

# This Day in History... March 15, 1858

## Birth of Liberty Hyde Bailey

Horticulturalist Liberty Hyde Bailey was born on March 15, 1858, in South Haven, Michigan. The gardening and horticulture stamp issued for Bailey's centennial birthday also marked a significant US postal first!

Bailey grew up on his family's pioneer farm. They were renowned for their innovative farming techniques and prize-winning apple orchards. Bailey was especially talented at grafting – their orchard had over 300 cultivars and his neighbors often sought his help with their plants.

Bailey had an interest in plants and reading from a young age. He enjoyed studying taxonomy and plant classification. After graduating from the Michigan Agricultural College in 1882, he was hired by renowned botanist Asa Gray to work as his assistant. After two years working with Gray, Bailey returned to Michigan to serve as a professor and chair of the Horticulture and Landscape Gardening Department at his alma mater. It was the first horticulture department in the country.



*This stamp was issued on Liberty Hyde Bailey's 100th birthday.*



*Bailey's Junior Naturalist Clubs are considered inspirations for 4-H Clubs.*

Then in 1888, Bailey moved to Ithaca, New York to chair the Practical and Experimental Horticulture Department at Cornell University. As early as 1893 he promoted the idea of a state-supported agricultural program at Cornell. He and fellow professor Isaac Roberts gained support for the idea by giving lectures and demonstrations, and even visiting farmers' homes and helping solve their problems. They soon gained significant support and Cornell changed the name of the Department of Agriculture to the College of Agriculture. In 1903, Bailey petitioned the state for support for an agriculture building. He succeeded and was made the first dean of the New York State College of Agriculture from 1903 to 1913.

Bailey was the co-founder of the American Society for Horticultural Science in 1903. He also spearheaded a Nature Study movement – opposing the belief that learning had to be about distant or intangible subjects. He encouraged children “to work with tools and soils and plants and problems.” Bailey helped found Junior Naturalist Clubs, which helped inspire the 4-H movement. He also chaired a National Commission on Country Life in 1908, and his resulting report led to the Cooperative Extension System. Bailey's research was also instrumental in the establishment of Parcel Post service and rural electrification.



*Bailey's work on the National Commission on Country Life was instrumental in the legislation that established Parcel Post.*

Bailey retired from Cornell in 1913 to spend more time writing and addressing social and political issues. He wrote 65 books on horticulture during his life and founded two journals on the subject. Bailey also edited more than 100 books by others and published over 1,300 articles. He also coined the words cultivar, cultigen, and indigen.



*Bailey's commission was also influential in rural electrification.*

Bailey died on December 25, 1954. Cornell later named Bailey Hall in his honor. Since 1958, the American Horticultural Society has given out an annual Liberty Hyde Bailey Award.

### The 1958 Liberty Hyde Bailey Stamp and Cancel

In 1958, Cornell University held the Liberty Hyde Bailey Centennial Celebration. To mark the occasion, the US Post Office issued a stamp on Bailey's 100th birthday, March 15, 1958, at Cornell University. The stamp didn't picture or name Bailey, instead it depicted an allegorical image of the “bountiful earth.”

The First Day Covers for this stamp also have an interesting first. They have the first pictorial First Day of Issue cancels. Between the circular postmark and “First Day of Issue” killer bars, they placed a reproduction of one of Bailey's bookplates. Pictorial cancels were soon added to a number of other covers, paving the way for the large, full-color pictorial cancels we have today.

# This Day in History... March 15, 1858

## Birth of Liberty Hyde Bailey

Horticulturalist Liberty Hyde Bailey was born on March 15, 1858, in South Haven, Michigan. The gardening and horticulture stamp issued for Bailey's centennial birthday also marked a significant US postal first!

Bailey grew up on his family's pioneer farm. They were renowned for their innovative farming techniques and prize-winning apple orchards. Bailey was especially talented at grafting – their orchard had over 300 cultivars and his neighbors often sought his help with their plants.

Bailey had an interest in plants and reading from a young age. He enjoyed studying taxonomy and plant classification. After graduating from the Michigan Agricultural College in 1882, he was hired by renowned botanist Asa Gray to work as his assistant. After two years working with Gray, Bailey returned to Michigan to serve as a professor and chair of the Horticulture and Landscape Gardening Department at his alma mater. It was the first horticulture department in the country.



*This stamp was issued on Liberty Hyde Bailey's 100th birthday.*



*Bailey's Junior Naturalist Clubs are considered inspirations for 4-H Clubs.*

Then in 1888, Bailey moved to Ithaca, New York to chair the Practical and Experimental Horticulture Department at Cornell University. As early as 1893 he promoted the idea of a state-supported agricultural program at Cornell. He and fellow professor Isaac Roberts gained support for the idea by giving lectures and demonstrations, and even visiting farmers' homes and helping solve their problems. They soon gained significant support and Cornell changed the name of the Department of Agriculture to the College of Agriculture. In 1903, Bailey petitioned the state for support for an agriculture building. He succeeded and was made the first dean of the New York State College of Agriculture from 1903 to 1913.

Bailey was the co-founder of the American Society for Horticultural Science in 1903. He also spearheaded a Nature Study movement – opposing the belief that learning had to be about distant or intangible subjects. He encouraged children “to work with tools and soils and plants and problems.” Bailey helped found Junior Naturalist Clubs, which helped inspire the 4-H movement. He also chaired a National Commission on Country Life in 1908, and his resulting report led to the Cooperative Extension System. Bailey's research was also instrumental in the establishment of Parcel Post service and rural electrification.



*Bailey's work on the National Commission on Country Life was instrumental in the legislation that established Parcel Post.*

Bailey retired from Cornell in 1913 to spend more time writing and addressing social and political issues. He wrote 65 books on horticulture during his life and founded two journals on the subject. Bailey also edited more than 100 books by others and published over 1,300 articles. He also coined the words cultivar, cultigen, and indigen.



*Bailey's commission was also influential in rural electrification.*

Bailey died on December 25, 1954. Cornell later named Bailey Hall in his honor. Since 1958, the American Horticultural Society has given out an annual Liberty Hyde Bailey Award.

### The 1958 Liberty Hyde Bailey Stamp and Cancel

In 1958, Cornell University held the Liberty Hyde Bailey Centennial Celebration. To mark the occasion, the US Post Office issued a stamp on Bailey's 100th birthday, March 15, 1958, at Cornell University. The stamp didn't picture or name Bailey, instead it depicted an allegorical image of the “bountiful earth.”

The First Day Covers for this stamp also have an interesting first. They have the first pictorial First Day of Issue cancels. Between the circular postmark and “First Day of Issue” killer bars, they placed a reproduction of one of Bailey's bookplates. Pictorial cancels were soon added to a number of other covers, paving the way for the large, full-color pictorial cancels we have today.