

More History

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First Sworn Sheriff

The Office of the Sheriff was first established in Virginia in early 1634. William Stone became the first sworn sheriff in America when he was appointed the sheriff in the County of Accomac.

First Elected Sheriff

A Virginia proclamation of March 13, 1651 required each county to choose a sheriff. The commissioners of Northampton County Virginia asked its people to elect a sheriff and William Waters became the first elected sheriff in America.

First Law Enforcement Fatality

New York City Deputy Sheriff Isaac Smith was America's first law enforcement officer to be killed in the line of duty. On May 17, 1792 Deputy Smith was shot and killed while attempting to arrest a man for disturbing the peace.

First Female Killed in the Line of Duty

The first woman in the United States to be killed in the line of duty was Anna Hart, a jail matron with the Hamilton County Sheriff's Department. On July 24, 1916, she was killed by a prisoner who was attempting to escape.

First "Policewoman";

In 1910, Alice Stebbins Wells of the Los Angeles Police Department became the first woman to be classified as "policewoman", and was given arrest powers.

America's First Female Sheriff

Emma Susan Daugherty Banister was probably the first woman sheriff in the United States. Her husband, John R. Banister, was elected sheriff of Coleman County in 1914. Emma served as John's office deputy. She bought supplies, ran her household, and oversaw the preparation of meals for the family and the prisoners.

On August 1, 1918, the sheriff died, and the commissioners of Coleman County appointed his wife to complete his term in office.

Also claimed as first: Mary Lois Roach - Graves Co., KY - 1922-1927

Also claimed as first: Mabel Chase - Kiowa Co., KS - 1926-19??