



# BLACK HISTORY MOMENT



Emma Belle Gibson Sykes

Emma Belle Gibson Sykes was born on October 8, 1885. She graduated from Howard High School in 1903 and then began teaching at the high school. Sykes was one of the founding members of the Wilmington Branch of the NAACP which was initiated in 1914 and chartered in 1915. Additionally, she founded the Equal Suffrage Study Club in her home on March 19, 1914. She served as the group's vice president. Sykes was appointed as the Clerk in the New Castle County Register of Wills office, the first Black woman to hold this position. She remained active in the Wilmington branch of the NAACP and devoted time to the Delaware Federation of Colored Women's Clubs, working initially to raise funds for the group's Industrial School for Colored Girls, later remaining in honor of Howard High School's esteemed principal Edwina Kruse. During the 1940s, Sykes was appointed treasurer and chairman of the school's volunteer board. The "colored" YMCA/YWCA on Walnut Street was another one of her interests, and she raised funds for war bonds during WWII. ([Alexander Street](#)).

#BlackHistoryMonth

