



MATILDA

EFFECT



Pionierinnen der Forschung **Female Pioneers of Research**

Pt. 42

Florenc Bascom





Florence Bascom (1862-1945)

Geologist, Petrologist & Mineralogist

Earning her master's degree in geology in 1887, a field heavily dominated by men, she became the second woman in the United States to earn a Ph.D. at *Johns Hopkins University* in 1893. As the only woman, she was required to sit behind a screen during lectures so as not to 'distract' her male classmates.



Her specialization in petrology and crystallography, as well as her work on volcanic rock in the eastern United States, was groundbreaking. Her precise fieldwork and microscopic analyses remain fundamental to geological methods even today.

In 1930, she became the first woman to serve as Vice President of the *Geological Society of America*. In this role, she actively advocated for women in science and trained many future female geologists.





Despite her groundbreaking research, she was rarely recognized during her lifetime to the same extent as her male colleagues. She was often overlooked in many historical retrospectives as well. Many of her female students went on to have successful careers themselves — yet Bascom's influence on their professional paths was often insufficiently acknowledged.





„Ich habe immer gesagt, dass es kein Verdienst ist, die Einzige ihrer Art zu sein. Ich habe versucht, es anderen Frauen zu ermöglichen, Geologinnen zu werden – nicht, es mir selbst zu ermöglichen, eine Geologin zu sein.“

"I have always claimed that there was no merit in being the only one of a kind. I have tried to make it possible for other women to be geologists, not to make it possible for me to be a geologist."

