

## Women in Ragtime

- Many ragtime compositions were written by women. There are few other styles or periods of music that had such a prominent role for women
- Ragtime tunes by Charlotte Blake, Adaline Shepherd, Julia Lee Niebergall, Irene Giblin and May Aufderheide
- Women were encouraged to learn to play the piano. There were few careers open to middle-class women. But teaching piano was a respectable way to earn money
- Women started to demonstrate new piano music for sheet music publishers at music stores and department stores. And they started to compose rags
- But publishers were slow to publicize the gender of the composer
- Charlotte Blake, who started her music career as an arranger and composer in 1903 at age 18, was listed as C. Blake until she was 21



### May Aufderheide (1888-1972)

- ❖ born in Indianapolis, Indiana, into a well-to-do musically talented family
- ❖ received classical piano lessons from her aunt, a concert pianist
- ❖ In 1908 (age 20), her first ragtime composition was published and distributed locally
- ❖ career took off after her father established J.H. Aufderheide & Company to publish her music.

