

Identifying the Flag Over the Porch Stamp Series



Most collectors have large numbers of stamps that appear similar and, due to the relatively low value of any of the stamps, are reluctant to devote much time to identifying the individual stamps. Consider the green 1c Washingtons and red 2c Franklins. While some varieties are quite expensive, most are not. A similar situation occurs with the “Flag Over Porch” series of stamps that was first introduced in 1995.

The Mystic Stamp Company commonly advertises the “complete set of 12” Flag over Porch stamps on the back cover of Linn’s Stamp News. Scott Publishing has assigned 12 major catalogue numbers to this one design. However there are 68 easily identifiable “major” varieties from this single design. This exhibit will identify the 15 most easily determined. Additional characteristics are included in the description panels of the exhibit which are not included in the flowchart for the benefit of those collectors who wish to further subdivide their basic types.

By following the guidelines in this exhibit, even a novice collector can easily identify the major varieties without the need for equipment any more complicated than a magnifying glass and (in two cases) a perforation gauge.

None of the varieties are especially valuable, however some are worth \$3 of \$4 making it worth the collector’s time to find those in the heap.

To help in identifying the varieties, first familiarize yourself with the terminology in the panels of this exhibit using the examples pictures to clarify the description, then consult the flowchart starting at the top and working your way downward through the decisions. When you arrive at a circle containing a Scott number, you are done! One caveat: there are two varieties which share a Scott number in spite of being issued in two different years: the 1996 Scott #2921 and the 1997 Scott #2921. You may classify those as you see fit.

Initial Sorting

Stamps should first be sorted by year and by the size and color of printing of the year on the stamp. Note that the blue 1995 varieties have either a small 1995 or a large 1995. The difference is easily seen when comparing one to another..

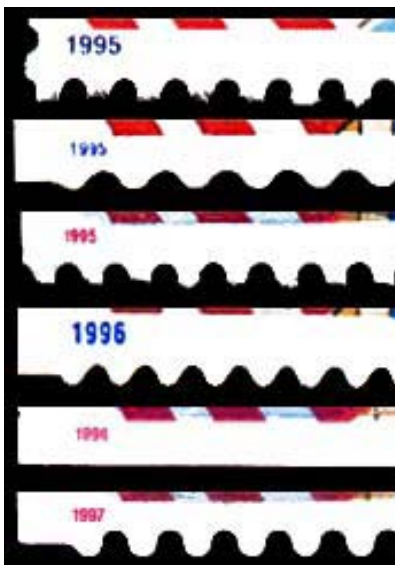
small blue 1995



large blue 1995



View of lower left corner of stamps showing relative size



Identifying Perf Type

These stamps come in three basic formats or perf types: sheet, coil or booklet.

Sheet - perfs on all 4 sides



Coil - perfs on 2 sides



Booklet - perfs on 3 sides



Gum

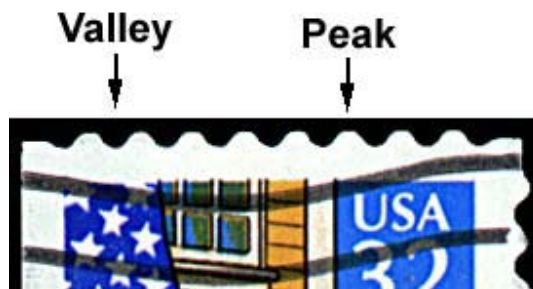
Gum will be either water-activated (lick and stick) or self-adhesive. Note the more regular perforation shape in the self-adhesive types.



Water-activated (top)
Self-adhesive (bottom)

Peaks & Valleys and Cutting

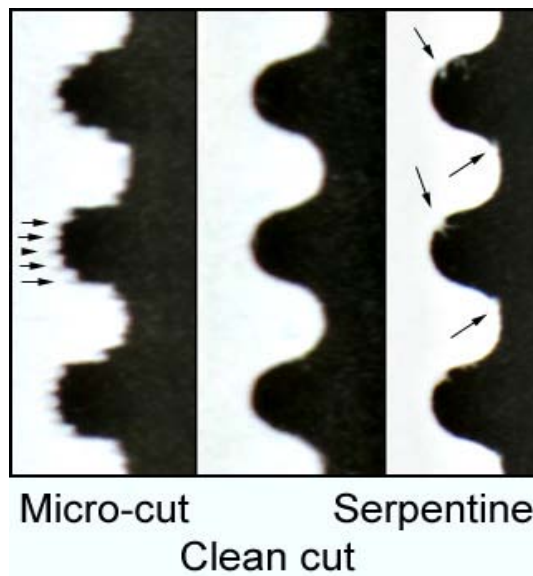
Perforations may begin with either a “peak” or a “valley”. The way that the perforations are cut is also distinctive and easily differentiated.



The “micro-cut” perforations show small ridges along the edge of the cut.

The “serpentine” perforations show small bits of “fuzz” along the edge of the cut.

The “clean cut” perforations show neither of these characteristics.



"Flag Over Porch" Identification Flowchart

