

1938 Presidential Series The Stamps and the FDC's

A Little History

- In 1933 President Franklin D. Roosevelt, himself a serious stamp collector, fostered the idea of a set of stamps honoring all the deceased past presidents of the United States. A national contest was held in 1937 to choose a designer for the 1st stamp of the series, the 1-cent George Washington issue. More than **eleven hundred** entries were submitted, some from famous artists. An artist from New York, Elaine Rawlinson, won the contest. Her design for the 1-cent stamp showed Washington in profile, modeled after a bust by the famous sculptor Jean-Antoine Houdon, and became the template for the new definitive series issued in 1938.

The Series

- Values perf 11 x 11 (32 values) Scott 803-834
½, 1, 1 ½, 2, 3, 4, 4 ½, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12,
13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25, 30,
50, \$1, \$2, \$5
- Pop quiz: why is 24 missing?
- Horizontal coils (9 values) Scott 839-847
½, 1, 2, 3, 4, 4 ½, 5, 6, 9
- Vertical coils (4 values) Scott 848-851
1, 2, 3, 5
- Booklets (3 values) Scott 804b, 806b, 807a
1, 2, 3

A Little More History

- The FDOI for the regular series was throughout 1938 (April 25 through December 8)
- All of the vertical coils had the same FDOI
- All of the horizontal coils had the same FDOI
- All of the booklets had the same FDOI

But in Addition...

- At the time that the series was introduced, a perforation process was being tested called “electric eye”
- The “electric eye” was invented to limit the waste due to errors in perforation
- A set of bars was printed on the left selvage and perforating equipment was introduced that “read” the bar to adjust the perforating machine.
- For each value of the regular issue, 1/2 to 50, the FDOI of the EE version of the stamp was variable.
- So, an additional collectible is the FDOI for the EE stamp

First Day Covers

- Mellone lists 50 First Day Cover producers
- Of course, more were discovered after Mellone (Volume 8, 1938) was published.
- Several of the Mellone entries are “no name” – the producer name was not known at the time of publishing
- “Most” of the covers can be found for a “reasonable” price; the \$ values are “pricey” for all producers

FDC Collection

- First, please take a couple of the un-cacheted FDC's.
- The covers are face down, so select a couple without knowing the value
- There are a couple of \$ values in the stack.

FDC Collection

- By Mellone number, here are the sets I have...
- This collection will never be complete...

Further Study

- Presidential Series (all presidents)
1986 (Scott 2216-2219)