

1908 SERIES

WATERMARKED USPS.

SPACING VARIETIES

When the 1908 series was introduced, the imperforate one cent to five cents denominations were printed in full sheets containing 400 subjects with standard vertical spacing of 2mm between columns. Early in 1909 a new type of "Star" plate was introduced for use in printing all but the five cent denomination. These new plates had a 3mm vertical space between the six outside columns on each side, while the remaining eight central columns were kept at the old 2mm spacing. This was done to cut down on waste due to paper shrinkage at sides of the sheets.

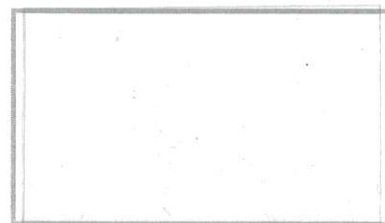
PRINTS FROM STANDARD PLATES WITH 2MM VERTICAL SPACING



PRINTS FROM "STAR" PLATES WITH 3MM VERTICAL SPACING



THREE CENTS HORIZONTAL IMPERFORATE COIL (THE ONLY WAY IT EXISTS WITH 3MM VERTICAL SPACING)



The three cent stamp with wide spacing was issued only as a horizontal imperforate coil pair. It originated from a "star" plate imperforate sheet but was not issued in full sheet format. This stamp can only be proved by the 3mm spacing which only exists from star plate printings.
one of two reported examples

THE 1908 SERIES IMPERFORATES

This exhibit examines the imperforate stamps of the 1908 to 1922 Washington - Franklin series. There are 16 main watermark and print varieties as shown below plus additional die type varieties and imperforate coils. The imperforate stamps in both sheet and coil formats were issued primarily for use by manufacturers of private coils for vending machines.

WATERMARKED USPS., FLAT PLATE PRINTS



WATERMARKED USPS., FLAT PLATE PRINTS



WATERMARKED USPS., ROTARY PRESS PRINTS



NO WATERMARK, FLAT PLATE PRINTS



NO WATERMARK, OFFSET PRINTS

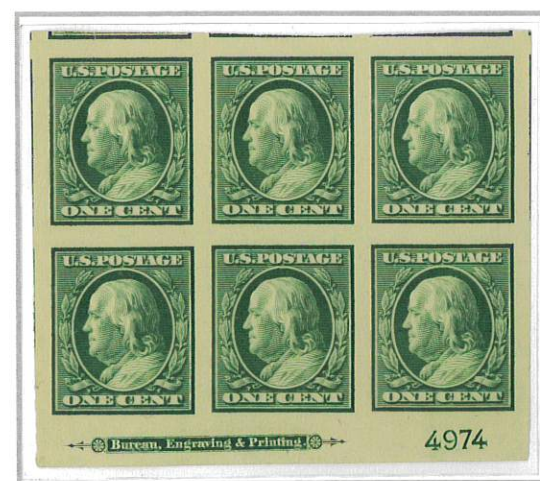
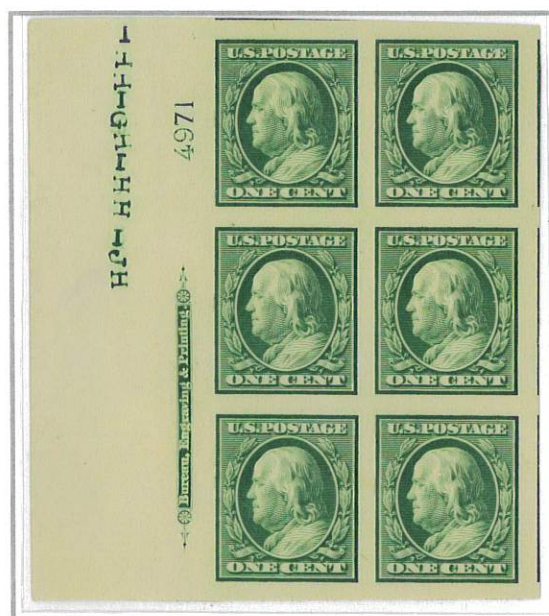


WATERMARKED USPS.
TWO MM VERTICAL SPACING

1908 SERIES

ONE CENT
STANDARD PLATE BLOCKS

The 1908 series one cent imperforate stamps were first printed using "standard" plates of 400 subjects. Each plate had the "Bureau, Engraving & Printing" imprint, plus an adjacent plate number, in eight places. These appeared twice in top margin, in bottom margin and twice on each side margin. Standard plates had a 2mm gutter between columns. (Scott #343)

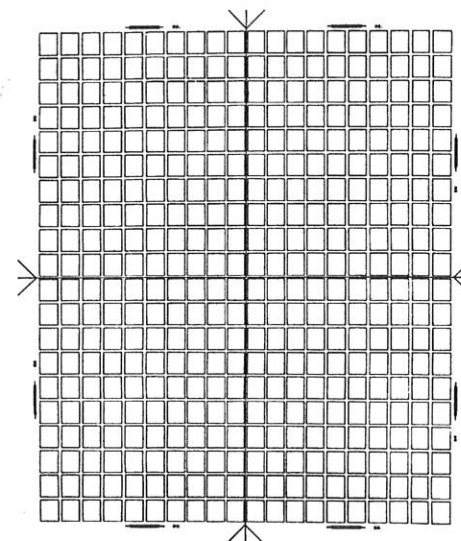


WATERMARKED USPS.
TWO MM VERTICAL SPACING

1908 SERIES

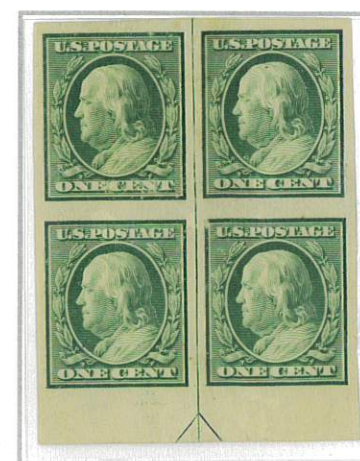
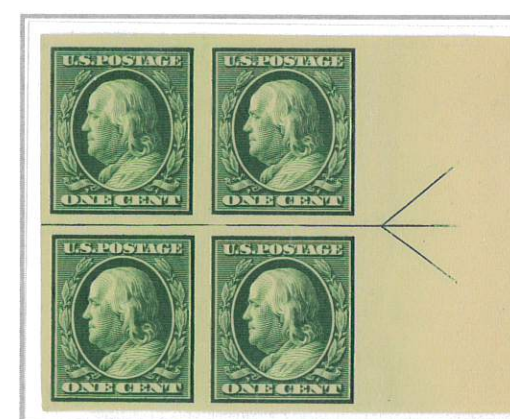
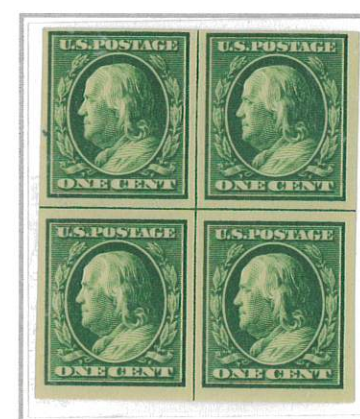
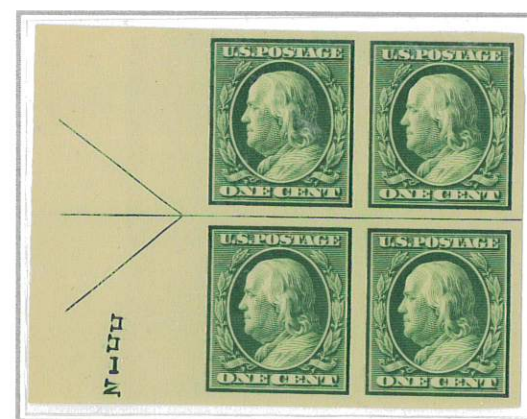
ONE CENT
POSITION BLOCKS

The left and right arrow blocks with 2mm spacing originated only from standard plates.



The diagram at left illustrates the full plate of 400 subjects, divided into four panes of 100 each by horizontal and vertical guide lines. The guide lines terminated in arrows at the margins.

Therefore, each sheet of 400 produced one centerline block, a top arrow block, a bottom arrow block, a left arrow block and a right arrow block. Each pane also included two imprint and plate number blocks.



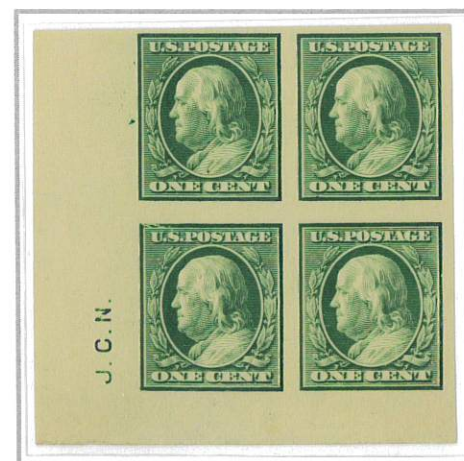
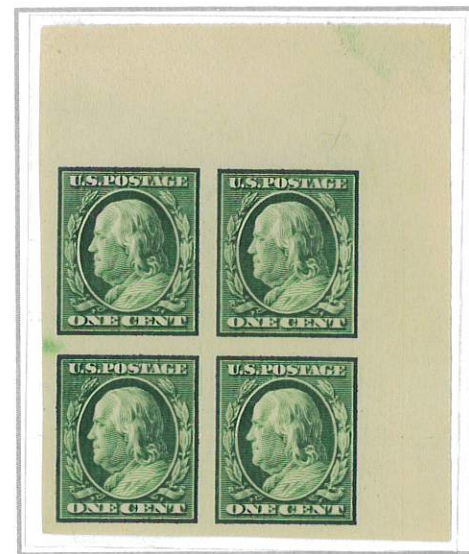
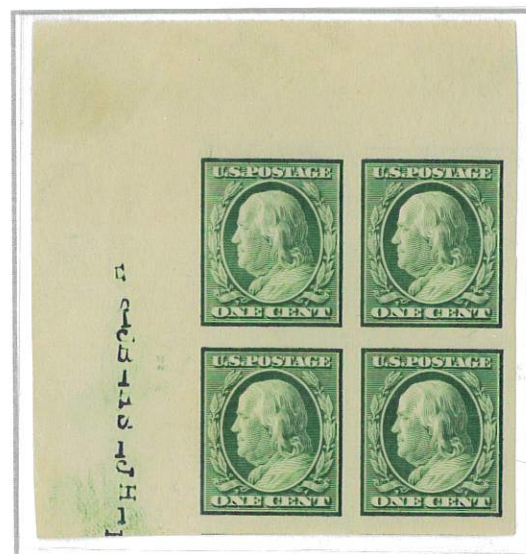
1908 SERIES

WATERMARKED USPS.
TWO MM VERTICAL SPACING

ONE CENT
CORNER BLOCKS

The corner blocks with 2mm spacing originated only from standard plates.

The one cent plates used from December 1908 to early 1909 were of the standard type with two millimeter vertical spacing between subjects. These plates were replaced with the "Star" plates in 1909. The new plates had a 3mm vertical space between the six outside columns on each side, while the remaining eight central columns were kept at the old 2mm spacing.

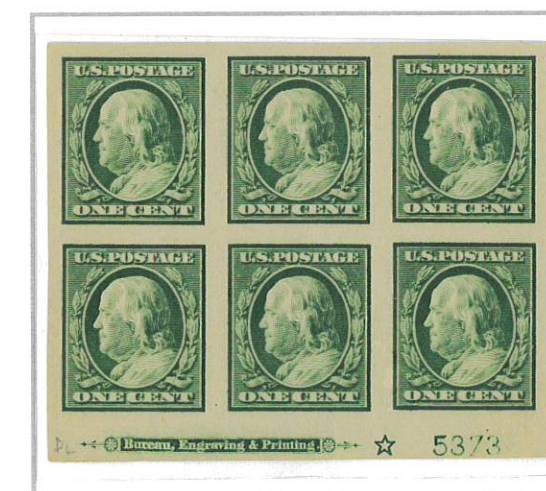
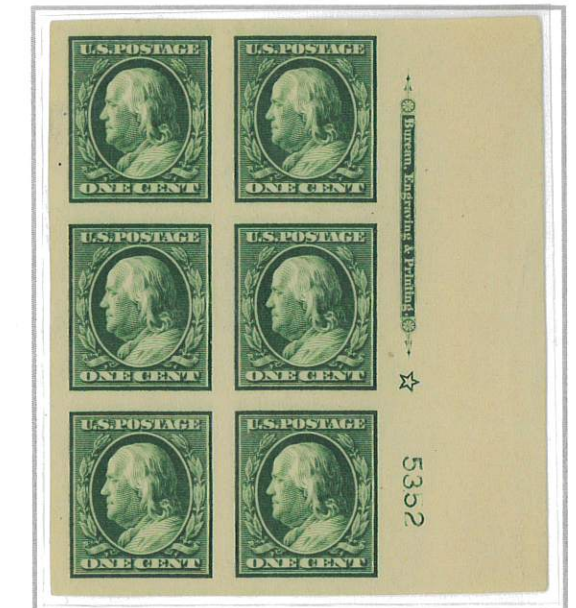
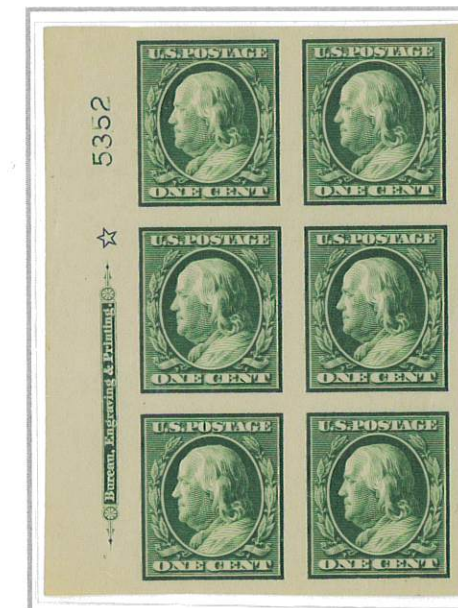


1908 SERIES

WATERMARKED USPS.
THREE MM VERTICAL SPACING

ONE CENT
STAR PLATE BLOCKS

In early 1909 the "standard" plates began to be replaced with new "star" plates designed to decrease waste from shrinkage. These new plates had a 3mm vertical space between the six outside columns on each side, while the remaining eight central columns were kept at the old 2mm spacing. To differentiate these new plates, a star was added to the imprint before the plate number.

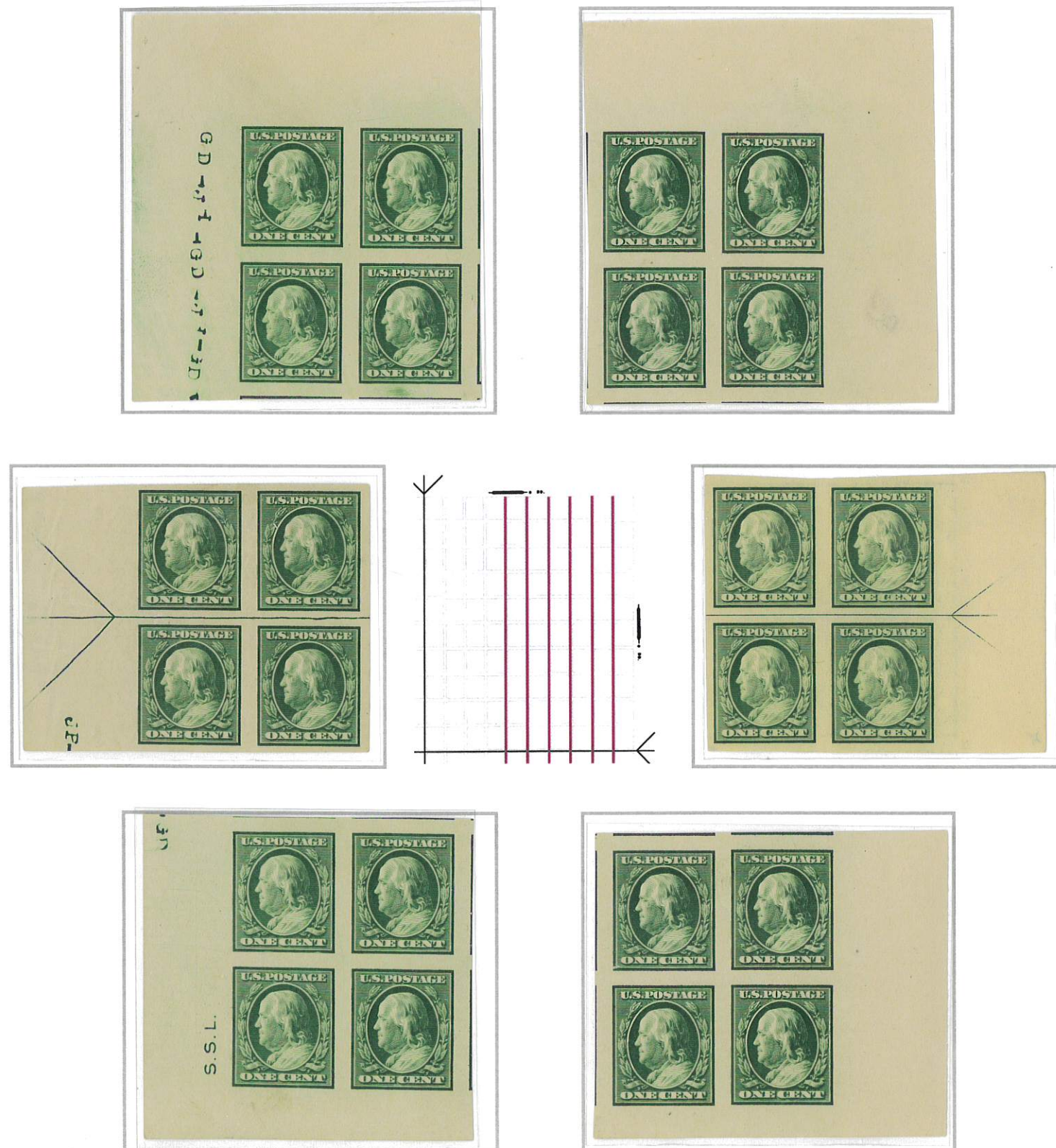


1908 SERIES

WATERMARKED USPS.
THREE MM VERTICAL SPACING

ONE CENT
POSITION AND CORNER BLOCKS

Only the corner blocks and side arrow position blocks from a "star" plate can show the 3mm vertical gutters. The diagram of the upper right pane shows the 3mm gutters in red. The central columns were kept at the old standard 2mm spacing.



1908 SERIES

WATERMARKED USPS.
TWO MM VERTICAL SPACING

TWO CENTS
STANDARD PLATE BLOCKS

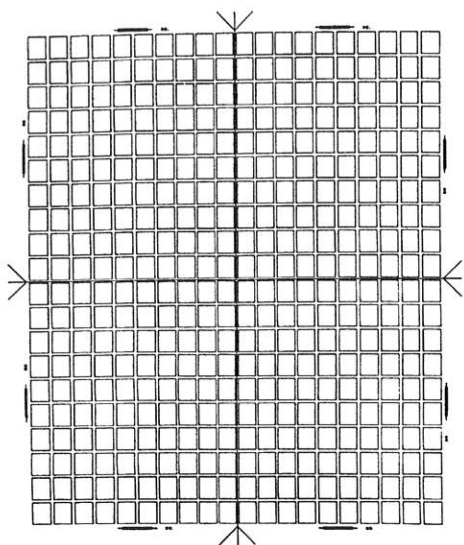


WATERMARKED USPS.
TWO MM VERTICAL SPACING

1908 SERIES

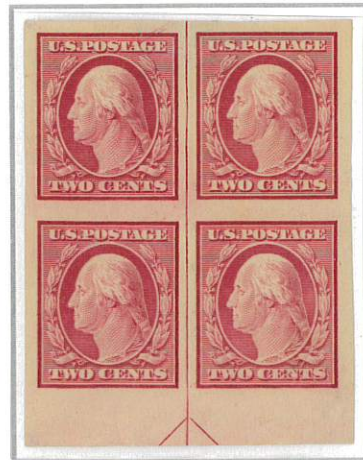
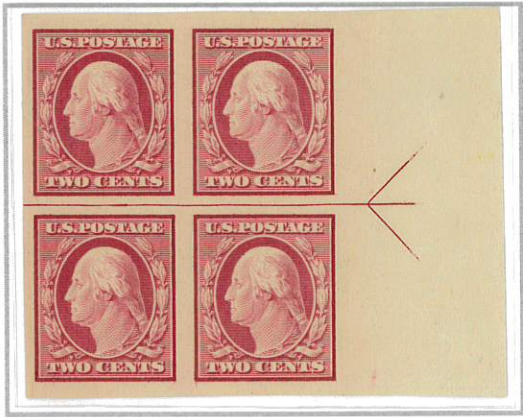
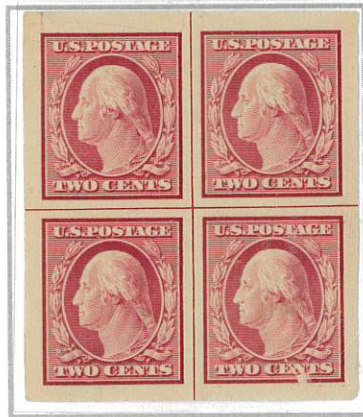
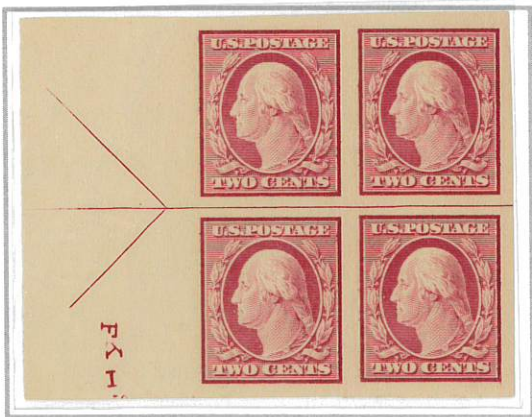
TWO CENTS
POSITION BLOCKS

The left and right arrow blocks with 2mm spacing originated only from standard plates.



The diagram at left illustrates the full plate of 400 subjects, divided into four panes of 100 each by horizontal and vertical guide lines. The guide lines terminated in arrows at the margins.

Therefore, each sheet of 400 produced one centerline block, a top arrow block, a bottom arrow block, a left arrow block and a right arrow block. Each pane also included two imprint and plate number blocks.



WATERMARKED USPS.
TWO MM VERTICAL SPACING

1908 SERIES

TWO CENTS
CORNER BLOCKS

The corner blocks with 2mm spacing originated only from standard plates.

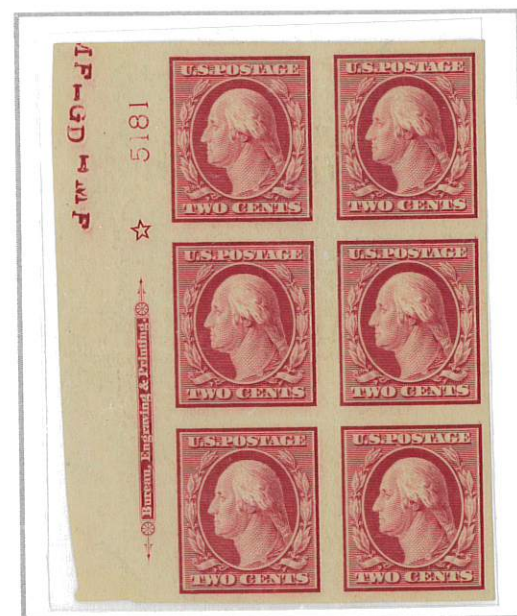
Like the one cent stamps, the standard two cent plates maintained uniform 2mm vertical spacing. The standard plates were replaced with the new "Star" plates with variable spacing in 1909. The new plates had a 3mm vertical space between the six outside columns on each side.



WATERMARKED USPS.
THREE MM VERTICAL SPACING

1908 SERIES

TWO CENTS
STAR PLATE BLOCKS

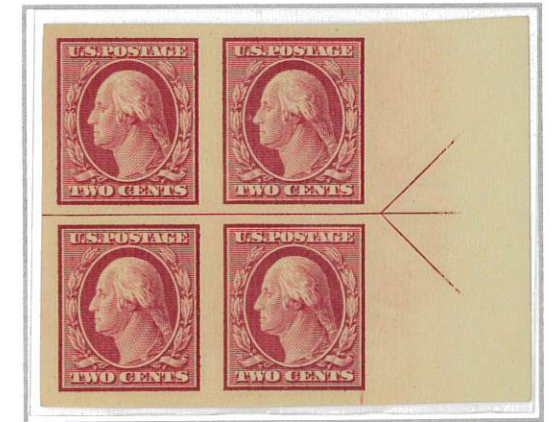
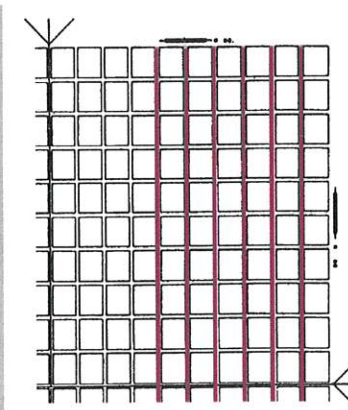
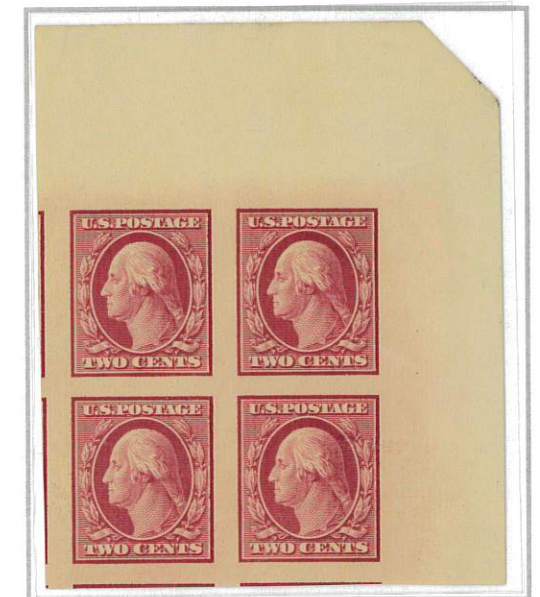
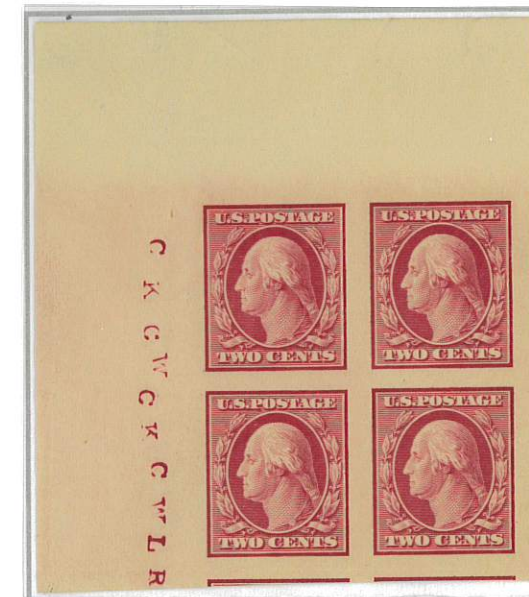


1908 SERIES

WATERMARKED USPS.
THREE MM VERTICAL SPACING

TWO CENTS
CORNER AND POSITION BLOCKS

Only the corner blocks and side arrow position blocks from a "star" plate can show the 3mm vertical gutters. The diagram below of the upper right pane shows the 3mm gutters in red. The central columns were kept at the old standard 2mm spacing.



WATERMARKED USPS.

1908 SERIES

TWO CENTS AND FIVE CENTS
IMPERFORATE COILS

The post office supplied coil rolls of imperforate stamps in limited quantities. The coil rolls were sold in rolls of 500 or 1,000 stamps for a slight premium. Horizontal coils of the one, two and three cents denominations were sold as well as vertical coils of the one, two, four and five cents.

HORIZONTAL IMPERFORATE COILS



guide line strip
2mm spacing



paste-up strip
3mm spacing

VERTICAL IMPERFORATE COILS



guide-line
strip



paste-up
strip

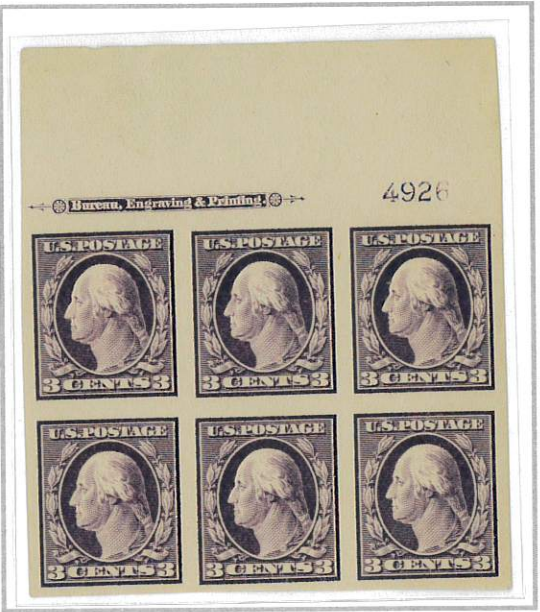


1908 SERIES

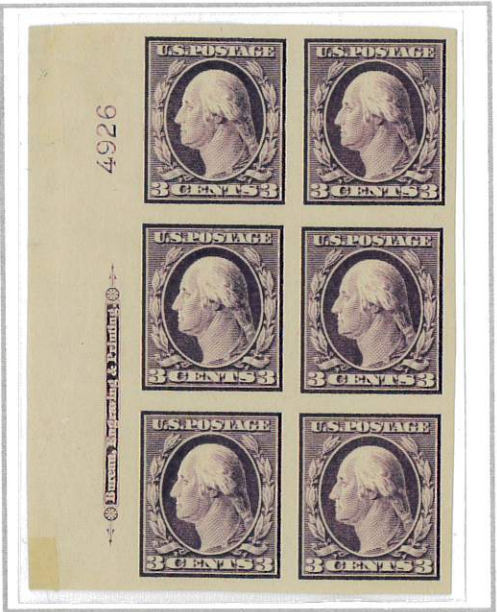
WATERMARKED USPS.
TWO MM VERTICAL SPACING

THREE CENTS
STANDARD PLATE BLOCKS

The only three cent imperforate stamps sold in sheet form to the public were printed from the standard plates.



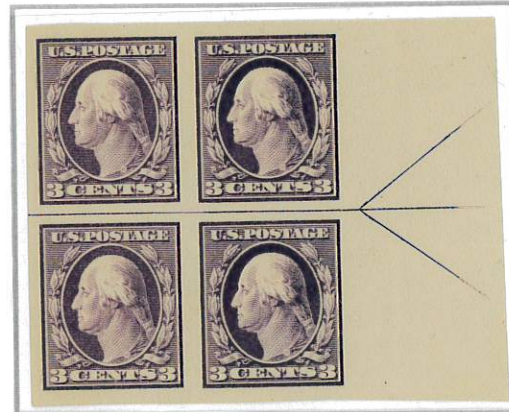
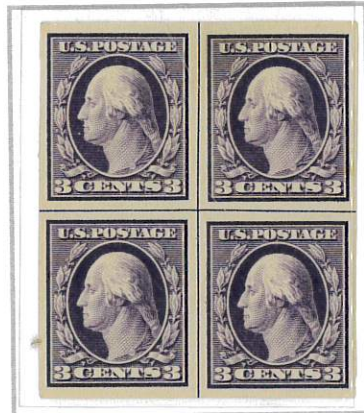
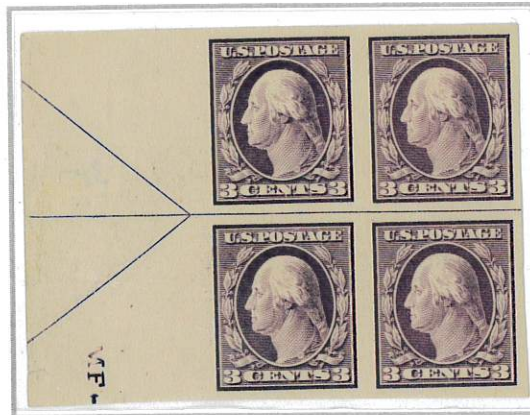
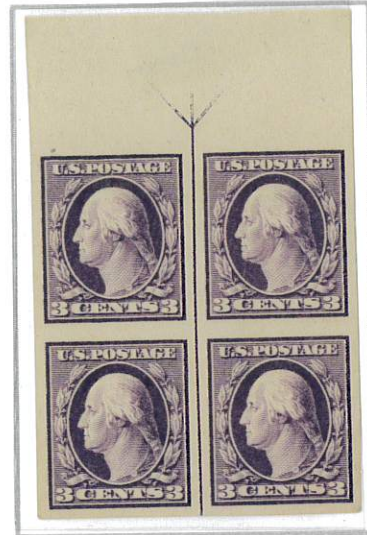
Matched set of
blocks on this
page are from
plate number
4926.



WATERMARKED USPS.
TWO MM VERTICAL SPACING

1908 SERIES

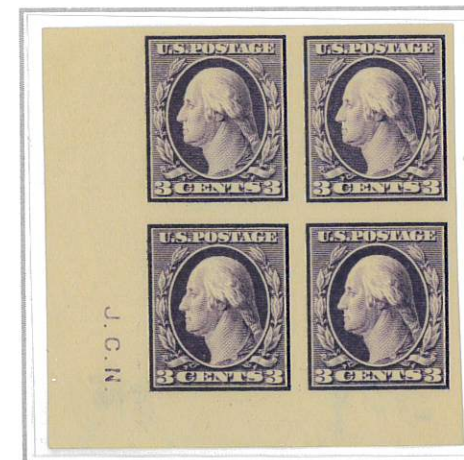
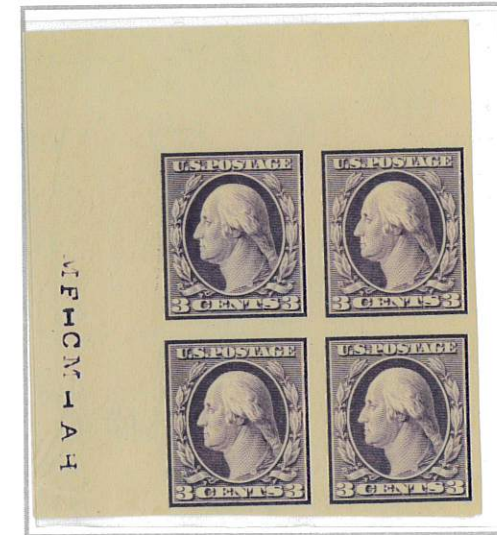
THREE CENTS
POSITION BLOCKS



1908 SERIES

WATERMARKED USPS.
TWO MM VERTICAL SPACING

THREE CENTS
CORNER BLOCKS

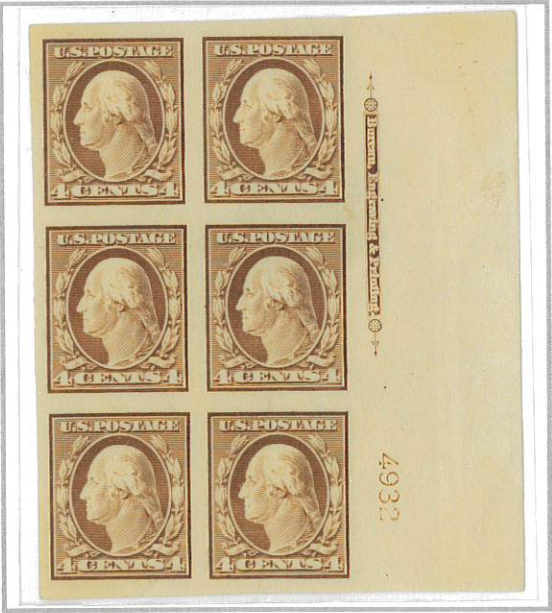
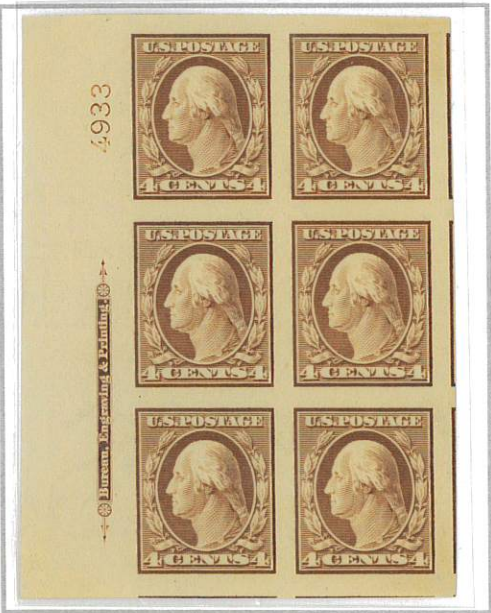


1908 SERIES

WATERMARKED USPS.
TWO MM VERTICAL SPACING

FOUR CENTS
STANDARD PLATE BLOCKS

Only four standard plates were used to print the four cents imperforates. All four plate numbers, 4932 to 4935 are shown.

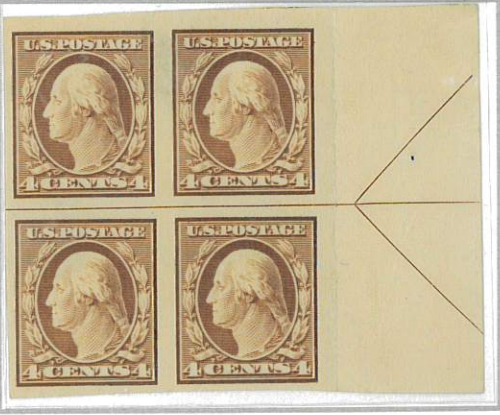
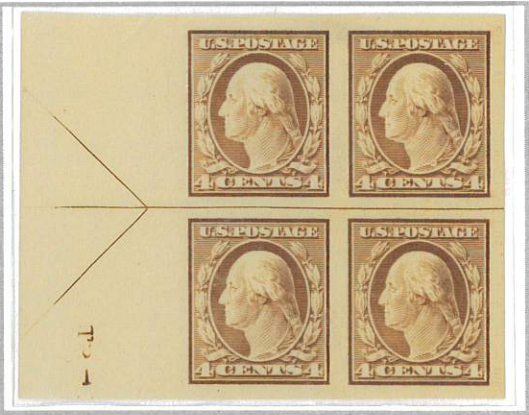


1908 SERIES

WATERMARKED USPS.
TWO MM VERTICAL SPACING

FOUR CENTS
POSITION BLOCKS

The left and right arrow blocks with 2mm spacing originated only from standard plates.

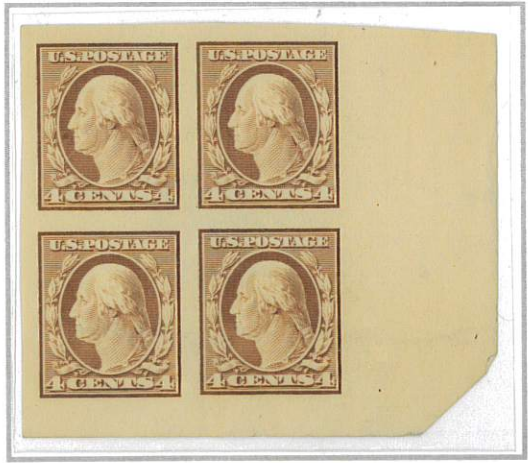
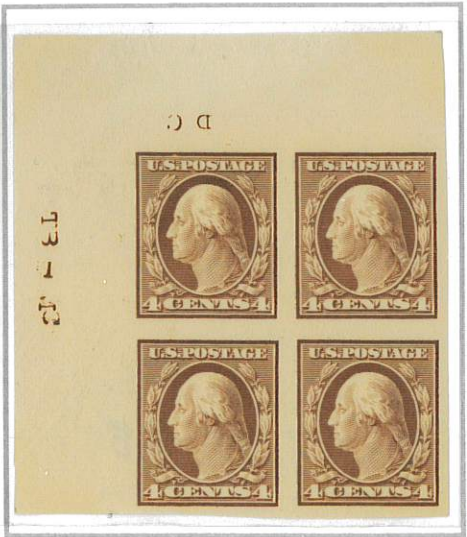


WATERMARKED USPS.
TWO MM VERTICAL SPACING

1908 SERIES

FOUR CENTS
CORNER BLOCKS

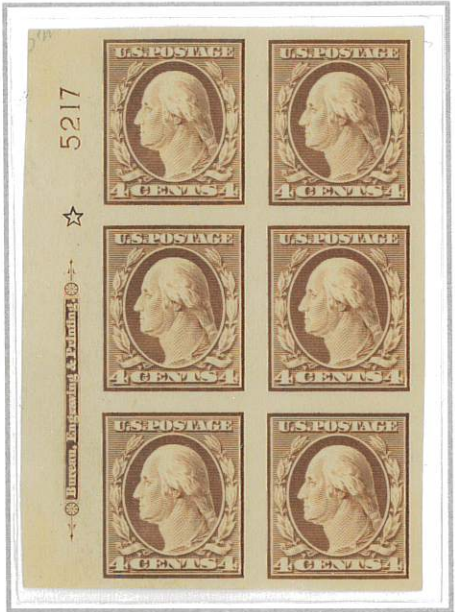
The corner blocks with 2mm spacing originated only from standard plates.



WATERMARKED USPS.
THREE MM VERTICAL SPACING

1908 SERIES

FOUR CENTS
STAR PLATE BLOCKS

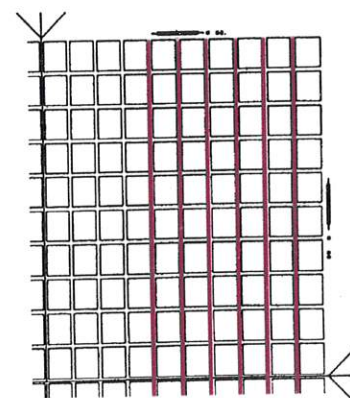
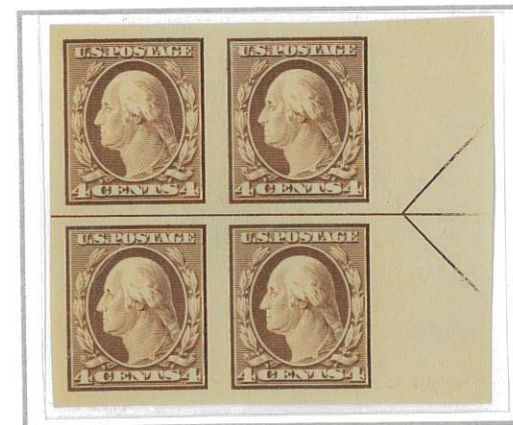
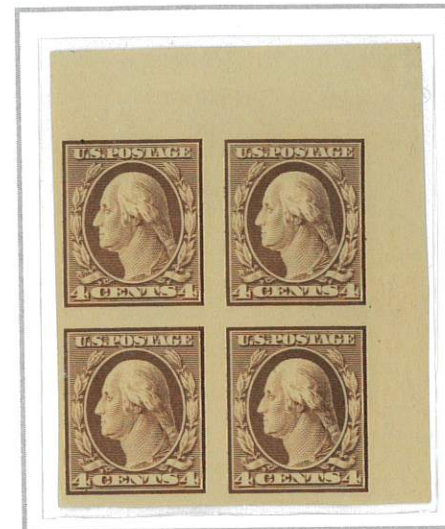


1908 SERIES

WATERMARKED USPS.
THREE MM VERTICAL SPACING

FOUR CENTS
CORNER AND POSITION BLOCKS

Only the corner blocks and side arrow position blocks from a "star" plate can show the 3mm vertical gutters. The diagram below of the upper right pane shows the 3mm gutters in red. The central columns were kept at the old standard 2mm spacing.

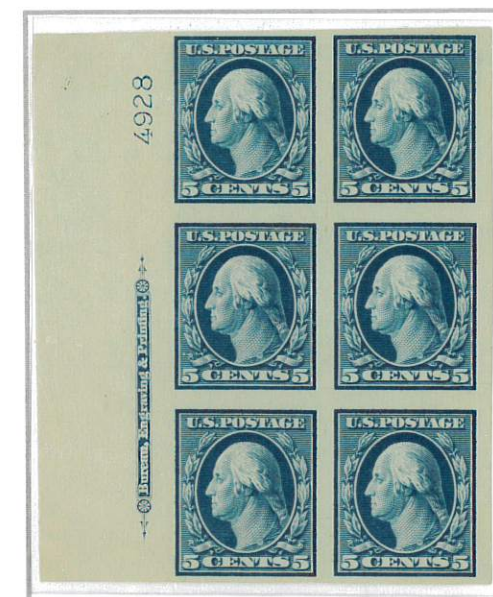


1908 SERIES

WATERMARKED USPS.
TWO MM VERTICAL SPACING

FIVE CENTS
STANDARD PLATE BLOCKS

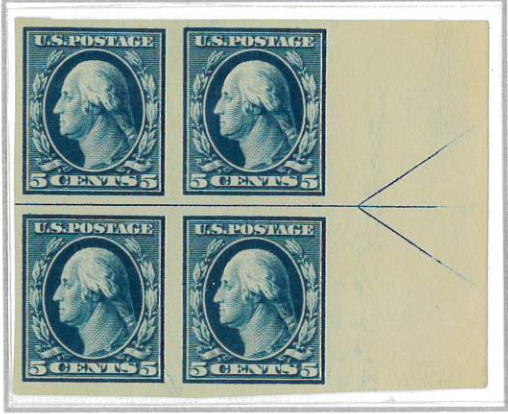
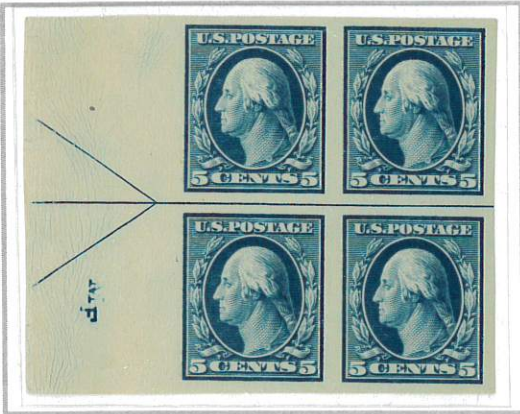
The only five cent imperforate stamps sold in sheet form to the public were printed from the standard plates.



WATERMARKED USPS.
TWO MM VERTICAL SPACING

1908 SERIES

FIVE CENTS
POSITION BLOCKS



1908 SERIES

WATERMARKED USPS.
TWO MM VERTICAL SPACING

FIVE CENTS
CORNER BLOCKS



1908 SERIES

WATERMARKED USPS.
2MM, 3MM AND 2.75MM VERTICAL SPACING

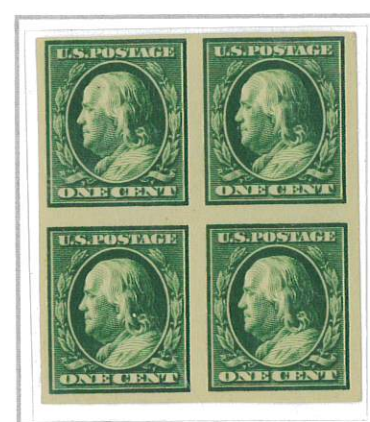
ONE CENT
STAR AND "A" PLATES

The one cent with single line watermark (Scott #383), issued in January 1911, was printed from both "star" plates as well as the new "A" plates. The "star" plates, which were the primary source of the imperforate one cent stamps, had a 3mm vertical space between the six outside columns on each side, while the remaining eight central columns had 2mm spacing. The new "A" plates had uniform 2.75mm vertical spacing.

STAR PLATE PRINTS



3mm vertical spacing

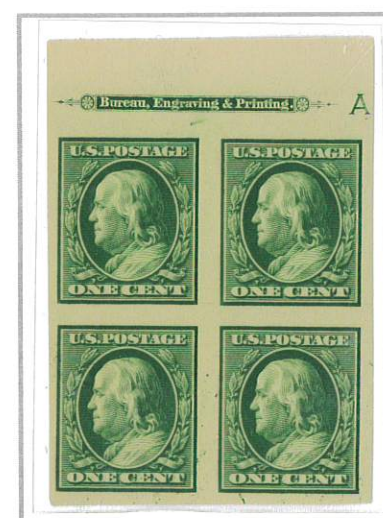


2mm vertical spacing



3mm vertical spacing

"A" PLATE PRINTING



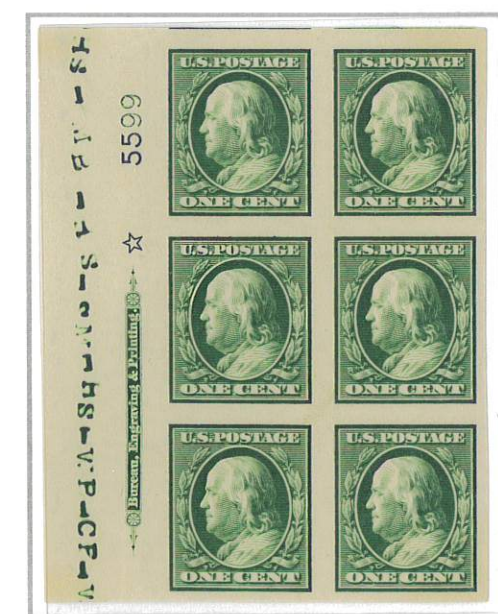
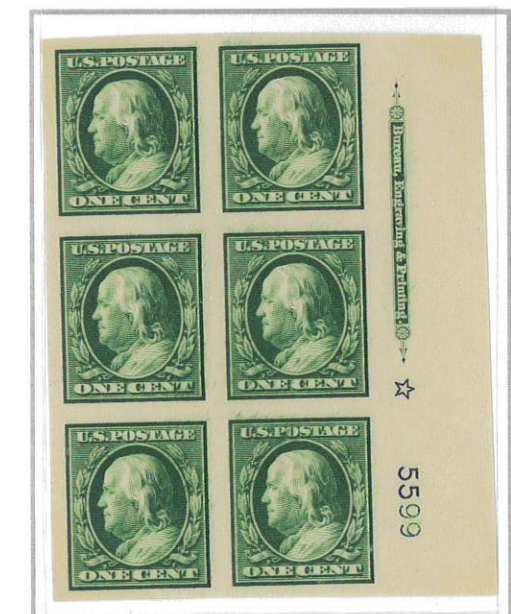
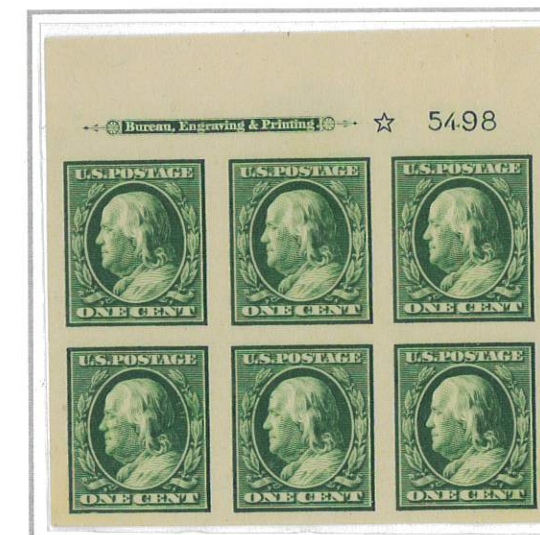
2.75mm vertical spacing

1908 SERIES

WATERMARKED USPS.
THREE MM VERTICAL SPACING

ONE CENT
STAR PLATE BLOCKS

The "star" plates had a 3mm vertical space between the six outside columns on each side, while the remaining eight central columns had 2mm spacing. All plate block positions are from the outer columns all plate block position show only the 3mm spacing.

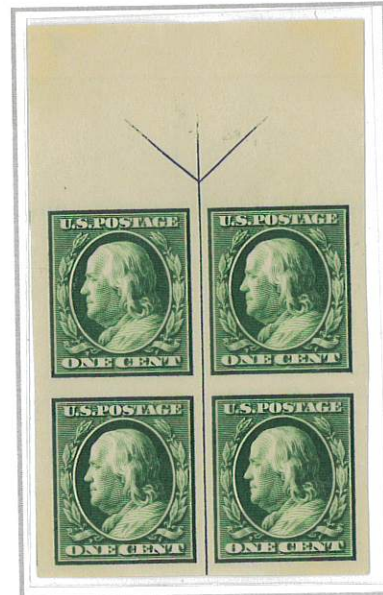
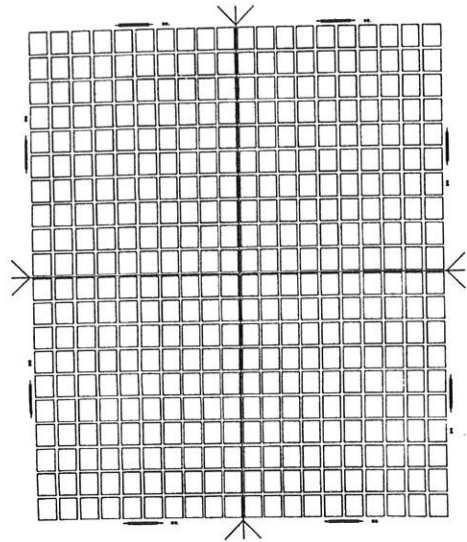


1908 SERIES

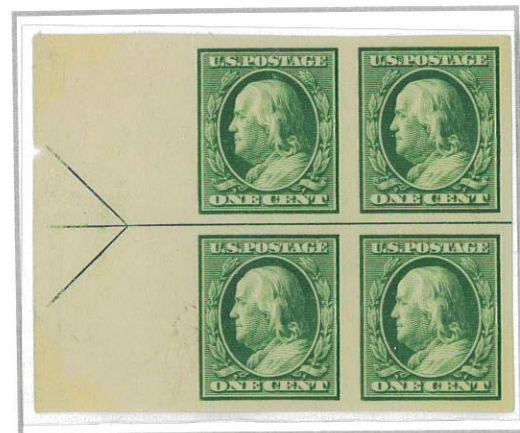
WATERMARKED USPS.
TWO / THREE MM VERTICAL SPACING

ONE CENT
STAR PLATE POSITION BLOCKS

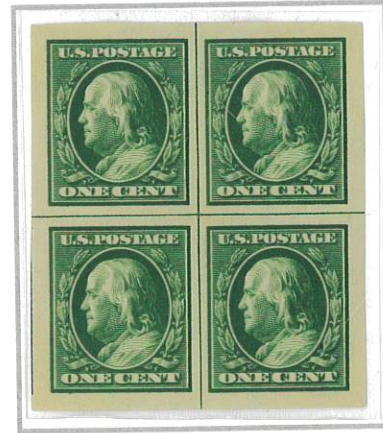
Only stamps printed from the star plates, and located in the eight central columns in the 400 subject sheet, show 2mm vertical spacing. The space between the outer columns on star plate printed sheets was 3mm and the "A" plates had uniform 2.75mm spacing.



2mm spacing



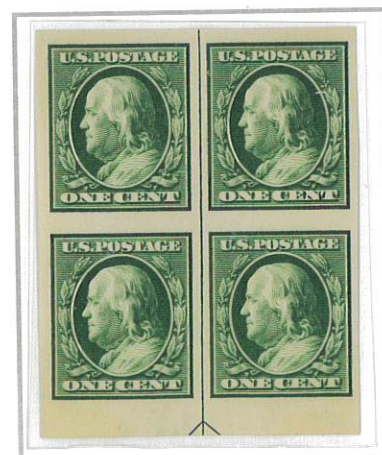
3mm spacing



2mm spacing



3mm spacing



2mm spacing

The diagram at left illustrates the full plate of 400 subjects, divided into four panes of 100 each by horizontal and vertical guide lines. The guide lines terminated in arrows at the margins.

Therefore, each sheet of 400 produced one centerline block, a top arrow block, a bottom arrow block, a left arrow block and a right arrow block. Each pane also included two imprint and plate number blocks.

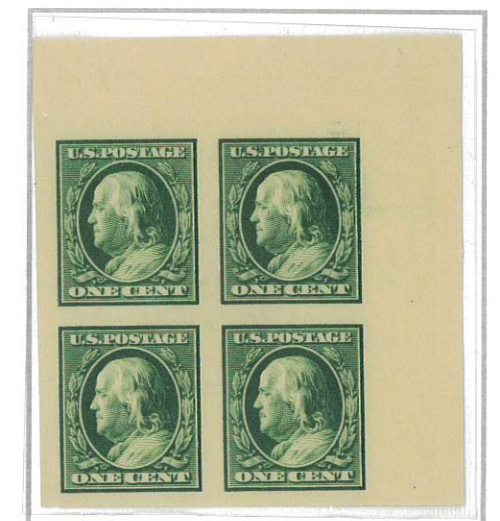
1908 SERIES

WATERMARKED USPS.
THREE MM VERTICAL SPACING

ONE CENT
STAR PLATE CORNER BLOCKS

The space between the outer columns on star plate printed sheets was 3mm while the "A" plates had uniform 2.75mm spacing.

The corner blocks with 3mm spacing originated only from star plates.

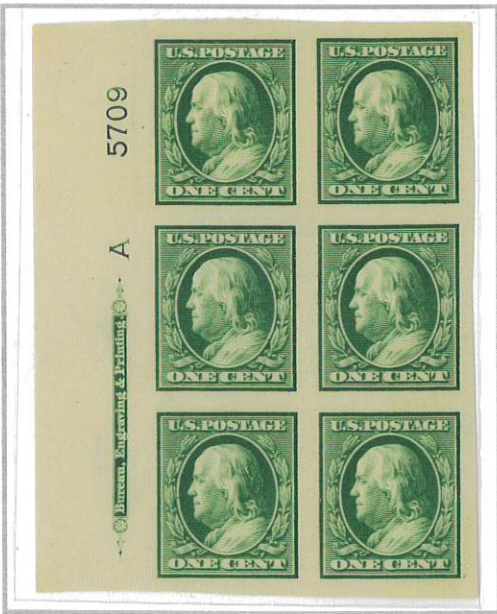
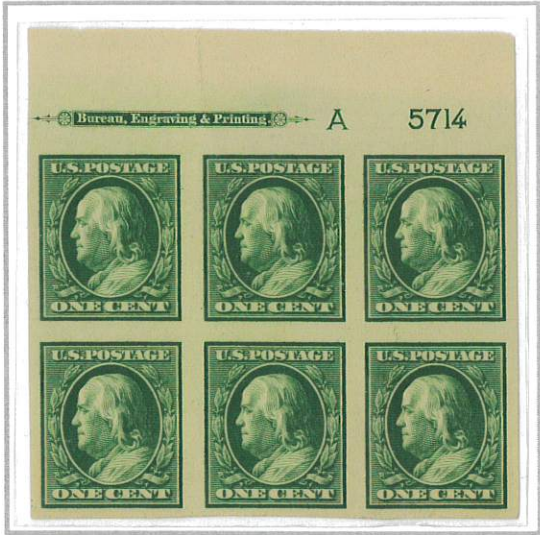


1908 SERIES

WATERMARKED USPS.
2.75 MM VERTICAL SPACING

ONE CENT
"A" PLATE BLOCKS

The new "A" plates, with plate number between 5566 and 5716, had a uniform 2.75mm (rounded up to 3mm in most catalogs) vertical space between all columns. The new plate included the letter "A" placed in front of the plate number.

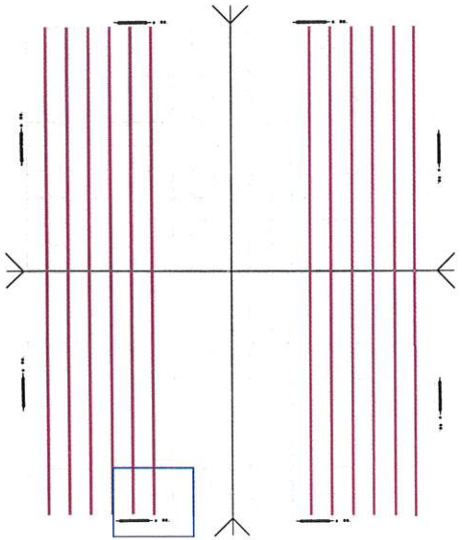
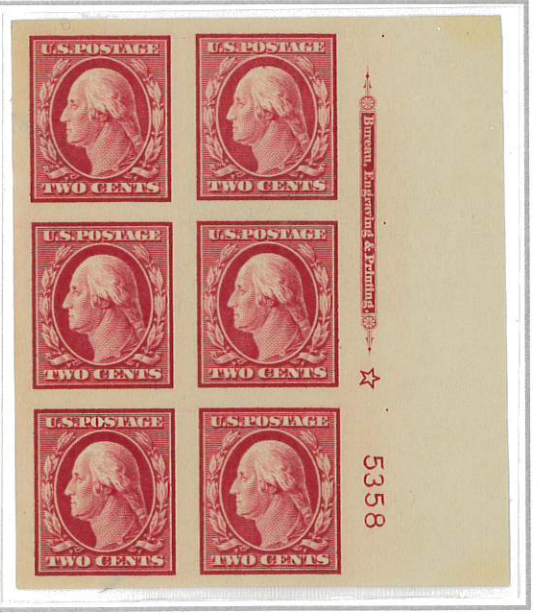


1908 SERIES

WATERMARKED USPS.
THREE MM VERTICAL SPACING

TWO CENTS
STAR PLATE BLOCKS

The two cents with single line watermark (Scott #384), issued in January 1911, was printed from both "star" plates as well as the new "A" plates with uniform spacing. The plate block of ten below includes an extra column of stamps at right with the narrow spacing which allows it to be specifically plated as being the imprint and plate number block from the bottom left pane (sheet position is outlined in blue on diagram).



column at right 2mm spacing ▲▲

1908 SERIES

WATERMARKED USPS.
THREE MM VERTICAL SPACING

TWO CENTS
STAR PLATE CORNER BLOCKS

The space between the outer columns on star plate printed sheets was 3mm while the "A" plates had uniform 2.75mm spacing.

The corner blocks with 3mm spacing originated only from star plates.



1908 SERIES

WATERMARKED USPS.
2.75 MM VERTICAL SPACING

TWO CENTS
"A" PLATE BLOCKS

The new "A" plates had a uniform 2.75mm vertical space between all columns. The plate included the letter "A" placed in front of the plate number.



WATERMARKED USPS.
2.75 MM VERTICAL SPACING

1908 SERIES

TWO CENTS
"A" PLATE POSITIONS

The "A" plates had a uniform 2.75mm vertical space between all columns.



1908 SERIES

WATERMARKED USPS.
TWO / THREE MM VERTICAL SPACING

ONE AND TWO CENTS
IMPERFORATE COILS

Imperforate coils were issued by the government in both sideways and endwise coiled rolls. The horizontal coils on this page all originated from "star" plates which had variable spacing.

HORIZONTAL IMPERFORATE COILS
2 MM SPACING



HORIZONTAL IMPERFORATE COILS
3 MM SPACING



VERTICAL IMPERFORATE COILS
PASTE-UP STRIPS



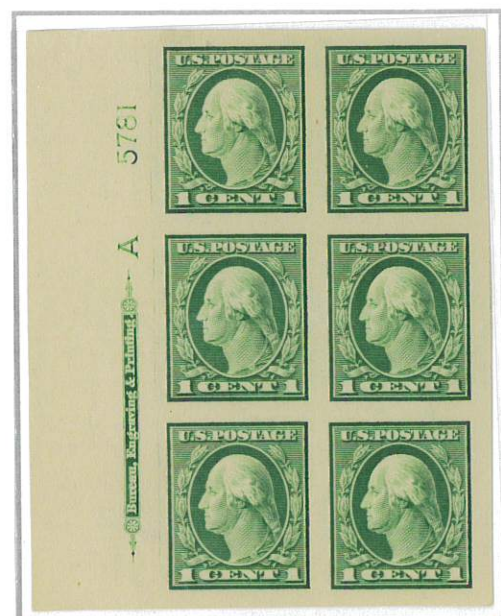
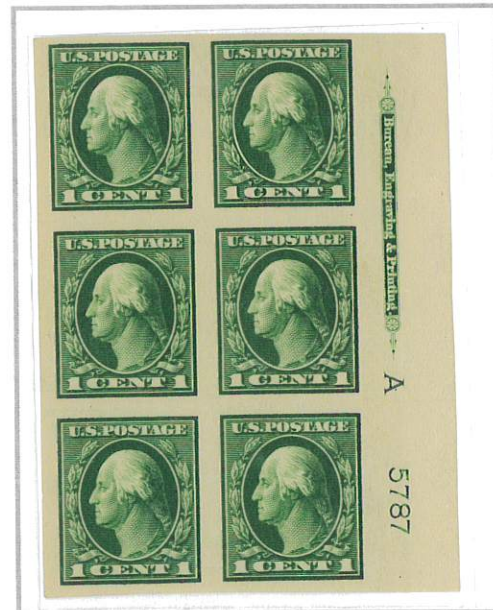
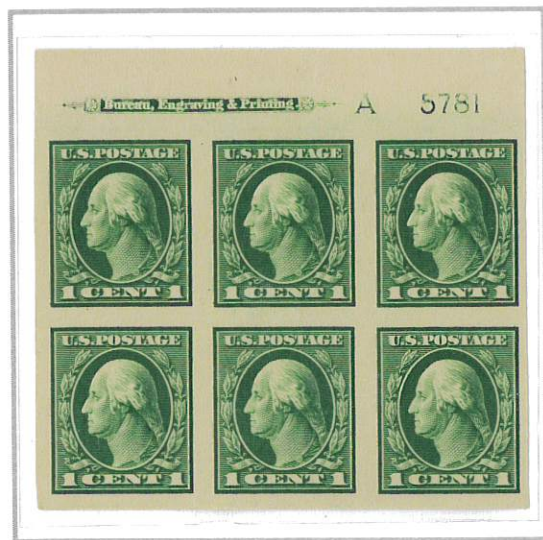
1908 SERIES

WATERMARKED USPS.
FLAT PLATE PRINTS

ONE CENT (NEW DESIGN)
IMPRINT & "A" PLATE BLOCKS

Issued on 19 March 1912, the "1 CENT" revised design was introduced to comply with Universal Postal Union regulation that required denomination be expressed in Arabic numerals. Initial printings used "A" plates that included imprint, initial "A" and a plate number. (Scott #408)

Only nine plates that included the imprint were used before the practice was discontinued. These plate numbers were between 5727 and 5787.

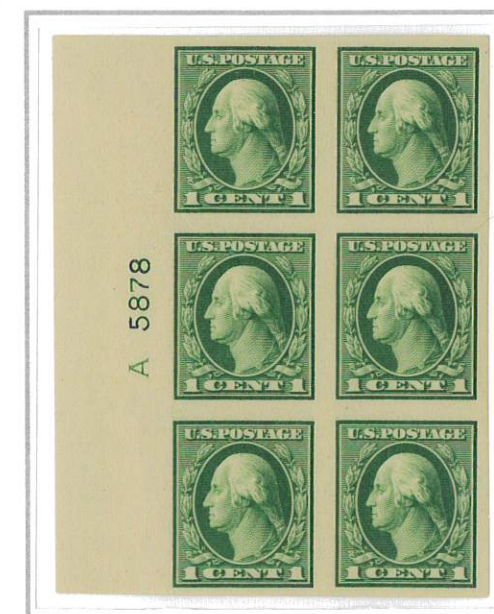
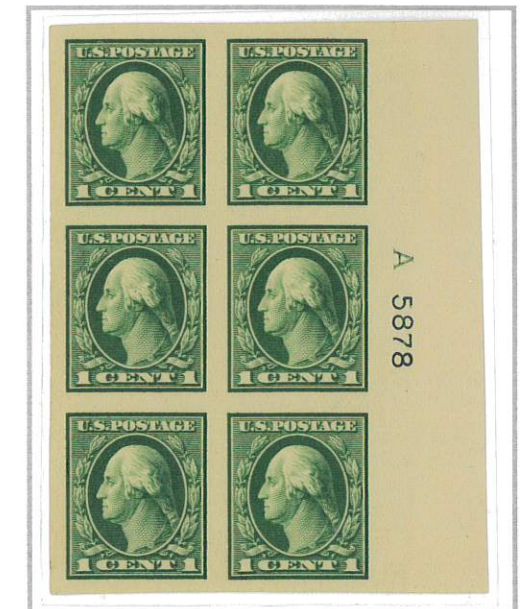


1908 SERIES

WATERMARKED USPS.
FLAT PLATE PRINTS

ONE CENT (NEW DESIGN)
"A" PLATE BLOCKS

Beginning with plate number 5806 the plates no longer included the Bureau of Engraving and Printing imprint but did still include the initial "A" and a plate number.

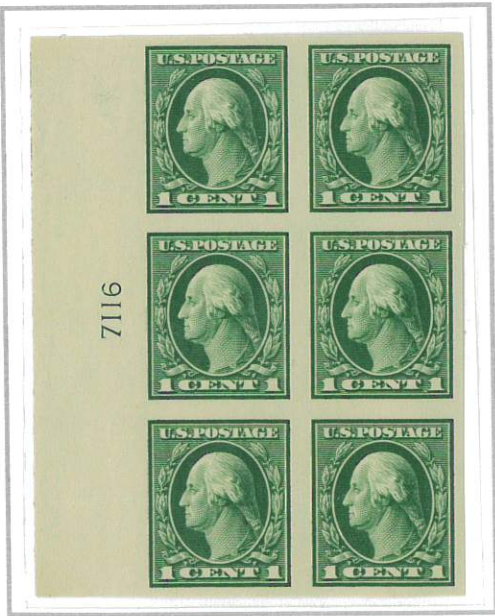
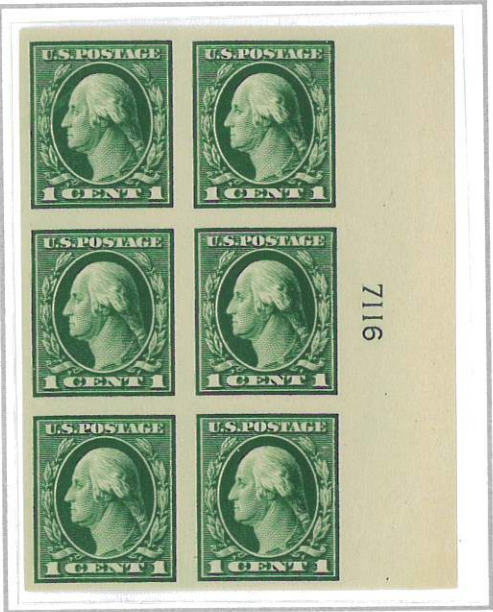
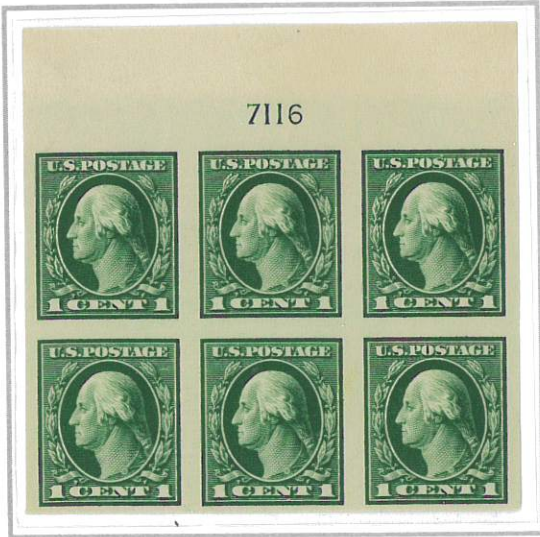


WATERMARKED USPS.
FLAT PLATE PRINTS

1908 SERIES

ONE CENT (NEW DESIGN)
PLATE BLOCKS

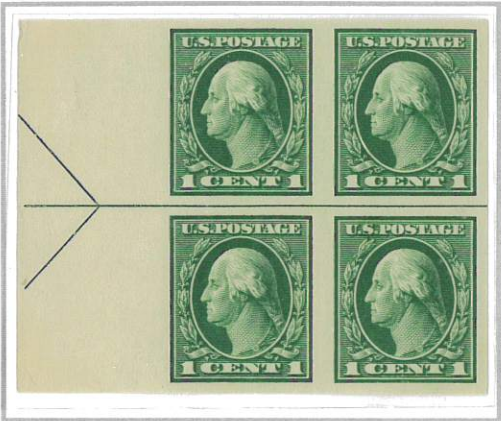
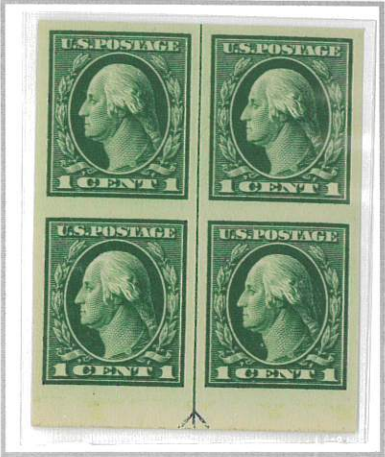
Beginning with plate number 6006 the plates were only identified by the plate number.



WATERMARKED USPS.
FLAT PLATE PRINTS

1908 SERIES

ONE CENT (NEW DESIGN)
POSITION BLOCKS



KANSAS CITY ROULETTE

Late in 1914 the postmaster of Kansas City, Missouri rouletted his remaining supply of one cent (93,600) and two cent stamps. This was apparently done in order to sell an oversupply of imperforate sheets. On 5 January 1915 he was order to stop by the Post Office.



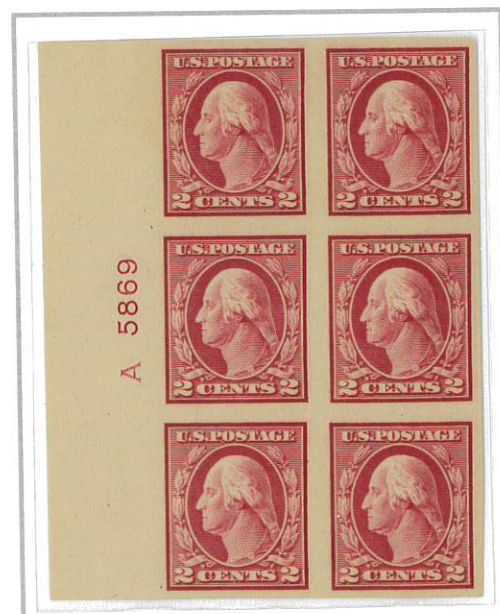
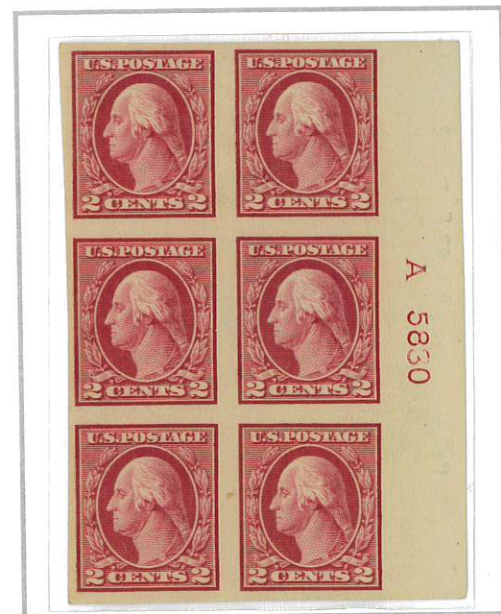
WATERMARKED USPS.
FLAT PLATE PRINTS

1908 SERIES

TWO CENTS (NEW DESIGN)
"A" PLATE BLOCKS

Issued on 23 February 1912, the "2 CENTS" revised design was introduced to comply with Universal Postal Union regulation that required denomination be expressed in numerals. The initial printings used "A" plates that included imprint, initial "A" and a plate number. (Scott #409)

Beginning with plate number 5811 the plates used no longer included the Bureau of Engraving and Printing imprint but did still include the initial "A" and a plate number.

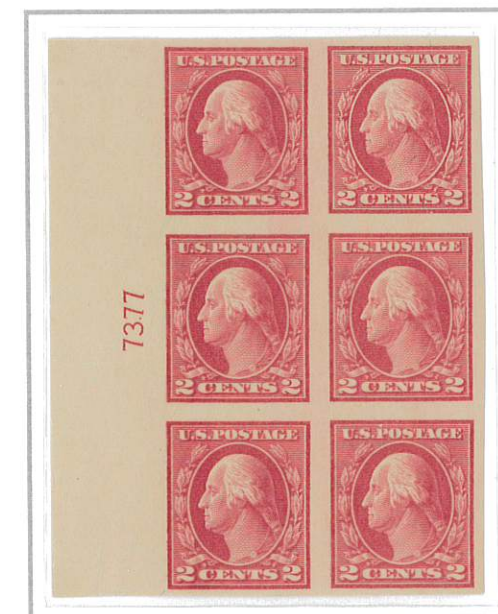


WATERMARKED USPS.
FLAT PLATE PRINTS

1908 SERIES

TWO CENTS (NEW DESIGN)
PLATE BLOCKS

Beginning with plate number 5920 the plates began to include only the plate number.

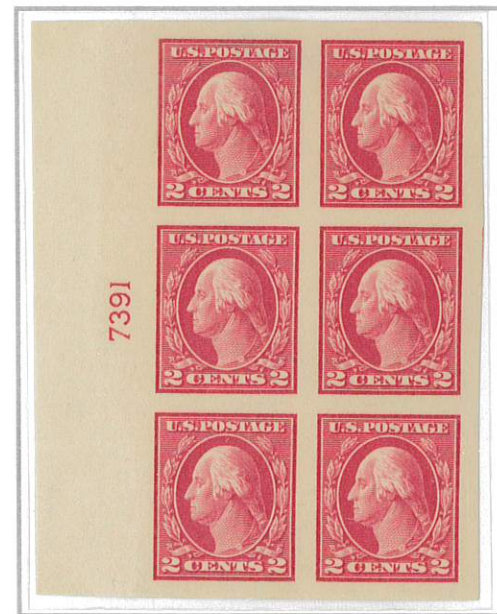


1908 SERIES

WATERMARKED USPS.
FLAT PLATE PRINTS

TWO CENTS (NEW DESIGN)
"PINK BACK" PLATE BLOCKS

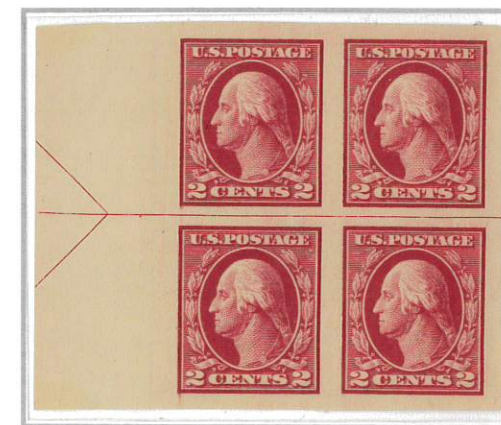
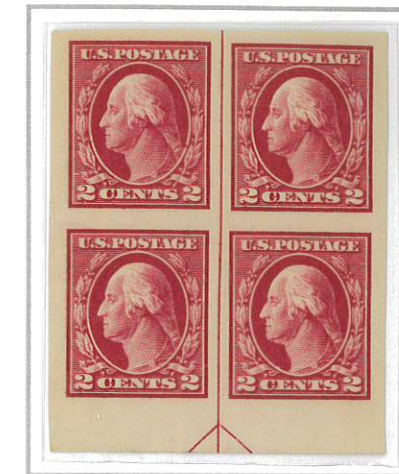
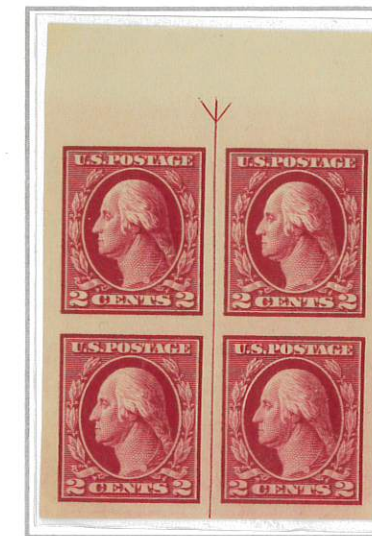
In late 1914 and early 1915 there was a shortage of carmine red printing inks that were no longer available from Germany because of the War. Finally, in August 1915, Great Britain agreed to allow such dyes, inks and chemicals that were not manufactured in the United States to be shipped from Germany. The lower quality aniline inks in temporary use resulted in paler shades and some caused a "pink back" appearance.



1908 SERIES

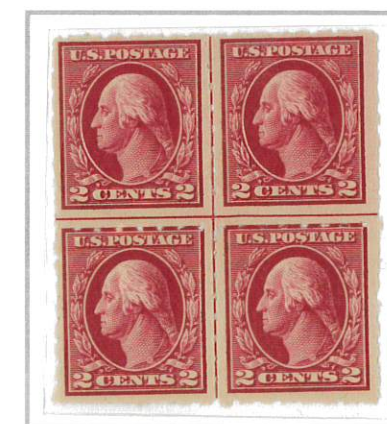
WATERMARKED USPS.
FLAT PLATE PRINTS

TWO CENTS (NEW DESIGN)
POSITION BLOCKS



KANSAS CITY ROULETTE

Late in 1914 the postmaster of Kansas City, Missouri rouletted his remaining supply of one cent and two cent (69,200) stamps. This was apparently done in order to sell an oversupply of imperforate sheets. On 5 January 1915 he was ordered to stop by the Post Office.



1908 SERIES

WATERMARKED USPS.

ONE AND TWO CENTS (NEW DESIGN)
IMPERFORATE COILS

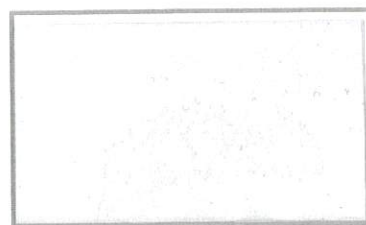
FLAT PLATE PRINTS
HORIZONTAL AND VERTICAL IMPERFORATE COILS

PASTE-UP STRIPS



ROTARY PRESS PRINT
HORIZONTAL IMPERFORATE COIL

Rotary Press stamps were printed from plates that are curved to fit around a cylinder. The Rotary Press coil stamps were printed from plates from subjects. Although no imperforate sheet stamps were made, an imperforate two cents horizontal coil was issued on 30 June 1914 printed. (Scott #459)



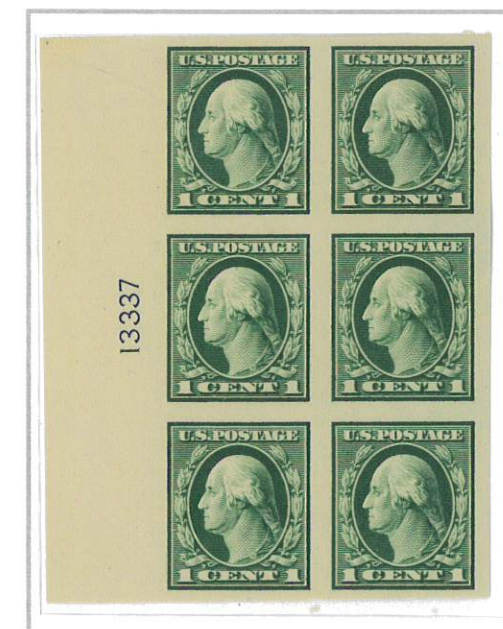
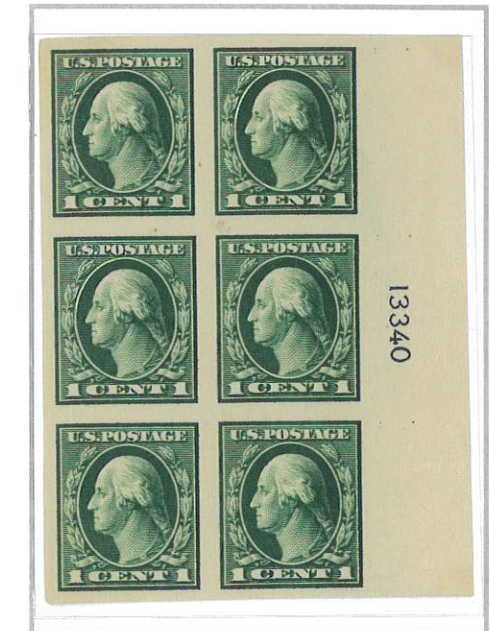
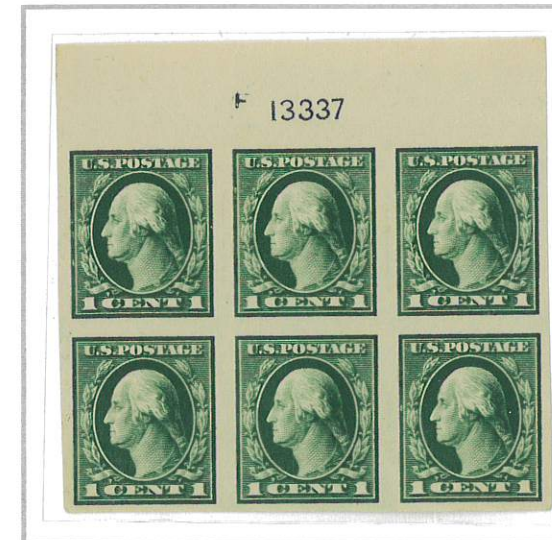
Rotary Press guide line pair

1908 SERIES

NO WATERMARK
FLAT PLATE PRINTS

ONE CENT
PLATE BLOCKS

Unwatermarked paper was introduced by the BEP as a money-saving measure when the stamp paper contracts were renewed on 1 July 1916. The 400 subject plates used for the one cent have a number only. The plate numbers used were between 7525 and 13381. No imperforate coils were produced. (Scott #481)



1908 SERIES

NO WATERMARK
FLAT PLATE PRINTS

TWO CENTS
PLATE BLOCKS

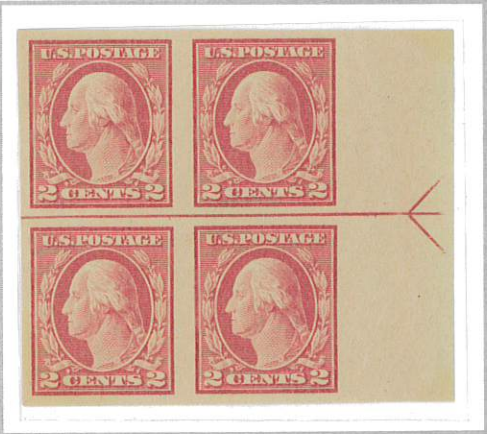
Issued on 8 December 1916, the imperforate two cents on unwatermarked paper was produced over a long period of time and is the most common of the two cent imperforates in the series. Plates numbered between 7322 and 13887 were used. One plate, 7942, included the "FIVE CENTS" transfer error. No imperforate coils were produced. (Scott #482)



1908 SERIES

NO WATERMARK
FLAT PLATE PRINTS

TWO CENTS
POSITION BLOCKS

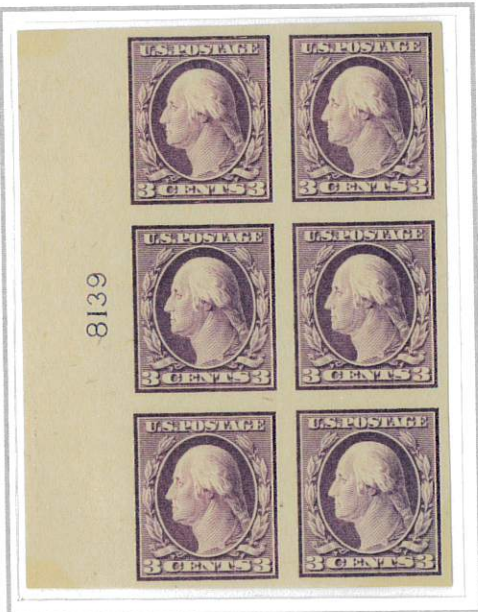


1908 SERIES

NO WATERMARK
FLAT PLATE PRINTS

THREE CENTS, TYPE I
PLATE BLOCKS

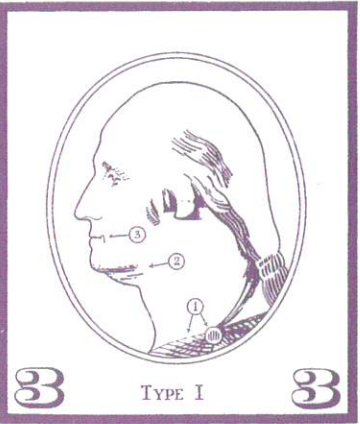
Issued on 13 October 1917, the imperforate three cents on unwatermarked paper was issued in anticipation of the rate increase to three cents that went into effect from 2 November 1917. The poor inks that were available at this date resulted in early deterioration of the plates. Plates numbered between 7272 and 8197 were made from the type I die. It was recut and plates produced from the type II die went to press on 10 January 1918. (Type I, Scott #483)



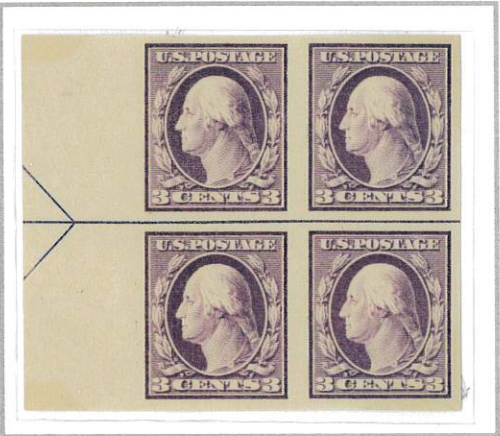
1908 SERIES

NO WATERMARK
FLAT PLATE PRINTS

THREE CENTS, TYPE I
POSITION BLOCKS



- Type I**
1. Top line of toga weak
 2. Lines under chin strong
 3. Line between lips thin

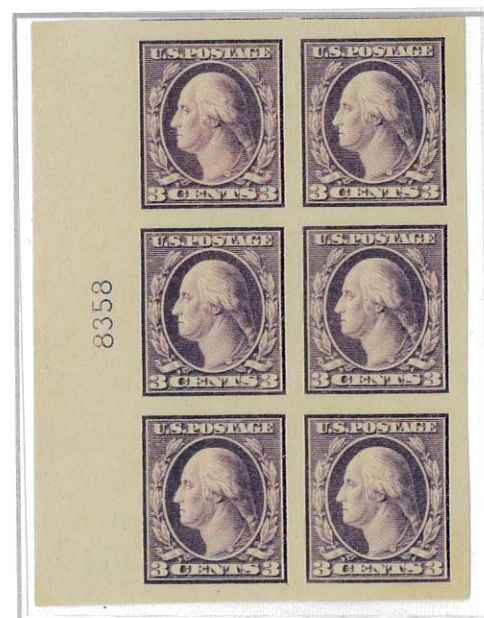


1908 SERIES

NO WATERMARK
FLAT PLATE PRINTS

THREE CENTS, TYPE II
PLATE BLOCKS

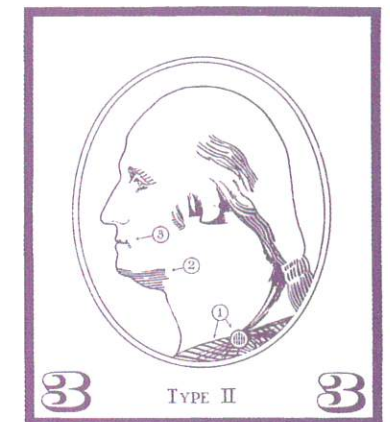
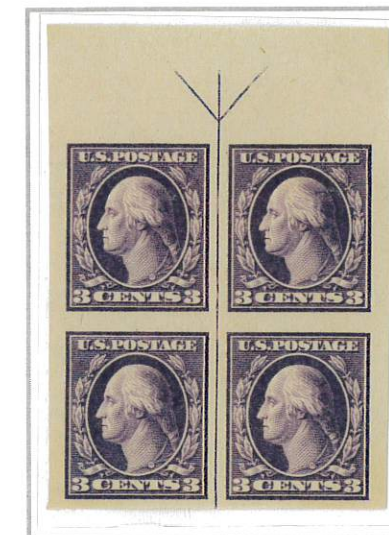
The three cent type I die was recut and plates produced from the type II die went to press on 10 January 1918 and were issued on 29 January 1918. Plates numbered between 8204 and 8476 were used. (Type II, Scott #484)



1908 SERIES

NO WATERMARK
FLAT PLATE PRINTS

THREE CENTS, TYPE II
POSITION BLOCKS



- Type II**
1. Top line of toga strong
 2. Lines under chin weak
 3. Line between lips thick

