

PRECANCEL DENOMS: AN OLD FASHIONED WAY TO COLLECT

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Twenty five years ago, when I first became interested in precancels, I was overwhelmed by the vocabulary, the types, and all the ways to collect precancels. But I was pretty familiar with US stamps, so I decided to start with one foot in each camp. I'd collect as many precanceled stamps as I could for each issued US stamp. These kinds of precancel collections are called "Denoms". It turned out that Denoms were once a significant theme in precancel collecting and that there were album pages made up with spaces for all 50 states on a single page. I am sure many of you who have bought old collections have run across these pages.

Now some of you are saying Horrors! Ralph, you are just collecting the state without regard to the type. Well, yes, but it's my collection and for me it was a way to learn about precancels without having to learn the whole type world all at once. I think we forget how overwhelming precancel types are for new collectors.

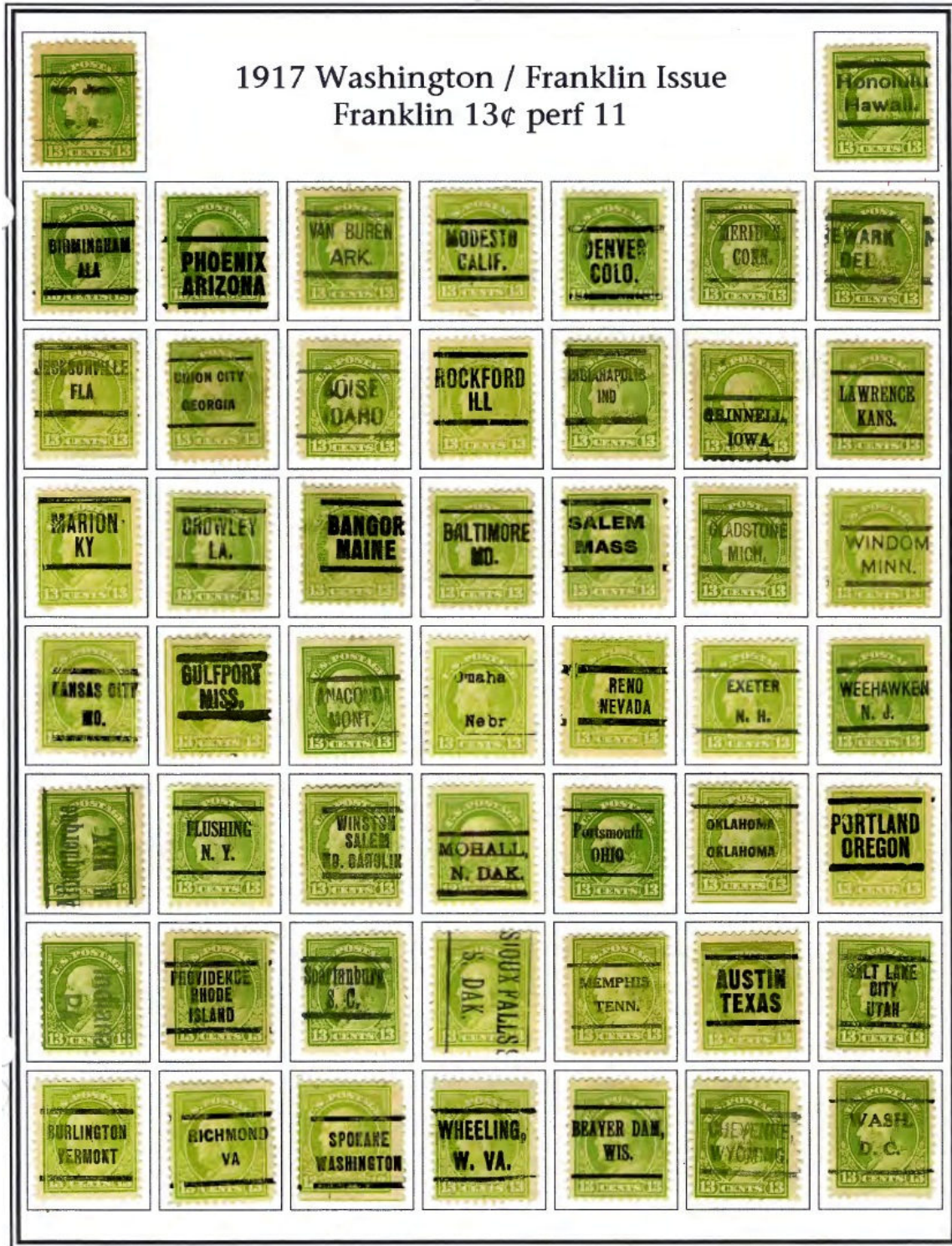
Pretty soon I got curious about whether it was possible to get all the states represented on the same stamp, any stamp, because I never saw a completely full Denom page. Thus, for almost ten years, my obsession was my Denom collection. I made up pages for every Scott number that had precanceled stamps, from 1890 to the end of the 3-cent commemoratives in 1958. More than 1000 pages!

And yes, it is quite possible to fill a Denom page with all 50 states, Washington DC, and one or more territories. I have complete pages for denoms in the 1914 series, all the denoms of the 1917 series up to the 50¢, almost all of the denoms from the 22-32 series and the Bicent series, and all the denoms of the Prexy series through the \$1, with the sole exception of the darned 50¢ Prexy from Hawaii...

Anyway, here's a sample. Give it a try!

The 13¢ Apple Green example of a denomination collection also happens to be a specific collecting specialty, with its own catalog: *The Apple Green Catalog*, 2006, edited by Mike Gutman.

1917 Washington / Franklin Issue
Franklin 13¢ perf 11



[[Larry: I've also enclosed a JPG of this page]]