Plate Number Coils have been collected in different lengths:

Virtually since their debut, coil stamps were collected as singles or, to spice up a collection, as a guide-line pair on flat press issues, and later on the joint line on rotary press issues was sought after to show a position piece:

Guide-line pair

Joint-line pair

On **April 24, 1981**, the 18¢ Flag coil was released. This issue featured a tiny plate number on the bottom of every 52nd stamp. Within a short time, collectors had 7 different numbers to find on this stamp:

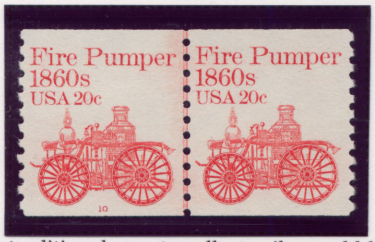
Soon after, on May 18, 1981, the 18¢ Surrey coil was released. This was the first Transportation Coil and the beginning of a series that contains the bulk of the PNC's issued during the 1980's. This issue had 18 different plate numbers:

Interested collectors adopted a basic premise that **a stamp with a plate number was collectibly different from a stamp without such a number, or a stamp with a different number.** This created an insatiable desire to collect plated stamps, and plate number collecting was born!

PNC collectors quickly developed a nomenclature. A single stamp was a PS1. Larger strips were PS2, PS3, PS4, etc.

A period of confusion and uncertainty existed on a decision as to how many stamps should be collected on a multiple strip. The Transportation Series was printed on the Cottrell press, which produced a joint line, while the Flag issues were printed on other presses which did not.

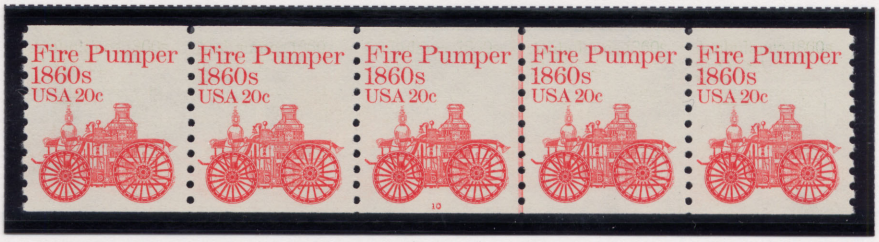
Should the center of symmetry, the "position pieces" for strips, be the joint line or the plated stamp?



The traditional way to collect coils would have the joint line in the middle of a pair of stamps.

Some early collectors preferred 2 stamps on either side of the joint line. Both of these formats soon fell from favor.

The **plated stamp** eventually became the central focal point:



Strips of 3 or 5 began to be collected. To this day, some collectors still favor the PS3. However, the PS5 became the dominant choice. There are several reasons for this. A primary factor was the Precancel Gap, explained further in frame #6.