

MDI "Blue" Vending Machine Booklets

For years, the USPS has contracted with Minnesota Diversified Industries to make "packets" of stamps consisting of various stamps torn from normal sheet, booklet, or coil stock that were placed in glassine envelopes for sale in vending machines. Some of those packets were replaced on an experimental basis with "jury-rigged" booklets starting in 1996. The covers on the various books appear to be identical at first glance, but each issue is unique due to the information printed on the outside back cover (see the illustrations at the bottom of page MDI-23).

Scott's editors initially felt these were not booklets and decided not to list them in their Specialized Catalogue. When they changed their mind and decided to assign "BK" numbers to each individual issue, collectors and stamp dealers had to get busy and try to find examples of these booklets. Many collectors felt these were "booklets" all along since they meet the main criteria of having one or more panes of stamps attached to cardboard covers.

Unlike the earlier 22¢ Flag and Fireworks booklets (which also contained panes produced from stock printed from plates intended for sheet stamps but that had been perforated especially for use as booklet panes), most of these "blue" MDI booklets contain panes that are simply blocks of 15 stamps torn from normal sheet stamp production (water activated gum or self-adhesive). While no previous U.S. booklets were made this way, collectors have long recognized booklets from other countries that contained panes with perforations on all sides that were made from regular sheet stamp stock (Canal Zone, for example).

MDI "blue" vending booklets were also made with panes created from stock originally intended to be made into "convertible booklets" (self-stick sheetlets of 20). Those vending machine booklet panes are unique since they can not be created from the individual 20-stamp sheetlets as sold by the post office. Those booklets are listed on pages MDI-2 through MDI-7; vending books made from normal sheet stamp production will be found listed on pages MDI-8 through MDI-22. Summaries of all "blue" vending books will be found on pages MDI-23 and MDI-24.

MDI books were assembled both by hand and by a machine. Different assembly varieties were found on several MDI booklets, making it nearly impossible to collect an example of every booklet variety. The following pages list the 60 known cover varieties along with the "typical" assembly varieties that may be found; every effort has been made to at least describe each of the lesser known assembly varieties. Each collector can decide what to collect; while some seek everything, many collectors will be happy with an example of each cover variety.

To help eliminate the confusion created by some of the descriptions concerning how the panes are mounted in the booklets, refer to the following pictures (in all cases, the orientation of the reorder label or missing stamp is determined with the panes still folded in the sealed booklet, while holding the book with the front cover upright):

Books with panes of 15 torn from regular post office stock

Panes of 15 self-adhesive stamps made from web stock originally intended for "convertible booklets".



INVERTED

The pane is mounted so that the top of the stamp designs are at the LEFT side of the window in the front cover.



NORMAL

The pane is mounted so that the top of the stamp designs are at the RIGHT side of the window in the front cover.



NORMAL

The pane is mounted so that the top of the reorder label is pointed towards the end of the booklet where it is folded.



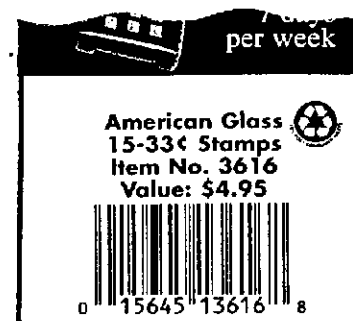
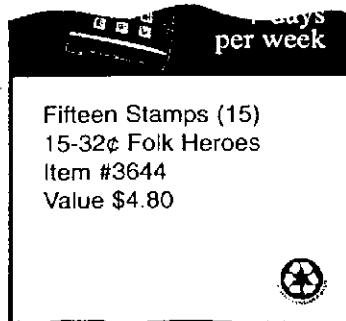
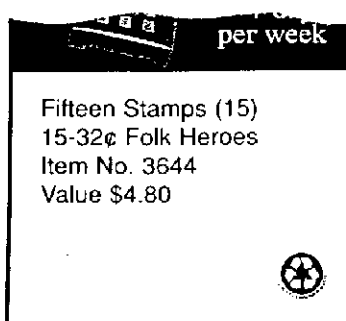
INVERTED

The pane is mounted so that the top of the reorder label is pointed towards the end of the booklet where it is sealed.

Summary of MDI vending booklets made from regular 32¢ and 33¢ sheet stamps

MDI - 23

USPS Number	Booklet Description/Page No.	Scott	Cover	Collectible pane varieties found in each of the booklet issue
Item 361300	\$4.95 All Aboard America	22	BK	Type III Selvage at Right, three plate numbers and six plate position diagrams
Item No. 3616	\$4.95 American Glass	22	BK	Type III Selvage at Bottom, top selvage removed, six plate position diagrams
				Type III Selvage at Top, bottom selvage removed, one position - scarce
Item No. 3630	\$4.80 Utah Statehood	11	BK245	Type II Selvage at Top, two plate numbers, five positions
				Type II Selvage at Bottom, 12 positions possible (only three are known) - scarce
Item No. 3635	\$4.80 Georgia O'Keeffe	19	BK247	Type II Plate number by both upper left and lower left stamps
Item # 3635	\$4.80 Georgia O'Keeffe	19	BK247	Type II-a Plate number by both upper left and lower left stamps
Item No. 3636	\$4.80 Tennessee Statehood	12	BK248	Type II Selvage at top, 16 possible positions
Item # 3636	\$4.80 Tennessee Statehood	12	BK248	Type II-a Selvage at top, 16 possible positions
Item No. 3638	\$4.80 Fulbright Scholarships	8	BK246	Type II Selvage at either top or bottom, 24 possible positions
Item # 3640	\$4.80 Iowa Statehood	11	BK253	Type II-a Selvage at bottom, two plate numbers, eleven known positions
Item No. 3642	\$4.80 Centennial Olympics	19	BK252	Type II Plate number above both upper left and upper right stamps
Item # 3642	\$4.80 Centennial Olympics	19	BK252	Type II-a Plate number above both upper left and upper right stamps
Item No. 3643	\$4.80 James Dean	8	BK250	Type II Plate number by either upper left or lower left stamp
Item # 3643	\$4.80 James Dean	8	BK250	Type II-a Plate number by either upper left or lower left stamp
Item No. 3644	\$4.80 Folk Heros	8	BK251	Type II Price information in left margin by center stamp
				Type II Price information in left margin by top stamp (scarce)
Item # 3644	\$4.80 Folk Heros	8	BK251	Type II-a Price information in left margin by center stamp
				Type II-a Price information in left margin by top stamp (scarce)
Item # 3645	\$4.80 Riverboats (PSA)	19	BK255	Type II-a Narrow selvage along left side of pane - no marginal markings
Item No. 3648	\$4.80 Indian Dances	11	BK249	Type II Selvage at left, one of three plate numbers in UL or LL corner
				Type II Selvage at right, plate number in UR or LR corner (scarce)
Item # 3649	\$4.80 Endangered Species	15	BK256	Type II-a One of six plate position diagrams below LR stamp
Item # 3651	\$9.60 Rural Free Delivery	12	BK254	Type II-a Two panes, seven plate numbers reported, six plate positions on each
Item # 3654	\$4.80 Madonna and Child	15	BK257	Type II-a Top selvage - glued to front or back cover, 3 plate numbers, 9 positions
				Type II-a Bottom selvage - glued to front cover, 2 plate #, 7 pos. known - scarce
Item # 3658	\$4.80 Hanukkah (PSA)	19	BK258	Type II-a Bottom selvage attached - plate number below left stamp
				Type II-a Bottom selvage removed - no marginal markings
Item # 3662	\$4.80 Stars and Stripes	20	BK268	Type II-a Selvage at top, 18 possible positions
				Type II-a Selvage at bottom, 26 possible positions (only nine are known) - scarce
Item # 3663	\$4.80 Humphrey Bogart	20	BK267	Type II-a Plate number by either upper left or lower left stamp
Item # 3664	\$4.80 Classic American Dolls	20	BK266	Type II-a Left selvage attached; five plate numbers with six position diagrams
				Type II-a Left selvage removed; no plate numbers or plate position diagrams
Item # 3665	\$4.80 Movie Monsters	20	BK269	Type II-a Plate number by both UL and UR stamps, or by just the UR stamp
Item No. 3670	\$4.80 Space Discovery	22	BK274	Type III Plate number by UL stamp
Item # 3673X	\$4.80 Flag Over Porch	19	BK243	Type II-a Water activated gum - nine positions (one position is scarce)
Item No. 3677	\$4.80 Tropical Birds	22	BK272	Type III Plate number above UL and below LL stamps, 9 plate position diagrams
				Type III Plate number above UR and below LR stamps, nine positions (scarce)
Item No. 3678	\$4.80 Ballet	22	BK273	Type III One of three plate numbers by UL stamp
Item # 3679X	\$4.80 Love Cherub	16	BK244	Type II-a Water activated gum - six plate numbers, 12 positions known (3 scarce)



TYPE I

No printing on Outside Back Cover

TYPE II

"Item No." on Outside Back Cover

TYPE II-a

"Item #" on Outside Back Cover

TYPE III

UPC bar code on OBC (32¢ or 33¢)

Summary of MDI books made from special die-cut web sections from rollstock originally intended for \$6.40 convertible booklets

USPS Number	Description & Page Number	Scott #	Cover	Collectible pane varieties ifound n each booklet variety	
Item # 3609 sticker over #3609X sticker	\$4.80 Pink Rose	2	BK178A	Type I	Four label positions, Type A liner; 2 stickers on cellophane wrapper
Item # 3609X	\$4.80 Pink Rose	2	BK178A	Type I	Four label positions; Type A liner; sticker on cellophane wrapper
Item No. 3609	\$4.80 Pink Rose	2	BK178A	Type II	Four label positions; Type A liner writing; label not die cut
		2	BK178A	Type II	Four label positions; Type A and B liner writing; label is die cut
Item No. 3609X	\$4.80 Pink Rose	2	BK178A	Type II	Four label positions; Type A liner writing; label not die cut
		2	BK178A	Type II	Four label positions; Type A and B liner writing; label is die cut
		2	Unlisted	Type II	Pane of 16 with lower right stamp removed; Type A and B liners
Item # 3609X	\$4.80 Pink Rose	2	BK178A	Type II-a	Four label positions; Type B liner writing
Item # 3610	\$9.60 Pink Rose	2	BK178B	Type I	Panes of 16 and 14, Type A liner; sticker on cellophane wrapper
Item # 3610 sticker over #3610X sticker	\$9.60 Pink Rose	2	BK178B	Type I	Panes of 16 and 14, Type A liner; sticker on cellophane wrapper
Item # 3610X	\$9.60 Pink Rose	2	BK178B	Type I	Panes of 16 and 14, Type A liner; sticker on cellophane wrapper
Item No. 3610	\$9.60 Pink Rose	2	BK178C	Type II	Two panes of 15, four label positions; diecut labels, Type A liner
		2	BK178C	Type II	Two panes of 15, four label positions; one label diecut, other not
		2	BK178D	Type II	Two panes of 16 with one stamp removed; Type A and B liners
Item No. 3610X	\$9.60 Pink Rose	2	BK178C	Type II	Two panes, four label positions; Type A and B liner writing
		2	BK178D	Type II	Two panes of 16 with one stamp removed; Type A & B liner writing
		2	Unlisted	Type II	Stamp removed on top pane with label on other; Type A & B liners
		2	Unlisted	Type II	EFO book - two Midnight Angel panes of 16 with a stamp removed
Item # 3610X	\$9.60 Pink Rose	2	BK178C	Type II-a	Two panes, four label positions; Type A and B liner writing
		2	BK178D	Type II-a	Two panes of 16 with one stamp removed; Type B liner writing
Item # 3623	\$4.80 Midnight Angel	6	BK233A	Type II-a	Four label positions; no liner writing
Item # 3623X	\$4.80 Midnight Angel	6	BK233A	Type II-a	Four label positions; no liner writing
		6	Unlisted	Type II-a	Pane of 16 with one stamp removed
Item No. 3627	\$4.80 Love Cherubs (PSA)	5	BK235	Type II	Four label positions; Type C and D liner writing
Item # 3627	\$4.80 Love Cherubs (PSA)	5	BK235	Type II-a	Four label positions; Type C and D liner writing
Item No. 3627X	\$4.80 Love Cherubs (PSA)	5	BK235	Type II	Four label positions; Type C and D liner writing
Item # 3627X	\$4.80 Love Cherubs (PSA)	5	BK235	Type II-a	Four label positions; Type C and D liner writing
Item No. 3628	\$9.60 Love Cherubs (PSA)	5	BK236	Type II	Two panes, four label positions; Type C and D liner writing
Item No. 3628X	\$9.60 Love Cherubs (PSA)	5	BK236	Type II	Two panes, four label positions; Type C and D liner writing
Item # 3628X	\$9.60 Love Cherubs (PSA)	5	BK236	Type II-a	Two panes, four label positions; Type C and D liner writing
Item # 3629	\$9.60 Midnight Angel	6	BK233B	Type II-a	Two panes of 15, four label positions; no liner writing
		6	BK233C	Type II-a	Two panes of 16 with a stamp removed from each pane
		6	BK233D	Type II-a	One pane has reorder label and one has a stamp removed
Item # 3629X	\$9.60 Midnight Angel	6	BK233B	Type II-a	Two panes of 15, four label positions; no liner writing
		6	BK233C	Type II-a	Two panes of 16 with a stamp removed from each pane
Item #3629X sticker on Item #3629 cover	\$9.60 Midnight Angel	6	BK233B	Type II-a	Two panes of 15, four label positions; no liner writing
		6	BK233C	Type II-a	Two panes of 16 with a stamp removed from each pane
		6	BK233D	Type II-a	One pane has reorder label and one has a stamp removed
Item No. 3633	\$4.80 Flag Over Porch (PSA)	5	BK226A	Type II	Four label positions; Type C and D liner writing
Item # 3633	\$4.80 Flag Over Porch (PSA)	5	BK226A	Type II-a	Four label positions; Type C and D liner writing
		5	BK226A	Type II-a	Four label positions; no liner writing
		5	BK226B	Type II-a	Pane of 16 - LR stamp removed; Type C and D liner writing
Item No. 3633X	\$4.80 Flag Over Porch (PSA)	5	BK226A	Type II	Pane of 15, four label positions; Type C and D liner writing
		5	BK226A	Type II	Pane of 15, four label positions; no liner writing
		5	BK226B	Type II	Pane of 16 - UL or LR stamp removed; Type C and D liner writing
Item # 3633X	\$4.80 Flag Over Porch (PSA)	5	BK226A	Type II-a	Pane of 15, four label positions; no liner writing
		5	BK226B	Type II-a	Pane of 16 - LR stamp removed; Type C and D liner writing
Item No. 3634	\$9.60 Flag Over Porch (PSA)	5	BK227	Type II	Two panes, four label positions; Type C and D liner writing
Item No. 3634X	\$9.60 Flag Over Porch (PSA)	5	BK227	Type II	Two panes, four label positions; Type C and D liner writing
Item # 3634X	\$9.60 Flag Over Porch (PSA)	5	BK227	Type II-a	Two panes, four label positions; Type C and D liner writing
		5	BK227	Type II-a	Two panes, four label positions; no liner writing
		5	Unlisted	Type II-a	EFO book - two Midnight Angel panes of 15 with a reorder labels