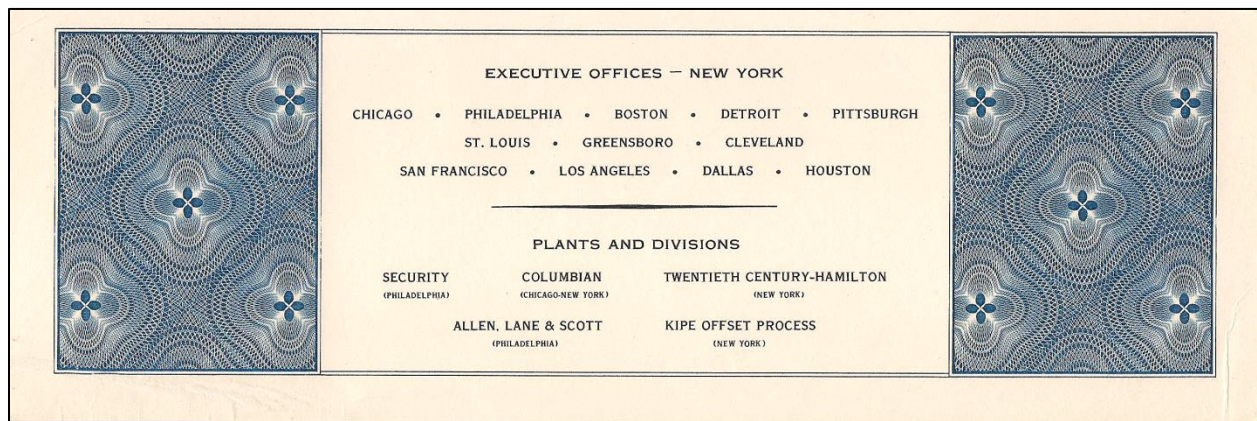


Promotional Paper Provenance

As author of the test note catalogs for Printers and ATMs, I attribute new “finds” nearly weekly. One “Unknown Test Note” offered for sale on Delcampe, I researched off and on for three months in early 2015. I finally bought the note from the Austrian seller, who offered no additional information. When I received the fiscal paper I noted:

- heavy stock paper
- well engraved guilloche side borders
- 222mm x 64mm
- uniface

Here is the “note”



As is always the case, the tactile sense spurred me on to continue researching the note. With so many executive offices, the printer had to be a large firm I already had documented. The major problems are no firm name nor any date. The list of executive offices eliminated only the smaller printing firms. A search of the plants and divisions information yielded little as well, though Allen, Lane, & Scott are still active in Philadelphia, with a phone number, but no email or web presence.

The major breakthrough came from a single news source, the Warren County Observer, Philadelphia newspaper article dated February 17, 1962. Citing a UPI news release, the Kipe Offset Process firm was acquired by the Security-Columbian Banknote Company. So the printer is Security-Columbian! But no, this firm had far less executive offices. The United States Banknote Corporation acquired the Security-Columbian Banknote Company in 1966. The Security and Columbian plants/divisions has to relate to this fact. So, the paper is from United State Banknote Corporation, sometime after the Security- Columbian acquisition in 1966. This was further reinforced by the Hamilton plant and division, since Hamilton Bank Note Printing and Engraving Company was acquired by Security Bank Note Company in 1951.

Can the approximate date be improved from 1966 forward? If you look at the paper, with only offices and plants/divisions listed, it doesn't seem so. The Los Angeles office turns out to provide the last clue. Again, one news source noted Jeffries Banknote Company of Los Angeles was acquired by United States

Banknote Corporation in 1989. Before that date, I cannot find a record of an USBNC office in Los Angeles.

Providing the provenance of an item usually adds value? I tend to agree. Collectors of American printers' and engravers' ephemera will have an interest in the now attributed paper. In this case, the personal value for me is THE HUNT to find out just what I had purchased.

There is one final point to note. Is the physical paper a test, advertising, or promotional note? I would suggest no. With no firm listed, there is no marketing value as a test note. The last desired information I would love to learn is "What was the fiscal paper original use?" I love research, but have doubts I will ever learn this. At this point, my best guess is a trimmed portion of a larger piece. The dimensions are generally too narrow for the normal range of paper notes, with test notes exhibiting the same ratio as bank notes. Stock? Bond? Advertising sheet? Could a fellow IBNS member have a clue?