

The Reapers Vignette by ABNC Revisited

by Roland Rollins

My original intent of this article was to add the Souvenir Cards, Checks, Promotional Sheets, & Test Notes that featured this vignette to the fine attributions of bank notes and stocks/bonds already penned by Gene Hessler¹. There are also useful vignette titles for the varieties of The Reapers produced by Mark D. Tomasko². I soon discovered a few omissions from both the bank note and stock/bond listings. All the additional bank notes I found were proof or essay, so it is probable Hessler only included notes produced for commerce. Hessler also mentions competitors that made use of The Reapers, including Wm. Mann, Theo Leonhardt & Son, Union Banknote Co. and S & B. I have found five more firms that “borrowed” the vignette as well.

The four Reapers engravings are:

- The Reapers No. 1, (AKA No. 76³) 46mm high, retouched by Alfred Sealy in 1860.
- The Reapers No. 2 [O.A. 791], renumbered V-4709882mm high, engraved by G.F.C. Smillie, finished by James Smillie, August 14, 1874.
- The Reapers No. 3 (Die 44474) (C 327) 40mm high, re-engraved by Angelo Delnoce, September 26, 1888.
- The Reapers No. 3 (Die 44474) (C 327) 40mm high, re-engraved by Angelo Delnoce, September 26, 1888.

Additional Bank Notes to Add

A wonderful private bank note utilized this image on this proof of The Waltham Bank of Massachusetts. The note shows a patent date of 30 June 1857 while entered in an act of Congress in 1862.



Hessler listed a note from Uruguay, but here's another proof note from a different bank – Banco de España y Río de la Plata, Montevideo.



Hessler lists a Colombia 100 Peso note. There are at least two more coupon bonds from Credito Caucano, Popayan, Colombia. Here's the 15 Pesos, P-S891s⁸ and the 20 Pesos proof on cardstock, P-S892s⁸.



In 1988, ABNC produced a face proof of the 1000 Korun note Hessler lists but offers no image, with certification on back. Both Pick and the Bank Note Book assigned separate catalog numbers for this, P13b⁴ and B114b⁵ respectively.

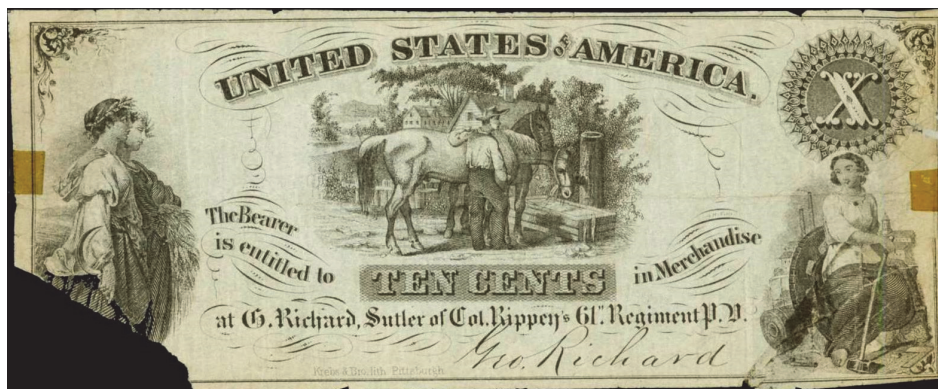


There were also two other notes for Czechoslovakia that did not come to fruition, with only mock-ups found in the ABNC archives.

Czechoslovak Republic 20 and 50 Korun partially printed working project. The 50 has a proposed date of June 7, 1919. Records indicate the color scheme envisioned for the 50 as orange on both sides.



The first firm to add to the list that “borrowed” The Reapers vignette is a 10 Cents Civil War payment voucher for Geo. Richard, Sutler of Col. Rippen's 61st Regiment. The printer is provided at the bottom of the note – “Krebs & Bro., Lith. Pittsburgh”.



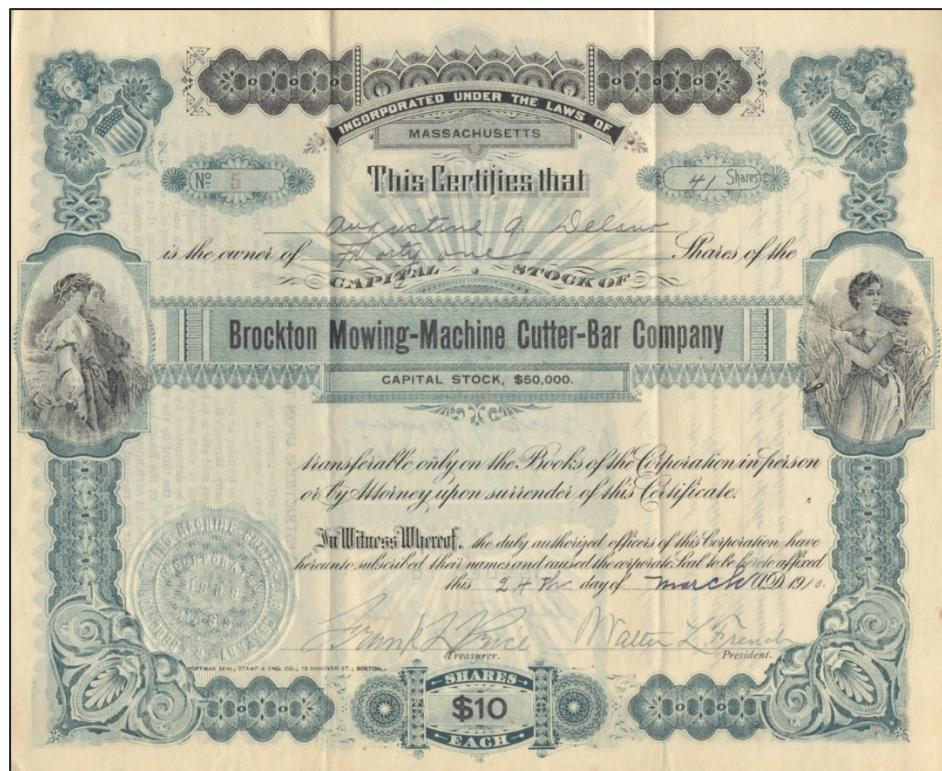
Another unknown printer counterfeited Valley Bank, Hillsborough. \$10 note dated 1860. It is an altered Egg harbor note with orange panel outlining TEN. Cattle in stream, lower left "The Reapers." It is cataloged as NH-130 A10⁶. No image available.

Additional Stocks and Bonds to Add

Here's an unrecorded American-British Home Building Association stock certificate of Rhode Island. The vignettes are poorly printed. I strongly suspect this certificate fits in the new find AND new firm “borrowing” the vignette – firm unknown.



There are stocks produced by Hoffman Seal, Stamp & Eng. Co. using The Reapers vignette. The stock is so similar to the American-British stock; one could assume it was also produced by Hoffman. Here is a \$25 Brockton Mowing-Machine Cutter-Bar Company of Massachusetts stock certificate, circa 1910-1919. A North Side Board of Trade Building Company of New York, NY stock is identical, less the firm name change.



Hessler lists a Banco Agrícola, Chile coupon bond. There are at least two – 500 Peso and 1000 Peso versions. The 500 Peso has a purple border and “500”. The 1000 Peso has a green border and “1000”. Here’s the 500 Peso piece.



A \$25 Income Bond Script from The Southern Kansas Railway Company cancelled in 1888. It is cataloged as R6⁷ in the Cox database.



There are three more recent stock certificate Specimens to add.
General Mills, Inc. preferred stock Specimen blank.



Minneapolis-Moline Company \$100 Specimen Blank dated 1986.



The Quaker Oats Company Specimen blank.

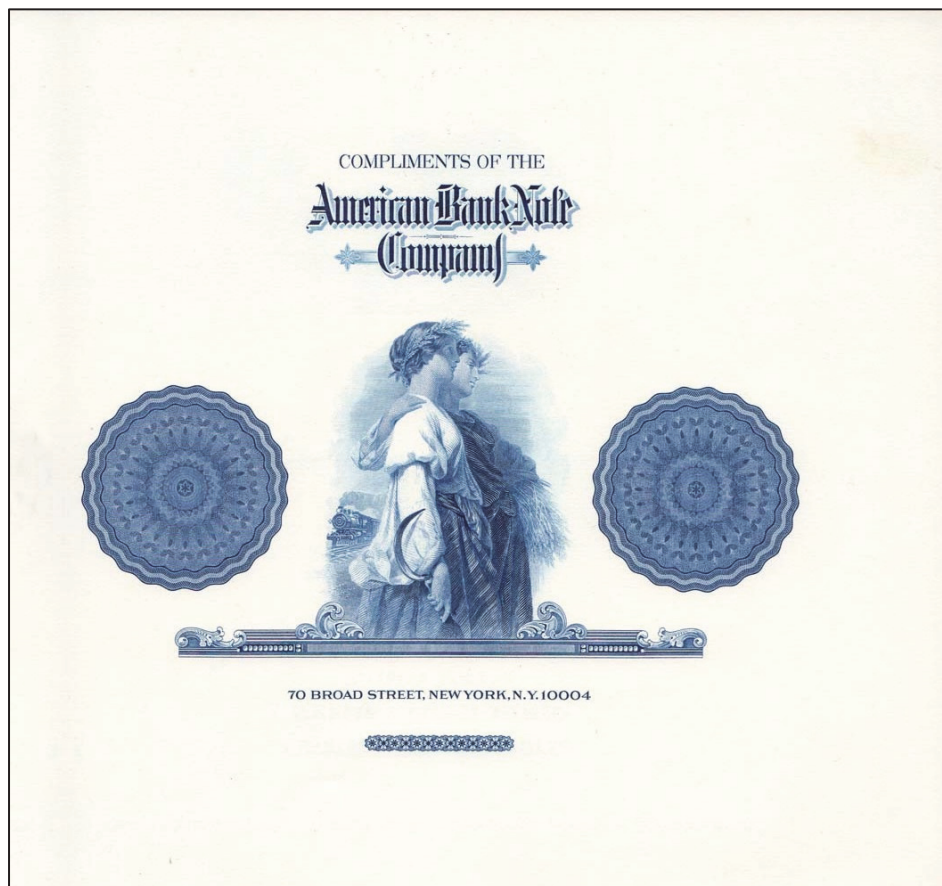


Additional Souvenir Sheets to Add

Of course a more complete list must include the 50th Anniversary of SPMC in 2011. This was recently assigned MC-47A (Mike Bean plate printer) by the Souvenir Card Collectors Society



Another souvenir card is assigned the catalog number F1981i by the Souvenir Card Collectors Society. It was printed for the 78th IPPDSPM&EU convention (International Plate Printers, Die Stampers, Plate Makers and Engravers Union). Notice the steam powered train added to the lower left side of the vignette.



Hessler mentions the Bank of Pittsylvania, Chatham \$20 is available on a 1989 card. Here is an image of this SO-65 card (5000 produced) for the 200th Anniversary of the inauguration of George Washington. This one was canceled at International Paper Money Show in Memphis.



The United States Postal Service used The Reapers vignette on one of its American Commemoratives celebrating Breast Cancer Awareness. The CP490 card was produced in 1986.



Additional Test Notes to Add

This test note at left find prompted this article! I have attributed test notes for 17 years for my catalogs on test notes and have just unearthed this sample this year, just in time for the new release of the book on ABNC (& predecessors) test notes in March. I doubt I will be able to find a sample of this note in more pristine condition. There is intricate scrollwork on the reverse. It is attributed as ABNC-144⁹.

A set of test notes were produced for Dokumentacni Akciová Společnost (DAS) in the Czech Republic. They print stamps, equities, bonds, tickets, vouchers, and other valuable papers. Its customers include Czech State Printing Works of Securities. To promote their Museum of Securities, they set up a Foundation Fund. That they would have access to The Reapers vignette is obvious to world currency collectors, since two of the most striking bank notes produced with The Reapers vignette were for Czechoslovakia. Both are documented by Hessler. The image at right is one of the five DAS test notes designed by Matej Gabris, attributed as DAS-171e¹⁰. All are identical with different color schemes.

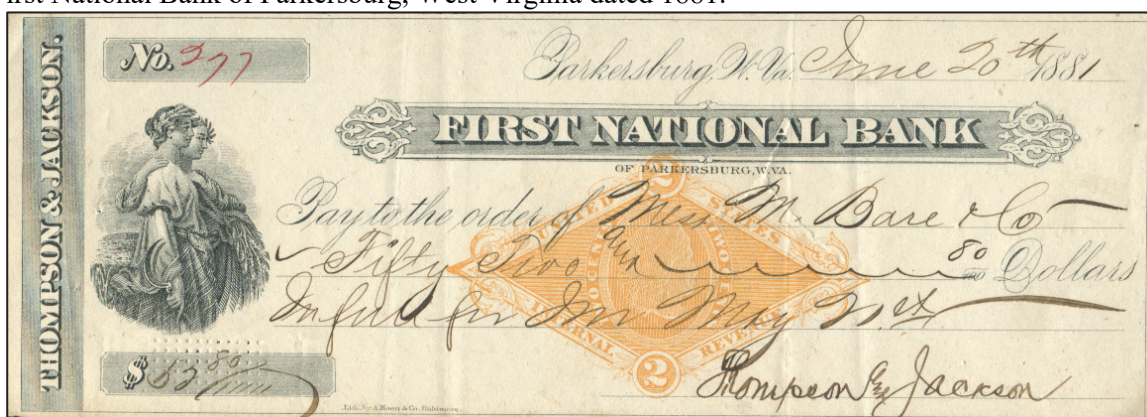


Additional Checks to Add

Territorial check from The Merchants National Bank of Helena, Montana dated 1888 followed by Genesee Valley National Bank, New York Specimen, circa 1900-1909.



Here is another Reapers vignette check, but this one was printed by A. Hoen and Company of Baltimore for the First National Bank of Parkersburg, West Virginia dated 1881.



References

- 1 – “The Engravings of G. F. C. Smillie”, ANA The Numismatist, September 1990, Gene Hessler
- 2 – “Naming Names – Vignette Titles in the Standard Catalogs”, IBNS Journal, Volume 44 Number 4, 2005, Mark D. Tomasko
- 3 – “Notes on Bank Note Engravers & Artist Attributions”, SPMC Paper Money, Volume XLVI, Number 2, 2007, Mark D. Tomasko
- 4 – “Standard Catalog of World Paper Money, Modern Issues 16th Edition, 2016, Stacy L. Schmidt editor
- 5 – “The Banknote Book: Czechoslovakia”, 2022, Owen W. Linzmayer
- 6 – “Standard Catalog of United States Obsolete Bank Notes”, 2009, James A. Haxby
- 7 – “Collectible Stocks and Bonds from North American Railroads, 3rd Edition”, 2018, Terry Cox
- 8 – Standard Catalog of World Paper Money, Specialized Issues 12 Edition, 2013, George S. Cuhaj Editor
- 9 – “Catalog of American Bank Note Company Test Notes, 2022”, Roland Rollins
- 10 – “Catalog of Printers Promotional Sheets & Test Notes, 16th Edition”, 2021, Roland Rollins