

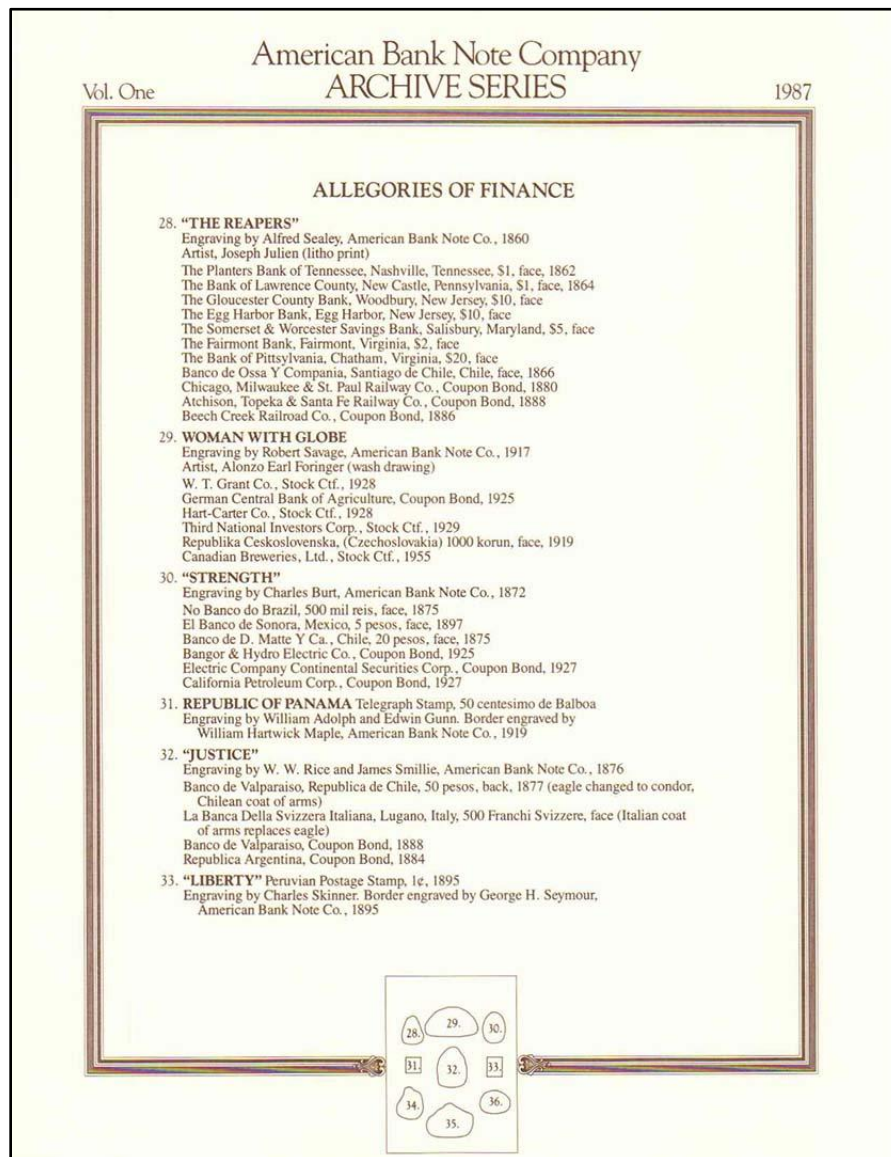
The “Strength” Vignette by Charles Kennedy Burt

The vignette titled “Strength” was engraved by Charles Kennedy Burt while he was employed by American Bank Note Company¹. Not listed elsewhere, the information panel for and ABN Archives series posts the date of engraving as 1872². The vignette has been attributed as a representation of Athena by Stacks & Bowers³.

Burt engraved for founding ABNC member Rawdon, Wright, Hatch, & Edson, American Bank Note Company, British-American Bank Note Company, John A Lowell & Co, Baldwin & Gleason, Homer Lee, Western Bank Note Company, New York Bank Note Company, International Bank Note Company, Continental Bank Note Company, and the Bureau of Engraving and Printing. Most of his work was while employed at ABNC for 16 years and while on contract for 20 years at the BEP.



Here's the second information sheet for 1987 "Allegories of Finance" panel for ABN Archives series. It lists six financial papers for which the Strength vignette was utilized. There are others noted in this article, though no images could be found for the coupon bonds.



The vignette first appears on a No Banco Do Brazil 500 Mil Reis banknote of 1875 (PS256). Pick incorrectly notes the vignette as Liberty and assigns no value for the issued, proof, or specimen examples. Numista also assigns no value, with a rarity rating index of 100 – the highest value. Latin American Bank Note Records⁴ cites a population of 20,000.



The earliest use of Strength on checks is on the account of the Troy House at the Mutual National Bank in starting 1881. Here are two examples.



Notice the two major differences. The later 1883 check lacks the Dennison & Brown Stationers imprint and the check is perforated at top and left margins. Possibly two different stationers used the ABNC blank checks, explaining the lack of Dennison imprint. The perforated check could come from the check book style with multiple checks per page. The one shown would have been the bottom check of the page. With such a short left margin on the first 1881 check, it could have been trimmed poorly.

The next use of the vignette appears on three banknotes.

Colombia, Credito Maritimo. 50 Pesos, 1886. P-Unlisted banknote. Spinks & Bowers auctioned this proof at the August 2024 Global Showcase Auction for \$18,000 on a \$10,000 to \$12,000 estimate³. The note came from the Gran Colombia Collection. Notice the vignette is reversed, probably due to the banknote being produced by lithography.



The next use was a Chile PS279, 20 Pesos banknote of 1888-89. Most commonly found as a specimen or remainder, asking \$300 to \$600. Latin American Bank Note Records⁴ list a population of 5,000 for 1888, 15,000 for 1889, and 50,000 for 1897. The ABN Archives panel incorrectly lists the date of issue as 1875.



The last banknote to utilize the vignette was this Mexico PS419, 5 Pesos banknote of 1897-1911. The banknote fetches about \$100 as a remainder or Specimen but is seldom encountered as a finished

banknote. Latin American Bank Note Records⁴ indicate a population of 30,000 to 70,000 for 9 issued years spanning 1897-1912.



There is also an undated American Bank Note Company advertising note produced with three different colored reverses. Here is ABNC-142b1⁵. When last sold, these cost about \$160 each.



As mentioned earlier, while the ABNC Archives Series mentions three coupon bonds utilizing the Strength vignette, I have been unable to locate little information or no images of these bonds. They include Bangor Hydro-Electric Co, Electric Company Continental Securities Corp, and California Petroleum Corp. The sheet lists Bangor Hydro Electric Co while the proper name includes the hyphen I've added. There is no Electric Company Continental Securities Corp. Continental Securities Corp. has no

connection to an electric utility, rather the firm is a holding or investment firm. No coupon bond could be located for either naming convention.

- 1 - The Engraver's Line, Gene Hessler
- 2 - Info sheet for 1987 "Allegories of Finance" panel for ABN Archives series (SOA-1987d)
- 3 - August 2024 Global Showcase Auction, Stacks and Bowers
- 4 - Latin American Bank Note Records, American Bank Note Company Archives, Ricardo Magan
- 5 - The Catalog of Printers' Test Notes, 19th Edition, Roland Rollins