

Introducing: The ABNCo Bust of Peace

The Bust of Peace vignette was first created by the American Bank Note Company (ABNCo) in the early 1860s and served as a company logo in a variety of applications. This exhibit is the first known attempt to arrange the history of this logo according to the chronology of its various philatelic usages.

All of the material in this exhibit was produced by the American Bank Note company between the years 1862 and 1929. None of it was ever issued to the public. However, the original metal vignette die was sold on eBay in 2021. Old proofs from that die are shown among the items here, including proofs associated with the die renumbering that took place in the 1920s.

The earliest clearly datable items in this exhibit are associated with the Rosenthal Patent models of 1868, appearing here on page 8. Subsequent material is arranged chronologically thereafter, and grouped generically according to function. The table of contents here and on the title page shows the pattern of arrangement by material genre.

1. Early ABNCo Foreign Exchange Revenue Essays	P 3	Based on design we can specify eight distinct groupings, three prior to 1868; five after that date. None is earlier than 1862.
2. "Internal Revenue" 25c vignette engraved	P 4-5	
3. ABNCo Logo engraved	P 6-7	
4. ABNCo Rosenthal Patent - 1868	P 8	
5. ABNCo Coupon Essay 1879	P 9-10	None of the design types in this exhibit was ever issued for postal or fiscal use, although several were so proposed.
6. ABNCo Postage Essays 1881	P 11-13	
7. ABNCo Postal Stationery Essays 1890	P 14	
8. ABNCo Generic "Experiment" Essays 1902	P 15-16	

The revenue material has structural correspondences with material from the early 1860s and has been grouped in the Turner catalog to the beginning of revenue stamps in 1862 and later. In addition to design features, the material is also partitioned by class of reuse prevention devices incorporated in their designs. This introductory segment gives way to the use of the central design as a generic corporate logo which in 1868 is specifically used to demonstrate the reuse prevention patent of Max Rosenthal.

A series of vertically oblong "Coupon" essays were produced as die tests and in sheets of 50. Two test covers are known which are both dated to July 12, 1879 by duplex cancellations on affixed stamps. In 1881 the American Bank Note Co. proposed a series of essays for the new stamp contract that year, and among them are stamp models in intaglio or a combination of intaglio and letterpress. In 1890 American proposed an essay design for bicolor postal stationery that was not embossed. Various color combinations were tried on white paper and on white paper with a fugitive blue ink wash.

Sometime near the turn of the century (Edward Mason says "1902") American produced a stamp model of the same size as their stamp reduction of 1890. These bore the word "Experiment" with the numeral 1 in boxes near the bottom corners. Other experiment stamps followed but none bore the bust of Peace as a vignette or other type of ornament.

Full size die essays for this material are rarely ever seen, and most are presumably unique. No less than five such are shown, in addition to 24 reduced size die essays. Among the essays for postage stamps there are three items of particular interest as exploratory models (one of which is a four-element composite entirely in intaglio). Each of these is unique. Each of the postal stationery examples on blue safety paper is unique. Items appearing on **red mats** are only known in one or two examples.

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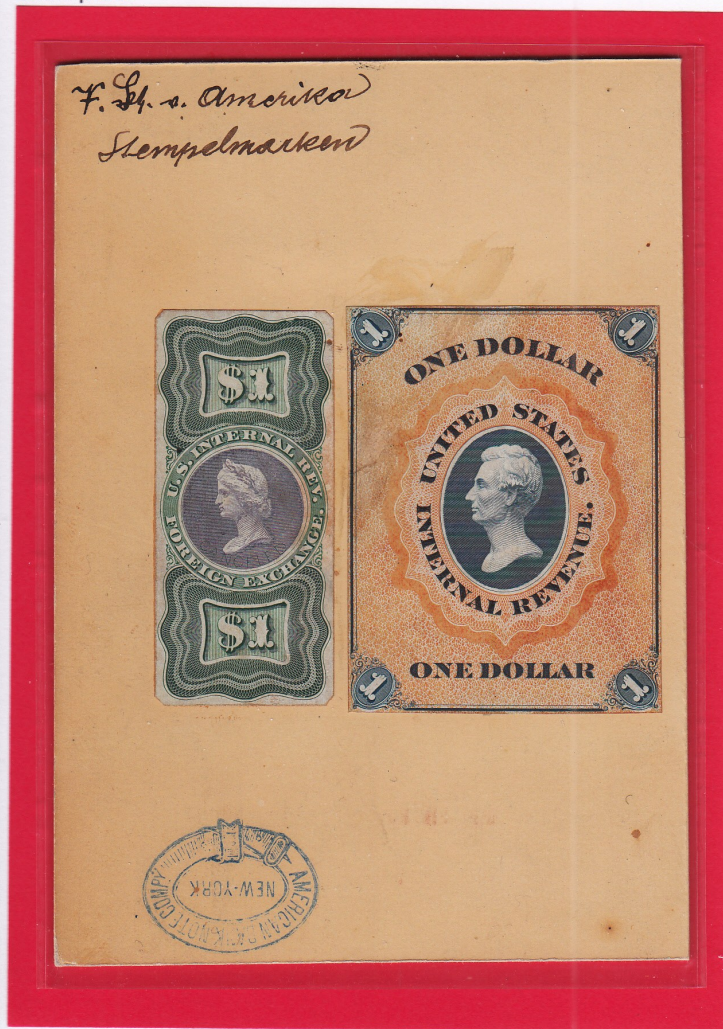
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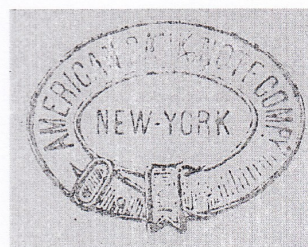
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Latest use

Cutout of **revised number** die proof from 1920's used as a file folder label in the ABNCo archives.

This die print bears the engraved inscription: "BUST OF PEACE"



Earliest use

The handstamp on this card (left) provides the earliest known connection between the Bust of Peace vignette and the American Bank Note Co.