

Bank Notes: Printing Products – Graphics-Oriented, Too

By Dulcie Apgar

With special thanks to Dwight L. Musser

Bank notes, of course, are printed paper money representing the hard currency (coins and/or bullion) of a country. In most instances, these notes are extremely finely and detailedly engraved, and printed on extraordinary paper for security reasons -- to make illicit reproduction as difficult as possible if not impossible.

Not only is paper money a product of the printing press, it is sometimes also illustrative of the graphic arts that produce it. Through the courtesy of Dwight L. Musser (about whom we will talk more later), we are able to illustrate a few such bank notes and describe still more.

The pièce de résistance of the items illustrated is the 50kr Iceland note [Figs. 1 & 2]. The face of this beautifully engraved note shows a portrait of Guobrandur Porláksson (1541-1627), Bishop of Holar, who worked on and caused the production of the first Bible in the Icelandic language (1584). (Iceland released two stamps on November 29, 1984 to commemorate this event. Please see P-G 33, Recent Issues, page 8.) The re-



Figs. 1 & 2



Fig. 3



Fig. 4

verse of the bank note shows two printers at an old screw press -- one inking a chase, the other pulling a printed sheet. The backing against which they work is part of a chase of hand-set type for a page of the Bible.

Another item is a £5 note from Guernsey that pictures "The Guernsey Printer" Thomas de la Rue along with an envelope making machine.

Notgeld is emergency money coined or printed in Germany after

World War I. Some examples with our theme are a 25pf note from Pössneck (East Germany) showing a web-fed rotary press [Fig. 3], and a 50pf Pössneck note showing a typesetting room and a Mergenthaler Linotype [Fig. 4]. A 5pf notgeld note from Glogau (Poland), valid only until December 31, 1920, shows a rotary press, a pressman and, in the foreground, an inkman inking a plate with a cylinder ink roller [Fig. 5]. A 10pf notgeld note from Mainz (West Germany), dated April 1, 1921, commemorates Johannes Gensfleisch, aka Gutenberg [Fig. 6].

Another interesting but non-fiscal item is a reproduction of the face of a July 1, 1851 \$100 Bank of

(Continued on next page.)

BANK NOTES, Continued



Fig. 5



Fig. 6

the State of Indiana note printed on card-stock in 1984 by the American Bank Note Company [Fig. 7]. The reverse attests to this fact and includes a (poor) reproduction of a Bridgeton, N.J. \$5 bank note [Fig. 8]. On November 17, 1985 the Society of Paper Money Collectors, Inc. overprinted the reverse to create a ticket valid for the awards breakfast of the International Paper Money Convention in Cherry Hill, N.J. A special postal cancel was created for the event which shows a "chase" and printed sheet bearing the society's initials [Fig. 9].



Fig. 7

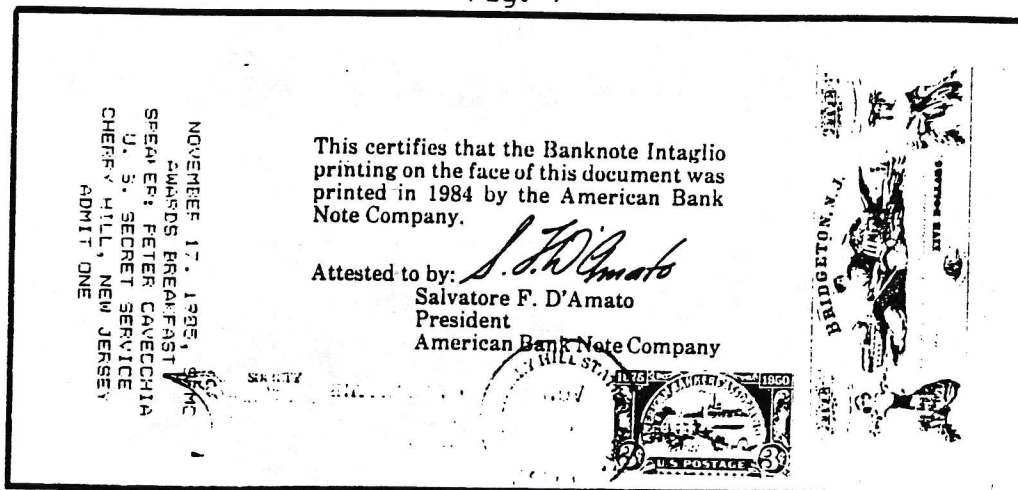


Fig. 8

The information and illustrations for this article came to us unsolicited, and out of the blue, from Dwight L. Musser (Box 305, Ridge Manor, FL 33525) in the interest of educating graphics stamp collectors about the thematic side of bank note collecting. We are indeed grateful to Mr. Musser for his generosity on our behalf.

Mr. Musser claims to be a pioneer of world paper money collecting and of its thematic collecting. Additionally, he is the first of the now more than 100 U.S. dealers of these items. Although paper money collecting has overtaken stamp collecting among his hobbies, another hobby is printing with old presses and hand-set type.

Mr. Musser suggests that anyone interested in knowing more about paper money collecting and/or dealers might write for a sample copy of Bank Note Reporter from Courtney Coffing, Editor, 700 E. State St., Iola, WI 54990.

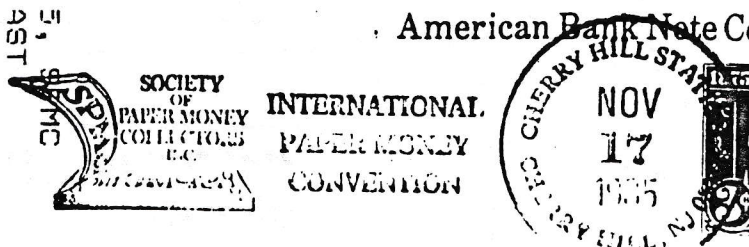


Fig. 9

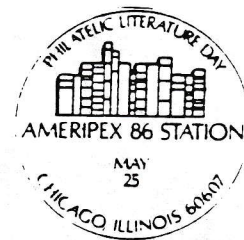
Addenda to BANK NOTES (page 17, 18)

Dwight Musser belatedly submitted the following regarding notgeld bank notes pertaining to our topic:

A 5 milliarden (5,000,000,000) mark note from Mainz, West Germany, dated October 8, 1923, with a representative portrait of Johannes Gutenberg holding a book.

Four notgeld notes (10, 20, 50 pf; 1 mk) from Solnhofen, Bavaria, dated July 1, 1921, picturing a statue of Alois Senefelder, father of lithography.

A 50 pf notgeld note from Blankenstein-Salle, Germany, dated August 15, 1921, picturing antique and "modern" paper-making on one side, and the Rosenthal Paper Factory at Blankenstein on the reverse. (Considered very scarce.)



An AMERIPEX cancel for us.

Of the 11 special daily cancels scheduled for use at AMERIPEX between May 22 and June 1, the one to be used on May 25 is of special interest to us. To honor Philatelic Literature Day at the show, the cancel features a shelf of books.

To receive this special marking on addressed and stamped envelopes or postcards, send them to Postmaster, Philatelic Literature Day Cancellation, Chicago, IL 60607-9998.

The requests must be received by the U.S. Postal Service no later than May 25.



Notgeld issued by City of Mainz with picture of Gutenberg. 8 Oct 1923.