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Collection Overview

Repository: Archives Center, National Museum of American History
Title: American Bank Note Company Records
Identifier: NMAH.AC.1285
Date: 1860-1987
Extent: 4 Cubic feet
Creator: American Bank Note Company
Language: English

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information
Donated by the AB Note Company of Fort Lee, New Jersey in 2012.

Provenance
In 2003, the American Bank Note Company contacted the National Museum of American History about surplus objects such as dies, printing plates and other three-dimensional objects, regarding a possible deaccession, and inquiring whether the National Numismatic Collection was interested in acquiring these items. NMAH volunteer Peter Huntoon surveyed the items proposed for deaccession, and acquired a large number of objects for the NNC. Along with these objects, Mr. Huntoon was also allowed access to archival materials, and brought back this collection of correspondence, business files, photographs and photograph albums, and a motion picture film.

Processing Information
Collection is unprocessed.

Preferred Citation
American Bank Note Company Records, undated, Archives Center, National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution

Restrictions
Collection is open for research.

Conditions Governing Use
Collection items available for reproduction, but the Archives Center makes no guarantees concerning copyright restrictions. Other intellectual property rights may apply. Archives Center cost-recovery and use fees may apply when requesting reproductions.
Biographical / Historical

First founded in 1795 as Murray, Draper, Fairham & Company, the American Bank Note Company developed into the United States' foremost high security engraving and printing firm in the years prior to the Civil War. It produced paper money, postage stamps, stock and bond certificates. After the Civil War, it produced paper money and stamps for foreign governments, including Canada and Haiti. In 1879, it merged with the National Bank Note and Continental Bank Note companies.

Scope and Contents

The collection includes correspondence with various banks and foreign governments, especially those of Canadian provinces, regarding their banknotes or postal stamps; client files, mostly with various companies that contracted with American Bank Note Company to engrave their stock certificates, but also including files regarding two engravers, Herman Ochs and Charles Brooks, who worked for ABNC; framed items including photographs and letters of appreciation; photographs and photograph albums, showing interior scenes of the ABNC's plants, shop floors with employees at work in various aspects of production, plant facilities such as the cafeteria and the hospital, plant expansion or renovation, and exteriors of the plants.
## Container Listing

**Correspondence files**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 1, Folder 1</th>
<th>Banking House of Bishop &amp; Co., Honolulu, 1890s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Box 1, Folder 2</td>
<td>Republic of Hawaii, 1880s-1900s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 1, Folder 3</td>
<td>Correspondence relating to postal stamps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 1, Folder 4</td>
<td>Hawaii postal stamps, 1880 - 1927</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 1, Folder 5</td>
<td>Bank of Nova Scotia, 1890s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 1, Folder 6</td>
<td>Dominion of Canada, postal stamps, 1890s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 1, Folder 7</td>
<td>Newfoundland, 1894 - 1900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 1, Folder 8</td>
<td>Bank of Nova Scotia, re: bank notes, 1889 - 1901</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 1, Folder 9</td>
<td>Canadian Bank Note Company, 1948</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 1, Folder 10</td>
<td>Newfoundland, re: bank notes and stamps, 1900 - 1908</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 1, Folder 11</td>
<td>Republic of Liberia, re: stamps, 1934 - 1940</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 1, Folder 12</td>
<td>Burland, Lafricain &amp; Co., re: Canada stamps and bonds, 1860 - 1866</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 1, Folder 13</td>
<td>Canadian Pacific Railway Co., re: stock certificates, 1891 - 1893</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 1, Folder 14</td>
<td>Dominion Bank, re: bank notes, 1887-1903 (bulk 1887-1893)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 1, Folder 15</td>
<td>Imperial Paper Mills of Canada Ltd., re: letterhead and checks, 1903 - 1904</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 1, Folder 16</td>
<td>Merchants Bank of Halifax, re: bank notes, 1888 - 1900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 1, Folder 17</td>
<td>Bank of Ottawa, 1880 - 1903</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 1, Folder 18</td>
<td>Bank of British Columbia, re: bank notes, 1893 - 1900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 1, Folder 19</td>
<td>Banque des Iles St. Pierre et Miquelon, re: bank notes, 1894 - 1895</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 1, Folder 20</td>
<td>Canadian Bank of Commerce, re: bank notes, 1888 - 1893</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 1, Folder 21</td>
<td>People's Bank of Halifax, 1890 - 1898</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 1, Folder 22</td>
<td>Bank of Toronto, re: bank notes, 1890 - 1892</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 1, Folder 23</td>
<td>Bank of British Columbia, re: bank notes, 1893 - 1900</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Box 1, Folder 24  Banque des Iles St. Pierre et Miquelon, re: bank notes, 1894 - 1895
Box 1, Folder 25  Canadian Bank of Commerce, re: bank notes, 1888 - 1893
Box 1, Folder 26  People's Bank of Halifax, re: bank notes, 1890 - 1898
Box 1, Folder 27  Bank of Toronto, re: bank notes, 1890 - 1892
Box 1, Folder 28  Bank of Montreal, re: bank notes, 1890-1899 (bulk 1890-1893)
Box 1, Folder 29  Dominion of Canada, re: stamps, 1881 - 1901
Box 1, Folder 30  Canadian Bank Note Company, general, 1935 - 1939
Box 1, Folder 31  Dominion of Canada, re: war savings stamps and certificates, 1940 - 1942
Box 1, Folder 32  Dominion of Canada, re: stamps, 1952 - 1953
Box 1, Folder 33  Canada, Post Office Department, orders, 1897
Box 1, Folder 34  Dominion of Canada, re: stamps, 1937 - 1942
Box 1, Folder 35  Dominion of Canada, re: bank notes, 1882 - 1903
Client files

Box 2, Folder 1  Entenman's, re: stock certificates, 1976
Box 2, Folder 2  European Atomic Energy Community, re: stock certificates, 1970s
Box 2, Folder 3  European Investment Bank, 1970s
Box 2, Folder 4  Knott Hotels Corporation, 1950s-1960s
Box 2, Folder 5  Lane Bryant, re: stock certificates, 1978 - 1979
Box 2, Folder 6  Lane Bryant, re: stock certificates, 1974
Box 2, Folder 7  Lane Bryant, re: stock certificates, 1950 - 1962
Box 2, Folder 8  Lane Bryant, re: stock certificates, 1961
Box 2, Folder 9  Kubota, Ltd., re: stock certificates, 1976 - 1982
Box 2, Folder 10  Kubota, Ltd., re: stock certificates, 1966 - 1971
Box 2, Folder 11  Leaseway Transportation Corporation, re: stock certificates, 1974
Box 2, Folder 12  Banco Central de Reserva del Peru
Box 2, Folder 13  Banco Central De El Salvador, 1969 - 1975
Box 2, Folder 13  Herman Ochs, script engraver, multiple clients, 1979 - 1987
Box 2, Folder 14  Republic of Haiti, re: bank notes, 1970 - 1980
Box 2, Folder 15  Republic of Haiti, re: bank notes, 1981
Box 2, Folder 16  Seatrain lines, Inc., re: stock certificates, 1947 - 1968
Box 2, Folder 17  Charles Brooks, engraver, various clients, 1946 - 1967

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Framed items

Box 3, Frame 1  Photograph of Bradbury, Wilkinson & Co., plant New Malden, Surrey, England
Box 3, Frame 2  Letter of thanks from the Bureau of Engraving and Printing, December 31, 1943
Box 3, Frame 3  Illustration of Ottawa plant
Box 3, Frame 4  Letter of thanks from New York Clearing House Association for ABNC's help during banking emergency, March 24, 1933
Box 3, Frame 5  Group photograph of employees, Ottawa, 1922
Box 3, Frame 6  Letter from the Secretary of the Treasury, thanking ABNC for services rendered during the reorganization of the Bureau of Engraving, December 6, 1919

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Photographs and photograph albums

Box 3, Volume 1  Photograph album, mostly documenting the paper making process, 1978

Box 4  Loose photographs, some black and white, some color, various sizes. Most depict various aspects of image creation and engraving of images. Other images are of plant exteriors., ca. 1930s - 1970s

Box 4, Volume 1  Photograph album, contains image of plant, shop floors, employee cafeteria and infirmary, 1912

Box 4, Volume 2  Album of photographs, some of same images as in Volume 1, Bronx plant, 1912

Box 4, Folder 1  Folder of photographic portraits and the engravings based on them, probably for currency

Box 5, Volume 1  Album with "D.E. Woodhull" tooled on the cover. Contains images of Bronx plant under construction, or possibly the addition of a wing

Box 5, Volume 2  Album, containing images of Security Banknote Building expansion, 1948 - 1949

Box 5, Volume 3  Album with title "Photo Prints, Bronx Plant, ABNCo". Some of same images as in Volume 2 and 3 of Box 4. , 1912

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Motion Picture, 1912

1 motion picture film

Reel 1-3

[American Bank Note Film], 1912
1 motion picture film (black and white silent print edge code date: 1923 cement splices copy probably made from circa 1912 original nitrate negative which no longer exists; 35mm )

The footage in the American Bank Note Film matches the images in the photograph albums. The filming date of 1912 was determined by comparing the film to the photographs. The 35mm black and white silent print donated to the Archives Center has an edge code date of 1923. It was probably printed from the original 35mm black and white negative which no longer exists. The film appears to have been minimally edited with cement splices throughout and intertitles.

Preservation: 35mm black and white silent duplicate negative, 3 reels Protection: 35mm black and white check print, 3 reels Reference: DVD

Produced from the archival original 35mm black and white silent print by Colorlab in 2013

Reference DVD available.