

MINING VIGNETTES ON OBSOLETE BANKNOTES

BY JERRY DZARA

After working in the mining industry for a good many years, I began to search for scenes of miners on obsolete notes. Here's a brief survey of the nine scenes I have found. I have omitted scrip as they are a different field.



Vignette 1 is a scene of two miners. One is "scaling the rib" (removing loose rock/ore from the sides), while the other is drilling a hole for blasting using a "hand steel and single jack" (star bit chisel and five pound hammer). This was engraved by Danforth & Wright and appears on the Central Bank of Hollidaysburg PA's \$10's and the Shamokin Bank of Shamokin PA's \$5's.



Vignette 2 shows three miners at the face. One is tamping the powder; one is helping; and one is lighting his lamp. This engraving by the American Banknote Co. is found on the Allegany County Bank of Cumberland 10's; the Honesdale Bank of Honesdale PA's \$2's; the McKean County Bank of Smethport PA's \$5's.; and the Bank of Catasauqua of Catasauqua PA's \$20's.



Vignette 3 shows four miners at lunch at the mine portal. The American Banknote Co. engraved this, and it is seen on the Allegany County Bank of Cumberland MD's \$5's and the Mauch Chunk Bank of Mauch Chunk PA's \$5's.



Vignette 4 has a miner digging with a pick while three others carry ore in baskets to load an ore car. This American Banknote Co. scene is found only on the Miners and Planters Bank of Murphy NC's \$10's.



Vignette 5 shows four miners digging with picks, one using a bar, one resting and one with two ore cars. Baldwin, Adams Co. engraved this for the Ocoee Bank of Cleveland TN's \$1's.



Vignette 6 has four miners: two digging with picks, one shoveling and one resting on his shovel. This Bald & Cousland engraving is found on the Tioga Bank of Tioga PA's \$20's.



The 7th Vignette has three miners: one using a bar, one a pick and one a shovel, it was engraved by Danforth, Wright, on \$5 bills of the Jersey Shore Bank, Jersey Shore PA





Vignette, number 8, is also by Bald & Cousland. Six miners are at the portal: one posing with a pick, another posing with a shovel, two pushing an ore car out of the mine and two at the chute of the tippie or breaker. This is printed on the Pittston Bank of Pittston PA's \$10's and the Anthracite Bank of Tamaqua PA's \$50's.



The last engraving, number 9, by J Sinclair, is a miner with a pick and wheel barrow. It is featured on the 5 cent note of the Banking House of Wm. Blumer, Allentown PA.



While these scenes seem to me to be unrealistic (way too much "open ground", ore carried in woven baskets? And no mules to pull the ore cars?) I feel they provide an interesting look at mining in another century.

all notes courtesy of Heritage Coins Currency Archives

