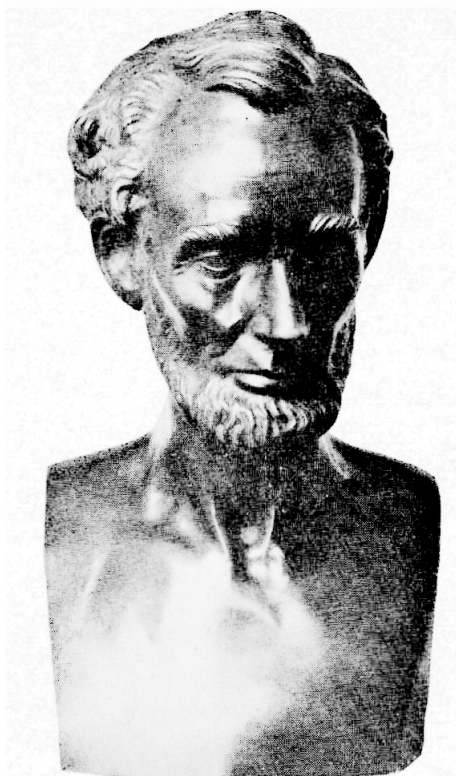


## Stamp Specialist:

# The 6-Cent Lincoln Bank Note Issues

By George C. Hahn (From the Stamp Specialist Volume 11, The Gray Book)



A frontview of the Lincoln bust sculptured from life by Thomas D. Jones in 1863-1864. This is the source of design for the six cents Lincoln issues.  
Courtesy Mrs. M. Hartley Dodge.



6c Lincoln, Vignette Only,  
Large Die Essay on India  
(148-E13)



6¢ Rose Large Die Proof on India (208P1) with  
American Bank Note imprint

## FOREWORD

THE study of the early postal emissions of the United States presents an ever-increasing fascination to the students of philately. Collectors, particularly the advanced and more serious philatelists, no longer are satisfied to just fill spaces in their albums. They insist upon securing information regarding the historical background of the stamps they are interested in. They enjoy delving into the reasons for the issuance of stamps. They like to make inquiries into the Postal Laws in force at the time the stamps were in use. A great deal is to be learned from the study of the methods by which new stamps and new designs were selected and orders for their printing placed. Collectors want to know something about the contractors who printed the stamps, their methods of printing, the paper used, how plates were laid out, and the many other items entering into the manufacture of stamps. Plate Numbers, Plate and Printing Varieties, Distribution, Cancellations, and the Postal Uses to which the stamps were put, offer a valuable background.

1873 6¢ Continental Bank Note Plate Block of 12 with Imprint and "No. 305" plate number, in this case the unique Plate Block in the brown rose shade.



The purpose of this article is to compile in a readable and easily accessible manner some of the pertinent information on the 6-cents issues of 1870 to 1882, bearing the portrait of President Abraham Lincoln. It is hoped that the publication of this information will contribute to a wider study of this interesting stamp. It is only through the generosity of some of the world's foremost philatelic students, who have devoted years of research to these stamps and who have freely shared their findings with philately, that a compilation of this kind is possible.

It is difficult to offer individual thanks to all those whose writings in the past have helped in making this compilation possible. They have given their time, their efforts and their devotion for the benefit of us all. We can show our appreciation by emulating them, by continuing the work they have begun, by additional studies and research in order to discover new information as well as to corroborate their opinions and findings. However, I desire to extend thanks to some well-known students, from whose works I have copied, in many cases "verbatim," much of the information contained in this article. They are the real authors of this discourse and to them all of the credit is offered.

John N. Luff, author of one of philately's foremost works "The Postage Stamps of the United States," occupies a prominent place in the philatelic Hall of Fame. His book continues to remain the Bible of all philatelists and offers complete and detailed information on the early issues of our country. L. G. Brookman, Acting Editor of the "*American Philatelist*," has devoted a great deal of time and study to the Bank Note Issues and his book "The Bank Note Issues of the United States 1870-1893" and his "Notes on the Grilled Issues of the United States," both published by the *American Philatelic Society*, have been of invaluable help and assistance. I also have drawn freely on the many articles published in various magazines, pamphlets, and books by such prominent philatelic writers as Elliott Perry, Fred J. Melville, and Clarence W. Brazer. Last but not least the "United States Stamp Catalogue," edited by Hugh M. Clark and published by Scott Publications, Inc., as well as the various booklets "The Postage Stamps of the United States," published by Stanley Gibbons, Inc., have added to the available information and helped to make this compilation more complete.

To each and all of them as well as to the many others I offer with a feeling of deepest obligation my own gratitude and the gratitude of all collectors.

## INTRODUCTION

Judging from the new Postmaster General John A. J. Creswell's report, dated November 15, 1870, the 1869 issue of United States stamps failed to please either the public or his Post Office Department. While stamp collectors seemed to be favorably impressed with the 1869 stamps, their opinion did not bear a great deal of weight in comparison with the opposition as expressed by the political press of the successful opposition party of those days.

The reasons, which prompted Postmaster General Creswell to replace that issue with another, were fully explained in the above report and I am quoting from it:

"The adhesive stamps adopted by my predecessor in 1869, having failed to give satisfaction to the public, on account of their small size, their unshapely form, the inappropriateness of their designs, the difficulty of cancelling them effectually, and the inferior quality of gum used in their manufacture, I found it necessary in April last, to issue new stamps of larger size, superior quality of gum and new designs. As the contract then in force contained a provision that the stamps should be changed, and new designs and plates furnished at the pleasure of the Postmaster General, without additional cost to the Department, I decided to substitute an entire new series, one-third larger in size, and to adopt for designs the heads, in profile, of distinguished deceased Americans. This style was deemed the most eligible, because it not only afforded the best opportunity for the exercise of the highest grade of artistic skill in composition and execution, but also appeared to be the most difficult to counterfeit. The designs were selected from marble busts of acknowledged excellence, as follows:—"

The report furthermore stated that "The stamps were completed and issues of them began in April last. The superior gum with which they are coated is not the least of the advantages derived from the change."

The report continued by giving the various designs of the different denominations of the 1870 issue, and stated for the 6-cents denomination: "Lincoln, after Volk." According to postal records and philatelic writings the design of the 6-cents Lincoln Bank Note stamps was drawn from a marble bust of the 16th President, sculptured by Leonard W. Volk. F. L. Ellis, an authority of the designs for United States stamps, however, questions this information. According to his studies and research, the marble bust of Lincoln, executed by Leonard W. Volk, modeled from life in 1860 and exhibited in Paris in 1867, was a beardless one while the stamp design features a bearded Lincoln. On the other hand, according to "Lincoln Lore," Bulletin of the Lincoln National Life Foundation, published by the Lincoln National Life Insurance Company November 20, 1933, Volk did complete a bearded statue of Lincoln of the administration days in 1876. Although this work is in plaster its position in the west corridor on the second floor of the state house in Springfield makes it appear to advantage. By this statement it will be noted that the bearded Lincoln by Volk was completed six years after the stamp originally was issued.

F. L. Ellis then states that it has been comparatively easy to trace source material due to Lincoln's popularity with the people of the whole world, which has resulted in the saving and collecting of anything pertaining to his life and existence. Two other sculptors made life busts of Lincoln; one Mas-

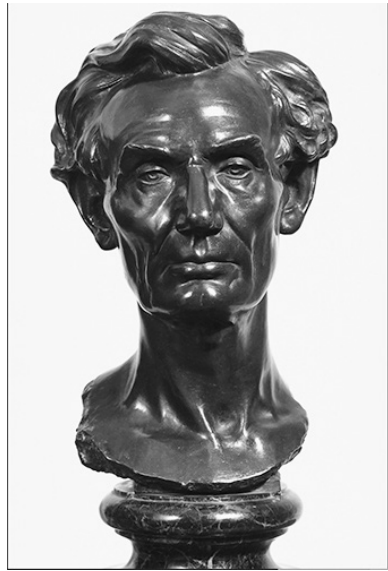
cani and Thomas D. Jones sculptured two busts. The bust, sculptured by Jones in 1863-1864, according to photographs of the same shows a bearded, undraped bust of Lincoln. The same appears very similar to the design of the stamp in question. The fact that the bust on the stamp is draped can perhaps be explained as engraver's "license" with the design. F. L. Ellis is of the opinion, after having carefully studied all references to the design, that the original design was drawn from a bust of Lincoln, sculptured by Thomas D. Jones in 1863-1864. This bust once was in the possession of Addison D. Richards, one time Secretary of the National Academy of Design, New York, N. Y. In 1890 the bust came into possession of William Milne Grinnell and later into the possession of Hiram Burlingham, both of New York, N. Y. William Randolph Hearst added the bust to his great collection in November 1933, however, Hearst sold the same to a New York antique dealer, James Graham & Sons, who in turn sold it to Mrs. M. Hartley Dodge of Madison, N. J. Another bearded and draped Lincoln bust, sculptured by Jones in 1863-1864, is in the possession of the New York Historical Society but Ellis doubts whether it was that bust which was used for the design of the stamp.

The design of the 6-cents denomination depicts the left profile of Abraham Lincoln. The bust appears on the stamp in an elliptical medallion mounted on an irregularly shaped shield with long projections, nearly one-third of the length, on both sides. "U. S. POSTAGE" appears on a curved label above the medallion, while below on a wavy ribbon with forked ends are the words "SIX CENTS," in white capitals, separated by a large white Arabic figure "6." The dark shaded, polysided tablet, on which the medallion is placed, is surrounded by a shading of faint vertical lines.

This design, which was used on the first issue of the 6-cents Lincoln Bank Note series, remained the same on all of the later printings except for the addition of the so-called "Secret Marks" and the re-engraved frame of the 1882 issue.

While the life of the great President is well known to all Americans, it will be of interest to philatelists to know that Lincoln was postmaster of New Salem, Illinois. It is said that he made a splendid postmaster and that he went far beyond the strict requirements of his office by carrying letters around in his hat in order that they could be delivered at the first opportunity.

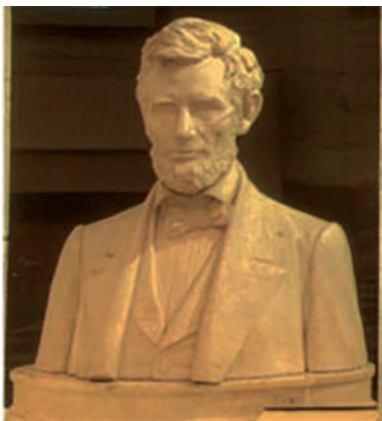
*See page 5 for some apparent inaccuracies in this discussion of the sculptors.*



Volk's bust of Lincoln, an example cast in 1914 for the Metropolitan Museum of New York.



Leonard Volk in his studio, working on his bust of Lincoln, with his bust of Stephen Douglas behind him.



Take your choice.

1. In a search, I could not find any sculptor named "Mascani", much less one who sculpted a bust of Lincoln.
2. The two photos at the top of this page show Leonard Volk working on his bust of a beardless Lincoln. I could not find a Volk bust of Lincoln with a beard.
3. Shown across the bottom is a bust of Lincoln that is located which looks very much like the one that was described in the text. Yes, it is in the corridor of a Statehouse, but the Statehouse is the Columbus, Ohio statehouse—and the bust is attributed to Jones.

*To be Continued*