

# United States Paper Money 1861 – 1923 Illustrated by \$10 Notes

Lecture Set #16

2/1/1953

# Large Size Notes or “Bills”

Act of July 17, 1861 authorized the first United States Paper Money, a \$10 Note

Act of August 10, 1861 authorized a \$5 Note

These are called “Demand Notes”

They were signed by Government employees who were empowered to sign “For the Register of the Treasury and “For the Treasurer of the United States

The reverse of the notes gave them their distinctive name, “Greenbacks”

# \$10 Front & Back

Entire design is made up of indications of the denomination, in Arabic & Roman numerals and written out in words



The notes were payable "On Demand" but no form of redemption was specified

Of course, only Gold and Silver were lawful money at the time, so naturally, they could only be redeemed by gold and silver coin



# Large Size Notes or “Bills”

Demand notes were issued in \$5, \$10, & \$20 denominations up to \$50 Million until February, 1862, then up to \$60 Million after that date

# Legal Tender Note

Signatures were engraved on the note so no need for individual to sign



Payable "On Demand" omitted, Treasury Seal added



Back of note has legal status clearly stated

"Legal Tender" technically means any creditor must accept note in payment of a debt

# Legal Tender



New reverse, states "Payable of all Loans made to the United States"

Over a period of months Congress raised the limit of notes to be printed from \$150 Million to \$250 Million & finally to \$400 Million

# Act of February 25, 1863

Banks were chartered for a 20 year period



Discovery of the Mississippi, State Seal & U.S. Seal

National Banks were established and could issue, within certain limits, notes from \$1 to \$1000 in lawful money

# \$10 U.S. Treasury Note

Redeemable  
1 year after  
March 28,  
1864, payable  
at 5%



It was a "Legal  
Tender" note  
thus could be  
used as money

With the national debt rising from \$76 million in 1861 to \$800 Million in 1863, Congress authorized interest-bearing notes on March 3, 1863



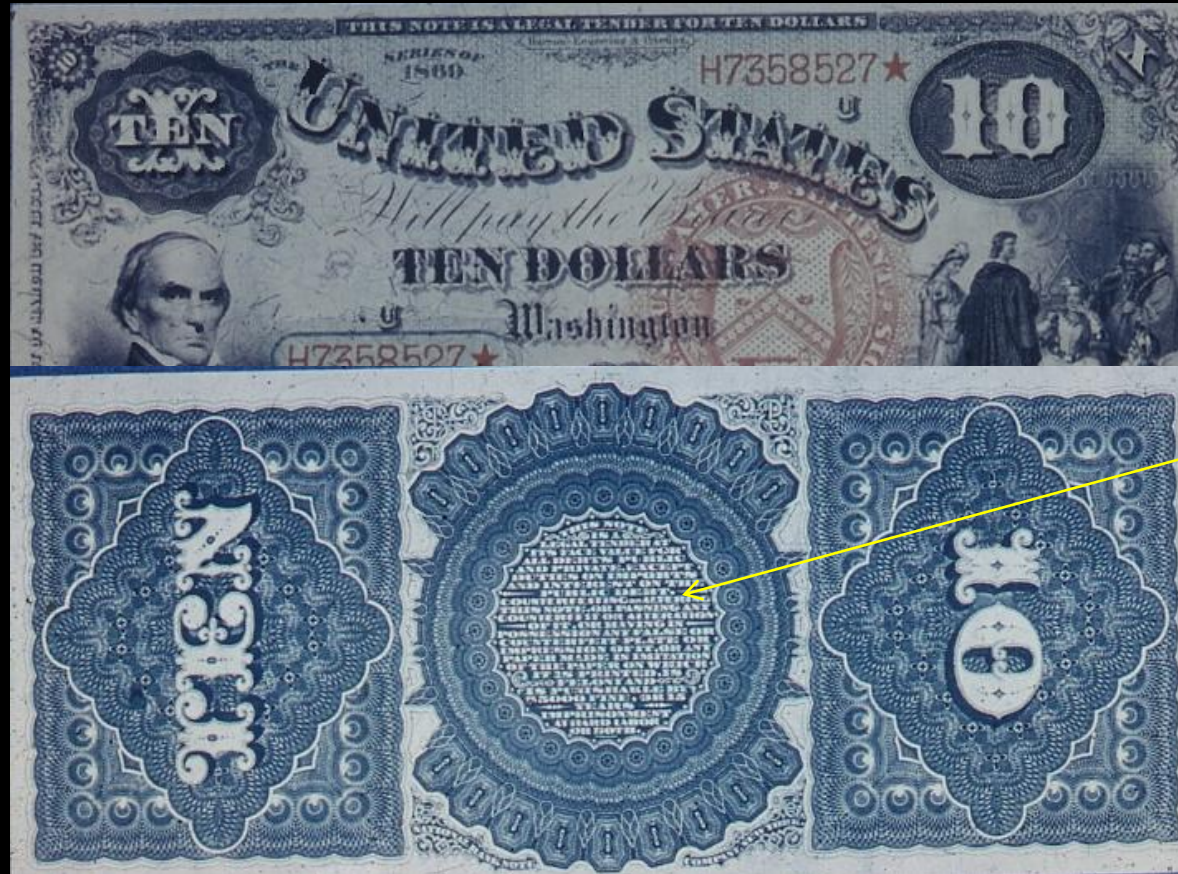
# 6% Compound Interest Treasury Note



Still a "Legal Tender" note thus could be used as money

Large gilt overprinted "Compound Interest Treasury Note"; bore interest for 3 years; reverse shows the compounding semi-annually & the amount at each incremental period until it matures @ \$11.94

# 1869 Legal Tender Note



“Legal Tender”  
& warning  
against  
counterfeiting

Obverse printed in the Bureau of Engraving & Printing, first note to contain “silk” Threads in the paper – reverse printed by National Bank Note Company

# 1869 Legal Tender Note



This reverse was printed by the Columbian Bank Note Company

# National Gold Bank Note

The Act of March 3, 1875 imposed a 10% tax on all State Banks, the following year, this tax was imposed on individuals when using the notes!!

That tax eliminated such issues



Reverse is similar to regular National Bank Notes

Notes from \$5 to \$100 were issued by 9 banks in California and one in Boston, which is still unknown

All are rare

Authorized as part of the National Banking System by Act of July 12, 1870; this is a \$5 note redeemable in gold coin. Issuing banks were required to keep 25% of the note's value in gold.

# Refunding Certificates of 1879

Refunding Certificates are not actually notes; but were Certificates of Deposit not intended to be used as money

All are dated April 1, 1879 and in \$10 denominations

Two types were issued; payable to the bearer or payable to the depositor

Reverse shows the interest rate to be paid



# Reverse of First \$10 Silver Certificate



The Act of February 12, 1873 stopped the minting of silver dollars so the western silver interests finally were able to help pass the Bland-Allison Act which renewed silver dollar coinage and authorized Silver Certificates, \$10 to \$1000

# 2<sup>nd</sup> Charter National Bank Note



Very similar to the prior issues; differences being the Blue Seal and numbers instead of Red which was used on First Charter Notes. Renewing the charter for 20 years became a political issue for years

# 2<sup>nd</sup> Charter National Bank Note



Different Reverse



# 2<sup>nd</sup> Design of \$10 Silver Certificates



Used on Certificates of 1886, 1891, and 1908  
The 1891 issue had a Red Seal with Scalloped Edges,  
The 1908 series had a Blue Seal with Scalloped Edges

# Treasury Notes



Although the notes were issued to be payable in Silver Coin, most were redeemed in Gold Coin



Only 2 issues of Coin Notes, 1890 & 1891

Issued in denominations of \$1 to \$1000, except there are no \$50 or \$500 notes

The Sherman Law of 1890 authorized issuance of Treasury Notes, also called "Coin Notes" because they were "payable to bearer in coin"

# Treasury Note-Different Reverse



During the 3 year period of 1890-1893, the Treasury had purchased \$147 Million in Silver, but paid \$132 Million in Gold for it, so the stock of gold was dangerously low, President Cleveland called an extra session of Congress which repealed the silver purchase section of the 1890 Act

# Legal Tender Note of 1901



The only note with an animal portrayed; reverse features a Maiden representing Enlightenment. This 1901 note was issued under the authority of the Civil Wars Acts of 1862 & 1863

# National Bank Note of 1903

Missing

# Gold Certificate of 1907

Missing

# Federal Reserve Note - 1914

Missing

# Federal Reserve Note - 1915

Missing



# Federal Reserve Note - 1918

Missing

# Legal Tender Note - 1923

Missing