

The Paper Money Issued at Khabarovsk, Russia in 1918

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There was no official regulation for the validation of the "Krasnoshchekov" bills or notes of the Amur Province (known as the "Mukhinki" of Blagoveshchensk) by the Nikolaevsk-on-Amur branch of the State Bank. The population of the city of Nikolaevsk and of the Amur estuary either refused or very unwillingly accepted bills originating in the Khabarovsk and Blagoveshchensk areas. In view of the severe shortage of paper money on the market in the Nikolaevsk-on-Amur area, the local branch of the State Bank, in its quest for ways of alleviating the shortage of currency, began to apply the two above-mentioned cachets on Khabarevsk and Blagoveshchensk bills, thus giving them a kind of "citizenship" in its own territory. As a result, the local population changed its attitude towards them and began accepting them without any qualms at all, on a par with bills of local issues which were circulating in this district.

On one occasion in 1930, when I was living in Shanghai, China, I acquired a bundle of Khabarovsk currency bills and on sorting them, I noticed that while there were many examples with the validation of November 30, 1918, another kind of cachet was also to be found, with a different date and text in five lines, as follows: "September 1918/Khabarovsk Br./of the State Bank/Authorized for/circulation" (See Fig. 1).

The F. Chuchin catalogue for 1927 (*Catalogue of Vouchers and Paper Money of Russia, RSFSR, USSR, the Borderlands and Organizations 1769-1927*, Moscow, 3rd Edition) lists the paper money of Far Eastern Council of National Commissars under Nos. 10104-6, on page 101, without specifying the town of issue (Khabarovsk) and then on the next page the following information is given under the heading of "Zagolovkol":

"Ditto, with cachet of br. of State Bank," without indicating the name of the branch or branches of the State Bank or the dates when the cachet or cachets were applied. The face value of these bills are listed under Nos. 10107-9; whether these bills had one or more cachets applied on them by one, two or three branches of the State Bank with the same or different texts and length of validity are left to the collector himself to judge. On the other hand, A. Pogrebetskii, in his work "The circulation of currency and currency bills of the Far East during the War and Revolution" (Kharbin, 1924) notes on pp. 180-1 that the bills of the Council of National Commissars of the Far East were validated on the basis of a regulation dated October 17, 1918, issued by the Siberian Provisional Government, but he does not quote the texts of validation.

As I did not find any information in the literature on paper money at my disposal about the validation of the

"Krasnoshchekov" notes in September, 1918, I turned to the magazine *Soviet Collector* (Moscow) to clear up these points. Under what circumstances and by whose arrangements was the validating cachet of September, 1918 placed on the "Krasnoshchekov" bills, when the official regulation for the validation of these notes was published a month later in October! Unfortunately, a reply to this enquiry was not forthcoming. At that time, the former Commissar of the All-Russian Provisional Government for the city of Khabarovsk in the Governor-Generalship of the Maritime Provinces, a Mr. A. N. Rusanov, was living in Shanghai and I turned to him for answers to these questions. In his time, he had been active in the social and political activities of Khabarovsk but had not interested himself greatly in financial affairs, so at first he could not give any explanation at all. However, after a few talks with him, during which he recalled the flow of all political events and struggles of that period in the Far East in general and at Khabarovsk in particular, he suggested the hypothesis set out hereunder, with which, after many discussions with other persons in all walks of life who had lived in Khabarovsk or the Far East in 1918, as well as the former witnesses or even participants in the events that took place at that time and in those places, I could not at first hand disagree and thus reject his hypothesis:

The city of Khabarovsk was captured on September 6, 1918, by detachments of Ataman Kalmykov. The new authorities could not keep "Bolshevik money" in circulation either in the city or in the area cleared of the Bolsheviks and so the "Krasnoshchekov" bills ceased to circulate as paper money by tacit consent of the population, although there were no official rulings to that effect. In the city, there appeared Romanov bills in the values of 1, 3, 5, 10 and 25 rubles; "Catherines"; "Dumas" in the values of 250 and 1000 rubles; 20 and 40 ruble "Kerenskies"; and also War Loan coupons which had originally gone on issue at the beginning of 1917. Omsk was apparently informed of all this by telegraph. On September 23, 1918, the regulation from Omsk regarding the release for circulation of Government securities and bonds with coupons attached to serve as paper money resulted in a breathing space for a short time, after which the demand for the currency grew with renewed force. Since the market was flooded exclusively with bills of the Council of National Commissars of the Far East, which were the only medium of exchange in the Khabarovsk district up till September 6, 1918, the situation required exceptional measures for supplying the area with cash without delay and in sufficient quantities.

For these and other reasons, such as the termination of the fishing and navigation seasons, as explained above,

the only logical and possible way out of the situation, for which there was practically no solution, was, as far as the authorities in Omsk were concerned, to put back in circulation in this area currency bills which had been in use there up till September 6, 1918, in quantities not only sufficient for daily requirements but also for future needs. It is apparent, therefore, that a ruling was also given by telegraph to the Khabarovsk branch of the State Bank to place the "Krasnoshchekov" bills of 10, 25 and 50 ruble values back in circulation in the capacity of paper money, after applying thereon cachets with specific dates and texts relating to their authorization for circulation as paper money. It is quite feasible that the actual text of the cachet was telegraphed from Omsk. Thus, the appearance of the "Krasnoshchekov" bills with a September, 1918 date may be justified.

amount of some millions of rubles into the financial channels of the area in a very short time and made it possible for the local businessmen to discharge their financial obligations to the public in a normal way at a very critical period when the fishing and navigation seasons were closing.

The September issue would have served as a "trial run," permitting the Siberian Provisional Government to acquaint itself with the mechanics of such a procedure, collect some information on the reaction of public, trade and industrial circles to the appearance of such a step and prepare the ground for carrying out similar measures as announced in the regulation of October 17, 1918, issued by the Provisional Government. This regulation was, however, of noticeably larger scope, since it now



Figure 5. Obverse of 25 ruble note with rubber stamp "A."

There was no information whatsoever officially announced in Khabarovsk newspapers of that period, or any explanation about the suggested measures or even measures already taken to supply the public with a sufficient quantity of paper money. Also, in view of the passage of time, the installation of the new authorities, replacement of civil servants in the state services and for many other reasons, the correspondence relating to placing the "Krasnoshchekov" bills back in circulation after applying the September cachet was apparently lost and it was therefore not mentioned at that time in the literature on paper money.

Hence, we see that bills have survived with this September, 1918 cachet, showing that the local authorities, with or without the permission of the Omsk Government (we greatly doubt their proceeding without permission) found it necessary to put back in circulation currency bills which had already been withdrawn either through the pressure of public opinion or not, either publicly or without prior announcement, officially or by private means. The application of September, 1918 cachet on the "Krasnoshchekov" bills poured paper money in the

covered the territory of the Transbaikal, Amur and Maritime provinces. The results of this measure may be regarded as being completely successful; during the entire period of the announced obligatory validation, "Krasnoshchekov" bills in the amount of 10,666,885 rubles were stamped, i.e. 93 percent of the original issue.

The application of the September, 1918 cachet did not exempt the "Krasnoshchekov" bills from being restamped upon the basis of the regulation of the Siberian Provisional Government, dated October 17, 1918, and therefore all bills with the September cachet, apart from the very rare exceptions, also bear the second validation cachet reading "Presented 30 November 1918."

In conclusion, I am setting out for the record a listing of currency bills issued by the Council of National Commissars of the Far East, together with all varieties of the cachets found thereon:

- I. February 1918, Khabarovsk. Original issue.
No. 1 10 rubles No. 2 25 rubles No. 3 50 rubles
- II. Cachet "a." Khabarovsk br. State Bank. "September 1918, authorized for circulation."

- No. 4 10 rubles No. 5 25 rubles
- III. Cachet "b." Khabarovsk Br. State Bank. "Presented 30 November 1918."
- No. 6 10 rubles No. 7 25 rubles No. 8 50 rubles
- IV. Cachet "a" and cachet "b"
- No. 9 10 rubles No. 10 25 rubles
- V. Cachet "Bikinskoe Stanichnoe Pravlenie" and cachet "b"
- No. 11 10 rubles No. 12 25 rubles No. 13 50 rubles
- VI. Cachet "Imanskoe Kaznacheistvo" and cachet "b"
- No. 14 10 rubles No. 15 25 rubles No. 16 50 rubles
- VII. Cachet "Kiinskaya Volostnaya Zemskaya Uprava" and cachet "b"
- No. 17 10 rubles No. 18 25 rubles No. 19 50 rubles
- VIII. Cachet "Nikolaevsk N/A Otdelenie Gos. Banka"; both cachets and cachet "b" (but not always).
- No. 20 10 rubles No. 21 25 rubles No. 22 50 rubles

We also encounter a note with stamp "b" Khabarovsk Br. State Bank together with cachets of different local administrative and executive offices of Maritime Provinces listed below. These cachets are the same type as the stamp of "Kiinskaya Volostnaya Zemskaya Uprava" but it is impossible at this time to point out the denominations on which those cachets can be found because of the lack of explicit information:

- IX. Volispolkom village Blagoslovennoe. (Volispolkom is the code name for: VOL—volostnoyi (district), ISPOL—ispolnitelnyi (executive), KOM—komitet (committee))
- X. Viazemskaya Volostnaya Zemskaya Uprava
- XI. Pravlenie (administration) Glinovskogo Poselka
- XII. Dormidontovskaya Volostnaya Zemskaya Uprava
- XIII. Ekaterino-Nikoljskiyi Volostnoyi Komitet Obshchestvennoyi Bezopasnosti. (See below.)
- XIV. Zenjkovskaya Volostnaya Zemskaya Uprava
- XV. Ivanovskiyi Volostnoyi Komitet Obshchestvennoyi Bezopasnosti (Ivanovskiyi District Committee of Community Safety)
- XVI. Knyaze-Volkonskaya Volostnaya Zemskaya Uprava
- XVII. Kozmodemianovskaya Volostnaya Zemskaya Uprava
- XVIII. Lermontovskaya Volostnaya Zemskaya Uprava
- XIX. Necrasovskaya Volostnaya Zemskaya Uprava
- XX. Nijene-Tambovskaya Volostnaya Zemskaya Uprava
- XXI. Poletinskaya Volostnaya Zemskaya Uprava
- XXII. Troitzkaya Volostnaya Zemskaya Uprava

- XXIII. Tungusskaya Volostnaya Zemskaya Uprava
- XIV. Khabarovskaya Uezdnyaya Zemskaya Uprava
- XXV. Tcherhyaevskaya Stanichnaya Zemskaya Uprava

(Offices listed below affixed stamps of a type used before 1917, with the Imperial coat-of-arms, crowned double-headed eagle in the center and the name of the office around the edge.)

- XXVI. Gosudarstv. (ennaya) Sbereg. (ateljnaya) Kassa No. 532
- XXVII. Gosudarstv. (ennaya) Sbereg. (ateljnaya) Kassa No. 789
- XXVIII. Khabarovskoe Kaznacheystvo (Khabarovsk Treasury)

CONCLUDED.

Foreign Paper Money News

Nicaragua—Newly designed one cordoba notes of the 1962 series are being printed by the American Bank Note Co. Francisco Hernandez de Cordoba appears in the center of the obverse. A view of the new skyscraper Central Bank Building is on the reverse. The new design replaces Thomas De La Rue-produced notes that featured an Indian girl on the obverse and the old, squat National Bank Building on the reverse.

Portugal—This country recently released an unusually attractive 1,000 escudo note (approximately \$35 U. S.). The portrait on the obverse is placed at the right rather than the center and is of Don Diniz (1279-1325). The pictorial element on the reverse is centered to the left and consists of a sort of two-storey representation. The top scene shows workmen building in Lisbon in 1290; the bottom shows students at Coimbra, 1308. Diniz stands at the left.

Sweden—Five-kroner notes three-quarters of an inch shorter and slightly narrower than the old series are being circulated in this Scandinavian country. Gustavus Vasa, who reigned from 1523 to 1560, is portrayed in blue on a green background on the obverse. An unusual ornamental bird-like design in blue and red appears on the reverse.

Uruguay—Because of a coin shortage in this country, new fractional notes are being introduced into circulation. In the 50 centesimos denomination, they feature the familiar Gen. Artigas on the obverse and the coat of arms on the reverse. Both sides are printed in light green on a light orange background, with the serial numbers in red. Size is 125 x 60 millimeters. The Casa de Moneda de Chile printed ten million of these notes as a stopgap until new coins can be supplied by the Chilean Mint.