



**Rare \$100 Nevada
Date Back
National Bank Note Surfaces
Tells the Story of Banker George S. Nixon**



\$100 Third Charter Date Back Nixon note, Fr. 688. Signed by G. S. Nixon, president, and G. F. Turriffin, cashier.

by M. Owen Warns, NLG

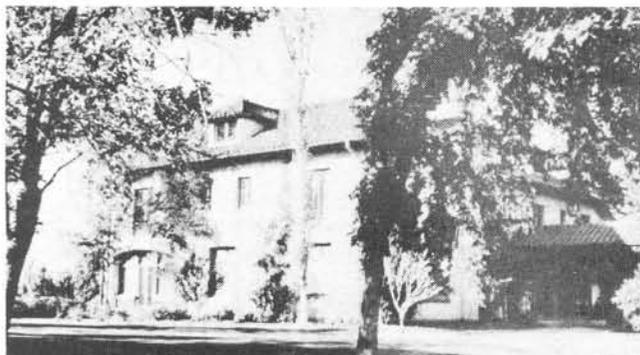
Jack Everson of Texas, the Nevada National Bank note specialist, has corralled another prize for his collection of the elusive Nationals from the Silver State: a \$100 Date Back note on The Nixon National Bank of Reno, charter 8424. The only other collectable \$100 note with this bank title would be of the Third Charter Red Seal series. The bank did not issue \$5 Red Seal notes of that series but did issue \$10, \$20, \$50, and \$100 notes, of which only the \$10 is known to have survived. There was no printing of notes under the Nixon title, charter 8424, of the Third Charter Blue Seal, Plain Back series.

This important acquisition joins the Everson Nevada collection which already includes the unique \$5 Red Seal note 2 on The First National Bank of Goldfield, the only known note existing on that bank; the only known Third Charter, a \$20 note 3 on The McGill National Bank of McGill; and a Third Charter \$10 note 4 on The Copper National Bank of East Ely. No \$5 notes were issued in this Date Back series; however, both \$10 and \$20 notes 5 exist, with the \$50 denomination yet to be reported. The newly-discovered \$100 Date Back is from a rarely used two-subject plate, 50-100; 2400 impressions were made, serials 1-2400, worth \$360,000. Under the new bank title "The Reno National Bank Reno" were issued \$50 and \$100 Third Charter Blue Seal Plain Back notes 6 printed from a four-subject plate layout of 50-50-50-100. These notes are not to be confused with the Date Backs issued under the Nixon bank title; both the old and new bank titles used charter 8424 for the various series of notes.

George Stuart Nixon, 1860-1912

George Stuart Nixon was born on April 2, 1860 at Doten's Bar, California, a few miles from the important Marshall gold discovery, a short distance above Placerville. At an early age, George became fascinated with railroads and telegraphy. Having learned the art of being a telegrapher, he applied to Leland Stanford's Central Pacific Railroad for a position and readily accepted an opening as station agent at the remote way-station known as "Humboldt House", situated midway between Winnemucca and Lovelock. He resigned from the railroad in 1884 and took a position with The First

The George S. Nixon mansion in Reno, which was sold early in 1973 for a reported \$675,000. Photo courtesy Nevada Historical Society.



The First National Bank of Winnemucca as it appeared at the time Butch Cassidy's Wild Bunch robbed it in 1901.

National Bank of Reno, charter 2478. The bank had been established four years earlier, on May 26, 1880, thus becoming the second bank to be chartered in the state of Nevada. The bank had been organized through a merger of the interests of the D. A. Bender Banking Co. (D. A. Bender became president of the new bank), Reno business man W. G. Mapes, and bankers Allen A. Curtis and John A. Paxton who represented the silver interests of several Virginia City mines and of the Manhattan Mining Co. of Austin. The First National Bank of Reno issued only \$20 First Charter notes 7. Fortunately, one specimen has been preserved and reposes in the specialized National Bank Note SEAL collection of SPMC member Dewitt Prather.

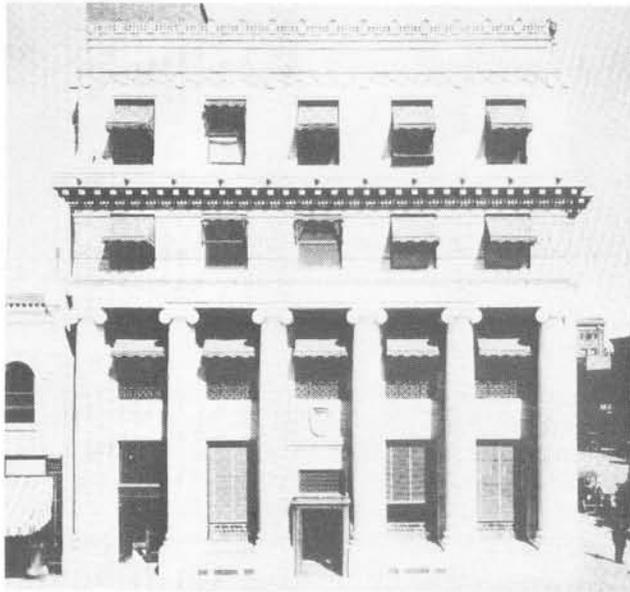
The First National Bank of Reno, charter 2478, was succeeded by The Washoe County Bank through voluntary liquidation in 1896 and is not to be confused with The First National of Reno, charter 7038, chartered in 1903 (original title The Farmers and Merchants National Bank of Reno).

The only other bank to have issued First Charter notes in Nevada was The First National Bank of Nevada, charter 1331, which issued \$5, \$10 and \$20 notes worth \$261,400; none of these notes is extant. Charter 1331 was the first bank to be chartered west of Denver and the first bank nationalized in the state of Nevada. The bank was to open on June 23, 1865 but did not start business until November 27, 1865, four months later! Meanwhile, the Comptroller of the Currency, the Honorable Freeman Clarke, wrote to the bank president, John W. Harker, inquiring about the operation of the newly-chartered bank because the Comptroller's office had not received the monthly or quarterly reports required by the regulations. President Harker replied by stating that the bank was forced to delay its opening since the circulating notes had been shipped from the East Coast via Cape Horn and San Francisco, thence overland some 800 miles over circuitous, rugged mountainous roads into the middle of Nevada. It must be assumed after that roundabout shipping experience the Comptroller was prompted to issue instructions for shipping currency to the West by a more expeditious route.

George Nixon Meets "Butch" Cassidy and the "Wild Bunch" at Winnemucca

In 1886, Nixon resigned from The First National Bank of Reno (2478) and moved to Winnemucca to join in the

organization of The First National Bank of Winnemucca, charter 3575, as the bank's cashier, with L. A. Blakeslee as president. The bank was established on September 27,



The final home of charter 8424, The Nixon National Bank and the retitled Reno National Bank, Reno. Photo courtesy Nevada Historical Society.

1886. It was the only Nevada National Bank to issue Second Charter Brown Back notes. Fortunately, again, we find that a single \$10 specimen has been preserved and is in the collection of Amon Carter, Jr. of Fort Worth, Texas.

George Nixon ascended to the presidency of the bank in late 1900. Before a year had elapsed he had come face to face with "Butch" Cassidy and the "Wild Bunch". They had been on an unsuccessful train robbery and decided their next attempt would be to rob a bank and The First National Bank of Winnemucca was selected to be the victim. Only three of the Wild Bunch took part in this caper: Cassidy, Harry Longabaugh ("The Sundance Kid"), and "Wild Bill" Carver. They entered the bank, forcing cashier F. M. Lee and Nixon to open the vault. The three robbers quickly gathered up the loot of coins and currency, mounted their horses and took off in a cloud of dust, with Nixon running out into the middle of the street, a gun in each hand, blazing away into the air to attract attention to the holdup. They got away with \$33,000, none of which was recovered.

The Nixon National Bank Becomes a Reality

Five years after the Winnemucca bank robbery, George S. Nixon established The Nixon National Bank of Reno, charter 8424, on October 20, 1906, and held the dual presidency of both charter 3575 and 8424 at the same time, thus fulfilling his boyhood dream of owning a bank of his own. Nixon and his inseparable friend and business associate George Wingfield, who was referred to as the "Napoleon of Nevada finance", formed the firm of Nixon & Wingfield in 1902. They were at hand at scores of strikes, always buying up those with the greatest possibility of large production. The most notable mines they managed to purchase were those in the rich Goldfield Camp, such as the Mohawk, Red Top, Yellow

Tiger, Jumbo and Florence, which with others they incorporated into the fifty-million-dollar Goldfield Consolidated Mining Co. The Mohawk alone became a magic word in Nevada mining circles, for it had produced more gold in less time from the smallest acreage of ground than any mine in the world! Ten million dollars in eight months tells the story that is substantial — all from a block of ground less than three acres in size.

George S. Nixon, U.S. Senator from the Silver State

With the organization of The Nixon National Bank of Reno on October 20, 1906, the Nixon family moved to Reno where Mr. Nixon erected an imposing residence, the finest in Nevada, on the banks of the Truckee River. There he entertained politicians, business associates, and members of Reno society in a sumptuous manner.

In 1891, Nixon began long service in the Nevada state legislature, representing Humboldt County. He was elected to the U.S. Senate on January 25, 1905 to succeed William M. Stewart. He was reelected to the Senate in January of 1911. His term of office still had five years to run when he died suddenly in his office at Washington, D.C. on June 5, 1912.

As a legislator in the halls of Congress, he won fame for his ability as a leader of the Republicans and the approval of the many bills he sponsored. Mr. Nixon also had the distinction of being president of several banks simultaneously. They were The Tonopah Banking Corporation (the bank that took over the assets and financial obligations of The Nevada First National Bank of Tonopah in 1932), The Carson Valley Bank of Carson City, Greenwater Banking Company of Greenwater, The John S. Cook Banking Company with banks in both Goldfield and Rhyolite, The Nixon National Bank of Reno, and The First National Bank of Winnemucca. In addition to his interests in banking and mining, he also had invested extensively in real estate, particularly in the Reno, Winnemucca and Lovelock areas. At the time of his death, his estate was valued in excess of thirty-five million dollars.

The notes referred to in this article appear in the publication, "The Nevada Sixteen National Banks and Their Mining Camps" As Follows...

1. \$10 Third Charter Red Seal, Nixon N.B. Reno page 189
2. 5 Third Charter Red Seal, FNB, Goldfield page 263
3. 20 Third Charter Blue Seal, P.B. McGill page 301
4. 10 Third Charter Blue Seal, P.B. Copper N.B. East Ely
..... page 309
5. 10 & 20 Third Charter Blue Seal, D.B. Nixon N.B. Reno
..... page 190
6. 50 & 100 Third Charter Blue Seal, P.B. Reno N.B. Reno
..... page 193
7. 20 First Charter, "75" series Charter 2478. FNB., Reno
..... page 138
8. 10 Second Charter Brown Back, FNB, Winnemucca page 146

References

Included in the list of publications and authorities consulted are:
National Banks of the Note Issuing Period, 1863-1935, Louis Van Belkum
Paper Money of the United States, Robert Friedberg
 Society of Paper Money Collectors, Washington, D.C.
 Reports of The Comptroller of the Currency, Washington, D.C.
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The Nevada National Banks and Their Mining Camps, M.O. Warns