

**NEW HAMPSHIRE**

596 Claremont ..... 20.  
2443 Franklin ..... 20.

**NEW JERSEY**

5621 Blairstown ..... 20.  
10147 Lyndhurst ..... 5.  
12891 Allenhurst ..... 100.

**NEW YORK**

349 Newark ..... 20.  
891 New York City ..... 10.  
1166 Sherburne ..... 10.  
1212 Fonda ..... 10.  
1335 Amsterdam ..... 10.  
2493 Kingston ..... 10.  
4482 Dansville ..... 10.  
5816 Castleton on  
the Hudson ..... 10.  
5848 Suffern ..... 5.  
8371 Morristown ..... 5.  
8847 Fleischmans ..... 20.  
9866 Altamont ..... 10.  
12992 Ardsley ..... 5, 20.  
\* 13839 Tuckahoe ..... 5, 10.

**NORTH DAKOTA**

\* 10596 Crosby ..... 5.

**OHIO**

1092 Greenville ..... 20.  
6372 Dalton ..... 10.  
7327 Bellaire ..... 10.  
10105 Greenfield ..... 10.

10373 London ..... 10.  
14261 Bethesda ..... 10.

**OKLAHOMA**

5061 Pawhuska ..... 10.

**OREGON**

6848 Couquille ..... 10.

**PENNSYLVANIA**

173 Oil City ..... 10.  
2223 Montrose ..... 10.  
3877 Port Allegheny ..... 20.  
5204 Glen Campbell ..... 5.  
5682 Stoystown ..... 10, 100.  
5855 Carrolltown ..... 10.  
\* 6182 Ebensburg ..... 10.  
\* 6615 Hyndman ..... 20.  
7616 Vandergrift ..... 10.  
8946 Sligo ..... 10.  
\* 9149 North East ..... 10.  
\* 11789 Rebersburg ..... 20.  
13292 Conyngham ..... 20.  
13663 Bentleyville ..... 5.  
13940 Tarentum ..... 10.  
14055 Greensburg ..... 20.  
14219 Erie ..... 50.

**SOUTH CAROLINA**

\* 11679 Elloree ..... 10.

**SOUTH DAKOTA**

14252 Pierre ..... 10.

**TENNESSEE**

\* 2593 McMinnville ..... 10.  
\* 9532 Nashville ..... 20.  
12438 Trenton ..... 10.  
13103 Nashville ..... 50.

**TEXAS**

4525 San Antonio ..... 10.  
7144 Lewisville ..... 10.  
8176 Santo ..... 20.  
9611 Spur ..... 10.  
10189 La Coste ..... 10.  
11762 Wichita Falls ..... 10.  
12062 Houston ..... 10.  
14204 Angleton ..... 5, 20.

**VERMONT**

130 Bennington ..... 10.  
278 Brandon ..... 20.

**VIRGINIA**

5032 Manassas ..... 10.  
8984 Rocky Mount ..... 10.  
9733 Suffolk ..... 20.  
10850 Richlands ..... 20.

**WASHINGTON**

9411 Okanogan ..... 20.  
\* 11672 Raymond ..... 20.

**WEST VIRGINIA**

1607 Weston ..... 5.  
\* 6226 Ronceverte ..... 20.

**WISCONSIN**

4650 Platteville ..... 10.  
8929 Viroqua ..... 5.  
11646 Rhinelander ..... 20.  
12351 Kenosha ..... 10.

**SOCIETY MEMBERS COLLABORATING IN THE  
PREPARATION OF SUPPLEMENT XV**

Sam H. Bettis	Harry E. Jones	Allen Mincho
Charles G. Colver	Allen Karns	Penny Mincho
Larry Cowart	Lyn C. Knight	Frank A. Nowak
Charles A. Dean	David Koble	Dean Oakes
Thomas M. Denly	Frank Levitan	Allen Perakis
Alan Goldsmith	Art Leister	Gary W. Potter
John T. Hickman	C. Dale Lyon	Ed. Richt
Alan R. Hoffman	Ken McDannel	Milton M. Sloan
Al. Hurry	Maurice M. Melamed	Roy Sparks
Curtis Iversen		

**TRADE UNIONS IN THE BANKING FIELD:****A footnote on the history of St. Louis****PART TWO: Albert von Hoffman and the  
Telegraphers National Bank of St. Louis**

by BOB COCHRAN

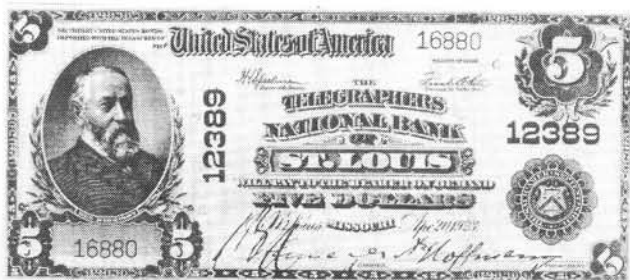
©1984, Robert E. Cochran

**W**HEN I joined the Society of Paper Money Collectors in late 1979, I received all of the previous issues of *PAPER MONEY* for that year. In the January-February issue (Number 79, pages 24-25) there is an excellent article about The Telegraphers National Bank of St. Louis, written by Ronald Horstman. I enjoyed the article so much that I began collecting St. Louis national bank notes. This piece is an addendum to Ron's original article, hence the title.

In 1983 I placed an advertisement in *PAPER MONEY*, seeking notes from St. Louis national banks. One response was from Bruce Smith, a former St. Louisan, who has an extensive Missouri national bank note collection. Bruce very kindly provided information about St. Louis national banks and their note issues. In closing, he mentioned that he was looking for a note from

The Telegraphers National Bank of St. Louis signed by von Hoffman as vice president.

The Telegraphers National Bank has always interested me, because of its unique title and unusual history. As detailed in Ronald Horstman's article, The Brotherhood of Railway Telegraphers, a trade union, owned and operated the bank. The success of other union owned and operated banks, most notably the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers National Bank in Cleveland, prompted The Brotherhood of Railway Telegraphers to open their bank in St. Louis. Another unique feature of The Telegraphers National Bank of St. Louis was that all of the employees were members of the United Bank Workers Union. The bank operated from 1923 through 1942, when it was absorbed by the United Bank of St. Louis.



When I received Bruce's letter, I had seen quite a few Telegraphers National Bank notes, but all bore the signatures of Edward J. Manion, president of the bank and The Brotherhood of Railway Telegraphers. I talked to Ron Horstman about this, and he indicated that Manion signatures were the only ones he had ever seen. He told me that it was quite possible that a vice president may have signed large-size notes, because certain bank officers could legally sign notes in the president's absence. Ron encouraged me to pursue the subject. I checked the bank directories at the St. Louis Federal Reserve Bank library and found a listing of Albert von Hoffman as vice president of The Telegraphers National Bank of St. Louis. Early in 1984 I was rummaging through the historical material at a charity "book fair" that is held annually here in St. Louis. The title on a book jumped out at me—"A Biography: Albert von Hoffman 1862-1931". Parting with the princely sum of \$2, I sat down with the book as soon as I got home. On page 104, I found what I was looking for: "As an officer (of The Telegraphers National Bank), his (Albert von Hoffman) name and signature appeared on the face of the United States currency issued by his bank. He always enjoyed doing the unusual as he was quite the showman, so his bank requested the treasurer of the United States to send them several sheets of five dollar bills, but un-cut, just as they come off the press. The total value of the sheets were charged to Vice President von Hoffman's account. He would delight in taking his pocket scissors, clipping off a five spot, and handing same to a friend as a souvenir or doing same operation to a seller when making a purchase. Some of his faithful employees were given one of these bills as a souvenir". A note of clarification is in order here: All national bank notes were shipped un-cut to the issuing banks (and they were shipped by the Comptroller of the Currency, not the Treasurer). Virtually all large-size notes from The Telegraphers National Bank bear engraved signatures, indicating the bank had the officers' signatures placed on the notes, most probably by a local printer. The printer or the bank cut the sheets after the signatures were added. Mr. von Hoffman undoubtedly had the bank reserve uncut, unsigned sheets of four \$5 notes for his own use.

Information in the book about Albert von Hoffman's family listed a son, George, as continuing the family printing business. I checked the St. Louis telephone directory, and found George von Hoffman listed. When I called, I spoke with his son, George von Hoffman, Jr. He confirmed the story about his grandfather, and told me that one of the notes was still in his family's possession. I wrote to George von Hoffman, with the result that he located the note, allowed me to see it, and graciously provided the photograph of the note which accompanies this article.

So Albert von Hoffman, like many other national bank officers, was a "note-snipper"—but he was certainly more than that! He was born in Vienna, Austria in 1862. He came to the United States when he was 25. He was seeking employment,

unsuccessfully, in New York City when he met a man who had served in the military with his father. Von Hoffman went to work for the man, but after some three years his benefactor felt Albert's future would be brighter in Milwaukee, with its large German population. He moved there and found work with one of the electric railway companies.



Albert von Hoffman

In the early 1890s, he developed a process to weld electric car rails instead of bolting them together, the practice at that time. Von Hoffman patented the process, and earned a substantial fortune. He travelled extensively marketing his process; while he was in Mexico he invested in a plantation with the idea of growing vanilla beans. This was not successful, seriously affecting his wealth. The plantation was eventually converted over to the production of coffee beans and it became profitable. Von Hoffman decided it was time to move on, and in 1907 he settled in St. Louis. He became affiliated with the National Telephone Directory Company, which was involved in selling yellow pages advertising and publishing telephone directories. He later bought an interest in a local printing company, and soon took total ownership. That company is known today as von Hoffman Press, Incorporated. He was an avid balloonist, and his foresight led him to establish a commercial air service and flying school at the St. Louis airport. One of the flight instructors at the von Hoffman Aircraft School was a tall, lanky fellow named Charles Lindbergh.

Albert von Hoffman was more than a successful businessman. As a self-made man, he never forgot that his adopted country had afforded him the opportunity to make his fortune. He operated free soup kitchens for the less fortunate during the winter of 1914-1915, and again in 1929. He probably gave birth to what is now the United Services Organization (USO) by instituting a program to feed and comfort soldiers passing through St. Louis during the early days of World War I. All of the funds for these projects, a substantial sum even by today's standards, came out of his own pocket.

So we have a seldom-seen signature on a scarce banknote. But it was quite a man who penned his name on that note; certainly deserving of his place in the history of St. Louis.

#### REFERENCES:

Hicks, Colonel W.E., *A History of a Fruitful Life*. A Biography of Albert von Hoffman 1862-1931. von Hoffman Press, Inc. St. Louis 1971.

Horstman, Ronald, "Trade Unions in the Banking Field: A Footnote on the history of St. Louis." *PAPER MONEY*, January-February 1979 (No. 79), pages 24-25.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

Sincere thanks to George von Hoffman, George von Hoffman, Jr., Alice Fudge and von Hoffman Press, Inc. And to Ronald Horstman for allowing me to use his original title and his help with this article.

The author would appreciate hearing from owners of other large-size Telegraphers National Bank notes. Please write to him at 1917 Driftwood, Florissant, MO 63031.