

Fairmont, West Virginia

A Series of 1902 Vice President Note

AN UNUSUAL VARIETY THAT HAS BEEN RECOGNIZED for years is the engraved "Vice President" on the later Series of 1902 Blue Seal Plain Back \$5s issued by The National Bank of Fairmont, West Virginia (9462). These occurred first on notes with the engraved signature combination of James H. Thomas, Vice President, and N. E. Jamison, Cashier, and later on notes with the combination James H. Thomas, Vice president, and J. Ray Smoot, Cashier.



THE PAPER COLUMN

by Peter Huntoon

Mark Hotz and I were startled to find that the President's signature was placed on the 10-10-10-20 plates for the bank as we sorted the Smithsonian proofs! First were 10-10-10-20 plates with Brooks Fleming Jr., President, and N. E. Jamison, Cashier, and later Brooks Fleming Jr., President, and J. Ray Smoot, Cashier.

The data on Table 1 demonstrate that the bank twice ordered engraved signatures for the Vice President on the lower denomination plate and the President on the higher. This occurrence is unprecedented to my knowledge in either the large or small note issues.

An amendment to the National Bank Act passed on March 3, 1919, revised the language of the act to allow for both new denominations and engraved bank signatures. The italics are added here for emphasis here:

That in order to furnish suitable notes for circulation, the Comptroller of the Currency shall, under the direction of the Secretary

Enlargement showing the engraved signature of James H. Thomas, Vice President.



of the Treasury, cause plates and dies to be engraved, in the best manner to guard against counterfeiting and fraudulent alterations, and shall have printed therefrom and numbered such quantity of circulating notes in blank, or *bearing engraved signatures of officers as herein provided*, of the denominations of \$1, \$2, \$5, \$10, \$20, \$50, \$100, \$500, and \$1,000, as may be required to supply the associations entitled to receive the same. Such notes shall express upon their face that they are secured by United States bonds deposited with the Treasury of the United States, by the written or engraved signatures of the Treasurer and Register, and by the imprint of the seal of the Treasury; and shall also express upon their face the promise of the association receiving the same to pay on demand, *attested by the written or engraved signatures of the president or vice president and cashier*; and shall bear such devices and such other statements and shall be in such form as the Secretary of the Treasury shall, by regulation, direct.

Clearly this allowed a bank to order engraved signatures for a Vice President, and the officers of the Fairmont bank did exactly that for its 5-5-5-5 plates!

The first 5-5-5-5 and 10-10-10-20 sheets with Jamison's engraved signature were sent to the bank respectively on July 10 and July 9, 1924. The first with Smoot's signature were sent respectively on November 21 and 20, 1928.

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Table 1. Summary of the Series of 1902 Blue Seal Plain Back plates with engraved signatures prepared for The National Bank of Fairmont, West Virginia (9462), and the sheets issued from them.

Combination	Approval Date	Plate Letters	President or Vice President	Cashier	Sheet Serials Issued	Sheets Issued
5-5-5-5	Jun 9, 1924	E-F-G-H	James H. Thomas, v	N. E. Jamison	74001-100390	26390
10-10-10-20	Jun 10, 1924	D-E-F-B	Brook Fleming Jr.	N. E. Jamison	50401-69493	19093
5-5-5-5	Sep 14, 1928	I-J-K-L	James H. Thomas, v	J. Ray Smoot	100391-105907	5517
10-10-10-20	Sep 17, 1928	G-H-I-C	Brooks Fleming Jr.	J. Ray Smoot	69494-73060	3567

Subjects from the certified proofs for the Fairmont, West Virginia (9462), Series of 1902 5-5-5-5 and 10-10-10-20 plates with engraved signatures prepared in June, 1909. Notice that the \$5 is signed by the Vice President.



SOURCES

Bureau of Engraving and Printing. Certified Proofs of National Bank Note Face Plates. National Numismatic Collections, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC. (1875-1929).

Bureau of Engraving and Printing. Ledgers Showing Deliveries of National Currency to the Comptroller of the Currency: U. S. National Archives, College Park, MD. (1924-1935).

Comptroller of the Currency. National Currency and Bond Ledgers for Individual National Banks. U. S. National Archives, College Park, MD. (1863-1935).



Subjects from the certified proofs from the Fairmont, West Virginia (9462), Series of 1902 5-5-5-5 and 10-10-10-20 plates with the second engraved signature combination made in September, 1928. The \$5s are once again signed by the Vice President. ♦

