

SPMC officer signed National Currency

by Bob Cochran



Ignatius T. Kopicki



THANKS TO SOME GREAT DETECTIVE work by Tim Kyzivat, we can now put a face with a signature! Several years ago I noticed a description and photograph of a sheet of 1902 Series National Currency being offered in a RARCOA auction.

Included were sheets of 1902 Plain Back notes issued to The Lawndale National Bank of Chicago (charter #10247). The description for one sheet mentioned that the signature in the Cashier position was "I.T. Kopicki."

For several days the notes and the Cashier's name

really bugged me. Finally, I remembered who "I.T. Kopicki" was!

When I joined SPMC in the summer of 1979, I really enjoyed the previous issues for that year that were delivered to me after I joined. I liked them so much that I almost immediately began to search for sources to acquire the other "back issues" that I was missing. Naturally the earliest issues were the hardest to find, but I stuck with it. Eventually I managed to compile a complete set, and I still refer to the issues quite often.

Ignatius T. Kopicki served SPMC as its Treasurer from 1967 until 1969. Mr. Kopicki was very active in the Chicago Coin Club, as well as the Central States Numismatic Society (CSNS). He was the CSNS Secretary-pro tem in 1939, and served as President of CSNS from 1942-1947.

The notes illustrated bearing Mr. Kopicki's signature as an "Assistant Cashier" of The Lawndale National Bank are from among several uncut sheets



that surfaced in the 1970s. Apparently the "Assistant Cashiers" of the bank were given the opportunity to sign 1902 Series notes of the bank as "souvenirs," because other sheets feature different "Assistant Cashiers."

The notes shown (courtesy of Heritage Auctions) with Mr. Kopicki's signature are from a sheet of \$5s, which brought \$8,625 at the recent Heritage FUN auction.

I was never able to find a photograph of Mr. Kopicki. None has previously appeared in the pages of *Paper Money*. But thanks to some great "Detective Work" by Tim Kyzivat -- who himself served as SPMC Treasurer -- we can finally look at the image of the ONLY member of the Society of Paper Money Collectors who signed large size National Currency!

The photograph Tim found pictured with him another prominent Chicago area collector, who also made solid contributions to the study of paper money. He was R. Edward Davis, who wrote "Early Illinois Paper Money," which appeared in the *Numismatic Scrapbook Magazine*. It was reprinted in booklet form, and contains a "Check List of Early Illinois Paper Money" compiled by D.C. Wismer and Lee F. Hewitt.



Kopicki and R. Edward Davis