

The Paper Column

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1862-1863 Legal Tender Classification Chart

Purpose

Our purpose is to provide a comprehensive and straight forward classification guide that will allow you to unambiguously assign a Friedberg catalog number to 1862 and 1863 legal tender notes. We are using Friedberg catalog numbers because this is the most widely used system of numbers within our hobby. Once you assign the right number to your note, we all will be talking the same language with respect to it.

No United States type notes have caused more confusion than the 1862-1863 legal tender issues. The problem is that there are so many arcane variables on these notes that it is easy to misclassify them. Consequently, they are the most erroneously attributed notes in auction catalogs, grading company holders and censuses.

The process is to match all the diagnostics on your note with the appropriate entry in the accompanying table. Then read the Friedberg number from either the first or last column.

Notice that the Friedberg numbers are out of order for the various denominations. We have attempted to put the entries into the approximate chronological order in which they were made. We say approximate because more than one variety was being printed at the same time during some periods. Also, some varieties reappeared after not having been used for a while.

The Friedberg numbering system is imperfect, but that is not our problem. Very little was known about these notes when Friedberg first assigned numbers to them. The way his numbering system was set up, all he could do was assign a number to each of the known varieties by series and denomination in the order in which he thought they were produced. He then moved on to the next series and continued numbering. As new varieties were discovered, he had no option but to sandwich the new entries into his listing by assigning suffix letters to them in succeeding editions. However, the letters were assigned in the order in which the discoveries were made, which had nothing to do with the order in which the varieties were produced.

Some of the varieties that have been assigned Friedberg numbers are not varieties at all, but misprints. The best example is \$2 1862 Fr.41d where the Treasury seal was inverted for at least one printing. This is a misprinted Fr.41c. Another is \$20 1863 Fr.126c where the left serial number was misplaced for an entire printing making the notes different from Fr.126b. Doug found a letter in his research where the printer was requested to be careful not to make that mistake again. It certainly created a variety and they made plenty of them so call it what you like, a legitimate variety or a misprint!

Of course, this type of numbering system leads to chaos, and that is exactly what happened. That chaos contributes to the difficulty people have when they attempt to classify these notes. At this point, we simply have to acknowledge that the Friedberg numbers are an arbitrary means to allow us to communicate. End of story, for better or worse.

Doug Murray, who seriously researched these notes for decades, unraveled the chronology of these issues and determined the actual or approximate numbers of each variety that were printed. He even deduced that certain listed varieties never were printed. Examples being Fr. 149 and 166, respectively a \$50 and \$100.

We have provided census data only for the flaming rarities; that is, the varieties for which fewer than 10 are reported.

There is a possibility that you may discover an unreported variety. If you think you have one, send a 300-dpi color scan of it to peterhuntoon@outlook.com. If indeed it is new, you will win for yourself a new listing and the resulting publicity that goes with such a discovery. These wonderful notes were the first true circulating U. S. Treasury issues so there is a great deal of interest in them and they have high visibility.

Classification guide for assigning Friedberg numbers to 1862 and 1863 Legal Tender Notes.

Fr. No.	Act	Plate Date	Series Number	Series No. Placement	Imprints	Monogram	Seal	Serial Numbers
\$1 1862								
17	Jul 11, 1862	Aug 1, 1862	1	left	National-American	none	1st	seal on left serial
17d	Jul 11, 1862	Aug 1, 1862	1	left	National-American	ABC	1st	seal on left serial
17b	Jul 11, 1862	Aug 1, 1862	1	left	National-American	ABC	2nd	seal on left serial
17a	Jul 11, 1862	Aug 1, 1862	1-166	left	National-American	ABC	2nd	left serial on green counter
16b	Jul 11, 1862	Aug 1, 1862	166-174	left	National-National	none	2nd	left serial on green counter
16 1st group	Jul 11, 1862	Aug 1, 1862	174-234	left	National-National	none	2nd	left serial on green counter
17c	Jul 11, 1862	Aug 1, 1862	199-204	left	National-American	ABC	2nd	left serial on green counter
16a	Jul 11, 1862	Aug 1, 1862	204-219	left	National-National	ABC	2nd	left serial on green counter
16 2nd group	Jul 11, 1862	Aug 1, 1862	219-234	left	National-National	none	2nd	left serial on green counter
16c	Jul 11, 1862	Aug 1, 1862	235-284	right	National-National	none	2nd	left serial on green counter
\$2 1862								
41b	Jul 11, 1862	Aug 1, 1862	1	right	American-National	none	1st	no face plate number left of portrait
41c	Jul 11, 1862	Aug 1, 1862	1-2	right	American-National	none	2nd	no face plate number left of portrait
41d	Jul 11, 1862	Aug 1, 1862	1	right	American-National	none	2nd inverted	no face plate number left of portrait
41a	Jul 11, 1862	Aug 1, 1862	3-88	right	American-National	none	2nd	face plate number left of portrait
41	Jul 11, 1862	Aug 1, 1862	88-171	right	National-National	none	2nd	face plate number left of portrait
\$5 1862/1863								
61	Feb 25, 1862	Mar 10, 1862	no series	none	American	none	1st	one serial number
61a	Feb 25, 1862	Mar 10, 1862	2-59	upper left	American	none	1st	one serial number
61b	Feb 25, 1862	Mar 10, 1862	59-70	upper left	American	none	2nd	one serial number
61c	Feb 25, 1862	Mar 10, 1862	71-119	lower left	American	none	2nd	one serial number
62	Feb 25, 1862	Mar 10, 1862	New 1-23	lower right	American-National	none	2nd	one serial number
63	Mar 3, 1863	Mar 10, 1863	New 24-65	lower right	American-National	none	2nd	one serial number
63a	Mar 3, 1863	Mar 10, 1863	New 65-75	lower right	American-American	none	2nd	one serial number
63b	Mar 3, 1863	Mar 10, 1863	New 75-83	lower right	American-American	none	2nd	two serial numbers
\$10 1862/1863								
93a	Feb 25, 1862	Mar 10, 1862	1	upper right	American-Ptd by Nat	none	1st upper right corner	one serial number
93a-l	Feb 25, 1862	Mar 10, 1862	1	upper right	American-Ptd by Nat	none	1st upper right corner	one serial number
93b	Feb 25, 1862	Mar 10, 1862	1-9	upper right	American-Ptd by Nat	none	1st right center	one serial number
93c	Feb 25, 1862	Mar 10, 1862	1-25	upper right	American-Ptd by Nat	none	1st right center	one serial number
93e	Feb 25, 1862	Mar 10, 1862	5-7 census	upper right	American-Ptd by Nat	none	1st right center	one serial number
93f	Feb 25, 1862	Mar 10, 1862	5 census	upper right	American-Ptd by Nat	none	1st right center	one serial number
93d	Feb 25, 1862	Mar 10, 1862	26-27	upper right	American-Ptd by Nat	none	1st right center	one serial number
93	Feb 25, 1862	Mar 10, 1862	28-63	upper right	American-Ptd by Nat	none	2nd right center	one serial number
94	Feb 25, 1862	Mar 10, 1862	New 1-15	upper right	American-National	none	2nd right center	one serial number
95	Mar 3, 1863	Mar 10, 1863	New 16-40	upper right	American-National	none	2nd right center	one serial number
95c	Mar 3, 1863	Mar 10, 1863	New 40-44	upper right	American-National	none	2nd right center	one serial number
95a	Mar 3, 1863	Mar 10, 1863	New 44-48	upper right	American-American	none	2nd right center	one serial number
95b	Mar 3, 1863	Mar 10, 1863	New 48-56	upper right	American-American	N	2nd right center	two serial numbers
\$20 1862/1863								
124a	Feb 25, 1862	Mar 10, 1862	no series	none	American	none	1st	one serial number
124b	Feb 25, 1862	Mar 10, 1862	2-12	top center	American	none	1st	one serial number
124	Feb 25, 1862	Mar 10, 1862	12-24	top center	American	none	2nd	one serial number
125	Feb 25, 1862	Mar 10, 1862	New 1-8	top center	National-American	none	2nd	one serial number
126	Mar 3, 1863	Mar 10, 1863	New 9-18	top center	National-American	none	2nd	one serial number
126a	Mar 3, 1863	Mar 10, 1863	New 18-20	top center	American	none	2nd	one serial number
126c	Mar 3, 1863	Mar 10, 1863	New 20-21	top center	American	none	2nd	two serial numbers in line with each other
126b	Mar 3, 1863	Mar 10, 1863	New 21-28	top center	American	none	2nd	two serial numbers, left in lower left corner
\$50 1862/1863								
148	Feb 25, 1862	Mar 10, 1862	1-3	upper right	National	none	1st	one serial number
148a	Feb 25, 1862	Mar 10, 1862	3-5	upper right	National	none	2nd	one serial number
150	Mar 3, 1863	Mar 10, 1863	New 1	upper right	National	none	2nd	one serial number
150b	Mar 3, 1863	Mar 10, 1863	New 1-2	upper right	National-American	none	2nd	one serial number
150a	Mar 3, 1863	Mar 10, 1863	New 2	upper right	National-American	none	2nd	one serial number
\$100 1862/1863								
165	Feb 25, 1862	Mar 10, 1862	no series	none	National	ABC	1st	one serial number
165b	Feb 25, 1862	Mar 10, 1862	2	lower right	National	none	1st	one serial number
165a	Feb 25, 1862	Mar 10, 1862	2-3	lower right	National	none	2nd	one serial number
167b	Mar 3, 1863	Mar 10, 1863	New 1	lower right	National	none	2nd	one serial number
167	Mar 3, 1863	Mar 10, 1863	New 1	lower right	National-American	none	2nd	one serial number
167a	Mar 3, 1863	Mar 10, 1863	New 1-2	lower right	National	none	2nd	two serial numbers
\$500 1862/1863								
183	Feb 25, 1862	Mar 10, 1862	no series	none	American	none	1st	one serial number
183a	Feb 25, 1862	Mar 10, 1862	no series	none	American	none	2nd	one serial number
183b	Feb 25, 1862	Mar 10, 1862	New 1	left	American-National	none	2nd	one serial number
183e	Mar 3, 1863	Mar 10, 1862	New 1	left	American-National	none	2nd	one serial number
183c	Mar 3, 1863	Mar 10, 1862	New 1	left	American	none	2nd	one serial number
183f	Mar 3, 1863	Mar 10, 1863	New 1	left	American	none	2nd	one serial number
183d	Mar 3, 1863	Mar 10, 1863	New 1	left	American	none	2nd	two serials with left in brackets with different font
\$1000 1862/1863								
186	Feb 25, 1862	Mar 10, 1862	no series	none	American	none	1st	one serial number
186a	Feb 25, 1862	Mar 10, 1862	no series	none	American	none	2nd	one serial number
186b	Feb 25, 1862	Mar 10, 1862	New no series	lower left	American-National	none	2nd	one serial number
186c	Mar 3, 1863	Mar 10, 1862	New no series	lower left	American-National	none	2nd	one serial number
186e-1	Mar 3, 1863	Mar 10, 1862	New no series	lower left	American	none	2nd	one serial number
186d	Mar 3, 1863	Mar 10, 1863	New no series & 2	lower left	American	none	2nd	one serial number
186e	Mar 3, 1863	Mar 10, 1863	New 2	lower left	American	none	2nd	two serials with left in brackets with different font

Green Underprinted				Number	
Patent Date	Back	Number Printed	Special Characteristic	Reported	Fr. No.
					\$1 1862
30 JUNE 1857	2nd obligation	5,000 est		4	17
30 JUNE 1857	2nd obligation	7,000 est		6	17d
30 JUNE 1857	2nd obligation	12,000 est		1	17b
30 JUNE 1857	2nd obligation	16,512,000 est	plates 1 to 45		17a
30 JUNE 1857	2nd obligation	810,000	plates 1-16, 18, 21, 23, 25-45		16b
none	2nd obligation	5,854,000	plates 1-16, 18, 21, 23, 25-45		16 - 1st group
none	2nd obligation	50,000 est with Fr.16	plates 17, 19, 20, 22, 24		17c
none	2nd obligation	150,000 est with Fr.16	plates 17, 19, 20, 22, 24		16a
none	2nd obligation	5,854,000	plates 17, 19, 20, 22, 24		16 - 2nd group
none	2nd obligation	4,946,000			16c
					\$2 1862
30 JUNE 1857	2nd obligation	10,000 est	error - plate number omitted	6	41b
30 JUNE 1857	2nd obligation	178,000 est	error - plate number omitted	6	41c
30 JUNE 1857	2nd obligation	12,000 est	error - seal inverted & no plate no.	3	41d
30 JUNE 1857	2nd obligation	8,511,160 est			41a
30 JUNE 1857	2nd obligation	8,318,840			41
					\$5 1862/1863
30 JUNE 1857	1st obligation	100,000			61
30 JUNE 1857	1st obligation	5,750,000 est			61a
30 JUNE 1857	1st obligation	1,150,000 est			61b
30 JUNE 1857	1st obligation	4,900,000			61c
30 JUNE 1857	2nd obligation	2,300,000			62
30 JUNE 1857	2nd obligation	4,132,764			63
none	2nd obligation	1,000,000			63a
none	2nd obligation	867,236			63b
					\$10 1862/1863
30 JUNE 1857	1st obligation	60,000 est	no starburst bottom	5	93a
30 JUNE 1857	1st obligation	20,000 est with Fr.93a	starburst bottom	2	93a-l
30 JUNE 1857	1st obligation	120,000 est with Fr.93c	no starburst bottom		93b
30 JUNE 1857	1st obligation	2,220,000 est	starburst bottom		93c
none (error)	1st obligation	60,000 est with Fr.93b	no starburst bottom	5	93e
none (error)	1st obligation	20,000 est with Fr.93c	starburst bottom	3	93f
30 JUNE 1857	1st obligation	200,000 est	starburst bottom	7	93d
30 JUNE 1857	1st obligation	3,600,000 est	starburst bottom		93
30 JUNE 1857	2nd obligation	1,500,000	starburst bottom		94
30 JUNE 1857	2nd obligation	2,430,504	starburst bottom		95
April 28, 1863	2nd obligation	370,000	starburst bottom		95c
April 28, 1863	2nd obligation	400,000	starburst bottom		95a
April 28, 1863	2nd obligation	800,496	starburst bottom		95b
					\$20 1862/1863
30 JUNE 1857	1st obligation	100,000		2	124a
30 JUNE 1857	1st obligation	1,050,000 est			124b
30 JUNE 1857	1st obligation	1,250,000 est			124
30 JUNE 1857	2nd obligation	800,000			125
30 JUNE 1857	2nd obligation	920,984			126
none	2nd obligation	225,000			126a
none	2nd obligation	66,016 est	error - left serial number was misplaced	9	126c
none	2nd obligation	734,000 est			126b
					\$50 1862/1863
30 JUNE 1857	1st obligation	260,000 est			148
30 JUNE 1857	1st obligation	173,600 est		6	148a
30 JUNE 1857	2nd obligation	32,000			150
30 JUNE 1857	2nd obligation	70,504		1	150b
April 28, 1863	2nd obligation	65,000			150a
					\$100 1862/1863
30 JUNE 1857	1st obligation	100,000		1	165
30 JUNE 1857	1st obligation	35,000 est		2	165b
30 JUNE 1857	1st obligation	155,000 est		6	165a
30 JUNE 1857	2nd obligation	24,000		2	167b
30 JUNE 1857	2nd obligation	29,440		2	167
30 JUNE 1857	2nd obligation	56,560			167a
					\$500 1862/1863
30 JUNE 1857	1st obligation	26,000		1	183
30 JUNE 1857	1st obligation	12,000	possibly printed		183a
30 JUNE 1857	2nd obligation	5,000	possibly printed		183b
30 JUNE 1857	2nd obligation	22,828	error - plate date should be Mar 10, 1863		183e
30 JUNE 1857	2nd obligation	22,000	error - plate date should be Mar 10, 1863	3	183c
none	2nd obligation	8,000		1	183f
none	2nd obligation	20,000		1	183d
					\$1000 1862/1863
30 JUNE 1857	1st obligation	12,000			186
30 JUNE 1857	1st obligation	10,000	possibly printed		186a
30 JUNE 1857	2nd obligation	2,500	possibly printed		186b
30 JUNE 1857	2nd obligation	24,904	error - plate date should be Mar 10, 1863	1	186c
30 JUNE 1857	2nd obligation	22,000	error - plate date should be Mar 10, 1863		186e-1
none	2nd obligation	64,000		2	186d
none	2nd obligation	20,000		1	186e

Obligations – backs

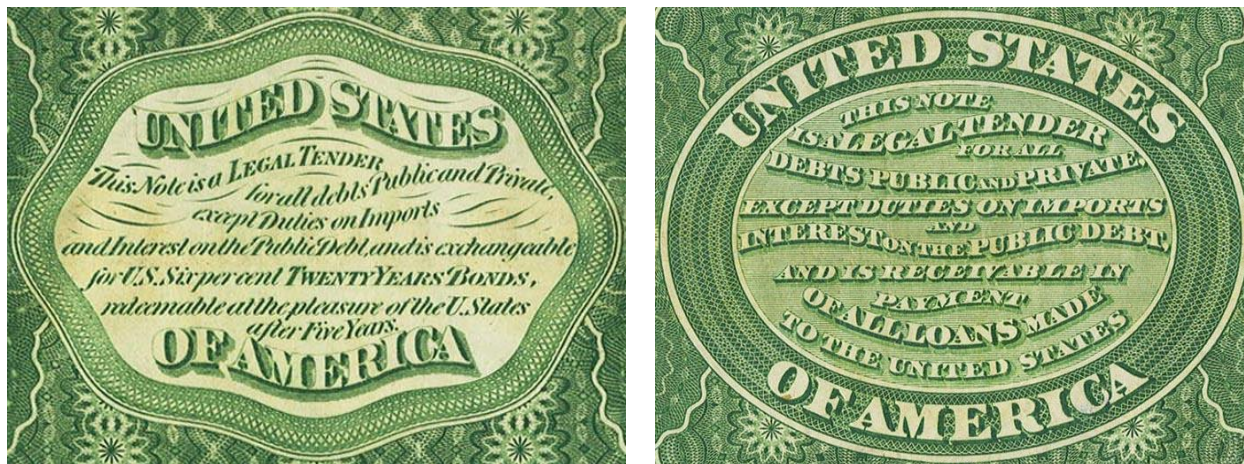


Figure 1. First obligations on left, second on right. The distinction is that the first provides for the exchange of the notes for U. S. bonds.

Several key elements – faces

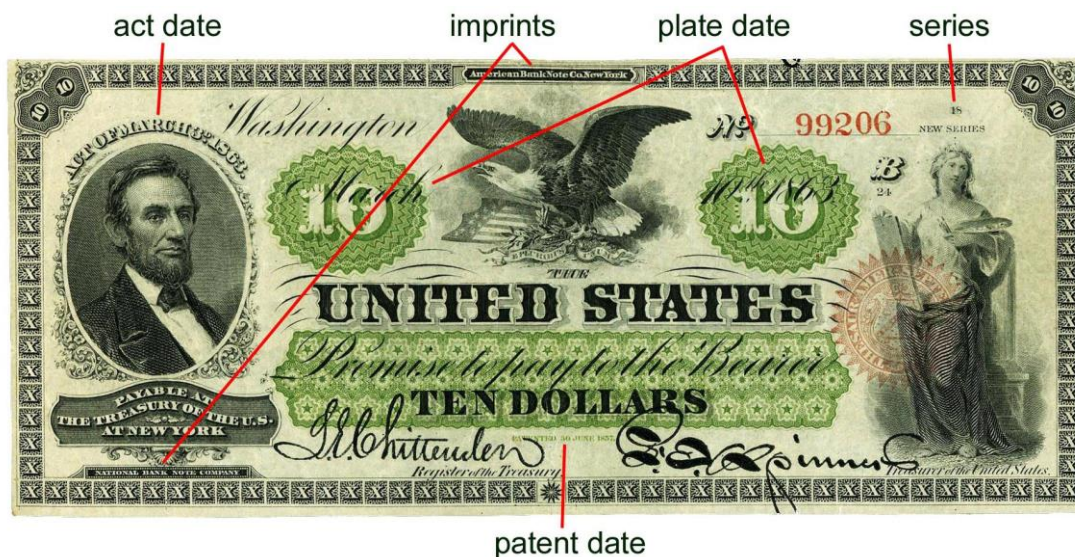


Figure 2. This is a Fr.95 note with March 3, 1863 act date, American & National bank note company imprints, March 10, 1863 plate date, series = 18 New Series, and 30 JUNE 1857 patent date.

Series Numbers

The serial numbering system used on these notes is coupled with the series. Each denomination began with Series 1. The numbering heads used by the bank note companies had five number wheels so the highest number they could print was 99999. However, they hand set 100000 to round out a series. They then advanced the series and printed the next 100000 and so on.

In order to change the series, which was a number etched into the surface of the face plates, they had to burnish off the old number and etch in the next.

In some cases, they did not etch in a 1 for the first 100,000 notes. See \$5 Fr.61, \$20 124a, \$100 165, \$500 183, 183a, \$1000 186, 186a. The series number was omitted by mistake on some \$2 Fr.41b, 41c, 41d notes.

Figure 3. Someone put together this neat pair, not a rollover pair because the 100000 is series 73 and the 1 is series 20. The 100000 had to be hand set because the numbering heads had only 5 number wheels. Lyn Knight Auction photo.



Bank Note Company Imprints

The contracts for engraving the master dies for the various denominations were spread among the American and National bank note companies as follows: National \$1, \$2, \$50, \$100, American \$5, \$10, \$20, \$500, \$1000, so their respective imprints were placed on the dies.

However, a second imprint occurs on most notes, some being duplicates, others being the other company. We have not found an official explanation for the second imprint or discerned a pattern that explains every instance. We simply don't understand how the imprint system worked.

Patent Dates



Figure 4. George Matthews' June 30, 1857 and Asahel K. Eaton's April 28, 1863 patent dates on 1862 and 1863 Legal Tender Notes were for anti-photographic green tint inks.

The green ink used to print the green tints on the faces of the notes were patented anti-counterfeiting inks. The patent holders claimed the green couldn't be removed without damaging the black intaglio printing and the paper, which would prevent counterfeiters from obtaining a sharp photographic image of the black overlay. The Treasury paid a royalty for the use of the inks, first for the Matthews and next for the Eaton formulas; however, neither worked. The patented inks were then dropped from use.

The patent dates were incorporated into the designs of the intaglio plates used to print the green tints. Their locations varied depending on denomination, but they are found free-standing under some part of the tint. They can be difficult to see on well-circulated specimens. The Eaton ink is decidedly bluish.

The June 30, 1857 date was omitted from one or more of the tint plates used to print \$10 1862 Series 5 through 7 notes, thus creating the Fr. 93e & f varieties, which technically classify as errors.

Monograms



Figure 5. Bank note company monograms: ABC on Fr.17a (left) and N on Fr.95b (right).



Corporate monograms were added to a few of the face plates, probably to reveal who printed them. See ABC for \$5 Fr.16a, 17a, 17b, 17c, 17d, \$100 Fr.165 and N for \$10 Fr.95c.

Seals



Figure 6. The background behind the shield is solid on the first seal (left).

Starburst on some \$10s



Figure 7. The bottom border of the \$10s come without (top) and with (bottom) a starburst in the center.

The first six \$10 plates were altered Demand Note plates. They have no starburst in the center of the lower border. Successive plates made exclusively for the legal tender issues incorporate the starburst. This detail applies only to the \$10 notes and is listed in the column labeled "Special Characteristics."

