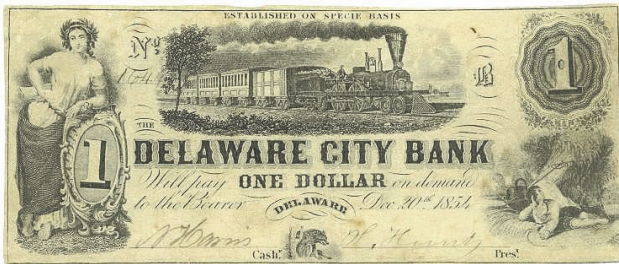


# Obsolete Currency Counterfeiters: Doty & Bergen Part 1: A Counterfeit Tale of Two Cities

by Terry A. Bryan

Notes ostensibly made for the Delaware City Bank in Kansas are among the most interesting fakes in the Obsolete Currency series. Delaware City, Kansas may have been a real estate developer's dream, but it never met expectations. There was never any bank there; there were businesses, a church, and a steam ferry across the Missouri River. River trade was its sole reason for being, inasmuch as the backcountry was too rough for good road access. A post office was established in 1855. By 1870 the entire Township of Delaware boasted only 1,641 residents, a small part of populous Leavenworth County. The town did not contribute much to the township numbers. It remains only as one of Kansas' many ghost towns.



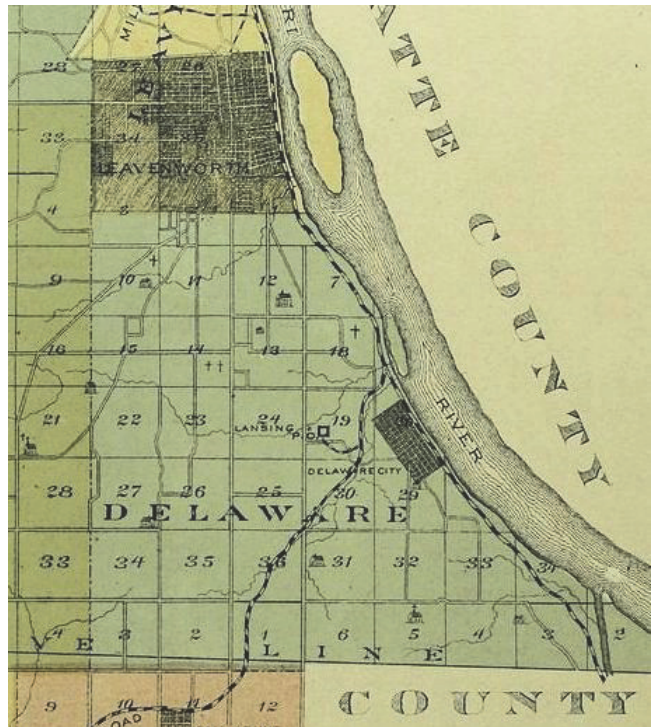
Spurious notes for the Delaware City Bank, Kansas form an odd series. \$1 from the first series has printed 1854 date and hidden "KAN" in the shrubbery.

Delaware is a common place name in Kansas mostly because the Delaware Indians were moved to reservations there in the 1830s. The Lenni-Lenape tribes in the East Coast Delaware River lands were called the Delaware Indians by white authorities. Development forced their migration to Ohio lands and their later removal to Kansas. There is a Delaware River in Kansas and many Delaware Streets in cities.

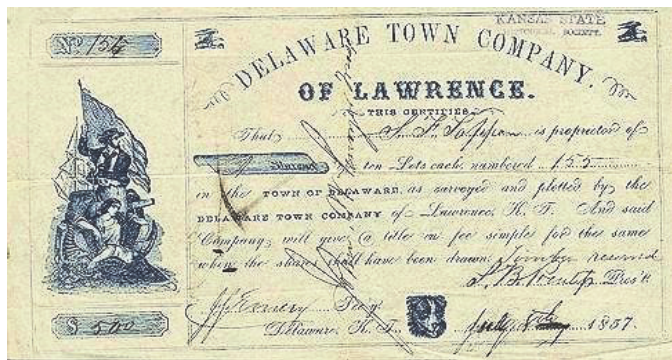
Northeastern Kansas was a terrible place in the 1850s. "Free Staters" and pro-slavery forces clashed, and many areas were strongholds of local militias. One raid resulted in some buildings in Delaware City being burned. "Ruffian outrages" occurred in many places. Pro-slavery at the beginning, the land to be Delaware City was purchased by a group of Free Staters in 1857, and a

hotel was established along a road south out of Leavenworth.

A promotional ad for the development specified shorter distances from the Missouri River for freight service to various towns, including touting a shorter road distance to inland Lawrence. The broadside did not specify the 35-mile distance to Lawrence, only that the landing saved 5 miles, compared to upstream Leavenworth. The Delaware Town Company of Lawrence, Kansas sold stock to investors to get the development going. That same year, a company of Free State local militia was organized in Delaware City to police election balloting. The town's outline is shown on an 1870s railroad map of Kansas. However, it is noted elsewhere that the place had only one or two houses in 1870.



Delaware Township, Kansas map shows a street grid on the Missouri River south of Leavenworth. Anything that was ever there is now gone.



The Delaware Town Company sold lots in the development of Delaware City in 1857.

The Kansas State Historical Society states that a street grid exists in some form, and it is shown on the contemporary county map. Google Maps™ shows coordinates for the place name, but exactly nothing on unnamed dirt roads and on featureless satellite images along the Missouri River south of Leavenworth. The red Google pushpin specifies “Delaware City”; properties of the Kansas and Federal Penitentiaries encroach on the area. Perhaps engineering the River course has wiped out any sign of the place. Modern Corps of Engineers’ maps show the “Delaware Bend” in the Missouri, but the banks are completely undeveloped on both sides.

The author polled adjacent homeowners by mail and paid a visit to the area after IPMS 2019. The River is not visible from any public road, and residents are unaware of any sign of the former development. One resident at the banks of a named creek that flowed through Delaware City did not know that the tiny watercourse had a name. There is simply nothing left, nor much local enthusiasm to go searching.

Doty and Bergen of New York, by attribution, are presumed to have manufactured bank notes for an imaginary bank in Delaware City, Kansas dated during the time that the town was being developed. There is no way to know the exact year of manufacture. It was not unreasonable for a faraway legitimate engraver and printer to fulfill such an order. The notes that survive today are relatively high-quality productions. One odd feature of the designs was an effort to minimize the word “KANSAS” or “KAN.”

While the notes all feature a hidden reference to Kansas, the state name printed in the lower center has been altered. The plates had two references to Kansas on each note; printed notes retain an inconspicuous Kansas location, and a second

mention of the state has been eradicated...on every note examined. Ease of alteration of the state name to another state appears to be the motive for the inconspicuous Kansas lettering. Notes may have been passed unchanged as Kansas notes (category: spurious), but all survivors observed have the second “Kansas” or “KAN.” bleached or blotted out (category: spurious, altered). A few examples of these versatile fakes are known to have more major alterations, including increasing the printed denominations (category: spurious, altered, raised all in one note!).

All, or the great majority, of these notes were apparently created to be passed as notes from the Delaware City Bank in the State of Delaware. The dual nature of these notes has gotten them listed under two states in the Haxby reference.



The State of Delaware town had a prosperous bank during the peak of canal operations. The building still stands prominent in the little town.

Delaware City, Delaware was also a riverside town, the river being the Delaware River. It was the eastern terminus of the Chesapeake & Delaware Canal laid out in the 1820s. The word “city” proved to be overly enthusiastic once railroads cut into canal trade, but the town persists. Most recent census data have the Delaware town about the same size as the population of the entire 1870 township that contained the failed namesake in Kansas, about 1,650.

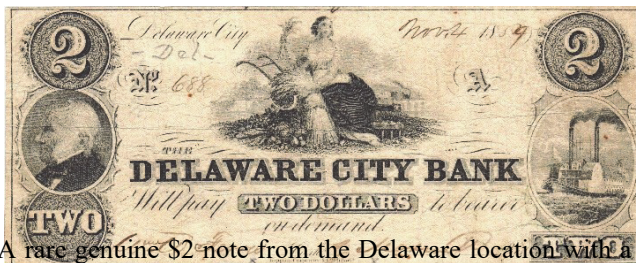


The Chesapeake & Delaware Canal had locks and a towpath (on right). The modern Canal bypasses Delaware City with heavy ship traffic.

The failed optimism of the development of Delaware City, Kansas was based on Missouri River trade to railroads and a primitive inland road system. The grandly-named Delaware City, Delaware hitched its hopes to canal business. The Chesapeake & Delaware Canal remains as one of the busiest canals in the U.S., based on the number of ship transits. Early boosters of this 14-mile project were some Founding Fathers, notably Ben Franklin. The advantage of joining the Delaware River with the Chesapeake Bay was stimulated by early surveys that mapped the proximity of the two waterways across the narrow part of the DelMarVa Peninsula.

Delaware City, Delaware and Chesapeake City, Maryland remain as quiet villages at either end of the Canal. The entrance from the Delaware River is now south of town after elimination of the historic lock system and straightening the waterway by the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers. The Chesapeake end of the Canal features a museum with original pumping equipment for the former locks. Both “city” ends of the C&D Canal are tourist destinations for old buildings, cute shops and nice restaurants.

The Delaware City Bank (Delaware) was established in 1849, during a profitable period in canal operations. The Bank continued conservative ethical operations, and it converted to a National Bank (#1332) in 1865. Probably because of its out-of-the-way location, it was the target of counterfeiters. Very few genuine notes are known, and some notes previously identified as counterfeits compare well with genuine plates which still exist. Fraudulent Kansas bank notes would not have troubled the Delaware firm much, not being seen locally. For whatever reason, counterfeiters singled out this small Delaware bank.



A rare genuine \$2 note from the Delaware location with a portrait of John Quincy Adams. Plates exist for this bank's notes. The small bank was a target for counterfeiters.

Most state-chartered banks did business in a small area, and they likely saw few bad notes come over the counter. Their problem was with disposition

of bad notes of remote banks. The tellers and cashiers had to decide on “foreign” paper. If a question remained it was easy to reject the note and debit the account of the depositor, or simply hand the note back to an unfamiliar customer. Counterfeits did not much affect the bottom line of the bank, in other words.

The Delaware City Bank (Delaware) issued \$1, \$3, \$5, \$10, \$20, \$50 and \$100 notes. It was the only bank in town. The high point of business and trade occurred during the Civil War. Fort Delaware, in the middle of the Delaware River opposite the town had developed into a huge masonry fort with powerful naval cannon. During the Civil War, it was a major Union Military prison. Delaware City was the supply point for the Fort and prison...and an escape route for Confederates heading south. Fort Delaware is a magnificent tourist attraction accessible by boat excursions from Delaware City today.



Gigantic Fort Delaware became a Union prison during the Civil War. Excursions are popular to the Fort on its Delaware River island off Delaware City.

*Paper Money* columnist Joseph E. Boling examined Delaware, Kansas counterfeits and found them to be intaglio-engraved work. They compare well with most spurious obsolete notes. Although Haxby attributes these Kansas notes to the firm of Doty & Bergen, this determination is not explained in the Kansas section. The engravers were apparently legitimate businessmen on a smaller scale than the familiar firms. Bowers' *Whitman Encyclopedia of Obsolete Currency* does not include the attribution at all.

All of these Kansas notes are spurious. There was never a real bank. Haxby designates notes from non-existent banks as “genuine” with the prefix letter G. They are genuine notes for the bank by that interpretation, although the whole enterprise is a fantasy. One cannot argue with the systematic cataloging of notes in Haxby; it is a magnificent work. The irony of the “G” rating is not lost, however.

The Delaware City, Kansas notes are odd. There are two series, one with the printed date of 1854 (1855 appears on slightly altered notes for

another bank fraud, see below). The other series prints 185- and examples are filled in for 1858, rarely 1859. The general appearance of the first series is more characteristic of notes from the 1840s. The second series gives more of an 1850s impression.



The first series of spurious Kansas notes is dated 1854. This is the \$2 from the series of \$1, \$2 and \$5 notes.



Five dollar spurious Kansas note. All the first series have "KAN" in the bushes.



Ten dollar Kansas counterfeit, first series. Merely the \$1 with adroit pasting of tens in the right places.

The first series includes two minor varieties of \$1, a \$2 and a \$5 denomination. The plate may have been for \$1-\$1-\$2-\$5, but all the plate letters are "B". Ones of the first series are also found raised to Tens. The second series contains only \$1 and \$2 notes. The Kansas designation on all the notes is hidden away. All of the first series notes have "KAN." concealed in the shrubbery under the upper right counter. Haxby incorrectly notes this shrubbery word to be "KANSAS", and "KANSAS T." elsewhere, but it is just the abbreviation.

All these notes had "KAN." below the word "DELAWARE" in the lower center (1854 series) or "KANSAS" below "DELAWARE CITY" in the center (185- series). This state name has been erased

on all known notes, and curved lines conceal the former location on some. Observation of about 20 examples of series 1 notes and 10 examples of series 2 proves that all of them have had erasures from the bottom center (above the little bear or eagle vignette). A few notes show clear remnants of the letters.



One dollar of the second series of fakes. Dates are printed 185- on these, and KANSAS is along the right margin line above center. These are mostly dated 1858.



Two dollars from the second series. The portrait is Elias Budinot. This note was the basis for a number of alterations to several state locations.



Notes of the first series (\$ 1, 2, 5, 10) have "KAN" in among the decorative vines around the upper right counters. It is open to speculation as to why make the location so obscure.

The second series of Kansas notes all have "KANSAS" in the right margin line above center. The majority of these notes have had the location concealed by convenient ink blots, careful trimming and erasing, or by artful tearing to simulate normal wear. Only a few of these notes retain the subtle KANSAS intact, but it is difficult to see.



Notes of the second series (\$1, \$2) have "KANSAS" up the right margin line for ease of concealment with ink blots or adroit tearing.



ALL these Kansas spurious notes have been altered by erasure of "KAN" or "KANSAS" from the lower center. Here, a faint remnant of the letters is visible.

This is very odd. Why manufacture notes from sophisticated engraved plates and make the location poorly visible? It appears that the notes were printed for the sole purpose of passing as State of Delaware notes. Why bother to put any “KANSAS” or KAN.” on any of the notes? One idea is that a legitimate engraver might accept a print job wherein the notes contain complete information. An eastern bank note company would have no information that the bank itself was a fraud. Another possibility is that a criminal engraver could reasonably state to police that he thought it was an honest commission from a distant bank.

Haxby lists these notes under both Kansas and Delaware. Perhaps they could be passed as Kansas notes in the East and Delaware notes in the West. The evidence that all have been altered suggests that Delaware was the main target of the fakers. They were not manufactured in either state, and they have no relationship to any legitimate Kansas bank, nor do they resemble genuine Delaware notes.

The Haxby numbers for these notes are:

\$1	KS-20G2	DE-10A5	(1854 series)
Two types, subtle differences.			
\$1	KS-20G4	DE-10A10	(185 series)
\$2	KS-20G6	DE-10A15	(1854 series)
\$2	KS-20G8	DE-10A20	(185 series)
\$5	KS-20G10	DE-10A25	(1854 series)
\$10	KS-20G12	DE-10A30	(1854 series)
Raised KS-20G2,DE-10A5			

Collectors have little trouble finding the Kansas/Delaware notes. The \$1 KS-20 G2 and \$2 KS-20 G8 are the most available. Ironically, a youth book on the history of money show a Kansas spurious note as the sole example of Obsolete Currency.

Easton, Kansas about 20 miles northwest of Delaware City, Kansas, also had an imaginary bank, complete with bank notes. The \$1, \$2 and \$5 notes of the 1854 Del. City series were altered by changing the printed date to Sept. 20, 1855 (Haxby KS-25G2, G4, G6, G8 raised \$1 to \$10). The date change might have been necessitated by the change of the community’s name and the establishment of the Easton post office in 1855. Fakers also removed “Established on Specie Basis” from the top edge, and removed “DELAWARE/KANSAS” and the bear vignette. The lower center now shows a sheaf of wheat below “EASTON”. “KAN” is still hidden in

the upper right shrubbery. These Easton versions are misstated in Haxby to be altered from Delaware City, Delaware notes, and the Delaware City, Kansas notes appear on the same page. Haxby omits the Doty & Bergen attribution in the Delaware state note listing.

The Bank of Easton, Maryland was also the victim of Kansas counterfeits. Haxby lists a \$2 note of the 1854 series as MD-180 A5. All the “EASTON” notes are altered from Delaware City, Kansas notes. Noting the different fonts used for “EASTON” (Kansas and Maryland) proves that the paper notes were altered and not the plate. The Haxby reference to an altered plate is incorrect. Confused yet?

**To summarize:**

*New York engravers Doty & Bergen are implicated in the production of spurious notes.*

*Notes were printed for a non-existent bank in Delaware City, Kansas, designed for easy alteration to a legitimate bank in Delaware City, Delaware and to others.*

*All these “Kansas” notes have a reference to Kansas erased, plus a concealed state name. All are spurious AND altered notes.*

*The bi-state nature of the fakes creates catalog confusion.*

[Part 2 of this article (in an upcoming issue of *Paper Money*) lists the Doty & Bergen notes represented in the Haxby reference.]

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## 50<sup>th</sup> Annual New York International Numismatic Convention

# NYINC

The NYIN convention will once again be held at the Grand Hyatt New York, located at 109 East 42<sup>nd</sup> Street, between Park and Lexington Avenues January 7-16, 2022. The Grand Hyatt also enjoys a direct indoor connection to Grand Central Station.

The roster of educational presentations has expanded to include a program by Dr. Bruce Smart, *Collecting World Paper Money: Banknotes of the Belgian Congo*.

A graduate of the University of Missouri at Kansas City, Smart went on to earn a Ph.D. in chemistry in 1970 from the University of California at Berkley. He had a 35-year career as a scientist and in corporate research management for the DuPont Company, retiring in 2005. Dr. Smart is a 53-year member of the American Chemical Society and a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.



Dr. Smart's collecting interests started in 1995 and he began a specialization in world notes in 2000. He has served as a consultant, cataloger and show representative for R.M. Smythe and Company as well as Spink USA. He currently consults for Heritage Numismatic Auctions. He is a member of the International Bank Note Society, the Society of Paper Money Collectors and the New York Numismatic Club. Spink & Sons has held two charity auction sales of his banknote collections: "The Bruce Smart Collections of the Middle East & North Africa" in 2016 and "The Bruce Smart Collections of British Commonwealth – Parts One & Two" in 2017.

He continues to collect Kansas City, Missouri national banknotes as well as adding to his major collection of Belgian Congo material. His reading interests focus on Central African exploration in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Kevin Foley, Bourse Chairman for the NYINC said, "World banknote collecting is an especially strong and growing segment of the rare currency collecting field. Dr. Smart is recognized as a serious and accomplished researcher in the field of his NYINC presentation, which will certainly be enhanced by the depth of his knowledge of Central African exploration. I'm especially pleased to have him participate in our 50<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention educational efforts."

Bourse dates for the NYINC will be Thursday through Sunday, January 13-16. The NYINC website, [www.nyinc.info](http://www.nyinc.info), includes a listing of participating dealers, the full schedule of events and a "Hotel Reservations" tab that enables site visitors to access a dedicated NYINC reservations page on the Hyatt website. Room rates for the NYINC begin at \$189. Dealers interested in bourse space at the foreign and ancient specialty event can contact Foley at (414) 807-01116, or via e-mail at [kevinsfoley.kf@gmail.com](mailto:kevinsfoley.kf@gmail.com).