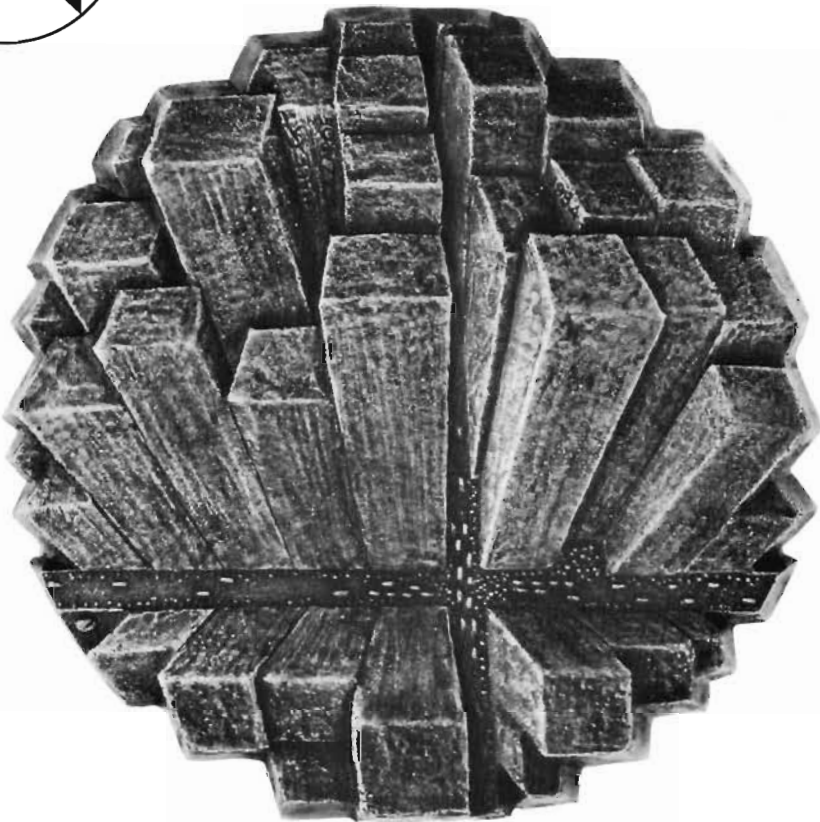


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AUSTRALIAN HIGH VALUE SUPERSCRIBED NOTES

By MICHAEL P. VORT-RONALD

For over 70 years, detailed information about the Australian Government's first high denomination notes have eluded researchers. Until now, it was believed that all superscribed note registers except the first book for £1, £5 and £10 notes had been destroyed.

Whilst it may still be correct that the remaining registers for the lower

denominations were destroyed, the former mystery about the high denominations can now be solved because of the recent location of the appropriate high-value registers by staff of the Reserve Bank of Australia Archives. These registers give details of which banks' notes were superscribed, in what quantities, and how many are outstanding.



£20.0.0.

It would appear that about 23,000 forms of various banks were superscribed before the initial supply was exhausted. This assertion is based on the record in the register for serial numbers from D022001 to D023000 where it is stated that forms of the following banks were used. Bank of New South Wales, Commercial Bank of Tasmania, English Scottish and Australian Bank, Bank of Victoria, Bank of Adelaide and Union Bank. This was probably a mixture of all but two of the remaining forms, and no quantities of particular banks' forms are given for this 1,000 notes.

National Bank of Australasia forms were then almost exclusively used. They were ordered from the printers, Bradbury Wilkinson and Co. in England and shipped out to Australia. Details of these shipments are given in "Banks of Issue in Australia" at pages 307 and 308. The 20,000 additional forms of this bank are bank serial numbers W0001 to W20000.

The register shows that from D023001-D043200 all forms used were National Bank, except two Bank of New South Wales forms with perhaps superscribed serial numbers D029999 and

D030000 and 200 notes either not issued or numbers not allocated (D032801-033000). This accounts for the 20,000 forms shipped out. Although printed, notes with superscribed numbers D023001-024000 and 041001-043000 were never issued from bulk stock.

From the register, the following totals of banks' forms have been calculated, and were presumably issued unless stated otherwise.

National Bank of Australasia	20,698
(includes 3,000 not issued)	
Bank of New South Wales	5,602 +
Union Bank of Australia	5,000 +
Bank of Adelaide	4,900 +
Commercial Bank of Tasmania	1,700 +
Bank of Victoria	1,500 +
English Scottish and	
Australian Bank	1,100 +
Cancelled (possibly Union Bank)	1,000
City Bank of Sydney	500
+ (= various banks)	1,000
Total	<u>43,000</u>

In September 1950, only 39 of these notes were recorded as outstanding, nearly all of which are presumed lost or destroyed. Only two have been observed in the last ten years. Both first appeared in the Spink-Stern auction of October 1975.

The Union Bank of Australia £20 bore the bank serial number 3 over F, 1668, superscribed serial number D017443. It was purchased by a well-known Victorian collector with a passion for superscribed notes, for \$2,800. It was then described as being in very fine condition with slightly frayed edges and slight stains with an ink mark.

The other note in that auction was a National Bank of Australasia 20, bank number W18112, superscribed number D036889. Described as about extremely fine condition, it sold for \$3,250. This note had originally been in the Ray Jewell, Syd Hagley and Walsgot collections.

The same National Bank £20 appeared in the November 1980 Spink Auction where

it sold for \$10,500 and in the November 1981 Spink Auction where it sold for \$11,500.

No other high denomination superscribed notes, including £50 or £100, are known to exist except those which have been preserved in some museum and bank collections, but those are cancelled notes, and are not included in the totals of notes shown as outstanding.

The following superscribed numbers were allocated:

D000001-003000	Bank of Adelaide
D003001-004000	Bank of New South Wales (300)
	National Bank of Australasia (700)
D004001-005000	Bank of Victoria (500)
	City Bank of Sydney (500)
D005001-008000	Bank of New South Wales
D008001-009000	Bank of New South Wales (Adelaide)
D009001-010000	Bank of New South Wales (Sydney)
D010001-011000	Commercial Bank of Tasmania (700)
	Bank of New South Wales (300)
D011001-012000	Commercial Bank of Tasmania
D012001-013000	Bank of Victoria
D130001-014000	English Scottish and Australian Bank
D014001-015000	English Scottish and Australian Bank (100)
	Bank of Adelaide (900)
D015001-016000	Bank of Adelaide
D016001-021000	Union Bank of Australia
D021001-022000	Cancelled (Union Bank?)
D022001-023000	Bank of New South Wales, Commercial Bank of Tasmania, English Scottish and Australian Bank, Bank of Victoria, Bank of Adelaide, Union Bank of Australia
D023001-024000	National Bank of Australasia — never issued from bulk stock

D024001-029000	National Bank of Australasia	Australasia — never issued
D029001-030000	National Bank of Australasia (998)	D033001-041000 National Bank of Australasia
	Bank of New South Wales (2)	D041001-043000 National Bank of Australasia — never issued
D030001-032800	National Bank of Australasia	D043001-043200 National Bank of Australasia
D032801-033000	National Bank of	



£50.0.0.

From the register, the following totals of banks' forms have been calculated, and were presumably issued. In August 1950, only 26 notes were outstanding.

National Bank of Australasia	13,850
Bank of Victoria	4,891
Bank of Adelaide	2,998
English Scottish and Australian Bank	2,861
Bank of New South Wales	2,097
Union Bank of Australia	1,290
Bank of Australasia	1,129
City Bank of Sydney	477
Australian Bank of Commerce	459
Total	<u>32,500</u>

The following superscribed numbers were allocated:

G000001-001000	Bank of Victoria
G001001-002000	Bank of Adelaide
G002001-003000	Australian Bank of Commerce (100)
	Bank of Adelaide (900)
G003001-004000	Bank of Adelaide
G004001-006000	Bank of New South Wales
G006001-007000	Bank of Victoria (Melbourne) (900)
	Australian Bank of Commerce (100)
G007001-008000	Union Bank of Australia
G008001-010000	English Scottish and Australian Bank

G010001-011000 Union Bank of Australia (Melbourne) (200)
English Scottish and Australian Bank (800)

G011001-012000 Bank of New South Wales (90)
City Bank of Sydney (477)
English Scottish and Australian Bank (3)
Australian Bank of Commerce (250)
Bank of Victoria (90)
Bank of Adelaide (90)

G012001-013000 English Scottish and Australian Bank (2)
Bank of Australasia (110)
National Bank of Australasia (300)
London Bank of Australia (498)
Union Bank of Australia (90)

G013001-014000 Bank of Australasia

G014001-017000 National Bank of Australasia

G017001-018000 Bank of Victoria (996)
English Scottish and Australian Bank (4)

G018001-019000 Bank of Victoria

G019001-020000 Bank of Adelaide (8)
Bank of Victoria (905?)
English Scottish and Australian Bank (52)
Bank of Australasia (19)
Australian Bank of Commerce (9)
Bank of New South Wales (7)

G020001-021000 London Bank of Australia

G021001-022000 London Bank of Australia (500)
National Bank of Australasia (500)

G022001-032050 National Bank of Australasia

Notes G031167 and G031595 were issued as specimen notes.

£100.0.0.

From the register, the following totals of banks' forms have been calculated, and were presumably issued. In September 1950, only five notes were outstanding.

National Bank of Australasia	6,603
Bank of New South Wales	2,048
London Bank of Australia	750
Bank of Australasia	550
	<u>9,951</u>

The following superscribed serial numbers were allotted.

F000010-001000	Bank of New South Wales
F001001-002000	Bank of New South Wales (Sydney)
F003001-004000	London Bank of Australia (250) National Bank of Australasia (Victoria) (150) Bank of Australasia (550)
	Bank of New South Wales (40) London Bank of Australia (10)
F004001-004998	National Bank of Australasia (500) London Bank of Australia (490) Bank of New South Wales (8)
F004999-005037	(numbers not printed)
F005038-009990	National Bank of Australasia

Although the last page in this register goes to number F010000, "end of delivery" appears after F009990. Numbers F006861 and F006862 were issued as specimens (National Bank).

The comparatively small amount of notes superscribed in this denomination makes a cross-referencing to information in "Banks of Issue in Australia" practical in an article of this nature. Similar information is available in "Banks of Issue" for other denominations.



The National Bank initially supplied 1,200 notes with bank serial numbers 1801-2000 (Victoria) and various other numbers. Of these, 1,000 were superscribed F002001 to F003000. A further 150, if used in the order as listed in the register, may have received superscribed numbers F003251 to 003400. A further 5,500 notes were ordered from the printers Bradbury Wilkinson and Co. These bore bank serial numbers T1 to T5500. Of these, 500 were possibly given superscribed numbers F004001 to F004500. The remainder were probably F005001 to F009990, but serial numbers were not printed from F004999 to F005037.

The Bank of New South Wales supplied 1,750 notes with bank serial numbers as follows:

751-800 (Melbourne) (50)
 1101-1300 (Adelaide) (200)
 1301-2300 (Sydney) (1000)
 2801-3300 (Melbourne) (500)

The 1,000 Sydney domiciled notes received superscribed serial numbers F001001 to F002000. Official records show that the Bank of New South Wales

supplied only 1,750 notes, but the register indicates a further 1,000 notes received superscribed serial numbers F000001 to F001000, 40 notes with possibly F003951 to F003990 and 8 notes with possibly F004991 to F004998. Thus 2,048 notes are shown as having been superscribed against the record of only 1,750 supplied.

The London Bank of Australia initially supplied 250 notes with bank serial numbers:

a601 - a650 (Victoria) (50)
 a 1 - a100 (S.A.) (100)
 f f
 101 - 200 (N.S.W.) (100)

These were possibly superscribed with numbers F003001 to F003250. A further 500 notes were ordered from the printers Bradbury Wilkinson and Co. with bank serial numbers T1 to T500. These may have received superscribed serial numbers F003991 to F004000 and F004501 to F004990.

The Bank of Australasia supplied 800 notes with serial numbers 1001 to 1300 and 4001 to 4500. From those notes 550

possibly received superscribed numbers F003401 to F003950.

Individual spaces in the register indicate the notes outstanding as next listed.

F001096, F001255, F001489, Bank of New South Wales (Sydney)
F004199, possibly National Bank of Australasia
F005037, National Bank of Australasia.

References: Superscribed registers in the custody of the Reserve Bank of Australia Archives, Sydney: "Banks of Issue in Australia" written and published in 1982 by Michael P. Vort-Ronald. At page 287 of "Banks of Issue" the following information should be added near the bottom of the page.

VS.30 £50.0.0. 480 notes. Bank serial numbers: D000521-D001000.

Photographs supplied:
£20.0.0. W02111, superscribed D024809, courtesy of the Reserve Bank of Australia. (National Bank).
£50.0.0. Bank of Victoria s/s G011862, and unissued £100 London Bank of Australia note, courtesy of the Art Gallery of South Australia.