FAIRBANKS' INFALLIBLE, MARK.

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT STANDARD.

FULL STANDARD AND LEAST LEGALLY CURRENT WEIGHT OF UNITED STATES GOLD COINS.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coin Type</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dollar</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Half Dollar</td>
<td>0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quarter</td>
<td>0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dime</td>
<td>0.10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DIRECTIONS: Place the Coin on the proper plate of the Scale, the Pointer will rest and indicate the weight of the Coin. If you lose the weight, place the Coin on the Scale, and the Pointer will point to the weight of the Coin.

THE FAIRBANKS' INFALLIBLE SCALE CO.,

W. H. HARRISON, MANAGER, BALTIMORE, MD.

Fairbanks' Infallible Gold and Silver Coin Scale, and Counterfeit Coin Detector, Approved and in use by the United States Government.

SENT TO ANY ADDRESS ON RECEIPT OF PRICE, $6.00.
Counterfeit coinage is as old as coinage itself, and over the centuries, governments have come up with various severe punishments for offenders. During the colonial era in America, counterfeiters who were caught faced the death penalty. Despite this, counterfeiting flourished, and by the 1860s, a third of all circulating money was counterfeit. Within a decentralized system of over 1,600 banks and many other financial institutions issuing their own currency, counterfeiters had a relatively easy task. With the Legal Tender Act of 1862, which introduced the U.S. legal-tender currency known as "greenbacks," the first step was taken toward creating a single currency for the United States. But counterfeiting continued unabated, threatening the financial stability of the country. The story that Secretary of the Treasury Hugh McCulloch met with President Lincoln to set up the Secret Service on April 14, 1865, just a few hours before he was shot, might well be apocryphal, but it is clear that the plan to create an organization to suppress the flow of counterfeits was underway. On July 5, 1865, William Wood was sworn in by Hugh McCulloch, and the Secret Service was created. Wood was a highly energetic if somewhat unconventional individual within the government bureaucracy. A former detective and bodyguard, he had also run the Old Capitol Prison in Washington, D.C. Wood quickly established a network of operatives—as Secret Service Agents were then called—who went out to different parts of the United States, in particular the South, to suppress counterfeiting. Although somewhat controversial, Wood's activities led to the establishment of a powerful agency. Thus the government-backed currency began to enjoy a more secure status than the various banknotes, which were much less protected against counterfeiting. By 1877, U.S. currency was issued solely by the government through the Bureau of Engraving and Printing, which further tightened federal control over U.S. currency.

The problems associated with counterfeit money were not confined to currency. Throughout the nineteenth century, counterfeiters also produced coins. An 1879 engraving from the weekly *Leslie's Illustrated* depicts how one might have imaged a raid by operatives of the Secret
Service. On the left, two men use a screw press; a third man is putting the freshly minted counterfeit coins in bags. In the background, two men appear to be preparing the metal for coining. A Secret Service photo from the 1890s shows confiscated equipment such as coin presses, dies, and other equipment.

When one examines some of the records from the archives of the U.S. Secret Service, one sees how widespread counterfeiting operations were in the late nineteenth century. An example is a small book from the New York City Field Office, which gives details of arrests of about eighty counterfeitors made between December 1901 and June 1902. Early on, the Secret Service was required to keep detailed records in order to help with the judicial process, for which accurate and proper recording was essential. Often entire groups were caught at once, such as Morris Weitzmann and his gang, who were arrested by Agent William Flynn at their house at 56 Welling Street in Astoria, New York. Counterfeit coins were primarily twenty-five-cent and ten-cent pieces, as well as "Hebrew coins," which were probably made as souvenirs. The counterfeit coins were described in contemporary reports as being 99 percent silver, "while the true government piece contains only 90 percent silver." Base metals such as lead, pewter, or iron were common for more basic counterfeits; less well known is the popularity of platinum, the "poor man's silver" of the nineteenth century, which was often used for extremely good counterfeit gold coins. If one reads through the contemporary accounts on counterfeiters, their arrests, and their coins, one realizes how prevalent such activities were. Clearly merchants could not rely on law enforcement to deal with the significant number of counterfeit coins and currency in circulation, which threatened many small businesses in towns all over the United States. Thus a large number of coin-detector scales and testers were produced. With such a device in hand, merchants could easily test a coin, which would be placed in its denomination's slot. If it fit correctly and balanced, the coin was deemed legal tender. A counterfeit coin might be of a different diameter, thickness, or weight and hence not balance correctly.

Ultimately it was the persistent work of the Secret Service that brought most of the cottage-industry counterfeitors...
under control. By the late nineteenth century, the Secret Service had established rules that helped with investigations and the judicial process. Standard procedures such as photographing suspects, keeping accurate records, and prompt reporting helped secure convictions of many counterfeiting rings. Suspects were also professionally photographed after their arrest. Exact details of the arrest, age, and identity of each person were made. The names of the special agents, the dates of the trial, the sentence, and the name of the jail were all recorded. Cases such as that of Jonathan Hughes, who was arrested in Iona, New Jersey, on July 17, 1892, show a careful recording of all the necessary information. A neighbor informed on him, and the Secret Service duly arrested him for having produced false coins.
Kings of Counterfeiting
Within the annals of the U.S. Secret Service, certain counterfeiters stand out for their audacity, the quality of their money, or simply their ability to avoid capture. In most of the cases, the agents remain anonymous individuals as they chase the bad guy, who in turn is often portrayed by the press or writers with some admiration. Thus in the public eye even hardened criminals turn into loveable rogues.

William Brockway
Arguably one of the most successful American counterfeiters was William Brockway. Born in 1822, he stood out for his fifty-year career as a counterfeiter, during which he made and passed some outstanding counterfeits of notes and bonds. Having studied chemistry at Yale, Brockway was familiar with the most advanced techniques of electrolysis, by which exact copies of printing plates could be made. One such example is the counterfeit coupon bond of 1881, which was the work of William E. Brockway and his engraver, Charles H. Smith. They were arrested with an accomplice, James B. Doyle, in Chicago on October 21, 1880. In their possession were 244 bonds of $1,000 each, which they had brought from New York. Smith cooperated with the investigation, and Brockway was convicted. The case of these counterfeit bonds only came to the attention of the U.S. Treasury when bonds with duplicate numbers appeared in Washington. It has been suggested that Brockway worked with employees of the U.S. Treasury, who provided him with electrotype copies of the original plates. Thus he was able to counterfeit nearly perfect bonds or notes, which were said to have fooled even Treasury officials. Despite numerous arrests and jail time, Brockway continued his activities into old age. On August 4, 1895, William Brockway, then in his seventies, was arrested in Rockaway Beach as part of a counterfeiting ring that included William E. Wagner and Abbie L. Smith. In his possession were various notes that, in an interview with the New York Times, he claimed to be genuine money. In the end, the Secret Service, then under Chief William P. Hazen, recovered $600,000 in counterfeit notes. He was sentenced to ten years, but in early 1904, he was released slightly early for good behavior and lived the last fifteen years of his life in receipt of a pension from an unnamed source on the condition that he would cease all criminal activities. However, the local police did not trust him altogether. In August 1905, Brockway was arrested a final time, evidently so that a new photo of the aging counterfeiter could be take; he explained to the magistrate that he was going to become “a director in a life-insurance business.” Brockway died at the age of ninety-seven in 1920.
"The smoothest con man ever" of his era was Victor Lustig, who was born in 1890 in Bohemia and lived the life of an aristocratic gentleman as "Count Lustig," traveling all over Europe and the Americas. Utterly charming and fluent in several languages, he pulled off some amazing stunts. Perhaps most famous today was the story of his sale of the Eiffel Tower, which he managed to sell for scrap metal. His victim, André Poisson, was one of several scrap-metal dealers, who received an invitation for a meeting at the Hotel de Crillon in Paris. There the group met Lustig, posing as a French government official, who explained them that maintaining the monument, which was built in 1899, was becoming too expensive. Lustig
was able to persuade even Poisson's wife, who became suspicious of this "government sale," that he was really a corrupt administrator looking for a bribe. This trick seems to have worked, and Poisson paid. Lustig disappeared with the money and Poisson was apparently embarrassed to admit his gullibility and let Lustig depart with the money. A second, almost identical attempt to sell the Eiffel Tower went sour, and the intended victim went to the police. In the United States, Lustig, who was known under various pseudonyms, became wealthy through his many fraudulent deals. They included such unlikely scams as a money-making machine, which he said could reproduce any currency. Lustig was wanted by as many as forty-two law-enforcement agencies in Europe and the United States. Despite several arrests, Lustig often managed to escape prison. It is possible that he would have continued an international life as an imposter and criminal, had he not turned to the production of millions of dollars in fake bills. The counterfeit notes that Victor Lustig distributed in New York City in 1934 were of the highest quality. Engraved by William Watts, a master counterfeit engraver, they were produced in enormous quantities and flooded the market. Watts was arrested in September 1935 and was the key witness against Lustig at his trial. Watts received a ten-year sentence. Lustig was convicted for counterfeiting, but not before escaping from a New York courthouse; he died in 1947 at Alcatraz.

"Shoving the Queer"
Over the last 150 years, the Secret Service has been involved in thousands of cases, most of which are now part of the vast Secret Service archives. Although we often talk about a single person as being the "king of counterfeiting," there is usually a team of people involved. In the accounts of the late nineteenth century, the emphasis is often on the engraver, who sometimes works for the bank whose notes he forges after work. Then there are the people, often women, who pass the counterfeit notes. Here we encounter highly confident, well-dressed individuals, who display such aplomb and respectability that the shopkeepers or clerks do not even look at the notes that they are handed. Ultimately, the counterfeit notes are only as good as the "passers." When arrested, the passes play a different role in court, portraying helpless, poor souls who try to persuade the judge of their innocence.

The Art of Counterfeiting
All counterfeiters strive to defraud the government and the public. However, as their craft requires great skill, counterfeiters often appear to be proud of quality work. The fact that it has at times fooled even government officials attests to the quality of some counterfeit currency. Many engravers were trained artists from Europe who worked for a legitimate printer and in their spare time participated in counterfeit operations. At times, the line between counterfeiting and art is difficult to draw, as the contemporary artist J. S. G. Boggs and his famous Boggs notes illustrate. Boggs was arrested in the United Kingdom and Australia on counterfeiting charges but never convicted; the Secret Service has also confiscated some of his works. Boggs' artwork, which is represented in many leading museums, was originally hand-drawn notes resembling U.S. currency; he also produced a series of Florida United Numismatists Show (FUN). He is often compared to Emmanuel Ninger, a.k.a. Jim the Penman. Ninger was born in Prussia in 1845 but emigrated in 1882 to Hoboken, New Jersey. A trained artist, he traced and then colored in notes on Crane paper. They were so well executed that he was able to pass them easily, and only when the ink began to dissolve on one of his notes were his counterfeit notes detected.

The Secret Service's methods of tracing fake notes to their origins relies to this day on merchants and bank clerks reporting any suspicious notes, which are then analyzed for specific diagnostics, which allow similar notes from perhaps the same source to also be identified. By mapping the locations where such notes emerge, a pattern begins to form, indicating where the counterfeiter or the distributor might be. In order for this system to work well, a critical mass of similar counterfeit notes must be found. The hardest cases to solve are those in which lone individuals work on a very limited production. The best-known and oddest of these cases is that of Edward Mueller, or "Mister 880," named after his case file. A popular and law-abiding citizen until his early sixties, he worked until 1937 as a superintendent on New York's Upper East Side. After the death of his wife, he and his dog moved to an apartment on Broadway and Ninety-sixth Street, where he began to print poorly executed one-dollar bills. He made no more than a couple per day, which he spent carefully, no more than one at a time and in many different stores all over New York. For ten years, the Secret Service struggled to establish Mister 880's identity. Over time, Mister 880's bills declined in quality: he even misspelled George Washington's name as "Washington." He was eventually caught in 1948, more or less by accident, when schoolboys found some of his fake notes in a dump and used them as play money for a while. This story was made famous by St. Clair McKelway, in an article in the New Yorker, which was made in 1950 into a movie starring Edmund Glenn and Burt Lancaster.

Once a counterfeiter is capable of producing a good product, it is hard to resist the temptation to produce lots of it. Until the 1940s, the work of the Secret Service focused on catching the bad guys and putting them in prison. But crime prevention became an increasingly important component of the Secret Service's mission. Since 1941, the Secret Service has produced a series of
Top row, L to R: Mug shots of Raphael DiNicolla, arrested in Pennsylvania, dealer in counterfeit currency; Robert Montgomery, arrested Pennsylvania, manufacturer and dealer in counterfeit currency; William Boatwright, manufacturer of counterfeit currency. Bottom row, L to R: Ricardo Mayo, arrested in New York City, shoker; Nima LaGron, arrested in New York City, manufacturer and shoker.

Cartoon from the 1941 first edition of "Know Your Money."

Yes, They Knew Their Berries— But They Didn’t Know Their Money!
booklets to educate the public about counterfeit currency. Although only a fraction of all circulating currency is counterfeit, the Secret Service investigates every case, however small. A new counterfeit note usually reaches the Secret Service's attention via the public or a bank. The brochure *Know Your Money* is designed to help the public be aware of counterfeit money of any kind. It contains a historical overview of U.S. currency and other general information about the work of the Secret Service. In the earlier issues, enlargements detail the engraving work on Federal Reserve notes. The original 1941 edition uses a cartoon and other illustrations to explain the importance of citizen awareness of counterfeit money. Examples of counterfeit bills are set against genuine ones. Over the years, as U.S. currency has acquired many more security features, *Know Your Money* has become much more technical. The brochure now depicts enlarged copies of notes very close in color to the original, which allows for detailed comparison.

In order to protect currency against counterfeiting, more security features have been added to America's currency. Today, U.S. notes have watermarks, fine-line printing, color-shifting ink, and a security thread. Despite these efforts, counterfeiters in this country and abroad still produce currency and put it into circulation. Traditionally, counterfeiters were made using offset printing, which required heavy machinery, the right kind of ink, and expertly produced printing plates. Procuring the right paper is another challenge. This is often achieved by bleaching genuine one-dollar notes. Thus counterfeiting requires a substantial initial investment to purchase equipment and supplies.

However, modern counterfeiters now increasingly use scanners, computers, and inkjet printers, which are available without much expense or effort. At a quick glance, such notes look highly convincing and can pass without detection. Inkjet printers mix four base colors, which is a fundamentally different process than offset printing; such counterfeit notes can be detected when examined under a
Top row: front and back of a partially bleached note.
Second row: note with one side printed with a $100 design; the other side shows a yellow fake watermark (to the left).
Third row: a completed note, consisting of two notes glued together.
Bottom row, L: loosening the glue reveals the fake watermark.
R: a bleaching machine seized in Colombia. This machine has a rolling mechanism covered with Brillo pads. By applying graffiti-removal spray or some other abrasive, dollar notes shed their ink, a process that often also damages the watermark and makes the notes thinner.
Counterfeit bills drying. Photo taken after seizure of counterfeiting operations in Colombia. (Courtesy of USSS)

Counterfeit currency smuggled into the country in a false-bottomed suitcase.

loop. But the ease of making money by pushing a button on a photocopier means that a much larger number of counterfeit notes are now being produced all over the United States by people who would have probably not engaged in counterfeiting twenty years ago. Teenagers, office workers, or other ordinary citizens just produce their money on demand, and thus only small numbers of notes are put into circulation at any one time, which makes the crime harder to detect. Not all cases are as dramatic and ultimately dominated by greed as that of Albert Talton. He was released from prison in 2004, after serving five years for bank fraud. After having been shown a fake fifty-dollar note, he decided to set up his own operation. The notes he used were from plate 38, spot H, and his case became known as H2-H38. Within a short time, he was able to produce highly convincing notes, using only a computer, scanner, inkjet printer, and supplies he had bought at Staples. He set up shop in a suburban house and hired three friends to help him; they ultimately produced over seven million dollars of counterfeit money. Several luxury cars, including an Aston Martin and a two Mercedes, sat in front of his house in Lawndale, California. After three years of making and selling counterfeit money, the Secret Service, with the help of informants, tracked down and arrested all four criminals. Talton is now serving nine years and two months in federal prison.

Just as most U.S. currency circulates abroad, most counterfeit currency is also produced abroad. South America, parts of southern and Eastern Europe, and the Far East are regions with active counterfeiting rings that the Secret Service is trying to break up. Often counterfeit notes are detected when they enter the country via the U.S. mail or other carriers. Significant amounts of counterfeits are smuggled into the country by visitors: toys, books, electronic equipment, or, as in an Italian case, in milk jugs.

Most counterfeit operations are parts of drug cartels and other organized crime rings. The Secret Service broke up a major South American counterfeit operation; the evidence left behind illustrates in great detail every stage of the production, from bleaching, reprinting, and drying. By bleaching a note with an abrasive cleaning material such as graffiti-removal spray, the ink printed on the cotton-based paper will disappear. As a result, the paper feels thinner, the watermark disappears, and the security thread is lost. Counterfeiters print a new yellowish watermark on the note and add it to a second bleached note, which has fake thread glued into it. The two notes are then glued together, giving the appearance and feel of a genuine $100 note.
The costly efforts of the Secret Service against counterfeiting in the United States and abroad make some people wonder whether these taxpayer-funded operations matter. Isn’t counterfeiting a victimless crime, as some commentators have asked? Isn’t it just criminals who produce and use these notes? The history of counterfeiting, in particular during the Civil War, illustrates that counterfeiting can easily undermine a country’s economy. Next year, a radically different $100 bill will be introduced, with new features, including a blue 3-D security ribbon and an image of a color-shifting bell inside a copper-colored inkwell. The U.S. Treasury and the Bureau of Engraving and Printing expect that these advanced features will make our bills safer. Unfortunately, it usually takes little time for counterfeitors to make copies of any new note, which the U.S. Secret Service will again have to battle—just as it has over the last 150 years.