

ITALIAN PAPER MONEY PRIOR TO UNIFICATION - PART I

John E. Sandrock

The Fall of Napoleon and the Congress of Vienna

To understand the complex history of the unification of the states of the Italian peninsula into a single nation, one must go back to the end of the Napoleonic Wars. With Napoleon's final defeat, the major powers that had resisted him (Prussia, Austria, Britain and Russia) met in 1815 at the Congress of Vienna to find ways to limit France's future power and to divide up the territory which Napoleon had conquered. In redrawing the European continent, the Congress of Vienna restored the power of the victorious governments over the patchwork of independent countries that Napoleon had created. This meant that Italy reverted to the rule of the Hapsburgs of Austria, either directly or indirectly. Although the Italian peninsula was returned to Austrian domination, Austria elected to occupy only the kingdom of Lombardy-Venetia, being content to exercise its authority in all diplomatic matters over the remaining Italian states. These included the Venetian Republic, the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, the Duchy of Modena, the Duchy of Parma, the Kingdom of Sardinia, the Kingdom of Sicily and the Kingdom of Naples.

The few remaining countries not under Austrian control consisted of the Kingdom of Piedmont in north-west Italy and the autonomous Papal States. It was the existence of these independent countries together with the Austrian occupation of Lombardy-Venetia which interfered most with the unification process.

We shall now examine the paper money of those countries of the Italian peninsula which had a paper currency in place before the beginning of the Napoleonic Wars and the Italian campaign which followed in 1796. Due to the complexity of the subject, with so many political entities - kingdoms, republics, duchies, etc. issuing their own money at different intervals - I have created a time-line chart of Italian states which issued paper money from the first issue in 1746 up to and slightly beyond unification. Hopefully this chart will help to better understand the progression of bank note emissions and the pieces held by private collectors. (See Table 1.) Reference to Map A. may also give the reader a better perspective as to the location of the many Italian states which occupied the peninsula prior to the Napoleon's invasion of Italy.

Table 1. - TIME-LINE OF ITALIAN BANK NOTE ISSUES PRIOR TO UNIFICATION

ISSUES BEFORE FRENCH INVASION:

Kingdom of Piedmont

Regie Finanze	1746-1799	lire
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Venetian Republic

Banco Giro di Venezia	1798	ducati
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Kingdom of Lombardy-Venetia

Wiener Stadt Banco Zettel	1759-1806	fiorini
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Papal States

Sacro Monte delle Pieta' di Roma	1785-1797	scudi
Banco di S. Spirito di Roma	1785-1797	scudi

Kingdom of Naples

Various banks	1759 - 1815	fedi di credito
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Kingdom of Sardinia

Various banks	1759 - 1815	fedi di credito
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FRENCH OCCUPATION OF ITALY:

First Roman Republic

Sacro Monte della Pieta'	1798	baiocchi
Banco di S. Spilito	1798	baiocchi, paoli
Assignats	Anno 7	baiocchi, paoli

PERIOD – END FRENCH OCCUPATION TO UNIFICATION OF ITALY:

Kingdom of Sardinia (Peidmont-Sardinia)

Banca Nazionale Negli Stati Sardi	1851-1869	lire
Banca di Genova	1848	lire
Banca di Torino	1849	lire
Banca Nazionale nel Regno d'Italia	1866-1896	lire
Credito Agricolo Industriale Sardo	1874	lire
Banca Agricola Sarda	1871-1879	lire

Republica Venetia

Moneta Patriotica	1848	lire correnti
Commune di Venezia	1849	lire correnti

Kingdom of Lombardy-Venetia

Regno Lombardo Veneto	1849	Austrian lire
Banco Nazionale Austriaca Privilegiata	1854-1859	fiorini

Grand Duchy of Tuscany

Banca Nazionale Toscana	1859-1890	lire
Banca Toscana di Credito	1866-1883	lire

Papal States (including the Second Roman Republic)

Banca Romana	1834-1850	scudi
Boni del Tesoro Ordinari	1848	scudi
Second Republic of Rome	1848-1849	baiocchi assignats, scudi
Biglietti Provinciali Pontifici	1848-1849	scudi
Banco delle Stato Pontificio	1851-1856	scud

Banca Pontificia per le 4 Legazioni	1855	scudi
Prestito Nazionale Italiana	1849	franchi
Second Banca Romana	1872-1892	lire

Kingdom of the Two Sicilies

Various banks	1816-1870	fedi di credito
Banco di Napoli	1867-1922	centesimi, lire
Banco Regio	1866	lire
Banco di Sicilia	1866-1921	lire

Kingdom of Italy

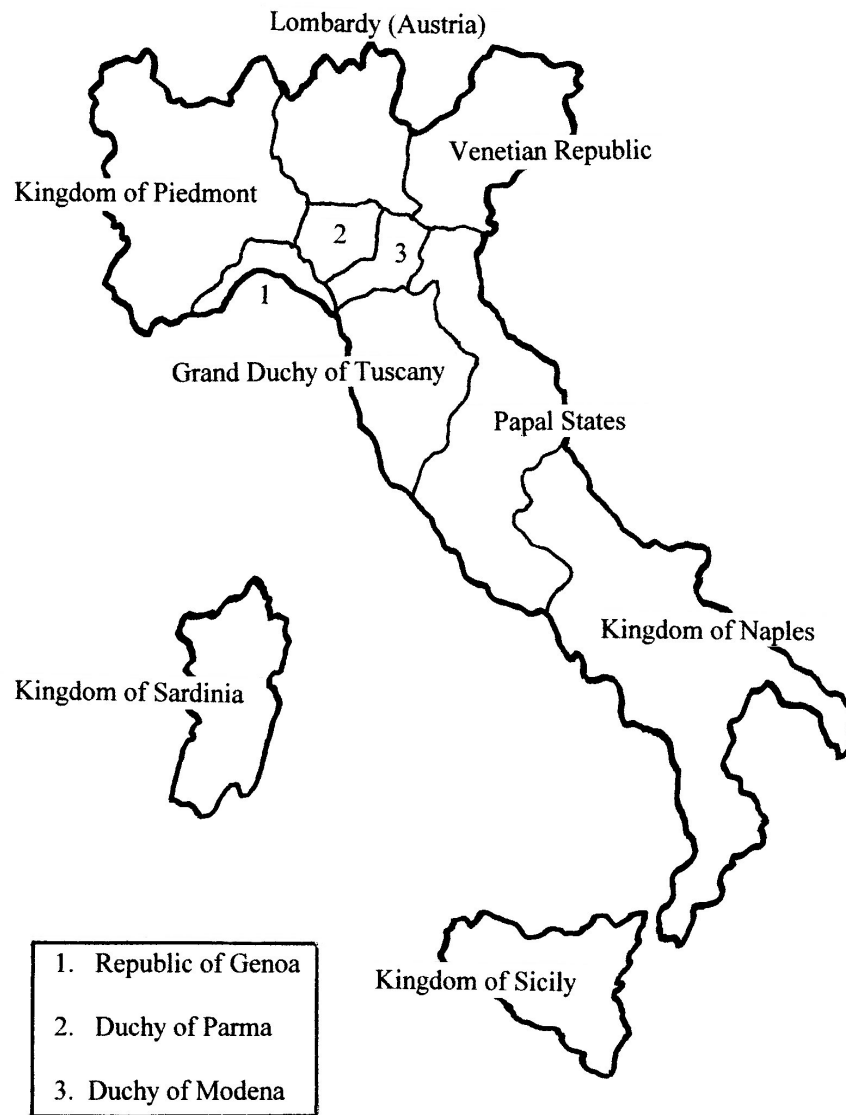
Banco Nazionale nel Regno d'Italia	1866-1896	lire
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Paper Money of the Kingdom of Piedmont

Prior to the Napoleonic Wars, the Kingdom of Piedmont, occupying the northwestern part of the Italian peninsula, was the most advanced of the independent states. It was also the first to issue paper money. In 1720 the Duke of Savoy became king of Sardinia, founding what eventually evolved into the Kingdom of Piedmont-Sardinia, thus increasing Torino's (modern day Turin) importance as a world capital. After Napoleon invaded the Italian states in 1796, Piedmont was annexed by France, becoming the Cisalpine Republic under French rule. After Napoleon's defeat in 1814 the Congress of Vienna restored the area as the Kingdom of Piedmont-Sardinia, adding to it the Republic of Genoa as a buffer against France. Piedmont later served as the initial springboard for the unification movement, fighting two wars against Austria in 1821 and 1848.

Piedmont used the lira which was divisible into 20 soldi or 100 centesimi. Other countries such as Genoa, Modena, Lucca and Mantua followed suit. Eventually all of Italy adopted the Piedmont lira as the sole unit of currency in 1871.

Map A - Italy in 1796 - Prior to the Napoleonic Wars





The coat-of-arms of Savoy as it appears on many Piedmont notes.

The issuing authority for the Kingdom of Piedmont was the *Regie Finanze-Torino* (the Royal Finance Department, located in the capital of Torino). All Piedmontese bank notes carry this title without actual reference to the country. Most notes, however, do make reference to the House of Savoy, the royal line, by displaying the House of Savoy coat-of-arms as part of the note's design or within the dry seals affixed to the note or in some cases, the watermark in the paper.

Piedmontese notes were printed on very heavy, handmade, cream colored paper which was reinforced with a horizontal and vertical grid of threads for durability. In the last years before Napoleon's occupation the grid was omitted. The notes were hand-signed by four government officials: two *Mastro Uditore* (Chief Auditors), the *Tesoriere Generale* (Treasurer General) and the *Controle. della Tes.G.* (Controller of the Treasury General). A counterfoil appears to the left of most notes. Watermarks were very distinct and ornate, consisting of sunbursts, royal monograms, geometric patterns and the wording **BIGLIETTO DELLE REGIE FINANZE** in the outer borders.

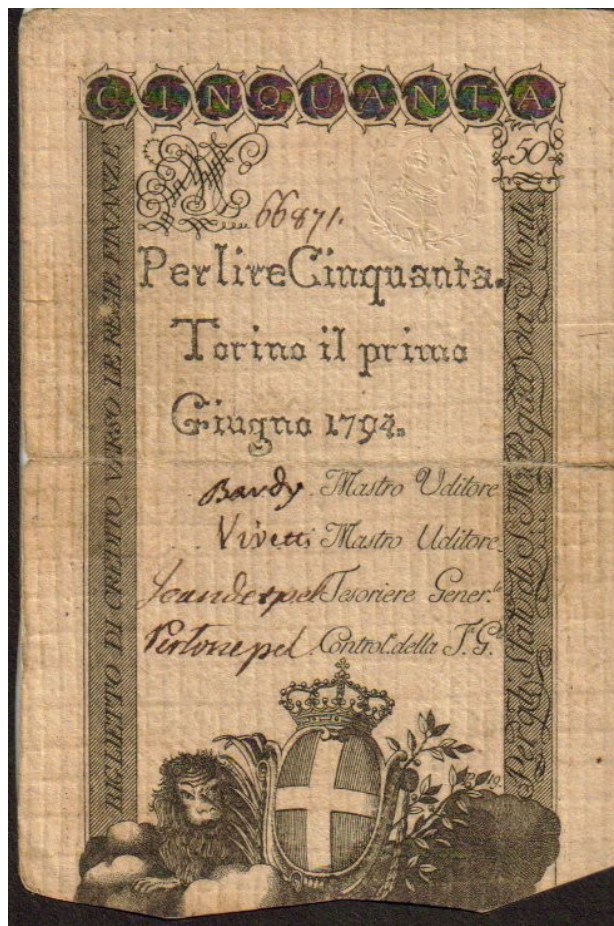
The first of these notes appeared in the year 1746 and continued to be issued at approximately ten year intervals until 1799. All notes were denominated in amounts of 25, 50 100, 200, 300 500, 600, 100 and 3000 lire. The 3000 lire note appeared only once (1746) and the 600 lire only in the 1793 issue. Needless to say, every denomination did not appear in every issue of notes. What makes this series so interesting to collect though, is the fact that no two notes of the same denomination released on different dates is the same. In other words, the types change with the date of issue, so that it is possible to have several 50 or 100 lire notes, for example, of entirely different size and design.



This Piedmont note of 100 lire is dated 1 July, 1786 and contains four handwritten signatures, the serial number 63,640, a single dry seal containing the king's portrait and a watermark which reads "Biglietto Credito Verso le Finanze" in the outer borders together with a geometric design at the center. The arms of the House of Savoy are predominantly displayed at the upper left of the note. Total production of this type was 95,850 notes.



This Piedmont 25 lire bank note of 1796 is the only one, to my knowledge, which does not have a counterfoil.



Two different 50 lire notes: one dated 1 June, 1794 in vertical format, the other 1 April, 1796. The 1796 note depicts a cherub with a banner displaying the denomination with Savoy arms and an eagle below. The dry seal features a bust of king Vittorio Amedeo III. The ribbon reads: "Biglietto di Credito Verso de le Finanze".



The final issue of Piedmont bank notes appeared in the year 1799. The 50 lire note shows Minerva embracing a portrait of king Carlo Emanuel IV, while the 100 lire note depicts Eve in the Garden of Eden holding a serpent. At her feet is an overflowing cornucopia. An angel appearing out of the Heavens is at right. Only 70,000 were issued.

Paper Money of the Venetian Republic

The city of Venice and surrounding lands, in present-day northeast Italy, was an independent republic from the year 726 onward. Venice was ruled by the *Doge*, or duke, and a ten member council made up of residents of the city. After sacking Constantinople in 1204, the Venetians bedecked their city with the loot brought back from the Byzantine. The fall of the Byzantine capital ushered in a golden age of commerce with the Middle East and the Orient which was to last for centuries. By the 15th century the Venetian Republic had become an international center of trade and industry. Venice maintained a large merchant fleet to carry on its mercantile business and a powerful navy with which to protect its commerce. Shipbuilding was an important industry. Through its trade with the Near East the city became rich from the profits made on silk and spice imports. Venetians produced woolen textiles, glassware, ornate metalwork and was a center of the printing industry. Venice enjoyed a virtual monopoly on Mediterranean trade until the 18th century. It is then that decline set in due to two principal factors. A century earlier the population of Venice had been reduced by one-third as a result of the bubonic plague. Before recovering, the Ottoman Turks were successful in conquering several advance bases in the east and in defeating the Venetian fleet at sea, ending Venice's monopoly on trade.



The winged lion of San Marcos, symbol of the Venetian Republic

This was the state of affairs until Napoleon's invasion in 1800. Incessant warfare had exhausted the republic. Too weak to resist, Venice fell to Napoleon's advancing army. The end of Napoleon's Italian campaign left Austria defeated and France either directly or indirectly in control of Italy from the Alps to Tuscany. Piedmont and Parma were annexed to France (becoming the Cisalpine Republic). At the Treaty of Lunéville (Feb. 9, 1801) Austria retained only Venetia. A valiant attempt was made to restore Venetian independence in 1848, which we shall discuss later.

Del Banco giro di Venezia (The Circulating Bank of Venice) had been a financial institution in Venice dating back to a charter given by the Senate in 1584. Its only issue of bank notes occurred shortly before the demise of the republic. These notes, dated 1



Venetian Republic 100 ducat note of 1 October 1798. This interest bearing credit note of the Banco giro di Venezia had a short life, as the republic was shortly after overrun by Napoleon's army. Production figures for this issue have not been found, yet the serial number of this note, No.720, indicates that it must have one of the early releases.

October, 1798, were credit notes issued to raise money to resist Napoleon. They were issued in three denominations - 10, 50 and 100 *ducats* (ducats). All notes were printed on thin white watermarked paper measuring 125 x 180mm. The watermarks consist of vertical lines and repeated San Marcos lions, the national symbol. The bank notes bear an oval dry seal containing the same arms which appear at the top of the notes.

Each note contains three handwritten signatures. The signatories were Signori Giovanelli, Fovel and Schiantarelli. The designs consist of a double-headed crowned eagle above and the winged lion of San Marcos below. An ornate counterfoil appears in the left border of these vertical notes. There also was produced an interest bearing note for 500 ducati; however, it is thought to no longer exist. Of the Venetian Republic notes that I have seen, almost all show very little wear from circulation, leading me to believe that the unfortunate holders of the notes never received payment for their faith in the republics' credit.

Money of the Kingdom of Lombardy-Venetia

The province of Lombardy lies in the north of Italy between the Alps and the Po River valley. The country was fought over for centuries by rival neighbors. The western half of the region eventually became the Duchy of Milan which had become a major political and military force by the 17th century. The eastern part of the region was under the rule of the Venetian Republic. Lombardy had a flourishing agricultural economy which made Milan a major economic center. In 1706 the Duchy of Milan became an Austrian possession after being defeated at the battle of Pavia. Austria remained in control until the Napoleonic invasion of the French army in 1796. Lombardy then became a semi-independent province of France, until being transferred to Austrian rule by Napoleon. It remained under French-Austrian rule from 1796 to 1814 until Napoleon's defeat and its restoration to Austria by the Congress of Vienna in 1815. Austria, having also attained the Venetian Republic, then re-established its rule over the combined area in the form of a puppet state known as the kingdom of Lombardy-Venetia. The previous Duke of Milan was made the first king. He ruled as Franz I from 1814 to 1835. In 1848 Milan and Venice revolted against Austrian rule in a short-lived uprising only to be quickly defeated by Austrian troops. The kingdom ceased to exist when annexed to the Kingdom of Italy in 1866.

Bank notes of the *Wiener Stadt Banko Zettel* were the only currency circulating in the Austrian occupied regions of Italy from 1759 until 1849. The notes were denominated in *gulden* on the obverse and in *fiorini* on the reverse. Thin, white watermarked paper was used in their manufacture. The issue dates of various emissions were 1759, 1762, 1771, 1784, 1796, 1800 and 1806. Denominations were designated 1, 2 forini (1800 issue only), 5, 10, 25, 50, 100, 500 and 1000 fiorini (gulden). All but the highest denominations were in vertical format. The notes contained the Austrian arms and the value of the note in a cartouche in various configurations.



Austrian coat-of-arms.

The kingdom had no paper money of its own until after its defeat in 1848. At that time a series of 5, 10, 15, 30, 60, 120 and 600 notes denominated in Austrian lire were released. These notes were dated 1 April 1849. All are extremely rare today. Subsequent to this issue, Austrian notes of the Privilegierte Oesterreichische National Bank were used in Lombardy-Venetia.



Wiener Stat Banco Zettel *formulare* (specimen) 1000 gulden note of 1784. All specimen notes were blue-gray in color to distinguish them from the real thing.



Austrian bank notes were the only form of currency which circulated in the kingdoms of Lombardy and Lombardy-Venetia from 1759 until annexed by the Kingdom of Italy in 1866. The notes were issued by the Wiener Stadt Banco Zettle (Bank of Vienna) and were denominated in gulden on one side and in fiorini on the other.



The Papal arms of Pope Pius VI.

Paper Money was first introduced to the Papal States in 1782, during the pontificate of Pope Pius VI. The reason for this was a chronic shortage of coin in circulation. Paper money of the Papal States before the French invasion consisted of bank notes issued by two different banks. These were the *Sacro Monte della Pieta' di Roma* (Sacred Bank of the Mount of the Poor of Rome, sometimes referred to as the Holy Mountain of Faith, or the Pawnbroker's Bank) and the *Banco di S. Spirito di Roma* (Bank of the Holy Spirit). The bank Sacro Monte della Pieta' di Roma was founded in 1584 by Pope Gregory XIII, but it was not until the year 1782 that the first bank notes were issued. These were small denomination notes denominated 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 *scudi*, a unit which translates to 'shield'; the shield, of course referring to the Roman shields of old. Therefore 10 scudi literally means 10 Roman shields! One scudo had an equivalent value of 7 lire. In 1785 the bank commenced issuing large format notes. These notes were known as *cedola* (interest bearing notes). The issue contained a total of 74 different denominations. This was a most unusual series as there was a note for every value commencing with 3 scudi all the way up to 50 scudi, i.e., 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 819, 20, 21, 22, 23, 2446, 47, 48, 49 and 50. After the 50 scudi value the notes increased in multiples of five; i.e., 50, 55, 60, 65, 70 up to 100 scudi. Above 100 scudi the notes increased in value by multiples of ten, i.e., 110 to 150. Above 150 scudi the notes were issued in multiples of fifty (200, 250, 300 etc. to 500 scudi) and above 500 scudi they advanced by multiples of one hundred (600, 7001000). The highest denomination in the series was the 1500 scudi note. Theoretically, if you purchased something for 100 scudi or less and held the right combination of bank notes, you would never have to make change when shopping! These sequential denominations make for a fascinating challenge for the collector. I have only seen a hundred or so haphazard values of these notes; however, I have no doubt that among Italian collectors there must be several complete, or nearly complete, collections. Of course, it goes without saying that the more common notes are of modest value, while the very rare ones demand a premium price. Years of issue for bank Sacro Monte della Pieta' di Roma notes were, 1785 through 1797. During these years, inflation became a real problem, and at the end, the *cedola* notes had lost most of their value.



7 scudo bank note of the Papal State's bank *Sacro Monte della Pietà di Roma* dated 15 January 1788. This note is of particular interest as it bears an orange hand-stamp of the Papal Legation in the town of Pesaro.

This bank was located in the Palazzo del Monte di Pietà which was initially constructed to give Rome a central banking area. Here the functions of deposit and loans took place. *Sacro Monte della Pietà di Roma* was one of the first charitable institutions to carry on banking activities. Founded in 1539, its philanthropic purpose was to provide interest-free loans to the poor, a kind of pawnshop arrangement. It was not until years later that the bank opened to depositors. The bank conducted business for over two hundred years.

The bank notes of *Sacro Monte della Pietà di Roma* are many, unusual and varied. They are unusual because of their unprecedented denominations, described above, and varied because of their size and issue dates. The 3 and 4 scudo notes of 1795 measure 130 x 100mm, while the large format notes were 200 x 150mm in size. All are printed in black on heavy white paper. The value of the note appears at the top center in

numerals and at the center of the text in bold letters. The date appears printed above the bank name in writing; e.g. *Primo Maggio mille settecento novantasette* (1 May, 1797). All notes contain one hand-written signature and two facsimile signatures at the left under the heading *Esibitore*. The esibitore signatures were those of bank cashiers and the hand-written one was that of the Chief Accountant. Some hand signatures are embellished with large colorful flourishes. To the right of the note may be found the registry number

(series number) with the serial number below next to the word *Num.* in a dark rectangle. Sometimes the serial number appears written out instead of in numeric form. At the lower right may be found the statement *Vaglia per tutto lo Stato Ecclestatico*. An ornate border surrounds the text. A counterfoil appears across the bottom of the note. Which reads “Sacro Monte della Pieta' di Roma”. The watermark consists of a large sunburst together with Christian symbols. Two ecclesiastical dry seals appear in the top border. The notes' reverses contain only a reference to the value of the note which is printed both numerically and in writing and repeated multiple times.

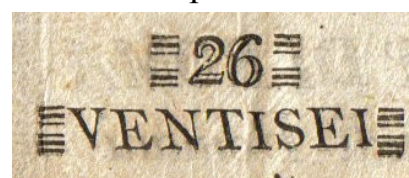
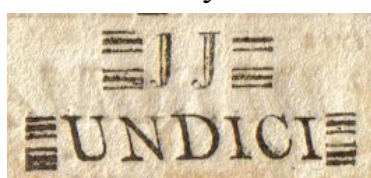
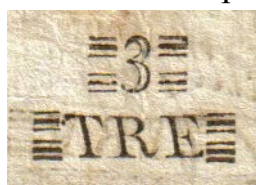


Sacro Monte della Pieta' di Roma 55 scudo bank note dated 15 January, 1788. This note carries a Legation seal which is yet to be identified.



This note of the Sacro Monte della Pietà di Roma, dated 1795, states that “ When presented this note is worth 3 scudi of the Ecclesiastical State of Rome.

Some Papal States notes may be found with hand-stamps of the Legations which made up the principal population centers. These are scarcer than notes without such stamps. Up until now about thirty of these places have been identified. They include the towns of Ancona, Assisi, Bettona, Cagli, Camerino, Cantiano, Castiglion del Lago, Cingoli, Citta di Castello, Fano, Fossombrone, Gubbio, Jesi, Macerata, Marsciano, Mercantello, Montemerciano, Osimo, Pergola, Perugia, Pesaro, Recanati, Roma, S. Costanzo, Todi and Urbino. These stamps represented an attempt to control inflation. Since too much money was in circulation, the hand-stamps when applied, limited the circulation and redemption of notes to only those which bore the stamp.



Valuations which appear on the reverse of Sacro Monte di Peita' di Roma notes. These examples for 3, 11 and 26 scudi were printed on the notes multiple times.

The other Papal bank to issue bank notes was the *Banco di Santo Spirito di Roma* (Bank of the Holy Spirit, sometimes referred to as the Bank of the Holy Ghost). The bank was founded by Pope Paul V on December 10, 1605. The building the bank

occupied on the Palazzo del Banco di Santo Spirito was actually started in 1513 by Pope Leo X. This sixteenth century building still stands. Its appearance resembles a triumphal Roman arch. The two baroque statues on top represent 'Charity' and 'Thrift'. The bank's chief function was to provide capital for church and hospital construction in Rome. Money was also lent to certain public works projects, such as the Trajan aqueduct which supplied water from the surrounding hills to the city. In 1724 Pope Benedict XIII saw fit to enact a law authorizing the circulation of bank notes, payable to the bearer by means of endorsement, provided that they be compared to the annotations kept in the bank's ledgers before being cashed. Unfortunately he died before the law could take effect and his successor Pope Benedict XIV, known for his anti-usury views, restricted the bank's lending privileges. It was not until 1785 that this bank, together with the Sacro Monte della Pietà di Roma, were permitted to become the first to issue paper money. This occurred under the papacy of Pope Pius VI. Amazingly the Bank of the Holy Spirit enjoyed a continuous existence from its founding in 1605 until its merger with the Banco di Roma in 1992. The bank also received notoriety in the 1930s when a group of Neapolitan bank robbers, while attempting to dig into the bank's underground vaults, accidentally discovered the skeletons of cholera victims who had died in a 1836 epidemic.



This low value 4 scudi note of the Bank of the Holy Spirit was issued on 15 September, 1795. This is not to imply that the note didn't have worth. Four scudi quite possibly represented a days wages for the working man of the time.

Bank of the Holy Spirit notes are similar in format to those of Sacro Monte della Pietà di Roma. They were printed on the same heavy white watermarked paper stock. The value appears in an ornate square at the top center surrounded by the date in Roman numerals. The text is surrounded by a border of squares. The register number and serial number are filled in by hand. The notes are hand-signed by two of the bank's cashiers. Low value notes such as the 3 and 4 scudi bore facsimile signatures. The coat-of-arms of the reigning pope, Pius VI, may be seen in the upper left corner, while a bold counterfoil reading "Banco di S. Spirito" appears across the bottom of the note. Banco di S. Spirito di Roma notes were issued in one hundred and eight different denominations, which ran consecutively from 5 scudi to 99 scudi. Values of 100 scudi and upward were spaced one hundred scudi apart (i.e., 200-300-400, etc.) up to 1000 scudi. Issue dates were 1785, 1786, 1795 and 1796. In the last year of issue values for 1500, 2000 and 3000 scudi were added. The lower denomination notes are relatively common, while notes from 30 scudi upwards are considered rare and those above 50 scudi very rare.



The *Banco di Santo Spirito di Roma* dates from 1513. It was one of the first banks of Europe to issue paper money. This bank, known as the Bank of the Holy Spirit, was in continuous operation until it merged with the Banco di Roma in 1992. This 28 scudi note was issued in 1786 and bears the seal of Pope Pius VI in the upper left corner.

Money of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies

The Kingdom of the Two Sicilies came about through the uniting of two much older realms: the Kingdom of Naples, which occupied the southern part of the Italian peninsula, and the Kingdom of Sicily, located on the island of Sicily in the Mediterranean. The city of Naples was the capital of the combined kingdoms. All this took place after Napoleon was driven from Italy following his final defeat at Waterloo. Unlike the rest of Italy which was under nominal Austrian control, the Kingdom of Naples and Kingdom of Sicily had been ruled by the Spanish Bourbon family. After Charles VII inherited the Spanish crown in 1759, his son, Ferdinand I became king of the two kingdoms. During Napoleon's conquest of the Kingdom of Naples, Ferdinand I fled to his other kingdom on the island of Sicily, where he was protected by the presence of his treaty ally, the British royal navy.

Following the French armies withdrawal from Italy, the Bourbon king Ferdinand I agreed to unite his two kingdoms as a matter of necessity. This was accomplished at the Congress of Vienna with the concurrence of the Pope. The two ancient kingdoms then became known as the Kingdom of Two Sicilies, which lasted from 1816 to 1860 when absorbed into the newly unified Kingdom of Italy.



Coat-of-arms of the Kingdom of Two Sicilies as seen on the reverse of this 120 grani silver coin.

The Kingdom of the Two Sicilies did not have a paper currency resembling those of Piedmont, Venice, Lombardy or the Papal States. Its private banks did not operate as banks did elsewhere in Italy. The specie coinage was extensive; consisting of a gold, silver and copper coinage. To supplement this, the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies used a system known as *fede di credito*. The term stems from the use of the word *fede* (faith) and the word *credito*, meaning credit. Taken together the term was used to cover certificates of credit which circulated as cash. The term implies that a relationship of trust was established between bank and depositor, i.e., “fede di credito” (faith of credit); hence the public faith placed in the credit of these instruments. The system worked as follows: since the Neapolitan banks held huge sums of specie representing the wealth of

the city and southern Italy, these banks would issue fede di credit certificates against the money deposited in the bank. This, of course, greatly facilitated commerce. The money was declared legal for use throughout the country: however, citizens were not compelled to accept it if they chose not to. Having become a safe means of keeping and transmitting money, the fede di credito became more and more popular. Provincial treasuries were obliged to regard them as cash. The money representing these notes was used for loans and public works, and when used for charitable works, the loans were interest free.



Two 120 grani silver coins of the Kingdom of Two Sicilies. The coin at left was issued in 1851 under the reign of Ferdinand II, while the coin dated 1859 at right bears the likeness of Francis II, the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies last monarch.

The fede di credito notes consisted of a sheet of paper, at first handwritten and after the 1750s printed, upon which the bank by affixing its emblem, stamp and seal (countersigned by the Chief Cashier) declared the bearer to be its creditor. These notes would circulate throughout the kingdom, from person to person, in the payment of debts. When presented by the bearer at any time for payment, the bank would pay the bearer the equivalent in silver or copper money. There were two types of fede di credito in circulation; one for silver coins, the other for copper. These instruments had their origins in the Kingdom of Naples and the Kingdom of Sicily and were used to some extent by the Papal States as well. When used by Naples, the notes were called *contante* (cash) instead of faith of credit.

Fede di Credito notes were extremely large, measuring 210 x 310mm. Each note carries a certificate number in the upper right corner. Following the clause *Il Banco delle Due Sicilie tiene Creditore* (the Bank of the Two Sicilies extends credit), the person to whom credit is given for specie deposited is named. The date appears alongside the place of issue, *Napoli*; the amount of credit extended is stated to the right of the last line. The Chief Cashier's signature then appears at the bottom of the note, authorizing the transaction. A dove with a ribbon in its beak identifies the type of specie to be paid, either *argento* (silver) or *rame* (copper), as there were separate institutions for each. A dry bank seal which appears over the Chief Cashier's signature completes the design.



Contanti, or cash note, of the Kingdom of Naples issued in 1806 during Napoleon's occupation of Naples. This note circulated freely and was widely accepted for payment of all debts in the kingdom. The bearer could at any time present the note to the bank for payment in specie.

In Part II we shall discuss Napoleon's invasion of Italy, the establishment of the first Roman Republic, and the note issues of the *Banco di S. Siro* and the *Monte di Pietà*'. After Napoleon's defeat we shall see how and why Italy remained divided. Finally, we will examine the nationalist movements and the revolution which followed in 1848 leading to eventual unification in 1861. The paper money associated with these events will be reviewed at length.