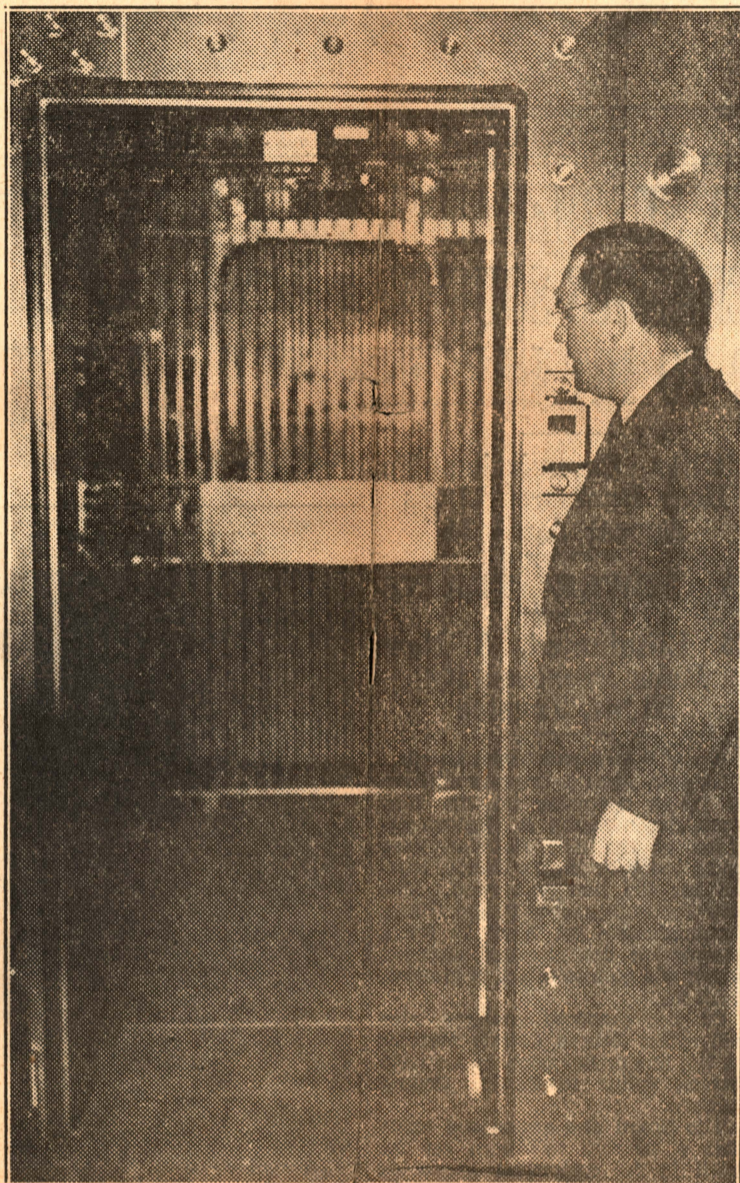


POLICE PRESS HUNT FOR ALLENDALE BANK BANDITS



The first bank robbery in Bergen County in 15 months occurred yesterday at the First National Bank of Allendale (above), where a heavily armed gang took more than \$10,000 and escaped.



Assistant Prosecutor William B. Mehler is shown (above) as he examined the bank vault of the First National Bank of Allendale, looted yesterday afternoon by five bandits. The stolen money was taken from this vault.

Bank Bandit Leader Known; Jail Photograph Identified

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the key. Then he remembered that Hamilton had it.

"I told them my boss had it and all the while they were getting tougher," Trinkner explained. "They were getting more insistent that I produce the key and I had the sight of their guns in front of me. They didn't believe that I did not have the key. I could hear Mr. Hamilton, too, telling one of the other men in the front that he had the key and I could hear the bandit telling him to shut up. That's when I didn't feel so good."

Julian Monti, tavern owner of Franklin Turnpike, Ramsey, and Mrs. Harry L. Osias, 28, of East Allendale Avenue, Allendale, whose husband is a Brooklyn apartment house builder, both agreed that the men were experienced.

Monti said three of them were well-mannered but the fourth, who covered him, was tough and swore profusely in ordering him to lie down.

The bandits scooped about \$3,000, the day's receipts, from the cash drawer at the front teller's window where Assistant Cashier David W. Frazer was stationed. They even took the bills and odd change that Monti had just handed over to Fraser.

Mrs. Osias had just been shown to the vault by Grossmann and was in a booth. She heard the orders given by the bandits and in the hope of remaining unnoticed she shut off the light in the booth. One of the bandits saw the light go out and ordered, "Come out of there, I saw you. Go lay down by the other girl or I'll slug you."

The bandits had made their way to the rear of the counter by way of the entrance through the front consultation office to make sure that Grossmann, Trinkner, Frazer and Miss Blanche Shoudy of West Saddle River Road, Saddle River Borough, stenographer and bookkeeper, had all dropped to the floor as ordered.

Hamilton, who was the first in the bank to be approached learned of their arrival when a gun was pressed against the back of his neck and a low voice ordered, "Don't move. This is a hold-up." He was then ordered to lie down.

Hamilton recalled hearing the bandits questioning Trinkner about

the key to the vault. He called repeatedly to one of the men standing near him, "Let me in there and I'll open the door for you." His word was finally accepted and he was led in, where he turned the key over to one of the men.

"This man was slightly nervous," Hamilton told investigators. "He dropped the key several times trying to put it in the lock." Once inside, one of the men went to work quickly loading the bags with money and had Hamilton assist him.

Their work done, the men seized the two revolvers owned by the bank and ordered the seven into the vault. They closed the outer grill and assured their captors that they would not lock them in. They warned them, however, not to move until they had driven off. Hamilton told investigators that one of his men asked whether he should sound the bank alarm from the switch inside the vault. He advised him not to, lest there would be shooting. It was about five minutes later, he said, when he gave the order to ring the alarms and they opened the grilled door and walked out into the empty bank just as surprised J. Morton Southwick, the janitor, walked in the front door.

The sound of the alarm had attracted businessmen and Henry Kahse, employed by the Allendale Water Department at the office of Water Collector W. G. Z. Critchley across the street from the bank, telephoned to Police Headquarters.

Officer James W. Webb, who had moments before been on duty in the business district, had just entered the office and answered the phone. He raced with the police car the quarter mile from the Municipal Building on Franklin Turnpike to the bank but the bandits car had long since made its getaway.

Before leaving the office, however, Webb sent out a general radio alarm. Later in the afternoon he sent two additional alarms giving further information.

Bank employees related how the bandits almost forgot the bag containing the loose money scooped from the cash drawer of the counter. The men had started for the door when one of them remembered the forgotten bag and sent back for it.

In several minutes Webb at the bank was joined by Bergen County

Traffic Police patrolmen in two cars, by Police Chief H. H. Voss of Ramsey and by a delegation from the Prosecutor's staff.

About 20 law enforcement officers of one agency or another were at the bank within an hour.

Donegan assigned two of his men, assisted by County agents, to questioning witnesses and showing them pictures of convicts. In business-like manner in another corner of the bank's private offices, a stenographer took exact statements of bank employees while other members of the County and federal staffs searched for fingerprints on every door, counter and object that could have been touched.

James Stewart, fingerprint expert for the Bergen County Police, said he found fingerprints on the bank vault door but was unable to raise them because of grease on the door. A number of prints were photographed elsewhere in the bank but no report was expected until today's conference.

Although some of their statements were said to be conflicting in parts, a number of persons on the street supplied information to the questioners.

Elwood Marks of East Crescent Avenue, Allendale, had been in Critchley's office and recalled seeing a car with New York license plates parked in front of the Winter Brothers grocery store next to the bank. A driver sat in the car, wearing a gray slouched hat. Mrs. Marcie Campbell, whose apartment is opposite the bank, described the car but did not notice the license plates. Harold Kiermaier of West Orchard Street, Allendale, and John Mahoney, delicatessen clerk, also supplied information.

Belief that the men had laid their plans carefully in advance was borne out by two who offered information. Frank Smith of Brook-

side Avenue recalled seeing a car with strangers in it on Tuesday and they drove up to the station and away again at train times, checking arrival and departure of passenger and freight trains. This was to guard against being blocked by any train that might pull across the grade crossing during their getaway, officers said.

Mrs. Burtis W. Griffiths of Brookside Avenue, Allendale, said the description of bank employees tallied with those of men she saw watching the bank 7 or 8 months ago.

Smith said one of the trains he saw being timed was an eastbound passenger at 2:15 P. M., which from the time of yesterday's break, would have cleared the crossing shortly before they drove across.

Officer John O. Forshay of Allendale Police was off duty but was called out. Reimer was in attendance at a State Police Chief's Association meeting at Elizabeth and was called immediately. Among the police who responded during the afternoon were also William B. Mehler, first assistant prosecutor; Harry B. Lockwood, chief of prosecutor's detectives; Lieutenant John E. Guidetti, Detective Walter G. Fraser and Investigator Frank Demuro of the prosecutor's staff; Sergeant Charles LoPresti, Officer Harry Cortwright, Stewart, Arthur Cole and Charles Gentner of the County police, and two State troopers from the Teaneck barracks.

Donegan brought four men with him and when they left at 6 P. M. he assigned a relief man to remain at the bank to work with Reimer and private bank detectives who arrived later in the evening.

Frazer received rough treatment. He is suffering from arthritis and when ordered to lie down he moved slowly because of the pain in his legs. One of the bandits thought it was an act and shoved him.

GANGS AVERAGE \$11,000 PER JOB IN BANK FORAYS

And They Hit Here About Once A Year, Police Recall

MOBS ROUNDED UP

Bergen County has had seven bank robberies and one unsuccessful attempt in the last decade, veteran detectives recalled today as they began investigating the latest holdup.

The total loot amounted to approximately \$80,000 and in every case with the exception of yesterday's holdup at the First National Bank of Allendale the law caught up directly or indirectly with the gunmen.

Since Jan. 15, 1937, the County has been free of bank robbers until they held up the Allendale bank yesterday. Fifteen months ago gunmen took \$9,000 from the Wood-Ridge National Bank. That gang was captured in a recent roundup by Federal and County officials.

Oddly enough every bank robbed in Bergen County has been a national bank protected by the full resources of the Federal government.

Among the most recent bank holdups were:

The Little Ferry National Bank, June 5, 1936, \$15,000; Bogota National Bank, April 30, 1936, \$20,000; Fort Lee First National Bank, \$17,000; Lyndhurst Branch of the Rutherford National Bank, Jan. 25, 1935, \$10,000; Garfield Trust Company, Jan. 8, 1935, \$5,600.

In 1928 four bandits got several thousand dollars from the Hillsdale National Bank in the County's first national bank holdup.

An attempt to holdup the First National Bank of Fairview failed in 1931 when police surprised the gunmen and exchanged pistol shots with them in the streets. One of the robbers, Ralph Miland, later was captured and sent to prison. Another was killed accidentally by one of his own companions in the running gun battle.