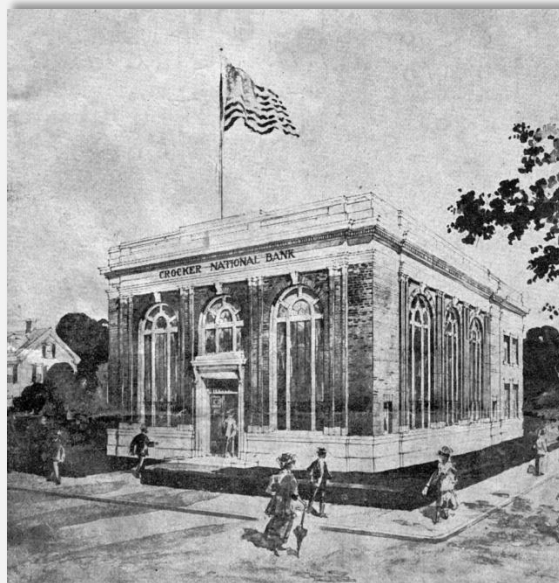


ROB CROCKER BANK of \$25,000
Two Armed Bandits Bind Three in Bank; Scoop Up Thousands in
Currency From Vault; Pass Unsuspected by Mill Guard



ED GREGORY

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Gleanings from **Greenfield**, **Northfield**, MA and **Albany**, N.Y. Newspapers via
* Old Fulton New York Post Cards (fultonhistory.com)

April 6, 1912
Revised,
April 8, 2024

ED GREGORY



* Search: **Crocker Bank** (iterations)



Each entry is linked to the **PDF** that will reach the specific newspaper article.



Transcribed articles are verbatim. If gross misspelling, or obvious errors are detected, corrections will be made accordingly.



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Imagery from the *e.g.* archive. Contributed images will be properly acknowledged.

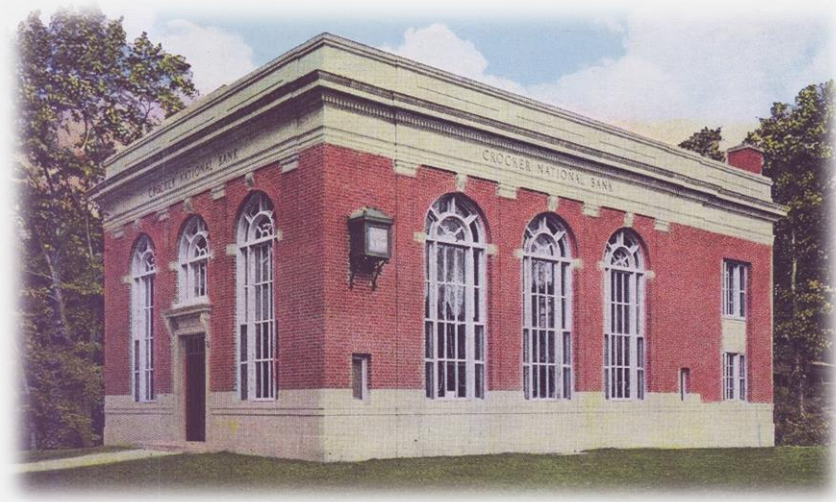
Others: Recorder photos.



Annotations; *e.g.*

Chronologically ordered historical accounts remembering the

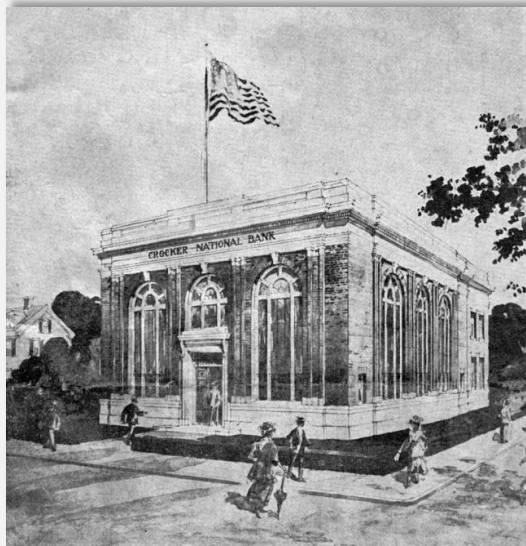
1933 **Crocker National Bank** heist,



Crocker National Bank c1910

ROB CROCKER BANK of \$25,000

Two Armed Bandits Bind Three in Bank; Scoop Up Thousands in Currency From Vault; Pass Unsuspected by Mill Guard



Crocker National Bank c1920

Search For 2 Bandits Fruitless Police Guard All Main Roads —Question Travelers and Run Down Rumors

The search for the two men who robbed the Crocker National bank, immediate and intense, spread over all western Massachusetts and into nearby states. From hour to hour through the day came tips, rumors and reports, now of captures, now of similar cars, now of new search.

The police acted promptly on each as it came in and up to mid-afternoon had proved all this information groundless or else of minor assistance in the search.

Most important, for a time, seemed the questioning of two men at the Northampton state police barracks. They were riding in a New York car and it was believed the bandits' car had plates from that state.

Police Chief William Callahan took the witnesses, Andrew Sauter, Earl Squires and Thomas Frawley to the barracks. Those being questioned were able to account for their movements and were not identified by the bank men. They were released at noon.

Aside from suspicious events observed at Shelburne Falls yesterday, the next best tip seemed one which told of a maroon colored car with New York plates sighted on the road between Belchertown and Ware. State police rushed to intercept it.

Telephoned information from Gill sent Officers James McHugh and Walter Casey to investigate a car parked in that town. It was gone when they arrived.

Early this afternoon Chief Callahan returned to Turners Falls to check once more all details of the robbery while the State police, directed by Lt. William V. Shimkus, Commander of Troop B, and Lt. Dect. Albert Davey maintained the search and watched all main roads.

Think Pair Visited Shelburne Falls

SHELBURNE FALLS—Members of the holdup gang which operated at the Crocker National Bank in Turners Falls this morning are believed to have been here yesterday possibly planning a similar holdup at the Shelburne Falls National Bank.

Pair Operates Calmly Just Before Bank Opening Hour

The Crocker National Bank vaults were stripped of more than \$20,000 in currency just before the bank opened today. Three men were left behind, bound hand and fast with wire but uninjured. Calmly the two armed robbers, unmasked and in ordinary clothing, walked across the street to their car and drove away.

The first bank holdup in Franklin County within the recollection of anyone questioned today was carried out along a shrewdly pre-arranged plan which clicked in every particular and allowed an apparently clean getaway despite prompt alarm.

Appearing at about 8 a.m. at the bank door in the post of express messengers, the robbers were admitted by Andrew Sauter, janitor. Him they promptly trussed up. Next came Earl Squires, whom they forced to open vault. Finally entered Thomas Frawley, paymaster of the Keith Paper company seeking the mill payroll. He was bound and laid on the floor as had been the other two.

The hold-up men, one carrying the same box used to deceive Sauter but now containing between \$20,000 and \$25,000 in currency, walked out of the bank, passed the Keith pay car in which were seated John McCarthy, driver, and Edward Hanley, guard, and walked casually across the street. They entered a car parked there, headed northeast, and drove away.

Vice-President W. Johnes Morgan, who estimated the loss, said it was entirely covered by robbery insurance. He said a small amount of currency was overlooked and that the robbers took some bank records and non-negotiable securities which would be of no use to them.

The robbers had not more than 10 minutes start before the alarm was given, police radios broadcast the warning and cordons of local and state officers were watching every main road.

[The story, as told by the victims, action, so speedy that later they had difficulty in remembering what the robbers looked like.

Sauter, the janitor, at 8 o'clock was sweeping out the banking rooms preparatory to opening, as is the custom. There was a knock on the front door and he went to it to find two men outside. One holding a package, was dressed like a truckman and they told Sauter the package was for the cashier. He allowed them to enter and was about to sign for the package when they produced guns and told him it was a holdup.

Seek Tall Dark Man

The pair led Sauter to the rear behind the cages and trussed him up tightly with wire like telephone wire. He was laid on the floor, bound hand and foot but not gagged.

The robbers asked if a "tall dark man opened the vault" and he said, "Yes, his name is Squires."

Waiting in the bank rooms while several persons passed on their way to work, the robbers stood, one on each side of the door as Squires entered. The note teller lives In Riverside and is Gill town clerk. There are double front doors to the bank. Passing the first, one can see straight ahead through the second but the side partitions are opaque and Squires could not see the men lurking with drawn guns until he stepped through the second door.

Squires was drawn to one side and held under guard for a few moments until Frawley entered to get the Keith payroll. Frawley was immediately held up, trussed with wire and laid on the floor behind a counter near the desk of Assistant Cashier Charles W. Higginbotham.

The note teller was then taken back to the vault, directly opposite the front door. The men told him if he failed to open it or set off the bank burglar alarm in doing so "it would be just too bad" for him. He followed their orders and opened the big door. He was then trussed with wire and laid beside Frawley.

Dump Money In Box

The robbers, on first entering the bank, had unwrapped the brown paper from around the pasteboard box one of them carried. The paper was left in the office of Cashier W. Johnes Morgan. They dumped the mill payrolls from the sacks in which they had been placed into the box and rapidly pulled out the cash drawers in the vault, dumping the entire contents of one and scooping handfuls of bills and money from the other into the box. They overlooked only a little currency, Morgan said.

Then as assuredly and calmly as they carried out all their previous acts, they walked out of the bank, crossed the avenue to a car parked in front of Kuklewicz Tailor Shop and headed northeasterly, got in and drove away.

They passed the Keith mill car in which sat John McCarthy, driver, and Edward Hanley, guard. Frawley had been in the bank less than 10 minutes and neither of his companions suspected anything. They saw the men emerge but observed nothing to make them suspicious. They were agreed the car was a two-door black sedan but could give no other details.

A few minutes later Phillip Jacobus and Thomas Tippet, bank employees, arrived together. They saw the open vault door, the drawers and papers scattered and then heard a call, "Mr. Morgan!"

Running to the counter they saw the trussed up victims on the floor. While Jacobus was releasing the three, Tippet ran 30 yards down the street to the telephone office and notified the Shelburne Falls barracks of the state police and the Turners Falls and Greenfield departments. The telephone wires at the bank had been cut by the robbers.

Broadcast Alarm

The local police were at the bank within 10 minutes of the completion of the robbery and gathered clues. These were furnished the Northampton state police barracks and the broadcast over short wave radio asking Vermont and New Hampshire authorities to be equally on the alert.

The bank building is a comparatively new structure, standing alone on a lot on the west side of Avenue A between Fifth and Sixth streets. It is about 75 yards from St. Ann's church and the Turners Falls Inn is across the street. The banking rooms on the first floor are flanked on either side by the cages and desks, the vault is at the rear and directors rooms are upstairs.

The money for the payrolls had come from the Federal Reserve bank in Boston, and was ready for the mills. The Keith mill paid off today and the Esleeck's payday is tomorrow. The International mill pays entirely by check.

To meet the payrolls, Franklin County Trust company furnished the Esleeck money and the First National Bank and Trust company provided the Keith funds. These funds were sent over from Greenfield under the guard of Sergt. James J. Burns, jr., and Officers W. J. O'Connell and James F. Casey, armed with riot guns. Delivery was made by 9:30 a.m.

Bound Very Tightly

Descriptions of the robbers were fragmentary. Sauter said one man was "short, stocky and of light complexion." Frawley stated one wore blue overalls and a khaki shirt. This man, he said, was about 5 feet, 11 inches in height.

The robbers made eight or nine turns of the wire about their victims legs and arms. So tightly was the wire twisted that more than an hour later the marks showed on their clothing and their wrists were red. They were not otherwise roughly handled.

A further check-up with the witnesses of the hold-up changed the chronological order of events somewhat. This version, apparently more authentic, was that the robber's forced Squires to open the vault as soon as he entered.

They had nearly completed their looting and were about to leave when Frawley appeared. Thrusting their guns at him as they had earlier at Sauter and Squires, one said, "Now that you're here, we'll have to tie you up too." They did.

Jacobus was the next man to enter. He had no more than discovered the state of affairs when Tippet arrived. With the latter was Hanley, who had grown restive at the non-appearance of Frawley and was about to investigate.

The time clock on the vault, it was learned, is a 24 hour one, tuned for a release at 8 a.m. A check on the time placed the arrival of Squires at 8:15 a.m. and Frawley at 8:25.

Mr. Morgan found some securities were taken with the currency but all were of the non-negotiable kind.

Sergt. Edward Majeski of the Northampton Barracks came to Turners Falls to take charge of the state police work.

One of the things which hampered capture of the holdup men was lack of more specific description, yet Paymaster Frawley risked his life to observe the pair. He had been ordered to lie with his "eyes to the floor" after they trussed him up.

He managed to work himself into a position where he could look over the counter when one of the bandits noticed him. "If you don't keep your eyes on the floor, I'll fix them so they'll always be there." Warned the bandit. Frawley dropped back.

Squires was so securely bound it took nearly 10 minutes to untwist the wire holding him.

December 11, **1933** (comment, anon.) [Greenfield MA Recorder 1933 - 2949.pdf](#)

It is believed that the Turners Falls bank robbery may have played a part in inspiring local persons to fight for the continued presence of the state police here. It is a well known fact that Shelburne Falls enjoys much additional protection because of the troop of patrolmen stationed here. This, together with the knowledge that large sums are

spent annually for food, fuel and other supplies for the barracks, has convinced people of the significant importance of the barracks in this community.

December 15, **1933** Northfield MA Press 1933-1934 00129.pdf

Northfield MA Press 1933-1934 00131.pdf

Turners Falls Bank Robbed Of \$23,000 By Armed Bandits

Gain Entrance by Clever Ruse to Deceive Janitor

Tie Up Three Men and Depart Without Arousing Suspicion of Waiting Guard

The first bank robbery ever committed in Franklin County was executed with such care that waiting guards were passed without arousing suspicion when two armed bandits robbed the Crocker National Bank in Turners Falls on Wednesday morning and escaped with over \$23,000. In the short time which elapsed, three men were tied with wire, a teller was forced to open the vault and the payrolls of two large companies were stolen.

Shortly after eight o'clock Wednesday morning two men dressed in working clothes approached the bank carrying a large bundle. They knocked on the door and were admitted to the bank by the janitor, Andrew Sauter, who thought they were truckmen. They told him that they had a package for delivery and that he would have to sign for it as he prepared, to sign a paper, the pair produced guns and announced that it was a hold-up.

The pair led Sauter to the rear behind the cages and trussed him up tightly with wire like telephone wire. He was laid on the floor, bound hand and foot but not gagged.

Note: A continuance from page 1 to page 4 not printed. Newspaper error. *e.g.*

Dark man opens the vault." Sauter replied, "Yes his name is Squires."

A few minutes later Earl Squires, a bank teller, walked in L⁹ and the bandits brandished two revolvers at him. They told him to open the vault, and warned that it would be "just too bad" if the burglar alarm went off.

Squires opened the vault, and a moment or so later Thomas Frawley, Keith Paper company paymaster came into the bank to get the weekly pay roll and was made a captive.

Squires and Frawley were bound. After taking the funds in the vault, including money for two company pay rolls the bandits left and entered a black automobile parked across the street. Frawley's chauffeur, sat outside the bank during the holdup and saw the bandits leave. A box they carried and their cool demeanor kept the chauffeur, John McCarthy from becoming suspicious. Thomas Tippet, another teller of the bank, came along soon afterward and looking in the bank door saw the vault wide open and Philip Jacobus, director of Jacobus heard his name called. He entered the bank, found the three bound men on the floor and released them. Tippet went to the telephone office and notified the authorities.

Before leaving the bank, the robbers cut the telephone wires and blew out one of the fuses. Police were immediately called and a crowd soon gathered. William J. Morgan, cashier, and Charles W. Higginbotham, assistant cashier, hurriedly examined the vault.

The cash box was missing. Some coin and currency were overlooked by the robbers. No good description of the robbers or of their car was obtained.

Sauter said one of the men Was short and stocky and of rather light complexion. Tied up as he was, he could get no good view of the other.

It is not known what direction the robbers took to get out of town. The job evidently was carefully planned. This is indicated by the fact that the robbers knew that a tall thin man worked at the bank and got in early. At the time the robbery was committed there would be few people around. All three victims of the robbery were badly shaken by their experiences.

A police squad with riot guns came over from Greenfield, escorting messengers with the pay rolls of both the Esleeck and Keith Paper companies, the money for which had been secured, from Greenfield banks. Frawley described one of the men as being about five feet, 11 inches tall and clad in blue overalls and a khaki shirt He had all the appearance of an outdoor man.

State Police were immediately mobilized and with the aid of town police from several surrounding communities conducted an intensive search for the robbers. Cars were stopped on all main routes, particularly those bearing New York state registration. Very few cars on the highway shortly after nine o'clock and until nearly two o'clock in the afternoon escaped the scrutiny of the police.

Deputy Sheriff T. F. Darby took up a post on Main Street in Northfield alert to catch the robber's car should it pass through here. He stopped several cars and engaged in one or two chases along the main thoroughfare. He was heavily armed and well prepared to meet the gangsters.

About 2:15 in the afternoon, police were recalled from the highway. State and town officers on the border towns were also recalled.

Suspects which were held in the Northampton State Police Barracks were released after being questioned by police. The robbery victims were also taken to Northampton in an effort to identify the suspects.

It is understood that the only clues are a few fingerprints and two or three registration numbers which the police refused to divulge. At present, no trace has been found.

The work was evidently that of men who had become familiar with the routine business of the bank and knew that the payrolls, of both the Keith Paper Mill and the Esleeck Manufacturing Company were drawn on Wednesday. They were also familiar with the habits of the employees and know that the janitor was alone in the bank at the time they visited it.

The bank which is on the west side of Avenue A in Turners Falls has no buildings near it. It was built about fifteen years ago.

December 15, **1933** Northfield MA Press 1933-1934 00130.pdf

Editorial

The Turners Falls Robbery

“It’s getting nearer home,” was the comment heard Wednesday after the news of the robbery of the Crocker National Bank in Turners Falls had spread. Bank robberies, until now, have been something that happened somewhere else. “Why who would ever think that anyone would rob a bank around here.⁹ They have and probably may again and perhaps successfully unless everyone realizes that every bank and every establishment where large sums of money are handled are potential victims.

The first bank robbery in Franklin County was carefully planned. Within less than a half hour the entire robbery had been executed. It is too late. now to plan preventatives, but had the guards on the outside of the bank been vigilant, the robbers might have been captured or at least temporarily detained until help arrived.

Let everyone be on their guard. Strangers should be watched. With one bank successfully robbed, other gangsters may shift their “working headquarters” to this locality. With the cooperation of the police, that shift may not only be a. temporary one, but those gangsters may be captured.

Current Comment

Turners Falls Bank Robbery

The bold robbery of the Crocker National Bank in Turners Falls may serve, to remind banking institutions hereabouts, and particularly in the smaller cities and towns, of the need of the greatest precautions to guard against similar occurrences.

The western part of the State has been rather free from this form of banditry, which has flourished more extensively in the area surrounding Boston, and it is possible that a false sense of security or immunity has grown up in this section. If so. it would be wise to discard it.

The criminals who have developed along with the racketeering of the last dozen or move years are no respecters of regions or areas and may commit their depredations in any field that, may look promising to them.

That they are sometimes cunning as well are bold and reckless was illustrated in the ruse adopted by the Turners Falls robbers to gain admittance to the Crocker Bank before the opening hour and at a time when there were likely to be few persons around to observe or interfere with their operations.

It is not easy to suggest measures to guard against a robbery of this type, but it does seem that a system of some sort could be devised and installed that would sound An alarm and summon the police before bank robbers had proceeded very far with their loot.

January 17, **1934** Greenfield MA Recorder 1934 Jan-Mar - 0126.pdf

Identification Fails of Holyoke Gunmen as Robbers of Crocker National Bank

Witnesses Scrutinize Two Suspects

Spectacular Arrest of Pair Made in Holyoke Garage Last Evening

The attempts of police of Holyoke and Turners Falls. as well as state police detectives to link two gunmen captured last evening In Holyoke with the Crocker National bank robbery at Turners Falls last month completely failed this morning.

Police Chief William J. Callahan and Officer James P McHugh of Turners Falls; Andrew Sauter, janitor of the Crocker National Bank. Earl Squires, teller, and Thomas Frawley, paymaster for the Keith Paper mill, who was n the bank at the-time of the robbery, all failed to identify the suspects when the two gunmen were in a police line-up it Holyoke this morning.

Bail \$5000

The suspects were put under the scrutiny of police from three cities and towns this morning after pleading guilty in district court at Holyoke to carry a loaded revolver. Bail was set at \$5,000 each and Judge John Hildreth continued the case.

March 22, **1934** [Albany NY Evening News 1934 - 2141.pdf](#)

STATE POLICE SEARCH MRS. COOLIDGE'S CAR

Northampton. Mass. Among automobiles stopped by state police in their search for clues to the recent \$23,000 Turners Falls bank robbery was one carrying Mrs. Grace Coolidge, widow of the late President Calvin Coolidge. The officers quickly explained to Mrs. Coolidge that they had orders to stop all automobiles.

April 14, **1934** [Greenfield MA Recorder 1934 - 0128.pdf](#)

Hope Dwindles in Crocker Case

As the time increases with no further word from the police officers who left Tuesday for the West in the search for the two armed bandits who robbed the Crocker national Bank of \$20,000 Dec. 13, doubt grew that definite progress was being made.

Turners Falls police declared today they had heard nothing from Chief William Callahan since he left with state detective Lieut. Albert Dasey Tuesday afternoon, at that time expecting to return by Friday at the latest.

The officers intended to go to Leavenworth. Kans. to examine a prisoner there whose photograph was identified as that of one of the two bandits. Had the suspect been wanted here and were it possible to remove the suspect from the penitentiary, officers would have been back here with him before now, it was generally believed.

What word Dist. Atty. Joseph T. Bartlett had received from the two officers is not known, he being in Boston today. Pending further word from Chief Callahan and Lieut. "Dasey it is believed the investigation may have taken the officers into Illinois and that clews[sic] developed at Leavenworth are detaining the two men. The possibility that the search might take this turn was seen in the fact that Eddie Larue, declared to be the suspect at the Leavenworth penitentiary, is known as an Illinois gangster.

April 17, 1934 Greenfield MA Recorder 1934 - 0146.pdf

Callahan Silent on Trip to West

TURNERS FALLS—A week after departing for the Middle West in search of the bandits who held up the Crocker National bank Dec. 13 and robbed it of \$20,000. Police Chief William J. Callahan of Turners Falls was back, having returned last night with State Deet, Lt. Albert Dasey of the Northampton barracks.

Today Chief Callahan maintained silence about the trip declaring he would say nothing unless Lieut. Dasey were present. Although the chief had an appointment with reporters for early afternoon when he had indicated he would outline the results of the trip and the nature of the investigation, the information was withheld when Lt. Dasey failed to appear. He said he had pledged Dasey to say nothing unless the detective was present.

Chief Callahan did indicate he and Lieut. Dasey questioned the suspect, Fred Larue, now serving 10 years in Leavenworth federal penitentiary. Larue, who says he comes from Albany, N. Y., recently married a girl from Danville, Vt., and was arrested on a federal charge while living with the girl in Florida.

With the officers back in this section, the investigation is continuing, the chief indicated, with federal operatives aiding Montague and state police.

April 18, 1934 Greenfield MA Recorder 1934 - 0157.pdf

Crocker Money Spent, Convict Says Little

TURNERS FALLS—Confident that they are working on the right track and that a solution of the robbery of the Crocker National Bank was near. Police Chief William J. Callahan and Albert E. Dacey of the state police late yesterday afternoon declared, however, that the chances of retrieving any of the stolen \$20,000 were slight.

The suspect, Fred LaRue at Leavenworth federal penitentiary, told the officers little, declaring merely, "You know the whole story." He had little money when arrested, and in St. Petersburg, Fla., where picked tip by federal officers, had been living a high life, spending about \$1,000 a week.

July 17, 1934 Greenfield MA Recorder 1934 - 1024.pdf

Crocker Robbery Blamed on Bentz Gang of Bandits

Brother of Desperado Captured in Portland is Wanted for Bold Raid on Turners Falls Bank Last December in Which \$22,000 was Stolen

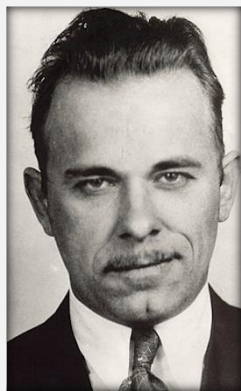
TURNERS FALLS—Edward W. Bentz, for whom federal operatives are instituting a nation-wide search today is one of two men believed implicated in the \$22,000 robbery at

the Crocker National bank here last December Bentz who is described by police as Public Enemy No. 3. was at large following the capture in Portland, Me., last night of his brother, Theodore Bentz, who is accused of being a member of a gang of five bandits who staged a daylight raid on the Caledonia National bank in Danville, Vt., June 4.

In the robbery of the local bank, Bentz is believed to have been accompanied by Fred Larue, now serving a 10-year sentence in the Federal penitentiary at Leavenworth Larue married a Danville, Vt., girl and was living with her in Florida at the time of his arrest on a federal charge, but refused to say anything when questioned concerning the local hold-up during Chief of Police William Callahan's trip to the Middle West last April

Quiet Search

The police have been quietly searching for Edward Bentz. but had lost track of him until after the Danville robbery in June. Bentz, who travels under the alias of Edward Wendell, is described as being 40 years old, 5 feet 11 inches in height, weighing, about 210 pounds, with blue eyes. He is also known in Chicago as, Ned Dewey, Jack Kearns, and Arthur Desmond, and is Wanted for a bank robbery in' Seattle, Washington.



**John Herbert
Dillinger**
c1930. Wikipedia

The Bentz' gang is thought to be fully as dangerous desperados as John Dillinger and have long records as gunmen and bandits. They are suspected of having taken part in the recent wanted kidnaping of Edward Bremer, wealthy St. Paul brewer and are believed to be implicated in a number of bank robberies throughout New England: and the Middle West.

The looting of the Danville bank was similar in technique to that of the Crocker National bank last December. The Bandits entered the building with guns drawn and forced all the employes[sic] to lie on the floor, after which they bound them tightly and then proceeded calmly to empty the contents of the vault. The bandits made their getaway in a car which they had parked outside, and the police had only the barest of clues to work with.

Auto Registration

Theodore Bentz has been operating a novelty store in Portland, Me., for some time, and at various times, Edward Bentz was in charge of the establishment. The latter fled by plane to New York two weeks ago, accompanied by his wife, but police are certain that he has returned, and the warning had been broadcast to all towns to be on the alert for automobiles bearing Maine registrations EM-930 and AW-628.

Chief of Police William Callahan declared definitely this morning that Edward Bentz is the man for whom the local police, have been searching, but does not believe that Theodore is connected with the case. They are sure that a large gang has been operating

with the Bentz brothers, and if all reports are true, it is one of the worst groups of gunmen in the nation.

The Maine and federal officials do not believe that they have deserted Theodore Bentz since his arrest, but the exact whereabouts of the gang is unknown at present.

The Turners Falls police will delay action until the possible apprehension of Edward Bentz, as they have no case against his brother.

September 4, **1934** [Greenfield MA Recorder 1934 - 1494.pdf](#)

[Bentz Linked to Dillinger Gang](#)

[Michigan Police Say Prisoner Admits Little Bohemia Escape](#)

CHICAGO—Theodore Bentz, held in jail at Grand Haven, Mich. was revealed last night as a known member of the Dillinger mob, and, authorities said, had admitted being one of those who escaped from a federal trap with his leader and other members of the gang at the Little Bohemia in Wisconsin last April.

Arrested in Maine some time ago, Bentz was taken to Michigan to face charges of robbing the People's Savings Bank at Grand Haven in 1933.

His connection with the Dillinger gang was learned when he was identified as a member of the band that robbed the Merchants National Bank at South Bend, Ind., the "last job" of the slain John Dillinger.

Assistant Police Chief P. Leo Berner of South Bend revealed the identification of Bentz in that robbery, a crime that cost the life of a policeman, Howard Wagner, on June 30.

October 3, **1934** [Greenfield MA Recorder 1934 - 1790.pdf](#)

[Bentz Gang Suspected in Conn. Bank Holdup](#)

WALLINGFORD—Conn. Five unmasked talkative robbers, calmly walked into the Wallingford Bank And Trust Co., Before noon yesterday and moving with lightning speed fled with \$20,000 in cash and a large number of securities.

Taking a little over four minutes to do their job which gave every evidence of having been well planned, the men returned to their sedan and dashed away down a side street running parallel with the one-story brick bank building.

The robbery, engineered in broad daylight, is believed by police to be the work of a gang from the Vermont hills led by Ed Bentz, (Members of the Bentz gang are sought in connection with the robbery last year of the Crocker National Bank in Turners Falls).

Once inside the bank, the men, working like a well-coached football team proceeded to fulfill their duties while one warned the eight bank employees and three customers a child not to be "nervous because only kids shoot and we're not kids."

"Just get in back there and lie down." He said.

March 13, 1936 Greenfield MA Recorder 1936 - 0645.pdf

Capture Crocker Suspect

Edward Bentz. Long Hunted for T.F. Robbery. Arrested

Also Linked to Other Bank Jobs

Vermont Indictment Takes Precedence Over \$22,000 County Charge

Washington—AP—The justice department today announced the arrest in Brooklyn, N. Y., of Edward Bentz and said he was wanted in connection with bank robberies in Nebraska, Vermont, and North Carolina.

J. Edgar Hoover, director of the bureau of investigation, said: Bentz was one of the participants in the \$1,430,000 robbery on Sept. 17, 1830. of the Lincoln National bank at 4, Neb.

The statement said Bentz also was wanted for robbery of the First National Bank of Brandon. Vt., and the first National Bank of Mooresville.

Hoover said Bentz is under suspicion in a number of other bank robberies. He will be taken to Rutland, Vt., to answer an indictment for \$8500 robbery of the Caledonia National Bank at Danville, Vt.

Fresh hopes for the capture of the two bandits who robbed the Crocker National bank of Turners Falls of \$22,000 on Dec. 13, 1933 were revived today by the capture of Edward Bentz alleged leader of desperadoes who also robbed the hank in Danville, Vt., on June 4, 1934.

Bentz, who was described by police at that time as Public Enemy No. 3. has been sought after constantly since these two daring robberies. The capture of his brother, Theodore Bentz, in Portland, Me., on July 16, 1934, clarified the mystery which surrounded the Western trip of Police Chief William Callahan to see Fred Larue, who was reported to be one of the Bentz gang connected with the robberies.

The trial of Edward Bentz was lost until after the Danville robbery, which was the first committed in Vermont since 1875. After the capture of his brother. Bentz remained at large but relentless trailing has at last brought him to justice.

The boldest daylight robbery which had ever been perpetrated in this section occurred between 8 and 8:30 a.m. Andrew Sauter, janitor was alone in the bank when two men came to the door with a package for the cashier. Thinking they were expressmen, he opened the door and was forced back into the bank at the point of a revolver.

After Sauter had been trussed up with wire, the bandits asked if the tall one, Earle Squires, the teller, could open the vault. Squires when he arrived, was told to open the vault and that "it would be too bad if the burglar alarm went off."



Edward Bentz.
1934

Thomas P. Frawley, paymaster for the Keith Paper company, was also trussed up, when he came for the payroll. Frawley's chauffeur, John McCarthy, sounded no alarm because the cool demeanor of the bandits and their manner were not unusual as they walked from the bank

After Theodore Bentz had been captured in Portland, Police Chief Callahan said he believed Theodore had no connection with the Turners Falls robbery. Action by the local police was delayed until the capture of Edward Bentz, since they had no case against his brother.

Police Chief Callahan said at that time Edward Bentz was definitely the man for whom they were searching.

March 16, 1936 [Greenfield MA Recorder 1936 - 0669.pdf](#)

[Vermont to Try Bentz First on Robbery Charges](#)

[Wanted in Turners Falls in Connection with Crocker Bank Holdup](#)

New York—Federal authorities said today that Edward Bentz western bad man who was smoked out of his Brooklyn hideout by department of justice tear gas on Friday, probably will be turned over to Vermont to answer charges of bank robberies in Brandon and Danville.

He is wanted from coast to coast. Federal authorities disclosed Bentz's wife, Verna Friedmark Bentz of Milwaukee, Wis. Had been arrested there and brought to Scranton, Pa., to stand trial on charges of harboring her desperado husband.

Federal authorities said Louis Philips is whose home Bentz was found, has confessed to five burglaries on Long Island and will be turned over to the Garden City police.

Police Chief William Callahan of Turners Falls said Saturday he would probably go to Danville to interview Edward Bentz, wanted by Turners Falls police in connection with the daylight robbery of the Crocker National Bank in that town of \$22,000 on Dec. 13, 1933, when two men entered the bank, trussed up Andrew Sauter, janitor whom they found alone, and forced Earl Squires, teller, to open the vault.

Chief Callahan, following the capture of Bentz's brother, Theodore, in Portland, Me., on July 16, 1934. Talked with one Fred Larue, believed to have been partner to the holdup, and later Edward was definitely the man he wanted.

March 27, 1936 [Greenfield MA Recorder 1936 - 0789.pdf](#)

[Bentz On Way to Penitentiary](#)

[Callahan Make No Comment on Crocker Holdup Suspect](#)

BURLINGTON—A heavy guard surrounded Edward W. Bentz, notorious robber, as he traveled toward the federal penitentiary, at Atlanta, Ga., yesterday to begin a 20 year sentence for a hold-up of a Vermont bank.

Bentz, believed an associate of Harvey Bailey, now imprisoned at Alcatraz, was guarded by five officers.

The bank robber pleaded guilty in federal district court here Monday to robbing the Caledonia National bank in Danville of \$7,200 in cash and \$8,000 in securities June 4, 1934. It was the first bank robbery in Vermont in 28 years.

Bentz was captured March 13 in a Brooklyn, N. Y., apartment house He was identified as one of the gang of four men and a woman who participated in the hold-up.

He has been arrested numerous times and has been connected with about 40 bank robberies in several states.

Turners Falls Police Chief William J. Callahan said this morning he would make no statement regarding Edward Bentz, captured bandit, suspected of robbing the Crocker National Bank in December, 1933. He said he would consult, with state detectives.

June 3, 1936 [Greenfield MA Recorder 1936 - 1485.pdf](#)

[Reports Old Timers Quitting Bank Robbery](#)

WASHINGTON—J. Edgar Hoover today quoted Edward Wilhelm (Willie) Bentz, notorious bank robber, as saying that many old-timers have "quit the bank robbing racket because they knew that they could no longer get away with it."

Bentz said "The whole picture changed" when the federal government started investigating national bank robberies two years ago, Hoover related.

Bentz pleaded guilty to robbing the Caledonia National Bank of Danville, Vt., and was sentenced to 20 years. (He was believed connected with the robbery of the Crocker National Bank at Turners Falls, also).

November 16, 1938 [Greenfield MA Recorder 1938 - 3260.pdf](#) & [Greenfield MA Recorder 1938 - 3267.pdf](#)

[Indict Alcatraz Convicts for Crocker National Bank Robbery of \\$18,000 in '33](#)

[Accuse Bentz, Doll](#)

[State Must Await Completion of Long Sentences Before Bringing Pair to Trial](#)

Indictments against two Alcatraz convicts were returned in superior court today for the armed robbery of \$18,000 from the Crocker National bank of Turners Falls, Dec. 13, 1933.

The men are Edward Bentz and Edward Doll, alias Edward LaRue, but Dist. Atty. Daniel T. O'Brien said he does not know when



Edward Wilhelm Bentz. Alcatraz mugshot. 1936
Wikipedia

they will be brought here. Both are in the federal stronghold serving time for other offenses. He said, however, he will ask for warrants to be sent to the federal bureau of prisons for their appearance here when they are freed from the island prison.

Threatened Two

The indictments are identical. One charges that they on Dec. 13, 1993 at Montague with intent to commit larceny unlawfully did confine and put in fear a certain person, to wit, one Earl F. Squires, for the purpose of stealing from a certain bank and depository of money, to wit, the Crocker National bank in Montague and by intimidation. force and threats compel said Earl F. Squires to open both the outer doors and the inner doors of a certain vault in said bank and did. succeed in the perpetration of said larceny.

Count two read they did threaten and put a certain person in fear, to wit, one Thomas P. Frawley for the purpose of stealing from a certain bank and depository of money in Montague and by intimidation, force and threats compel said Thomas P. Frawley to go to the rear of said bank and lie down and then wired his ankles together and did succeed in the perpetration of said larceny.

The second indictment was for stealing \$18,000 in money from the bank.

Long Crime Careers

Bentz, who has 28 aliases, began his criminal career in Tacoma, Wash., in 1912. Doll, with seven aliases known to police, made his first criminal record in San Antonio, Texas, Jan. 15, 1926. He has been a member of the "Machine Gun Kelley" gang. Both also have long records of prison escapes, paroles and probations and State Detective Maurice P. Nelligan said Doll has confessed to the Turners Falls robbery.

Doll was arrested in St. Petersburg, Fla., Feb. 14 ,1934. He was living there as Edward Foley with his wife, Doris, of Danville, Vt. While planning the Turners Falls holdup he was said to have lived in Albany, N.Y.

Bound Three Men

The Crocker National bank robbed of currency just before it was opened for the day's business. The two armed robbers, unmasked and in ordinary clothing, walked to the street and to their car and drove away, after they bound three men in the bank with heavy wire.

The men were admitted by Andrew Sauter, Janitor. They trussed him up, and then Squares entered. They forced him to open the vault. Before they left Frawley, paymaster of the Keith Paper company, called for the payroll. He was bound and laid on the floor with the other two.



George Kelly Barnes
"Machine Gun Kelly"
c1936 Wikipedia

W. Johnas Morgan, vice-president said the pair took some bank records, and non-negotiable securities which were of no use to them. The robbers had not more than a 10 minutes' start when the alarm was given.

Had Fake Package

Sauter reported that while he was sweeping out the banking rooms preparatory to opening there was a knock on the door and he found the two men outside. One holding a package, was dressed like a truckman and they told Sauter the package was for the cashier. He allowed them to enter and was about to sign for the package, when they produced a gun and told him it was a holdup.

The pair led Sauter to the rear behind the cages and trussed him up. They waited for Squires, who could not see them as they lurked with drawn guns until he stepped through the second door. He was held until Frawley entered. Then he was taken to the vault, and was told that if he failed or set off the alarm "it would be just too bad" for him.

Nelligan said today Bentz has been identified as one of the pair. Police Chief William Callahan of Turners Falls and Nelligan assisted in securing evidence for the indictments. The papers were returned today under direction of O'Brien, who is serving in place of the late Dist. Atty. David H. Keedy of Amherst.

Serving 20 Years

Bentz was arrested in Brooklyn, N. Y., March 13. 1936, for bank robberies in Nebraska. Vermont and North Carolina, and sentenced to 20 years in Leavenworth for a Danville, Vt., bank robbery. It was said he was wanted for robbing 40 other banks in several states.

In July 1936 police began a search for Bentz following the capture in Portland, Me., of his brother, Theodore as one of the gang of five who stage a daylight robbery of the Danville, Vt., bank. It then was believed he and a Fred Larue who was serving 10 years, were responsible for the Turners Falls robbery.

Methods used in the Danville robbery were reported similar to those used in Turners Falls.

June 28, 1940 [Greenfield MA Recorder 1940 - 1984.pdf](#)

Indictments against Edward Bentz and Edward Doll, were returned in superior court here Nov. 16, 1938, but they have not been tried on them. They were charged with robbing the Crocker National Bank of Turners Falls on Dec. 13. 1933. It was reported at that time Bentz was wanted for robberies in 40 other states.

He was sentenced to 20 years in Leavenworth in Brooklyn, N.Y., on March 13. 1936, for the Danville, Vt., bank robbery, among others.

August 7, 1940 [Greenfield MA Recorder 1940 - 2371.pdf](#)

County Police Officers Confer Secretly

Dist. Atty. John Heselton of Deerfield was in conference today at his court house, office with Lt. Det. Maurice P. Nelligan of Northampton Sheriff Michael Carroll of Turners Falls, Chief William J. O'Connell of the Greenfield police, and two unidentified strangers.



John W. Heselton
1940. Internet

Heselton would not discuss their investigation beyond suggesting the November session of superior court might reveal its nature.

Pointing out the obligation of law enforcement officers in regard to "secret indictments", Heselton said all officers had been pledged to secrecy.

"The nature of the investigation the district attorney's office is now conducting" Heselton said, "is such that the public interest would not be best served by a complete revelation at the present time."

He denied, however, that any persons were being brought to Greenfield for questioning.

It was also learned today from other sources that Lt. Nelligan with Chief William J, Callahan of Turners Falls recently were active in the vicinity of the former Crocker National bank in Turners Falls. This recalled that Edward Bentz, indicted in 1936 for the \$18,000 robbery of 1933, had never been brought to trial on it.

Bentz is now serving 20 years in Alcatraz for another robbery at Danville, Vt. Late in June this year he was brought east to Burlington, Vt., for the trial of Clyde Nimerick, charged with being an accomplice in the Danville crime. Bentz denied Nimerick was with him. Bentz and Edward Doll, also supposed to be in Alcatraz, were indicted by the Franklin County grand jury in November, 1936, for the Crocker affair.

Aug. 21, 1940 [Greenfield MA Recorder 1940 - 2511.pdf](#)

Hold Doll Here for Trial

Edward Doll, alias Edward Larue, one of two men under indictment for the \$20,000 robbery of the Crocker National Bank in Turners Falls in 1933 is at the Franklin County jail awaiting trial, Dist. Atty. John W. Heselton said today. This new year-old case was nearing a climax but war not then free to reveal details.

Doll was brought here Aug. 6, Heselton revealed, 13. days before his federal sentence expired on Monday. The district attorney, in a formal statement, said

Formal Statement

With the cooperation of the federal bureau of prisons and by or der of the attorney general of the United States, after request by Gov. Saltonstall, under federal legislation enacted April 30, 1940, Edward Doll, alias Edward Larue, was transferred from the United States penitentiary at Leavenworth, Kas., to the Franklin county jail on Aug.

"The sentence which he was then serving, imposed by the United States district court for the southern district of Illinois on march 5, 1934, expired Aug. 19.

"A warrant from the superior court of Franklin County, based Upon an indictment returned by the grand jury on Nov. 16, 1938, was immediately served upon him and he is now in custody. The commonwealth anticipates placing 4ftis ease upon the list for trial at the November sitting."

It was learned that Doll, who had served the greater part of his sentence at the federal prison at Alcatraz, was transferred from that institution back to Leavenworth on June 14, but further comment.

The second man indicted by the Franklin the Turners Falls robbery, Edward Bentz, is believed to be still in Alcatraz serving a 20 years sentence returned there earlier summer after brief testimony at Burlington, Vt., in connection with another bank robbery there. Doll earlier, police said, had confessed to his part in the Turners Falls crime implicating Bentz, which led to his indictment here in 1938.

Quiet Prisoner

Since his arrival here, it was learned today, he has been an excellent prisoner, in contrast to the career of violence which led him and his associate Bentz to be branded by the department of justice as "public enemies."

It was believed today that Doll at prisoner serving time on a major offense to end his term in the county institution. Such action made it unnecessary to send local officers on the long trip to California.

It was understood today from reliable sources that no local persons are suspected of complicity in the crime, and that the two men indicted were accused of sole responsibility for its planning and execution.

Heselton, however, declined to comment on this angle.

Neither Bentz or Doll has ever been faced with the local indictments and there was no indication today what plea Doll might make when he faces a superior court judge.

November 12, 1940 [Greenfield MA Recorder 1940 - 3485.pdf](#)

Doll Denies Robbery of Bank

Edward Doll of Chicago, Ill., first so-called "big-time gangster" to face trial here, at noon today denied two grand, jury indictments in connection with the \$18,000[sic] Crocker National Bank (Turners Falls) robbery, Dec. 13, 1933. Superior Court trial will be next week.

Doll was held at the jail in lieu of \$35,000 cash bail ordered by Justice Allan Buttrick on District Atty. John W. Haselton's recommendation. He was handcuffed and taken there after arraignment by Sheriff Michael W. Carroll.

Edward Wilhelm Bentz of St. Louis considered "king of bank robbers", will be brought here to face similar charges, it was unofficially learned here today. He was implicated by police in the bold day-time robbery. He is serving a 20-year federal prison sentence for the Caledonia National Bank robbery in Danville, Vt.

Doll denied today he intimidated Earl F. Squires of Gill, then cashier, and forced him to open both outer and inner doors to the vault. He also denied tying Thomas G. Frawley, Keith Paper Company paymaster, who was in the bank at the time.

The indictments were returned after a secret session of the 1938 grand jury under Foreman Delbert Truesdell.

Dist.-Atty. Heselton in asking for \$30,000 on the intimidation charges and \$5,000 on the robbery count, said that the total lost in the bank robbery Dist.-Atty. Heselton in asking for \$30,000 on the intimidation charges and \$5,000 on the robbery "will exceed \$35,000." Judge Allen G. Buttrick granted the bail request without question.

Doll has been at the county since July when he was transferred from a federal prison at the request of Dist. Atty. Heselton.

Atty. Maurice Levy appeared for Doll today. He was appointed by Judge Francis Hammond of Northampton following Doll's petition for a lawyer, filed soon after his arrest.

November 14, 1940 [Greenfield MA Recorder 1940 - 3511.pdf](#)

[Bentz Admits Crocker Bank Robbery Which Doll Denies: Heavy Guard on FBI Convict](#)

[Here From Alcatraz](#)

[Hold Accused in Separate Jails Pending Trial of Second Here Next Week](#)

Edward Wilhelm Bentz, 44, former Public Enemy No. 3, at soon today admitted he aided in robbing the Crocker National bank of Turners Falls of \$18,000 in a bold daylight hold-up on Dec. 13, 1933.

In a superior courtroom never more carefully guarded, Bentz in a voice so low court officials could scarcely hear his words, admitted he aided in intimidating Earl F. Squires of Gill, former cashier, to open the bank's vaults, and in tying Thomas Frawley, former Keith Paper company paymaster, his bail was set at \$35,000.

This afternoon Bentz was given a mental examination at the request of Dist. Atty. John W. Heselton in the grand jury room where he and the dozen federal marshals and Bureau of Investigation men had been for more than two hours. Heselton's request followed a conference with Bentz, after his arrival at the courthouse at 10:20 a.m., of more than an hour and a half.

Held at Distance

He will be held at an out-of-state county jail pending trial of his alleged accomplice, Edward Doll, 38, of Chicago, Ill., who Tuesday denied the same charges. Doll is at the local jail and, in confining Bentz in a separate jail, county prosecution officials sought to keep the two men from meeting.

Bentz was brought from the federal prison at Alcatraz Island, California, by train, arriving in Springfield early this morning. Federal men there were joined by a cordon of state police and county prosecuting officials. Once inside the courthouse, all doors leading into the building were constantly guarded by federal men who were under specific orders from U.S. Atty.-Gen. Robert H. Jackson.

Will Attend Trial

Following his arraignment, Atty. Philip Johnson, associate defense counsel with Atty. Maurice Levy for Doll, asked Judge Allan Buttrick that Bentz be on hand during Doll's trial. Dist. Atty. Heselton said his plans called for Bentz' appearance.

Official silence early descended on the courthouse while the federal men disposed themselves at strategic positions. As the time for arraignment approached, Sheriff Michael W. Carroll began placing county law enforcement agents including Chief William J. Callahan, near doors leading from the courtroom.

The federal men are assigned to accompany Bentz daily to the courtroom from his out-of-county lock-up.

Both in Alcatraz

Bentz and Doll, while both have been engaged in similar major criminal careers for years, will appear before a judge charged with the same crime for the first-time Monday, federal agents said. Both have been confined at Alcatraz. Doll was taken from there on June 14 to Leavenworth, Kans. And later brought to the local jail prior to also expiration of a recent sentence.

Bentz, who has been studying law while at Alcatraz on a 20-year sentence for robbing a Vermont bank, reused today aid of an attorney. He has conducted his own defense before prosecuting officials remarked.

Bentz' career is one of the longest in the annals of federal criminal dockets, extending back to at least 1922 when he was convicted of kidnapping. Federal authorities maintain he has not been convicted of all crimes he may have engaged in because federal police control does not go back as far as his criminal career.

In addition to establishing a full-fledged crime ring to handle his bank hold-ups, which was broken up in the spring of 1933 with his conviction for the Vermont robbery. Bentz also[sic] was notorious for handling all types of stolen merchandise, including cars, and his specialty, so-called "hot bonds".

Prosecuting officials refused today in divulging the extent of Bentz' part in the Crocker bank hold-up.

November 18, 1940 [Greenfield MA Recorder 1940 - 3558.pdf](#)

Bank Robbery Witnesses Fail to Identify Either Bentz or Doll as Bandits

Five Turners Falls men this morning revealed to a crowded superior courtroom the details, of the \$35,000 Crocker National bank robbery, Dec. 13, 1933, as trial of Edward Doll, 38, of Chicago, Ill., alleged accomplice of a confessed robber, Edward W. Bentz, opened.

Doll denied last week he helped Bentz. 44, of Seattle, Wash., former public enemy No. 3 and brought here from Alcatraz, in the bold daylight robbery which stripped the Crocker National bank in Turners Falls of \$15,000 in cash and \$20,000 in securities in less than 15 minutes. He denied also a grand jury indictment, returned Nov. 10, 1933, that he was instrumental in forcing Note Teller Earl F. Squires to open the vaults or that he tied Squires and the late Thomas Frawley with wire.

None of the five witnesses so far has been able to identify either Doll or Bentz as the men who held up the bank at revolver point, and disappeared down Avenue A with a box full of loot, before anyone on the street was aware of the robbery.

Both Squires and Andrew Sauter, 73-year old bank janitor, declared today that they obeyed both robbers only because they were actually in fear of their lives! The commonwealth has already sworn in 10 additional witnesses.

Dist. Atty. John W. Heselton, in a dramatic opening address, traced the movements of Doll from March 17, 1931, when the defendant met Doris Crane Barton of Danville, Vt., in Chicago, Ill., to the time they were married in July 27, 1932.

Money Runs Out

Heselton claimed that after several visits to Danville and to her parents' and a wide swing around the country, through a source, Heselton found out that Doll's money was running out and he out began getting funds from his wife. He further declared that he stopped asking for funds shortly after the robbery and actually began giving her money. In January of 1934, the couple went to Florida where they bought a home and furnished it at a cost of \$2400 within a single month, he charged.

Sauter, initial witness this morning, declared he went to the bank door in response to a knock "H said a man, dressed in overalls and carrying a bundle, informed him he had a package for the cashier. He said he admitted the man, whom he identified, only as being heavily built and placed the package on a desk.

When he turned, he said, he faced a revolver and the man said "This is a hold-up". He was then ordered to lie down and his legs were tied with wire, which was placed in evidence today.

Hauled To Cubicle

Sauter then said he heard a second man enter the bank and then he was hauled by his coat collar across the floor and into a cubicle, where later Squires and Frawley joined him in confinement.

He was questioned by one of the men and later in an overheard conversation, he recalled one said to the other. "He's lying. Blow his brains out".

Squires said that, on his arrival at 8.29 a.m. he was confronted by two men at the door, both of whom held revolvers on him and ordered him to take off his coat and hat.

One, he said was heavily-built (Bentz is tall and heavily-built) ordered him to the vault's door which he opened. He was then taken to the cubicle to Join Sauter. He said that while lying on the floor, he heard telephone wires being clipped and the rustle of papers inside the vault The day, he said, was one for payrolls for several mills and the payrolls had already been completed when the bank was held up.

Thomas C. Tippet of 136 Third street teller, said that on his arrival at 8:35 a.m., he entered the bank because the front door was incorrectly locked. Going to the vault. he said he saw the floor strewn with coin and papers and the safe open and empty. He called police from the Turners Falls inn.

Edward J. Hanley, Keith Paper company employee, said he went with Frawley but that he stopped to purchase a newspaper. He then walked to the car which was parked in front of the bank and operated by John S. McCarthy, garage owner, and waited for Frawley.

While waiting, a second car parked in front of them and left the motor on, he testified. Soon a heavily-built man with a box in his arms left the bank tossed the box in the back seat of the machine, and the car drove south on Avenue At a "fast pace". He could not identify the operator of the car.

McCarthy said that a man casually left the bank, crossed the street to where a car was parked in front of the inn, got in and drove off. The car then swung in front of his machine.

The state charges that both men drove to Bernardston and to Wardsboro, Vt., where they stopped and split the money. The car then became stuck in snow and the men spent the night in an overnight camp, continuing to Cambridge, N.Y., the next day when Doll allegedly left Bentz and returned to Danville, Vt.

Prior to the robbery, Doll is supposed to have met Bentz in Chicago, Ill., where they had a number of conferences. Several days before the robbery, Doll is charged with having met Bentz in Albany, N. Y., where they purchased some articles and left for Turners Falls by way of Pittsfield and Northampton, driving to Turners Falls early the next morning, the state claims.

With deputy sheriffs, and federal men stationed inside and outside each courtroom door, trial got under way at 10.30, following lengthy impaneling of a jury. Doll entered 10.10 a.m., just two minutes after his alleged accomplice, Bentz, was brought in on the arms of two federal agents. Neither man looked at the other.

Doll was brought from the local jail by Keeper Irwin Hale and a posse of deputy sheriffs while Bentz was brought from his out-of-the-county jail in a three-machine motorcade with state police escort.

Judge Buttrick received no answer from the jury after asking them if they had formed an opinion on the case. The commonwealth challenged the following jurors: Pearl Emery of Greenfield, John A. Dresser of Orange, Thomas F. Flavin of Whately, Adam Sokoloski of South Deerfield and Edward Bezio of Wendell. The defense challenged Harry C. Gates of Orange, Cornelius O'Shea, Walter Hennessey and Joseph Sicard. sr., all of Turners Falls.

The jury, as finally drawn, includes Roy S. Babbitt of Orange. Ernest H. Wilcox of Greenfield, Foreman Winfred Woodard of Leverett, John B. Glabach, jr., of Leyden, Mearl K. Wilson of Monroe Bridge, Roy L. Gifford of New Salem, Roy D. Harris of Greenfield, Frank H. Reed of Greenfield, Harwood Thayer of Ashfield, John R. Fisher of Hawley, Fred W. Wells and Lloyd E. Clapp, both of Greenfield.

Dist. Atty. Heselton has as his aide, Atty. Milton (text obliterated) contacts with Atty. Levy.

November 19, 1940

[Greenfield MA Recorder 1940 - 3568.pdf](#)



Edward Doll. 1940

Bentz Charges Doll Aided in Crocker Bank Holdup; G-Men Claim Other Crimes

Linking Edward Doll, 38 of Chicago to the Crocker National bank robbery by the, confessed robber. Edward Bentz, former public enemy No. 3, and to nearly a score other holdups by three FBI men highlighted the second day of trial today in a packed superior court room.

Bentz flatly declared it was Doll and only Doll who helped him rob the Turners falls bank Dec, 43, 1933 of more than \$32,000 in cash and securities. But by noon recess, no other state's witness had come forward to make the tie-up. despite Dist. Atty. John W Heselton's strenuous attempts to overcome Defense Atty. Maurice Levy's objections to introduction of possible damaging evidence.

Grim Battle

The case became a grim battle at noon today when Dist. Atty Heselton unsuccessfully questioned Edward Scheldt, special FBI agent attached to the Charlotteville, N. C. office, and Lt. Maurice P. Nelligan. state; detective assigned to Franklin County.

A storm of protests, which Judge Allan Buttrick said he would take on exceptions, were filed by Atty. Levy when Scheldt and Nelligan both attempted to discuss a signature on the registry of the Hotel Wellington, Albany, N.Y., where the state charges Doll and Bentz stayed just before the hold-up.

Charge Assumed Name

The state charges Doll used the name of Edward Foley when he registered at the hotel and that he signed the register. Foley was a name Doll is alleged to have used also when he was married, and while hiding in Florida after the Crocker affair.

Bentz yesterday afternoon and this morning, in low tones, told of Doll's part in the robbery. He said Doll forced Earl F. Squires, a note teller, at gun-point to open the bank's vaults and that he scooped currency and securities in a safe into a box.

Forced Squires to Lie Down

Doll then brought Squires back to Bentz, waiting at the outer bank door and while Bentz forced Squires to lie down beside other imprisoned bank officials, Doll placed the box on a counter and attempted to add some travelers' checks, the witness stated. Bentz said they found \$20,160 in cash save for an occasional twitch of a cheek muscle. Doll listened quietly to Bentz' story of how the bandits fled Turners Falls down Avenue A, through the old Montague City covered bridge, by local side streets to routes 5 and 10 and then northward.

Split Loot in Vermont

Bentz said he and Doll split the loot eight miles south of West Wardsboro, Vt., and that they buried the securities in the ground. They continued until they became stuck in snow in a wood road and spent the night at a hunting cabin. Bentz and Doll then went on to Cambridge, N. Y., where the two parted company.

Bentz admitted that a man other than Doll accompanied him to Turners Falls when he "cased" the bank in November of 1933, but continually denied that the unnamed man actually robbed the bank.

He said he and his partner planned to escape by a circuitous route to Albany, N.Y., and that they mapped complete driving directions, which Bentz later read to Doll as they escaped.

Bentz said he left the car, Doll drove into Turners Falls, on K street that he then walked up Fifth street to Avenue A and into the bank.

Searched for Securities

Doll was not with him when he returned to; West Wardsboro, Vt., in July of 1934 and searched for, the buried securities, Bentz said, but he stated his wife came part of the way. The car the men abandoned in the woods was found the following May by Sheriff Patrick J. O'Keefe of Brattleboro, Vt., who today it contained Minnesota and Illinois plates and a box of shotgun shells bearing a Cicero, Ill. sales slip.

Turning to Doll's activities after the Crocker affair, the state called on R. A. Alt, FBI chief of the Jacksonville, Fla., office, Robert L. Main of Jacksonville, a former FBI agent, and Harold L. Anderson, chief of the Oklahoma City, Okla., office.

Alt said he interviewed Doll following his arrest in Tampa, Fla., Feb. 15, 1934, on a chicken farm owned by the defendant and his wife. He said Doll wanted to talk and did so freely, a fact attributed by Anderson to his belief Doll was a "newly" married man who was separated from his wife and wanted to be with her."

Anderson said he felt Doll, in revealing his connections with a number of notorious criminals and a large number of bank robberies he was trying to pay for what he had done so that he might start afresh.

Doll is alleged to have admitted he knew such criminals as "Machine Gun" Kelly, Harvey Bailey who committed a New Rochelle, N. Y., kidnaping case, George Gates of the Bremer kidnaping case and a number of notorious bank robbers.

Linked With Others

Doll is also said to have admitted having aided in the October, 1933, Effingham, Ill., mail robbery, in which Bentz was also involved; a bank "job" at Tupelo, Miss., Dec. 1, 1933 in which about \$16,000 was taken; a Blue Ridge, Tex., bank robbery in August, 1932; a Colfax National bank robbery in Washington state in September, 1932, and an Arkadelphia, Ark., bank robbery in April of 1933.

It was after the Arkansas robbery that Doll and his companions ran into a sheriff's posse and wounded several of the men, but the whole gang. escaped, according to FBI agents.

At noon. Doll's wife was on the stand, detailing their early courtship and marriage. She stated that during October and November of 1933, her husband had received large sums of money from her, while both were living at Danville. Vt., with her relatives.

Found Doll Silent

Albert M. Dasey, formerly a state police detective, said he and chief William J. Callahan of Turners Falls, went to Leavenworth prison in 1934, when Doll was waiting trial on a charge of transporting a stolen car over state borders and that they had met with no success trying to get Doll to tell of his connection with that alleged crime. Dasey said that Doll asked them not to interview his wife about it.

Charles W. Higinbotham of Turners Falls, then assistant cashier, yesterday said an inventory after the robbery disclosed \$19,423.25 in cash and \$13,249.30 in securities had been taken from the vault Also deeds, foreclosure papers and receipts and about \$600 in bonds, he added. He revealed that both the Keith Paper company and Esleek Manufacturing company payrolls, to be delivered that day, were stolen.

November 20, 1940 [Greenfield MA Recorder 1940 & 3581.pdf](#) [Greenfield MA Recorder 1940 - 3582.pdf](#)

Doll Bank Robbery Case Ready for Jury Verdict with Arguments Complete

A superior court jury this afternoon began consideration to determine whether Edward Doll, 38, of Chicago, aided Edward W. Bentz, 46, conduct the \$33,000 Crocker National bank robbery, nearly eight—years ago; Closing arguments by Dist. Atty. John W. Heselton and Defense Atty. Maurice Levy and a charge by Judge Allan G. Buttrick occupied the last minutes of the morning session and most of the afternoon, following a three-hour appearance by Doll himself to deny any connection with the daylight robbery or "business associations" with Bentz.

Cross-Examine Doll

Doll was cross-examined for about two and a half hours this morning by Dist-Atty.[sic] Heselton after he flatly asserted that the statements in which he revealed to FBI agents he performed a number of bank hold ups, including the Crocker bank, were lies. He said he provided the government with information concerning them because he wanted to square himself with the government and start anew.

Unruffled by a volley of questions from Dist. Atty Heselton, Doll said he had agreed to plead guilty to the Crocker affair, although he continued to deny any connection with it, on the understanding that he would be confined to a prison in Ne England. This he asserted, because he wanted to stay where his wife, who he said was located in Danville, Vt., would be able to visit him.

Attached to Wife

Doll professed a deep attachment to his wife, who [yesterday broke] into tears while visiting, and claimed that while he lied continually to her about his vocation of professional gambler, he did so to protect her. He flatly denied he ever had a hand in the Crocker bank robbery.

Doll was unable to state where he was, Dec. 13, 1933, when the robbery took place but insisted that he was not in Turners Falls.

He claimed following his purchase with his wife of a \$3000 chicken farm in St. Petersburg, Fla., he found his money running low and obtained funds from his wife, who previous to the robbery had supplied him with money on several occasions. He insisted that the money he used to buy the farm and the \$500 he said he paid Mrs. Doll in December of 1933 came from proceeds obtained as a professional gambler.

Admitting that his former stealing and selling stolen automobiles had sent him to a federal prison from which he was released in July, Doll also admitted he had at one time been a professional bootlegger and that he knew a number of notorious criminals. He said he stopped all such activities after meeting his wife in 1931 and turned to professional gambling.

He charged that Bentz, while both were incarcerated at Alcatraz, and after both had learned they would face trial for the Crocker affair, said he would testify in his behalf. He also claimed Benz said while he was on his way east to face trial he would make good his escape from the federal wardens who accompanied him.

During cross-examination, Doll admitted having many aliases, including those of Foley, Larue, Fred E. Maron, jr., Edward Owen and Frank Lewis. He also admitted that he committed bigamy at least twice.

Diet. Atty. Heselton charged, and Doll admitted, that he was married to one Peoria, Ill., girl when he married a second, that he was married to a third woman when he met and married Miss Crane and that all four women had divorced him.

Denies Capone Connection

Among charges hurled by Dist. Atty. Heselton at Doll all denied, were charges that Doll was a member of the Al Capone gang, the notorious Gold Dust twins, and the Touhey gang of Chicago, Ill.

Doll traced his motoring journeys about the country for about two years prior to and after the Crocker affair. He said that he stayed in many western and southern cities for about a month, always engaged in professional gambling. He said he broke his little finger while he was on the farm of his brother-in-law, Lynn Crane at Danville, Vt., 10 days before Thanksgiving of 1933 and that the family doctor put a splint on it.

He admitted having met Bentz at the Hotel Wellington, Albany, N. Y., the evening of Dec. 11, 1933, but claimed he had not accompanied Bentz there. Bentz previously testified that he and Doll spent the night at the Hotel Wellington, then went together to a tourist home outside Northampton where they spent the evening of Dec., 12 and early the next morning went to Turners Falls.

Doll said that he was trying to get a gambling game into operation at the Hotel Wellington that night and that his wife was not then with him. He said he used the name of E. Foley at that time, a statement corroborated by Earl B. Hodges, one of the clerks who was the final state's witness yesterday afternoon.

Recall Broken Finger

Doll's brother-in-law and wife testified that the defendant spent some time at their home in the fall of 1933 and that Doll and his wife left "retaliation"[sic] for Florida Dec. 27, 1933. He said the broken finger became infected, but could not recall whether a doctor treated it.

Elliott M. Strange of Central Street, Turners Falls, testified that he had a good look at two men entering the Crocker bank the morning of the robbery from his position across the street in front of the Turners Falls inn. He said that this fall he learned, while imprisoned in the house of correction for drunkenness, that Doll was there and that he had been charged with the crime.

He asserted it could not have been Doll who entered the bank with a man in overalls and carrying a box. This man was Bentz, according to Bentz' testimony. He denied he had talked with Doll.

The jury is Foreman Wilfred Woodard of Leverett, Roy S. Babbitt of Orange, Ernest H. Wilcox of Greenfield, John B. Glabach, jr., Leyden, Mearl K. Wilson of Monroe Bridge, Roy L. Gifford New Salem, Rod D. Harris and Frank H. Reed, both of Greenfield, Harwood Thayer of Ashfield, John R. Fisher of Hawley, Fred W. Wells of Greenfield and Lloyd E. Clapp, both of Greenfield.

November 21, 1940 [Greenfield MA Recorder 1940 & 3593.pdf](#) [Greenfield MA Recorder 1940 - 3604.pdf](#)

Doll, Bentz Both Draw Sentences

Edward Doll, 38, of Chicago, was found guilty on all counts in connection with the Crocker National Bank robbery by a jury at 6:25 p.m. yesterday, nearly four hours after it began deliberation. Judge Allan G. Buttrick immediately sentenced him to 20 and not more than 25 years in the Charlestown's state prison.

Doll's accomplice, Edward W. Bentz, 48, received a minimum of five and a maximum of six years, to be served at the expiration of his current federal sentence.

The jury's decision was reached after it asked and was given further instructions. At 5:15 p.m., Judge Buttrick queried the jury and Foreman Wilfred Woodard of Leverett disclosed they were undecided on whether to believe Bentz or Doll.

Judge Buttrick pointed out that Bentz was a confessed bank robber since he had pleaded guilty to putting in fear and forcibly restraining two persons then in the bank, and the actual larceny charge. He said Doll had admitted bigamy, transporting of stolen automobiles, and illicit bootlegging of whiskey. It was the duty, he said, of the jury to reach its own conclusions as to whom to believe.

Following the verdict, Atty. Maurice Levy spoke for Doll, declaring that if Doll had not told FBI agents about the Crocker Bank and other similar affairs, the state would not be trying either Bentz or himself. He pointed out that Doll was not well and asked for leniency.

Bentz spoke in his own behalf declaring that "although I have 'Committed a crime, I have since realized the moral turpitude. I do not ask for sympathy and I did not mean to hurt anyone. I will not be out until 1949 from my current, sentence, and I am now 48."

Judge Buttrick observed that Doll could never say he had not received a fair trial here and said that Atty. Maurice Levy had shown a fine spirit in observing the court's request that he take the case.

Judge Buttrick said Atty. Levy took the case, knowing he would never get a cent for his services, since the state could not pay for them, and Doll in petitioning the court for an attorney, obviously could not reimburse him. Atty. Philip Johnson acted along the same lines as assistant defense counsel.

Bentz who has been closely guarded throughout the three days of trial by federal officials, left last night for his Alcatraz cell and the remainder of the 20-year sentence he is serving for having robbed the bank, in the hometown of Doll's wife, the Caledonia National Bank in Danville, Vt. He was also sentenced to serve three to five years for the larceny at the Crocker Bank.

Leaves For Prison

Doll also left last night with state and county officials, for Charlestown state's prison. He, too received, three to five years for the actual larceny of money and this sentence will be served concurrently with the longer prison term. The jury included Foreman Woodard. Roy S. Babbitt of Orange, Ernest H. Wilcox of Greenfield, John B. Glabach, jr., of Leyden, Mearl K. Wilson of Monroe Bridge, Roy L. Gifford of New Salem, Roy D. Harris and Frank H. Reed of Greenfield, Harwood Thayer of Ashfield, John R. Fisher of Hawley, Fred W. Wells and Lloyd E. Clapp both of Greenfield.

Nov. 21, 1940, reported that Doll received at least 20 and not more than 25 years in state prison. Bentz, as his accomplice, had to serve a minimum of five years and not more than six in state prison, after he completed 20 years at Alcatraz in California.

Why was Bentz in Alcatraz? Because he had robbed a bank in Danville, Vt., the hometown of Doll's wife.

Many thanks to Tippet for this exciting answer to my simple question.

February 20, 1942 [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1942 - 0479.pdf](#)

Bank Robber Carves Crucifix in Cell to Rescue County Red Cross

With Franklin County lagging \$500 behind its \$35,000 Red Cross war quota, Edward Doll, whom the county sent to Charlestown state prison in 1940 for complicity in the 1933 Crocker National Bank robbery, contributed a hard-wood crucifix carved by himself. "It is the only way in which I can help my country from in here," Doll said in his letter accompanying the crucifix to Sheriff Michael W. Carroll of Millers Falls, "so I hope the little contribution will help.

The cross measures 18 by 12 inches and the figure is remarkably well done. Sheriff Carroll said. The 40-year-old Chicago, Ill., prisoner, serving a 20-to-25-year sentence, wrote farther: "Please dispose of it any way which will bring the most money and donate it to the

American Red Cross." He added: "Your town, Millers Falls, is on my mind every day for the few carving tools I have were made there."

Doll concluded that he had noticed an item in newspaper which said the county quota was unfilled.

The figure of \$34,413.28 from the Red Cross this morning included pledges and reported amounts which have not been turned in. officials said.

Chairman Edgar B. Smith of the Red Cross drive, in deep appreciation of the carver's efforts, expressed hope a substantial sum would be realized from the sale of the crucifix. If no appreciable amount is offered by an individual, he believes some religious society might purchase it.

February 23, 1942 [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1942 - 0507.pdf](#)

Edward Doll, lower right, sentenced to Charleston's state prison for his part in the Crocker National Bank robbery in Tamers Falls, carved this crucifix, and gave it to the County Red Cross drive to help it reach the \$35,000 goal. The crucifix is shewn above with a Red Cross poster in the background. Neither Sheriff Michael Carroll nor E.B. Smith, chairman of the Red Crass drive, had received an offer over the week-end.



March 19, 1943 [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1943 - 0659.pdf](#)

TF Bank Bandit Gives Handiwork for Red Cross

Maintaining a tradition he started a year ago, Edward Doll, in state prison for the Crocker National Bank robbery, has contributed a pair of hand-carved ornaments in the form; of two greyhounds to be disposed of for the benefit of the Red Cross.

Last year Doll, who is serving a 20-to-25-year sentence for bank robbery and other charges, sent a large crucifix which he had carved by hand and which was sold as his contribution to the Red Cross drive. The greyhounds, suitable as table ornaments or book-ends, are on display at Red Cross drive headquarters on Federal street.

In a letter to Sheriff Michael Carroll who befriended him during his trial in 1940, Doll wrote; "I have been getting the Greenfield paper lately and I've noticed that the Franklin County Red Cross quota this year is \$56,600. There isn't any doubt but that Franklin County will go over the top, but I do hope that my little donation will be accepted.

“ . . . I have read of many noble things the Red Cross is doing to help war prisoners and I'd feel mighty small later on if I found out I hadn't done all I could to help them”

June 12, **1954: Montague Bicentennial Edition.** [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1954 - 2470.pdf](#)
Crocker Bank Robbers Caught Soon After \$18,000 Break in December '33

It was early on the morning of Dec. 19. 1933. when a knock sounded on the door, of the Crocker National Bank in Turners Falls. Janitor Andrew Sauter, the only employe[sic] in the building, opened the door.

Fifteen minutes later, the bank was 518,000 poorer and two armed robbers were fleeing with a 10 minutes start.

Edward Doll, alias Edward LaRue and owner of at least six other names, and Edward Bentz, with 28 aliases, had struck again.

"Again" is almost an understatement. Bentz began his criminal several record in 1912, Doll in 1926. Doll had been a member of the Machine Gun Kelley gang. Both had long records of imprisonments, escapes, paroles and probations.

Doll was arrested in February, 1934, in Florida, and Bentz in March, 1936, in Brooklyn. Both were indicated by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for the Turners Falls robbery in superior court at Greenfield Nov. 16, 1938, and the indictments remained on the book until the pair were returned for trial in 1940, fresh from serving other sentences.

Doll, as the leader of the pair, was sentenced in Greenfield, Nov. 20. 1940, by Judge Allan G. Buttrick to at least 20 and not more than 25 years in the Charlestown state prison. He is still there.

Bentz was handed from five to six years, to be served at the expiration of a federal sentence to Alcatraz for 20 years in 1936 Bentz was brought here from that prison for trial and returned there. He was brought to Massachusetts to serve his time for the robbery in 1948.

Doll was thought to have lived in Albany, N. Y., for a short time while planning the Crocker robbery. Bentz "borrowed" the car used in the getaway from a Chicago roadhouse—and the two met in Turners Falls, it is alleged, on the morning of the holdup.

Unmasked and in ordinary street clothing, two men were admitted by Janitor Sauter after they knocked at the front door. They bound Sauter with heavy wire and waited for the next employe[sic] to arrive for the day's business.

Next arrival was Earle F. Squires, now of Gill. Under threat of bodily harm, he was forced to open the vault. Meanwhile, Thomas P. Frawley, paymaster of the Keith Paper Co., came to the bank for the company payroll. He was also bound and laid on the floor beside Sauter.

Squires was held motionless until Frawley was bound, then taken to the vault and told if he failed to open it or set off the alarm, "it would be just too bad for him". The vault was opened, 518,000 in cash, bank records and non-negotiable securities taken. Squires was then bound with the wire used on the others and the pair walked across the street, got into the car and drove away.

A tremendous furor was created throughout the county at the bold act, especially as the pair escaped without a worthwhile clue being left behind. The bank hastened to publish the fact that the loss was completely insured and that business would go on as usual. The day after the robbery, papers printed a small story saying no clues had been found and that the eye-witnesses had looked through official rogue's gallery photographs without identifying anyone. Then the hullabaloo gradually quieted down.

September 24, 1956 [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1956 - 4237.pdf](#)

Even the Smart Ones Fail (Editorial)

After Edward Bentz had told of the elaborate planning that preceded the Turners Falls raid, court officials and spectators alike admitted to a grudging admiration for the plan of operation. Bentz and Edward Doll spent weeks in preparing for the robbery and for the escape. Their apprehension was due to carelessness in subsequent activities.

Like the Bentz testimony in Franklin County courthouse, that of O'Keefe describes weeks of patient observation, of painstaking surveys of the premises, of minute details taken into consideration. No army general planning an attack was more thorough than the men described by the state's witness in Boston.

Layout of buildings, routine of employees and visitors, the network of streets and highways were all considered in each robbery. The conception of each operation was thorough, little was left to chance.

In each case there was a minimum of luck left in the final strategy employed.

Whatever the verdict of the jury in Boston, the fact is that the criminals showed a degree of intelligence sadly wasted on such an endeavor. Just as the judge in Greenfield remarked 16 years ago concerning the Crocker Bank robbers. If these men had employed their abilities in lawful pursuits, they might have been outstanding citizens.

In nearly every crime, however, the person responsible has serious character flaws and these eventually lead to the criminal's apprehension. The law is seldom cheated even in the methods of the underworld. Those willing to gamble their lives to the contrary invariably lose.

November 26, 1971

Greenfield MA Recorder 1971 - 7176.pdf

Veteran Banker Wants Only Quiet Retirement. (Ref. to Crocker Bank robbery)

(Truncated to show only the bank robbery recollection. *e.g.*)

Catherine Schab, of Turners Falls, retiring the end of this month after nearly a half century at the Crocker National and First National Banks, would prefer no reaction at all.

So far, however, she has not been too successful with fellow bank workers at FNB who are sorry to see such a loyal worker go.

. . . One of her most exciting memories was the robbery of \$20,000 from the Crocker National in 1933. She remembers walking in just as cashier ran out without saying "good morning". Her initial reaction was "what's eating him." Then she saw the teller and two paymasters lying on the floor tied up with telephone cords. "That morning for some reason all the girls were late," Miss Schab recalled, "a lucky thing, because Helen would have yelled bloody murder if she had been touched. And one of the gunmen later said that if anyone had given him any trouble he wouldn't have hesitated to shoot."

Miss Schab recollected that the holdup later caused much irritation as the robbers dumped a lot of checks and securities into a hole in the ground in Bernardston. "and here I had stop payments this (indicating about two feet) high."

June 9, 1995

Greenfield MA Recorder 1995 - 3461.pdf

Irmarie Jones "Just Plain Neighbors"

1933 Bank Robbery Clear for Bookkeeper

Last Friday I made a brief mention of a bank robbery in Turners Falls and asked if anyone knew the date and the details. Well, that was all Thomas Tippett of Turners Falls needed to recall his vivid memories of Dec. 13, 1933.

Incidentally, I had the wrong name for the bank. It was the Crocker National Bank, not the Crocker Institution for Savings.

Tippett said a week before the robbery, two Chicago holdup men took rooms on the second floor of the Turners Falls Inn, right across the street from the bank, where they could look right into the lobby and the vault. They knew; that the Keith Paper Mill payroll money, in cash, was ready to be picked up on that day.

"The two men, wearing caps and posing as delivery men, went to the door of the bank with an empty carton. Andrew Sauter, the custodian, the only person there, opened the door," said Tippett. (I've mentioned Sauter in a couple recent columns.)

"He had his little blue overalls on . . . a wonderful old man. The men pushed the door open, tied him up and dragged him across the floor, like a pig, and dropped him behind the desks. They asked him where the tall man with glasses was. That was Earl Squires, the head teller, who was a little late that morning," Tippett continued.

He said the men stood on each side of the front door with drawn revolvers. When Squires came in, they forced him to unlock the gate and open the vault.

"He told me later they were holding the revolvers on him, wagging them up and down, making it hard combination for the vault. Once they were inside, Mr. Squires had to open the small safe where the currency was kept," said Tippet.

Thomas Frawley, the paymaster for Keith, was the next person to come in the door. The men bound Squires and Frawley with telephone lines they had cut and told them to keep their eyes on the floor. They scooped up bills, the Keith payroll and a large envelope which later proved to contain canceled checks.

This is where Tippet, a bookkeeper for the bank, appeared.

"The men had just left the bank. It was approximately 8:15 a.m. As I crossed to the bank, I met Phillip Jacobus, one of the bank directors. He had a key to the bank and opened the door," said Tippet.

"We noticed the vault was open. On the floor was a lot of loose change. In the safe, we could see the design on the piece of red carpet lining the safe. We had never seen the design before, because there was always so much money in there.

"We looked at each other and said, "There's been a robbery. We heard the muffled voices of the men who were tied up. Their faces were pretty white because they thought maybe the robbers had come back."

While Jacobus untied the men, Tippet ran across the street to call police. The Turners Falls telephone exchange was on the second floor above the E. M. Gould¹ Hardware Co., where Agnes Legendre was chief operator. State police and officers from Greenfield and Turners Falls converged on the bank.

"I remember Charles Higginbotham, the assistant cashier, had me make a sign to put on the front door, saying the bank would be open in two hours. We were able to open with money from the Franklin County Trust Co. in Greenfield," Tippet said. "Between \$18,000 and \$20,000 was stolen. It was never recovered. It was lucky the robbers hadn't come earlier when we had all the money to pay off our Christmas Club depositors."

Tippet said his father heard on the radio that the bank had been robbed. He got out of his sickbed and drove to the bank to make sure his son was unharmed.

According to the [Recorder-Gazette](#) story, at one point, Frawley was able to work himself along the floor and put himself in a position where he could look over a desk. Frawley quoted one of the robbers saying, "If you don't keep your eyes on the floor, I'll fix them so they'll always be there."

A postscript: Several years later Edward Bentz, who was caught in Florida for another crime, confessed to robbing the Turners Falls bank and implicated Edward Doll.

¹ E.M. Gulow. *e.g.*

At their trial in 1940, Bentz said the pair; in living at the Turners Falls Inn, learned the schedule of the Keith paymaster. They even made practice runs, taking their car through Montague City, over the bridge (then a covered bridge), up Mountain Road in Greenfield, down Maple Street, turning right and traveling into Vermont.



News travels . . .



The Evening News, North Tonawanda, N.Y.

December 13, **1933** [North Tonawanda NY Evening News 1933 Grayscale - 2593.pdf](#)

Bank Bandits Flee With \$10,000 Loot

TURNERS FALLS, Mass., Dec. 13 (U.P.)—Two bandits entered the Crocker National bank by a ruse today, forced a teller to open the vault under threat of death, bound the teller, janitor, and a paymaster, and escaped with cash estimated at \$10,000 or more.

Albany Evening News, Albany, N.Y.

March 22, **1934** [Albany NY Evening News 1934 - 2141.pdf](#)

State Police Search Mrs. Coolidge's Car

Northampton. Mass. (UP) —Among automobiles stopped by state police in their search for clues to the recent \$23,000 Turners Falls bank robbery was one carrying Mrs. Grace Coolidge, widow of the late President Calvin Coolidge. The officers quickly explained to Mrs. Coolidge that they had orders to stop all automobiles.

The Troy Record, Troy, N.Y.

November 19, **1940** [Troy NY Times Record 1940 - 6770.pdf](#)

Confessed Robber Visited Troy Soon After Bank Holdup

Edward Bentz, who has confessed to a part in the Crocker National Bank robbery in Turners Falls, Mass., in 1933 and said that he came to Troy to live after the robbery, is on trial in superior court at Greenfield, Mass. Also on trial is Edward Doll, who has pleaded not guilty to the robbery.

Doll, according to Dist. Atty. John W. Heselton, met Bentz in Chicago in 1933 and told him he had found a bank to rob in Turners Falls. The pair held conferences, he said, in Albany and Chicago.

After the holdup of the bank, in which they obtained \$15,000 in cash and 120,000 in bonds and securities, Heselton said, the two fled north over country roads to West Wardsboro, Vt., where they divided the loot. Then they drove to Cambridge, where they separated, Bentz coming to Troy.

The Knickerbocker News, Albany, N.Y.

November 20, **1940** [Albany NY Knickerbocker News 1940 - 6791.pdf](#)

Albany Plot Alleged in Robbery Trial

Two men are on trial at Greenfield, Mass., for a bank robbery that allegedly was hatched in an Albany hotel in 1883.

The men are Edward Bentz. Chicago, who assertedly has confessed to a part in the holdup, and Edward Doll, who pleaded not guilty. The bank it the Crocker National Bank

of Turners Falls, Mass., from which \$15,000 in cash and \$20,000 in bonds and securities was stolen by two men.

John W. Heselton, assistant district attorney at Greenfield, alleges Doll met Bentz in Chicago in 1833 and told him he knew of a bank to rob "back East" The pair came to Albany, Heselton alleges, and worked out details of the holdup.

After the robbery, the state alleges, the pair drove to West Wardsboro, Vt, divided the loot and went to Cambridge, N. Y, where they separated. Bentz' purported confession related he hid out for some time in Troy before returning West where he eventually was captured.

Albany Times Union, N.Y.

November 21, 1940 [Albany NY Times Union 1940 a - 4297.pdf](#)

Former Troy Man on Trial

A resident of Troy for seven years, Edward Bentz, an alleged participant in the Crocker National bank robbery at Turners Falls, Mass., In 1933, is on trial in Superior court at Greenfield, Mass. The \$35,000 holdup was plotted in Albany and Chicago, it has been revealed.

On trial with Bentz, who located in Troy after the robbery, is Edward Doll, who has pleaded innocent. Doll, according to John W. Heselton, met Bentz in Chicago in 1933 and told him he had found a bank to rob in the Massachusetts town- They made their plans in Chicago and later in Albany, he contends.

After the holdup, in which they obtained \$15,000 in cash and \$20,000 in bonds and securities, Heselton said, they fled to West Wardsboro, Vt., where they divided the "take," later separating.

State Police evidence photos.





Crocker National Bank, east facade, and main entrance from Turners Falls Inn front steps.



Entering the bank, the safe door is open.



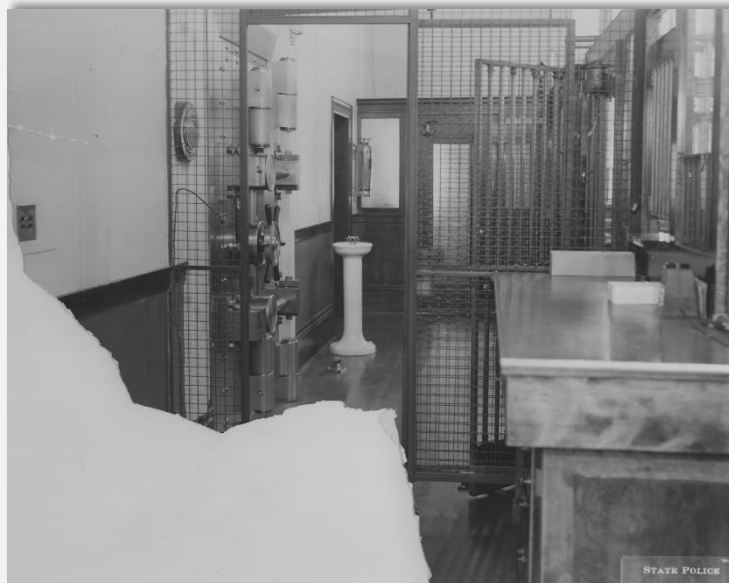
The safe door . . . closed.



Looking east from the lobby to the main entrance.



The safe door . . . open.



The safe door, rear approach.



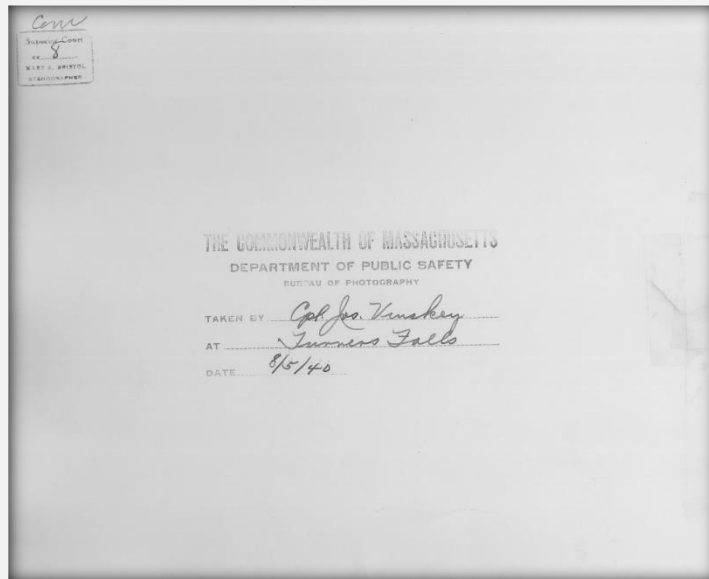
Office area.

Each photograph is identified on the reverse.

(upper left)

Cem [?]

Superior Court
EX 8
Mary A. Bristol
Stenographer



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Department of Public Safety
Bureau of Photography
Taken By *Cp. Jos. Vinskey*
At *Turners Falls*
Date *8/5/40*

~end~

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