

## MAN ABOUT TOWN

... by Gene Bock

# Daleville Robbery At Least Fourth Recorded At Site

The holdup of the Daleville Branch of the Central Bank and Trust Company opened up a flood of memories, as such things are bound to do. There was, of course, a guy named Dillinger who was involved in a similar affair at the same spot, but a different bank, in the summer of 1933.

What did bring it up particularly was a piece Evan Owens did in his column, "In the Press of Things," in the Muncie Press. Ev, now balding, was just a squirt then and he and his pal, Bob White, also on The Press staff in those deep depression days, hopped into a Ford runabout and scooted for Daleville. Ev says the side curtains were up on the Ford, which belonged to Bob, but he "doesn't remember it being very cold."

It wasn't, Ev; the thermometer hit 98 on Saturday of that week. It might be a good story just to ring up Bob in New York and find out why he did have those curtains on.

Owens has a most entertaining way of spinning these yarns, as witness:

"We must have been driving a little fast, for although Anderson police were there when we arrived, the Muncie lawmen didn't get there for several minutes. The bank was 100 feet down a side street from the main drag. Bob went inside to talk with the teller while I circulated in the crowd trying to find the people who had seen something.

"Several people had. There were good descriptions of the bandits, who had spent a part of the morning sitting on a bench in a park-like area nearby from which they could see the bank entrance."

"Their car hadn't gone unnoticed, either, so police had more to go on than they often do."

"Harry Nelson was captain of detectives here then, and he arrived with a couple of his men, and all the lawmen went into a huddle in the street."

"I don't remember whether Bob phoned in the story, or I did. But we stayed around long enough to talk with a lot of people."

"Including Harry Nelson ... He said they had a pretty good idea who the bandits were."

"Only about two weeks earlier two men had held up a Muncie night spot, The Bide-a-wee, and police thought they knew who had done it. One of the men lived here in Muncie, a fellow named Harry Copeland."

"Hold off the names, though," said Harry. "We don't want to tip our hands."

"Since we weren't using the names immediately it didn't make much difference who the men were, but I asked Harry anyway."

"'Harry Copeland,' said Capt. Nelson, 'and a fellow named Dillinger.'

"That was the first bank job of what quickly became known as the Dillinger gang."

Owens appended the notation that Nelson died last August, 35 years after the Daleville robbery. After leaving the Muncie police department in late 1951 or 1952, he operated a private detective agency for several years.

We remember covering a couple of earlier Daleville bank holdups, by phone, but, somehow, we didn't get in on the celebrated Dillinger performance. The predecessor institution, the Commercial State Bank, sat exactly where the Central Branch does now. The present bank, in fact, was able to make use of the old vault and cash boxes. There was some refurbishing of the premises, both inside and out. So it is the same familiar "bank spot" of Daleville.

Anyway, back in early months of the year 1930, a lone bandit "called" at the Commercial Bank. He must have been of the jittery type. At any rate, he certainly didn't have things very well "cased." He grabbed up two bundles of currency, one containing \$1,500, the

other \$600. As he went out the door, he dropped the \$600 bundle and didn't even bother to retrieve it because some bystanders had collected in the street and others were rushing up. He opened up with his gun, firing several shots in the air to disperse the growing audience so he could make his getaway.

"Including Harry Nelson ... He said they had a pretty good idea who the bandits were."

unmasked men entered the bank five minutes before closing time in the afternoon. The pair heisted between \$700 and \$800 that trip and made their getaway in the direction of Anderson.

And so now to the big show of 1933.

It had been a big news week in Anderson, to begin with. Archie Chadd, then of Canton, Ill., but formerly a hardwood star at Bainbridge High School and Butler University, had just been hired as Anderson High School basketball coach. Harry Baldwin and Jesse H. (Hick) Mellett had had a tussle in court to decide which was the mayor of Anderson and the court had just ruled in favor of Baldy, a former city editor of The Herald.

Entirely apart from the events, certain preliminary stages of which had certainly generated temperatures of their own, a mid-summer heat wave had this area firmly in its grasp. There hadn't been any rain in these parts since the last week of May. Folks were jobless and hungry. Crops were gone and the grass on the lawns had long since turned yellow. You could buy a respectable meal in a restaurant for 25 cents. In some the "blue plate special" was only 15 cents.

Looking into the old bound files of The Bulletin, we came across the story. "Two Youths Rob Bank At Daleville," the headlines said. We know instantly who wrote THAT story. To Foxy Louiso, anybody under the age of 52 was a YOUTH. That's elementary.

Well, said Foxy, "two young unmasked bandits," driving a green coupe, had entered the Commercial Bank at 12:30 p.m., cleaned out a cash till, rifled a vault in almost leisurely manner, and made off with \$3,000 to \$4,000.

Miss Margaret Good, bookkeeper, alone in the bank at the time, was catering to three customers — Frank Mowery, Lindley Hall and Wesley Cox. That has been told and retold.

Foxy told how one of the bandits stood about 5 feet 4 and had a scar on one of his lips. That was, of course, Harry Copeland.

The other stood about 6 feet and was of the athletic type. He jumped over a partition with ease to enter the teller's cage. That was Dillinger. The pair took 10 minutes to get their job done. They were methodical and thorough. They fired no shots. In the end, nobody was physically harmed. (That, of course, was not the way many of the subsequent Dillinger performances went!)

We could go on and on, but

## No Arrest In Robbery

Agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation at Indianapolis said this morning that an all-points bulletin seeking the arrest of a Muncie man suspected in the armed robbery of a Daleville bank Thursday has not yet brought results.

The FBI announced Friday before noon that Nathan J. (Nate) Warden, 30, of 2207 N. Milton St., Muncie, is being sought in the armed robbery at the Central Bank and Trust Co. branch at Daleville about 3 p.m. Thursday. The robbery netted approximately \$12,000, according to James Hamilton, manager of the bank.

Mrs. Marilyn Richman, a teller who was pistol-whipped by the robber, remained in satisfactory condition at Muncie's Ball Memorial Hospital with a dozen scalp lacerations. Hamilton, who was reportedly chloroformed and slugged one time during the robbery, has been back at work since Friday morning.

A warrant and complaint were filed against Warden Friday before a U.S. commissioner at Indianapolis. Hamilton said he positively identified the suspect from photographs.

# Bank Is Hit For \$12,000

## Police Hold Three Men In Wickes Burglary

DALEVILLE — A 30-year-old Muncie insurance salesman and former professional photographer has been allegedly identified as the lone gunman who escaped from the Central Bank and Trust Co. branch here Thursday with an estimated \$12,000 in cash. One of two employees, severely beaten by the bandit, was listed in satisfactory condition today at Ball Memorial Hospital in Muncie.

In Anderson, two Kentucky men and an Ohio resident face charges today of second degree burglary, after they were arrested Thursday evening during a break-in at Wickes Lumber Co., 1625 E. Whetstone Road.

James T. Neagle, FBI special agent-in-charge at Indianapolis, has identified the Daleville branch holdup suspect as Nat Warden of 2207 N. Milton Ave., Muncie.

Neagle said James Hamilton, the bank manager, aided in identifying Neagle as the gunman. A federal complaint and warrant regarding Warden was to be filed before a U.S. commissioner at Indianapolis today.

Delaware County and FBI officials returned to the Daleville bank this morning as the probe continued into the Thursday robbery. Mrs. Marilyn Richman, 45, suffered a reported 12 lacerations about the head from the pistol-whipping administered by the lone bandit shortly after 3 p.m. Her condition was termed satisfactory at Ball Hospital this morning.

Bank Manager James Hamilton said the bandit entered the bank at exactly 3 p.m. — the normal closing time. He said he wished to speak with Hamilton and then went to his car, returning with a briefcase. Hamilton said when the man returned he had already drawn curtains across the windows of the bank, and that when the man entered, Hamilton locked

Both men entered Hamilton's private office, where the subject drew a black snub-nosed pistol and ordered Hamilton to sit down. The gunman then placed a rag, believed soaked in chloroform, over Hamilton's face and the manager lost consciousness.

Hamilton said he awoke shortly thereafter and that the gunman struck him on the head with his pistol. Hamilton feigned

loss of consciousness after the blow and was present when the armed subject attempted to chloroform Mrs. Richman, who had been brought into Hamilton's office from the main part of the bank. Hamilton said the woman failed to black out and that the bandit began to club her on the head. A physician later reported the woman had 12 scalp lacerations from the beating.

The bank manager said only he and Mrs. Richman normally work in the bank. He termed the robbery "well-planned," and said the gunman arrived at the bank at a time when employees would normally be counting the day's receipts.

The gunman was described by Hamilton as six feet tall, of slender build with long black hair. He was estimated to be in his late 20s or early 30s and wore a tan trench coat and blue pants. Officials were seeking persons today who may have seen the robber leave the bank or observed the vehicle in which he left the scene.

## Bank Suspect Has Passport

A Muncie insurance salesman suspected in the \$12,500 armed robbery of the Daleville branch of the Central Bank and Trust Company of Gaston last Thursday may have left the United States. Police officials have learned that Nathan J. Warden, 30, recently obtained a passport and efforts are being made now to learn if he had obtained visas for any foreign countries.

Warden, object of a nationwide search following issuance of a federal warrant for his arrest on a charge of bank robbery, is believed traveling alone. He left his wife and two step-children at Muncie where they moved about a year ago from Chicago. Warden had been a freelance photographer in Chicago.

Police have learned Warden was last seen driving a car rented from a Muncie agency last Tuesday. Authorities have been checking Indianapolis and other Middle West airports to see if the 1958 Chevrolet has been left behind. Warden's military record is being checked to learn if he had any inclination for a particular country or political ideology.

It has not been learned if Warden had any associates.

## Daleville Bank Suspect Turns Self In to FBI

By DICK POWELL

Nathan J. Warden, 30, a former Muncie insurance salesman charged in the \$14,500 holdup of the Daleville branch of Central Bank and Trust Co., surrendered to the FBI in Indianapolis Sunday.

Special Agent James Nagle said Warden was accompanied by his wife and an attorney.

Warden's arrest was sought the day after the Jan. 23 robbery when a warrant was issued for him. It alleged that he pistol-whipped two bank employees and took the large amount of cash.

NAGLE SAID Warden will appear Monday before a U.S. Commissioner, probably Robert W. Geddes, to determine identity, probable cause and bond. The warrant stipulates \$50,000 bond, but since the surrender was voluntary the bond might be lowered.

The robbery suspect made no statements Sunday, Nagle said, because his attorney had instructed him to make none. Nothing concrete was learned of the man's whereabouts since the armed robbery, but Nagle said Warden had been in Florida shortly after the holdup and had also spent some time in Chicago, according to information he had received.

## Warden Indicted for Bank Robbery

INDIANAPOLIS — Nathan J. Warden, Muncie, was indicted by a federal grand jury here Monday in connection with the armed robbery of the Gaston Central Bank and Trust Company branch at Daleville.

Warden, who eluded capture for some time, is charged with the robbery in which both the branch manager and cashier were pistol whipped. About \$14,500 was taken in the robbery and never recovered.

Also indicted Monday were three men charged with the robbery of the Mt. Summit branch of the Citizen's State Bank at New Castle. They are James D. Brotzge, William Joseph Brotzge and David Le Roy Hedstrom.