



KATHIE O'DONOHUE

## Check turns up missing in the balance

"Your check's in the mail." An interesting recent experience acquainted me abundantly with this oft quoted cliché. Two months ago, I drove 100 miles to a hospital to deliver a work-alike on assisting newly discharged mothers and their infants. My consulting fee was several hundred dollars, and since I had neglected in my contract to specify payment upon arrival, which is usual, they planned on mailing it to me after my presentation. Trusting person that I am, I let them slide. "It'll be in the mail shortly," they promised.

Two weeks elapsed, and I received no check. I called to let them know and was informed it was sent out the day after my presentation. I decided to wait a few more days then call if it hadn't materialized.

Another week went by; still no check. I called again. By this time, my calls were re-routed to the secretary who became a tad flustered when I introduced myself. Since it was obviously missing in action, advising me where in postal limbo, I asked and they agreed to simply stop payment on the check and re-issue it. I waited patiently for the second check to arrive. One week, two weeks passed. Incredibly no check showed up.

I phoned once again, chatted with the secretary about our developing friendship and doing lunch sometime. She stated she would inquire about the status of the new check and call me back. After hanging up the phone,

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## 1920s bank job still raises interest

Robbers got away with plenty of loot from Farmington State Bank, which operated out of what is now the Village Mall in downtown.



By RUTH MOEHLMAN SPECIAL WRITER

The great Farmington Bank Robbery was like a scene out of a wild west movie.

Robbers came to town. Rob a bank and escape in a fast car. A local deputy sheriff aided by neighboring storekeepers shot at the robbers. A posse is formed and chases the robbers. The posse is in cars, however, not on horseback. The thieves get away.

The money is never recovered and the robbers are never caught.

It really happened Nov. 19, 1924 in the city of Farmington. The theft was remembered in the peaceful little city as The Great Farmington Bank Robbery.

The significance of the Farmington Bank to the township is an important part of Farmington history, most of the local people had money in the bank.

Farmington was a city by 1923. A small commercial center in a rich farming area. The little city was at the crossroads to the important areas of the county and the state.

The roads leading north were to commerce, recreation and the judicial system and government offices in Pontiac.

The Grand River Road led from Detroit to the capitol in Lansing and beyond.

Farmington Township had been settled by pioneers mostly from the American East Coast who wanted cheap land to farm. By the Civil War, the township specialized in fruit and dairy farming.

Beginning in the 1840s immigrant farmers came to the rich lands in Farmington Township. They received a



At the corner: Village Mall was the focal point as Farmington State Bank in the rural township of the 1920s. Armed bandits interrupted that tranquility by pulling off a daring robbery

helping hand from the members of the community who had proceeded them.

P. Dean Warner, a local merchant and leader in his little town, was trusted by his customers to safeguard their money.

Farmington had no local banking facilities. As early as the 1890s P.D. actually invested money for customers of his general store and paid them interest. By 1898 he established a private bank.

In our world of credit cards and banking facilities it's hard to imagine how difficult life could be without any checks, credit cards or banks.

In 1910 P.D. Warner organized the Farmington State Bank, a public bank.

Besides his store and other commercial interests, P.D. Warner was active in local and state politics and became a state senator.

He and his wife Rhoda adopted a little boy, Fred Maltby, who became Fred Warner. When Fred Warner grew up, he was active in the business and political life of the community like his father and grandfather before him. Fred Warner was elected governor of the state of Michigan 1905 to 1911, serving three terms. He was also president of the Farmington State Bank.

In March 1922, a new bank building was dedicated on the corner of Division Street, Farmington Road, and Grand River. By that time the bank was a

million dollar enterprise. (That was when a million dollars was a great deal more than it is considered today.)

After Fred Warner died in April 1924, his son Howard became bank president.

On Nov. 19, 1924 Howard Warner was holding a business conference with bank vice-president M. Byron Pierce and cashier Edgar Pierce.

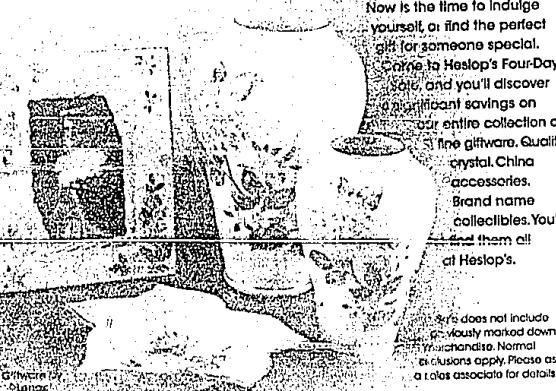
Meanwhile, Charlotte Walters, a neighbor of Margurite Moore, a bank teller, saw four rough looking men walking past her on Grand River. Two

Please see BANK JOB, B2 were on one side of the street and two on the other. Mrs. Walters became sus-

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