

Krum Banks & Robberies

The history of banking in Krum had its beginning when J.W. Wilkinson, President of the Continental Bank & Trust Company of Fort Worth, established a branch of that bank in Krum in 1905. The new business occupied the first brick building in town. In 1909 Dr. A.H. Knox erected a two-story building and opened the First State Bank in July of that year. In 1910 the Continental Bank & Trust Company and First State Bank merged and the newly organized firm became the Farmers & Merchants State Bank. The Continental Bank building was torn down after World War II. In 2005 The Farmers and Merchants State Bank was sold to First United Bank & Trust out of Ardmore Oklahoma.



Continental Bank
& Trust
Est. 1905



A.H. Knox Sr.

Farmers & Merchants State Bank
1910



Farmers & Merchants State Bank



KRUM INSTITUTION

Bank Observes 62nd Anniversary

By LAURA MEINE
Special To The Record-Chronicle
KRUM — This month marks the 62nd anniversary of the Farmers and Merchants State Bank in Krum.

In the years since the bank began business, many changes have taken place. And now in the bank's anniversary month, more changes can be seen.

John Porter and J. T. Jones, new bank owners, have purchased the building adjoining the bank to provide space needed by the bookkeeping department.

The bank upstairs has been completely remodeled to include a lounge, small kitchen, another office, and rest rooms.

Throughout its history, the bank has remained solvent, in spite of poor crops, two wars, a depression, and tight money. It has been reported that the good luck of the bank is due to the alertness of stock-holders and of the Knox family — there has always been a Knox in the bank.

The Knox family and stockholders bought out the First State Bank in July 1909. The name was changed to the Farmers and Merchants State Bank and business was started in the same building that houses the bank today.

Wilkerson, the first bank president and one of its stockholders until his death in 1920, was succeeded by J. O. McClister, owner of a dry-goods store in Krum.

McClister died in 1937 and Dr. Knox, then chief executive officer and on the advisory board of the bank became the third president.

Walter McClister, son of J. O. McClister became the fourth bank president with the death of Dr. Knox in 1947.

When McClister died in 1933, A. H. Knox Jr., who had been working at the bank since 1930, became president and is still president today.

Many more members of the Knox family have been involved with the bank. Douglas Knox, another son of Dr. Knox, worked at the bank several years but left to become vice president of the Midwest Oil Co. Cecil Knox, a third son of Dr. Knox, worked in the bank until he was forced to quit because of illness.

Mrs. Ruth Knox Hilliard, a daughter of Dr. Knox who had been left a widow, started to work in the bank in 1949 and is a cashier there today.

Howell was connected with the Bank for more than 60 years. Took 2 years out for the Navy in WW I



Dad on a trip to the Valley



Grandchildren who worked in the Bank thru the years:

- Wendell
- Cecilia
- Sharon
- Susan
- Jane



Marjorie also worked in the Bank before she married. She is a daughter of Dr. Knox

As long as Cecil was physically able to be in the Bank, he had customers who preferred him to serve them above all the others!



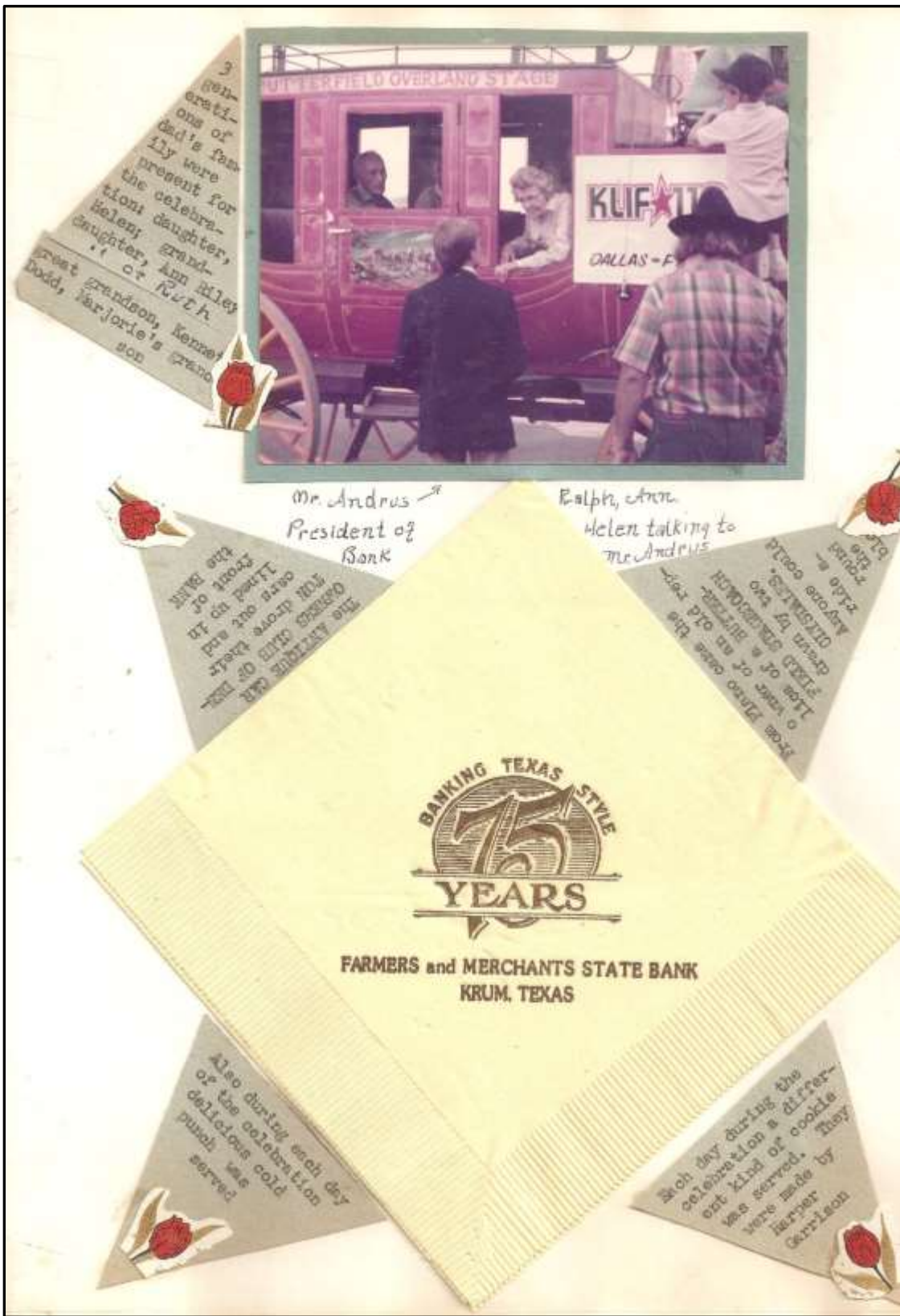
Douglas was part of MID-CON - TINENTAL OIL AND GAS ASSOCIATION, branch of Standard Oil of Indiana, Committee of Federal Taxation, and Vice Pres.



Ruth was in the Bank 25-26 years. Was Vice-President when she retired. Cecil standing by her.



Several of the Knox family members worked in the F & M bank. Here is a scrapbook page from one of A.H. Knox's daughter, Helen Knox Ashworth, showing some of the family members who worked there as well as a newspaper clipping from the bank's 62nd anniversary from around 1971.



Another scrapbook page from Helen Knox Ashworth on F & M Bank's 75th anniversary
Ca. 1984

The Farmers & Merchants State Bank at Krum had at least five bank robberies in their history. Below is a description of these robberies.

June 9, 1925: Two hooded men roared up to the F & M bank's west side, jumped out of a stolen Cadillac with six shooters in hand and raced into the bank. Yancy Story and Wilbur A. Martin netted \$ 3,100 in cash and \$ 1,550 in liberty bonds. Assistant cashier Reuben Rucker was able to make out one number of their license plate and the vehicle was found to have been reported stolen by a Denton man.

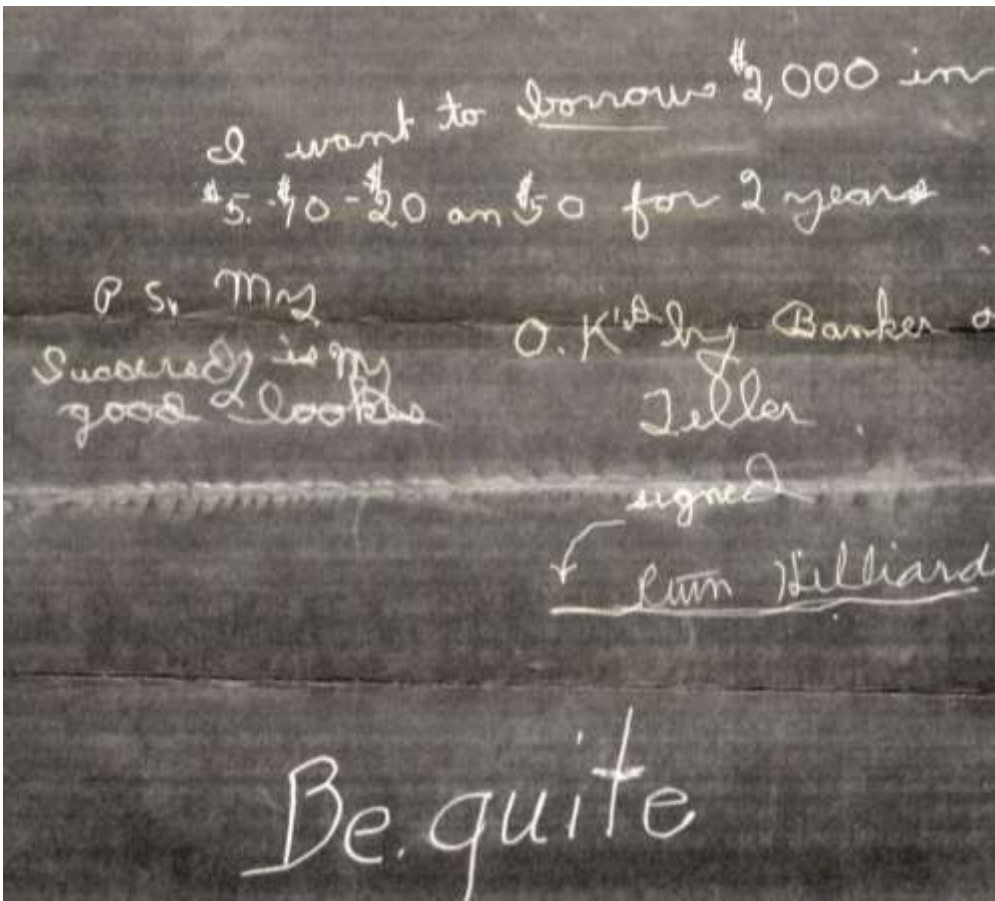
A local Krum man, Fred Barnett who was at a filling station across from the bank when it was robbed, opened fire on the bandits as they fled. He didn't hit the robbers but his bullet hit the garage down the street and a bullet narrowly missed a man in the garage. The robbers abandoned their stolen Cadillac on the Old Denton Gainesville dirt road east of Blue Mound where the robbers had a car stashed for the get away or an accomplice waiting to take them away.

March 12, 1954: Howard L. Walker came into the bank three times during the day of the robbery. He first came in asking about a loan and was asked to come back in the afternoon as bank president Howell Knox was out for lunch. Mr. Walker did return in the afternoon but his loan was denied by President Knox because he did not live in the territory served by the bank. He said he lived in Weatherford but intended to move to Denton. Mr. Walker came back a third time armed with an automatic pistol and locked Mrs. Ruth Hilliard and Wendell Knox in the vault after stealing \$1,200 in cash. He was given a 30 year sentence for the Krum robbery.

March 19, 1959: A blond, unarmed, cowboy clad nineteen year old Charles Roy McCrory walked into the bank asking about a savings account. An article in the Paris Texas News from March 20, 1959 says that McCrory later told his captors and newsmen that he handed a note to Mrs. Hilliard which read: "*I want to borrow \$2,000 for two years. Give me all your \$5, \$10, and \$20 bills. My looks is my security.*" He went on to say "*When she put her hand into the drawer,*" he laughed, "*I thought she was going for a gun and she nearly scared the living daylights out of me, I made a noise*" and she said, "*I'm just getting the money for you.*" After McCrory left the bank Mayor Pin Fowler and Jake Chism gave chase but they lost his trail. He was apprehended 65 minutes later at a Grapevine filling station with the entire \$1,885 stash in the glove box. After Mr. McCrory was apprehended he was brought back to the F & M Bank to be identified.

March 24, 1959: Unknown burglars robbed the bank during the week-end. They were unable to open the time locked safe and escaped with only \$100 in nickels. Sheriff Wylie Barnes said he thought the burglars gained access to the bank through an unlocked lodge hall on the second floor. After gaining access to the lodge hall above the bank building they used a sledge hammer to knock out a hole in the concrete floor above the room containing the vault. They couldn't open the safe and couldn't access the rest of the bank as they could not leave the vault area.

February 11, 1970: A newspaper article in the Denton Record Chronicle from 1971 showed this robber was in prison in Kansas and had admitted to the Krum robbery. No name or other details are known.



Copy of original bank note handed to Ruth Hilliard in the March 19, 1959 robbery by Charles McCrory

I want to borrow \$2,000 in \$5- \$10- \$20 and \$50 for 2 years.

P.S. My security is my good looks.

Ok'd by Banker or Teller Signed Ruth Hilliard



Charles McCrory...Still able to smile
Mr. McCrory had actually lived in Krum as a boy



Mrs. Hilliard & Cash Drawer
No stranger to robberies

Newspaper Headlines-1925 Robbery

DENTON RECORD-CHRONICLE

A Growing Newspaper For A Growing Area

**YANCY STORY CASES
SET FOR TRIAL AT
M'KINNEY SEPT. 19**

**OFFICERS FINISH
ROUNDUP OF MEN
IN BANK THEFTS**

**YANCY STORY
FOUND GUILTY**

Newspaper Headlines-1954 Robbery

DENTON RECORD-CHRONICLE

A Growing Newspaper For A Growing Area

**Krum Bandit
Eludes Search
Of FBI, Police**

**WALKER FACES
SPEEDY TRIAL**

Newspaper Headlines-1959 Robbery

DENTON RECORD-CHRONICLE

A Growing Newspaper For A Growing Area

**Krum Bank Robbed
By Tall, Blond Youth**

**Why Did Blond Youth
Take \$1,865 At Krum?**

**McCrorry Is
Out On Bond**

**Things Were Tough At Farm,
Charged Boyd Teen-Ager Says**

Newspaper Headlines-1970 Robbery

DENTON RECORD-CHRONICLE

A Growing Newspaper For A Growing Area

NEW LEAD ON BANK ROBBERS

FBI Gets Scent

**New Lead
On Robbers**

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brought to trial on the 29th of
this month.

The Justin bank was also held
up in March of last year, with
that bandit still at large. A
bandit who hit the Krum bank
in February, 1970, however, is
in prison in Kansas, where he
has admitted to the Krum
robbery.



During the 1970's renovations were done on the F & M bank and a façade put on the front.



Northstar Bank-2005



First United Bank-2008