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.
Farmers & Merchants State Bank
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 a 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.
I want to borrow $2,000 in $5- $10- $20 and $50 for 2 years.

P.S. My security is my good lucks.

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

Copy of original bank note handed to Ruth Hilliard in the March 19, 1959 robbery by Charles McCrory
1925 Robbery

**DENTON RECORD-CHRONICLE**

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

OFFICERS FINISH
ROUNDUP OF MEN
IN BANK THEFTS

YANCY STORY
FOUND GUILTY

1954 Robbery

**DENTON RECORD-CHRONICLE**

Krum Bandit
Eludes Search
Of FBI, Police

WALKER FACES
SPEEDY TRIAL
**Newspaper Headlines-1959 Robbery**

**DENTON RECORD-CHRONICLE**

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

Why Did Blond Youth Take $1,365 At Krum?

**McCory Is**
**Out On Bond**

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

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**Newspaper Headlines-1970 Robbery**

**DENTON RECORD-CHRONICLE**

**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