

Further Details on Hills Slayings

AS REPORTED in last week's issue of the NORTHWESTERN BANKER *Weekly Newsletter*, three people in Hills, Ia., were shot to death December 9 by a local resident who went berserk, then committed suicide. One of his victims was John R. Hughes, 46, president of Hills Bank & Trust Company. Earlier, farmer Dale N. Burr, 63, had murdered his wife in their nearby farm home; then, after shooting Mr. Hughes at the bank he proceeded to a neighboring farm where he shot and killed 37-year old Richard Goody, with whom he had quarreled over land. When stopped within minutes on a rural road by authorities, Mr. Burr killed himself with the same shotgun.

Details of the bizarre, senseless slayings last week indicated from initial sources that Dale Burr, after having killed his wife (it was learned later), went to Hills Bank "to cash a check but was rejected until the funds status was clarified. Bank employees said he became enraged and left the bank." That initial report then stated that Mr. Burr left the bank, got his shotgun from his truck, re-entered the bank and went directly to Mr. Hughes office where he opened the door and killed John with one shotgun blast.

The latter statement concerning Mr. Burr going out to get his gun

and killed Mr. Hughes was correct. However, we have learned after personal discussion with one of the Hills Bank officers that Mr. Burr's first trip into the bank that morning of December 9 was *not* one of confrontation. This is the sequence of events as related by this eyewitness to the entire tragedy:

Dale Burr did enter Hills Bank shortly after 11:00 a.m. Monday, December 9, and proceeded to a teller to cash a check. The teller, upon checking the record and determining that Mr. Burr's personal account was already overdrawn, asked him to see an officer of the bank with whom Mr. Burr had been doing business. The customer agreed, went to the officer's desk and was told that his account presently was overdrawn. "He accepted that," the officer said, "and said he'd take care of it. He reached in his pocket, got his wallet and took out the cash needed to cover the shortage in his personal checking account. He said and did nothing more about cashing the check. There was some brief, casual conversation about other matters and he left the bank."

The officer said Mr. Burr re-entered the bank within about five minutes time, apparently with the shotgun from his truck hidden under his clothing. He went directly to John Hughes' office where he

pushed open the door and with no words or warning shot John Hughes in the head, killing him instantly. He ran to the next office where a fellow officer had heard the shot and when Dale Burr stopped at the doorway of that office pointing the gun at him, the officer dove under the desk. He was convinced that Mr. Burr was going to step around the desk and shoot him; however, a third officer, who was also in the office, was standing next to the wall by the doorway. When the gun barrel appeared, he grabbed it, shoved it up in the air and said, "Hey, you can't do that. Get out of here!"

Authorities later discovered a spent shell and live shell on the floor of the bank by the two officers. It was theorized that the pump shotgun malfunctioned after the first shot and the next shell was inadvertently ejected. The life of the man in the adjoining office was probably saved by that and the quick action of his associate.

At that point, Dale Burr walked out of the back door, the same way he had entered the bank. Other witnesses said he waved casually to them as he drove away in his truck. He proceeded from there to the Goody farm where he killed Richard Goody without warning.

It was also stated in the earlier report that Mr. Burr was given a

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check by the ASCS in his name for approximately \$23,000 and the check should have been made out jointly with Hills Bank. The initial report said ASCS asked the bank and Mr. Burr to work it out and if such an agreement could not be reached, ASCS would turn over the corn to the bank. That earlier report said "The latter course was followed, which angered Mr. Burr."

That report was erroneous, for the bank and Mr. Burr had already held a meeting December 2 at which time Mr. Hughes and a bank officer told Mr. Burr that so long as he could make arrangements to pay that particular loan the bank would not want the corn, which was sealed on Mr.

Burr's farm. It was a week later that Mr. Burr unexplainedly went on his shooting spree.

As noted in many newspaper accounts, the irrational action of Dale Burr was puzzling because Hills Bank had no legal actions pending or planned against Mr. Burr and actually was planning to continue its financing relationship with him through the coming year. Even at reduced land values, the equity of Burr land holdings far exceeded the loan at Hills Bank. The reason for the deliberate killings will probably never fully be known. □

Iowa News

AMES: At First National Bank, Edward Jacobson has been advanced to senior vice president. He joined the bank in 1964 and has held a variety of positions there including manager of the University office.

CLARION: Dale C. Dougherty will retire December 31 from The First National Bank as senior vice president and trust officer. He joined the bank in September, 1941. He was honored at an open house at the bank November 29. R.B. Bartholomaeus, president of First National, also announced the recent appointment of Neil W. Fell to the bank staff as an ag marketing loan officer. Mr. Fell previously was vice presi-

dent in Mason City for the North Central Iowa Federal Land Bank.

DES MOINES: Three officers at Valley National Bank have been promoted. Verne C. Bates was named senior vice president in charge of trust and retail banking. He joined the bank in 1975 and most recently was vice president and senior trust officer. Charles Leibold has been named vice president and senior trust officer and will head the trust department. He joined Valley Bank in 1981 and previously served as vice president and trust officer. Michael R. Hyzer was named vice president and trust counsel. He joined the bank in 1981 and was most recently senior trust officer.

DES MOINES: At Bankers Trust, Bradley L. Burt has been named vice president and director of marketing. He joined the bank in 1973. In 1983 he took a leave of absence from his duties as vice president of commercial lending to pursue the proposed development of the Iowa World Trade Center.

DES MOINES: Richard N. Strang has been elected to the office of vice president—investments at Brenton Banks, Inc. He succeeds Betty L. Steele, vice president/secretary, upon her retirement on December 31, after 32 years of association with Brenton Banks. Mr. Strang brings over 25 years of investment experience to the Brenton organization. Prior to joining Brenton Banks, he was employed for seven years with a private investment counseling firm in Chicago.

INDIANOLA: At Warren County Brenton Bank, Eugene T. Smith has been named vice chairman of the board of directors. He has been with Brenton Banks since 1955, and has been president of Warren County Brenton Bank since 1965. Clark Raney will succeed him as president



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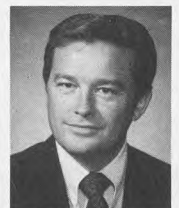
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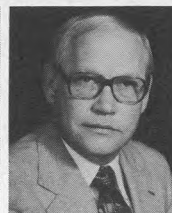
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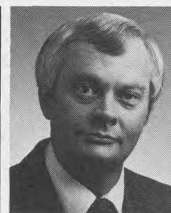
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and chief executive officer. He previously was senior vice president of the bank. Mr. Smith will continue his public relations responsibility, direct the bank's real estate properties, and continue working in the trust area. He plans retirement from full-time duties in April, 1987. Mr. Raney has been with Warren County Brenton Bank since 1983. He has previously been with the Brenton Bank in Emmetsburg, beginning in 1975.

LUANA: Dale Linderbaum has been appointed director of the Luana Savings Bank to fill the vacancy created by the resignation, due to ill health, of C. Adrian Riveland. Janice Bruns was also promoted to vice president of the bank.

Nebraska News

Three Nebraska banks owned by Robert Wekesser were closed the morning of December 19 by James Barbee, Nebraska director of banking and finance. They are Bank of Panama (Lancaster County), assets of \$4.7 million; Farmers & Merchants Bank of Comstock (Custer County), assets of \$4.1 million and deposits of \$3.7 million, and the Farmers State Bank of Sargent (Custer County), assets of \$13.1 million and deposits of \$11.6 million.

The Security State Bank in Broken Bow, which was closed December 6, also is located in Custer County and a PCA was closed earlier in the same county, located in the center of the state.

The FDIC, acting as receiver, was taking bids on the three banks on December 17 and was to open those bids Thursday afternoon, December 19. The closing of these three banks brings to 13 the total number of Nebraska banks closed in 1985.

BELLEVUE: John R. Young has been elected to the board, named

president and CEO, and will direct the newly state chartered, federally insured First United Bank of Bellevue. He has 23 years of financial services experience including serving as president of two banks and participating in the formation of three newly chartered banks. Thomas R. Edwards has been named vice president and will be responsible for the consumer, credit card and mortgage departments for the bank. In addition, he will be marketing the bank's small business loan program. Mr. Edwards brings ten years of lending experience with him and was formerly regional director for the nation's seventh largest bank holding company.

Minnesota News

The Minnesota Bankers Association Communications Committee will sponsor a workshop on "What to Do with the Death of Reg. Q" at three locations in January. The workshop program will explore financial product development opportunities in a deregulated environment. Speaker will be G. Michael Moebs, president of G.M. Moebs and Associates, Chicago. The workshop will be held on Jan. 14 at the Holiday Inn, North Mankato; Jan. 15 at the Holiday Inn International, Bloomington, and Jan. 16 at the Holiday Inn, Alexandria.

ALBERT LEA: Norwest Bank Albert Lea, N.A. recently announced the promotion of Gerald K. Johnson to the position of vice president—commercial banking. He joined the bank in 1983 as a real estate loan officer and has served as assistant vice president—commercial loans since 1984.

MINNEAPOLIS: The Federal Home Loan Bank Board has ap-

proved the largest merger in Minnesota history by giving permission for Minnesota Federal and First Federal to form First Minnesota Savings Bank on January 1, 1986. The new savings institution will have the largest branch office network in the state and rank second in assets with over \$3 billion. First Federal President and COO Kenneth D. Olson will be the bank's new president and COO. Minnesota Federal Chairman and President Gordon R. Mosentine will serve as vice chairman and CEO of the bank. First Federal Chairman Wilfred E. Lingren will become chairman of First Minnesota.

South Dakota News

VALLEY SPRINGS: Donald C. Clauson has been elected executive vice president of the Dakota Heritage State Bank. He has been in banking 18 years in both South Dakota and Nebraska.

Wyoming News

CASPER: Gary Wickam, president of the Norwest Bank West Casper, has been named executive vice president of Norwest's downtown Casper bank. He at one time worked as a commercial loan officer as well as manager of the downtown bank's commercial loan department. Jay Bordewick was named executive vice president of the east and west Casper banks and will serve as managing and executive officer. He has been in banking since 1959. Kevin Farrell will serve as senior vice president and chief financial officer at Norwest's main bank. He is also senior vice president and chief financial officer of the Affiliated Bank Corporation of Wyoming, the parent corporation of Norwest Banks in Wyoming.

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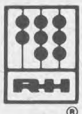
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