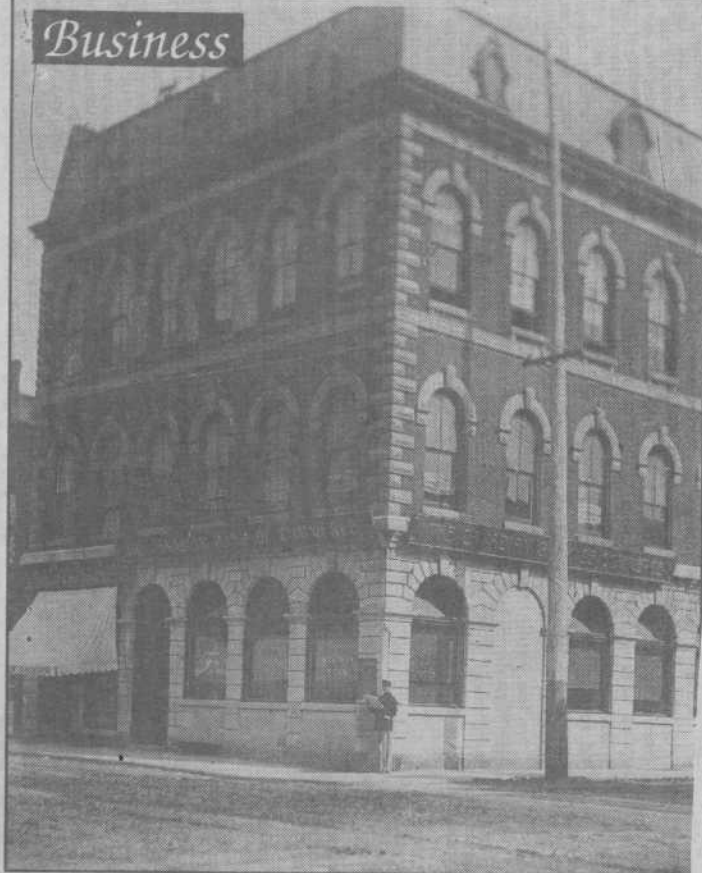


Denyes, Drury

Intelligence, Remember taken June 6, 1994



Hastings County Historical Society

The Bank of Commerce in Belleville about 1900.

he called an employee into the office and left him standing, the person knew everything was OK. If the individual was told to be seated, he knew he was in for a lecture.

Denyes was often asked to go to Bill Cook's cigar store on Front Street and buy a package of Buckingham cigarettes for the manager.

Regular duties included recording and dispatching bank drafts to businesses in the city. It was a common practice then for companies to borrow money using accounts receivable as collateral. Bank drafts were then issued as security and delivered by messengers. In Denyes' time at the Commerce, the messenger was Sam Johnston.

Also among a junior's responsibilities were the tasks of checking all the envelopes at the end of the day to ensure the messenger had put the proper stamps on them and then balancing the stamp box.

At the end of each month, canceled cheques had to be paired with customers' statements so they were ready to be given out the following day. It was usually 10 p.m. before this was complete and was even done New Year's Eve.

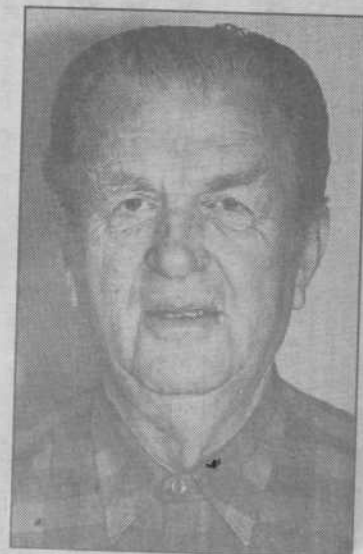
One customer of the bank was Charlotte Sills, a former Belleillian who moved to Boston and married a wealthy man. Sills returned to Belleville each year to visit relatives and Denyes served her

at the bank several times. Her chauffeur waited outside with the Mercedes, he recalls.

Despite all the regulation and formality, there was one occasion when the staff let their hair down. It was May 15 of each year when Harry Smith's ice company began dropping a block of ice at the front steps of the bank, to be put in the water cooler. The staff celebrated the event (after the manager had left for the day) by pouring a bottle of gin into the cooler.

When Denyes returned to the bank in February, 1946, he found all the tellers were women, something that was unheard of in the 1930s.

He left the bank in 1948 to become city treasurer and is now retired.



Drury Denyes