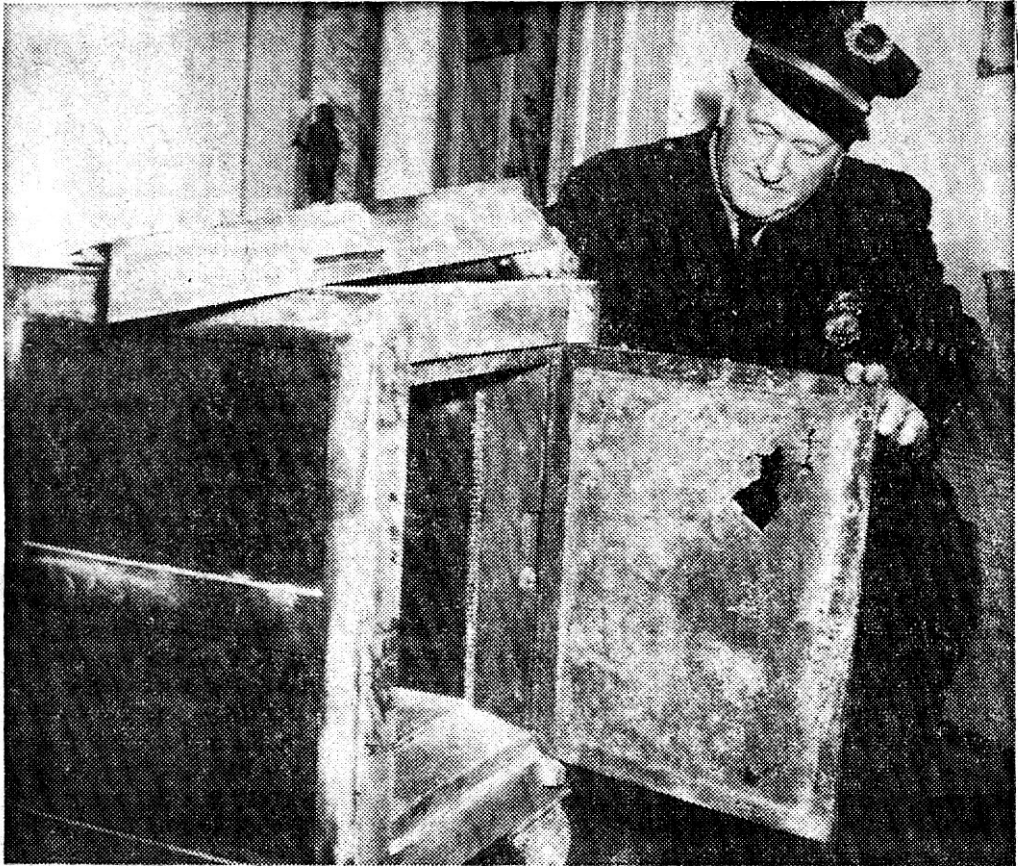


INSPECTS EMPTY SAFE



Pelham Police Chief Arthur Peabody inspects the damaged safe which was emptied of its contents during a \$2,000 bunko-burglary in that town last week. Miss Alice Clement of Mammoth rd told police the money was stolen from the

safe and a secret hiding place while she was being driven to Lowell, Mass, to a bank tea party by a man who posed as a representative of a bank where she does business. (Telegraphphoto)

Confidence Man Pulls Off Theft

Pelham, Dec 23—Police were intensifying their search today for a well-dressed confidence man who drove an 80-year-old Pelham woman to Lowell, Mass, on the pretext of attending a bank tea party while a confederate burglarized her home of some \$2,000.

MISS ALICE CLEMENT of Mammoth rd told Police Chief Arthur Peabody that the man posed as a representative of a Lowell bank where she does business. She said he later advised her against attending the party, paid her \$5 to take a taxi home from Lowell and gave her an envelope containing \$5 which he called "a Christmas gift."

When she arrived home, the retired Boston school teacher found her home had been entered and some \$2,000 in cash stolen from a safe in the library and from a secret hiding place off the living room.

CHIEF PEABODY, County Sheriff Thomas O'Brien and Lowell, Mass, authorities investigated the flim-flam theft over the weekend but failed to find the smooth-talking chauffeur or his accomplice.

Peabody today was checking out a list of persons who have done any work at the Clement home, a 10-room colonial located a short distance from the Massachusetts line. He said the burglar went right to the safe and the hiding place indicating that he knew where her money was kept.

"He advised me against attending the tea party because there were only two or three persons there," Miss Clement related. She said he gave her \$5 to take a taxi back to Pelham and also gave her a sealed bank envelope which he told her not to open until Christmas.

THE ELDERLY woman took a bus home instead of a taxi. She also checked the contents of the envelope and found a five-dollar bill.

Authorities said the man got lost in Lowell in an apparent attempt to stall a while. They said he also made a phone call from a Lowell bar, apparently to alert his accomplice that the coast was clear for the burglary.

MISS CLEMENT told police the chauffeur said he was from Billerica, only he pronounced it "Bil-LER-ica."

Police said the burglar left a few bags of old coins in the secret hiding place and a \$10 roll of half-dollars which had rolled beneath a coat in the closet.

Miss Clement told police somewhat ruefully today that "from now on I'm going to keep my money in banks and pay by check."

AUTHORITIES are operating on the theory that the bunko-theft was carried out by two persons. The first man made sure she was away from home for some time while the second man carried out the robbery.

The crime occurred between 1:30 and 3:30 pm Thursday but Pelham police were not notified until the weekend.

PEABODY said an old-fashioned key safe in a library closet was punched open and the contents removed. Remainder of the loot was taken from a concealed compartment in the partition of a living room closet. The thief lifted a removable mopboard to get at the cash.

Miss Clement told police that she had never told anyone prior to the robbery about the closet hiding place. Not even her relatives knew about it, she said.

SHE SAID the bogus bank representative called her by name and was very polite during the trip to Lowell. After parking his car around the corner from the bank, Miss Clement said he went to the front of the building and later returned to the car.