

Ben Lomond 4-5-71 Bank Bombed

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A bomb blast early this morning ripped through a wall and shattered windows at the Bank of America branch in Ben Lomond, resulting in an estimated \$5,000 to \$7,000 in damage.

(Additional photo on page 18.)

The explosion occurred at 2:50 a.m. and was heard three miles away by sheriff's deputies on patrol in Felton. The blast reverberated through surrounding mountains to the point deputies were unable to tell from which direction it had come, however, and the location was not discovered until an hour later.

Maintenance man Clifford Daugherty of 116 Bethany Drive, Scotts Valley, discovered the damage when he arrived at the bank at 4 a.m.

Branch Manager Don Bailey said Daugherty is in the habit

of arriving for work about an hour earlier and would have been in extreme danger had he done so this morning.

The Ben Lomond branch was constructed in October of last year and is B of A's newest facility in Santa Cruz County.

The bomb consisted of two lengths of pipe, approximately two inches in diameter, filled, experts now think, with black powder. The device was laid against the rear wall of the building and ignited with a fuse.

The blast tore through the wall, shattered four large windows and damaged an expensive machine used to photograph bank documents.

Bailey said the branch has not been threatened since the night it opened when a telephoned bomb threat resulted in a brief evacuation of the building.

"It's hard to understand," he said. "We've had no problems at all."

Several Bank of America branches in other areas of the state have been attacked in recent months.

Lt. Ken Pittenger of the sheriff's office said such attacks usually are accompanied by messages or warnings, but none was given in the Ben Lomond bombing.

He said Ben Seibel, chief sheriff's identification technician, and Pat Haggerty of the local office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation now are attempting to put together pieces of the bomb. They later will contact the state Criminal Investigation and Identification Bureau in Sacramento to attempt to trace the origin of the device.