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4-4-2018

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#### Recommended Citation

Richter, Wendy, "Banking establishments popular in Clark County" (2018). *Articles*. 274.  
<https://scholarlycommons.obu.edu/articles/274>

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# Banking establishments popular in Clark County



**By Wendy Richter**  
For the Siftings

Clark County is home to a number of banking institutions today. Some of these businesses have many branches across the state and the region, all connected with modern methods of communication.

The banking business was much different in the early twentieth century when a brand new facility was constructed in downtown Arkadelphia. The well-known Merchants and Planters Bank moved into its building at Sixth

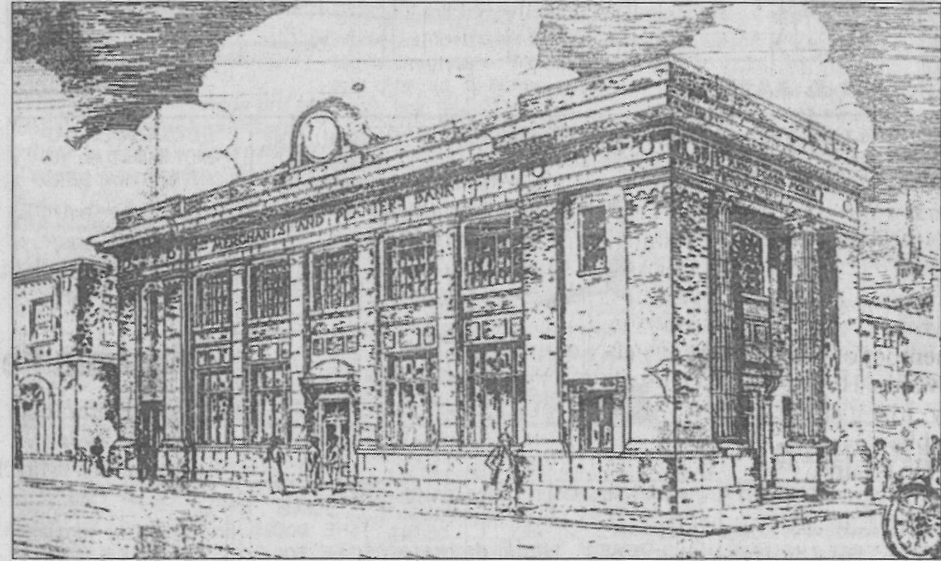
and Main in February of 1914.

Arkadelphia's Southern Standard newspaper announced the building's February 19, 1914, opening with glowing remarks about the facility: "Since its completion, this structure bears out the prediction that it would be among the handsomest bank buildings in the state, and being built especially for a banking institution, it is a model of convenience in every respect. The interior and fixtures are of polished marble and mahogany and a novice can read elegance in every part of the building."

While the bank opened on the 19th, a formal ceremony took place on Saturday the 21st, at which time the public was invited "to come and inspect this up-to-date and modern banking institution."

The new facility lived up to those expectations. In just over a year, the paper reported that bank officials had received requests for plans, specifications, and photographs of the building, so others could replicate what had been done in Arkadelphia. The paper stated that "There is no question but what the people of Arkadelphia and Clark County as well should feel proud of such an edifice whose beauty not only is confined to the substantial appearance from the outside, but the finish and decoration of the interior is symmetrically carried out in every particular."

Interestingly, a neighboring bank also benefited from the new construction. At the time of Merchants & Planters' opening, the Southern Standard related that "the Dalark Bank has bought



**This drawing of Merchants and Planters Bank appeared in the December 18, 1913, Southern Standard.** FILE PHOTO

the fixtures used by the Merchants and Planters Bank here in their old quarters, and are moving them to Dalark this week. From nothing the Dalark institution has grown to a strong and healthy bank under the careful and

conservative management of Frank DeLamar, and with these new fixtures will soon be putting on city airs."

For additional information about Clark County history, visit or contact the Clark County Histor-

ical Museum ([www.clark-countyhistory.org](http://www.clark-countyhistory.org) or (870) 230-1360) or the Clark County Historical Association's Archives at the Ouachita Baptist University Library ([www.obu.edu/archives](http://www.obu.edu/archives) or (870) 245-5332).