

# Graphics

# Firm in Rockville Raided by Agents

By Edward Walsh

Washington Post Staff Writer

The way Robert J. Edsall tells it, he was just leaving his store in Rockville last Monday afternoon when the agents arrived, about 10 of them, two or three of whom were brandishing guns.

"They really tore up the place," Edsall said yesterday. "They pulled paneling away from the walls went through my files, dumped trash on the floor."

What the U. S. Secret Service agents were looking for, Edsall says, was \$1 million in counterfeit money. What they got, he says, was several hundred sheets of paper on which were printed impressions of Federal Reserve notes. Edsall said he planned to use the sheets to wallpaper his home and office.

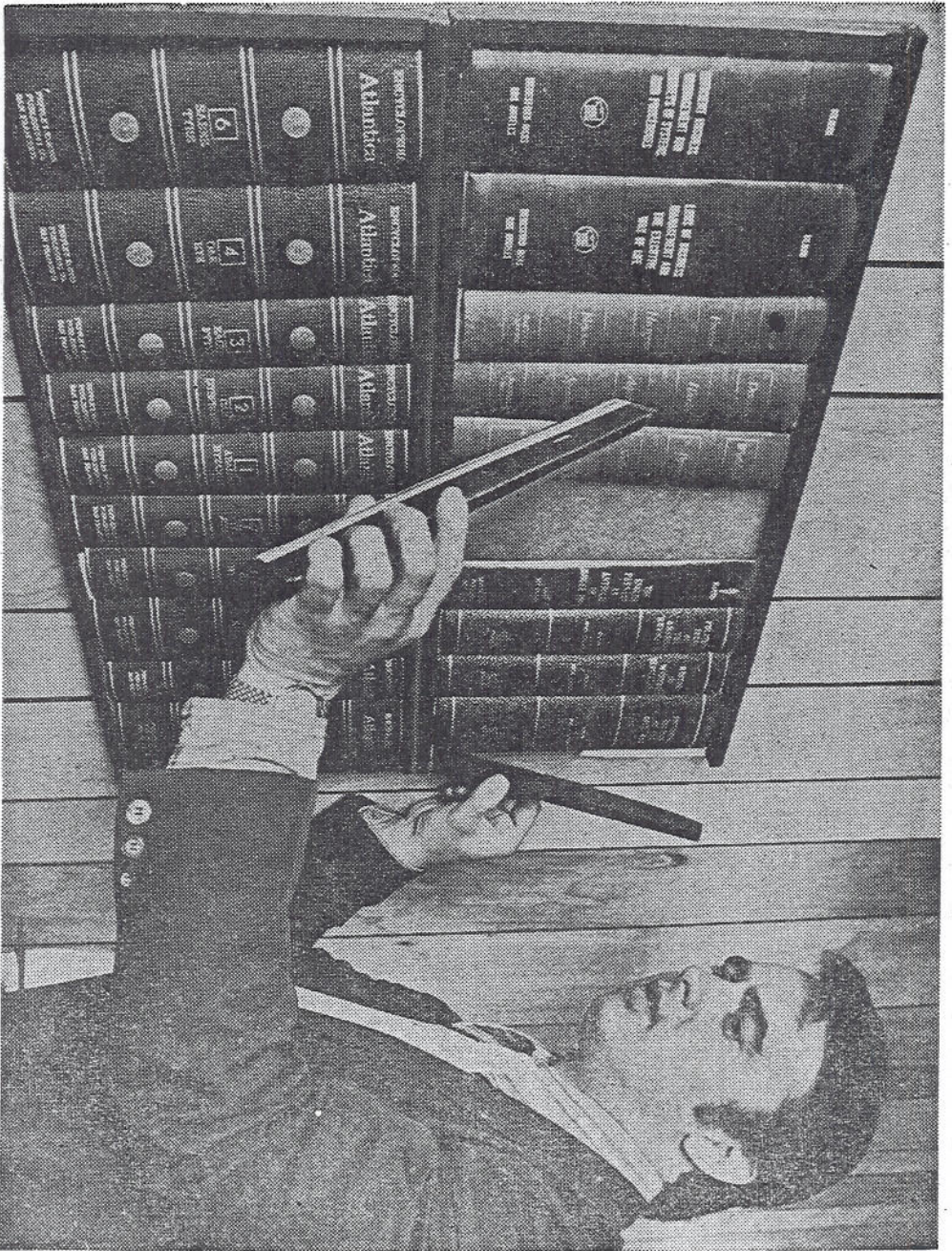
Some of the sheets of paper were pink, others blue and yellow, Edsall said.

Kenneth Thompson, assistant agent in charge of the Secret Service's Washington Field office, confirmed yesterday that the search took place and that 340 sheets of the paper were confiscated.

Thompson denied that any agents involved in the search revealed their weapons. Edsall, 30, was not arrested or charged with any crime, but an investigation into a possible counterfeiting operation in Montgomery County is continuing, Thompson said.

Edsall owns Inter-Graphics Inc. at 12109 Nebel Rd., Rockville, a firm that sells offset printing equipment and graphic arts supplies. He has been in business there about two years, he said.

A self-described "magician and practical joker," Edsall said he began producing the



Robert J. Edsall checks over bookcases he says were ripped apart Monday during a raid by U. S. Treasury agents.

By Frank Johnston—The Washington Post

sheets of paper with impressions of money on them about two months ago. The sheets were in a storeroom of his store Monday when the agents arrived, he said.

Edsall said he gave the agents the sheets of paper but that, armed with a search warrant issued by a U. S. magis-

trate, they searched his car and store for more than two hours.

Edsall said he was taken to the Secret Service field office in Washington and questioned until 1 p. m. before an agent drove him back to his store. Agents also questioned another store owner in the Nebel

Road area about knowledge of counterfeiting operations, he said.

During the questioning, Edsall said, agents showed him photographs of him, his employees and customers entering and leaving the store. The photographs were taken with a telescopic lens from the top of a nearby building, he said.

He said the agents also disclosed that his phone was tapped and that they once followed him on a business trip to New Jersey.

"They told me where I sat on the plane," Edsall said. Thompson said the printing of any reproductions of U. S. See PAPER, B9, Col. 1

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currency is a violation of federal law. The U.S. attorney's office in Baltimore, which is directing the investigation by the Secret Service, has deferred prosecution in the case pending completion of the investigation, he said.

A spokesman for the U.S. attorney's office said there would be no comment on the investigation.

Thompson said the sheets of paper contained printing on only one side. Each sheet contained impressions of four \$100 federal reserve notes, one \$20 federal reserve note and one \$5 note.

Thompson said the sheets were about 15 inches-by-12 inches, of ordinary printing

quality, "not the kind of paper you print money on."

Edsall said the impression of the bills overlapped on the sheets, but Thompson said they did not and could have been cut out as individual bills.

Thompson said there is no evidence of attempts to use the sheets as real money. According to the Secret Service, the quality of the impressions was "poor and not deceptive," but Thompson said, "I've seen worse copies passed."

Thompson said the search was conducted because "we had information counterfeit money was being printed there."

Edall said, "I don't know how they came up with me being Rockville's No. 1 counterfeiter."