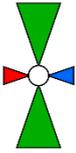


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<1722/e>	Company. The Boston deal will double Gulf States' mortgage portfolio to \$8 billion, making it the 42nd largest mortgage firm in the country. It will also increase the number of Citizens branches from 60 to 85. The Boston Five is a 167-year-old savings bank. At the end of October last year, its loans - including mortgages - totalled \$1.4 billion. Failed bank acquired in separate deal CITIZENS Financial Group has bought the failed New England Savings Bank for £32 million. The deal involved the purchase of NESB assets worth almost £500 million from the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation and the assumption of about £456 million of the Bank's deposits. All 21 NESB branches have re-opened under the name of Citizens Bank. Royal Bank Chief Executive Dr George Mathewson said, 'Following hard on the heels of our announcement in April that we had agreed to acquire the Boston Five, this is another encouraging step towards our strategic aim of deriving more than 10 per cent of our earnings from the USA. To do this we will at least double the size of Citizens, both through organic growth and by expanding into the states adjoining its Rhode Island base. Hospital opts for Charter CHESTER Branch fought off tough competition, not least from the existing account holders National Westminster, to win the banking contract for the new Countess of Chester Hospital NHS Trust. Facilities provided include Royline, BACS and the Employees Loan Scheme. Senior Corporate Manager Alan Lingard said, 'With over 5000 employees we see this as an ideal opportunity to market the Bank's services. Since the banking was taken on we have already seen £4 million in deposit balances and also hope to complete a financial arrangement with RoyScot which could provide £20k in commission to the Branch.' Profits up at Royal Scottish ROYAL Scottish Assurance doubled its profit contribution to the Royal Bank to £6.3 million during the half-year to 31 March. More than 13,000 new policies were completed in that period with new annual premium business increasing by 19 per cent to £7 million, and single premium business almost doubling to £57 million. Chief Executive Ian Offer described the figures as 'very pleasing.' Ian also said that since the company was launched in October 1990, the sales force had grown from 40 to 270 and overall, more than 420 jobs had been created. To ensure Consultants had a first class knowledge of the industry, all were obliged to obtain the Financial Planning Certificate awarded by the Life Insurance Association and Chartered Insurance Institute. Cashline at Asda CUSTOMERS at the Asda superstore in Rawtenstall , Lancashire can now stock up on cash as well as groceries after the opening of the store's first Cashline machine. The Rawtenstall store is
 <p>Key: Footprint ConEn1 Footprint ConEn2 Footprint ConEn3</p>	<p>the first of the supermarket chain's English stores</p> <p>to get Cashline, and to celebrate the occasion staff from the town's branch handed out carrier bags and keyrings to shoppers as well as answering account enquiries. OPEN LINE THE Editor welcomes contributions for publication in OPEN LINE but reserves the right to shorten or amend them. Letters should include the writer's name and address, but on request these will not be published or disclosed. Plucky staff beat City bombers Dear Editor FOR the second year in succession, St Mary Axe staff have been affected by an IRA bomb. On this occasion, however, 12 members of staff were working in the Bury Street Office in preparation for the</p>

merger with the Great Tower Street Grouping. Bishopsgate is locked only a few hundred yards from the Bury Street Office and the explosion blew in a skylight, narrowly missing Jon Staniforth. It also buckled the front door of the premises. Although initially shaken by the experience, the plucky 12 carried on working in traditional Royal Bank spirit in order to achieve the task in hand. Naturally, the advice of the local police was taken before continuing work and they concurred that the staff were best placed in Bury Street at that time. On duty with Jon were Wendy O'Donnell, Joannah Mellors, Jan Maslen, Rob Lee, Doug Franklin, Julie Taylor, Mark Belcher, Mark Carter, Steve Lee, Linda Good and Philippa Fenner. It is to their credit that the office was ready for business on the Monday with a full service being provided to the customers. Customer car care ! Dear Editor CONTRARY to reports in certain sections of the media, the Royal Bank's customer care policy is still very much alive and jumping. When a customer at Glasgow's Charing Cross West Branch found her car battery was flat, Tina Browne, a member of staff at the Local Operations Centre situated above the Branch, offered to give her a jump-start. The result was a very satisfied customer was able to drive away minutes later, Tina having proved it is not necessary to work in a branch to provide good customer service. There was an ironic footnote to the story, however. The grateful customer sent Tina a box of chocolates but only a few days earlier she had vowed not to eat any chocolates because of Lent. From tea maker to charity supporter Dear Editor I am writing to make readers aware of the registered charity. The Anthony Nolan Bone Marrow Trust. My finance and I have recently formed a local group with a view to organising fund raising events to increase people's awareness of the role of this charity, and to increase the numbers on the donor register. The Anthony Nolan Research Centre