



All sorts of characters are waiting for those who venture through the looking glass. Alice discovered as much the moment she reached Wonderland.

New Bern's characters, past and present, make the March Hare, the Mad Hatter and Alice's other newfound friends appear rather colorless. And though our town is admittedly no Wonderland, it's still about as wonderful as a real-life place can be.

Ranking high on the list of local unforgettables is the late Mack Henderson. Best remembered as the village Santa Claus, he delighted in telling about a little boy who stopped him in the business section during the Christmas holidays. "Are you the same Santa Claus who was here last year?" the like asked. Mack of course replied in the affirmative. "This is Old Santa himself," Henderson proudly proclaimed, with grandiose gestures and a very merry chuckle.

Whereupon the little boy hauled off and kicked Mack on the shins. "You're just a big old liar," the lad said. "You promised me a trifle and you didn't bring it to me."

Mack's interesting activities were by no means confined to his impersonations of St. Nick. Once, the way he told it, he combed the countryside in a half dozen coastal counties, selling subscriptions to a farm magazine.

With each subscription he gave the subscriber a free map of the world. It wasn't such a bad map, except for the fact that the names printed on it were so small you couldn't tell one country from another.

Mack took care of that. Two weeks after he unloaded the maps he hit the trail once more. This time he peddled reading glasses to the despairing subscribers, and didn't miss a sale.

Mack would have enjoyed knowing Margaret T. Applegarth, the New York lecturer and author, who gave several talks before the State Convention of the Woman's Missionary Union here last month.

As whimsical and charming as they come, she passed along the story about processional caterpillars that she in turn had picked up from a scientist.

These caterpillars, like a lot of people, have no mind of their own and simply follow the caterpillar immediately in front of them. Aware of this, the scientist filled a jar with food and started a small army of caterpillars marching around the rim.

They marched for days, too dumb to break ranks, and finally starved to death.

Warren Ellis, a hard working route man for one of New Bern's laundries, made an intriguing observation the other day. "I was cut out to be a country gentleman," he said, "but the money didn't come with it."

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## Caleb Bradham Takes Care Of His English Overhead

No one in town has a nicer umbrella than Caleb Bradham. You can tell that at a glance, as he uses it for a walking cane while strolling along Middle Street in the occasional bright sunshine that New Bern had to settle for during recent months.

What puzzled some of the citizenry was the way the prized contraption vanishes from view when storm clouds gather. Rather than wonder ourselves we refrained from speculation and got the low-down first hand from Caleb himself.

"It's an English umbrella," he told us, "and I've got too much money tied up in it to let it get ruined by rain. Besides, I don't even know if it would shrink or fade."

That's the reason you'll see him scurrying for shelter the minute he hears the pitter patter of pennies from heaven.

Having solved this particular mystery without benefit of Alfred Hitchcock, we're all set to render further service as the opportunity presents itself.

## Loaded Docket Seen For Next Week as Craven Court Meets

Thirty one cases ranging from rape and robbery to public drunkenness and frivolous prosecution have been set for next week's abbreviated term of Craven Superior Court.

Out of consideration for Peter and Molly Cottontail, there will be no court on Easter Monday. This will give everyone concerned a chance to go on an egg hunt, if they so desire, except those who are currently languishing in jail.

Judge Joseph W. Parker of Windsor, the presiding jurist, can be expected to make every effort to keep things moving, once court gets underway Tuesday. Yet, it is a foregone conclusion that only a fraction of the cases will be reached.

## Piano Keys Unlock Doors to Success

Newport's Rachel Mundine is the latest Yuletide Revue graduate to achieve distinction professionally.

Once a piano student of Mrs. Charles L. Abernethy, Jr., and later featured on WNCT, she is currently appearing nightly at the Ford Hotel in Toronto, Canada.

Immediately prior to her present engagement she had a successful run of several months at the Emory Hotel in Bradford, Pa. Incidentally, her Toronto engagement is booked for three months. "I like it very much, and the people are wonderful to me," says Rachel. "Besides, the musical profession gives me an opportunity to see many interesting places."

Shy and unassuming, the Carteret native is not only a talented pianist but an excellent organist. Fortunately for her, her versatility embraces the classics, sacred music and popular tunes with equal proficiency.

## Parker As Sparker Sure Spurs Scouts

Enthusiasm and energy have paid off tremendously for James L. Parker, the Scoutmaster of Troop 231.

Starting with three youngsters, Marion Hadder, Linwood Dunn and Johnnie Crary back in August, 1956, he now has a membership of 55.

No Scouter anywhere could possibly be loved and respected more than this modest man, who has refused to let his own ill health hamper his unstinting efforts to benefit New Bern boys.

This affection was much in evidence at a recent father and son banquet held at Centenary Methodist church for troops and Scout executives in this area.

## It's Round-Up Time Again As Babies Get Special Attention

### EASTER COMES AGAIN

It's Easter again, and the sunny blue skies seem to fairly proclaim that Christ did arise; The green of the grass and the budding of flowers Give a promise of life everlasting that's ours. All Nature is saying, "Let's hail the Messiah," The birds in the trees are a heavenly choir; They sing not of toms, nor of mourning and death, There's a shrill note of hope in each tiny breath. Perhaps it's just instinct, these feathered creatures Exist in a sphere that lives without preachers, Yet, somehow it seems, in a very strange way, That even the birds know this is His day. Yes, it's Easter again, and the sunny blue skies Seem to fairly proclaim that Christ did arise; The grave has no triumph, death has no sting, And Man, like the birds, has a reason to sing.

—JGMcd

A bottle warmer may be just the thing when it comes to serving Junior his formula feeding, but it takes a boiling political pot to assure him of extra special affection.

Now is the time for all good men to come to the aid of the party. Unfortunately for Junior, or for little Susie as the case might be at your house, it's also the time when office seekers go on the prowl in search of infants to kiss.

Good or bad, young or old, fat or skinny, all politicians have one trait in common. They develop an overwhelming love for very small younguns the moment they throw their hat in the ring. And, not content with admiring the little darlings from afar, they feel an overwhelming compulsion to give them a great big smack.

Naturally, any candidate would prefer to kiss a freshly scrubbed kid who is right out of the tub, rather than the brat who has just come up for air out of a chocolate ice cream cone. And of course there is always more sincerity involved if the child in question doesn't happen to have a nose that needs some overdue attention.

Be that as it may, in New Bern as in far away places a baby would have to look worse than Frankenstein's monster to get the brush off from a prospective officer holder. This holds true especially in those instances where the mother, father or both are in the company of said small fry.

As a matter of fact, there is considerable doubt that any child can count on a politician's kiss, even on the eve of election, unless he is

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## Rip Van Winkle Not By Himself In Sleeping Deal

With New Bern's 250th anniversary now less than two years off, natives and newcomers alike are blissfully snoozing away their golden opportunity to really whoop it up.

Like the proverbial ten o'clock scholar, and in typical Johnny Come Lately style, villagers are dragging their feet to such an extent that it may be too late, even at this moment, to ever catch up on what needs to be done for the big celebration.

Aside from a tremendous job of

planning rather than day dreaming, there are hundreds of thousands of details that must be attended to by any and all available hands.

Five years of honest to goodness preparation wouldn't have been too much. Assuring the success of so rare an occasion is going to require more than idle talk and wishful thinking, unless the main objective is to round up a few old timey dresses for the ladies, demand that all adult males grow whiskers and let it go at that.

New Bern's most epic event is bound to get a smattering of attention from outsiders, and attract a few tourist dollars, whether residents of this picturesque first State Capital put their shoulder to the wheel or not. Like the flea looking for lunch on a St. Bernard dog, it's too big a deal to miss, even with bad aim.

When a city in comparatively young America has been around for a full two and a half centuries, it's nothing to sniff at, unless the sniffing is done with the appreciation shown for other gloriously ancient things such as vintage wine and Stradivarius fiddles.

History isn't manufactured overnight, and no town can buy it. Father Time provides for every com-

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## Scottish Rite Body Now Has Members In All Parts of World

No one expects all of the New Bern Consistory's nearly 4,000 members to show up for the annual Spring Reunion that opens its three days of degree work next Tuesday.

For such a miracle to happen, it would require far more than full attendance from all of the 48 states. In addition, no less than 1,700 members of the local Consistory would have to journey here from places outside the boundaries of the United States.

In every civilized country on earth, and in a lot of countries not so civilized, you'll find 32nd degree Masons who had their Scottish Rite degrees conferred upon them right here in New Bern.

Responsible in great measure for this state of affairs is the fact that many of the candidates in the 22-county area covered by the New Bern Consistory are at the time temporarily stationed at Cherry Point, Camp LeJeune or Fort Bragg.

This great influx of service personnel has helped to make the local Consistory the largest in North Carolina—surpassing Charlotte, Greensboro, Asheville and Wilmington.

Although the membership is widespread and various out-of-town-ers take part in the degree work, most of those who plan, produce and present the degrees are New Bernians.

G. A. Farrow is the director of the work, and his assistant is Charles T. Midyette, Jr., Robert L. Pugh is class lecturer, and A. A. Kafer, Jr., is stage director and custodian.

## New Bern's Starlings Are Just As Wise As Any Owls

If you're a New Bern wife who nags her husband morning, noon and night, there's a valuable lesson waiting for you down at City Hall.

Yap long enough and loud enough, and your ranting will fall on deaf ears. That's what's happened in the case of the squawkie that New Bern officials bought to scare starlings into roosting somewhere besides the clock tower.

Supposed to sound for all the world like another starling with his tail caught in a split stick, the device got results when first put up. In fact, some of the more timid starlings, along with other birds, left for good on short notice, and gave points as far away as Siberia as their forwarding address.

It didn't last long. Now when the squawkie starts up, most of the starlings remain at the scene, and a lot more show up from elsewhere to try and figure out what all the

fuss is over.

Some of them, displaying the same morbid curiosity that humans exhibit when they rush to see a mangled corpse at a wreck site, seem to get a large charge out of hearing what appears to be a fellow starling shrieking in agonized distress from a torture chamber inside the tower.

Perhaps Raleigh was smarter than we were when public officials and private citizens there hung feather dusters from the tops of many of the Capital's principal buildings.

Or there's a possibility that some feather duster salesman simply saw a good chance to feather his nest. At any rate, here in New Bern, starlings are still behaving like anything but well mannered darlings.

As for our squawkie, it's strictly for the birds.