

THE NEW BERN MIRROR

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MILLIONS LOST FOREVER

It's been so long now since New Bern had a tobacco market, that no one bothers to mention it any more.

We're much too concerned with other matters, it seems, to weep over the millions of pounds of the golden weed that are hauled out of Craven County each Fall to markets in Greenville, Wilson, Kinston, Washington, Williamston, Rocky Mount, Tarboro and elsewhere.

Does it make sense to you? Last season alone in Craven County, there were 11,836,449 pounds of tobacco harvested from 8,018 acres on 1,700 farms. Every single ounce of that tremendously valuable crop had to be hauled out of our County, and sold somewhere else.

Multiply these figures by the great number of years that New Bern has had no tobacco market, and you would have a stupendous total. Maybe it's just as well, in view of our complacency, if we never go to the trouble of really adding up the millions upon millions of dollars that we've waved goodbye to.

After all, it's been said many times that there's no need to cry over spilled milk. Perhaps the same philosophy can be applied to the tobacco that should have been sold on a New Bern warehouse floor but wasn't.

How indifferent can a town get? Do we deserve new industries that continue to pass us by, when it's a matter of record that we have failed to make the most of our opportunities?

Maybe we'll get some of those industries eventually, if only through accident or blind luck. There are already 7,000 manufacturing concerns in North Carolina, employing 480,000 persons. Still more are headed for the Old North State, so through a first-rate miracle we might land just one.

Speaking of industries, tobacco markets create industries in towns where they thrive, aside from the actual auction sales of the weed. If you need proof, visit Greenville and see the tobacco industries there. You might also take a look at the lovely homes that were built by tobaccoists who reaped a fortune from tobacco that was grown in Craven and peddled in Pitt.

There are those who might say that a few tobacco warehouses, or even a single warehouse, would harm the cultural aspects of our town. Culture is a wonderful thing, and New Bern ought to hang on to it. All of us should be agreed on that point.

But Greenville, despite its many warehouses and tobacco factories, has managed to flourish as a cultural and educational center. East Carolina College has long since outgrown its small-school classification, and is today quite an institution of higher learning.

Offhand, we can't think of any town in our sprawling Coastal Plain that is a worse town because it has tobacco warehouses within its boundaries. Much to the contrary, a town with tobacco warehouses is apt to be a progressive town.

We have more than a faint suspicion that it was progressiveness that brought the warehouses, and not the warehouses that brought progressiveness. Which, if you ask us, doesn't make us look too smart and wide awake.

Millions of pounds of tobacco are being grown in Craven County again this year on those 1,700 farms. Take a look at it in the fields, for it will never end up in New Bern—except to pause briefly at a stop light or two.

Is it any wonder that folks in Greenville, Kinston and Wilson laugh at us behind our backs, and call us dumb and slow and sleepy?

Village Verses

FATHER'S DAY

We come today to Father's Day, that one time in the year
When everybody in the house tries smothering him with cheer;
He doesn't get a scolding, for ashes on the rug,
Instead the Missus only smiles, and gives her man a hug.

For once he hears the programs that most men like to choose,
It's quite okay if Pop keeps tuned to baseball and to news;
His Sunday papers, scattered 'round, no longer start tongues nagging,
And who is there who dares to doubt, when he begins some bragging.

The kids don't whine for nickels, on this the day of days,
In fact they're real considerate, in oh so many ways;
Mom makes no mention of new hats, the old one still can do,
That is, until this Father's Day has passed in grand review.

If Pop sits in the parlor, in undershirt and socks,
Nobody says that he's uncouth, or gives his jaws a box.
Oh yes, when it is Father's Day, a mighty man is he,
Tomorrow he may be a mouse, but now, why no sirree.

Most folks must do with little, although they long for more,
Life's apple goes to just a few, the others get the core;
In view of that, I'm hoggish in asking what I seek,
But wouldn't Father's Day be nice, just seven days a week.

—JGMcd.

Free Wheeling

By BILL CROWELL

Dept. of Motor Vehicles, State of North Carolina

WHOSE FAULT . . . Not too long ago an automobile driven by the 16-year-old son of City Councilman W. B. Myers of Tampa, Fla., went out of control at high speed. One high school student was killed and five others were hurt. The Tampa Times asked Mr. Myers to write of his reaction to the tragedy, both as a father and a city official. Excerpts from his statement follow:

It was a wholesale tragedy. We realize that Tommy must face the fact that the boy lost his life in the car Tommy was driving.

There is nothing in the world to compensate for the loss of a life. If I could I would give my life for that boy's. I surely would. I feel that with all my heart.

Whatever charge they place against Tommy he is going to have to take it. He was wrong. I'll stand by him as a father, but not as a public official.

If every parent of a teen-ager who drives could stand by helplessly in a hospital and see their children lying on an operating table, wondering if they will live or die, I'm sure they would wish that the automobile had never been invented.

Yet you realize that you can't lock your children in the house and tell them they can't be a part of society. And you can't be with them every minute. So what is the answer?

I know that much of the problem is centered around speed. Ever since we have had a television set in our house, all I can remember seeing on automobile ads is power, speed, pick up . . .

How can you explain to a child, or even an adult, that he has to go under 40 (the limit where this accident occurred) when he is constantly shown examples of cars which go more than 100?

My son had been told not to drive fast, not to exceed the speed limit, to be careful and look out for the other fellow.

One of the problems confronting me now is whether to let him drive again. Frankly, I don't know if I'll ever let Tommy drive until he's 18. But it will be a long time before I have to make that decision, due to the extent of his injuries.

I think that except in extreme cases a boy probably should not be permitted to drive until he is 18. The two-year difference between 16 and 18 will give him much more maturity and common sense. The law gives a child 16 years old the right to drive. But I feel that each parent should examine his own child as an individual and determine whether the child is fit from the standpoint of maturity and common sense to operate a lethal weapon such as the modern car.

SUDDEN THAWT . . . Some drivers, it seems, can find difficulty for every solution.

TRAFFIC CONTROL . . . Out in

Missouri a school bus had stopped on a heavily-traveled road to disembark some children. A 13-year-old monitor took up his regular position with a red flag to help get the youngsters safely across the highway. A big car, approaching the bus rapidly, wasn't slowing down at all despite the red flag and the flashing lights of the bus.

The young man carrying the flag sensed that the car was not going to stop. He took things into his own hands when he picked up a rock from the side of the road and lambasted the windshield of the car. The rock fell in the lap of the errant driver but he stopped finally and emerged unhurt.

I suppose all of us have had the urge to resort to such dynamic methods of traffic control but somehow lacked the impulsive courage of the young flagman.

WOMEN . . . I guess to the average Tar Heel male, women drivers are a necessary evil, a nuisance he somehow learns to put up with through years of deciphering hand signals and unpredictable maneuvers on the highway.

As a release for some of the annoyances he feels, the male directs a multitude of jokes (usually bad) about the womenfolks' activities behind the wheel. He enjoys poking fun because the jokes help him forget how furious he can get with her as a fellow motorist.

But hold on, there's one segment of the adult male population that actually loves her!

They are our car designers. To the engineers the little woman is no laughing matter. They like to meet her every whim, please her,

and they're out to do right by her—even the housewife you saw making a left turn from a right lane last week.

When the auto industry was young, and salesmen were beating the bushes for customers, they learned quickly that more women

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