



The NEW BERN MIRROR

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Roy Tucker still cherishes a Christmas gift received several years ago from a boyhood chum, Robert Barnum, down at Swansboro. They grew up together on upper Broad street, and Barnum wasn't wrong in assuming that the present mailed Roy would be doubly appreciated.

It consisted of a rare collection of old-time dime novels, including Nick Carter, Secret Service, and other publications just about a half century old.

No New Bern youngster at the turn of the century would have dared to read Nick Carter where his Ma and Pa could see him do it, but this didn't quell the literary tastes of local juveniles.

They sneaked the paper-bound volumes into the privacy of Chick Sale powder-rooms, or back of the woodshed for a glorious excursion into the realms of forbidden fiction.

There wasn't anything obscene or off-color about the reading matter itself. The only reason that parents vigorously disapproved was the fact that boys of the era neglected their school books to peruse the stories from cover to cover.

Since the novels came out once a week, it did require considerable reading time to keep abreast of the latest exploits of Carter, Dick Merrill, Bob Esterbrook and Dick Slater.

New Bern lads purchased their copies from a book shop operated by Sam Waters on Middle street for a nickel apiece. They were called dime novels, but at that time they were nickel novels hereabouts.

There were a lot more boys than there were available nickels in that far-off day, so three local brothers—Bruce, Lacey and Roy Edgerton, got the bright idea of opening a library.

After reading the latest editions to their heart's content, they rented them to neighborhood kids for a penny apiece. The penny entitled the borrower to keep the book a week.

Fast readers ganged up among themselves to see that some of the pennies did double or triple duty. Of course, the preferred method of reading was at a leisurely gait that permitted full digestion of the wonders that lurked within the pages of these marvelous periodicals.

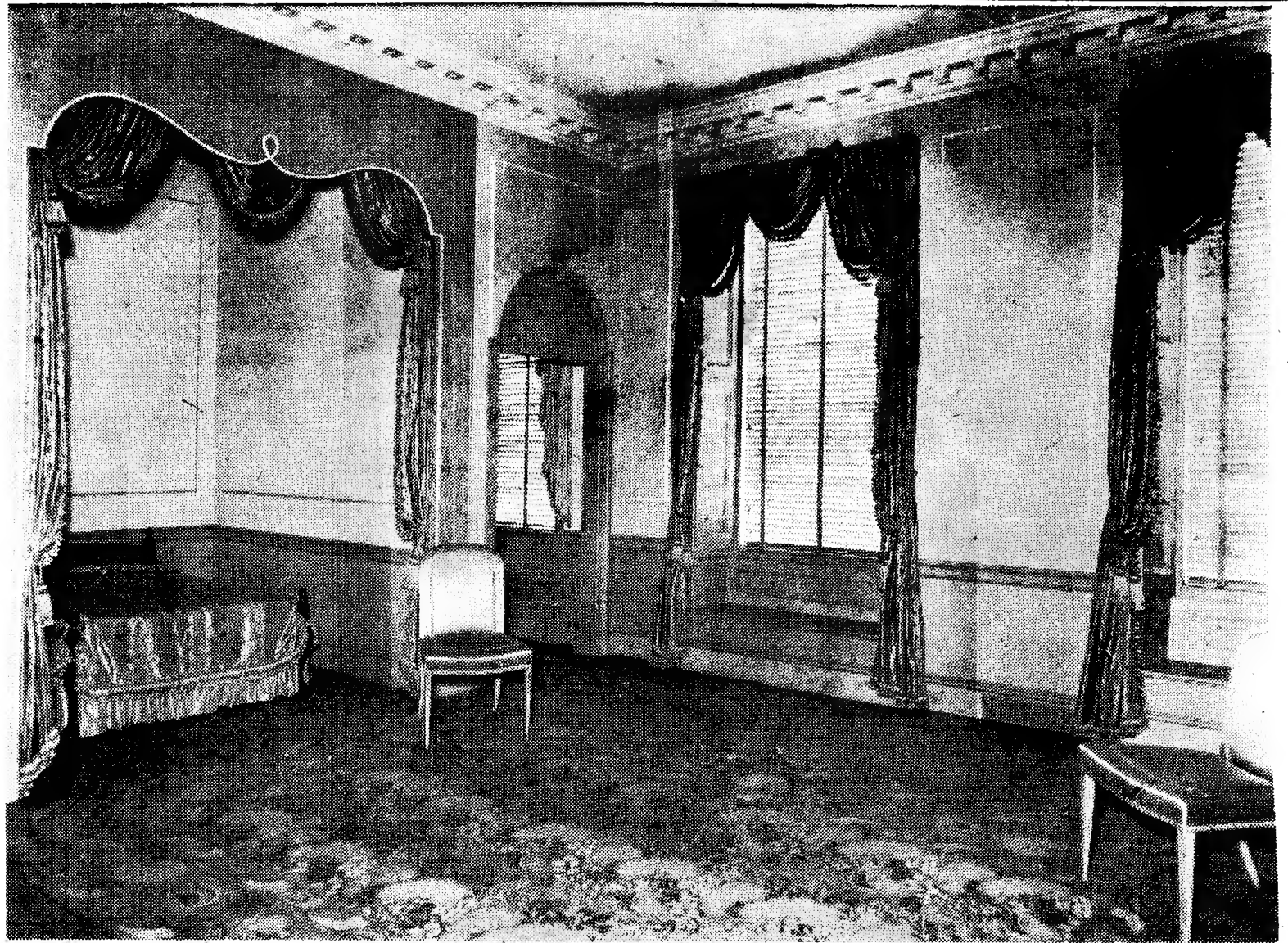
Back in those days there were very few magazines on the market. One of them was Leslie's Weekly. Hence, when the dime novels first came into being in the Gay Nineties, they had little competition, and they didn't give up the ghost until the First World War.

There isn't much likelihood that they will ever flourish again, but you can't be too sure about it. After all, who would have dreamed that the old-time western was to get a new lease on life through a thing called television, and push a bunch of these modern actors and actresses and singers right out of the picture?

As a matter of fact, countless paperback novels are being published and sold today. Some of the shadier ones are selling far faster than Nick Carter ever did. Unlike the original dime novel, they rely chiefly on filth to make the cash registers ring.

Few if any New Bern males under 50 are apt to remember Nick Carter, or Dick Merrill, Bob Esterbrook and Dick Slater. They were succeeded by a new crop of boyhood heroes, including Tom Swift and Tarzan. Both of these favorites were central figures in novel after novel.

Tarzan, in particular, landed between the covers of a book quite frequently, thanks to the prolific writing of the author who created him. Edgar Rice Burroughs, born in Chicago in 1875, made millions of dollars out of his fascinating



FOR SLUMBER SWEET—Sleep, that knits up the ravell'd sleeve of care, the death of each day's life, sore labour's bath; balm of hurt minds, great Nature's second course, chief nourisher in life's feast. Thus did Shakespeare de-

scribe the rest that comes when day is done. Surely, this alcove bedroom in Tryon Palace extends just such repose to the imaginative visitor.—Photo by John R. Baxter.

New Bern's Nathan Brooks Is Now President of Carver

A lot of water has gone under the bridge since Nathan C. Brooks, Jr., graduated from New Bern High school in 1927.

Today, as witty and good-natured as ever, he is Dr. Brooks, the president of Carver School of Missions and Social Work in Louisville, Ky.

Elected to this high office last May at a meeting of the trustees in Houston, Texas, the pudgy and pleasant New Bernian is one of the busiest educators you'll find anywhere.

In recent weeks, for example, he attended a session with child care executives in Oklahoma City; went to Memphis for a conference with Southern Baptist leaders; spoke at the State Sunday School convention in Baltimore; visited students at Wake Forest college interested in doing graduate work at his school; visited Bowman Gray School of Medicine; conferred with leaders at Furman university; and then headed for the Baptist Bible Institute at Graceville, Fla.

Married since 1934 to the former Ruby Hayes of Lumberton, Nathan is the proud father of five children. Mary Kelly is 23, Nathan III is 22, Frank Lane is 13, George Evans, 10, and Misa Emelle, 9. George was off visiting a friend when our Mirror photo was made, and is missing from the family group shown here.

"I drive a 1951 Chevrolet coach," Carver's president told us. "Some

jungle character.

Burroughs lived a mighty long time, but Tarzan has outlived him. Maybe Nick Carter is still alive too, and merely pulling an extended Rip Van Winkle. At least, he is alive in Roy Tucker's library.

folks go in for cars, some for children. I go in for children." Incidentally, he gets his chief recreation with the Brooks brood, roller-skating at the gymnasium of the

church they attend. "This keeps me moving about, even if I do look like an elephant on wheels," reasons the not-so-dignified but highly-respected Dr.

Brooks. Still, he misses his most recent pastorate before becoming president, at Pensacola, Fla.

"I must confess that I am still very much in love with the Gulf Coast," he says. "I like its climate and its waters, and I found myself enjoying the fishing, swimming and similar activities that were part of my boyhood."

In addition, Dr. Brooks found "the opportunity of ministering to the men at the Naval Air Station, as well as the people of the local community, a very happy experience."

Thirty years and more is a long span. "Time has taken its toll," Nathan admits. "I am fat and bald like many another middle-aged individual. However, I haven't lost my sense of humor, and still enjoy practical jokes."

Anyone who was a member of Troop 8 here, when Bob Coons was scoutmaster, will easily recall just how prankish Brooks was. It's nice to know that despite the distinction he now holds, there's a little bit of Dennis the Menace still lurking under his well-stuffed hide.

Nathan writes frequently for the Baptist Adult Union Quarterly, and occasionally for Open Windows, The Baptist Training Union Magazine, The Sunday School Builder, Baptist Young People's Union Quarterly, and Home Life Magazine.

He has served as chairman in his denomination for the North Carolina Radio Committee, Secretary of the Southern Baptist Radio Commission, Trustee of the Alexandria Baptist hospital, and as a member of the General Boards for Baptists in South Carolina, Louisiana and

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DR. BROOKS AND FAMILY