



# The NEW BERN MIRROR

...ED WEEKLY  
...T OF  
Miss Elisabeth Moore  
Box 803

VOLUME 2

NEW BERN, N. C., FRIDAY, JUNE 19, 1959

NUMBER 12

It might be well for all of us to remember, on the eve of Father's Day, that the most unusual portrait ever painted of the Father of Our Country was the work of a New Bern artist, William Williams.

Williams, even as many another notable figure, lies beneath the sod in historic Cedar Grove cemetery here. Unhonored and unsung in life, he has long since joined the forgotten in a world that seldom remembers.

True, two of his grandsons—Charles A. Williams and J. F. Williams of Charlotte—saw to it that a modest monument was erected over his grave. But the carving thereon has almost been obliterated by the ravages of time.

The portrait of George Washington that the local artist created was unique in two respects. It was the only painting ever done of the famed subject in full Masonic regalia. Aside from that, it was the only Washington portrait that wasn't intentionally flattering.

Masons of the Alexandria, Va., lodge picked the right man when they asked Williams to do an honest job, and let the chips fall where they would. A stickler for accuracy, no matter how brutal the results might be, Williams emulated Washington, who legend says displayed a bit of honesty himself in the chip department when he whacked down a cherry tree.

So exacting was the artist that the very busy President posed no less than 13 times before the portrait was completed. Obviously, patient and considerate G. W. rather liked the idea of assuring posterity of at least one glimpse of his countenance that revealed all.

Let it be said that Williams didn't overlook anything. He included a none too flattering mole under Washington's right ear, an unsightly scar on the left cheek, and pock marks on his nose.

Not content with detailing these items, the painter saw to it that the "five o'clock shadow" on the President's heavily bearded upper lip got proper emphasis. And the familiar square jaws, resulting from an ill-fitting denture, were duly put upon the canvas too.

It was typical of Washington's greatness that he heartily approved of the portrait, notwithstanding the blemishes. A lesser man, with more vanity, would have been insulted, but not G. W.

Williams delivered the portrait in person to the Masons at Alexandria. They probably knew little about art, but they saw that it was indeed a true likeness and proceeded to pay the artist \$50 for his work.

Few purchases in history have turned out to be as big a bargain, although no one apparently realized it at the time. Today, it is said, the Alexandria-Washington lodge has a standing offer of \$100,000 for the portrait, and wouldn't think of selling.

Incidentally, Williams was a Mason himself, and a portrait he did of Francis Lowthrop for New Bern's St. Johns lodge is still in its possession. The artist was paid \$40 for the Lowthrop work.

Washington was worshipful master of the Alexandria lodge for eight months while he was President—a situation that is without parallel in the history of the nation. He was in Philadelphia at the seat of government when fellow members of the lodge passed a resolution asking him to pose for a portrait.

It so happened that Williams was living in Philadelphia at the time. He readily agreed to do the portrait, when a committee appointed to select an artist approached him.

Williams had never met the Father of Our Country, but they



**ENDLESS VARIETY**—In our mother city of Berne the grandiose and the picturesque are blended together in a harmony that is little short of remarkable. Ancient structures and modern architecture give the visitor a glimpse

of the old and the new. This latest scene, in a series arranged by The Mirror to acquaint New Bernians with their heritage, was flown to us from Switzerland with the good wishes of Berne officials.

## Jack Horton Gets Our Vote As Nation's Top Bus Driver

If you're looking for the nicest, most outstanding bus driver in the State, the South or probably the nation, you can stop right here in New Bern and get acquainted with Jack Horton.

He passes through our town daily on his Seashore Transportation Company run from Washington to Wilmington and back. Except for a very short period when he made the round trip from Morehead City to Goldsboro, he has devoted his entire 34-year career to traveling on Highway 17 as he does today.

During those 34 years he has driven approximately 2,734,550 miles. In all those miles, transporting thousands and thousands of passengers, he has never once been charged with an accident.

This despite the fact that the Washington-Wilmington highway is one of the heaviest traveled roads in the State, and through the years has had a grim toll of dead and injured.

Among fellow Seashore employees the name Jack Horton and the word "safety" mean almost the same thing. The greatest compli-

ment paid the big, good natured fellow—greater even than the affection his regular passengers feel for him—is the deep respect accorded him by bus men everywhere.

As remarkable as his fantastic driving record is the fact that in the 34 years he has missed just four days from work due to illness.

He took a penicillin shot for sore throat, back in 1957, and the reaction forced him out of action. Even then, officials of the company practically had to hog-tie him to keep him home.

At 56, he is as strong as an ox, and each year his annual physical examination indicates that his health is good enough to assure



Jack Horton

many more years of good driving. Not only is Jack young in body, but young at heart.

As friendly as a speckled puppy, he smiles constantly and laughs often.

His is a robust, rollicking sort of laugh that somehow puts you in mind of Santa Claus. He loves people and one look at his honest, cheerful face will convince you that driving over the same road day in and day out for more than a third of a century hasn't grown monotonous for him.

Having worked with him, years ago, in the bus business, we're convinced that the man is ageless. He has shown no sign of change in looks, temperament or attitude toward the world and folks who live in it.

Jack takes everything in stride. Like the time, early in his career, when he was hailed down between New Bern and Wilmington. A group of folks wanted to go up the road a piece for a funeral.

This wouldn't have been unusual, except for the fact that they wanted him to haul the deceased too. Obliging, Horton loaded the coffin on top of his bus, and they proceeded to the little country graveyard.

No one who knows Jack would have expected him to do anything else at a time like that. Being a bus driver presents all sorts of incidents and problems, but Horton is so tolerant and understanding that fellow passengers would be tempted to thrash any individual who found fault with him.

(Continued on back page)