



The NEW BERN MIRROR

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To us it has always been a thrilling sight to see a teen-ager graduate from high school. Thrilling and a little sad. Few moments are more dramatic, and because there's so much drama involved you get a wistful blending of joy and pathos.

Most dramatic of all graduations for this writer, however, was the awarding of a New Bern High school diploma to Peggy Waters a few weeks ago. It wasn't what was happening that tugged at our heart, but the vivid memory of a tragedy that occurred years before.

Peggy was just three at the time—and as cute a little blonde as you could possibly imagine. It was a sunny afternoon in Sunnyside—a perfect day for childhood.

Little did this newspaper man dream, as he happened along a peaceful and deserted street, that a story fraught with horror would unfold before his very eyes in a matter of seconds.

Then it happened. A child's scream pierced the air, and the next instant a little girl with her clothing ablaze raced across the street in front of us, and darted into a drive way.

She fell to the ground just before we reached her, and in some miraculous way the fall mercifully extinguished flames that were enveloping her tiny body.

With the help of others we bundled a blanket about her as gently as possible, and minutes later she was receiving emergency attention from Dr. Charles H. Ashford.

Like the writer, he too had a little girl of his own about the same age. Standing there, and marvelling at the bravery of Peggy as the physician did the things that had to be done, we could almost read his mind.

The public is inclined to feel at times that a newspaperman who works hard at his trade relishes his coverage of the grimmer aspects of life. Actually, most reporters are tender-hearted jerks who are sickened by the necessity of viewing human misery.

And, when it comes to accidents involving children, we often remember long after readers have forgotten the stories that tumbled from our typewriters. We remember like the writer has remembered Peggy all these years.

We've watched her grow up, never quite sure that she herself was remembering a man who happened along on a sunny afternoon. Then a year of two ago she stopped us on Middle street, and smiled a bit uncertainly.

"Do you know who I am?" she asked softly. We nodded, and she smiled again and went on her way. Nothing else had to be said. Watching her, we breathed a little prayer of thankfulness to God for sparing her to know the joy of being a teen-ager.

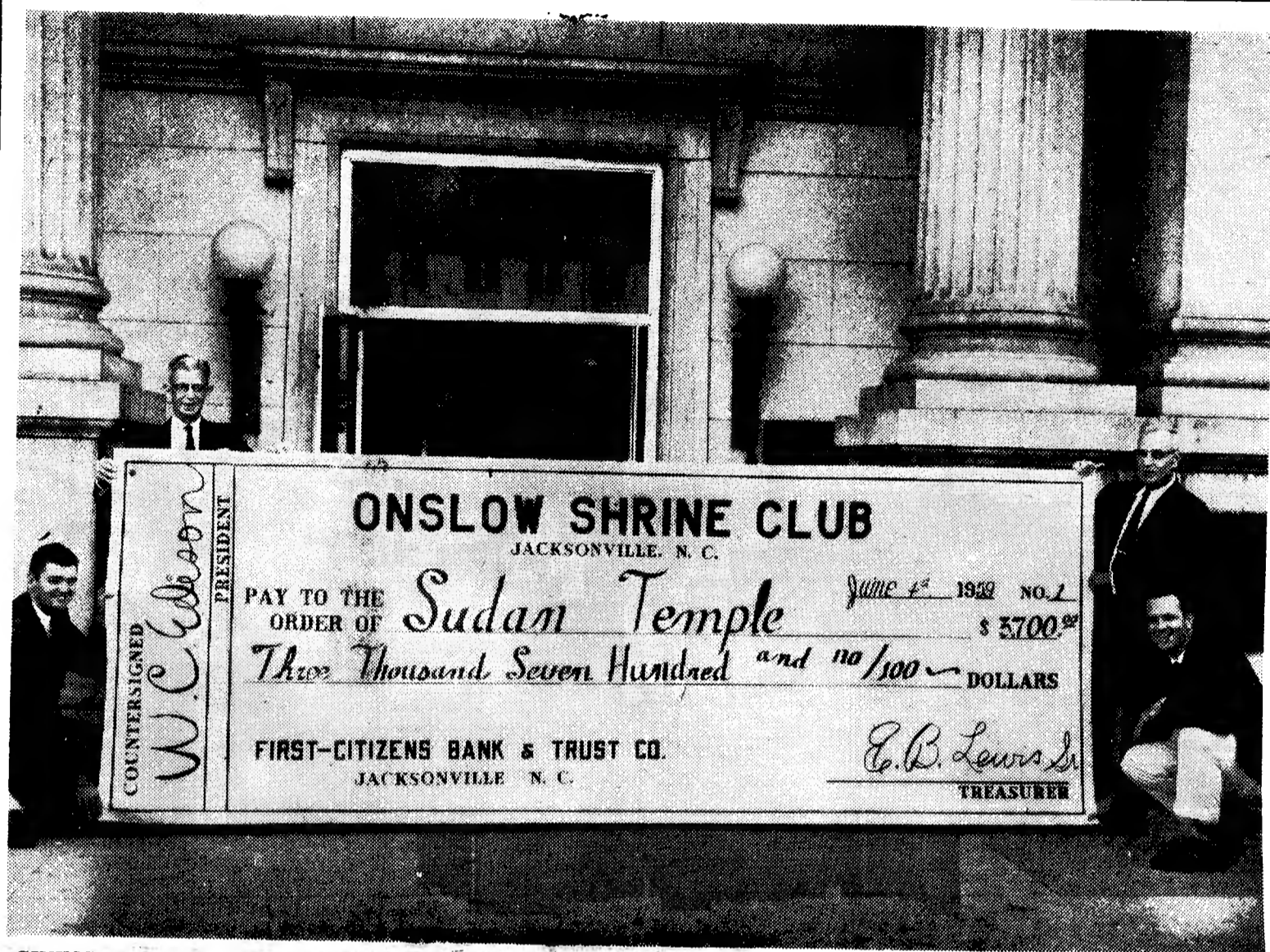
It wasn't until after Peggy's misfortune that we found out how brave a little girl she really was, and how the tragedy occurred. We didn't print the story behind the story at that time, but having been assured by her Dad that she won't object to the column you're now reading, we'll recount it now.

The little blonde, with playmates, had made a mud-cake. They wanted it to be a birthday cake—although we're not sure that it was somebody's birthday in the group.

A birthday cake should certainly have a candle, and they found one and a match. Peggy struck the match. The head popped off and fell inside the outing shirt she was wearing.

And we found out later why she fell to the ground, on purpose. "Me knew me was going to burn up," she told her parents, "but me didn't want to burn up the house."

So you see why, to the writer, Peggy Waters is an extra special person.



GIVING IN A BIG WAY—There's nothing little about the generosity of the Onslow Shrine Club when it comes to contributing to Shrine hospitals for crippled children. This giant check, mailed to New Bern's Sudan Temple, is 13 feet, 4 inches, long and 4 feet, 10 inches wide. Handling it

here, at New Bern's First Citizens Bank & Trust Company, are Jerry Thomas, a teller; W. D. Ferebee, vice-president; J. E. Boswell, assistant vice-president; and John Connolly, assistant cashier.—Photo by Billy Benners.

How Many Changes in You Since Your High School Days

How much do New Bernians change in 30 years? How many of them live up to the usually glowing phrases that describe them in their high school annual?

We asked those questions last year about New Bern's class of 1928, and the feature story that stemmed from this curiosity stirred tremendous interest. So much so that we've been requested to do another such feature on the class of 1929.

Our present mayor, Robert L. Stallings, Jr., was a member of that class, and even then he had demonstrated leadership of a high order. Here's what the annual said: "If the senior class wants a president who can give it a smooth and successful year; if the football, basketball and baseball teams want a manager to bring them a paying season; if the producers of plays want a real business man with ideas which increase their box receipts; a fellow who can manage these things successfully, and still maintain his popularity among those with whom and for whom he works—page Robert Stallings."

After 30 years, in which His Honor has grown considerably plumper than the wisp of a teen-ager he once was, the prophetic analysis carried in his high school yearbook still applies to a remarkable degree.

At that, Stallings wasn't valedictorian of the 1929 class. Joseph Ramon Salem, our city electrical engineer, topped that honor with a scholastic average of 95.2. "Don't worry about Joe, he'll make his mark," the annual predicted.

Describing him as "one of the most outstanding boys that ever graduated from our high school," the class added: "A foreigner by birth, he came into our school and made better grades and showed a better spirit of loyalty and pride for his adopted country than many of his native born classmates."

Incidentally, Stallings—with Elsie Cook—was picked as "most attractive" in the senior statistics. Bill Wheeler and Ann Church were the "best all round"; Francis Ferebee and Amy Williams were "most athletic"; Roy Miller and Elizabeth Duffy, "best looking"; Billy Minich and Eleanor Jones, "most dependable"; and Lawrence Patten and Elizabeth Herriage, "wittiest."

Senior class officers, along with President Stallings, were Lawrence Patten, vice-president; James Ketcham, secretary; and Helen Jackson, treasurer. Amy Williams was editor-in-chief of the annual. Serving with her were Mildred Hamilton, business manager; Mary Madara, assistant editor; Edith Carpenter, assistant business manager; Durward Hancock, joke editor; and Ruth Miller, art editor.

Jimmy Cason was "always ready to help a friend, or do a favor for anyone." Grace Deppe had "a genial happy disposition. Neither very quiet nor loud—just a happy medium." As for Sara Julia Foscoe, "loyalty, cheerfulness and pep" were her outstanding characteristics.

Sadie Mae Gaskins was "full to the brim of life and fun" while Ernest Johnson was "studious, but not too studious." Buzz Mitchell, a

pitcher on the baseball team, was "sure death to batters and geometry." Nina Basnight Lupton "will have a good time wherever she is," the yearbook predicted.

Gladys Mallard was "blessed with a disposition that everyone envies." Martha Williams you "will never see walking" while Corinne Taylor "was able to be one of the most popular girls in her class and still keep up on her studies."

Bessie Mae Taylor had "a merry laugh all through the corridors"; Grace Swinson had "an enormous vocabulary" and was "always" talking. Dudley Suter was "one of the most talented" girls, while Mildred Stallings displayed "kindness toward all, and malice toward none."

Wallace Smith was "good natured and easy going," while Rosalie Smith was "a talent pianist." Leo Smith had "ready wit" and the remaining Smith in the class, Katie Belle, "never let her studies interfere with her social life."

Charles Seifert was "a star pupil, good sport and real friend." Earl Peterson was a "cute boy" while Sallie Mae Rhodes "charmed a great many young hearts around town." Lula Jessie Potter, the annual said, was "jolly and capable." Winifred Parker was "not too studious—not too quiet—just right."

Roy Miller was "a thing with the ladies," and Mary Madara was always riding "on the main drag." Ralph Lockey, it says, was "a lively companion," and Isabel Lawrence "full of good sense and humor." Elizabeth Lancaster rated a "good sport" classification, and James

Ketcham was a "student of no mean ability."

You could "depend" on Eleanor Jones, and Helen Jackson was "true to a purpose in life." Mary Elizabeth Hughes was known by her "cheerful smile" while Evelyn Hodges was "popular with teachers and pupils alike."

As for Elizabeth Heritage she was "never serious." William Harris had a way of "saying the unexpected" while Earl Harper was a "modest young man." Naomi Hardison had a "jolly and lovable nature" and Durward Hancock "added lots of life to the class."

Robert Gray was always "making us laugh" and Len Gibbs a "good actor." Francis Ferebee showed "splendid sportsmanship" while Elizabeth Duffy "takes things as they come." Tom Davis was "always willing to do something mischievous, and Elsie Cook was the "snappiest, sportiest female that ever struck New Bern high school."

Ann Church had "a combination of attractiveness, popularity and basketball ability." Edith Carpenter was one of the "most lovable" members of the class. Sarah Brandt was "a spirit kind and bright" and you could "take your troubles" to Annie Boyd. Mildred Boyd despite her "modest talk" was "one of our best and most dependable students." As for Ruth Anderson, she had a "sweet disposition, quick thinking brain and staunch perseverance."

Ruby Lee Hall "never hurries, but when she finishes anything you may be sure it is O.K." Mil-

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