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It's hard to believe that almost 25 years have passed since George Isaac Hughes, a 94-year-old Confederate veteran, fathered a son here. The lad arrived on December 23, 1934, and on June 3, 1936, a baby sister showed up to keep him company.

Hughes was the object of smirks and wisecracks, but it didn't get his dander up, or chill his enthusiasm. He took a good gander at both younguns, allowed as how they were chips off the old block, and cuter than any of his other 16 children by a previous marriage.

George Isaac named the boy Franklin Delano Roosevelt. As soon as FDR got wind of it, he wrote young Frankie a warm personal letter in his own handwriting. Not content with this unusual gesture, the President sent along a handsome, tinted photograph for good measure.

The miracle baby's brothers and sisters joined their pappy and his 28-year-old wife as prejudiced admirers. The eldest of the lot was Benjamin Hughes, 59 years older than the new arrival.

Ben was born in 1875. He wasn't the first of the Hughes brood, but those born before him died with the passing of the years. The children still living had quite a time of it pampering Frankie.

The birth caused quite a commotion among medical authorities, and numerous inquiries came to Dr. Charles Duffy, the Hughes family physician. Dr. Duffy didn't have any doubts about the authenticity of George Isaac's parenthood.

As for the Confederate veteran, he suggested that he be given a thorough physical examination by some outstanding specialist, to dispel once and for all the understandable skepticism that was rampant here in New Bern and elsewhere.

Dr. Frances Seymour of Pittsburgh jumped at the chance to stage the exhaustive tests, and Dr. Duffy was equally eager to assist this noted authority. It developed that Hughes was completely capable of parenthood.

Facts revealed by this study were the basis for an authoritative report in the Journal of the American Medical Association. Dr. Duffy took head measurement of the father and son for Johns Hopkins hospital in Baltimore and the blood types and hair of the two were compared.

Nothing came out of the any of these studies to refute the fact that a 94-year-old man had become a father. Verification was no revelation to George Isaac. It was just what he expected when he suggested that a thorough examination be made.

When Mary Gertrude arrived, it caused even more excitement than Franklin did when he arrived on the scene. This time, however, most folks at long last were willing to give George Isaac the benefit of the doubt. Medical science was on the old gentleman's side, and they knew it.

Photographers flocked to the Hughes dwelling on upper Pollock street. Newsreel cameramen showed up too. George Isaac and his wife, the former Libby Hill Dixon, took it in stride.

Eighteen months later, Mary Gertrude contracted pneumonia and died. Hughes himself died on November 18, 1939. Had he lived until January 1, 1940, he would have been 100 years old.

Franklin Delano, as he grew from infancy to young boyhood, developed unmistakable mannerisms of his Confederate veteran father. He had George Isaac's same shuffling walk, for example. Hughes had been right, Frankie was a chip off the old block.

Science would have welcomed



OUT OF THE PAST—So much interest has been displayed in two photographs previously published of old-time classes at Central school that we've dug us another. Maybe you

can identify someone in the picture. If so, pass the word along to us. Who knows, you might be in this very dignified group of youngsters yourself.

That Day Is Here at Last for A Host of City's 6-Year-Olds

There'll never be a bigger day than this for the 431 first graders who showed up at New Bern's public schools this morning.

It wasn't visions of sugar plums dancing in their heads that made them restless last night, and got them out of bed at the bust of dawn. Instead it was visions of an honest to goodness classroom, with individual desks and a blackboard, and books and tablets and pencils.

Most of them were too excited to eat, but Mom wasn't very hungry either. Not until their wedding day many years hence will she have the same gnawing feeling—the same consciousness of losing forever a part of your life that has been near and dear to you.

Dad was quieter than usual, too, as he shaved amid all the noisy confusion that had the house in a last-minute uproar. "Time really flies," he thought as he gazed into the mirror. And he noted that the wrinkles on his face looked deeper, and the gray in his thinning locks more predominant.

Like Mom, he was aware that the era of babyhood had come to a close. From here on out the six-year-old he almost hated to see

the opportunity to check on the boy from infancy to manhood, but it was not to be. When the youngster was 13 years old, he fell on a Scout knife while imitating Tarzan, and punctured his intestines. He died of peritonitis five days later.

Was Hughes really as old as he claimed to be? His birth date in 1840 was an unchallenged fact, backed up by his Civil War records as a member of Co. A, North Carolina Regulars.

grow up will be monopolized by others. An outside world will claim its own.

Try though parents may, they can never tear down the barrier, or hark back to the toddling days when they reigned supreme in a kingdom bound by the four walls of a child-blessed home.

Failure to accept the inevitable avails nothing, but it isn't easy to

be philosophical. Not when you know that, to a considerable extent, you're being relegated to a back seat and reduced to secondary importance.

Of course, even a six-year-old has moments of joy and heartbreak when most of all it's Mom and Dad they want to turn to. But by the very nature of things their classmates and their teachers have a

priority that no parent can compete with.

You need not be told that moderate or excessive grieving over the growing up of our young is one of the things that distinguishes us from God's lowlier creatures.

Few of us would deny that the animal kingdom, at least as far as mothers are concerned, displays a devotion to its helpless offspring that equals human devotion. But when weaning time comes, there's a drastic change.

No longer does the mother robin hover over her nest, and fly hither and yon to fetch worms for her hungry brood. Impatient to complete her mission in the miracle of creation, she forces her timid fledglings to fly, and seek sustenance for themselves.

It's that way everywhere, below man's station and wisdom. If there are regrets or backward looks, they aren't detected. Humans never have, in our civilization, reacted in any such manner.

Looking at the brighter side, New Bern's current crop of first graders will have unequaled opportunities for learning. Junior and little Jane, if the race doesn't destroy itself, will live to see wonders that today's adults can't visualize in their wildest imagination.

In fact, one of the problems facing school officials is keeping textbooks abreast of the times. The world and what is in it changes so fast that most volumes are apt to be obsolete before the ink is dry on their pages.

Meanwhile, the uneasiness existing in international relations in this year of 1959 will in all likelihood



FIRST GRADE BOUND

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