



The NEW BERN MIRROR

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Box 808
5¢ Per Copy

VOLUME 2

NEW BERN, N. C., FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 1959

NUMBER 33

Everybody is a soft touch for something, and our strongest weakness happens to be any kid who is out trying to sell the Grit.

Invariably, when he approaches us, we see in him the little boy we used to be. And, to this very day it is painful to remember the disdainful looks and curt refusals you had to endure before someone came along who was willing to part with a nickel.

Forty years ago or thereabouts the well-known Willilamsport, Pa., weekly was much bulkier than the edition that now sells for three times that much. There were several sections, and as an added inducement you got a colored portrait of a President or somebody else quite important that was suitable for framing.

Here was a newspaper that had everything. Covered rather promptly with words and photographs were all the current events of national scope, and tossed in for good measure were pictures of two-headed cows, cats mothering a litter of orphaned puppies, and sundry other freakish things in the realm of nature.

There was a special section devoted to fiction, and a full page of poems old and new. Editorials were pertinent and timely, and the comic strips were slanted to appeal to children from eight to eighty.

A nickel in those days looked as big as a county biscuit to the empty-pocket lads we grew up with, and was as hard to come by as a four-leaf clover in the middle of Neuse river.

Looking back, nickels must have been pretty precious to grown folks too. This or else just about everybody we tried to sell a Grit to was tighter than a girdle two sizes too small at the conclusion of a dinner of stewed chicken and dumplings.

Peddling Cloverine salve or flower seeds to the neighbors was a picnic compared with disposing of a dozen copies or two of the Grit. Before you got rid of the last threadbare copy, you were certain to trudge all over town.

Included on the beat we staked out was the Union Station at the corner of Queen and Hancock streets. Counting the curious loafers who congregated there to see who was coming to town on a train and who was leaving, you could figure on soliciting a lot of folks there.

Unfortunately, train passengers didn't exhibit the slightest interest in reading. As for the village loiterers on hand, they were there to see the sights, including the trim feminine ankles displayed. No newspaper, most especially the Grit, could compete with the face and figure of a pretty girl who had just come to town.

Later, with our typical lack of juvenile shrewdness, we became a salesman for the Literary Digest. This publication was even harder to sell than the Grit. For one thing, it cost a whole dime and its appeal was aimed at intellectuals. There weren't many intellectuals in New Bern, we discovered, and besides the citizens who qualified were dime squeezers with moths snoozing in their pocketbooks.

No doubt about it, the Literary Digest was very high class. It also was less than honest, or woefully inaccurate in its political prognostications. For month and months the magazine predicted that Alf London would beat the pants off of Franklin D. Roosevelt in his bid for another term in the White House.

A map of the United States was printed each week, with so-called up-to-the-minute figures obtained by a couldn't-miss Literary Digest poll that was being taken from coast to coast.

A moronic monkey or a goose on



TALKING IT OVER—Robert L. Pugh and R. C. O'Bryan are quite enthusiastic as they discuss plans for the Neuse Basin Scouters' Recognition Banquet to be held Monday

night at the New Bern Recreation Center. Community leaders like these men are giving Scouting great support here. —Photo by Billy Benners.

Rachel Mundine's Success Carries Her to Santa Land

It's a right far piece from Newport in Carteret county to Greenland's icy mountains in the frozen north. However, shy and remarkably modest Rachel Mundine has covered the full distance as she makes her climb to fame in the entertainment world.

New Bernians will have no trouble recalling that she made her stage debut in the Yuletide Revue here, even as many another youngster who had hopes of theatrical success and saw those hopes come true.

Rachel didn't have much brass—considered by some a must in show business—but she does have talent. This is evident when she played "Twelfth Street Rag" so vigorously in her first Revue appearance that the surprised piano almost bounced from the stage.

For an encore, and in other Revue appearances during the years following, she demonstrated equal ability as an organist, and made it clear to delighted audiences attending edition of the charity show that she could present the most intricate classic with the same proficiency that her boogey-woogey and Dixieland numbers revealed.

Her versatility as an organist and pianist isn't the whole story at that. While living at Newport

the loose wouldn't have done a worse job of fortune telling. Roosevelt swamped Landon—sweeping 46 of the 48 states—and the Literary Digest was so discredited and laughed at that it folded up.

But the Grit is still around, and we buy it for the sake of the boy who sells it and the boy we used to be, a long time ago.

she had exceptional results as a choir director, and is well versed in sacred music. In fact, it isn't often that one finds a musician whose interests are broader. As for the old adage that most good musicians

are temperamental, this doesn't apply in the least to Rachel.

Since turning professional and heading for New York, she has played various engagements in good spots above the Mason-Dixon

line. Just completed was a highly successful seven-month run at the Sheraton-McAlpin hotel, located at the corner of 34th street and Broadway.

There she doubled with piano and organ, and drew a considerable following of folks who differ widely in their taste for music. Rachel, in the course of a performance, has the knack of appealing to everyone in hearing distance with one song or another.

Her reputation as a sure-fire audience-pleaser has spread far beyond the metropolitan area. That's why, last Saturday, she left McGuire Air Force Base for Thule Air Force Base in Greenland. There she will play a full month's engagement at the Thule Officers club.

Someone else with less ambition, and less determination to achieve perfection in their chosen field, wouldn't be interested in further study. But Rachel isn't one to rest on her laurels. When she returns to New York from Greenland her present plans are to resume voice and drama study at the Charles Lowe school.

Piano, organ, voice and drama—that's quite a big order for this diminutive young lady. However, with her boundless energy and zest for conquering anything that challenges her, she is apt to make a name for herself in all categories.

She still remembers quite fondly her Yuletide Revue and subsequent appearances, and keeps tab on the charity show. To her, you New Bernians are the kindest audience she has ever worked before, and she looks forward to the day when
(Continued on back page)



REVUE GRADUATE