



The NEW BERN MIRROR

WEEKLY
Miss Elizabeth Moore
Box 803
5¢

VOLUME 2

NEW BERN, N. C., FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 1960

NUMBER 46

Norman Earl Ward, who is employed in the Craven County tax office, is best known to his friends and casual acquaintances here as "Frosty." Since he doesn't fit our conception of the average snow man, we were curious to know how he acquired such a nickname.

"It dates back 36 years," he told us, "when I went to work for the State Highway Department at the age of 16. My hair wasn't just blonde, it was downright white. When I walked into the office to report for my job, a Highway employee by the name of John Pope spied me.

Most of all, Pope spied Ward's head, and exclaimed, "Well, what do you know, here comes Frosty!" The label stuck, and from that day on the youngster was known by no other name. Friends in his native Williamston picked it up and used it too.

There's nothing particularly strange about that, but what has happened since then is unusual to say the least. The name is no longer appropriate—not because Ward has lost all of his hair, which he hasn't—but rather because his hair is now quite dark.

This situation had its beginning back in 1945, when Frosty developed a heart condition. His doctor prescribed a certain type of medicine for him. It was good for what ailed him, but he noticed a change in the texture of his hair. Aside from the change in texture, he became aware that his locks were changing color, slowly but surely.

He was transferred later to New Bern by the Highway Department, and retired in 1952 for disability reasons connected with his heart ailment. For a number of years now he has been employed by Craven county in his present position.

We first got to know Ward fairly well when he had a daughter to arrive at Kafer Memorial hospital back in 1953; while Hurricane Barbara was raging. Looking for a good hurricane story, we suggested that he name the little lady Barbara Gale.

He agreed, and in true newspaper fashion we naturally saw to it that the news went out to the far corners of the world. Any doubts as to how much this particular birth announcement got around can be erased by the clippings in Barbara Gale's scrapbook.

With possible exception of the two children fathered by George Isaac Hughes—his son Franklin Delano and his daughter Mary Gertrude—Barbara Gale got more world-wide notice at birth than any other New Bern infant we've ever heard of.

Frosty has three other children—all of them grown and married. Norman Jr., is a captain in the Army, and left last November for a three-year tour of duty in Europe. Mavis Jean, married to Milton Powell, lives in New Bern, while Virginia Alice, who married David Jones, lives in Spring Lake.

In addition, Ward has a half dozen grandchildren who think that he is just about the most wonderful somebody there is. This is easy to understand, in view of his keen sense of humor and his genuine love for kids, whether they happen to be in his own family circle or someone else's.

When we asked him why he decided to become a New Bernian, Frosty didn't have to grope around for an answer. "I love New Bern," he said, "because I'm convinced we have the nicest people in the world here."

This isn't just empty talk as far as Ward is concerned. He readily admits that for awhile after moving here he was in the notion to go back to Williamston. What changed his mind for keeps was a serious heart attack in 1955 that

(Continued on Back Page)



FLOWERS, FLOWERS EVERYWHERE—Residents in our mother city of Berne go all out to beautify their homes and shops with Dame Nature's handiwork. This scene is typical of the colorful Swiss capital.

If We Want Berne's Charm, Their Secret Is in Geraniums

Despite its many good points, New Bern doesn't quite measure up to the charm that belongs to our mother city of Berne.

What we lack most, and can do something about, are the profuse floral displays that have brought to the Swiss capital a world-wide reputation as a town of lovely flowers.

It wasn't always this way. As recently as 1937, Berne decided that something must be done to brighten up the city. Municipal authorities, the ancient "street guilds" and private citizens put their heads together and founded an association called "For Berne."

Its aim was to bring more business to town, to attract foreign visitors, and to encourage the occupants of flats and offices to bring a gay note to the street scene by putting out window boxes of showy flowers.

Prizes are offered annually for the finest display of flowers. Since it would entail too much work and expense if all the districts of the town were to participate at the same time, the suburbs take it in turn to join in the competition.

In autumn prizes are awarded for the displays that are most attractive and have lasted the longest. The prizes take the form of tasteful ceramics and other work and art prints. These have always proven popular with the recipients, and spurred them on to even greater effort the following year.

From 800 to 1,000 prizes are given away each year. In 1957, to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the campaign, nearly 2,000 prizes were awarded to residents of the town and its suburbs. Judging the displays is the job of a committee of 40 to 50 members under the Head

Gardener of the city. "But why are all the flowers red?" visitors are always asking. It is a natural question. The reason

is that no other color is so effective as geranium red against the greyish green of the sandstone facades in Berne's old streets.

Besides, being a semi-succulent plant, the geranium is particularly suitable for a dry position like the town's window sills. Streets of the older part of Berne run more or less east to west. This means that some house fronts face south and receive the full heat of the sun. That may be bad even for geraniums unless they are planted in boxes. Other facades are cool and shady.

How does the planting and care of geraniums in Berne compare with the methods used by you New Bern flower growers? Here's that information, sent to The Mirror for your benefit from far across the sea.

In Berne, we are told, the best time for propagating geraniums is from July to August. They put the cuttings into sandy soil in single pots, then transplant them after New Year into a well-manured geranium soil.

According to the residents of Berne, geraniums can be planted out at the beginning of May. There is sufficient room for two or three in a box 20 inches long, and for three or four in a box 28 inches long. Boxes of Eternit (asbestos cement) are recommended by the Bernese as the most economical available.

In view of the millions of geraniums that give the Swiss capital a dazzling cloak of crimson splendor, it's easy to understand the popularity of the Berne Geranium Market. This year it is being held on the 21st day of May.

Buying window boxes, soil and plants is quite an expensive business for any Berne family in modest circumstances, especially if there are several windows. However, citizens say it's worth every

(Continued on Back Page)



BERNE'S "MOSES" FOUNTAIN