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"Oh I wish I was in the Land of Cotton, old times there are not forgotten." So go the words of Dixie, a song that ranks with the Star Spangled Banner in the hearts of many dyed-in-the-wool Southerners.

Well, there was a time indeed, around the turn of the century, when King Cotton reigned supreme—not only in the Deep South but right here in New Bern. The boll weevil and kindred problems changed that picture, and perhaps for the better. Before it happened, fortunes were made, and in some instances, fortunes lost.

We had a Cotton and Grain Exchange that functioned very well. S. W. Smallwood was president, Dr. Charles Duffy the vice-president, James Redmond the secretary, and T. A. Green the treasurer. D. T. Carraway served as superintendent, while R. R. Jones, J. A. Latham, Matt Manley, G. A. Oliver and C. E. Foy were the directors.

For years the cotton market here was one of the best in the state. There was a good corps of buyers belonging to the Exchange, several of whom bought for and shipped on through bills of lading directly to European markets. The shipments were made via Wilmington, New Bern and Norfolk Railroad, and Norfolk via the Eastern Carolina Dispatch and the Old Dominion Steamship lines.

Most of the cotton sent from New Bern was shipped as fast as it was bought. Only a small amount was kept in storage here, as a general rule. Incidentally, the freight to Europe was seventy cents per hundred pounds, and insurance was one-eighth of one percent.

There were an even dozen cotton brokerage firms in town during the Gay Nineties. Included were E. K. Bryan, Jonathan Havens, C. D. Mebane, Frank Meyer, and James Redmond at the Cotton Exchange; Pierre La Montagne at the Old Dominion Wharf; Thomas A. Green at 71 Middle street; and D. T. Carraway, Gates and Oliver, J. E. Latham, M. Manley and F. G. Simmons on the lower end of Craven street.

Little did anyone dream at the time that the presence of Latham in the group of brokers, and his spectacular success, eventually would lead to the restoration of Tryon Palace. He married Maude Moore, as just about everybody who reads this knows, and the money he left at his death made it possible to bring a rebuilt first State Capital into impressive reality. Maude Latham and her charming daughter, Mrs. John Kellenberger, saw to that.

Water transportation to and from New Bern has long since dwindled to a tiny fraction of what it used to be, but in the Nineties we had no less than five steamboat lines here. All were located at the foot of Craven street. The five were East Carolina Dispatch, Independent, Vanceboro, Old Dominion, and New Bern, Norfolk and Washington.

Our commission merchants at the time—all located along the banks of the Trent—were E. K. Bishop, W. P. Burrus & Co., Hollister & Cox, Pierre La Montagne, J. E. Latham and W. F. Rountree. Collectively, they did a great deal of business.

During a typical year in the Gay Nineties era, between 46,000 and 50,000 bales of cotton were handled here. In addition, 100 million board feet of lumber were shipped from New Bern to various points in Maryland, Delaware, New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and the New England states.

In 1890, there was shipped from New Bern, by all lines, 75,349 barrels of potatoes, 10,607 barrels of vegetables, 40,932 half-crates of

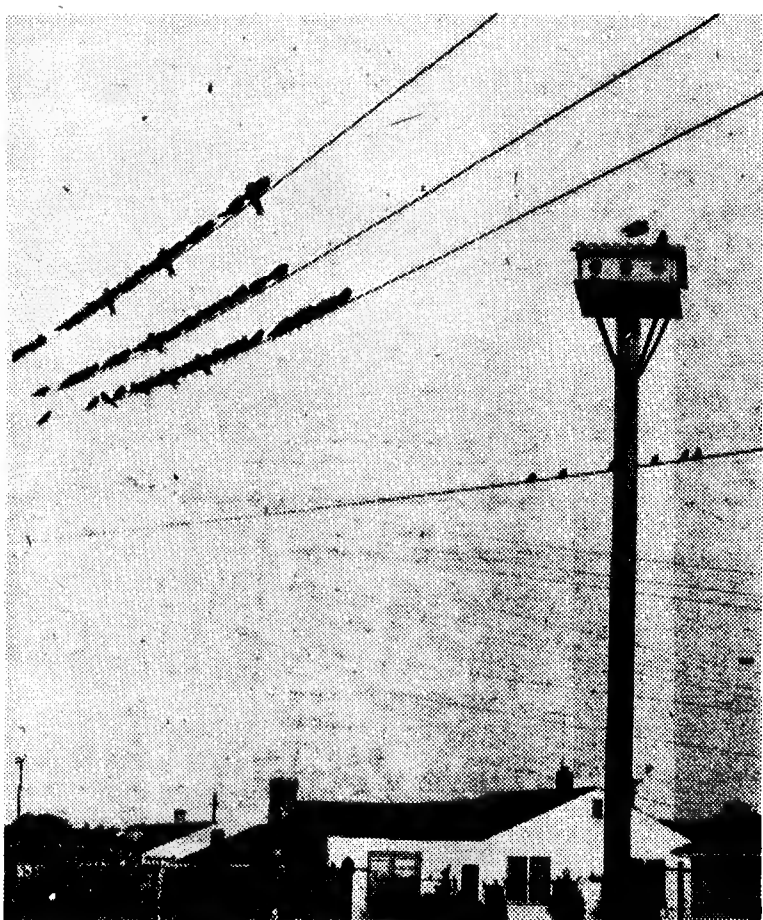
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WORTH THE EFFORT—What they learned in a tailoring workshop sponsored by the Craven County Home Demonstration Council saved these enterprising women up to \$40 each when they made wool suits they are wearing. Average investment in material was \$17.50. Mrs. Earl Alligood, assistant Beaufort County H. D. agent, was instructor at Maola Opera House. Left to right are Mrs. Merle Dail

(Jasper club); Mrs. R. A. Watson and Mrs. M. J. Carraway (Beech Grove); Mrs. Dick Hubbard (Spring Garden); Mrs. A. D. Harris (Neuse River); Evann Rowe and her mother, Mrs. William Rowe (Bridgeton). Mrs. Rowe made Evann's blazer. Mrs. J. W. Satterwaite (Glenburnie Gardens) and Mrs. H. C. Ipock (Asbury) also made suits. Now the group will teach others.—Photo by Billy Benners.

New Bern Wives Are Reading More than Their Husbands Do



WAITING IN LINE FOR HOUSING
—Photo by Billy Benners.

New Bern women, clinging tenaciously to the make-believe that made childhood happier, invariably reach for a novel when they want a book to read. Their husbands, often accused of being unromantic and unimaginative, prove the accusation is well founded by turning to non-fiction for their literary selections.

That's what a sample survey staged here during National Library Week reveals. When it comes to quality of material, the fair sex can't brag too much. Quite a bit of the so-called trash peddled locally is sold to the female of the species—in fact, the vast majority of it.

However, from the standpoint of quantity the survey indicates conclusively that New Bern women read much more than the men folks do. Hence, disregarding the shoddy reading matter altogether, it is not unlikely that the remaining books that local ladies peruse far outnumber what the males are reading.

Besides, who is to say what is trash and what isn't? Some of the popular paper-back novels of today are nothing more or less than a carry-over of standard works from another era. A good example is "The Scarlet Letter." A generation ago it was recommended to New Bern High school students for reading in the preparation of term papers, or themes.

That was before it came out in paper-back form with a lurid cover

that hinted strongly of a heavy spice content. Other literary masters have probably turned over in their graves, along with Nathaniel Hawthorne, as their prized stories were misrepresented for the sake of heavy sales.

When it comes to magazines, the feminine yen for fiction still prevails here in no uncertain terms. Although there are more women reading magazines than there are men, the percentage is closer to being fifty-fifty than you would imagine offhand. The great number of males who read sports and news publications regularly accounts for this strong showing by the men folks.

Very few New Bernians, if any, fail to read newspapers regularly, according to the Mirror survey. As far as general news is concerned, interest appears to be equal among men and women.

It's a toss-up when you try to figure which sex reads a newspaper more thoroughly. Few men devote much time to digesting society items, but a fair percentage of wives join their husbands in giving sports pages the once over.

Men are more apt to read editorials, although there are plenty of exceptions to the rule. And until you make a survey of local reading tastes, like The Mirror did, you never realize how many men and women read the daily horoscope column and take it seriously.

By the same token, it developed
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