

# The NEW BERN MIRROR

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Few things, as many of you know, could ever be more sickening than the realization that you've lost a wallet, a purse, a pouch or an envelope containing what to you is a considerable amount of money.

And the feeling of sudden despair is heightened, if the currency so quickly vanished from your possession belonged to someone else. In that first instant of utter dismay, you forget all else, including the petty problems that were worrying you before bad luck in the form of a personal catastrophe befell you.

It has hapened to us twice in a lifetime. In the first instance, the money was never recovered, despite all sorts of identifications enclosed. Maybe it's a sad commentary on human nature, but we never expected to get it back. The pattern of behavior that most mortals abide by is "finders keepers and losers weepers."

Our second loss came last Saturday morning. While walking just two blocks to make a deposit at the bank for someone else, we dropped a pouch stuffed with money and endorsed checks. The loss was discovered three or four minutes later at the bank.

Retracing our steps, and hoping for the best while fearing the worst, we soon came face to face with the fact that someone had picked the pouch up. The street was crowded with pedestrians, and somewhere in the throng was a fellow human whose honesty, or lack of it, was of prime concern to us.

What we did immediately is what everyone else should do in similar circumstances. All local banks were notified to stop payment on the checks in the pouch, and they promised to let us know without delay if by some miracle the pouch was turned in at that particular bank.

And, of course, the police department was alerted, in case somebody turned the money in at City Hall, or a happy free spender showed up somewhere to arouse suspicion. Having done that, we peeked into trash containers along the street, figuring that the average dishonest persons would pocket the money and get rid of the pouch and checks as quickly as possible.

Within thirty minutes, the telephone rang. It was Johnnie Green at the Branch Banking & Trust Co., who when notified of the loss had said, "All you can hope for is that somebody who is honest picked it up."

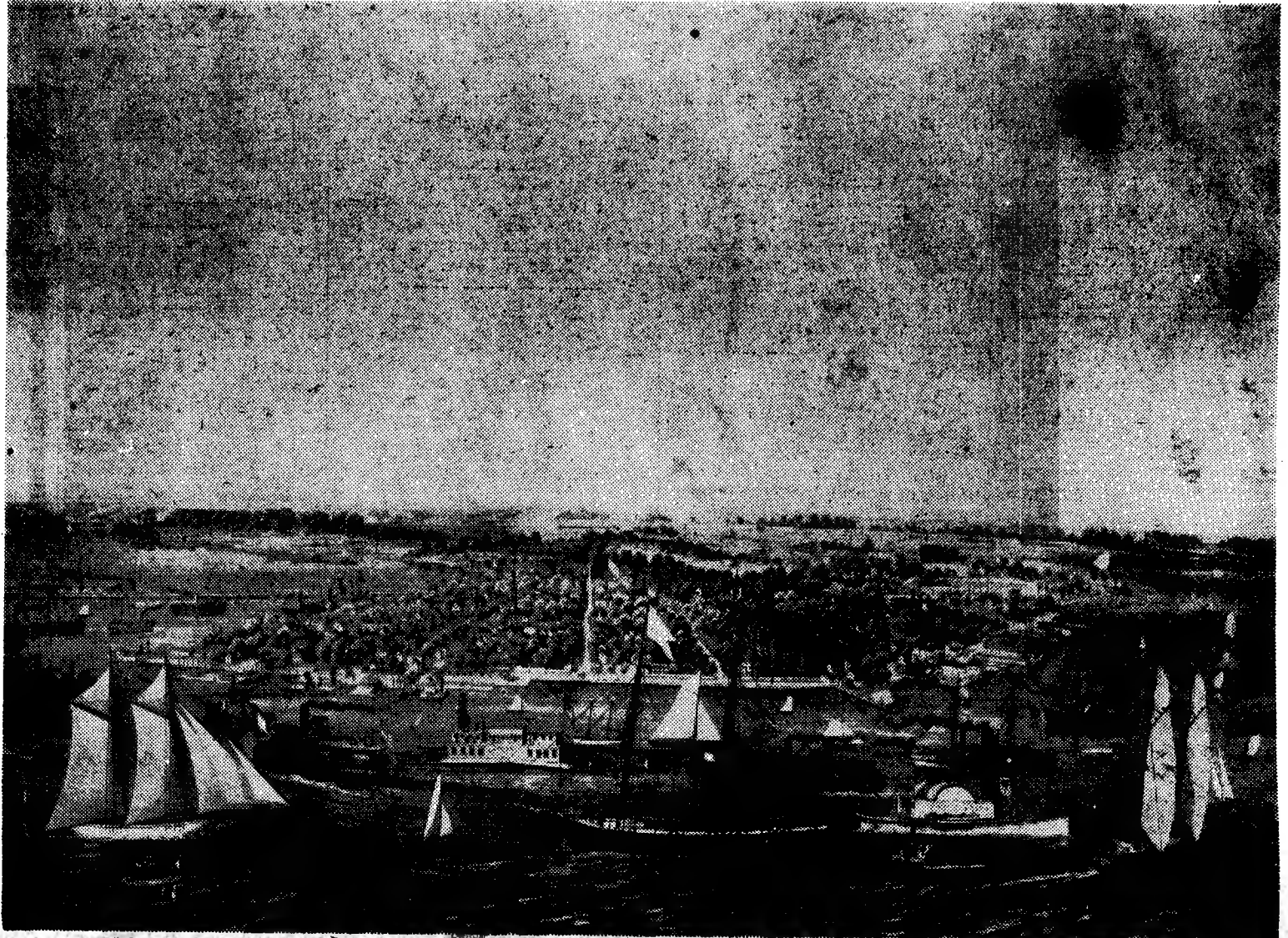
Johnnie had good news to tell. "That honest person found it," he proclaimed. It developed that the "honest person" was N. E. Mohn, who lives on Pollock street, a block and a half above us. He turned the pouch in at Branch Bank, where the deposit was picked up and soon got to its rightful destination, First Citizens Bank & Trust Co.

Thus, in less than an hour, there was enough bad luck and enough good luck to fill anyone's cup to overflowing. Mr. Mohn, a staunch Baptist and a remarkably vigorous man for his age, did exactly what those who know him would have expected him to do.

Permit us to say that we were considerably more grateful to him than one man was to his own particular benefactor in the waning days of the Great Depression here. The story is true, if thoroughly unbelievable.

The man in question went to a New Bern bank to cash a government check for \$140. He especially asked for a \$100 bill, saying he had never had one. He left with the bill and two \$20 bills, and came back an hour or more later to accuse the bank teller of failing to

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IN DAYS OF YORE—New Bern was considered quite a port a century ago, with vessels large and small dropping anchor at the junction of the Neuse and Trent. Our thanks to Dr. Charles T. Baker, a keen student of history, for the

privilege of publishing the rare picture he has depicting this early era. Times change, but our rivers remain—ever flowing eastward, to the sea.

## Sky-Watching Was Popular For New Bernians This Week

When thousands of eye-straining New Bernians got kinks in their necks, butterflies in their tummies and vague but unmistakable misgivings in their hearts this week, it wasn't because of what was happening in town, the state, the nation and the world.

Nor could the gazing they did toward Heaven be interpreted as a common and simultaneous urge to thank their Maker for past and present blessings while seeking additional undeserved benefits from on high.

Man's awe-inspiring accomplishment, rather than God's marvelous handiwork in the realm of outer space, was generating mass scrutiny that rivaled the sky scanning Halley's Comet aroused on its last visit back in 1910.

This was no periodically returning comet, soaring above the earth and visible at 75-year intervals, but a 10-story tall, aluminum-coated sphere that was showing up every couple of hours, plus a few minutes. Uncle Sam had made it, and dubbed it the Echo Communications Satellite.

Old timers, impressed like everyone else, said that Echo couldn't hold a candle to Halley's spectacle of a half century ago. Countless citizens who weren't around to witness the comet, and won't be living in 1985, aren't going to have occasion to dispute that contention.

Some of the more apprehensive mortals in these parts are actually of the glum opinion that never again will human eyes feast upon Mr. Halley's famed extravaganza. Not only do they expect to be among the departed themselves in

much less than 25 years, but believe the human race in its entirety is destined for self-perpetrated extinction.

They say, and with what appears to be strong points of justification, that Man in his persistent eagerness to reach out to the intriguing

mysteries of other bodies in space has hopelessly over-extended himself. Instead of solving his problems here on earth, these apostles of doom reason, he has multiplied them a thousand fold, and issued his own death warrant in the form of unleashed atomic power and missiles that are lethal beyond belief.

Time will provide the truth, and Time might be running out. As far back as we have writings and records, prophets of every generation have been predicting the end of the world. Their predictions failed to materialize, but even the most optimistic earth dweller in our generation will admit that we've laid the foundation for destruction sufficiently comprehensive to obliterate all life from this globe that gravity holds us on.

Meanwhile, summer is still with us in the Land of Enchanting Waters, and happenings less ominous are occurring here. One of the top events of the week is scheduled for tomorrow at New Bern's Shrine Auditorium, where the North Carolina Baton Twirling Championship and the National Open will be held.

Sponsored by the New Bern Lions club, this major attraction gets underway at 8:30 a.m. and continues for the remainder of the day. Seventeen cities in the State are going to be represented, and there'll be additional entries from South Carolina, Virginia, Tennessee, Florida, Louisiana, Maryland, Pennsylvania and Ohio. There are eight local entries.

Shirley Crutchfield of Roanoke (Continued on Page 8)



NEW BERN'S GINGER ARMSTRONG Seeking More Honors