



The NEW BERN MIRROR

Mr. & Mrs. A. N. Murphy
2000 Arundall St.
Wilmington, N. C.

IN THE EASTERN NORTH
CAROLINA
5¢ Per Copy

VOLUME 3

NEW BERN, N. C., FRIDAY, JANUARY 13, 1961

NUMBER 40

Father Time usually manages to make mortals old in due season, but he has long since given up his efforts to rob Nina Basnight of her youth. She was 82 last Thanksgiving, and yet a birthday cake with more than 16 candles would be out of place for her.

Like wine of rare vintage, or a fiddle fashioned by a master craftsman, this delightful young lady keeps right on improving with age. She is one of the reasons why living in New Bern is a pleasure not far removed from heaven itself.

For 33 years, from September 1926 until April 1959, she taught music here, and before retirement as organist and choir director for the Broad Street Christian church completed a full half century of service. Born at Maribel, in Pamlico county, she made her bow as a school teacher in Greene county, back in 1903.

Later she taught in the grammar grades here, until her mother passed away. It was her father's wish that she discontinue, so she complied with his request. Besides, music was her great love, and she eventually studied for three years in New York before opening her studio here.

She was a graduate of Salem college, and still vividly remembers the beauty of the Moravian music she used to hear there. In addition to studies at Salem and in New York, she attended Atlantic Christian college.

"I'll never forget the summer I spent at Lake Chautauqua in New York," she told us the other night. "The year was 1918, and I spent seven weeks there. My room mate was Mary Willis, who used to be the organist at the Centenary Methodist church here."

Nina has good reason to remember, since the great Victor Herbert was her instructor there for two thrilling weeks. "We had a choir," she says, "and sang oratorios and cantatas." In addition to two classes daily under Herbert's magic touch, she was privileged to hear him in concert each afternoon during the two weeks he was there.

"He performed in the amphitheater," Nina recalls. "One day all of us showed up with small bouquets that we kept carefully concealed. Then at a given moment, from our seats up in the tiers, we all tossed our bouquets down upon him and he was literally showered with flowers."

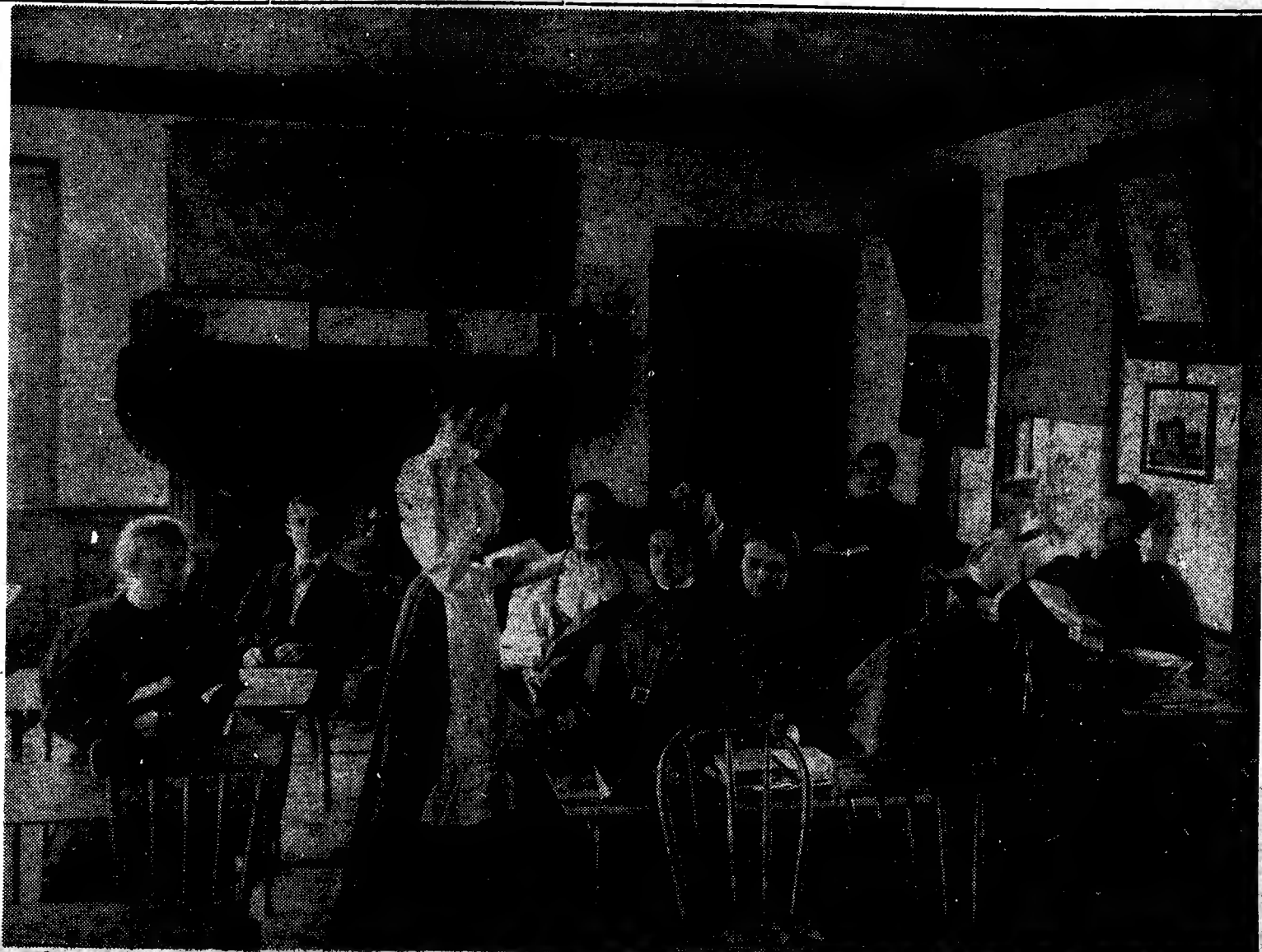
Those of us who have been intrigued by Victor Herbert's operettas—such as "Babes in Toyland" and "The Red Mill"—can easily understand why the local woman still has his portrait on the wall of her studio. He was as fascinating as the compositions he wrote, and those who knew him personally were impressed for a lifetime.

Although Nina has a remarkable knack for remembering dates, the editor of The Mirror was positive that she erred when she said Herbert died in 1924. We were positive that the year was 1925, and told her as much. She didn't argue, but shortly afterwards our telephone rang.

"I've looked it up in my book on the lives of famous composers," she informed us gently, "and I wasn't wrong after all. He died on May 26, 1924." She didn't gloat over the fact that we had been smugly mistaken, so the slip of memory on our part didn't embarrass us as much as it could have.

To begin with, this grand lady would never think of trying to put a foolish upstart in his place. She is, and always has been as far back as we can recall, kindness itself. Sweetness is a natural trait of hers, and her thoughtfulness has provided many a happy moment for others.

She prides herself on being well



IN THE LONG AGO—This priceless photograph, we are told by its owner, Miss Harriet Marks, must be at least 70 years old. Seen is Leah Jones Stevens teaching school in

her home at the corner of Metcalf and New streets. Just wait until Mrs. Minnie Bray recognizes herself as the young lady in the foreground, staring at the camera.

Watch Your Step, Neighbor, Today's the Fatal Day Again

Honest injun, and cross your heart hope to die, are you just as superstitious as your ancestors were? Maybe not, but a sample Mirror survey aimed at New Bernians of above average intellect reveals conclusively that pet apprehensions aren't restricted to the dumb and the ignorant.

There's no need to remind you that this is Friday the 13th. You probably thought about it when you barged out of bed, and groped your way to the kitchen for that first cup of coffee. And throughout the day you'll keep on remembering it.

Chances are you won't be anxious to take a trip, or enter into any important contracts. And—knock on wood—if something bad happens to you before the day is over, you'll tell yourself that the Friday the 13th hex had something to do with it.

Just why 13 is considered an unlucky number you can't rightly say, nor can anyone else. All sorts of reasons have been suggested, but the real reason is veiled in the unrevealing folklore of the past. Your guess is as good as any-

groomed, when she saunters down the street to dine out at her favorite restaurant. "Miss Nina's wardrobe isn't as extensive as you might imagine," another woman who admires her greatly says. "It's just that she buys nice things, and then takes good care of them. And she changes hats and dresses by adding a little something."

One thing about her needs no changing—her wonderful and enduring youth.

one else's. At least no one can refute it.

Have you ever slept on the 13th floor of a hotel? Possibly, but you didn't know it. Smart hotel owners don't list that floor, so the dream-

less slumber you thought you were getting on the 12th floor or the 14th floor might have been where you thought it wasn't.

When was the last time you walked under a ladder, if there was

any way to avoid it without looking downright silly? And how many times during the course of a year do you take heed of the notion that lighting three cigarettes on a match is an invitation to disaster?

Remember how, when you were a kid, you would always say, "Bread and butter" if you went in one direction around a tree or a pole and a friend you were with went the other way? Perhaps you don't say it out loud any more, but you think it, don't you?

And what about black cats that cross your path? How in the world can an ebony-colored feline, minding his own business, get you into a peck of trouble? Even so, we encountered intelligent local citizens repeatedly during our survey who admitted in confidence that black cats never cease to worry them.

Literally thousands of New Bernians believe implicitly that certain people have the power to wish away warts. Their faith is founded on personal experience, or on the statements of others who swear that they got rid of warts in this miraculous manner.

Of course, you don't believe that breaking a mirror brings seven years of bad luck—not really—but you wouldn't dare break one if you could help it, just in case it's so.

That rabbit's foot you carry may bring you good luck, but you've got to admit it didn't bring much luck to the rabbit that owned it originally. Perhaps you don't tote a rabbit's. Instead you've got a lucky penny, or some other charm that reassures you as you sense the



THE GOBLIN WILL GET YOU

(Continued on Page 8)