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Old timers who mourn the passing of things that were dear to earlier generations should never overlook the boarding houses we used to have in New Bern.

Scattered around town were these pleasantly informal eating places, where quality and quantity blended into meals that took no account of calories. You stuffed to heart's content, and shared the latest gossip with every bite you ate.

No one ever knew in advance what was to be served on any given day, but nobody cared. There was bound to be a wide variety, and those who had arms long enough to qualify for the famed "boarding house reach" got plenty of it all.

In many respects a boarding house was just like a family gathering. Table manners didn't worry the regulars, and second helpings were the order of the day. There was good natured banter over the food consumption of this or that diner, but it was like the pot calling the kettle black. Everybody was a hog over the vittles, except the temporarily ailing who were "off their feed" for the time being.

Invariably, the energetic lady who operated the boarding house was a cheerful and loquacious soul. She loved people, and darted in and out of the kitchen to exchange conversation with the folks who entrusted their digestions to her care.

Perhaps memory is playing tricks on us, but for the life of us we can't remember anybody at the long, bountifully-laden table ever getting sure enough mad during the hectic discussions that accompanied the meals. It's hard to become successfully infuriated, when you're cramming food like a late arrival at a church picnic.

Surprisingly, you didn't hear much about stomach ulcers either. Maybe the unhappy mortals who were plagued by ulcers simply stayed away from boarding houses—or should have stayed away earlier. At any rate, it was quite clear that no one among those present was suffering at the moment from the inadequacies and disturbances of a squeamish stomach.

Today, at noon, most of us describe our meal as lunch, but it was always called dinner in the old days. To call this enormous intake of food a lunch would have been a disgraceful misrepresentation of the facts.

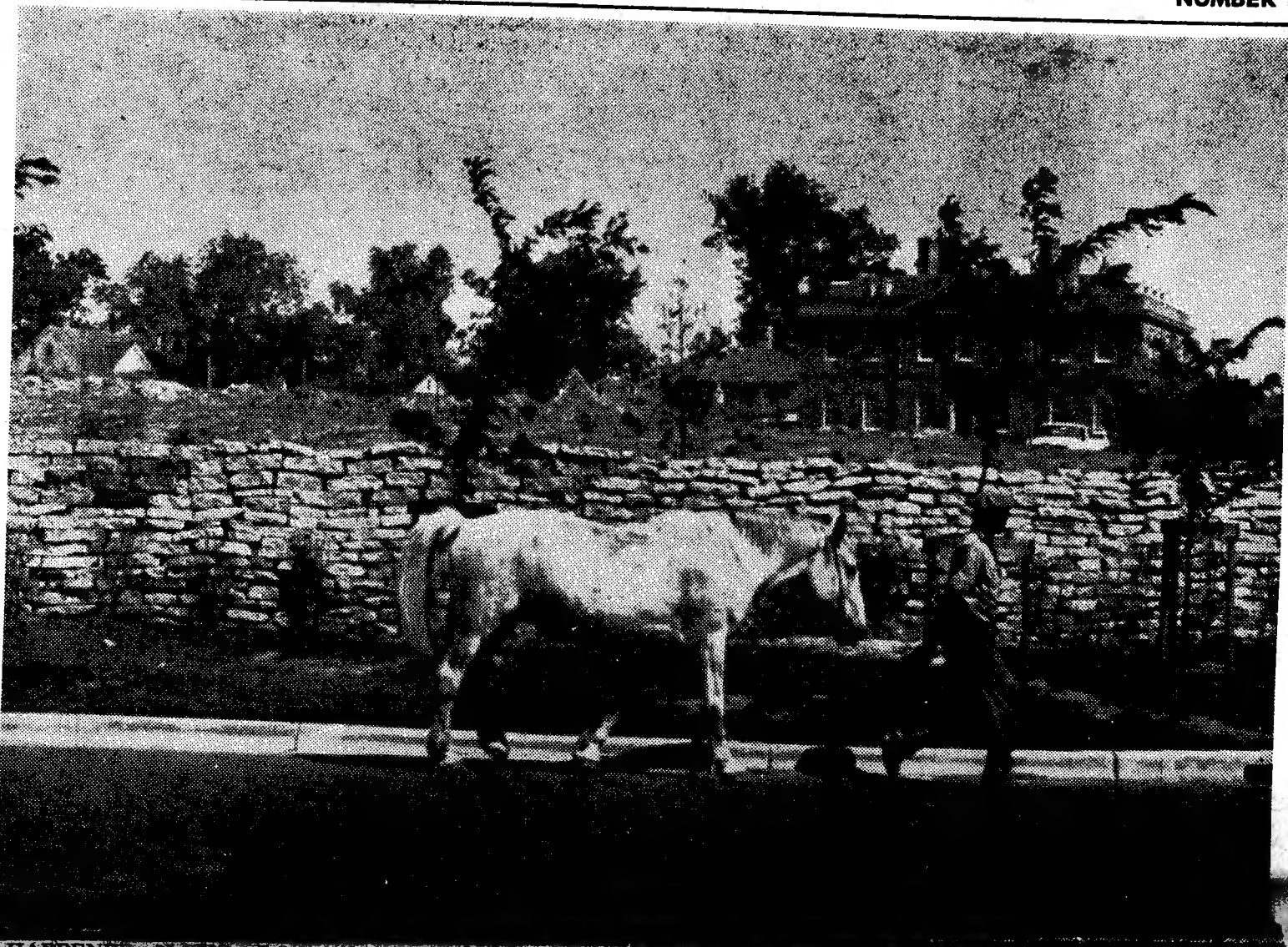
First come, first served was the pattern, and the boarders who got a head start were privileged to latch into the best pieces of meat on the platter. Actually, this was their only advantage, since the avalanche of assorted vegetables that rounded out the feast was never depleted. Much remained after the last of the thundering heard had departed.

Eating first, and leaving, wasn't entirely advisable. You knew full well that the moment you were gone you would become the topic of conversation. Your faults and failing were paraded out for caustic criticism, and an untruth or two got added occasionally to liven up the gossip.

What the boarding house crowd didn't know about what was going on in town wasn't knowing. It goes without saying that no one ever lived a life so perfect that his fellow boarders couldn't tumble him from his self-erected pedestal.

With no chance whatsoever of being a hero or a heroine to the crammer at your elbow, or across the table, you became resigned to being yourself. It did little for vanity, but it relaxed you into the proper state for enjoyment of the repast spread before you.

Human nature being what it is,
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HAPPENED ALONG—Some pictures are planned deliberately, while others bob up unexpectedly in front of the camera. Just when Billy Benners was getting set to shoot a rear view of Tryon Palace, this man and his horse came

by. Unintentionally they enacted a scene that could have occurred in exact fashion, back in Colonial days. Where the two came from and were headed, we still don't know.

There Is Little Affection, But His Talent is Admitted

How do New Bern citizens feel about Governor Terry Sanford, now that the General Assembly has closed shop after stringing along with him rather consistently on his major legislative proposals?

Well, a sample survey by The Mirror, aimed impartially at friends and foes, and taking into full account the views of prejudiced politicians along with rank and file voters, presents this picture.

He has emerged as a man who knew what he wanted, and did a thorough job in achieving his objectives. In doing just that, he convinced New Bernians of his ability; but here on the shores of the Neuse and Trent he would hardly appear a likely candidate to win a popularity poll at the moment.

Aside from the hostility that his tax plan inspired—and this couldn't have come as any great surprise to the Governor—it can be conclusively said that as of now he doesn't appear to have that certain something in his personality calculated to make fellow mortals regard him with fondness.

Most successful politicians do possess this characteristic in varying degrees, and it is an asset that comes in handy at the polls. However, history is liberally sprinkled with leaders who offset this handicap by convincing constituents that they were the best qualified candidate in the running for a given office.

Significantly, Sanford and others too ran better in the last Gubernatorial race than Trenton's John D. Larkins, although to our way of thinking the Jones county veteran of many political wars was the

most personable gentlemen seeking residence in the Executive mansion at Raleigh.

John's charm—and we do mean charm—failed to bring him the fi-

nanial backing he needed, and that hurt. Even so, with or without backing, it is doubtful that he could have sold himself against the rest of the field as the people's

choice.

For reasons satisfactory to themselves, a lot of folks—including many New Bernians—liked Larkins personally and didn't vote for him. On the other hand, a great many New Bernians who didn't particularly like Sanford went to the polls and cast their ballot for him. We gather, from talking with some of these local voters, that they would probably support him again, despite widespread resentment over the sales tax.

As one New Bernian puts it—"I voted for Larkins the first time because he was from our section. After he was eliminated, I voted for Sanford because he impressed me as being able, and his opponent made me uneasy with his approach toward the racial problem. I'm still glad I made the choice I did."

Another citizen, quite critical of the way that Terry went about throwing his support to Kennedy at the Democratic National convention, also says he would vote for Sanford again if the clock were turned back to the Gubernatorial race.

"Like the average politician," this New Bernian observed, "Terry had his own axe to grind. It made some of the other politicians mighty unhappy, but getting on the bandwagon early was to Sanford's advantage and he made the most of it. I didn't admire him for the way it was done, but that's politics."

Those who felt that North Carolina's latest Governor would run into extreme difficulty and possibly fail, when he tried to get his
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SANFORD AT TRYON'S DESK
—Photo by John R. Baxter.