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When T/Sgt. Nihl Demorest was assigned to Cherry Point, back in 1944, he and his wife Maxine went hunting for a place to live. They ended up at a farm near Newport.

The couple had heard tales of Southern hospitality, but came face to face with a brand of it that they never dreamed existed outside of story books. "We still marvel over it every time we think about it," says Nihl, and Maxine's dark brown eyes sparkle when she smiles and nods agreement.

The farmer and his wife — Nelson and Lona Bell — were fixing to leave home for several days when the Demorests showed up, but this didn't complicate things. "Although we were total strangers," Nihl and Maxine recall, "they insisted that we move right in and make ourselves at home while they were gone."

For two young Yankees in Rebel country, this was too good to be true. They were shaking their heads in utter disbelief, as the Bells drove off with never a fear of what might happen to their household possessions in their absence. It was a gesture of faith and kindness that they would never be forgotten.

While Nihl was stationed at Cherry Point, their firstborn, Linda, arrived in the Morehead City hospital. He and Maxine acquired a trailer, and eventually moved into Tom Haywood's trailer park at Croatan.

After leaving service, they returned to Michigan and their second daughter was born there. Sold on the South, they promptly named her Dixie. Nihl had been an aircraft mechanic at Cherry Point, and he went to work for the Chevrolet people at Grand Rapids. He is still employed there.

Linda, at 16, is every inch a rebel. She takes pride in her North Carolina birthright, and doesn't hesitate to argue for the Stars and Bars with her Michigan schoolmates. She and 13 year old Dixie get along splendidly together, but when Dixie gets provoked and wants to get a real fuss going, she brings up the Civil War and the battle is on.

This past week, when Nihl's vacation came up, the Demorests decided to head below the Mason-Dixon line for a visit with the folks who befriended them during World War II. Linda was especially excited at the prospect of seeing a homeland she left in infancy.

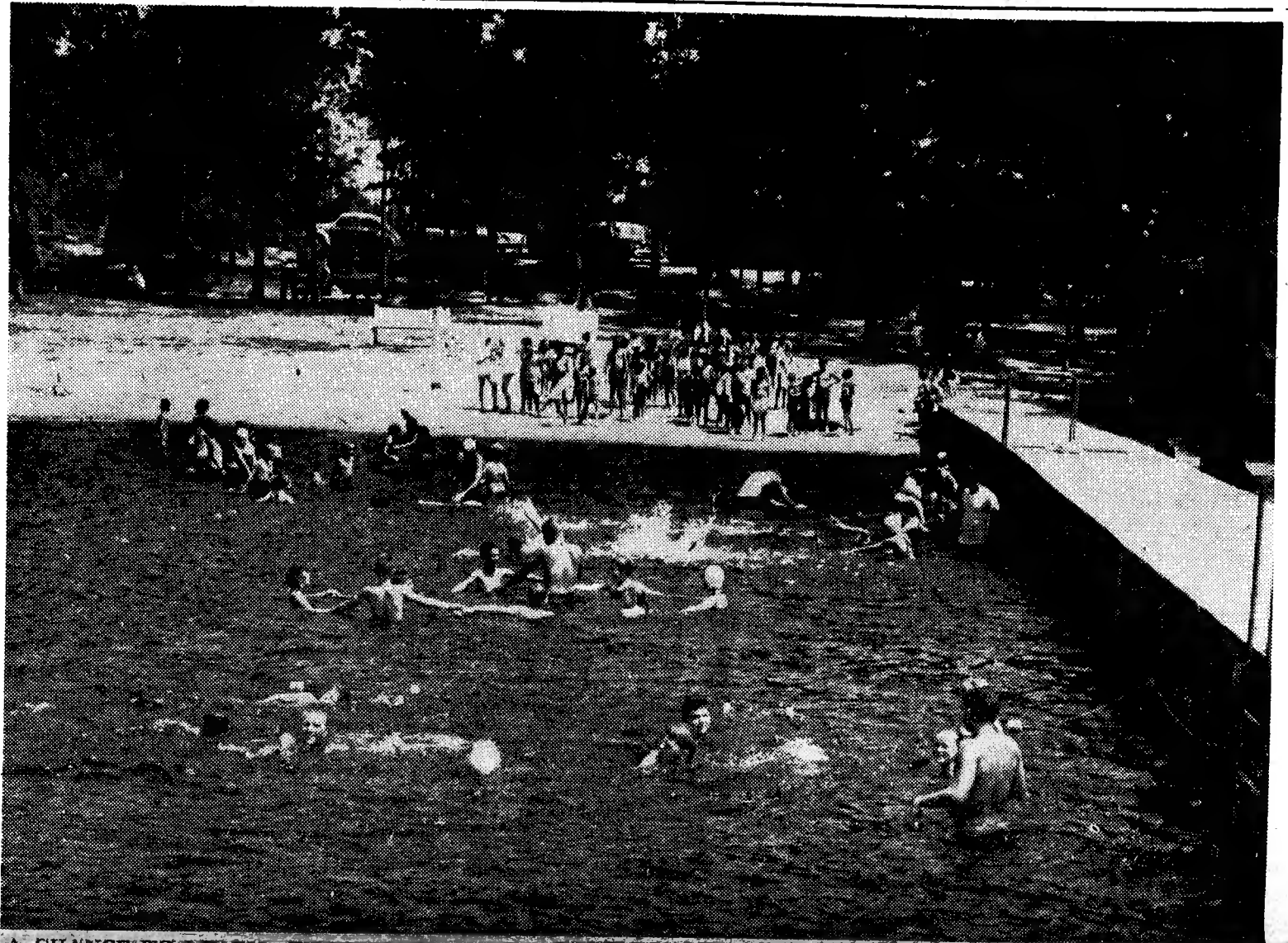
Newport had grown remarkably in their absence, and they couldn't find their way around very easily. They learned that Mr. Bell was no longer living, and that Mrs. Bell, in ill health, was in New Bern with relatives.

They drove to New Bern, and happy reunion ensued. True to Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson, Linda had her Confederate flag with her when she barged in to this here town on the shores of the Neuse and Trent.

It was no act cooked up on the spur of the moment. This flag is a must with her. She unfurled it every place that the family stopped, coming to North Carolina. She is undoubtedly waving it just as proudly as they head back to Yankee Land.

Incidentally, she happened to mention that she is an ardent Jane Morgan fan, and we were delighted to present her with a photograph of Jane and Laurence that was taken at the Stith home during the Christmas holidays. It's the same photo, you'll recall, that was used in The Mirror when we did a story about the two last January.

Thousands of rebels are scattered all over the United States — babies born to Marine couples during World War II. We can't help
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A CHANCE TO LEARN—This is the happy scene you'd find on the upper Trent these days, where the New Bern Recreation Department is holding swimming classes each morning, Monday through Friday. Frances Ferebee is the supervisor. Jim Shine, John Baxter, Ann Chagaris and Bill

Slaughter are the Red Cross trained instructors. The session of four weeks' duration starts July 17. Transportation is provided, and \$4 covers the total fee for the full month's training.—Photo by John Baxter.

Coming To New Bern Is Fun For This Outstanding Person

Arriving in New Bern today, for her annual summer visit with relatives, will be one of North Carolina's most exceptional teen agers, Clara Annette Rikard of Canton.

Her mother, Mrs. W. Lawrence Rikard, is a former New Bernian — Louise Reel — and the youngster has been spending two months or more here and at Minnesott Beach each year as far back as she can remember.

Although born in the Land of the Sky, where mountains prevail, she is always eager to come to the Land of Enchanting Waters for an extended outing in the coast country.

When we say that Clara Annette is exceptional, it's no idle flattery. Honors have been heaped upon the 18 year old beauty with the abundance of a small boy serving himself a helping of home-made ice cream.

At the annual Youth Fitness Conference of North Carolina recently held in Raleigh she was selected from 180 teen agers representing 91 Tar Heel counties to receive a fitness award from Governor Terry Sanford.

"The youth fitness program," said the Governor, "is three-fold—intellectual, moral and physical." He commended Clara Annette as a leader in her school, community, church, and in her personal life. A straight A student at Canton High school, she graduated last month.

On May 6, she was crowned queen of the annual North Carolina Dogwood Blossom Festival.

This event, staged amid the lovely scenery that has made Haywood county, a mecca for tourists, has been widely publicized for years.

Its objectives are to advance and promote by every suitable means the propagation and preservation of the dogwood tree as the North

Carolina State Flower; to encourage the wider use of dogwood trees in home, highway, community, street, city and town planning for beautification purposes.

As the 1961 queen of the Dogwood Blossom Festival, Clara Annette has been quite impressed with the legend of the dogwood. It is said that at the time of the Crucifixion the dogwood had been the size of the oak and other forest trees. So firm and strong was the tree that it was chosen as the timber for the cross.

To be used thus, according to the legend, greatly distressed the tree, and Jesus, nailed upon it, sensed this. In His gentle pity for all sorrow and suffering He said: "Because of your regret and pity for My suffering, never again shall the dogwood tree grow large enough to be used as a cross. Henceforth it shall be slender and bent and twisted and its blossoms shall be in the form of a cross.

"In the center of the outer edge of each petal there will be nail prints, brown with rust and stained with red, and in the center of the flower will be a crown of thorns, and all who see it will remember."

The versatile teen ager represented the Mary Custis Lee Chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy during the North Carolina Confederate Centennial in Raleigh. Presented at the Colorful ball as one of 40 Confederate belles, she wore a pink lace dress over satin, copied from one worn
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A HEALTHY SMILE