



The NEW BERN MIRROR

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Faith and courage are more than mere words in a dictionary to the Negro students attending Newbold school at Fort Barnwell.

Day in and day out, for many years, they have seen a member of their race, and heard him too, teach - without benefit of vocal chords or a larynx. Despair can find no foothold to throttle his spirit, and his heart bubbles over with belief in the goodness of God.

Robert Wellington Boley was born in Cambridge, Mass., and after graduation from high school he received his BS degree from Shaw University in Raleigh. For 10 years he taught at Winton High, before he accepted a position on the faculty of New Bern's West Street High school.

Six years later, on the basis of an outstanding record, he was appointed principal. And as football coach he turned out a string of spectacular teams. One of the grid-ers he developed was Bob Mann, who later became an All-America end at Michigan, a Rose Bowl star, and a mainstay for the professional Cleveland Browns.

Boley's service as principal terminated when, in 1949, he underwent surgery at Kinston's Memorial General Hospital for removal of his left vocal chord, found to be malignant.

A year later he entered Jefferson Memorial Hospital in Philadelphia, where one of the nation's leading specialists removed his larynx. Resigned to the fact that his school career was over, Boley took a tailoring course at A&T College in Greensboro. He learned to reweave damaged fabrics.

Robert L. Pugh, superintendent of Craven County schools was well aware of his ability, and admired his attitude in the face of adversity. He figured there was a place for a man like Boley in his school system.

Meanwhile, the handicapped teacher had learned to talk a little through breath control. The American Cancer Society gave him considerable encouragement, and for a man as brave as Boley, considerable encouragement was more than ample.

Pugh, as many know is a 33rd degree Mason, and lecturer for reunions of the New Bern Scottish Rite Consistory. Knowing that a lapel microphone and loud speaker was sometimes used in rituals, he conferred with Alfred "Shorty" Kafer, Jr., the stage director.

Kafer agreed with Pugh that such a microphone was made to order for Boley's impediment. They invited the teacher to accompany them to the Consistory's auditorium for a try-out. The set-up worked like a charm.

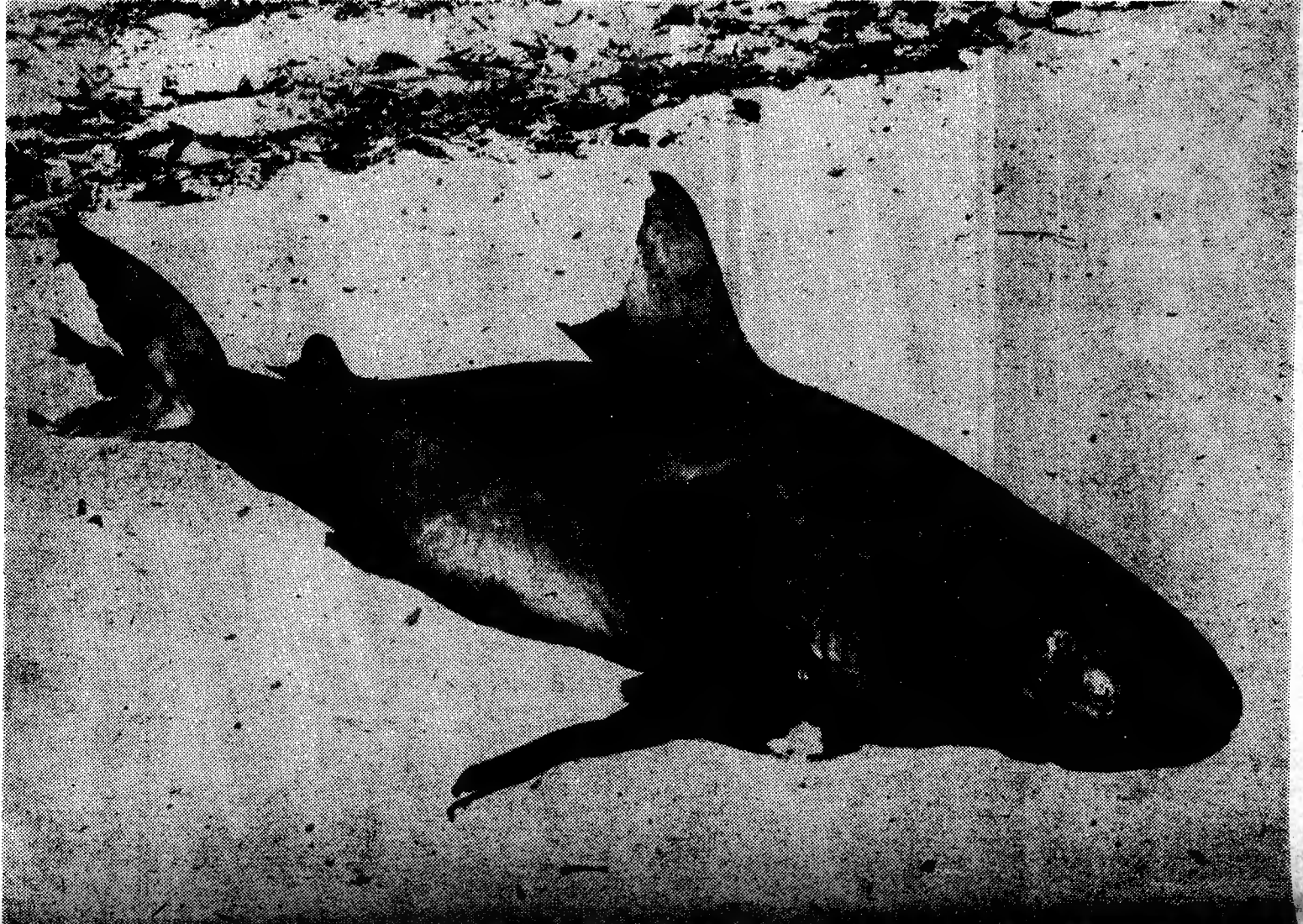
The Negro teacher could be heard throughout the auditorium, as he spoke the lines that were to give him back his career. Superintendent Pugh offered him a job teaching the eighth grade at Newbold school, and he accepted.

In his classroom he hung a small loud speaker in a rear corner near the ceiling. A wire ran from it, along the wall, connecting with an amplifier on the teacher's desk.

A tiny microphone that Boley wore alternately on his lapel and around his neck connected to the amplifier by means of a lengthy cable, permitting him to move anywhere in the room for individual instruction.

It worked out very nicely, which came as no surprise to those who knew Boley intimately. Not only is he a likeable teacher and a brave man, but a man of strong inner faith.

Until his operation, he had been a lay reader at St. Cyprians Episcopal church in New Bern. He has complete belief in the power of prayer, and likes to give credit for
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HE WASN'T INVITED - Ordinarily, New Bern hangs out the welcome sign for unusual visitors, but no one was happy when a shark showed up in Neuse river Monday morning. Zeb Jones found this 6-foot, 4-inch critter in his net off Sandy Point. You heard about it, and just as you pre-

dicted. The Mirror got a picture for its readers. We didn't have a chance to interview him while he was still among the living, but a good look at his teeth convinced us that it wouldn't have been advisable anyhow.—Photo by Billy Benners.

New Bern Television Fans Didn't Yawn Tuesday Night

New Bernians already vexed by oppressive July heat that lingered after the sun had set in a cloudy-ribbed western sky, had little cause to be jovial this past Tuesday night.

Perspiring mothers, glad to be done with dishes, tried in vain to lull their fretting babes into the Slumber Land of Winken, Blinken and Nod.

Tired fathers pulled their shoes off, puffed on smelly cigars their better halves detest, or dangled filter cigarettes from grumbling mouths that dropped in discomfort and disgust.

Dogs, still panting as if it were high noon instead of early evening, scratched forlornly at real or imaginary fleas, and sought the solace of familiar porches where loved ones wouldn't spurn their presence.

Prowling cats, a little slower of step than usual but not to be outdone by the weather, slinked furtively into neighboring backyards. Their immediate intention was to pounce upon unwary songbirds nesting dangerously in the insecurity of a low-sprawling hedge.

Citizens young and old were doing a minimum of stirring, taking their cue from motionless leaves on trees that stood like weary sentinels in the encircling shadows.

Streets of this ancient town that has seen centuries of similar summers come and go had softened and in some spots buckled during a day of relentless sunshine. Throughfares remained warm, and you could feel the feverishness rising from asphalt, and drifting

across sidewalks and lawns.

Resigned to the fact that this is the season for repeat programs on television networks, but bored to distraction, villagers turned their sets on, and settled back for an expected interlude of dull, twice-viewed entertainment.

Although newspapers foretold it, thousands had forgotten the scheduled speech of a worried fellow American, whose boyishness — alternately admired and scorned by friends and enemies — is fast giving way to gravity well beyond his years.

Then it happened. Flashed upon screens in homes all over the city, and throughout the land, was the image of the President of the United States. He had a message to deliver to the nation that had elected him only months ago — a carefully written text he would adhere to.

This was no time for ad libbing — no time for the clever quip. Reading his words slowly and deliberately, he presented in forthright fashion the unyielding stand that America is pledged to and will honor in the Berlin crisis.

Voices were stilled in countless living rooms, here on the Neuse and Trent, and pulses quickened as John Fitzgerald Kennedy, a wounded and decorated hero of World War II, warned the Kremlin that the United States would join in the horrors of armed conflict, if forced into it, to preserve its right to remain in West Berlin.

Haunted no doubt by the memory of Neville Chamberlain — an umbrella-toting British Prime Minister who was intimidated by swag-

gering Adolf Hitler — the President made it clear that the significance of West Berlin, as a testing ground for the cause of free peoples, is global in scope.

Kennedy, in his remarks aimed at Khrushchev, left no room for doubt that the United States is determined to stand its ground regardless of the consequences. What those consequences could be were outlined explicitly to fellow Americans.

At worst there would be war — even nuclear war. At best, there would be billions more spent for military preparedness and civil defense. Hundreds of thousands, among the young men of the nation, were destined to don a uniform and serve their country for months, or years.

The words were uttered by a Chief Executive who knew the sobering effect they would have on millions of listeners. He mentioned the disruption that will extend into countless homes, as his plans go into action. The day following his history-making speech he brought a message to Congress, but to rank and file Americans it was something of an anti-climax. The big speech — perhaps one of the momentous ones of all time — was the Tuesday night address.

How did the average New Bernian react to the President's presentation of his aims and hopes in dealing with the West Berlin crisis? Well, he wasn't happy about the matter, but a sample survey by The Mirror reveals that citizens

share Kennedy's belief that a firm stand must be taken.

"No one in his right mind wants war," one man we interviewed said, "and I'm hoping and praying that war won't come. But yielding to a bully never solves anything. Sooner or later you're forced to fight. If you stand up to him, there's always the possibility that he'll back down."

A woman whose husband was in World War II, and who has a son destined for military service in the very near future, said, "War is a dreadful thing to contemplate, and I keep telling myself that it isn't going to happen. I can't believe that Russia will start something that could destroy all mankind, but with freedom at stake in West Berlin, we've got to face up to the Communists once and for all."

Most of the New Bernians with whom we discussed President Kennedy's speech had a pretty fair knowledge of circumstances surrounding the crisis in West Berlin. It is obvious that a high percentage of the newspaper readers here are following international events as they are reeled off daily in distant places.

In New Bern, at least, it is the consensus of opinion that President Kennedy — very much on the hot seat — has made the best of a bad situation in his approach to the West Berlin crisis.

What will history say about the speech he made on a sultry Tuesday night in July? Your guess is as good as the next fellow's including perhaps the President himself.