



The NEW BERN MIRROR

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2000 Arondall St.
Morehead City, NC

PUBLISHED WEEKLY
IN THE HEART OF
NORTH CAROLINA
Per Copy

VOLUME 4

NEW BERN, N. C., FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 1961

NUMBER 26

It is always flattering to a newspaperman when other newspapers consider some of his writings worth reprinting. Perhaps a fellow scribbler is, in truth, a poorer judge of journalistic excellence than the average reader, but there's no denying that every writer appreciates recognition from his own kind.

Victor Meekins, who turns out such interesting pieces for the Coastland Times at Manteo, has been kind enough to pick up some of our past columns and pass them along to his enthusiastic readers. This week it's a pleasure to borrow the following from his column—"Then and Now."

"I do not know of any memories of boyhood that stand out more clearly and which never grow dim nor lose their appeal, than my recollections of the big white passenger steamer which used to ply Croatan Sound at the beginning of this century.

"They passed nearly two miles off shore from my home, and they were fascinating indeed at night with their lights burning brilliantly, and on still nights one could hear the sound of the rhythmic movement of their machinery.

"Soon it would fade in the distance, but the lights might be seen long afterwards. These steamers were operated by the Old Dominion line between Elizabeth City and New Bern. Travelers could make the night trip, renting a state-room, eating in the boat's dining room, just as now on the Baltimore steamer.

"News has recently been released that after Labor Day the Old Bay Line would discontinue its passenger business, and a historic and romantic service which has operated 121 years ends.

"Just a few weeks ago, anticipating such a move as not far away, I took my six-year-old grandson on this boat down from Baltimore to Norfolk at night. We took the train from Washington over to Baltimore.

"He was quite fascinated with roaming around the boat, and with sleeping in an upper berth, and I equally enjoyed the journey while watching his delight. I wrote a column about this trip shortly afterward.

"I had many trips on this boat; also many on the boats which ran between Washington and Norfolk until 1958. Air travel has about taken all the business which formerly sustained these boats. It was a delightful journey, particularly eating in the ship's dining room, with appetite whetted by the salt air.

"When I was a boy, there were boat lines everywhere. It was the most comfortable way to travel. The Old Dominion Steamship Company ran in addition to its North Carolina boats, night boats each way between Richmond and Norfolk—the Brandon and the Berkley; it ran passenger ships to New York.

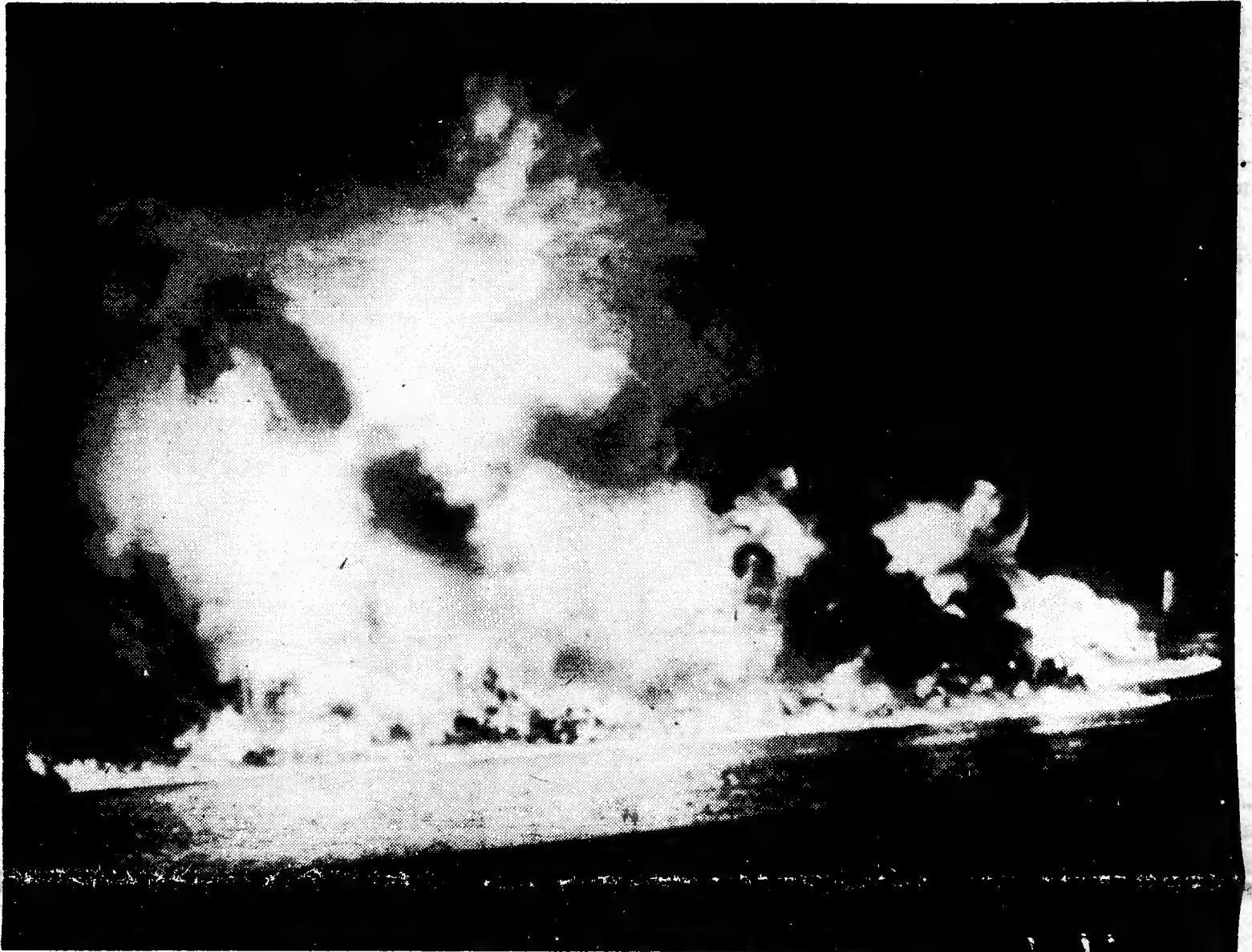
"Passenger boat lines operated between Elizabeth City and Manteo and to Hertford, and to Edenton, and up the Roanoke River, and down the Alligator River to Fairfield and to Columbia. Boat lines ran up the Roanoke as far as Hamilton in Martin county.

"Other Norfolk boats ran to Suffolk and to Smithfield, to Old Point and many other places on Chesapeake Bay and the James River, as well as down to Currituck Sound and Pasquotank River points.

"There used to be passenger service by boat by sea out of Norfolk for New York, Boston, Providence, Charleston, Savannah and Jacksonville. Many of these lines were acquired by railroad companies and operated as auxiliary services, or otherwise in their owner's interests.

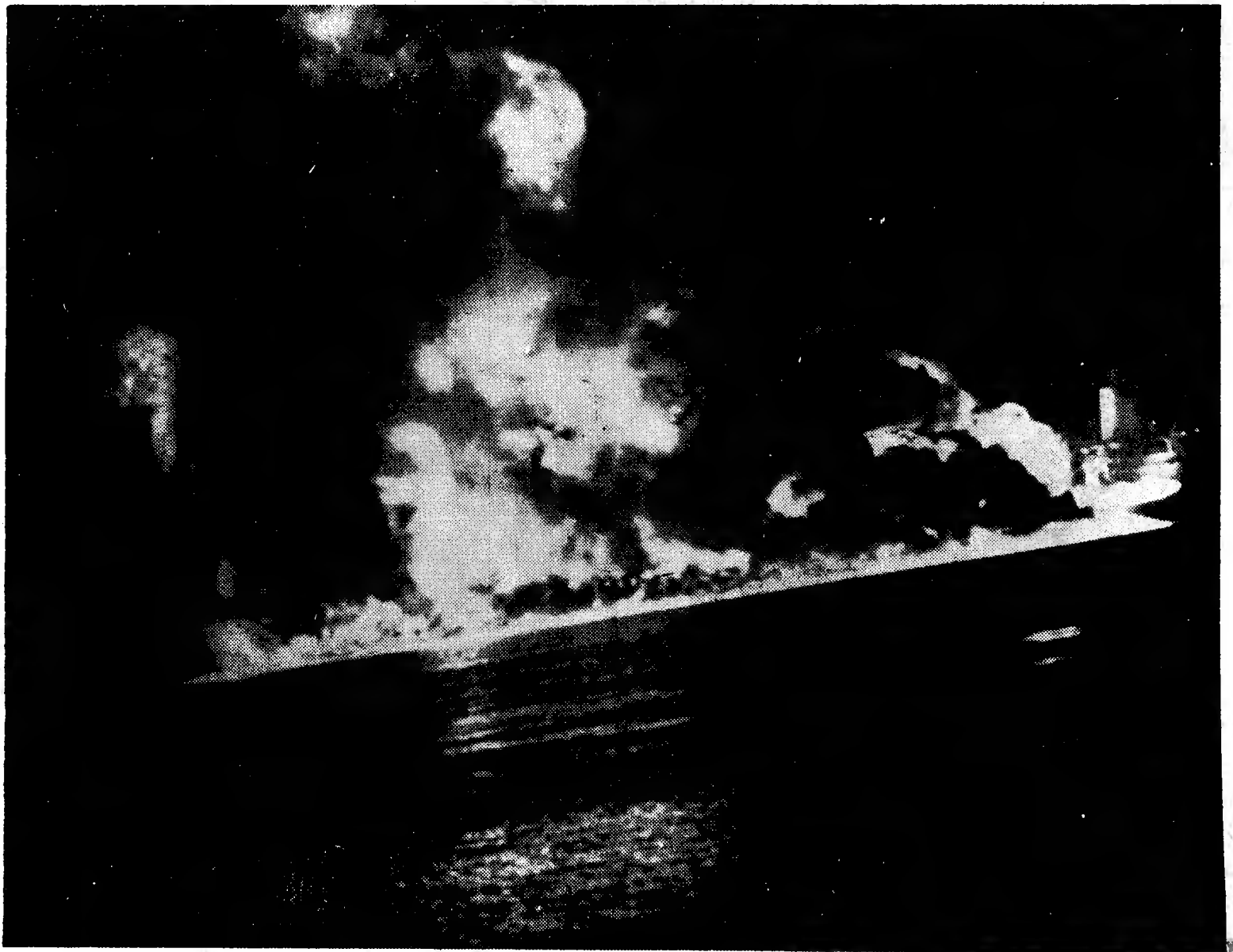
"All of us who enjoy the boat trips between Nags Head and Elizabeth City and Manteo will hold them in cherished memory as long as we live. I am glad that the little boy got his boat trip in time."

(Continued on Page 7)



TRULY AN INFERNO—Nothing in the category of unbridled fire is more vicious and destructive than blazing oil. Death and devastation rode the waters that lapped at Morehead City's shoreline Tuesday night in the wake of

this tanker explosion. The holocaust lasted for hours, and endangered many persons and property worth millions. —Photo by Billy Benners.



A NIGHT TO REMEMBER—Coastal Carolina's story of the week was the explosion and ensuing fire that turned a tanker at Morehead City's Radio Island into a mass of madly surging flames. The Mirror was there to bring its

readers the dramatic scene you see here. When this picture was snapped, it was risky to be around and the conflagration was out of control.—Photo by Billy Benners.