



The NEW BERN MIRROR

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We doubt that many New Bernians are aware that W. J. (Bill) Edwards, director of New Bern-Craven County Civil Defense is a poet. Published below is an excellent sample of his creative laboring.

A LOOK AT AMERICA

America, symbol of freedom and might,
We look at you with searching light.
Your dark corners long unswept
Dim the light of liberty long enshrined.
Where departed the patriots and martyrs,
Jealousy guarding the rights of man?
How the world rejoiced and long applauded
Your release of men from serfdom's shackles.
Yes, America has clearly shown the way
To men oppressed and trodden down.
The magic picture you have wrought,
Though tarnished some by years,
Need not be painted over anew,
A little brushing with clothes of truth
Will show freedom's beauty still intact.
Your self-searching shows the flaws
In men smaller than the laws
Of Democracy's unchanging code.
But despair is not for prestige loss
And to your own heritage hold.
Fight for each man's right to speak,
Let him pray as conscience deems,
Give each man equal right to learn,
Equal right to strive and earn,
Allow no infringement, however small
On rights of men weak or strong.
Time has not eroded your foundation,
Your standing little as a nation.
You're still to us a challenge,
A guiding light and goal.
Though your shores be far away,
You're not beyond the hopes of years,
And while your land we may not reach,
Your freedoms, piecemeal help our lot.
So hold your course with strength and courage—
While helping us along the way—
And keep the picture bright.
Fear not, if as we take your lead,
Our freedom seems a different hue,
For darkness must adjust to light.
Encourage us each tiny gain
As we approach your height,
For anon the world must all be free
And equal under God.

You'll probably want to clip Bill's poem, and keep it for further perusing at some later date. Perhaps, more than we realize, he has caught the spirit of those who are not privileged to live in these United States.

His verses bring to mind the lovely lines penned by Emma Lazarus, an immigrant, inscribed in bronze on the Statue of Liberty:

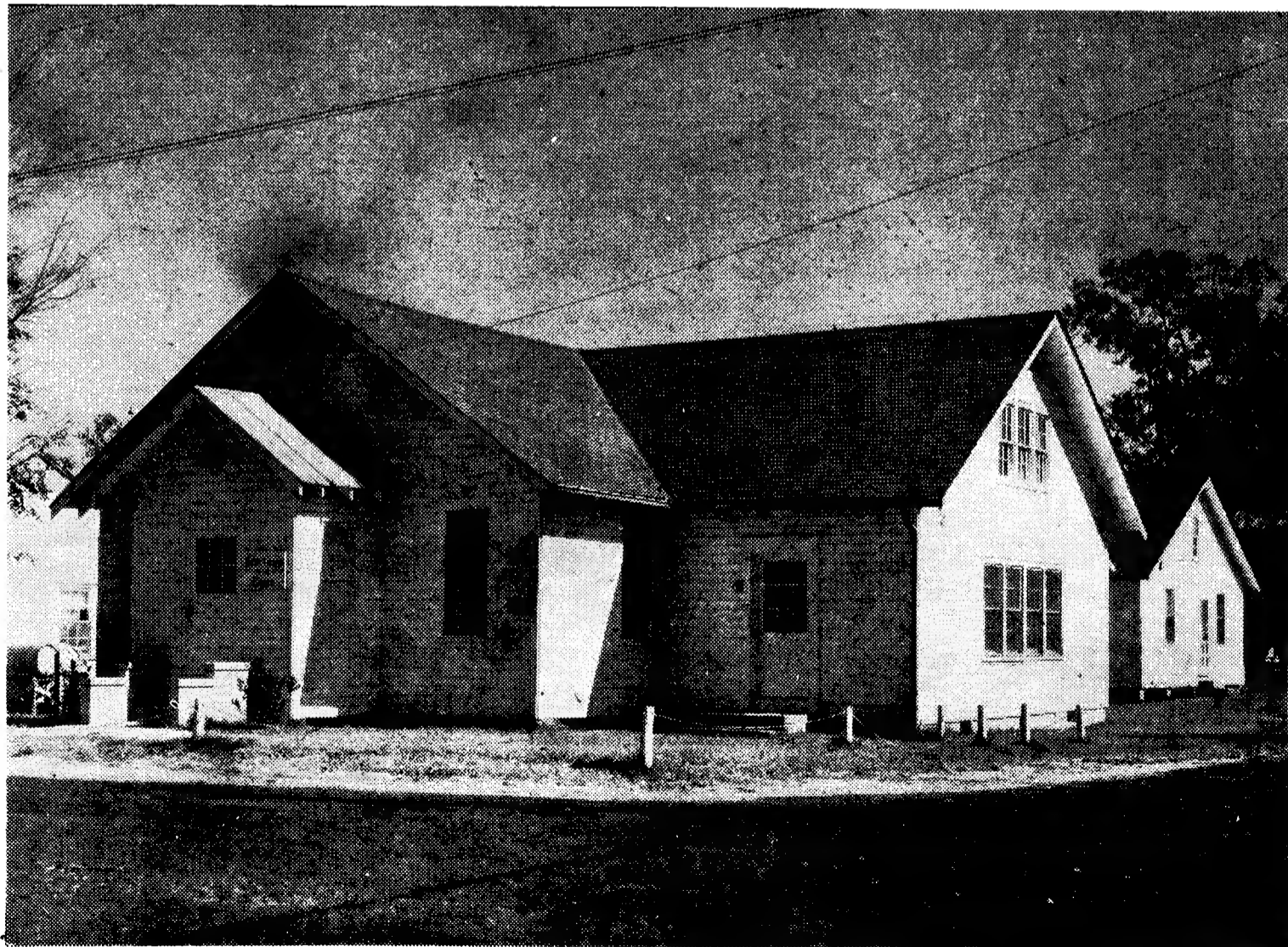
Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,
With conquering limbs astride from land to land;
Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand
A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame
Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name
Mother of exiles. From her beacon-hand
Glows world-wide welcome; her mild eyes command
The air-bridged harbor that twin cities frame.
"Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp!" cries she
With silent lips. "Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to

(Continued on Page 2)



THEY HAD FAITH—Pictured here on Oaks Road is a shining example of what can be done when a church congregation has the will to do it. Members of Ruth's Chapel,

prodded and inspired by their boyish looking pastor, the Rev. A. L. Hines, have built this edifice to replace the outgrown frame structure shown below.



SERVED THE LORD—Fashioned in the midst of the Great Depression, this original Ruth's Chapel with its additions housed a flock that labored long and tirelessly for Christianity's cause. One of its stalwart leaders along the way

was the beloved Rev. J. C. Griffin, who in his still vigorous eighties is now pastor of the Bridgeton Free Will Baptist Church.