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You'll never convince Ken Powell (son of Lillian and Jimmie) that 13 is a bad number to mess around with. Last Friday was his 13th birthday, and he had an appointment with the dentist. Shortly before the hour of his dreaded ordeal, the Powell phone rang. The dentist was sick and couldn't keep the appointment. As for Ken, he felt much better right away.

Hardest look we've had this week came from an indignant woman driver who almost ran over us at the corner of Middle and Pollock. The scowling femme resented our being in the way as she made an illegal left turn. It ain't safe for man nor beast in New Bern's downtown business section, if you can't step lively.

When March winds blow, and small boys sail their kites, we're always reminded of Ben Franklin's daring feat with a silk-covered kite, surmounted by a pointed wire. If the world had waited for us to catch lightning in a Leyden jar from a wet kite string, electricity would still be undiscovered. Among other things, Franklin was able to demonstrate that some clouds have positive and some negative electric charges.

How high can a kite fly? Well, the Weather Bureau used to send great box kites--containing instruments--to an altitude of three miles. A train of 10 kites, with 8-1/2 miles of steel wire, once raised weather instruments four miles. Don't tell your boy that, he might get notions. Above all, don't let him use metal wire. Contact with power lines can cause electrocution.

Reid Fuller, who knows the nature of our coastal woodlands almost as well as his father did, says the robins we have here don't journey further south in winter, although they may wander around during the summer months.

Robins do flee, of course from the frigid north. More than a billion escape ice and snow in the Gulf states. With the first hint of springtime, they return unerringly to their respective homes throughout the United States and Canada.

Experts tell us that a robin, during the three or four years of his life, remains loyal to the place from whence he came. How he manages to find the selfsame tree, at the end of an air jaunt of countless uncharted miles is something that humans are too dumb to figure out.

A recent article revealed that some robins fly as much as 200 miles in a single day when they get near home. Like a mule heading for the barn at day's end, the bright-plumaged songsters pick up steam on their final lap.

Don't fret when your dog, or the neighbor's dog, barks at the garbage man. Fido simply figures that somebody who has no business being there is stealing something off the premises. Another time it could be somebody else snitching your lawn mower.

Enroute to Greenville the other night, Howard Lancaster brought up the ancient yarn about Bridgeton's late Tom Holton. As the story goes, Tom was chatting with cronies at a store in our nice little neighboring town across the Neuse.

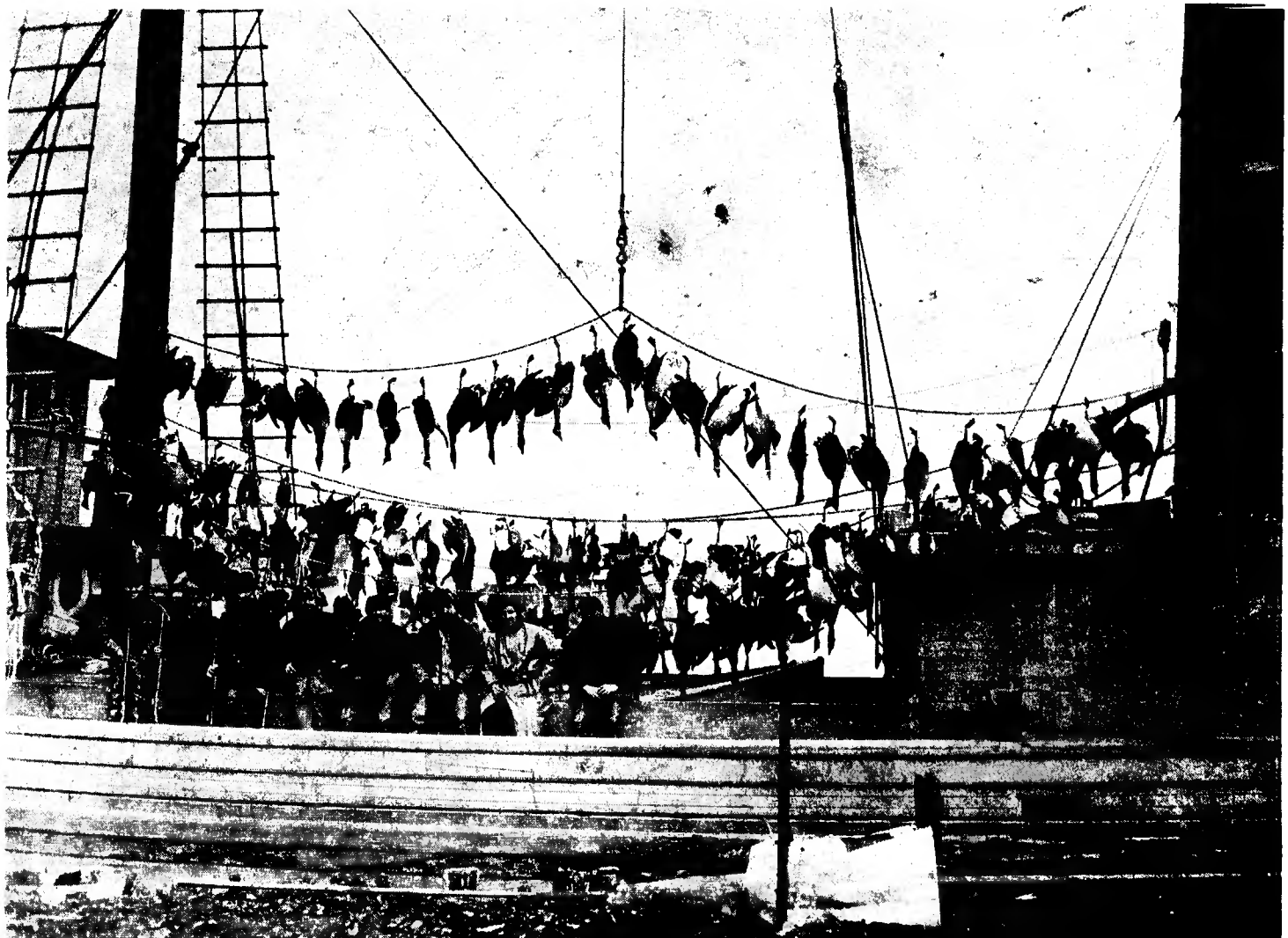
"There are plenty of moon-

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SLIGHTLY SURPRISED—When William F. Dowdy, III, picked a fellow undertaker, Tommy Best, as his best man he got betrayed. Leaving Riverside Methodist Church last Saturday with his bride, the former Jackie Smith, Billy discovered that Tommy had substituted

an ambulance for the get-away car. Best also provided funeral markers in front of the church, and a crepe at the entrance to the Smith residence.—Photo by John R. Baxter.



OUT OF THE PAST—Here is another priceless Mirror photo, snapped more than 40 years ago. Pictured on the Parkins with geese they bagged in Carteret waters nears Portsmouth are, left to right, Paul Mengel, Dan Richardson, Ralph Daniels, Dave Morris, Henry Hender-

son, George Brooks, John Haywood Jones and Bill Blades. The happy hunters had docked near lower Middle street, when this scene took place. It was an occasion to remember.