



Through
THE
Looking
Glass

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(Many of our present subscribers weren't readers of The Mirror, when the column reprinted below first appeared on June 20, 1958. Because of a number of requests, we are glad to publish it again.)

In every town there ought to be a local Hall of Fame, where so called unimportant folks could have inscribed their name.

For instance, Albert Crabtree is a man we won't forget. The many jobs he brought to us are pleasant memories yet. We kids all dubbed him "Crabby" but he never was that way. In fact, with youngsters hovering 'round, you'd always find him gay.

As generous as the morning sun that shines on everything, this little man with legs quite bowed was like a breath of Spring. We're sure no one will ever know, there's no one who could measure, the hours and dollars that he spent for other people's pleasure.

Many's the time he knocked off work, and closed his little joint, to slave at fixing up the club we had at Union Point. He built a dock and put up swings, and what a diving board! Yes, Crabby shelled out money that he had a chance to hoard.

New clothes never crossed his mind, he stuck to coveralls. He passed up swank occasions and evaded social calls. He gave his heart to boys and girls, they came down by the score to get the recreation that they never had before.

Those boys and girls are grown ups now, and scattered everywhere. Some of the gang have even died on battlefields out there. But scattered though we know they are, we hope each grown up kid remembers all the kindly things that good old Crabby did.

These are the rhyming lines, written years before, that we read at Albert Crabtree's funeral. The lines fitted him, just like the simple epitaph on his modest gravestone that reads "He lived his life for boyhood."

Not only boys but girls as well were blessed by the great generosity of this grand little man. We thought of him particularly during the recent Father's Day because he was a second father to every kid he knew.

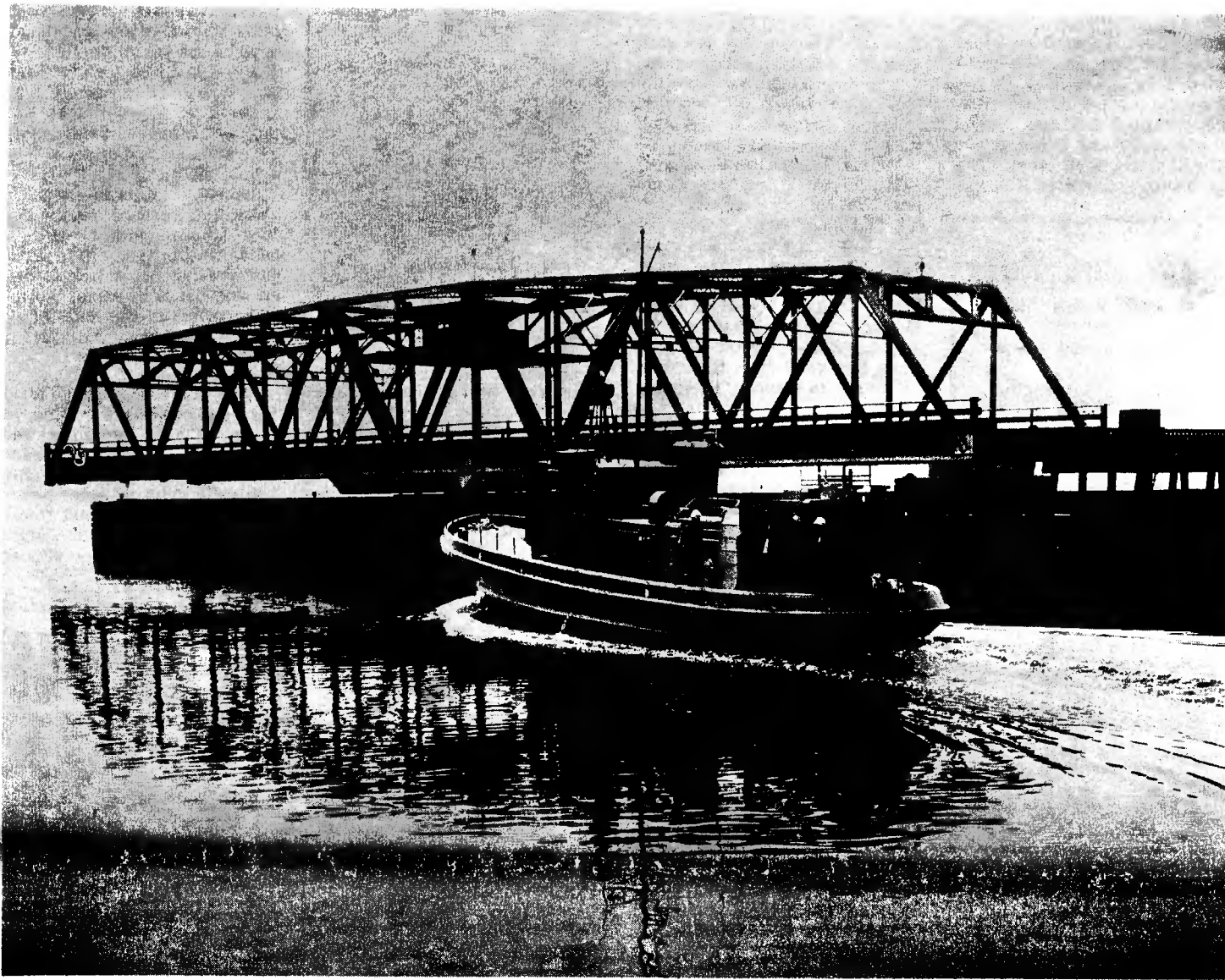
To us, Crabby was Santa Claus without the red costume, white whiskers and reindeer. A bachelor, he nevertheless had the biggest adopted family in town, and did more for New Bern youngsters than any man of his era.

His gang (not to be confused with present-day punks who lean toward lawlessness) had its unplanned inception in Crabby's tiny machine shop. Kids dropped by to watch him work, in much the same manner that kids once watched Longfellow's Village Blacksmith.

Crabby was kind to them, and they returned again and again. He shared their joys and sorrows, forgave them for their pranks, and gave them advice when they asked for it.

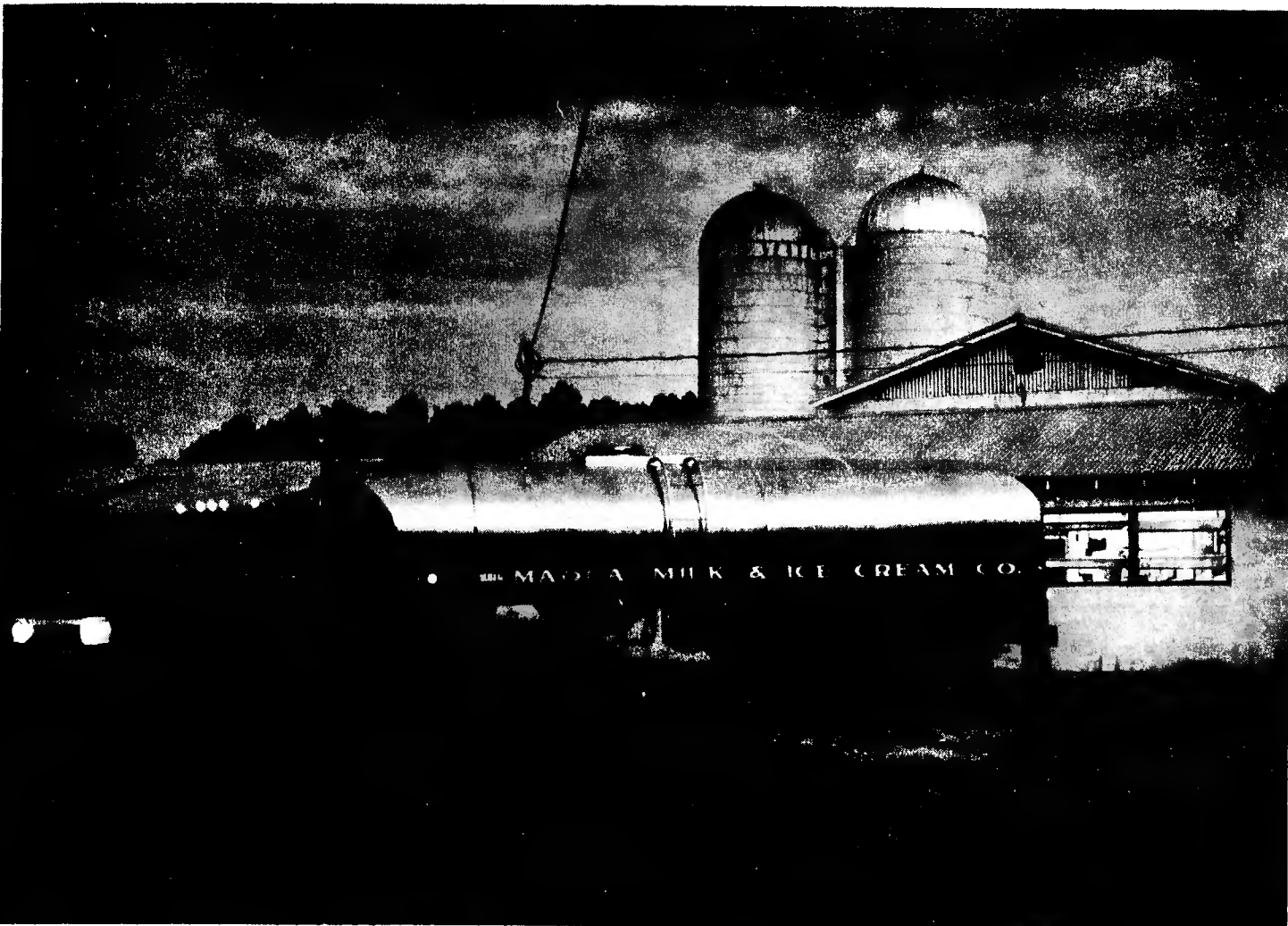
Included among others in the original gang were Shoot Hall, Tom Davis, Buzz Mitchell, the Patterson brothers (Harry, Bill and Robert) Reid Fuller, Bill Gwaltney, Earl Harper and The Mirror's future editor.

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ON ITS WAY—Pictured in the early morning stillness of an August day is another government boat, passing through the Trent river draw after leaving New Bern Shipyard. The firm is sometimes overlooked when local industries are being discussed, but it makes an import-

ant contribution to the city's economy. It is located a very short distance from Union Point, where Swiss settlers landed in 1710, and founded our town.—Photo by Billy Benners.



ROUND THE CLOCK—Industry works at night also in New Bern. While citizens sleep, or watch late TV, tank trucks like this one seen loading at a Pamlico county dairy bring a huge supply of milk to Maola's main plant here for processing, and wholesale and re-

tail delivery. The company's payroll benefits farmers and city dwellers alike. As for the cows that make it all possible, they're eating regularly too.—Photo by Billy Benners.