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New Bern, settled in 1710, prides itself on being an old town, but hardly offers a challenge to the oldest of all inhabited cities, Damascus in Syria.

Like the elderly lady who tore her birth date out of the family Bible, Damascus is well along in years, but just how far nobody really knows. We do know it was mentioned in Genesis.

It was a city of considerable distinction before Moses led the Israelites out of bondage, and more than 2,000 years old when Christ arrived in Bethlehem. It was going strong before anyone dreamed of building Athens and Rome, so you see New Bern isn't ancient at all.

If you think starlings are a problem, just be thankful that eagles haven't taken a liking to our community on the shores of the Neuse and Trent. You don't know what you've missed, or what has missed you.

Their nests, built out of sticks, are sometimes six feet across and six feet high, and they live for years and years. Can't you just picture a horde of eagles hatching out still more eagles on top of City Hall, the local Postoffice and Courthouse, and (heaven forbid) Try-on Palace?

Irving Berlin's lyrics for "White Christmas" lamented the fact that Christmas Eve in Beverly Hills was as warm and bright as springtime. It didn't seem right. We've had somewhat the same feeling of topsy turviness walking along Middle Street in recent weeks of summer weather, with Christmas decorations hanging overhead.

As long as we're on the subject, don't forget to identify yourself sufficiently when you sign your greeting cards this year. "John and Mary" can be pretty confusing to that friend of yours who happens to be acquainted with several other couples who have these same names.

If you like authentic Dixieland music, with explanatory remarks by a real authority, you should be a regular listener to the "Pops" Campbell Show each Saturday afternoon on New Bern's WHIT.

For more than six years his prized recordings have been aired here, and before moving to New Bern he did similar programs elsewhere. A former musician himself, Campbell played with many of the top names in his field, and is as well known in New Orleans jazz circles as anybody down that way.

And, since we're plugging WHIT, we'll give equal praise to somebody over at WRNB. Congratulations to Bill Jefferay, its owner-manager, for the spectacular success he has achieved in lining up local subscribers for the East Carolina College Summer Theater.

Jefferay did rather well as New Bern's chairman for the Theater's first season, but has done far better in pushing subscriptions for the 1965 season. He had sold double the quota assigned to New Bern, 10 days before the December 1 deadline, and was still at it.

New Bern's ham radio operators, and the town has plenty of them, are an asset to the community. Albert Parker, who was a veteran operator before

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COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS—As you can see, human beings didn't have an exclusive claim on New Bern's observance of Thanksgiving. Eunice Wray's ebony black mongrel, Pudgie, reflects on the good things of life, while his pedigree guest, Pierre, (Effie Woodard's

toy poodle of Jacksonville) solemnly waits for grace. Eunice, who operates Wray's Studio, made this remarkable Mirror photograph. You'll agree it is one of the most appealing pictures ever to appear in The Mirror.



FROM COAST TO COAST—D. L. (Libby) Ward, a Carolina Telephone director, dials the first direct distance call from this area. Governor Elect Dan Moore answered at Asheville. Seated with Ward are District Commercial Manager L. A. Corning and Vice-President

J. F. Havens. Standing are New Bern Mayor Mack Lupton, Pollockville Mayor R. C. O'Bryan, Carteret Representative Tom Bennett, Craven Representative R. C. Godwin and Commissioner Chairman D. L. Stallings.