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You've often heard it said that New Bern's winters in days of old were much more severe than they are now. Don't believe it, facts and figures prove otherwise.

A booklet on the town issued 75 years ago says, "The average minimum winter temperature for the past thirty years is about 20 degrees. The average diurnal mean temperature for the winter is 46 degrees, which is about the same as that of Southern France."

And the booklet adds, "The entire winter frequently passes without snow, and sleets are practically unknown, the thermometer seldom registering below the freezing point. The coldest day of the winter was December 30th, when the record at sunrise showed 21 degrees, rising during the day to 33 degrees."

"This was the only time during December that the temperature fell below the freezing point, the cold spell lasting three days. During the entire winter there were twenty-four days that the thermometer registered less than 32 degrees, one-half the number being in January."

However, on at least one occasion according to old timers, it got cold enough here for Neuse river to freeze solid. As a boy we used to listen wide eyed to the story of a local gent who drove across the stream in his auto, from New Bern to Bridgeton. At this late date we're in no position to ascertain whether or not he was cold sober.

Memory plays tricks on all of us. Each of us during our lifetime experience several big snows, and looking back remember such blizzards as the rule rather than the exception. Apparently, from New Bern's earliest days to the present, honest to goodness snows have been few and far between.

Outsiders who move to this city from places where snow is commonplace are quite content to see few if any flakes tumbling out of the sky during fall and winter months. Perhaps it's the kid in us, but we still think even grumpy adults should welcome at least one good snow a year. Childhood just doesn't seem complete without a chance now and then to build a snow man.

It's easy to see where the late William F. (Bill) Pierce, beloved director of New Bern's Recreation Department, got his wonderful disposition from. His parents, well along in years, live a few doors from us in Bill and Jo's home, and they are delightful neighbors.

They moved here from Jacksonville, after their son and daughter-in-law passed away, to continue the home for Billy and Betty Jo. Last Sunday evening we (this editor and his wife, Hazel) dropped over to see the couple. We discovered that Mrs. Pierce was observing a birthday and Mr. Pierce would observe one the very next day.

It didn't occur to us to inquire as to the number of candles each was entitled to. They're both much too young in spirit to waste time adding up years. Smiling is as natural for them as swimming is for a fish, and their laughter has the merry tinkle of a bell resounding on a frosty night.

If you've never gotten around to visiting folks in their
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AND SOME CANDY—Pepe, a champion toy poodle owned by Florence Hanff and Fran Fulford of New Bern, listens attentively while his two month old son Paddy, perched in sleigh with back to camera, spiels off what he wants St. Nick to bring him. Paddy's dark fur is temporary. When he starts growing up, he'll have a silver coat just like his father. Pepe has brought considerable publicity to New Bern by win-

ning top awards in shows at Raleigh, Salisbury, Norfolk, Columbia, Charleston, Wilmington and High Point. Paddy hopes to be just as successful when he enters competition, but that's in the future. As of now, he is much more concerned with going to bed early on Christmas Eve like all good little youngsters should.—Photo by Wooten Moulton.