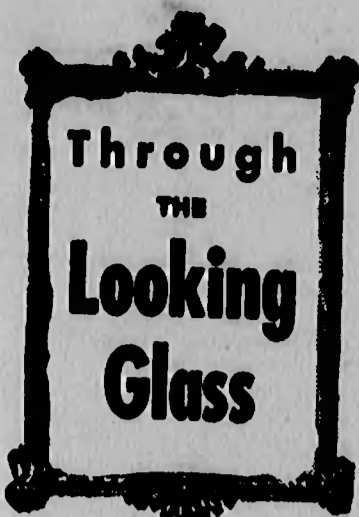


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Time doesn't march on, it gallops. Thousands of New Bernians felt instantly older when the announcement of Shirley Temple's bid for Congress mentioned that she will be 40 her next birthday.

One of our pleasant screen memories of Shirley is the tap dance she did with the greatest of all hoofers, Bill Robinson, affectionately known to millions as "Bo Jangles of Harlem."

Bill, a Negro, was born in Richmond, Va., and was a beloved person in that city. Each year, on the date of his birth, "Bill Robinson Day" was declared by Richmond's Mayor, and Robinson returned home to entertain at children's hospitals.

This happened in the town that describes itself as "Down Where The South Begins." White people didn't hate Bill, and Bill didn't hate white people. And when 10,000 turned out for his funeral in Harlem, there were plenty of whites in the throng.

Probably in these troubled times, Robinson would be called an "Uncle Tom" by some members of his race. Even so, he proved that a Negro with talent and goodness in his heart not only could succeed, but earn recognition as a much loved American.

We saw Bill Robinson only once, in 1939, performing in "The Hot Mikado" at the New York World's Fair. The man was so obviously wholesome and sincere that you took an immediate liking to him.

Broadway knew him well as the best tap dancer in the business. We might add that no one before him, or since his departure, ever challenged his reign as the king of them all.

Eleanor Powell, whose own nimble feet brought her movie fame, learned her best steps from Bo Jangles, and to this day the finest compliment you can pay any tapper is to say he is "almost as good" as Bill Robinson was.

Bill went for the light touch. He didn't stomp the boards, he caressed them. When we saw him at the World's Fair, he danced in close proximity to a sensitive microphone, and it picked up his beat like the ticking of a watch.

Robinson was not only a superb dancer, but a far better comedian than a lot of not so funny guys who are around today. His wisecracks may have been studiously rehearsed (though we doubt it) but they rippled as freely as a brook in early spring.

During a "Mikado" monologue, he told some of his World War I experiences, including the opportunity offered him to take a ride in an Army plane while on overseas duty.

"Don't be afraid," said the officer who offered him the trip, "you aren't going to die until it is your time to go." To which Bill replied, "I've heard that before, but what if it is the pilot's time to go?"

Robinson followed the same line of reasoning, when he fell flat on his face in the trenches every time he heard the whine of a shell headed in his direction.

"The time to worry," a buddy

(Continued on page 8)



CLOUD NINE—That's what Buzzy Holton was on, quite a few seasons back, at the moment this scene was snapped. Billie Slater, if we're not badly mistaken, is the winsome cheerleader embracing the exhausted New Bern High school lineman, after a thrilling Bruin victory. Buzzy, worn to a frazzle, appears to be drifting off into dreamland like a contented cat when he swallows double-yolk mouse with a single expansive

gulp. Life being what it is, Buzzy and Billie went their separate ways following graduation, both happily married to somebody else. In fact, this particular embrace was probably a random thing, in the midst of post-game excitement. At any rate, John R. Baxter, who recorded the sight for posterity, came up with a photograph that is as ageless in appeal as it is self-explanatory. We can't resist sharing it with you.