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A bystander, watching flames gut the historic Hughes home on Craven street last weekend, spread the word among other spectators that the venerable three - story brick dwelling place was once a hospital.

As is so often the case when people are quick to speak with authority, the information was wrong. It would have been right, had the informant pointed next door to the rambling frame house that used to be New Bern General hospital. And the Salvation Army building, just up the street, was in days long past Fairview hospital.

In dollars and cents, the loss of the stately structure, converted into a dozen apartments, proved quite a blow to occupants and the owner, Charles Toler. Beyond this, no amount of money could ever restore the rare woodwork destroyed by the raging fire. To those who cherish landmarks, for their intrinsic value and their memories, it was a tragedy.

One of the misconceptions held by many people is the belief that only those well along in years are enthusiastic about antiques. Any dealer will tell you that today a high percentage of the buyers are under 35, and most of them are shrewd and discriminating.

They aren't usually hasty in making a choice. As one dealer observes, "Our younger clients are vitally interested and are educating themselves to make wise and responsible purchases. Another adds that "Young people these days are closer to art and beauty than any generation we have seen."

As an investment, antiques at a reasonable price are as sound as any investment you can make. It may not always hold true, but up to now no antique has decreased in value, according to the experts. The longer you hold them, the more they're worth, especially high-priced items of the finest quality.

In fact, countless things, you have discarded through the years would bring a pretty price today. Remember the Mickey Mouse watch you threw away when it stopped ticking, and the Shirley Temple drinking cup that came in a box of cereal and ended up in the trash can when your kids grew up. You could sell them today for quite a tidy sum.

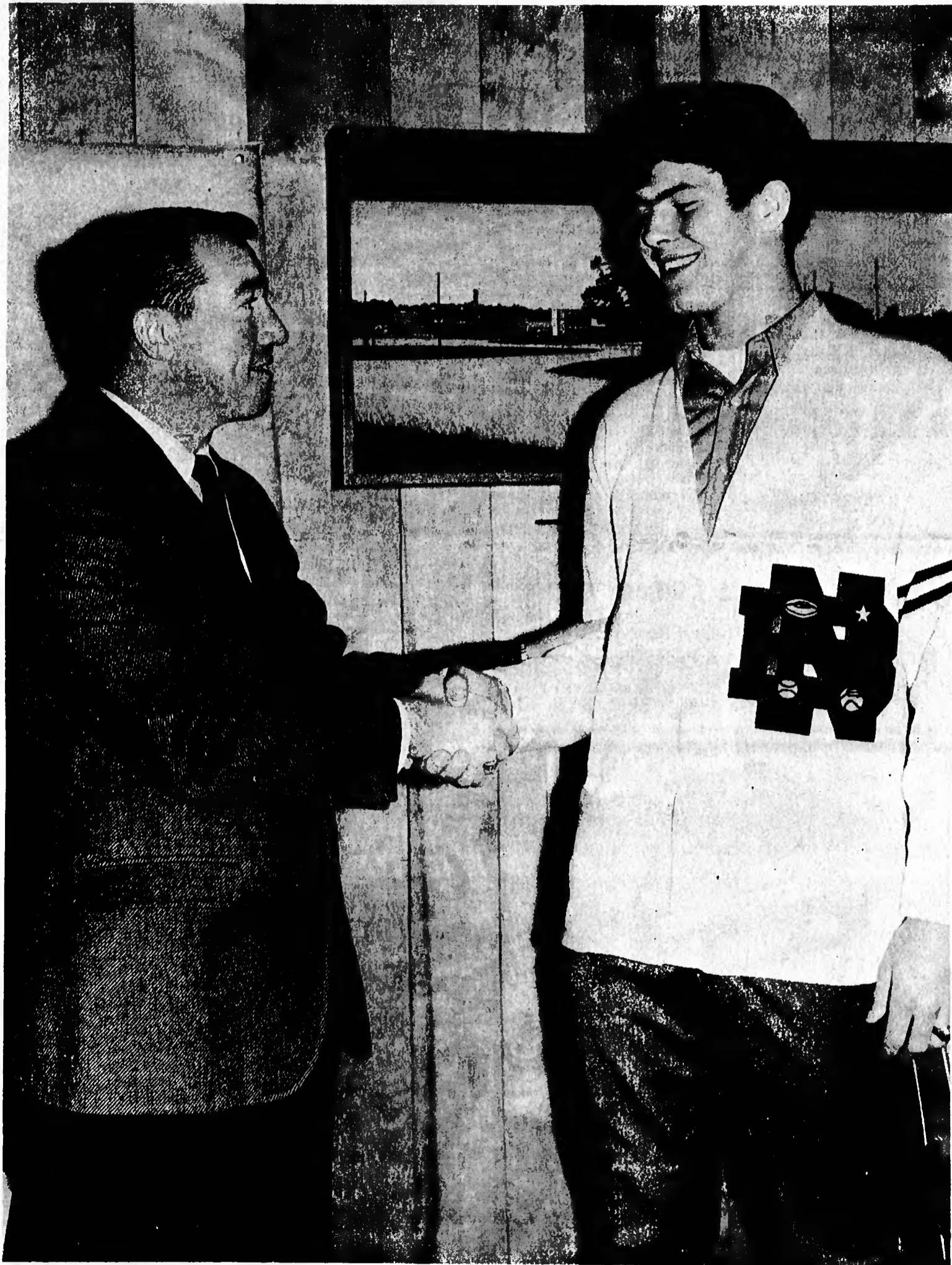
Irvin S. Cobb, whose short stories brought him lasting fame and so endeared him in his home town (Paducah, Kentucky) that schools, bridges, and just about everything else were named for him, realized belatedly that all things rare have value.

As humorous in person as his delightful fiction, Cobb hunted in these parts (at Camp Bryan) and described our upper Trent River as the most beautiful stream in the eastern United States. Quite a compliment from a man who had traveled widely, and viewed more than his share of scenery.

But getting back to his tardy appreciation of antiques, the loquacious and rather comical looking author recalled with keen regret how he and his family cleaned out the attic and threw away several hundred old

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New Bern-Craven County Public Library



Duke Coach Tom Harp and New Bern High School Quarterback Chuck Mohn make it official.
—Photo by Chick Natella.