



The NEW BERN MIRROR

PUBLISHED WEEKLY
IN THE HEART OF
EASTERN NORTH CAROLINA
Regional Library
400 Johnson St.
New Bern NC 28560

VOLUME 13

NEW BERN, N. C., FRIDAY, MARCH 27, 1970

NUMBER 2

Everybody is a soft touch for something, and our strongest weakness is any kid who happens to be out trying to sell the Grit.

Invariably, when he approaches us we see in him the little boy we used to be. And, to this very day it is painful to remember the disdainful looks and curt refusals you had to endure before someone came along who was willing to part with a nickel.

Close to 50 years ago the durable Williamsport weekly was much bulkier than the edition that now sells for three times the original price. There were several sections, and as an added inducement the purchaser got a colorful portrait of a President or somebody else quite important.

Here was a newspaper that had everything. Covered rather promptly with words and photographs were all the current events of national scope, and to seed in for good measure were pictures of two-headed cows, cats mothering a litter of orphaned puppies, and sundry other freakish things in the realm of nature.

There was a special section devoted to fiction, and full page of poems old and new. Editorials were pertinent and timely, and the comic strips were slanted to appeal to children from eight to eighty.

A nickel in those days looked as big as a country biscuit to the lads we grew up with, and was as hard to come by as a four leaf clover on a brick street. Apparently, adults didn't have too many of them either.

This or else just about everybody we tried to sell the Grit too was tighter than a girdle two sizes too small at the conclusion of a second helping of stewed chicken, with a bowl of butter beans as a side dish.

Peddling Cloverine salve or flower seeds to the neighbors was a picnic compared to disposing of a dozen copies of the Grit. Before you got rid of the last wrinkled copy you were certain to trudge all over town.

Included on the beat we staked out was the Union Station at the corner of Queen and Hancock streets. Counting the curious loafers who congregated to see who was coming to town on a train or leaving, you could figure on soliciting a lot of folks there.

Unfortunately, train passengers didn't exhibit the slightest interest in reading, maybe because of the cinders in their eyes. As for the loiterers, they were there to see the sights, including the ankles of mounting or dismounting feminine travelers.

Later, with our typical lack of juvenile shrewdness, we started peddling the Literary Digest. This publication was even harder to sell than the Grit. For one thing, it cost a whole dime, and its appeal was aimed at intellectuals.

We discovered that there weren't many intellectuals in New Bern. And besides, the individuals who qualified were dime squeezers with moths snoozing in their pocketbooks. Folks with brains, we learned, weren't free spenders.

No doubt about it, the Liter-



A LITTLE GIRL'S WONDER — As our thoughts turn, on Good Friday, to One Who publicly professed His love for children, this unposed portrait of a two year old pensively studying a flower holds more than ordinary appeal. Rhonda Michelle Caton, daughter of the Gary Catons of Route 1, New Bern, and granddaughter and great granddaughter of two of our valued Mirror subscribers, Mollie Stallings and Mollie Rountree, is not alone in her appreciation of blessings on us by God. When she is older, and capable of fuller comprehension, she will learn of and marvel at the greatest of all gifts from Heaven, the gentle Man of Galilee, Who died in agony that others might have life everlasting. The glorious revelation of an empty tomb remains the greatest news story the world has ever known. He is risen, and man has cause to be joyful.