



The NEW BERN

MIRROR

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Yesterday was when New Bern families that could afford it ate chicken every Sunday. Of course, if Thanksgiving or Christmas came on the Sabbath the routine was interrupted, because then you just had to have turkey.

As far back as thirty years ago, local housewives paid a third more for the gospel birds, so dubbed because preachers devoured them so ravenously, than they sell for on the supermarket today.

Now, chicken on the platter is an any-day repast, and hardly the delicacy you would serve to guests you are trying to impress with status symbols. Mostly it gets a going over when nobody is around but home folks.

Back in 1940, the average American consumed less than eighteen pounds of chicken annually. Today the figure is 47.6 pounds and chicken raising has grown in this land of ours to a \$4 billion operation.

A chicken can be produced today for 14 cents per pound, compared with 27 cents a pound as recently as ten years ago. If you have a weight problem, be glad you're not a chicken. It gains a pound for every 2½ pounds it eats. Yesterday, 1960 that is, 4 pounds of feed was needed to produce a pound.

The increase is almost as startling as the results reaped by a farmer in the old days who started mixing sawdust with the cracked corn he gave his prized hen. Eventually, he had her eating nothing but sawdust.

His day of reckoning came when he put a setting of 13 eggs under her. When the biddies hatched, 12 of them had wooden legs, and the other one was a woodpecker. After that, he went back to just cracked corn.

Much of the credit for popularizing the fowl belongs to Colonel Sanders, whose Kentucky Fried Chicken chain sold 600 million pounds of his take-home or eat-on-the-road delicacy in 1969. The 1970 figure, when available, will no doubt surpass that.

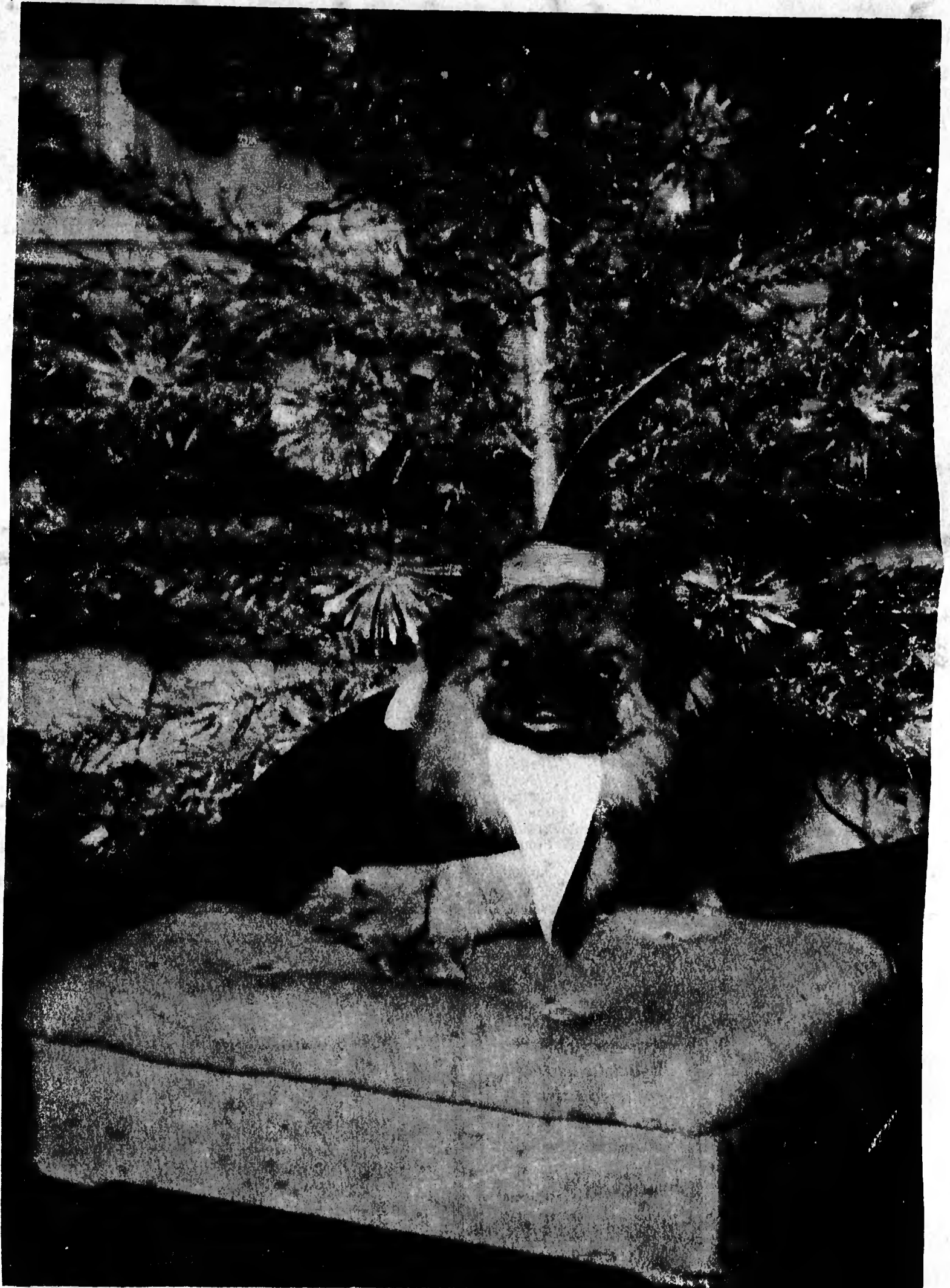
If, perchance, you visit England or Japan, you'll find the Colonel's product on sale there too. The firm he founded aims to set up franchises all over the world.

Less famous, but quite successful, is Chicken Delight, Incorporated. At last report, it was turning out 300 million pounds a year. That's only half as much as the Colonel's output, but the concern anticipates a billion pound annual sale by 1976.

If this sounds rather fantastic, consider the fact that Americans are already spending \$35 billion a year on away-from-home food, an experts predict that the figure will double in 10 years.

So prolific is the production of chicken, at a rather low cost, that there is already talk of learning heavily on it to feed the world's mounting population in the years ahead.

Until 10 years ago, the United States didn't export much chicken, except to Canada. Now we're sending it everywhere to



GOT INTO THE ACT—Just to prove that humans aren't the only ones who can play the role of Santa Claus, Puff Ball donned Kris Kringle attire, complete with beard, during the Christmas holidays and posed for this Mirror portrait. For those who don't know who Puff Ball is, he's the Pekingese who reigns supreme at the home of Mrs. James M. West on East Front Street. No wonder the frisky canine gent considers himself the

rightful ruler of all he surveys. Starting with Honey, a third of a century ago, his ancestors have maintained an absolute monarchy in the West residence. Puff Ball is a ham of the first order, and was quite pleased to impersonate the patron saint of children while Eunice Wray clicked her camera. Are you own dogs misbehaving? Show them this picture, and warn them they'd better be good.

(Continued on Page 8)