



# The NEW BERN MIRROR

Regional Library  
400 Johnson St.  
New Bern NC 28560

PUBLISHED WEEKLY  
IN THE HEART OF  
EASTERN NORTH  
CAROLINA  
5¢ Per Copy

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Yesterday was when New Bern boys and their rural cousins in the outside reaches of Craven County relished reading the Nick Carter dime novels. Ma and Pa didn't approve, so it had to be done on the sly.

That could be easily arranged. Youngsters sneaked the volumes into the privacy of Chick Sales powder rooms, or got in back of the woodshed for a glorious excursion into the realms of forbidden fiction.

There wasn't anything obscene or off color about the reading matter. The only reason parents vigorously objected was that male juveniles neglected their school books to peruse the stories from cover to cover.

Since the novels came out once a week, it did require considerable time to keep abreast of the latest exploits of Carter, Dick Merrill, Bob Esterbrook, and Dick Slater.

New Bern lads purchased their prints from a book shop operated by Sam Waters on Middle street, for a nickel apiece. They were called dime novels, but at that time they were nickel novels, here on the shores of the Neuse and Trent.

There were a lot more boys than there were available nickels, so three local brothers, Bruce, Lacey, and Roy Edgerton came up with the bright idea of opening a library for kids who were short on funds.

After reading the latest editions to their heart's content, the enterprising trio then rented them to neighborhood chums for a penny apiece. The penny entitled the borrower to keep the book for a whole week.

Fast readers ganged up among themselves to see that some of the pennies did double or triple duty. Of course, the preferred perusal route was at a leisurely gait that permitted full digestion of the marvelous exploits.

Back in those days there were very few magazines on the market. One of them was Leslie's Weekly. Hence, when the dime novels first came into being in the Gay Nineties, they had little competition.

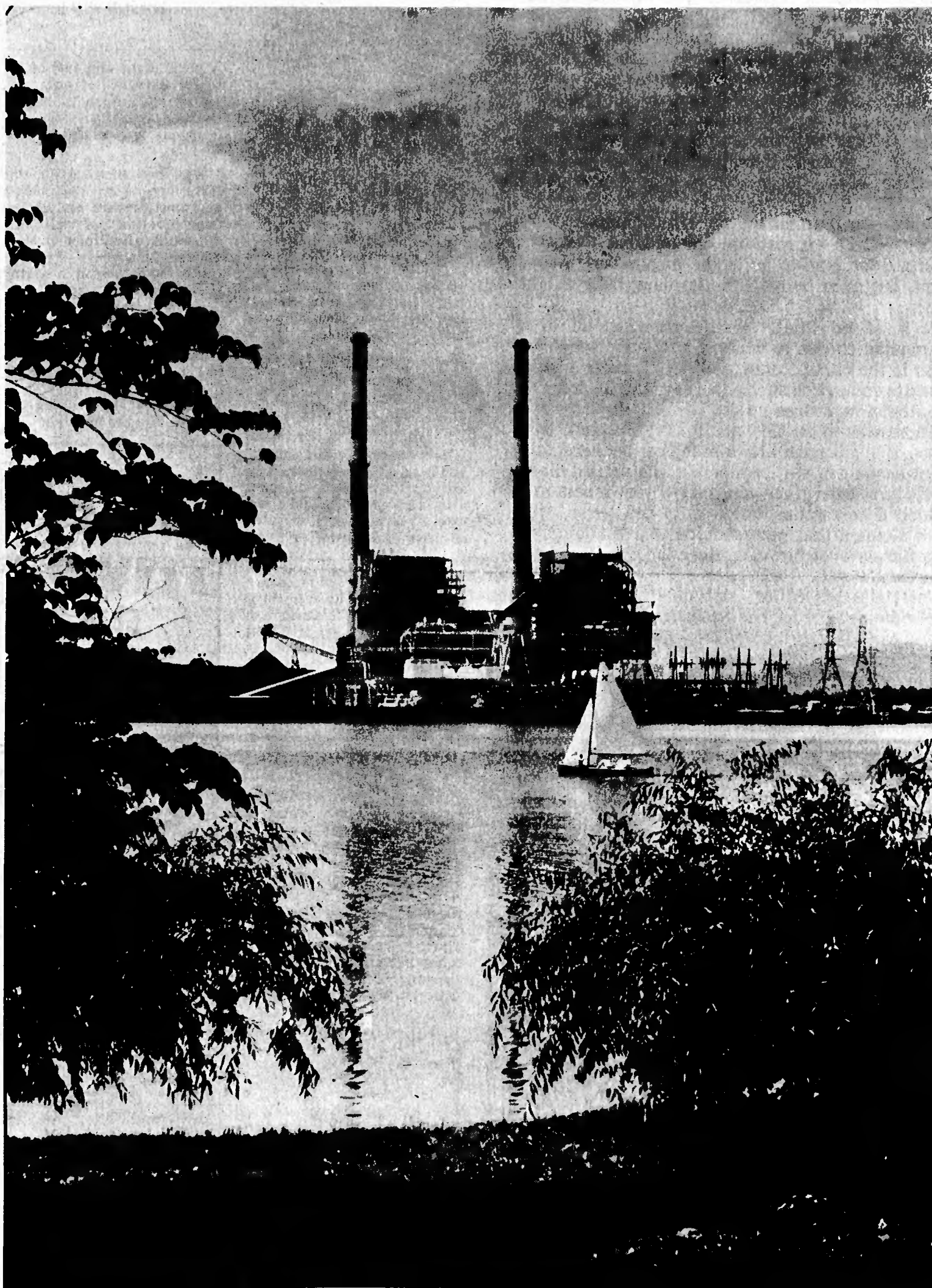
They didn't give up the ghost until the First World War. Don't discount the possibility they may one day flourish again. After all, who expected the old time westerns, popular principally in the South, to get a new lease on life on world television?

As a matter of fact, the millions of paperbacks sold today stem from those original dime novels. Some of the shadier ones sell far faster than Nick Carter did, since filth finds a ready market.

Unless you've reached your sixtieth birthday, you probably have no recollection of Nick Carter. You should however, if you're ten years younger, remember Tom Swift, who was the central figure in many hardback novels.

Tarzan was one of your boyhood favorites too. Edgar Rice Burroughs invented the character, and made millions

(Continued on page 8)



**NEW GENERATION**—The second unit (left) of Carolina Power & Light Co.'s Asheville electric generating plant was dedicated at an Asheville Chamber of Commerce breakfast on July 29, 1971. The 194,000 kilowatt unit was completed in a record

two years, and increases CP&L's capacity in Western North Carolina by 60 percent. Both the new unit and the initial 200,000 kilowatt unit completed in 1964 represent an investment of approximately \$54 million.