



The NEW BERN

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Yesterday was when turning back the clock was an easy accomplishment for any traveler, if not entirely pleasant, who reached the tree-bordered banks of Neuse river, six miles north of New Bern.

There, where low-hanging Spanish moss flourished like a hermit's whiskers, Street's ferry had survived the centuries. What it did for George Washington it was now doing in obsolete awkwardness for fretful wayfarers.

Considering the fact that the General once made a wintry crossing of the Delaware in an open skiff, it is reasonable to assume his voyage over the narrow Neuse during the April weather of 1791 was almost a lark.

Modern motorists, accustomed to good roads and adequate bridges, weren't inclined to be similarly agreeable. Whatever the reason, they scowled at the wheezy gas engine that had supplanted the poles of Washington's era, and gazed uneasily at the cables used by the ferry along its rippling route.

Their animosity was understandable. Frequently, the State-operated outfit ceased to function, bringing undue inconvenience to countless citizens, particularly those hapless individuals who dwelled in the section between Spring Garden and Vanceboro.

Since the distance from Vanceboro to New Bern, by way of Spring Garden, is several miles shorter than it is along heavily traversed U. S. Highway 17, many motorists endured the inconvenience of the ferry.

This draining of traffic from one of the most congested thoroughfares on the Atlantic Coast made for safer driving. And, considering the frequent fatalities on the blood spattered stretch, safety was no minor factor.

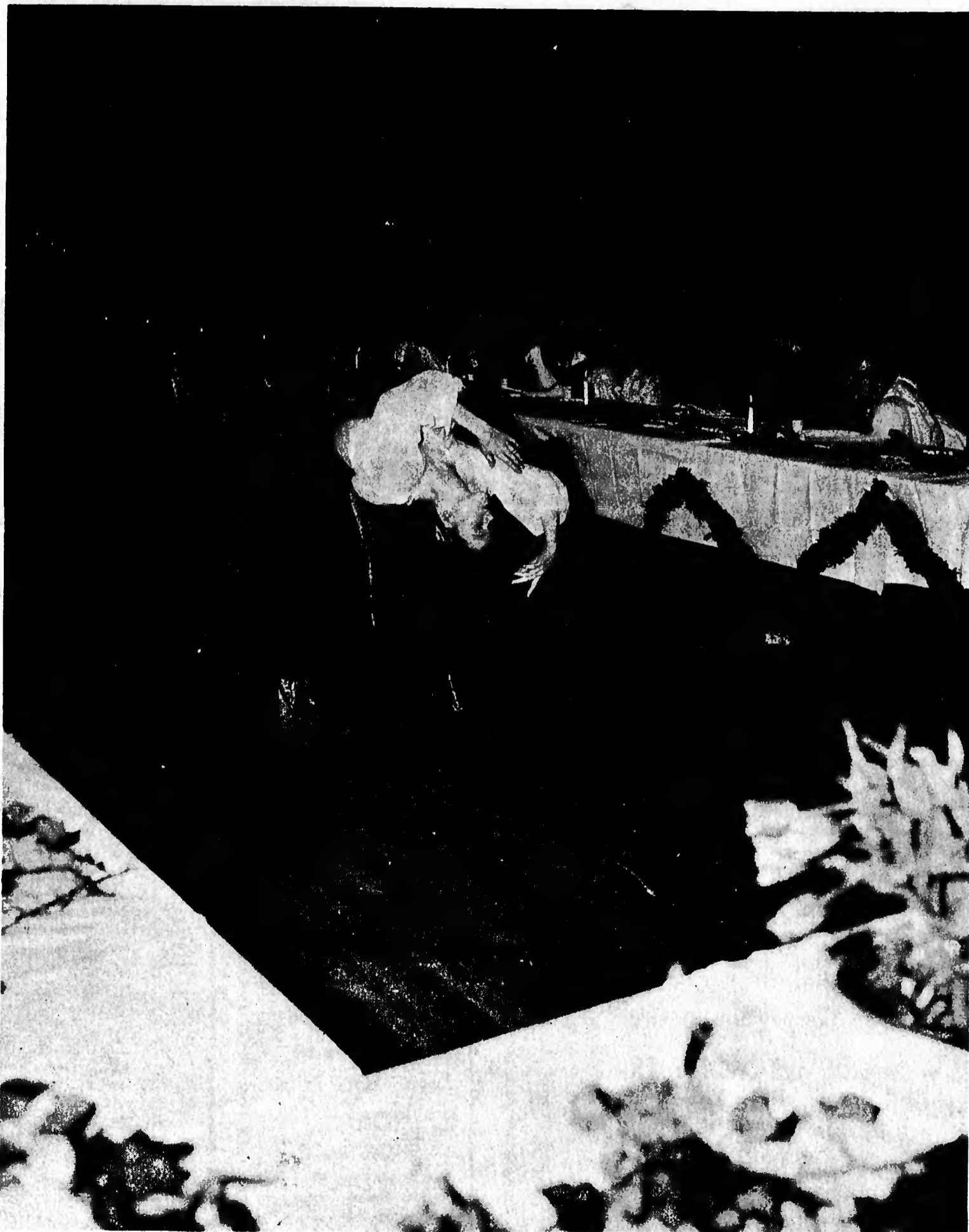
Street's ferry, at best, was a costly antique. Only a small percentage of North Carolina's population had occasion to ride on it, and fume at its limitations, but every Tar Heel taxpayer contributed to the upkeep. A fortune was spent through the years for repairs, replacements, and maintenance.

Residents of the section complained over the undisputed fact that the ferry was often out of commission. In many instances a motorist wasn't aware of his predicament until he arrived at the river bank.

Instead of shortening his trip, as he planned to do, the disgruntled traveler was forced to double back for miles, and then take the long way around anyhow. By this time he was fit to be tied.

Extremely unfortunate were the occasions when an ill person was involved. Often told was the story of a man who was woefully sick, and headed for the home of relatives. He couldn't get across the ferry, and sat in the darkness for an

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BUDDING STAR—There's a story behind this previously unpublished photo. The oriental dancer seen performing in the 1950 edition of New Bern High school's Roman Banquet, presented by Latin students of Mrs. Laura Rhodes, was destined for

bigger things. Later, Mickey Gunnerson appeared on Broadway in Pajama Game and Pink Tights, and in a Benny Goodman TV spectacular, Swing To Spring. She made her stage debut at five in the Yuletide Revue.

