



The NEW BERN

MIRROR

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Yesterday was when just about every boy in town did his first swimming naked as a jaybird, off New Bern's docks. The guano warehouse on lower East Front, and the Pocomoke in Riverside, drew dozens of skinny dippers daily.

Yesterday was when any guy foolish enough to pull out a pack of cigarettes in a crowd of loiterers had the coffin nails pounced on immediately. The smart way was to keep a pack exposed with a single cigarette in it.

Nobody ever took your last cigarette. On the sly you could keep the rest of your smokes concealed, and fish one out to replenish the empty pack as needed. Unless you rolled your own, the Depression switched you to Wings.

As for cigars, New Bernians puffing expensive brands today used to reap pleasure from two for a nickel stogies in the late Twenties and early Thirties. Remember those El Reesos, Robert Fultons, and King Edwards?

Yesterday was when any local movie fan could cite you several instances where not just one but a number of stars beamed in the same family. At that time the Barrymoores (John, Lionel and Ethel) were still exclusively on stage.

Shuffle your recollections, and maybe you'll recall Norma, Constance, Natalie and Richard Talmadge, as well as those popular cowboy brothers, Dustin, Franklin and William Farnum.

Maurice Costello, the silver screen's top matinee idol in the early days, fathered a pair of lovely daughters who made it big too, Delores and Helene. Douglas Fairbanks, Sr., had a less famous brother, William.

Incidentally, in the realm of western stars, everybody remembers that Roy Rogers did his riding on Trigger, but how about Tom Mix and Fred Thompson? Give up? Tom's trusted steed was Tony, and Fred straddled Silver King.

Yesterday was when owning an Atwater Kent radio was a status symbol in our town. On a good night you could pick up KDKA in Pittsburgh and WLW in Cincinnati through the ever present static.

Yesterday was when nobody else around here had a laugh like Squib Moore's. We always thought it was sort of put on, but he unleashed it frequently, especially at the pool hall and riding in his roadster. You could hear it in James City, and some parts of Bridgeton.

Yesterday was when the thought of eating breakfast in bed held no appeal for even the most pampered New Bernian. You woke up in a room that was freezing cold, and what you craved was a chance to roast your posterior by the coal heater or fireplace downstairs.

Yesterday was when Bob Pugh, Shorty Kafer, and Rip Summerell needed vaseline or something of the sort to control their unruly hair. Time took care of that. Now, with a lot more face, all they need is a



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COLDER BY THE MINUTE—Uncovered ruts are mute evidence that snow has ceased to fall, for awhile, but heavy skies will make good their promise of a real blanket of white. We know this, for the year was 1899, and February's blizzard was descending on New Bern. We know too that the temperature was dropping, since the cart on your left had made no tracks, nor had the pedestrians. Before the impending storm abated, both the Neuse and Trent

would freeze over, and hapless New Bernians would shiver miserably in homes that couldn't be warmed adequately. Speaking of the Neuse, it is visible at the far end of this hazy thoroughfare, for you are gazing down Pollock, between Craven and East Front. Incidentally, we are grateful to all of the many, here and in far off places, who have expressed keen interest in our current series of rare pictures from the past.—Photo from Albert D. Brooks Collection.

