



The NEW BERN MIRROR

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D. T. Midyette
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Yesterday was when New Bern housewives didn't get green stamps with their groceries, but could count on premiums derived from a batch of Octagon soap coupons.

Yesterday was when folks took a dose of Arm & Hammer soda if they had what is now termed stomach distress. Tums for the tummy weren't around.

Yesterday was when no one would have known what you were talking about if you had brought up the subject of faulty elimination, over the back fence.

Yesterday was when families in our town didn't eat most of their meals in the kitchen. Parlors, not dining rooms, saw use only periodically.

Yesterday was when virtually all babies were delivered at home, and the stork had to know who lived where. Now he just heads for the hospital.

Yesterday was when the only parking problem a fellow had was persuading his date to pause on a lovers lane. Drive-in theatres later remedied that.

Yesterday was when laborers at New Bern's several lumber mills didn't tote a dinner pail to work. Their younguns fetched them a freshly cooked meal from uptown at noon.

Yesterday was when a chemistry teacher at New Bern High school curbed gum chewing in class. He made you dip your wad in a jar of Epsom salts, and chomp it until the bell rang.

Yesterday was when no gal in town could quote her vital statistics. She didn't need a tape measure to tell if her clothes were well filled out.

Yesterday was when you couldn't have purchased canned dog and cat food anywhere in town. Pets thrived on scraps from the table, and there was always enough to go around.

Yesterday was when cigarette manufacturers gave up trying to induce decent women to smoke publicly on city streets. Like dipping snuff, it was done mostly at home, or at the house of a close friend.

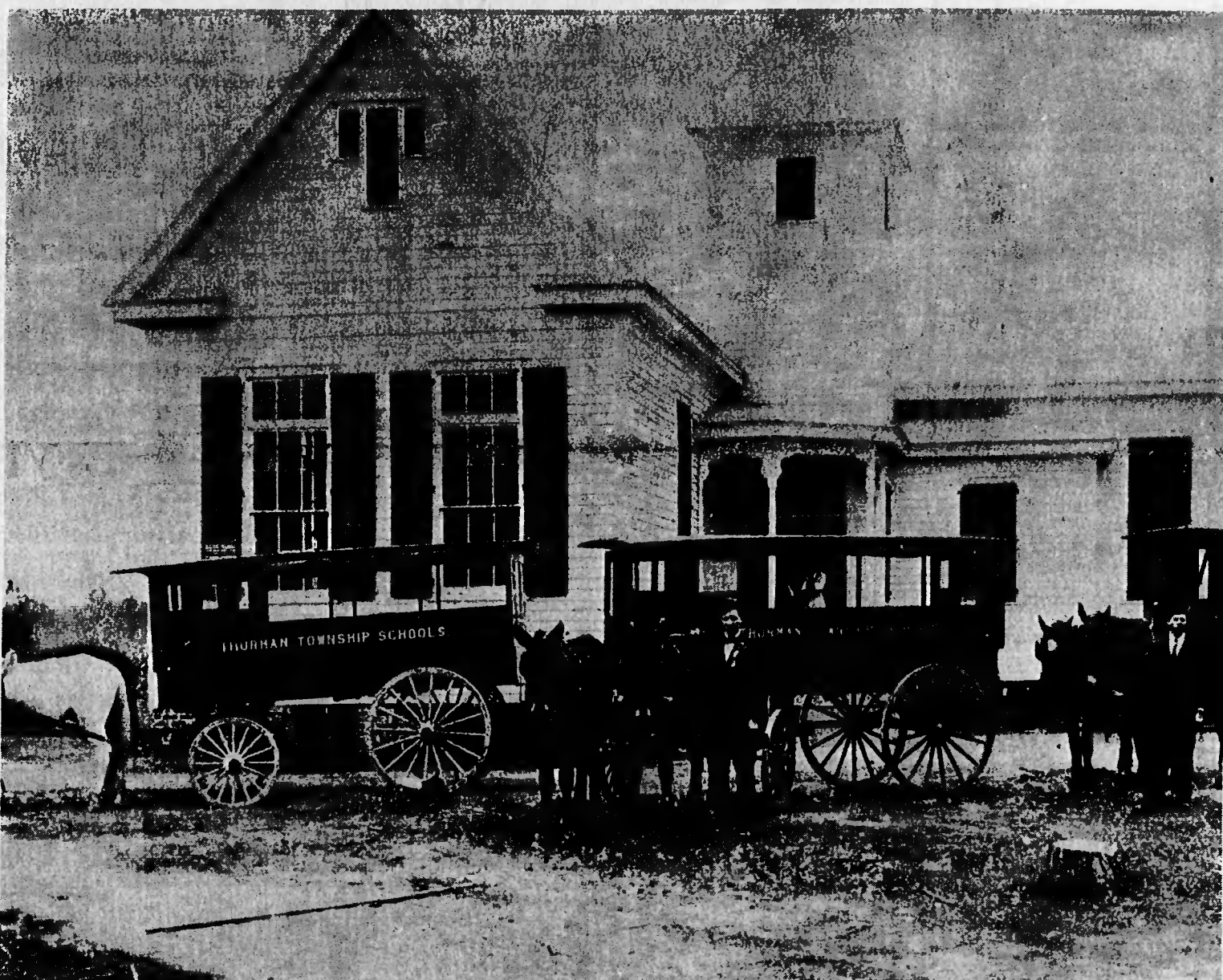
Yesterday was when masculine teen agers would have shaved earlier, if they hadn't been so scared of experimenting with their old man's straight razor. Our own first attempt was a gory disaster, perpetrated on the sly.

Yesterday was when New Bern's financial center wasn't one of our established banks, but a converted fruit stand on upper Broad Street where the Big Apple operated.

Money invested in the get rich quick scheme by grasping New Bernians and out of towners drew a whopping interest each week. This was supposedly made possible by lending the money at double this interest.

It was, of course, the old Ponzi game. There's doubt that anyone was gullible enough to believe the Big Apple wouldn't turn sour, but everybody counted on making a killing and getting out.

Money came in so fast that it was actually tossed into bushel



ONCE UPON A TIME—School busing to achieve racial balance is of recent origin, but not the hauling of rural children to reach a center of learning. As far back as 60 years ago, Thurman School, right here in Craven County, had the horse and mule drawn vehicles seen here. They were the first in North Carolina. Riding for miles in these crude coaches was no picnic, especially in cold weather, but it beat sloshing through the mud. Kids who lived shorter distances from the school were reconciled to long walks daily in sunshine and rain.

There wasn't a hot meal in a cafeteria available at lunch hour. You toted what you ate from home in a brown sack, and likely as not it contained collard biscuits. That's the way it was in 1912, out in Thurman township. There was no rioting, and if you broke bad you were whipped twice, once by the teacher and again when you got back to your house. Prayer in the classroom hadn't been banned to humor a protesting atheist, and nobody claimed that God is dead. We've come a long way since then, or have we?

