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Yesterday was when, on a January day in 1959, two little boys played roles in a murder trial we covered for the state press at Craven County Court House. Fortunately, neither knew the gravity of the situation.

That's one of the many blessings of early childhood. The grief and worry experienced by adults in so many instances doesn't get a grip on those of tender years. More than enough heartaches come later.

One of the little boys, just three years old, was seated with his Mother and Daddy. His father had blasted a hole in the back of another man, as the unsuspecting victim walked toward a nearby automobile he would never reach.

As for the other little boy, four years old, he was busy drawing the typewritten names of prospective jurors from a hat. Some of those jurors would determine life or death for the first child's father.

That's the way a murder trial is handled. Selection of the list was very carefully and very fairly arrived at. The four year old boy couldn't read, or course, but, even so, the hat was covered with a handkerchief.

We've never seen two kids anywhere who were better behaved. They sat quietly for hours, as dignified as a deacon presiding over the Amen pew on Sunday morning. No sign of restlessness, no trace of mischief.

Getting 12 qualified jurors wasn't easy. Time and again, either the prosecuting Solicitor, or attorneys for the defendant, exercised their prerogative and declined to approve a man or woman whose name had been drawn.

The list of prospective jurors was exhausted, and eptuels took to the streets and shops of downtown New Bern to summon more citizens for possible serving. The two little boys and others awaited their arrival.

In the end, none of the jurors had to pass judgment. The accused man pleaded guilty to manslaughter, and was sentenced. Then the two little boys no longer had reason to be in court. Never having met, they went home.

Yesterday was when Peston Robinson dropped out of public school. Not because he thought he knew more than the teacher, but to support his invalid father and his mother.

New Bern lost, when Pres died the other day, a remarkably well read man. Years before, through outside study, he had earned the equivalent of a High school diploma, and followed this with courses in law enforcement.

His religious faith was deep and abiding, and his quest for knowledge extended to all creeds. There are, we daresay, many local members of other denominations who know less about their own church than Robinson knew.

He grew up in our neighborhood, but we can't remember a time when he



Becky Wayne and Mary Lib Gardner in an early Yuletide Revue.

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