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Yesterday was when small towners considered fame and fortune in the Big City the goal to aim for. Present woes in large centers of population, and the exodus of those able to leave, has dimmed the enchantment.

Most mortals who live in or visit a metropolis are bugged by realization that, crowded among millions, the average individual doesn't count for much. In short, the urge to matter takes a bad beating.

As a sage has written, no man is an island unto himself, but like it or not, isolation is forced upon hapless mortals in, for example, New York City. With little chance to evaluate strangers, suspicion and hostility incubate.

For our part, we're enough of an incurable if somewhat obnoxious extrovert to maneuver folks into conversation on our very few trips to the Big Town. Somewhere someone hungers to talk and be talked to.

Yesterday was when, next to Gene Austin's biggest sellers, My Blue Heaven and Melancholy Baby, the phonograph record most in demand around New Bern was Johnnie Marvin's Old Man Sunshine, Little Boy Blue Bird.

Austin, of course, stood alone. Wonder how many of you oldsters still can recall, as we do his Jeanine, I Dream of Lilac Time; But I Do, You Know I Do; Tamiami Trail; Memories of France; Some Day Sweetheart; At Peace With The World; In My Bouquet of Memories; and Lonesome Road.

Bing Crosby hadn't arrived then, but very soon would get his first break, teaming with Harry Barris and Bill Bailey as the Rythm Boys, featured with Paul Whiteman's orchestra.

Only one of the vocal trio to make it big in later years was Bing. He never forgot the others, however, when fame singled him out. Bailey was gone, but Crosby made it a point to use Barris in every movie he made.

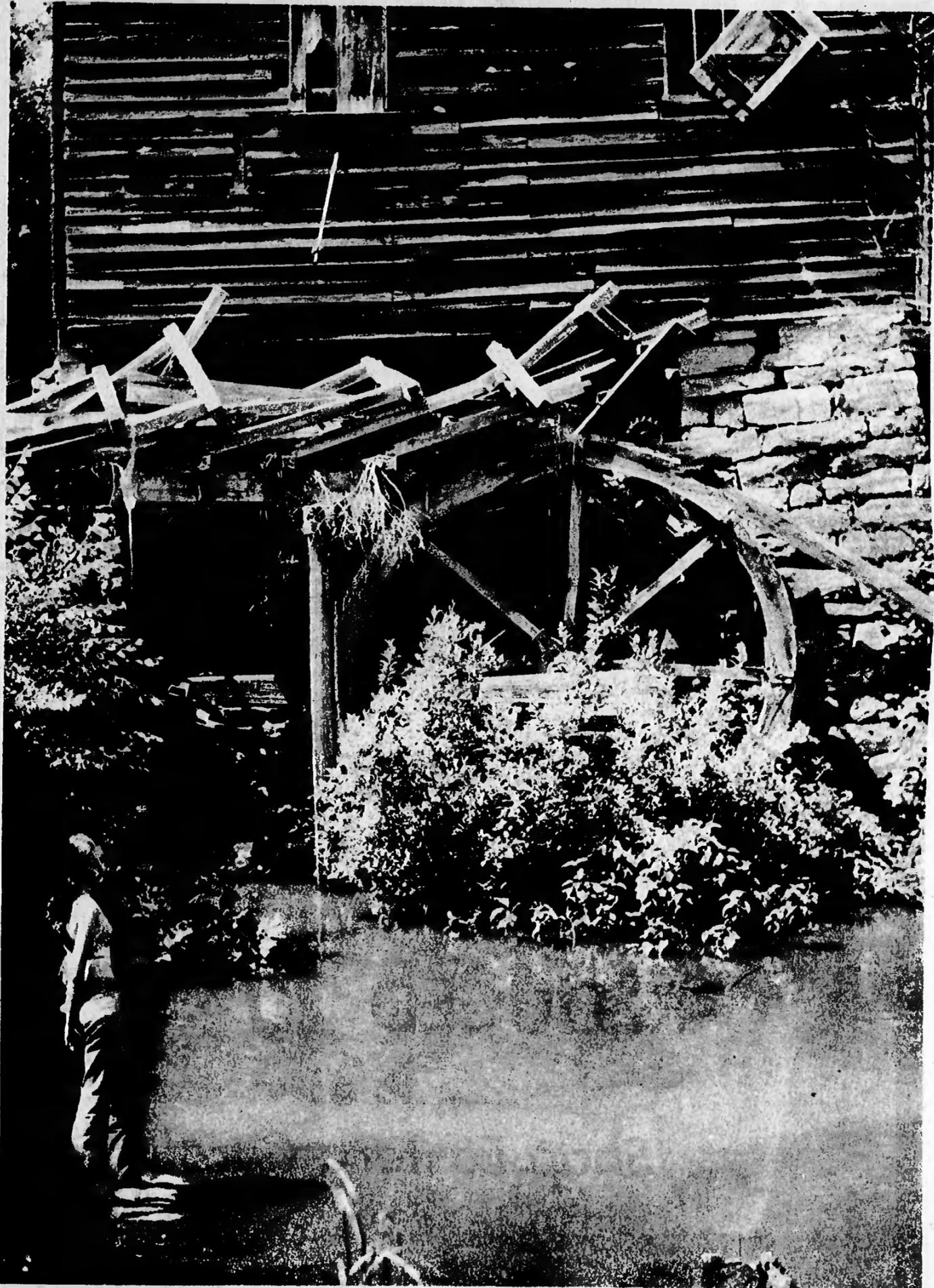
Getting back to the Austin era, it was a wondrous span that also produced Ruth Etting, discovered by Florenz Ziegfeld and quickly starred in his Follies on Broadway.

On New Bern's music counters too were the records of Fats Waller, and incomparable jazz pianist. He was also an exceptional organist. Victor didn't overlook this fact, and placed him at the console repeatedly.

Big and boisterous, and given to beer drinking during performances at night spots, Fats wrote songs on the side. Not wild stuff, but things like Honeysuckle Rose, and I'm Flying High But I've Got A Feeling I'm Falling.

New Bernians scrimped to pay 75 cents for Victor records at Fuller's Music House and William T. Hill's, and the same amount for Columbia records at C. D. Thomas Music Company. Even nickels and dimes were scarce then, but people would rather listen to music than eat a

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There's nothing like an old mill, on a lazy summer day, to fill a restless heart with peace, and bid one's fancy stray.—Photo by Jack Layne Chick's & Jack's Studio.

