



The NEW BERN

# MIRROR

PUBLISHED WEEKLY  
IN THE HEART OF  
EASTERN NORTH  
CAROLINA  
James P. McCoy  
167 Allston St.  
W. Medford Mass. 02155

VOLUME 16

NEW BERN, N. C. 28560, FRIDAY, DECEMBER 7, 1973

NUMBER 38

Our belated thanks to C. W. (Bill) Smith, Jr., for bringing to our attention the fact that famed Jules Verne, who wrote *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under The Sea*, also penned a novel dealing with New Bern.

Billy, whose quest for rare books puts him in the class of another local sleuth, Charles Duffy, Jr., was understandably elated when he discovered that Verne's *For the Flag* repeatedly refers to our town.

The story begins with receipt of a card by the Director of Healthful House on 15th June, 1890, on which was scribbled in pencil: "On board the schooner *Ebba*, at anchor at Newburn, Pamlico Sound."

In the succeeding paragraph, Verne, explains for his readers that "Newburn in North Carolina is situated at the farther end of the estuary of the Neuse, which flows into Pamlico Sound, a vast salt-water lake protected by a natural breakwater of islands and islets."

Further along in the novel, that largely centers here, the author tells how "the *Ebba* turned her head eastwards to follow the left bank of the Neuse. About fifteen miles from Newburn the river bends suddenly, winding toward the north-west, and then getting wider.

"Having reached the bend, the *Ebba* veered towards the north, close to the wind, along the left bank. It was eleven o'clock when, favoured by the breeze and without having met either cruiser or steam launch, she rounded the point of the island of Sivan, beyond which begins Pamlico Sound."

Since you may, in due time, have an opportunity to read *For The Flag*, we won't spoil your enjoyment by elaborating on the narrative. Sufficient to say that Verne, a globally recognized master of science fiction, didn't hurt his reputation in writing it.

In his *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under The Sea*, Verne wrote about the submarine almost thirty years before it was invented, and he also used the airplane and the automobile in his stories.

So uncanny was the French writer in accurately foretelling the future, that his novels are no longer so fantastic as they seemed when they were first published.

There is even speculation that Thomas Roch's *Fulgurator*, as described by Verne in *For The Flag*, is a forecast of the atomic bomb. It is pointed out that the two weapons have enough in common to make the idea plausible.

Born in Nates in 1828, he lived a remarkable life. He studied law in Paris, and at twenty helped write the librettos, or words for several operas. He wrote unsuccessful plays before he turned to novels and penned a best seller titled *Five Weeks*



"WHY SURE I'M SANTA CLAUS"

(Continued on page 8)