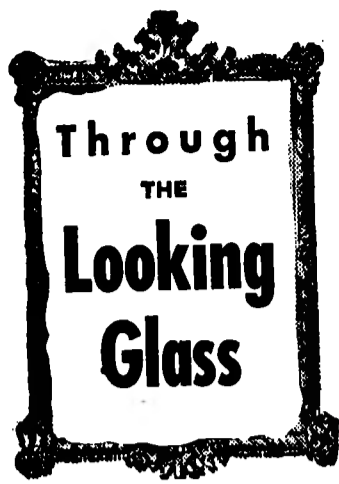


MIRROR

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It happens several times a year, here in New Bern, and in music stores elsewhere across the nation and around the world. Excited individuals visualizing a fortune, come scurrying with cheaply made, inexpensive fiddles that they firmly believe are newly discovered Stradivarius violins.

What fools the owners is a printed label inside the instrument that reads "Antonius Stradivarius Cremonensis Faci — at, Anno 1730." Or the date may read 1725, 1731, or any of the many other years in the career of a master craftsman whose artistry was beyond compare.

Unfortunately, the violins that turn up in this fashion are only reproductions, and there are thousands just like them that you can buy for little more than a song. It's a keen disappointment to folks who possess the instruments when they learn their true value, especially if they've already figured out what they intend to do with sudden wealth.

Reid Fuller, down at Fuller's Music House, tells us that the government passed legislation approximately 40 years ago that requires the word COPY on all such labels. Hence, if the label in your particular violin doesn't include this word, it is reasonable to assume that your fiddle is close to a half century old or older.

According to experts, your chances of finding an honest to goodness Stradivarius violin in existence are practically nil. There are between 300 and 400 of the famed violins in existence. Most of them are catalogued, we are told, and they all bear nicknames. If by some miraculous act of fate you do find the genuine article, you will indeed get more pocket money for it than you can conveniently tote.

In the event you're skeptical when Reid or Andy Fuller tells don't have to take their word for you that your fiddle is nothing more than a cheap imitation, you it. You can get an expert appraisal by shipping the instrument to John A. Gould & Son, 230 Boylston street, Boston Mass. A simple appraisal, which is probably all you'll need, is given for five dollars. An appraisal requiring research will cost you 15 dollars or more, depending on the research necessary.

Violins, as we know them today, were perfected in Italy in the latter half of the 16th century. Born in a little town named Cremona, near Venice, Antonio Stradivari's superb contribution to the art of fiddle making was the manner in which he fashioned with extreme delicacy the curves and arches of the violin body, and yet made the instrument strong and resonant.

Stradivari didn't roam afar to find the wood for his violins. He selected the wood of a certain type of pine that grew on the hillsides just outside his home town. He tried every available oil and finish until he came up with a varnish that gave his instruments a rich amber color.

Science, despite great strides made in the centuries since, has never been able to duplicate this varnish, or even approach its incomparable beauty. The secret went with Antonio to his grave, or else was soon lost by those with whom he worked. At any rate, the mystery of his know how is still a baffling mystery, after all these many years.

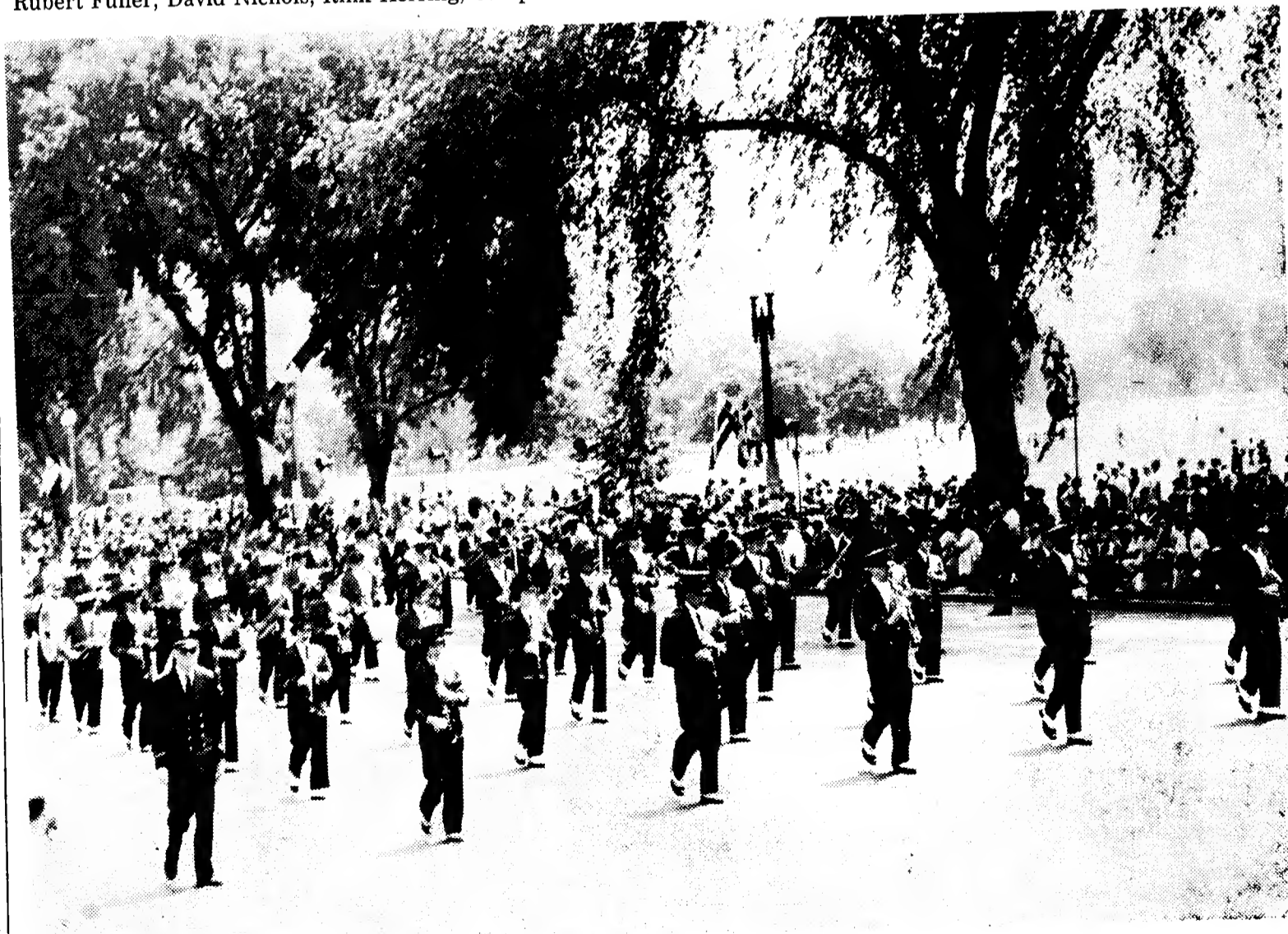
So conscientious was this gentle craftsman that in his old age, when his eyesight was failing, he refused to permit his name to be signed to the instruments he created. Perhaps they were just as perfect as the violins he fashioned from boyhood, but he was fearful that some minor flaw might go unnoticed.

(Continued on Page 8)



HARD TO BELIEVE—Celia Ferebee and Anna Gillikin performed a miracle when they got members of their Christ Church kindergarten still long enough to have a picture made. First row, left to right, are Grace Hancock, Beverly Lipman, Lena Johnson, Becky Taylor, Susan King, Andy Little, Allie Taylor, Bill Ward, Kathy Copley, Bill Willis and Susan Marie Rankin. Second row, Martha Ward, Caren Lipman, Suellen Stanley, Johnny Green, Gregg Andrews, Rubert Fuller, David Nichols, Rink Herring, Camp Simons,

West Wheeler, Vicki Stanley. Third row, Wes Minton, Ellen Freeman, Joe Anderson, Marjorie Warren, Jeffrey Corbett, Mike Yarborough, Ed Bell, Bennet White, Frank Gwaltney, Peggy Millns, Cindy Johnson, Graham Barden, Marjorie Rose Disosway. Fourth row, Greg McCall, Cathy Coleman, Annette Willis, George Hancock, Joe Barker, Clark Cushman, Stephen Dunn, Susie Rose, Margaret Stevens, April Kear, Rhondel Canupp, Edmund Taylor.—Photo by John R. Baxter.



NEW BERN HIGH SCHOOL'S AWARD WINNING BAND MARCHES TO TOP RECOGNITION IN NATION'S CAPITAL