



Through  
THE  
Looking  
Glass

The NEW BERN

# MIRROR

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Yesterday was when George R. Fuller, driving a team of horses hitched to a wagon, pulled up in front of S. H. Scott's livery stable on Middle Street.

From Abbeyville, in south Georgia, where he was born on a farm 25 years earlier, to New Bern, a town he had never seen, was a right far piece. Fuller didn't mind. He knew in advance where he wanted to spend the rest of his days.

His mind was made up months before, when he bought a Randy McNally map for 15 cents while peddling organs from his wagon in Georgia and South Carolina. New Bern, he noted on the map, ought to be a good spot for a fellow who liked to mix business with hunting.

Mr. Scott agreed to put his team up for the night, told him how to reach a first rate boarding house, and Fuller went his way. Next day he rented a vacant store on Craven Street, along about where Mike's Place is now.

Stocking it with organs and pianos was no problem. Manufacturers already knew him as the man who would order a carload of organs shipped to a town he was headed for with his wagon.

When he arrived in the town, always a complete stranger, he would put three organs on the wagon and cover the countryside. Stopping at farm houses, he would play a few chords, drawl his sincere, soft-sell pitch, and come back the next day, or the next with an empty wagon.

Somebody was always happy to put Fuller up for the night. It was clear, right off, that he was decent and respectable, and he talked a dirt farmer's language. He could tell some corking good stories, too, after supper.

First and last, Big George was a peddler. Sticking around his newly opened store here didn't exactly strike his fancy. Day in and day out, in those early years, he would load up the wagon and strike out for virgin territory.

Fuller well recalled his first trip to Pamlico County. After he crossed the bridge from New Bern, he turned the reins loose and let his team pick out which way to go. It didn't matter to him, and probably not much to the team. They ended up at Arapahoe, where the affable, transplanted Georgian saw to it that not just one, but three organs played at twilight.

Big George was no flim-flam man, although with his ability to inspire immediate confidence he could have fleeced the stingiest miser. He loved music, especially the kind pumped from a parlor organ, and felt like every home ought to have some of it floating around.

He wasn't one to hold out for a hard bargain. Members of many a little country church, not just then but during the following years, found him to be sympathetic and generous when making a deal for an organ or a piano.

Fuller was 16, sweating behind a plow on his family's farm, when he allowed to himself as how it was time for

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OUT OF THE PAST—The year was 1905, and George R. Fuller (see Through the Looking Glass) was a newcomer in our town. He agreed to play one of the feminine roles in a "womanless wedding" staged at Central School's Griffin Auditorium, and here you see him giving a bit of friendly advice to

Steve Daniels. The Mirror is grateful to Steve's widow, Edna, for the opportunity given us to publish this rare, 66 year old photograph. No kidding, that quite attractive gal really was the music man.

