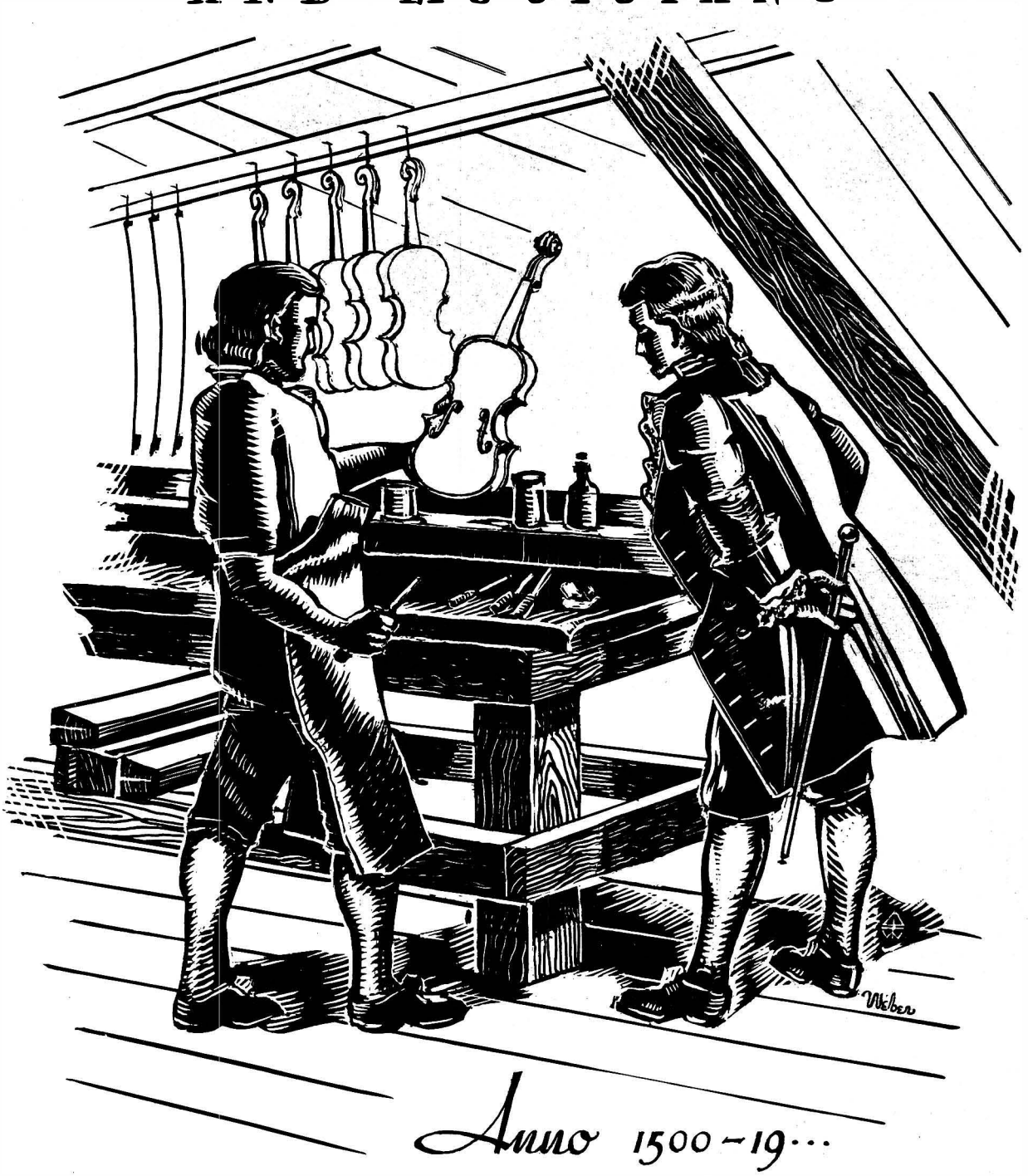
INTERNATIONAL
VIOLIN, GUITAR MAKERS AND MUSICIANS



Issued as an Educational Feature to encourage and develop the art of violin making.

Violin and Guitar Makers Association of Arizona

INTERNATIONAL
OFFICIAL MONTHLY JOURRNAL
non-profit
Vol 12 OCT. 68 no 3

INDEX

MUSIC THERAPY

GROAN TONE by Edmund A. Braun

A survey was conducted recently among youngsters enrolling in various music classes. The results are presented here without editorial comment other than , " HOly trumped-up trumpeters!"

60.7 %were postive TOMTOM meant two male cats.
35,9 %reveled QUATRAIN was a locomotive and four cars.
53.2 %imagined HIGH C as the ocean during a storm.
71.4 %believed PIZZICZTO referred to a large size Italian pie.
49.1 %explained DULCIMAR needed sharpening.
62.0 %agreed MISICAL SCORE showed which musician played fastest.
74.8
56.8 %knew CASTANETS concerned a method of fishing .
87.5 %depicated BACH as a type of beer.
60. %stated ALLEGRO reffered to getting taller from the waist down.
39.6 %insisted LOST CHORD meant misplaced string.
75.2 % said ORGAN RECITAL consisted of a story about a major operation.
48.1 %presumed TROMBONE was a part of the skeleton.
62.3 %described EMAJOR As an army offie
57.7
99.6 %claimed BASSOON was missed by old time tobacco chewers.

Sent in by Joe Hand of Prescott,Ariz.

NOT BULL HEADED JUST DETERMINED

BY Willis
1089 Arney Rd.
Sherwood , Mich. 49-89

IN the June issue of the Journal I read the article more about DAT O'LE DED'L OIL By Sam Freeman , with great interest. So I decided right then to try his method of preparing linseed oil for violin use.

So I rounded up a 5 gal. pale , found a piece of copper tubing about 3/8" dia., put a hole in the pail right height and sowdered the tubing in , every thing just fine .

Now for the oil, I had a pint so I bought two qts more and then was when the fun began. Hold on boys . Sam said it would be nice to put the pal e of stuff some where so the cats , dogs and kids wouldn't disturb the solution and still would get all the sunshine and rain it could, later I used the waterhose to seed it up.

Well here we go, I decided the very near flat roof of the chicken coop would be the ideal place to keep it . So I filled the pale with water dumped in 2½ qts of linseed , and started for the chicken coop. Pale in hand and step ladder in the other , of courseI am always in a hurry.

I set the ladder up near the building and started up on my journey, I got almost to the top and
and started to tip. Should I tell the rest? I have done some silly things in my life and this is the most riduclous . I would up flat on the ground with five gallons of water and oil all on me. I never felt so completely beat in my life. I was a beautiful mess , cap,glasses, clothes and shoes . My wife happened to be out in the garden at the time , when she heard me hollar for help she came running and asking if I was hurt, heck no I'm not hurt just wi
what happened. She all but layed down and rolled ,its a good thiing she didn't think of the camera. She got me a clean out fit and directed me to the garage to change.

Well only one thing to do, buy more
be ready to harvest the last batch and proceed with the rest of the process.

Can you top this one.

Willis Barnes.

FIELDS VIOLIN SHOP_ ADJUSTING AND REPAIRING
STRINGED INSTRUMENTS

Mr. Maeshell Fields of McKenzie , Tenn Route 1
would like to correspond with other violin makers ,also have them visit him .

VIOLIN VARNISH RECIPE FOUND
News Item ..... Geneoa, Italy

Eraclio Raineri , a violin maker near Pegli near here, claimed here to have discovered the 18th-century recipe of the varnish used by Antonio Strad., on his now world-famous violins.

Signor Rainori said he found a torn sheet of paper in a packing case containing a vi

He pieced the paper together and could read the words " Composition of violin varnish." The paper , he said also contained the date , 1737, The date of Stradivarius passing.

The three ingredients of the varnish were Two of them were well-known forms of resin but the third was unfamiliar to him. Signor Raineri discovered it could be made from an I"dia

He said that so far he had treated five violins with the varnish prepared from this formula and that experts had been struck by the warm velvety tones of the instoumants.

Sent in by Clarence F, Turnberg.

PIECED TOPS AND BACKS

BY Ralph S Thompson
Route 1 Box 99
S bastian , Flo. 32598

I have just finsihed reading HIll's book on Stradivarius-His Life & Work, purchased from the Vitali Import Co. It con
prints of the most famous Strads.A nice addition to anyone's library on violins.

From the book we read where the old Italians incluDing Stradivarius often pieced the tops and quite often added pieces to the backs at the wings,
I think it was the nature of the man. He did not wast
not want to waste good wood. Which reminds me that hereabouts is a man who claimed he owns a genuine Stradivarius ,
the inside and that he valued it at 15000. Now I am pretty sure this man is deluding himself, Stradivarius had too much respect for wood to burn it. A number of master's violins were from maple that was cut on the slab. Perhaps a lot of readers know this , but it was news to me .

I would like to know : in using the inside violin form, even though the form is as accurate as you can make it ,when the bent ribs are fitted and glued up to the blocks, there are always some slight variations. Now if a back has been completed as per the blueprint, it will never fit the ribs on the form because of the variation. So I have to take a roughed out or unfinished back-- which means the purfling can not be done either -- lay lay the mold with its glued up ribs and mark around it the 3/16 inch or so. In other words, the plate has to be fitted to the ribs, not visversa . No two will ever be alike .Then with the back glued to the ribs, this is used to mark out the top plate . Is this the general practice or am I doing something wrong.

To the gentleman from Utah who says the violin makers are dying off, and the fact that he could use a half dozen repairmen right now, I would like to know where one can sell a good hand made violin for 1000. Most of the fellows I know , just make them , give them away or tuck them up hoping for the day when violins will be ib demand like guitars are today . Sure they're as good as gold - for somebody a hundred years from now-- maybe. Good hand made fiddles can be had from most of todays makers for 75. to 150.

Now and then there is a makerwho fancies his product and puts on his own price,like 1500or 2000. I know one such , who in displaying his wares in a fine two violin professional case,handled them as if they were made of thin glass, almost afraid to let the valuable thing out of his hands. One was 1800 and the other was 2000. That was his own valuation . Later I heard that he sold them for 75. each.

A friend and f
tourp- and spent some of his money in Paris for a violin, paying 2500. A genuine Vuillaume from a selection of other high grade violins . He was in New York a few years ago trying to sell the instrument to a well known firm

They could not buy , declaring and displaying to him case full of very fine violins with prices anywhere from 300 to 20,000 for which there was no market. They admitted to the genuiness of his violin but wailed at the scarcity of buyers. He could not dispose of his violin even at an attractive discount.

This same professional player tells about the seeming unfairness of the business, that is , playing in the symphony orchestras, during an evening's concert the fiddle players sawed out an estimated seven hundred and twenty thousand notes.The wages were $ 75. per week. That was when the dollar was worth at least 98 cents, Om the same orchestra , the cymble player clashed his discs once, or possibly twice during the show-- and he --so the union said, also earned $ 75. a week I suppose he did have to wake up on time to make his play.

Playing the same old stuff over and over becomes a chore, so m that violinists now and then resorted to stunts for diversion. He tells of one piece that called for a half rest, on a fast up bow he'd let go of it, then sudden down on the next note exactly one half rest later. Another piece of music ended in high high note . They discovered that they could make it by drawing the middle finger down the back of the fiddle at just the right pitch. Great day-- when you are that good! Says anybody can do it if they'd practice as he did -- eight hours a day.

NOTICE ON SHELL MAPLE BACK WOOD.

Last month I put in a notice in the Journal that I would have some shell maple back wood for sale.

I had perchased a large amount of it and thought it was being shipped, but I called and the man who had it has been sick in the hospital and unable tp plain it out . It has been seasoned for several years but unplained .

When he talked to me he said he had collected some more and would get it in shipment by truck this week , monday Sept 9th . So it should be here in 10 days or so,

I will hold all your request for prices of this wood until I see how much it costs and shipping charges.

I see b
beautiful figured maple in the world.

I'll let you know as soon as I find out and some of it comes in .

Bob Wallace.

Thanks for the response for material last month . I have enough for this issue, but keep it coming as there is always another issue due next month.

Bob Wallace.

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Dear Bob ,

It sounded real fine to hear your voice on the phone a few minutes ago, and it sounded even better to hear you say that the Doctor told you your lungs and heart sounded pretty good . That is one thing about a doctor; he can tell you that you are pretty good , no matter how your feel! And then give you a big set-back by handing you his bill! Well , we love them when we are sick, any way.

I got a kick put of your article in the JOurnal where you told about how generous you and Doc Grand were, and you being a Scotchman and he being a Jew. Of course I knew that you weren't very saving , ever since I heard about you buying that two pants suit and then wearing one pair of pants over the other ! No stingy man wouod do that .

And Doc has always been too generous , but I understand that he has tightened up a little now. I am told that he is coming to the convention this fall with his suit case and two fiddles in a wheel barrow . Of course that is not so bad as it sounds, because he will tie his litttle boys wagon on behind to ride in !

It is a little odd though , because the wheelbarrow is usually reserved for the Irshmen. They can push a wheelbarrow and talk at the same time !

Any way, it will be good to see you whether you have that new suit or not, and it will be good to see Doc , even if he Jets out, as usual.

And there are some others coming that I am curious to meet. Clarence Gohl, the Cello builder and helper of Ben Harrison. I wonder if Ben has him to do the hard part . I read in a book once about how to train mean horses and it told how to put on the bridle and the saddle and then it said, " Have your assistant mount him?" No Bob I don't think Ben does that .

And then there is Bill Slaby. I have never seen him, but that makes us even ; he has never seen me, either !

Say, did you happen to watch A t Linkletter's prohramme on T. V. last week? He had a nice li-
Friess and a little like harold Briggs. Smart guy, and he put on several demonstrations but what interested me was some little metal plates, about seven or eight inches square, with a litttle handle in the center of the back to hold them by. He would hold one of them with hisleft hand and sprinkle sugar on top of it and then bow the edge with a violin bow, and the sugar would dance around and form patterns along the nodal lines.

I have read in violin books about such experiments with violin plates but thought that due to the arching , it sounded rather far out. And I still feel the same way about that.

But as usual , I probably missed the point he wanted to put across . Any way, the thing that impressed me was the fact that he could completely

change the pattern by merely bowing in a different place. He showed several interesting patterns tha

I assume that the metal sheet was of uniform thickness , and it certainly was not arched. But since applying the bow in different places would completely change the pattern . Therefore , if it ties in with violin makin g it would seem that the spot where the bridge sets should control the pattern. That, in connection with the placing of th post, It seems to be the accepted theory that all of the vibrations are passed to the violin by the bridge.((That is not my theory, but then who am . I ?)

Any way, I wish I had a film of it so I could run it over several times . I'm sure there some interesting experiments that could be made and that would prove of some help to a violin maker . This little guy was a physicist and seemed to know what he was doing , even if I didn't . And he had visual evidence of something , though I am at a loss to say just what it was .

Well Bob I'm working on a fiddle that is supposed to be The violin at the contest, but all I have done is the ribs and the outline of back sawed out ,.Too much fishing to contend with . If I can get it done it will sure be raw and not played in . I have to do a good job on it because Vitali told me that back was real good wood and I don't want to let theold boy down. He has never told me wrong.

I guess you know that Ben Harrison is supposed to come to the contest. If he gets there first , he is to make a mark and if I get therer first I will rub it out.

Take go for the convention say Hello to Kate and Linda and pat the pooch on the head. Like you said , when every thing else goes wrong , the Pooch is still A.! .

Fred Craig.

CONTEST
SPECIAL NOTICE

I have just received word from Mr Vitali Import Co. (see his ad) tht he will again this year as has been his practice , give $ 50. for best violin , 20. for best viola.

Remember this and give him order. Also Mr Atchley Violin Shop (see ad) Gives 50. every year to the best varnished violin.

The 7 top winners will receive silver trophies and rest will get certificates . You all come .

Bob

NOTICE

Dr. Grand has just informen us that all the willow wood that is left is the Tantillo Willow which is the 6 Mo. seasoned lot.

Bob

NSOA CONVENTION

cliff Fales
1435 South Urban Way
Denver, Colo. 80228

Bob said something a month or two ago about sharing news of conventions any of us might attend; so here is a little about my recent experience.

My work is teaching elementary band and orchestra so this brought me to the National School Orchestra Assn. Convention and Workshop the last week in July. This is an annual affair which lasts one week and was held this year at Trinity Univers in San Antonio, Texas.

There was a very distinguished group of persons br there to lead the clinic sessions; I will mention four.

Sidny Harth, conductor and violinist, directed the orchestra mad from all over the country. The program he prepared with the orchestra was presented in the amphitheater at Hemisfair the last evening. Playing under Mr Harth was a very stimulating and worthwhile experience.

Most interesting was Gary Karr, the young virtuoso, who gave a clinic session on the bass and also soloed at the concert mentioned above, accompanied be the director's orchestra. This fellow is phenominal- the sound he gets from his instrument and the facility with which he get around on it "is something else." His selection for the concert was the Paganini Moses Fantasy from the violin literature.

A great deal of my time, when I could have been in some of the other sessions, was spent "talking shop" with Doug and Gene Bearden of the Bearden Violin Shop, Inc. in St. Louis. They were there to present sessions on such topics as "Emergency Repairs" for the directors, But I found them very helpful (like most fiddle makers); Glad to answer questions and exchange ideas. They also brought many fine instruments wi them suchas a Landolfi, a Storioni, and a Grancino cello. I felt many of the ideas and tips I picked up from them made the trip worthwile.

(Gene Bearden says parrafin oil is what the butchers use to clean meatcutting equipment and is obtainable from a butcher's supply house.)

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ARTICLES AND INDEX FOR JOURNAL

Cliff Fales
1435 South Urban Way
Denver, Colo. 80228

Here is a suggestion for Bob and Kate which might keep Bob from having to write those notices every few months about needing articles. You try to keep one month ahead , don't you, Bob? Why not just mention how many pages you have on hand for the next issue at the time the current one is run off.

Another id have hunted through back issues for some some kind. This Summer I went through the 1967 issues and indexed the articles. Now I am bogged down at the thought of the typing; and I hate to send it to Kate if I am the only one who would use it. Maybe if a few people indicated it would be helpful I could get going and finish it up.

Mr Cliff Fales

Yes I think it would be a good thing if we printed any kind of index, for any or complete 10 years of the Journal.

Several have been working on an index and if you will send us a copy of yours 1967 index we will print it and maybe we will get one for 1968 and so on.

Glen Stockton of Phoenix
page , he had about 8 pages ,
w complete issue of the Journal just for index and sell it at cost.

Bob Wallace.

Youths of today:." I think the problem is that we're too permissive with parents !.. The more we let them do for us the more surley and unmanageable they become.!"

---

changed much. They still grow up , leave home and get married However not in that order."

Wife:." There's a story here about a westener who left $500,000 to the woman who refused to marry him".
Hen-pecked : " That's what I call gratitude."

" I AM A TIRED AMERICAN"

(The following editorial was written by Alan McIntosh for the Rock County Herald, Luverne, Minnesota)

I am a tired American. I am tired of being called the Ugly American.

I'm tired of having the world panhandlers use my country as a whipping boy 365 days a year.

I am a tired American--weary of having American embassies and information centers stoned, burned, and sacked by mobs, operating under orders from dictators who preach peace and breed conflict.

I am a tired American--weary of being lectured by Gen. DeGaulle (who never won a battle), who poses as a second Jehovah in righteousness and wisdom.

I am a tired American--weary of Nasser and all the other blood sucking leeches who bleed Uncle Sam white and who kick him in the shins and yank his beard if the flow falters.

I am a tired American--fed up with the mobs of scabby faced long-haired youths and short-h ired girls who they represent the "new wave" of American and who sneer at the old-fashioned virtues of honesty, integrity, and morality on which America grew to greatness.

I am a tired American--weary unto death of having my tax dollars go to dictators who play both sides against the middle and threats of what will happen if we cut off the golden stream of dollars.

I am a tired American--who is tired supporting families who haven't known any other source of income than Government relief checks for three generations.

I am a tired American--who is getting madder by the minute at the filth peddlers who have launched Americans in an obscenity race--who try to foist on us the belief that filth is an integral part of culture-in the arts, movies, literature, the stage.

I am a tired American--weary of the bearded bums who tramp the picket line and sit-ins, who prefer Chinese Communism to capitalism, who see no evil in Castro, but sneer at Pres. Johnson as a threat to peace.

I am a tired American who has lost al patience with that civil rights group which is showing propaganda movies on college campuses from coast to coast -- movies denouncing the United States, mad in Communist China.

I am a tired American--who is angered by the self-righteous breast beater critics of America at home and abroad, set impossible yardsticks for the United States, but never apply to same standard to the French, the British, the Russians the Chinese.

I am a tired American--sickened by th slack-jawed bigots who wrap themselves i bed sheets in the dead of night and roa the countryside for innocent victims.

I am a tired American who resents the who try to peddle the beliefs in schools and colleges that capitalism is a dirty word and that free enterprise and priva initiative are synonyms for greed.

They say they hate capitalism, but they are always right at the head of the line demanding their share of the Americ way of life.

I am a tired American--real tired of those who are trying to sell me the beli that American in all the world--a nation dedicated to the policy of trying to help the "have nots" achieve some of the good things that our system of free enterprise broug about.

I am an American who gets a lump in h throat when he hears the "Star Spangled Banner" and who holds back tears when he hears those chilling high notes of the brassy trumpets when Old Glory reaches the top of the flagpole.

I am a tired American who thanks a merciful Lord that he was so lucky to be born an American citizen--a nation under God, with truly mercy and justice for all.

****

Sending by Howard Moore

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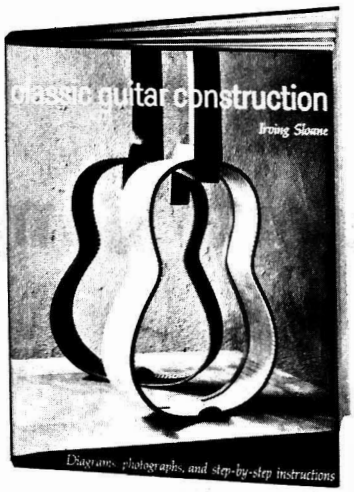
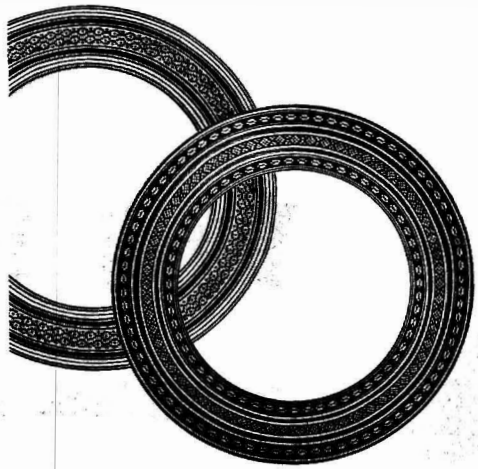
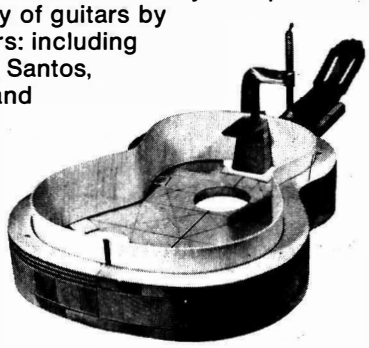




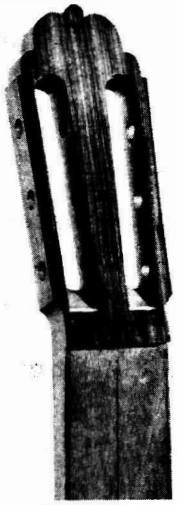
classic guitar construction

By Irving Sloane

This unique, comprehensive book gives all the information necessary for the building of a fine, classic guitar. Handsomely illustrated, it is an indispensable guide for the novice *luthier,* and conveys much of the romance of the Spanish classic guitar, gives a brief history and discussion of guitar construction theory, and provides a picture gallery of guitars by the great makers: including Torres, Hauser, Santos, Esteso, Arias, and Barbero.



The author's method of construction conforms to classic guitar-making principles and is superbly well-suited for the amateur craftsman. Specific diagrams and 125 clear, professional photographs illuminate each step. A simple wood 'sandwich' yields the principle elements of the basic forms necessary to build a guitar: A mold, bending form, purfling forms, and template. The author tells one how to make his own clamps, purfling cutter, and even the rosette (the sound hole mosaic inlay). He explores each aspect of guitar construction, and includes a directory of suppliers for wood, tools, and all guitar-making accessories.



Send me _____ copies of CLASSIC GUITAR CONSTRUCTION by Irving Sloane at $5.95 each.
Include $.50 for postage and handling.

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COMMENTS

BY Geo. Friess
2724 Yale St
Vancouver, B.C.

Clarence Cooper and I expect to make the convention once again , a couple of others here, might come also, but uncertain at this time .

Speaking of the convention I hope that you will be able to rustle a black board , as that is one of the best mediums for putting across ones ideas (Note : We have had a board ordered for weeks and expect it any day Bob)

Believe it or not , I have made two violins this year , am just varnishing the second , so I might have two champs this year . The first one has taken a " First" in the Professional class at P.N.E. and I also cam e second , in our local competition last June, so I think I'll give the guys some good competition down there this year .

I should tell you about Our June competition . There were two classes new (under one year) and Old over one year . Previous winners not eligible, also it was stipulated , Gut string. They were played behind a curtain, 5 judges, all principle in the Vancouver Symphony . The six top marks , were run offf, for tone, and I am sure , that no one had any complaint. The player, hit every tone and half tone all the way up to the bridge and it wa s easy for all of us to pick the best two or three. Of course there were only about 25 instruments , so it was comparatively simple ,and with a couple of hundred it would be different .

Geo. Friess

CONVENTION AND CONTEST

Oct. 17-18-19th 1968 at Miami ,Globe, Ariz.
This is all set up and ready to go . All we need is you and your violins , violas, cellos , guitars and quartettes.

The American Legon Hall is rented for all day and nights too. So we can hold evening sessions .

We will judge instruments of a morning, and have convention in the afternoon and evenings.

Morning of Oct. 17, we will judge , Viola , Cellos and Quartettw.-

Morning of 18th Guitars , steel string violin contest.

Morning of 19 th and continue till we finsih , will be the big violin contest with Gut strings or any other kind.- Every one try and bring one violin with steel strings.

Some poeple have the idea , I hear, that this affair has a lot of music played . Well ,there is some music mostly at night as nearly ever maker is a musician and we have some local fiddling groups that play for us some nights.

So every one come prepared to play some . But come , fpr if you are a maker you can hardly afford to miss it ,every one I hear from ,who have attended intend to come , all violins may be entered . A fee of $2. for each instrument will be charged to pay for Hall- Trophies and expensis.

See you in Oct. Bob .

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NOTICE

Dear readers of the Journal;

We are shortly publishing an Appendix and Price List of German , French, Italian, English add American instruments, astupendous task never attempted in this country . Such a list will we hope stabilise prices and promote sales throughout the world and enable you to see at a glance present market prices of instruments in this country and abroad. Will all makers of stringed instruments please send us details of your selling prices and the date when the instruments were made . These details and your name will be included free of charge in our forthcoming publication. Please tell all your friends about this .

A. Woodcock. Editor
AMATI PUBLISHING LTD
44 The Lanes,
Brighton BN1 1HB. Sussex.
England.

This letter explains its self . I ask each and every member to write direct to Mr. C. Woodcock, at the above address, give him the information and your name and price of your instruments will be in a great book on modernmakers.

Bob Wallace.

A NEW IDEA

I see many out-of-state cars passing through my town and have often wondered whether the drivers of at least some of themweren't members of the Violin Makers Association. Therefore I want to suggest the following proposal for my fellow-members consideration: If we were all to contribute a dollar or two to pay for the printing of window stickers or bumper stickers, and display these on our cars , we could recognize each other as we travel around the country . I would be interested in getting the response of other members concerning this idea. Perhaps some would be interested in designin g this sticker. Let the Journal know how you feel about the feasibility of such an idea.

Anatolojs Nikiforovs
733 South West Ave.-- Sioux Falls , South Dak.
57104

I would suggest that any one who wishes to get letters from other members , write me and we will put your name and address in the Journal.

Bob Wallace.
4118 Mill St
Miami, Ariz. 8 5539

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SOME OF MY FIDDLE MAKING SECRETS

By Earl L. Smith
Two, Golfview Road
Sebring, Florida
33870

I Read , with great interest and pleasure, the many letters and comments of my fellow fiddle makers who write for the Journal. However, I believe there are many "tricks of the trade" which most of my good friends use, at least occassionally, that they do not emphasize in their writings or discussions. Of course they would discourse freely upon them if you ask about them, but what I am trying to say; they don't go around braging about them.

I am listing a half dozen of my secret little procedures and processes, some of which I use on about every fiddle I make.

1

First I select some nice choice wood; maple and pine or spruce or some of Bob's fir. Now, just good appearance is not enough. With any luck at all I can get at least one piece among these which will show a slight knot or sap stain or some other unsightly defect just as I attain the correct shape or graduation. A knot hole is no good as I immediately discard it and start all over again.

2

You probably have noticed some corners on your fiddle while doing your final shaping or when cutting the channel for the purfling. Threr are about eight of them, and if you have not tried it, you will find it a great thrill to break off at least one or two of those tiny little points at the mitre of the purfling. If you have the degree of perfection I have, you might even be able to break off part of the corner itself while scooping out the contours; especially on the top. It is a lot of fun to improvise little clamping arrangements and replace these little severed fiddle components. I have done it so cleverly that even my worst enemies cannot detect it.

3

I suppose most fiddle makers drill the peg holes to approximate size and with perfect spacing and alignment on both sides at the first pass of the drill. I never do it that way. I drill pilot holes much smaller than correct size and I drill at least one or two of them a little off perfect spacing and alignment. You too can do it if you learn how to let your drill creep slightly, or hold your peg box a little off correct angle while drilling. This is easiest to accomplish at the A and D peg holes. If all this is done with the skill I possess, you can while away a lot of time correcting the alignment and spacing with your peg hole reamer, and at the same time have the pleasure of avoiding oval peg holes.

4

A great thrill of fiddle making is the cutting of the ff holes and admiring your creation as it looks more and more like a fiddle. I never cut these alike at first. I seem to prefer to cut one of them a little larger or different than the other at some point or other and then I go about the task of trying to make them look alike. I have learned that a little cutting goes a long way if it is done on a fiddle f hole. Reminds me; I went to the hospital a couple of weeks ago and the Doc. cut a small skin cancer from the top of my left ear. I don't think it hurt him as much as it did me so to evoke a little levity he remarked that my left ear "su e is going to be a lot shorter than your right". I told him not to worry about it as we can always cut the right one off to match it. That is the way I cut sound holes.

5

This probably is the least important of all my secrets, but I never make up exactly the correct amount of glue. I use a good quality of hide glue for my fiddles and a resin glue for guitars, and since I do not reheat the hide glue I always discard all unused portions of both kinds. I almost invariably make up much more than I need and have a lot to throw away. Otherwise, I am a bit short and must make up just a tiny bit more while the job waits. A serious note here: Many fiddle makers frown upon repeated reheating of animal glue and I am afraid to take chances since glus is not expensive, but I believe if glue is properly made in a double boiler with controlled temperature it can be reheated many times without deterioration. After all it is heated and even boiled during the process of manufacture.

6

This one is a Lulu. I almost decided not to let you in on it. It has to do with bending the sides. Here is the situation; you have selected the very finest piece of maple you have ever seen; perfect figure and a most beautiful flame. This thing doesn't happen with ordinary maple and is not easy to accomplish on the outer portions of any of the bouts, BUT with my experience, I am able to make the corner bends of the upper and lower bouts and the return bends of the C bouts with a number of small fissures or breaks in them. I have read that the great Tony himself did it on several vilons which were made of highly flamed maple. So far as I have ever read or heard, he and I are the only fiddle makers who ever did this. What do I do? These are small and on the inside (of course if the thing breaks into I throw it away and try again) I simply rub in a little glue, sand them down when they are dry and no one will ever know the difference; at least for a couple of hundred years. Maybe.

I did have anexceptional case recently. I was ready to glue the top on. Back was already on and one of the most beautiful

14

backs I have ever seen. In fact the job so far was one of best I had turned out. I was completely satisfied with all phases of the operation except for one C bout which was fissured in four places at the upper corner bend and not covered by the block. They were filled with glue and sanded down very nicely. Now, I figured here probably is the fiddle I and all fiddle makers have been trying for all these many years. It might just turn out to be that exceptional fiddle with the "one in a million" tone. My fellow fiddle makers have not been able to come up with such a fiddle and probably never will, but I believe I can do it and this just might be the one; the fiddle with the tone we read about but have never seen or heard. Naturally, I would not want to have made such a fiddle and have hidden inside a cracked C bout. My conscience would ache. So I cut the thing out clean from the blocks and back, made another one from the same maple which I sawed from the one-piece back, and I replaced so neatly that I have forgotten whether it was the right or left. I forgot to make a note of it and I cannot tell by looking. Now I loose sleep trying to figure out which it was.

I thing I have revealed enough for this time. I have a lot of these tips. One has to do with varnishing a violin or guitar. For example, a few years ago I got quite a kick out of removing and redoing a bad varnish job. I have not done that lately. I learned that I could get a fiddle dark enough to suit me without putting on too many coats of varnish. Now I do it with three coats of color.

Any fiddle maker who would like to use one or more of my tips is welcome to do so. Just don't be calling folks attention to or pointing thest things out especially at convention time.

Earl L. Smith

P. S. I just strung up the fiddle mentioned above. No, it did not turn out as I had hoped. It is a pretty good fiddle, and I am proud of it, but it just doesn't quite have that Itallian tone I have heard so much about. However, I have a few new sure-shot tricks in mind which are bound to improve any fiddle, and I am sure the next one I make will be so good that Bob probably will bar it from competing with ordinary fiddles

WALTER COLTON'S NOTES

by Carl Farseth

You all undoubtedly remember Walter Colton's notes at the end of Sara Bull's biography of Ole Bull. Besides being an amateur violin maker, Walter Colton was the first American importer of Italian violins. He is said to have studied violin making under the famous Georg Gemunder of Astoria, N.Y., who in turn had worked several years for Vieullaume in Paris. The inference then is that much of Colton's knowledge stemmed from Vieullaume himself. Both Colton and Ole Bull laid great stress on the correct bass bar for the individual violin. Since they ignored the slant of the neck, it appears they tried to make amends by fashioning the bar to correct for a wrongly slanted neck. They have many modern coreligionists.

In 1947 the writer contacted Mr. Colton's granddaughter in New York city. Colton had written private notes on violin making and varnishing evidently for the benefit of his dentist son, who was also a violin maker.

Lütgendorff's book on violin makers says Ole Bull devised a graduation system of his own based on Bagatella's. Since Colton advocates a similar system, we do not know whether one copied from the other or probably collaborated. We do not know Ole Bull's graduation, but Colton's private notes reveal Colton's variation of Bagatella, as well as his sizing and varnish formulas.

Construction. Colton arched both back and top 3/5 inch (scant 5/8 inch). Ribs 1 3/16 inches high tapering to 1 1/8 at neck. Total thickness of violin body 2 3/8 inches (maximum 2 1/2).

Thicknesses. Colton measured his thicknesses in millimeters, however omitting the decimal point, thus: 2.4 mm he wrote 24. The point is left in the following table showing comparison with the ordinary measurements in sixty-fourths of an inch (sf).

mm	64ths	mm	64ths	mm	64ths
2.0	5	3.4	8 1/2	4.8	12
2.2	5 1/2	3.6	9	5.0	12 1/2
2.4	6	3.8	9 1/2	5.2	13
2.6	6 1/2	4.0	10	5.4	13 1/2
2.8	7	4.2	10 1/2	5.6	14
3.0	7 1/2	4.4	11	5.8	14 1/2
3.2	8	4.6	11 1/2	6.0	15

(In above table, 2/5 of 64ths equals mm; 5/2 of mm equals 64ths.)

16

Top graduation. At the center of the bridge, Colton draws three concentric circles. The smallest circle of 1 1/16 inch radius he graduates 29 (7 1/4 sf). The middle circle is of 1 15/16 inch radius. Its "doughnut" he graduates 28 (7 sf). The largest circle of 2 7/8 inch radius has its doughnut reduced to 24 (6 sf). The inference is that the rest of the top is graduated 24 mm (6 sf). But the edge along the C's is usually left thicker as in the back. The reduction in thickness is of course gradual from the center circle to the outer circle.

Back graduation. Like Bagatella, Colton centers his top graduation on the bridge, and likewise he centers his back graduation 3/8 inch lower, on crossline of post. Colton draws three concentric circles. Inner circle of one inch radius is 10 to 11 1/4 sf thick. Thickness tapers to 8 3/4 at circumference of middle circle of 2 1/4 inch radius. Along circumference of outer circle of 3 15/16 inch radius thickness is 7 sf. Rest of back is 6 1/4 sf thick. But nowhere along the C's, in a ribbon 5/8 inch wide, should the thickness be less than 7 or 7 1/4 sf. How?

Whereas Bagatella's outer back circle just touches the C's, Colton's cuts way through them, extending along center-line of back to within about 4 inches of upper end of back and 2 inches from lower end. The chief difference then between Colton and Bagatella is the size of Colton's largest circle in the back. However, it is only Bagatella's orchestra violins that have circle graduation in the top. Bagatella's concert violins are graduated evenly 6 1/4 sf over all the top.

In tabular form, Colton compares thus with Bagatella:

COLTON AND BAGATELLA GRADUATIONS
(Radii in inches, graduations in 64ths of inch)

Radii of Circles	TOP 1	2	3	Rest of Top	BACK 1	2	3	Rest of Back
Colton	1 1/16	1 15/16	2 7/8		1	2 1/4	3 15/16	
Bagatella	19/32	7/8	1 15/32		25/32	1 17/32	2 11/32	
Thicknesses					10 to			
Colton	7 1/4	7	6	6	11 1/4	8 3/4	7	6 1/4
Bagatella	8 1/3*	7 2/7**	6 1/4	6 1/4	12 1/2	9 3/8	6 1/4	6 1/4 or Less

*In orchestra violins. Concert tops are even 6 1/4 sf.
**The fraction 2/7 is half ways between 1/4 and 1/3.

17

Bassbar. Colton's bassbar is 5.1 mm (12 3/4 sf) thick, 10 5/8 inches long and 3/8 inch deep. Heron-Allen and Riechers also use Shallow bars.

Tone test. Colton recommends light, high-pitched wood. He planes a square stick 1/4"x1/4"x3". Leaving 2 inches free above a vise, he bows it with a fiddle bow. The tone should not be lower than F sharp, first added line above. So say his notes--it should probably be first added space above. Colton recommends three reeds or more to the quarter inch of wood. That is not fine-grained wood.

1. Ammonia stain. Colton darkens his wood for two weeks in fumes of ammonia. Then he warms wood in oven. Then he hangs fiddle up two months before varnishing. One of Georg Gemunder's daughters told this writer her father bought much ammonia, but she did not know what he used it for.

2. Bichromate wash. Wet "white" violin with wet sponge to raise grain. Then sponge on bichromate of potassium solution of 30 cc water and 2 grains bichromate. Four minutes, then pour off. Colton thinks a violin maker should know rest of procedure.

3. Transparent varnish, 2 coats, are then applied. Thin with lavender. Rub on. Wet rag with alcohol and go over violin.

Winsor & Newton picture copal makes a good substitute for transparent varnish. Add 6 drops of Winsor & Newton drying oil per coat of picture copal.

4. Then size:

	Grams		Grams
Succotrine aloes	3	Orange analine	1 to 2
Gamboge	4	Alcohol	60 cc

Filter. Apply one coat with camels hair brush.

5. Varnishing. Apply alternately one coat color varnish and one coat transparent varnish (or picture copal with drying oil and Courtray dryer) till there are four coats color and 3 coats transparent varnish on the violin. Use diagonal strokes. Then finish with 4 or 5 coats of transparent varnish or copal. Rub down violin between coats.

Clear varnish.

	Grams		Grams
Sandarac	10	Damar	10
Mastic	10	Oil of lavender flowers	100 cc

To each 100 cc lavender, add 5 to 8 cc pale drying oil. Venetian turpentine may substitute for damar.

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Dissolve sandarac in alcohol and add lavender. Boi off alcohol. Add mastic, damar and drying oil. Let stand 2 or 3 days. Filter. If thick, thin with lavender.

Picture copal. Winsor & Newton's is very good substitute for colorless varnish. To each ounce, add 20 to 30 drops of drying oil. Add 6 to 10 drops of Courtray dryer (4 to 5 drops per coat) to each ounce of varnish. Add dryer, not to stock, but to little poured out in a saucer for a varnish job.

Color varnish. Fill one-third bottle with dragonsblood. Almost fill rest of bottle with lavender. Dragonsblood is rendered less fugitive by adding one-fifth part santal or less. Let stand. Filter coarsely. Probably add more dragonsblood. Add 10 drops pale drying oil per ounce of varnish. Add sandarac 4 grams, mastic 3 grams, damar 3 grams. Thin with lavender.

Ebony finish. Blue vitriol 12.5 grams, potassium chlorate 12.5 grams, water 10.0 grams. Boil.

Added notes. Turps one-quarter plus three-fourths alcohol is a natural mixture. But oxygenated turpentine will mix in all proportions.

Colton prefers dragonsblood in lavender plus santal, no drying oil. Then picture copal with Courtray 10 drops each coat for alternate coats between color coats. Finish with picture copal, 6 drops dryer each coat.

The following obituary ran in the Exeter News Letter of August 15, 1913:

WALTER EWING COLTON

Mr. Walter E. Colton passed away peacefully at his home in Exeter on Tuesday afternoon, August 12. He had been ill for two years, and during the past few months those nearest to him realized that the end was approaching.

Mr. Colton was born in Philadelphia, on June 3, 1846, the son of Walter Colton and Cornelia Baldwin Colton. His father of note as journalist and author, was appointed a chaplain in the navy by President Jackson and in this post had an interesting career. When Commodore Stockton took possession of California in 1846 he appointed Chaplain Colton alcalde or governor, the appointment soon confirmed by election. He established California's first newspaper, organized its first school and in a letter to a Philadelphia paper made the first public announcement of the discovery of gold.

After receiving his early training in the Hamden School, a famous mi itary school of that day, near New Haven, the subject of this sketch entered Columbia College, from which he was graduated in 1867. He was

married two years afterward to Mary E. Litchfield. After spending some years in travel and in Brooklyn he came to Exeter with his young family and has lived here ever since.

Mr. Colton was a talented violinist and added greatly to the musical life of his own town, but he was more widely known throughout the country as a maker of violins. He never made but two a year, and these were generally sold in advance at his own price to musicians and collectors. His work was a labor of love and not of necessity, and he put his whole soul as well as his rare skill into his handiwork.

Harper's Magazine for January, 1881, contains an article on "Some Great Violins" by Barnet Phillips, who in 1878 had declared Mr. Colton a "very wonderful violin maker."....

Mr. Colton's long and persistent quest of a suitable varnish is interestingly told by Mr. Phillips. He delved deeply into European libraries. Many fancied clues were followed up in vain. Finally Mr. Colton bought an old Venetian rococo table, scraped off and analyzed its varnish and after a series of experiments produced the desired varnish. It is to be hoped its secret has not perished.

Mr. Colton's workshop was unique, for there might be seen violins in different stages of construction and many tools of ingenious and delicate workmanship, which were invented and made by him.

Among his friends of musical fame was the great violinist, Ole Bull, and he had in his possession two violins once owned by him, a Guarnerius given to him by the artist, and a Nicolo Amati given him by Mrs. Bull after her husband's death to use during his life.

Besides his wife Mr. Colton leaves two sons, Litchfield Colton, of Stetson University, Deland, Florida, and Henry E. Colton, of Brooklyn, N.Y., and one daughter, Mrs. Edward C. Chickering, of Jamaica, N.Y.

A private service was held at his late residence on Thursday afternoon, conducted by Rev. Victor M. Haughton. Most appropriately three violin solos were played by Mr. Harry P. Doe, a Haverhill friend. The public library was meanwhile closed.

The undersigned writer has tried for 20 years to get a photograph of Walter Colton. If he had concentrated on the Litchfield family, he probably would have succeeded. The Litchfields of Brooklyn were railroad tycoons and financiers. Maybe some reader can enlighten us.

Ole Bull owned two Gaspar da Salo violins. The one left to the Museum in Bergen, Norway, was never played in public.

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- Carl Farseth

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COMMENTS

BY Ben F. Harrison Jr.
23071 Sherman St
Detroit , Mich. 4 8237

After reading the April issue of the Journal several times. I have to say that this is one of the best issues that I have seen in a long time . Very well put together and my only regret concerning it is that it was not twice as long. It is good to hear that Bob is getting more articles for us from you members . Personally , I want to add my thanks to Bob for that kind of co-operation. The journal means a lot to me , since it keeps me in touch with other makers, provides some thought and is just downright good reading. Along about the first of the month, there are a lot of us who stick our heads out the door every few minutes to see if the postman is in sight .

Starting right from the front , and getting over to page 5, I find a nice article by Burton Hardin on sound post patches. I have made my comment on glue , so can only agree with Burton in a general way on his frustrations with it and hacked up work. But, on the cleating of a crack, we are pulling in oppoiste directions. I have never seen a good cleat job by a competent repairman where the grain of the cleats ran parallel to the top grain. The cleat is put there primarily to prevent the crack from opening again due to humidity or pressure on the top and I cannot see that the tone of a stringed instrument is affected much by this cross graining. I have used it ever since I have been in violin repair work and have had no kicks on it yEt.

In the past where he delals with sound patching , the method he has outlined would make for a beautiful repair job that is what is ideal to the repairman. But, it should be added that this method would be suitable for very fine instruments only. to make a patch such as this on an ordinary instrument would make for a charge far in excess of the fiddles worth. Understand what I have said there.. if it is a fine violin, then cost is usually the least of the worries and such a procedure would be ideal. One thing that article does make me think is that Burton Hardin is a careful workman with a lot of pride in what he is doing. So, this is not a kick in the pants. Just a friendly disagreement .

Henry Ashley wrote his ususl fine article dealing with wood and I am on the sopt , since there are some references to me and the ideas thath Henry and I have been exchanging in these pages . Recently , I sent in a follow up article on my Sunshine article add I do not know if this will be used before that article apperas . However, in that second article, I touched on the possibilities of stress relief in the wood . The comment I wish to make at this time are that I have had in effect something along the line of the drying frames that Henry speaks of . He has suggested that I set up a small pilot program to see what happens when the wood is worked downsomewhat before beginning to actual construction of the plate. Our shop is usually loaded with repair work and the time that I have actually built a violin is very small . In a good year , I may can build one or two violins of my own. Naturally , this is done a little at a time . Perhaps the shaping of the outline of the plate will take a couple of weeks and then the arching will go on for several more weeks .

Once done , the graduating will consume some more time and by taking off a little wood here add there , I one day find I have another violin ready to varnish .

My working form is exactly as Henry suggested . That is , it has a similar outline to the violin, but is about ½ inch larger all around. The center portion is cut so allow the arch to drop thru and rest on the plate rim while scooping out the inside. This is padded with an old bycycle tire cut in sections and cemented to one surface . The form itself is 3/4 fir plywood. A pretty crude affair , but it works.

Some years ago, I noticed that the wood would get out of true as the work progressed and began to clamp the plate to the back side of the work form when I was not working on it. This is done by 2 C clamps in the upper bout, and 2 in the lower bout. These act as feet and hold the whole shebang up off of the bench top. Our counter and bench runs East to West and the form and plate is usually just set down on the West end of the counter until I get ready to work on it again. Of course ,this means that it catches several hours of the afternoon sun, which is the very hottest and brilliant of the day.

It has occured to me that in gradually reducing the arching as it has become necessary for me to do and then having the plate laying there in the sun, that is possible that a gradual stress relief comes about in the wood. For example , if you say a thin section from a board , it will begin to bow as you cut and when completely cut off may have distinct curve along its length. I would assume that the cutting of the fibers would produce tension in on edge and compression in the opposite side much the same as a loaded structural beam. If this saw cut were to be made a little at a time over an extended period, would it give the wood time to adjust to the new stress or for the stresses to equalize ? It is possible that slow forming of the violin plate would have somewhat the same effect.

I have heard it said by some makers that they felt if they could build an instrument with no stresses in it , that it would be much freer to vibrate We know that a violin string is useless until it is put under stress, but is this the case of the plates?? If this changing of the form of the wood does result in setting up such stresses in the entire violin,then we may be able to offset what up to no has been known as " Playing in" the instrument. We have all heard that the violin has so many parts and there it takes time for these parts to become adjusted to each other .I have no doubt that this is true, but it just maight be that the reason these parts must become adjusted after the fiddle has been completed is because they were not allowed to adjust before it was assembled/ It would seem that if the outside arch were cut all at once and finished , then the inside rapidly graduated and the plate put on the ribs , any stress build up (which causes the original cupping or the plate getting out of line.) would then be transferred to the ribs and liners. IN time , these would begin to neutralize each other and if a violin is best when built under zero stress, it would bot reach its tone potential until such time as these stresses balanced each other out .

During this time , the fiddle would not sound at its best due to the constant shifting of those stresses in the different parts.

I do not know if this is correct or not . It is theory that is worth looking into . I have been working on this principle for several years and it may be that the sunlight only serves to aid the relieving of manufacturing stress. On the other hand , we do not know all the vitamins ans minerals to be found in foods. In the asme vein , we also don't know all the products of the sun. I am not at all sure that anyone really understands the way photossynthesis works . In a gerneral way, they do ,but the real underlaying cause??? What I wish to point out is that we do not know all of the effects of sunlight . We do know of the red rays , the X rays, etc., but there are possibly some that haven't been discovered yet that have a benefi--cial effect on any organic matter, which wood certainly is .

When possible , I prefer to use semi machined wood which is available from dealers. The only trouble with it is that it seldom is as pretty as that you can obtain in the billet form. I feel that the thinner sections of the semi machined wood have a start on that which is carved directly from the billet.At least there is not so much wood to remove all at once and the stresses have become more balanced .

If there are any of you who have ideas that might go along with this line of thinking , I would like to hear them. In any event , I can see no harm in working a plate down slowly and none detrimental in exposing it to prolonggd sunlight . If any of you are trying this , I would appreciate knowing what your observations are .

Ben.

Wife: " Here comes that awful Miss Gabbings. I'll ignore the bell and she'll think we're out."
Husband:" Won't that still small voice of conciscience reproach you?"
Wife: " Yes. But I'd rather listen to the still small voice than hers!"

Modern mathematics: the number of blasts that come from auto horns in a traffic jam is equal to the sum of jerks at the wheels.

Cashier: " You have to be identified to cash this check madam."
Customer:" Well , my friend here can identify me."
Cashier: " But I don't know her."
Customer: " Oh, I'll be glad to introduce you."

Author: " What did you think of my book?"
Critic: " The covers are much too far apart."

YLON BOW HAIR

BY H.F. Sleath
45 Sanford St St. Lucia
Bisbane Queensland, Australia.

In the JUne JOurnal Mr. W. H. Brown of Onterio writes an article on Bow Hair .. chiefly in favor of Nylon. In his opening paragraph he saythat a top professional player urged him to use Nylon hair. I wish I had such a man in Australia. The profession here will not touch Nylon and are specifying " not Nylon" when asking for Bow rehairing. This is because nylon has proved to be a failure here. It is too smooth and will not hold the rosin..players say it lacks a track in very soft passages . My own experience is a player prooves this to be correct. There is , however, a synthetic fiber hair noe on the market which has all the vitture of horeehair and which is very much easier to work with . I can make a perfect job of hairing a bow with this " synthetic fibre" in less time than it takes me to make a passable job with real hair.

M^r. Brown says he has more trouble in hairing with nylon thatn he does with real hair. I cannot understand this .The best of horsehair from England these days is very irregular in thickness and , in spite of soaking in hot water, is difficult to get a nice even job.This " synthetic fibre" is nothing like Nylon. When burned in a small flame Nylon just melts ... Horsehair shrivels up and then goes to an ash. The synthetic hair shrivels in a flame and goes to an ash somewhat similar to horse hair. The synthetic fibre has a fine crimp init and when examined under a microscope looks to be the nearest to real horse hair yet.

mr. Brown is bit off the beam when he states that Amati and Strad decided that horsehair was the best for use in Bows. Bows for stringed instruments were in existance for hundred of years before Amati and Strad and the were 'Haired " with animal hair.

I agree with M^r. Brown that " tractors don't grow hair" and that smoething will have to replace horsehair in Bows in the future... but it wont no nylon.. it is sure to be synthetic fibre of some sort. Horse hair examined unDer a powerful miCroscope shows that hair .. all animal and human hair.. grows with small scales or ridges and it is these scales which cause the tone as they act like thousands of plectra plucking at the strings as they pass over . Nylon is a smooth extruded filiment and has no grip other than sticky rosin which soon falls off on the fiddle.

With regard to the suggestion that a ribbon be used in place of the ha hair. Try this and you will soon be convinced. I once purchased a String-bass and bow from an old man . He had replaced the hair in the Bow with a webbing strap. It looked like military equipment. Rosined , this strap made a weird sound as it scrubed across the strings but it " never wore out."

I agree with Mr. Brown that the shape of things to come will be synthetic but I do not think nylon ..at least in its present form.

AN INTERESTING EXPERIENCE

BY

Lawernce E. Boerner
15842 Dell View
El Cajon, Calif. 92021

My wife and I just returned from a most interesting trip to Long Island, New Yorl. where I took the advanced course in making , repairing and the maintaenance of stringed instruments .

This is the second year the Hofstra Univwrsity has given this course Forty three attended , they came from various parts of the United States, Canada and even one from Alaska.

Professor Seymour Benstock , of the University Music Department was the coordinator and did a wonderful job of making the program go along smoothly.

The course was most interesting and informative . There wase about twelve of us that took the advanced course, making it very informative and under these circumstances the question and answers proceedure would be used. Mr. Ervin Hertel instructed this group most of the time . He is a mest capable instructor . It has been his lifes work as he started his apprenticeship in New York City , where he works on many of the very fine instrumets owned by some of our most famous musicians.

Mr. Samuel Eisenstein, who has a background of stringed instruments similar to that to Mr. Hertel, taught the beginners class. He occasionally instructed our group , giving us a chance for a cross section of view points. By the way, both of these men have made many very fine instruments that are being used in symphony Orchestras throughout the country.

William Salchow, a leading bow maker in the United States , gave us wonderful instructions on bow maintaenance, rehairing , straightening and so forth. He Also made a bow i n the class room, which was very interesting.

These three men displayed an enormours amount of knowledge and capability and were eager to help us all get the most of the course. Every pertaining to stringed instruments was discussed some time or other . The instructors gave us many demonetrations of the techniques that they use in this work. They also brought in many of their tools to demonstrate teir uses.

The students were invited to the instructors studios to see other tools, equipment and so forth .My wife and I being down town N .Y. one saturday, to took advantage of thss . This itself was very educational as they could demonstrate the use of the various tools and equipment . They had on hand at the time and some of them restoration jobs that they were working on. Whitb in down town N,Y, , we went to the Wurlitzer Music co. We were treated with great hospitality and were shown through their stringed instrument department , including their shop. then to top if off they opened their big valut and brought out many of the fine old violins of their collection, including the Hellier Strad.

All in all , it was a most gratifying experience and the benefit will be endless as time goes on .

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CLASSIC GUITAR MAKING

BY

A. E. Overholtzer
618 Orient At.
Chico, Calif. 95926

I would like to start a series of writings in this Journal about Classic Guitar making . This means that I would like to read in this Journal any article that may contribute to making guitars. This also have some questions. This hobby of mine gets more interesting if I can read and write about it .May we start this writing by going over each part of the guitar one at a time . Let us start with the Top, as this is the first part that I make / The top is considered by most writers , and makers to be most IMPOrtant part of the guitar as to tone production .

In the guitar review No . 16 Copyrighted 1954, it says that Torres demonstrated that the whole secret to tone production was dependent on the top alone. In the Guitar Review No. 28 (Guitar construction from a to Z) May 1965 the writers do not agree with this /

There has been many books written which do not agree that the top alone is the secret to tone production. The fact that rosewood is said to b e the best wood to make guitars would disprove this theory, It i s my theory that the top is one of the most important parts, but that a combination of all of the parts has a contribution to the tone . After I have tuned up a guitar , I have thinned the back , and this did change the tone , (more on this later).

What are the merits between a flat top , and a arched top, (not carved but arched , as Torres made his guitars. A flat top is easier to make, all fan and cross strutting can be made straight . All top struttting can be glued to top without the use of clamps,(use weights only to glue strutting to top). You can also purchase a bridge that fits flat tops.

A perfectly flat top guitar looks cheap,(no craftsmanship).I wouod not spend the time writing about a flat top guitar , except that some pf the finest tone guitars that I have heard were flat top, Why? These flat top guitars , (also flat back,) were made in Spain, and are selling in Sacramento, Calif. for the dum of $1,345.00

I have read Mr, Eric V. Ridge little book , in his book he tells his theory aboot flat tops, is he right ?

On page no.11&12 he writes , " The table of my guitar is perfectly flat and is glued to the ribs without bending, and is this able to vibrate naturally, free from any stresses or strain."

I have made many arched top guitars in the past , now I am making my first flat top guitar, as a experiment. This guitar that I am working on now , is the Torres strutting, and I plan to make one more flat top guitar using the Bouched system of strutting.

When I finish this first flat top guitar , I will write in this JOurnal and let you know how it turned out . Some of you are going towonder how my

arched top guitars turned out , all I can say is that I have sold all the guitars that I have made , excepting two. I never like to sell the last guitar that I make , untill I finish the next one . I make guitars more for the enjoyment of making them than the I do for the money that I might get for them. I do not keep track of the time that I spend making guitars , no more than a sportsman would count the hours it takes to catch a bear, or a woman that is crocheting

A arched top guitar makes a better looking instrument then a flat top guitar. To make a good arched top guitar , without any distortion in arch, you will need a workboard with a contour the shape of finshed top. This contoured workboard is not my invention , for I have seen them in luthiers workshops . On some of my first guitars that I made in 1931 , I glued the struts in the top and back, using C clamps as shown by A P.Sharpe (his book page 15) about the same as shown by Irving Sloane Page 60, Fig.77,&79.

The thing I did not like about this method of glueing the struts was that it left a ridge on the face side of the top , you could feel this ridge by passing your hand over the top . You Violin makers remember that a guitar top , is about one half the thickness of a violin top. To lesson the size of this ridge it helps to glue size the space where the struts are to be fastened .Let this first coat glue dry begfore glueing on struts.

If you glue strut to bare wood, the glue will soften and swell the wood under strut, this causing the ridge, I use masking tape to keep glue off the wood where I do not want it .

I am real interested in Watson's wood sealer , and plan to use it on my next guitar, if it will do what the ad says , it will solve many problems making guitars tops.

When we give a little thought about making an arched top from a flat piece of wood , how it is bent in all directions ,(Try to bend a piece of paper into a saucer and you will see what I mean) . It is a wonder to me that they shape up as good as they do, when made without a contoured workboard. When these tops are made in a contoured workboard, the wood is clamped or pressed tight against the surface of the contour while the struts are glued in , and held in this shape until glued to sides .

It is understandable how part of wood must stretch an parts of wood must compress to make a guitar top arched. The longer the wood is held in contoured workboard,(or finished guitar the less stress there is in the wood, this may be one reason that an older guitar sounds better . I make my arched top guitars with a 96" radius across top where bridge is placed . This is about the same radius , (or arch) that drawing show in Torres model. I do not know whats to buy a bridge that will fit this arch, (do any of you ?) I have been making my own guitar bridges for arch tops.

Here is how I make my guitar tops . Some spruce I buy from the supply companys that sell luthiers goods . Other tops I saw or split from 2" thick spruce lumber. From the supply companies the wood comes about 1/8 " thick . When I saw or split out the tops , some I rough out 1/8" thick, other tops I make 3/16 thick depending on how thick I plan to make the

finished top. The two halves or sometimes four pieces are then joined and glue together . The spruce is then bandsawed to exact size of finfished guitar, (I leave no margin as a beginner should do) When the face side is sanded I tape off the space where the fingerboard and bridge goes, then spray on two coats of sanding sealer . After sealer is dry I rout the groove for rosette and glue the rosette in place . When glue is dry I finish rosette flush with top, Here again I spray more sealer over rosette and any bare wood where I may of sanded through .(The reason that I am so careful to keep sealer on top , is to keep top clean and white.)Now I route out sounding hole .(Router is mounted on pivot,) Through all the above work on face of top the under side is left rough and thick.With drill press I spot drill about every 2" to the thickness that I want the finidhed top, mark bottom of holes with black pencil.

Then with vibrating sander I sand to black mark . This drilling ans a all other work to thin sown top is done on under sideof top. The sealer is nearly sanded off before the final finish . On some guitar tops I leave top 9/14 thick around sounding hole, 5/64 around bridge area , and 1/16 thick around outer edge (When I leave the top thick around sounding hole , I do not glue in any reinforcements between the twocross struts. Other tops, I have made some 3/32" all thick ,and some 1/16 all over . In the Guitar Review No 28 page 5 it is writen , " A fine guitar top is sometimes less than 1/16 of an inch in the vicinity of the bridge."

I am not going into the structure at this time , only to say that Irving Sloane is right about th Bouchet system of strutting page 16, and 17, and Guirar review no 28 page 21. as I have made two guitars this way both were good.

There is many ways to makee a guitar, you will find this out when you read the many instructions books on guitar making. It will depend on the tools that you have, as to the method used. You start with a dry guitar side and have it bent in less than ten minutes, or you can spend hours cooking , steaming ,or some other way bending it .

Any one that is starting to make guitars would do well to read all the instructions books that he or she can get.

Now back to the question , as to which makes the best sounding guitar, a flat or arched top? Please explain why.

A. E. Overholtzer.

One woman describing another :" You might say she's a decided blonde- with just the slightest bit of hesitation around the roots."

Hippie's remark at the sight of a string of loaded auto rack cars: " Man , dig that crazy parking lot."

PRESS RELEASE:

The American Old Time Fiddlers Association , the international correspondence fiddlers non-profit organization for the preservation and promotion of the old time fiddling and its related arts and skills, is asking your cooperation and a few moments of your time .

There is no complete book of old time fiddling available. Anyone seeking information about fiddling finds virtually nothing to satisfy his needs. Hence, this request.

For several yeaars , we have been gathering information on fiddlers, seconds(fiddlers accompanists), violin makers and repairmen who live anywhere in the world since fiddling began. Other related information about fiddlers, fiddle tunes, fiddling music, fiddling records, photoes , fiddling stories are all welcome .

We need the fiddling personality's name , where he lived , and played, and about when he did this fiddling and if possible a photo. Even a name place, and date will help honor these fiddling folks who have contributed to this great folk art and skill.

Any information will be greatly appreciated . No obligation is required of informants or fiddling personalities. This is a " labor of love" research project. Anyone desiring more information about either the book or the organization may write to the association address given below;

AMERICAN OLD TIME FIDDLERS ASSOCIATION,
6141 MORRILL AVE., LINCOLN, NEB.68507 .U,S.A.
Thank you for your time and effort. It is greatly appreciated.

We are also working for a truly national old time fiddling contest for the U.S. We would appreciate hearing from anyone interested in working to achieve this .We wish to have all 50 states represented as we will take the state champions and have them compete for national title.

DeLores 'Fiddling De' DeRyke
President.

CORRECTIONS ON ADS

These prices were received too late to print , as the ads were already finished. We have to get the material to the printers early this time of year in order to get them printed by the first of the year.

Bob.

Following is the corrections for the INTERNATIONAL VIOLIN CO. ADS

Firstly there were price changes , and I naturally want the correct prices for the 1968 year. Our Luigi Nicoseco oil Varnishes now - $5.00 per pint, 90 for two ounce bottle and $9.50 per dozen bottles . I am showing the correct on the enclosed ad. This is very important . On the White Nylon Hair we reduced the dozen units price from $5.00 to 4,50 per dozen. However the unbleached Nylon Hair , which is the best grade, and which you mention in two lines below the white Nylon Hair is now $35.00 per pound, or in dozen units lots $ 7.00 per dozen.

Neutral or any color desired : per pint $5.00 2 Oz. bottle 90¢
1 Dozen Assorted 2 Oz. bottles Price F.O.B. Baltimore , Md. $9.50

OUR " CHIEFTAIN WHITE NYLON BOW HAIR " IS STRONG ER THAN THE OLD TYPE HORSE HAIR AND IS HIGHLY PRAISED BY ALL VIOLIN MAKERS AND VIOLINISTS WHO USE IT

Per Doz. units $4.50 Per Gross $40.00

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The same hair , but unbleached and looking like best grade unbleached horse hair , is $ 35.00 pound F.O.B. or dozen units $7.00

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Enhances the value of any Violin. This incomparable Oil Varnish is renowned around the world for its Superior Excellence. Never Smears—never Checks—imparts a most Distinctive Finish to your Violin. Dries in one day.

NOTE THESE LOW PRICES FOR SUCH SUPERB QUALITY

Neutral or Any Color Desired: Per Pint - $4.50, 2 Oz. Bottle - 85c
1 Doz. Assorted 2 Oz. Bottles - $8.00. Prices F.O.B. Baltimore, Md.
Send for a Sample Order Today and ask for the Violin Makers Supply Price List

NEW "BOW-HAIR" SENSATION — Have you trouble in getting good Bow Hair and paying exhorbitant prices? If so, try our Chieftain White Nylon Bow Hair — a 1960 revelation.

Our "CHIEFTAIN WHITE NYLON BOW HAIR" is stronger than the old type horse hair and is highly praised by all violin makers and violinists who use it.

Per Pound, Hank - - - - $20.00	½ Pound - - - - - - - - $10.50
Per Doz. Units - - - - - $ 5.00	Per Gross - - - - - - - - $48.00

The same hair, but unbleached and looking like best grade unbleached Horsehair, is $25.00 per pound F. O. B. Baltimore.

Postage Extra

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