

by George Romney, the painter (1734-1802). As a musical instrument it has little significance, the solution of continuity, which carving involves, having prejudiced its acoustical value. But in all its parts it is the painter's own work. His biographers tell us that in early life he was fond of wood-carving, had a passion for Violin-making, and delighted in experiments of the kind. Antonio Stradivari never favoured decoration by carving for any part of his Violins save the scroll. He was represented by a very large-sized Violin, dated 1679, known as the 'Hellier Strad.' The scroll is engraved on the sides from his own designs, the violin being double purfling and beautifully inlaid with ivory and black composition between the purfling. It is one of eight known inlaid Violins of his make; the varnish is of a bright yellow colour, and the instrument is a model of that superlative beauty which characterizes the work of Stradivari.

There were not many other Violins of consequence. A Stradivari made in 1736, a year before his death, and inscribed with his age (ninety-two years), and a Joseph Guarnerius del Jesu (1738), formerly the property of Henri Wieniawski, were interesting exhibits. As already intimated, it was the aim of the Musicians' Company to illustrate in this section the growth and evolution of the bowed instrument, and to throw light upon its history.

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