

and seems to be quite a poorly regulated form, giving rise to the suspicion that this was not copied directly from an original, but was worked up from accumulated information. The materials are cleverly used, the maple of the back being just the sort of lightly flamed maple commonly used by the Gaglianos, and the front is made from good-quality spruce, not the coarser grained fir seen in some of the Vollers' cruder work. The very thin linings are authentically made from beech, running into small, deeply hollowed corner blocks.

The soundholes are not particularly convincing, being rather broad and crudely shaped, with excessively deep flutes in the lower wings, a feature of 'looser' Voller efforts. The head is crude, but then so would the original have been. The varnish is also remarkably close in colour and texture to the thin, spirity golden yellow-brown Gagliano recipe, and the ground, too, captures the rather dry, greenish-grey of the original. The whole surface is busy with lightly touched scratches and dints, all evocative of a well-used late eighteenth-century violin. As is often the case in Voller instruments, a compass point is clearly visible in the centre of the back button (see below) and the neck root, as in so many Vollers that still retain their original necks, is at a very vertical angle, set deep into the top block at the base.

THE HART INSTRUMENTS

The violin representing a Brothers Amati instrument (page 58) was made originally for Hart & Co. in Wardour Street, London, and, although unlabelled, bears the Hart stock number 389 pencilled on the interior of the back. Most of the instruments made for Hart wore Hart labels and were numbered: number 22 was made in 1893, 35 is dated 1894, and by 1899 the number had reached 164. This makes it unlikely that the pencilled number relates to a label, but to a more general cataloguing system. Part of a collection previously held by W.E. Hill & Sons, this violin was exhibited in Stuttgart in 1984 in a special collection of copy work from all over Europe. It is relatively crude in workmanship, but a very good impression of an early Amati, with typically narrow wings to the soundholes and rounded arching, matching very closely a violin by the brothers dated 1611.

The most striking feature of this copy is the reversed wood of the back; one side of the jointed two-piece back is flipped over so that the flame appears to be continuous across the centre joint, rather than sloping symmetrically. This is an authentic and idiosyncratic feature of genuine Amati instruments, and dates from a period when violins were more commonly made with



LEFT
Back button of
Gagliano copy

RIGHT
Head of Amati copy
showing scribe line