

Nicolò Amati, Cremona, 1662

PURCHASED FROM ALBERT ARNOLD, 6 OCTOBER 1942, FOR £500

Cyril Jacklin, of the London dealership Albert Arnold, asked the Hills for a certificate for this violin in 1941, and he sold it to Segelman the following year.

The one-piece slab-cut back is smallish in length, and is much narrower than the grand-pattern 1645 example (pp.128–131), particularly across the lower bouts. The stop, however, is typically Cremonese.

The certificate mentions that “*the original neck-termination of the scroll is carried further than usual*” – a somewhat strange choice of words. A new neck has not been grafted onto the head; rather, Amati’s original neck is retained, having been re-angled (twice) at the heel. However, one wouldn’t necessarily expect the Hills to mention it in a certificate.

I think they mean that the pegbox is longer than usual.

It is not immediately obvious, but there is more space around the G peg than normal. As a matter of fact, the scroll is not typical either, and the neck and head may be the work of one of the apprentices. The Hills state that the violin has its original label, and I have no reason to doubt it, but perhaps it has faded in the last 68 years, because the last two digits of the date are simply impossible to read.

The certificate has another oddity in that it states that the back length is $13 \frac{1}{8}$ inches, which is just not so. It is undoubtedly the correct document for this violin – the rest of the description is perfect, as is the Hill number which ties up with this violin – so it’s just a mistake.

The instrument is a very typical example of Nicolò Amati, and in wonderful condition. There is a repaired soundpost crack in the table, but only the centre bouts of the table have been half-edged – that is, the upper surfaces outside the purfling have been replaced.

This instrument was illustrated in *The Strad* during the war, and seized upon by Segelman.

DIMENSIONS (MM)

Body: 352
Upper bout: 160
Middle bout: 110
Lower bout: 191
Stop: 193

REFERENCES

The Strad, December 1941

