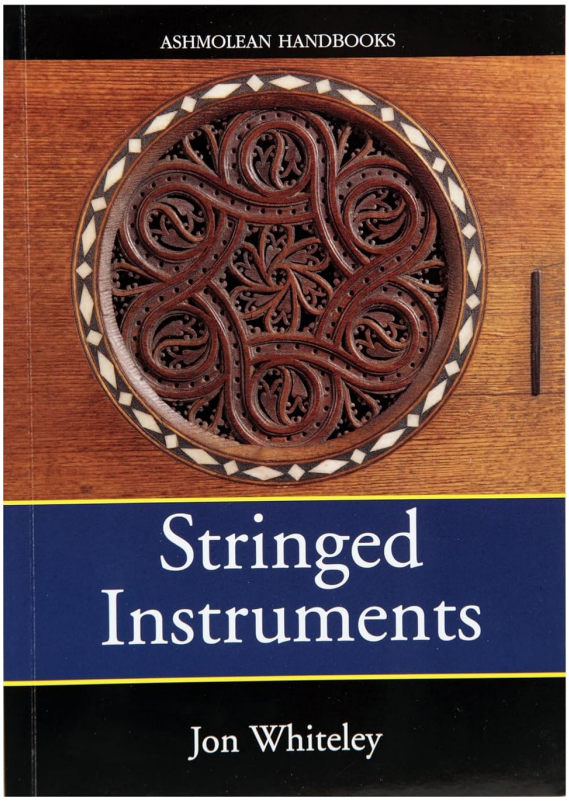
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# Stringed Instruments

## Viols, Violins, Citterns and Guitars in the Ashmolean Museum

### Ashmolean Museum

### Jon Whiteley

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- Illustrates all the viols and the violins in the Ashmolean Museum, mainly from the (1939) gift of Arthur and Alfred Hill, the Hill Collection

The Ashmolean's collection of European stringed instruments is not large but it is very famous. Several of the instruments in the Ashmolean are among the rarest and most beautiful of their kind and most are, in some way, exceptional. The collection was founded on a group of instruments which was given to the museum by the firm of W.E. Hill & Sons in 1939 and has since been increased by two bequests and by an important group of bows and instruments given by Albert Cooper in 1999. The firm of W.E. Hill & Sons was founded in 1880 and by the early 20th century the firm had achieved an unrivalled reputation in making, restoring, and selling stringed instruments.In the course of handling and repairing instruments, the Hills became increasingly aware of the damage that was being inflicted on early viols and violins by constant playing and repeated restoration. This concern gave rise to the idea of donating a select group of rare instruments to a museum where they would be preserved from further harm, and the first instruments were handed over in 1939. The present handbook discusses and illustrates every stringed instrument in the collection and is chiefly intended for the many visitors to the Hill Collection and for the wider public who might wish for more information about the instruments and some background history.

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