

Basic Detail Report



Spinet

Date

1689

Primary Maker

Charles Haward

Description

While nearly 150 18th-century English spinets have survived, 17th-century examples are less common. The spinets of Haward and his contemporaries are all rather small, with short strings intended to be tuned to the

prevailing English "quire"pitch, about one and a half semitones above modern pitch. The most notable characteristic of Haward's style, immediately evident in this instrument, is the S-shaped bend side. This feature, present in all of Haward's instruments including a harpsichord made in 1683 and in a few instruments by other English makers, gradually passed out of use in England in the early eighteenth century. Early English keyboard instruments typically are handsome pieces of furniture. The 1689 Haward is no exception, and the curly figure of its walnut case is especially attractive. The interior is veneered in red cedar (imported from the British colony of Bermuda or Virginia). The instrument rests on a stand, certainly old and perhaps of the period, in appropriate 17th-century style with twist-turned legs. Compass: 4+ octaves, apparently BB to c3, but in a common short-octave arrangement the BB key was tuned to GG, C# to AA, and Eb to BBb or BB. The missing accidentals in the bass, especially GG# and C#, were not often needed in the music of the period. In this spinet, Haward divided the Eb key: the front half plays Eb, the back half BBb or BB. Solid ivory accidentals.

Dimensions

String length: c2: 289 mm