

A violin by Auguste Delivet

Catalogue Number: RKT-0888

\$6,500

Labeled: “A Delivet, No.234 Année 1917, Paris”

The owner of this violin is very motivated to sell and we are offering it well below its appraised value.

Biography: Auguste Delivet is well known in Canada as he worked for the R.S. Williams Company in Toronto from 1918 until his death in 1927. According to R.S. Williams Jr., Delivet made 176 violins, though this may be the total for his production in Canada.

Born in Mirecourt in 1861, he served his apprenticeship under his uncle Victor Rombaux, and François Chardin. In 1887 he went to Paris to join the workshop of H.C. Silvestre and was awarded gold medals for his violins at Nantes (1904) and Liège (1905 and 1906). In 1892 Delivet set up his own workshop at 10 rue Paradis, in Paris, before moving to 49 rue Richer. In 1918 he moved to Canada to join R.S. Williams & Sons in Toronto as foreman (premier ouvrier). In 1923 Delivet moved to Montreal where he established his own workshop. However we know that he continued his collaboration with Williams & Sons as one can find Delivet violins bearing both his name and theirs as late as 1925.

DELIVET, AUGUSTE.

Born at Mirecourt, 1861. Served apprenticeship in that town. Pupil of Victor Rombaux and Chardin. Worked five years in the Atelier of Silvestre, Paris. Opened own workshop in the rue de Paradis, Paris, 1892; later removed to the rue Richer. Awarded gold medals at Nantes, 1904; Liège, 1905 and 1906; and at other Exhibitions. Maker and repairer to the Paris Conservatoire. Working for Williams & Co., at Toronto, 1920. Died 1928. Inventor of an “Ideal Peg”, with two conic ends.

Built several original forms of instruments, especially some designed for the acrobatic performances of musical clowns.

Many violins, violas, and 'cellos; attractive as any of the modern French school;

often sought for by connoisseurs in search of instruments of the highest possible skilled workmanship. Very rich oil varnish of various shades. Tone quality remarkably mellow and very very clear.

Exposition Universelle. Liège. Grand Prix (Collective)

A. Delivet

Luthier

No. . . Année 19. Ex-Ouvrier de H. C. Silvestre
Paris.

—(yellow paper)

Made in the workshops of
The R. S. Williams & Sons Co. Limited, Toronto, Canada.

Bearing a fancifully-designed violin and bow—fac-similes of medals and other scrolled work.

Also instruments produced for the Canadian Firm divided into three classes:

- (1) Branded “A. Delivet” on the inside and under the saddle above endpin on the outside—250 dollars.
- (2) 200 dollars.
- (3) Marked “Sous la Direction”—150 dollars—these not solely made by him but by assistant workmen.

A. Delivet: Luthier
ex-ouvrier de H. C. Silvestre
Paris année 1896 No

—(Parisian label)

- From: “Universal Dictionary of Violin and Bow Makers” by William Henley

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Description: This violin has a two-piece back of maple showing strong figure descending from the centre joint. The sides and neck are of matching wood. The front is of two pieces of spruce showing medium grain becoming slightly broader towards the edges. The fittings are of ebony with dark rosewood pegs. The varnish is of a dark red-brown colour and in very good condition with minor wear and some re-touching.

Repairs: This present violin is a good example of Delivet’s later work and comes to us in good condition. There have been very few repairs done over the life of the instrument and the varnish has been recently restored. The centre joint in the lower part of the back has been repaired by James Ham in May 2006. The varnish has been cleaned and restored by Kim Tipper in 2009. At the same time the peg holes were bushed and the original pegs re-fit. The end pin was replaced after the hole was moved to the centre. There are no other visible repairs or cracks.

Comments: Although the label of this violin appears to be dated 1917, we believe it was actually made in Toronto, Canada after 1919 as the label is in the style of Delivet’s instruments for R.S.Williams & Sons. This violin has a varnish of a rich red/brown colour which is evenly applied and quite attractive. In contrast, other violins from Delivet’s later Montreal period sometime suffer from muddy, hurriedly done varnish of a dark brown colour. Most players who pick up this violin comment on its comfortable slender neck, which is just as the maker left it. This makes the instrument quite easy to play and responsive. We would agree with William Henley’s comment in his Universal Dictionary that the tone is “...remarkably mellow and very, very clear.”

Back Measurements:

Length: 350mm. Upper bout: 166mm. Middle bout: 110mm. Lower bout: 205mm.
May 25th, 2010