

A violin bow by Archibald S. Hill, Seattle circa 1940

RKT-1311

\$1,500

Faintly branded: “ARCHIBALD S. HILL”

Repairs: The ivory tip face has apparently been replaced, but no other repairs are visible.

Condition: In good condition.

Comments: This is an interesting bow by a respected Australian-born violin and bow maker who worked in Seattle from 1925. He was roundly applauded by William Henley in his *Universal Dictionary of Violin and Bow Makers*. It is nicely made and mounted in silver, slightly light and flexible with adequate strength and in good condition.

Hill, Archibald S.; Yakima, WA. 1882-c. 1972. Born in Ballarat, Australia. Started playing the violin at age nine, and made first violin at age 11. Apprenticed to a maker in Chicago. Worked in New York City and Toronto, Canada. Established own shop in Seattle and was working there in 1922. Worked a brief time in Vancouver, BC, Canada, c. 1924, later returned to Seattle. Moved to Yakima c. 1960. Small modified Guarneri model. Preferred various shades of red, often antiqued. Unusual lip on the

curl of the face of the scroll. Some domestic wood. Made at least 79 instruments. Also made bows with round shafts for the soloist and octagonal shafts for the orchestral player. Branded “ARCHIBALD S. HILL.”

-From “Violin Maker of the United States” by Thomas Wenberg

HILL, ARCHIBALD S.

Born at Ballarat (Australia), 1882. Seriously studied violin playing from the age of nine. Began to make violins at the almost unpardonable (for such work) age of eleven. Even then, he was always thinking “violin”, and everything he did at this time was practically from his own inspiration. Later years of traditional apprenticeship were spent in Chicago, New York, and Toronto, where he formed an invaluable friendship with the violin maker, Hugill. Eventually settled at Seattle (U.S.A.), where in 1925 he was enjoying all success possible to a modern maker. Never wasted time rushing into print with any special theories, but put them all into his instruments, and these have found marked favour with well-known soloists and proficient amateurs. Had a splendid gift for perfect outline, arching also cannot be praised too highly. Also maintained striking individuality in the carving of the scroll. Sound-holes gracefully symmetrical to the whole contour. Penetrated into the philosophy of a true “singing” tone, smooth and responsive. Favoured the small Guarnerius model of 13 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches in length. Varnish varies from a light amber to a deep coral-red, and dark cherry red, applied in such a way as to give it a similarly old appearance to the particular Cremonese model imitated. Bows made very patiently, astonishingly well balanced, and have the flexibility of old French bows. Produced two kinds—round sticks for soloist bows, and octagon for orchestral use. Stamped “Archibald S. Hill”.

A. S. Hill, *Liutajio*
Seattle. U.S.A.
Anno Dom. 1925

—(on the right, a fanciful interweaving
of his initials)

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

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Description: This bow has an octagonal stick of red-brown pernambucco wood with an ivory tip face and silver wire grip. The silver mounted ebony frog has a mother of pearl slide and dot. The divided adjuster is of silver and ebony. There are no visible repairs, though the ivory tip face is an apparent replacement.

Weight: 58.5grams

Balance point: 24 cm. from the adjuster

This bow is in good condition. It is registered in our records as RKT-1311.

May 16, 2011