



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 10, 2016

Contact: Alexandra Nelson
Communications Director
212.254.4710 ext. 19
alexandra@swannalleries.com

RECENTLY DISCOVERED EDITION OF THE FAMED BAY PSALM BOOK LEADS MILLION DOLLAR SALE FOR SWANN GALLERIES' AMERICANA DEPARTMENT

New York—Swann Galleries' **February 4** auction of **Printed & Manuscript Americana** brought just over \$1,000,000, led by historically significant texts.

The top lot and perhaps most storied item in the sale was a previously unseen 1693 seventh edition of *The Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs...*, colloquially known as the Bay Psalm Book. The seventh edition is apparently the first to be printed in America in more than forty years. It was previously thought that printing of the Bay Psalm returned to America with the 8th edition in 1695. In addition to revealing new information about the history of the touchstone of early American printing, this copy was owned by Jonathan Corwin, one of the judges in the Salem Witch Trials, and his wife Elizabeth. Years later, the text passed into the hands of descendants of John Proctor, a witch trial victim, and remained in their family for several years, where they referred to it as the "witch book." The Bay Psalm brought \$221,000, a record for this edition's first appearance at auction.

Other significant texts included a first edition of *The Federalist Papers*, published in two volumes, New York, 1788, which realized \$87,500. The first published edition (in French) and first English edition of Thomas Jefferson's *Notes on the State of Virginia*, the only full-length book by the founding father published in his lifetime, both sold well. The French version sold for \$47,500, while the English edition brought \$22,500. A first edition related to another founding father, *The Will of General George Washington*, sold for \$7,500. Washington's will included a provision emancipating all his slaves upon the death of his wife, Martha.

Manuscript materials were also top performers in this sale, including the journal of Lewis Cresse, a Cape May whaler, which brought \$13,750. Cresse's determination is clear in the pages, which reveal that he and his compatriots continued to go to sea hunting each year, despite coming up empty handed for stretches as long as seven years. Another whaling diary, that of Mrs. Parnell Smith Pease, wife of a whaling captain in the South Pacific, sold for \$4,500, while the diary of young Transcendentalist John Albee realized \$9,375. A

MORE

letterbook of Boston merchant and privateer agent Paschal Smith from during the Revolutionary War sold for \$30,000. Smith corresponded with many notable Revolutionary figures, including Baron von Steuben and Benedict Arnold. A large archive of correspondence between Civil War regimental surgeon William C. Towle and his wife, detailing the atrocities of battle and disease, sold for \$10,625.

An engraving made from a drawing done by British spy John André during the American Revolution realized \$15,000. The drawing, which depicts André being rowed across the Hudson River to meet Benedict Arnold, was found in André's cell the day he was executed for espionage. Another visually striking item in the sale was the broadside *\$100,000 Reward! The Murderer of our Late Beloved President, Abraham Lincoln, is Still at Large*, which sold for \$37,500. This second edition, second printing of America's most famous reward poster included additional details in the description of John Wilkes Booth, noting his "heavy black moustache, which there is some reason to believe has been shaved off."

Archives did well in this sale as well, with the family papers of Indian captive Jeanette DeCamp Sweet realizing \$5,000, while the family papers of Colonel Joaquin Terrazas of Chihuahua, known for leading the Chihuahua militia in its efforts to suppress Apache raiders, sold for \$15,000. The diaries and family papers of Elizabeth F. Houghton, a young woman from Woodstock VT, realized \$9,375.

The Printed & Manuscript Americana department's next auction will be held on June 21. For further information, or to consign items to upcoming Americana auctions, please contact Book Department Director and Americana Specialist Rick Stattler, rstattler@swanngalleries.com, or via phone at 212-254-4710, ex.27.

Complete results are available online via www.swanngalleries.com.

*Prices include buyer's premium.

#

CATALOGUE AND ADDITIONAL DIGITAL IMAGES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST