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First Use of “Virginia” Sees \$80K at Swann Galleries

Maps by Hakluyt, Waldseemüller & Zaltieri Reveal History of Exploration



New York—Maps were so plentiful at **Swann Galleries’ December 5 auction of Maps & Atlases, Natural History & Color Plate Books** that one could be forgiven for getting lost. Many buyers chose to bid in person, contributing to a strong sell-through rate of 84%.

The highlight of the sale was **Richard Hakluyt’s** 1587 map of the New World, *Novus Orbis*—the first to use the designations “Virginea” and “Nuevo Mexico.” It was one of a selection of duplicates from the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation Collection, originating in the William C. Wooldridge Map Collection, which was generously donated by the Virginia Cartographical Society in 2017. All proceeds from the sale of these lots will be used to support this important acquisition and the collections at Colonial Williamsburg. In its first appearance at auction since 1917, the Hakluyt map brought \$80,000.

Maps represented more than half of the auction’s offerings. A masterwork of sixteenth-century Venetian cartography, Bolognino Zaltieri’s 1566 rendering of North America in the Lafreri style depicted the mythical northwest Strait of Anian, dividing the continents of Asia and North America; it sold for \$47,500. Maps by **Martin Waldseemüller** performed well, with the captivating woodcut *Tabula Terre Nove*, 1513—the first map of the Americas to appear in an atlas—selling to a collector for \$27,500. A hand-colored map of the same year brought \$18,750. John Smith’s 1616 map of New England, called the “foundation map” of the region, realized \$35,000.



Not everything in the sale concerned cartography. A fine book of detailed watercolors of birds by John Gerrard Keulemans reached \$6,500, above a high estimate of \$2,500. Similarly, the ink-and-watercolor sketch *Golden Eagle and Ptarmigan* by Louis Agassiz Fuertes flew past its \$3,000 high estimate to sell for \$12,500 to a collector.

Caleb Kiffer, Maps & Atlases Specialist at Swann Galleries, said he was “very pleased” with the sale. “Swann continues to cruise the top of the auction

market to buy and sell exceptionally scarce high-profile items, as well as holding strong with mid-range material. Across the board, the map-collecting community is out in force and the results of this sale are evidence that Swann is an important part of keeping that interest and energy alive.”

The next auction of **Maps & Atlases, Natural History & Color Plate Books** at Swann Galleries will be on June 7, 2018. The house is currently accepting quality consignments.

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Swann Auction Galleries is a third-generation family business as well as the world’s largest auction house for works on paper. In the last 75 years, Swann has repeatedly revolutionized the trade with such innovations as the first U.S. auction dedicated to photographs and the world’s only department of African-American Fine Art. More than 30 auctions and previews are held annually in Swann Galleries’ two-floor exhibition space in Midtown Manhattan, and online worldwide. Visit swanngalleries.com for more information.