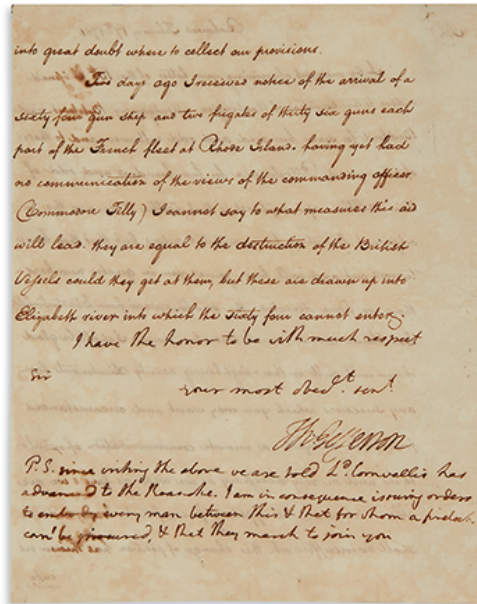


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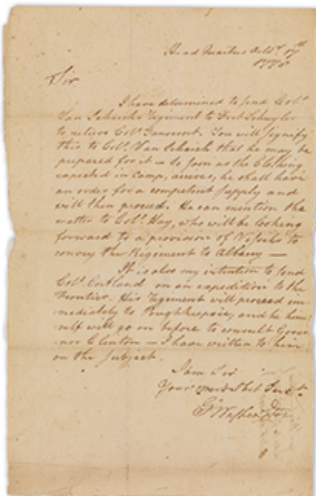
Jefferson & Washington Letters Lead Swann Galleries Autographs Auction Artist Autographs Reach New Heights



New York—Swann Galleries’ auction of **Autographs** on **March 22** offered a selection of letters, photographs and works by some of history’s greatest game-changers, with communications by founding fathers, letters from artists and writers, and autographs by notable scientists all performing well.

A selection of correspondence sent by preeminent figures during the Revolutionary War led the sale. An important Letter Signed by **Thomas Jefferson** to Major-General Nathanael Greene in February 1781, reporting that he has ordered over 1,000 riflemen to join him, exceeded its high estimate to sell for \$35,000. A 1778 letter from Commander in Chief **George Washington** to General James Clinton preparing for the Sullivan-Clinton campaign against the Iroquois reached \$25,000.

Long before the war, a charming letter by John Hancock in 1761 to his brother promises to bring his sister a monkey and requesting a cage of birds be sent to him in London. It was purchased by a collector for \$16,200. War was also far from the mind of Benedict Arnold in his 1772 letter providing instructions to the captain of one of his merchant ships (\$5,500).



Autographs by artists of all stripes performed well, with an archive of 28 items by Jean Dubuffet going to an institution for \$6,750. Letters by Jacob Lawrence and Hale Woodruff each achieved the highest price for his autograph at auction (\$1,625 and \$2,750, respectively). The first autograph by dancer Vaslav Nijinsky ever offered by Swann reached \$6,480.

Walt Whitman's final poem, *A Thought of Columbus*, transcribed from his deathbed by a secretary in 1892 and featuring his holograph notations and corrections was purchased by a collector for \$20,000. An important letter by Charles Dickens to Lord Robert Grosvenor, 1838, that provides insight into the author's process, reached \$8,750.

Correspondence by scientists also performed well, amiable contents hinting at the humanity behind the genius. One of the earliest recorded uses of the term "bug" to describe a technological mishap, a term coined by Thomas Edison, appears in an 1878 letter to Western Union President William Orton, which sold for \$12,500.

The next auction of **Autographs** at Swann Galleries will be **Revolutionary & Presidential Americana from the Collection of William Wheeler III** on June 21, 2018. The house is currently accepting quality consignments for autumn auctions.

Additional highlights can be found [here](#).

Captions:

[Lot 4](#): Thomas Jefferson, Letter Signed, to Major-General Nathanael Greene, Richmond, February 1781. Sold March 22, 2018 for \$35,000.

[Lot 5](#): George Washington, Letter Signed, as Commander in Chief, planning the Sullivan Expedition, "Head Quarters," Fredericksburg, Virginia, 1778. Sold March 22, 2018 for \$25,000.

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