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Runaway Currier & Ives Print with Special Ties to Thomas W. Streeter Sets Record at Swann



MAPS & ATLASES, NATURAL HISTORY & COLOR PLATE BOOKS Sale 2496; December 13, 2018

New York–**Swann Galleries** closed out their fall season with a marathon sale of **Maps & Atlases, Natural History & Color Plate Books** on Thursday, **December 13**. The auction saw a sell-through rate of 89%, five records, and steady interest across categories.

The runaway top lot of the sale was *Across the Continent*, 1868, a **Currier & Ives** print depicting the changing landscape of the mid nineteenth-century American frontier upon the completion of the Transcontinental Railroads. Significant for its subject matter and memorable provenance, the work came across the block, by descent, from the noteworthy collection of Thomas Winthrop Streeter who was gifted the lithograph on his 80th birthday by his children. *Across the Continent* reached \$62,500—a record for the print.

Maps and atlases represented a generous portion of the sale with several lots taking top spots and setting records. Maps included Samuel de Champlain’s scarce 1664 record of his later discoveries in Canada with \$22,500, and John Overton’s *New and Most Exact Map of America* from 1671 with \$11,875. Additional cartographic material featured a chart of the middle Atlantic Coast including New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia and North Carolina by Joseph Frederick Wallet Des Barres (\$13,750); Joan Vingboons’ *Caarte van Westindien*, circa 1700, a large engraved chart of Florida,

Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean (\$10,625); and a 1676 *New and Accurate Map of the World* by John Speed (\$9,375). Atlases included George Woolworth Colton's *Atlas of America* on the physical and political geography of North and South America and the West India Islands, which set a record with \$11,250, and a first edition of a rare atlas of Spanish-controlled harbors in North America, Central America and the Caribbean, which earned \$11,700.

Perhaps in response to the political climate, satirical color plate books performed well: *Caricaturana*, 1836-38, Honoré Daumier's collaboration with Charles Philipon, taking aim at French society sold for \$18,750; and *The Caricature Magazine*, circa 1806, by George Moutard Woodward, which satirized various elements of nineteenth-century British social and political themes, garnered \$16,250. Later in the sale, individual Gillray prints saw a 100% sell-through rate.



Additional highlights from color plate books included John James Audubon's *The Birds of America*, 1859, which featured seven volumes and 500 tinted and hand-colored lithograph plates. The publication was offered together with Audubon's *The Quadrupeds of North America* and reached \$16,250. **Michele Rene d'Auberteuil's** eighteenth-century weekly Parisian theatre journals, *Costume et Annales des Grands Theatres de Paris*, set a record with \$11,875. Also from the selection was Thomas Say's *American Conchology*, 1830, and a well-illustrated manuscript ciphering book from the eighteenth

century by William Greene (\$8,750 and \$8,125, respectfully).

A run of Japanese material was led by a color woodblock map of Uraga and Edo Bay relating to Commodore Matthew Perry and His Black Ships at \$15,600. Additional Perry material included a manuscript report on the arrival of the commodore, featuring two large portraits of Perry and Commander Henry A. Adams, which was sold for \$6,500. A panoramic color woodblock map of the roadways, waterways, cities, towns and topography of the entire island chain of Japan; and a large Edo-period woodblock Japanese atlas and encyclopedia were won for \$8,450 apiece.

Caleb Kiffer, Specialist of Maps & Atlases, noted of the sale, "In many ways this sale showed a great confidence in the antique map market with more interest than has been seen and strong prices to back that up. It was also encouraging to witness a surge in the middle-market items. The highlight of the sale, Currier & Ives' *Across the Continent* was an exceptional result. It is a beautiful, historic image, but it was the fact that it was such a meaningful piece of Thomas Winthrop Streeter's personal collection that propelled it into record territory."

The next auction of **Maps & Atlases, Natural History & Color Plate Books** at Swann Galleries will be on June 6, 2019. The house is currently accepting quality consignments.

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

Captions:

[Lot 342](#): Currier & Ives, *Across the Continent / Westward the Course of Empire Takes Its Way*, formerly in the collection of Thomas Winthrop Streeter, New York, 1866. Sold for \$62,500, a record for the print.

[Lot 281](#): Michel Rene d'Auberteuil & J.C. le Varcher de Charnois, *Costumes et Annales des Grands Theatres de Paris*, Paris, 1786-89. Sold for \$11,875, a record for the work.

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