

For Immediate Release
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CHRISTIE'S THREE DAY AUCTION AT COWDRAY PARK, WEST SUSSEX REALISES £7.9 MILLION

Over 1,200 clients register to bid buyers with buyers from
34 countries as auction exceeds pre-sale expectations

Over 4,500 people visit Cowdray Park during the pre-sale exhibition
and the auction

Combined with the nine works from Cowdray Park sold in London
in July, the Pearson collections realize a total of £18.9 million



A complete list of results can be found at: <http://tinyurl.com/5txvm6>

Cowdray Park, West Sussex – The three day country house auction at Cowdray Park, West Sussex, on 13, 14 and 15 September 2011 realised £7,939,800 / \$12,576,643 / €9,178,409 - exceeding pre-sale expectations and selling 93% by lot. The auction sold 1,122 lots from both Cowdray Park, home of Lord Cowdray (*above left*), and from Dunecht House, the Scottish home of Lord Cowdray's brother, the Hon. Charles Pearson (*above right*). The auction had been expected to realise in the region of £5 million.

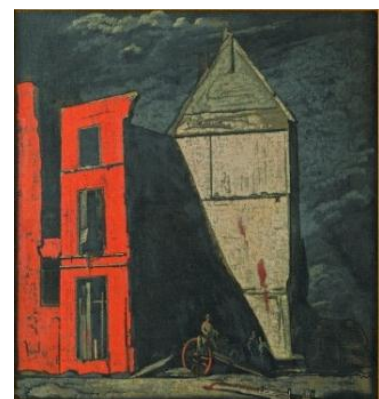
This auction follows sales at Christie's in London in July when a selection of nine works from Cowdray Park were sold for a collective total of £10,974,000, led by Thomas Gainsborough's full-length portrait of Mrs William Villebois which sold for £6,537,250, a world record price for the artist at auction. The combined total for works from the Pearson collections sold in July and at this September auction is £18,913,800.

Andrew Waters, Head of Private Collection and Country House Sales, London; and Gemma Sudlow, Specialist: “*Christie's has a long and distinguished history of important country house sales stretching back over 200 years; this week illustrated the global appeal of the traditional British country house sale in the 21st century. The Pearson name and collecting legacy drew interest from all around the world with clients from 34 countries successfully buying in the sale. We saw a high level of bidding from international clients via the internet and the telephone, with a healthy crowd of collectors experiencing the auction first hand in the marquee. A team of 9 auctioneers oversaw the sale which lasted nearly 24 hours over the course of 3 days, and which produced very strong prices for all categories of art represented at the sale.*”



The auction at Cowdray Park sold a diverse and fascinating selection of lots – from British pictures, furniture and works of art, silver, arms and armour and tapestries, to a selection of firemen's helmets and a jukebox. The top price was paid for an English School portrait of a lady, *circa* 1595-1605, traditionally identified as Queen Elizabeth I, but more probably Catherine Carey, Countess of Nottingham (*illustrated left*). It sold for £325,250 / \$515,196 / €375,989 and led a group of early British pictures which realized strong prices at the auction. Three paintings by James Ferrier Pryde broke the auction record price for the artist on three consecutive occasions, led by *The Red Ruin*, 1910, which sold for £91,250 / \$144,540 / €105,485 (*illustrated below*).

Bidders who attended the auction competed with those who bid by telephone and via the internet through Christie's LIVE. In total, the auction welcomed winning bidders from 34 countries; the buyer breakdown for the sale (by lot) was 72% United Kingdom, 11% rest of Europe, 11% Americas, 4% Asia and 2% others. Internet bidding via Christie's LIVE represented approximately 22% of registered bidders.



Further highlights of the auction included a George V Silver Pier-Mirror which sold for £85,250 against an estimate of £10,000 to £15,000; a rare late 15th century North Italian helmet which sold for £51,650 against an estimate of £3,000 to £5,000; two pairs of spurs which sold for £21,250 against an estimate of £400 to £600; a Salor rug from West Turmenistan, *circa* 1880, which realized £56,450 (estimate: £2,500 to £3,500); a William IV mahogany extending dining-table which sold for £39,650 (estimate: £10,000 to £15,000); and a set of nine silvered-metal lanterns which sold for £30,000 (estimate: £5,000 to £8,000). More unusual

items included a Seeberg 'select-o-matic' jukebox which sold for £3,000 (estimate: £800 to £1,200); and a set of eleven fire helmets and axes from the late 19th century which realized £4,750 against a pre-sale estimate of £1,500 to £2,500.

A portrait of Lady Pearson, later Viscountess Cowdray by Sir William Nicholson (1872-1949) was sold to the Trustees of Blair Castle by private treaty prior to the auction in order that it could go on public display in the future.

The majority of the works offered at the auction were acquired by Weetman Dickinson Pearson (1856-1927), the first Viscount Cowdray, and his son, Weetman Harold Miller Pearson, the 2nd Viscount. Weetman Pearson, 1st Viscount Cowdray, developed his family firm, S. Pearson and Son Ltd., from a small company in Bradford into one of the most successful business empires of the 20th century. In 1889 he won the contract to drain Mexico City by means of a Grand Canal and, having gained the friendship of President Porfirio Díaz, Pearson developed vast oil fields in Mexico. His firm became one of the largest construction companies in the world and together with his oil interests, he accrued extraordinary wealth. He was for ten years the Liberal Member of Parliament for Colchester, and due to his regular absences from the Houses of Commons, was often referred to in jest as 'the Member for Mexico'. Weetman Pearson acquired Cowdray Park in 1909. On his death in 1927, an American newspaper described him as 'one of the greatest pioneers ever sent out of Britain'. Pearson PLC exists today as a global media and education company and the largest book publisher in the world.

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