

*For Immediate Release*

*December 20, 2002*

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*RARITIES ABOUND IN CHRISTIE'S JANUARY 2003 AMERICANA SALES*

*Important American Furniture, Silver, Prints, Scrimshaw and Folk Art  
January 16 & 17, 2003*

*New York, NY – The Russell B. Aitken Collection of Wildfowl Decoys on January 18 (please see separate release), Pennsylvania German Folk Art from the Collection of Rose Anna and John Kolar on January 17, a highly important silver tankard bearing the mark of Jacobus van der Spiegel and a rare presentation pistol given to Civil War hero General G. George Meade are just a few of the many highlights from Christie's January 2003 series of Americana sales at Rockefeller Center.*

*American Silver*

*The highlight of Christie's offering of American Silver will undoubtedly be the highly important Cornell Family Tankard, circa 1695 (estimate: \$300,000–500,000). Bearing the mark of Jacobus van der Spiegel, this previously unrecorded tankard is one of the last great 17<sup>th</sup> century New York tankards remaining in private hands. Additionally, the Cornell Family Tankard is one of three tankards, all by van der Spiegel, with superb foliate engraving on the cover, distinguished by pairs of birds and/or cherub's heads—the other two reside at Yale and the Metropolitan Museum of Art. The example at Yale is widely acknowledged to be the finest New York tankard known and this example offered at Christie's is nearly identical.*

*Additional silver highlights include a previously unrecorded silver teapot with the mark of Simeon Soumaine, New York, circa 1730 (estimate: \$100,000–150,000). This rare teapot is a significant addition to the very small group of spherical teapots with double-domed covers produced exclusively by New York silversmiths. Another silver tankard bearing the mark of Koenraet Ten Eyck, Albany, circa 1728 (estimate: \$30,000–50,000) is one of just seventeen known objects by the silversmith who lived in worked in Albany from 1678 to 1753.*

*American Furniture and Decorative Arts*

*One of the major highlights of the January 17 session will be an object of gratitude presented to one of the*

*great heroes of the Civil War: The General G. George Meade Civil War Presentation Pistol— a Remington .44 Caliber Model 1858 with engraving attributed to Louis d. Nimschke (estimate: \$200,000–300,000). Meade is best known for his role after President Lincoln appointed him Commander of the Army of the Potomac for the Union forces. In this role, Meade led his troops against Robert E. Lee’s Confederate forces in Maryland in July of 1863. Over four bloody days 25,000 men lost their lives, and in the end, Lee’s troops were repulsed and they retreated across the Potomac River. While Meade received considerable criticism for allowing Lee’s forces to “escape”, he had won perhaps the most important battle of the Civil War.*

*This finely engraved pistol was a gift to Meade from the United States Sanitary Commission, the precursor to the American Red Cross. This commission, charged with ensuring the good health and safety of Union soldiers, brought focus to the civilian war effort and provided items such as blankets and food for wounded and sick soldiers. It was the Chairman of this commission, William Blodgett, who wrote to Meade informing him of this exceptional gift in gesture of support and gratitude for his sacrifices on the battlefield in the name of his country. Because of Meade’s continuing duties, the pistol could not be presented to him in person with the desired ceremony, but Meade received the pistol in the field and sent the requested receipt. The pistol has descended in the Meade family since.*

*Furniture highlights include a Chippendale Cherrywood block-and-shell chest-of-drawers, probably New London County, Connecticut, 1770–1790 that is a powerful expression of Connecticut’s Rococo aesthetic (estimate: \$400,000–600,000). While the chest’s scrolled skirt and block-and-shell facade are striking; the most unusual feature of the piece is its combination of a shaped top with a block-and-shell facade. A Chippendale carved Mahogany serpentine card table from New York City, 1765–1785 (estimate: \$300,000–500,000) with a deeply shaped top and quintessentially New York squared ball and claw feet, exemplifies the most robust version of the form, known as the “Van Rensselaer” type.*

*Excellent examples of Classical furniture include a classic ormolu-mounted marble top commode labeled by Charles Honore Lannuier (estimate: \$200,000–300,000). This incredibly rare commode, only three by Lannuier are known, was included in the Metropolitan Museum of Art’s heralded exhibition, “Honore Lannuier; Cabinetmaker from Paris.”*

*American Folk Art including Pennsylvania German Folk Art from the Collection of Rose Anna and John Kolar*

*Christie’s strong offering of American Folk Art will be highlighted by the single-owner collection of Pennsylvania German Folk Art from Rose Anna and John Kolar. Resembling a “country sale in the city,” the Kolar sale will offer a wide variety of decorative objects including weathervanes, needlework samplers, redware, and various furniture forms. Among the many highlights are a painted and decorated blanket chest from York County, Pennsylvania featuring red and green pinwheels (estimate: \$18,000–24,000), and a set of six yellow, black and green painted sidechairs (estimate: \$12,000–18,000) attributed to Johnathan Whitney,*

*Templeton, Massachusetts, circa 1828–1835.*

*Lift-top chests are perhaps the most ubiquitous form of Pennsylvania German furniture, and while they are the subject of much scholarship only a handful of makers have been identified. Christie's sale features two blanket chests by known makers. The first is a blue-painted chest attributed to John Flory (1754– after 1824) working in Rapho Township, Lancaster County (estimate: \$40,000–60,000). The chest is embellished with twelve-pointed stars, unicorns, flowers, birds and bears the inscription Dienes Kist Gehert Mir Jacobus Ober 1794 (This chest belongs to Jacobus Ober 1794). The second chest, from the Kolar collection, is signed and dated by Johannes Ranck (1763–1828), 1787, who belongs to one of the best-known schools of decorators (estimate: \$15,000–25,000). The chest is embellished with three panels on the front, each depicting a characteristic flowerpot with stylized floral spray.*

*The most prominent and most expensive piece of furniture in any Pennsylvania German household was the schrank, which housed the linens and other items of the entire family. Christies' will offer an exceptional architectonic schrank from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, possibly from Lancaster County, whose bold form is highlighted by red, white and blue paint (estimate: \$150,000–250,000).*

*A particularly strong offering of American folk portraits includes a double portrait of Frances Almira Millener and Fanny Root Millener by the acclaimed painter Sheldon Peck (estimate: \$200,000–400,000). Painted in Peck's signature style, this work was included in Peck's groundbreaking exhibition at the Whitney Museum of American Art in 1975, the first major solo exhibition for an American Folk painter. Further portrait highlights include an enchanting portrait of a girl picking mulberries by an unknown 19<sup>th</sup> century artist (estimate: \$40,000–60,000). The painting is from the Estate of Eleanor Searle Whitney McCollum, wife of Cornelius Vanderbilt Whitney and daughter-in-law of Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney.*

*Edward Hicks' Washington at the Delaware (estimate: \$200,000–300,000) depicts the iconic moment in American history when Washington led his troops across the Delaware River for a successful attack on British forces at Trenton, New Jersey. This sign, bearing the inscription Washington Crossed here, and its companion, located in the Mercer Museum in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, were likely painted in 1833 to flank a new bridge spanning the Delaware from Pennsylvania to New Jersey. It hung there until 1841 when it was rescued and placed in the bar of Alexander Nelson's tavern near McKonkey's Ferry.*

#### *Scrimshaw*

*The Dr. Joseph E. Fields II collection of Scrimshaw offers a wide variety of rare whale's teeth engraved with romantic sentiments, inlaid decorative boxes and miniature furniture easily carried home to present to children or sweethearts—all objects crafted by 19<sup>th</sup> century whalers as they bided time between whale sitings on voyages that could last as long as two or three years. Many of the objects convey the perils and sentiments of this legendary chapter in seafaring.*

*Among the many highlights in the Fields Collection is an exceptional inlaid hardwood, whale ivory, baleen and whalebone fitted box (estimate: \$10,000–15,000). This highly decorated box with elaborate inlaid geometric designs such as mariner's stars likely held prized personal possessions such as jewelry and other keepsakes. Many of the finely decorated teeth depict women in fancy dress, often inspired by magazines of the day such as Godey's Lady's Book. One particularly finely carved pair of whale's teeth depicts a Victorian lady in daytime and evening dress (estimate: \$5,000–8,000). Other popular scenes centered around the hunt and pursuit of whales such as an engraved tooth depicting the whale ship Fox Hound in full sail surrounded by harpoon boats and whales (estimate: \$3,000–5,000).*

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| <i>Auction:</i> | <i>Prints, Silver &amp; Scrimshaw</i>    | <i>January 16 at 10 a.m.</i> |
|                 | <i>American Furniture &amp; Folk Art</i> | <i>January 17 at 10 a.m.</i> |

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| <i>Viewing:</i> | <i>Christie's Galleries at Rockefeller Center</i> | <i>January 11 – January 16</i> |
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*Additional information about Christie's Americana sales can be found on [www.christies.com](http://www.christies.com) closer to the sale date. All lots from the sale can be viewed online along with full catalogue descriptions on Lotfinder®, which also allows clients to leave absentee bids. [www.christies.com](http://www.christies.com) provides information on more than 80 sale categories, buying and selling at auction, complete auction results and Christie's international auction calendar.*

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*Images available on request  
Visit Christie's Web site at [www.christies.com](http://www.christies.com)*