

Press Release

CHRISTIE'S

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**EXCEPTIONAL TREASURES FROM THE
COLLECTION OF BENJAMIN F. EDWARDS III TO BE
SOLD AT CHRISTIE'S NEW YORK**



The Collection of Benjamin F. Edwards III

January 26, 2010

New York – On January 26, Christie's New York is honored to present *The Collection of Benjamin F. Edwards III*, a prominent collector and former Chairman, CEO and President of A.G. Edwards & Sons in St. Louis. Following the enormous success of three annual sales of *The Benjamin F. Edwards Collection of Chinese Export Porcelain* from 2002 to 2004, this sale of over 400 lots will feature a superb selection of Silver, English Furniture, Delft, Chinese Export, and Rugs & Carpets.

Benjamin F. Edwards III

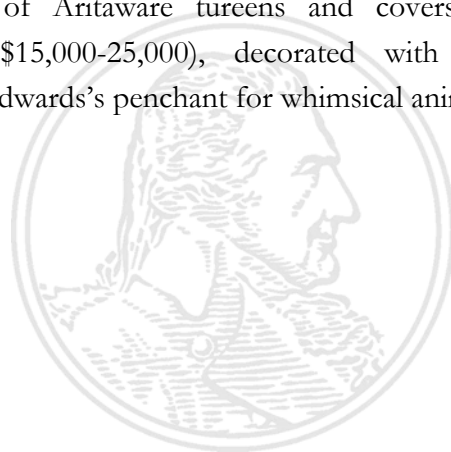
Benjamin F. Edwards III (1931-2009) was the fifth direct descendant to head A. G. Edwards & Co., a firm founded by his great-grandfather, Albert Gallatin Edwards, in 1887. A.G. Edwards was a West Point graduate and the son of an Illinois Governor and Senator. Named Assistant Secretary of the Treasury by Abraham Lincoln in 1865, A.G. Edwards later established his brokerage firm in St. Louis, Missouri. Benjamin F. Edwards III joined the family firm after his time at Princeton and three years in the U.S. Navy. Under his leadership, A.G. Edwards & Co. continued to thrive as a leading American financial services holding company, consistently ranked in *Fortune's 100 Best Companies to Work for in America*. Ben's expertise was not only in business, but also in collecting. His early passion for Georgian furniture soon broadened into a fascination with delft, Chinese export and English silver and brass. Ben's collection graced his homes in St. Louis and Naples, and the executive floor of A.G. Edwards, and was a remarkable assemblage of beautiful objects, inspiring both employees and clients.

Chinese Export

Mr. Edwards selected his Chinese export art with an eye for rarity and charm, amassing over 3,000 pieces by 1995. He had a particular fondness for armorial works passed down through Europe's great families and decorative objects illustrating famed European prints. Leading the collection is a very rare pair of verte-imari candelabra, *circa 1725 (illustrated right, estimate: \$80,000-120,000)*. In European silver form, this pair was most likely a very special commission for a very highly placed East Indies Company director or investor.



Additional highlights include a rare massive verte-imari monteith, *circa 1720 (illustrated left, estimate: \$40,000- 60,000)*, a monumental basin enameled with lush flowers and butterflies; a famille rose "Hong" Bowl, *circa 1785 (estimate: \$20,000-30,000)*, depicting a scene of the Canton waterfront; and a very large pair of Aritaware tureens and covers, 18th century (estimate: \$15,000-25,000), decorated with rabbit knobs reflecting Edwards's penchant for whimsical animals.



Silver

Benjamin F. Edwards collected museum-quality English silver with rich history including the works of the celebrated silversmiths Paul de Lamerie and Paul Storr. Among the selection of eleven pieces by Lamerie is a George II silver cake basket, London, 1739 (*illustrated right*, estimate: \$200,000-300,000). The collection also includes George III masterpieces, like a set of four silver saucetureens from the Howe service by Digby Scott & Benjamin Smith, London, 1805 (estimate \$70,000-100,000), which were made as part of an extensive dinner service. Also from this period is a set of four Regency silver-gilt candlesticks by Paul Storr, 1811/1812 (\$100,000-150,000), from the collection of William, 1st Earl of Lonsdale.



A rare Charles II parcel-gilt silver porringer and cover, London, *circa* 1670 (*illustrated left*, estimate \$80,000-120,000), is one of the collection's fine early works. While most surviving porringers of this style and period are unmarked, this example is marked by Jacob Bodendick, a celebrated German-born silversmith. Other early works include a George I fifteen-sided silver-gilt salver by Augustine Courtauld, London, 1723 (estimate: \$100,000-150,000) and a Queen Anne silver chocolate pot by Pierre Harache, London, 1703 (estimate: \$50,000-80,000).



English Furniture, Brass, Delft, Rugs & Carpets

Perhaps one of the most intriguing items in the Edwards's collection is the George II mahogany Windsor armchair, *circa* 1750 (*illustrated right*, estimate: \$30,000-50,000). According to the label affixed to the underside of the seat, this was the chair in which Prime Minister Spencer Perceval collapsed after John Bellingham shot him in the lobby of the House of Commons in 1812. Additional furniture highlights include a pair of George IV yew-wood and elm shepherd's crook armchairs by Gillows, *circa* 1830 (estimate: \$30,000-50,000), a George II mahogany tripod table, *circa* 1750 (estimate: \$30,000-50,000); and a George III mahogany concertina-action card-table, *circa* 1760 (estimate: \$15,000-25,000). Also featured in the sale is a large group of English brass, including rare signed examples by 18th century makers.



Edwards's zeal for collecting also included delft and he amassed a great collection of exquisite English and Dutch examples with running themes ranging from history to politics. Leading the collection are an English delft dated portrait charger of Charles II (*illustrated right*, estimate: \$120,000-180,000) and a related caudle cup (estimate: \$80,000-120,000) both dated 1662. There are eight known dated chargers of this type and six of these are now held in museum collections. Among the more whimsical items within his collection is a pair of English delft models of shoes, dated 1727, London or Bristol (estimated: \$20,000-30,000). The two shoes are molded with a left and right buckle, signifying that they were truly intended as a pair. As shoes were considered symbols of good luck and often given as a token of affection, the initials and date inscribed on the soles of the pair indicate that it may have been commissioned as a betrothal or wedding gift. Further highlights include a Dutch delft thirteen-nozzle flower holder or 'vase with spouts', 1686-1701 (estimate: \$40,000-60,000) and an English delft posset-pot and cover, *circa* 1685-90 (estimate: \$30,000-40,000).



Along with the exceptional and rare delft collection, Edwards decorated his home with many expertly-woven rugs and carpets. The sale will offer 14 remarkably designed works ranging from village carpets to bold tribal rugs. The collection includes a large, ornately detailed Heriz carpet from Northwest Persia from the last quarter of the 19th century (*illustrated left*, estimate: \$30,000-\$50,000); a Bakshaish carpet (estimate: \$18,000-22,000); and an Eagle Kazak rug from South Caucasus, *circa* 1880 (estimate: \$8,000-12,000).

Auction: *The Collection of Benjamin F. Edwards III*

January 26

Viewing: Christie's Rockefeller Galleries

January 16-26

About Christie's

Christie's, the world's leading art business, had global auction and private sales in 2008 that totalled £2.8 billion/\$5.1 billion. For the first half of 2009, art sales totalled £1.2 billion/\$1.8 billion. Christie's is a name and place that speaks of extraordinary art, unparalleled service and expertise, as well as international glamour. Founded in 1766 by James Christie, Christie's conducted the greatest auctions of the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries, and today remains a popular showcase for the unique and the beautiful. Christie's offers over 450 sales annually in over 80 categories, including all areas of fine and decorative arts, jewellery, photographs, collectibles, wine, and more. Prices range from \$200 to over \$80 million. Christie's has 53 offices in 30 countries and 10 salerooms around the world including London, New York, Paris, Geneva, Milan,

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*Estimates do not include buyer's premium

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