

For Immediate Release

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**THE MOST SIGNIFICANT COLLECTION OF TRAVEL BOOKS AND
MANUSCRIPTS STILL IN PRIVATE HANDS TO BE SOLD AT
CHRISTIE'S**

Travel Books from the collection of Quentin Keynes, Explorer and great-grandson of Charles Darwin to fetch £3 million

The Quentin Keynes Collection of Books and Manuscripts

7 and 8 April 2004

London – One of the most important travel collections assembled in the 20th century and the most significant collection of travel and exploration books and manuscripts still in private hands, The Quentin Keynes Collection of Books and Manuscripts, will be offered at Christie's on 7 and 8 April 2004. A lifelong explorer, and later a wild-life photographer and film maker, Keynes spent over 60 years collecting important and rare books throughout the world, in three principle fields; travel, natural history and modern literature. Over 500 lots comprise the travel section which covers the great ages of exploration and epic voyages, from Bligh and Burton, to Livingstone and Stanley. The collection is expected to fetch in the region of £3 million.

“The Quentin Keynes Collection of Travel Books and Manuscripts is the foremost private collection of its type in the world and represents the culmination of 60 years of collecting,” says Tom Lamb, Christie's Head of Books and Manuscripts. “Christie's are delighted to have worked with such a distinguished collector and collection.”

*Quentin Keynes's collection of books and manuscripts relating to the renowned and notorious Victorian explorer Sir Richard Burton is without rival in private hands, and forms a special section of 100 lots within the auction. The Burton material boasts over 33 presentation and inscribed copies, as well as many unrecorded variants. Particularly notable lots are a copy of the rarest of Burton's books, *A Complete System of Bayonet Exercise*, London, 1853 (estimate: £10,000-15,000), a first edition of one of the most sought after works of travel ever published, *Personal**

Narrative of a Pilgrimage to El-Medinah and Meccah, London, 1855-56 (estimate: £3,000-5,000) and a first edition, in mint condition, of the Burton great rarity, A Pictorial Guide Book to Mecca and Medina, London, 1865 (estimate: £18,000-25,000). Also offered is a remarkable archive of correspondence relating to the murder of Edward H. Palmer in the Sinai desert, and Burton's role in the investigation (estimate: £2,000-3,000).

The auction also boasts manuscripts and books related to the most iconic episodes in the lives of David Livingstone and Henry Morton Stanley. A letter written by David Livingstone and left in a bottle at the mouth of the Zambesi river, requesting urgent provisions from any passing ships that found it (estimate: £15,000-20,000), is one of the highlights of the collection. Written by Livingstone on 25 May 1859, placed in a bottle and positioned in the sand ten feet Magnetic North from a spot marked 'X' on a beacon, to summon help from whomever found it.

Livingstone's 'to-whom-it-may-concern'-style message is addressed 'To – Commander of Her Majesty's Ship –'. He asks that 'salt provisions' be left at the Zambesi mouth for the crew of his paddle-steamer and adds, 'Several members of the expedition have suffered from fever, but not in its severest form...' Quentin Keynes acquired the letter at auction in New York in 1957, after it was consigned for sale by a descendent of Rear Admiral Sir James Donnet, a mid 19th-century ship's surgeon, who, it is believed, was on board the ship that discovered the message in a bottle a month after Livingstone wrote it. The purchase of the letter immediately inspired Keynes to follow in Livingstone's footsteps, and to seek out the tree under which Livingstone had camped, and had carved with his initials.

Further important material relating to Livingstone and Stanley includes a copy of Robert Moffat's Missionary Labours and Scenes in Southern Africa, London, 1842, which is thought to be the only text on which the signatures of both Livingstone and Sir Henry Morton Stanley exist (Stanley was sent to find Livingstone and uttered the famous words, 'Dr Livingstone, I presume?') will be offered (estimate: £7,000-10,000). Also notable is a signed autograph letter from Livingstone to Sir Thomas Maclear (at the Royal Observatory, Cape of Good Hope, 1865 (estimate: £15,000-20,000). In this high-spirited and gossipy letter, Livingstone writes a prolonged attack against Sir Richard Burton, describing him as 'an awful ruffian' and stating that 'I don't believe that Burton was ever at Mecca'. Livingstone goes on to comment ruefully on further activities of Burton and others, remarking, 'we travellers have not been shining of late'. In a further highlight of the sale, Stanley writes pleading for supplies from "Any gentleman who speaks English at Enboma", at the mouth of the Congo, having just negotiated the river for the first time (£20,000-£30,000).

Quentin Keynes's collection of African material is one of the finest in private hands, and provides an almost complete view of the settlement of Southern Africa, detailing the expansion from Cape

Province. The African section also encompasses a full suite of works on the golden age of exploration, with works by Baines, Speke, and Grant, as well as Livingstone and Stanley, many of which are inscribed, and groups of autograph letters and manuscripts of the highest quality. The collection also contains highly important and sought after books relating to the West Indies, Mauritius, Falklands, Madagascar, and many Atlantic and Indian Ocean Islands.

In his Natural History collections Quentin Keynes focussed mainly on Zoology and particularly African quadrupeds, to the extent of forming special collections on elephants, gorillas and even extinct species such as the Dodo. The collection includes many of the standard works by Gould, Elliot, Selby, Wolf and Curtis. Also offered are a number of legendary rarities on Australia: Bauer's Florae Hollandia, London, 1813 (£25,000-£35,000), Shaw's Zoology of New Holland, London, 1794 (£15,000-£20,000), and Smith's Botany of New Holland, London, 1793-94 (£7,000-£10,000).

The third area of Quentin Keynes' book collecting, 20th-Century Literature, shows a different side to the collector, and is based around two 20th-century writers – James Joyce and Ezra Pound. Keynes was a major collector of Joyce, forming his first Joyce collection in 1941-49 (now mostly at Yale and other American university libraries). The forthcoming auction will offer some of the legendary rarities, such as The Holy Office, Pola, 1904 (£15,000-£20,000), Gas from a Burner, Trieste, 1912 (£12,000-£18,000), Joyce's own copy of Work in Progress. Volume I, New York, 1928 (£12,000-£18,000), and a portrait of Joyce by Frank Budgen, circa 1919 (£12,000-£18,000). One of the most important Joyce letters is an extraordinary one-page letter from Joyce to William Heinemann from Trieste on 23rd September 1906, offering his book Dubliners to the publisher (£20,000-£30,000).

Ezra Pound material includes a proof copy of A Draft of The Cantos 17-27, London, 1928 corrected by Pound (£15,000-£20,000), and Gaudier-Brzeska's drawing of Ezra Pound, 1914, preparatory to his sculpture 'The Heiratic Head of Ezra Pound' (£15,000-£20,000). In addition to this remarkable array are various works by Wyndham Lewis, a near-complete canon of the Black Sun Press's publications, and pieces by Hemingway.

The extraordinary letter from Hemingway to Ezra Pound describing bull fighting in Spain is a highlight of the 20th-century literature section. A satirical piece in praise of the virtues of bulls, the letter is a thinly-veiled and bitter diatribe against society, and, in particular, against America— "Bulls don't run reviews, Bulls of 25 don't marry old women of 55 and expect to be invited to dinner ... To me bulls ain't exotic. They are normal. And such a goddam relief from all this horseshit about Art etc ... To hell with delicate studies of the American scene. Fuck the American scene." (estimate: £20,000-30,000)

Quentin Keynes – A Brief Biography

Quentin Keynes (1921–2003) was the great grandson of Charles Darwin, nephew of Maynard Keynes, son of the famous doctor and book collector Sir Geoffrey Keynes, and early on he decided to spend his life doing ‘his own thing’ – his dual passions of travel and book collecting. As a traveller, he spent over 60 years moving around the world between London, Washington, Connecticut, Los Angeles, New York, Central America and Southern Africa. As a book collector for over 55 years he scoured bookshops, checking auction and booksellers’ catalogues on a daily basis, and visiting every available source he could find. In the 1950s he set himself up as a wild life photographer and film-maker and began a life of lecturing in America and Britain in the winter and arranging Safaris in Africa in the summers.

This itinerant lifestyle gave him both the time and opportunity to pursue his love of collecting books and manuscripts. This he did in an extraordinary manner, accumulating upwards of five thousand books in three main fields – Travel, Natural History and Modern Literature. The whole collection comprises 800 lots and is estimated to fetch in the region of £3 million. Christie’s will offer his collection in three catalogues, each one dedicated to his chosen fields:

Part I:

Important Travel Books and Manuscripts, 7th April, a.m. & p.m.

Part II:

Natural History, 8th April, a.m.

Part III:

Modern Literature, 8th April, p.m.

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