

For Immediate Release

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THE MAKING OF AMERICA: A TALE OF SETTLERS, GOLD-MINERS AND EXPLORERS

The Jay T. Snider Collection of Historical Americana June 21, 2005

New York – On June 21, American history will take center stage at Christie's New York when *The Jay T. Snider Collection of Historical Americana* will be offered for sale. Formed over the last two decades by a meticulous and inquiring collector, the Snider Collection spans the North American continent, focusing on the shifting American frontier from early colonial times to the end of the Plains Indian Wars. With Mr. Snider's focus on fine condition, provenance and associative copies, many books in this sale have either come from distinguished collectors of the past or have unique presentations or manuscript additions. A select ensemble of key manuscripts will also be offered. Comprising nearly 350 lots – all witnesses of momentous events in American history - the collection is expected to realize \$5-6 million.

The Snider collection presents genuine gems documenting the very earliest settlements of the American colonial period. Commencing with Captain John Smith's *The Generall Historie of Virginia, New England and the Summer Isles: with the names of the Adventurers, Planters, and Governours from their first beginning An: 1584 to this present 1634* (estimate: \$90,000-120,000). The Snider copy is a first edition of Smith's masterpiece and comes with a superb colonial provenance, having belonged to Benedict Leonard Calvert (1700-1732), a son of the 4th Lord Baltimore who was the governor of Maryland. In *The Generall Historie*, Smith not only describes the first settlements on the East Coast, the Indian inhabitants and the history of the Bermudas, he also provides an eyewitness account of the founding of Jamestown, his explorations of the New England Coast and his capture by chief Pouhatan and

rescue through the intercession of the chief's daughter, Pocahontas, undoubtedly the most romantic episode in this major primary source of American history.

A splendid map-collecting opportunity comes with the unique and very important early map of Manhattan and its surroundings, circa 1683 (estimate: \$60,000-80,000). The map was drawn by Philip wells, Surveyor-General for New York and one of the commissioners appointed to run the boundary between the colonies of New York and Connecticut. Very decorative and colorful, with place-names written in a neat italic hand, the map is rich in detail, pointing out Manhattan Island as well as the East River (labeled "Yorke River") and providing a wealth of navigational data. This map served as the basis for a succession of printed maps of New York, produced by various map-makers well into the 18th century. The present map is one of only a few 17th century maps of the area still in private hands.

A superb, unsophisticated copy in a contemporary binding of Lewis and Clark's *History of the Expedition under the Command of the Captains Lewis and Clark, to the Sources of the Missouri, thence across the Rocky Mountains and down the River Columbia to the Pacific Ocean. Performed during the years 1804-5-6* (estimate: \$90,000-120,000) touches upon another landmark event in the making of America. The Lewis and Clark expedition was commissioned by Jefferson and with its operating budget being funded by Congress – all of \$2,500 – it was the first exploration officially sponsored by the Federal government. Although the discovery journey took place from 1804 to 1806, the publication only happened in 1814. A first edition of the account of the expedition, the present copy includes a foreword by Thomas Jefferson and the extremely detailed and accurate map that, maybe even more than the written account, served to motivate the nation's westward expansion.

The fascination with Native Americans which were a natural outgrowth of the territorial explorations, is reflected in several items in the Snider collection. A visual tour de force is *History of the Indian Tribes of North America* by McKenney and Hall (estimate: \$90,000-120,000), one of the most distinctive American illustrated books. Twelve years in the making, this color plate book includes 120 hand colored lithographs representing the principal American Indians who came to Washington. Each portrait is accompanied by a biographical sketch and a general history of the various Indian tribes within the borders of the United States is also mentioned. The majority of the Indian chiefs portrayed were painted from life by Charles Bird King and their grandeur - accentuated by vivid coloring - is still as eye-catching as it was 150 years ago. Another tribute to the Native Americans is James Otto Lewis' exceedingly rare *Aboriginal port Folio; or a Collection of portraits of the most Celebrated Chiefs of the North American Indians* (estimate: \$120,000-180,000). A first edition with the complete set of 80 plates, this portfolio is the only known copy with a title-page.

Arguably one of the most widely known although highly romanticized episodes in America's coming of age were the frenzied gold-rushes in California, Colorado and the Black Hills. The Colorado chapter in America's gold fever commenced in 1859, when thousands of adventurers headed across to Kansas territory. Several sharp entrepreneurs focused their attention not so much on the gold as on the ones frantically digging for it, a far more secure way to make money. One such opportunist was LJ Eastin, editor and publisher of the Leavenworth *Kansas Herald*, who had the brilliant idea to use his newspaper's press to issue a guide to the gold diggings in the form of a newspaper. Together with first-hand accounts and a discussion of the possible routes, the *Emigrant's Guide to Pike's Peak* (estimate: \$70,000-100,000) provided a detailed wood-engraved map of the route to the Rockies. Printed in large numbers in 1859, today only two copies survive, the present one and one housed in the Denver Public Library.

The discovery of gold, made by John H. Gregory on May 6, 1859, and the subsequent media attention promising prospectors huge fortunes, attracted thousands of miners to Colorado and it was not very long before lawlessness reigned over Gregory District. On February 11, 1860, a three-man committee was asked to draw up a code of laws which defined the district boundaries, set rules for mining claims and stated that, in case of legal judgments, the sheriff is forbidden to seize "all tools for mining, household furniture and a Bible." *Laws of the Gregory District, Enacted February 18 and 20, 1860* (estimate: \$15,000-20,000) is a first edition, one of the earliest Colorado imprints and comes in fragile original paper wrappers.

Highlights are so varied and manifold that the above offers just a mere glimpse at this spectacular collection. Other rarities include John Adams' highly influential *Thoughts on Government*, Philadelphia, 1776 (estimate: \$60,000-80,000); Thomas Morton's New England's *Memoriall*, Cambridge, 1669 (estimate: \$60,000-80,000); the superlatively rare first edition of Cadwallader Colden's *History of the Five Indian Nations*, New York, 1727 (estimate: \$80,000-120,000); an exceptionally fine copy of Henry Lewis', *Das Illustrierte Mississippthal*, Dusseldorf 1858 (estimate: \$100,000-150,000); a significant early map of the western portion of the United States, *Mitchell's New Map of Texas, Oregon and California*, Philadelphia, 1846 (estimate: \$7,000-10,000) and George W. Kendall and Carl Nebel's *War Between the United States and Mexico*, Philadelphia, 1851 (estimate: \$20,000-30,000), a superbly-executed series of views taken on the spot by Nebel during the U.S. War with Mexico (1846-1848).

Auction: The Jay T. Snider Collection of Historical Americana June 21 at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.

Viewing: Christie's Galleries at Rockefeller Plaza

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Images available on request

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More information about Christie's sale of *The Jay T. Snider Collection of Historical Americana* can be found on www.christies.com. 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 provides information on more than 80 sale categories, buying and selling at auction, complete auction results, and Christie's international auction calendar.