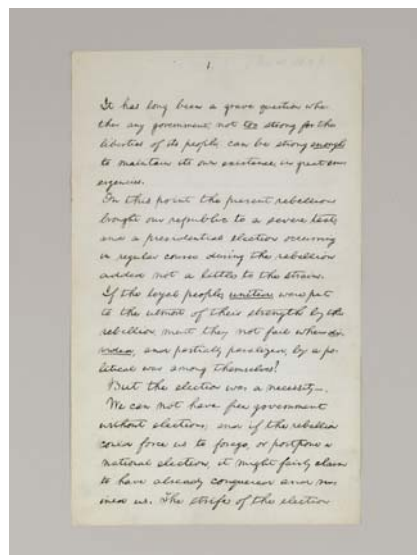


For Immediate Release

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**CHRISTIE'S TO OFFER ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S ORIGINAL,
HANDWRITTEN RE-ELECTION SPEECH**



"...may not all...re-unite in a common effort, to save our common country?"

-Abraham Lincoln

**Abraham Lincoln's 1864 Re-Election Speech
February 12, 2009**

New York – On February 12, 2009, the bicentennial of the birth of Abraham Lincoln, Christie's New York is honored to offer Abraham Lincoln's original, handwritten re-election speech on this historic anniversary. The four-page speech was delivered at the White House on 10 November 1864, immediately after his re-election to a second term as President. This unique document, never before offered for sale, is one of a very few Lincoln speech manuscripts not in permanent institutions like the Library of Congress. It is expected to realize in excess of \$3 million.

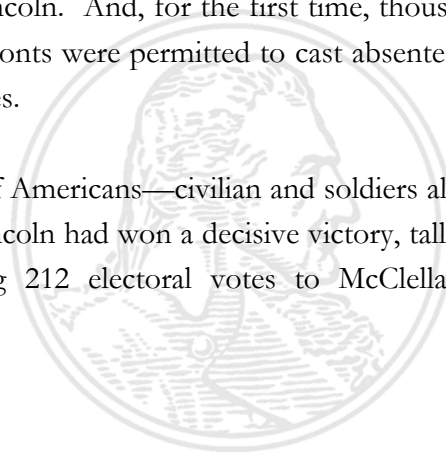
The speech manuscript, in superb condition, is written in Lincoln's bold, clear hand on four large sheets of paper. It is the one Lincoln held in his hands to read that night to a crowd of celebrating supporters on the White House lawn. The precious manuscript remained with Lincoln's papers until 1916, when Robert Todd Lincoln, son of Abraham and Mary Lincoln, graciously presented it to New York Congressman, John A. Dwight, as thanks for his efforts to secure Congressional funding for the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. Dwight's widow, in turn, presented it to the Southworth Library Association in Dryden, New York. Proceeds from the sale of the speech will fund construction of a new addition to the library, and help pay expenses of its operation, maintenance, and programming.

This address, one of Lincoln's most important wartime speeches, is revealing of both his personal and political attitudes immediately after his unexpected re-election. The election campaign, he emphatically affirms, "has demonstrated that a people's government can sustain a national election, in the midst of a great civil war." It also shows "how sound, and how strong we are." He expresses gratitude to "Almighty God for having directed my countrymen to a right conclusion," and anticipating the end of the Civil War, takes the first, small steps towards reconstruction, eloquently asking his countrymen to "re-unite in a common effort to save our common country."

In the summer of 1864, it looked all but certain that Lincoln would not win election to a second term. There was deep disaffection with his war policies: battle casualties mounted, resistance to the military draft grew, while clear-cut victories remained elusive. Many urged an armistice with the Confederacy. In June 1864, by careful political moves, Lincoln was renominated by the Republican Party. The Republican platform called for the South's unconditional surrender and an amendment banning slavery. Democrats, rallying behind George B. McClellan, the very popular former General-in-Chief of the Union Army, called for an immediate cease-fire and a negotiated peace with the Confederacy.

In early stages of the contest, it appeared—even to Lincoln himself—that McClellan was certain to win the presidency. But with the dramatic fall of Atlanta to General W.T. Sherman in August, and other successes on the battlefronts, the American electorate—for the first time sensing the possibility of victory--began to shift towards Lincoln. And, for the first time, thousands of soldiers in the Union armies across the far-flung battlefronts were permitted to cast absentee votes, or were granted brief furloughs to vote in their own states.

On Election Day, 8 November 1864, millions of Americans—civilian and soldiers alike--went to the polls, and when their votes were fully tallied, Lincoln had won a decisive victory, tallying 55% of the popular vote: carrying 22 states and winning 212 electoral votes to McClellan's meager 21.



Celebrations broke out in cities across the North. In Washington, a large crowd carrying lanterns and waving banners, converged on the White House. A military band played, and cannon in the driveway roared. But elation over his political success is tempered by Lincoln's thoughtful reminder that "the rebellion continues."

And continue it did, for an additional five months, until Lee's surrender of the tattered but proud Army of Northern Virginia. But Lincoln would be granted only a few days in April 1865 to enjoy the Union's hard-won victory, before his assassination.

Auction: Abraham Lincoln's 1864 Re-Election Speech
Viewing: Christie's Rockefeller Galleries

February 12
February 7-11

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*Estimates do not include buyer's premium

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