

# CHRISTIE'S

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## CAPTAIN SCOTT'S COMPASS AND SHACKLETON'S SLEDGING HARNESS INCLUDED IN CHRISTIE'S TRAVEL, SCIENCE AND NATURAL HISTORY SALE

Dedicated Polar Sale section commemorates the centenary of Scott's *Terra Nova* expedition



Herbert George Ponting (1870-1935), *Crew of the Terra Nova*  
Estimate: £1,000-1,500 [lot 123]



Captain Robert Falcon Scott, *circa 1904-5*  
Estimate: £600-800 [lot 138]

**South Kensington, London:** Christie's is pleased to announce the forthcoming sale of a selection of art, literature, photographs and artifacts which offer poignant memorials of the lives and endeavours of the celebrated Polar explorer, Captain Robert Falcon Scott, and his contemporaries from the Heroic Age of Antarctic exploration. Offered for sale on Tuesday, 9 October 2012, the dedicated Polar section (lots 76-163) of Christie's *Travel, Science and Natural History* auction to be held in South Kensington is set to commemorate the centenary of Scott's *Terra Nova* expedition. The auction will feature historical items relating to the *Discovery* (1901-1904), *Nimrod* (1907-1909), *Terra Nova* (1910-1913), and *Endurance* (1914-1916) expeditions.

Carried by Captain Scott on his sledging journeys, the marching compass used to navigate on both *Discovery* and *Terra Nova* expeditions is expected to fetch between £15,000 and £20,000 [lot 91] *illustrated right*. Inscribed with ink on the cover of the leather case "Capt. 'Discovery' 1902", the item was one of many, returned to Scott's widow following his final and fatal journey to the South Pole on the *Terra Nova* expedition. One of a variety of scientific instruments carried by the southern party in their instrument box, Scott is reported to have had difficulties with compasses in the trying conditions of the Antarctic, as readings could be variable, writing at the time "... these compasses are not to be relied upon where the directive force is so small..."





Captain Scott's contemporary, the charismatic Anglo-Irish explorer Ernest Shackleton (known as "The Boss") sledged with Scott on the *Discovery* expedition. Shackleton's sledging harness from his *Nimrod* expedition [lot 102] *illustrated left*, which helped him to achieve fame in reaching within 97 miles of the South Pole and returning to tell the tale (his life saved on numerous occasions by this very harness as he fell into crevasse after crevasse on his trailblazing ascent of the Beardmore Glacier) is expected to realise £15,000 to £20,000. With just four ponies, in lieu of dogs, and with the last surviving pony, Socks lost in a crevasse at the beginning of the ascent of the Beardmore Glacier, the majority of Shackleton's 1755 mile march to within 100 miles of the South Pole was achieved by man-hauling sledges, on foot

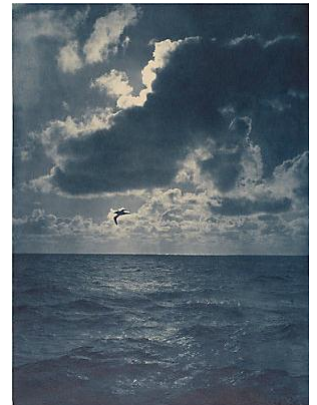
rather than ski, with harness and alpine rope. *'Just before we left the Glacier I broke through the soft snow, plunging into a hidden crevasse. My harness jerked up under my heart, and gave me rather a shakeup. It seemed as though the glacier were saying: "This is the last touch of you; don't you come up here again."* (E.H. Shackleton, *The Heart of the Antarctic*, London, 1909, I, p.355.) Shackleton would return south, but would never sledge up the Beardmore again.



Lot 131



Lot 127



Lot 122

The Antarctic landscape itself is recorded in a series of fine large vintage prints by the *Terra Nova* expedition's camera artist, Herbert Ponting ("Ponko"), including a remarkable group which concentrates on climate and ice from the collection of the expedition meteorologist and physicist Dr. George ("Sunny Jim") Simpson [lots 122-131], *selection illustrated above*.

Gran's famous photograph [lot 130], *illustrated right* of the final resting place of Scott, Wilson and Bowers, was taken on 12 November 1912 with the camera [lot 139] consigned for sale by Gran's son, Hermann Gran (estimate: £10,000-15,000) *illustrated far right*. It was later printed by Herbert Ponting in a special portfolio of prints issued in commemoration of the Polar





Party, and was illustrated in *Scott's Last Expedition*. Gran, the Norwegian ski expert taken by Scott on the expedition, was a member of the Search Party that set out to discover the fate of Scott and the Polar Party in October 1912. His diary records: *'12 November: It has happened! We have found what we sought! Good God, what a twist of fate. Barely 20 km from 'One Ton Depot', we have come upon the snow-covered tent with the bodies of Scott, Wilson, and Bowers. ... We buried our dead companions this morning; it was a truly solemn moment. It was moving to witness 11 weather-beaten men standing with bared heads singing... We have erected a 12-foot cairn over the graves and atop a cross made of a pair of skis [Gran's own, he would take Scott's for the return to the hut].'* (T. Gran, *The Norwegian with Scott, Tryggve Gran's Antarctic Diary 1910-1913*, London, 1984, pp. 215-217).

## FURTHER POLAR HIGHLIGHTS

- An extraordinary series of twenty-seven unpublished and hitherto unknown letters from Apsley Cherry-Garrard ("Cherry") recalling the *Terra Nova* expedition from outset to tragedy expected to fetch between £50,000 and £80,000 [lot 140].\*Please see [separate press release](#).
- From the epic tale of survival of the *Endurance* expedition: one of the expeditions medical chests (Lot 150, est: £5,000 - £7,000); a scrap of hessian cloth kept by Shackleton as a souvenir of the boat journey in the *James Caird* (Lot 149, est: £500 - £800); and lantern lecture slides from the collection of Thomas Orde Lees ("Colonel"), the expedition storekeeper which illustrate the terrible story (Lot 148, est: £700 - £1,000).
- A small vintage photographic print of Frank Hurley's arresting image of the doomed and frozen ship 'Endurance', taken by magnesium flashlights in the Antarctic night, and kept as a precious souvenir of his days with Shackleton and voyaging South by the physicist Raymond Priestley, is recognised as one of the most famous images of the Heroic Age of Antarctic exploration (Lot 113, est: £2,000 - £3,000).
- Shackleton's fair copy manuscript of the poem "L'Envoi" (Lot 92, est: £15,000 - £20,000), written by him on the southern sledging journey with Scott and Wilson in 1902, is one of the texts most profoundly representative of Shackleton's spirit as an explorer: *"We shall dream of those months of sledging through soft and yielding snow; The chafe of the strap on the shoulder; the whine of the dogs as they go."*
- Items relating to Captain Lawrence Edward Grace Oates ("Soldier") include his silver christening mug (Lot 132, est: £3,000 - £5,000), consigned for sale by his great nephew Lawrence Grace Oates. Oates was born on 17 March 1880 and would perish in the Antarctic on 17 March 1912, his 32<sup>nd</sup> birthday, walking out of the tent with the immortal words, *"I am just going outside and may be some time"*.

## FURTHER SALE HIGHLIGHTS

- A rare original Apple personal computer, now known as the Apple-1, serial number 22, offered directly from the estate of Joe Copson, a former Apple employee and estimated at £50,000-80,000 [lot 71]. \*Please see [separate press release](#).
- An original mercury thermometer, invented by Daniel Gabriel Fahrenheit in 1714 and the only remaining example in private hands, is expected to realise between £70,000 and £100,000 [lot 69]. \*Please see [separate press release](#).
- A previously unrecorded three-rotor enigma cipher machine, *circa* 1939 is on offer at auction for the first time, having been in private hands in Norway since deployment in World War II. The machine is estimated to fetch £30,000 to £50,000 [lot 70].

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#### Public Exhibition:

Saturday, 6 October: 11.00am – 5.00pm

Sunday, 7 October: 11.00am – 5.00pm

Monday, 8 October: 9.00am – 7.30pm

#### Auction:

TRAVEL, SCIENCE AND NATURAL HISTORY

including the Polar Sale to commemorate the Scott Centenary, 1912-2012

9 October 2012 at 10.30am

#### Christie's Polar Auctions

Christie's inaugurated sales of Polar art and artefacts in the 1990s and have dispersed properties on behalf of the families of all the great explorers from the Heroic Age, including "The Scott Relics" for Captain Scott's grandchildren in 1999, "The Shackleton Collection" for Shackleton's heirs in 2001 and "The Amundsen Collection" for Amundsen's great-niece in 2006. The largest private collection of art, literature and artifacts offered at auction from the Heroic Age was led by the sale of "The Neil Silverman Collection" in 2002. Christie's holds the record price for Polar art and artefacts at auction, with Ponting's own master albums of Terra Nova photographs selling for £169,250 in 2010, and the blueprints for Scott's ship 'Discovery' realising £163,250 in 2000. The crumbling remains of Shackleton's last biscuit on the Endurance expedition set the world record price for a biscuit at auction when they sold for £7,638 in 2001.

#### Christie's South Kensington

Open seven days a week, Christie's South Kensington is one of the busiest salerooms in the UK attracting over 200,000 visitors each year. With over 100 sales and offering more than 20,000 lots annually, estimates start from £300. Interiors sales dedicated to home furnishings are held three times a month alongside regular Sunday sales of single-owner collections. Specialised sales for the avid collector are scheduled throughout the year according to category, and include Film Posters, Pop Memorabilia, Antiquities, Jewellery, 20th Century British Art and Chinese Works of Art, among others. In 2011 Christie's South Kensington realised the highest ever total for the second successive year with sales of £115.9 million / \$186.6 million.

#### About Christie's

Christie's, the world's leading art business, had global auction and private sales in 2011 that totaled £3.6 billion/\$5.7 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 has since conducted the greatest and most celebrated auctions through the centuries providing a popular showcase for the unique and the beautiful. Christie's offers over 450 auctions 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 \$100 million. Christie's also has a long and successful history conducting private sales for its clients in all categories, with emphasis on Post-War and Contemporary, Impressionist and Modern, Old Masters and Jewellery. Private sales totaled £502 million / \$808.6m in 2011, an increase of 44% on the previous year.

Christie's has a global presence with 53 offices in 32 countries and 10 salerooms around the world including in London, New York, Paris, Geneva, Milan, Amsterdam, Dubai, Zürich, and Hong Kong. More recently, Christie's has led the market with expanded initiatives in growth markets such as Russia, China, India and the United Arab Emirates, with successful sales and exhibitions in Beijing, Mumbai and Dubai.

*\*Estimates do not include buyer's premium. Sales totals are hammer price plus buyer's premium and do not reflect costs, financing fees or application of buyer's or seller's credits.*

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