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## Freeman's realized \$2.5 million with the auctions of Americana and the USS Constitution Colors



A 13-star American Naval color flag, center, from the late 18th/early 19th century is on display amongst other flags at Freeman's auction house. AP Photo/Matt Rourke.



**PHILADELPHIA, PA.-** Freeman's marathon day of auctions on April 30--American Furniture, Silver, Folk & Decorative Arts and the Historic USS Constitution Colors from the Collection of H. Richard Dietrich Jr.--was a resounding success realizing a combined total of \$2.5 million. Provenance, uniqueness and overall high-quality generated excitement and interest from new and veteran collectors as well as institutions at home and abroad.

The eleven USS Constitution flags were 100% sold. Top lots included a rare 31-star United States Ensign of the USS Constitution, circa 1851, inscribed 'Constitution No. 1' and a rare Commodore's Broad Pennant from the USS Constitution, circa 1837 inscribed 'Constitution bradd pendend' each achieving \$158,500.

### \$1.74 million achieved in Freeman's American Furniture, Silver, Folk & Decorative Arts auction

Yesterday's sale of American Furniture, Silver, Folk & Decorative Arts, due to the provenance, uniqueness and overall high quality of the property, generated excitement and interest among American and International institutions, private collectors, and dealers. The audience was broader than usual, with participation from 11 countries and new clients comprising more than 10% of the auction registration. The sale ultimately realized more than \$1.74 million dollars, and was well attended with highly active in-room, telephone, and internet bidding.

Lynda Cain, Vice President, American Furniture, Silver & Decorative Arts, commented: "It was an exciting day and we are pleased, not only with the auction record achieved for the Spittler blanket chest, but also with the solid prices achieved throughout the sale. The combination of fresh, interesting property with significant provenance always sparks interest."

The top lot, a rare painted and decorated yellow pine blanket chest, attributed to Johannes Spittler (1774-1837) of Massanutten, Virginia, circa 1800 (lot 536, estimate \$80,000-120,000), was with the consignor's family for four generations before it came to Freeman's. The blanket chest sparked spirited bidding and finally achieved \$350,500, more than four times its low estimate. The client commented after the sale: "My family is thrilled with the results."

Lynda Cain was extremely helpful and knowledgeable." Another rare blanket chest, a diminutive Queen Anne walnut blanket chest-on-frame, probably Philadelphia, circa 1760 (lot 339, estimate \$3,000-5,000), also performed exceedingly well, realizing \$46,875 to a bidder on the phone. Other highlights include the Charles Carroll Chippendale mahogany metamorphic architect's desk, Anglo/Irish, circa 1770 (lot 393, estimate \$15,000-25,000), achieved \$71,500 after a lengthy battle between a bidder in the room and one on the phone; while a watercolor of the Interior of the J.S. Russell Whale Oil and Lamp Store, 55 Chestnut St., Philadelphia by Joseph Shoemaker Russell (1795-1860) (lot 347, estimate \$2,500-3,500) proved popular, ultimately selling for \$23,750.

Three collections of private estate property added historical significance and diversity to the sale. Property from the estate of Janet Brown included tasteful and distinctive 20th century furniture and silver. The collection of Mr. and Mrs. William R. Wister of Oldwick, New Jersey offered American and English furniture and decorative arts, many associated with the historically prominent Philadelphia family and with the National Historic Landmark, Grumblethorpe. Highlights from the Wister collection included an autograph letter signed, George Washington (lot 137, estimate \$15,000-25,000), which realized \$35,000; a life-sized silhouette of Sarah (Sally) Wister (1760-1804) (lot 189, estimate \$2,000-3,000) illustrated right, her only known likeness, which achieved \$27,500; a mourning picture for Captain Thomas Smalley by Hannah K. Smalley (lot 166, estimate \$2,000-3,000), which brought \$11,875; and a Chippendale mahogany bracket clock by John Childs (active 1813-1847), Philadelphia, PA, circa 1825 (lot 180, estimate \$3,000-5,000), which achieved \$19,200.

The collection of Virginia H. Knauer, well-known and respected collector and consumer advocate from Washington, DC, was the largest estate in the sale and included exceptional furniture from Philadelphia, Ireland and England and fine decorative arts, including a highly desirable collection of Chinese Export porcelain. Notable lots included two marble and carved Irish tables, 18th century (lot 244, estimate \$1,000-1,500 and lot 258, estimate \$2,000-4,000), which sold for \$17,500 and \$33,750, respectively; a uniquely small walnut corner cupboard, Pennsylvania, circa 1800 (lot 296, estimate \$1,000-2,000) that brought \$25,000; a Chippendale carved mahogany fire screen, England or America, circa 1770, that brought \$21,250; and a Chippendale carved walnut side chair, Philadelphia, PA, circa 1770 (lot 260, estimate \$6,000-9,000), that achieved \$16,250.

Standout works of silver were all unique items made by the Gorham Corporation: an impressive sterling silver centerpiece ornamented with elephants, dating from the late 19th century (lot 31, estimate \$8,000-12,000) illustrated above, realized \$25,000; a fine five piece sterling silver tea service, 1869 (lot 39, estimate \$5,000-7,000), achieved \$8,960; a 20th century punch bowl (lot 40, estimate \$4,000-6,000) brought \$7,500 and an impressive early 20th century sterling silver repousse presentation bowl (lot 64, estimate \$3,000-5,000) sold for \$6,875.



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7.- [Jane Austen's ring sells for five times estimate in Sotheby's English Literature Sale](#)

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