

Email Announcements

Join our email list
 Email:
 Privacy by SafeSubscribeSM

Freeman's News



Freemans to Sell a Rare and Early American Revolutionary War Flag from Colonel Peter Muhlenbergs Virginia Regiment

[Read More](#)



Highlights of Fine Books, Maps, Prints & Manuscripts

[Read More](#)



Diamonds of Great Importance

[Read More](#)



Modern & Contemporary Art Auction Achieves Nearly \$2 Million

[Read More](#)



American Furniture, Silver, Folk & Decorative Arts Auction Achieves \$1.74 Million

Freemans to Sell Historic USS Constitution Colors from the Collection of H. Richard Dietrich, Jr.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Tara Theune Davis I ttDavis@freemansauction.com
 Andrew Huber I ahuber@freemansauction.com
 +1.267.414.1259

Philadelphia, Friday, February 10, 2012—Freeman's is delighted to announce that it will offer for sale a unique collection of historic and rare naval flags from one of the most revered patrons and collectors of American art, the late H. Richard Dietrich, Jr., on Monday, April 30, 2012 following the American Furniture, Silver and Decorative Arts auction. Included are some of the earliest known and significant patterns of our Nation's naval ensigns from our country's most iconic ship, the USS Constitution. This exceptional grouping of 12 flags spanning six decades has been in private hands for more than 150 years and never been on the open market. Dietrich's ambition and foresight to preserve American history through material culture combined with his lifelong passion for the sea has secured the survival of these flags; the ensigns are testaments to American pride, patriotism and preservation.

Commenting on the sale, Samuel M. "Beau" Freeman II, Freeman's Chairman and specialist in Americana, said "We are privileged to offer these exceptional and rare flags. Mr. Dietrich was one of the great collectors of his time and committed to the city of Philadelphia and the preservation of American art. These flags are actual artifacts of 'Old Ironsides', flown during many pivotal moments in the Nation's as well as the world's history." The Constitution, a three mast 44 gun frigate named by President George Washington and launched in 1797, has the distinction of being the oldest commissioned naval vessel. In 1997 she sailed under her own power for her 200th birthday. The Constitution will be lauded again with this year's bi-centennial of the War of 1812.

Eleven of the colors were acquired by Dietrich in 1964 via Horace and Elinor Gordon, friends and advisors to Dietrich on his private collection as well as The Dietrich American Foundation. The colors were sold by Ken Parris, grandson of Virgil Parris (1807-1874), former US representative and state senator from Maine and appointed "Keeper of the Stores" of the Portsmouth Naval shipyard in 1858. The Constitution arrived in Portsmouth on June 14, 1855, decommissioned from active duty and saved from salvage to be converted to a training ship. During this period, Parris was informed that her "light gear"—sails, rigging, spars, hull timbers, and various instruments, as well as all flags—including small boat and signal-- were to be removed and condemned as "unfit for service," and ordered sold at public auction. Parris purchased the acclaimed vessel's naval flags and the family retained them into the mid-twentieth century.

Highlights of the collection include four rare and extremely early U.S. ensigns and a U.S. Commodore's Broad Pennant. "Dietrich's flags are the most important collection to come up for sale since the Tarleton Colors. The collection includes a rare 13-star naval ensign and an unparalleled grouping of flags from the U.S.S. Constitution that have survived with a rich and colorful provenance almost equal to that of the ship itself," shared Col. J. Craig Nannos, consulting specialist for the auction.

Highlights:

- An extremely rare 19-star United States Ensign from the USS Constitution was officially used from December 1816 to December 1817. H 10'6" x W 16'8"
- A rare 28-star United States Ensign from the USS Constitution authorized in 1846 with modifications made for continued use. H 12'9" x W 20'1"
- A very fine 31-star United States Ensign of the USS Constitution, most likely her last ensign prior to the ship being laid up in ordinary at the Portsmouth Navy Yard in 1855. H 11'4" x W 15'3"
- An early and rare 13-star, 4-5-4 patterned, 8 stripe American Naval Flag. Late 18th/early 19th century. H 6'1" x W 10'10"
- A rare and early U.S. Commodore's Broad Pennant from the USS Constitution. The oldest known representation of a U.S. Commodore's "broad pennant," in use from 1837 to 1845. H 8'9" x W 19'5"

America's oldest auction house, founded in 1805, is pleased to be offering historic naval colors from America's oldest war ship, the USS Constitution. In honor of ports the Constitution has visited, Freeman's will be hosting special events in Boston, Newport and Annapolis. Please call Andrew Huber at 1.267.414.1259 for more details.

Quick links  

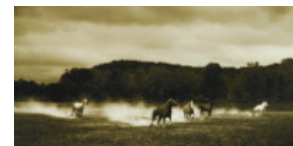
- Auction Estimate Request
- Schedule
- International View Magazine
- Conditions of Sale
- Freeman's Live Bidding

Forthcoming Auctions



ASIAN ARTS

Sale Date: Sep 09 2012 10:00



PHOTOGRAPHY & PHOTOBOOKS

Sale Date: Sep 19 2012 10:00



BOOKS, MAPS & MANUSCRIPTS

Sale Date: Sep 20 2012 10:00

COINS & MEDALS

Sale Date: Sep 20 2012 15:00



ENGLISH & CONTINENTAL FURNITURE & DECORATIVE ARTS

Sale Date: Oct 09 2012 10:00

ORIENTAL RUGS & CARPETS

Sale Date: Oct 10 2012 10:00

[Read More](#)



Freemans Achieves Auction Records
for Rare and Early American Naval
Flags

[Read More](#)

PAINTINGS

Sale Date: Jul 21 2012 10:00

ANTIQUES

Sale Date: Jul 21 2012 12:00

SCOTTISH SILVER

Sale Date: Aug 14 2012 11:00

2012 © Copyright - Freeman's Auctioneers & Appraisers - 1808 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, PA. 215-563-9275 Follow us on  