

For Immediate Release

April 24, 2012

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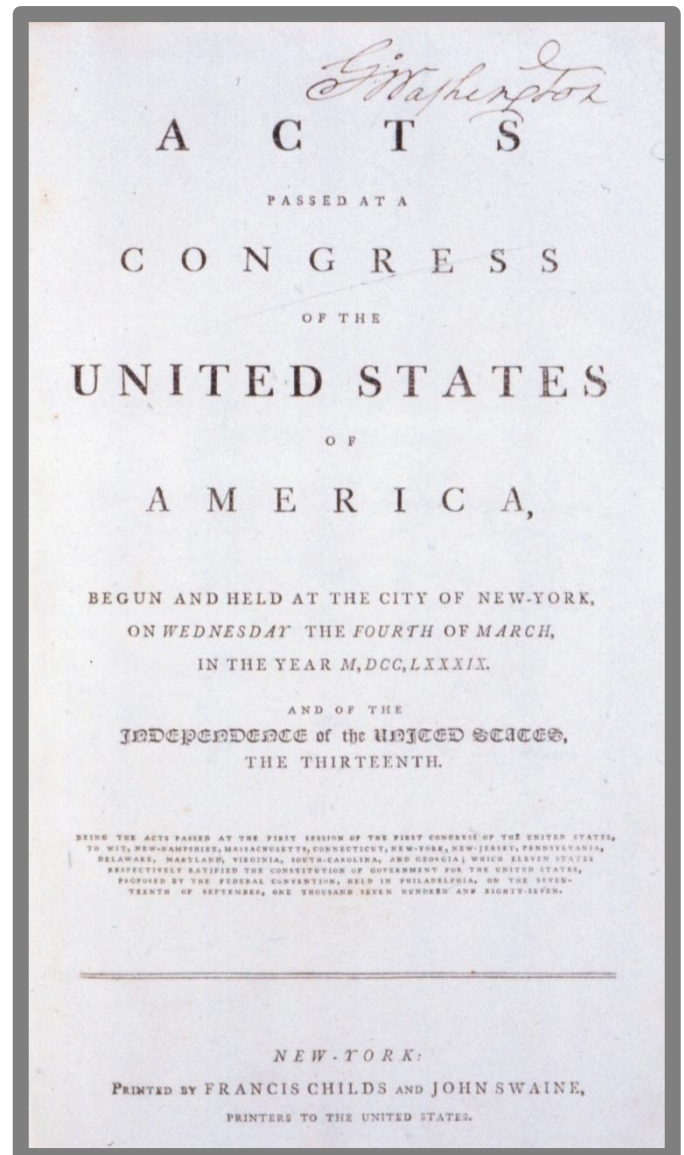
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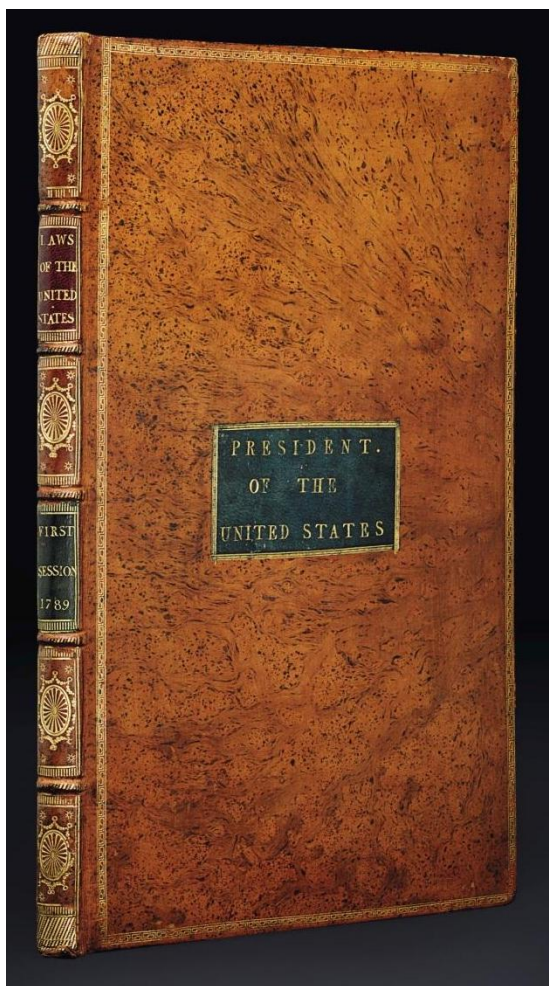
**CHRISTIE'S NEW YORK
TO OFFER PRESIDENT GEORGE WASHINGTON'S PERSONAL COPY
OF THE ACTS OF THE FIRST CONGRESS (1789), CONTAINING
THE U.S. CONSTITUTION AND THE PROPOSED BILL OF RIGHTS**

**IN A NEAR PRISTINE NEW YORK BINDING, WITH WASHINGTON'S BOLD SIGNATURE, HIS
ARMORIAL BOOKPLATE AND HIS AUTOGRAPH MARGINALIA, HIGHLIGHTING THE
DUTIES AND POWERS OF THE PRESIDENT UNDER THE NEW CONSTITUTION**

ESTIMATE: \$2-3 MILLION

New York - On June 22, Christie's New York will offer one of the most evocative and revealing American historical artifacts: George Washington's personal copy of the *Acts of Congress*, including the Constitution and draft Bill of Rights, a volume specially printed and bound for him in 1789, his first year in office as first President of the United States (estimate: \$2-3 million). It is in near-pristine condition, after 223 years. On the cover, "President of the United States" is embossed in gold. On the marbled endpaper is Washington's personal bookplate, engraved with his motto, *Exitus acta probat*. Washington added to the title-page a bold signature "G^o: Washington." Remarkably, in the margins of the Constitution, Washington has added careful brackets and marginal notes. These notations highlight key passages concerning the President's responsibilities, testifying to Washington's careful, conscientious approach to his powers and responsibilities in his ground-breaking first term. This elegant, slim volume epitomizes Washington's multiple, indispensable roles in the creation of the nation. As he affirmed at his first inaugural, in April 1789, "I was summoned by my country, whose voice I can never hear but with veneration and love."





It was printed and bound especially for the president by a New York bookbinder, Thomas Allen, who created two similar volumes for the first Secretary of State, Thomas Jefferson, and Attorney General John Jay. Jefferson's copy is in the Lilly Library in Indiana, and Jay's is in a private collection.

Washington's copy of the *Acts of Congress* remained in the library at Mount Vernon for many years after Washington's death in 1799, but in 1876, many of his books, including this volume, was sold at auction. Later, it was acquired by the Heritage Foundation of Deerfield, Massachusetts, and sold it at auction in 1964. It was acquired by the noted Americana collector Richard Dietrich. It is being offered for sale by the Dietrich American Foundation, which he established in 1963 to collect and document historically important examples of American decorative and fine arts as well as documents, manuscripts and paintings.

Rare books and manuscripts relating to the most revered and respected American presidents have inspired record prices at Christie's in recent years. An autograph manuscript of Lincoln's 1864 election victory speech sold for \$3,442,500 in February 2009, the highest price for any American manuscript. An autograph letter written in 1787 by George

Washington to his nephew Bushrod Washington, on the subject of the ratification of the Constitution, set a record for a Washington document of \$3,218,500 in December 2009.

Auction: Books and Manuscripts

June 22 at 10am

Viewing: Christie's Rockefeller Center Galleries

May 11-17 and June 16 - 22

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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Images available on request

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