

Swann Galleries, New York City

# Two Heroes of the Slavery Era Are Standouts at \$1.2 Million African Americana Sale

by Jeanne Schinto

Photos courtesy Swann Galleries

“How do you come back from that?” Jenelle Watler, Swann’s operations director and one of its auctioneers, asked her audience after the applause ended. She had just hammered down a previously unknown photograph of Harriet Tubman for \$161,000 (including buyer’s premium) in the auction house’s New York City gallery. The sale took place on March 30, three days after Swann celebrated its 75th anniversary.

The vintage photography community was abuzz about this newly discovered Tubman image for weeks. The Harriet Tubman Home in Auburn, New York, started a crowd-funding effort on ([www.womenyoushouldfund.com](http://www.womenyoushouldfund.com)) in an attempt to secure it. More than 450 people contributed \$28,035 toward it. Undoubtedly, many other would-be contenders were knocked out by the opening bid of \$20,000, the low estimate, which came from Watler’s absentee-bid book. For the more determined and better financed, it was quite the opposite. They acted as if a starter pistol had been fired. Watler could barely take a breath while calling the raises. The race pace slowed only after bidding reached six figures. “Are you sure?” she asked the last remaining contender in the room. That bidder did go a few more, but someone on the phone prevailed.

Swann announced in an initial press release that this top lot of its \$1.24 million sale of printed and manuscript African Americana had gone to a dealer. The following day, a subsequent release announced that the 4" x 2½" carte de visite of the woman who led scores of her fellow slaves to freedom was acquired in a partnership by the U.S. Library of Congress and the Smithsonian Institution’s new National Museum of African American History and Culture. A New York City dealer, David H. Lowenherz of Lion Heart Autographs, had been the partners’ agent.

The image had been tucked away for decades in an album of nearly four dozen images assembled in the 1860s or later. The standard Victorian leather-bound book had once belonged to Emily Howland (1827-1929), a Quaker schoolteacher and abolitionist from upstate New York. In its premier photo, Harriet Tubman (1822-1913) is shown full-length and seated. She is wearing a flowing, floor-length skirt. Someone—it is believed to be Howland—wrote Tubman’s name in pencil along the skirt’s hemline.

Tubman looks fairly young. Wyatt Houston Day, who founded Swann’s African Americana department 21 years ago, said he researched the photographer, Benjamin F. Powelson, whose name was on the back of the card, and learned that his Auburn studio was in existence only one year spanning from 1868 into 1869. That puts her age at 46 or 47.

The more familiar images of Tubman show her much later in life. One of them, a 5½" x 3½" silver print, is part of Howland’s album. But the searing gaze of the younger Tubman is unmistakable, a match for the elder Tubman. Long after slavery was abolished, the fire never went out. In 1896, she told a women’s suffrage convention: “I was the conductor of the Underground Railroad for eight years, and I can say what most conductors can’t say—I never ran my train off the track and I never lost a passenger.”

Howland’s papers reside with the Friends Historical Library of Swarthmore College, Swarthmore, Pennsylvania. The collection contains correspondence, journals, manuscripts, memorabilia, and other photos. It’s not known how this album became separated from the rest. Nonetheless, as Day recounted, 33 years ago the unnamed consignor was walking by the Puck Building in SoHo where an auction was going on and decided on a whim to go in. He was a photography buff in a minor sort of way. He bid on the album and got it, then put it away in a closet. He remembered it when he read (perhaps in *M.A.D.*) about last year’s sale, where several photography lots did well.

## The image had been tucked away for decades in an album.

When Day was asked to examine the album, he paged through it, noting the usual suspects—Wendell Phillips, Lydia Maria Child, Charles Sumner—that would likely have been found in an album owned by someone similar to Howland. Then he came across a minor find, an image of John Willis Menard (1838-1893), the first African American elected to the U.S. Congress. Finally, he turned to the last page, and there was the Tubman image. “I almost fell out of my chair,” he recalled. “It was a physical jolt.”

During the Barack Obama presidency, the U.S. Treasury Department announced that Tubman would replace Andrew Jackson on the \$20 bill in 2020. It was undecided, or at least unannounced, what image of Tubman would be used. One might logically hope that this new photo, now that it is owned by these two government agencies, would be in the running. However, with Donald Trump in the White House, the whole endeavor appears to be in jeopardy, with the change being delayed until 2026. Meanwhile, the 45th president has expressed his admiration for Jackson’s populism. He has hung Old Hickory’s portrait in the Oval Office. He has visited the Jackson home in Nashville and laid a wreath at his tomb. And although he has characterized Tubman herself as “fantastic,” he has criticized the plan to substitute her image for Jackson’s as “pure political correctness.”

Highly recommended to those who may know little or only the myths about this genuine American hero is Kate Clifford Larson’s enlightening biography, *Bound for the Promised Land*, published in 2004. Until then, the last biography of Tubman, by Earl Conrad, had been published in 1943. Most other books about Tubman, and there are many, have been geared toward children.

Trump brought up the accomplishments of another great hero of the slavery era, Frederick Douglass, at the start of February’s National Black History Month. “Frederick Douglass is an example of someone who’s done an amazing job and is being recognized more and more, I noticed,” he said. Well, except for the revealing ineptness of its present tense, that sentence is accurate, to judge by this auction’s results. An autograph letter signed by Douglass sold to an institution for a new record (\$100,000), and a first edition of his *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* broke another record, when it sold to a dealer for \$37,500.

Douglass wrote the letter to journalist George Alfred Townsend (1841-1914) on May 5, 1880. It was partly a defense of Robert G. Ingersoll (1833-1899), a noted orator, similar to Douglass, as well as an avowed agnostic. The letter recounted how Ingersoll took Douglass into his home in Peoria, Illinois, in the middle of the night, when, because of the late arrival of Douglass’s train after a lecture in another city, he might otherwise have been forced to wander in the sharp winter cold until



This carte de visite of Harriet Tubman was found inside a Civil War period photo album. It sold to the U.S. Library of Congress and the National Museum of African American History and Culture for \$161,000 (est. \$20,000/30,000). The album had been given to Emily Howland by her friend and teaching mentor Carrie Nichols. Both women taught at Camp Todd, the freedmen’s school in Arlington, Virginia. The photo of John Willis Menard included in the album is a minor rarity—Swann could find no other record—and would have made the album an auction highlight even without the Tubman portrait. Although Menard was the winner of a seat in the U.S. House of Representatives from a district in Louisiana, he never served, since his opponent and the apparent loser, Caleb S. Hunt, contested the win and neither was seated. Menard was, however, the first black man to address the U.S. Congress.

morning. “I went to Peoria that night with all the sin of my hated complexion upon me and found [Ingersoll to be]... as kind[,] noble and humane as any Christian man in Peoria,” Douglass wrote. The letter also eloquently corrected a misconception about how Douglass became a free man: “You are wrong in saying I bought my liberty, a few friends in England bought me and made me a present of myself,” he told his correspondent. This happened, he said, “[w]ithout any word of prompting on my part.”

The record-breaking *Narrative*, the first of Douglass’s three autobiographies, was an associational copy inscribed “To Miss Adeline Henshaw / from her Friend / Frederick Douglass / 11th July, 1845.” According to Swann’s research, there appears to be no clear connection between the Underground Railroad operator Seth Hinshaw (not Henshaw) of North Carolina and Indiana and the Adeline Henshaw of this inscription. It’s possible that she may be the Adeline Henshaw (1825-1912) of Massachusetts who married Joseph Avery Howland in 1847. Both were active in the abolition and women’s suffrage movements alongside Frederick Douglass, as was Adeline’s father, Josiah Henshaw. Swann had spoken with the purchaser, a dealer who requested anonymity, and interestingly, that person has said that the potential of a Seth Hinshaw connection had no bearing on the very strong price paid.

One more record price was set at this sale when *Benjamin Bannaker’s [sic] Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia Almanac, for the Year of Our Lord 1795* sold for \$55,000. Printed for and sold by John Fisher of Baltimore in 1794, it is considered one of the rarest and most desirable of Banneker’s almanacs. Its special aspect is the portrait of Banneker (1731-1806) on its front cover. This copy, a battered one bearing the inked library stamp of an old historical society, was missing its last leaf—a considerable loss in a pamphlet of only 36 pages—but apparently it didn’t matter to the winning bidder, a collector.

Yale University took three of the other top 20 lots. They were an original Marcus Garvey manuscript (\$11,875); an archive pertaining to the Scottsboro Boys (\$11,250); and a pair of volumes pertaining to a Memphis beauty school of the 1930s-40s (\$11,875)—all of which have significant research potential. William S. Reese of New



A pair of child-size wrought-iron Middle Passage slave shackles was sold to an institution for \$4500 (est. \$2500/3500). The bar is 5" long; the cuffs are 2" in diameter. The catalog said the shackles were made in Ghana sometime in the 18th to early 19th century.



Haven, Connecticut, the agent on the phone for the institution, said Yale acquired 54 other lots and tried for nearly 30 more. "In general, we either bought comfortably or we were decisively outbid," he said. "These are hard sales to predict, given the nature of the odd range of constituencies" that participate.

Always a major player at these sales, Yale was the buyer of last year's top lot, the original pen-and-brush artwork for "A Night-Club Map of Harlem" by E. Simms Campbell, that sold for \$100,000. It has already been put on display at a major exhibition, *Gather Out of Star-Dust: The Harlem Renaissance & the Beinecke Library*, which was on view from January 13 to April 17 this year. (For more information, see the caption beneath the image of the catalog cover.) In addition to the nightclub map, many of the more than 300 other items selected for the exhibition from the library's James Weldon Johnson Memorial Collection of African American Arts and Letters were acquired at Swann.

The curators of the National Museum of African American History and Culture have often aggressively shopped these Swann sales too. By Day's count, they bought "fifty to sixty lots each year for a decade—prime stuff." After the museum opened its doors last September, it was logical to presume that the curators' buying habits would change. Given its joint purchase of the Tubman photo for such a phenomenal price as well as several other acquisitions, it seems clear the museum will find ways to continue to buy exceptional material.

Day, who attended the national museum's opening, took pride in seeing many of the items sold at Swann on prominent display there. He also saw pieces that once had been in his own collection. These included a big burl bowl with its lip incised with African patterns. "I acquired it from a guy in Mississippi who got it from a defunct plantation," he said. "It was made by slaves here of American wood."

Several other institutions, here and abroad and some new to this annual auction, were significant buyers of highlights and of myriad smaller lots. One of them has announced on its website that it is building a museum in Montgomery, Alabama. They'll no doubt be back. The museum from abroad bought Atlantic slave trade material. One of the American institutions sent seven of its curators to the preview.

It was a long, long sale, with 530 lots offered, 79% of which sold. Lots of note that didn't sell were two typed Malcolm X manuscripts (est. \$200,000/300,000) and a silver-sequined cape presented to James Brown by Michael Jackson (est. \$25,000/35,000). Bidders also rejected a pair of Brown's black suede platform shoes (est. \$1500/2000). "Those of you with big holdings of James Brown garments should probably rethink your investment strategy at this point," the assembled bidders were advised by Nicholas "Nico" Lowry, Swann's president and principal auctioneer, who was taking his turn at the podium. Nico joined the business in 1995. His father, George S. Lowry, bought it in 1970. It was founded in 1942 by Benjamin Swann, who ran it with a staff of four people. Today Swann at 75 lays claim to being the "largest auctioneer of Works on Paper in the world, and New York's oldest specialty auction house."

For more information, phone (212) 254-4710 or see the website ([www.swannalleries.com](http://www.swannalleries.com)).



An excavated West African kudu (ritual burial jar) sold to an institution for \$10,625 (est. \$10,000/15,000). Approximately 2 3/4" x 4", the lidded vessel (missing its handle) is broadly dated to sometime in the 18th or 19th century. It is made of bronze with a green verdigris patina and decorated with two applied Middle Passage type slave shackles. The imagery suggests that it once belonged to a slave dealer, said Wyatt Houston Day.

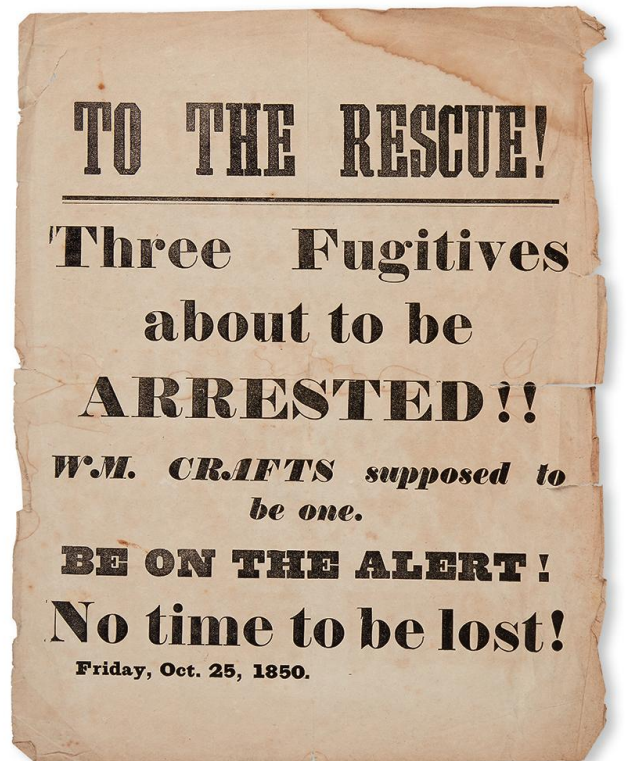
Steamer Vernon June 8, 1861

The following is a true copy of the bill of lading for the goods on board the Steamer Vernon, of the New York and North River, by the 16th New York Volunteer Regiment during the Civil War.

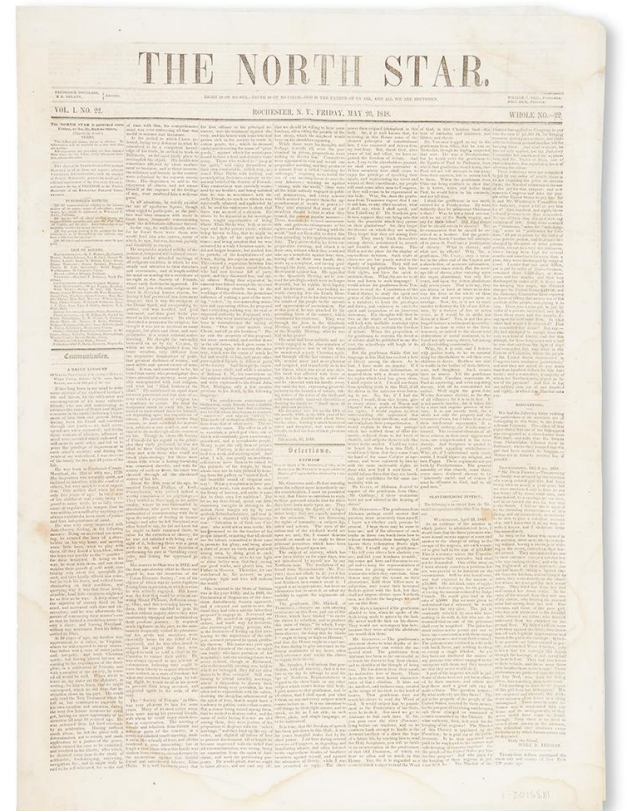
Item	Quantity	Value	Total
1 large iron barrel	21	100.00	2100.00
1 do. iron barrel	29	100.00	2900.00
1 do. iron barrel	41	100.00	4100.00
1 woman Mary Robert wife	41	100.00	4100.00
1 girl girl	5	100.00	500.00
1 man Robert	20	100.00	2000.00
1 man Robert	21	100.00	2100.00
1 woman Betty	28	100.00	2800.00
1 boy Robert	10	100.00	1000.00
1 girl Matilda	7	100.00	700.00
1 do. Sally	4	100.00	400.00
1 boy William	2	100.00	200.00
1 boy George	11	100.00	1100.00
1 man John	28	100.00	2800.00
1 girl Matilda	11	100.00	1100.00
1 man John	66	100.00	6600.00
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$16600.00</b>
6 sets of plough gears	6	20.00	120.00
3 road wagons	3	50.00	150.00
1 set of 14 iron horses	1	10.00	10.00
1 do. do.	1	10.00	10.00
18 sets of plough gears	18	2.00	36.00
1 girl Matilda 7 years old	1	1000.00	1000.00
1 boy Robert 16 years old	1	1000.00	1000.00
1 boy William 2 years old	1	200.00	200.00
1 girl Matilda 7 years old	1	700.00	700.00
1 man John 66 years old	1	1000.00	1000.00
6 sets of plough gears	6	20.00	120.00
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$20351.00</b>



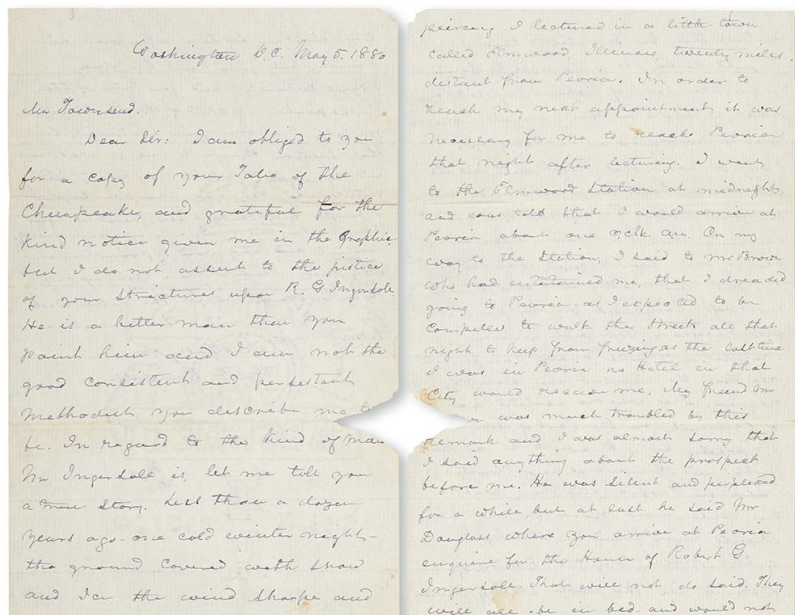
A group of letters relating to John Augustine Washington III, grand-nephew of George Washington and the last private owner of Mount Vernon, sold in 16 separate lots to various bidders for a total of \$54,063. A phone bidder paid \$8750 for this document, a theft and vandalism claim dated June 8, 1861, that accounts for property taken by the 16th New York Volunteer Regiment during the Civil War. Besides road wagons (three at "50.00" each), milk cows (six at "45.00" each), 18 sets of plough gears ("2.00" each), other farming equipment, and food, there are these "items"—slaves freed by the Union troops—and their values: "1 woman Betty 28 years 1000.00," "1 boy Robert 16 years 1000.00," "1 boy William 2 years 200.00," "1 girl Matilda 7 years 700.00," and "1 man Jim Michel [sic] 66 years 500.00." The last named is actually Jim Mitchell, who had begun work at Mount Vernon at age 14. The carte de visite, dated April 15, 1870, is believed to be Mitchell.



A 12" x 9 1/2" letterpress broadside sold to a collector on the phone for \$15,000 (est. \$5000/7500). "To The Rescue! / Three Fugitives / about to be / Arrested!!" had been printed for the Boston Vigilance Committee on October 25, 1850, and was cataloged as "exceedingly rare." "Wm. Crafts" was William Crafts, husband of Ellen; in 1848, the couple escaped from slavery in Georgia by way of a clever ruse. Light-skinned Ellen played the part of an infirm white man who was traveling with his faithful slave companion. To be sure, she had the more difficult role. She bandaged her face to hide her smooth skin. She feigned deafness to discourage conversations. And she had her right arm in a sling to avoid registering in hotel registries, since she did not know how to read or write. They made it to Philadelphia, then settled in Boston. In 1850, however, the Fugitive Slave Act put them in peril in the North. When slave catchers began hunting for them, the Crafts fled to England. After 20 years, having lived and worked and raised a family there, they returned to the States and established a school in Georgia for newly freed blacks.

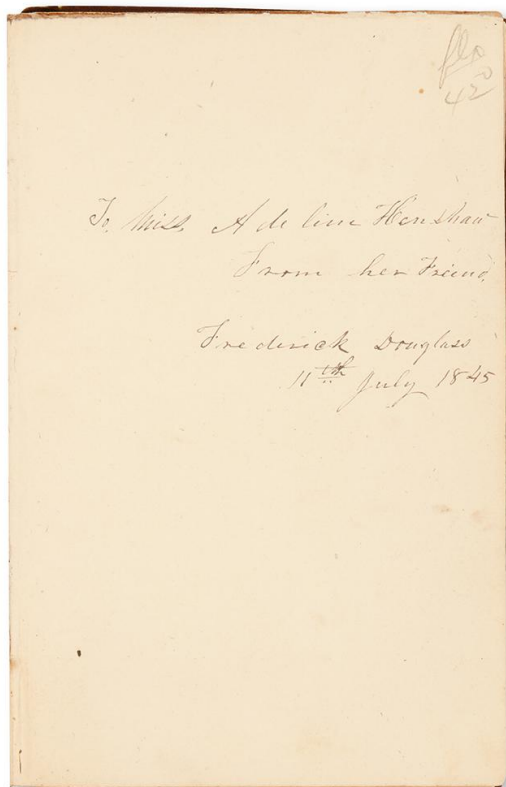


A copy of Vol. 1, Number 22 of Frederick Douglass's newspaper, *The North Star*, published in Rochester, New York, on May 26, 1848, went to an institution bidding in the room for \$15,000 (est. \$6000/9000).

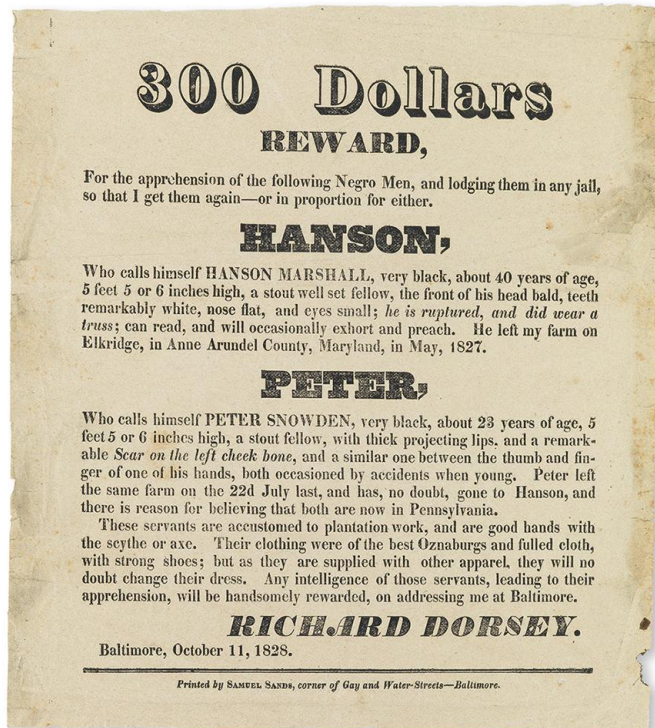


An autograph letter signed by Frederick Douglass to George Alfred Townsend fetched \$100,000 (est. \$40,000/60,000). Four small octavo pages on a folding sheet, it was written in Washington, D.C., and dated May 5, 1880.

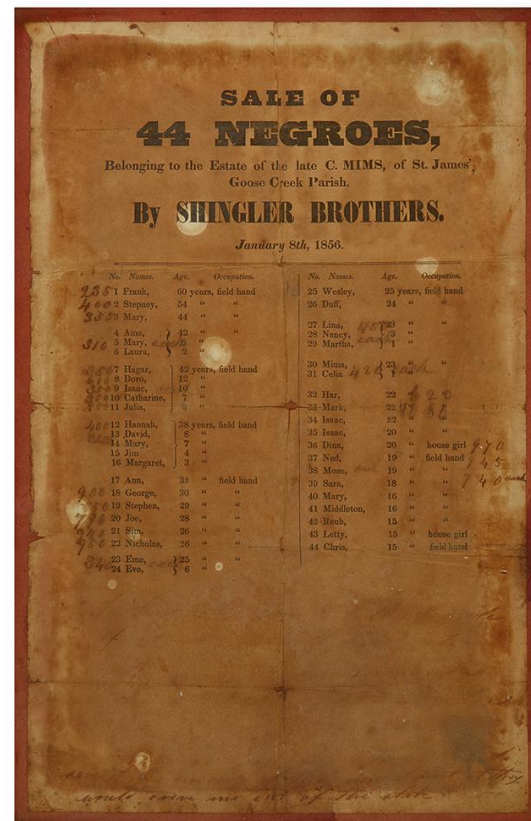




An inscribed, associational copy of Frederick Douglass's autobiography, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, published in Boston in 1845, achieved \$37,500 (est. \$3000/4000). Douglass spent 20 years as a slave on Maryland's Eastern Shore. Long before he gained his freedom, he had metaphorically liberated himself by reading. Southerners protested that some slave autobiographies were fictional. It didn't help matters that some actually were. The skeptics demanded further proof that what Douglass had written was true. They wanted to see the man, to hear him speak. That is one reason why he became an orator.



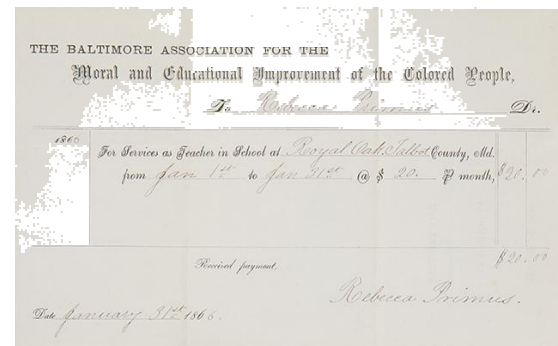
An 11½" x 11" letterpress broadside announcing a reward for the capture of two runaway slaves sold to an institution for \$10,000 (est. \$3000/4000). Printed by Samuel Sands of Baltimore in 1828, it gives unusually detailed descriptions of the two men, Hanson and Peter, being hunted by their owner, Richard Dorsey (1780-1850), whose papers are archived at the Maryland Historical Society.



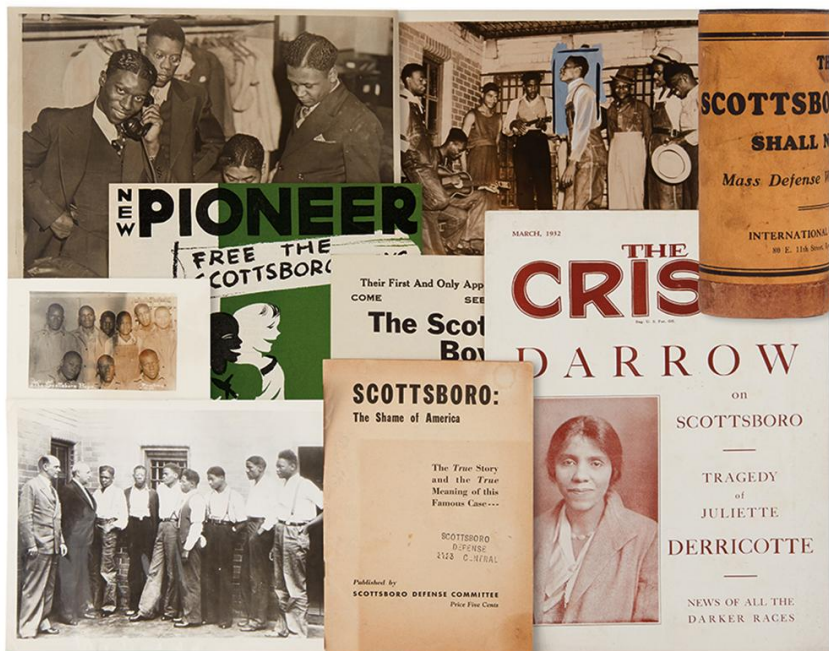
This 1856 broadside advertising the "Sale of 44 Negroes" from a South Carolina estate designated each slave with a first name, age, and occupation. Reading down the list, one comes across three-year-old girls named Julia, Margaret, and Nancy, a four-year-old boy named Jim—and, can it be? or is it a typo?—a one-year-old, Celia, all being sold as "field hands," along with teenagers and adults. With prices realized written in ink next to some of the names, the 13½" x 8¾" document printed by the Shingler Brothers of Charleston went to a bidder on the phone for \$8750 (est. \$2500/3500).



A copper slave badge sold to a bidder in the room for \$6250 (est. \$8000/12,000). Approximately 2" x 2", the badge is an identification tag unique to Charleston and Charleston Neck created for the use of slave owners who allowed their slaves to be rented out. Incised with the place name "Charleston," the date "1824," the word "Servant," and the number "1980," this one also bears the mark of silversmith John Joseph Lafar (1781-1849). The Swann catalog said the item came fresh to the market from the original South Carolina family whose slaves would have worn it. Another badge virtually identical to this one in every way, except for the servant's number, is illustrated with a line drawing in E. Milby Burton's *South Carolina Silversmiths 1690-1860* (1942). Burton, director of the Charleston Museum, wrote that the collection had three slave badges in all, dated 1817, 1824 (like the illustration), and 1825. The current website of the museum shows a dozen examples. For a whole book on the subject, see *Slave Badges and the Slave-Hire System in Charleston, South Carolina, 1783-1865* (2004) by Harlan Greene and Harry S. Hutchins, Jr. with Brian E. Hutchins.



An important, newly discovered collection of 41 letters written to Rebecca Primus (1836-1934), an African American educator from one of the oldest and most prominent black families of Hartford, Connecticut, sold to the Schlesinger Library on the History of Women in America, Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study, Cambridge, Massachusetts. The price was \$45,000 (est. \$20,000/30,000). In 1999, Farah Jasmine Griffin published *Beloved Sisters and Loving Friends*, a fascinating study based on letters written by Primus from 1854 to 1867 to Addie Brown, a woman with whom she shared a close romantic friendship. They are, as Griffin declares, "a rare glimpse" into the life and thoughts of a black woman in 19th-century New England. The letters sold at Swann were written between 1854 and 1872 by other friends of Primus and by her family members, especially her mother. It includes the period in her life when she helped found a freedman's school in Royal Oak, Maryland, later named the Primus Institute in her honor. "We are so very excited about the acquisition of the Primus letters to our collections," said Kenji C. Phillips, the Schlesinger's curator for race and ethnicity. "They will add to the understanding of 19th-century African American education in New England and the Upper South. We hope that through these letters researchers will be able to gain insights into national and local events, race relations, financial gains and hardships, and other conditions as filtered through the words written to an African American woman."

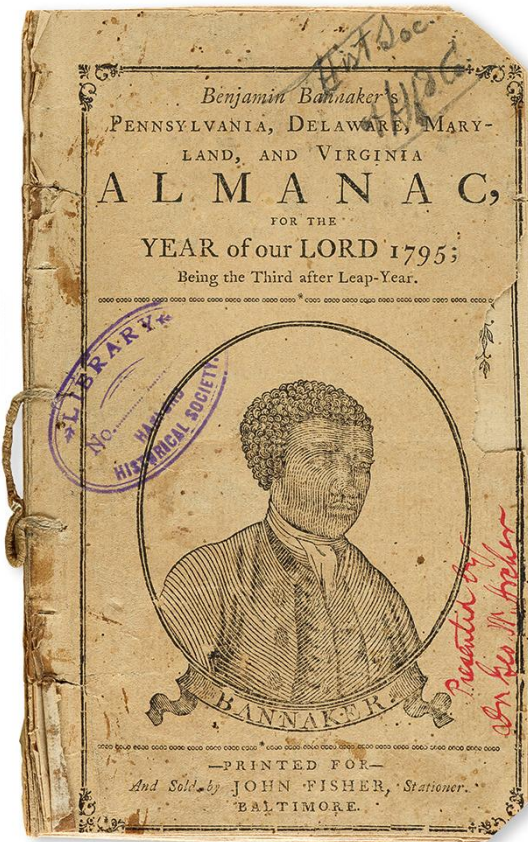


An archive of materials relating to the Scottsboro Boys and their trials sold to Yale University for \$11,250 (est. \$3000/4000). The items dating from 1931 to 1937 include press photographs, pamphlets, broadsides, and a tin used to collect funds for their defense.

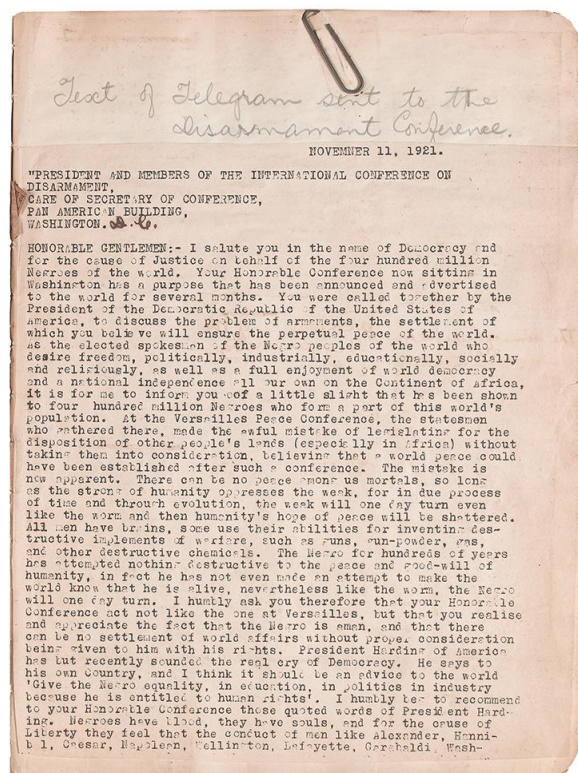




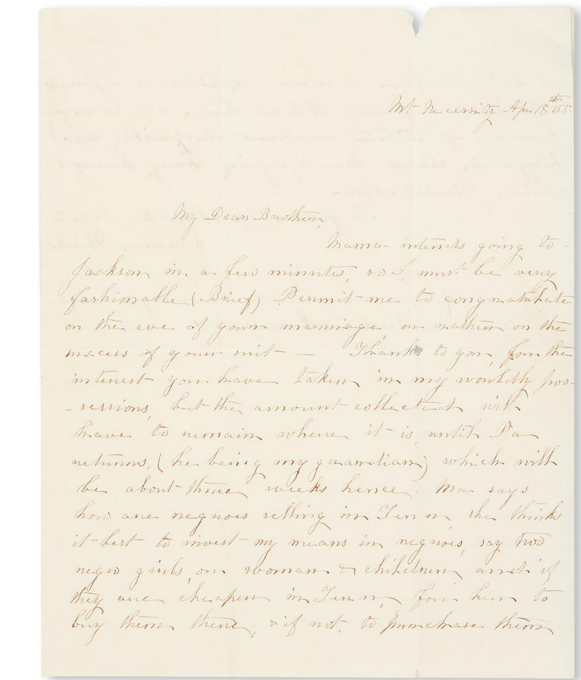
Yale University paid \$11,875 (est. \$2000/3000) for *The Besso System of Beauty Culture* by William Bess of Memphis, Tennessee. The lot comprises two volumes, one of which is 90 illustrated pages; the other has 20 sepia-toned photos of young women in hairstyles popular in the 1930s and 1940s. Although beauty schools catering to the tastes of African American women sprang up during this period, in response to the success of Madam C.J. Walker, the volumes are rare survivors of the phenomenon.



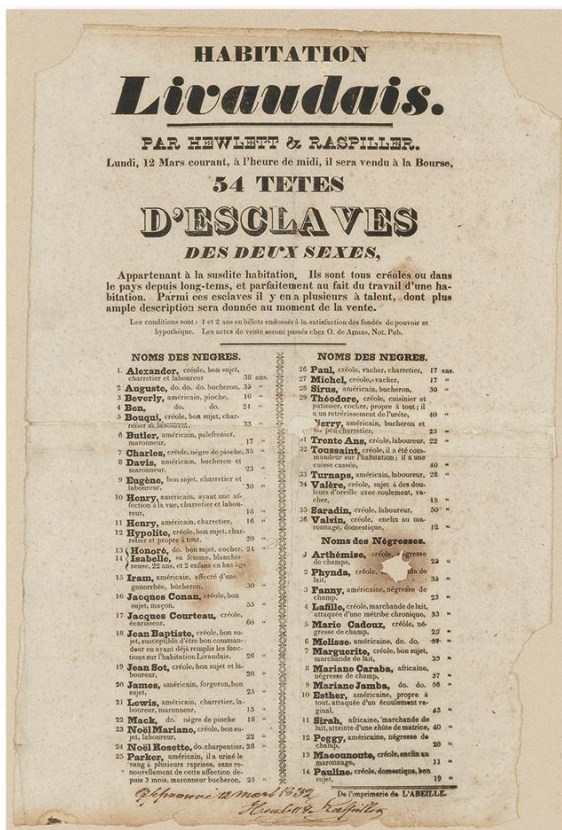
Benjamin Bannaker's [sic] *Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia Almanac, for the Year of Our Lord 1795*, with engraved portrait of Banneker, fetched \$55,000 (est. \$30,000/40,000).



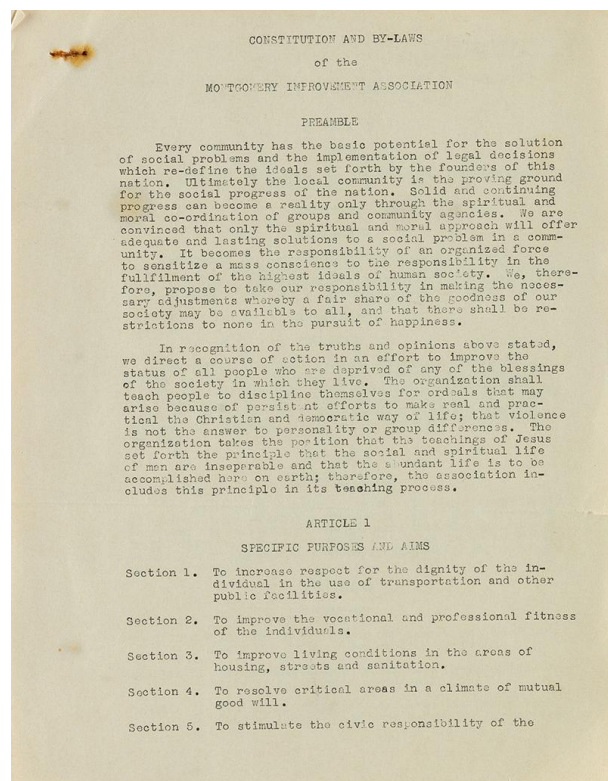
An original 90-page manuscript for the second edition of *The Philosophy and Opinions of Marcus Garvey, 1921-25*, sold to Yale University for \$11,875 (est. \$5000/7000). The first edition was published in 1923. This edition was assembled and edited by Garvey's second wife, Amy Jacques Garvey (1895-1973). For more information about this important journalist and organizer for the Pan-African cause, see *The Veiled Garvey* (2002), a biography by Ula Yvette Taylor.



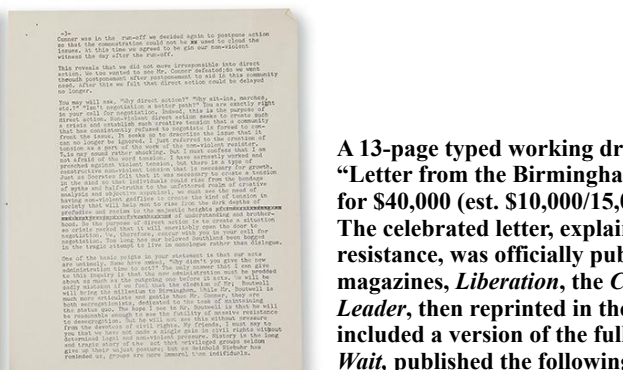
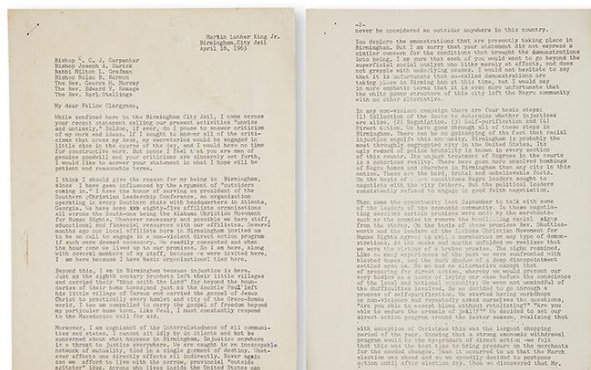
Some lots at this annual sale—the child-size slave shackles, for example—are wrenching. Others, such as photos of lynchings, are enraging. Then there are the things that are simply chilling. This letter perfectly demonstrates what Frederick Douglass called “the brutalizing effects of slavery on both slave and slave-holder.” Selling to a bidder online for \$1690 (est. \$400/600), the single leaf (folded to form four pages) was written on April 18, 1855, by a Mississippi woman named Emma Hicks to her brother Edward, a well-known slave dealer in Nashville. “Ma says how are Negroes selling in Tenn.,” she asks him. The answer will help their mother make a practical financial decision, no more, no less. “[Ma] thinks it best to invest in Negroes, say two Negro girls, or a woman with children and if they are cheaper in Tenn for him to buy them there, or if not, to purchase them in Miss.”



An institution paid \$27,500 (est. \$10,000/15,000) for this 17" x 11" letterpress broadside advertising the sale of an estate and 54 slaves. It's an early one. Printed in New Orleans in 1832 by auctioneers Hewlett & Raspiller, it is signed at the bottom edge by the latter. The property was the former Livaudais Plantation, located in what is today's Garden District of New Orleans. The descriptions, in French, identify the slaves as Creoles “*parfaitement au fait du travail d'une habitation*,” i.e., fully aware of the kind of work expected of them on such a property.



Passed at the auction, a lot containing important civil rights material was later acquired by an institution for \$18,750 (est. \$20,000/30,000). It is a large collection of papers from the Montgomery Improvement Association, including two large ring binders, one of which contains nearly 600 canceled checks. Wyatt Day made the case in his catalog description that the archive sheds “new light on this seminal community movement, which heralded the beginnings of the modern civil rights struggle.” The checks show how Martin Luther King Jr. and others cobbled together a plan to get Montgomery's 17,500 African American workers to and from work during the famed bus boycott of 1955. For example, they paid nearly \$32,000 for a fleet of station wagons for ferrying boycott participants to their jobs. A number of the earliest checks were co-signed by King. Later material includes a 1963 check written to the Shoup Voting Machine Company, together with a full-page advertisement for the machine. In Day's opinion, this suggested a plan to teach people how to vote, quite likely in anticipation of the Voting Rights Act.

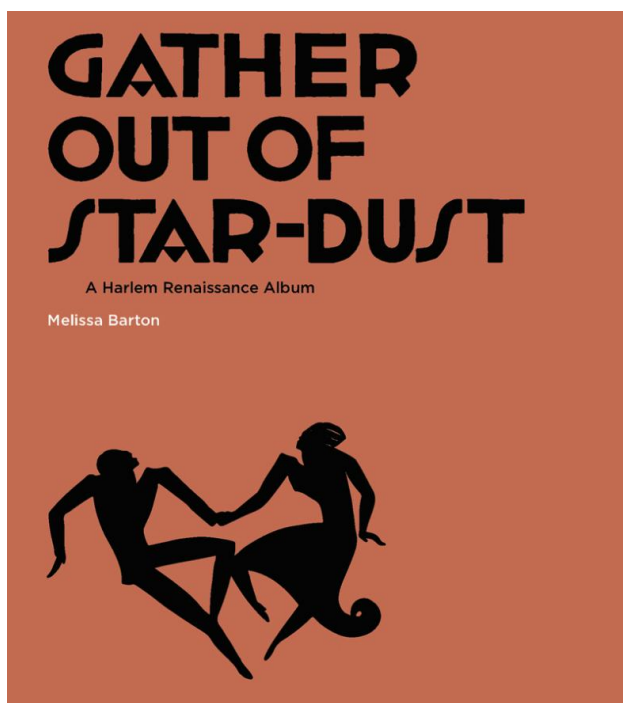


A 13-page typed working draft of Martin Luther King Jr.'s “Letter from the Birmingham Jail” went to an institution for \$40,000 (est. \$10,000/15,000). It's dated April 16, 1963. The celebrated letter, explaining his philosophy of nonviolent resistance, was officially published in June 1963 in three magazines, *Liberation*, the *Christian Century*, and the *New Leader*, then reprinted in the *Atlantic Monthly* in July. King included a version of the full text in his book *Why We Can't Wait*, published the following year.





*Heroes of the Colored Race*, a 22" x 30" chromolithographic poster printed in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1881, sold to a dealer for \$10,625 (est. \$2500/3500). It was part of the "Race History & Uplift" section of the sale.



*Gather Out of Star-Dust: A Harlem Renaissance Album* by Melissa Barton was published in February 2017 by Yale University Press as a companion volume to the eponymous exhibition at Yale's Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library. The show has now closed, but the 144-page paperback highlights 50 of the exhibition's approximately 300 objects, each accompanied by a high-quality illustration and a short essay by Barton, who is curator of drama and prose for the Yale Collection of American Literature. To order the book, priced at \$25, see the publisher's website ([www.yalebooks.com/book/9780300225617/gather-out-star-dust](http://www.yalebooks.com/book/9780300225617/gather-out-star-dust)).



The women depicted in this quarter-plate tintype are believed to be seamstresses. Note that they are wearing dresses with only slight variations and that the African American woman has a pincushion on her wrist. The 4¼" x 3¼" image fetched \$2000 (est. \$800/1200).



An online bidder spent \$8450 (est. \$3000/4000) for a scrapbook of 144 photographs depicting scenes from the building, development, and growth of the famed flying school at Tuskegee, Alabama, during the years of World War II.



Cataloged as "exceedingly rare," "Stephens' Album Varieties, No. 3" sold to a dealer on the phone for \$6000 (est. \$2000/3000). Printed in Philadelphia in 1864, this complete set of 12 cards, each 4" x 2½", was designed by Henry Louis Stephens (1824-1882) and lithographed by James Fuller Queen (1820/21-1886). They depict a slave's life and death—from picking cotton to being lashed, from rebellion and escape to fighting and dying for the Union cause. Swann could locate only one other set, at the Library Company of Philadelphia.



An archive devoted to The Ink Spots went to an institution for \$9375 (est. \$4000/6000). The nearly 1000 pieces were kept by group member Charlie Fuqua (1910-1971).



Wyatt Houston Day, founder of the printed and manuscript African Americana department at Swann in 1996, announced his resignation from the auction house on April 10, less than two weeks after this successful sale. He said he will continue to do independent appraisal work, agenting, and consulting with museums. He is also working on a memoir. Rick Stattler, Swann's book department director, said future inquiries about African Americana should be directed to him via e-mail <[rstattler@swanngalleries.com](mailto:rstattler@swanngalleries.com)>. Schinto file photo.