

# Rare scientific manuscript penned by Sir Isaac Newton brings \$118,750 in University Archives' May 26th online auction

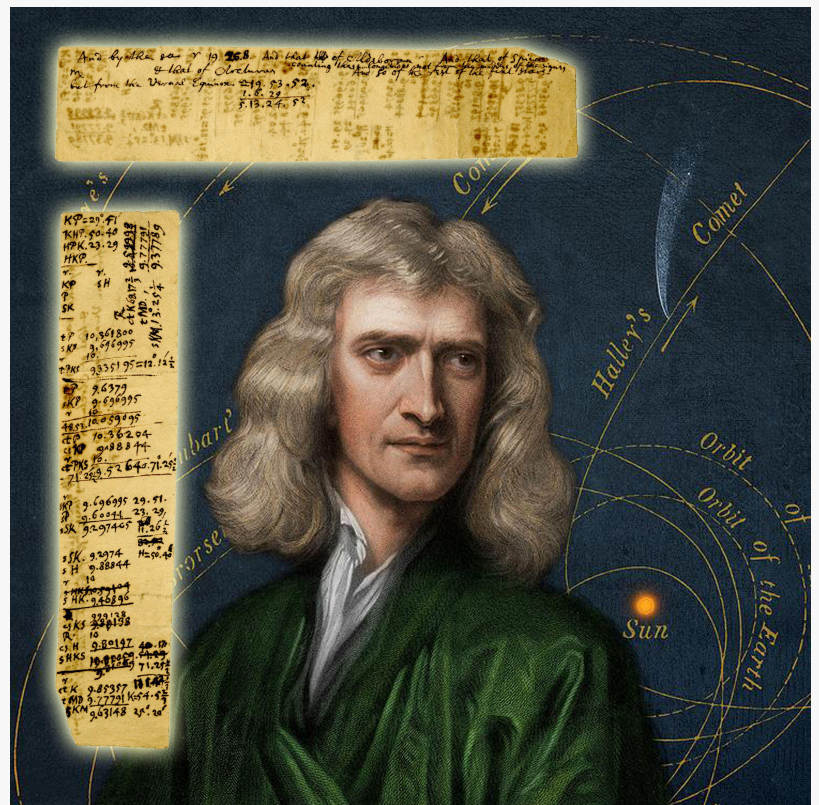
*The manuscript, with mathematical notes and calculations relating to Book III of Newton's seminal scientific work "Principia", was the top lot of the auction.*

WILTON, CT, UNITED STATES, June 2, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A manuscript penned by [Sir Isaac Newton](#) (1642-1727), with mathematical notes and calculations relating to Book III of his iconic scientific work *Principia*, changed hands for \$118,750 in University Archives' online-only auction of rare autographs, manuscripts, artwork and comic art held on May 26th. It was the top-selling item of the 409 lots in the sale.

"We're still experiencing strong prices and keen new interests in many areas," said University Archives president and owner John Reznikoff. "We've sold over three million dollars of items at auction so far this year, and we are not even at the halfway mark. This is another banner year."

The rare and important two-page (front and back) manuscript, written by Newton circa 1715-1725, was believed to relate to Newton's *De Mundi Systemate* (or Book III of the *Principia*). It was a set of mathematical notes containing several types of calculations and data points. One side was just calculations; the other side had a short note by Newton along with a calculation.

The text of the note reads, in part, "And that of Aldebaran and of Spica and that of Arcturus



Sir Isaac Newton's handwritten notes and calculations regarding the longitudinal positions of stars and comets, ideas later formalized in his iconic work, *Principia* (\$118,750).

counting these longitudes not from the middles of the signes but from the Vernal Equinox/ And so of the rest of the fixed stars." Newton was referencing the longitudinal position of Aldebaran and other stars, plus data points relating to his revolutionary study of comets.

Isaac Newton is widely recognized as one of the greatest mathematicians and most influential scientists of all time and was a key figure in the scientific revolution. In Principia, he formulated the laws of motion and universal gravitation that formed the dominant scientific viewpoint (until it was superseded by Einstein's theory of relativity). Einstein was also featured in the auction.

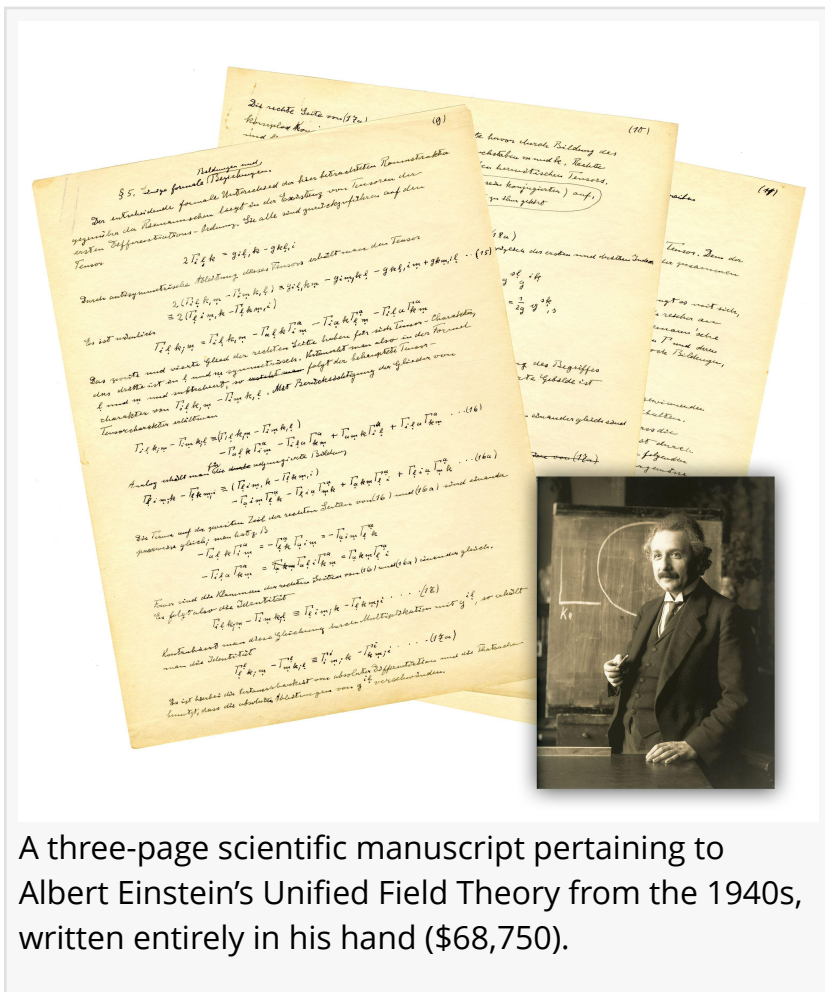
Items pertaining to Newton are exceedingly rare and highly sought after by collectors. The last time a Newton Principia-related autograph manuscript came on the market was October 1999 and, before that, 1991 and 1979. Newton was a notorious hoarder of paper and of his own manuscripts; the preservation of this manuscript note was unusual even for him.

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The items relating to [Albert Einstein](#) included a three-page scientific manuscript pertaining to his Unified Field Theory from the 1940s (“I want to try to show that a truly natural choice for field equations exists”) (\$68,750); and a black and white photo signed by Einstein, taken in 1955 by photographer Yousuf Karsh, who said the image reveals the “brief moment when all there is in a man's mind and soul and spirit are reflected through his



A three-page scientific manuscript pertaining to Albert Einstein's Unified Field Theory from the 1940s, written entirely in his hand (\$68,750).

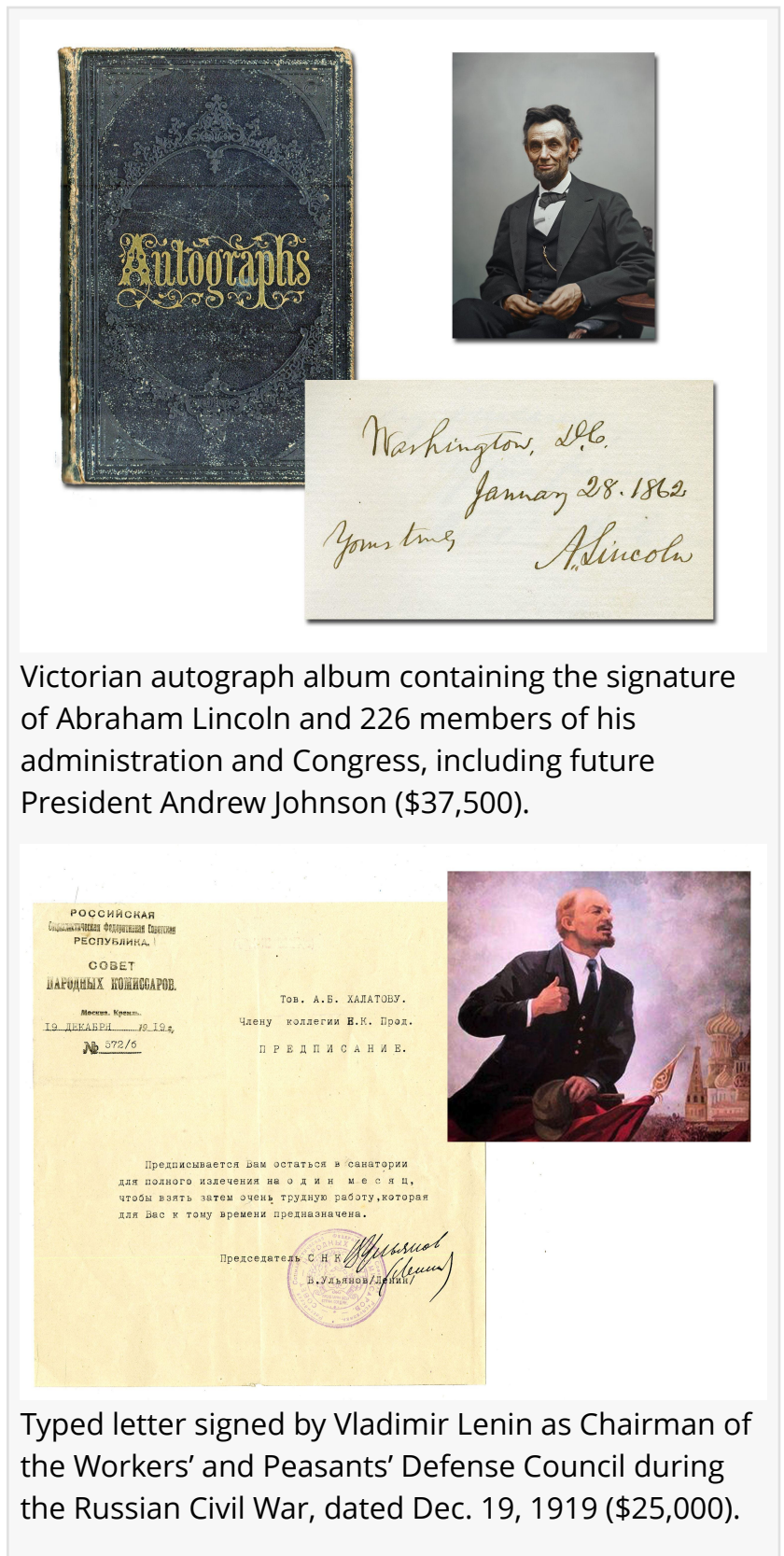
eyes, his hands, his attitude”  
(\$34,375).

A Victorian autograph album compiled by Pennsylvania Congressman William M. Davis that contained 226 signatures of Lincoln administration officials as well as members of the 37th U.S. Congress, including President [Abraham Lincoln](#) himself and seven of his eight cabinet members (Hamlin, Seward, Chase, Bates, Welles, Cameron and Smith), and the autographs of about 217 statesmen, including Lincoln’s eventual successor, Andrew Johnson, hammered for \$37,500.

A typed letter signed by Vladimir Lenin as Chairman of the Workers’ and Peasants’ Defense Council during the Russian Civil War was addressed to a future victim of Stalinist Purges, the People’s Commissariat Artemic B. Khalatov. The letter, dated Dec. 19, 1919, was in Russian and typed in the Cyrillic alphabet. Lenin wished Khalatov a speedy recovery and a swift return to work. Ironically, Lenin’s successor, Josef Stalin, later ordered Khalatov’s execution (\$25,000).

A one-page, partly printed ship’s paper dated Nov. 25, 1794 boldly signed by George Washington as president, issued to “James Humphrey master or commander of the Sloop called Hiram”, printed in three languages, brought \$15,000. Also, a rare autograph letter signed by Woodrow Wilson as president on White House stationery, dated May 19, 1913, addressed to author and editor James Grant Wilson regarding the dedication of a U.S.S. Maine monument, fetched \$13,750.

An Act of Congress signed in type by George Washington as President and John Adams as Vice



Victorian autograph album containing the signature of Abraham Lincoln and 226 members of his administration and Congress, including future President Andrew Johnson (\$37,500).

Typed letter signed by Vladimir Lenin as Chairman of the Workers’ and Peasants’ Defense Council during the Russian Civil War, dated Dec. 19, 1919 (\$25,000).

President on May 8, 1794, permanently establishing the U.S. Postal Service and making robbing the mails a crime punishable by death, rose to \$12,500. Also, a one-page autograph letter signed by the prominent British Methodist preacher John Wesley (1703-1791), written at Derby, England on July 12, 1788 with content regarding a children's school, knocked down for \$5,938.

A two-page letter typed and signed by author J.D. Salinger (as "Jerry"), dated May 5, 1972, in which he offers his thoughts on a dating interest of a friend and aspiring writer, Eileen Paddison, including the original "Air Mail" envelope, reached \$8,125. Also, Beat writer Jack Kerouac's personal advance copy of The Twelfth Anniversary Playboy Reader (1965), gifted to Kerouac (as a contributor) by Hugh Hefner and accompanied by a typed letter signed by Hefner, hit \$8,125.

An 8 inch by 10 inch photograph signed by Civil Rights icon Rosa Parks, showing Parks getting fingerprinted after her arrest in 1955 for not relinquishing her seat to a white person, signed in felt-tip pen on her sleeve, finished at \$5,000; while three items related to the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and its first president, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., including a letter in which King questions the wisdom of the "Black Power" slogan, sold for \$4,375.

An actual piece of fabric from the Wright Flyer, the first airplane that made its debut flight at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina on Dec. 17, 1903, famously giving wings to mankind, 1 ¼ inch square in a CAG case, flew away for \$6,875. Also, a map of Israel hand-drawn and signed by former Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, drawn during the time of the 1993 Oslo Accords and providing detail to both the West Bank and Gaza Strip, 5 ½ inches by 9 inches, hit \$4,688.

Future online auctions for University Archives will feature presidential items (from Washington to Trump), literary giants (Kerouac, Shelley, Proust and others); space and aviation (U.S., the Soviet Union, etc.) and other categories. Visit [www.UniversityArchives.com](http://www.UniversityArchives.com) for more details.

University Archives has become world-renowned as a go-to source for rare items of this kind. It is actively seeking quality material for future auctions, presenting a rare opportunity for sellers. Anyone who has a single item or a collection that may be a fit for a future University Archives auction may call John Reznikoff at 203-454-0111, or email him at [john@universityarchives.com](mailto:john@universityarchives.com).



One-page, partly printed ship's paper dated Nov. 25, 1794, signed by George Washington as president, issued to "James Humphrey master or commander of the Sloop Hiram" (15,000).

University Archives was founded in 1979, as a division of University Stamp Company, by John Reznikoff, who started collecting stamps and coins in 1968, while in the third grade. Industry-wide, Reznikoff is considered the leading authenticity expert for manuscripts and documents. He consults with law enforcement, dealers, auction houses and both major authentication companies.

University Archives' new offices are located at 88 Danbury Road, Suite 2A in Wilton, Conn. For more information about University Archives please visit [www.universityarchives.com](http://www.universityarchives.com).

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