

Extraordinary Thomas Jefferson Letter Comes to Auction

On June 27, 2024, Siegel Auctions will offer an extraordinary autographed letter from Thomas Jefferson to Tench Coxe, written at Monticello in June 1795.

NEW YORK, NY, UNITED STATES, June 10, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- On June 27, 2024, [Siegel Auctions](#)

will hold their annual Rarities of the World auction of stamps and historical items. One of the sale highlights is an extraordinary autograph letter from Thomas Jefferson to Tench Coxe, written at Monticello in June 1795, shortly after the French Revolution and Reign of Terror.



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Scott Trepel, President of Siegel Auctions

The letter discusses important global issues of the day and reveals Jefferson's profound passion for liberty and democracy. In it, Jefferson eloquently writes:

"This ball of liberty, I believe most piously, is now so well in

motion that it will roll round the globe. At least the enlightened part of it, for light & liberty go together... What a tremendous obstacle to the future attempts at liberty will be the atrocities of Robespierre!"

A press copy is in the Library of Congress and was displayed in the exhibit of April 24, 2004, "A Revolutionary World-Thomas Jefferson". However, the original has always been held in private collections. The letter is estimated to sell for \$100,000 to \$150,000.

Scott Trepel, president of Siegel Auctions, commented on the significance of this letter:

"At the time he wrote this letter, Jefferson was home in Monticello, working to restore his plantation and manufacturing nails. He would be elected vice-president 18 months later. Still very much informed about world events and involved in American politics, Jefferson maintained his voice for liberty and democratic government. Remarkably, he refers to the 'ball of liberty' he and the other Founding Fathers set in motion in breaking from Great Britain's colonial rule. An extraordinary man and an extraordinary letter."

Jefferson's letter is written completely in his own hand and signed. It is datelined "Monticello June 1, 1795".

The most remarkable passage is transcribed as follows:

"It proves there is a god in heaven, and that he will not slumber without end on the iniquities of tyrants, or would-be tyrants, as their Stadtholder. This ball of liberty, I believe most piously, is now so well in motion that it will roll round the globe. At least the enlightened part of it, for light & liberty go together. It is our glory that we first put it into motion, & our happiness that being foremost we had no bad examples to follow."

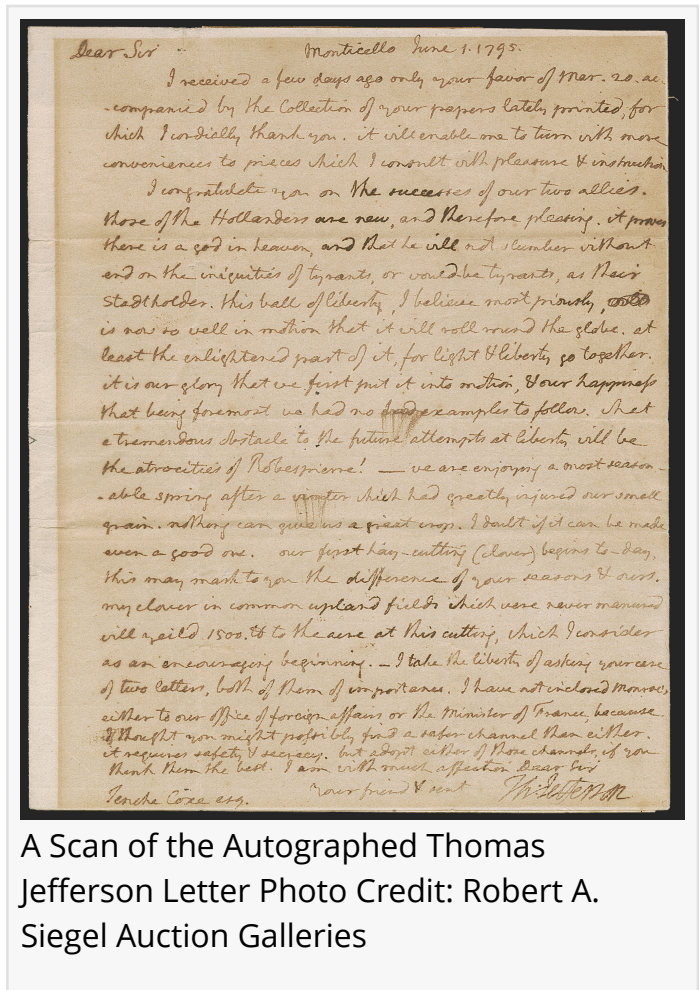
To fully appreciate the significance of this letter we must first understand the historical context. In 1795, the revolution in France spilled over into neighboring Holland. The Dutch Republic, facing internal unrest and external pressure from revolutionary France, underwent a series of dramatic transformations. On January 19, 1795, the Dutch Republic was replaced by the Batavian Republic, and they adopted a new constitution inspired by revolutionary France.

Jefferson, who has served in France with Benjamin Franklin and John Adams as Ministers Plenipotentiary to represent American interests, was a supporter of the French Revolution and its impact on spreading democracy across the globe. Surprisingly, he even spoke out in support of the Robespierre and the Reign of Terror when it first began. This led to a rift between the Federalists, who were horrified by the revolutionaries' violence, and Jefferson and some of his colleagues in the nascent Democratic-Republican party.

By 1794, however, Jefferson's opinion on the Reign of Terror had changed. Jefferson's letter to Coxe reaffirms his stance in support of revolution, free from tyranny and looks to the new Batavian Republic as a beacon of hope.

Siegel Auctions has held its annual Rarities of the World Auction since 1964. The Jefferson letter will be in good company alongside other treasures, including two examples of the famous Inverted Jenny postage stamp.

Alyssa Baumgardner



A Scan of the Autographed Thomas Jefferson Letter Photo Credit: Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries

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