

An Unassuming Blue Book Reveals an Historic Manuscript Worth Millions

NY, UNITED STATES, January 15, 2025

[/EINPresswire.com/](https://www.einpresswire.com/) -- Four days after the Presidential inauguration, one of the most important documents responsible for United States freedom will be auctioned at [Christie's Auction House](https://www.christies.com/). Discovered by a collector who purchased an incomplete set of 18th-century Laws of New York at a library sale, the plain book, worth approximately \$100 and rebound in unattractive blue Buckram fabric from the 1950s, was unremarkable at first glance. Unbeknownst to the buyer at the time of purchase, the volume later turned out to contain the actual handwritten manuscript of the Declaration of Independence penned by Samuel Jones. Jones is credited with securing New York's ratification of the United States Constitution by breaking the impasse over the inclusion of a bill of rights.



The manuscript, with numerous marginal notations in Jones' hand, was likely brought to the Constitutional Convention in Poughkeepsie, New York by Jones. The volume, bound previously and then rebound about 70 years ago, indicates 'Printed by John Holt, Printer to the State, 1782.' The watermarks of the paper date to 1787 and correspond with the time of the New York Constitutional Convention. Jones penned the Declaration as it appears within the text of what stands as the earliest complete manuscript of the 1777 New York State Constitution—the only state constitution to quote the Declaration's text in full. The detailed authentication process was conducted by Peter Klarnet at Christie's with additional analysis by John P. Kaminski, a renowned Constitutional scholar and director of the Study of the American Constitution at the University of Wisconsin.

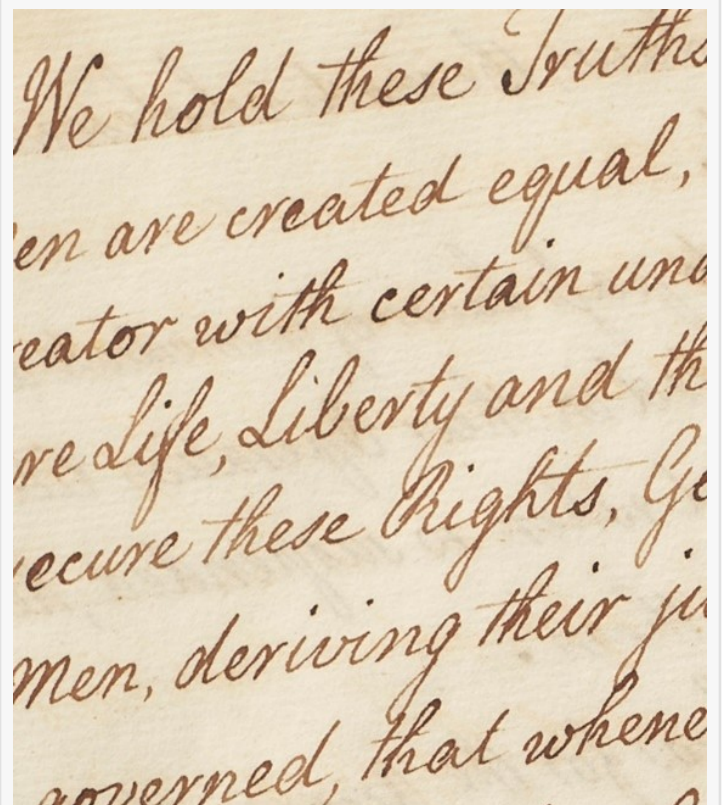
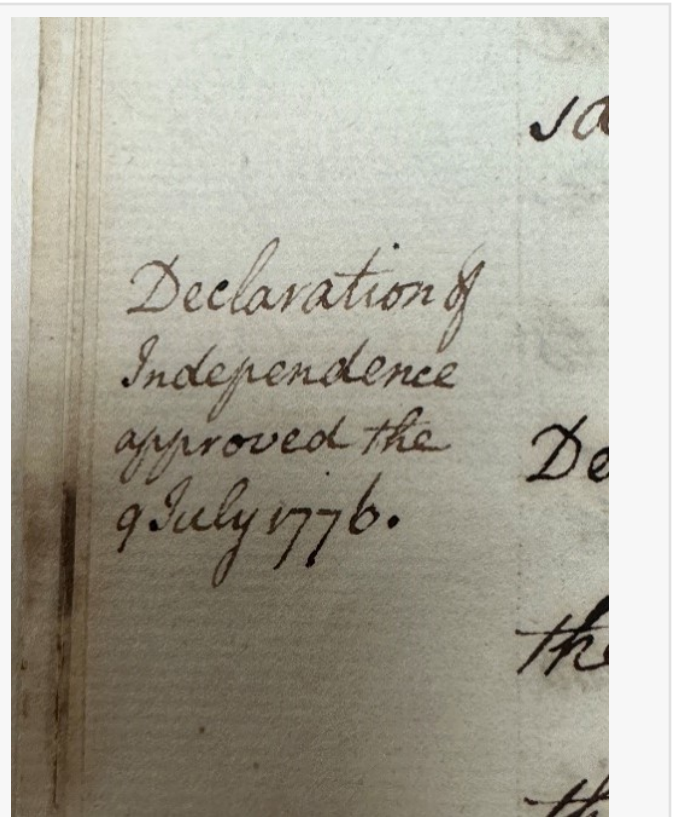
At the New York convention in Poughkeepsie where they were considering ratifying the Constitution, Jones broke the impasse about whether a bill of rights should be added. It was Jones who proposed removing the words "on condition that" a listing of rights would be added and proposed to insert the words "in full confidence that" a listing of rights would be added;

Jones won that battle by two votes, which assured both the success of the Constitution as well as the later addition of the Bill of Rights.

"This document played a key role in shaping the nation's founding principles and is the only privately held 18th-century manuscript of the Declaration of Independence according to the census maintained by Harvard University's Declaration Resource Project. It is a unique artifact tied directly to the establishment of the Bill of Rights and the U.S. Constitution, and this auction marks the first time a manuscript of the Declaration by such a significant figure has ever been available. Its historical importance and scarcity make it a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for collectors and institutions alike," states Peter Klarnet. It is expected to sell for \$2,000,000 - \$3,000,000.

The Declaration of Independence holds a unique place in the New York Constitution, serving as a preamble to the 1777 document. While some other state constitutions mention the enactment of the Declaration of Independence in their preambles, New York boldly enshrined the entire document in text, linking its new government directly to the ideals of independence and natural rights. The discovery of this manuscript emphasizes the Declaration's role not only as the foundational document establishing a new nation but also as the standard against which all governments "deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed" would be measured.

The "Jones Declaration of Independence" will be auctioned at Christie's New York, 20 Rockefeller Plaza in New York, on January 24th as the pinnacle of the [Important Americana](#) auction, the annual sale of works of art, furniture, silver, folk art, Chinese Export works, and documents that trace American history.



About Christie's

Founded in 1766, Christie's is a world-leading art and luxury business with a physical presence in 46 countries throughout the Americas, Europe, Middle East, and Asia Pacific, and flagship international sales hubs in New York, London, Hong Kong, Paris and Geneva. Renowned and trusted for our expert live and online-only auctions, as well as bespoke Private Sales, Christie's unparalleled network of specialists offers our clients a full portfolio of global services, including art appraisal, art financing, international real estate and education.

Christie's auctions span more than 80 art and luxury categories, at price points ranging from \$500 to over \$100 million. Christie's has sold 7 of the 10 most important single-owner collections in history, achieved the world record price for an artwork at auction, launched the first fully on-chain auction platform dedicated to exceptional NFT art and manages an investment fund to support innovative startups in the art market. Christie's is also committed to advancing responsible culture throughout its business and communities worldwide. To [learn more](#), browse, bid, discover, and join us for the best of art and luxury at christies.com or by downloading Christie's apps.

Risa B. Hoag

GMGPR

+1 845-627-3000

risa@gmgpr.com

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/777223191>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2025 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.