

The Potomack Company

AUCTIONS ~ APPRAISALS ~ ESTATE SALES

WASHINGTON D.C. HISTORY: PAST & PRESENT ON POTOMACK COMPANY'S AUCTION BLOCK

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: September 14, 2011
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Washington D.C. history from past to present is featured at The Potomack Company's September 24th and 25th Catalogue Sale with auction items reflecting life in the nation's capital from the original U.S. Capitol to President Barack Obama's official Washington guest quarters, Blair House.

ARCHITECTURAL RELICS FROM THE ORIGINAL U.S. CAPITOL

The important architectural relics from the Capitol building are being brought to auction by descendants of Capitol architect Benjamin Latrobe. Potomack's auction features architectural remnants from sections of the United States Capitol built during the years 1793 to 1828 based on the original design by Latrobe and adapted and installed under architect Charles Bulfinch, including Aquia Creek Corinthian column capital fragments from the building's original columns of 1828. An assemblage of intact columns that once stood alongside the fragments is now permanently installed at Washington's National Arboretum. Details carved into the stones such as acanthus leaves and various paint layers applied while the columns were situated at the Capitol are still visible.

Two Aquia sandstone blocks in the sale from the 1828 Capitol's East Wing Portico steps bearing the numbers and letters "S41" and "AS35" would have witnessed the inaugurations of most American



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presidents from Andrew Jackson to Franklin Pierce. Other remnants from the Capitol in the sale are two bookend-size marble step pieces from the original grand stairway of the Capitol's Senate Wing.

BLAIR HOUSE, THE PRESIDENT'S GUEST QUARTERS

Present day historical items in Potomack's sale include designer soft furnishings from Washington, D.C.'s Blair House, the President's official Guest House located across the street from the White House.



Built in 1824 as a private home in the heart of the nation's capital and in service since 1942 as host to foreign dignitaries visiting American presidents on official business, the house has hosted Margaret Thatcher, Gen. Charles de Gaulle and Queen Elizabeth II.

As part of a continuing refurbishment of the historic Blair House mansion, the collection of draperies and bed hangings designed by internationally renowned interior decorators Mario Buatta and Mark Hampton during the 1980s are being sold with proceeds to benefit the Blair House Restoration Fund, a non-partisan nonprofit group that supports enhancement and preservation of the

décor, gardens and fine arts collection of Blair House.

Guests to Blair House enjoyed the nation's hospitality in rooms decorated, among others, with Brunschwig & Fils "Grand Genois Peanneau" fabric and walked on the coordinating custom Stark rug. Several other rooms include a Lee Jofa "Trentham Hall" chintz bedroom bed and drapery suite along with Brunschwig & Fils designer fabric hangings.

The "Ludlow Print" fabric bedroom features a valance with wooden bells painted by the late noted muralist Robert Jackson, whose work is featured at the American wing of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

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HISTORIC WASHINGTONIANA

U.S. Ambassador to France
Pamela Harriman is another notable Washingtonian represented in Potomack's sale with a 19th century oil painting, *View of Mount Vernon*, from her estate. Also of note is a Progressive party battle flag from Teddy Roosevelt's 1912 presidential campaign being sold by the Anna Safley Houston Museum of Decorative Arts along with antique photographs of Abraham and Mary Todd Lincoln and a carte-de-visite of Andrew Jackson.



Viewing hours in the gallery for the September 24-25 auction are September 17 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., September 18 from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. and September 19-23 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. The Potomack Company is located at 526 N. Fayette Street in Old Town Alexandria. For further information please call 703-684-4550 or visit www.potomackcompany.com.