

Melbourne 27 September 2018

John Keats 03 9508 9900 | 0412 132 520
John.Keats@sothebysaustralia.com.au

Historic Silver Presented to One of Melbourne's Founding Fathers and Held in the Same Family for 5 Generations Emerges for Auction at Sotheby's Australia

AUCTION IN MELBOURNE, 24 OCTOBER 2018

Since first presented to Captain William Lonsdale in 1842 by the people of Melbourne in recognition of his services to the founding colony, the Lonsdale Silver Presentation, comprising eight inscribed sterling silver articles, has remained in his descendants' care for 176 years.

The collection was nearly lost during the Second World War, as the family fled Singapore with the Japanese occupation. All of the family valuables were stripped from the Singaporean bank vault – only the silver miraculously remained.



A historically important inscribed and crested Victorian sterling silver soup tureen from the Lonsdale Silver Presentation, William K. Reid, London, circa 1841-1842. Estimate \$200,000-300,000.

1 | Sotheby's Australia is a trade mark used under licence from Sotheby's. Second East Auction Holdings Pty Ltd is independent of the Sotheby's Group. The Sotheby's Group is not responsible for the acts or omissions of Second East Auction Holdings Pty Ltd

One hundred and seventy six years after it was first presented, the historically significant Lonsdale Silver Presentation will be auctioned by Sotheby's Australia on 24 October 2018 with a combined estimate of \$625,000-1,025,000. Consigned by a fifth generation descendent of Captain William Lonsdale, the collection is a rare connection with Melbourne's colonial foundation and its early citizens, and acknowledges the esteem that the public felt for one of its leading figures in its establishment as a colony separate from New South Wales.

William Lonsdale arrived in Australia as a lieutenant in Sydney in 1831 and rose to serve as an administrator in the colony of Port Phillip until 1853. He is best known for his role supervising the founding of the new settlement of Port Phillip between 1836-1839, serving as the first police magistrate and was responsible for general superintendence of the settlement, including conciliation with the Aboriginal population. In 1851, Lonsdale was appointed first colonial secretary of the colony of Victoria. Important landmarks acknowledge William Lonsdale's contribution to the colony of Victoria with Lonsdale Street, Melbourne and Point Lonsdale named after him, and Mount Martha named after his wife.

Following a public subscription in 1839, which raised £350 by 'certain inhabitants' of the Town and District of Melbourne, Port Phillip, William Lonsdale was publically acknowledged in January 1840 for his public and private character in the discharge of his duties in the early settlement of Melbourne. Through the testimonial address there was a promise to 'procure from England some more enduring testimonial of our regard' with the intention to acquire a chest of silver (testimonial letter from the committee appointed to present an address to William Lonsdale, 28 January 1840). Acquired in London from 1841, the Lonsdale Silver Presentation was formally presented to William Lonsdale in March 1842. The majority of the silver was made in London in 1840 and 1841, with some pieces dated earlier such as the four entrée dishes from the George IV period, circa 1828. The candelabra, made by Robinson, Edkins and Aston of Birmingham, is dated from circa 1830-1837 and is one of only two pieces in the collection manufactured outside of London.



ARTIST UNKNOWN 19th CENTURY, *Captain William Lonsdale*. Courtesy of Cecilia Newman



A historically important inscribed and crested William IV sterling silver three branch candelabra epergne from the Lonsdale Silver Presentation, Robinson, Edkins & Aston, Birmingham, circa 1830-1837. Estimate \$150,000-250,000.

This collection of silver has travelled the world with William Lonsdale and his descendants. It returned to England with Lonsdale to Rushington Manor, in southern England in 1854 when he retired from service in the Australian Colonies. Passing through the generations, the collection resided in Singapore prior to World War II. In the great haste to depart before the Japanese invasion the vendor's grandmother deposited her valuables, including the silver, in a bank vault. After the war, the grandmother returned to Singapore and found that her jewellery and valuables had been lost, however, the silver miraculously remained. From Singapore the silver was returned to England, and subsequently back to Australia for exhibition in Melbourne and Bendigo in the late 1980s.

Geoffrey Smith, Chairman of Sotheby's Australia commented: 'Sotheby's Australia is honoured to be entrusted with the most historic sale of this exceptionally important collection of the Lonsdale Silver Presentation. Held in the family collection since its presentation in acknowledgment of William Lonsdale's contribution to the early settlement and foundation of Melbourne and the colony of Port Phillip, its journey is in itself a story a survival and endurance, and we are fortunate that we still have this important link to our early settlement history. This collection has survived a world war and has now returned to Melbourne from where it was first gifted.'

Cecilia Newman, great-great-granddaughter of Captain William Lonsdale commented: 'The Lonsdale Silver Presentation is unique and has a fascinating story of its own. The collection, having travelled the world with the Lonsdale family, came back to Australia in the late 1980s. I am still surprised that the collection still exists given its time lost in Singapore during World War II. My father served as an officer in The Royal Air Force and I recall that for over two decades the Lonsdale Silver Presentation was utilised by my parents on their many postings overseas. The candelabra in particular featured as a centrepiece at many important military and diplomatic functions.'

AT A GLANCE

The Lonsdale Silver Presentation

Overall estimate \$625,000-1,025,000 | 8 lots

Treasures: Important Asian, Australian and European Arts & Design

Auction in Melbourne, 24 October 2018, 6 pm

14-16 Collins Street, Melbourne

Exhibition in Sydney, 11-14 October 2018, 10 am to 5 pm, 30 Queen Street, Woollahra

Exhibition in Melbourne, 18-24 October 2018, 10 am to 5 pm, 14-16 Collins Street, Melbourne

For More News on Sotheby's Australia

VISIT sothebysaustralia.com.au/articles/press

FOLLOW twitter.com/sothebysAUST

JOIN facebook.com/sothebysaustralia

**Estimates do not include buyer's premium and prices achieved include the hammer price plus buyer's premium.*

Images are available upon request

All catalogues are available online at sothebysaustralia.com.au

Copyright in the image(s) supplied shall remain vested in Sotheby's Australia. Please note that image(s) may depict subject matter which is itself protected by separate copyright. Sotheby's Australia makes no representations as to whether the underlying subject matter is subject to its own copyright, or as to who might hold such copyright. It is the borrower's responsibility to obtain any relevant permissions from the holder(s) of any applicable copyright and Sotheby's Australia supplies the image(s) expressly subject to this responsibility. Note that the image(s) provided is/are for a one-time use only and no permission is granted to alter the image(s) in any way.