



The Alexander Hamilton Collection of John E. Herzog (1716)

October 25, 2021 EST, Philadelphia

Viewing:

Exhibition is open by appointment at our [1600 West Girard Avenue](#) location October 8-24. To make an appointment, please contact Colin Foley at cfoley@freemansauction.com.

Lot 3

Estimate: \$6000 - \$9000 (plus Buyer's Premium)

[Hamilton, Alexander] [United States Mint] An Ordinance for the Establishment of the Mint of the United States of America; and for Regulating the Value and Alloy of Coin

Rare printed ordinance for the establishment of a United States Mint

(New York, 1786). Bifolium sheet, 12 3/4 x 7 1/2 in. (324 x 190). Printed broadside. Creasing from original folds; lightly toned. A fine example. Evans 20074; Sabin 57509; Streeter Sale 1042

Debates surrounding the establishment of a central mint can be traced back to 1777 when Congress advised the Treasury Board to look into the matter. At the time no action was taken, and with the passage of the Articles of Confederation in 1781, states were granted the authority to strike their own coin. By 1782, with Robert Morris acting as Superintendent of Finance, charged with the goal of rescuing the U.S.'s finances, he requested from Congress the authority to establish a mint. He was likely inspired by a letter the previous spring from Alexander Hamilton, who painstakingly detailed his vision of establishing public credit and a national bank. The establishment of a mint was also on Hamilton's agenda as he wrote in article 10 of his letter, "...the power of coining to the amount of half its stock, the quantity of alloy &c. being determined by Congress..." By the fall of 1786 the Board of Treasury submitted the above Ordinance to the Continental Congress, and it was immediately authorized. The ordinance provides for a Master Coiner, fixes the value of silver and gold, and outlines other provisions for the operation of the mint. It would take until 1792, under the guidance of Hamilton as the first Secretary of the Treasury, before Congress passed the *Coinage Act*, establishing the mint as well as the U.S. dollar. The first Mint was founded in Philadelphia, then the nation's capital, in 1792, and began operations in 1793 under the directorship of renowned scientist David Rittenhouse. It was the first building of the Republic erected under the Constitution.

As a previous cataloguer writes about the location of the printing of this document, "Evans originally ascribed the place of publication to New York, though NAIP cites Ford's bibliographic notes on the issues of the Continental Congress in ascribing it to John Dunlap's press in Philadelphia." The Congress of Confederation moved to New York City in 1785 when it became the capital. *Rare*.