

Books and Manuscripts (1714)

September 23, 2021 EDT

Viewing:

Exhibition is open by appointment at our 1600 West Girard Avenue location September 20-22. To make an appointment, please contact Colin Foley at cfoley@freemansauction.com.

Lot 17

Estimate: \$800 - \$1200 (plus Buyer's Premium)

[Americana] [Mason Dixon Line] The London Chronicle: or, Universal Evening Post

The Mason-Dixon Line in born!

"Lord Baltimore, Proprietary of Maryland, and Messrs. Penn, Proprietaries of Pennsylvania, have appointed Mr. Mason and Mr. Dickson (sic), two eminent mathematicians, to settle the bounds of their respective settlements in those colonies, and put a final issue to a dispute which has subsisted on that head ever since 1693."

London: J. Wilkie, August 2-4, 1763. Vol. XIV, No. 1031. Folio, 11 1/2 x 8 1/2 in. (292 x 216 mm). Limp printed self-wrappers; spine worn; starting; light dampstaining along top edge. A bright, well preserved example.

The English newspaper is one of the earliest--perhaps the first--with reference in print to the famous line demarcating Maryland, Pennsylvania, and surrounding states. Printed on the fifth page, the arrival of English mathematicians Charles Mason and Jeremiah Dixon is announced to begin their celebrated survey. Conducted between 1763 and 1767, their survey was commissioned by the Penn family of Pennsylvania, and Calvert family of Maryland, to help settle a land dispute between the two colonies that had persisted for over 80 years. At the time, the survey was a groundbreaking technical achievement, and it settled the dispute peacefully. 50 years later with the Missouri Compromise of 1820, the Mason-Dixon Line would come to separate the slave-holding South from the free North. The line has since come to culturally signify the border between the Northern and Southern United States.

