



## Books and Manuscripts (1742)

September 21, 2022 EST, Freeman's

### Viewing:

The exhibition will be on view by appointment at our [1600 West Girard Avenue](#) location from September 16 to September 20 by appointment only.

To make an appointment, please contact Adam Dias at [adias@freemansauction.com](mailto:adias@freemansauction.com)

## Lot 11

**Estimate:** \$20000 - \$30000 (plus Buyer's Premium)

**[Americana] (Eliot, John) New Englands First Fruits; in Respect, First of the (Conversion of some, Conviction of divers, Preparation of sundry) of the Indians...**

***Extremely rare first edition on early colonial New England including the first printed account of Harvard University***

London: Printed by R.O. and G.D. for Henry Overton, 1643. First edition. Small 4to. (ii), 26 pp.; lacking errata leaf and rear blank, as usual (very rarely are either present); some pages misnumbered. Presumed to be from the collection of renowned American bibliographer Henry Stevens. Full 19th-century polished tan calf, black morocco spine labels, stamped in gilt, rebacked, light wear to extremities; all edges gilt; gilt dentelles; marbled endpapers; by F. Bedford; faint red ownership ink stamp of Charles I. Sturgis along fore-edge of title-page, gutter of same repaired; edges trimmed close, just touching some text and catchwords; text slightly darkened and soiled; a few small repairs in corners; a few scattered annotations to text; in tan cloth case, by The Lakeside Press. Old Puttick and Simpson auction catalogue description of this title from the Henry Stevens library sale mounted to verso of front blank (Lot 1552); "1552" in MS. in pencil under binder's stamp, possibly indicating this copy is from that sale. Lot includes correspondence between Sturgis and the Harvard College Library, as well as the Library of Congress, concerning this copy, ca. 1936-39. Sabin 52758; Church 458; Indian Bibliography 490, see note; ESTC R1260; Henry Stevens, *Historical Nuggets: Bibliotheca Americana or a Descriptive Account of My Collection of Rare Books Relating to America* #1972

It is our belief that this copy is from the collection of American bibliographer Henry Stevens (1819-86). In the 1861 Puttick and Simpson auction catalogue for the sale of Stevens's books, they state the following: "The Books described in this Catalogue were collected, several years since, by Mr. Henry Stevens, Literary Agent in London of the Smithsonian Institution, as material to be used in the completion of his yet unfinished Work upon American Bibliography. Having made such use of the Books as was necessary for this purpose, he described them, with collations, and prices for sale affixed, in a Catalogue, printed about four years ago, entitled *American Nuggets*." (p. iii). Mounted to the verso of the front blank of this copy is the lot description of Stevens's copy from that sale (1552). Additionally, "1552" is written in pencil under the binder's stamp on the front free endpaper. In Stevens's *Historical Nuggets* (1862), he describes his own copy of this title which one assumes is also the copy described by Puttick and Simpson, and is in turn, this very copy. His brief

description of the binding matches both copies ("calf extra, by Bedford") and the price he gives ("2l. 2s.") is very faintly written in MS. on the title-page of this copy.

An extremely rare first edition of the first "Eliot Tract," often attributed to Puritan missionary John Eliot (1604-90). The first of 11 pamphlets published between 1643-71, it describes early colonial life in New England, and Puritan efforts to convert the indigenous tribes in the region to Christianity. The first settlement in New England was established only 20 years before this publication, but missionary work did not begin until a few years later. This pamphlet was created by settlers in response to critics in England who questioned their evangelization efforts.

This tract, one of the rarest of the 11, is also notable for featuring the first printed account of Harvard College, founded only seven years prior to this publication: "After God had carried us safe to *New-England*, and wee had builded our houses, provided necessaries for our liveli-hood, rear'd convenient places for Gods worship, and settled the Civill Government: One of the next things we longed for and looked after was to advance *Learning* and perpetuate it to Posterity; dreading to leave an illiterate Ministry to the Churches...it pleased God to stir up the heart of one Mr. *Harvard* (a godly Gentleman, and a lover of Learning, there living amongst us) to give the one halfe of his Estate...towards the erecting of a Colledge, and all his Library...the Colledge was, by common consent, appointed to be at *Cambridge*...and is called...Harvard Colledge." (p. 12).

This is the first copy to be offered at auction in over 20 years.