



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

Lot 9

Estimate: \$10000 - \$15000 (plus Buyer's Premium)

[Americana] [Declaration of Independence] (Force, Peter) In Congress, July 4, 1776. The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America

Wash(ingto)n., (D.C.): W. J. Stone SC., (ca. 1833). Printed by William J. Stone from his original 1823 copperplate, for inclusion in Peter Force's monumental history of the United States, *American Archives: A Documentary History of the United States of America, Series V, Vol. I*. Engraved broadside, 29 3/4 x 25 1/4 in. (760 x 641 mm). Creasing from original folds; trimmed along right edge (from side mounted in book), small restoration at top of same; two faint tidemarks at bottom; scattered reinforcements to folds on verso; presumed printers error at bottom in signature of Abraham Clark; some very light offsetting from when folded.

A fine and scarce copy of Peter Force's *American Archives* edition of the Declaration of Independence, one of an unknown number of copies printed.

In 1823, to commemorate the approaching 50th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, Secretary of State John Quincy Adams commissioned William J. Stone to create an exact copy of the original engrossed document. Stone spent three years copying the original document to a copperplate, carefully replicating Congressional Secretary Timothy Matlack's handwriting, as well as the signatures of the 56 Continental Congress delegates. His original copperplate was then left in the care of the State Department.

About a decade later, on March 2, 1833, printer, archivist, and mayor of Washington, D.C., Peter Force (1790-1868), was commissioned by Congress to create a history of the United States, subsequently titled, *American Archives: A Documentary History of the United States of America*. Force planned to publish a massive 20-volume anthology spanning America's colonial origins to the founding of the Federal government after the ratification of the Constitution. Using important Revolutionary-era documents, including correspondence and broadsides--many of which Force scoured the country collecting--Congress agreed to fund 1,500 sets. Force arranged with the State Department to have Stone print copies of the Declaration from his original copperplate. Only one change was made to Stone's copperplate: his original imprint along the top edge was burnished away and replaced with "W.J. STONE SC. WASHn.", below the signatures of the Georgia delegates at bottom left. By the 1850s, due to mounting costs and production delays, Force's *American Archives* had only reached nine published volumes, and not long after Congress cancelled the project.