



Original Print of 'Liberty' is Acquired

Monticello has acquired a much sought-after original print of a 1796 engraving by Edward Savage, *Liberty in the Form of the Goddess of Youth Giving Support to the Bald Eagle*.

"We are thrilled to add Edward Savage's *Liberty* to Monticello's permanent collection," said Susan R. Stein, Monticello's vice president for museum programs and curator. "This print, an important image at Monticello, represents the triumph of liberty and America."

After conservation and re-framing, the print will be hung in the Parlor, where Jefferson displayed the copy he owned. Jefferson left no record of how he acquired his print, and its present location is unknown.

Starting around 1760, the Goddess of Liberty began to be linked to the American cause and

later to the new nation. In this particular engraving, she wears a white dress and a flower garland, both symbols of youth and purity, as she crushes various symbols of monarchy, such as a key, the medal and garter of a royal order, and a broken scepter. Also shown are an eagle and an American flag topped with a liberty cap visible through war clouds.

The print was purchased in September 2004 from The Old Print Shop in New York City, which specializes in American art, maps, photographs, and books. Its clients include various international collectors, including major museums.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE.

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-  MONTICELLO CABINET 2004
-  MONTICELLO COOKBOOK PUBLISHED
-  NEWS & NOTES
-  PAPERS OF THOMAS JEFFERSON
-  PASSAGEWAY RESTORATION
-  PRESIDENT'S LETTER
-  PRIVY ROOF REPLACED
-  SATURDAYS IN THE GARDEN

Monticello



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CONTINUED, PAGE **TWO**

Liberty is the second Savage work to be added to the collection in recent times. After a long search, the Curatorial Department in 2003 was able to locate and purchase a copy of Savage's 1796 engraving *David Rittenhouse*, after a portrait by Charles Willson Peale. The print portrays the prominent Philadelphia inventor and astronomer who preceded Jefferson as president of the American Philosophical Society.

Other prints remain on the list of objects that Monticello's curators are actively pursuing.

"Monticello is enlivened by the works of art and furnishings that Jefferson owned," Stein said. "We actively seek to acquire the images that Jefferson exhibited at Monticello so that today's visitors can experience Monticello as Jefferson knew it."

- KIM CURTIS

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