

PRESS RELEASE

FROM THE BRONZE AGE TO THE EARLY 20TH CENTURY

THOMAS DEL MAR LTD'S SALE COVERS CENTURIES OF HISTORY

Six ancient helmets and 10 suits of armour – all from Italy and Germany - a collection of a European Prince, an important collection of American Firearms plus a copper saucepan rescued from Sebastopol in 1855 are among the array of objects offered in Thomas Del Mar Ltd's auction of **Antique Arms, Armour and Militaria** at 25 Blythe Road, London W14 on **Wednesday, December 2, 2015**.

Thomas Del Mar Ltd – which was founded 10 years ago - holds two sales each year. The forthcoming sale in December comprises over 500 lots from the bronze age to the early 20th century, with pieces from ancient Greece, Persia, Europe's middle ages and renaissance, tribal African and Australia and the American civil war.



From an Important Private Collection, the **helmets** include an Italic bronze helmet dating from the 4th – 1st century B.C. which is estimated at £10,000-15,000, while a Greek bronze example from the 5th century B.C. is expected to fetch £8,000-12,000 and another Greek example from the 6th – 5th century B.C. is also estimated at £8,000-12,000.

The 10 **suits of armour** from Italy and Germany are being sold by order of the Trustees of the John Woodman Higgins Armory Collection to benefit its ongoing study and display at the Worcester Art Museum. Over the past three years, Thomas Del Mar has sold £2.5million of items on behalf of the Woodman Higgins Collection. With estimates up to £20,000 and dating from as early as the 15th century, examples include a composite North Italian cap-a-pie armour with etched decoration dating from the late 16th century which is estimated at £15,000-20,000 and a composite North Italian field armour with later etched decoration dating from mid-to late 16th century which is expected to fetch £12,000-18,000.





One of the more unusual items is a **Crimean copper saucepan**, taken at Sebastopol - inscribed '*taken from the ruins of Sebastopol, the day after the fall Sept. 9th 1855 by A Farquharson, cook of the S. S. Imperartix*' (Estimate: £150-200).

An important private collection of **American firearms** also includes swords that belonged to members of 29th New York State Volunteers Regiment (Astor rifles) and 139th regiment New York Volunteers. A .40 calibre sharps model 1874 'old reliable' Schuetzen rifle, circa 1877, probably made as a test piece or prototype is expected to fetch £6,000-9,000, while a Fine .400 Calibre Borchardt Patent Sharps Model 1878 Rifle, Sold to Hugo Borchardt, *Patentee of the System and Superintendent of the Sharps Rifle Company* is estimated at £3,000-5,000.

Firearms included the property of Wesley I Paul, former Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Royal Armouries such as a fine cased pair of 40 bore percussion rifled duelling pistols by J. Purdey, dating from 1834 is estimated at £15,000-20,000, while a cased pair of 40 bore percussion rifled duelling pistols by John Manton & Son, Dover Street, London, circa 1822 carries an estimate of £10,000-15,000. These are being sold with a transcript of a letter from leading expert David Back stating that these appear to have been made in 1825 and are the earliest recorded pair of pistols by John Manton to use copper caps.



Elsewhere a very rare 32 bore **Irish** hand rotated seven-shot revolving carbine by W. & J. Rigby, Dublin, circa 1838, which sold for £34.13.0 to S. Crothwaite in 1838 is estimated at £7,000-10,000

Several important **swords** include a Ceylonese silver-mounted shortsword presented to the Right Honorable Sir William Henry Gregory, K.C.M.G., 14th Governor of British Ceylon (1872-1877), from Mrs Alwis, circa 1872-90, which carries an estimate of £3,000-5,000 (*See bottom of the release for Biography*).

A Royal Highland dirk inscribed for King Peter II of Yugoslavia (1923-70) - the godson of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother - is expected to fetch £1,000-1,500.



A Brunswick State two-hand processional sword of the guard of Julius, Duke of Brunswick and Lüneburg in Wolfenbüttel (1528-89), dated 1573 is expected to fetch £7,000-9,000. Duke Julius of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel (1528-1589) inherited the title following the death of his two older brothers in battle. He was a keen supporter of the Reformation and introduced it into the Duchy of Wolfenbüttel.

NEXT SALE: June 2016

**For further details of the sale, please visit www.thomasdelmar.com
or call 0207 602 4805**

NOTES TO EDITORS:

BIOGRAPHIES

Sir William Henry Gregory (1816-1892) was the son of Robert Gregory of Coole Park, co. Galway, and Elizabeth O'Hara of Raheen. He was born on 13 July 1816 in Dublin and educated at Harrow School from 1831 under Charles Thomas Longley, who considered him the cleverest boy he ever taught. Gregory was head of the school before leaving for Oxford. At Harrow he began a lifelong friendship with Anthony Trollope. Gregory matriculated at Christ Church on 6 June 1835, but was less successful there, running second for the Craven scholarship in two successive years. Deeply disappointed by this failure, and increasingly distracted by an interest in horse-racing, he left Oxford without a degree. In January 1842 he stood at a by-election as the Conservative candidate for Dublin, and was returned against the whig-Liberal Viscount Morpeth. The election cost £9000, of which the chief item was a 'gratification for 1500 freemen at £3 a head'. Gregory was soon regarded as being among the promising young men of his day in the House of Commons. He was popular with all parties and attracted the attention and regard of men as different as Peel, Disraeli, and O'Connell. He was the author of the 'Gregory clause', which disentitled the possessor of more than a quarter of an acre of land, and his family, to relief. He declared in parliament on 29 March 1847 that the smallholding class was 'no longer an object of pity'. He also procured the insertion of provisions for assisting emigration. Gregory inherited his father's Galway estates in spring 1847, and soon acquired a reputation as a humane and improving landlord. In 1850 he was appointed high sheriff of Galway, and became active in local affairs. Gregory's already considerably encumbered estates were pushed further into debt by his famine expenditure. His financial embarrassments were compounded by his passion for the turf, where he made heavy losses in the early 1850s and in 1857 he was obliged to sell more than half his estate. After this financial breakdown Gregory finally quitted the turf, but he retained his interest in racing matters to the end of his life.

Gregory became best known in parliament for his promotion of state funding for the arts. In 1860 he chaired a House of Commons inquiry into the British Museum, and he subsequently had much to do with the arrangement and development of the South Kensington collections. He was an ardent supporter of the opening of public museums on Sundays and took a keen interest in popularizing the study of the arts. In 1867 he was appointed by Disraeli a trustee of the National Gallery, and he took a very strong interest in the enlargement of the national collection. Shortly before his death he presented the best of his private collection to the National Gallery.

Early in 1871 Gregory was sworn of the Irish privy council, and later that year he was appointed, governor of Ceylon. In January 1872 he sailed for that colony, in which he remained for over five years. In this position Gregory exhibited high administrative qualities, and his tenure of the governorship was one of considerable success, and popularity. He spent more money on transport and irrigation works than any other governor, doing much to stimulate the cultivation of coffee and tea, and to improve the harbours of the island. His efforts at social reform and attempts to end the commercial monoculture of coffee were more circumspect and of limited success. He also took a great interest in the culture and antiquities of Ceylon, and established a museum at Colombo. In 1875 he received the prince of Wales in Colombo and was knighted. Increasingly bored by administrative routine, irritated by the criticisms made of him by the plantation interest, and having clashed with the Conservative colonial secretary over the privileges of the Anglican church in the colony, Gregory decided to resign in 1876. After a visit to

Australia in January 1877, he returned to Ireland.

Thenceforward Gregory took no active part in public affairs, though his interest in them remained keen. As an Irish landlord he was deeply alarmed by the land war, and he vehemently criticized Gladstone's Land Act of 1881. In 1882 he had a sharp confrontation with his tenants over rent levels, and relations were subsequently strained on the Coole estate. He was strongly opposed to the home-rule movement, and in 1881 he printed privately a 'confidential letter', attacking what he took to be the separatist aims of Parnell and his followers. From 1886 Gregory considered himself a Liberal Unionist, ready to support coercion against agrarian agitation, but looking increasingly to tenant purchase as the solution to the land question.

Gregory had a strong interest in the Middle East; he visited Egypt and north Africa in 1855-6, and published an account of his travels privately in 1859. In 1882 he advocated the cause of Arabi Pasha, the Egyptian nationalist leader, in letters to The Times. Subsequently to his retirement from the Ceylon government he paid three visits to that island. He contributed to The Racing Life of Lord George Bentinck by John Kent and Francis Lawley (1892) and in 1889 he published an article on Daniel O'Connell in the Nineteenth Century.

Gregory was twice married: first, on 11 January 1872, to Elizabeth, daughter of Sir William Clay and widow of James Temple Bowdoin, a lady of considerable private fortune, who died in 1873; second, on 4 March 1880, to Isabella Augusta (1852-1932), youngest daughter of Dudley Perse of Roxborough, co. Galway. She survived him with one son, William Robert Gregory, and both published Gregory's posthumous autobiography and turned Coole Park into the centre of the Irish literary renaissance. After 1890 Gregory's health gradually failed, and he died at his London home, 3 St George's Place, on 6 March 1892. A reduction, taken from the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography.

Thomas Del Mar Ltd was founded in 2005 and has been holding sales biannually entitled "Thomas Del Mar Ltd in association with Sotheby's" since then. Thomas was formerly Head of Sotheby's Worldwide Department of Arms, Armour and Militaria and assisted Sotheby's with sales in London, New York, Denmark, Zurich, Billingshurst and Hanover. The sale of works of art from the Royal House of Hanover included arms and armour which sold for £4,764,004 (\$8,392,610) which continues to stand as a World Auction Record for an ancestral collection in this field. Thomas continues to work as a Consultant to Sotheby's on valuations and sales of major collections. Thomas Del Mar Ltd gratefully acknowledges the specialist contribution of Nicholas McCullough as cataloguer of the Langenburg armoury.

25 Blythe Road founded in 2007 by Arms and Armour specialist Thomas Del Mar, is a collective of highly experienced specialists many of whom who have worked at Sotheby's who organise auctions twice a year under their own names. The specialists will willingly sell good quality low value lots to open up the doors to first time collectors, starting at £50, going up to many tens of thousands. Curators, collectors and dealers from around the world buy from the various fields of expertise. The auctions include Photographs, Posters, British & Continental Pictures, Decorative Works of Art which includes Silver, Ceramics, Jewellery and Objects of Vertu. Also Antique Arms, Armour & Militaria, and Maritime and Scientific Models, Instruments and Works of Art. Each auction is preceded by viewing days at the 25 Blythe Road Gallery.

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