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The Letter Auction: JFK, Oswald, Ruby

The tragically linked names of John F. Kennedy, Lee Harvey Oswald and Jack Ruby figured prominently in a Manhattan autograph auction last night.

Among the 300 items sold for a total of \$56,000 by Charles Hamilton Autographs, Inc. at the Waldorf were two letters by the President, one by his assassin, Oswald, to his mother from Russia, and sketches made by Oswald's killer, Ruby, while in the Dallas County Jail.

Other highlights were letters by President Jefferson to a fellow signer of the Declaration of Independence and by Gen. George Washington during the Revolution.

A Kennedy letter dated April 2, 1957, while he was a Senator, declaring "the most direct American influence against communism is . . . personal demonstration by Americans of adherence to democratic ideals," went to the Carnegie Book Shop here for \$525.

A letter written by him on Aug. 1 the same year about having "fought long and hard for a good civil rights bill" and addressed to a Negro editor, Al-

fred Jarrette, of "All Religions Advocate," was sold for \$250 to Walter R. Benjamin, a New York autograph dealer.

The badly misspelled Oswald letter was exhibit No. 183 in the Warren Commission hearings on the Kennedy assassination in which he acknowledged a birthday card from his mother, asked her to send some fashion magazines for his wife, Marina, and which also said, "You needn't worry about my losing American citizenship. I can only do that if I want too, and I don't want too."

The letter, dated Oct. 22, 1959, was sold to Maury Bromsen, a Bronx dealer, for \$1,200.

Five curious, geometric sketches made by Ruby went to a New York medical researcher for \$625.

Jefferson's letter to Elbridge Gerry brought the highest price of the evening, \$4,500. In 1935, the same letter sold for \$285.