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For further information or image requests, please contact:
Melissa Geller 267.414.1228 or mgeller@freemansauction.com

Freeman's to Sell One-of-a-Kind Toy Bank

Philadelphia, PA—An extremely rare toy bank, thought to be the only one in existence, will be sold at Freeman's American Furniture, Folk & Decorative Arts auction on November 13. Estimated at \$30,000-50,000, the "Coasting Bank" was unveiled, with much fanfare, at the Mechanical Bank Collectors of America annual banquet on September 28.

"This is the only known example of this bank attributed to the famous toy designer Charles A. Bailey, and it is in very good condition. Before now, this bank had only been seen in an advertisement from 1884," said Freeman's Americana Department Head Lynda Cain.

This American-made bank, which was found in an attic in Peebles, Scotland, depicts a painted lead figure of a baby with outstretched arms on a sled, his legs straddling a coin slot. The sled rests atop a gold-painted cast steel slide, or track, which is held up by two poles stemming from the red painted base. As the sled descends, the coin is deposited in a triangular cast lead bank, painted green with gold floral scrollwork. The rectangular base features an open-work, geometric design, which flanks the cast iron title "Coasting.Bank."

F.H. Griffith, in his article "Coasting Bank" published in the April 1955 issue of *Hobbies Magazine*, chronicles William J. Stackhouse's discovery of an advertisement for the Coasting Bank in *Ehrich's Fashion Quarterly* from 1884. According to Griffith, "this bank is not known to be in any collection and the catalog offers us our first information about it."

Although there is no patent information available for the Coasting Bank, certain strikingly conspicuous features warrant an attribution to the illustrious bank designer Charles A. Bailey. Bailey worked for J. &

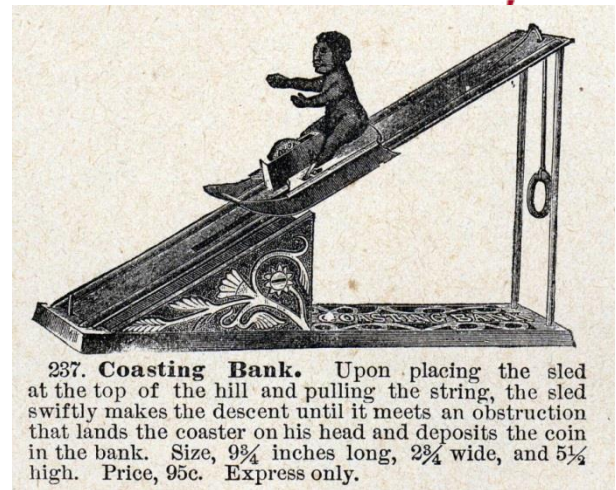


The only known example of a rare coasting bank, estimated at \$30,000-50,000, to be sold at Freeman's on November 13.



Collectors take a closer look during an unveiling at the annual Mechanical Bank Collectors of America banquet.

E. Stevens Company from the 1880s to about 1915 when he established himself as an independent designer and manufacturer. He is responsible for many great mechanical banks, including the rare Bismark Pig Bank and the Germania Exchange Bank, both featured alongside the Coasting Bank in the *Ehrich's Fashion Quarterly* advertisement. Bailey had a known penchant for utilizing lead or white metal; the Coasting Bank's cast lead figure, therefore, serves to reaffirm the attribution. Given their similarities in general action and overall design—especially with regards to the cast floral scroll work present on both triangular coin receptacles—this bank might have served as the predecessor to the "Shoot the Chute" mechanical bank designed by Charles A. Bailey for J. & E. Stevens Co. in 1906.



237. **Coasting Bank.** Upon placing the sled at the top of the hill and pulling the string, the sled swiftly makes the descent until it meets an obstruction that lands the coaster on his head and deposits the coin in the bank. Size, $9\frac{3}{4}$ inches long, $2\frac{3}{4}$ wide, and $5\frac{1}{2}$ high. Price, 95c. Express only.

Detail of the ad for the coasting bank from Ehrich's Fashion Quarterly in 1884.

Freeman's American Furniture, Folk, & Decorative Arts exhibition opens on Friday, November 8. For more details, [click here](#). The auction will be held on Wednesday, November 13.

For more information about the Coasting Bank or for additional images, please contact:

Melissa Geller, Marketing & Communications Manager
267.414.1228 or mgeller@freemansauction.com.

About Freeman's: Established in 1805, Freeman's has preserved its family business and traditions, while adapting to maintain its position in today's thriving art market. Located in Philadelphia, Freeman's holds over 30 auctions a year in the following categories: American Furniture, Folk & Decorative Arts; English & Continental Furniture & Decorative Arts; Asian Arts; American Art & Pennsylvania Impressionists; Modern & Contemporary Art; Photographs & Photobooks; Rare Books, Maps & Manuscripts; Posters & Other Graphics; Oriental Rugs, Carpets & Textiles; Fine Jewelry & Watches; Silver & Objets de Vertu; and European Art & Old Masters. The company's marketing alliance with Scotland's Lyon & Turnbull has extended Freeman's reach into the European marketplace, maximizing global sales opportunities. Additionally, Freeman's offers Trusts & Estates and Museum Services. **For more information, visit:** www.freemansauction.com.