United States Attorney
Southern District of New York

HISTORIAN SENTENCED TO 18 MONTHS FOR STEALING HISTORIC LETTERS WRITTEN BY WASHINGTON AND LINCOLN

MICHAEL J. GARCIA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, announced that historian EDWARD J. RENEHAN, JR., was sentenced today by United States District Judge DENNY CHIN to 18 months in prison for his theft and subsequent sale of historic letters written by George Washington and Abraham Lincoln. On May 20, 2008, RENEHAN pleaded guilty to charges of interstate transportation of stolen goods in connection with the theft. According to documents filed in this case and statements made at sentencing:

Between March 2005 and May 2006, RENEHAN served as Interim Executive Director of the Theodore Roosevelt Association. Beginning in early February 2006, RENEHAN stole from the Theodore Roosevelt Association, among other things: a letter written on March 1, 1840 by Abraham Lincoln, and two letters written by George Washington on August 9, 1791 and December 29, 1778, respectively. RENEHAN then resold the letters through a Manhattan gallery for a total of approximately $97,000, of which he received $86,700.

Prior to imposing sentence, Judge CHIN observed that a significant sentence was warranted in part because RENEHAN held a position of trust with the Theodore Roosevelt Association.

In addition to the prison term, Judge CHIN sentenced RENEHAN to two years' supervised release, ordered him to pay $86,700 in restitution to the Manhattan gallery through which he sold the letters, and ordered that he forfeit $86,700 and any rights or interest he may have had in the stolen letters to the United States.

Mr. GARCIA praised the work of the National Park Service in the investigation of this case.

Assistant United States Attorney MARK LANPHER is in charge of the prosecution.

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