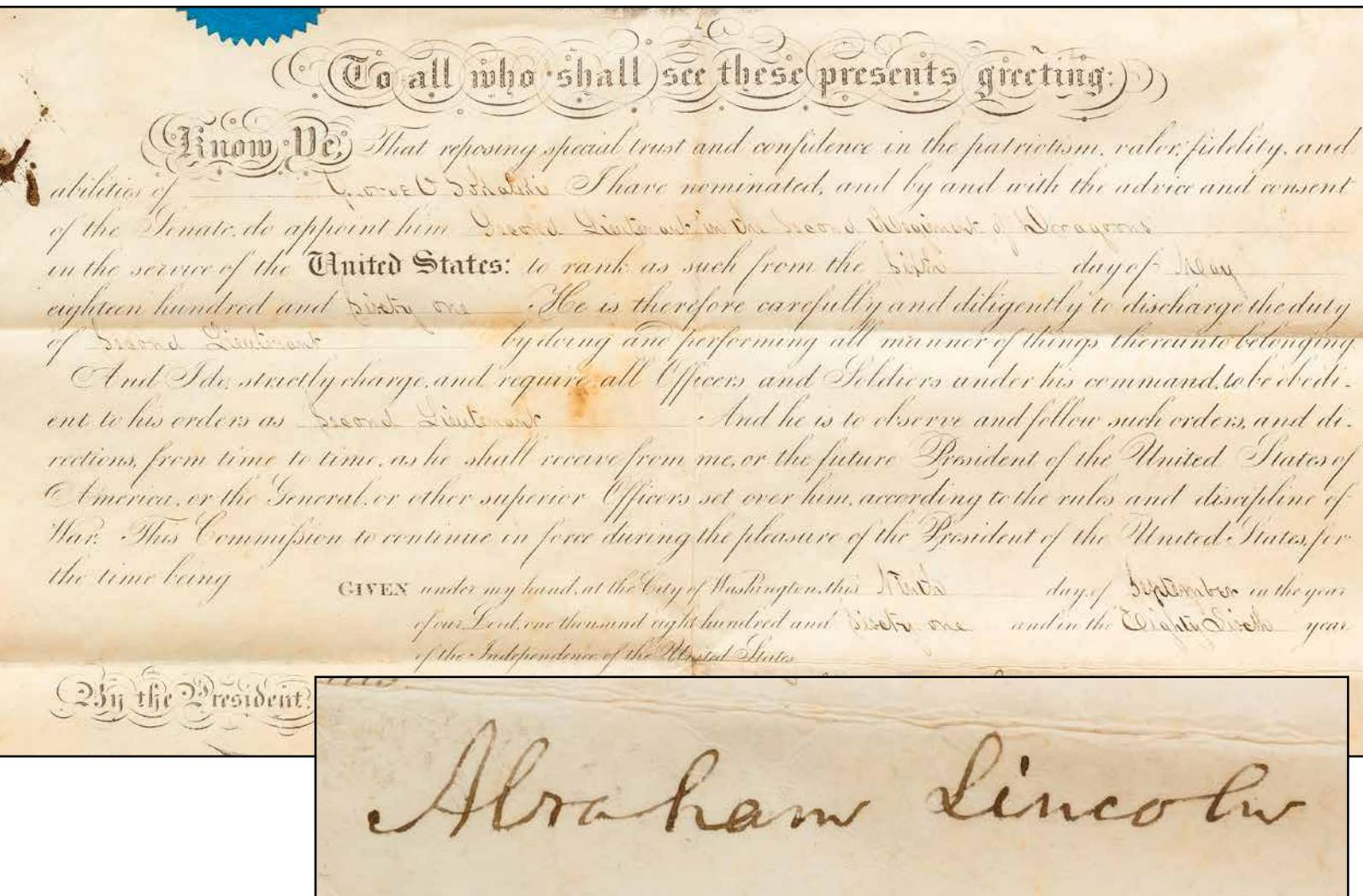


Abraham Lincoln, Simon Cameron, Lorenzo Thomas (George O. Sokalski)

[Original Civil War Document]: Appointing George O. Sokalski, the first Polish American graduate of West Point, Second Lieutenant in the Second Regiment of Dragoons (May 6th, 1861), Signed by Abraham Lincoln

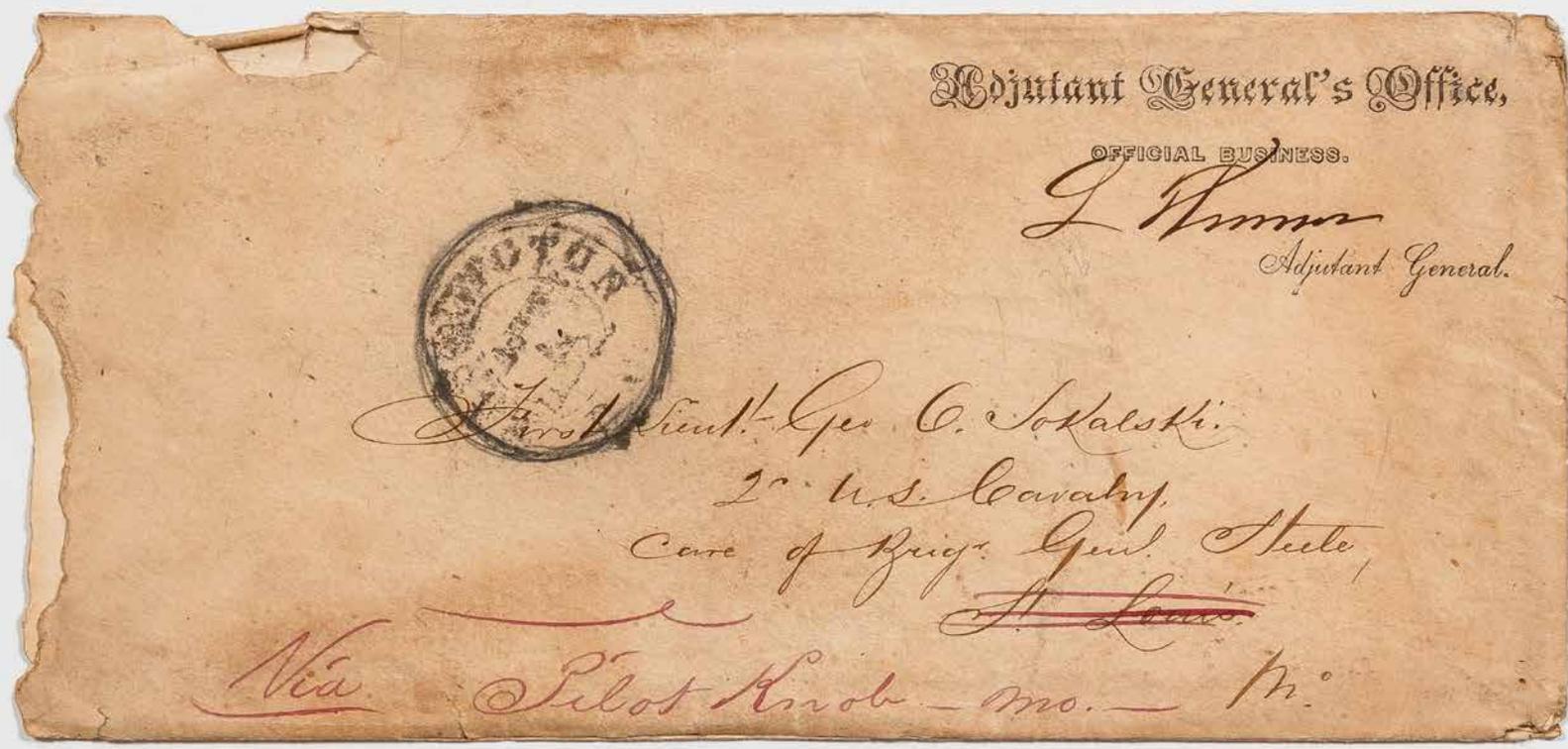
[Washington, D.C.]: 1861

\$12,000



[General Order of the War Department]. Calligraphic text and two engraved illustrations printed on parchment and completed in manuscript. Signed by Abraham Lincoln, Secretary of War Simon Cameron, and Adjutant General Lorenzo Thomas. Folio (15¾" x 18"). With an embossed blue-paper seal, and additional manuscript note at the top left corner signed by Thomas. Original folds (one vertical and five horizontal), with modest soiling and about three tiny holes, very good. With the original Adjutant General's Office mailing envelope, signed by Lorenzo Thomas and addressed to: "First Lieut. Geo. O. Sokalski, 2d U.S. Cavalry, Care of Brig. Genl. Steele". (Sokalski was promoted first lieutenant on Oct. 1, 1861).

George Oscar Sokalski, who would become a Civil War hero (and was later court-martialed in 1866), entered West Point the same year as George Armstrong Custer in 1857. He was the first Polish-American graduate of the Academy, in the May class of 1861. Soon after his appointment by Lincoln and Cameron, he was sent into combat on the Expedition to Southeast Missouri (June, 1861), and put in command of an Artillery battery at the Battle of Wilson's Creek (August 10, 1861). Over the next four years he was involved in over 50 battlefield engagements, including 18 major "pitched battles", and was promoted Captain of the 2d Cavalry (September, 1864). During the Union occupation of Little Rock, Arkansas (beginning in September, 1863), he served as Assistant Adjutant General to General Steele, and met his future wife, Annie Blanche Scott: "a sure-shot markswoman [who] could outride the average cavalryman [and who] wore a wolfskin riding habit ..." After the war Sokalski served on the Western frontier under civilian officers, whom he did not get on with, and he was court martialed in July 1866 for insubordination. Although he was reinstated in October, 1867, due in large part to the efforts of his wife, he had become ill, and died later that year, only six years after graduating from West Point.



A scarce, early Civil War document on parchment, notable for Lincoln's signature, and Lincoln's formal recognition of a distinguished Polish American Civil War soldier. [BTC#421685]

General Orders, 17, Page 22
Adjutant General's Office
Washington, D.C.
J. Thomas
Approved.

THE
PRESIDENT of the United States of AMERICA,



(To all who shall see these presents greeting)

Know Ye That reposing special trust and confidence in the patriotism, valor, fidelity, and abilities of George Denison I have nominated, and by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, do appoint him Second Lieutenant in the service of the United States: to rank as such from the 15th day of May 1862 and 1862. He is therefore carefully and diligently to discharge the duty of Second Lieutenant by doing and performing all manner of things thereunto belonging. And I do, strictly charge and require all Officers and Soldiers under his command, to be obedient to his orders as Second Lieutenant. And he is to observe and follow such orders and directions, from time to time, as he shall receive from me, or the future President of the United States of America, or the General, or other superior Officers, set over him, according to the rules and discipline of War. This Commission to continue in force during the pleasure of the President of the United States, for the time being.

GIVEN under my hand, at the City of Washington, this 15th day of September in the year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and sixty two under the United States year of the Independence of the United States.

By the President

Simon Cameron

Abraham Lincoln

Secretary of War.

