

Khyber rarity takes £38,000

THIS extremely rare 18th Century Khyber knife was the highlight of the London sale conducted by Norfolk-based sporting gun specialist **Holts** at Princess Louise House, Hammersmith on September 25, where it sold for a surprise £38,000 (plus 20 per cent buyer's premium).

The buyer, a specialist dealer who bought it for his own collection, described it as the finest example of its kind he had seen in terms of its condition and decoration.

The decoration includes damascened cartouches of Persian poetry and a prayer to Allah for strength in battle, niello panels of fish, birds and animals, and a charming scene of a pair of oxen carrying bricks towards a man building a castle. The ring of turquoise around the scabbard is typical of work made for the Uzbekistan market.

The buyer – who is currently researching the purchase – believes it may have been made in Lucknow, India, for a ruler of Uzbekistan between 1750 and 1780. It was consigned for sale with an estimate of £1000-1500 as part of a collection of much more modest edged weapons

