

Signed and numbered Ansel Adams photos and Gold Rush-era tokens do well in Holabird's December Dreams auction Dec. 17-19

The auction was packed with more than 1,900 lots in a wide array of collecting categories, at attractive price points. Several important collections were sold.

RENO, NV, UNITED STATES, January 4, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A [Wells Fargo Express Chinese Western directory from 1878](#) sold for \$13,750, while signed and numbered photographs by Western photographer [Ansel Adams](#) (1902-1984) and [rare tokens from the glory days of America's Gold Rush era](#) all did well in Holabird Western Americana Collections' December Dreams: Premier Americana Auction held December 17-19.



Wells Fargo & Co. Express Directory of Chinese Houses (all in California) from 1878, one of the most sought-after of all the Western directories (\$13,750).

The three-day sale, held online and live at the Holabird gallery in Reno, featured over 1,900 lots of rare books, art, mining, numismatics, stock certificates, postcards and more. Highlighted collections included more parts of the Ken Prag postcard collection, the Bill McIver token and medal collection, the MacKenzie Montana collection and the Ron Lerch Western collection.

Following are highlights from the auction, which enjoyed an 80 percent sell-through across all 1,900 lots. About 7,500 people registered to bid, with the top categories being art, directories and numismatics. "We're attracting hundreds of new collectors with each sale that goes by," said Fred Holabird of Holabird Western Americana Collections. All prices include buyer's premium.

Day 1 contained over 600 lots of philatelic (stamps); military, political and firearms; gaming collectibles; and model railroad and toys. Postcards, many of them from the Ken Prag collection, included California (especially wine country), Hawaii, Disney, Titanic and Pioneer cards. The

gaming section included items from the Shirley Bovis Cowboy Museum in Tombstone, Ariz.

Of the 500 postcard lots from the Ken Prag collection, about 350 lots were California-related, but 40 lots or so were Hawaii-themed. Lot 1370 was a collection of more than 210 postcards with color renderings of rare and exotic fishes of Hawaii. Most were from a series published for the Waikiki Aquarium in Honolulu. All were from the early 20th century. The lot went for \$1,387.

Day 2 was packed with 683 lots of books (featuring Part 1 of the Ron Leach Western directory collection); mining artifacts and ephemera; and stock certificates and bonds, to include mining and railroad. There were about 200 directories from the Ron Lerch collection. Directories are considered a “primary source” material and, as such, are essential aspects of historical research.

The Wells Fargo Express Chinese directory from 1878 is one of the most sought-after, rare and important of all the Western directories and sold accordingly, for \$13,750. It was a directory for Chinese houses in San Francisco, Sacramento, Stockton, Marysville, San Jose, Portland and Virginia City for that year. It was well-used and worn, with Chinese notes on pages throughout.

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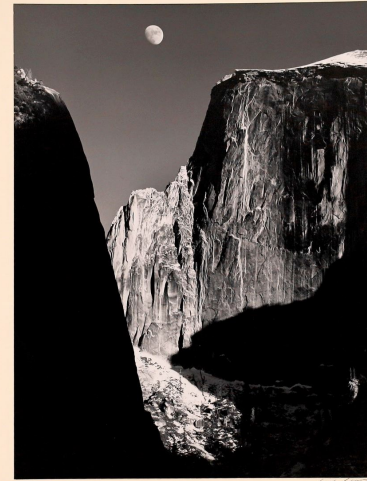
Fred Holabird

Other noteworthy directories, all from the Ron Leach collection, included the following:

- A first edition copy of the Hawaiian Kingdom Statistical and Commercial Directory from 1880-1881, including a tourist guide. Each island in the Kingdom was listed, along with officials, principal villages and descriptions of the islands, plus colored ads (\$2,250).
- A Brown’s Marysville (Calif.) Directory for the year beginning March 1861, a general and business register of citizens with statistical tables, historical references and

more, prefaced by sketches of industrial enterprises and charitable organizations (\$7,810).

• A very rare copy of the A.R. Dunbar & Co.’s Chinese Mercantile Directory for 1897, listing all the principal Chinese merchants and manufacturers in the U.S., Canada and Hawaii, 216 pages from



Ansel Adams original photograph from his Yosemite Series, signed, titled Moon and Half Dome (1960), print No. 10, considered one of his greatest photographs (\$9,687).

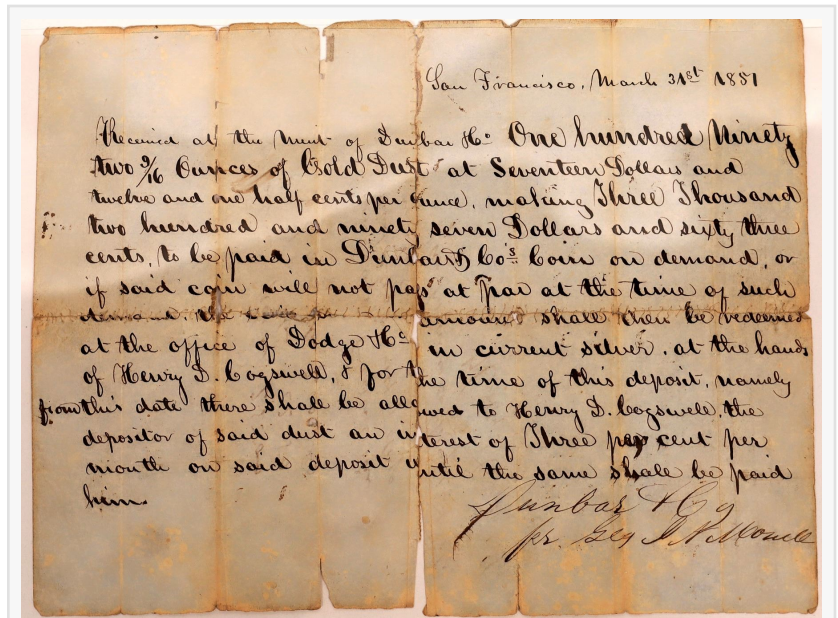
the press of Brown, Meese & Craddock, San Francisco (\$8,435).

Other Day 2 highlights included a handbill issued by Wells Fargo in 1866 (Gold Hill, Nevada), extolling the thefts of company monies used by several WF agents to gamble on mining stocks (\$3,375); and a Britton & Rey lithograph depicting a pair of life scenes of gold miners in the 19th century, titled Bar Room in the Mines and Long Tom, one of only five known copies (\$1,625).

A rare stereo view of gold miner Ed Schieffelin (who founded Tombstone, Arizona in 1877), showing him with a pick, breaking a rock, taken by Charles O. Farciot, hammered for \$3,125. Also, a stock certificate for 42 shares from 1863 for the Byron Gold & Silver Mining Co. (Sutro, Nevada), a company mentioned by Mark Twain in a letter dated Feb. 3, 1863, finished at \$812.

Day 3 was a busy one, with 614 lots of Native Americana (baskets and jewelry), art (featuring Ansel Adams, three signed Salvador Dali prints, Thomas Kincaide, Japanese woodblocks and prints and more), numismatics (including coins and currency, medals and so-called dollars), tokens (featuring Part 2 of the Bill McIvor Nevada token collection), and general Americana.

The signed and numbered photographs by Ansel Adams were from a special edition of fine prints from Photographs of Yosemite (Calif.) by Ansel Adams. Images included Moon and Half Dome, the tenth print made of this world-class photograph from 1960 (\$9,687); Bridal Veil Fall, from circa 1958-1970 (\$7,500); and El Capitan in Winter, also printed circa 1958-1970 (\$5,625).



Letter signed by Dunbar & Co. from 1851, noting the receipt of 192 9/16 ounces of gold dust at \$17.125 per oz. to be paid in Dunbar & Co.'s (gold) coin on demand (\$8,435).



Possibly the finest known 12.5-cent token from The Payteller (Rhyolite, Nev.), showing a miner with a pick, shovel and lunch bucket, plus mountain and sun, 30mm (\$5,500).

Offerings from the Bill McIver Nevada token and medal collection included the centerpiece of his collection: possibly the finest known 12.5-cent token from The Payteller (Rhyolite, Nev.), showing a bearded miner with a pick, shovel and lunch bucket, plus a mountain and rising sun (\$5,500); and a Copper Block Buffet (Valdez, Alaska) gold nugget token, good for \$1 (\$2,625).

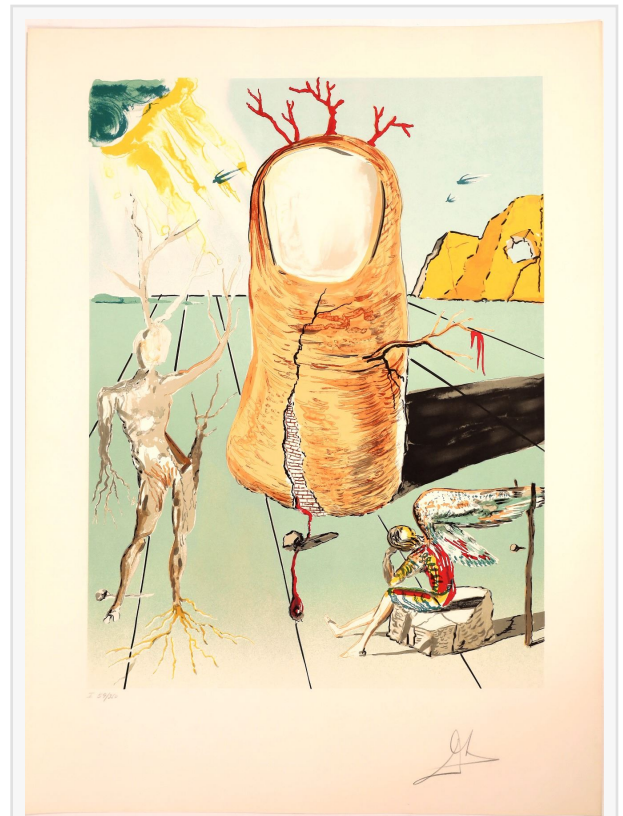
Other tokens included an extremely rare Rhyolite token for the Southern Bar ("Good for a Drink or Cigar"), very rare, round in shape, 24mm, made by L.A. Rubber Stamp Company (\$2,125); and a Victor Venturino token from the Eureka County (Nev.) town of Mineral Hill ("Good for 12 ½ Cents in Trade"), round in shape, 25mm, with what appeared to be a plug or a hole (\$2,500).

A great numismatic rarity was found in an 1851 letter. Prior to the establishment of a Branch US Mint in California, private firms made their own gold coins. Some came under fire in 1851 for not containing sufficient gold. These firms, including Dunbar & Co., were "attacked" in the local press, which adversely affected their value. Reacting to this adversity, the letter addresses how Dunbar would cure and defect. It is the first original document to discuss this important period.

The letter was signed by Dunbar & Co. and dated March 31, 1851, noting the receipt of 192 9/16 ounces of gold dust at \$17.125 per ounce to be paid in Dunbar & Co.'s (gold) coin on demand, "or if said coin will not pay at par at the time of such demand, the amount shall be redeemed at the office of Dodge & Co. in current silver at the hands of Henry D. Cogswell." It made \$2,500.

A pair of magnificent signed and labeled art prints by the renowned Japanese landscape artist Hiroshi Yoshida (1876-1950), titled Kura at Tomonoura and Lugano, each signed in pencil and both 10 ¼ inches by 15 ½ inches, went for \$3,125. Also, a scarce signed and numbered print by the Spanish Surrealist master Salvador Dali, titled Thumb Tree (although the actual title of the work wasn't found online and is therefore unknown), numbered "59/350", realized \$2,625.

Native Americana was led by a Tlingit Indian basket, 8 inches in diameter and 4 inches tall, with seven swastikas false embroidered into the middle band, circa 1900 (\$1,000); a large Haida (Alaska) ornate design box with patterns on all sides with shell inlays as eyes of birds and



Signed and numbered print by Salvador Dali, titled Thumb Tree (although the actual title of the work wasn't found online and is therefore unknown), numbered "59/350" (\$2,625).

animals, plus typical red and black patterns (\$625); and a vintage, museum-quality sterling silver and turquoise squash blossom necklace, unmarked, with 20 gorgeous turquoise stones (\$938).

Online bidding was via iCollector.com, LiveAuctioneers.com, Invaluable.com, Auctionzip.com.

Holabird Western Americana Collections, LLC is always seeking new and major collections to bring to market. It prides itself as being a major source for selling Americana at the best prices obtainable, having sold more than any other similar company in the past decade alone. The firm will have its entire sales database online soon, at no cost – nearly 200,000 lots sold since 2014.

To consign a single piece or a collection, you may call Fred Holabird at 775-851-1859 or 844-492-2766; or, you can send an e-mail to fredholabird@gmail.com. To learn more about Holabird Western Americana Collections, visit www.holabirdamericana.com. Updates are posted often.

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