

# Rare antique bottles retrieved from the S.S. Central America, which sank in 1857, will be auctioned Dec. 3 in Reno, Nev.

*The event will be held at the Reno-Sparks Convention Ctr. Sold will be beer bottles, decanters, wine bottles, perfumes, pot lids, stoneware bottles and cruets*

RENO, NV, UNITED STATES, November 23, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Rare antique bottles](#) retrieved from the [S.S. Central America](#) - [the legendary "Ship of Gold"](#) that sank in a storm off the North Carolina coast in 1857 while on a voyage from Panama to New York City - will come up for bid in an auction slated for Saturday, December 3rd, by Holabird Western Americana Collections, at 10 am PST.

The auction will be held online on several platforms as well as live at the Reno-Sparks Convention Center in Reno. Collectors have been eagerly awaiting the Gold Rush-era items to come on the market since the S.S. Central America was first spotted on the ocean floor in 1988. At the time, Life magazine proclaimed it America's greatest treasure ever found, and rightly so.

The antique bottles are just one of the categories of the more than 500 lots on offer in the Part 1 auction (Part 2 will be held in late February 2023; time and date to be announced). The antique bottles will be roughly split between the December and February auctions.

Lots 1053-1056 are dark green to black beer bottles ranging from 8 to 9 ½ inches tall. While none of the bottles are embossed or have labels, original seafloor dirt still adorns the exteriors, and



Classic American pot lid for X. Bazin Perfumed Grease, 3 ¼ inches diameter. Xavier Bazin was a French perfumer. This lid has a fancy border and is one of only five known (MB: \$100).

possible dregs of 19th century beer coat the interiors. One bottle exterior is swirled with iron oxide coating; another has a frosted appearance that accentuates the molding swirls.

Lot 1057 is a brown stoneware bottle, 7 inches tall and nearly 3 inches in diameter, the side embossed, "Vitreous Stone Bottles / Warranted Not to Absorb / J. Bourne & Son / Patentees / Denby & Condor Park Pottery / Near Derby". This pottery works has existed since 1812, and it was under the leadership of J. Bourne, his sons, their descendants and other relatives until 1942.

After that, the company was passed to the Wood and Dales families, who had been in the management of the company for many years. After various mergers and acquisitions over the years, Denby Pottery Ltd. still exists today. To learn more about J. Bourne and Denby Potteries, visit <http://www.potteryhistories.com/Denbyhistory.html>.

Lot 1058 is a clear glass bottle, 7.5 inches long and 4 inches from the base to the bottom of the shoulder. The bottom is not level and the surface of the glass is slightly etched, revealing a swirl pattern in the glass. Lot 1059 is a small, possibly leaded, cut-glass condiment cruet bottle, 5 ½ inches tall. The cut facets are shiny and smooth; intermediate surfaces appear lightly etched.

Lots 1060-1064 are heavy, possibly leaded, cut-glass decanters, 9 and 10 inches tall and 4 ¼ inches in diameter at the base. The openings at the top are 2-2 ¾ inches in diameter at the widest. The exterior facet edges have some chips - most of them small - and the glass has several air bubbles. The base of three of the decanters have some chips; one is significant.

Lot 1065 is a large, white ceramic coffee cup, 3 ½ inches tall, with saucer. The cup is lettered in gold, "To my / Mother" and is generously embellished with gold-painted leaves and flower motifs. The top 1 ½ inches of the inside surface has been painted gold. This would have been the personal possession of an unknown passenger, not a ship's serving piece.

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*Fred Holabird*

Lot 1066 is a tall, green wine bottle, just shy of 12 inches long, with an open pontil. This would have been a "wine vessel", used to extract wine from a barrel when a siphon wasn't available. The source of wine on the ship is unknown. The first award given for a California wine was in



1856, to Captain John Cooper for wine from San Jose.

Lots 1067 and 1068 are perfume bottles. One is a pale green, likely hand-blown, thin-walled cylindrical flask with a flared top, 8  $\frac{3}{4}$  inches long and 1  $\frac{1}{4}$  inches in diameter, unusual in shape, suggesting a perfume bottle. The other is a small, pressed glass bottle, 2  $\frac{1}{2}$  inches tall, still corked, containing a cloudy pinkish liquid inside with black crud sticking to the inside surface.

Lot 1072 is also a perfume bottle, tall at 8  $\frac{1}{2}$  inches in height and missing its stopper (otherwise unbroken). The surface is clean and glassy, and the interior has the remains of seafloor sediment or its original contents. Lot 1071 is a tall green whiskey bottle, 11  $\frac{1}{2}$  inches tall and 3  $\frac{1}{4}$  inches in diameter, with an air bubble seed about an inch below the bottle's shoulder.

Antique pot lids, very popular with collectors today, will also be offered. An example is lot 1074, a pot lid for X. Bazin Perfumed Grease, a classic American pot lid 3  $\frac{1}{4}$  inches diameter. Xavier Bazin was a French perfumer whose products were heavily marketed by a San Francisco wholesale drug firm. The lid in the auction has a fancy border and is one of only five known.

"These bottles and other incredible artifacts give us a glimpse of daily life for the passengers and crew in the 1850s," said Dwight Manley, Managing Partner of the California Gold Marketing Group of Brea, California, which owns the recovered items. "They are a time capsule from the California Gold Rush."

The tragedy of the S.S. Central America sinking took the lives of 425 of the ship's 578 passengers and crewmembers, and the loss of the gold cargo was a major factor in the economically devastating financial Panic of 1857 in the United States.

Holabird Western Americana Collections has prepared an extensive, limited edition 280-page catalog with dozens of previously unpublished illustrations of the S.S. Central America recovery operations, some reproduced in 3-D as shot during the discovery missions with a remote-controlled submersible nicknamed "Nemo." Copies of the catalog are available while supplies last for \$100 each with the price refundable with any purchase from the auction. Auction lots can also be viewed online.

For additional information about the recovered artifacts auctions planned for December 2022 and February 2023 and to obtain a printed catalog, visit Holabird Western Americana Collections of Reno, Nevada at [www.HolabirdAmericana.com](http://www.HolabirdAmericana.com), call 775-851-1859, or email



Brown stoneware bottle, 7 inches, embossed, "Vitreous Stone Bottles / Warranted Not to Absorb / J. Bourne & Son / Patentees / Denby & Condor Park Pottery / Near Derby" (MB: \$100).

info@holabirdamericana.com. A virtual catalog is available online for auctions Parts A and B.

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Lots 60-64 are heavy, possibly leaded, cut-glass decanters (lot 1063 shown), 9 inches tall and 4 ¼ inches in diameter at the base. The exterior facet edges have some chips (MB: \$250).



Lot 1067 is a pale green, likely hand-blown, thin-walled cylindrical flask with a flared top, 8 <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> inches long, unusual in shape, suggesting a perfume bottle (MB: \$250).

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