

# California Gold Rush millionaire's brooch among sunken treasure artifacts to be auctioned March 4th-5th in Reno, Nevada

*Holabird Western Americana Collections will hold the final auction of jewelry and other historic items recovered from the S.S. Central America, sunk in 1857.*

RENO, NV, UNITED STATES, February 15, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The second and final auction of never-before-offered, historic California Gold Rush jewelry and other artifacts recovered from the 1857 sinking of the fabled "Ship of Gold," the [S.S. Central America](https://www.sscamerica.com/), will be held on March 4 and 5, 2023. It will be conducted in Reno, Nevada and online by Holabird Western Americana Collections, LLC ([www.HolabirdAmericana.com](https://www.HolabirdAmericana.com)).



A REGARD ring created with gemstones with first letters that spell out that word – Ruby (missing from the recovered ring), Emerald, Garnet, Amethyst, Ruby, and Diamond -- is among the beautiful California Gold Rush sunken treasure jewelry retrieved from t

"This is the last opportunity for collectors to acquire previously unoffered, historic artifacts from what Life magazine proclaimed, 'America's greatest treasure.' The 420 lots in the auction represent an incredible time capsule of [the California Gold Rush era](#)," said Fred Holabird, president of Holabird Western Americana Collections.

“

The 420 lots in the auction represent an incredible time capsule of the California Gold Rush era.”

*Fred Holabird*

One of the important items is a large gold quartz engraved brooch that prominent San Francisco businessman Sam Brannan -- California's first millionaire -- was sending to his son, Sam Brannen Jr., in Geneva, Switzerland, as a gift to the son's teacher. Biographer Milton Balch described Brannan (1819 - 1889) as "a gambler, and a banker,

merchant and hotel owner, importer and exporter, gold digger and real estate speculator."

The brooch is described as: Large 18-K gold brooch consisting of a buckle-like piece at the top from which hangs a 28 x 24 x 4 mm piece of gold-bearing white quartz set in a hinged mount so the stone can rotate on a horizontal axis to see both sides. Overall length of the brooch is 77 x 48 mm. The presence of the buckle suggests that it may have held a colored ribbon of some sort which then draped behind and below the stone to highlight it. The back of the buckle is engraved "A. Roediger / from his little pupil / Sam Brannan Jr. / California."

Among the 45 other recovered jewelry pieces in the auction is a REGARD ring, named for the first letter of each of the six gemstones it contains: ruby (missing from the ring), emerald, garnet, amethyst, ruby, and diamond. This style of ring became popular in the early 1800s when it was introduced in France.

The ring was found in 1990 by Bob Evans, Chief Scientist of the S.S. Central America Project who was on each of the recovery missions. It was located while he was carefully looking through a sediment trap of dredge for gold dust one evening at sea while under the recovery ship's work lights.

"When I found this little ring, its stones flashing in the night, I was immediately charmed. I thought it could be a birthstone ring, intended as a mother's representation of her children. Research by our historians ashore revealed the custom of the REGARD ring, intended as a gentleman's token of affection for a lady, pre-engagement, but very serious," Evans recalled.

Other exquisite, recovered California Gold Rush jewelry in the auction includes gold nugget stickpins, gold nugget pinback brooches, and gold cuff links.

There are also vintage clothing including an early Brooks Brothers shirt; ship's objects such as cabin and dining plates, bowls, and bottles; a recovered porthole; the only still-intact Gold Rush treasure shipment box; and an intriguing 1850s photograph of an unknown young woman now nicknamed "Mona Lisa of the Deep" who is wearing a choker and brooch of the era.

The six-ton remote-controlled submersible scientists successfully used between 1988 and 1991 to locate and retrieve the Central America's legendary sunken treasure nearly a mile-and-a-half under the Atlantic Ocean will also be offered.



One of the important recovered jewelry items from the SS Central America is a large 18-karat Gold Rush ore engraved brooch that California's first millionaire, San Francisco businessman Sam Brannan, was sending to his son in Geneva, Switzerland as a gift

"The S.S. Central America was carrying tons of Gold Rush treasure from San Francisco and the northern California area when she sank 7,200 feet deep in the Atlantic off the North Carolina coast in a hurricane while on a voyage from Panama to New York City in September 1857. Recovery from the shipwreck site occurred in several stages between 1988-1991 and again in 2014," explained Dwight Manley, managing partner of California Gold Marketing Group, the consignor of the sunken treasure.

Holabird Western Americana Collections, LLC has prepared an extensive catalog with many illustrations of the S.S. Central America recovery operations in 3-D. Copies of the March 2023 auction catalog are available for \$100 each with the price refundable with any purchase from the auction.

All items in the auction are being offered unreserved. For additional information, visit Holabird Western Americana Collections of Reno, Nevada at [www.HolabirdAmericana.com](http://www.HolabirdAmericana.com), call 775-851-1859, or email [info@holabirdamericana.com](mailto:info@holabirdamericana.com).

# # # #

Fred Holabird  
Holabird Western Americana Collections, LLC  
+1 775-851-1859  
[email us here](#)



One of the historic stickpins created with a nugget from the California Gold Rush and recovered from the 1857 sinking of the S.S. Central America that will be offered in the March 4 and 5, 2023 auction by Holabird Western Americana Collections.



The unidentified young woman in this 19th-century daguerreotype photograph is wearing a choker and brooch of the era. The photo was recovered from a pile of coal in a debris field where the S.S. Central America sank in 1857 and the scientific mission reco

---

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/617214075>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2023 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.