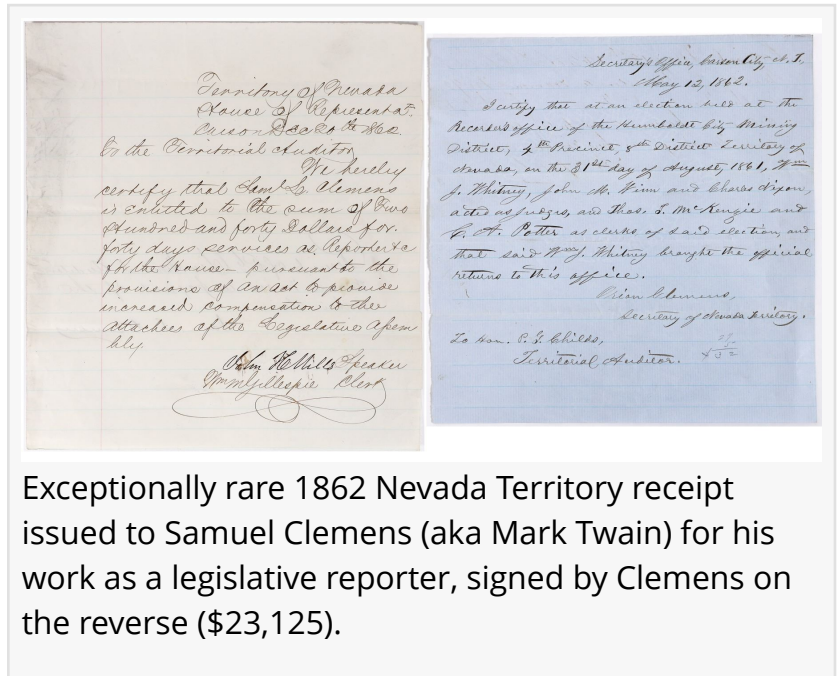


Holabird's huge Desert Riches Auction, Jan. 31-Feb. 3, featured mining, gold, numismatics, Americana, philatelic, more

A rare signed 1862 Nevada Territory receipt issued to Samuel Clemens (better known as author Mark Twain) for his work as a legislative reporter sold for \$23,125

RENO, NV, UNITED STATES, February 11, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- An exceptionally rare 1862 Nevada Territory receipt issued to [Samuel Clemens](#) (better known as author [Mark Twain](#)) for his work as a legislative reporter sold for \$23,125, and a pair of 1871 documents appointing the melter and refiner to the Carson City, Nevada Mint, one of them signed by President Ulysses S. Grant, rang up \$15,625 in a huge, four-day Desert Riches Auction held January 31st thru February 3rd by Holabird Western Americana Collections, LLC.



Exceptionally rare 1862 Nevada Territory receipt issued to Samuel Clemens (aka Mark Twain) for his work as a legislative reporter, signed by Clemens on the reverse (\$23,125).

“

We chose the name ‘Desert Riches’ to honor the gold specimens, stock certificates, mining artifacts and railroad pieces from the California desert mining camps, as well as from Arizona and Nevada.”

Fred Holabird

The event was packed with more than 2,100 lots in numerous collecting categories to include mining, gold, numismatics, scripophily, Native Americana, railroadiana, philatelic and general Americana. The first three days were live sessions, hosted in Holabird’s Reno gallery. The fourth day was a timed-only session, hosted exclusively on iCollector.com and LiveAuctioneers.com.

“We chose the name ‘Desert Riches’ to honor the gold specimens, stock certificates, mining artifacts and railroad pieces in this sale from the California desert mining camps in Inyo County and Death Valley, as well as from Arizona

and Nevada,” said Fred Holabird, the president and owner of Holabird Western Americana

Collections, LLC. "Overall it was a tremendous success."

The Samuel Clemens receipt from the Territory of Nevada House of Representatives in Carson City, dated Dec. 20, 1862, reads in part, "To the Territorial Auditor, We hereby certify that Saml. L. Clemens is entitled to the sum of Two Hundred and Forty Dollars for forty days services as Reporter etc. for the House. [signed] John H. Mills, Speaker." Clemens signed the reverse side.

Also sold was a Pony Express Virginia City (Nev.) cover sent the same month Clemens arrived in town to work for the Territorial Enterprise, in September 1862. Wells, Fargo & Co.'s Virginia Pony Express began operations on Aug. 8, 1862, using the 10-cent fee for a half-ounce letter. The rate increased to 25 cents in Jan. 1863, making this an 1862 specimen. It gaveled for \$2,875.

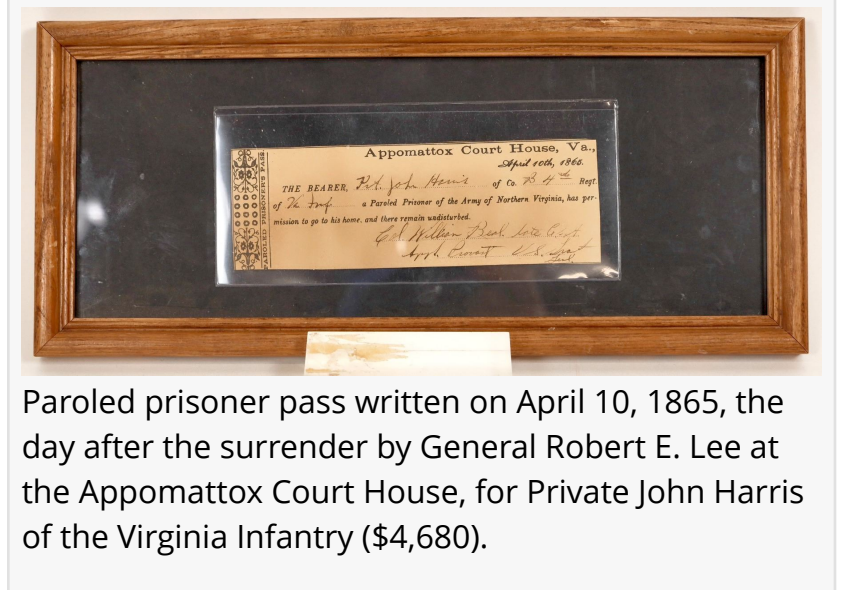
The pair of 1871 documents appointing the melter and refiner to the Carson City, Nevada Mint surfaced from a prominent Nevada banking family. The document pair reflected the original appointment as Melter and Refiner of Moses D. Wheeler prior to June 3, 1871. The second document formally appointed Robert P. Andrews to the position on December 12, 1871.

Following are additional highlights from the auction. All prices quoted include the buyer's premium. Online bidding was via iCollector.com, Invaluable.com and LiveAuctionbeers.com.

Day 1, on January 31st, had 434 lots of stock certificates and bonds (mining, oil, transportation –



1901 imprint type Jos. Leshar No. 17 referendum silver dollar for J. M. Slusher in EF-AU condition, one of 260 stamped, with a low serial number and a mining scene (\$4,500).



Paroled prisoner pass written on April 10, 1865, the day after the surrender by General Robert E. Lee at the Appomattox Court House, for Private John Harris of the Virginia Infantry (\$4,680).

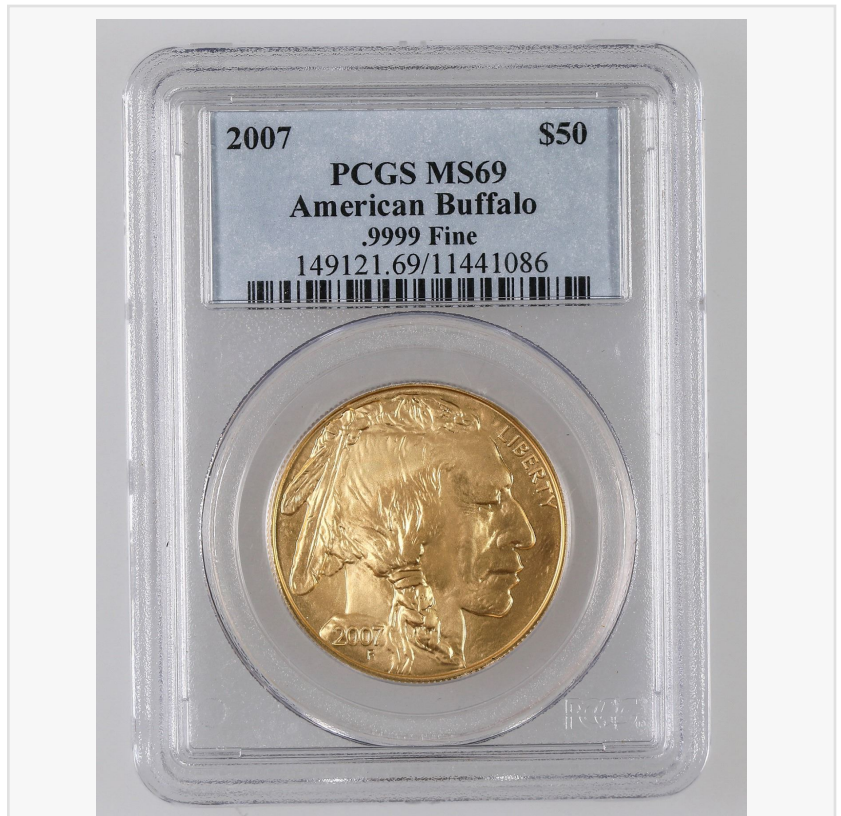
such as air, auto, railroad and steamer/marine – and miscellaneous, such as banking, Express and foreign); and philatelic (including postal covers, revenue and US and foreign stamps).

A Day 1 highlight was lot 1035, a rare and important Bullion Gold & Silver Mining Company stock certificate (Mazourka Canyon, Inyo County, Calif.), issued for 50 shares on Aug. 12, 1861 to Geo. V. Hight in San Francisco and signed by the company president, secretary and treasurer. The fantastic certificate traces the very beginning of mining in Inyo Country. It sold for \$1,250.

Day 2 showcased 503 lots of transportation, to include railroad (passes, lanterns, locks and ephemera); bottles and brewing; general Americana (geographic sort US, foreign, books and maps, and miscellaneous, to include gaming, sports and toys); and military, political and weaponry/militaria.

A paroled prisoner pass written on April 10, 1865, the day after the surrender by General Robert E. Lee at the Appomattox Court House, for Private John Harris of the Virginia Infantry, signed by Col. William Beal of Co. A, Provost, framed, brought \$4,680. Also, a mounted original albumen photo from 1881 of 13 men who made up a posse sent from Tucson to Yuma (Arizona) to take over the goods from a suspected major retail goods swindle, changed hands for \$2,750.

A Stephen F. Molitor tin ingot from around 1884, produced in Deadwood (the Dakota Territory)



This 2007 American Buffalo \$50 bullion gold coin, graded PCGS MS 69, .9999 fine, one of only 136,000 minted, found a new owner for \$3,000.



Mounted original albumen photo from 1881 of 13 men who made up a posse sent from Tucson to Yuma to take over the goods from a suspected huge retail goods swindle (\$2,750).

and every bit as important as many historical gold ingots since tin was in the 1880s worth about as much as gold, 2.35 troy ounces, fetched \$5,300. Also, a USA Hospital Dept. bottle in a rare citron color, dug up in Virginia City, Nevada around the time of the Civil War and boasting very crude glass with thousands of bubbles, a little over 9 inches tall and very attractive, hit \$2,750.

A circa 1940s slot machine from the Mills Novelty Company, a 25¢ hand operated, 3-reel Hi-Top Jewel Bell model with a 'Black Diamond' finish consisting of a deep maroon top and deep blue body/front, with a jackpot window on the front, finished at \$1,125. Also, a luggage tag from the Tonopah & Goldfield Railroad, stamped "T.&G. R.R. 65", in nice condition, reached \$937.

Day 3 featured 501 lots of Western art and collectibles (cowboy, Native Americana and art); minerals and mining (gold specimens, minerals, fossils, mining artifacts and equipment and mining ephemera); and numismatics (US Mint and ingots, California fractional gold, US and foreign coins, medals, currency and scrip, and tokens).

A group of 13 letters written to J. L. Holland, a mine superintendent and mine financier by four different mining men from Feb. to Nov. 1881, 10 datelined Cerro Gordo, Calif., the other three datelined Lone Pine, Calif., hit \$1,560. Also, a 1901 imprint type Jos. Leshar No. 17 referendum silver dollar for J. M. Slusher in EF-AU condition, one of 260 stamped, with a low serial number and a mining scene on the obverse, rose to \$4,500. Slusher was a grocer in Cripple Creek, Colo.

A crystalline gold specimen pulled from the Vulture Mine in Vulture City, Arizona, nestled into the landscape of the state's Sonoran Desert, 0.46 troy ounces, 1 ¼ inches long, went for \$3,125.

A 2007 American Buffalo \$50 bullion gold coin, graded PCGS MS 69, .9999 fine, one of only 136,000 minted, found a new owner for \$3,000.

An 1896-S U.S. Liberty Head \$20 gold piece in F-EF condition, on a 26-inch chain that does not test for gold content, earned \$2,875.

Mega Bucks placer gold nuggets from a claim in the El Paso Mountains in Kern County, Calif., the largest one being 10mm, totaling 18.99 grams and 0.606 troy ounces, settled at \$2,125.

Dry wash placer gold nuggets from the El Paso Mountains near Randsburg, California, 18.8 grams and 0.603 troy ounces, the largest piece measuring 7mm, left the room for \$1,875.

A Brunswick & Company (Chicago) token ("Good For / One / At N. 10"), 24mm, possibly the same "No. 10" saloon in Deadwood, S.D., where Wild Bill Hickok was shot, went for \$1,625.

A rare 1853 California fractional gold \$1 coin, octagonal in shape, 12mm, BG-519, marked by Deriberpie, "California Gold / 1 / Dollar / 1853 / DERI", graded F-EF, brought \$1,250.

Day 4, the timed session only, featured 716 lots, all with \$10 start prices, in categories that

included minerals and mining, transportation, general Americana, numismatics, and stocks and bonds (mining, transportation and miscellaneous).

Holabird Western Americana Collections, LLC is actively seeking quality consignments for its upcoming auctions, especially items in the following categories:

- Mining artifacts and ephemera
- Rare documents (checks, billheads, stocks, maps)
- Native Americana
- Wild West outlaws, lawmen and cowboys
- Gaming
- Coins, ingots, currency, tokens, US Mint
- Minerals, gold nuggets, ore specimens
- Railroadiana (passes, lanterns, locks)
- Bottles and brewing and saloon collectibles
- Firearms and militaria

Anyone owning an item or a collection that might fit into a Holabird Western Americana Collections auction is encouraged to get in touch. The company has agents all over America and will travel to inspect most worthy collections.

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, LLC and their calendar of upcoming events, please visit www.holabirdamericana.com.

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