

# Holabird's American Treasures of the Past auction in Reno featured antique denim miners' pants and rare U.S. gold coins

*Eager bidders proved that old denim jeans and other clothing from the California Gold Rush era are high-dollar collectibles. The auction grossed \$1.3 million.*

RENO, NV, UNITED STATES, September 5, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Antique denim jeans](#) and [rare U.S. gold coins](#) dominated the list of top lots at Holabird Western Americana Collections, LLC's American Treasures of the Past auction held August 22nd thru 25th, online and live in the Reno gallery. More than 2,100 lots in a rainbow of collecting categories came up for bid in an auction that ended up grossing a robust \$1.3 million.

Antique denim pants as collectibles? Yes, when they were worn during the era of the [1800s mining days of the American West](#) they can fetch dizzying dollars. The top earner of the general Americana category was a pair of button fly Mountaineer brand jeans from ZCMI of Salt Lake City. Discovered in a house in Utah as insulation lining the walls in 2024, the pants boasted a Mormon connection (\$21,250).



Pair of button fly Mountaineer brand jeans from ZCMI of Salt Lake City. Discovered in a house in Utah as insulation lining the walls in 2024, the pants boasted a Mormon connection (\$21,250).

A pair of AB Elfelt & Company Pioneer brand brown canvas pants with full label and buckle intact, plain buttons and blue wool factory lining, in nice condition, gaveled for \$10,000; while a circa 1875-1880 pair of brown canvas standard pants by Neustatter Bros., a competitor of Levi Strauss & Co., a classic pair of "miner's" pants meant for tough outdoor use, brought \$16,875.

Not all the clothing were pants. Lot 3498 was a men's denim jacket with no manufacturer's label,

but the style of the pocket stitch attachment at the top corner was very distinctive, and the only pattern that was close (and apparently the same) was SR Krouse, who used the stitch pattern on their rear pant pocket. The jacket, with four of the five button holes hand-stitched, hit \$6,250.

As expected, the U.S. gold coins were runaway best-sellers. They were led by a 1908 Indian Head U.S. \$5 gold proof coin, one of only 167 proof issues from that year. It went for \$43,380. Also, a 1795 Capped Bust U.S. \$5 gold coin, known as “America’s first gold coin”, designed by Robert Scot and an exceptionally rare Heraldic Eagle reverse \$5 gold piece, realized \$38,560.

A 13-leaf variety 1795 Capped Bust U.S. \$10 gold coin, also designed by Scot, one of only 400-500 known and a coin George Washington wanted finished before he left office, made \$25,305. Confederate States of America bank notes also did well, as a Type 3 \$100 Montgomery issue note rose to \$4,820, while a CSA Type 1 \$1,000 note, both from May 1861, finished at \$21,690.

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*Fred Holabird*

general Americans billheads and maps, railroadiana, transportation, antique bottles, silverwares, sports memorabilia, medals and tokens.

Rare antique bottles featured a circa 1856-1858 Bordwell & Co. (Oroville, Calif.) green pontiled



1908 Indian Head U.S. \$5 gold proof coin, one of only 167 proof issues from that year (\$43,380).



Men’s California Gold Rush-era denim jacket with no manufacturer’s label, but the style of the pocket stitch attachment at the top corner suggested it was made by SR Krouse (\$6,250).

The rest of the auction featured Native American jewelry, turquoise and raw Western gems, high-quality bronzes and Western oils from the Tahoe/Reno Western Art collection, Art Nouveau postcards, old Western bottles, Western antiquities and Chinese Eastern watercolors. Online bidding was provided by iCollector.com, LiveAuctioneers.com and Invaluable.com.

Day 1, on Thursday, August 22nd, featured 537 lots of

soda bottle, a newly discovered addition to the California Gold Rush soda bottle list (\$5,312); and a very scarce S.H.M.

("Superior/Trade/Mark/Old Bourbon") choice Western whiskey out of San Francisco, produced by the philanthropist J C Wilmerding, with no chips or cracks (\$2,250).

An 1880 rail pass for the Corpus Christi, San Diego & Rio Grande Railroad, #189 issued to Jas. Converse, Esq., signed "U. Lott" (president), printed on tan card stock, achieved \$5,937. Also, it doesn't get any more Western than a token and real photo postcard for Soapy Smith's Skagway Saloon in Mesa, Arizona ("Good For / 12c. / In Trade"), the round token circa 1970 (\$1,187).

Day 2, on Friday, August 23rd, contained a world-class collection of original vintage Art Nouveau postcards, cowboy collectibles, militaria, postal history (to include Wells Fargo & Express), and philatelic (covers/USA and worldwide, stamps/USA and zeppelin / Hindenburg).

The collection of Art Nouveau postcards included one featuring a design by the famous Czech Republic poster artist Alphonse Mucha, circa 1913, of two young women in festive European attire (\$5,000); and a rare complete set of 12 different postcards by Alberto Martini, the Italian artist famous for illustrating noted literary works, including 132 for Edgar Allan Poe (\$2,000).

A Civil War carte de visite photo and the leather covered pocket journal of David Cook rang up \$2,375. The journal was found on his body after he was killed in Chattanooga in Sept. 1863. Also, a signed typed letter by the famous Revolutionary Francisco "Pancho" Villa, addressed to Professor Virgil Y. Russell of Tucson, Arizona, plus two photos of Villa, garnered \$2,250.

An historical list of witnesses' payments for the 1886 trial of Belle Starr, the notorious outlaw



This 1795 Capped Bust U.S. \$5 gold coin, known as "America's first gold coin", designed by Robert Scot and an exceptionally rare Heraldic Eagle reverse \$5 gold piece, realized \$38,560.



Confederate States of America bank notes featured a Type 3 \$100 Montgomery issue note that rose to \$4,820, while a CSA Type 1 \$1,000 note (shown), from May 1861, finished at \$21,690.

charged with horse stealing in the Choctaw Nation, signed by her son and daughter, among others, fetched \$5,000. Also, a group of 12 photos of deceased Nazi war criminals from the Nuremberg Trials of 1946, from the Rev. Cornelius Greenway collection, earned \$3,125.

Day 3, on Saturday, August 24th, was especially busy, with 536 lots of art, Native Americana (to include jewelry), mining (to include turquoise and raw Western gems) and the miners' old pants.

Western art and imagery included some truly spectacular examples, to include the following:

- A stunning, detailed bright and vibrant depiction of Indians on the trail, possibly an unfinished painting by the Western artist CM Russell, circa 1912-1914 (\$31,875)
- A 1982 bronze collaboration between the artists Gil Melton and Buckeye Blake, titled Faded Romance (9/12), weighing an estimated 300 pounds (\$13,135).
- A half-plate daguerreotype image of 13 gold miners working their gold in Hangtown, Calif. (later Placerville, earlier Dry Diggins) during the California Gold Rush (\$15,625)

The Native American jewelry category showcased numerous gorgeous examples, including a world-class and magnificent Zuni Chief bolo (\$3,750); a lovely Zuni necklace and earring set (\$2,000); a carved turquoise eagle necklace crafted in 1936 by the artisan Willy Rosa (\$4,062); and a spectacular Zuni belt buckle, Dishta style, that went to a determined bidder for \$3,375.

Day 4, on Sunday, August 25th, has 544 lots of general Americana feature pieces and numismatics, including ingots, coins and currency. The rare U.S. gold coins and Confederate bank notes ruled the day, but also sold was a circa 1948 Jennings Sun Chief nickel slot machine, a tabletop model filled with nickels and with a brass Indian head in the jackpot window (\$1,500).

Anyone owning a collection that might fit into a Holabird Western Americana Collections, LLC auction is encouraged to get in touch. The firm travels throughout the U.S., to see and pick up collections. The company has agents all over America and will travel to inspect most collections.

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](mailto:fredholabird@gmail.com). To learn more about Holabird Western Americana Collections and their upcoming sales, visit [www.holabirdamericana.com](http://www.holabirdamericana.com).

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