



# RARITIES

FEATURING

## The Buccleuch Block

THE GREATEST STAMP DISCOVERY IN MODERN HISTORY



SALE 1380 • THURSDAY, MAY 28, 2026, AT 4:00 P.M.

ON LOCATION AT BOSTON 2026 WORLD EXPO

SIEGEL AUCTION GALLERIES

*Robert A. Siegel*



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## The Buccleuch Block

THE GREATEST STAMP DISCOVERY IN MODERN HISTORY



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SALE 1380

THURSDAY, MAY 28, 2026, AT 4:00 P.M.

ON LOCATION AT BOSTON 2026 WORLD EXPO

Thomas Michael Menino Convention and Exhibition Center  
(formerly known as the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center)

415 Summer Street, Boston, MA 02210

Live auction to take place in Room 102B

## SIEGEL AUCTION GALLERIES

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- 4) Absentee Bids:** Bids received in advance of the sale by any method are Absentee Bids, which instruct the auctioneer to bid up to a specific amount on one or more lots in the sale. Absentee Bids should arrive at least one hour prior to the start of the sale session. Bids entered through BidBaller™ will be immediately visible to the auctioneer during the sale. All Absentee Bids should be carefully written or typed and double-checked.

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THE PROPERTY IN THIS CATALOGUE WILL BE OFFERED AT PUBLIC AUCTION BY ROBERT A. SIEGEL AUCTION GALLERIES, INC. ("GALLERIES") ON BEHALF OF VARIOUS CONSIGNORS AND ITSELF OR AFFILIATED COMPANIES. BY BIDDING ON ANY LOT, WHETHER DIRECTLY OR THROUGH A THIRD PARTY, IN PERSON, BY TELEPHONE, FACSIMILE, INTERNET OR BY ANY OTHER MEANS, THE BIDDER ACKNOWLEDGES AND AGREES TO ALL OF THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS OF SALE.

1. The highest bidder acknowledged by the auctioneer shall be the buyer. The term "final bid" means the last bid acknowledged by the auctioneer, which is normally the highest bid offered. **The purchase price payable by the buyer will be the sum of the final bid and a commission of 18% of the final bid ("buyer's premium"), together with any sales tax, use tax or customs duties due on the sale.**

2. The auctioneer has the right to reject any bid, to advance the bidding at his discretion and, in the event of a dispute, to determine the successful bidder, to continue the bidding or to reoffer and resell the lot in dispute. The Galleries' record of the final sale shall be conclusive.

3. All bids are per numbered lot in the catalogue unless otherwise announced by the auctioneer at the time of sale. The right is reserved to group two or more lots, to withdraw any lot or lots from the sale, or to act on behalf of the seller. The Galleries will execute bidding instructions on behalf of clients, but will not be responsible for the failure to execute such bids or for any errors in the execution of such bids.

4. **Lots with numbers followed by the symbol ° are offered subject to a confidential minimum bid ("reserve"), below which the lot will not be sold. The absence of the symbol ° means that the lot is offered without a reserve. If there is no reserve, the auctioneer has sole discretion to establish a minimum opening bid and may refuse an offer of less than half of the published estimate. Any lot that does not reach its reserve or opening bid requested by the auctioneer will be announced as "passed" and excluded from the prices realized lists after the sale. The Galleries may have a direct or indirect ownership interest in any or all lots in the sale resulting from an advance of monies or goods-in-trade or a guarantee of minimum net proceeds made by the Galleries to the seller.**

5. Subject to the exclusions listed in 5(A), the Galleries will accept the return of lots which, subject to the Galleries' sole judgment, have been misidentified or which have obvious faults that were present when the lot was in the Galleries' custody, but not so noted in the lot description. **All disputed lots must be received by the Galleries intact with the original packing material within 5 days of delivery to the buyer but no later than 30 days from the sale date. (5A) EXCLUSIONS: The following lots may not be returned for any reason, or may not be returned for the reasons stated: (i) lots containing 5 or more items; (ii) lots from buyers who registered for the pre-sale exhibition or received lots by postal viewing, thereby having had the opportunity to inspect them before the sale; (iii) any lot described with "faults," "defects" or a specific fault may not be returned because of any secondary fault; (iv) photographed lots may not be returned because of centering, margins, short/nibbed perforations or other factors shown in the photos; (v) the color of the item does not match the color photo in the sale catalogue or website listing; (vi) the description contains inaccurate information about the quantity known or reported; or (vii) a certification service grades a stamp lower than the grade stated in the description or on an accompanying certificate.**

6. Successful bidders, unless they have established credit with the Galleries prior to the sale, must make full payment in cleared funds before the lots will be delivered. Buyers not known to the Galleries must make payment in full within 3 days from the date of sale. **The Galleries retains the right to demand a cash deposit from anyone prior to bidder registration and/or to demand payment at the time the lot is knocked down, for any reason whatsoever.** In the event that any buyer refuses or fails to make payment in cash for any lot at the time it is knocked down to him, the auctioneer reserves the right to reoffer the lot immediately for sale to the highest bidder, and the first buyer of record shall be liable for any difference in price. **Credit cards (Visa, Mastercard and Discover only) can be accepted as payment, but will be subject to a 3.5% non-refundable Convenience Fee, which will be added to the total of the entire invoice (including hammer price, buyer's premium, shipping and transit insurance charges and any applicable**

taxes). **The buyer waives the right to dispute all credit card charges. Third-party payments will not be accepted. The payment must come from an account in the name of the buyer.**

7. If the purchase price has not been paid within the time limit specified above, nor lots taken up within 7 days from the date of sale, the lots may be resold by whatever means deemed appropriate by the Galleries, and any loss incurred from resale will be charged to the defaulting buyer, and/or the Galleries may seek any other remedy prescribed by law to enforce payment. **Any account more than 30 days in arrears will be subject to a late payment charge of 1½% per month as long as the account remains in arrears. Any expenses incurred in securing payment from delinquent accounts will be charged to the defaulter.** A fee of \$250.00 will be charged for a check returned for insufficient funds.

8. All lots are sold as genuine. **Any lot accompanied by a certificate issued by The Philatelic Foundation or by Professional Stamp Experts within 5 years of the sale date is sold "as is" and in accordance with the description on the certificate. Such lots may not be returned for any reason, including but not limited to a contrary certificate of opinion or change in grade.** Buyers may request a certificate for a lot containing not more than one item, which does not have a P.F. or P.S.E. certificate (dated as above), provided that the following conditions are met: (i) the purchase price must be paid in full, (ii) if submitted by the buyer, the lot must be submitted to an acceptable expertizing service with a properly executed application form within 21 days of the sale, (iii) a copy of the application form must be given to the Galleries, (iv) the Galleries retains the right to resubmit the item for reconsideration, without time limit or other restrictions, for the purpose of obtaining a satisfactory opinion, (v) the Galleries has the sole right to clear or cancel lots submitted for certification, whether or not a certificate has been issued, and (vi) in the event the lot is determined to be misidentified or misdescribed, pursuant to 5 and 5(A) of these Conditions, the Galleries will issue a refund to the buyer for the full purchase price and actual certification fees, but the reimbursement for certificate fees (and related costs) shall not exceed 10% of the hammer price of the lot. **Changes to a grade by the same certification service or a different grade from another certification service are not grounds for returning a lot.**

9. Until paid for in full, all lots remain the property of the Galleries on behalf of the seller.

10. Agents executing bids on behalf of clients may also be held responsible for all purchases made on behalf of clients, unless otherwise arranged prior to the sale.

11. **The buyer assumes all risk for delivery of purchased lots and agrees to pay for prescribed shipping costs. Buyers who receive lots in the U.S. are obligated to pay whatever sales tax or compensating use tax might be due, at any time, and buyers outside the U.S. are responsible for all customs duties.**

12. **The bidder consents that any action or proceeding against it may be commenced and maintained in any court within the State of New York or in the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York, that the courts of the State of New York and United States District Court for the Southern District of New York shall have jurisdiction with respect to the subject matter hereof and the person of the bidder. The bidder agrees not to assert any defense to any action or proceeding initiated by Galleries based upon improper venue or inconvenient forum. The bidder agrees that any action brought by the bidder shall be commenced and maintained only in a Federal Court in the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York or the State Court in the county in which Galleries has its principal place of business in New York. The bidder agrees not to use a public conflict resolution service and not to use any form of social media to publish comments or information about the Galleries and its employees which might harm the Galleries' reputation or business.**

13. **These Conditions of Sale shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the substantive laws of the State of New York, and shall constitute an agreement that shall be binding on the parties, and their respective heirs, administrators, distributees, successors and assignees.**

*Revised 9/2023*

## Conditions of Sale for The Buccleuch Block (read carefully before bidding)

**LOT 4 IN THIS CATALOGUE (THE “BUCCLEUCH BLOCK” OR “LOT”) WILL BE OFFERED AT PUBLIC AUCTION BY ROBERT A. SIEGEL AUCTION GALLERIES, INC. (“GALLERIES”) ON BEHALF OF THE CONSIGNOR. BY BIDDING ON THIS LOT, WHETHER DIRECTLY OR THROUGH A THIRD PARTY, IN PERSON, BY TELEPHONE, FACSIMILE, INTERNET OR BY ANY OTHER MEANS, THE BIDDER ACKNOWLEDGES AND AGREES TO ALL OF THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS OF SALE. THESE CONDITIONS OF SALE SUPERSEDE ANY OTHERS.**

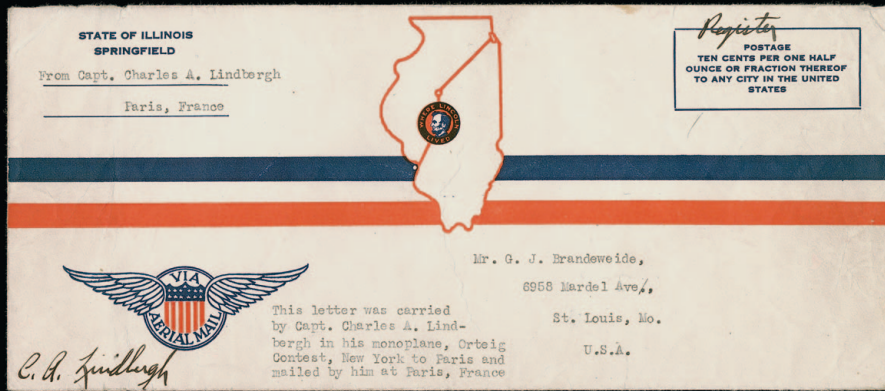
1. The highest bidder acknowledged by the auctioneer shall be the buyer. The term “final bid” means the last bid acknowledged by the auctioneer, which is normally the highest bid offered. **The purchase price payable by the buyer will be the sum of the final bid and a commission of 18% of the final bid (“buyer’s premium”), together with any sales tax, use tax or customs duties due on the sale.**
2. The auctioneer has the right to reject any bid, to advance the bidding at his discretion and, in the event of a dispute, to determine the successful bidder, to continue the bidding or to reoffer and resell the lot in dispute. The Galleries’ record of the final sale shall be conclusive.
3. The Galleries will execute bidding instructions on behalf of clients, but will not be responsible for the failure to execute such bids or for any errors in the execution of such bids.
4. **This lot is offered subject to a confidential minimum bid (“reserve”), below which the lot will not be sold. If the lot does not reach its reserve or opening bid requested by the auctioneer, it will be announced as “passed” and excluded from the prices realized lists after the sale.**
5. The successful bidder, unless they have established credit with the Galleries prior to the sale, must make full payment in cleared funds before the lot will be delivered. Buyers not known to the Galleries must make payment in full within 3 days from the date of sale. **The Galleries retains the right to demand a cash deposit from anyone prior to bidder registration and/or to demand payment at the time the lot is knocked down, for any reason whatsoever.** In the event that any buyer refuses or fails to make payment in cash for the lot at the time it is knocked down to him, the auctioneer reserves the right to reoffer the lot immediately for sale to the highest bidder, and the first buyer of record shall be liable for any difference in price. Credit cards (Visa, Mastercard and Discover only) can be accepted as payment, but will be subject to a 3.5% non-refundable Convenience Fee, which will be added to the total of the entire invoice (including hammer price, buyer’s premium, shipping and transit insurance charges and any applicable taxes). **The buyer waives the right to dispute all credit card charges. Third-party payments will not be accepted. The payment must come from an account in the name of the buyer.**
6. **The Buccleuch Block will be held by the Galleries until all amounts due from the buyer have been paid in full.**
7. If the purchase price has not been paid within the time limit specified above, nor the lot taken up within 7 days from the date of sale, the lot will be resold by whatever means deemed appropriate by the Galleries, and any loss incurred from resale will be charged to the defaulting buyer. Any account more than 30 days in arrears will be subject to a late payment charge of 1.5% per month as long as the account remains in arrears. Any and all expenses, including legal fees without limitation, incurred in securing payment will be charged to the defaulting buyer.
8. **The Buccleuch Block offered in this sale is sold “as is” and the buyer has no return privileges nor will the Galleries offer or sell the lot subject to third-party certification.**
9. Until paid for in full, the lot remains the property of the Galleries on behalf of the seller.
10. Agents executing bids on behalf of clients will be held responsible for all purchases made on behalf of their clients unless otherwise arranged in writing prior to the sale.
11. **The Galleries has full and final decision-making power regarding arrangements for delivery and transportation of the lot. The buyer assumes all risk for delivery and transportation of purchased lot and agrees to pay for prescribed shipping costs. Buyers who receive the lot in the U.S. are obligated to pay whatever sales tax or compensating use tax might be due at any time, and buyers outside the U.S. are responsible for all customs duties due at any time.**
12. **The bidder consents that any action or proceeding against it may be commenced and maintained in any court within the State of New York or in the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York, that the courts of the State of New York and United States District Court for the Southern District of New York shall have jurisdiction with respect to the subject matter hereof and the person of the bidder. The bidder agrees not to assert any defense to any action or proceeding initiated by Galleries based upon improper venue or inconvenient forum. The bidder agrees that any action brought by the bidder shall be commenced and maintained only in a Federal Court in the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York or the State Court in the county in which Galleries has its principal place of business in New York. The bidder agrees not to use a public conflict resolution service and not to use any form of social media to publish comments or information about the Galleries and its employees which might harm the Galleries’ reputation or business.**
13. These Conditions of Sale shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the substantive laws of the State of New York, and shall constitute an agreement that shall be binding on the parties, and their respective heirs, administrators, distributees, successors and assignees.



Stolen Pony Cover (lot 1)



Inverted Jenny Position 99 (lot 2)



Signed cover carried on Lindbergh's May 1927 nonstop transatlantic flight (lot 3)



The Buccleuch Block (lot 4)



India 1854 Half-Anna 9/2 Arches block (lot 5)



China "Countess Caroline" cover (lot 6)



# RARITIES

IT SEEMS LIKE IT WAS JUST A MONTH AGO THAT WE PACKED UP our booth at the Javits center after World Stamp Show-NY 2016. The next international exhibition in Boston in 2026 felt like a distant event.

Yet, here we are.

From May 23 to May 30, philatelists from around the world will gather at the Boston Convention Center, which I recently learned is now named the Thomas Michael Menino Convention and Exhibition Center, after the longest serving mayor of Boston.

Exhibitors will mount their pages in the frames. Dealers will present their inventories to prospective buyers. Societies will hold seminars and meetings. Judges will make their notes and score the exhibits. The public will navigate seemingly endless rows of exhibits and stands.

Almost every evening, members of various philatelic associations will sit for dinners and speeches, culminating in the Friday evening Palmares, where the winners of the Grand Prix awards will be announced.

This will be my fifth international hosted in the United States. I was 14 in 1976 when INTERPHIL took place, and I profoundly regret not making the two-hour trip from my home in northern New Jersey to attend that exhibition. If I had, I could now say this is my sixth U.S. international.

When we made our plans to participate in Boston 2026 World Expo, we never intended to hold an auction on site. The Buccleuch Block changed our minds. We were entrusted with the sale of the greatest stamp discovery in modern history—the block of 48 of the Great Britain 1840 Two-Pence Blue found in a Scottish palace just as World War II ended. When we considered the different venues for the auction, we decided that a truly international philatelic event—Boston 2026—was ideal.


A one-lot auction is awkward. Fortunately, we were able to move a few lots from our annual Rarities of the World sale in June to the special Boston 2026 auction with the Buccleuch Block. In this catalog we present all of the world-class rarities in the order they will be offered. We have also produced a separate hardcover catalog for the Buccleuch Block, to enshrine this magnificent item in a book for philatelic bibliophiles.

On May 28, the Buccleuch Block will be offered at auction for the first time since it was issued in 1840 and found hidden in a Scottish palace 81 years ago. We hope spectators and serious bidders alike will attend the auction in Room 102B at the convention center.

I might have missed 1976, but I hope to make the most out of 2026.

—SCOTT R. TREPEL

Received from a Pony Express }  
Mail Station in July 22<sup>d</sup> }  
1860 }  
Received  
May 1<sup>st</sup> 1862  
Mr. Wm. A. Hedden  
Newark  
New Jersey



Received from the  
Station in  
Newark



Stolen Pony Cover (lot 1)—front and back

## Sale 1380

To be offered on Thursday, May 28, 2026, at 4:00 p.m. (EDT)  
on location at Boston 2026 World Expo—Room 102B

## Lot 1

### One of two recorded Pony Express covers stolen by Indians

*“Pony Express, July 22d” (1860).* Magenta manuscript way-mail marking on **10c Pale Green on Buff Nesbitt entire (U16a)** addressed in the same hand (in brownish-black ink) to *“Mr. Wm. A. Hedenberg, Newark, New Jersey”*, stolen by Indians on or about July 28 at the Platte Bridge Station in Wyoming and recovered nearly two years later, *“recovered from a Mail Stolen in 1860”* written once across the backflap and again along the left edge, embossed stamp cancelled by circular grid applied at New York City post office, neat receipt docketing *“Received May 1st 1862”*, some effects of exposure and two backflaps are missing, but the markings and address are intact, restoration not affecting the stamp or markings

THIS “WAY” COVER WAS ADDED TO THE EASTBOUND PONY EXPRESS MOCHILLA ABOUT SIX DAYS BEFORE THE RIDER WAS THROWN FROM HIS HORSE WHILE CROSSING THE PLATTE RIVER BRIDGE IN WYOMING IN JULY 1860. THE MAIL FROM SAN FRANCISCO AND THIS “WAY” COVER WERE IN THE MOCHILLA STOLEN BY INDIANS AND RECOVERED IN 1862. THE TWO KNOWN “STOLEN PONY” COVERS WERE MAILED AT NEW YORK CITY, DELIVERED TO THE ADDRESSEES, AND TODAY SURVIVE AS THE ONLY TANGIBLE EVIDENCE OF THIS REMARKABLE “WILD WEST” DRAMA.

FKW census E11. Trip ET-15. Ex “Alyeska” collection (Sale 1038).

**Estimate \$200,000-300,000**

#### The incident at Platte Bridge Station

The mochilla carrying the “Stolen Pony” mail left San Francisco on Saturday, July 21, 1860, and travelled 1,200 miles east to the Platte River Bridge in pre-territorial Wyoming, at which point the rider was thrown from his horse. The horse and mochilla went missing, and neither was recovered despite the efforts of a 20-man search party over a period of 10 days. The incident is documented in a news article published in the *San Francisco Bulletin* on September 29, 1860 (shown right).

The fate of the horse will never be known, but the mochilla with the Pony Express mail was stolen by Indians, as stated retrospectively in the manuscript notations on the two known “Stolen Pony” covers. The mochilla was missing for two years until it was traded, found or possibly recaptured in 1862. Both covers reached the addressees at the beginning of May 1862.

Other than the *Bulletin* news article, neither the loss nor recovery of the July 21 Pony Express mail is mentioned in any contemporary reports known to us. Consequently, we must try to reconstruct the history of the Platte River Bridge incident and the “Stolen Pony” mail using the evidence in hand.

**FATE OF THE MISSING PONY EXPRESS.**—Considerable interest has been felt here as to the fate of the Pony Express that left San Francisco on the 21st of July last, and what has become of the letters which it carried. We learn from a communication by the Secretary of the Pony Express Company at Leavenworth city, dated 14th September, instant, to the agent of the company in San Francisco, that an accident befel the Express in question, when going East. In crossing the “Platte Bridge,” the rider was thrown from his horse, and the animal, with the letter-bags upon him, ran off. Some twenty men were employed to search the country, during a period of ten days, for the horse and bags; but, up to the date of the letter by the agent at Leavenworth city, no tidings had been received there on the subject.

*San Francisco Bulletin*, September 29, 1860, reporting the “Fate of the Missing Pony Express” and the loss of the July 21 eastbound mail when the rider was thrown from his horse on the Platte River Bridge in Wyoming

continued



## The unreliable Pony Express of June and July 1860

The Pony Express in June and July 1860 was a struggling enterprise trying to overcome the major disruptions caused by the war between Paiute Indians and white settlers in western Nevada, which was then part of Utah Territory. The war started on May 7, 1860, with the raid on Williams Station. It reached its climax with the Second Battle of Pyramid Lake on June 2-4, in which the war chief Numaga and the Washoe Regiment's commander, Colonel Jack Hays, led their respective armies in a three-hour fight that ended with the Paiutes withdrawing north to the Black Rock Desert region.

The 360-mile stretch of the Pony Express route between Carson City and Deep Creek (about 150 miles west of Salt Lake City) was repeatedly attacked by Indians, beginning on May 20 with the raids on Cold Springs and Simpson's Park stations. Reports of stations burned, stock run off and station keepers killed caused COC&PP officials to announce on May 31 the suspension of the Pony Express and cancellation of the June 1 departure from San Francisco.

There were no new eastbound runs from California or Carson Valley until July 7. The May 25 express from San Francisco, which was interrupted and forced to return to Carson City, continued east on June 9, accompanied by a military escort. It carried the May 25 mail and telegraph dispatches sent to Carson City through June 8, but no additional mail from California. The express arrived at St. Joseph on June 25, a 16-day trip from Carson City.

The mails bound for California dated May 20, May 27, June 3 and June 10 at St. Joseph were held there until an army escort could accompany the riders. The first "guarded" express left St. Joseph on Wednesday, June 13, with an escort of 25 U.S. troops, and it arrived at San Francisco on June 25. Another California-bound express departed from St. Joseph with mail and telegraph dispatches received up to 11 p.m. on Saturday, June 16 (*Sacramento Daily Union*, June 30). It arrived at Carson City on June 29 and San Francisco on June 30, a 14-day trip. This express also travelled with a military escort for part of the trip.

## The Pony Express service from California resumes

In June and July 1860, Bolivar Roberts, the COC&PP Division V superintendent in charge of the day-to-day operation of the route between Sacramento and Roberts Creek, led a team of workers to repair and rebuild damaged stations, to resupply the route with horses and materials, and to replace employees who had been killed or quit their stations. The militia and U.S. army regulars assisted in protecting the men sent to accomplish this task.

Indians continued to attack express stations and riders, and skirmish with soldiers, but by the beginning of July, the COC&PP managers announced their readiness to restart regular express runs from California and to operate the relay across the still-dangerous part of the route between Carson City and Ruby Valley.

The plan to resume service was announced in the San Francisco *Bulletin* on July 3, and the first eastbound trip was scheduled to depart on Saturday, July 7. Curiously, other than this notice and advertisements placed by COC&PP, the California newspapers were surprisingly silent on the subject of the revived Pony Express. As far as we can find, there were no published reports of the outbound express in the San Francisco or Sacramento papers, nor was a telegraph report received from Carson City, notifying the public that the express had arrived and departed.

The only news items confirming that the July 7 express actually left San Francisco are reports from Salt Lake City and St. Joseph. From Salt Lake City the July 18 *Deseret News* reported that the express from the West had arrived on Monday evening, July 16, carrying news that the Pony Express "came through from Carson without molestation." The report from St. Joseph dated July 25 (*Sacramento Daily Union*, August 6) stated that the Pony Express with dates to July 7 arrived on Tuesday, July 24. The 17-day trip from San Francisco to St. Joseph was slow.

Another eastbound express left on Wednesday, July 11, which arrived at St. Joseph on July 26, also a somewhat slow trip of 15 days. The July 7 and 11 expresses—both unusually slow—were delayed between Carson City and Roberts Creek, due to renewed Indian attacks.

The next express run from San Francisco departed on Saturday, July 14. The July 28 report from St. Joseph (*Daily Alta California*, August 9) announced the earlier arrivals of the expresses carrying the July 7 and 11 mails, and anticipated the arrival of the July 14 mail. No further mention of the July 14 mail can be found, but the July 31 St. Louis report (*Sacramento Daily Union*, August 13) applauded the 12-day trip made by the express carrying the Wednesday July 18 mail, which arrived at St. Joseph on July 30.

### **The Indian attacks continue**

The May-June Indian attacks on the Pony Express deeply impacted the enterprise and threatened to destroy it. The measurable costs included replacing infrastructure—buildings, horses and equipment, all at inflated war-zone prices—which company officials calculated to be at least \$75,000. The intangible cost was in lost patronage and diminished public confidence.

As the Pony Express tried to revive itself in July and August, the Indians continued to strike at riders and stations. Military escorts and troops in proximity to stations offered some protection. The COC&PP company distributed firearms to their employees for protection. Yet the guerrilla-style tactics of the Indian warriors made it very difficult to defend against attacks.

The July 25 *Deseret News* published a letter written by W. H. Shearman from Deep Creek on July 22, which states that the express just arrived (possibly the July 18 express) and reports that a rider named Armstrong was “shot through the thigh” by Indians and “rode 30 miles after it was done.” According to Shearman, two others were shot at, and Paiutes stole two horses from soldiers. Finally, he reports that “the other end of the road is re-stocked as far as Smith’s Creek, 100 miles west of Ruby.”

Small-scale attacks and a major fight with Indians are described in an article published in the August 21 *Daily Alta California*. These attacks took place at Spring Valley, Deep Creek, Shell Creek and Egan Canyon stations during the first half of August.

The war between the Pyramid Lake Paiutes and whites in western Nevada rippled across the Great Basin and Great Plains. The Shoshone, Goshute, Cheyenne, Arapaho and Sioux tribes in the remote regions of Utah and Wyoming presented an even greater threat. In late July—under a moonlit sky 700 miles east of Ruby Valley—a lone rider carrying his mochilla across the Platte River Bridge in Wyoming would experience the harsh reality of Indian warfare.

### **Guinard’s Bridge and Fort Caspar, Wyoming**

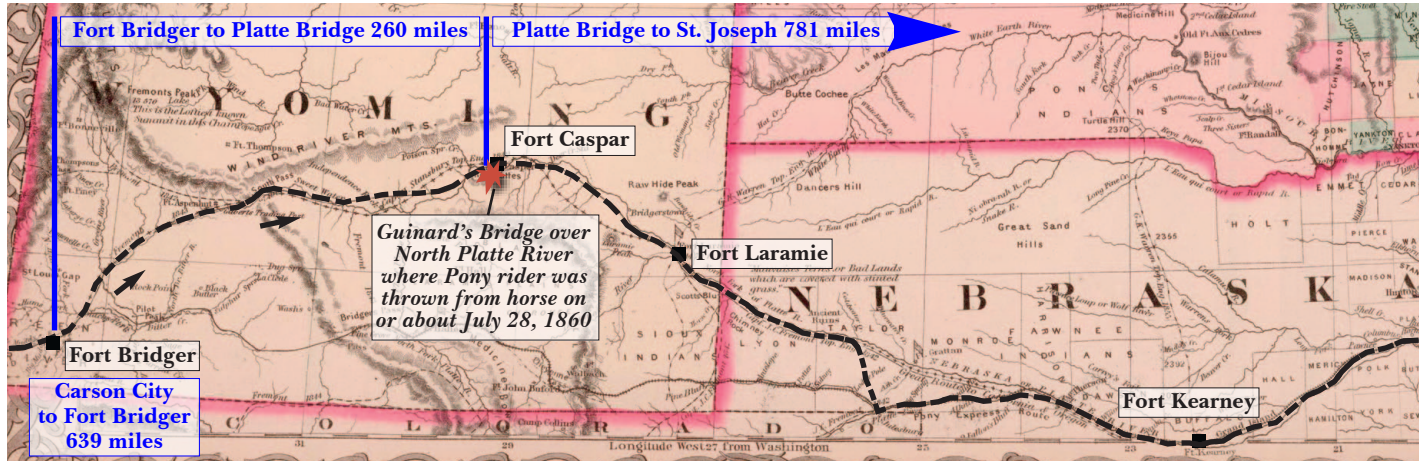
With the bi-weekly eastbound Pony Express trips of July 7, 11, 14 and 18 demonstrating increasing reliability and speed, the newspapers became more optimistic about the Pony’s future. In reporting the trip scheduled for July 21, the *Daily Alta California* gushed to its readers, “An unusually large number of letters have already been delivered for it, and it is expected that the express bags will be more fully freighted than ever before.”

Based on an analysis of other Pony trips, the July 21 “Stolen Pony” express rider crossed the Platte River Bridge, where he met his fate, at approximately 9 p.m. on Saturday, July 28. That night in 1860 a three-quarter moon lit up the landscape. Bright moonlight—the so-called Comanche Moon—was preferred by Indian warriors for night attacks.

The Platte Bridge Pony Express station was situated at the Upper Crossing of the North Platte River on the South Pass route to California and Oregon. The South Pass played a key role in the history of western migration, going as far back as 1812 when the Astorians returned from a fur trade expedition under Robert Stuart. In 1847 the Mormons established a ferry at the Upper Crossing, near the future site of Guinard’s Bridge and Fort Caspar.

Several shoddy bridges were built across the river, but they washed away when the river rose. Two solidly constructed bridges became the primary crossing points. The first was built at the Lower Crossing in late 1852 by John Baptiste Richard Jr., the son of a famous fur trader. The French pronunciation of his name gave the bridge its popular title, Reshaw’s Bridge. It was actually Richard’s second bridge (the first washed away), and was located about six miles south of

continued



Map of the Pony Express route between Fort Bridger and Fort Kearney, showing Platte Bridge Station, the location of Guinard's Bridge, where the Pony Express rider was thrown from his horse and the July 21 mail was stolen by Indians

the Mormon Ferry. Reshaw's Bridge and trading post served emigrants and wagon trains on the Oregon-California Trail, as well as the U.S. army station established near the bridge crossing. Richard also traded with the neighboring Indian tribes—Lakota Sioux, Northern Cheyenne and Arapaho—and his business carried on through the Civil War.

The second bridge was built in 1859 at the Upper Crossing, near Mormon Ferry, by Richard's former partner, a French Canadian named Louis Guinard. His wife was a Shoshone, and Guinard traded with the Shoshone tribe located near his post.

In 1859, Jones, Russell and Company—Russell was one of the three principals in COC&PP—acquired the mail contract for the Central Route. They used Guinard's Bridge and made his trading post a stage stop. When Russell and the COC&PP launched the Pony Express in April 1860, Guinard's trading post was used as a relay station, and riders crossed the river on his bridge. In 1861 the Civil War caused Congress to transfer the overland mail from the southern Butterfield Route to the Central Route, which increased the traffic over the South Pass and Guinard's Bridge.

**The addressee—William A. Hedenberg**

The "Stolen Pony" cover offered in this sale is addressed to "Wm. A. Hedenberg" in Newark, New Jersey. William Alexander Henry Hedenberg died in 1903 at the age of 73. His obituary (*New York Times*, April 18, 1903) identifies him as a "Forty-Niner" who was born in Newark in 1830, the son of John Charles Hedenberg, "who more than fifty years ago owned the largest carriage factory in the world." Carriages and wagons were big business in the 1850s, and we can imagine William, in his adventurous youth, heading West to promote the family firm. The *New York Times* article identifies William as a member of the Sacramento Society of California Pioneers and an associate of several prominent California businessmen. He is also described as having owned an interest in the great Comstock mine.



Illustrated view of Guinard's Bridge over the North Platte River in Wyoming

From advertisements in the *Sacramento Daily Union*, we know that in January 1860 William Hedenberg formed a partnership with another prominent Californian, David Meeker. The firm of Meeker and Hedenberg had offices located at 227 J Street in Sacramento and advertised their products as “wagon and carriage materials... hubs, spokes, felloes, wagon poles, bent poles, rims and shafts, axles, &c.” The announcement of their partnership also noted that “W. A. Hedenberg will make their purchases in the Atlantic States, and they intend to keek [keep] a large stock of the best quality to be found...” The June 13 advertisement gives William Hedenberg’s address as “Newark, N.J.” This explains why someone addressed a Pony Express envelope to William Hedenberg in Newark in July 1860. He was there procuring products for the new Meeker & Hedenberg business in Sacramento.

### **The unknown correspondent and point of origin**

Knowing of Hedenberg’s partnership with David Meeker, it is tempting to say that Meeker addressed the cover to Hedenberg from Sacramento. The problem is that the address and Pony Express marking were written by the same person, and there is no evidence that Meeker was a COC&PP employee with authority to apply a Pony Express marking. The address precisely matches the “*Pony Express, July 22d*” marking. The Pony Express marking is magenta, while the address is brownish-black, which rules out the possibility that they were written at the same time. One explanation is that the envelope was addressed by someone who had authority to apply a Pony Express marking. He wrote the address in black, then wrote the Pony Express marking in magenta later when he was preparing the outbound mail. Handstamped Pony Express markings were used only at the principal offices, and handwritten postmarks were normal for smaller stations. The earliest use of a handstamp at Sacramento is January 7, 1861, so manuscript markings might have been applied there before the oval handstamp was introduced.

Without evidence that David Meeker had authority to apply a Pony Express marking, it seems likely that this “Stolen Pony” cover was addressed and postmarked by someone else, most likely a station agent or employee of COC&PP. The letter is no longer with the cover, but perhaps the sender was in communication with Hedenberg about ordering wagon material or wood products to repair the damage from Indian attacks. The absence of a “Paid” marking or \$5 fee (as far as one can see) also supports the possibility that this was sent on company business.

The point of origin is also uncertain. Other way-mail covers with the station identified are usually dated on the day the express was at the station. Therefore, it seems likely that the cover was put into the mochilla on the same day it was postmarked, July 22, at a point between Sacramento and a short distance east of Carson City.

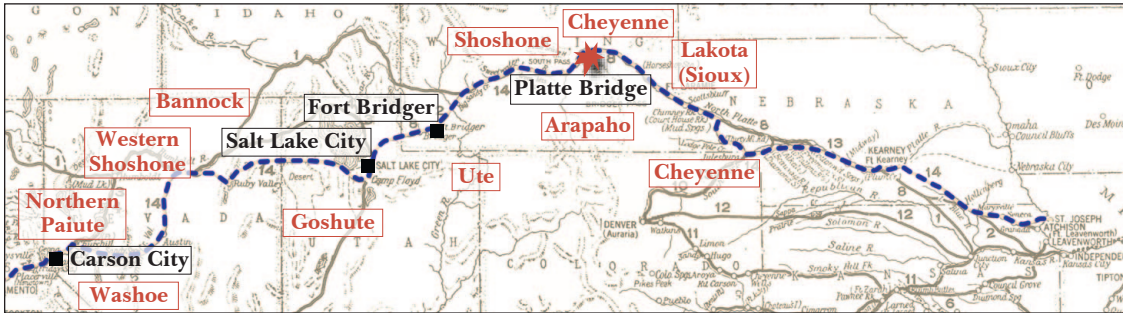
### **The rider and the Indians**

The identity of the rider who carried the July 21 mail over Guinard’s Bridge will probably never be known. There were numerous Pony Express riders who ran the relay through the South Pass, including one of the most famous, William “Buffalo Bill” Cody, whose 300-mile (plus or minus) ride from Red Buttes to Rocky Ridge and back became the stuff of Wild West lore (some say it was exaggerated or concocted). Express riders were generally young men with experience riding fast horses over rugged trails. The severe conditions—long rides, dangerous terrain, unpredictable (or predictably bad) weather and the threat of Indian attack—naturally selected men who were willing and adaptable. Each rider was furnished with a buckskin suit that repelled rain and snow, and they were armed.

Although the rider’s name remains a mystery, we can be confident of two things: that he was experienced in the saddle, and that he was thrown from his horse because of an Indian attack. A trained express rider crossing a bridge was unlikely to be thrown from his horse. The only question is how an Indian marksman might have missed his slow-moving target. Perhaps the Indians wanted the horse, but showed mercy on the rider.

It is also impossible to determine exactly which Indian tribe’s warriors were responsible for the attack, but we can examine the tribes across the region for possibilities.

continued



Map showing relative locations of the major Indian tribes along the Pony Express route

As the map above shows, the Paiutes were hundreds of miles west of Platte Bridge Station and could not have been involved. We know that Western Shoshone and Bannock warriors joined the fight in Nevada, and it is possible that the Shoshones living north of Platte Bridge Station were harassing Pony Express riders. Likewise, the Cheyenne and Lakota Sioux tribes on the north side of the river were responsible for a number of attacks on white “trespassers.” On the south side of the river were the Arapahos, another hostile tribe with a history of attacks on whites in the area. The Utes and Goshutes were concentrated farther west, near Salt Lake City, but Ute attacks on Pass Creek and Grand Pass in northwestern Wyoming occurred in 1863, so they are also “suspects” in the Platte Bridge Station incident.



A Shoshone warrior in full dress

### Recovery and delivery in 1862

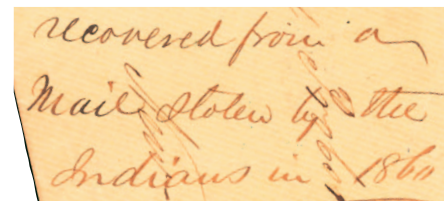
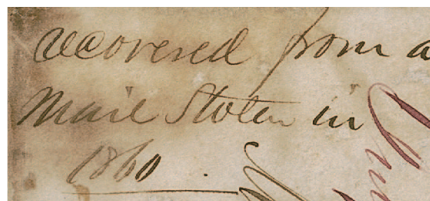
The two known “Stolen Pony” covers were delivered to their respective addressees on May 1 and 3, 1862. Assuming that no more than a month passed between the time of recovery and delivery, the mochilla was found, traded or recaptured in April 1862.

There is an obvious difference between the cover originating in San Francisco on July 21 (shown on opposite page) and the July 22 way-mail cover sent from somewhere between Sacramento and Carson City offered in this sale. The July 21 cover is pristine, and the July 22 cover shows the effects of exposure to weather. The explanation for this difference is simple. Mail from either end of the Pony Express run was wrapped in oiled silk cloth to protect it from rain, mud and water, before it was placed in the pockets of regular mail. Way mail was not.

It seems likely that the mochilla was intact when it was found, and that it was returned to Wells Fargo & Co., the logical place to send it in April 1862. In support of the theory that Wells Fargo & Co. handled the recovered mail is the presence of identical New York City grid cancels on both covers. Rather than mailing them from California or from a location near the point of discovery, Wells Fargo & Co. evidently forwarded them inside an express package to its New York office, where they were placed into the mails.

If Wells Fargo & Co. handled the “Stolen Pony” mail, then they are also the likely source of the manuscript notations on the two covers. The writing is similar, if not identical, and the wording is

Recovery notations in similar handwriting on the two “Stolen Pony” covers—the notation at left reads “recovered from a mail stolen in 1860” and the one at right reads “recovered from a mail stolen by the Indians in 1860”





The other "Stolen Pony" cover sent from San Francisco. Unlike way mail, the mail from the ends of the route was wrapped in oiled silk cloth for protection, which explains why this cover shows no signs of exposure.

From the William H. Gross collection. Photo courtesy of the Smithsonian National Postal Museum.

almost the same. On the July 21 cover, it reads *"recovered from a mail stolen by the Indians in 1860."* On the July 22 cover, the words "by the Indians" are omitted. Obviously, the covers were stolen at the same time. The identification of Indians as the thieves on the July 21 cover suggests that Pony Express officials knew more, or learned more, than the "Fate of the Missing Pony Express" article revealed. Perhaps the COC&PP, anxious to restore confidence, deliberately kept Indians out of the story in 1860.

### The fate of the two Stolen Pony covers

The July 21 cover with the 10c adhesive stamp was owned by three generations of the Lichtenstein and Dale families. When it finally reached the market in 2004, it was purchased in the H. R. Harmer auction by William H. Gross (with Charles Shreve as his agent) for \$450,000 plus the 15% buyer's premium, for a total of \$517,500.

Despite selling almost all of his vast collection, Mr. Gross retained ownership of the "Stolen Pony" cover as one of his favorite items. For years the cover has been on loan to the Smithsonian National Postal Museum, where it continues to be one of the star attractions of their exhibits. Whether or not Mr. Gross decides to make it a permanent gift to the museum is the question.

The July 22 cover offered in this sale was owned by a doctor in Alaska for many years. His collection was sold by the Siegel firm on March 22, 2013, under the pseudonym "Alyeska" (Sale 1038). The Stolen Pony cover (lot 3) sold for \$200,000 plus the 15% buyer's premium, for a total of \$230,000.

If Mr. Gross chooses to make his cover a permanent part of the Smithsonian National Postal Museum's collection, the cover offered in this sale could become the only privately held Stolen Pony cover.



Inverted Jenny Position 99 (lot 2)

## Lot 2

**24c 1918 Inverted Jenny, Scott C3a  
Position 99 with sheet selvage**

**24c Carmine Rose & Blue, Center Inverted (C3a).** Position 99 with bottom sheet selvage, the ninth stamp in the bottom row of the sheet of 100 purchased by William T. Robey on May 14, 1918, original gum, small hinge remnant, tiny natural inclusion speck, few perf separations between stamp and selvage and natural flat plate gum bends (not mentioned on certificate), faint semi-translucent stain spots

VERY FINE CENTERING AND BEAUTIFUL RICH COLORS. THIS IS ONLY THE SECOND TIME THIS STAMP—POSITION 99 WITH BOTTOM SHEET SELVAGE—HAS BEEN OFFERED AT AUCTION SINCE 1929.

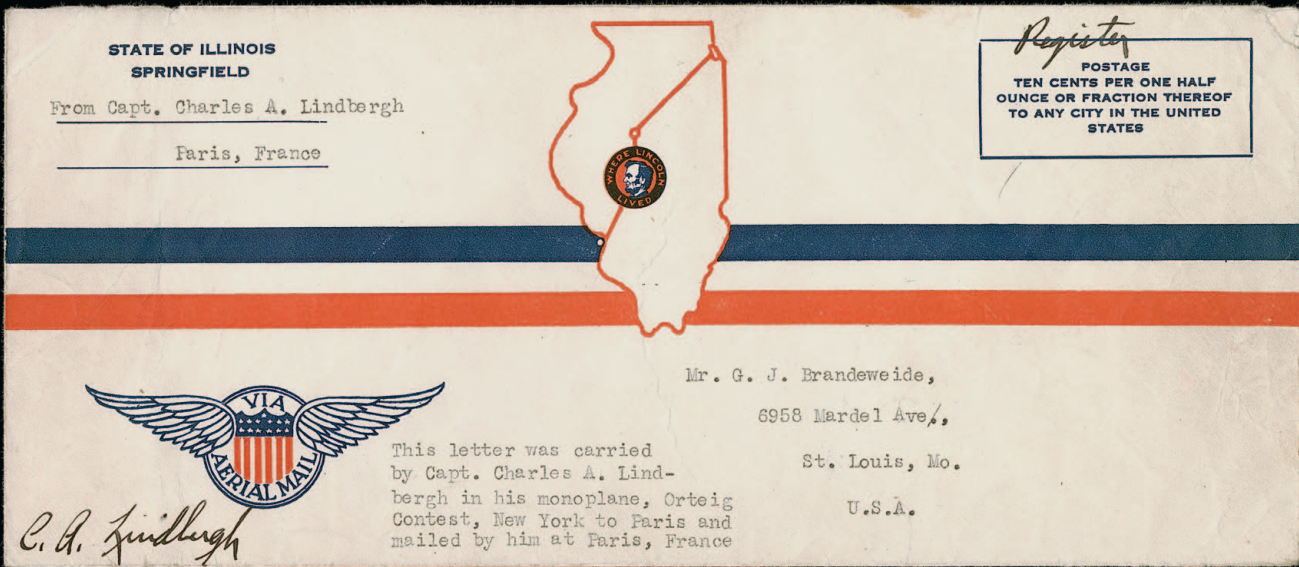
The original sheet of one hundred Inverted Jenny errors was purchased by William T. Robey on May 14, 1918, the first day the stamps went on sale in all three principal airmail route cities: Washington, D.C., New York and Philadelphia. Robey bought the sheet for its \$24 face value at the New York Avenue Post Office window in the District of Columbia. On Sunday, May 19, Robey agreed to give Eugene Klein, a prominent Philadelphia stamp dealer, a one-day option to buy the sheet for \$15,000. Klein exercised his option on Monday, May 20, in a late afternoon phone call, and he confirmed it with a registered letter to Robey sent in the evening mail. The sheet was delivered to Klein's office by Robey and his father-in-law on the following day, Tuesday, May 21, 1918.

No later than Monday, May 20, the day Klein exercised his option, he had arranged to sell the sheet for \$20,000 to Colonel Edward H. R. Green. Half of the \$5,000 profit went to Klein's partners, Percy McGraw Mann and Joseph A. Steinmetz. Klein was then authorized by Colonel Green to divide the sheet into singles and blocks, and to sell all but a few key position blocks.

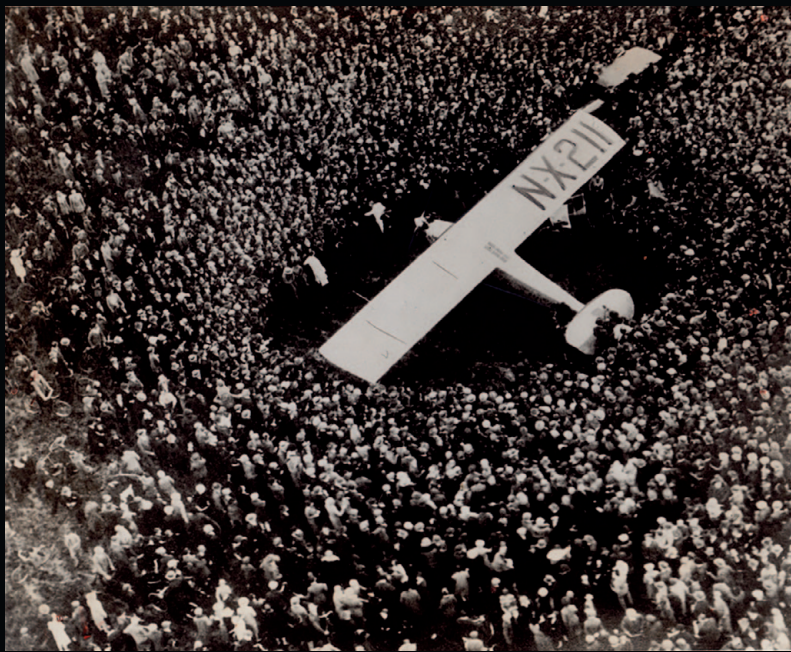
George Amick, in his definitive reference book on the Inverted Jenny, referred to this stamp without knowing its position number (p. 94). It was sold in 1929 for \$1,575 in the H. A. Robinette sale of the Reid S. Baker collection. The buyer was a collector named Charles L. Jackman, who assembled his United States stamp collection in 1928 and 1929. Mr. Jackman was a prominent businessman in Concord, New Hampshire, and served as chief executive officer of the Jackman Group of Insurance Companies and Chairman of the Board of Page Belting Manufacturing Company for decades. Mr. Jackman also served on the boards of several area banks, the Northern Railroad and United Life, as well as holding the office of police commissioner for the city of Concord. Mr. Jackman died in 1957, leaving his collection to the late Margaret Gesen, who kept it away from public view for the duration of her life. With her passing, the long-lost Position 99 was offered by us in 1994. We are offering it again to the market for the first time in 32 years.

With 1994 P.F. certificate. Ex Reid S. Baker and Margaret Gesen. Scott value \$500,000.

**Estimate \$250,000-350,000**



Signed cover carried on Lindbergh's May 1927 nonstop transatlantic flight (lot 3)



Lindbergh and the *Spirit of St. Louis*  
at Croydon Field, Surrey, England, May 29, 1927

## Lot 3

**A signed cover carried on Lindbergh's historic May 1927 transatlantic flight**

**Charles A. Lindbergh's Nonstop Transatlantic Flight in *The Spirit of St. Louis*, New York to Paris, May 20-21, 1927.** 4¼ by 9½-inch cover with red and blue printed design, including "State of Illinois, Springfield" corner card, map of Illinois and profile of Abraham Lincoln ("Where Lincoln Lives") at center, winged shield and "Via Aerial Mail" route designation at lower left, and postage requirements in frame at upper right, typewritten address to "Mr. G. J. Brandeweide, 6958 Mardel Ave., St. Louis, Mo., U.S.A.", typewritten sender's address at upper left "From Capt. Charles A. Lindbergh, Paris, France", five-line typewritten endorsement "**This letter was carried by Capt. Charles A. Lind-/bergh in his monoplane, Orteig/Contest, New York to Paris and/mailed by him at Paris, France**"—prepared in advance of the flight and carried by Lindbergh—**signed "C. A. Lindbergh"** and marked "*Register*" in his hand at upper right, opened at right; accompanied by Lindbergh's autograph note on American Embassy stationery ("*Regards, Charles A. Lindbergh*") and the large registered-mail cover used to return the souvenir flight cover to Gregory J. Brandeweide, bearing 3fr and 1fr stamps of France, cancelled at Paris on May 28, 1927, registry label and American Embassy return address, manuscript "*Pouch*" indicating that the cover and contents were carried in a United States diplomatic pouch

ONE OF THREE PIECES OF MAIL CARRIED BY CHARLES A. LINDBERGH ABOARD *THE SPIRIT OF ST. LOUIS* ON HIS EPOCHAL NONSTOP TRANSATLANTIC FLIGHT FROM NEW YORK TO PARIS. ARGUABLY THE MOST SIGNIFICANT POSTAL HISTORY ARTIFACT OF THE 20TH CENTURY.

Upon arriving at Le Bourget Aerodrome in Paris 33½ hours after taking off from Roosevelt Field on Long Island, Charles A. Lindbergh, a 25-year old American mail pilot, achieved historic fame as the first person to fly nonstop across the Atlantic. In technical aviation terms, his accomplishment displayed awesome navigating and flying skills, as well as phenomenal endurance. In more abstract terms, Lindbergh's flight fueled the age of aviation.

The practical possibilities of flight were significant in Lindbergh's aspirations. As a mail pilot flying under contract for the U.S. Post Office Department, Lindbergh was familiar with the great risks of flight and the small reward. The fledgling Air Mail Service inaugurated in 1918 depended on a corps of aviators who flew at the mercy of mechanics and weather. Between October 1919 and July 1921, accidents claimed the lives of 26 Air Mail Service employees, including 19 pilots. Lindbergh, despite crashing on his own route between St. Louis and Chicago, held strongly to his vision of future flight, writing:

What limitless possibilities aviation holds when planes can fly nonstop between New York and Paris! The year will surely come when passengers and mail fly every day from America to Europe. Of course flying will cost much more than transportation by surface ship; but letters can be written on light-weight paper, and there'll be people with such pressing business that they can afford the higher price of passage.

In preparing for his flight, Lindbergh's concern over fuel consumption outweighed most other considerations, including his personal comfort and safety. The *Spirit of St. Louis* was especially constructed for the 3,500-mile flight, becoming a virtual flying fuel tank. The pilot's forward window was sacrificed for fuel storage, and all equipment except items deemed absolutely essential was discarded. Mail, which Lindbergh was accustomed to carrying, also had to be sacrificed. In one account, after realizing how much excess fuel was available as he neared Paris, Lindbergh lamented "The gasoline left in my tanks when I reach France will weigh more than all the mail one of our DH's can carry between St. Louis and Chicago... I could have brought thousands of letters to Paris." In fact, by his own account, he brought only two pieces of mail, six letters of introduction and a business card. He stated "I'm taking one letter for Postmaster Conkling of Springfield—I couldn't say no to him—and one letter for my friend Gregory Brandeweide, who worked with me laying out the mail route. That's all—except for my messages of introduction." Although not specifically mentioned by Lindbergh, a third letter to his colleague, Joseph T. Hartson, must have made the journey—it was sold in our 2001 Rarities sale.

**Estimate \$75,000-100,000**



The Buccleuch Block (lot 4)

Lot 4°

## The Buccleuch Block

The largest multiple of either of  
the world's first two postage stamp issues  
owned privately or in a museum

## Great Britain, 1840, Two-Pence Blue (Scott 2; Stanley Gibbons 5)

Block of 48 from the bottom four rows of Plate 2, lettered QA-QL, RA-RL, SA-SL and TA-TL

Full sheet margins and imprint stating the price per stamp, row and sheet, and giving instructions for applying stamp to letter:

*PRICE 2d. Per Label. 2s/- Per Row of 12. £2... Per Sheet. Place the Labels ABOVE the Address and towards the RIGHT HAND SIDE of the Letter. In Wetting the Back be careful not to remove the Cement.*

Plate number "2" at bottom right and left corners—unused multiples from Plate 2 are considerably rarer than those from Plate 1

Positions QL, RI and TA are the only re-entries found on Plate 2

Original gum in Mint Never-Hinged state; brilliant color and impression on bright fresh paper; light vertical creasing from gum

Ex Gordon P. Bailey, Renato Mondolfo, Hassan Shaida and Guido Craveri.

Estimate \$5,000,000-7,500,000

## The world's first postage stamps

The Buccleuch Block—a mint never-hinged block of 48 of the Great Britain 1840 Two-Pence with the full imprint and plate numbers at bottom—is the largest multiple of either of the world's first two postage stamp issues owned privately or in a museum. Since its discovery in 1945, the Buccleuch Block's rarity, size, quality and importance in philatelic history have justified its exalted position in the pantheon of the world's greatest stamp rarities.



The Penny Black and Two-Pence Blue were the product of Rowland Hill's postal reforms in Great Britain. Working on the foundation established by Robert Wallace in the 1830s, Hill—a member of a family of fervent social and education reformers—began to advocate for postal reform, culminating in his pamphlet, *Post Office Reform: Its Importance and Practicability*, published in 1837. Hill argued that postage should no longer be treated as a form of taxation, but rather as a payment for service. He carefully calculated the cost of carrying a letter in England at approximately one-tenth of a penny. At that time, the actual charge was 6½ pence.

continued

Sir Rowland Hill—postal reformer and  
father of the postage stamp

Hill successfully changed two fundamental principles of postage rates. Instead of using the number of sheets of paper to determine single or multiple rates, Hill's plan implemented a weight class, with a single letter weighing up to a half-ounce. He also eliminated rates based on distance. A letter carried anywhere within Great Britain would be charged the same basic rate. Prepayment of postage was not mandatory, but it was encouraged through a double-rate charge for postage collected rather than prepaid.

The most significant philatelic element of Hill's plan was described as follows:

...a bit of paper just large enough to bear the stamp, and covered at the back with a glutinous wash, which the bringer might, by applying a little moisture, attach to the back of the letter.

The Penny Postage Bill was passed and approved by royal assent on August 17, 1839. The one-penny uniform rate went into effect on January 10, 1840. Effective May 6, 1840, the world's first postage stamps were officially authorized for use.

The Rowland Hill reforms were immediately successful and inspired similar movements throughout the world.



Great Britain 1840 1p Black and 2p Blue—the world's first postage stamps



Walter Francis Montagu Douglas Scott, 5th Duke of Buccleuch, 7th Duke of Queensberry (1806-1884)  
Courtesy of Nicholas Hillman

## Discovery of The Buccleuch Block

As the Allies celebrated victory over tyranny in Europe in 1945, the 8th Duke of Buccleuch—pronounced *buck-loo*, from the Scottish Gaelic term for “deer ravine”—instructed his personal secretary, Alexander Martin, to inventory the contents of Dalkeith Palace, a Scottish Ducal Seat in Midlothian, Scotland. In the Palace Library, the Duke's secretary discovered two large blocks of stamps issued by Great Britain in 1840 and 1841, neatly rolled up and stored in a

compartment in an old leather traveling writing desk set on a table. One of the blocks immediately gained fame as the greatest stamp discovery in modern post-war history—the Buccleuch Block offered in this sale.

The block was originally purchased by Walter Francis Montagu Douglas Scott, the 5th Duke of Buccleuch and 7th Duke of Queensberry (1806-1884). From 1842 to 1846, the Duke of Buccleuch was Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal.

Dalkeith Palace was built by the Buccleuch family during the first decade of the 18th century to replace the family's 12th century medieval castle. The Buccleuch family stopped using the house as a residence in 1914. It was occupied by troops during



Folded letter postmarked Dalkeith March 20, 1841, addressed to the 5th Duke of Buccleuch in Bowhill  
Cavendish Auctions



Dalkeith Palace Library, photographed in 1902 (Malan)  
[www.thecastlesofscotland.co.uk](http://www.thecastlesofscotland.co.uk)

World War I and World War II. Since 1986 Dalkeith Palace has been a residence for students from the United States. The current owner is Richard Montagu Douglas Scott, the 12th Duke of Buccleuch.

### Rarity of 1840 Two-Pence Blue unused blocks

The Buccleuch Block contains the bottom four rows of 12 from the sheet of 240 stamps, individually lettered QA-QL through TA-TL. The plate number “2” appears in the corners. The imprint in the bottom margin states the price of the “Labels” per single, row and sheet, gives instructions for affixing the stamp on the letter, and advises care in “Wetting the Back” to avoid removing the “Cement.” The block is extraordinarily fresh and has original gum that has never been hinged by a collector.

The total postage value of the Buccleuch Block is eight shillings, or 40% of one British pound. In 1840 that was roughly two days’ wages for a skilled tradesman. Such a large sum was rarely left and forgotten in the form of unused postage, which explains the great rarity of Penny Black and Two-Pence Blue unused multiples.

Only a few large unused (or “mint”) multiples of the Two-Pence Blue exist. The Royal Philatelic Collection owned by the British royal family contains a block of 38 from the upper left corner of the sheet. A part-sheet of 168 stamps from Plate 1, discovered in 1905 in Dublin and acquired by the Earl of Crawford, has since been divided into much smaller units. The discovery companion to the Buccleuch Block is a block of 55 of the 1841 One-Penny Red Brown.



Walter John Montagu Douglas Scott, 8th Duke of Buccleuch and 10th Duke of Queensberry, KT, GCVO, TD, PC (1894-1973)– the stamps were discovered during the 8th Duke of Buccleuch’s ownership

continued



The Buccleuch Block in the compartment of the traveling writing case, as shown in the H. R. Harmer Ltd. private treaty brochure  
Courtesy of Dr. Jan Huys

## The Buccleuch Block's philatelic journey

Within one year after its discovery in 1945, the Buccleuch Block was sold privately for £6,500 through H. R. Harmer Ltd. to Gordon P. Bailey, a collector in Surrey, England. When the Bailey collection was dispersed, the block was again sold privately. The brochure produced by H. R. Harmer Ltd. advertising the Buccleuch Block for sale at £8,000, on behalf of Bailey, shows a photograph of the block curled up in the compartment of "the traveling writing case" (shown here). The case itself accompanied the block for decades, but at a certain point (circa 1985) the case was separated from the block, and its location today is unknown.

The next owner of record was Renato Mondolfo (1918-1992), a dealer, collector and expert who was regarded as a philatelic prodigy. At the age of 13, prior to World War II, Mondolfo studied alongside legendary European philatelic experts. Over a lifetime career, he bought and sold many of the world's greatest stamp rarities, including the Buccleuch Block.

Italy stamp and first day cover honoring Renato Mondolfo, the famous philatelist who owned the Buccleuch Block  
[www.gm-storiapostale.it](http://www.gm-storiapostale.it)





Michael Lea



William Lea



Hassan Shaida



Guido Craveri

Michael and William Lea, British stamp dealers who arranged the private sale of the block to Hassan Shaida; Guido Craveri, European stamp dealer who bought the Shaida collection, including the Buccleuch Block

In 1985 the block was sold by William and Michael Lea, prominent British stamp dealers, to Hassan Shaida, an Iranian collector whose exhibit, “Queen Victoria: The Birth of the World’s First Postage Stamps,” won the Grand Prix National in Stamp World London 1990.

Soon after winning the Grand Prix, the entire Shaida collection, including the Buccleuch Block, was purchased by Guido Craveri, a European dealer who has handled many important collections and philatelic rarities.

The Buccleuch Block was one of twenty items displayed in the “Aristocrats of Philately” exhibit at ANPHILEX 1996 in New York City, the Collectors Club centenary event. The block was shown “on loan” from Tito Giamporcaro, and subsequently was acquired by the current owner, a private collector.

## Ranking the Top 10 World Philatelic Rarities

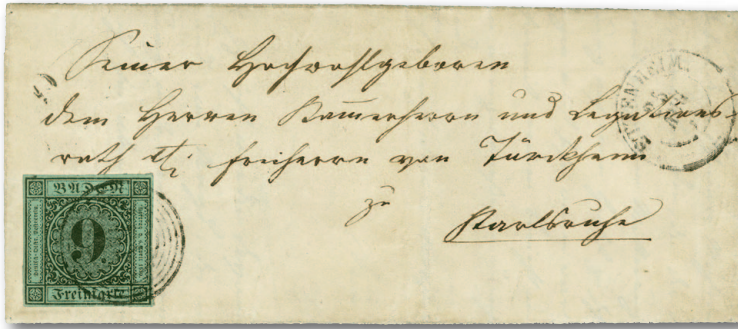
Any attempt to create a list of the Top 10 World Philatelic Rarities is bound to stir controversy. Tastes and values change. Certain countries rise in prominence, while interest in others wanes. Long periods of dormancy make old transaction values obsolete. Personal collecting or marketing bias also has a strong influence.

Nevertheless, we present a list of the Top 10 in the next two pages of this sale catalog, in order to create a “family photo” of major stamp rarities that have roughly equal status.

All of these stamps and covers are iconic philatelic items. Several have names, such as the “Pack Strip” (Brazil), the “Dawson Cover” (Hawaii), and the “Bordeaux Cover” (Mauritius). Each is valuable for its stamp component, not for “usage” of a common stamp. The items that have traded recently have sold for millions of dollars, with the exception of the Baden color error on cover, which sold at auction in the 2019 Köhler sale of the Haub collection (“Erivan”) for the equivalent of US \$1.73 million.

Of the ten items in this list or any other, the Buccleuch Block stands out for its imposing size, significance as the world’s first issue, and extraordinary story of discovery in relatively modern times. On May 28, this iconic rarity will be offered at auction for the first time since it was issued in 1840 and found hidden in a Scottish palace 81 years ago.

## Top 10 World Philatelic Rarities



Baden 9-kreuzer error of color, printed on green paper instead of pink  
Heinrich Köhler



British Guiana One-Cent Magenta  
[www.fepanews.com](http://www.fepanews.com)



Great Britain Buccleuch Block—the largest multiple of either of the world's first two postage stamp issues  
Siegel Auction Galleries



Brazil "Pack Strip"  
Siegel Auction Galleries



Hawaii "Dawson Cover"  
Siegel Auction Galleries



Mauritius "Bordeaux Cover"  
Wikimedia Commons



Japan 500-mon Invert  
David Feldman SA



Sweden "Treskilling Yellow"  
David Feldman SA



United States 1c Z Grill  
Siegel Auction Galleries



United States Inverted Jenny Plate Block  
Siegel Auction Galleries



India 1854 Half-Anna 9½ Arches block (lot 5)

## Lot 5

**The India 1854 Half-Anna 9½ Arches block of 60****The largest surviving multiple and  
one of the most important rarities of India****From the Magnolia collection**

**India, 1854, ½a Deep Vermilion, 9½ Arches (1 var; SG 1a).** Block of 60 comprising the bottom half of a sheet (originally 120 stamps), Positions 61-120, margins slightly trimmed, but still with complete corner ornaments and bottom inscription, large part of inscriptions along vertical sides, and plate number “I”, without gum as issued, intensely rich color in the distinctive deeper shade, “RECEIVED/3 JUL. ‘85/VIA SOUTHAMPTON” handstamp on back, flaws including slight discoloration at right, edge nick at top left on Position 63, at least eleven stamps affected by creases, thins, or splitting, some of which have been repaired with tape, reinforced and sealed margin tear at top right

VERY FINE APPEARANCE. A PHENOMENAL HALF-SHEET OF THE FAMOUS 1854 HALF-ANNA NINE-AND-ONE-HALF ARCHES IN THE DEEP VERMILION SHADE. THIS IS BY FAR THE LARGEST MULTIPLE RECORDED AND RANKS AS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT RARITIES OF CLASSIC INDIA.

Named “9½ Arches” for the number of arches in the side panel, this issue was printed and prepared for use with a supply sent to Bombay. In a March 2, 1854, report, Captain Thuillier wrote:

...In this manner a considerable number of stones were prepared—and charged with the vermilion English lithographic ink, a very small quantity of which I happened to have by me, and a few hundred sheets—were struck off and—transmitted to Bombay by the steamer on the 5th instant...

The lithographic stone comprised three blocks of 120 subjects each—numbered “I”, “II”, and “III”. Each printed sheet contained 120 stamps arranged in twelve horizontal rows of ten. The block offered here is a half-sheet from the bottom of the original sheet of 120, Plate I.

The printing made by Capt. Thuillier exhausted the vermilion ink supply on hand. Ink believed to be of similar quality and color was sourced, but it was quickly realized that this ink had a severe corrosive effect on the lithographic stone, making the stone unusable for further printings. Officials in Bombay were telegraphically informed on April 23, 1854, that the Deep Vermilion 9½ Arches sheets shipped by Capt. Thuillier should be destroyed, but evidently some of the sheets were released.

Capt. Thuillier created a new die, with only eight complete arches in the side panel, and used it to make a new printing stone. Trials were completed in both the new vermilion and blue inks. Blue was ultimately chosen as the color, and the stamps were officially issued on October 1, 1854. These are listed as Scott 2-2E (SG 2-10).

Ex “Rajah” collection. With 2024 B.P.A. certificate.

Unlisted in Scott in this shade. Stanley Gibbons value £300,000 simply as singles.

**Estimate \$75,000-100,000**



China "Countess Caroline" cover (lot 6)—front and back

Lot 6°

## The “Countess Caroline” Cover—The Crown Jewel of Chinese philately

From the Magnolia collection

**China, 1882, 5ca Orange Yellow, Wide Setting (6; Chan 6).** Symmetrically shaped block of nine, Setting III, Types 7-5-12-8/19-6-20-13-14, affixed to back and cancelled or tied by Peking blue oval *pakua* cancels with blue “I.G. of Customs, Peking MAR 25 83” double-circle datestamp on European-size cover addressed to “*Gräfin Caroline Tattenbach*” in Munich, Bavaria (Germany), sent via the French Post Office in Shanghai, used with **France, Used in China, Shanghai, 25c and 1fr Sage**, tied by “Shang-Hai, Chine 4 Avril 83” circular datestamps with additional strike at left, “Customs Shanghai MAR 30 83” and “Ligne N, Paq. Fr. 8 Avril 83” datestamps, Munich (May 12) arrival backstamp, top right stamp (Type 8) of 5c block shows the “long-leg Dah” variety (top right Chinese character), cover and multiple professionally and moderately cleaned to remove staining

VERY FINE. THE ICONIC “COUNTESS CAROLINE” COVER, REGARDED BY MANY AS THE “CROWN JEWEL” OF CHINESE PHILATELY. THE BLOCK OF NINE IS THE LARGEST RECORDED MULTIPLE OF THE 1882 5-CANDARINS WIDE SETTING USED ON COVER.

The 1880s were a time of great change for China, much of which was detrimental to the country and its Chinese inhabitants. In a world largely governed by European imperialism, ongoing power struggles and competing trade interests impacted China. The Qing Dynasty was facing pressure from internal and external forces, weakening the imperial hold on the country. Foreign intervention and Westernization continued to expand as treaty ports were carved out of China and taken over by foreign powers. These foreign occupiers included Germany, France, Japan, Russia, and the United States. The opium trade filled foreign coffers with precious metal and trading ships with goods. Chinese sovereignty was sacrificed on the altar of technological and economic progress, with the benefits passing almost exclusively to foreign powers.

The “Countess Caroline” cover’s story begins on March 25, 1883. A young man by the name of Christian Friedrich Ludwig Graf von Tattenbach was stationed at the German Imperial Legation in Peking, working as a legation secretary. At just 37 years old, he served as an envoy in China before continuing his career with diplomatic postings in Tangier, and eventually as an ambassador in both Lisbon and Madrid. On this date in March, he wrote to his sister, Countess Caroline Olga von Tattenbach, in Munich.

The letter once contained in this envelope was removed long ago. We can only speculate about the letter’s content. We do know, according to the Postal Tarriff Rate of Nov. 1882, 45 candarins paid the five-times letter rate (up to two Chinese ounces). Similarly, the French postage of 1fr25, also paid the five-times letter rate to Bavaria. The rates associated with this artifact are covered in Ireland, *The Large Dragons* (p. 105). It was probably a long letter that described Christian’s experiences in Peking and China—a completely different world than the one they both knew in Bavaria. We can imagine Countess Caroline’s delight in seeing the exotic yellow Dragon stamps that adorned Christian’s letter.

The cover’s travels from Peking first took it to Shanghai. The block of nine of the 5-candarins was affixed to the back and cancelled by the blue *pakua* chops. Little did Tattenbach realize he had applied the Wide Setting issue, a surprisingly rare choice of stamps. Not only is a 5ca Wide Setting a rare stamp on cover, this is the largest recorded block on cover (there is another similar franking with a strip of four and five on cover used domestically). In Shanghai, the cover was transferred to the French post office and franked with France 25c and 1fr Sage issues. Carried by French ships to Europe, this cover arrived in Germany and was delivered by the Bavarian post office in Munich on May 12, 1883.

Ex Warren Kauder, Giulio Mochi, Anna-Lisa and Sven-Eric Beckeman.

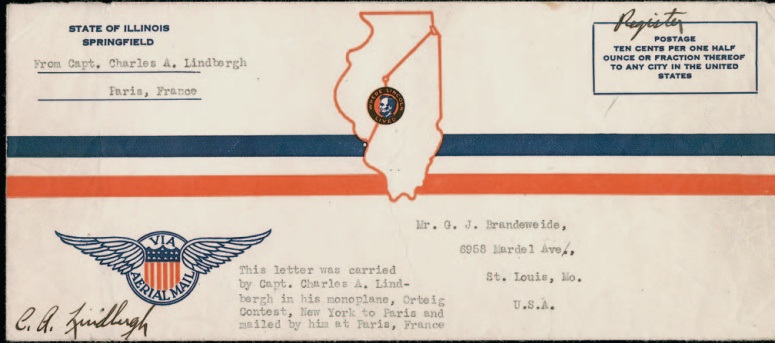
**Estimate \$400,000-500,000**



Stolen Pony Cover (lot 1)



Inverted Jenny Position 99 (lot 2)



Signed cover carried on Lindbergh's May 1927 nonstop transatlantic flight (lot 3)



The Buccleuch Block (lot 4)



India 1854 Half-Anna 9/8 Arches block (lot 5)



China "Countess Caroline" cover (lot 6)

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