

Baker's U.S. Classics:

Wells, Fargo & Company I

by Hugh J. & J. David Baker

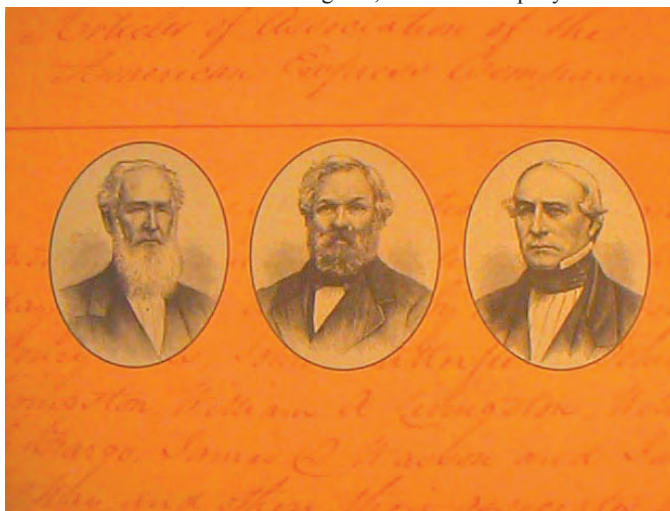
(From STAMPS Magazine, with images added)

May 15, 1965

Perhaps many readers of this column have not read the histories of Wells, Fargo & Company, although the name is familiar to almost every boy and girl who watches television. To many, Wells Fargo and Pony Express are synonymous.

Who were the founders who met at the Astor House in New York City March 18, 1852, to form Wells Fargo & Company to operate in California in competition with Adams & Company and other lesser known express companies?

Henry Wells of Auburn, N.Y. formed Wells, Crawford, Livingston in approximately 1841 which was succeeded by Livingston, Wells & Company when Pomeroy retired. Livingston & Fargo in 1846 bought out the western business of Livingston, Wells & Company.



From the American Express website, the three principal founders of the American Express Company: Henry Wells, William G. Fargo and John Butterfield, set within a portion of a document headed "Articles of Association of the American Express Company."



American Express stock certificate signed by Henry Wells and William G. Fargo.

Wells & Company (called Western Express) was formed in April 1845, by Henry Wells, William C. Fargo, and Dan Dunning, to operate an express route from Buffalo to Chicago.

When Crawford Livingston died in 1848, Livingston, Wells & Company became Wells Company. Johnston Livingston and Edward Winslow were taken in as partners.

John Butterfield started Butterfield, Wasson & Company in 1848 to carry express from Albany to Buffalo.

In 1850 these three companies; Wells & Company, Livingston & Fargo and Butterfield, Wasson & Company consolidated into the American Express Company.

In 1849, a year prior to the organiza-



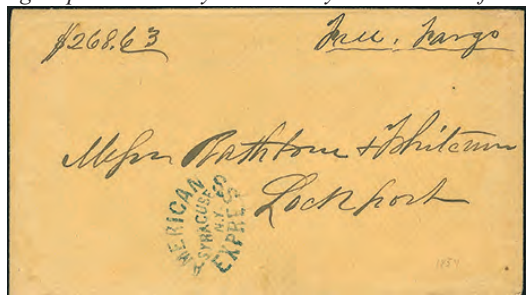
Cover carried by Wells & Cos Express May 1849 Buffalo to New York City.



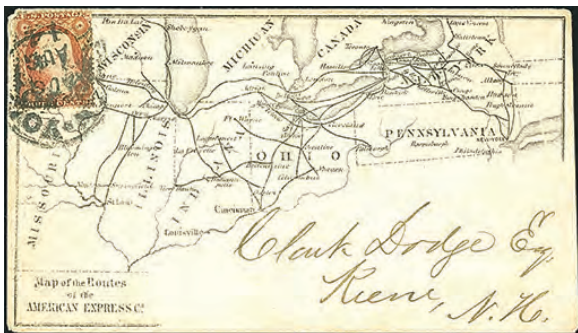
Cover from New York to Petersburg, Virginia with Wells Fargo & Co. Express Auburn (N.Y.) oval handstamp



Circa 1858 "Paid Livingston Fargo & Co, By The American Express" blue frank on 3c red Nesbitt entire to Westerville Station, Ohio, with manuscript "Death, Agent please delivery immediately" notation at left.



"American Express Syracuse N.Y." handstamp on cover to Lockport N.Y., with "\$268.63" and "Free Fargo"



3¢ dull red Type I (Sc. 25) tied by two strikes of "New York Aug. 14" 1857 circular datestamp on cover to Keene N.Y. with "Map of the Routes of the American Express Co." all-over design depicting states from Missouri to New York,.

tion of the American Express Company, The Adams Company sent Dan Haskell to establish express service in California. Adams & Company grew rapidly and became California's leading express company in 1854.

Wells, Fargo & Company was formed by Henry Wells and William Fargo of the American Express Company and seven others, two of whom were Edwin B. Morgan, President, and James McKay, Secretary of the new company. Its prospectus says "now ready to undertake the general forwarding agency and commission business; the purchase and sale of gold dust, bullion and specie, also packages, parcels and freight—in and between New York and San Francisco connecting at New York with—American Express Company"—etc.



Wells, Fargo & Co. Express, Sacramento, blue double oval handstamp on September 15, 1852 folded letter addressed to Samuel Brannan, the first publicist of the California Gold Rush and its first millionaire at San Francisco.

Samuel Carter, an American Express employee, was sent to California, arriving in June 1852, closely followed by the other agent, Reuben Washburn, in July.

By August there were eight offices; three in Placer County, San Francisco, San Diego, Monterey, Benicia and Sacramento and by the end of the year, twelve.

Late in 1852 Henry Wells paid his one and only trip to California. After a 33 mile steamboat ride from Chafres to Cruces, he paid \$30 for the privilege of riding a mule from Cruces to Panama, twenty-four miles.

To Be Continued

Baker's U.S. Classics:

Wells, Fargo & Company II

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(From STAMPS Magazine, with images added)

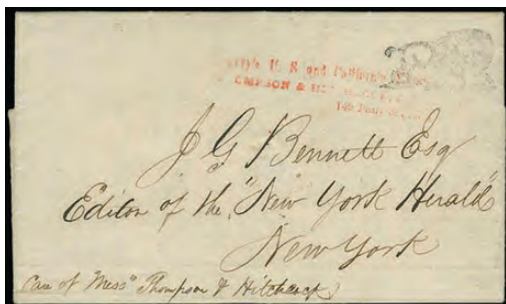
May 22, 1965

When Henry Wells arrived in San Francisco he found their offices at Montgomery and California streets across from the recently completed Parrott Building, which housed Adams & Company. The Chinese would not enter the Parrott Building because the contractors would not allow the Chinese man who designed the building to perform purifying rites required by Chinese tradition! Therefore Wells Fargo immediately gained the not inconsiderable business of the Chinese.

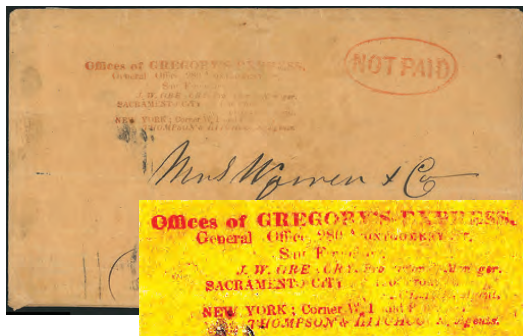
During late 1852 and continuing into 1853 Wells Fargo began picking up the agents of the Gregory & Company Express which operated internationally, but whose New York agent, Thompson and Hitchcock, refused to accept its paper. There was no formal sale or transfer. Colonel William Pardee replaced Sam Carter as agent in July 1853.

Jun. 30, 1850

folded letter from Joseph W. Gregory to James Gordon Bennett at The New York Herald in New York City with "Gregory's U.S. and California Express, Thompson & Hitchcock, Agts., 149 Pearl St., N.Y." partly clear red three-line handstamp and Bison pictorial handstamp.



Gregory's Express first handstamp (shown in a computer-enhanced detail) is set in tiny type, and reads "Offices of Gregory's Express, General Office 280



Montgomery St., San Francisco, J. W. Gregory, Proprietor & Manager, Sacramento City to Stockton, G. E. Clark, Agent, New York: Corner Ann and Pearl Sts., Thompson & Hitchcock, Agents". This is the only reported example of the first handstamp used by Gregory's Express, the California intra-state express operated by Joseph W. Gregory as an adjunct to his coast-to-coast Atlantic & Pacific Express. The cover to Sacramento also bears a matching "NOT PAID" in oval handstamp.

Government stamped envelopes, produced by the Post Office department to insure payment of postage whether or not the letter entered the U.S. mails, were first used in California August 1, 1853. The express companies bought these envelopes and imprinted their frank on the face and sold them to customers. Wells Fargo was probably the largest single customer for these envelopes for many years.

Red Wells Fargo printed frank on 10¢ green Nesbitt entire (Sc. U16) to Philadelphia endorsed "pr. Golden Age" with



Blood's Penny Post Dec. 15 10-1/2 A.M. Philada. Double-circle datestamp and "2cts" handstamp, also with blue "Wells, Fargo & Co.s Express S. Frco 11 Nov." double-circle datestamp cancelling the envelope.

On September 14, 1853, Wells Fargo bought Todds & Company Express, which started with Alexander Todd, a 49er turning expressman, operating seven months as Todd & Bryan's Express in 1850, fourteen months as Todd & Company Express into 1851, seven months as Reynolds, Todd & Company Express and finally under an entirely different Todd (Chas. A.) for sixteen months when sold to Wells Fargo. Covers bearing markings of these express companies exist, most are stampless, a very few had postage paid by postage stamps. D. H. Barney succeeded Edwin B. Morgan as President of Wells Fargo.

1853 cover to "Tuttle-town, near Sonora". Calif., with "Forwarded By Todd's Express San Francisco", blue oval and matching "Not Paid" handstamps on cover. This "Todd" is C. A. Todd, no relation to Alexander Todd, who purchased Reynolds, Todd & Co's Express on April 22, 1853. He sold the company to Wells, Fargo & Co on September 1, 1853.



The January 13, 1854 issue of *The Alta Californian* carried this notice: "J. D. Frye, Special Agent of Post Office Department has given us official notice that all letters sent by our expresses hereafter, must bear the Post Office Stamp or Envelope." Fine for violation \$50.

About this time 3¢ postage stamps used in the Wells Fargo office were precancelled by vertical and horizontal lines drawn through the center of each line of stamps. (See page 31.)

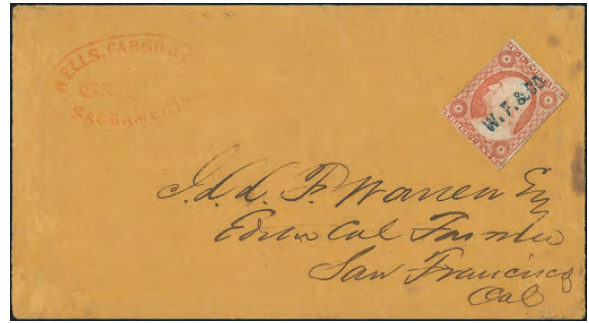
Little hydraulic mining (first used in 1852) was done in 1854 because of lack of rain and snow.

The first dividend paid to Wells Fargo stockholders was 10% in March 1854, and an additional 5% the following September.

While the Baker Brothers state that the cross hatch precancel was used by Wells Fargo, the only example I could find was on this Adams & Co. cover,



which is an example of the requirement that postage be affixed even if a letter was carried outside the mail. The pair of 3¢ dull red Type II (Sc. 11A) shows the manuscript cancels. It was carried from New York to San Juan del Norte by the Vanderbilt Line's Star of the West. At San Francisco, Adams & Co. datestamped the cover and carried it to Stockton on their regular express route. Although handled entirely outside the government mails, this cover was prepaid 6¢ by the sender in New York City, as required by law, effective January 13, 1854.



3¢ dull red Type II (Sc. 11A), one of ten known examples of a "W.F. & CO." blue precancel that was used briefly in 1854. The cover to the editor of the California Farmer in San Francisco also bears a red "Wells, Fargo & Co. Express Sacramento" oval handstamp. The stamp was applied to comply with the January 1854 U.S. Post Office Dept. order requiring postage to be paid on all mail. Shortly thereafter Wells, Fargo began using postal stationery entires such as the one seen previously.

Viewing Collections:

George Kramer Collection Pony Express Covers

by John F. Dunn

Last September the Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries offered at auction selected Pony Express Covers from the award-winning George Kramer Collection. The usual reminders: prices quoted here do not include the 18% Buyer's Premium that is added on to these hammer prices; and the statements are from the auction lot descriptions. My comments are in brackets.

In this case, however, I need to suggest that what you will find here in the descriptions only touches the surface, and that you absolutely should go to the Siegel website and read the four-page introduction to the sale in the pdf version, a precise history of the Pony Express.

With that, the first lot selected for viewing is a 10¢ Green on Buff Nesbitt entire (U16) addressed to Herman Wohler in San Francisco, sender's directive "By Pony Express", no government postmark and no indication of origin or \$5.00 rate. Most important, it shows a perfect strike of the St. Joseph Running Pony oval dated May 20, 1860—the first westbound Pony mail delayed by Paiute Indian War and carried with military escort.

As documented in "The Impact of Indian Attacks on the Pony Express in 1860"—published by the Siegel firm available at http://siegelauctions.com/enc/Pony_Indians.pdf—the attacks on Pony Express stations and riders occurred during the Paiute Indian War, which started on May 7. The presence of U.S. troops guarding the route helped keep the stage and Pony Express running during July and August 1860, but several mails were delayed and combined as they waited for an escort. This May 20, 1860, was carried as far west as possible and held until a military escort could accompany the riders beyond the dangerous part of the route. Mail from three subsequent trips—May 27, June 3 and June 10—eventually caught up with the May 20 mail and was carried to California. The Daily Alta California 6/24/1860 contains a report from Carson City dated June 23, which states, "The long missing Pony Express arrived at Carson City last evening, bringing dates from St. Louis to June 10th." The San Francisco Bulletin 6/25/1860 confirms that the four delayed Pony mails arrived in San Francisco on June 25. Five covers are recorded with the May 20, May 27, June 3 and June 10 departure dates.

Estimated at \$40,000-50,000, it drew a top hammer price of \$52,500.

Next is another cover carried on the westbound Pony mail delayed by Paiute Indian War and carried with military escort, this one with a St. Joseph June 3, 1860 Running Pony oval and Latham free frank.

Pony Express, St. Joseph, Jun. 3 (1860). Full clear strike of Running Pony oval datestamp on cover with a free frank "Milton S. Latham U.S.S." and addressed in his hand to General James W. Denver, care of Frank Denver in Sacramento, Latham's directive "Per Pony Express" along left edge, blue crayon "Free" above oval and pencil "Free F.A.M." at right, lightened stain and minor cosmetic improvements.

Senator Milton S. Latham, who franked the cover, went to California in 1850 and was elected to Congress on the 1852 Democratic ticket. After his term expired, he declined to run for re-election and served as collector for the port of San Francisco. In 1859 he was elected governor, but he resigned five days after taking office to fill the U.S. Senate seat left vacant when Senator David C. Broderick was killed in a duel. It was during his term as a U.S. senator that Latham franked this cover addressed to his friend and fellow Democrat, General James W. Denver, who was the former territorial governor of Kansas, state senator and U.S. congressman, and who would be commissioned as a general in the Union army at the start of the Civil War.

Senator Latham was a friend of William H. Russell, the Central Overland California & Pikes Peak Express Company president, and a strong supporter of their effort to secure the contract for the Central Route. He was among the few individuals later permitted to send Pony Express letters free of charge. In this case Senator Latham's free frank applied to the \$5.00 Pony Express rate and U.S. postage.

Estimated at \$50,000-75,000, it sold for \$50,000.

This next lot shows a blue Running Pony oval date-stamp clearly struck and tying a 10¢ Green, Type V (Sc. 35) on a blue cover addressed to Robert Patton in Covington, Kentucky, sender's directive "Pony Express, August 22nd 1860", also with a carmine "Pony Express, St. Joseph, Sep.



2" (1860) Running Pony oval receiving datestamp on the back, no indication of \$2.50 rate, entered the mails with "Saint Joseph Mo. Sep. 2, 1860" circular datestamp also tying the 10¢ stamp, receipt docketing "George Binds, himself, Keep this carefully for me, R Patton", cover opened for display and professionally restored with some paper backing and additions, but not affecting the stamp or markings.

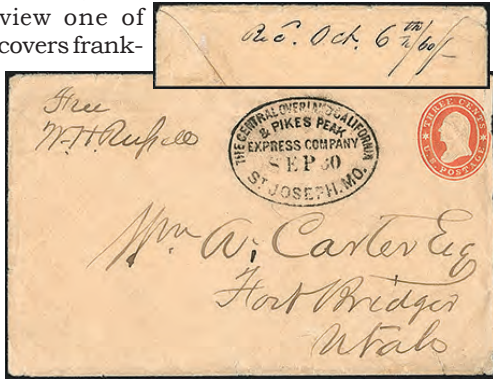
The St. Joseph Running Pony handstamp was normally struck in black, but ten covers are recorded with this marking struck in the distinctive carmine color.

This cover was sent from San Francisco on Wednesday, August 22, 1860, after the new Pony Express rate of \$2.50 per quarter-ounce (half of the \$5.00 per half-ounce rate) was announced at St. Joseph.

Estimated at \$20,000-30,000, it realized \$20,000.

Next we view one of three recorded covers franked by William H. Russell,

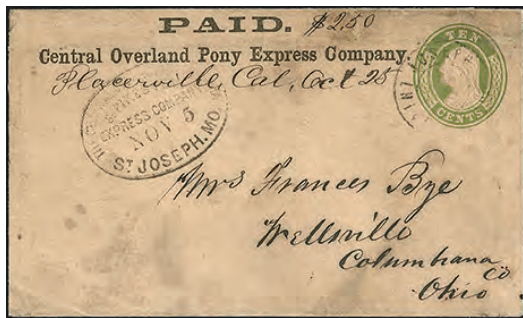
the most prominent of the three Pony Express founders, with a "Free W. H. Russell" free frank (for Pony Express fee) on a 3¢ Red on



Buff Star Die entire (Sc. U27) addressed in his hand to Judge William A. Carter, the station agent at Fort Bridger, Utah Territory (later in Wyoming Territory), also with "The Central Overland California & Pikes Peak Express Company, St. Joseph, Mo. Sep. 30" (1860) oval datestamp applied at origin, receipt docketing on back "Recd. Oct. 6th /60" which confirms a six-day Pony Express trip starting at St. Joseph on Sunday, September 30, 1860, reduced and opening faults at right.

Estimated at \$7,500-10,000, it went for \$6,250.

Here we see one of nine recorded "PAID. Central Overland Pony Express Company" entires and a rare way-mail Pony



Express cover with a two-line frank with manuscript "\$2.50" quarter-ounce rate and "Placerville, Cal. Oct. 25" (1860) station agent's way-mail marking on a 10¢ Pale Green on Buff Nesbitt entire (Sc. U18a) to Mrs. Frances Bye, Wellsville, Ohio, "The Central Overland California & Pikes Peak Express Company, St. Joseph, Mo. Nov. 5" oval datestamp applied the day of arrival (the entire trip was 12 days), lightly-inked strike of "Saint Joseph Mo. Nov. 8" double-circle datestamp (date is unreadable, but the other two recorded covers from this trip are dated November 8), with original letter enclosure datelined "Placerville Oct. 25th 1860."

The presence of manuscript station markings on several of these COPEC franks, including the cover offered here, supports the theory that they were mainly used by telegraph

operators and by relay station agents for way mail received along the Pony Express route.

Estimated at \$15,000-20,000, it did not sell.

Next is a "The Central Overland California & Pikes Peak Express Company, St. Joseph, Mo. Nov. 23" (1860) mostly complete strike of an



oval datestamp applied on arrival to a way-mail cover carried on the Pony Express trip that started in San Francisco on November 10, 1860, and arrived in St. Joseph on November 23, addressed to Charles White, Whitestown, New York, sender's directive "By Pony Express", 3¢ Dull Red, Ty. III (26) affixed by St. Joseph office over manuscript "1/4" quarter-ounce weight notation (\$2.50 rate), cancelled by grid with matching "Saint Joseph Mo. Nov. 24" double-circle datestamp, stamp has margin defects including piece out at lower right, cover slightly reduced at left.

This cover's original mailing location is not known, but it must have originated within the distance limit for the 3¢ rate. Postage was probably paid in cash, and upon arrival in St. Joseph, the receiving office applied the November 23 oval datestamp, then affixed the 3¢ stamp. The St. Joseph post office applied the November 24 datestamp and cancelled the stamp before sending the cover on the eastbound train.

Pony Express way-mail covers are rare. This is the only cover we have seen on which the adhesive stamp was applied at the receiving office. Estimated at \$7,500-10,000, it did not sell.

The next lot selected for viewing is one of five recorded covers with the 10¢ 1857 stamp tied by the San Francisco Running Pony oval, Dec. 8 (1860) with a matching "The Central Overland California &



Pikes Peak Express Company, San Francisco, Cal." dateless oval handstamp on mostly complete blue folded cover addressed to A. A. Low & Brother in New York City, sender's directive "pr Pony Express", manuscript "1/4 oz" weight notation (\$2.50 rate), carried on the Pony trip departing San Francisco on Saturday, December 8, 1860, and arriving at St. Joseph 15 days later on December 23—a longer journey due to winter weather. On arrival the "Pony Express, The Central Overland California & Pikes Peak Express Company, St. Joseph, Mo. Dec. 23" large oval within circle receiving datestamp was applied in green on the backflap, entering the mails with "Saint Joseph

Mo. Dec. 24" double-circle datestamp tying the 10¢ stamp.

[Demonstrating the depth of the lot descriptions, the auctioneers also tell us] The recipient firm, A. A. Low & Brother, was named for Abiel Abbot Low and his brother, Josiah Orne Low. Founded in 1840, the firm became one of the leading importers of China and Japan silks and teas, and operated its own line of clipper ships. In 1850 Low completed the A. A. Low building at 167-171 John Street, **now the offices of the South Street Seaport Museum** [emphasis added].

Estimated at \$15,000-20,000, it soared to \$35,000.

Next is

a Pony cover with a California Pony Express, New-York, Dec. 11 (1860) greenish-blue oval datestamp on a 3¢ Red on Buff Star



Die entire (Sc. U27) to Daniel Gibb & Company in San Francisco, sent to the eastern terminus at St. Joseph where "Pony Express, St. Joseph, Dec. 16" Running Pony oval datestamp was boldly struck at lower left, arithmetic notations applied at the offices of Gibb & Company, slight wear at top left corner.

Only 21 covers have the St. Joseph Running Pony oval struck on the front, including two in carmine and four eastbound covers (one of which is badly damaged). Of the 21, only two have this distinctive New York office oval with a date. They are both dated December 11 and were carried on the same trip to two different addresses in San Francisco.

The addressee, Daniel Gibb & Company, was a large merchant firm in San Francisco. The firm's warehouse at Front and Vallejo Street is a registered historic landmark building. Estimated at \$15,000-20,000, it sold for \$16,000.

Next, the "Cuba Pony"—the only recorded Pony Express cover from Cuba and one of three originating outside the



United States. It bears a California Pony Express Paid red double-line oval handstamp on a blue folded invoice dated "Havana 5 September 1860" from Levy Hermanos (Levy Brothers), a detailed invoice for 137,550 cigars in 15 cases, billed at \$3,480.23, addressed to St. Losky, Levy & Co. in San Francisco, sender's directive "pr Pony Express" and "Paid" notation, blue "Forwarded by Duncan Sherman & Co. New-York" oval handstamp a commercial banking firm in New York City which received the invoice from Cuba and forwarded it through the New York office of the Central Overland California & Pike's Peak Express Company, postage paid by 3¢ Dull Red, Ty. III (Sc. 26) affixed over part of the written word "Express" and effectively tied by a faint ink bleed, left uncanceled since this invoice was carried in a package of letters to St. Joseph for the next Pony trip, with a wedge-shaped sealed tear at bottom.

Estimated at \$20,000-30,000, it did not sell.

This next lot features one of six recorded Pony covers originating in Nevada and the earliest recorded Wells Fargo & Company franked entire



carried by Pony Express and the only Pony cover from Silver City. It bears a "Pony Express Paid \$2.50, Silver City March 7th/61" manuscript express marking and "X" cancel on a 10¢ Green on Buff Nesbitt entire (Sc. U16) with a red Wells Fargo & Co. printed frank, addressed to Ephraim Brigham in Natick, Massachusetts, Also with a "Via Carson City UT Mch 7/61" manuscript express marking in a different hand. At Carson City the cover was placed into the way-mail pouch of the mochilla carried on the Pony trip that departed San Francisco on Wednesday, March 6, 1861, passed through Carson City March 7, arrived in St. Joseph on March 20 ND entered the mails with A green "Saint Joseph Mo. Mar. 21" double-circle datestamp and matching grid cancel, tears in backflap and also into red frank and embossed stamp at right (skillfully sealed).

The Pony Express mochilla had four pouches. Three were used for mail originating at the San Francisco and St. Joseph offices. The letters were bundled and wrapped in water-resistant oiled silk, then placed in the pouches, which were locked for the entire trip (only certain offices had the key). The fourth pouch was used for way mail, which was collected at stations along the route and placed into the pouch by the station agents.

Estimated at \$10,000-15,000, it realized \$13,500.

Here we view an example of the red San Francisco Running

Pony oval dated April 17, 1861, carried on the first eastbound trip of the \$2.00 rate period clearly struck on a 10¢ Green on White Nesbitt



entire (Sc. U15) addressed to A. W. Canfield, care of George Updyke & Co., New York City, sender's directive "Pony Express", no indication of \$2.00 rate, carried on the Pony trip that departed San Francisco on Wednesday, April 17, 1861, and arrived in St. Joseph on April 30, entered the mails with green "St. Joseph Mo. Apr. 30" circular datestamp, small opening slit at top, faint stain spot at bottom right.

One of the finest San Francisco Running Pony ovals in red, and the only recorded red strike with a date, this cover carried on the Eastbound trip marked the beginning of the \$2.00 per half ounce rate period, or what postal historians call Rate Period 3, and it is also the early stage of Phase II, known as the Interim Phase, in which the Pony Express was operated as a joint private enterprise by COC&PP (now controlled by Holladay) and the Overland Mail Company, with Wells Fargo & Company acting as agents for the business.

Estimated at \$20,000-30,000, it went for \$23,000.

This next cover is one of three carried on the first east-bound trip of the \$2.00 rate period. It bears a "Pony Express, San Francisco, Apr. 17"



(1861) Running Pony oval datestamp in blue struck on a 10¢ Green on Buff Nesbitt entire (Sc. U16) addressed to Charles Arthur Ely in Elyria, Ohio, no indication of \$2.00 rate, carried on the Pony trip that departed San Francisco on Wednesday, April 17, 1861, and arrived in St. Joseph on April 30, entered the mails with bold green "St. Joseph Mo. Apr. 30" circular datestamp, with original letter enclosure datelined San Francisco, April 17, 1861, from Henry Leffingwell at 6 Montgomery Block, concerning debts incurred by Charles Ely and demanding reimbursement—"I send this by Pony, because I cannot wait any longer."

Henry Leffingwell, a San Francisco real estate agent with offices at 6 Montgomery Block, was a frequent newspaper advertiser, offering properties for sale or rent. According to the letter, Leffingwell had provided considerable financial assistance to his friend, Charles A. Ely, and was demanding payment of the long overdue debt.

Estimated at \$5,000-7,500, it realized \$8,000.

Moving into a section with Wells Fargo stamps on cover, we find the famous and unique \$4.00 Green Pony Express cover, with the \$4.00 Green (Sc.



143L2), Position 15, used with a \$2.00 Red (Sc. 143L1), Position 3, clear to ample margins except in at top, tied by a clear strike of "Pony Express, San Francisco, Jun. 26" (1861) Running Pony oval datestamp on a 10¢ Green on Buff Star Die entire (Sc. U33) addressed to Eugene Kelly & Co., 164 Fulton Street, New York City, embossed Donohoe, Ralston & Company corner card beneath stamps, sender's directive "Pony Express June 26th" and carried on the Pony trip that departed San Francisco on Wednesday, June 26, 1861, and arrived in St. Joseph on July 8, entered the mails with bold green "St. Joseph Mo. Jul. 8" circular datestamp, no obvious evidence of missing stamps, but it is presumed that two 10¢ stamps were affixed overlapping the embossed stamp and were removed from the cover, since the triple \$2.00 per half-ounce express fee would require corresponding triple 10¢ rate postage, Pony Express stamps have creases and sealed tears, and have been lifted and reaffixed.

This is the only recorded cover with the \$4.00 Green and one of two with a combination of Wells Fargo Horse & Rider stamps. The Wednesday, June 26, 1861, Pony mail from San Francisco was carried on the penultimate eastbound trip during the Phase II (Interim) operational period and Rate Period 3. From April 1, through June 30, 1861, the rate for a Pony

Express letter was \$2.00 per half-ounce. The \$2.00 Red and \$4.00 Green Horse & Rider stamps were issued in April 1861 by Wells Fargo & Company for use on mail from the West. On July 1, the new government mail contract for overland mail on the Central Route and the Pony Express took effect, and the rate was reduced to \$1.00 per half-ounce. A new \$1.00 Red stamp was issued, and the colors of the \$2.00 and \$4.00 were changed to Green and Black, respectively. [The only other Horse & Rider combination cover will be seen later.]

Estimated at \$150,000-200,000, it sold for \$150,000.

This next cover is the earliest of eight Pony Express examples of a Pony Express usage of the obsolete Freeman & Company Frank-
ed entire, overprinted by a Wells Fargo imprint at the top, and the only one that is a Way-Mail usage.



The Wells Fargo & Company Pony Express, \$2.00 Red (143L1), Position 16, is tied by a blue "Wells, Fargo & Co., Carson City, Jun. 16" (1861) oval datestamp on a 10¢ Pale Green on Buff Nesbitt entire (Sc. U18a) to William B. Taylor, postmaster of New York City, with a red Wells Fargo & Co. frank printed twice over green Freeman & Co. frank, sender's directive "Pr Pony Express June 16/61". Carried on the Pony trip that departed San Francisco on June 15, 1861, it arrived in St. Joseph June 27 and entered the mails with a green "St. Joseph Mo. Jun. 27" circular datestamp and matching grid cancel on the 10¢ embossed envelope, the cover restored at top with some paper added and part of red printed frank inked in, \$2.00 stamp has faint crease and tiny repair at top right.

John Freeman was an agent for Adams & Co. at the time of the firm's collapse in February 1855. He ran the Freeman & Co. Express until November 1859, then sold out to Wells Fargo & Co. The unused supply of 10¢ embossed envelopes bearing Freeman & Co.'s green frank was overprinted with the Wells Fargo & Co. red frank in two directions. Some of these were used to send letters by Pony Express.

Estimated at \$15,000-20,000, it went for \$18,500.

This next cover is the earliest recorded westbound Pony Express cover of Rate Period 3 and one of two Pony covers with a black Wells



Fargo & Company frank. It bears a "California Pony Express, New-York, Apr. 6" (1861) partly clear strike of an ultramarine oval datestamp on a 10¢ Pale Green on Buff Nesbitt entire (Sc. U16a), addressed to James Pullman, Sansome and Sacramento Streets, San Francisco, no indication of \$2.00 rate and no government post office markings, carried by Wells Fargo to St. Joseph where green "Pony Express, The Central Overland

California & Pikes Peak Express Company, St. Joseph, Mo. Apr. 14" large oval within circle datestamp was applied before the cover was carried on the Sunday, April 14, westbound trip to San Francisco, some minor toning around edges.

The Phase II (Interim) operational period and Rate Period 3 started in St. Joseph on April 1, 1861, and the first westbound trip left on Thursday, April 4, followed by trips on Sunday, April 7, and Thursday, April 11. No covers from these three trips are recorded. The cover offered here is the earliest recorded westbound mail to which the new \$2.00 per half-ounce rate and Phase II handling procedures applied.

Estimated at \$15,000-20,000, it did not sell.



This looking lot presents the complete set of Wells Fargo & Company Pony Express Horse & Rider Issues (Sc. 143L1-

143L5), including the \$2.00 Red and \$4.00 Green First Issue (April 1861) and \$1.00 Red, \$2.00 Green and \$4.00 Black Second Issue (July 1, 1861), 143L1 part original gum, others no gum, all have four margins (mostly clear to large), 143L3 and 143L4 slight creases and thin spots, others sound.

Commencing July 1, 1861, the Pony Express was authorized by Congress to carry mail at the rate of \$1.00 per half-ounce. Although the Scott Catalogue lists the July 1861 issue Pony Express stamps (143L3-143L6) with other private post issues, we wish to emphasize that these stamps were issued under the terms of a government mail contract; therefore, they have semi-official status. Although some of the Horse & Rider stamps were remaindered, they are scarce and the vast majority do not have gum or four margins.

Estimated at \$500-750, it fetched a top bid of \$1,600.

To be Continued

Viewing Collections:

Kramer Collection Pony Express Covers, Part 2

by John F. Dunn

We continue our viewing of Pony Express Covers from the award-winning George Kramer Collection that were auctioned by the Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries last September, with the usual reminders: prices quoted here do not include the 18% Buyer's Premium that is added on to these hammer prices; and the statements are from the auction lot descriptions. My comments are in brackets.

The next lot selected for viewing is this the celebrated and unique "Patriotic Pony" cover to Europe, bearing a Wells Fargo Pony Express, \$1.00 Red (Sc. 143L3), tied by a blue "Pony Express, San Francisco, Sep. 14" (1861) Running



Pony oval datestamp with matching "PAID" in oval handstamp, used with a 30¢ Orange (38) to pay the Prussian Closed Mail rate, tied by an "Atchison, Kan. Sep. 27" double-circle datestamp on a Civil War patriotic cover depicting George Washington and a quote from his Farewell Address, "To the Efficacy and Permanency of Your Union, A Government for the whole is indispensable".

The cover is addressed to Mr. H. Hauschildt at Elmshorn in Schleswig-Holstein, then under Danish crown rule, with sender's directive "by Hamburg" (18.5 miles south of Elmshorn) and in the same hand on back "Stadt Altona"—Altona being a Danish harbor town on the Elbe river.

The cover was carried on the Pony Express trip departing San Francisco on Saturday, September 14, 1861, and arriving in Atchison, Kansas, on September 27. At this date the western terminus for the Pony relay was at Placerville, and the eastern terminus had been moved from St. Joseph to Atchison, due to Confederate bushwacker attacks on railroad lines near St. Joseph. From Atchison it was sent by railroad to New York for the October 5 sailing of the Hamburg-American line's Saxonnia, which off-loaded the mail at Southampton on October 17. Mail for the German-Austrian Postal Union (GAPU) was transported to Aachen for processing. From there the cover was sent north to Hamburg, then turned over to the Royal Danish Postal Agency in Hamburg and transported to Elmshorn. Danish postage was collected from the addressee.

The sequential transit markings follow the route described above: red "N.York Am. Pkt. 7 Paid Oct. 5" (1861) 7¢ credit datestamp dated on the departure day of the HAPAG Saxonnia; red framed "AACHEN 19 10/Franco" (October 19) transit datestamp and matching framed "FRANCO/PREUSS. RESP. VEREINS/AUSGANGS-GRENZES" handstamp (Paid to the GAPU Border); "HAMBURG 20 10" (October 20) datestamp on back; "KDOPA HAMBURG 20/10" (October 20) Royal Danish Postal Agency in Hamburg double-circle datestamp on back; "HOLST. EISENB. POST SP. BUREAU Z2 20/10". (Holsteinisches Eisenbahn Postspeditionen Bureau) Holstein railway datestamp on back; red crayon "4" on front for postage due in Danish rigsbank skilling.

This cover is one of three recorded Civil War Patriotic covers carried by Pony Express and one of six Pony covers to destinations outside the U.S., of which only four bear a Pony Express stamp.

With a pre-sale estimate of \$500,000-750,000, it drew a hammer price of \$525,000.

Next we view a Pony Express cover bearing a Wells Fargo Pony Express \$1.00 Red (143L3) tied by a blue "Wells, Fargo & Co. Express, Folsom,



Express, Folsom" oval handstamp, also with a blue "Pony Express, Sacramento, Jul. 4" (1861) oval datestamp on a 10¢ Green on White Star Die entire (U32) with Wells Fargo & Company printed red frank. Addressed to Massena, New York, the embossed envelope stamp was pen-canceled, with no post office markings, and was carried with the mail that left San Francisco on July 3, 1861, the first trip under the new government mail contract.

This is the only recorded Pony cover from Folsom that made the journey in both directions, 24 miles west from Folsom to Sacramento, where it was placed in the mochilla, then back east to Folsom and onward from Placerville by Pony Express.

The government awarded the mail contract along the Central Route to the Overland Mail Company on March 12, 1861, effective July 1. The contract paid \$1,000,000 per year for mail/passenger service along the Central Route and required the company "to run a Pony Express semi-weekly at a Schedule time of ten days eight months of the year and twelve days four months of the year, and to convey for the Government free of charge five pounds of Mail Matter; with liberty of charging the public for transportation of letters by said express not exceeding One dollar per half ounce..."

This period of operation is known as Phase III, which corresponds to Rate Period 4 (July 1-October 24, 1861). On July 1 Wells Fargo & Co. issued new stamps and envelopes to reflect the agreed-upon government contract rate for the

Pony Express. The fee for Pony Express service between Placerville and St. Joseph (or Atchison) could not exceed \$1.00 per half-ounce.

Since the July 1 commencement date of the new contract was known well in advance at both the eastern and western terminal offices, the \$1.00 rate went into effect simultaneously, and new stamps were ready for the first eastbound trip.

The unusual east-to-west and west-to-east journey this cover took is probably best explained by the timing. Rather than hold the cover until the Pony mochilla passed through Folsom, it was sent by train to Sacramento to meet the express there. The Sacramento office applied its July 4 oval datestamp and the cover made its way back to Folsom and on to Placerville, where the Pony relay started.

Estimated at \$30,000-40,000, this cover sold for \$30,000.

Next up is the “Black Pony”, the finer of two recorded \$4.00 Black Pony Express covers, bearing the Wells Fargo \$4.00 Black (143L5) tied by a blue “Pony Express, San Francisco, Aug. 10” (1861) Running Pony oval datestamp, also with a large blue “Wells, Fargo & Cos. Express, S.Frco. 10 Aug.” double-circle datestamp on this 8.25 by 3.5 inch legal-size cover addressed “To The Hon. Fifth Auditor of The Treasury, Washington, D.C.” with sender’s directive “By Pony”—Voucher by regular mail” in the same hand, return address at upper right in a different hand “U.S. Consulate, Honolulu H. Islands”, green seal on back with embossed “CONSULATE U.S.A. HONOLULU, OAHU H.I.” and American eagle, two strikes of “Forwarded by McRuer & Merrill, San Francisco” double-line oval



handstamp on back—carried from Honolulu to San Francisco on the American bark Yankee, which sailed on July 18 and arrived on August 7; then carried on the Pony Express trip that departed from San Francisco on Saturday, August 10, and arrived in St. Joseph on August 22, entering the mails with a green “St. Joseph Mo. Aug. 22” circular datestamp, carried to Washington D.C. free of postage (official mail).

The first Pony Express stamps—the \$2.00 Red and \$4.00 Green—were issued in April 1861 after Wells Fargo & Co. became involved in operating the express. When the \$1.00 per half-ounce contract rate took effect on July 1, 1861, a new set of stamps was ready, comprising the \$1.00 Red, \$2.00 Green and \$4.00 Black.

Estimated at 300,000-400,000, it went for \$330,000.

Next we view the only Pony Express cover with a combination of the \$1.00 and \$2.00 Pony Express, the only one known with



two different July 1861 Issue stamps and one of two with the \$2.00 Green Pony stamp. It bears the Wells Fargo Pony Express, \$2.00 Green (143L4). Position 18 (showing plate flaw on rider’s face), used with a \$1.00 Red (143L3), both stamps tied by a blue “Pony Express, San Francisco, Aug. 3” (1861) Running Pony oval datestamp, also with a separated vertical pair of 10¢ Green, Type V (35) canceled by three strikes of a New York City grid cancel. It was carried on the Pony trip that departed San Francisco on Saturday, August 3, 1861, and arrived in St. Joseph on or about August 15, the mail from this Pony trip was brought to New York City and postmarked at the post office on August 18.

It was opened on three sides and slightly reduced, with a long diagonal cover tear across upper left corner that has been expertly repaired (not affecting stamps), the 10¢ pair has a large piece of one replaced, a third 10¢ stamp to make up the triple rate was probably removed, but there is no trace of it.

This cover was prepaid \$3.00 for the triple Pony Express rate based on weight (it weighed between 1 and 1.5 ounces). The corresponding postage of 10¢ per half-ounce should have been 30¢, which has led to the longstanding assumption that a third 10¢ stamp was originally affixed and has since fallen off or been removed. There is no physical evidence of a missing stamp, such as a ghost outline in regular or ultraviolet light, but it is possible the third stamp was affixed at the top right corner, and the cover has been reduced slightly at right. Since this is the only known cover with a combination of the July 1861 Horse & Rider stamps, the missing stamp and restoration are immaterial. The bidders agreed with the auctioneers’ assessment: estimated at \$50,000-75,000, it realized \$65,000.

This next lot featured the only recorded Pony Express cover datestamped at Stockton, California—carried by riverboat to San Francisco



by “Chips” Hodgkins. It bears a Wells Fargo Pony Express, \$1.00 Red (143L3). Position L3 (showing a white flaw in scroll line above “CO.”), tied by a blue “Wells, Fargo & Co., Stockton, Sep. 3” double-oval datestamp on a 10¢ Green on Buff Star Die entire (U33) with Wells Fargo & Company printed red frank, addressed to Geneva, New York, also with a red “T. Robinson Bours & Co., Bankers, Stockton” red oval handstamp, carried on the Pony trip that departed San Francisco on Wednesday, September 4, 1861, and arrived in St. Joseph on September 17, entering the mails with a perfect bold strike of “St. Joseph

Mo. Sep. 17” circular datestamp, accompanying certificate notes \$1.00 has diagonal tear at bottom right, entire with corner repair at top left and a sealed 6mm horizontal cut at the center of the Stockton oval—none of these are apparent.

After Wells Fargo & Company became involved in the operation of the Pony Express in April 1861, their offices began acting as feeder lines to the Pony Express. Examples of Pony covers with markings of Wells Fargo offices that were not actually located on the route are rare, this being the only one with a Stockton office marking.

Stockton is located on the San Joaquin River east of San Francisco—the trip by riverboat in 1861 took about eight hours. At this time the Wells Fargo riverboat messenger in Stockton was Pillsbury “Chips” Hodgkins. Mail for the Pony Express left Stockton at 6:00 a.m. on Wednesdays and Saturdays, in order to reach San Francisco in time for the eastbound departures. This cover was datestamped on Tuesday, September 3, and presumably was carried by Hodgkins on that day or the next morning. The \$1.00 Red stamp paid the Pony Express rate, and the entire with the red frank paid the Wells Fargo charge for service to San Francisco.

On the day this cover was datestamped at Stockton—September 3—an incident occurred 2,000 miles away that would have a significant consequence for the Pony Express. Confederate bushwhackers, who had been destroying rail lines and bridges on the Hannibal & St. Joseph Railroad since June, attempted to burn the support columns of the bridge over the Platte River. The sabotage caused a westbound train to derail and plunge 30 feet into the shallow river, killing 20 and injuring 100 more. As a result of this attack, the eastern terminus of the mail route was moved from St. Joseph to Atchison, Kansas. The September 11 eastbound Pony mail from San Francisco was the first to be postmarked at Atchison.

Estimated at \$10,000-15,000, it went for \$12,000.



Next we view the only known Wells Fargo & Company surcharge frank sent by Pony Express. It bears a Pony Express, \$1.00 Red (143L3), tied by a blue “Pony Express, San Francisco, Aug. 7” (1861) Running Pony oval datestamp on a 10¢ Green on White Star Die rebacked front (U32) with Wells Fargo & Company printed red frank and “PAID 50 Cts.” surcharge overprint, addressed to New York City, with sender’s notation “V M Richards” at lower left. It was carried on the Pony trip that departed San Francisco on Wednesday, August 7, 1861, and arrived in St. Joseph on August 19, entering the mails in New York City with that post office’s grid cancel on the embossed stamp, all backflaps expertly added to make this front appear as a complete cover.

The “PAID 50 Cts.” surcharge is one of several varieties overprinted on Wells Fargo & Company franked entires to indicate a premium rate for service. Some of these surcharged entires are found with markings indicating that they were

used for the service for which they were intended. Others, such as the example offered here, were probably used as an expediency—whether the 50¢ premium was paid and used



toward the Pony Express fee, we cannot say, since the \$1.00 Red stamp would have covered the fee.

Estimated at \$5,000-7,500, this cover sold for \$9,500.

Here we see the rare East-to-West Pony Express franked entire with St. Joseph datestamp. It shows the Wells Fargo & Company Pony Express, (\$1.00) Red Type II East-to-West printed Frank at the left, on a 10¢ Green on Thin Hard White Entire (unlisted in Scott), boldly struck by a “New-York Sep. 20” (1861) circular datestamp and duplex grid cancel, printed address to the “Agent of Pony Express, St. Joseph, Mo.” and handwritten address to F. Gilbert, “Melodeon,” San Francisco, also with an unusually complete and clear strike of “Pony Express, The Central Overland California & Pikes Peak Express Company, St. Joseph, Mo. Sep. 25” large oval in circle datestamp applied one day before the westbound Pony departure on Thursday, September 26, 1861, which arrived in San Francisco on October 8 or 9 (based on 12-13 day trips at this time), small part of top right corner repaired but not affecting 10¢ embossed stamp.

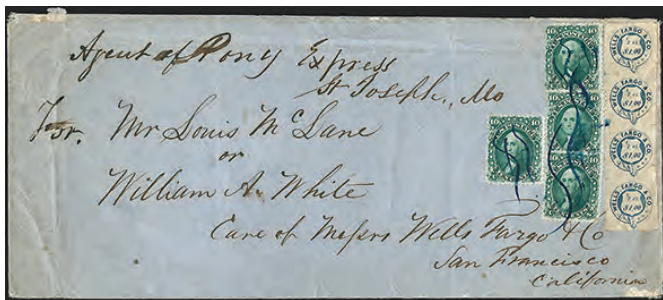
It is one of 21 recorded Type II East-to-West Pony Express entires and one of the more desirable examples that have a St. Joseph Pony Express datestamp. In anticipation of the government contract set to go into effect on July 1, 1861, Wells Fargo & Co. produced a special franked envelope for Pony Express mail from the East.

After seeking approval from the Postmaster General, the 1861 10c “Pumpkin” entire with the Type II printed frank was ordered from George F. Nesbitt & Co. (New York). On August 12, 1861, Wells Fargo announced in the New York papers that “Pony Express Envelopes” were “Now ready and for sale at our office.” Although this announcement refers only to “envelopes,” in fact both the franked entires and \$1.00 adhesive stamps were put on sale in August 1861. The earliest recorded Type II envelope is dated August 14, 1861.

Based on an article in the San Francisco Bulletin 9/13/1861, the Type II franked envelopes were problematic, because eastern post offices were sometimes sending them in the “through” mail to San Francisco, instead of directing them to St. Joseph for the Pony Express. As a result, they would arrive by regular mail ten days after the Pony Express for which they were intended. This might explain why some examples of the Type II franks are found without a St. Joseph Pony Express handstamp.

The presence of the St. Joseph Pony Express datestamp, as found on the cover offered here, confirms that this was carried by Pony Express riders.

Estimated at \$15,000-20,000, this is one of the few lots that did not sell.



Here we view the quadruple-rate Pony Express cover with \$1.00 “Garter” strip—an astonishing and unique icon of American postal history. It bears the Wells Fargo & Company Pony Express \$1.00 Blue Garter (143L6) in a vertical strip of four from the first vertical column in the sheet of 20, with large to huge margins all around showing the corner guide marks on each stamp, used with four 10¢ Dark Green, Type I (62B), corresponding quadruple \$1.00 Pony Express rate and 10¢ per half-ounce postage, the 10¢ stamps canceled with blue manuscript and all stamps tied on large blue linen-lined cover originating in Boston on October 11, 1861, addressed “Agent of Pony Express, St. Joseph, Mo, For Mr. Louis McLane or William A. White, Care of Messrs Wells Fargo & Co, San Francisco, California”, with original letter and several legal documents, carried on the westbound Pony trip departing on Thursday, October 17, 1861, which arrived in San Francisco on October 29.

This was one of the last mails to actually be carried by Pony riders before the service was closed on October 24, certificate notes slight creases in top three \$1.00 stamps and a crease in one 10¢ stamp.

This is the only recorded multiple of any Pony Express stamp on a cover and one of four extant covers with the \$1.00 “Garter” stamp.

The Horse & Rider Second Issue, the “Garter” Issue and Type II franked envelope were issued to prepay the \$1.00 Pony Express rate under the government contract that went into effect on July 1, 1861. The franked entire and Garter adhesive were needed by Wells Fargo & Co.’s eastern offices, since the Horse & Rider stamps were never sent to them.

The cover and letter are addressed to Louis McLane or William A. White, in care of the Wells Fargo office in San Francisco. McLane was Wells Fargo’s general agent and later became president of the firm. The letter is datelined “Boston Mass. Octo. 11, 1861”, and with the enclosures weighed between 1.5 and 2 ounces, thus requiring four times the express fee and postage. The 40¢ postage was paid with the new 10¢ 1861 First Design (Type I) stamps, and the \$4.00 Pony Express fee was paid with the Garter strip.

The stamps were canceled with blue manuscript ink, and it appears that the cover was carried outside the mails all the way to the Wells Fargo office. It should have reached St. Joseph in time for the October 17, 1861, westbound Pony trip, which arrived on October 29. Newspaper notices of letters arriving by Pony during this period list McLane and Wells Fargo as recipients. Estimated at \$150,000-200,000, it fetched a top bid of \$165,000.

Although this concludes my viewing of this auction, I urge you to go to the Siegel website, www.SiegelAuctions.com and read the four-page introduction to this sale. #1207. in the pdf version, where you will find descriptions of all the lots as well as a history of the Pony Express in an extremely informative introduction to the auction.



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