

COMPLETE HERITAGE DOSSIER



1902 5¢ Columbian Entire Franked with Pan-American Exposition Multiples to Denver

Forensic Integrity : Verified Genuine

Analysis Date : Jun 25, 2026

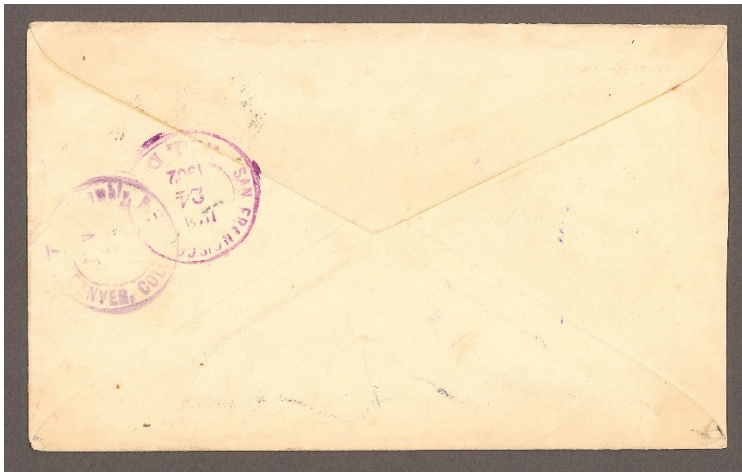
Postmark Date : Jun 24, 1902

Origin : San Francisco, California

Destination : Denver, Colorado

Stamp & Envelope

- 5¢ Columbian Stamped Envelope (Entire)
- 1¢ Pan-American (Single)
- 2¢ Pan-American (Single)
- 4¢ Pan-American (Single)



Overview

This registered cover represents an exceptional philatelic artifact from the turn of the 20th century, mailed by the prominent stamp dealer E. F. Gambs from San Francisco, California, to L. C. Nelson in Denver, Colorado. Sent on June 24, 1902, the item utilizes a 5 cents Columbian commemorative stamped envelope from 1892, upgraded a decade later with 1 cent, 2 cents, and 4 cents values from the celebrated 1901 Pan-American Exposition issue. The reverse side features the corresponding purple San Francisco registry postmark and a distinct Denver receiving backstamp dated June 27, 1902, tracing its complete 3-day transit across the American West.

Postal Rate

The total franking on this postal cover equals exactly 12 cents, which represents a combination of the 5 cents printed value of the Columbian stamped envelope and 7 cents in added Pan-American adhesive stamps. During this postal era, the domestic first-class letter rate was 2 cents per half ounce, and the registry fee was a flat 8 cents. This cover perfectly satisfies the mathematical calculation for a double-weight domestic registered letter, where

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the first 2 ounces of weight required 4 cents of postage, combined with the mandatory 8 cents registry fee to total exactly 12 cents.

Condition

The cover exhibits a well-preserved appearance with clean paper stock and sharp strikes of the registration markings. The adhesive stamps are securely affixed with minor edge wear, and the embossed envelope indicia remains crisp. Light toning is present along the perimeter, and a minor vertical fold line exists on the left side, which does not impact the stamps or key cancellations.

Rarity	Scarcity Score	Market Value
UNCOMMON	5	\$150 - \$250

Rarity Assessment & Verdict

Under our 5-tier rating system, this cover's postal usage is considered UNCOMMON.

Why it is not 'Common': The item surpasses the lowest rarity tier because it is a registered commercial cover carrying a complete sequence of low-denomination Pan-American Exposition stamps combined with a premium Columbian entire. Standard domestic mail of this era typically features single-rate 2 cents regular definitive stamps, whereas this double-weight registered usage represents a more complex and deliberate postal preparation.

Why its usage is 'UNCOMMON': The cover qualifies for the uncommon designation due to its neat multi-issue franking, the specific double-weight rate breakdown, and the clean preservation of the specialized regional registry markings. While many individual Pan-American stamps survived on philatelic mail, finding three distinct values paying an exact commercial rate step on a legacy 1892 entire requires a targeted search for modern collectors.

Why it is not 'Scarce' or 'Rare' (or higher): The cover lacks the extreme characteristics necessary to reach the higher tiers because comparable mixed-franking covers from major metropolitan hubs like San Francisco appear regularly in public auctions and online venues multiple times per year. It does not involve an unusual international route, a short-lived territorial office, or an unrecorded postal rate anomaly.

Condition Considerations: The bold, clear registration handstamps and the excellent facial condition of the three definitive stamps significantly bolster the item's overall desirability. The clean backstamps further solidify its historical appeal without the detracting of heavy tears or significant stains.

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Market & Value Considerations

The market value for this specific cover is estimated to be between \$150 and \$250 based on recent realizations for clean turn-of-the-century registered mail. The key driver of this valuation is the visual arrangement of the 1901 Pan-American stamps sitting alongside the 1892 Columbian embossed design, which appeals strongly to collectors of both eras. Covers prepared by known contemporary stamp dealers like E. F. Gambs generally retain a premium because of their exceptional strike clarity and precise rate applications.

The future appreciation potential for this piece remains steady and positive. As high-quality, cleanly cancelled examples of the Pan-American series become more difficult to source in unblemished condition, well-preserved multi-denominational combinations will continue to experience stable demand among specialized postal history enthusiasts.

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