



Lot 2

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The rare “RHM” initialed stamp is used here on one of the seven New York postmaster’s provisional covers from New Hamburg in Dutchess County, all originating from James Lenox, whose collection of art, books and manuscripts became one of the cornerstones of The New York Public Library

ESTIMATE \$7,500-10,000

DESCRIPTION

New York, N.Y., 5¢ Black on Bluish, “RHM” Initials (9X1d), Position 40 from the bottom right corner of the sheet, large margins to clear at lower right, bold magenta “RHM” initials reading from top to bottom, tied by blue manuscript cancel (applied on arrival in New York City) on folded letter datelined “Netherwood 12 Augst 1845”—Netherwood was the Lenox estate in Dutchess County, New York—addressed to Thomas L. Callender, Sun Mutual Insurance Company, Wall Street, New York City, manuscript “New Hamburg Augst 12 NY” postmark and “5” rate, red “PAID” arc handstamp applied on arrival in New York City to indicate stamp accepted as prepayment, neatly docketed “Recd. 13 Agt”

PROVENANCE

Charles A. Shierson, H. R. Harmer sale, 5/22/1961, lot 45
 Daniel F. Kelleher sale, 10/4/1974
 Louis Grunin (New York collection sold privately to Andrew Levitt)
 Daniel F. Kelleher, Sale 573, 9/30-10/1/1983, lot 153

CENSUS, LITERATURE AND EXHIBITION REFERENCES

USPCS census no. 20301
<https://www.uspcs.org/resource-center/censuses/postmasters-provisionals-cover-census/>
 Stanley M. Piller, *The New York Postmaster’s Provisional*, fig. 90, p. 67

CONDITION NOTES

Very Fine example of Scott No. 9X1d on a pristine folded letter

HISTORY AND COMMENTARY

James Lenox Writing from Netherwood Manor

In 1855 James Lenox was the third wealthiest resident of New York City. He was a dedicated collector of art, rare books and manuscripts, and his magnificent collection, including a Gutenberg Bible, formed the basis of the Lenox Library. In 1895 the Lenox Library was consolidated with the Astor Library and the Tilden Trust to form the New York Public Library. Through his generous philanthropy, Lenox also founded the Presbyterian Hospital.



James Lenox
(1800-1880)

While his Fifth Avenue townhouse was being built, Lenox spent the summer of 1845 in Netherwood, his manor house in New Hamburg in Dutchess County, located approximately 80 miles north of Manhattan. From there he corresponded with associates in New York and Boston, using the recently issued 5¢ provisional stamps to prepay postage, all with Robert H. Morris’s initials (Scott 9X1d).

There are seven recorded letters sent by Lenox from New Hamburg with “RHM” initialed stamps. One was mailed in New York City; the other six have the manuscript New Hamburg postmark. ■