

The Gilcrease Magazine · Tulsa, Oklahoma

TITANS OF WESTERN ART

Gillie Library



Frederic Remington



Owen Wister

To see the best in the art of western America, go to Gilcrease Museum. Tom Gilcrease valued the work of Remington, Russell, Schreyvogel, Moran and others before they had widespread recognition. His judgment in paintings was sound and his courage to invest was excellent. He gave Tulsa and the nation a western museum that will never be equalled elsewhere in the world.

C. R. Smith

C. R. Smith
Chairman, Board of Directors,
American Airlines

Mr. Smith is a collector of western art and is a member of the Board of Directors of Gilcrease Institute.

Introductory Statement.....	C. R. Smith	New York	1
Titans of Western Art.....	J. Frank Dobie	Texas	5
Remington's Home and Studio.....	Harold McCracken	Wyoming	13
Log Studio of C. M. Russell.....	Lola Shelton	Montana	21
Remington, the Letter Writer.....	N. Orwin Rush	Florida	28
Legacy of C. M. Russell.....	Ramon F. Adams	Texas	39
Will Rogers and Charlie Russell.....	Will Rogers, Jr.	California	46
Frederic Remington's Bronzes.....	Helen Card	New York	48
Visions of Today.....	Dean Krakel	Oklahoma	57

All art is from the Gilcrease collections unless otherwise noted.

American Scene

THE HISTORY and ART MAGAZINE WITH A PURPOSE

GILCREASE INSTITUTE

Founded by the late Thomas Gilcrease
Owned and operated by the City of Tulsa

JAMES L. MAXWELL
Mayor

GORDON T. HICKS
Chairman, Parks & Recreation Board

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

ALFRED E. AARONSON.....	Past Chairman
WILLIAM S. BAILEY, JR.....	Past Chairman
E. FRED JOHNSON.....	Chairman
OTHA H. GRIMES.....	President
GEORGE H. BOWEN.....	Vice-President
MORTON R. HARRISON.....	Vice-President
DAVID R. MILSTEN.....	Secretary
JOSEPH F. GLASS.....	Treasurer

DEAN KRAKEL..... Director of the Institute

AMERICAN SCENE COMMITTEE

JAMES C. LEAKE.....	Chairman
OTHA H. GRIMES.....	Member
MORTON R. HARRISON.....	Member

Editorial Staff

DEAN KRAKEL.....	Editor
PAUL ROSSI.....	Associate Editor
RICHARD MUNO.....	Photo-Art Assistant
BRUCE WEAR.....	Assistant
EDITH DAUGHERTY.....	Copy Reader
HAZEL DESJARDINS.....	Copy Reader

Layout and Art Work by Paul Rossi
Litho by R. F. Rodgers Company, Tulsa
Color Photography by Robert Hawks, Tulsa

Volume V, no. 4 of the *American Scene*, is published and copyrighted by the Thomas Gilcrease Institute of American History and Art, an Oklahoma corporation. A subscription is \$5.00 for four issues. Single issues, \$1.25, deluxe issue, \$5.00. A \$10.00 membership in the Institute entitles the holder to four issues of the *American Scene*, along with membership privileges. (Address: Rural Route # 6, Tulsa, Oklahoma).

Cover: I. to r., Frederic Remington, c. 1909. Remington, *The Trooper of the Plains*. Bronze, 1909. Charles M. Russell, c. 1925. Detail, Russell, *Salute of the Robe Trade*. Oil, 1920.

© Thomas Gilcrease Institute of American History and Art, 1964.

The Story Teller

Russell, *The Story Teller*. Pen-and-ink and water color, 1926

TITANS OF WESTERN ART

"Remington translated the visible into an astounding variety of pictures that do not fade in interest or power . . . Charlie Russell had the rhythm of the earth to which he belonged."

By J. Frank Dobie



Remington, *With the Eye of the Mind*. Oil, 1908.



FR

Remington, *Hungry Moon*. Oil, 1900.

Frederick Remington could toil diligently, habitually rising at six, breakfast at seven (half a dozen chops "and other knick-knacks" as Mr. Pickwick would say), then work in the studio until midafternoon, and afterward, return in the evening. For a long time he struggled to keep his weight down. At sixteen, he described himself as five feet eight inches in height and weighing 180 pounds. He was mighty proud of the way he rode up with General Nelson Miles and other seasoned soldiers during their chasing around after the Sioux in the year 1890. At that time, Remington weighed 215 pounds. In 1894, at age thirty-three, he records, "Without a drink in three weeks. Did 15 miles a day on foot and am down to 210 pounds." In 1897, at age thirty-six, he wrote to a friend, "Have been catching trout, killing deer — feel bully — absolutely on the water wagon, but it don't agree with me. I am at 240 pounds and nothing can stop me but an incurable disease." He had only eleven years left before the incurable disease did stop him. Long before the end, he had grown too obese to mount a horse or do much walking, but not to keep on drawing, painting and writing.

In May, 1909, the Remingtons moved to an expensive house and studio on a plot of ground they had bought near Ridgefield, Connecticut. Remington had burned many pictures with which he was dissatisfied. Although he could not ride horseback in the West anymore, he was settling

down to put on canvas things stirring to come out of himself. He had said more than once that he wanted his epitaph to be: HE KNEW THE HORSE. On Christmas day of that year (1909) he was very ill. The day he died he was forty-eight years, two months, and twenty-six days old.

One can not be absolute on numbers, but according to one statement, Remington had completed more than 2700 paintings and drawings, had illustrated 142 books, and had furnished illustrations for forty-one different magazines. He is not being judged now by quantity and will not be judged by quantity. He knew the horse, all right, and he knew the West — but more as a reporter than as a part of it. At times, he was a superb reporter. I would say that in "The Sioux Outbreak in South Dakota," a chapter in *Pony Tracks*, he is a better reporter on cavalymen than the sentimental and beloved Ernie Pyle was on American soldiers in World War II.

He knew cavalry horses and cavalymen better than he knew cows, cow horses and cowboys. On board a battleship off the Cuban coast during the Spanish-American war, he wrote in an article for *Harper's Weekly*, "I want to hear a shavetail bawl; I want to get some dust in my throat, kick dewey grass, see a sentry in the moonlight, and talk the language of my tribe."

As well as he pictured and wrote about "my tribe," if



Russell, *The Buffalo Hunt*. Oil, 1900.

what he said in combined media were compared with Captain John G. Bourke's *On the Border With Crook*, Remington diminishes in amplitude, in richness of knowledge, in ease and familiarity with land, frontiersmen, soldiers, Indians, and in nobility of outlook.

In the fourteenth edition of the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, Rembrandt has six pages and Remington has one-sixth of one page. I guess the proportions are about right. Evaluations of Remington will not be right unless the evaluators keep perspective and proportion. Now and then, a writer's best, an artist's best—for some imaginers at least—is something untypical, although not unrepresentative—something that has smoldered long in him and is near to him, but would hardly be wanted by his rut-following editors, publishers, and public. The *Fight for the Waterhole* is near the climax of Remington's paintings of violence. Placed next to it in a little-known album of reproductions is a picture entitled *A Prayer to the*

Gray Wolf. It shows an Indian standing with one foot on the head of a dead buffalo partly consumed by wolves, while a second Indian stands out on the bleak prairie, maybe ten steps away, his shortened shadow on the ground, arms and hands spread downward with his whole body in an attitude of supplication. He is brother to a wolf trotting around rather near, while two of his mates stand way-out-yonder beyond rifle range. Quietness of everything, the at-oneness between man and beast (both the quick and the dead) and the earth (including sparse clumps of grass)—this is not the Remington many times iterating "man-just-shot-down-the-street."

It is not necessary to run down good bourbon in order to enjoy good Scotch, and I trust I am not doing that when I say that Remington toiled too furiously trying to satisfy the demand for naked action, to linger and let things soak into him. He knew more than he understood. In this respect he is not the equal of Charles M. Russell, although

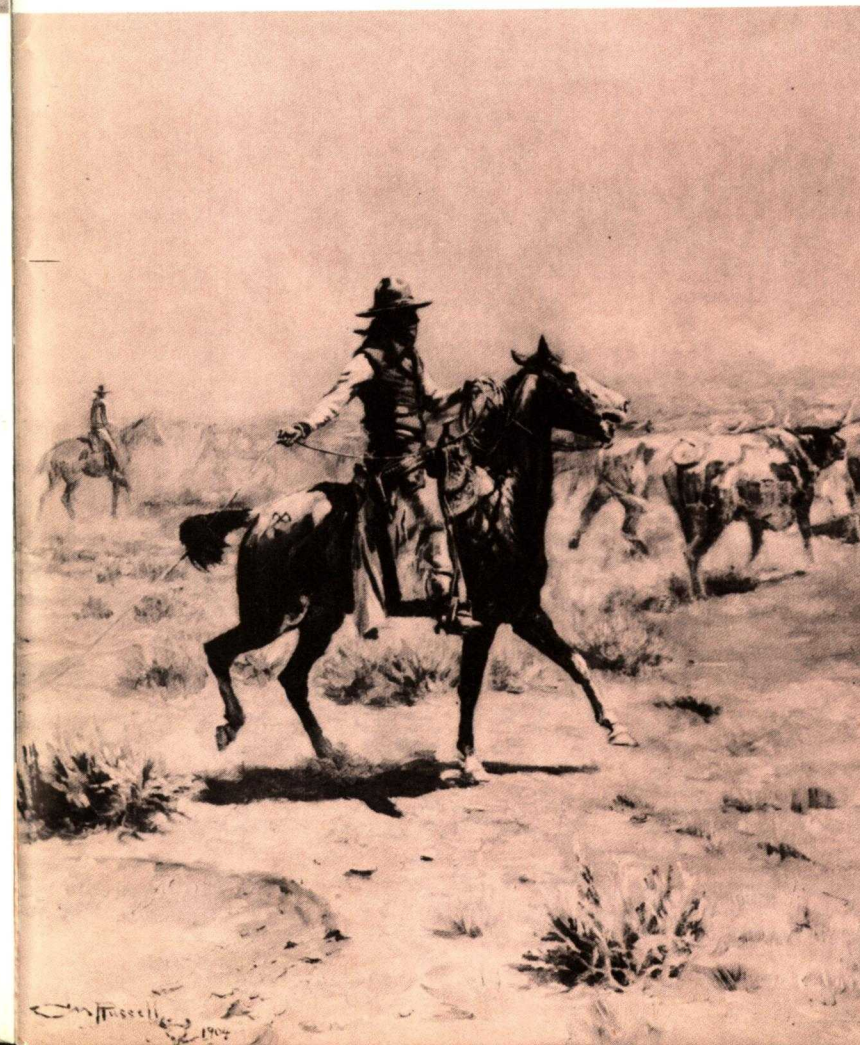
he may have had some advantage in craftsmanship. I cannot say. As a reporter through eye and ear, through drawing, painting and writing, Remington habitually got and gave the right words, but less frequently the right tune. Even his soldiers sometimes seem but clever imitations of Kipling's.

Where ripeness is all, the right tempo is always present. In his prose writing, Charlie Russell had the rhythm of the earth to which he belonged. This rhythm was infinitely superior to that of his sentimental judges. Remington's prose has no rhythm beyond the Richard Harding Davis type. He could be smartly clever with words. In this, Russell resembled George Borrow, he of *Lavengro* and *The Bible in Spain*, who lived with the gypsies and knew how to char horses. From the hedges where Mr. Petlengro told him, "Life is sweet," he went up to London, full of ambition to write. He spent hours in a tavern reading a variety of journals. Then in despair he said, "I can never be as clever as that."

I think of two drawings by Charlie Russell. In one, *The Trail Boss* is sidling over in the saddle, resting his knees



Above: Russell, *Steer Rider*. Pen-and-ink and water color, 1925. Left: Russell, *Through the Alkali*. Oil, 1904.





Remington, *Missing*. Oil, 1899.

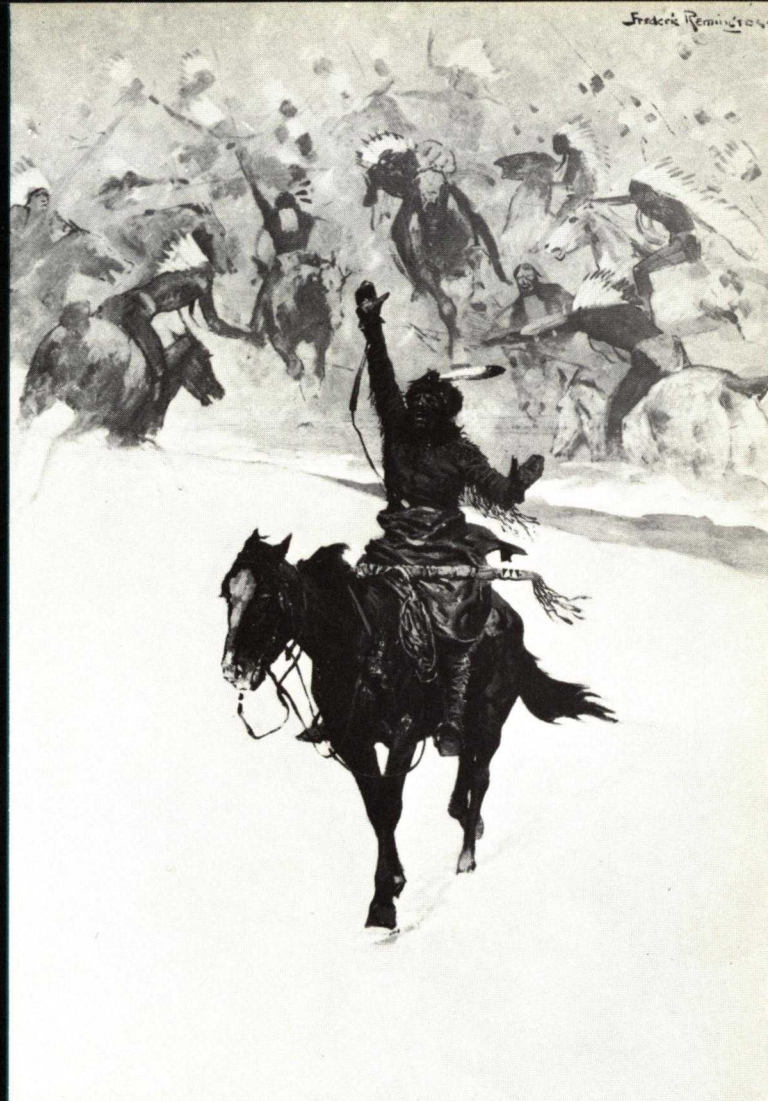
Right: Remington, *An Indian Dream*. Black-and-white oil, 1898. Lower right: Russell, *Powder River Let'er Buck*. Water color, 1904.

while his horse rests on three feet. The two repose on a slight elevation of ground while the herd is moseying by, and you may be sure the boss is not looking at the steers in general but in particular. He knows each one in that long strung-out herd which drags so far behind, that only the dust it raises can be seen. No honest trail boss ever wanted a stampede, but if one should occur in the middle of the night, this boss and the bony cow horse would leap into action — in order to restore quiet.

Serenity passes into me when I recall a black-and-white vignette of Russell's, which is among forty illustrations he did for the *Virginian*. A cowboy herding the fat steers lazily grazing, is asleep prone on his belly with his spurred heels free and his head in the shade of the horse — the only shade there is. The horse is not used to a man stretched out on the ground under him and is not content. Russell made *Dead Man's Prices* an action painting for calendars and for rich purchasers of western culture.

Also, he was a sculptor. No bronze he made is more permeated with the beautiful, the spiritual, and with the understanding of Indian nature than one called *Secrets of the Night*. It is of a medicine man, cunning and mysterious, and an owl, with wings spread and its beak at the listener's ear.

Well, Frederick Remington reported, all right, much that nobody can ever again see or hear. If his illustrations for Longfellow's *Hiawatha* are made on somewhat the same principal that an interior decorator chooses pictures, it is to be remembered that he made the coyote howl, fixed the panther in his crouch before leaping, and caught the medicine man's gesture. If few secrets of the invisible passed into him he translated the visible into an astounding variety of pictures that do not fade in interest or power. ■



Lyell Carr, *Remington's Studio*. Oil, 1900.



REMINGTON'S HOME AND STUDIO

"The whole room was a veritable museum of fine Indian, cowboy and military paraphernalia."

By Harold McCracken

The Remingtons called their home "Endion" and it was at 301 Webster Avenue, in New Rochelle, not far north of New York City. It was here that Fred and Eva lived from 1890 to May 1909, for most of their particularly compatible married life. It was here that the great western artist had his spacious and extraordinary studio, which reflected the man's personality as well as his concept of work, and it was here that he created the majority of his now-famous paintings and sculptures—until seven months before his untimely death shortly after his forty-eighth birthday.

Endion was a big house, in the psuedo-Gothic style that was popular at the time—two stories of high-ceilinged rooms, with a full attic under the tall sharply-gabled roof with its bit of ginger-bread trim. It had a broad front porch at the top of wide stone steps, half-shaded with vines and scattered with tall-backed rocking chairs—a pleasant place to sit in summer. The view from the porch looked out across three hundred feet of well-groomed lawn to the street, and beyond, there was a view through the trees to Long Island Sound in the distance. With its large stable in the rear, with horses (including a finely bred Irish hunter) attended by a groom with a broad brogue, Endion seemed more like the estate of a Manhattan banker than the sort of atmosphere expected to inspire such

Remington, sketch. Oil, n.d.

paintings as *The Buffalo Hunter* or *Missing*. The house and the grounds gave one a feeling that here would be an ideal place for the rearing of a family of children — although the Remingtons, to their sorrow, remained childless. And as to the quiet country-squire-like impression which was presented by the exterior appearance of Endion, it was not wise to draw any iron-bound conclusions until one saw the master's studio.

There were even stronger contradictions to the fact that Fred and Eva enjoyed such a long-lasting and blissfully-happy married life together. It is true that Remington had become eminently successful with remarkable suddenness. Less than five years before acquiring the big house, Eva and Fred were living in a furnished room in Brooklyn and he was desperately peddling his pictures from publisher to publisher. In that brief period of time his work had not only given them an abundance of financial security, but it had also won the highest recognition in the field of fine art — the coveted awards of both the Hallgarten and the Clarke prizes of the National Academy, and also the Silver Medal award of the Paris (France) Exposition. But money and awards are no assurance of a happy matrimonial relationship, and the Remingtons were so far apart in temperament and personality that their life-long compatibility is a pleasant thing to think about. Even their appearance, when seen together, was a bit of a surprise. Fred would have made almost three of his petite wife. Eva was a prim and fastidious little lady of the old New England sort. She was pretty and liked to wear tight-fitting dresses with unusually large mutton-chop sleeves trimmed with lots of lace. She took pride in dusting the fine antique furniture of the big living room, thoroughly enjoying all the comforts of her home and being hostess to the famous personalities who frequented Endion for long dinner parties that usually continued into protracted serious discussions in the big studio. There Fred held forth — habitually standing with feet planted squarely apart, with hands jammed down into pants pockets and spicing his arguments with an occasional expletive that would have made an old-time cowboy feel at home.

Fred was really a man of two very different personalities — Remington, the scholarly and sophisticated Manhattanite, and Remington, the intensive and deeply-dedicated devotee of all the rough and rugged characteristics of western Americanism. He thoroughly enjoyed having lunch at the Players Club and carrying on with witty repartee or weighty discussions of anything from politics to the Indian problems, with the keenest minds the occasion presented. He wore a dress suit and boiled shirt with the aplomb of a duke, bought the most expensive Sulka ties by the dozen,

and cherished the friendships he enjoyed with such men as Owen Wister, Teddy Roosevelt and Rudyard Kipling. On the other hand, however, he had a tremendous urge to be in places like a sod-floored cowtown saloon, with the possibility of enjoying a knock-down brawl! Remington really liked to fight. After all, he had been a heavyweight boxing champion at Yale and once seriously considered competing for the professional heavyweight championship. He honestly and deeply loved the life of the West, the old West, and everything it stood for. His pictures attest to this. There were never many months that passed by, that Remington did not give way to the deep urge which took him back to his beloved West — to revert to a different mode of life in the roughest places he could find. Also, more than occasionally, he drank far more than his share of the strongest liquor available. I have discussed this with a number of his closest friends and cronies, however, and have not found anyone who would indicate ever seeing Remington befuddled from imbibing. His more than two hundred pounds of rugged constitution, and a penchant for pig's knuckles for breakfast, seems to have taken care of that. In spite of this, he was always "going on the wagon" — which he periodically did quite seriously, for more or less brief periods of time.

But Fred had one all-redeeming characteristic. That was his deep and unflinching devotion to Eva — from their first meeting at a county fair at Canton in upstate New York, to the end of his life. He was strictly a one-woman man. This is a fact so well known to his friends that during my preparation of the Remington biography several of them emphasized it to me. The most convincing of these was the noted Poultney Bigelow, close friend of Kaiser Wilhelm, *bon vivant* and gay cosmopolitanite, who told me about when he and Fred were foot-loose and free in Paris, with plenty of leisure and opportunity at their disposal, Remington had eyes only for Eva even though an ocean separated them — and she was undoubtedly the strongest influence in his life.

The big studio at Endion was Fred's own special domain where the Remington dream world flourished and was translated into realities in all the various media of the graphic arts and sculpture, as well as in literature. He, also, had a small studio at Ingleuek, their island summer home in Chippewa Bay on the St. Lawrence, but it was at Endion where he did the most of his work — usually being seated at his easel by 6:00 a.m. each day, and refusing to be interrupted by anyone before lunch time. The studio was a wing which he had built onto the house after acquiring the property. It was forty by twenty on the floor, and twenty feet to the roof-tree. A big skylight covered nearly half of one long side of the roof on the north

(cont'd on page 17)



FR

Upper left: Remington's birthplace, Canton, New York. Center: Remington, *Moonlight Scouting Party*. Oil, n.d. Lower left: Dr. Harold McCracken and the Remington studio collection, Whitney Gallery, Cody, Wyoming.



Remington, *Hopi Girls*. Black-and-white tempera. n.d.

Log Studio (cont'd)

and there were large windows across one end and a side wall. There was also a double door that was large enough to admit two horses with riders at a time, or could be opened as he painted several horse models with riders on the grounds outside.

The large brick fireplace was the gathering-place for after-dinner discussions, and provided warmth for work days in winter. The andirons were massive and black, and the heavy oak mantel was crowded with an assortment of storied mementos—from a toothy, hollow-eyed human skull to a strangely-shaped pottery treasure from ancient Mexico. Over the mantel hung the mounted head of a large bull moose Fred had killed in Canada; and around this hung several fine Indian decorated warshields. The whole room was a veritable museum of fine Indian, cowboy and military paraphernalia, each piece reminiscent of Remington's exciting days in the hinterland of the West—from his first trip which began in 1880 to the last of the annual pilgrimages. The walls were crowded with all manner of articles from lodges and trophies of the warpath, and gear used by cowboys, cavalry and troopers of the western frontier—from Old Mexico to Canada and Alaska. Remington had personally collected every item on the spot and there was a pattern and purpose to what he had selected. There were beaded buckskin clothing, war bonnets and a wide variety of decorated trappings from the Sioux, Blackfoot, and other of the tribes of the northern and southern plains, each with its own tribal designs and characteristics. There were guns representing the various periods from the earliest days of the American frontiersmen, to the last period of the United States Army in the Indian wars. This vast array of material had been collected for the specific purpose of giving documentary accuracy, as props and detail, in the drawings and paintings that Remington made. Sometimes these items were merely used for reference and sometimes they were used on the professional models that were sent up to his studio from New York City.

Nearly every article in the studio collection had some story connected with how it had been obtained or about the person who had used it. There were a few of the items, which for one reason or another, Remington liked to tell about. One such, was an extraordinary bead-decorated pair of moccasins, which showed long usage. The moccasins were obtained on an early trip in Arizona, when he had accompanied a small detachment of cavalry sent out to bring in a band of renegade reservation tribesmen. The soldiers were accompanied by a very striking and picturesque Indian guide, whom the young artist followed quite closely to study and sketch.

As the dismounted soldiers were cautiously approaching the renegades' camp, their presence was discovered



Remington, field sketch. Pencil, n.d.

Remington, *An Indian Brave*. Pen-and-ink, 1890.



and a volley of rifle shots caused members of the deploying party to dive behind the best shelter they could reach in a hurry. Remington found himself hugging the ground behind the Indian guide, who started firing his rifle around the corner of the rock which provided their protection. For a time Fred just flattened out against the ground. After a while he noticed the unusual pair of beaded moccasins that were moving so close to his face. He stared at these admiringly for a moment.

"Want to sell those moccasins you have on?" he queried. The Indian aimed and fired his rifle, then grunted, "Sell 'um . . . Dollar." Remington squirmed until he was able to get a dollar out of his pocket—but the Indian was taking aim again. After he had fired, the dollar was tossed to where he could reach it, and the moccasins were kicked off. It had occurred to Remington that the Indian, or he, might get killed before they got back to the reservation, so he had closed the deal on the spot, and stuffed the moccasins into his own pockets. "Later a model posing for me wore those particular moccasins," the artist reminisced with a chuckle, "and when the picture was exhibited, an art critic wrote, 'Remington is always picturesque. His Indian guide wears a pair of moccasins the like of which were never worn by any Indian guide outside a theatre. The actual guide probably wore a pair of old army brogans!'"

Most of Remington's formal and finished work was done in his studio, although he made an abundance of sketches, both in color and in pencil, in the field, and on his later trips into the West he made hundreds of photographs. Also, like most good artists, he had a remarkable photographic memory. The penciled portrait sketches he made of oldtimers, are wonderfully done, and many of the oil color sketches on canvas and board have an impressionistic and charming quality which is not excelled by his finished works. Some of these are pure landscapes—which he did apparently for sheer personal pleasure. There were well over a hundred of these beautiful field sketches in oil in the studio when the Remingtons moved from New Rochelle to the larger estate near Ridgefield, Connecticut, only a few months before the artist died in 1909. He was not well in the interim and much of the studio collection was not even unpacked. Then, after the sudden death, and in the confusion which was precipitated, everything was packed and shipped to the old home town of Ogdensburg in upstate New York. Many of the packing cases remained in storage not only until after Eva's death seven years later, but until 1923, when the Remington Art Memorial was established. Somewhere along the line nearly all the oil sketches were "lost."

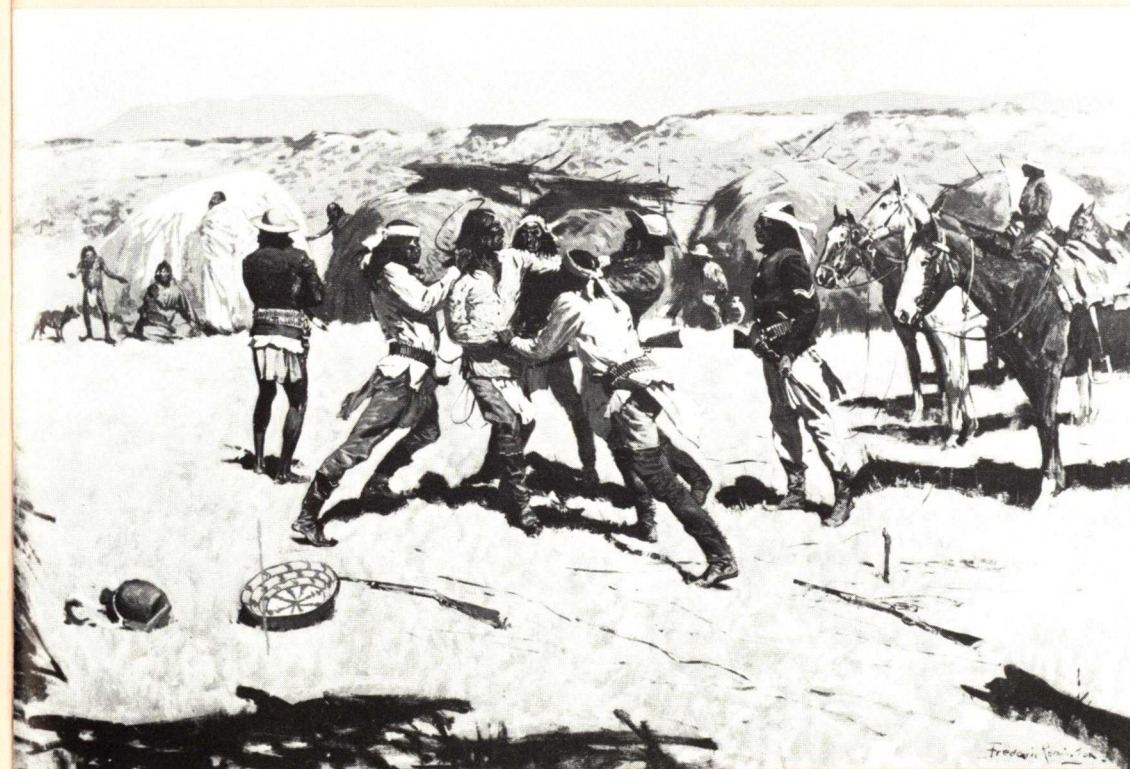
During the twenty years or more that I was gathering material for the book *FREDERIC REMINGTON—Artist of the Old West* (Lippincott, 1947), I spent a great deal of time at the Remington Art Memorial, examining

the artist's personal diaries, note books, sketch books and photographs, and making fascinating discoveries in boxes of letters and other memorabilia long stashed away in dark closets of the old Ogdensburg mansion in which the Memorial had been housed. It was not until about two years after my Remington biography was published, however, that I got into a back corner of the building's dim and dusty attic, and with the aid of the caretaker pulled out a large six-foot-square packing case. It had long been covered with old bedsteads, broken picture frames and empty boxes. No one knew what, if anything, the big packing case contained. When we started pulling it out we



Remington, *Sitting Bull*. Oil, n.d.

knew it was full of something, and when the lid was pried off it was found to be crammed full of the missing oil sketches, with a number of much larger unfinished paintings—more than eighty canvases in all! The big box had probably been packed when the Remingtons moved from New Rochelle to Ridgefield and had not been opened in more than forty years. Unfortunately, the paintings had been carelessly packed, one on top of another; some were damaged and all were very badly in need of cleaning. But for me, it was like finding a treasure which had long been buried in the sand.



Remington, *Arrest of the Scout*. Black-and-white oil, c. 1898.

The Remington Art Memorial had long faced the problem of having a considerable amount of cleaning and restoration work done for the preservation of its collection of large and important paintings—the mainstay of the permanent collection. The old mansion also needed some critical remodeling to lessen the serious fire hazard and modernize the antiquated soft-coal-burning furnace. After long and intensive efforts had failed to raise the necessary funds for this urgent work, the Board of Trustees, in 1956, decided to sacrifice the Remington studio collection of 110 original oil sketches, together with all the Indian, cowboy and other material which had given the

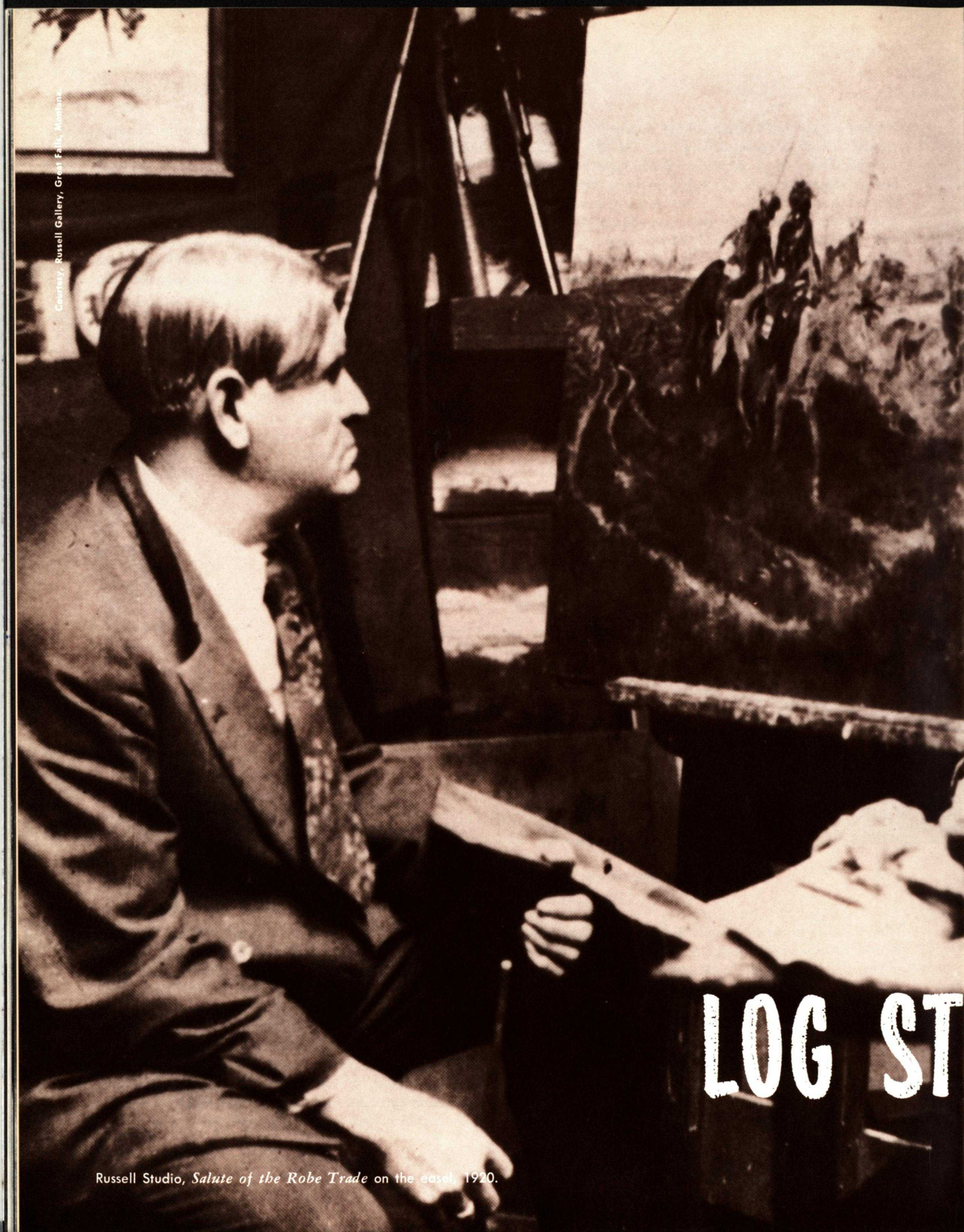
New Rochelle studio its museum aspect. It had been Frederic Remington's personal desire that his collection should someday be permanently exhibited in its entirety in an appropriate museum, and this important qualification was made as a basic requirement of the sale. It was, therefore, during the active planning for the Whitney Gallery of Western Art, as part of the Buffalo Bill Historical Center in Cody, Wyoming, and my appointment as director of that nebulous museum, that I took more than ordinary interest in working out some plan whereby the Remington studio collection might be acquired. This was made possible by the

generosity of the W. R. Coe Foundation, and one large, forty-by-forty-foot wing of the new building was specially designed to accommodate the collection—as the new museum's first acquisition.

It is a most appropriate circumstance that Frederic Remington's studio collection should come back to the West which that great artist loved so deeply and portrayed so faithfully. Some of his happiest and most fruitful days were spent in the vicinity of the town of Cody and the nearby Rocky Mountains and Big Horn Basin of Wyoming's still unspoiled West. One of Remington's



closest friendships was with Colonel William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody, the founder of the town and the inspiration for the growing Historical Center which bears his name. Situated at the east entrance to Yellowstone National Park, the Remington studio collection will remain permanently and appropriately as a unique public exhibition, along with collections of the works of the other great documentary artists of the old West, in the Whitney Gallery of Western Art. For this writer, it is like an old friend come home—and I am sure that Frederic Remington himself would be pleased. ■



Russell Studio, *Salute of the Robe Trade* on the easel, 1920.

"Within its walls the artist wrote his autobiography in relics of his past."

By Lola Shelton

When Charlie and Nancy Russell built their home at 1219 Fourth Avenue North, in Great Falls, Montana, by some strange oversight they failed to include a room in which the artist could paint his pictures with any degree of privacy. He therefore, found himself using the dining room through which all traffic from the front to the back of the house was routed.

"You know, Mameso," he said one day, "I'd like to have a studio right out there where I could work without being in the way of your hen parties."

"Just a plain log cabin with a big stone fireplace, like I lived in back in the good old days. Not any frills or gewgaws on it. Then my old friends could drop in and talk about the trails we've rode. That kind of company never did get in my way when I was paintin' back in the Judith."

It was characteristic of Charlie, who disliked business details of any kind, to leave the entire execution of the project to Mrs. Russell's efficient management. She soon found that the only immediately available material to be had was telephone poles of western red cedar. These she obtained and almost at once workmen were busy with stone and wood.

As Charlie strolled down the street one day, one of the neighbors called to him, "What you building on your vacant lot, Russell? Looks like a corral."

Charlie glanced back and, in truth, the enclosure which was now about four poles high did resemble a corral. He construed the jesting remark as a criticism of a rustic building in what was one of the better residential districts of the growing city. Paradoxically, while he had always maintained his eccentric way of dressing, he now became very sensitive concerning his studio, and because of this

(cont'd on page 24)



LOG STUDIO OF CM RUSSELL



Russell, *Salute of the Robe Trade*. Oil, 1920.

Log Studio (cont'd)

imagined criticism, apparently lost interest in it. After one statement to the effect that it was probably a mistake to put a log cabin in this part of town, he refused to even glance in the direction of the growing edifice.

Nancy, who in her usual way, had gone all out to make the studio everything he had suggested, was heartsick. She appealed to their closest friends the Triggs.

At the first opportunity, Trigg called across the short distance which separated the Russell property from his own, "Say, Charlie, I've been so busy, I haven't had time to see your new studio, but it sure looks good from the outside."

"Do you like it? Charlie asked.

As the two men met in front of the half-finished structure Charlie said hospitably, "Come in and have a look." He never let on for an instant that it would be his own first view of the interior.

As Trigg admired the huge stone fireplace, Charlie said, "I'm gonna cook sourdough bread from a Dutch oven and barbecue steaks over the coals like we did out on the range. You know, Mame scares the tar out of some of them old hard cases that I usta ride the range with. They privately think that I'm henpecked. They don't know what a good little old pa'dner she is to travel in double harness with."

In due time the building was finished and Charlie carried to it the treasures he had accumulated over his more than twenty years as a cowboy and friend of the Indians. These things, along with his painting equipment were all that he allowed to be housed there. The sparse pieces of furniture were homemade counterparts of that found in line shacks and abodes such as that of the hide hunter, Jake Hoover with whom "Kid" Russell had lived out his boyhood dreams.

Charlie Russell loved this plain log building, a personification of himself; it was stark in its simplicity, yet warm and welcoming to all that walked through its portal. Within its walls an artist wrote his autobiography in relics of his past. Within its walls a warm heart relived again the deathless days of a great era. There lived again the far-flung herds of the redmen's buffalo, who lived and died an ignoble death at the hands of the hide hunters, in order to make

Upper right: Russell and his niece, Mrs. John M. Wenneis. Photograph taken at Lake McDonald, Glacier Park, c. 1909.

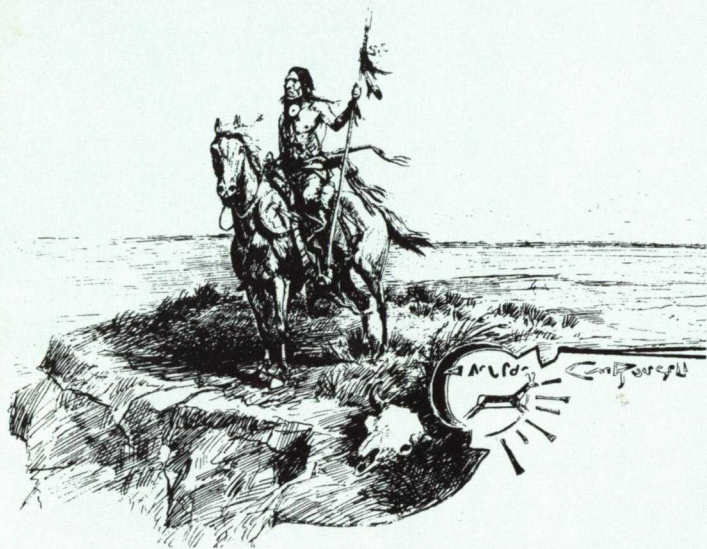
Right: Olaf Seltzer, *Charlie Russell*, c. 1891, with the N-N Outfit in the Judith Basin, Montana. Oil, n.d.

Opposite page: Russell, *Buffalo Coat*. Oil, 1908.



Courtesy, Mrs. John M. Wenneis, Setauket, New York.





◀ Russell, personal letterhead, *The Knight of the Plains as He Was*. Pen-and-ink. The symbolism to the right depicts Russell's Indian name "Ah-Wah-Cons" (antelope).



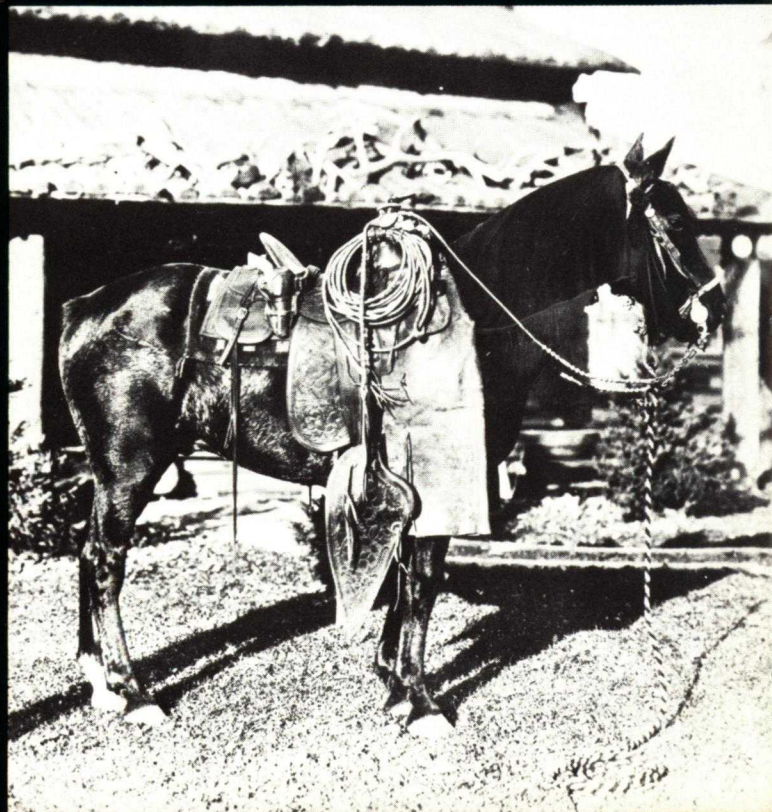
◀ Russell, *Father De Smet's First Meeting with the Flathead Indians*. Oil, 1926. Russell's last major work, unfinished and unsigned.

Below: The cowpony, "Dexter" that followed the horse-drawn hearse at Russell's funeral, October 24, 1926.

way for the longhorns that swarmed up the trails from Texas. They, also, were to dot Montana's plains a few short years and then be smothered under a blanket of white in the awful winter of '86; their bones, too, a bleaching epitaph to the whiteman's greed. He caused the mountains and plains of his beloved state to live again on canvas; flaming sunsets and cold wintry scenes grew under his hand to chill the bones of those who scanned them, although the day outside was sweltering in August heat.

Within these walls a father gave his love to a small boy; here he again spun his salty tales for friends to hear, renewing the days of old in cronicle, to friends now halt and lame, and to those Indian brothers whose priceless legacy from God now was bleaching bones — and these, were fast fading from the land.

Courtesy, Russell Gallery, Great Falls, Montana.



September 26
1926

Dr Philip Codd

Friend Codd
I just received your gift the books by Will James which I like very much when it comes to horses nobody can beat James there is no other horse like our range horse and James says every noose they make we have just returned from our mountain camp the big hills look very beautiful in their fall clothing of many colors the above sketch is of a small band of elk we saw a few days before we left which I hope will remind you of the country you were born and raised in the camp you live in now can boast of man made things but your old home is still the real out doors

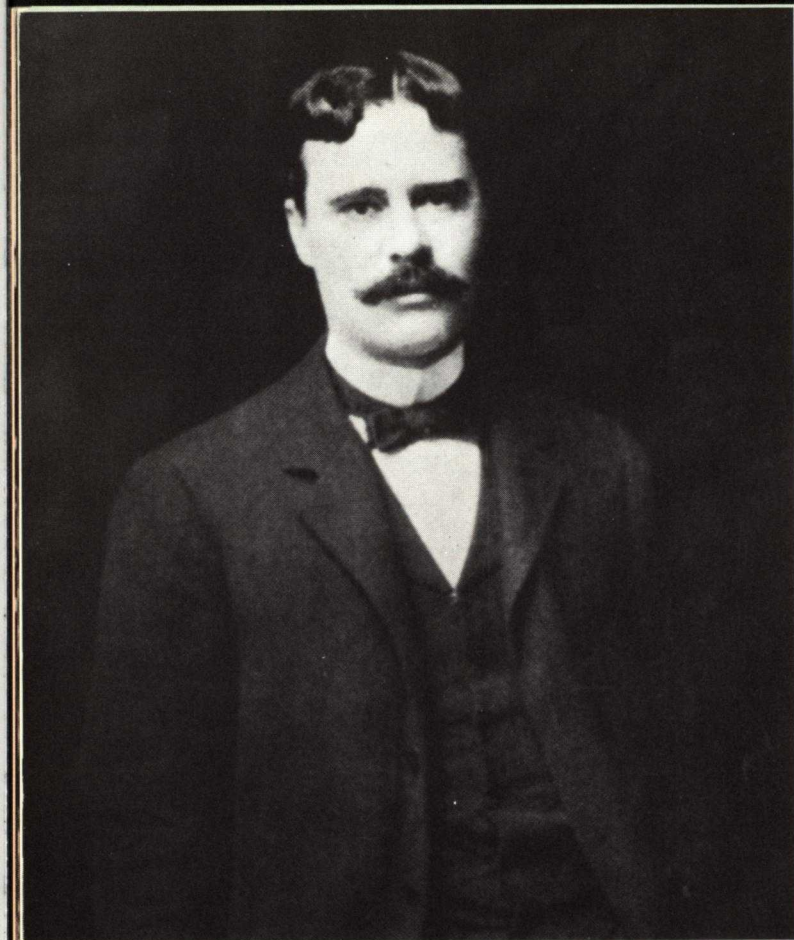
and when it comes to making the beautiful Ma nature has man beat all ways from the old lady still own a lot of mountain to show what I mean man made this animal but the old lady I'm taking about made this one  I have made a living painting pictures of the horses on and the life about him it took regular men to handle real cows I would starve to death painting the horses deformed. God made cows with horns to defend herself and when a wolf got meat it wasn't easy often he was so full of horn holes he wasn't hungry a scorch could kill the man on with out getting a scorch but I forgot I got no kick coming I've been turned on myself but the medicine men at Rochester only took from one thing I didn't need and was glad to get rid of I look and feel better but I'm still very weak if you see Olaf Seltzer give him my regards I suppose by this time he's a real New Yorker we have been having lots of snow but today it has cleared and I think the storm is over we all send our best regards to you and yours
Your friend
C.M. Russell

Russell's last illustrated letter.

Here still dwells the spirit of the man who gave the world so lavishly of his skill. Twenty thousand visitors a year walk through the room, solemnly scanning these silent momentos of the past, seemingly letting their souls absorb something of the great love Charlie Russell gave unstintingly to his fellow man.

After Russell's death in 1926, an addition was made to the studio, to better house what was now termed Russellana.

In 1953, next door to the studio cabin, the C. M. Russell Gallery was opened to the public. This building was built with funds from public donation, but by request of Miss Josephine Trigg's will, was erected after her death. It was built to house the Trigg collection of his art and to that has been added many other objects of his skill. ■



REMINGTON *the Letter-Writer*

"Am going to Montana for two months—to sweat and stink and thirst and paint, particularly paint."

By N. Orwin Rush

Like a good many individuals of the period, Frederic Remington carried on a rather extensive correspondence with a number of persons. Hundreds of these letters are in existence today. Few, however, are more interesting than approximately ninety letters (now in the Wister Collection in the Library of Congress) written by him to another great westerner, Owen Wister.

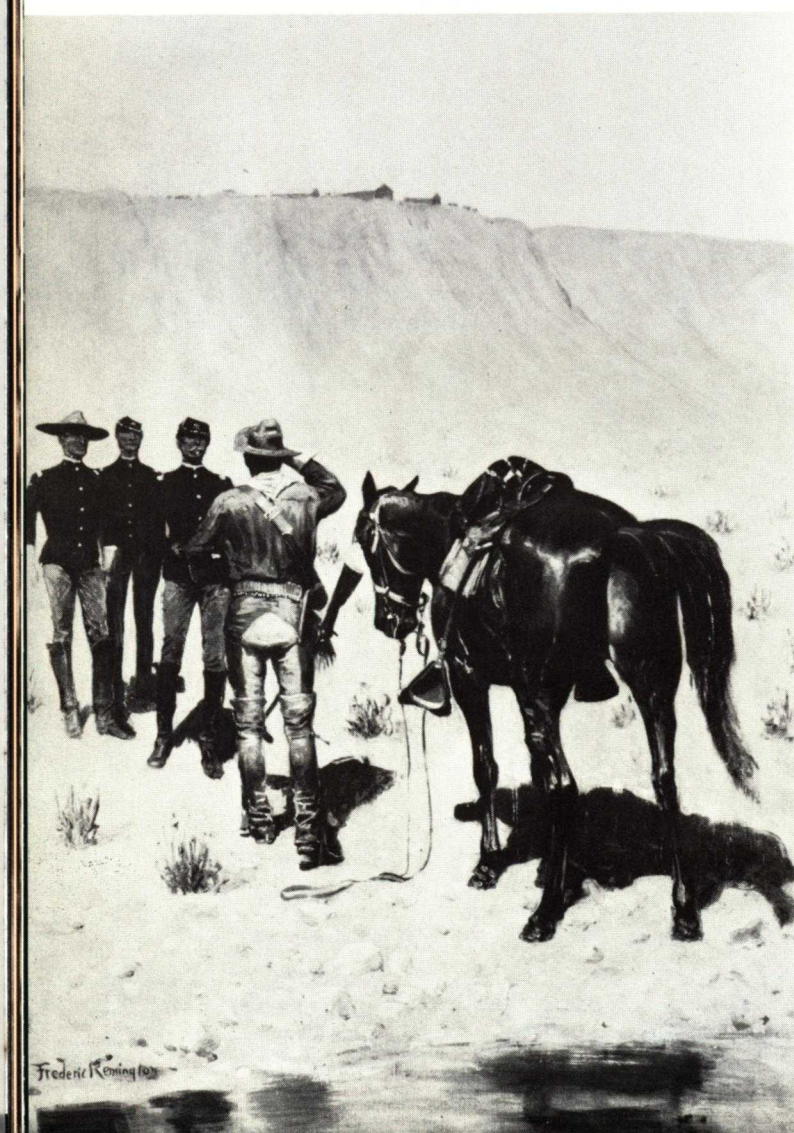
Letter-writing gave him an opportunity to confide in Wister on many subjects. He seemed especially eager to tell Owen Wister about his new-found love, modeling, his great desire to improve his color, and his writing. Most of his letters to Wister, as would be expected, deal with some phase of the old West. With few exceptions, they are undated and are rather brief, rarely running to more than two or three pages and often only a single page. They reveal a very close and intimate friendship.

The eighteen different salutations Remington used in letters to Wister, including "Dear Wis," "Dear Ownie," and "Dear Dan," are, in themselves, an indication of the real feeling that Remington had for Wister. Wister was called Dan only by a few very close friends.

His letters are full of comments about trips, especially his western ones. Many times he urges Wister to go with him or to join him. Typical of such remarks are, "Am going to Montana for two months—to sweat and stink and thirst and paint, particularly paint," or "Just back from two months in Montana and Wyoming—trying to paint at the impossible—had a good time." Most of his western trips were for a period of two months. His wife evidently never accompanied him on any of them. She did, however, go with him on at least one trip to Florida. He writes to Wister from Jacksonville, Florida, "Old lady has grip and we have been detained here until Thursday morning . . ." Even on this trip he seems to yearn for Wister's companionship. He tries to entice Wister to join him by such remarks as, "Come—dove, deer, bear, tarpon, red snapper, ducks, birds of paradise, cow-

Upper left: Owen Wister, the author, as a young man. His most famous work was *The Virginian*.

Lower left: Remington, *The Messenger*. Black-and-white oil, c. 1903.



boys who shoot up the railroad trains. Write when I can expect you." A few days later he writes, "We expect you. It is summer here and I have gotten my nerve back already." Then still later from Punta Gorda, Florida, he writes, "Sorry you can't come. I am like a sixteen-year-old school girl now. Mrs. R. wishes you were coming and sends regrets." Even while on this trip to Florida he couldn't get the West out of his thoughts. He used the opportunity to collect information for an article about cowboys, even if he had to settle for Florida cowboys.

The correspondence with Wister substantiates the legend that has grown up around Remington that he would have very little to do with women. About the only time he mentions his wife is in connection with invitations to Wister to visit them. However, whenever his wife was away he evidently missed her greatly as is indicated in one of his letters when he wrote, "The misus arrived today with . . . paper and ink. My 'Injun' and I have been burning bacon and coolin' coffee for a week on the batch." When writing about his illustrating *Tijana* he commented that he "Didn't get the girl pretty as the second word unfortunately says she was—but no one can expect that of me."

He seemed especially eager to tell Wister about his great interest, hopes, and desires in his new found love, modeling. He wrote to Wister that he had only one idea, "mud"—going on to say that "all other forms of art are trivialities." He was very much taken with the thought that through "mud or bronze" he would become immortal. As he wrote to Wister, "It don't decay—the moth don't break through and steal—the rust and the idiot cannot harm it for it is there to say (that) one day I was not printed in another tone from this—one day anyone could read me—now I am black letter. I do not speak through a season on the stage. I am d--- near eternal."

He writes, "You just ought to see the 'great model' I am making—it's a lulu." Then at another time he states, "My model is said by competent judges to be immortal. Your sneers will haunt you." Then later, "They are writing editorials out West about the Buster."

Remington has quite a bit to say to Wister about his weakness in color. He writes that he is going out West to devote two months to color. Then he goes on to say, "I am sufficiently idiotic to have a *color sense* and I am going to go *loco* for two months." Another time, he refers to plans for going into the desert in the month of October with an engineer by the name of Worth. They both want Wister to go with them. Remington mentions that they would have a good time and "might uncover some new color."

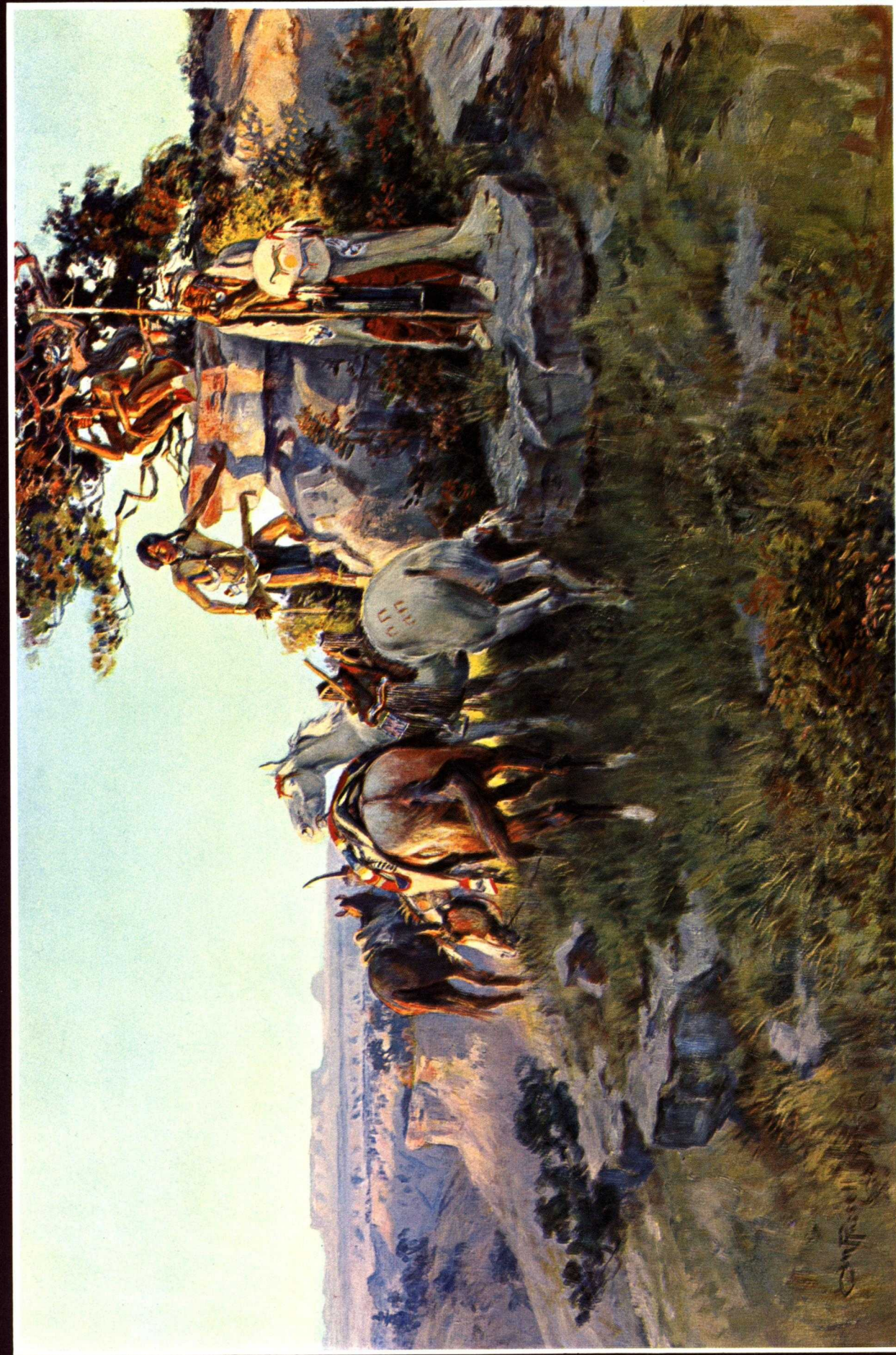
Occasionally Remington philosophizes on art, such as when writing of his painting derived from Reno's repulse, where Reno and his men are crossing a ford in a huddle. He remarked, "It was kind of unpatriotic but art is im-

(cont'd on page 36)





Indian Warfare.
Frederic Remington. Oil, 1908.



Watching for Wagons.
Charles M. Russell. Oil, 1917.

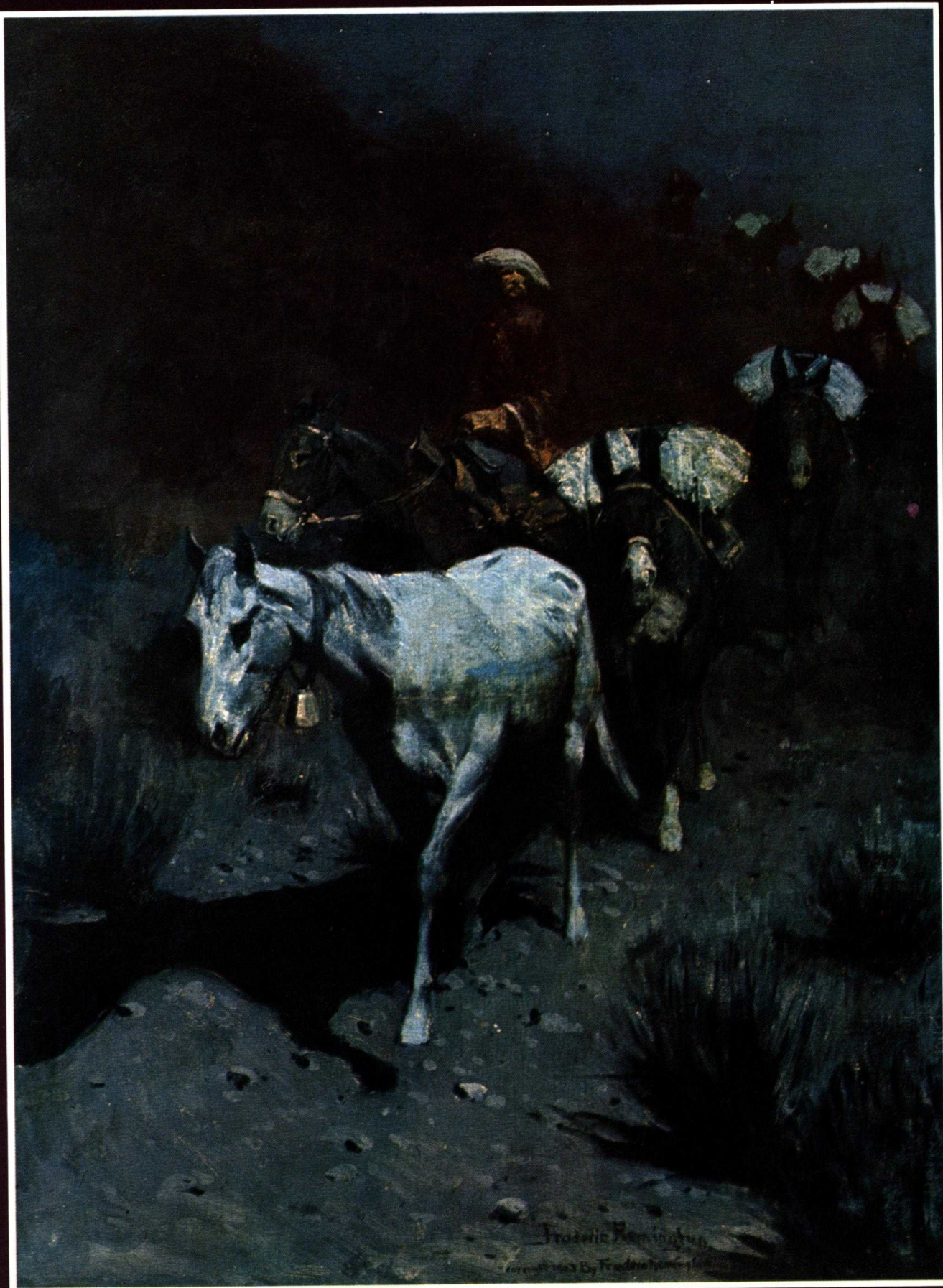


▼ *Russell.*

The Gilcrease Galleries.

Remington. ▲

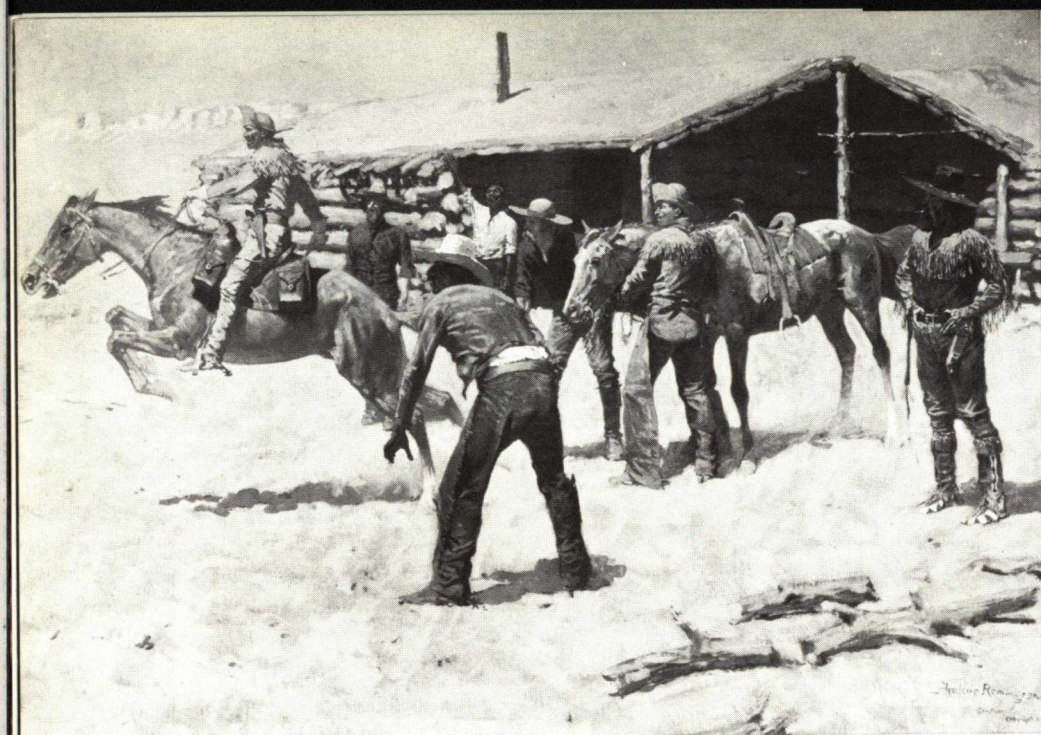




Bell Mare.
Frederic Remington. Oil, 1907.



The Bell Mare.
Charles M. Russell. Oil, 1910.



Remington, *The Coming and Going of the Pony Express*. Oil, 1900.



Remington, *The Night Rider*. Oil, n.d.



Remington, *Camp on the Cheyenne River*. Oil, n.d.



Remington, *The Rabbit Hunt*. Black-and-white oil, c. 1896.

Letter-Writer (cont'd)

personal I am told."

Not a great deal has been written about Remington's literary activities. A kind of rivalry existed between Remington and Wister when it came to writing; both were praised, highly, by Theodore Roosevelt; both wrote articles about the West for the leading magazines of the time; both published their best western novel in the same year just a few days apart; both books went into a number of editions; both were produced as plays and opened in New York at the Manhattan Theatre only a short time apart. Remington's letters to Wister reveal some interesting comments from which one gets the impression that Remington had mixed feelings about his ability to write. He was always eager to have Wister's comments on his literary activities. In one letter he asked Wister what he thought of his stories. He then went on to say that Wister would probably think them amateurish, but they were not subjective. He confessed that his writings lacked a great deal, but he wrote to Wister that they gave him "a chance to use 'his right' as they say in the arena."

Remington wrote to Wister that he was thinking of writing a short character story pertaining to the West, but went on to say that he didn't intend to "do the West." He wrote, "I couldn't if I would, I am only a character man. What we do along such lines can have no comparison. I'm a snare drum and you are an organ." Another time Remington wrote to Wister saying he had some writing to be done which he could not do himself but he knew Wister could.

For many years *Harpers* was an important outlet for both Wister and Remington. However in the early 1890's *Harpers* dropped them both, Remington first and a few

months later, Wister. In commenting upon this, Remington stated that *Harpers* wanted cheap men, going on to say that he found a way to get printed anyway.

On one occasion there seemed to be a misunderstanding about who was to write a certain story about a bear hunt. Remington explained that he had already written the story since he could write it much better than Wister "because it was a lot of little things which happened and a very little bear and you were not there anyway." On another occasion he mentions a story about canoeing which he is working on, calling it a good one but writing that he is going to do it over and send it to Wister to "make copy."

In a letter concerning some poetry, Remington writes, "I can't say anything more than that I would like you to do it but I wouldn't stop important work to do pen etchings for you and don't expect you will for me. Tell Collier you will or you won't and pass it up—no harm done pardner."

In spite of whatever literary rivalry there may have been between the two men, Remington certainly enjoyed illustrating Wister's stories. At times, however, he found him quite difficult to please. When working with him on his story "Game and the Nation" he wrote to Wister that he was "tusseling with your d--- subjectives." Once he wrote to Wister, "Well old man what's the matter of your coming out here for next Sunday... I have the 'Second Mo. Com.'—and it's bothering me to know just how to illustrate. We will 'raise our voices' in the matter." As time went by, he accused Wister of getting harder to please. After commenting that he had finished the illustrations for one of Wister's articles he went on to say, "and when



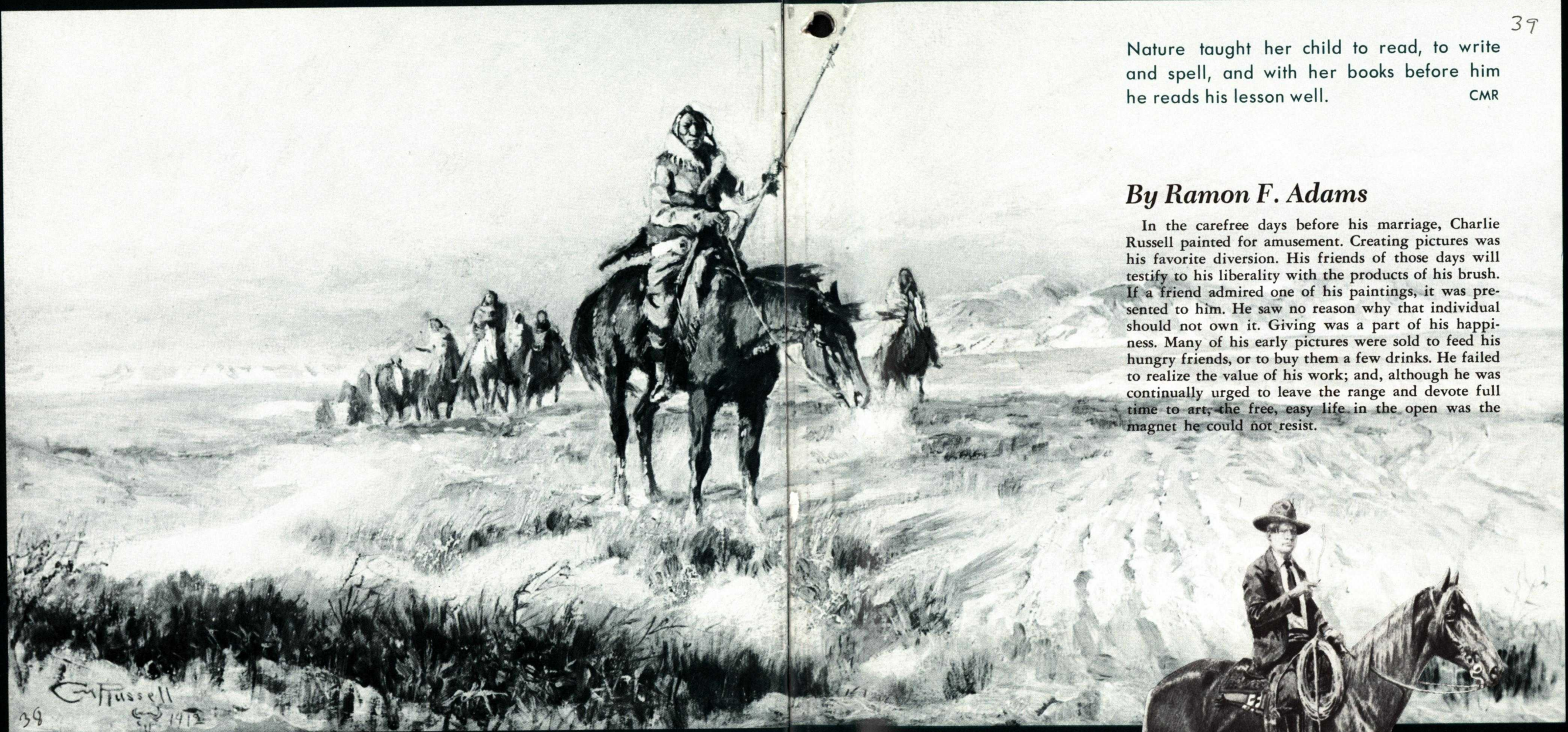
FR

I get fixed I want to load you up with ball cartridge and fire you off."

It appears that from the very first time Remington and Wister met in Yellowstone Park in 1893 (at which time Wister wrote in his diary, "He made a good criticism on the first two pages of *The Promised Land* which I accepted and profited by") until Remington's death in 1909, Remington freely gave Wister literary advice both on his own initiative and whenever Wister asked for it. When writing about one of Wister's cowboy stories he was illustrating, he suggested that Wister should, "Tell about the survival of the fittest down in the back reaches of New Mexico and Arizona." Evidently after Wister asked Remington for his comments on one of his stories he writes, "I send back manuscript. It's all right." Another time he writes, "The article is all right," but goes on to say, "I would make more scenes and less essay if you can see your way to do it. Make more of the fourteen men and the maverick etc."

Remington was always pleased to have Wister write introductions to his books; however, he did not hesitate to tell Wister how they should be written. He instructs him, "Write me a short preface such as will stun the public by its brevity and by its Homeric style. Get off the earth—see visions—go back—launch into the future." When asking Wister to write the preface for his book, *Done in the Open*, he wrote, "I want a lulu too—no d---newspaper stuff saying how much I weigh, etc. etc. but telling the d--- public that this is the real old thing—step up and buy a copy—last chance—ain't going to be any more West etc." ■

Russell, *Where Tracks Spell War or Meat*. Oil, 1912.

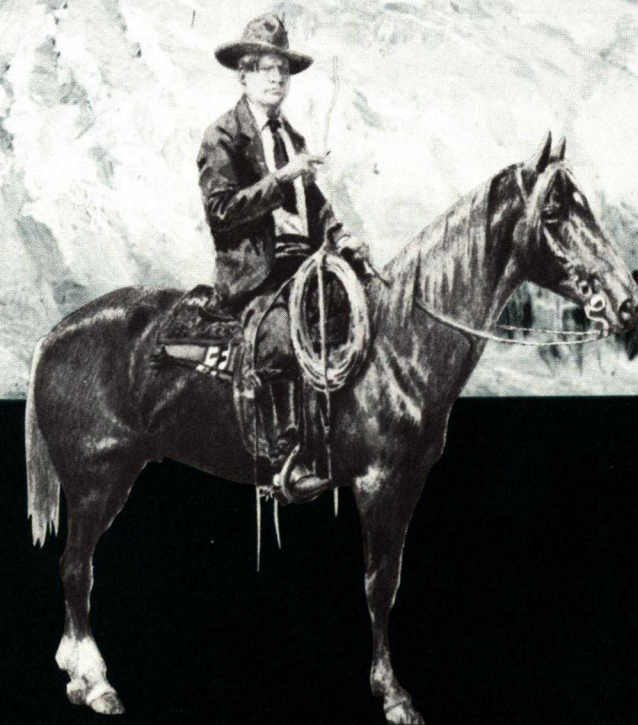


39

Nature taught her child to read, to write and spell, and with her books before him he reads his lesson well. CMR

By Ramon F. Adams

In the carefree days before his marriage, Charlie Russell painted for amusement. Creating pictures was his favorite diversion. His friends of those days will testify to his liberality with the products of his brush. If a friend admired one of his paintings, it was presented to him. He saw no reason why that individual should not own it. Giving was a part of his happiness. Many of his early pictures were sold to feed his hungry friends, or to buy them a few drinks. He failed to realize the value of his work; and, although he was continually urged to leave the range and devote full time to art, the free, easy life in the open was the magnet he could not resist.



Olaf Seltzer, *A Picture Builder*, CMR. Water color, n.d.

LEGACY OF CM RUSSELL



Russell, *Bronc to Breakfast*. Oil, 1912.

Charlie lived the life and the scenes he depicted. In the wilderness of Montana and Canada he was the companion to the freighter, the trapper, the hunter and the Indian. On the plains he herded cattle, worked on the roundups and participated in the rough-and-ready and wild existence of the region. He wore the clothes with which he clothed his characters. He felt the emotions he put upon his canvases. His men are rough, homely frontiersmen, not the fiery romancers depicted by some idealist. His characters are close to earth, men he lived and worked with, not caricatures or exaggerated types.

Not being a portrait or landscape artist, Charlie could not pose his subjects, nor set up his easel at the scene of action. He had to draw upon an indelible memory for the subjects he painted, and except for the backgrounds, which he frequently sketched at the scene, he relied upon hard work to secure the effects he desired.

Russell hated comparisons. His generous heart rebelled against comparing his work as better than that of other artists. Yet many critics have compared his Indians, for example, to those of Remington. Remington saw the West from a soldier's point of view. He saw the Indian on the warpath—as enemies of the white man, as barbarians to be subjugated. But Russell saw an entirely different West. He saw it from the point of view of the pioneer who came West to make it his home, to enjoy its thrills and suffer its hardships.

He did not look upon the Indian as the white man's enemy. Early in his western experience he came to know

the better side of the red man, and he found many traits to admire. As his contacts with Indians became more frequent and he had opportunity to study their character, he came to the conclusion that in some respects the Indian had a sounder philosophy than did the white man. Instead of seeing murder in their hearts, he saw the misunderstanding between two races of people. Instead of merely catching the action of the moment, he caught and preserved the historical background which produced the action.

When he put upon canvas a mass of detail, action and history, it was always because this was the thing he liked to do best. His taste in art was avowedly for the picture that told a story. He painted like a master novelist writes. His pictures had action and suspense. There was a hint of distance and the highness of the country he knew so well, a thrill of danger, a splash of blood, the smoke of a .45 but always and beyond his pictures, the immutable, luminous splendor of the blue-purple mountains, with a sense of Infinity and the Absolute above them.

His pictures have the exciting element of danger. He loved to paint a mixed-up, tangled-up situation whereby man or animal had an equal chance of victory. The incident was not enough. The hazard, the chance and the possible tragedy alone gauged his interest. He had the wit to see a dual situation attached to any great moment, and he had the ability to paint his animals and characters in a hazardous situation such as daily occurred in the unfenced West—situations no other artist had ever attempted. He never generalized, but gave accurate and graphic events, and his

pictures tell an unforgettable story.

Most of his paintings were of men and animals in violent action, in poses not possible to be held by a model for an instant, even if the cowpunchers had had a mind and willingness to do so. He then turned to his first love—modeling in clay and wax. With these materials he could, with unbelievable speed, arrest each of his subjects in the pose he wished them to assume in the picture.

He would arrange these figures as though they were actual participants in the real scene. Then, to make the effect complete, he would place them in the desired position in relation to the sunlight. Now he was ready to begin filling in his picture on canvas.

One of his greatest problems was the portrayal of the human anatomy in action. When alone and in a quandary, he would often strip his torso and stand before a mirror observing his own muscles, noting the twist of a limb or a movement of his head, sketching the right muscular outlines as they appeared in certain vigorous postures.



Russell, *Elk in Forest*. Oil on papier-mache bowl, 1889.



Above: Russell, *White Man's Buffalo*. Oil, 1919.

Below: Russell, *The Wagon Boss*. Oil, 1909.

Since Charlie knew the West before civilization moved in, his knowledge was gleaned from having lived it, not from superficial observation. He loved the strife and conflict of that life. Witnessing, as he did, the vanishing of the buffalo and the Indian, the replacement of cows for plows, he realized that the life he loved was passing into history. So, with each eventful happening, he etched indelibly upon his mind the pictures he has since put into lasting form upon canvas and in bronze.

The characters of his paintings bear out the creed of his accurate craftsmanship. Never will you find one waving a tomahawk, holding a Henry rifle or throwing a rope with the wrong hand. You can tell that his horses have been "broke" by the saddle marks. Whether the pattern of a wearer's costume, or a medicine man's headdress, Russell drew it as he knew it to be. The critics receiving most of Charlie's respect were his fellow cowboys.

Apart from the beauty of Russell's paintings, the grandeur of the purpling hills and snow-covered buttes, of misty cold effects against an autumn sky, of amethyst sunset and topaz dawn, his pictures have distinct historical significance. In the accuracy of detail, the creator was faithful to the time and the place of the old frontier, thus leaving a legacy to the future in his canvases.

His paintings are chronicles in wonderful colors that are true to the glories of the landscape of his country. In none of them is the sun itself visible but the highlights are so well painted, the flashback of the sun as it strikes a face or an object so realistic that one turns involuntarily to see if the sun is not filtering through a window.

Ar Philip. G. Cole
Forest Hills
Long Island. N.Y.

Great Falls, Montana.

Dec 21-1926

Dear Doc:-

In thinking over a conversation we had some time ago regarding our mutual friend, the late Charley Russell and his early life in Montana, I am sure he came out of the Little Belt Mountain about 1882 after living there with old Jake Hoover, the trapper, their stamping grounds in those mountains being around and near old Gogo, later famous for the sapphires mined there. In leaving the Little Belt Mountains Charley dropped down into the upper Judith River country around the old cow town

Utica and the Bigeye Basin, where he struck the N-N Cow Outfit. He was hired by the Trail boss of this outfit, Horace Brewster, as horse wrangler, and he was known to the N-N in general, and Gros Ventre Johnny, the cook and Brewster in particular, as "The Buckskin Kid", due to his straw coloured hair, and his bleached

also due to a pair of riding pants. When he went north line, this same pair of pants caused him to be named by the "Aw-a-kos"

then Indians figuring simple way that the in his riding pants flagging his danger



complexion, and of buckskin seated sometime after that across the Canadian of pants caused him Bloods and Bigeyes "The Antelope", in their picturesque, rear view of Charley looked like an antelope signal in full retreat.



This obscure kid became through evolution an interesting and well-known character throughout the Northwest and even further.



EVOLUTION.
(VIA THE DARWIN ROUTE)

I am now about to pull the old timeworn broncade; but there seem to be but one formula as how goes; - Wishing you, your family and Miss Balston a merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year, I am

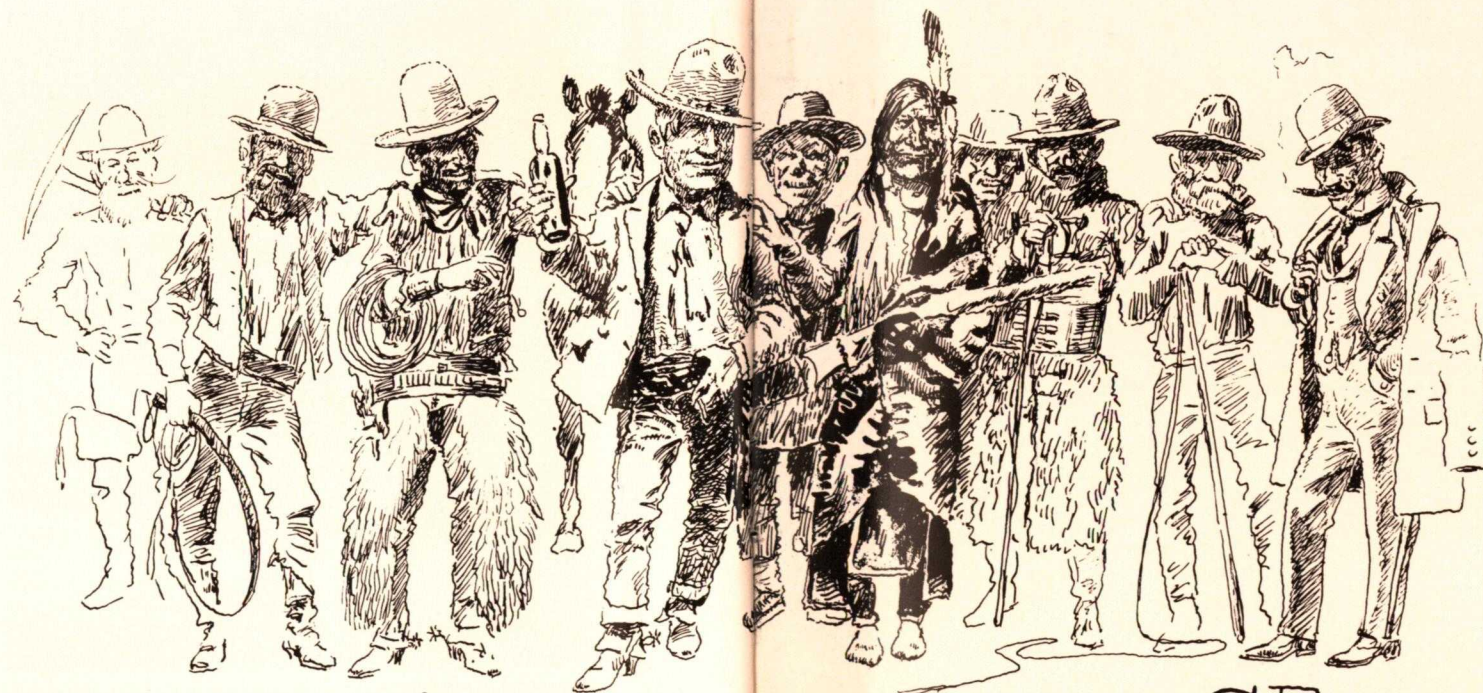
Sincerely your friend

Chaf.

All his pictures are characteristic of him, full of motion, vivid color, the indescribably translucent atmosphere of those latitudes and, above all, authentic of the native and the landscape.

The West he was perpetuating was that of the '70's and '80's, the West of cowboy pranks and Indian ceremonials, of buffalo and wolves, Rocky Mountain sheep and bears, and the cattle ranges—the West of "holdups" and miscellaneous shootings, of cattle- and horse-stealing, of "bad men" and quick gunplay. These things are found in his pictures and sculptured groups, presented with freshness and verve, with excellent composition, free, spirited drawings and modeling, and faithful adherence to accuracy in matters of costume and equipment.

Charlie Russell became a master with no master but the inspiration of the West, the vivid experiences of his days on the range, the thrilling story of adventure and exploration and an indomitable genius to teach him. Yet, notwithstanding this lack of academic training and precedent, or



I savvy these folks

GTR 1907

Dear Dr. Cole-

The last few weeks have sure been a time of rest for my pen, both in writing and drawing. That time has been look up in the starting of a home I'm having built.

I'm building that home in the heart of the cow country, a hundred miles from where I was born, it's a country old times tell of as fast, and now as I look at it I want to preserve it as it is regardless of what progress does to the world outside my line.

I want to have this little country of mine so I can set up on a knoll, look down the creek bottom and ridges below me and see cattle there, and riders, not irrigating ditches and fences.

I wanted awful bad to fix up my corral, scatter out my log and dolie buildings, and then have good old Charlie Russell come and rest his feelings at the right—but now that cowboy has went to Other Ranges and I'm cheated of the glad feeling of having him, but somehow I can't think of him as far away. Maybe the thought of that is too much for me. Anyway I've got a hunch as I look up to the Big Dipper of nights that he's looking down at me.



and that he can hear the bacon sizzle in the frying pan I'm holding - I feel sometimes like hollering at him to come and unlaugh that bone that's on the picket-rope -



With that old cowboy gone I feel as if the lines of the cow country have give away - I know it's quit true and that the cow country is up to stay a long time yet, but anyway I want to play safe and get my little territory where I'll be able to look around as it is now and without seeing a fence, I want to feel sure that I'll always have space to really breathe.

What I'd like to do is buy the whole state of Montana, kick out these boosting hombres outside the line, tear down the fences, let the ponies and cattle grow wild, and then tell all the cowboys to come HOME



Sincerely Yours.

Will James

perhaps because of it, he developed a sensitive technique of much natural refinement, springing from an inborn exultation in the light, color and freedom from the influence of "school," and untrammelled by tricks of the studio.

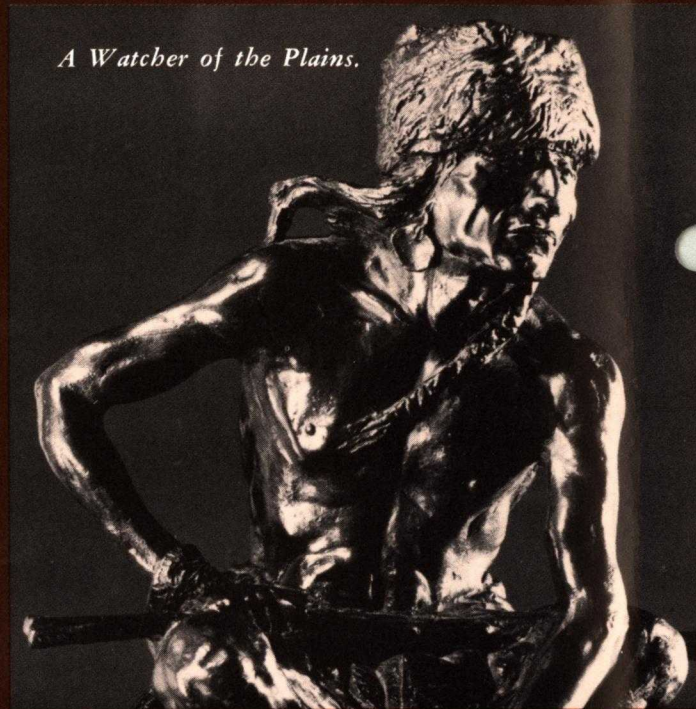
He gave us the presentation of an individual cowboy and horse in such a way, and with such authority they seem to become the type of their race, but at the same time, and in the same picture, he gave us their world and their life, with its joys and hardships.

The sentimentality of the poet ill suits a man like Charlie Russell; still, his pictures often affect the beholder as some powerful poem, more epic than lyric, in which he glorifies Nature, the living and the lifeless.

He painted because he could not help painting. It was as much a part of the necessity of living to him as breathing. It has been said that if he had lost both hands he would have found some means of putting brush to canvas, for he had to do it. And herein, perhaps, lies the secret of the man behind the pictures. ■

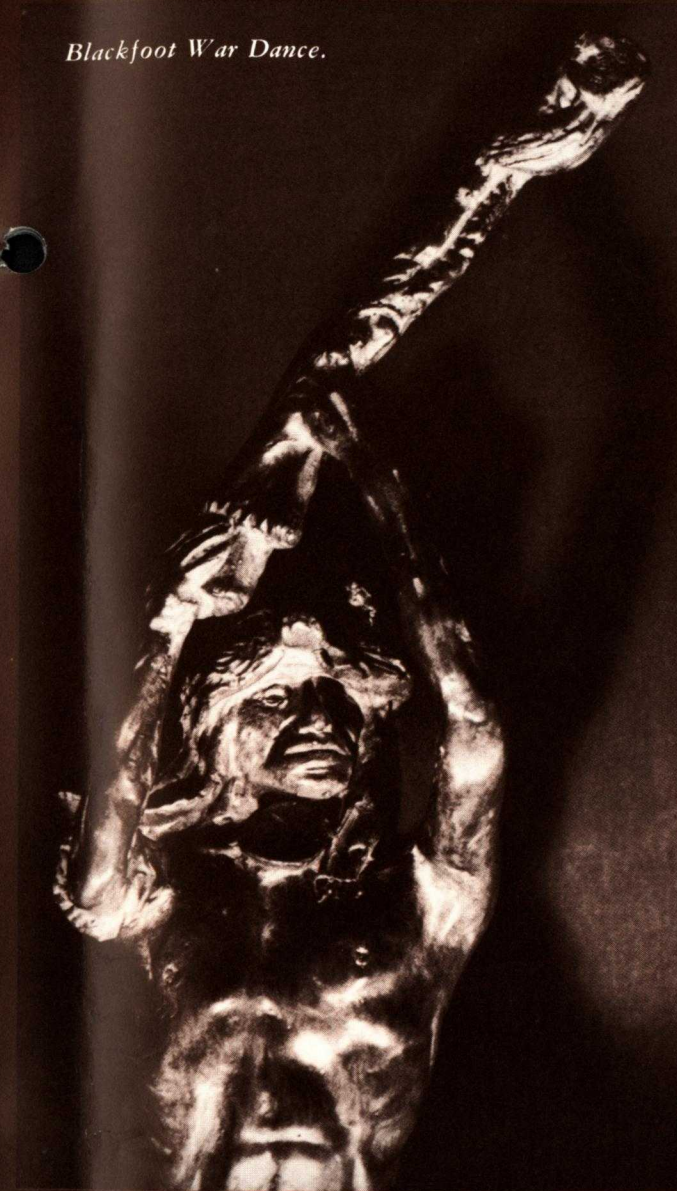


Secrets of the Night.

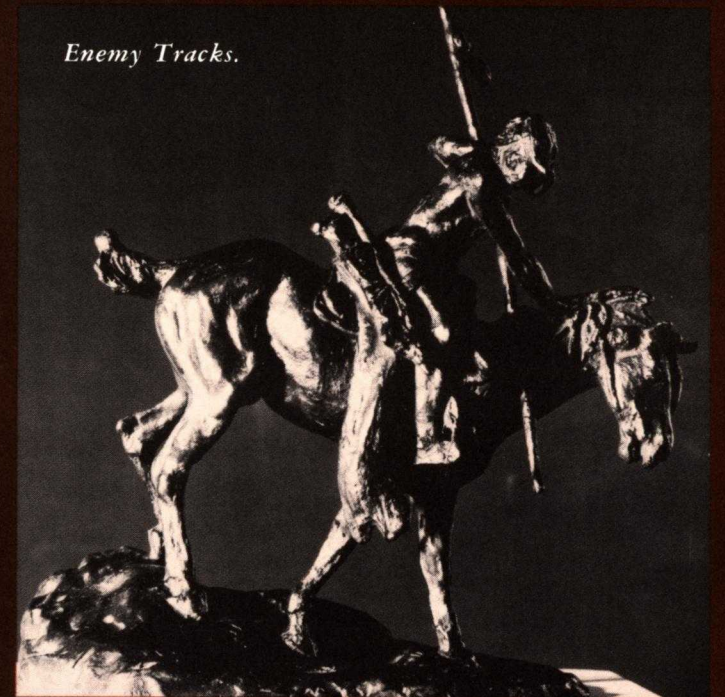


A Watcher of the Plains.

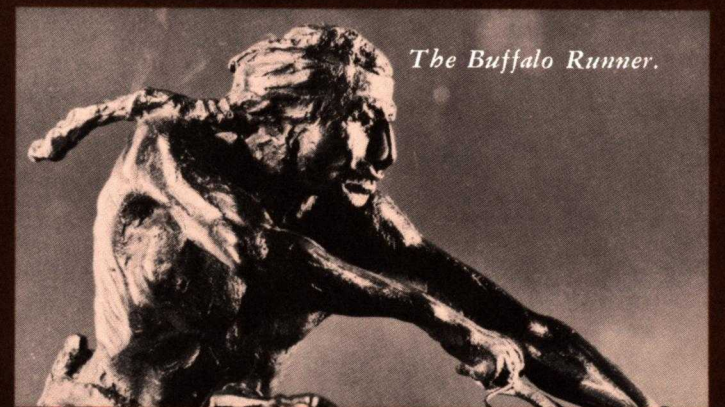
The Spirit of C. M. Russell
AS SHOWN IN HIS BRONZES.



Blackfoot War Dance.



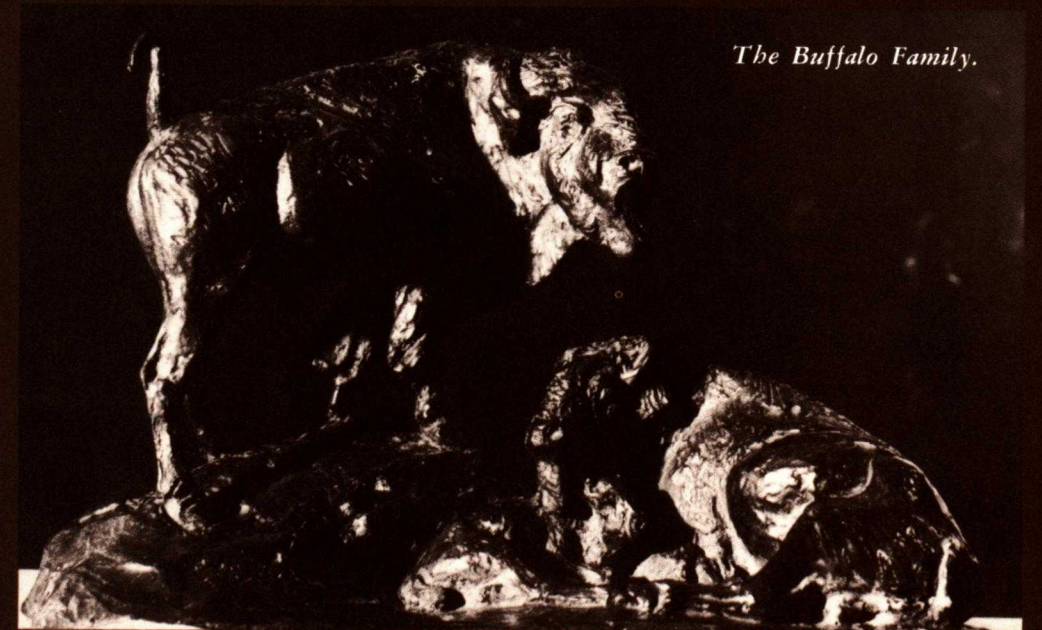
Enemy Tracks.



The Buffalo Runner.



The Cryer.



The Buffalo Family.



Will Rogers, 1900.

By Will Rogers, Jr.

It is my belief that Will Rogers admired Charlie Russell more than he did almost any other public figure.

They first met in 1904. "Charlie Russell was trying to sell a few paintings and I was trying to sell a few jokes when I first met him years ago," he once wrote. "We met in the East. Neither of us had much more than carfare... He went up the ladder of fame a lot faster than I did."

"I always wanted to have Russell pictures," he wrote another time, "but his prices rose faster than my salary. I couldn't catch him."

There is considerable truth to this. Only after Russell's death and the coming of the talkies did Will Rogers acquire a small collection.

When we first moved to Beverly Hills, Charlie Russell and his wife, Nancy, came several times to visit us. My father was never in doubt as to Russell's genius, as the following will show.

I was about seven or eight years old and we were at a picnic at Harry Carey's ranch near Saugus. William S. Hart, Tom Mix and other western stars were there.

After the meal Charlie Russell came over to entertain the children. There were several sets of us, and I am sure we had been raising general cain.

My father came over with him and leaned down to talk to me.

"Son, I want you to remember this man. He is a very famous man. Remember that you have seen him. Pay attention and remember what he says."

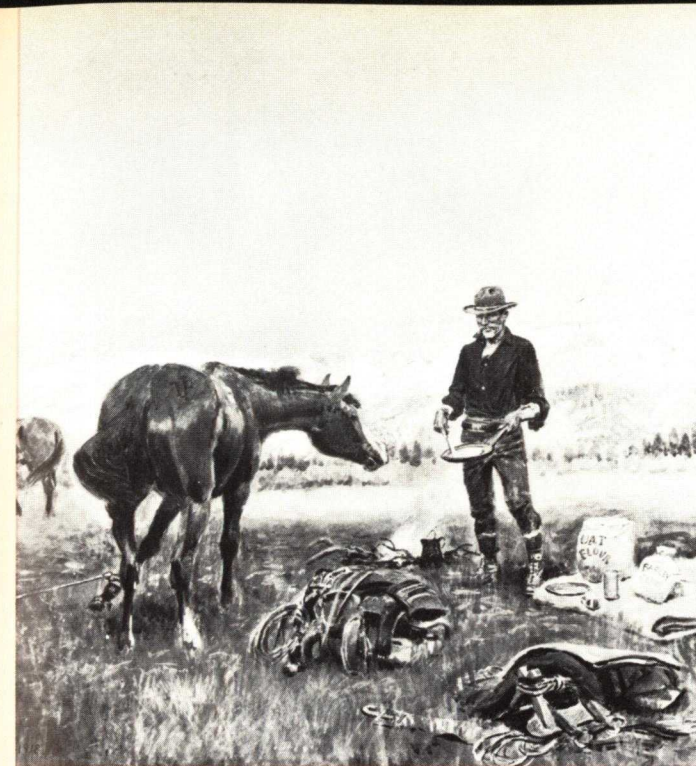
As a result, I can still see a short figure in cowboy boots and hat standing up before a sandy hill, holding us spell-bound as he told a story in the Indian sign language. I know it was effective, because for years after, we children used these signs.

We met many famous people, but never, either before or since, did my father ever single one out to us as he did Charlie Russell.

The two men were amazingly similar. Both true western cowboys, both brilliant story tellers, both great lovers of people. Their admiration was not of just one talent for another. It was deep and man to man.

One of the most touching things Will Rogers ever wrote was a foreword to one of Russell's books. In another place he said, "He is the only painter of western pictures in the world that the cowpunchers can't criticize. Every little piece of leather or rope is just where it should be. So you see, in these times of scandal, it is a pleasure to point out to you someone who has gained fame and still remains *pure*."

The odd use of that last word in italics hints at the deep emotion Will Rogers always felt concerning Charlie Russell.



Russell, *Pardners*. Water color, 1918.



Will Rogers, Jr.

WILL ROGERS AND CHARLIE RUSSELL



Russell, *Jerked Down*. Oil, 1907. Reproduced as a commemorative stamp, March 19, 1964, on the 100th anniversary of Russell's birth.



FREDERIC REMINGTON'S BRONZES

"The Thomas Gilcrease collection is one to be proud of, for it contains more rarities than any in this country."

By Helen Card

Buried for two weeks in the copyright files at Washington, I once listed every card made out for Frederic Remington under "Works of Art." When I came to a bronze I listed it separately; there were twenty-two. I will comment on them chronologically. The first four, Bonnard Foundry castings, I had seen: *The Bronco Buster*, 1895; *The Wounded Bunkie*, 1896; *The Wicked Pony* and *The Triumph*, 1898. *The Bronco Buster* is always in demand, but not scarce. Of *The Wounded Bunkie*, there are supposed to be about fourteen; and I have seen a casting number fifteen of *The Wicked Pony*. The Gilcrease Museum owns number one, a real honor in a Bonnard casting.

There are apparently more of *The Triumph*, but not many; and I do not mean its later version, known as *The Scalp*, in which Remington changed many details (which is not uncommon at all) and was cast by Roman Bronze by the "lost wax" process. The Bonnard foundry closed forever after a fire around 1900, and their castings are considered most desirable, for scarcity and for fine work. All very well the magic of the "lost wax" process which delighted Remington, I like the Bonnard castings as well. Luckily I don't

have to try to explain the difference, because in the 1961 "Remington" number of the *American Scene*, this was done very well by Bruce Wear, Art Curator of the Gilcrease Museum.

My next find was a card for *The Norther*, 1900. There was no indication that it was a painting, statue or drawing, and the only description was "Cowboy on horseback in snowstorm." But I knew that Thomas Gilcrease owned a bronze of that title, said to repose in his safe; he had no museum then. From Remington's own letters we know that only three of these existed. So once again, Mr. Gilcrease had rung the bell; he owned one of those three.

Walter Latendorf, a regular sleuth of a dealer, had his nose on the trail of another *Norther* for years; yet to the day of his death he never found it. I have since located it. That makes two. Where is the third?

Next came *The Cheyenne*; I had seen many. But now the record: *The Buffalo Signal*, 1901. What —! I had never heard of it, much less seen it. Not even Mr. Gilcrease had this one. There's scarcity for you!

Coming Through the Rye, 1902, followed. We used to sit around and tick off how many might exist. Someone would start, "Gilcrease owns number one, you know..." and we'd count others: two in Chicago, one in Ogdensburg, three in Texas, and so forth, till we got to the Metropolitan Museum and the White House. But we never could account for more than fifteen.

The Mountain Man, 1903, we all knew. But I suddenly

(cont'd on page 53)



The Rattlesnake. 1905.



The Scalp. 1901.



Paleolithic Man. 1906.



The Wicked Pony. 1898.



The Horse Thief. 1907.



Bronzes (cont'd)

realized, when I came to *Polo*, 1904, that I had never seen but two and had heard of one more. It seems very scarce.

Patient thumbing of the copyright cards: *The Sergeant*, 1904, ever popular and numerous; *The Rattlesnake*, 1905, well over a hundred known. *The Old Dragoons of 1850*, made in 1905, is one the Metropolitan bought in 1907 while Remington was still alive — a big one, intricate — and very scarce.

The Outlaw, 1906, is fairly numerous as well as its variation called *The Cowboy*. But *Paleolithic Man*, 1906, has always puzzled me, for a number fifteen casting came up at an auction in 1947, yet I have never seen but two of them.

The Horse Thief, 1907, eluded me for years. I had no idea what it looked like, for the required photographs were not filed with the copyright cards. At last I saw it in Tulsa; once more the Gilcrease Museum had the rare one. I know of only one other casting of *The Horse Thief*; neither casting is numbered.

Certainly the greatest rarity among Remington bronzes is *The Buffalo Horse*, made in 1907. The mechanical difficulties of supporting buffalo, horse and hunter on one hind leg were too great, and Remington never cast another. This one is unique; once more, only a pilgrimage to Tulsa will reveal it.

Of course, there is only one of *The Cowboy*, but that is a monument of heroic size in Fairmont Park, Philadelphia, unveiled in 1908; every Remington fan goes to see it, but certainly he cannot hope to collect it!

The Savage, 1908, ranks in number with *The Sergeant*. *Trooper of the Plains*, 1909, is truly desirable, but not scarce.

Remington's last bronze, *The Stampede*, first copyrighted in November 1909, once more proves Mr. Gilcrease to have been lucky. The Remingtons apparently cast only three, and Mr. Gilcrease got number two. One is at Ogdensburg. Evidently an edition of ten was planned in 1947 (the royalties to go to the Remington Art Memorial) but how many got cast I do not know. I can count up only seven *Stampedes* in all that I know about. The truth, as in the day of Diogenes, is elusive.

But I do know, that the Thomas Gilcrease collection is one to be proud of, for it contains more rarities than any in this country. ■

Upper Right: Remington, *Episode of the Buffalo Hunt*. Oil, 1908.

Lower Right: Remington and *The Buffalo Horse* clay model. New Rochelle, New York, c. 1907.

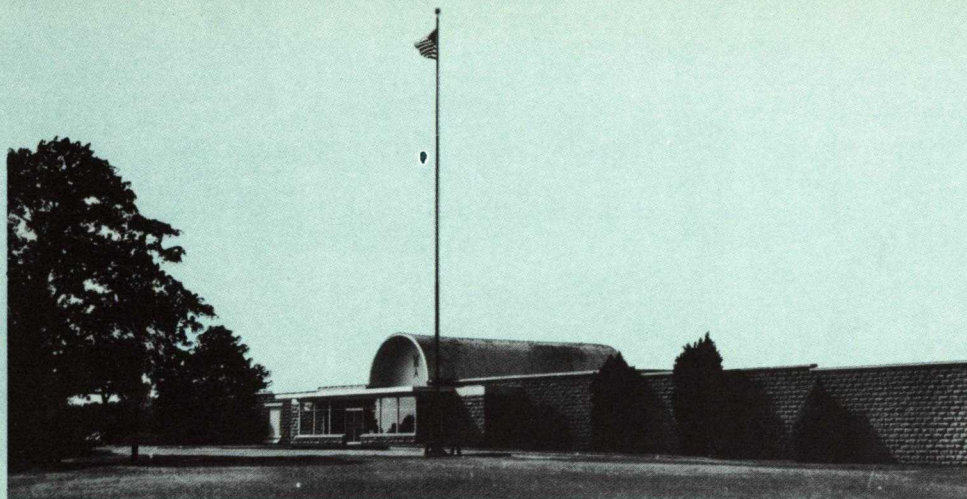




Remington, *The Buffalo Horse*. Bronze, 1907.

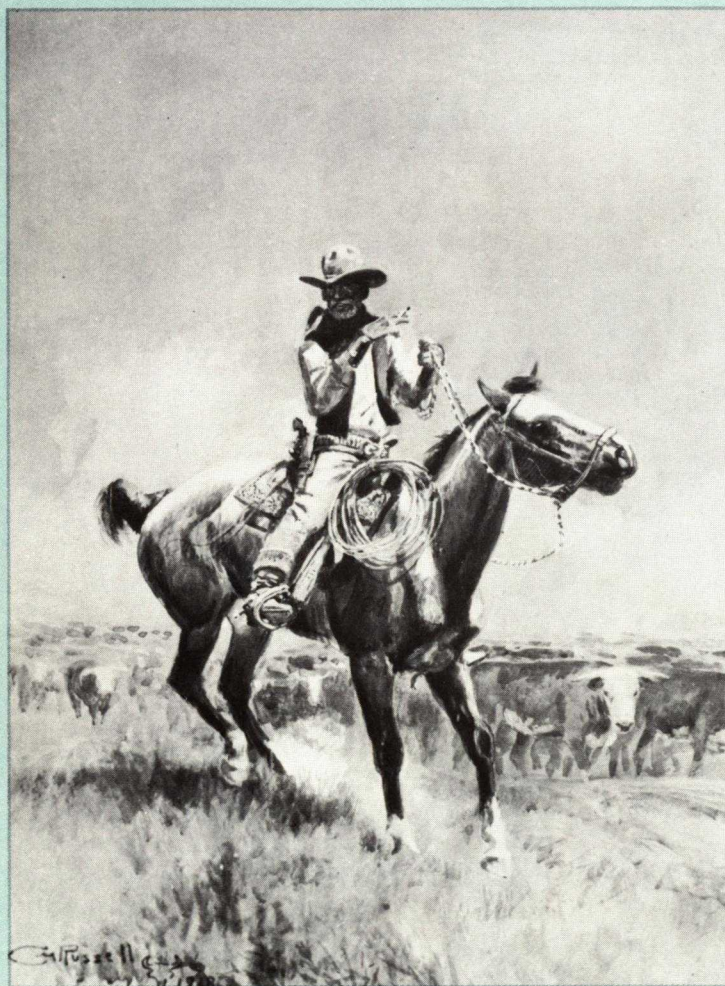


Russell, *Where Tracks Spell Meat*. Oil, 1916.



Gilcrease Institute, 1964.

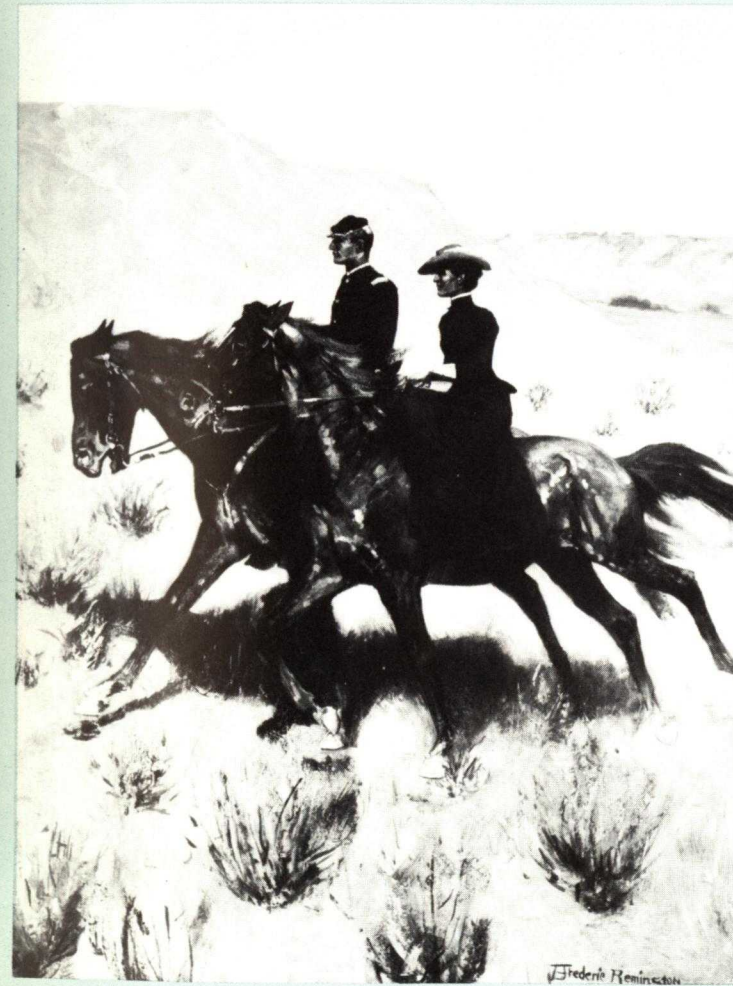
VISIONS OF TODAY



Russell, *Beef for Fighters*. Water color, 1918. Cold Biscuit Joe, Foreman for the Matador Cattle Co.



Dean Krakel and Thomas Gilcrease, Director and Founder of the Institute, June, 1961.



Remington, *The Escort*. Black-and-white, c. 1903.

"In the end, Frederic Remington and Charlie Russell scattered a lot of seed that has sprouted time and again for their cause as well as for that of the old West."

By Dean Krakel

Mr. Gilcrease made art-world history in January, 1944, when he purchased the Philip G. Cole library and collection of western paintings. The Cole estate, located in Tarrytown, New York, contained the most important collection of Frederick Remington and Charles M. Russell ever offered. A large number of paintings and bronzes by other well-known artists of the West were included in the purchase.

After examining the collection, Mr. Gilcrease negotiated through the New York offices of his company. Attorneys for Mrs. Cole made her wishes known, and within hours, a certified check of intent was given. There are no grounds for the often-told story that Thomas Gilcrease issued a check with authorization that it be filled in for an amount ten percent above the highest offer, regardless of price. Mr. Gilcrease requested that no publicity be given the sale for two years from the date of closing. The Tulsan recalled that in the interim, dealers coyly tried to interest him in looking into the Cole estate—it contained some real western art, they said.

By the time news of the big deal broke in 1946, the acquisition had been cleaned and placed in vaults. The sale price launched a new era of appreciation for art and western Americana. According to commercial gallery officials, works of Russell and Remington have been spiraling upward in price ever since.

Through the years, Mr. Gilcrease was offered various holdings of Remington and Russell. The oilman inspected each collection, studied the descriptive catalogs and provenance, then declined to bid, each time, convinced that he possessed the finest.

As a collector, he stressed quality, continuity and condition rather than quantity. He was absolute and uncompromising in these respects. Using this formula through the years, he carefully added to his Remingtons and Russells; he was a collector among collectors.

In May, 1949, Thomas Gilcrease opened his museum which is located in the beautiful Osage hills northwest of Tulsa. He had lived on the site since 1910. His museum was the first major institution of its kind to be devoted to art which portrays the succession of America's frontiers. Other museums have followed, but none has duplicated the quality of the Gilcrease collections. There are approximately 5000 paintings representing more than 300 artists—testimony to one man's vision.

Since the opening, more than three-quarters of a million visitors have toured the Gilcrease galleries. People from all walks of life and from most of the countries in the world have come to the museum, now owned and operated by the City of Tulsa. The building has grown in size until today, it has eleven large, colorful and well-lighted galleries. The past three years have been especially fruitful in the amount of bond money raised and in gifts of art, land and

archaeological artifacts; the total is more than six million dollars. A number of prominent Tulsans who are on the Executive Board of the Institute and a comparatively new museum staff are carrying forward the dream of Thomas Gilcrease. New goals. New interpretations. New values.

According to Phillip G. Cole, Jr., his father and grandfather, Charles K. Cole, were among the first and the most avid collectors of the works of Charles Russell. Professionally, both were doctors of medicine. The elder Cole had been a pioneer of Montana and had met the artist early in his career. Philip Cole, like his father, loved the West and his appreciation for western paintings grew through the years. He bought not only from the artist, and through his agent, but gave him important commissions. Dr. Cole influenced Charlie Russell by continually encouraging quality. His long and close association with the artist as a quiet friend and a fellow Montanan, combined with his ability to buy, is unparalleled in Russell biography.

Financial independence, resulting from large purchases such as Philip Cole made, aided Russell, broadening his horizons. His titles took on new humor and sentimentality. The transition in Russell's work, as shown in the Gilcrease collection, occurred during the period following his first major exhibition held in 1911 in the Folsom Gallery in New York City. A casual turning of the head with a perusal of painting dates in our gallery makes this apparent. From this time and until the end of his trail, he splashed golden sunlight over many of his canvases in an unhibited manner.

He used an abundance of colors in coming up with such masterpieces in oil as *Where Tracks Spell Meat or War*, 1912 (11 $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 24 $\frac{1}{4}$ "), *Bronc to Breakfast*, 1912 (29" x 43"), *Carson's Men*, 1913 (24" x 35 $\frac{1}{2}$ "), *When Guns Speak*, n.d. (25" x 35") and *Innocent Allies*, 1913 (23 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 35 $\frac{1}{2}$ "). In *Innocent Allies* Russell demonstrated superb draftsmanship. His horses show good breeding, training and an insatiable curiosity. These paintings are in contrast, colorwise, to *Wagon Boss*, 1909 (36" x 23 $\frac{1}{2}$ ").

Without going into the history of the painting, it is regrettable that the editors of *Montana Magazine* (Vol. VI, no. 2, page 5) have gone to great lengths through the use of photographs and captions to downgrade the quality as well as the importance of the Cole-Gilcrease oil *The Bronc to Breakfast* on behalf of their fine 1908 watercolor. Why compare them? Composition, dates, sizes and media are different; only the subject is similar. They are both originals.

In 1914 Charlie and Nancy took time out for an exhibition in England. The Englishman, with his knickers, eye glasses and tea-drinking habits provided the westerner with a new reservoir of humor. The cowboy artist's pace took on new rhythms. Rested and relaxed from travel, Russell strove for, and achieved perfection as a colorist during 1915 in *Meat's Not Meat 'Til It's in the Pan* (23" x 35 $\frac{1}{2}$ ") and *Where Tracks Spell Meat*, 1916 (29" x 48"). In March, 1916, the Folsom Gallery exhibited *Meat's Not Meat 'Til It's in the Pan* along with *Innocent Allies*, *Carson's Men*, *Wagon Boss* and *The Bell Mare*, 1910 (19" x 29 $\frac{1}{2}$ "). During 1917, Russell produced our tremendously beautiful *Her Heart is On The Ground* (23 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 35") and the dramatic *Watching for Wagons* (23" x 36 $\frac{1}{2}$ ").

The year World War I ended was a banner year. Prices were high, Russell's heart was strong and apparently, Nancy was content with the way her husband's career was going. The Gilcrease collection undoubtedly contains the cream of the big 1918 crop. On exhibit, are a large and

Russell, *Running Buffalo*. Oil, 1918. Portrays "Buffalo Bill" Cody, Gen. Phil Sheridan and Grand Duke Alexis of Russia out hunting on August 17, 1871.



Center: Remington, *The Discovery*. Oil, 1908.

Bottom: Russell, *Innocent Allies*. Oil, 1913.

colorful concept of Sacajawea (the Indian guide for the Lewis and Clark expedition) meeting her people, and Buffalo Bill leading the Grand Duke Alexis of Russia and General Phil Sheridan on a hunt. Both pictures are oils (29 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 47 $\frac{1}{2}$ ") and were commissioned by Dr. Cole.

The Duke Alexis painting has an interesting history according to correspondence exchanged between Phillip Cole and the Russells. Charlie had painted a calf in the foreground and slightly to the right of the oncoming buffalo herd. The hunters were directing arrows and shots at a cow while attempting to turn the herd. Instead of the calf, Cole wanted a fine specimen of a bull leading the herd, with the hunters closing in on it. Russell, talking through his wife's pen, explained the fundamentals of the hunt; calves, he said, were forced to the front of a herd slowing it down; also, the choice meat was that of the cow, not the bull. Dr. Cole further implied that froth streaming from the animals' mouths was unsightly. Russell objected to all this. In the end, the lead animal was painted out. Examination with X-ray verifies this unusual alteration. *Where Tracks Spell Meat* is another work that has had a small amount of over painting.

Two splendid and unusually large water colors indicate the pace and the quality maintained during 1918: one is entitled *Beef for Fighters* (17" x 22") depicting Cold Biscuit Joe, foreman for the Matador Cattle Company and *Pardners* (17 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 18"), an amusing mountain camp scene portraying a hobbled and hungry horse and a cowboy with his frying pan full of grub. Prior to adding onto our galleries, *Pardners*, a personal favorite, hung in my office.

A brilliant high plains country painting *White Man's Buffalo* (14 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 23"), documents 1919 as a superb Russell year. What this oil painting lacks in size, it makes up for in color and composition. *White Man's Buffalo*, unsophisticated as it is, has much for the critic's eye—foreground, background, line harmony, strength of figures and light and shadow patterns.

Dr. Cole bought *Salute of the Robe Trade*, an oil (29" x 47") which was painted in 1920. The colors in this painting are unusually brilliant. Russell's color work after 1910 is a constant challenge to professional color photographers and print makers. Gilcrease Russells of the artist's last years show a general decline in contrast. Mr. Russell's eyesight was, evidently, beginning to weaken, forcing him to work close to his canvases.

The Institute catalogs, *The Head Man* (14 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 20"), an oil, *Bruin Not Bunny Turned the Leaders* (23" x 35"), also, an oil. Both are dated 1924. *Steer Rider* (8 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ ") is one of three pen-and-ink watercolor wash drawings in our collection. This work and *Discovery of Last Chance Gulch* (17 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 29 $\frac{1}{2}$ ") an oil, were painted in 1925. The *Gulch* painting depicts the discovery of gold on the site that was to become Helena, Montana; Dr. Cole commissioned the artist to paint it for his wife. *Where Guns Were Their Passports*, an oil, (24 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 36 $\frac{1}{2}$ ") appears to be of this period. The painting is a fountain of sunlight. *The Story Teller*, a watercolor pen-and-ink drawing is dated 1926.

At this time, the Russells were making preparations to move to Pasadena, California. Charlie was not well and the winters there were less severe, doctors (they felt) were undoubtedly more skilled and many friends were nearby. Arthur H. Harlow and Company were now their New York agents. In January, 1925, this firm offered *Bruin Not Bunny Turned the Leaders*, *The Head Man*, *The Buffalo Hunt* painted in 1900 and *Where Tracks Spell Meat*. Doctor Cole, who lived on Long Island, made a



FR



Russell, *Meat's Not Meat 'Til It's in the Pan*. Oil, 1915.

monumental acquisition.

Charlie Russell's last major canvas is an unfinished oil entitled *Father DeSmet's First Meeting With the Flathead Indians* (29½" x 47½"). Four crosses adorn the corners of the frame. Perhaps this painting comes as close to expressing the artist's feelings toward the Almighty, as anything he created. Much that was dear to his earthly world is in it—glassy-eyed ponies, long-stemmed grass, patches of golden aspens, blue sky, snow-topped mountains and strong-faced Indians. In September, 1926, Charles Russell wrote Dr. Cole a beautifully illustrated and philosophical letter, "...when it comes to making the beautiful, Ma Nature had man beat all the way from the ace..." A few weeks later, he died in Great Falls at the age of sixty-two.

It is significant to point out that the Gilcrease Institute collection of twenty-seven oils, contains quality paintings from various stages of Russell's life—from 1884 to his last unfinished canvas. Few Russells of the pre-1910 period can match our magnificent *Buffalo Hunt*, a large 47" x 70" canvas dated in 1900, or *The Wagon Boss* of 1909 with its often controversial whiskey bottle in the foreground.

In January of this year, a committee acting on behalf of the Postmaster General of the United States, selected *Jerked Down* to commemorate the one hundredth anniversary of Russell's birth. *Jerked Down*, which is in the Gilcrease galleries, is a 22" x 36" oil that was painted in 1907. There were a lot of paintings for the committee to study before making a choice. Such recognition would have made Thomas Gilcrease "terribly proud" in his modest sort of way.

The sixteen Russell water colors in the museum are

outstanding, all of good size and exquisite in composition. *Beef For Fighters* and *Pardners*, mentioned previously, along with *When Sioux and Blackfeet Meet*, 1903 (16½" x 27¼"), *Gun Powder and Arrows*, 1900 (19¼" x 28"), *A Doubtful Handshake*, 1910 (29" x 36"), and *Robe Traders at Fort Benton*, 1901 (20" x 30"), form the nucleus of the watercolor collection. We have *Custer's Last Stand*, 1903, a black-and-white opaque wash drawing (11¼" x 21¾"). A fine water color, *Squaws Fetching Water*, n.d. (15¾" x 23"), was included in the studio collection (five and one-half tons of furniture, art and Americana) of the late and great western artist, William R. Leigh, which recently, was presented to the Institute by the executors of Mrs. Leigh's estate. The Gilcrease collection contains three illustrated letters, including his last.

The Museum has twenty-seven C. M. Russell bronzes, including all of the major pieces, with the exception of *Meat for Wild Men*. Leading the Gilcrease bronze parade are *Counting Coup*, 1907, *The Buffalo Runner*, 1905, *The Buckner and Buckeroo*, 1911, *Jim Bridger*, 1925, *Where the Best of Riders Quit*, 1920, *Blackfoot War Dance*, 1905, *The Cryer*, n.d., and *Secrets of the Night*, 1926.

Two unique pieces of Russell art accepted by the Executive Board of the Institute, were presented by Mr. Charles S. Jones of Los Angeles. These items, are the bronze, and the model from which it was cast, of Lewis and Clark and Sacajawea at the Great Falls of the Missouri. The watercolor sketches and plans were done by Russell; only one casting was made after his death. The Institute exhibits a 1964 casting with the model. These forceful pieces, thirty-five inches high, along with our large oil painting of *Sacajawea Meeting Her People*, form one of



Russell's Winchester rifle (35 cal., Model 1895) containing two wildlife engravings on one side, and two additional wildlife engravings and his signature on the other side of the receiver. The history of this superb item is related in *Recollections of Charlie Russell* by Frank Bird Linderman. Reproduced through the courtesy of J. N. Bartfield Galleries, N. Y. C.

the most imposing triologies of CMR art in existence.

A splendid "fresh-from Montana" item exhibited at Gilcrease is Russell's Winchester rifle, model 1895, containing four separate wild life vignettes engraved by Russell with his initials and buffalo skull. The interesting history of the gun is related in Frank Bird Linderman's book, *Recollections of Charlie Russell*.

Since Helen Card, in her article, has covered the subject of Remington's bronzes in a thorough and capable manner, I shall not go into further detail.

Gilcrease Institute has twenty-two oil paintings, two pen-and-ink drawings, and one small sketch by Frederic Remington. Seven of the oils are in black-and-white and have appeared as illustrations.

An Indian Brave (22½" x 28½"), a large pen-and-ink drawing, was reproduced in *Harper's Monthly* May, 1891, illustrating an article written by Colonel Theodore Dodge, entitled "Some American Riders." The subject is a Comanche warrior and the setting is Fort Sill, Indian Territory (Oklahoma). *The Rabbit Hunt* (26½" x 39½"), a black-and-white, 1896, appeared in *Harper's Monthly* along with a story entitled "On Snowshoes to Barren Grounds" by Casper W. Whitney. *The Escort* (26" x 39") and *The Messenger* (26" x 39"), both metallic-looking oils, appeared in General Charles King's book *A Daughter of the Sioux*. *The Escort* is a popular work portraying a proper lady on the frontier.

The Arrest of the Scout (20¼" x 39½"), a black-and-white oil, was in *Harper's* in an article by the artist entitled "Massai's Crooked Trail," and subsequently was included in his book *Crooked Trails*. The setting is in the camp of the Chiricahua Apache. *The Rabbit Hunt*, mentioned

previously, and *An Indian Dream* (27" x 40"), were two of twelve illustrations which appeared in five articles by Remington about Sundown LeFlare, a scout, in "How Order No. 6 Went Through," which were featured in *Harper's Monthly* in 1898 and later published in book form. The black-and-white paintings and the pen-and-ink drawings in the collection were acquired by Mr. Gilcrease from sources other than the Cole collection.

Pursuing the Indians was reproduced in General Nelson A. Miles' book of personal recollections. Remington and General Miles were close friends; the artist had campaigned out West with him. *Sitting Bull* (9½" x 11¼") and *Battle of War Bonnet Creek* (26½" x 39"), both oils, commemorate Remington's association with Miles.

In 1899, Remington was represented at the annual exhibition of the National Academy of Design with *Missing* (29½" x 50"), a colorfully dramatic canvas which now adorns our gallery. Haughtier Indians never were painted, nor was a trooper more composed than the destined-to-die prisoner in *Missing*. Frederic Remington was no stranger to the National Academy, whose members were the cream of the New York art world. The organization recognized him as an associate academician; quasi-recognition did little for the big man's ego. In the end, he went his way and they, theirs.

In 1900, Remington produced *The Coming and Going of the Pony Express* (26" x 39"). No single painting has so ably documented the colorful epoch of western communication.

The first to be reproduced in color was *Bell Mare*, 1903, (26¼" x 34½"), later to become a Gilcrease possession. It appeared in *Colliers Magazine*, August 13, 1904. *Hungry*

Moon, 1900, (19½" x 25½"), was also published in color, as have others which we have in our collection.

In 1905, the Knoedler Galleries exhibited the following Remington bronzes: *The Mountain Man*, *Bronco Buster*, *Polo Players*, *Coming Through the Rye*, *The Cheyenne*, *The Wicked Pony*, *The Scalp*, *The Rattlesnake* and *The Sergeant*. One year later, the artist made a full debut with oil paintings at the important gallery, then located at 355 Seventieth Avenue, New York City, New York. Eleven paintings were viewed by the "blue bloods" of seaboard society. In this exhibition, Remington received \$2,500.00 for a single work, which set a new high in his gallery sales.

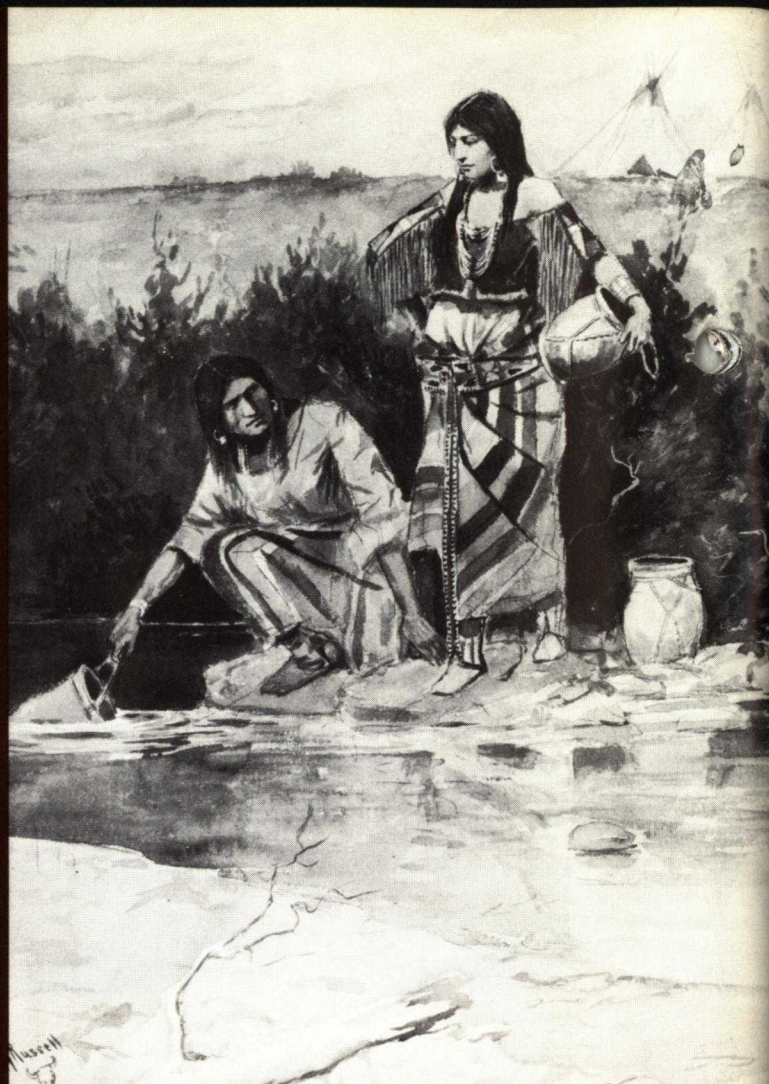
By this time, critics were impressed with Mr. Remington's work, commissions were numerous and publishers clamored for manuscripts as well as for illustrations. The following spring, officials from the Metropolitan Museum purchased four bronzes. This acquisition represented a "break through" for art depicting the old West—a high compliment to the artist as well as to his agent. December of 1907 saw another array of exciting Remington paintings at Knoedler's.

The 1908 exhibition of nineteen paintings was a huge success, with both the artist and his agent gaining recognition. It represented a year's work. Four paintings from this exhibition—often called Remington's greatest—eventually came to Gilcrease. *Stamped by Lightning* (26" x 39½"), *Indian Warfare* (29½" x 50") and *With the Eye of the Mind* (27" x 39½"), were obtained through the Philip Cole collection. Years later, *The Discovery* (26½" x 39½") was purchased by Mr. Gilcrease. It is a searing desert scene of death and desolation.

The 1909 output excelled the previous years. Remington sent twenty-three paintings to New York for his annual show, his last. Death stalked him. Six of the number were small landscapes priced at \$300 apiece. The larger works ranged in price from \$600 to \$2,000. The Institute's *An Episode of the Buffalo Hunt*, 1908 (28½" x 26½"), made its appearance and was done as a companion piece to the bronze *The Buffalo Horse*. The bronze, thirty-five inches high, is a tribute to the technical skill of the Roman Bronze Works as well as the artist's mastery of sculpture.

Remington's paintings emphasizing mass, mood, light and action, along with his bronzes, loom powerfully with distance, while the Montanan's paintings and bronzes become less distinct. Trained and untrained eyes see different things in the two artists' works.

In the end, Frederic Remington and Charles M. Russell achieved what they set out to achieve. They did so, however, by working at opposite ends of the poles. Both were nonconformists. One was all spit and polish and the other was as rough-hewn as a bunk-house door. What one liked, the other might not have liked. If Remington knew the horse and the mule, Russell knew the buffalo. One knew the mounted soldier intimately, the other, the Indian and the cowboy. By choice, Russell drank from the bottle in a bar room; Remington, from a thin-stemmed glass at the club. They represented the schooled and the unschooled, the trained and the untrained. One advocated detail; the other—at times—abhorred it.



Russell, *Squaws Fetching Water*. Water color, n.d.

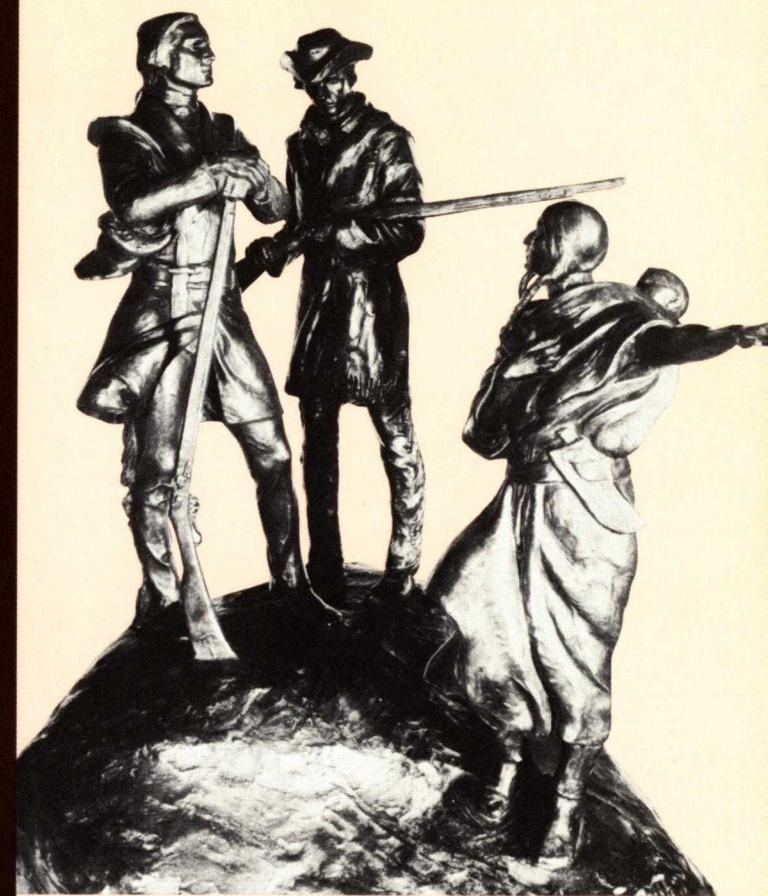
l. to r: Rudolph Wunderlich, Kennedy Galleries; Victor Hammer, Hammer Galleries; William Davidson, Knoedler Galleries. New York art gallery officials who were friends of the late Thomas Gilcrease.



Both sought accuracy. Both were illustrators. Both were artists. Both were prolific. They were documentarians to an age. They were eye witnesses. Both wrote well in their respective ways, Remington profusely and grammatically; Russell, seldom and phonetically. Russell was inclined to moderation, while Remington had gigantic appetites. Remington loved to go places and do things. Russell loved only Montana. Both were gentlemen in the presence of women. Both were affectionate horsemen. Both married strong women and neither left an offspring to carry on his name. The worlds they lived in were the worlds of the "he man." A lot may be said for the artist on bivouac with a cavalry patrol, or the artist working as a cowboy with a roundup crew. More laughs may have been had at their expense than will ever be known. Both were more mercenary than writers have led us to believe. Painting and sculpturing is hard, often frustrating work. They didn't give away or swap many important works—not for whiskey. In the end, Frederic Remington and Charlie Russell scattered a lot of seed that has sprouted time and again for their cause as well as for that of the old West.

The 1960's will mark the end of the trail for most of the worth-while gems documenting and portraying the historic West. The captureable will have been captured. As an epoch, the frontier's legacy is *sine die*. Museums, collectors and galleries will have to look elsewhere at new fields, new eras, new talent and recent biography. Regrettably, much more should have been done. In Colorado, for example, where I was born and reared, one cannot go to an art museum or to a historical society and see more than a smattering of art relating to the state's magnificent mountains or plains country, much less see anything by Russell and Remington. Denver, the Queen City of the Plains, in my opinion, has failed miserably in this respect. Montana could have done better. From the looks of what is left in the way of important Russell art, in comparison to what got away, the state's legislature evidently turned its back on its favorite son. Fortunately, however, not all Montanans shared the legislature's lethargy. The same shoe fits up-state New York—Ogdensburg. Santa Fe and Colorado Springs lean heavily toward the non-objectives. Taos is the West's "Greenwich Village." Cheyenne, it appears, is not even mildly interested in great western art. The Whitney Gallery in Cody is beautifully resplendent. State university and college art departments, for the most part, from Canada ranging south to the Rio Grande and on both sides of the Continental Divide, have become "internationalized" and scoff at the man on the horse. Too much "ivy" has gone West.

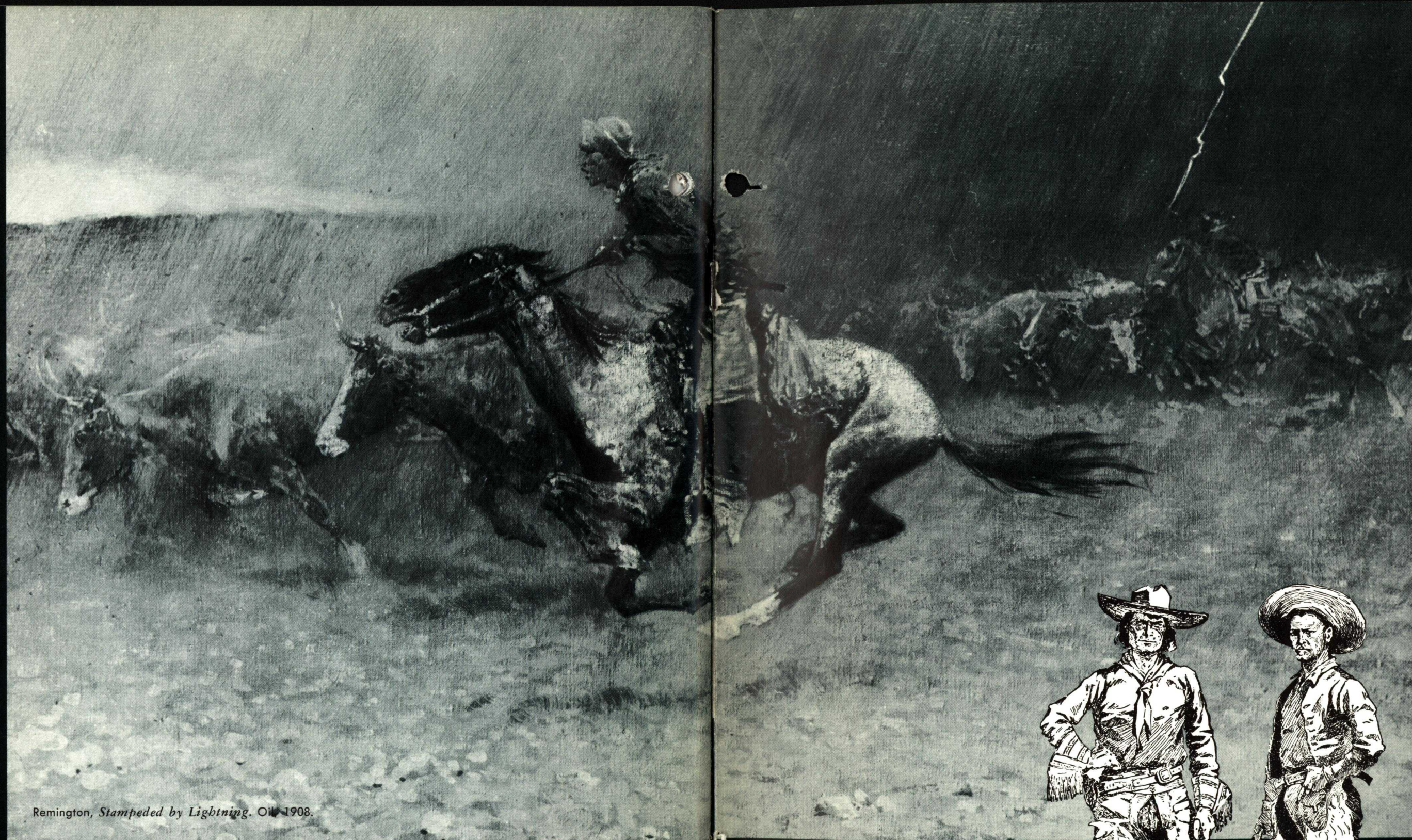
Thomas Gilcrease, who loved his "old Oklahoma" said shyly that he hoped people would enjoy the few things he collected for them to see. During the year I was privileged to know him and enjoy his friendship, he came to the museum almost every day. When Mr. Gilcrease approached a Russell or a Remington painting, it was like seeing old friends meet. Invariably, he would say to whomever was with him, "Say, now, let me tell you, that old Charlie was a character... and Mr. Remington was too, otherwise, you know, they couldn't have painted the way they did." ■



Explorers, Lewis and Clark, with the party's guide, Sacaajawea, a Shoshone girl. Russell made the preliminary watercolor sketches for this piece. The original model and the 1964 casting (each 35" high) were presented to Gilcrease Institute by Mr. Charles S. Jones of Los Angeles, Calif.

Below: Russell, *Sacaajawea Meeting Her People*. Oil, 1918.





Remington, *Stampeded by Lightning*. Oil, 1908.

My Dear Mr. Schofield:

My friend Wygatt says you have concluded to uphold my hand in my work, by standing for "*The Stampede*."

Regarding that picture, long ago when I was a boy I have had a few realities of that kind burned into my brain and I have at least a half dozen times tried to perpetuate the impressions on canvas but have failed and burned up the results. At last I concluded to pass the present canvas as being as near the thing as I am likely to come . . .

I think the animal man was never called on to do a more desperate deed than running in the night with long horns taking the country as it came and with the cattle splitting out behind him, all as mad as the thunder and lightning above him, while the cut banks and dog holes wait below, nature is merciless. Thanking you and hoping you may derive pleasure from my efforts, I am

Yours faithfully,

December 12, 1908

Frederic Remington



FR