

FREDERIC REMINGTON

(1861 - 1909) ANA



Sketch in a Hudson Bay Company Trading Store

Oil on academy board en grisaille
 18 x 24 inches
 Signed lower left, *Remington*
 attached on reverse a *F.W. Devoe* Academy board label
 and a Kennedy Galleries label

Frederic Sackrider Remington was born on October 1, 1861, in Canton, New York. From a very young age, Remington showed artistic inclinations as well as a proficiency in riding. In 1872, the Remington family moved to Ogdensburg, New York, where Remington was enrolled in a military academy at the age of fifteen. His fervent desire to become an artist eventually convinced his parents to enroll him in art classes at Yale University in 1878. While at Yale Remington also excelled in athletics, becoming the Yale boxing champion and a member of the football team.

Upon his father's death in 1880, Remington quit Yale and decided to try to make his living as an artist, spending the next five years traveling in the West. During this time he committed himself to the artistic representation of the history, people and traditions of the "Old West." Remington befriended anyone who would lend him additional insight into his obsession. He talked to cowboys, saloonkeepers, Indians, soldiers, trappers, and settlers, including the famed William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody, who became a good friend.

It is these characters that Remington captures in his 1888 *Sketch in a Hudson Bay Company Trading Store*. The scene portrayed here is likely one that Remington stumbled upon during his 1887 trip to western Canada. The work is unique in comparison to his later *Trading in the Hudson Bay Company's "Old Store" at Edmonton* of 1895, in that the artist painted a 'sketch', or vignette if you will, of everyday frontier life, drawn from his own experience. In this right, the painting exudes an obvious and unique sense on creative, artistic, construct. By comparison, the later work, completed some seven years after the first, is a formulated illustration, possibly based on photograph as well as the 1888 painting, done at the request of *Harper's Monthly* editor Caspar W. Whitney.¹

The similarities between these two works of art cannot be over looked. Remington consciously celebrated his earlier work by adapting exact characters for the later painting; a confident mustached Mounted Police man, a pipe smoking trapper in a fur lined coat, and a number of indian characters including two in wool trapper style robes, one of which wears a fur cap. Both paintings, but especially *Sketch in a Hudson Bay Company Trading Store*, are excellent examples of Remington's dedication, if not obsession, with the North American frontier and the individual characters that embodied it.

During the later part of Remington's career, he settled in New York City and experienced steady success as an illustrator for *Harper's Weekly*, *Harper's Monthly*, and many others. Remington also gained considerable formal success through exhibitions and awards at some of America's most important institutions, including the National Academy of Design. In 1888, the year he painted *Sketch in a Hudson Bay Company Trading Store*, Remington won both the prestigious Hallgarten Prize and the Clark Prize from the National Academy. Eventually he amassed enough wealth to purchase a home and studio in New Rochelle, NY, where he housed his collection of western artifacts. The work that Remington produced in this studio continued to drive his popularity as one of America's most respected western painters for the remainder of his life and well into the future.

Provenance:

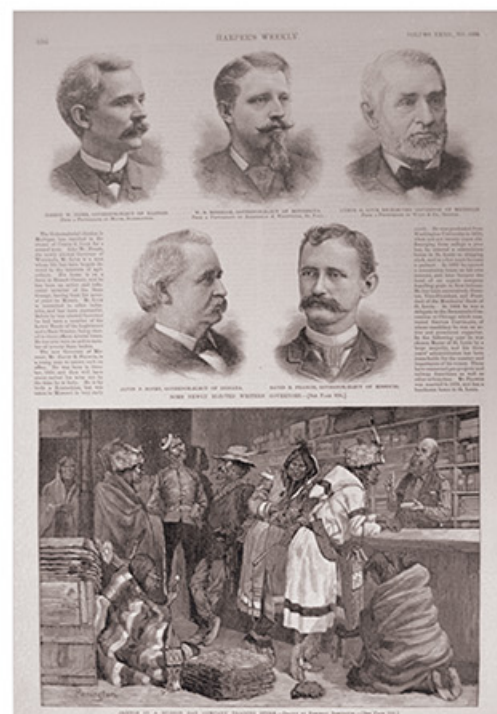
Kennedy Galleries, New York, New York
 Mr. Donald S. Harvey, Calgary, Alberta, Canada
 By descent in the family
 Thomas Nygard Gallery, Bozeman, Montana
 Private collection, Idaho

Illustration:

Harper's Weekly, November 24, 1888, p. 896,
 wood engraving
*Frederic Remington: A Catalogue Raisonné of
 Paintings, Watercolors and Drawings* by Peter H.
 Hassrick and Melissa J. Webster, vol. I, Cody,
 Wyoming, 1996, no. 395, page 161

Exhibited:

*Capturing Western Legends: Russell and Remington's
 Canadian Frontier*, Glenbow Museum, Calgary,
 Alberta, Canada, June 19, 2004 to October 11, 2004.



¹ Peter Hassrick, "They Are A Fine Outfit Those Blackfeet": Frederic Remington in Western Canada," *Alberta History* vol. 52, num. 2 (2004): 44.

THOMAS NYGARD GALLERY
 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN ART

135 EAST MAIN STREET • BOZEMAN, MONTANA 59715
 TELEPHONE: 406-586-3636 • TELEFAX: 406-587-8279
 www.nygardgallery.com



FADA FINE ART DEALERS ASSOCIATION MEMBER