

Amon Carter Museum

October 16, 2008

Ray Simpson, Sr.
Simpson Antique Galleries
6116 Skyline Drive, Suite 1
Houston, TX 77057

Dear Mr. Simpson:

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to examine the bronze sculpture of *The Bronco Buster* by Frederic Remington (1861-1909). I have looked at it closely and offer my opinion of it in my comments below.

Overall, the cast seems to be consistent in several respects with the casts produced by Roman Bronze Works during the period 1916-1918. The cast is very clearly incised on the underside of the sand-cast base as number 182; as I told you over the telephone, the numbers beginning with 172 and well past 189 generally date to 1917 in the foundry ledgers. According to the list compiled by Michael Shapiro, number 182 is one of several numbers that do not appear in the ledgers. The underside of the base seems fine to me; there is ample evidence of the black sand used in the casting process, and for the most part the surface of the underside has the right amount of old patina. I did note, however, that the pin on the underside that secures the right rear hoof has a bright metal surface, unlike the other pin. Whether this is evidence of a repair that was made at some point is difficult to determine. I did see a little bit of what might be lead solder at the edge of the right rear hoof on the upper side of the base; perhaps the pin worked loose at some point and was retightened.

On the upper side of the base, the Roman Bronze Works foundry inscription, in small block letters with dashes after the "N" and "Y," is consistent with their style of inscription for that period. Overall, the detail on the sculpture is a bit less distinct than on earlier lost-wax casts, and this is consistent with casts that were produced in the period. Remington had been dead for a number of years, and the foundry's attention to detail fell off in the period of his wife's administration of the estate. (Eva Remington died in 1918.) If you compare this cast with one that was made, say, in the year following the artist's death, you'll see a clear difference in the sharpness of detail. On this cast the horse's tail, for example, is rather poorly handled compared to the earlier casts.

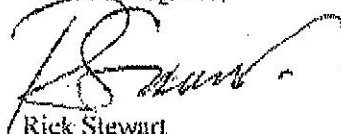
Ray Simpson, Sr.
October 16, 2008
Page two

I note that the cast is missing the quirt that normally protrudes from the rider's outstretched right arm. The patina, overall, looks to be authentic and old, but very dull. There is a lot of loose dirt in the crevices, and some spots of green oxidation on the rider and underside of the saddle that should be carefully removed (or at least covered with colored wax to stop their growth and hide them from view). One can see the typical plaster deposits of the lost-wax casting process in some of the more inaccessible areas, such as the crevices at the back of the rider's head under the hat. The patina overall is worn down in some likely areas (for example, on the edges of the chaps or the horse's mane and shoulders) that again could be treated with a light application of colored wax. Overall, the sculpture would benefit from a light cleaning and a thin coat of wax applied to a satin finish; evidence shows that Remington's sculptures were originally finished this way, because the artist wanted the light to play over the surface of the sculpture, not bounce off of it if the finish was too glossy.

In summation, I see nothing that would prevent me from saying that this cast is a good example of an estate cast of Remington's famous bronze of *The Bronco Buster*. As I told you, there was a lot of casting activity before and after Eva Remington's death because there was the fear that the foundry would be forced to stop its casting activities. The Remington bronze remained very popular long after the artist's death, and it was a good source of income for all concerned!

Thanks again for letting me look at this cast.

With best regards,



Rick Stewart

Senior Curator of Western Painting & Sculpture