



Who is this man?

What makes him look like a cowboy?

“I paint for boys,” said Frederic Sackrider Remington, “boys from ten to seventy.”

As a lad, Remington drew along the edges of his school books and papers. He drew soldiers and battle scenes. He drew Indians, horses, and cowboys. He grew up around horses and rode well. Even though Remington was never a real cowboy, we see him dressed up as one in this self-portrait. He longed to be the rough Western cowboy who rode a huge white horse. He gave himself a mustache, cocky brimmed hat, chaps, and a gun across his lap.

Remington was born in Canton, New York, on October 4, 1861. At the age of nineteen, he vacationed in the Montana Territory. He made short two-to-three-month trips to the West. However, he spent most of his life in upstate New York.

Remington sketched or painted all the time. He attended Yale University’s art school, but he quit after only three semesters. Teachers at Yale taught about the old masters; Remington wanted to learn

to paint the West. Researchers say he taught himself with the help of a few friends.

In 1882 a magazine published one of his drawings. A staff member redrew it. Still, both of their names were listed. After that, magazine editors sent him to draw the wild lands of the West from Canada to Mexico.

On those trips, Remington traveled by train, stagecoach, and horse. He wrote in his journal. He sketched and photographed what he saw. He collected military, cowboy, and Indian clothing and weapons. Back home, he stored everything in his studio. Those props helped him record America’s dying Wild West. They made his paintings look real. However, the stories he told with oil, watercolor, pen, and ink were often from his imagination.

In 1895, Remington made his first bronze sculpture. He called it *The Broncho Buster*. Remington created more than 3,000 paintings and sketches. He sculpted twenty-two bronzes. He published seven books and many articles. Frederic Remington died the day after Christmas in 1909. He was only forty-eight years old.

Frederic S. Remington

*Self-Portrait on a Horse*, ca. 1890

Oil on canvas, 29<sup>3</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 19<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> inches,

Courtesy Sid Richardson Museum, Fort Worth, Texas



How many campfires do you see?  
What do the cavalrymen wear?  
Which man is not a soldier? How do you know?

Remington copied parts of an old drawing to create this oil painting. It tells a story through images of how American cavalrymen lived. However, these frontier soldiers usually awakened with the dawn. They ate a quick breakfast of bacon, biscuits, and coffee. Then, the soldiers started their day's journey. They seldom enjoyed a lazy, late morning breakfast as shown. They carried snacks in their saddle bags and ate no other meal until dinner.

The night wranglers gathered the horses each morning and brought them to camp. No bugles sounded because Apache Indians might hear. Instead, the sergeant called, "Catch your horses." Each man chose his horse, saddled up, and prepared to leave. After a long, tiring day, the sergeant finally called "Halt."

The scout, dressed in brown, only reported to the commanding officer. Here, he seems to enjoy a leisurely chat with the soldiers.

Remington included this painting in his first one-man exhibition in 1893. Almost all of the pieces were sold at higher prices than he had received in the past.

Frederic S. Remington  
*A Cavalryman's Breakfast on the Plains*, ca. 1892  
Oil on canvas, 22 $\frac{1}{8}$  x 32 $\frac{1}{8}$  inches,  
Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas, 1961.227



How is this Mexican soldier's hat different from the cavalymen's in the last picture?

Where are his gun and saber?

What else does the Mexican soldier wear?

Is the day hot or cold? How do you know?

The Mexican cavalryman's hat is called a shako or kepi. It has no brim to keep the sun out of his eyes. The sun's hot reflection seems to bounce off the dry soil and white adobe stables.

The cavalryman carries his gun (a .50 caliber carbine) over his shoulder and his saber hangs from his waist. He ties his bed roll and a knap sack behind his saddle. Even

though the weather is hot, he wears a dress uniform with the pants tucked into calf-high leather boots. He straps his kepi under his chin. His horse can withstand long marches without much food or water.

*Harper's* sent Remington to Mexico. He stayed about six weeks, studied the surroundings and people, then recorded everything in his journal. He sketched and photographed the Mexican soldiers. He planned to write a story to accompany this picture but never did. Instead, his picture illustrated someone else's story in the November 1889 issue of *Harper's Monthly Magazine*.

Frederic S. Remington

*Cavalryman of the Line, Mexico*, 1889

Oil on canvas, 24 $\frac{1}{8}$  x 20 inches,

Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas, 1961.238



Are these cowboys or soldiers?  
What is happening?  
Find the injured rider.  
How do you know they are in a desert?  
What makes the horses look scared?

Between 1885 and 1888, Remington took several trips to the hot, dry Arizona Territory. He logged what he saw through sketches, his diaries, and photographs.

A man asked Remington to paint a large picture showing how hard it was to live in the West. He painted this familiar scene. The clothes make these men look more like cowboys than soldiers. The horses gallop toward a bunch of trees. The cowboys hope to hide there from the Indians.

Remington wanted to draw everything correctly, from each man's hat to his boots. He used props he collected on his travels. He asked fellow painters for advice. Remington told one friend he "redid the sky, warmed the horses," and took out some brush in this painting.

Up to this point, Remington's pictures illustrated magazine articles. This was the first of his paintings to hang in a museum. When people saw it, they quit calling him an illustrator. They called him a painter instead. The scene almost looks like one from a Western movie. In fact, many years later, movie makers copied the action for their Western films.

Frederic S. Remington  
*A Dash for the Timber*, 1889  
Oil on canvas, 48¼ x 84½ inches,  
Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas, 1961.381