

STEAMBOAT ART MUSEUM

BILL GOLLINGS (ELLING WILLIAMS)

Born: in the Territory of Idaho in 1878.

Death: 1932, Sheridan Wyoming at the age of 54 in Sheridan Wyoming.

- Gollings' early years were spent in the rough-and-tumble mining camp of Pierce City.
- His parents felt that his education necessitated his departure from Idaho and sent him to live with a relative in Michigan.
- As a boy, he spent much of his time was in Idaho and Michigan.
- When he was twelve, he and his family moved to Chicago.
- Painting from a Mail Order Montgomery Ward paint set, his early pictures gained him entry into the Academy of Fine Arts in Chicago, and studied there for two years before leaving on a train to Rapid City, S.D.
- From South Dakota, Gollings set out on a borrowed horse to roam the open ranges and work odd jobs for money, food and shelter.
- He learned to brand cattle and drive a stage, as well as engaging in the almost obligatory early western activities of fur trapping and panning for gold. The lifestyle was hard, but he stayed at it for five years before he was accepted back in Chicago on scholarship.
- 1889 Frederic Remington's work appears in Harper's magazine inspiring Gollings.
- Gollings worked hard at his painting but tired of city life and in 1909, moved to Sheraton, Wyoming and built a small studio for himself with a skylight.
- After the construction of his studio Gollings worked less outdoors, but never completely abandoned the cowboy way of life that had drawn him in the first place.
- Gollings was lucky in that, Remington excluded, he got to meet almost all of his artistic heroes during his lifetime, including Edward Borein, W.H.D. Koerner, Charles M. Russell, Will James, Joe D. Young and, more importantly, J.H. Sharp.
- It was Sharp that encouraged Gollings more than anyone else, and also taught him technique in order that he might realize his full potential. Gollings was an apt pupil and his work continued to develop over the course of his career.

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- His paintings, collected and treasured all over the American west, bear his signature- his last name followed by a pony track insignia.

Bill Gollings (Elling William) did paintings known for their accurate accountings of the Old West. Gollings drew upon his own personal experiences as a cowboy, and was also known to have studied and admired the drawings of Frederic Remington. Like Remington, he longed for a forgotten west, and went about authenticating himself in order to render it carefully and faithfully.

Methods

Painting

Printmaker/Graphic Artist

Mediums

Charcoal

Etching

Ink Drawing (Pen and Ink)

Mixed-Media/Multi-Media

Oil

Watercolor

Styles

Realist/Representational

Subjects

American Frontier

Animal/Zoological

Cattle in Landscape

Cowboys

Figure

Genre (Human Activity)

Indian/Native American

STEAMBOAT ART MUSEUM

Landscape

Mountain Landscape

Nocturne

Western: Cowboys, Indians, Horses

Exhibitions

Charles Russell Art Show

Vose Galleries-Boston

Whitney Museum of American Art

Steamboat Art Museum

Schools

Chicago Academy of Design-Student

Chicago Academy of Fine Art-Student

Chronology

Early 20th Century Before 1950