Title: The Edward Borein Drawings,
Identifier/Call Number: MS.669
Contributing Institution: Autry National Center, Braun Research Library
Language of Material: English
Storage Unit: 1
Storage Unit: PORT.55
Physical Description: 0.25 Linear feet(1 document box, 1 portfolio box)
Date: early 20th Century
Abstract: (John) Edward Borein (born October 21, 1873, died May 19, 1945) was a prominent and prolific artist of Western themes who created illustrations, oil and watercolor paintings, and etchings. Collections consists of 234 pencil drawings and watercolors by Ed Borein. Images are mostly of Plains Indian clothing and objects.
creator: Borein, Edward, 1872-1945
creator: Lummis, Charles Fletcher, 1859-1928.
Scope and contents
Collections consists of 234 pencil drawings and watercolors by Ed Borein. Images are mostly of Plains Indian clothing and objects. Also includes oversized watercolors stored in Portfolio Folder 55 (PORT.55).
Preferred citation
Edward Borein Drawings, early 20th Century, Braun Research Library Collection; Autry National Center, Los Angeles; MS.669.
Processing history
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Biographical note
(John) Edward Borein (born October 21, 1873, died May 19, 1945) was a prominent and prolific artist of Western themes who created illustrations, oil and watercolor paintings, and etchings. Borein was self-taught and his works appeared frequently in magazines as illustrations and cover art.
He had a deep affection for the “Indian country” of the Southwest, as well as that of Montana, Southern Canada, and Mexico. He often visited these places studying Native customs and compiling a tremendous collection of Native costumes and artifacts.
Borein had the habit of drawing from memory and virtually never used a model. In his later years, he sometimes made photographs or films to check for the accuracy of his rendering of fast-moving animals, but these were typically viewed once and discarded.
Borein was born in San Leandro County in California in 1873 to Peter Rouble Borein of Chicago (1839-1901) and Annie Blake Borein of Montreal (1851-1928). His parents were married on December 9, 1871 and moved to Oakland shortly after his birth. Borein was the oldest of 5 children, followed by Peter Rouble, Charles Ashley, Lucinda Pope, and Annie Blake. His parents had a tempestuous relationship and eventually separated although they managed to maintain friendly terms afterwards.
Borein’s interest in art began at an early age. He was particularly interested in sketching cattle and vaqueros as subjects and he was a great admirer of Frederic Remington.
He left school at the age of 17 and found work as a ranch hand. In the evenings, after his work was done, Borein would sketch what he had seen each day by the light of a kerosene lamp. Borein returned to Oakland in 1891 and his mother enrolled him in the San Francisco Art Association Art School, which he attended for one month before leaving it. In 1984,
while working at the Rancho Jesús María as a ranch hand, Borein sent some of his sketches to Charles F. Lummis, founder of the Southwest Museum and publisher of the *Land of Sunshine* magazine. At the age of 21, Borein had sold his first drawing to Charles Lummis for $15.

Borein’s work first appeared in the *Land of Sunshine* August 1896 edition. His drawing served as an illustration for the story “The Old California Vaquero” by Flora Hughes Loughead (Loughead was commonly known as “the mother of Lockheed Corporation” as her sons Allan and Malcolm Loughead founded what would eventually become the Lockheed Aircraft Company in Hollywood, California).

Borein eventually travelled to Mexico where he spent two years before returning to his home near Oakland, California. In 1907, at the age of 34, Borein moved to New York City and took up the technique of etching at the Art Students League. He also adopted the medium of watercolor, which are now considered to be rare works of art. At the age of 45, Borein met Lucille Maxwell, and gave up his bachelor’s lifestyle. They were married after a brief courtship on June 27, 1921 at El Alisal, Lummis’s home in Los Angeles, California. The couple settled in Santa Barbara, California where they built a home and adjacent art studio called La Barranca. Borein also kept a studio in town where his works were sold.

Edward Borein died suddenly after complaining of chest pains on the 19th of May in 1945 at the age of 73.


**Acquisition**

Confidential gift to the Southwest Museum, 1951 October 2.

**Subjects and Indexing Terms**

Drawings
Illustrations
Indians of North America -- Clothing -- Great Plains -- Pictorial works
Indians of North America -- Material culture -- Great Plains -- Pictorial works
Watercolors
West (U.S.) -- Pictorial works