

President's Message By Jessie Keymel

Have you read the book Call of the Wild by Jack London? Most of the men I asked said yes. Then I asked: "Did you notice the illustrations?" They are the work of Charles Livingston Bull, "premier wildlife artist of his time in America, perhaps the best of his kind in the world". This compliment was given by the Society of Illustrators when reflecting on his talents.

Charles Livingston Bull was born in West Walworth in 1874. He illustrated more than 135 books and numerous articles for magazines such as The Saturday Evening Post, Life, Collier's, American Boy, and Country Gentleman. He attended classes at the Rochester Athenaeum and Mechanics Institute (now Rochester Institute of Technology) and began a taxidermist apprenticeship for the Ward Museum of Natural History in Rochester. Professor Ward sent him to the 1893 Chicago World Exposition to design and set up an exhibit of 400 birds for the government of Guatemala.

Charles became the chief taxidermist in the National Museum in Washington, D.C. Like many illustrators of his time, he also created posters for advertising campaigns and patriotic themes. Perhaps his most famous works in this medium are the leaping tiger for Ringling Brothers and Barnum and Bailey Circuses and the Keep Him Free Eagle poster for war savings stamps during World War I.

Charles Livingston Bull's work can be seen at the National Museum of Wildlife Art in Jackson Hole, WY; Brandywine River Museum, Chadds Fork, PA; the National Museum of American Illustrators in Newport, RI; and many other art galleries and museums throughout the country, including the Rochester Memorial Art Gallery.

There is much more that could be said about this West Walworth native who died in Oradell, NJ, in 1932. He was held in great esteem by those who knew his work as a wild life artist, illustrator, and educator. Remember the name Charles Livingston Bull when you are visiting museums in the future, or check some of his work on the internet.

Note: Thank you, Nolan Powell, for bringing this fascinating man to our attention. Much of this information is from the artist's biography of the National Museum of Wildlife Art.



Three works by Charles Livingston Bull