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Dedication of the Charles M. Russell Statue, 11th Annual Charles M. Russell Art Auction

Max S. Baucus

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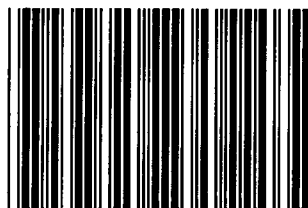
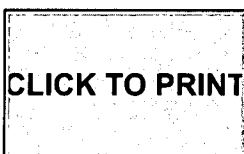
(1) Subject*: **Dedication of the Charles M. Russell Statue**

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(2) Subject* **11th Annual Charles M. Russell Art Auction**

DOCUMENT DATE*: **03/17/1979**

(Example: 01/12/1966)



BAUCUS

REMARKS BY
SENATOR MAX BAUCUS
AT THE DEDICATION OF THE CHARLES M. RUSSELL STATUE
11TH ANNUAL CHARLES M. RUSSELL ART AUCTION
GREAT FALLS, MONTANA
SATURDAY, MARCH 17, 1979

GOOD AFTERNOON.

MY FRIENDS, IT'S GOOD TO BE BACK IN GREAT FALLS, AND I AM ESPECIALLY PLEASED AND GRATEFUL THAT THE OCCASION OF MY RETURN IS THE DEDICATION OF THIS NEW STATUE OF CHARLES M. RUSSELL. I AM GRATEFUL FOR HAVING THE OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK TODAY IN HIS HONOR.

WRITING TO A FRIEND OVER FIFTY YEARS AGO, CHARLIE RUSSELL COMMENTED ON THE STATE HE SAW:

"A CAR WILL SHOW YOU THE MAN-MADE THINGS, BUT IF PEOPLE WANT TO SEE GOD'S OWN COUNTRY THEY'VE GOT TO HAVE A HORSE UNDER THEM. IN SPITE OF GASOLINE, THE BIGGEST PART OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS BELONGS TO GOD ... TO ME THE ROAR OF A MOUNTAIN STREAM MINGLED WITH THE BELLS OF A PACK TRAIN IS GRANDER MUSIC THAN ALL THE STRING OR BRASS BANDS IN THE WORLD."

TODAY WE HONOR THE MEMORY OF THIS MAN WITH SUCH GLORIOUS VISION, WHO SHOWED US WITH NEW EYES SO MUCH OF THE STATE IN WHICH WE LIVE.

FROM THE DAY HE FIRST SET FOOT IN MONTANA, AT AGE SIXTEEN, TO HIS LAST DAYS IN GREAT FALLS NEARLY A HALF-CENTURY LATER, CHARLIE RUSSELL CAPTURED ON PAPER, CANVAS, AND IN SCULPTURE THE GRANDEUR, THE SUFFERING, THE HUMOR, AND THE DAILY LIFE OF THE MONTANA OF HIS TIME AS NO ONE ELSE BEFORE OR SINCE.

BUT CHARLIE BELONGED TO THE UNITED STATES AS WELL. AS HIS FAME GREW, HE TRAVELLED EAST.

CHICAGO HE FOUND TOO SMOKEY. "IF I HAD A WINTER HOME IN HELL," HE SAID, "AND A SUMMER HOME IN CHICAGO, I THINK I'D SPEND MY SUMMER AT MY WINTER HOME. THERE MIGHT BE MORE PEOPLE THERE, BUT THERE COULDN'T BE MORE SMOKE."

IN NEW YORK HE FOUND A NEW NATIONAL MARKET FOR HIS WORK, BOTH IN MAGAZINES AND IN SUCH FINE SHOPS AS TIFFANY'S, WHICH CARRIED HIS SCULPTURES FOR YEARS.

LATER HE WOULD TRAVEL TO FLORIDA AND CALIFORNIA TO PROMOTE HIS WORK AND VISIT FRIENDS.

SO IN A TIME WHEN WEALTHY FINANCIERS GUIDED A STREAM OF PROFITS FROM MONTANA BACK EAST, CHARLIE RUSSELL WAS THE RIP TIDE: HIS PAINTINGS, DRAWINGS, AND SCULPTURE COMMANDED HIGH PRICES ON THE EASTERN MARKETS.

HE COUNTED AMONG HIS LEGION OF FRIENDS FAMOUS ACTORS, ARTISTS, AND ENTERTAINERS FROM ACROSS THE COUNTRY. WILL ROGERS WAS ONE OF CHARLIE'S CLOSEST COMPANIONS.

HE EVEN REACHED ACROSS THE SEAS, TO ENGLAND -- A LAND HE CALLED "A BIG PARK WITH AN INTERESTING HISTORY" -- ON AN OCEAN LINER "AS BIG AS THE CITY OF LEWISTOWN."

THIS NOTORIETY BROUGHT CHARLIE A HALLOWED POSITION AFTER HIS DEATH: A LIKENESS IN STATUARY HALL IN THE UNITED STATES CAPITOL IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

THERE HE IS MONTANA'S LONE REPRESENTATIVE, AND THE ONLY ARTIST TO HOLD THAT DISTINGUISHED PLACE.

TODAY WE DEDICATE A SECOND STATUE OF CHARLES MARION RUSSELL, THIS ONE BY BOB SCRIVER.

BUT WE DEDICATE THIS STATUE NOT MERELY TO CHARLIE RUSSELL THE ARTIST, FOR THAT UNDERSTATES HIS GIFTS BY A LONG MEASURE, NOR SIMPLY TO CHARLIE RUSSELL THE MONTANAN, FOR WE KNOW HIM EVEN TO BE MORE THAN THAT.

A FAVORITE SON OF MONTANA, PAINTER, SCULPTOR,
HUMORIST, COWBOY, PHILOSOPHER, STORY-TELLER -- ALL THOSE
TITLES FIT.

BUT THERE IS MORE: CHARLES MARION RUSSELL, VISUAL
HISTORIAN OF THE AMERICAN WEST, HE PRESERVES FOR US AND FOR
GENERATIONS TO COME THE LIFE AND THE SPIRIT OF A LOST ERA,
OF THE DAY WHEN, AS HE SAID, "BARRING THE INDIANS AND A FEW
SCATTERED WHITES, THE LAND BELONGED TO GOD."

THIS IS WHERE CHARLIE RUSSELL ALWAYS LIVED.

BUT THE ERA HE CAPTURED WOULD NOT STAY STILL ABOUT HIM.

"THE WHOLE WORLD," HE SAID LATE IN LIFE, "HAS CHANGED
SINCE THEN, BUT I HAVE NOT. I'M NO MORE AT HOME IN A BIG CITY
THAN I WAS THEN; I'M STILL LONELY."

AS WE PAY TRIBUTE TO CHARLIE RUSSELL TODAY, AND
DEDICATE THIS IMAGE TO HIS MEMORY, WE MAY RECOGNIZE THAT
THIS WAS HIS GREAT GIFT: THAT HOWEVER FAR AWAY TIME WAS TO
TAKE HIM FROM HIS DAYS ON THE MONTANA RANGE, HIS SPIRIT WOULD
NEVER LEAVE.

EVEN AS THE WORLD GREW UP AROUND HIM, HE STILL
TOUCHED THAT EARLIER AGE IN HIS MEMORY, HIS DREAMS, AND IN
HIS LEGACY TO US -- HIS ART.

SO OUR DEDICATION TO CHARLIE RUSSELL MAY BE IN HIS OWN WORDS, WRITTEN IN THE LAST YEARS OF HIS LIFE TO AN OLD FRIEND IN CALIFORNIA:

"TIME ONLY CHANGES THE OUTSIDE OF THINGS. IT SCARS THE ROCK AND SNARLES THE TREE, BUT THE HEART INSIDE IS THE SAME. YOUR BODY IS HERE IN A HIGHLY CIVILIZED LAND, BUT YOUR HEART LIVES ON THE BACK TRAILS THAT NOW ARE GRASS-GROWN OR PLOWED UNDER."

THANK YOU.

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