

# **Museum of World Treasures**

## **Romancing the West Vocabulary List**

- All entries pertain directly to artifacts or signs in our exhibits.

**Cowboy** – an animal herder who tends to cattle on ranches or in drives. Also performs a variety of tasks involving ranch work.

**Saloons** – a kind of bar particular to the Old West. Served trappers, gold miners, cowboys, settlers, and gamblers.

**Pony Express** – A fast mail service that helped connect the West to the East. Riders were on horseback in staged relays.

**Homestead Act** – An 1862 act that gave free land to settlers with a few qualifications: they had to be at least 21 years of age, the head of a household, and build a home on the land and live there for at least 5 years.

**Stagecoach** – a type of covered wagon used to take people or goods long distances. Usually drawn by four horses.

**Gatling Gun** – An early rapid fire weapon used in the American Civil War. Custer had the opportunity to bring these early machine guns with him to the Battle of Little Bighorn and declined.

**Isaac C. Parker** – the “Hanging Judge” of the American old west.

**Dalton Gang** – a group of bank and stagecoach robbers who were at last defeated in Coffeyville, Kansas, during their attempt to rob two banks at once.

**Dodge City** – A very important part of the Chisholm Trail cattle movement. A true frontier settlement of the Old West.

**Wichita** – Another city with great importance in the cattle trails of the Wild West.

**Billy the Kid** – A frontier outlaw about whom many things are unsure. One of the most mysterious characters in Wild West history.

**Battle of Little Bighorn** – A battle in which Lakota Sioux, Cheyenne, and Arapaho tribes defeated American army forces.

**George Custer** – the Commander of the 7<sup>th</sup> cavalry at the Battle of Little Bighorn.

**Elizabeth Custer** – George Custer's wife, who was largely responsible for the positive perception around him after his death.

**7<sup>th</sup> Cavalry** – A Cavalry regiment that followed Custer to their doom in the Battle of Little Bighorn.

**Scalping** – the act of removing all or part of the scalp as an act of violence, war, or disrespect. Initially used as a kind of trophy, scalps were eventually traded for money.

**Geronimo** – A famous leader of the Apache people, he fought against Mexican and American forces that took his tribal lands.

**Medicine Man** – a traditional healer or spiritual leader in American Indian cultures.

**Indian Wars** - one could claim they were fought from the time of the American Revolution. Indian wars mainly involved the displacement of native peoples from their tribal lands.

**Oglala Sioux** – One of the seven subtribes of the Lakota peoples of the Dakotas.

**Ghost Dance** – a religious movement led by Wovoka of the Oglala Sioux that eventually led to the death of tribes people at the Pine Ridge Reservation.

**Liniments & Snake Oil** – generally a form of quackery, many liniments and snake oils in the Old West were false healing ointments sold for profit.

**Luther Standing Bear** – An Oglala Sioux man who became famous during Wild West Shows and eventually became an actor.

**Frederic Remington** – An American painter, illustrator, and sculptor whose work romantically portrayed the American West.

**Charles Russell** An American painter, illustrator, and sculptor whose work romantically portrayed the American West.

**Laura Ingalls Wilder** – Author of the “Little House on the Prairie” books that portrayed the life of a frontierswoman and her family.

**Roy Rogers** – A Hollywood cowboy who was in over 100 movies and had a successful television show. His work is partly responsible for the romanticization of the West.

**Dime Novels** – Early popular fiction that was marketed toward young men and soldiers. The American West was one of the most popular subject matters which led to its romanticization.

**Jessie James** – An American outlaw, bank robber, gang leader, and murderer involved in some of the most scandalous activities of the Wild West. His stories made the West seem more dangerous than it was in reality.

**Buffalo Bill Cody** – An American soldier, buffalo hunter, and showman who started a successful Wild West show.

**Annie Oakley** – An exhibition and sharpshooter arguably called the first American female superstar. Participated in Buffalo Bill’s Wild West Shows.

**John Wayne** – An American film star whose primary films were Westerns.

**Wild West Show** – Vaudeville performances stylized in a romantic version of the Wild West.

**Furrier** – A person who treats and makes fur wearable and usable for humans.

**Ad Astra Per Aspera** – Kansas’s state motto meaning “To the Stars through Difficulties.”

**Western Saddle** – a saddle used for comfortable, long rides on trails. Primarily used for herding cattle and on farms and ranches.

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