



Smithsonian
National Museum of Natural History

Anonymous Assiniboine drawings to illustrate Edwin
Denig's "Indian Tribes of the Upper Missouri,"

National Anthropological Archives
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Collection Overview

Repository:	National Anthropological Archives
Title:	MS 2600-b-1 Anonymous Assiniboine drawings to illustrate Edwin Denig's "Indian Tribes of the Upper Missouri"
Identifier:	NAA.MS2600B1
Date:	ca. 1853
Extent:	37 Items (drawings pasted onto 19 mounts; graphite and ink; mounts 18 x 22 cm.-36 x 24 cm.)
Creator:	Denig, Edwin Thompson, 1812-1858
Language:	English .
Digital Content:	Image(s): Anonymous Assiniboine drawings to illustrate Edwin Denig's "Indian Tribes of the Upper Missouri,"

Administrative Information

Provenance

These are the original drawings that accompanied Edwin Thompson Denig's 451 page manuscript, entitled "Report to Hon. Isaac I. Stevens, Governor of Washington Territory, on the Indian Tribes of the Upper Missouri, by Edwin Thompson Denig." It is unclear when or how they were acquired by the Smithsonian.

Citation

Manuscript 2600-b-1, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution

Biographical / Historical

Edwin T. Denig was born on March 10, 1812 in Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania. He entered the fur trade in 1833 as an employee of the American Fur Company. He would be employed in the fur trade for the next 23 years. During this period he worked at Fort Pierre and Fort Union, eventually rising to the position of bourgeois at the latter post. In 1854 he authored a 451 page manuscript, entitled "Report to Hon. Isaac I. Stevens, Governor of Washington Territory, on the Indian Tribes of the Upper Missouri, by Edwin Thompson Denig." Denig left Fort Union in 1856. He died on September 4, 1858 near the city of Winnipeg, Canada. For further biographic information, see Edwin Thompson Denig, *Five Indian Tribes of the Upper Missouri: Sioux, Arickaras, Assiniboines, Crees, and Crows* (edited and with an introduction by John C. Ewers), University of Oklahoma Press, 1961.

Biographical / Historical

Fort Union trading post was constructed by the American Fur Company in 1828 and was located near the confluence of the Yellowstone and Missouri Rivers. It was established to open trade with the Assiniboine, yet it served a variety of tribes, including the Crow, Arikara, Mandan, Hidatsa, Plains Cree, Chippewa, Blackfeet, and Sioux. These tribes exchanged beaver pelts and buffalo robes for trade goods at Fort Union. In 1866, the trading post was sold to the Northwestern Fur Company. A year later, the United States Army purchased the facility, which it subsequently dismantled. For further information, see: National Park Service, Fort Union Trading Post: Grandest Fort on the Missouri <http://www.nps.gov/fous/history.htm>
Edwin Thompson Denig, *Five Indian Tribes of the Upper Missouri: Sioux, Arickaras, Assiniboines, Crees, and Crows* (edited and with an introduction by John C. Ewers), University of Oklahoma Press, 1961.

Scope and Contents

These are the original drawings that accompanied Edwin Thompson Denig's 451 page manuscript, entitled "Report to Hon. Isaac I. Stevens, Governor of Washington Territory, on the Indian Tribes of the Upper Missouri, by Edwin Thompson Denig." The drawings depict utensils, tools, game pieces, plants, warfare, hunting, a tipi, a scalp dance, and a map. Five of the drawings are attributed to anonymous Assiniboine artists. The drawings that are not attributed to the Assiniboine may have been drawn by Edwin T. Denig. All of the drawings were likely created between 1853 and 1854, while Denig was working on the report. Records indicate that his original manuscript included 15 pages ink drawings. The manuscript was published in 1930, in the Forty-sixth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology. Prior to being photographed for the publication, the 15 pages of drawings were trimmed into 39 smaller drawings, which were subsequently arranged and pasted onto 19 mounts. Included with the drawings is typed page identifying the drawings as "Original sketches for Plates 64-80 and Figs. 30-35 of Denig's "Indian Tribes of the Upper Missouri," edited by J.N.B. Hewitt, BAE-AR 46, Washington, D.C., 1930. " The page also contains a list of negative numbers.

Bibliography

Edwin Thompson Dennig, *Indian Tribes of the Upper Missouri*, Ed. by J. N. B. Hewitt, Bureau of American Ethnology Forty-sixth Annual Report (1928-1929), United States Government Printing Office, 1930.

Local Numbers

NAA MS 2600-b-1

OPPS NEG 42,514

Place

United States North Dakota Fort Union.

Place

United States Dakota Territory Fort Union.

Album Information

MS 2600B1 000

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

Assiniboin
Assiniboine (Stoney)
Indians of North America -- Great Plains

Cultures:

Assiniboine (Stoney)
Indians of North America -- Great Plains

Types of Materials:

Ledger drawings

Container Listing

Anonymous Assiniboine drawing of musical instruments, ca. 1853

1 Drawing (graphite and ink, mounted on paper; 13 x 19 cm., mount 18 x 22 cm.)

[Image\(s\)](#)

Denig, Edwin Thompson, 1812-1858, Annotator

English.

Inscriptions read "1 Hoop Drum Head", "2 Hoop Drum Other Side", "3 Log Drum Head", "4 Gourd Rattle", "5 Doctors Rattle Chi-chi-quoin", "6 Doctors Rattle", "7 Brave's Rattle", "8 Deer Hoof Rattle", "9 Flute", "10 Whistle", "11 Gourd Rattle".

Local Numbers

NAA INV 08689300

OPPS NEG 99-10376

NAA MS 2600-B-1

Place

United States North Dakota Fort Union.

United States Dakota Territory Fort Union.

Album Information

MS 2600B1 001

Topic: Assiniboin

Genre/Form: Ledger drawings

Culture: Assiniboine (Stoney)
Indians of North America -- Great Plains

Anonymous Assiniboine drawings of pictographs depicting a trail and camp and a diagram of a council lodge, ca. 1853

2 Items (drawings on 1 mount; ink, mounted on paper; left drawing 18 x 18 cm., diam. right drawing 9 cm., mount 15 x 29 cm.)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

Denig, Edwin Thompson, 1812-1858, Annotator

English.

Figures in the left drawing have been numbered 1-8. The diagram depicts the lodge where E. T. Denig met with Assiniboin leaders, with a calumet indicating the location of the leading chief.

Local Numbers

NAA INV 08689401

NAA INV 08689402

NAA MS 2600-B-1

Place

United States North Dakota Fort Union.

United States Dakota Territory Fort Union.

Album Information

MS 2600B1 002

Topic: Assiniboin
Genre/Form: Ledger drawings
Pictographs -- Assiniboin
Culture: Assiniboine (Stoney)
Indians of North America -- Great Plains

Anonymous Assiniboine drawings of hunting scene and camp equipment, 1853
November 10

*2 Items (drawings on 1 mount; ink, mounted on paper; left drawing 14 x 14 cm.,
right drawing 14 x 13 cm., mount 21 x 31 cm.)*

[Image\(s\)](#)

Denig, Edwin Thompson, 1812-1858, Annotator
English.

Inscriptions read "Drawings by an Assiniboine Indian. Fort Union Nov. 10.
1853.", "Lodge", "Dog Travaille", "Bear", "Man Shooting a Bear.", "Dog", "Elk",
"Medicine Pole and Sack".

Local Numbers

NAA INV 08689500

NAA MS 2600-B-1

Place

United States North Dakota Fort Union.

United States Dakota Territory Fort Union.

Album Information

MS 2600B1 003

Topic: Assiniboin
Genre/Form: Ledger drawings
Culture: Assiniboine (Stoney)
Indians of North America -- Great Plains

Anonymous Assiniboine drawings of Arikara ear ornament and cooking vessels
from several tribes, ca. 1853

5 Items (drawings on 1 mount; graphite and ink, mounted on paper; mount 18 x 28 cm.)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

Denig, Edwin Thompson, 1812-1858, Annotator

English.

Inscriptions read: "Arickara Ear Ornament", "Arickara Clay Pot", "Clay Corn Mortar", "Grossventre Stone Mortar", "Assiniboine Buffalo Horn Spoon", "Assiniboine Big Horn Spoon, 3 pints".

Local Numbers

NAA INV 08689601

NAA INV 08689602

NAA INV 08689603

NAA INV 08689604

NAA INV 08689605

OPPS NEG 99-10372

NAA MS 2600-B-1

Place

United States North Dakota Fort Union.

United States Dakota Territory Fort Union.

Album Information

MS 2600B1 004

Topic: Assiniboin

Genre/Form: Ledger drawings

Culture: Assiniboine (Stoney)
Indians of North America -- Great Plains
Sahnish (Arikara)

Anonymous Assiniboine drawings of characteristic Assiniboine implements, ca. 1853

1 Drawing (graphite and ink, mounted on paper; 20 x 17 cm., mount 26 x 20 cm.)

[Image\(s\)](#)

Denig, Edwin Thompson, 1812-1858, Annotator

English.

Inscriptions read: "Stone Hatchet", "Stone War Club", "Stone Arrow Point",
"Shoulder Blade Axe", "Hump Rib Knife", "Assiniboine Snow Show", "Assiniboine
War Lance", "Elk Horn Bow".

Local Numbers

NAA INV 08689700

NAA MS 2600-B-1

Place

United States North Dakota Fort Union.

United States Dakota Territory Fort Union.

Album Information

MS 2600B1 005

Topic: Assiniboin

Genre/Form: Ledger drawings

Culture: Assiniboine (Stoney)
Indians of North America -- Great Plains

Anonymous Assiniboine drawings of medicinal roots, ca. 1853

*2 Items (drawings on 1 mount; ink, mounted on paper; top drawing 10 x 12 cm.,
bottom drawing 13 x 12 cm., mount 28 x 18 cm.)*

[Image\(s\)](#)

Denig, Edwin Thompson, 1812-1858, Annotator

English.

Inscriptions read: "Comb Root. Racine Noir. E-pach-cha-hoo" and "Cat's Tail.
Hint-kah-koo. Racine de Quenouille".

Local Numbers

NAA INV 08689800

NAA MS 2600-B-1

OPPS NEG 99-10374

Place

United States North Dakota Fort Union.

United States Dakota Territory Fort Union.

Album Information

MS 2600B1 006

Topic: Assiniboin
Genre/Form: Ledger drawings
Culture: Assiniboine (Stoney)
Indians of North America -- Great Plains

Anonymous Assiniboine drawings of calumets and related implements, ca. 1853
1 Drawing (ink, mounted on paper; top drawing 19 x 18 cm., mount 29 x 22 cm.)

[Image\(s\)](#)

Denig, Edwin Thompson, 1812-1858, Annotator

English.

Inscriptions read: "Probe", "Tobacco Sack", "Ghost or Charm Sack", "Calumet Pipe uncovered", "Calumet Pipe enveloped". Portions of the uncovered pipe are labelled A-D.

Local Numbers

NAA INV 08689900

NAA MS 2600-B-1

OPPS NEG 99-10375

Place

United States North Dakota Fort Union.

United States Dakota Territory Fort Union.

Album Information

MS 2600B1 007

Topic: Assiniboin
Genre/Form: Ledger drawings
Culture: Assiniboine (Stoney)
Indians of North America -- Great Plains

Anonymous Assiniboine map of buffalo park, ca. 1853
1 Drawing (ink, mounted on paper; top drawing 29 x 20 cm., mount 35 x 24 cm.)

[Image\(s\)](#)

Denig, Edwin Thompson, 1812-1858, Annotator

English.

Inscriptions read: "A The park below the bluffs", "BB A high range of hills", "C Gaps or opening thru the hills & descend to the park", "D A person on horseback leading in the buffaloe", "E Buffaloe on the level prairie behind the bluffs, and enclosed within the lines", "F Dirt and stones thrown up about 3 ft high and men lying down concealed behind them", "G The buffalo having passed the stations of these, they close in behind them", " Indian camp in the valley below the bluffs".

Local Numbers

NAA INV 08690000

NAA MS 2600-B-1

OPPS NEG 42514-F

Place

United States North Dakota Fort Union.

United States Dakota Territory Fort Union.

Album Information

MS 2600B1 008

Topic: Assiniboin
Genre/Form: Ledger drawings
Maps
Culture: Assiniboine (Stoney)
Indians of North America -- Great Plains

Anonymous Assiniboine drawings of Assiniboine implements, ca. 1853
*7 Items (drawings on 1 mount; ink on blue chain layed paper, tracing cloth, and
Manila paper, mounted on paper; mount 26 x 19 cm.)*

[Image\(s\)](#)

Denig, Edwin Thompson, 1812-1858, Annotator
English.

Inscriptions read: "Fig 1 Elk Shin Bone", "Fig 2 Elk horn iron tool", "Lancet",
"Horn for cupping", "Wah heent Kah tool for scraping hides as shaving the skin
Fig 2", "Wah heem pack pah Tool for fleshing the hide". Two drawings are on
blue chain layed paper, 1 is on architech's linen, and 4 on manilla paper.

Local Numbers

NAA INV 08690100

NAA MS 2600-B-1

Place

United States North Dakota Fort Union.

United States Dakota Territory Fort Union.

Album Information

MS 2600B1 009

Topic: Assiniboin
Genre/Form: Ledger drawings
Culture: Assiniboine (Stoney)
Indians of North America -- Great Plains

Anonymous Assiniboine drawing of an Assiniboine running a buffalo, 1854
1 Drawing (ink, mounted on paper; drawing 14 x 23 cm, mount 18 x 28 cm.)

[Image\(s\)](#)

Denig, Edwin Thompson, 1812-1858, Annotator

English.

Inscription reads "An Assiniboine running a Buffalo. Drawn by an Assiniboine warrior and hunter. Fort Union Jan. 16. 1854."

Local Numbers

NAA INV 08690200

NAA MS 2600-B-1

OPPS NEG 42514

Place

United States North Dakota Fort Union.

United States Dakota Territory Fort Union.

Album Information

MS 2600B1 010

Topic: Assiniboin

Genre/Form: Ledger drawings

Culture: Assiniboine (Stoney)
Indians of North America -- Great Plains

Anonymous Assiniboine drawing of scalp dance, 1853
1 Drawing (ink, mounted on paper; drawing 14 x 23 cm, mount 18 x 28 cm.)

[Image\(s\)](#)

Denig, Edwin Thompson, 1812-1858, Annotator

English.

Inscription reads "Scalp dance. Drawn by an Assiniboine warrior. Fort Union Nov. 10. 1853."

Local Numbers

NAA INV 08690300

NAA MS 2600-B-1

OPPS NEG 42514-E

Place

United States North Dakota Fort Union.

United States Dakota Territory Fort Union.

Album Information

MS 2600B1 011

Topic: Assiniboin
Genre/Form: Ledger drawings
Culture: Assiniboine (Stoney)
Indians of North America -- Great Plains

Anonymous Assiniboine drawings of Assiniboine bowl game, ca. 1853
3 Items (drawings on 1 mount; ink, mounted on paper; mount 28 x 18 cm.)

[Image\(s\)](#)

Denig, Edwin Thompson, 1812-1858, Annotator
English.

Diagram of plays of the game of the bowl (cos-soo) with representations of
crow's claws, stones, china, vest buttons, and brass tack heads.

Local Numbers

NAA INV 08690400

NAA MS 2600-B-1

Place

United States North Dakota Fort Union.

United States Dakota Territory Fort Union.

Album Information

MS 2600B1 012

Topic: Assiniboin
Genre/Form: Ledger drawings
Culture: Assiniboine (Stoney)
Indians of North America -- Great Plains

Anonymous Assiniboine drawings of Assiniboine game, ca. 1853
*4 Items (drawings on 1 mount; graphite and ink, mounted on paper; mount 28 x
21 cm.)*

[Image\(s\)](#)

Denig, Edwin Thompson, 1812-1858, Annotator
English.

Diagram of plays of the "chun-kan-dee" game with representations of blank and
marked sticks.

Local Numbers

NAA INV 08690500

NAA MS 2600-B-1

Place

United States North Dakota Fort Union.

United States Dakota Territory Fort Union.

Album Information

MS 2600B1 013

Topic: Assiniboin
Genre/Form: Ledger drawings
Culture: Assiniboine (Stoney)
Indians of North America -- Great Plains

Anonymous Assiniboine drawings of tipi frame and completed tipi decorated with animal designs, ca. 1853

2 Items (drawings on 1 mount; graphite and ink, mounted on paper; top drawing 14 x 10 cm., bottom drawing 26 x 17 cm., mount 29 x 21 cm.)

[Image\(s\)](#)

Denig, Edwin Thompson, 1812-1858, Annotator

English.

Inscriptions read "Lodge Poles set up", "Lodge Erected", and "Entrance."

Local Numbers

NAA INV 08690600

NAA MS 2600-B-1

Place

United States North Dakota Fort Union.

United States Dakota Territory Fort Union.

Album Information

MS 2600B1 014

Topic: Assiniboin
Genre/Form: Ledger drawings
Culture: Assiniboine (Stoney)
Indians of North America -- Great Plains

Anonymous Assiniboine drawings of interior of tipi and its surroundings, ca. 1853
1 Drawing (ink, mounted on paper; drawing 21 x 19 cm., mount 29 x 23 cm.)

[Image\(s\)](#)

Denig, Edwin Thompson, 1812-1858, Annotator

English.

Inscriptions read: "Door", "Kettles", "Pans", "Meat", "Grandmother", "Man of the Lodge", "His Eldest wife", "Their children", "Visitors and Strangers", "Brothers-in-law and other relatives", "Female relatives and visitors", "The other wives of the

master", "Gun", "Baggage", "Grandfather or uncle", "Dressed skins, etc", "Meat and other baggage", "water", "Medicine Sack and Shield outside", "Dogs outside though each side the door against the lodge.", "Large quantities of fresh meat on scaffold outside covered with raw hides", "wood outside near the door".

Local Numbers

NAA INV 08690700

NAA MS 2600-B-1

OPPS NEG 42514-B

Place

United States North Dakota Fort Union.

United States Dakota Territory Fort Union.

Album Information

MS 2600B1 015

Topic: Assiniboin
Genre/Form: Ledger drawings
Culture: Assiniboine (Stoney)
Indians of North America -- Great Plains

Anonymous Assiniboine drawings of mounted Assiniboine warrior in costume
stabbing Blackfoot, 1854

1 Drawing (ink, mounted on paper; drawing 23 x 14 cm., mount 29 x 18 cm.)

[Image\(s\)](#)

Denig, Edwin Thompson, 1812-1858, Annotator
English.

Inscriptions read "Drawn by an Assiniboine Warrior. Fort Union Jan.16. 1854."

Local Numbers

NAA INV 08690800

NAA MS 2600-B-1

OPPS NEG 42514-A

Place

United States North Dakota Fort Union.

United States Dakota Territory Fort Union.

Album Information

MS 2600B1 016

Topic: Assiniboin
Blackfeet

Genre/Form: Ledger drawings
Culture: Assiniboine (Stoney)
Indians of North America -- Great Plains
Niitsitapii (Blackfoot/Blackfeet)

Anonymous Assiniboine drawings of pictographs describing a battle scene, ca.
1853

1 Drawing (ink, mounted on paper; drawing 17 x 26 cm., mount 20 x 30 cm.)

[Image\(s\)](#)

Denig, Edwin Thompson, 1812-1858, Annotator
English.

Local Numbers

NAA INV 08690900

NAA MS 2600-B-1

Place

United States North Dakota Fort Union.

United States Dakota Territory Fort Union.

Album Information

MS 2600B1 017

Topic: Assiniboin
Genre/Form: Ledger drawings
Pictographs -- Assiniboin
Culture: Assiniboine (Stoney)
Indians of North America -- Great Plains

Anonymous Assiniboine drawings of pictographs describing a battle scene, ca.
1853

1 Drawing (ink, mounted on paper; drawing 28 x 18 cm., mount 31 x 20 cm.)

[Image\(s\)](#)

Denig, Edwin Thompson, 1812-1858, Annotator
English.

Various aspects of the drawing have been numbered 1-11.

Local Numbers

NAA INV 08691000

NAA MS 2600-B-1

Place

United States North Dakota Fort Union.

United States Dakota Territory Fort Union.

Album Information

MS 2600B1 018

Topic: Assiniboin
Genre/Form: Ledger drawings
Culture: Assiniboine (Stoney)
Indians of North America -- Great Plains

Anonymous Assiniboine map of north side of Missouri River from Fort Union to Fort Benton, 1853 December 27

1 Drawing (ink, mounted on paper; drawing 31 x 20 cm., mount 36 x 24 cm.)

[Image\(s\)](#)

Denig, Edwin Thompson, 1812-1858, Annotator
English.

Inscriptions read: "Map of the north side of the Missouri river from Fort Union, mouth of the Yellow Stone, to Fort Benton, mouth of the Maria, drawn by an Assiniboine warrior at Fort Union Dec. 27. 1853. The artist was not acquainted with the country on the south side of the Mo. The dotted line is their usual war path to the Blackfeet. Names of rivers & c. written under his direction and explanation." Features on the map are inscribed "Fort Union", "Creek", "Trade Houses", "Bourbeuse R.", "Road to War", "Quaking Asp R.", "Milk River", "North Fork", "Pine Mts.", "War Path", "Bear Paw M.", "Sweet smeling Grass Mounts", "Maria River", "Rocky Mountains", "Fort Benton", "Maria R.", "Teton River", "Missouri River", and "Perpetual Snow Mountains."

Local Numbers

NAA INV 08691100

NAA MS 2600-B-1

Place

United States North Dakota Fort Union.

United States Dakota Territory Fort Union.

Album Information

MS 2600B1 019

Topic: Assiniboin
Genre/Form: Ledger drawings
Maps
Culture: Assiniboine (Stoney)
Indians of North America -- Great Plains