



Smithsonian
National Museum of Natural History

Charles Milton Bell photographs of
American Indians, circa 1874-1890

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Collection Overview

Repository:	National Anthropological Archives
Title:	Charles Milton Bell photographs of American Indians
Identifier:	NAA.PhotoLot.80
Date:	circa 1874-1890
Extent:	340 Copy prints (circa) 3 Prints (albumen) 333 Glass negatives (wet plate collodion and dry gelatin) 69 Copy negatives
Creator:	Bell, C. M. (Charles Milton), approximately 1849-1893
Language:	Undetermined .

Administrative Information

Provenance

When the C. M. Bell studio finally closed in 1909, its entire collection of negatives was acquired by another Washington photographer, Isaac M. Boyce. Boyce separated out the Indian negatives and attempted to sell them to the Bureau of American Ethnology. It was not until the 1950s, however, that the bureau finally bought the negatives from Boyce's son, William.

Provenance

The set of prints that make up this collection was prepared as working material in the task of identifying the photographs of the Boyce collection. Prints were given arbitrary numbers when they were accessioned into the archives, with numbers 266-341 going to the oversize plates. All of the plates in the collection appear to have been copied in the 1950s shortly after their purchase; copies of the non-oversize plates were originally filed in MS 4661 and copies of the oversize plates were filed in Photo Lot 80. There was a project in 1998 to copy and conserve many of the oversize plates in a larger format and these copies were also added to Photo Lot 80.

Location of Other Archival Materials

Copy prints previously filed in MS 4661 have been relocated and merged with Photo Lot 80. These are also copy prints of Bell negatives that were acquired from Boyce and form part of this collection.

Location of Other Archival Materials

Additional C. M. Bell photographs held in National Anthropological Archives Photo Lot 4420, Photo Lot 24, Photo Lot 60, Photo Lot 81-44, Photo lot 87-2P, and Photo Lot 90-1.

See others in

Charles Milton Bell photographs of American Indians, circa 1874-1890

Available Formats

Digital surrogates for many of the original negatives available online.

Preferred Citation

Photo Lot 80, Charles Milton Bell photographs of American Indians, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution

Restrictions

The collection is open for research.

Access to the collection requires an appointment.

Conditions Governing Use

Contact the repository for terms of use.

Biographical Note

Charles Milton Bell (circa 1849-1893) was the youngest member of a family of photographers that operated a studio in Washington, DC, from around 1860-1874. Charles Milton Bell established his own studio on Pennsylvania Avenue in 1873 and it rapidly became one of the leading photography studios in the city. Bell developed the patronage of Ferdinand Vandever Hayden, who sent American Indian visitors to the studio to have their portraits made. Bell also made photographs of Indians for the Department of the Interior and the Bureau of American Ethnology.

Scope and Contents

Portraits of American Indians made by Charles Milton Bell in his Washington, DC studio. Depicted individuals include Red Cloud, Oglala; Spotted Tail, Brule; Quanah Parker, Comanche; Nawat, Arapaho; Scabby Bull, Arapaho; Wolf Robe, Cheyenne; D. W. Bushyhead, Cherokee; John Jumper, Seminole; Plenty Coups, Crow; Rushing Bear, Arikara; Gall, Hunkpapa; John Grass, Sihasapa; Lean Wolf, Hidatsa; Chief Joseph, Nez Perce; and Lone Wolf, Kiowa; as well as people associated with Pawnee Bill's Wild West Show. The collection also includes copies of some images by other photographers, including G. G. Rockwood and F. T. Cummins.

Local Call Number(s)

NAA Photo Lot 80, NAA MS 4661

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Apsáalooke (Crow/Absaroke)
Assiniboine (Stoney)
Cherokee
Delaware Indians
Fox Indians
Hidatsa Indians
Hunkpapa Indians
Indians of North America -- Great Plains
Indians of North America -- Northeast
Indians of North America -- Plateau
Indians of North America -- Southern States
Inunaina (Arapaho)
Iowa Indians
Kansa Indians
Kickapoo Indians
Kiowa Indians
Nez Percé Indians
Niuam (Comanche)
Oglala Indians
Ojibwa Indians
Omaha Indians
Osage Indians
Oto Indians
Paloos Indians
Pawnee Indians
Pikuni Blackfeet (Piegan)
Plains Apache (Kiowa Apache)
Sahnish (Arikara)
Salish Indians
Sauk Indians
Seminole Indians
Shoshoni Indians
Sicangu Lakota (Brulé Sioux)
Sisseton Indians
Spokane Indians
Tsitsistas/Suhtai (Cheyenne)
Wichita Indians
Winnebago Indians
Yakama Indians
Yanktonai Indians

Cultures:

Apsáalooke (Crow/Absaroke)
Assiniboine (Stoney)
Cherokee
Delaware Indians
Fox Indians

Hidatsa Indians
Hunkpapa Indians
Indians of North America -- Great Plains
Indians of North America -- Northeast
Indians of North America -- Plateau
Indians of North America -- Southern States
Inunaina (Arapaho)
Iowa Indians
Kansa Indians
Kickapoo Indians
Kiowa Indians
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Niuam (Comanche)
Oglala Indians
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Wichita Indians
Winnebago Indians
Yakama Indians
Yanktonai Indians

Types of Materials:

Photographs

Names:

Joseph (Nez Percé Chief), 1840-1904
Lean Wolf.
Parker, Quanah, 1845?-1911
Plenty Coups Chief of the Crows, 1848-1932
Red Cloud, 1822-1909
Spotted Tail, 1823-1881

Addl. KW Subj

Sioux

Gros Ventre; Hidatsa
Plains Apache
Assiniboin; Assiniboine
Blackfoot
Otoe
Chippewa
Sauk & Fox
Meskwaki; Sauk & Fox
Kansa (Kaw)
Shoshone
Palouse
Yakima
Lenape