



# Smithsonian

*National Museum of the American Indian*

## Fred R. Meyer photograph collection

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## Collection Overview

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|--------------------|--|
| <b>Repository:</b> | National Museum of the American Indian   |
| <b>Title:</b>      | Fred R. Meyer photograph collection  |
| <b>Date:</b>       | 1890-1915  |
| <b>Identifier:</b> | NMAI.AC.032  |
| <b>Creator:</b>    | Meyer, Fred R.   |
| <b>Extent:</b>     | 199 Lantern slides (black and white)<br>381 Negatives (photographic) (black and white)<br>6 Photographic prints  |
| <b>Language:</b>   | English .  |
| <b>Summary:</b>    | The Fred R. Meyer collection consists primarily of lantern slides and glass plates negatives made by Meyer among the Apsáalooke (Crow/Absaroke) and Pikuni (Piegan) communities in Montana on the Crow and Blackfeet Reservations, circa 1900. Additional photographs were made in North Dakota, California and Alaska, among other locations. |

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## Administrative Information

### Acquisition Information

Gift of Mrs. Fred R. (Hattie M.) Meyer.

### Processing Information

Collection record written by Heather Shannon, Photo Archivist, in 2013. Additional processing by Rachel Menyuk, Processing Archivist, 2024.

### Preferred Citation

Identification of specific item; Date (if known); Fred R. Meyer photograph collection, image #, NMAI.AC.032; National Museum of the American Indian Archives Center, Smithsonian Institution.

### Restrictions

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## Biographical Note

Relatively little is known about Fred R. Meyer (1874-1939), but from his photographic record it is clear that he was an amateur photographer who traveled extensively throughout the western United States, particularly in Montana and North Dakota possibly from 1890 to 1915. A handful of his Montana photographs were given to the Buffalo Bill Historical Center by Meyer's friend William P. Sargent. Meyer's notations on the versos of these prints are dated either 1902 or 1904. According to the Historical Center's records, Meyer was a surveyor but other sources indicate that he (also) worked as a butcher. It has also been suggested that he was associated in some way (perhaps as a clerk) with the Indian agencies that served the Apsáalooke, Pikuni, and Numakiki reservations. He apparently also photographed in Pine Ridge in 1907 and collected objects in Wyoming and Montana. On January 19, 1914, he gave a lantern slide lecture at the Rochester Historical Society entitled "Indian Life and Customs in the Great Northwest," and it appears that he was either originally from or eventually settled in Rochester. In addition, in 1913 he may have corresponded with Joseph Keppler. In the letter, he thanks Keppler for a book and a gun and states that he was pleased to give Keppler the medicine teeth, some of which he also planned to give to "Mr. Pepper" (George Pepper?).

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## Scope and Contents

The Meyer collection consists primarily of lantern slide and glass plates negatives made by Meyer among the Apsáalooke (Crow/Absaroke) and Pikuni (Piegan) in Montana on the Crow and Blackfeet Reservations, perhaps in 1902 and in 1904. The Apsáalooke and Pikuni lantern slides and negatives are mostly informal, outdoor portraits of men and women in traditional clothing, but they also depict camps and ceremonials and even buffalo herds. In addition, there are depictions of Ute, Niitsitapii (Blackfoot/Blackfeet), Nimi'ipuu (Nez Perce), Numakiki (Mandan), and Ojibwa individuals. He made the Numakiki photographs on the Fort Berthold Reservation in North Dakota. The collection also contains landscape views made in Yosemite Valley, California, and British Columbia and cityscapes of Juneau, Alaska. Although Meyer likely photographed the vast majority of the items in the collection, it is unlikely that he created all of them. For example, there are many studio portraits that an amateur such as Meyer lacked the studio space, equipment, and experience to make. In addition, there is at least one glass plate negative of a Fred Miller Crow Reservation photograph and several that appear to be by Cree photographer Richard Throssel, who also made photographs on the Crow Reservation. The five prints (one of these--assigned a print number--is in fact a newspaper clipping announcing the death of Ka-Be-Na-Gway-Wence or Meet-Ka-Be-Nah-Gway) are certainly not by Meyer. Of interest here is a photograph depicting Goyathlay (Geronimo) in later life wearing traditional Chiricahua Apache clothing, including his headdress. Most of the negatives are on glass but some of them are film copies of the glass negatives and lantern slides.

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## Arrangement

Arranged intellectually into five series geographically and by community. Within each series, lantern slides and negatives are arranged by catalog number. **Series 1:** Montana: Apsáalooke (Crow/Absaroke), Pikuni (Piegan), Niitsitapii (Blackfoot/Blackfeet); **Series 2:** North Dakota: Numakiki (Mandan); **Series 3:** Alaska and Canada; **Series 4:** California, Yosemite National Park; **Series 5:** Miscellaneous and Non-Meyer photographs.

## Names and Subject Terms

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

### Subjects:

Anishinaabe (Chippewa/Ojibwa)  
Apsáalooke (Crow/Absaroke)  
Crow Indians -- Montana -- Crow Indian Reservation -- Photographs  
Mandan Indians -- North Dakota -- Fort Berthold Indian Reservation -- Photographs  
Niimípuu (Nez Perce)  
Niitsitapii (Blackfoot/Blackfeet)  
Numakiki (Mandan)  
Piegan Indians -- Montana -- Great Blackfeet Reservation -- Photographs  
Pikuni Blackfeet (Piegan)  
Ute

### Cultures:

Anishinaabe (Chippewa/Ojibwa)  
Apsáalooke (Crow/Absaroke)  
Niimípuu (Nez Perce)  
Niitsitapii (Blackfoot/Blackfeet)  
Numakiki (Mandan)  
Pikuni Blackfeet (Piegan)  
Ute

### Types of Materials:

Black-and-white negatives  
Lantern slides

### Names:

Miller, Fred E., 1868-1936  
Throssel, Richard, 1882-1933

### Places:

Juneau (Alaska)  
Yosemite Valley (Calif.)

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## Container Listing

### Series 1: Montana: Apsáalooke (Crow/Absaroke), Pikuni (Piegan), Niitsitapii (Blackfoot/Blackfeet) photographs, 1890-1910

142 Lantern slides

335 Negatives (photographic)

Culture: Apsáalooke (Crow/Absaroke)  
Pikuni (Piegan) [Blackfeet Nation, Browning, Montana]  
Niitsitapii (Blackfoot/Blackfeet)  
Place: Yellowstone National Park

#### Subseries 1.1: Apsáalooke (Crow/Absaroke) photographs, 1890-1910

20 Lantern slides

68 Negatives (photographic)

Scope and Contents: Subseries 1.1: Apsáalooke (Crow/Absaroke), includes lantern slides and negatives that were made on the Crow Reservation in Yellowstone County, Montana. They include individual and group portraits of Apsáalooke (Crow/Absaroke) community members posed outdoors, as well as camp images with horses and tipis.

L01171-L01189, L01204, N21809, N21812-N21817, N21901, N21939, N21940, N22025-N22076, N22139, N22169-N22173, N22970.

Culture: Apsáalooke (Crow/Absaroke)

##### [Apsáalooke \(Crow/Absaroke\) camp views, 1890-1910](#)

14 Lantern slides

15 Negatives (photographic)

Notes: L01175, L01176, L01177, L01178, L01179, L01180, L01181, L01182, L01183, L01184, L01186, L01187, L01188, L01204, N22025, N22026, N22027 (Restricted), N22052, N22053, N22054, N22055, N22056, N22057, N22058, N22059, N22060 (Restricted), N22061, N22062, N22170 (Restricted).

##### [Apsáalooke \(Crow/Absaroke\) portraits, 1890-1910](#)

6 Lantern slides

53 Negatives (photographic)

Notes: L01171, L01172, L01173, L01174, L01185, L01189, N21809, N21812, N21813, N21814, N21815, N21816, N21817, N21901, N21939, N21940, N22028, N22029, N22030, N22031, N22032, N22033, N22034, N22035, N22036, N22037, N22038, N22040, N22041, N22042, N22043, N22044, N22045, N22046, N22047, N22048, N22049, N22050, N22051, N22063, N22064 (Restricted), N22065, N22066, N22067, N22068, N22069, N22070, N22071, N22072, N22073, N22074, N22075, N22076, N22139, N22169, N22171, N22172, N22173, N22970

A handful of photographs in this series may have been originally made by Fred Miller. These include N22036, N22060, N22065, N22066, N22069, N22073, N22075.

Portraits include Aloysius Holds The Enemy, Has No Foretop (also known as Smart Iron), Plenty Coups, Spotted Rabbit, Black Horn, Bird Child, Oliver Plenty Horse, Big Medicine, Wolf Eagle, and Fred Meyer.

Culture: Apsáalooke (Crow/Absaroke)

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### Subseries 1.2: Pikuni (Piegan) [Blackfeet Nation, Browning, Montana] photographs, 1890-1910

*118 Lantern slides*

*258 Negatives (photographic)*

Scope and Contents: Subseries 1.2: Pikuni (Piegan) [Blackfeet Nation, Browning, Montana] includes lantern slides and negatives that were made on the Blackfeet Nation in Browning, Montana. They include individual and group portraits of Pikuni (Piegan) community members posed outdoors, as well as camp images with horses and tipis. The majority of the sitters are unnamed, but the named Pikuni (Piegan) community members include—Big Moon, Three Bears, Old Person, Many Guns, Duck Head, Jack Big Moon, Mad Wolf, Wades-in-Water, Chief Little Plume, and Buffalo Body. A series of photographs depicting the sun dance have been restricted.

L01191-L01311, N21810, N21811, N21818-N22003, N22023, N22039, N22103-N22164, N22175-N22187, N22972-N22974.

RESTRICTED: L01285-L01311, N21951-N21969, N21973-N21977, N22156.

Restrictions: Images restricted due to cultural sensitivity.

Culture: Pikuni (Piegan) [Blackfeet Nation, Browning, Montana]

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### Subseries 1.3: Niitsitapii (Blackfoot/Blackfeet) photographs, 1890-1910

*1 Lantern slide*

*4 Negatives (photographic)*

[Image\(s\)](#)

Scope and Contents: Subseries 1.3: Niitsitapii (Blackfoot/Blackfeet), includes portraits of Niitsitapii (Blackfoot/Blackfeet) leader Chief Little Dog.

L01263, N21885, N21886, N21924, N22174.

Culture: Niitsitapii (Blackfoot/Blackfeet)

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### Subseries 1.4: Yellowstone and Miscellaneous photographs, 1890-1910

*3 Lantern slides*

*5 Negatives (photographic)*

[Image\(s\)](#)

Scope and Contents: Subseries 1.4: Yellowstone and Misc, includes images of buffalo herds as well as views in Yellowstone Park, Montana.

L01160-L01162, N22093-N22097.

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## Series 2: North Dakota: Numakiki (Mandan) photographs, 1890-1910

*2 Lantern slides*

*39 Negatives (photographic)*

### [Image\(s\)](#)

Scope and Contents: Series 2: North Dakota: Numakiki (Mandan), includes lantern slides and negatives that were made on the Fort Berthold Reservation in North Dakota. They include individual and group portraits of Numakiki (Mandan) community members posed outdoors, as well as camp images with horses and tipis.

L01169-L01170, N21808, N21843, N22004-N22022, N22077-N22091, N22165-N22167, N22186.

Culture: Numakiki (Mandan)

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## Series 3: Alaska and Canada photographs, 1890-1910

*32 Lantern slides*

*1 Negatives (photographic)*

### [Image\(s\)](#)

Scope and Contents: Series 3: Alaska and Canada, includes lantern slides and negatives that were made in Skagway, Sitka, Juneau, Taku Glacier, White Pass, and the Yukon Route Railroad. These images include views of various harbors, gold mines, steamboats, and the Taku Glacier.  
L01313-L01344-, N22168.

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## Series 4: California: Yosemite National Park photographs, 1890-1910

### *14 Lantern slides*

#### [Image\(s\)](#)

Scope and Contents: Series 4: California, Yosemite National Park, includes lantern slides made in Mariposa County, California at Yosemite National Park. These include views of Mirror Lake, Merced River and Royal Arches.

L01345-L01358.

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## Series 5: Miscellaneous and Non-Meyer photographs , 1890-1910

*5 Lantern slides*

*9 Negatives (photographic)*

*11 Photographic prints*

**Scope and Contents:** Series 5: Miscellaneous and Non-Meyer photographs includes lantern slides, negatives and photographic prints made and collected by Fred Meyer in various locations including Minnesota, South Dakota, Utah, and New Mexico. Photographs by Frank Rinehart and Laton Huffman can also be found in this series.

L01164-L01168; N21807, N21844, N22016, N22092, N22099-N22102, N22971, P14003-P14008, P15998-P16002.

**Culture:** Minnesota Chippewa  
Ute  
Jicarilla Apache

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