



Smithsonian  
*National Museum of the American Indian*

Fred R. Meyer collection of lantern slides,  
negatives, and photographic prints, 1890-1915

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2013

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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	National Museum of the American Indian
<b>Title:</b>	Fred R. Meyer collection of lantern slides, negatives, and photographic prints
<b>Identifier:</b>	NMAI.AC.032
<b>Date:</b>	1890-1915
<b>Extent:</b>	199 Lantern slides (black and white) 381 Negatives (photographic) (black and white) 6 Photographic prints
<b>Creator:</b>	Meyer, Fred R.
<b>Language:</b>	English .

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## Administrative Information

### Acquisition Information

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

### Preferred Citation

Fred R. Meyer collection of lantern slides, negatives, and photographic prints, 1890-1915, National Museum of the American Indian Archives, Smithsonian Institution (negative, slide and catalog number).

### Restrictions

Access is by appointment only, Monday - Thursday, 9:30 am - 4:30 pm. Please contact the archives to make an appointment.

### Conditions Governing Use

Copyright: National Museum of the American Indian

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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 Blackfoot 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

Lantern slides: organized in envelopes; arranged by image number

Negatives: organized in envelopes; arranged by negative number

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## Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Apsáalooke (Crow/Absaroke)  
Crow Indians -- Montana -- Crow Indian Reservation -- Photographs  
Mandan Indians -- North Dakota -- Fort Berthold Indian Reservation -- Photographs  
Niitsitapii (Blackfoot/Blackfeet)  
Nimi'ipuu (Nez Perce)  
Numakiki (Mandan)  
Ojibwa

Piegan Indians -- Montana -- Great Blackfeet Reservation -- Photographs  
Pikuni Blackfeet (Piegan)  
Ute

Cultures:

Apsáalooke (Crow/Absaroke)  
Niitsitapii (Blackfoot/Blackfeet)  
Nimi'ipuu (Nez Perce)  
Numakiki (Mandan)  
Ojibwa  
Pikuni Blackfeet (Piegan)  
Ute

Types of Materials:

Black-and-white negatives  
Lantern slides

Names:

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

Geographic Names:

Juneau (Alaska)  
Yosemite Valley (Calif.)