



Smithsonian

National Museum of the American Indian

Iva Towsley Gardner's collection of Chief Shabbona ambrotypes, 1854-1859

Emily Moazami

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Collection Overview

Repository:	National Museum of the American Indian
Title:	Iva Towsley Gardner's collection of Chief Shabbona ambrotypes
Date:	1854-1859
Identifier:	NMAI.AC.100
Creator:	Gardner, Iva Towsley (Collector)
Extent:	2 Ambrotypes (photographs) (1/4 plate)
Language:	English .
Digital Content:	Image(s): Iva Towsley Gardner's collection of Chief Shabbona ambrotypes
Container:	Box 1

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Donated by Ann Hohn in 2017 in memory of her parents Maxine and Glenn Fisher. Glenn Fisher was the nephew of Iva Towsley Gardner.

Processing Information

Processed by Emily Moazami, Assistant Head Archivist in 2017.

Preferred Citation

Identification of specific item; Date (if known); Iva Towsley Gardner's collection of Chief Shabbona ambrotypes; National Museum of the American Indian Archive Center, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions

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Biographical / Historical

Iva Towsley Gardner (born circa 1899) served as a nurse in Illinois and often treated members of the Potawatomi community in her region. She married Laurence Gardner in 1924. Later in life she worked as a nurse in a private home.

Chief Shabbona (also spelled Shabonee and Shabni) is best known as a warrior and Chief of the Potawatomi tribe. Born circa 1775 to the Ottawa tribe, Shabbona is believed to be the grand-nephew of Ottawa Chief Pontiac (circa 1720-1769). As a young man Shabbona became an Ottawa chief and later married Coconako, the daughter of Potawatomi Chief Spotka. He eventually became a Potawatomi Chief himself. During the War of 1812 Chief Shabbona fought alongside Tecumseh (Shawnee) in an alliance with Great Britain against the United States. After Tecumseh's death, Chief Shabbona pledged his allegiance to the United States. Chief Shabbona died in Illinois in 1859.

Scope and Contents

This collection contains 2 hand-colored ambrotypes that depict portraits of Potawatomi Chief Shabbona, circa 1854-1859. The ambrotypes were given to Iva Towsley Gardner when she served as a nurse within the Potawatomi community. The ambrotypes are housed in a union case that features a horse and rider motif. The photographs may have been shot on different dates by different unidentified photographers.

At some point in time, a typed note was attached via tape to the glass of one ambrotype. The note states, "Picture of Shabbona and his wife. Property of Iva Towsley Gardner." It has since been determined that both ambrotypes actually depict Chief Shabbona.

Arrangement

The photographs are stored in 1 box.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Potawatomi

Cultures:

Potawatomi

Types of Materials:

Ambrotypes

Names:

Shabni, approximately 1775-1859 -- Photographs