



Smithsonian

National Museum of the American Indian

John M. Kauffmann photographs of Dewey Beard

Emily Moazami

2020

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Collection Overview

Repository:	National Museum of the American Indian
Title:	John M. Kauffmann photographs of Dewey Beard
Identifier:	NMAI.AC.225
Date:	1955
Creator:	Kauffmann, John M. (Photographer)
Extent:	52 Photographs
Language:	English .
Summary:	This collection contains 54 photographs that were shot by amateur photographer John M. Kauffmann in 1955. The photographs depict Dewey Beard (also known as Iron Hail and Wasu Maza) and the Black Hills in South Dakota.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Gift of John M. Kauffmann, 1999.

Related Materials

The Library of Congress has the [recorded interview with Dewey Beard](#) that took place on 18, 1955 at the Alex Johnson Hotel, Rapid City, South Dakota.

Processing Information

Collection processed by Emily Moazami, Supervisory Archivist, 2020.

Preferred Citation

Identification of specific item; Date (if known); John M. Kauffmann photographs of Dewey Beard, image #, NMAI.AC.225; National Museum of the American Indian Archives Center, Smithsonian Institution.

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Biographical / Historical

John M. Kauffmann grew up in Washington, DC and graduated from Princeton University. He worked for the National Park Service for many years serving in Washington, DC and Alaska. His work led to the conservation of 100 million acres through the passage of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act. He also played a vital role in the creation of the Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve. He passed away on November 16, 2014 at the age of 91.

Dewey Beard, also known as Wasu Maza or Iron Hail, was a member of the Minneconjou Lakota (Minniconjou Sioux) tribe and was the last known survivor of the Battle of Little Bighorn. He was also present during the Wounded Knee Massacre in 1890, where many of his family members were killed and he was wounded. Born in 1858, Wasu Maza changed his name to Dewey Beard when he converted to Roman Catholicism. For 15 years, he also was a member of Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show. He died in November 1955 at age 96.

Scope and Contents

This collection contains 54 photographs (53 negatives and 1 gelatin silver print) that were shot by amateur photographer John M. Kauffmann in 1955 in South Dakota. Kauffmann accompanied his photographer friend Bates Littlehales, who was on assignment to illustrate a National Geographic article authored by Leland Case about the Black Hills of South Dakota. Littlehales invited Kauffmann to join him on his assignment, so that Kauffmann could practice his photography.

The collection contains two series. **Series 1** contains photos that depict the interview with Dewey Beard (also known as Iron Hail and Wasu Maza) that was conducted by Leland Case on June 18, 1955 at the Alex Johnson Hotel, Rapid City, South Dakota. At the time of the interview, Dewey Beard was the last Sioux survivor of the Battle of Big Horn. **Series 2** contains photographs shot around the Black Hills of South Dakota and includes depictions of Leland Case, possibly Bates Littlehales, and other unidentified people on horseback; exploring landscapes and caves; and looking at tree rings.

Kauffmann used a Rolleiflex medium format camera to photograph the images in this collection. Leland Bates' National Geographic article was published in the October 1956, vol. CX, no. 4 issue.

Arrangement

Negatives arranged in a box and photograph arranged in a folder.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Minneconjou Lakota (Minniconjou Sioux)

Cultures:

Minneconjou Lakota (Minniconjou Sioux)

Types of Materials:

Photographs

Names:

Beard, Dewey
Case, Leland D. (Leland Davidson), 1900-1986

Places:

Black Hills (South Dakota)

Container Listing

Series 1: Interview with Dewey Beard, June 18, 1955

13 Photographs

Box 433 (film negatives) (photographs)

Photo-folder 1 (photographs)

[Image\(s\)](#)

Scope and N53820-N53831, P33919

Contents: This series contains 12 negatives and 1 print that depict the interview with Dewey Beard [Minneconjou Lakota (Minniconjou Sioux)] that was conducted by Leland Case on June 18, 1955 at the Alex Johnson Hotel, Rapid City, South Dakota. At the time of the interview, Dewey Beard (also known as Iron Hail and Wasu Maza) was the last Sioux survivor of the Battle of Big Horn.

The photographs depict Dewey Beard in a war bonnet and beaded hide shirt being interviewed by journalist Leland Case. Dewey Beard died later that year in November. The photographs were shot by amateur photographer John M. Kauffmann.

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Series 2: Bear Butte, Black Hills, South Dakota, 1955

41 Negatives (photographic)

Box 433 (film negatives)

[Image\(s\)](#)

Scope and N53832-N53872

Contents:

This series contains 41 negatives that depict a group exploring the Black Hills region of South Dakota. The photographs were shot by amateur photographer John M. Kauffmann around June 1955. Kauffmann was accompanying his friend- a National Geographic photographer- Bates Littlehales, who was on assignment to illustrate an article about the Black Hills of South Dakota. The article was authored by Leland Case.

The photographs include depictions of Leland Case, possibly Bates Littlehales, and other unidentified people on horseback; exploring landscapes and caves; and looking at tree rings. The photographs also depict the group exploring Bear Butte in South Dakota.

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