



Smithsonian

National Museum of the American Indian

Daguerreotype of Peter Wilson

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2020

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Collection Overview

Repository:	National Museum of the American Indian
Title:	Daguerreotype of Peter Wilson
Date:	circa 1852-1855
Identifier:	NMAI.AC.405
Creator:	Thomas, Philip E. (Philip Evan), 1776-1861 (Collector)
Extent:	1 Daguerreotypes (photographs)
Language:	English .
Summary:	Daguerreotype of Dr. Peter Wilson (Cayuga) given to Philip Evan Thomas.
Digital Content:	Image(s): Daguerreotype of Peter Wilson

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

The immediate source of acquisition is unknown.

Processing Information

Collection processed by Emily Moazami, Supervisory Archivist, 2020.

Preferred Citation

Identification of specific item; Date (if known); Daguerreotype of Peter Wilson, P25296, NMAI.AC.405; National Museum of the American Indian Archives Center, Smithsonian Institution.

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Biographical / Historical

Dr. Peter Wilson (1815-1872), also known as Wa-o-wa-wa-na-onk, was born on the Buffalo Reservation in New York, but subsequently spent a good amount of his life on the Cattaraugus Reservation. Wilson was a signatory to the Second Buffalo Creek Treaty of 1838, in which he was included with a group of Cayuga Warriors, but would later give speeches advocating for fair compensation to members of the Six Nations who had lost much of their land in this and other treaties. Among the speeches were two delivered to the New York Senate in 1848 and 1850.

Peter Wilson earned a medical degree from Geneva Medical College in 1844 and appears to have served as an Assistant Surgeon with the United States Army, either during or soon after the Civil War. He also spent time as the interpreter for the New York Agency of the Office of Indian Affairs.

Philip Evan Thomas (1776-1861) was the first president of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad (B and O). He also served as chairman of the Society's Indian Affairs Committee and was the representative to Washington for the Six Nations of Indians, where he most likely met and befriended Dr. Wilson.

Scope and Contents

P25296

This collection contains 1 daguerreotype depicting Peter Wilson (Cayuga) circa 1852-1855 housed in a leather case. A handwritten note from Wilson inside the case reads, "Peter Wilson --- Wa-o-wa-wa-na-onk to his friend P.E. Thomas--- Sa-ga-oh." Wilson most likely gifted this daguerreotype to Philip Evans Thomas (1776-1861).

Arrangement

This daguerreotype is housed in an archival phase box.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Cayuga

Cultures:

Cayuga

Types of Materials:

Photograph.

Names:

Wilson, Peter (Cayuga)