

Ada Stillwell collection of Colville Indian Reservation photographs, 1897-1940

Overview of the Collection

Collector	Stillwell, Ada
Title	Ada Stillwell collection of Colville Indian Reservation photographs
Dates	1897-1940 (inclusive) 1897 1940
Quantity	53 photograph prints (1 box) ; sizes vary
Collection Number	PH0766
Summary	Photographs of Chief Joseph's band of Nez Perce Indians on the Colville Indian Reservation in eastern Washington
Repository	University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections Special Collections University of Washington Libraries Box 352900 Seattle, WA 98195-2900 Telephone: 206-543-1929 Fax: 206-543-1931 speccoll@uw.edu
Access Restrictions	Access to originals restricted. Entire collection available on digital site. Permission of curator required to view originals. Contact Special Collections for more information.
Languages	English, with Nez Perce names listed

Biographical Note

Ada Stillwell Dickson was one of two daughters of Barnett and Dema Stillwell, schoolteacher and housekeeper respectively, for the school at Nespelem on the Colville Indian Reservation, from 1897-1901. Ada and her younger sister, Emma, attended the reservation school, along with the Nez Perce children. At approximately 10 years of age, Ada learned the Sahaptian language of the Nez Perce, serving as an interpreter for Chief Joseph, as well as for University of Washington Professor Edmond S. Meany, who became one of Chief Joseph's champions. She married Frank Dickson in 1908. The family apparently moved to Chelan nearby the reservation after leaving.

Dr. Edward H. Latham (1843-1928) was the agency physician on the Sioux, Spokane, and Colville Indian Reservations, arriving at the latter in 1890. He was an amateur photographer and created a record of life on the reservation.

Edmond Stephen Meany (1862-1935) was a graduate of the University of Washington. He received a masters degree from the University of Wisconsin, and his thesis centered on Chief Joseph, which brought him to the Colville Indian Reservation. He became a professor at the University of Washington and an important Washington State historian.

Content Description

Photographs of the Colville Indian Reservation, including images of students and teachers at the reservation school, members of the Nez Perce, Sinkiuse-Columbia, and Okanagan tribes in both traditional and formal dress, of Ada and Emma Stillwell, as well as images of Chief Joseph's house and property, and later views of the reservation made by Ada Stillwell Dickson, during her return visit to the reservation in 1940. The majority of the images were made by Edward Latham, with the remainder made by Edmond Meany and Ada Stillwell Dickson

Other Descriptive Information

All inscriptions on verso made by the photographer unless otherwise noted.

Many of these photographs appear in the Edward H. Latham Photographs, PH Coll 409. Some photographs were also duplicated by Thomas Prosch and may be found in the Thomas Prosch Indian Photographs Album.

Use of the Collection

Alternative Forms Available

[View the digital version of the collection](#)

Restrictions on Use

Restrictions may exist on reproduction, quotation, or publication. Contact Special Collections, University of Washington Libraries for details.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Source: Larry Gottheim for Be-hold, Inc. Received in two parts: May 7, 2007 and November 28, 2007.

Processing Note

Processed by Christina Linclau, 2009.

The collection was accessioned as PH 2007-030 and PH 2007-031.

Bibliography

In Mick Gidley's book, 'With One Sky Above Us: Life on an Indian Reservation at the Turn of the Century' (1979) the images of Dr. Edward H. Latham, the reservation physician, and an accomplished amateur photographer, depict life on the Colville Indian Reservation, while 'Kopet: A Documentary

Narrative of Chief Joseph's Last Years' (1981), also written by Gidley, focuses on Professor Edmond Meany.

Related Materials

Chelan albums

Detailed Description of the Collection

Ada and Emma Stillwell, Nez Perce Playmates, and Reservation School

Edward H. Latham (photographer)

Container(s)		Description	Dates
Box/ Folder	Item		
1/1	1	Ada and Emma Stillwell with Dr. Latham's dogs [view]	circa 1900
1/1	2	Dr. Latham's dogs [view]	circa 1900
1/1	3	Ada and Emma Stillwell with Nez Perce girl gathering flowers [view]	circa 1899
1/1	4	Ada and Emma Stillwell with Nez Perce baby and two Nez Perce playmates [view]	circa 1901
1/1	5	Five Nez Perce schoolgirls [view] Written on verso by Ada Stillwell Dickson: Playmates 1. Tal-len-a-ka-loo, Jal-win-nun-my, 2. Pea-nu-wants-son-my, 3. Will-lie-a-loot, 4. Shu-poo-cake.	circa 1900
1/1	6	Students and teachers in front of Nespelem school [view] This photo was taken the year that the Stillwells arrived. Ada (at right) was six and Emma was four.	1897
1/1	7	Students and teachers in front of Nespelem school [view] Barnett and Dema Stillwell are at left. Ada (to left) and Emma Stillwell are at front right.	circa 1900

Edward Latham Photographs of People of the Colville Indian Reservation

Edward H. Latham (photographer)

Container(s)		Description	Dates
Box/ Folder	Item		
1/2	8	Charlie Will-pock'-en in ceremonial dress with pinto horse [view] Written on verso by Edward H. Latham: Charlie Wil-pock-en pinto horse for parade and special occasions.	circa 1900-1905
1/2	9	Brother of Charlie Will-pock'-en with a coyote skin [view] This is the brother of Charlie Wilpocken, Nez Perce. Coyote skin is emblematic of service of a scout during war.	circa 1900-1905
1/2	10	Charlie Will-pock'-en with his wife and brother [view] The man at right is Charlie's brother. Written on verso by Edward H. Latham: Charlie Wilpocken and Wife.	circa 1900-1905
1/2	11	Charlie Will-pock'-en in dress costume [view] Wil-pock'en means "Swans on the Water." Written on verso by Edward H. Latham: Dress Costume. Written on verso by Ada Stillwell Dickson: Charlie Will-pock'en.	circa 1900-1905
1/2	12	Art Cercle and baby boy in a cradleboard, both sons of Charlie Will-pock'-en [view] Written on verso by Edward H. Latham: Boy and papoose. Written on verso by Ada Stillwell Dickson: Larger boy-Art Cercle.	circa 1903
1/2	13	Chief Moses of the Columbia tribe [view] Written on verso by Edward H. Latham: Cheif Moses- of the Columbia Tribe.	before 1899
1/2	14	Nez Perce Medicine Man [view] Written on verso: Medicine man- Nez Perce	circa 1900-1905
1/2	15	Men on horseback in dress parade [view] Written on verso by Edward H. Latham: Dress parade. From left to right: 1. unknown, 2. unknown, 3. Joe Moses, Sinkiuse, 4. Cool-Cool-a-Weela, Okanagan.	circa 1900-1905
1/2	16	Chief Joe Moses, Sinkiuse - nephew of Chief Moses, whom he succeeded [view] Eagle and Hawk feathers, at the end of the six foot long silk ribbons, would spin and trail behind the wearer as his horse ran. Written on verso by Stillwell: Chief Joe	circa 1900-1905

Container(s)	Description	Dates
	Moses. Written on verso by Latham: Charley Melpalkin [crossed out with pen] Nez Perce.	
1/2 17	Cool-cool-a-weela, Okanagan [view] Both Latham and Stillwell identified this photo incorrectly. This is actually an Okanagan named Cool-cool-a-weela. Written on verso by Latham: Nez Perce in Dress Costume. Written on verso by Stillwell: Kok shut George.	circa 1900-1905
1/2 18	Nez Perce girl [view] Written on verso by Latham: Nez Perce Girl-Half-breed.	June 1905
1/2 19	Two Nez Perce girls, Nespelem [view] Written on verso by Latham: Squaws at Nespelem.	June 1905
1/2 20	Nez Perce woman and boy [view]	June 1905
1/2 21	Two wives of Nez Perce Chief David Williams (successor to Chief Joseph) with young girl [view]	circa 1905
1/2 22	Four Nez Perce women on horseback [view] The woman second from right is possibly Mrs. Willie Nampoya, identified as such from carrying the same beaded handbag as in another Latham image held by UW Libraries: Latham 982. The woman on the far left is Mary Joe, identified by Ada Stillwell Dickson.	circa 1900-1910
1/2 23	Four Nez Perce women on horseback [view] Ada Stillwell Dickson identified the women as Linda Paul, Isabel Friedlander, Mary George and Mary Joe.	circa 1900-1910
1/2 24	Four Nez Perce women and one man on dress parade [view]	circa 1900-1910
1/2 25	Susie Williams, one of the wives of Chief David Williams, on horseback [view] Written on verso by Ada Stillwell Dickson: Susie Williams. Written on verso by Latham: A Nez Perce girl.	circa 1900-1910
1/2 26	Nez Perce woman on horseback [view] Written on verso by Latham: Nez Perce Squaw.	circa 1900-1910
1/2 27	Mary Parsons with son in beaded cradleboard [view]	circa 1901

Edmond S. Meany Portrait and Photographs of Colville Indian Reservation made by Edmond Meany

Container(s)		Description	Dates
Box/ Folder	Item		
1/3	28	Chief Joseph's barn [view] Edmond Meany (photographer) Written on verso by Edmond Meany: Chief Joseph's barn. Nespelem Edmond S. Meany 1901.	1901
1/3	29	Chief Joseph's House [view] Edmond Meany (photographer) According to the collection guide for the Edmond S. Meany Photograph Collection (PH Coll 132), this house was built for Chief Joseph by the U.S. government. Written on verso by Edmond Meany: Chief Joseph's House. Nespelem Edmond S. Meany 1901.	1901
1/3	30	Chief Joseph's "Ictas" House [view] Edmond Meany (photographer) Written on verso by Edmond Meany: Chief Joseph's Ictas House, Nespelem. Edmond S. Meany 1901. Ictas House where he kept his relics. Ictas = things. Where Mrs. Frank Dickson interpreted Joseph for Prof. Meany He kept his old gun, shield (rawhide) arrows old time. Note: Mrs. Frank Dickson = Ada Stillwell	1901
1/3	31	Nespelem Mill [view] Edmond Meany (photographer) Written on verso by Edmond Meany: The Mills at Nespelem Edmond S. Meany 1901.	1901
1/3	32	Ada Stillwell in front of her house [view] Edmond Meany (photographer) Written on verso by Edmond Meany: Ada C. Stillwell, my interpreter at Nespelem Edmond S. Meany 1901.	1901
1/3	33	Portrait of Edmond S. Meany [view] LaRoche, Seattle (photographer) Written on verso: Yours Faithfully Edmond S. Meany Seattle Wash 21 IX 1901.	1901

Ada Stillwell Dickson's visit To Colville Indian Reservation, circa 1940

Ada Stillwell Dickson (photographer)

Written on the back of the front album cover: "Ada's visit 30 (?) years later." These photographs were processed by "Olds & King Camera Department" as indicated on the back of the original album cover. Olds & King, located in Portland, Oregon, was purchased in 1943 and the name changed, dating these photographs to prior to that time.

Container(s)		Description	Dates
Album 1			
Box/ Folder	Item		
1/4	34A	Ada Stillwell with Native American infant [view]	circa 1940
1/4	34B	Ada Stillwell with two teenage Native American boys [view]	circa 1940
1/4	34C	Ada Stillwell at a roadside overlook [view]	circa 1940
1/4	34D	Ada Stillwell seated near roadside with a bridge in the background [view]	circa 1940
1/4	34E	Large waterway landscape, probably Columbia River [view]	circa 1940
1/4	34F	Native American man in traditional native dress including feather headdress with an older native woman in front of a tipi [view]	circa 1940
1/4	34G	Native American man in traditional native dress including feather headdress in front of a tipi [view]	circa 1940
1/4	34H	Ada Stillwell with older Native American woman [view] The Native American woman is wearing a beaded belt with initials "LF" and carrying a beaded purse.	circa 1940
1/4	34I	Young Native American man in traditional dress including feather headdress [view]	circa 1940
1/4	34J	Native American man with bell cuffs at his ankles and feather headdress, possibly a dancer [view] The man is surrounded by people in modern dress. Automobile in background has loudspeakers on roof.	circa 1940
1/4	34K	Native American man with bell cuffs at his ankles and feather headdress, possibly a dancer [view]	circa 1940

Container(s)		Description	Dates
		The man is surrounded by people in modern dress. Automobile in background has loudspeakers on roof.	
Album 2			
Box/ Folder	Item		
1/5	35A	Young girl dressed in beaded outfit and hat [view] There is an automobile visible behind the girl, and people in modern dress.	circa 1940
1/5	35B	Man on horseback in traditional dress with feathered headdress [view]	circa 1940
1/5	35C	Two men on horseback wearing traditional dress and feathered headdresses, with feathered spear, in front of tipi [view]	circa 1940
1/5	35D	Two men in procession on horseback [view]	circa 1940
1/5	35E	Women on horseback in traditional dress in front of tipis, with onlookers in modern dress [view]	circa 1940
1/5	35F	Older woman with a shawl and purse [view]	circa 1940
1/5	35G	Ada Stillwell with older woman with shawl and purse [view]	circa 1940
Teepees at Colville Reservation			
Box/ Folder	Item		
1/6	36	View of tipis at the Colville Reservation [view]	circa 1940
1/6	37	View of tipis and trucks at the Colville Reservation [view]	circa 1940

Names and Subjects

Subject Terms :

Nez Perce# girls--Photographs
 Nez Perce# Indians--Clothing--Photographs
 Nez Perce# Indians--Photographs

Personal Names :

Moses, Chief, approximately 1829-1899--Photographs
Stillwell, Ada--Photographs

Corporate Names :

Colville Indian Reservation--Photographs

Geographical Names :

Nespelem (Wash.)--Photographs

Other Creators :

Personal Names :

Latham, Edward H
(photographer)

Meany, Edmond S. (Edmond Stephen), 1862-1935
(photographer)

Names and Subjects

Subject Terms :

Visual Materials Collections (University of Washington)

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