

Items: (1) A sepia postcard of an Indigenous man in front of three tipis, and a structure comprised of seven small poles tied at the top, with a Red River cart in the left background, and faint traces of buildings at the right horizon

(2) A published black and white sketch of the above photograph

Photographers: Hall and Lowe, Winnipeg photographers

Lithographers: Unknown, possibly the publisher: Pictorial World, England.

Date: Photo: late summer, early fall of 1883

Sketch: Pre-June 1885

Captions: (Photo - obverse) *"Hall & Lowe, Photographers... Main St. Winnipeg"*

(Photo - reverse) *"Indian buck of the Eighties. Note: the Red River cart. (Taken on the Bell Farm)"*

(Sketch) *"Indian Chief "Pasqua" (Cree Tribe)"*

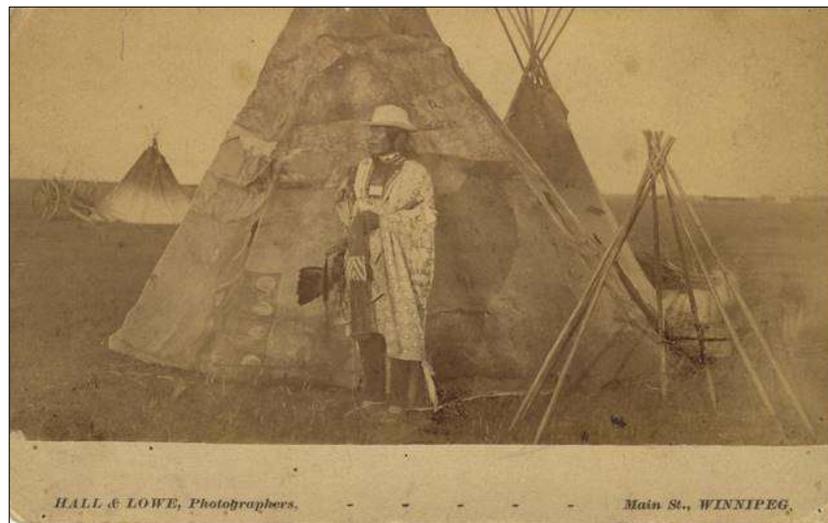


Image # 1: Obverse of postcard featuring Chief Pasqua

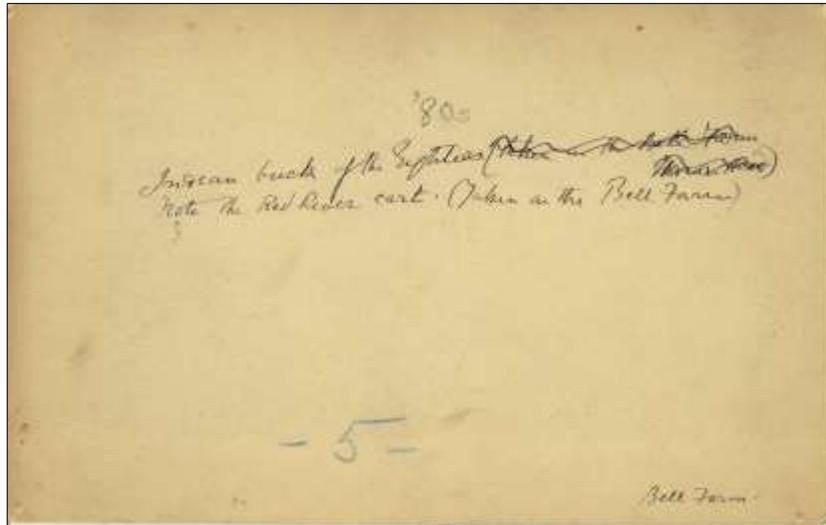


Image # 2: Reverse of postcard displaying handwritten text



Image # 3: man identified as Chief Pasqua (Cree Tribe)

Background: The sepia postcard was donated to the Bell Barn Society in February 2010 by Shelagh Whitaker, a granddaughter of Major W.R. Bell. At the time of the donation, the identity of the man was unknown.

The sketch of Chief Pasqua was discovered on Oct. 14, 2018 by Michelle Cabana, of Saskatoon, who has been researching the people associated with the Bell Farm since January 2010. The sketch was published in the *Illustrated Naval and Military Magazine: No. 12, Vol. II, June 1, 1885: p. 372.*

Comments: Many photos of Canada’s Indigenous people remain unidentified, or were inadequately identified as “Indian Man”, or some other comment, such as the one written on the back of the sepia photo by an unknown author: “Indian buck of the Eighties”. In some instances, better documentation was achieved.

The fact that the sketch pre-dates June 1885 – within two years of the photo being taken – means that there is no reason to question the validity of the identification.

The primary tipi includes four circles to the left of the entrance, and likely another four behind Chief Pasqua, as is the case for similarly decorated tipis in other historical photographs or drawings. René Gadacz and Michelle Filice reported that:

“A few tipis — perhaps one in ten among the Siksikaitstapi — were covered with painted images, which transformed them into sacred lodges associated with specific rituals. The images painted on these tipis reflected the owners’ band or First Nation, and had both literal and cosmological meanings. Border designs at the base embodied the earth and things pertaining to the earth; those painted at the top depicted the sky and the spirit world. Between these two regions lay a zone that represented aspects of this world or another world that the principal occupant (or his direct ancestor) entered during a vision. Images in this area consequently ranged from depictions of human exploits to evocations of supernatural creatures that conveyed powers to the first owner of the vision. After the skins wore out, usually every year or two, they were replaced. The paintings on the old tipi cover would be transferred to the new one, and so the designs passed on from generation to generation.”

Importance of the Discovery: Finding the actual name for photographs or sketches of unidentified Indigenous people is a major challenge, and is something not all that frequently met with success. Confirming that the photo is indeed of Chief Pasqua is a major new addition to the photographic history of Western Canada’s Indigenous peoples.

Sources: Photo: Provincial Archives of Saskatchewan: GM-PH-403-4

Sketch: Illustrated Naval and Military Magazine: No. 12, Vol. II, June 1, 1885:
p. 372. <https://archive.org/details/illustratednava06unkngoog/page/n412>

Discussion of tipis: <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/tipi>

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