



Department of Special Collections and University Archives

## Nicholas Black Elk Collection

Writings and photographs about the life, holiness, and legacy of Nicholas Black Elk (1866-1950) from several special collections in the Marquette Archives plus other sources.



### Biographical Note

This video and accompanying notes provide an overview of the life, holiness, and legacy of Nicholas Black Elk, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QLjuKg1Oic8&feature=youtu.be>, <http://www.marquette.edu/library/archives/documents/NBE4final.pdf>. He celebrated his birthday during the “Moon of Popping Trees” on St. Nick’s Day, December 6<sup>th</sup>. In 1904, he was baptized on that day, and like the elder saint, he too, gave gifts to children, elders, and needy people.

Marquette University Special Collections – Archival Records

PDF = Denotes copy available in PDF on request from archivist; consult with archivist for more information.

Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions Records, <http://www.marquette.edu/library/archives/Mss/BCIM/BCIM-main.shtml>.

Series 1-1, Correspondence: Letters by Nicholas Black Elk, 1908, 1912; 2 letters; PDFs.

Series 4-1, *The Indian Sentinel*: includes illustrated articles online about Nicholas Black Elk and family: <http://cdm16280.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/landingpage/collection/p15072coll2>.

Series 9-1, Photography: Selected images of Nicholas Black Elk from the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions are included online in the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions digital image collection: <http://cdm16280.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/landingpage/collection/p4007coll4>

Series 14-1, Collected Publications:

*A Bit of Missionary Life among the Sioux Indians*, Henry I. Westropp, undated (ca. 1907-1915); about Nicholas Black Elk, in part; PDF.

*In the Land of the Wigwam*, Henry I. Westropp, undated (ca. 1907-1915); about Nicholas Black Elk, in part; PDF.

*Missionary Life among the Sioux*, Henry I. Westropp, undated (ca. 1907-1915); about Nicholas Black Elk, in part; PDF.

*Šina Sapa Wocekiye Taeyanpaha*, 1907-1917; at least 15 letters in Lakota by Nicholas Black Elk; PDFs: checklist and available English translations.

Doll, Don, S.J., Collection, <http://www.marquette.edu/library/archives/Mss/DAD/DAD-main.shtml>.

Series 2-1 Photography: Charlotte Black Elk, 1991.

Series 3 Interview: Charlotte Black Elk, 1991; about Nicholas Black Elk, in part; PDF.

Holy Rosary Mission – Red Cloud Indian School Records,

<http://www.marquette.edu/library/archives/Mss/HRM/HRM-main.shtml>.

Series 1 Correspondence: Letters by Nicholas Black Elk, 1934 (reportedly created by Rev. Placidus Sialm, S.J.), 1948; 2 letters.

Series 2 Reports: Nicholas Black Elk baptismal record, 1904; PDF.

Series 6, Photography: Selected images of Nicholas Black Elk and family included online in the Holy Rosary Mission – Red Cloud Indian School digital image collection: <http://cdm16280.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/landingpage/collection/p128701coll3>

Series 7 Jesuit Papers: Rev. Placidus Sialm, S.J., “Camp Churches,” undated (1930s); unpublished memoirs about Nicholas Black Elk, in part; PDF.

Hunt, W. Ben, Collection, <http://www.marquette.edu/library/archives/Mss/WBH/WBH-main.shtml>.

Photographs of Nicholas Black Elk and grandson George Looks Twice by W. Ben Hunt at the Black Hills (South Dakota) Pageant, 1937; Hunt was an outdoor educator from Hales Corners, Wisconsin, a Milwaukee suburb. Selected images of Nicholas Black Elk from the W. Ben Hunt Collection are included online in the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions digital image collection: <http://cdm16280.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/landingpage/collection/p4007coll4>

Marquette League for Catholic Indian Missions Records,

<http://www.marquette.edu/library/archives/Mss/ML/ML-main.shtml>.

*The Calumet*, “Our Friends in Service,” Spring 1945, pp. 10-11; about grandchildren Henry Black Elk and Katie Black Elk, on furlough at his homestead while in the U.S. Armed Forces; PDF.

St. Francis Mission Records, <http://www.marquette.edu/library/archives/Mss/SFM/SFM-main.shtml>.

Series 6, Photography: Selected images of Nicholas Black Elk and family included online in the St. Francis Missions digital image collection,

<http://cdm16280.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/landingpage/collection/p4007coll12>, and In the Spotlight: Catholic Ladder Pictorial Catechisms (January 2009),

<http://www.marquette.edu/library/archives/News/spotlight/01-2009.shtml>, which includes an image (see collage) depicting Nicholas Black Elk teaching with it by Rev. Eugene Buechel, S.J., 1927-1928. The original negative is within the St. Francis Mission Records, Series 6 Photography; Father Buechel's photography log provided an approximate date and location for this image.

Series 7 Jesuit Papers: Rev. Eugene Buechel, S.J., Diary, 1927-1929; several entries pertain to Nicholas Black Elk as a catechist who assisted Father Buechel; PDFs: checklist included.

St. Paul Mission Records, <http://www.marquette.edu/library/archives/Mss/SFM/SFM-main.shtml>. Includes a postcard print of Nicholas Black Elk and others dressed to dance by Ralph Doubleday at the Interior (South Dakota) roundup (rodeo), 1908 (see collage). Doubleday became a nationally prominent rodeo photographer whose biography provided clues for dating the image.

### Diocese of Rapid City

West River Catholic, 2016-04:4, <http://www.rapidcitydiocese.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/reduced-apr-16.pdf>. Under the leadership of George Looks Twice (1933-), Black Elk's eldest grandchild, the six grandchildren presented a petition to Bishop Robert Gruss, which requested that he begin the necessary steps to initiate a canonization cause for Nicholas Black Elk. Compiled from August, 2014, to March, 2016, the petition contained over 1,600 signatures from five countries. PDF: Statistical analysis of the petition signatures.

### More Sources

American Association for the Advancement of Science, A.B. Meinel (University of Chicago, Williams Bay, Wisconsin), 1950, p. 112; report of aurora borealis, August 18-20, 1950; PDF.

American Astronomical Society, A.B. Meinel (University of Chicago, Williams Bay, Wisconsin), 1950, p. 50-54; report of aurora borealis, August 18-20, 1950; PDF.

*Iapi Oaye*, <http://reflections.mndigital.org/cdm/>, 3 letters by Black Elk in Dakota, the dialect of his transcribers: 14:2(1885-02):1, 17:3(1888-03):1, and 18:12(1889-12):1; PDFs: English translations of selected letters.

*Lakota Times*, November 2, 1983; 1948 letter by Nicholas Black Elk in Lakota with translation and commentary by Charlotte Black Elk; PDF.

*L'Astronomie*, Carl Störmer (University of Oslo), vol. 64 (1950), pp. 384-385; report of aurora borealis, August 18-20, 1950; PDF.

*L'Astronomie*, W. Abbott, vol. 65 no. 2 (1951), p. 67; report of aurora borealis, August 18-20, 1950; PDF.

National Archives and Records Administration, U.S. Office of Indian Affairs Indian Census Records, Microfilm publication M595 – Access Genealogy (by Ancestry.com):

<http://www.accessgenealogy.com/native/free-us-indian-census-rolls.htm>. Roll 33 (Cheyenne River Agency, South Dakota, 1886), roll 94 (Devil's Lake Agency, North Dakota, 1886), rolls 362-384 (Pine Ridge Agency, South Dakota, 1866-1913), roll 427 (Rosebud Agency, 1886), roll 547 (Standing Rock Agency, 1886); annual agency censuses commenced in 1886.

*Positio on the Introduction of the Cause of the Servants of God, John Brebeuf and Companions, Martyrs*, Rome, 1916; appended letters submitted by various tribes, petitioning the introduction of the cause of the Servant of God Katharine Tekakwitha to the Sovereign Pontiff Leo XIII, 1885, letter no. 7 from the Benedictine mission of the Sioux Nation, Dakota Territory with 150 signatures, undated, pp. 98-103; PDF; Black Elk's signature appears near the end.

*Sky and Telescope*, October 1950, p. 296; report of aurora borealis, August 18-20, 1950; PDF.

Yerkes Observatory (University of Chicago, Williams Bay, Wisconsin), photography of aurora borealis, August 18-20, 1950.

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