

# Guide to the Bertha Crum Sparks photographs of Rosebud Sioux Indians in Valentine, Nebraska, circa 1903-1930s

<b>Photo Lot</b>	MS 4818
<b>Creator</b>	Sparks, Bertha Crum
<b>Title</b>	Bertha Crum Sparks photographs of Rosebud Sioux Indians in Valentine, Nebraska
<b>Date Span</b>	Circa 1903-1930s
<b>Quantity</b>	46 prints: silver gelatin 9 prints: cyanotype Total extent: 7 folders (1 manuscript box): .25 linear feet

**Summary:** Photographs primarily of Rosebud Sioux Indians wearing ceremonial dress at events in Valentine, Nebraska made by Bertha Crum Sparks. Helen Sparks, daughter of Bertha Sparks, may have made several of the photographs.

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**Background Note:** Bertha Crum (Mrs. Levi C.) Sparks lived in Valentine, Nebraska and took many photographs of the Rosebud Sioux Indians visiting there. Some were taken in the Sparks' back yard.

Rosebud, South Dakota is approximately 45 miles north of Valentine, Nebraska.

**Scope and Content:** The photographs show primarily Sioux Indian men, women, and children from the Rosebud reservation in South Dakota who were in Valentine, Nebraska for various events. Included are images of Sioux Indians wearing ceremonial garments; some showing dancing or other events in the streets of Valentine. Also included are two photographs of a sod church in Kennedy, Nebraska.

**Note on Format:** Bertha Crum printed many of the photographs on postcard stock, and occasionally allowed her negatives to be used commercially to make souvenir postcards.

**Alternate Forms Available:** All photographs have been digitized and are available for viewing in the Smithsonian's online catalog.

**Preferred Citation:** MS 4818, the Bertha Crum Sparks photographs of Rosebud Sioux Indians in Valentine, Nebraska, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution.

**Acquisition Information:** The collection was donated by Helen Sparks, daughter of Bertha Sparks, in 1968.

**Custodial History:** The photographs were initially filed by tribe in Photo Lot 24, or NAA's "Source Print Collection." In 2010 the photos were removed from Photo Lot 24 and restored as a distinct collection.

**Restrictions on Access:** The collection is open to the public.

**Restrictions on Use:** Contact the repository for terms of use.

**Note on Processing:** The collection was processed by Gina Rappaport, 2010.

**Finding aid prepared by:** Gina Rappaport, 2010.

**Note on Description:** Collection and image descriptions provided in this finding aid were compiled using the best available sources of information. Such sources include the creator's annotations or descriptions, collection accession files, primary and secondary source material (i.e. documents, publications, and websites), and subject matter experts. While every effort is made to provide accurate information, it is understood that errors may reveal themselves following review by other subject experts, and new information is welcome.

**Repository Information**

Smithsonian Institution  
National Museum of Natural History  
National Anthropological Archives  
4210 Silver Hill Road  
Suitland, MD 20746  
(301) 238-1300  
[www.nmnh.si.edu/naa](http://www.nmnh.si.edu/naa)

## Inventory

Box/Folder	Item(s)	Description	Date
1/1	1-5	Sioux Indian family from Rosebud reservation in South Dakota at home of Bertha Sparks Krum.  <i>Helen Krum notes that the family "came to our home in Valentine with a note from father that mother [Bertha Krum Sparks] was to take their pictures."</i>	Ca 1905
1/2	6	Sioux Indians holding Omaha dance in main street of Valentine, Nebraska. Vehicle at left has "Rosebud" printed on back	Ca 1905
1/2	7	Sioux man pouring water into beef "paunch" hung on four sticks with spectators in background  <i>On verso: "into this [paunch] stones heated very hot are dropped in order to cook the paunch which is afterwards eaten"</i>	Ca 1905
1/2	8	Sioux men in feathered war bonnets dancing, possibly Grass dance, in street in Valentine, Nebraska	Ca 1905
1/2	9	Sioux man, woman, and child wearing decorated garments and jewelry. Child is holding staff decorated with feathers	Ca 1905
1/2	10	Two Sioux men wearing decorated garments and feathered war bonnets standing next to tent	Ca 1905
1/2	11	Two Sioux children wearing beaded garments and moccasins	Ca 1905
1/2	12-13	Woman wearing peacock feather headdress and girl wearing elk-tooth dress (dress decorated with elk teeth) on street in Valentine, Nebraska	Ca 1905
1/2	14-15	Group photograph of Sioux men, women and children dressed in ceremonial dress including war bonnets and elk-tooth dresses, on street in Valentine, Nebraska	Ca 1905
1/2	16	Sioux Indians at campsite near Valentine, Nebraska with tent, wagon, and rack strung with drying skins and meat	Ca 1905
1/2	17	Sioux Indians in ceremonial dress gathered possibly for Sun dance	Ca 1905

Box/Folder	Item(s)	Description	Date
1/3	18	Sioux man wearing ceremonial garments including beaded loincloth, feathered headdress, and bells fastened at knees. <i>Cyanotype</i>	Ca 1905
1/3	19	Sioux man wearing ceremonial garments including feathered war bonnet. <i>Cyanotype</i>	Ca 1905
1/3	20	Sioux men and women wearing ceremonial garments on street in Valentine, Nebraska. Some holding staffs with small American flags tied on top. <i>Cyanotype</i>	Ca 1905
1/3	21	Small Sioux child wearing decorated vest. Woman sitting inside tent in background. <i>Cyanotype</i>	Ca 1905
1/3	22-23	Sioux woman wearing beaded dress and moccasins. <i>Cyanotype</i>	Ca 1905
1/3	24	Sioux woman. <i>Cyanotype</i>	Ca 1905
1/3	25	Two Sioux women wearing bead necklaces. <i>Cyanotype</i>	Ca 1905
1/3	26	Sioux man wearing full length feathered war bonnet with Sioux (probably) woman wearing elk-tooth dress and feathered war bonnet. <i>Cyanotype</i>	Ca 1905
1/4	27	Sioux man, women, and girls wearing beaded and fringed garments. Man has bells fastened at knees	Ca 1905
1/4	28	Sioux man wearing beaded and fringed pants in street of Valentine, Nebraska with Sioux women and other people in background	Ca 1905
1/4	29	Sioux men in ceremonial dress on street in Valentine, Nebraska with spectators at left. Man in center is same as in item 19	Ca 1905
1/4	30	Sioux man wearing ceremonial garments including fringed tunic and war bonnet, holding bells, bundle of feathers, and large American flag on pole decorated with feathers standing in street in Valentine, Nebraska	Ca 1905
1/4	31	Sioux man wearing ceremonial garments including long feathered headdress and bells fastened at knees and ankles standing in street in Valentine, Nebraska	Ca 1905
1/4	32	Sioux woman and boy standing in front of tipi frame partially covered with cloth	Ca 1905
1/4	33	Sioux man, probably "Crow Dog"	Ca 1905

Box/Folder	Item(s)	Description	Date
		<i>On verso: "If I [Helen Sparks] am not mistaken father told how he [Crow Dog] escaped from prison during the winter and walked miles and miles to see his family and returned to prison on his own"</i>	
		Items 34-44 show people gathered for an event possibly relating to a presidential campaign for Franklin D. Roosevelt, or a Fourth of July celebration	
1/5	34	Sioux men in ceremonial dress gathered on street in Valentine, Nebraska. Large banner on store window says "Roosevelt for President"	Ca 1932
1/5	35	Sioux men, some in ceremonial dress performing a dance or ceremony in street in Valentine, Nebraska	Ca 1932
1/5	36	Sioux men and women in ceremonial dress walking down street in Valentine, Nebraska with town residents watching from in front of Armstrong Grocery on corner	Ca 1932
1/5	37	Sioux men and women in ceremonial dress gathered in street beside Armstrong Grocery. American flags flying along street in background	Ca 1932
1/5	38	Sioux boy wearing feathered headdress and with bells fastened at ankles standing in street in Valentine, Nebraska	Ca 1932
1/5	37-40	Sioux man in ceremonial dress including fringed garments and feathered war bonnet on street in Valentine, Nebraska (same man as in item 18)	Ca 1932
1/5	41-44	Sioux men, women, and children with Valentine, Nebraska townspeople gathered and mingling at event. One white man wearing suit and bowtie and feathered headdress	Ca 1932
		Items 45-53 show Sioux Indians and Valentine townspeople at fair in Valentine, Nebraska. Photographs probably made by Helen Sparks	
1/6	45-48	Crowd gathered around a strength test pole with Women's Christian Temperance Union "rest room" in background	Ca 1930s
1/6	49-50	Crowd gathered around a strength test pole with tents and Ferris wheel in background	Ca 1930s
1/6	51	Circle of spectators around Sioux men and women performing ceremony or dance near fair tents	Ca 1930s

Box/Folder	Item(s)	Description	Date
1/6	52	Sioux men wearing ceremonial garments in front of fair tent	Ca 1930s
1/6	53	Small Sioux child wearing ceremonial garments	Ca 1930s
		Items 54-55 are copy prints of photographs made in the early 1900s	
1/7	54	Sod church at Kennedy, Nebraska  <i>On verso: "this church was built on a hill above the Piercy ranch home where the post office of Kennedy, Nebr. was in the home. There were a few graves on the hill. Rev. John Bates, an Episcopal minister serving the mission church in Valentine, Nebr. Drove the approximate 50 miles to Kennedy from Valentine to hold service once or twice a year. The organ to the left in the interior picture [55] was given by Mrs. Wm. Erickson of Kennedy. Her father had carried it with him when he was a missionary in South America as I [Helen Sparks] recall the account. I was permitted when I was a child visiting the Piercy family to have a key to the church so I could play the organ."</i>	Ca 1905
1/7	55	Interior of sod church at Kennedy, Nebraska	Ca 1905