Portraits of Native Americans from Pocahontas to Sitting Bull

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I'm speaking to you this evening on a topic that should be much better known than it is. Even among my friends and acquaintances here in the UK, I find that few people know much - or indeed anything - about the historically significant Indigenous Americans who visited this country during the colonisation of North America. Yet from the late sixteenth century and over the next 300 years numerous members of different tribal communities came to Britain, sometimes staying only a matter of weeks, sometimes much longer. Many of them were important personages and were recognised as such at the time. The very fact that portraits were made of them testifies to that fact. From this diverse record I have chosen to concentrate my talk on four instances, three of them took place in England, but as regards Sitting Bull, although he visited Britain, his photographic portrait was made in the United States.

Too many historical Indigenous American leaders are known only by reputation, principally via accounts written by those who had come to settle the country and eventually to displace them from their ancestral lands. So visual testimony of this sort is something to be cherished, allowing the modern spectator to put a face to a name. In that regard, it would be nice to think that contemplating each individual's portrait would allow us to understand something about their lives and achievements, but this is no straightforward business and part of what I want to do this evening is pose some questions and share with you some of the difficulties their portraits raise.

Let's start with the questions. When a European sitter commissions a portrait, he or she knows what that business entails, as does the artist. They essentially work together to produce the work. But what happens when realistic portraiture of this sort is removed from the sitter's experience, which is the case for at least some of the individuals I shall discuss? To borrow a term widely used in analysing the colonial encounter, we might envisage these portraits as contact zones where two radically different cultures confront one another. What plays out in a contact zone is often a matter of negotiation and the portraiture of Indigenous American sitters was potentially open to negotiation, too. From the sitter's point of view, what agency did they have within a European artistic milieu and how did this compare with their self-representation? Are there any indications of the sitter's Indigenous sensibility finding expression within the strictures of the portrait format? With respect to the artist, what traditions conditioned their approach and were they flexible enough to incorporate a sitter wholly outside their normal experience? Did the artist attempt to engage with the particularities of the sitter's culture, using costume and pose as markers of difference, or did they lack the information that would allow them to do this? And finally, from the consumer's point of view, who were these portraits made for? How many people could have seen them? What purpose did they serve?

I believe that these questions are essential, if we are to make any serious attempt to engage with these images. A very welcome research effort has done much to establish a more secure understanding of the biographies of these sitters, their place in their original Indigenous community, their activities as representatives of it overseas, and the reactions of those who met them in London and elsewhere. This information is, of course, vital if we are to attempt to come to terms with these sitters as people, as historical agents and ultimately as ambassadors of a way of life that was, and perhaps still is, poorly understood. But my purpose this evening is to make another claim, and a necessary one, which is that the routine inclusion of these portraits in accounts of Indigenous leaders has far too often taken them at face value if you'll pardon the pun. Studies that offer the most painstaking textual analyses of historical documents and have made compelling use of Indigenous oral testimony often have much less to say about the surviving visual representations of their subjects. Painted or engraved portraits, or in Sitting Bull's case, photographs, are deployed in the best instances as sources of empirical information, contributing visual evidence to supplement what is known from verbal sources. In the worst instances they simply appear as illustrations, as though their depiction is unproblematic or self-evident. But, as I have just indicated, the portraits made of these sitters are anything but self-evident. As soon as one begins to probe them, the central problem of what portraiture actually is moves to centre stage. Portraiture is a kind of artifice, a cultural practice working within a set of traditions and bound to historically specific expectations regarding what constitutes a likeness or, rather, what purpose a likeness should serve. And these traditions and expectations are themselves differently interpreted in different periods.

For all these reasons, in my talk this evening my aim is examine these portraits not so much as documentary statements, using them as portals to the true identity of each sitter, but more as somewhat problematic evidence from artist-witnesses who inevitably effected a compromise between their customary art practice and the sitter's remoteness from it. This is not, I should emphasize, to discredit these portraits as wholly suspect or unreliable. As we shall see, they do provide some sort of evidence: evidence of the sitter to a limited extent, but much more obviously evidence of the encounter between sitter and artist. And it is that encounter which fascinates me.

Because their portraits bear witness to distinctive historical episodes, I'll present my four sitters in chronological order. The first of them is Pocahontas. She was born in 1596 or 1597 in the coastal tidewater area of what is now the state of Virginia. Her father, Wahunsenacah, was a supreme Chief or Powhatan from the Pamunkey nation, a member of the Powhatan people, speaking an Algonquian dialect. Pocahontas was a childhood name, meaning 'little pest' or 'mischievous one' and was often used to identify her in the contemporary English accounts of the nearby Jamestown colony. She carried other names, one of them being Matoaks which you can see in the script below her portrait. Its meaning is uncertain. It may possibly come from the Algonquian term Matoak meaning White Bird.

Pocahontas became an intermediary between her father and the English in Jamestown, but in 1613 she was abducted by Captain Samuel Argall and taken to Jamestown as the colony's property. During her captivity, she was Christianised and given the name Rebecca, marrying the English tobacco planter John Rolfe in 1615. She travelled to England the following year, with her husband and child, accompanied by an entourage of important Powhatan family members and advisors. It has been suggested that the visit allowed the Virginia company, needing new investors, to tout their success by using her assimilation into Christianity as an advertisement for their endeavours. In London she became a celebrity, was received at Court and attended a masque at Whitehall Palace. She was due to return home in 1617 but succumbed to an unnamed illness while on board ship and died on the 21st March 1617 before the voyage had commenced. She was buried in the chancel of St George's church, Gravesend.

The print's inscription makes no reference to the name 'Pocahontas'. Instead, in the oval band surrounding the portrait, her identity is given in Latin which can be rendered as: 'Matoaks, also known as Rebecca, daughter of the powerful prince Powhatan of the empire of Virginia.' The English script below the image also acknowledges her name 'Matoaks', but asserts her new identity, her name Rebecka, her conversion to Christianity, her baptism and her marriage to John Rolfe.

This is a formal portrait image in keeping with contemporary styles of engraved portraiture. The expatriate Dutch artist who made it, Simon Van de Passe, belonged to a distinguished family of engravers and brought new standards of engraving to England. As you can see, the text refers to her as 'daughter to the mighty Prince Powhatan Emperour' which explains the print's inclusion in a suite of portrait prints by de Passe of distinguished sitters, nobility and royalty. It was published by Compton Hollond, one of the most important print publishers of the day.

Is it reasonable to suppose that Pocahontas wished to assert anything of her Indigenous identity when she sat to de Passe? Mediated as her image is by European artistic conventions, what avenues were open to her should she have wished to do so? As Rebecca Rolfe she dressed appropriately in contemporary fashion. She is shown wearing up to the minute fashionable attire including a starched lace collar, rich textured undergarments, a short-sleeved brocaded over gown and a tall beaver-felt hat adorned with a splayed bird feather. She also holds a fan of three ostrich feathers and displays a pearl earring in her exposed left ear. Did those garments entirely eclipse her original identity?

In addition, compared to the other prints in this series, such as that of the Countess of Somerset, Lady Frances Howard, Pocahontas' skin is rendered in a darker tone, she is given wide-set eyes and a broader nose. More intriguingly, the shading on Pocahontas' chin, is positioned in the same place as the distinctive vertical lines of facial tattoos seen on the chin in earlier drawings of Algonquian women, made by the English artist John White, who in the 1580s had been appointed to record the local inhabitants near the Roanoke colony, in today's North Carolina. As one colonial witness noted in 1612, '*The women have their armes, breasts, thighes, shoulders, and faces, cuningly ymbrodered with divers workes, for pouncing or searing their skyns with a kind of instrument heated in the fier*..'

It is fascinating to speculate whether Pocahontas had similar markings which were deliberately modified, or masked, in her portrait to accommodate her appearance to European standards. In an ambiguous comment, in February 1617 the news-monger John Chamberlain, wrote about this engraving to Sir Dudley Carlton, the English Ambassador at The Hague: 'Here is a fine picture of no fayre Lady'. What he meant by this is open to conjecture. The surface meaning of 'fayre' is a concern with social rank, her high-born appearance being at odds with her origins and status, especially in the context of the precarious finances of the Virginia company, for he goes on to say:

> *… yet with her tricking up and high stile and titles you might thincke her and her worshipfull husband to be somebody, yf you do not know that the poore companie of Virginia out of theyre povertie are faine to allow her fowre pound a weeke for her maintenance*.

But perhaps Chamberlain also intended to draw attention to her facial features, distinguishing her from the fair skin of European sitters, and thereby disqualifying her from the kind of respect a high-ranking English woman would expect to command. Certainly, looking at de Passe's engraving Pocahontas' identity is very much between worlds.

My next example comes from roughly a hundred years later, at a time when colonial expansion had brought English territories into competition with other European nations, resulting in the conflict of 1702-1713, known as Queen Anne's War. Like their rivals, the English government was desirous of making treaties with Indigenous communities and seeking their co-operation variously in trade, in neutrality or in military aid. For their part, Indigenous communities, reacting to the cultural and economic disturbance set in train by European commercial and military activities, sought to preserve their traditional lands and way of life from widespread disruption. This is the background which explains the visit of the so-called 'Indian Kings' to London in the Spring of 1710.

This embassy to Britain involved four Indigenous men: one Mahican diplomat named Etowacaum and three Mohawk ambassadors: Sagayenkwaraton, Tjonihokarawa and Onigoheriago. The British knew them by more familiar names, respectively, Nicholas, Brant, Hendrick and John, which had been given them on their baptism into the Christian faith. The mission was a combined enterprise, supported by British interests in North America and agreed to by the Hodenosaunee (Iroquois) confederacy the most powerful and long-lived alliance in the northeast of the continent. In 1710 it comprised five nations: the Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, and Seneca. The Hodenosaunee controlled a vast swathe of land near the British colonial outposts in the upper Hudson River valley. Britain needed their support to invade French Canada after a failed attempt the year before.

The delegates were treated with the deference and respect due to visiting dignitaries and were called 'Kings', lacking the terms to describe their precise status and position in Indigenous society. They were given two separate audiences with Queen Anne during their stay and met many of the officials concerned with British overseas trade. They were shown the most important places in London: the Tower of London, St Paul's, the Guildhall, the Royal Exchange, the Banqueting House and Chapel at Whitehall, Greenwich Hospital, Woolwich Arsenal, and a review of the Guards in Hyde Park. They also attended a performance of Macbeth in the Queen's Theatre, Haymarket. It's a nice coincidence for this evening's talk that one stop on their tour was to visit Gresham College, then situated in Sir Thomas Gresham's old house in Bishopsgate and already soundly established as a pre-eminent place of learning. In short, the delegation was shown the best examples of England's wealth, power and wisdom.

Their introduction to London inevitably made them something of a public spectacle and their near celebrity status was evidenced in the request by members of the Macbeth audience that the Hodenosaunee and Mahican men be seated on the stage instead of in the stalls as no one could properly see them.

Queen Anne commissioned three separate artists to take portraits from life of each of the delegates. These were: John or Jan Verelst (from a distinguished family of Dutch artists living in England) who made full-length oil portraits of each of them, John Faber, Sr, who made mezzotints and Bernard Lens III, who painted miniatures of them. Verelst's portraits are the most ambitious and I will concentrate on them. Unlike the overlay of English dress on the figure of Pocahontas, here the delegates are able to retain many aspects of their culture.

We know that the Queen directed the dressers of the playhouse to make them appropriate clothing, including a “scarlet-in-grain cloth mantle, edged with gold, thrown over all their other garments’” as Verlest shows. Contemporary reports also state that when in public or meeting Queen Anne the delegates wore English-style clothing in black, as shown in Verelst’s portrait of Hendrick/ Tjonihokarawa, wearing a black frock coat buttoned down the front and worn with black breeches, silk stockings and leather shoes with brass buckles. The fact that he is referred to as ‘Emperour of the Six Nations’ in a print published after Verlest’s portrait and holds in his right hand a belt of wampum, used by the Haudenosaunee to signify treaty-making, shows that the English, at least, saw him as the leader of the delegation, which Verelst’s differential treatment probably underlines.

Three of the delegates wear moccasins and all of them have a decorated band or tie (probably a burden strap) at their waist, stitched with pigmented moose hair embroidery in a repeated pattern. Perhaps the most obvious sign of Indigenous culture is their body adornment. The Mohawk Brant’s linen shirt, for example, is opened widely to reveal the elaborate and extensive tattooing on his chest that extends up to his neck and face. A document of the time contains a ‘signature’ of a Seneca Chief entailed in the elaborate tattooing on his face and chest, which implies that the London delegates’ exhibition of their body adornment was, in effect, a demonstration of their personal identity and status.

The final Indigenous element Verelst included is an animal at their feet or just behind them, referring to their membership in the wolf, turtle and bear clans, constituent parts of the Hodenosaunee system of government. This association is supported in a contemporary document, where next to their Christian names the delegates placed an animal motif signifying their Clan status.

Yet, all the Indigenous details in Verelst’s portraits are contained within a thoroughly European format. Brant, for example, is standing in an elegant and relaxed pose very much in keeping with the style of aristocratic portraiture of this period, as seen, for example, in Michael Wright’s Lord Mungo Murray portrait of 1683. Both men are shown holding the end of their muskets as if just stopping to pose briefly while still engaging in their outdoor hunting activities. If Verelst had Wright’s figure of a Scottish laird as a possible model for his portrait it raises interesting questions. Was this simply a useful stock pose to employ for a new sitter who represented a people entirely outside Verelst’s experience? Or did he intend, as some have supposed, to suggest a rough equivalence between the woodlands-based life of an Indigenous ‘king’ and someone whose Scots’ ancestry reached back to a more ‘primitive’ lifestyle? Perhaps some who saw Verelst’s portraits, with linen shirts worn as tunics might have been put in mind of the garb of classical warriors. Whatever the associations that might have been raised, Verelst’s approach managed to retain some elements of Indigenous identity.

The next figure I wish to discuss was a highly important Cherokee ambassador, Ostenaco. The embassy he headed came to London in 1762 to meet King George III and to follow up on a treaty between England’s Virginia colony and the Cherokees, which marked the conclusion of the Anglo-Cherokee War of 1758-61. That conflict was part of the so-called French and Indian War (1754-63), referring to the North American theatre of the Seven Years War between France and England. The Anglo-Cherokee war had come about when the expansion of colonial settlements, coupled with British and French military rivalry, pushed the Cherokees, some of whom had formerly been allies of the British, to respond. After early reverses, the British crushed Cherokee resistance in a brutal campaign. It was now important for both the Cherokee nation and the British to restore their former alliance.

They were not the first Cherokees to have visited London. In 1730, seven Cherokee delegates accompanied a Scots eccentric named Sir Alexander Cuming, who spoke Cherokee, on a mission ‘to enter into Articles of Friendship and Commerce’ with George II. Their arrival and activities were followed closely in the London newspapers and journals and a contemporary witness recorded their meeting with the King.

> *The [Indian] King had a scarlet jacket on, but all the rest were naked except an Apron about their middles, and a Horse’s Tail hung down behind; their Faces, Shoulders etc. were painted and spotted with red, blue, and green, etc. They had bows in their Hands, and painted Feathers on their Heads ...*

However, that demonstration of Indigenous clothing may have been exceptional, for each delegate was probably given English style clothing to wear at Court, as had been the case with the 1710 Haudenosaunee delegation. An artist called Markham made their group portrait, known only in this engraving by Isaac Basire. The inscription again uses the terminology of Kings, Princes and ‘chiefs’ to explain the status of these visiting dignitaries.

Their successors in 1762 were similarly referred to as the Cherokee ‘king’ and his ‘chiefs’, referring respectively to Ostenaco (meaning Big Head) and the other Cherokee leaders with him, Atawayi (Wood Pigeon) and Kunagadoga (Standing Turkey). Ostenaco came from the ‘Overhill’ Cherokee villages near the Holston River in what is present day eastern Tennessee. Among his many names and titles was that of head warrior or ‘skiagusta’ and he may have belonged to the largest of the seven clans of the Cherokee, the Wolf, or Ani-waya clan, which was the source of many warriors of note. He was also known as Outacity or Utsidihi, meaning man-killer, another warrior designation. A London journalist provides valuable details of the delegation’s appearance and their treatment on arrival.

> *Three Cherokee Indian chiefs arrived in London from S. Carolina. They are well made men, near six feet high, were dressed in their own country habit, with only a shirt, trousers, and a mantle round them; their faces are painted a copper colour, and their heads adorned with shells, feathers, ear-rings, and other trifling ornaments. They neither (sic) of them can speak to be understood, and very unfortunately, lost their interpreter in the passage. A house is taken for them in Suffolk Street, and cloathes have been given them in the English fashion.*

Without an interpreter the embassy was necessarily limited. Nevertheless, in early July Ostenaco and his fellow delegates were given an audience with King George III. At that meeting the King gave each man a silver gorget signalling their loyalty to him and the Crown’s forces.

Two members of the embassy had their portraits painted. Joshua Reynolds had his first sitting with Ostenaco in early June, describing him in his pocket book as the ‘King of the Cherokees.’ Further sittings must have followed in July, for his portrait includes the silver gorget as well as what is probably a peace medal, hanging below it. However, whereas Verelst could probably have spoken Dutch with his sitters in 1710, Reynolds had no such advantage and would have found it difficult to do more than respond to his subject’s appearance and the newspaper reports of his reputation. One of these appeared in the *Court Magazine* in July, and includes a description of Ostenaco:

> *He is of a good size, much better made than the rest of the Indians. He strongly resembles the Marquis of Granby, and I assure you in many instances gives masterly strokes of great courage, a sense of true honour, and much generosity of mind. This great warrior I am now mentioning, most certainly makes an appearance that strikes one with horror.*

This comparison with John Manners, the Marquess of Granby, was obviously designed to help readers picture the Cherokee by using an example closer to home, and in purely visual terms we can make the comparison ourselves, for Reynolds would paint Granby the following year. But the comparison is more than simply visual, for Granby was the overall commander of British troops in the European theatre of the Seven Years War, and the implication of the remark is to suggest that Ostenaco shared Granby’s martial prowess and success in battle.

Reynolds’ portrait presents Ostenaco as a highly dignified emissary, confident in his role, wearing what may be a decorated finger woven belt around his shoulders and holding a pipe-tomahawk, an intercultural device, perhaps as an item for trade, and used in negotiations to effect peace. The dark skin tone, plucked or shaved scalp and remaining scalp-lock of hair or top-knot are also important Indigenous features, as is Ostenaco’s highly prominent left ear, which would have been deliberately slit and stretched for attaching personal items of adornment, silver earrings etc. There is little trace of the ‘horror’ the *Court Magazine* had suggested here; instead, the overall result is to give Ostenaco an air of distinction, self-possession and power.

At the same time, the portrait painter Francis Parsons made a striking image of Ostenaco’s fellow-delegate, Kunagadoga. This, too, is an effective presentation, but in contrast to Reynolds’ emphasis on peace, Parsons presents a loyal ally brandishing his weapon with clear threat. This portrait, unlike Reynolds’, was engraved.

As with previous delegations, the Cherokees were shown around London, visited the theatre and pleasure grounds and, inevitably, became something of a public spectacle. Other, less careful images circulated, too, as for example wax-work figures exhibited in Mrs. Salmon’s Royal Wax-Work, Fleet Street, of ‘the Cherokee King, with his two chiefs, in their Country Dress, and Habilments’, and also this engraved group portrait. The engraving is a good demonstration of the confused and confusing reception given these important diplomatic figures. Here, each man is given a name that looks like it was derived from one or other of Ostenaco’s honorific titles.

The Cherokees were given engraved versions of their portraits to take home with them, a practice which had now become customary. They seemed to appreciate this as expressed by Kunagadoga when he stated that he was pleased with his portrait, ‘as his friends would now have something to remember him [by] when he was gone to fight the French.'

The final figure I want to discuss tonight is perhaps the most recognised name of all the Indigenous people I have mentioned previously. It is Sitting Bull, or more properly translated from his Lakota name Tatanka Iyotake, Sitting Buffalo Bull, born 1831, died 1890. His early life is better known in a factual sense than all the others I have talked about tonight but that does not make it any easier to reach his Indigenous self or to intuit how he might have felt about having his portrait taken.

At age 14, he distinguished himself in a horse- raiding party by riding up and 'counting coup' or touching an enemy Crow man and riding away. This was considered a feat of great bravery and skill and his father gave the young man his own name Tatanka Iyotake to honour it. He would become a distinguished chief of the Hunkpapa, one of the seven bands of Western Sioux or (as we now refer to them), the Lakota, their own name for themselves meaning 'the friends or allies'.

Tatanka Iyotake, as I shall call him from now on, became one of the most important resistance fighters against US encroachment on Lakota lands in the last half of the nineteenth century. He is best known for his part in the defeat of the US Army's 7th Cavalry led by General George A Custer on June 25, 1876 at the Battle of the Little Big Horn, as the Americans call it, but the Battle of the Greasy Grass by the Lakota, in present day south-eastern Montana.

Tatanka Iyotake had organised the communities resisting enforced moves on to reservations and although he personally took no part in the battle, the notoriety surrounding this so-called 'massacre' was seen as grounds for retaliation against him, his followers and all the Lakota people who stood up to the US government. As a result, he had retreated into Canada by 1877. However, with little bison left on which to survive and enduring near starvation conditions, he and his remaining followers returned to the US in 1881 coming to Fort Buford to surrender. He would only live another 7 years.

He was transferred from Fort Buford to Fort Randall, at the beginning of September 1881 and this photograph was taken shortly afterwards, in early 1882. It seems that three local men commissioned William R. Cross, a photographer from Nebraska to create a series of photographs centring on the Lakota leader that could be marketed to a national audience.

It is designed in a postcard or carte-de-visite format showing the seated leader framed in an oval and below this, in bold type, TATONKA IYOTANKA, a misspelling of his Lakota name, followed by his autograph written in cursive script as 'Sitting Bull'. Below this is printed 'The above is a true Photo and Autograph of 'Sitting Bull', the Sioux chief at the Custer massacre', a sentence which reflects how distortion and mythmaking were already affecting his identity and biography.

The image shows him seated facing forward and holding across his lap a wooden-stemmed pipe, used by the Lakota in ceremonies to send prayers via tobacco smoke. The pipe is probably not his own but given to him to hold by the photographer. His hands seem to be gesturing to the pipe itself with one of his first fingers extended across the pipestem and the other seemingly pointing towards the decorated pipe bag draped across his lap. Whether or not it was the photographer who asked him to arrange his hands this way, they draw attention to themselves. Lying across his lap is a war club, which is hard to detect in digital scans of the image.

Although this is a photograph of a leader who has succumbed to the United States' colonial control and its ideology of 'Manifest Destiny', the image is, arguably, not one of subjugation; the steady gaze and air of command are grounds to see an assertion of Tatanka Iyotake's identity within this format, even a measure of resistance.

Even though Tatanka Iyotake was frequently photographed in the 1880s, we do not know what he felt about photography as a way of representing a person. His sense of self may perhaps be better understood if we look at Indigenous pictorial writing, which had been used historically by the Lakota and other Plains warrior societies to tell narratives of an individual's or group's accomplishments in a visually ''written" form. Originally, these narratives of battles and horse-captures were shown on the hides covering tipis, or even earlier, in rock art forms. By the time of Tatanka Iyotake's maturity there were fewer animal hides on which to make such recordings. Many turned to canvas to make these drawings but when Cheyenne, Kiowa and Comanche participants in the Red River or Buffalo War in 1874, were made prisoners of war by the US Army, they were given ledgerbooks and writing/colouring implements by Captain Richard H Pratt (no relation) to help their 'education'. Some of the warriors began to make a type of pictographic account of their war deeds on ledger paper. This practice spread and has now become a recognised Indigenous artform known as "ledger drawings".

Fortuitously, a set of 55 drawings on the backs of unbound papers long thought to be copies of drawings made by Tatanka Iyotake of his own and his adopted brother's warrior achievements was purchased by an Army surgeon named Dr James Kimball while he was stationed at Fort Buford from 1867- 1870. The drawings were shown to Tatanka Iyotake when he was incarcerated at Fort Randall at about the time his photograph would have been taken by Cross. He identified them as depictions of his and his adopted brother Jumping Bull's accomplishments but was only specific about two of them. While being held at Fort Randall from 1881-83, he was able to make another set of drawings by his own hand on ledger paper where he depicted his choice of important warrior accomplishments. In many of the examples from the Fort Buford drawings, there is a 'name-glyph' of a seated Buffalo bull attached by a thin dark line to a Lakota warrior, who Tatanka Iyotake must have identified as himself. If we think back to those four Indigenous men of the Hodenosaunee embassy of 1710, each of whom 'wrote' their signature both in cursive writing but also depicting the basic shape of their animal clan symbol on official documents, another method of portraiture emerges. It is to my mind an entirely Indigenous way of thinking about oneself, one's signature and how one might be represented in an artistic sense.

Unexpectedly perhaps, when we turn to the Fort Randall set of images made by his own hand, Tatanka Iyotake does not use the name-glyph but instead writes his name in cursive as 'Sitting Bull' to identify who is being seen in these images. Although his name gifted by his father was highly significant to who he was and was part of the way he might have imaged himself, his choice of a cursive mode to provide identification of himself points rather to him making these drawings for sale and/or collection. Despite these differences, the image-making in both sets of ledger drawings also points to a combined, shared sense of the man Tatanka Iyotake, known for his exploits rather than his appearance. In which case, the dignity of his pose and the somewhat stern gaze that seems evident in all the photographs taken of him could be explained as a certain disdain for the whole activity of portrait photography, which could at best only copy appearances.

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