

Chief Red Cloud, Chief Biography

Chief Red Cloud, Chief

The following sections of this BookRags Literature Study Guide is offprint from Gale's For Students Series: Presenting Analysis, Context, and Criticism on Commonly Studied Works: Introduction, Author Biography, Plot Summary, Characters, Themes, Style, Historical Context, Critical Overview, Criticism and Critical Essays, Media Adaptations, Topics for Further Study, Compare & Contrast, What Do I Read Next?, For Further Study, and Sources.

(c)1998-2002; (c)2002 by Gale. Gale is an imprint of The Gale Group, Inc., a division of Thomson Learning, Inc. Gale and Design and Thomson Learning are trademarks used herein under license.

The following sections, if they exist, are offprint from Beacham's Encyclopedia of Popular Fiction: "Social Concerns", "Thematic Overview", "Techniques", "Literary Precedents", "Key Questions", "Related Titles", "Adaptations", "Related Web Sites". (c)1994-2005, by Walton Beacham.

The following sections, if they exist, are offprint from Beacham's Guide to Literature for Young Adults: "About the Author", "Overview", "Setting", "Literary Qualities", "Social Sensitivity", "Topics for Discussion", "Ideas for Reports and Papers". (c)1994-2005, by Walton Beacham.

All other sections in this Literature Study Guide are owned and copyrighted by BookRags, Inc.

Contents

Chief Red Cloud, Chief Biography.....	1
Contents.....	2
Biography.....	3

Biography

Chief of the proud Oglala Sioux tribe, Red Cloud (1822-1909) saw his people defeated and forced onto United States reservations.

Born on a tributary of the North Platte River in Nebraska, Red Cloud early distinguished himself as a warrior. By the 1860s Makhpiyaluta (his Native American name) was leading his own band of warriors and had gained an important reputation. In the Sioux War of 1865-1868 he was war chief of all the Oglala. In 1866 he learned of the U.S. government's intention to build the Bozeman Trail and to construct three forts along it; this road would run through land guaranteed by treaty to the Sioux. Red Cloud gathered 1,500 to 2,000 warriors and in December lured Capt. W. J. Fetterman and 80 soldiers into a trap and massacred them. Only the severe cold of winter prevented his overrunning the post itself.

Though at the famous Wagon Box Fight of August 1867 Red Cloud saw the deadly accuracy of the U.S. Army's new rifles, the government conceded defeat in 1868. The Bozeman Trail was closed and the forts abandoned. The Sioux happily set fire to these forts while Red Cloud went to Ft. Laramie, Wyo. Here on Nov. 6, 1868, he signed a treaty that, unknown to him, provided for reservations and the cession of certain tribal lands. Finding out the terms of the treaty, angry young warriors turned more and more to the militant leader Crazy Horse. In 1870 Red Cloud journeyed to New York and Washington, D.C., to clarify the treaty and to speak in defense of the Sioux. His speeches aroused public opinion to the extent that the government revised the treaty. A special agency for the Oglala Sioux was created on the North Platte River.

Thereafter Red Cloud counseled his people to remain peaceful. He frequently charged the government agents with fraud, graft, and corruption, but he advised the Oglala to be loyal to the U.S. government. During the final Sioux War, of 1875-1876, though he opposed the war faction led by Crazy Horse, he refused to cede the Black Hills. In 1881 Red Cloud was removed as chief. Thereafter he declined in prestige and importance. His tribe was moved to the Pine Ridge Agency in South Dakota following the final Sioux War. He became blind in his later years and died at the Pine Ridge Agency on Dec. 10, 1909.