

Plains indians



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The American Plains Indians are among the best known of all Native Americans. These Indians played a significant role in shaping the history of the West. Some of the more noteworthy Plains Indians were Big Foot, Black Kettle, Red Cloud, Sitting Bull, and Spotted Tail. Big Foot (c. 1825-1890) was also known as Spotted Elk. Born in the Great Plains he eventually became a Minneconjou Teton Sioux chief. He was part of a tribal delegation that traveled to Washington, D. C. , and worked to establish schools throughout the Sioux Territory.

He was one of those massacred at Wounded Knee in December 1890.

(Bowman, 1995, 63) Black Kettle Black Kettle (c. 1803-1868) was born near the Black Hills in present-day South Dakota. He was recognized as Southern Cheyenne peace chief for his efforts to bring peace to the region. However, his attempts at accommodation were not successful, and his band was massacred at Sand Creek in 1864. Even though he continued to seek peace, he was killed with the remainder of his tribe in the Wichita Valley of Oklahoma in 1868.

Red Cloud Red Cloud (1822-1909) was born near the Platte River in present-day Nebraska. Because of his intelligence, strength, and bravery, he became the chief of the Oglala Sioux. “Red Cloud’s War” took place between 1865 and 1868. These battles forced the closing of the Bozeman Trail and the signing of the Fort Laramie Treaty in 1868. Sitting Bull Sitting Bull (c. 1831-1890) was born on the Grand River in South Dakota. He was known among the Sioux as a warrior even during his youth.

He was bitterly opposed to white encroachment, but made peace in 1868 when the U. S. government guaranteed him a large reservation free of white settlers. When gold was discovered in the Black Hills, he joined the Arapaho to fight the invaders. Spotted Tail Spotted Tail (? 1833-1881) was born along the White River either in present-day South Dakota or near present-day Laramie, Wyoming. He became the leader of the Brule Sioux and was one of the signers of the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868.