

Red Cloud seen as warrior and diplomat

(AP) — Red Cloud started down the path of becoming the most photographed American Indian of the 19th century one spring morning in 1872, a few blocks from the White House.

Before meeting with President Ulysses S. Grant, the Lakota chief agreed to sit for Mathew Brady, famed for his Civil War-era photographs and his portraits of the prominent. Two days later, Red Cloud posed at the nearby studio of Alexander Gardner, Brady's former assistant and one of the founders of American photojournalism. That session yielded a picture that was a bestseller in its day and is one of the earliest, most striking photographs of an Indian chief in his prime.

"My great-great-grandfather was both a leader and a warrior, but he was also a man," Dorene Red Cloud, 34, an artist in Gardner, Mass., tells Smithsonian magazine. The chief, she says, wanted Washington leaders to see him as a diplomat, "minus the glamour or pomp or circumstance of feathers and beads."

Nor much is known about Red Cloud's visit to Gardner's studio, says Frank Goodyear III, a curator of photographs for the National Portrait Gallery and author of the 2003 book "Red Cloud: Photographs of a Lakota Chief." Gardner made

at least four different plates, and the session was arranged by a wealthy land speculator named William Blackmore, who was collecting photographs for a museum about native peoples he'd opened in 1867 in his hometown of Salisbury, England.

The Scottish-born Gardner, once a Glasgow newspaperman, had been living in Washington since 1856. He started as Brady's assistant and occasional bookkeeper, but launched his own studio in 1863, after what D. Mark Katz, in his "Witness to an Era: The Life and Photographs of Alexander Gardner," calls an "amicable" break with Brady. In 1865, Gardner published a volume of frontline Civil War scenes, "Gardner's Photographic Sketch Book of the War." He also won recognition for his images of Abraham Lincoln and other leading figures. He made his mark not with technical innovations but by "affecting public awareness," Katz writes, whether through "authentic images of the horrors of the battlefield" or mug shots of the Lincoln assassination conspirators.

After the war, Gardner briefly went West, where he documented treaty signings between Indians and U.S. officials. Gardner retired in 1879 and died three years later at age 61.

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The best-known Indian leader of his time, Red Cloud had become a warrior in clashes with the U.S. military in the northern Plains. In 1868, he reluctantly signed the Fort Laramie Treaty, which reaffirmed the Lakota's hunting rights, sectioned off the Great Sioux Reservation and required the government to remove military forts. But the government didn't hold up its end of the deal, and even built a new fort on Lakota soil.

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Officials, meanwhile, had hoped to wangle from Red Cloud access to the Lakota's gold-rich Black Hills — which they obtained years later.

During the chief's second

visit to Grant, in 1872, Red Cloud sensed more respect, and as a kind of diplomatic gesture, Goodyear says, he agreed to have his picture taken.

In years to come, Red Cloud would journey from his home in Pine Ridge, S.D., to Washington eight more times and hobnob with officials from three other administrations, frequently on his own initiative. Photographers clamored to capture him on film, and the 128 known photographs of the chief trace his quest to hang onto influence while most people believed American Indian culture would go the way of the dinosaurs.

In photographs from the 1880s, Red Cloud sports short hair and tailored suits, which he had hoped would help win over U.S. leaders. Those efforts proved futile, and he let his hair grow. The final portraits show a frail, white-haired, nearly blind old man, seemingly wistful for his tribe's glory days. He died in 1909 at age 88.

But at Gardner's studio in 1872, Red Cloud fixes his gaze directly forward — a "strikingly modern" view, Goodyear says, that distinguishes this image from the rest: "He's at the top of his game as a diplomat and tribal leader. You can sense this is not a defeated man."

Council suspends tribal judge charged in drug case

FORT WASHAKIE, Wyo. (AP) — A tribal judge charged with being part of a drug ring on the Wind River Indian Reservation has been suspended without pay by the Northern Arapaho and Eastern Shoshone Joint Business Council.

Judge Lynda Munnell was arrested May 27 in a drug bust that netted 18 other people. The joint council suspended her last Thursday, according to Chief Tribal Judge John St. Clair. Munnell, also known as Lynda Noah, was charged with threats against a federal officer, distribution of prescription pills and conspiracy.

Meanwhile, Munnell and 17 other defendants appeared before U.S. Magistrate Michael Shickich in Casper for detention hearings. Munnell and 12 others were ordered to remain in federal custody, while four were released on bond. Another defendant, in the late stages of pregnancy, is also not in custody and is scheduled for a detention hearing Monday.

Authorities said the Wind River Indian Reservation-based drug ring brought in methamphetamine, cocaine and marijuana from Mexico and also sold prescription drugs, some of which were thought to have come from the reservation's Indian Health Services clinic.

Oklahoma tribal official critical of attacks on sovereignty

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP) — An Oklahoma Indian tribal leader says tribes must wield political power to combat a national movement to erode their sovereign rights. John "Rocky" Barrett, long-time chairman of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation, a panelist during a session last week at the 18th-annual Sovereignty Symposium, said "right-wing nuts" aim to reduce the economic gain that gambling has brought to American Indian tribes.

"Never in the history of the United States have tribes been allowed to profit at the expense of the European invaders ever and it will not happen now," he said.

He predicted Congress will alter the 1988 federal law that controls Indian gaming. Among other things, Congress will protect states against tribal efforts to establish casinos in their ancestral lands, he said. That tactic has been used by some Oklahoma tribes that were moved here from other states.

Navajo Council upholds same-sex marriage ban

ALBUQUERQUE (AP) — The Navajo Nation Tribal Council has voted to override a veto of a law that bans same-sex marriage on the nation's largest Indian reservation.

The council voted 62-14, with 12 delegates abstaining or absent, to override the decision by Navajo President Joe Shirley Jr. last month to veto the Dine Marriage Act of 2005. Dine is the Navajos' name for themselves.

The act defines marriage as a relationship between a man and a woman and prohibits plural marriages as well as marriage between parents and children, grandparents and grandchildren, brothers and sisters and other close relatives.

"In the traditional Navajo ways, gay marriage is a big 'no, no,'" said Kenneth Maryboy, a delegate from Montezuma Creek, Utah, who voted in favor of the ban. "It all boils down to the circle of life. We were put on the Earth to produce offspring."

Gay activists who argued that such a law imposes a western Christian perspective on a culture that historically has been tolerant and respectful of homosexuals, expressed disappointment in the vote.

"My feeling is that the reason they overrode the president's veto is that they have a huge animosity toward the president," said Percy Anderson, a gay rights organizer who started a Web site and petition to lobby against the marriage act.

Anderson, who previously held an elected office in the tribe's Manuelito, N.M., chapter, said he believes the council is locked in a power struggle with the Navajo Nation president.

"They want to show the president that they are the governing body," Anderson said. "It has to do with a mentality the council has, and it's been building for

years. The more they do this, however, the more they promote an image to Navajo voters that will ultimately get them replaced and elected out of office."

Maryboy said he doubts there will be a political backlash for his vote. He said his constituents overwhelmingly oppose gay marriage and generally disapprove of gay relationships.

"My constituents told me to vote against approving same-sex marriage," Maryboy said. "My supporters told me to stay firmly against it, especially the ministers who join people in marriage. They said, 'What are we going to do if two people of the same sex want us to marry them?' They're really concerned about that."

Nevertheless, leaders of groups such as Native Out in Phoenix, Ariz. and the Dine Coalition in Albuquerque, contended their intense lobbying efforts in the last month had positive effects. A discussion was sparked across the reservation about what it means to be gay in Navajo tradition and they managed to convince 14 members who originally voted for the Dine Marriage Act to reverse their stance.

"Today, we were actually only four votes over from the 59 needed to override the veto," Anderson said.

He praised the delegates who changed their votes.

"We feel they voted their conscience," Anderson said. "We're grateful to them for doing that."

A spokesman for Shirley said the president would issue a statement this weekend responding to the veto override.

"The president wants to think about what he's going to say now," George Hardeen, a spokesman, said after the vote on Friday.

Delegate Larry Anderson of

Fort Defiance, Ariz., the author of the Dine Marriage Act, did not return numerous phone calls. But in a statement he released immediately after the president's veto, he said Navajos were saddened that Shirley vetoed the marriage act.

"The president's abuse of the veto power necessitates the re-evaluation of the president's veto power," Larry Anderson said.

He also sponsored the legislation to overturn Shirley's decision. Supporters of the marriage act said the goal of the law is to promote family values and preserve marriage as a sacred union between a man and a woman.