



CHIEF BLACK KETTLE



"...after a time the spirit of good will which animated him [a Cheyenne Chief] became reflected in his countenance, so that as he grew old such a chief often came to have a most benevolent and kindly expression."

George B. Grinnell, *The Cheyenne Indians*

"Black Kettle's band, the clan he was in charge of 'Wu-ta-pi-u' were nearly all killed at Chivington's Massacre at Sand Creek in 1864. Only few men were left."

George Bent, eyewitness

Black Kettle was born around 1807, probably in the Dakotas. His family was Suhtaio, a people who long ago joined the Cheyenne – some trace of the Suhtaio is still found in Cheyenne ceremonies, stories, and family heritage.

Black Kettle was signatory to at least three treaties with the U.S.: Fort Wise in 1861; the Little Arkansas in 1865; and Medicine Lodge in 1867.

In 1865, Black Kettle's property and livestock (21 horses/6 mules) losses at the Sand Creek Massacre were valued by the U.S. at \$1,425.00.

Black Kettle died at the Washita, November 27, 1868. He was shot and killed by troops of the 7th U.S. Cavalry.

The site of the Battle of the Washita is now a unit of the National Park Service.



Chief Black Kettle (front row, holding pipe) and other Chiefs at Camp Weld Council, September 28, 1864.

"All we ask is that we have peace with the whites. We want to hold you by the hand. You are our father."

CHIEF BLACK KETTLE, SEPTEMBER 28, 1864

"There was one exception to these ferocious looking faces; it was the countenance of one, whom I know to be the most powerful among all the nomadic tribes; one whom I could now see... had been created a ruler; one who had stamped upon every liniment, the fact that he was born to command; he while all the balance of the Council were like snarling wolves, sat calm, dignified, immovable, with a slight smile upon his lips, and a brightness upon his face...he gave me a look of encouragement, which assured me more than if I had the knowledge of a thousand bayonets within call; this was Make-ta-vatah, head Chief of the Cheyennes...known among the whites as Black Kettle."

Major Edward Wynkoop, September, 1864