

MAGILL'S CHOICE

# AMERICAN INDIAN BIOGRAPHIES

Revised Edition

*Edited by*

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## **Adair, John L.**

**Born:** 1828; northern Georgia

**Died:** October 21, 1896; Tahlequah, Indian Territory (now in Oklahoma)

**Tribal affiliation:** Cherokee

**Significance:** John L. Adair played an important role in Cherokee affairs during the difficult years following the Trail of Tears.

John Lynch Adair was born in 1828 in the original Cherokee Nation, which included northern Georgia. The Adair family, originally from Ireland, had intermarried with the Cherokee and produced numerous part-Cherokee Adairs, of whom John was one.

When John was ten years old, the Cherokee were forcibly moved to the Indian Territory west of the Mississippi River. Reaching manhood there, John Adair provided needed leadership in helping the Cherokee adjust to a new environment.

In 1871, as a result of the Cherokee Treaty of 1866, Adair was appointed Cherokee boundary commissioner to work with a U.S. government commissioner in determining the boundaries between the Cherokee Nation and surrounding states. In later years, he compiled the constitution and laws of the Cherokee Nation; published in 1893, they were the major references for Cherokee law until Oklahoma became a state in 1907. Adair died in the Cherokee capital of Tahlequah in 1896.

*Glenn L. Swygart*

### **FURTHER READING**

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Wardell, Morris L. *A Political History of the Cherokee Nation, 1838-1907*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1938.

Woodward, Grace Steele. *The Cherokees*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963.

## **Adario**

**Born:** c. 1650; Ontario, Canada

**Died:** August 1, 1701; Montreal, Canada

**Also known as:** Kondiaronk, Sastaretsi, Gaspar Soiga, Le Rat

**Tribal affiliation:** Petun

**Significance:** Adario skillfully thwarted a late seventeenth century French-Iroquois alliance.

Acting under a 1688 treaty, the Petun leader Adario embarked on a French-sponsored military expedition against the powerful Iroquois Confederacy. Unbeknown to Adario, however, the French simultaneously were courting an Iroquois alliance. While he was en route, Adario received intelligence of an Iroquois delegation led by the Onondaga DEKANISORA, who was traveling to Montreal for negotiations; Adario ordered his men to ambush them. Later he claimed he was acting under French orders. As an ostensible gesture of goodwill toward Dekanisora, Adario released his Onondaga prisoners except one hostage, whom he surrendered to the French fort commander at Michilimackinac. Ignorant of machinations by the French and Adario, the commander executed the captive. Retaliating, the Iroquois launched a massive attack on August 25, 1689, catching the French unprepared. They inflicted heavy casualties and burned Montreal.

Adario died in 1701 in Montreal while leading a treaty delegation of Huron chiefs. Unaware of Adario's duplicities, the French buried him with military honors.

*Mary E. Virginia*

## **Alexie, Sherman**

**Born:** October 7, 1966; Spokane Indian Reservation, Wellpinit, Washington

**Tribal affiliation:** Spokane/Coeur d'Alene

**Significance:** Sherman Alexie is one of the most prolific and accomplished of Native American writers; he has received widespread critical acclaim for his poetry, short stories, and novels.

Sherman Alexie is a Spokane-Coeur d'Alene Indian who grew up on a reservation in Wellpinit, Washington. He acknowledges that his origin and upbringing affect everything that he does in his writing and otherwise. His father retired from the Bureau of Indian Affairs and his mother worked as a youth drug and alcohol counselor. The first of their five children to leave the reservation, Alexie attended Gonzaga University in Spokane for two years before entering Washington State University, where he studied creative writing with Alex Kuo. He was graduated in 1991.

Among the five books Alexie produced between 1992 and 1995, the

seventy-seven-line free verse poem “Horses,” from *Old Shirts and New Skins* (1993), typifies the passion, anger, and pain in some of his most effective poems. Focused on the slaughter of a thousand Spokane horses by General George Wright in 1858, the long lines echo obsessively: “1,000 ponies, the U.S. Cavalry stole 1,000 ponies/ from the Spokane Indians, shot 1,000 ponies & only 1 survived.” The poem is one of Alexie’s favorites at readings, where it acquires the incantatory power of the best oral poetry.



Sherman Alexie. (© Marion Ettlinger)

Alexie’s *First Indian on the Moon* (1993) is largely composed of prose poems. “Collect Calls” opens with an allusion to CRAZY HORSE, who appears often as a mythic figure in his writing: “My name is *Crazy Horse*, maybe it’s *Neil Armstrong* or *Lee Harvey Oswald*. I am guilty of every crime; I was the first man on the moon.” As in his fiction, Alexie tempers the anger and pain of his poems with satiric wit, as in “The Marlon Brando Memorial Swimming Pool,” from *Old Shirts and New Skins*, in which activist Dennis BANKS is imagined as “the first/ Native American real estate agent, selling a 5,000 gallon capacity dream/ in the middle of a desert.” Not surprisingly, there is no water in the pool.

Alexie’s initial foray into fiction (except for a few stories sprinkled among his poems), *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven* (1993) appeared before his twenty-seventh birthday and was awarded a citation from the PEN/Hemingway Award committee for best first book of fiction in 1993. Praising his “live and unremitting lyric energy,” one reviewer suggested that three of the twenty-two stories in the book “could stand in any collection of excellence.”

Critics have noted that the pain and anger of the stories are balanced by his keen sense of humor and satiric wit. Alexie’s readers will notice certain recurring characters, including Victor Joseph, who often appears as the narrator, Lester Falls Apart, the pompous tribal police chief,

David WalksAlong, Junior Polatkin, and Thomas Builds-the-Fire, the storyteller to whom no one listens. These characters also appear in Alexie's first novel, *Reservation Blues* (1995), so the effect is of a community; in this respect, Alexie's writings are similar to the fiction of William Faulkner. One reviewer has suggested that *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven* is almost a novel, despite the fact that Alexie rarely relies on plot development in the stories and does not flesh out his characters. It might more aptly be said that the stories come close to poetry, just as Alexie's poems verge on fiction. The stories range in length from less than three to about twenty pages, and some of the best, like "The First Annual All-Indian Horseshoe Pitch and Barbecue," leap from moment to moment, from one-liner to quickly narrated episode, much like a poem.

Alexie's novel, *Reservation Blues*, was published before his thirtieth birthday and after the striking success of *The Business of Fancydancing*, a collection of poems and stories published by a small press when he was twenty-six. By the time his novel was being reviewed, nearly eight thousand copies of *The Business of Fancydancing* were in print, along with two additional collections of poetry, *Old Shirts and New Skins* and *First Indian on the Moon*, and a heralded book of short stories, *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven*, all published in 1993.

In his novel, Alexie reasserts an equation that he formed in "Imagining the Reservation," from *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven*: "Survival = Anger + Imagination. Imagination is the only weapon on the reservation." *Reservation Blues* is arguably the most imaginative of his works to date, blending, among other things, the Faust myth with life on the "rez" and the dream of making it big in the music world. Alexie has performed in his own blues band.

In 1998, stories from Alexie's collections were adapted in the film *Smoke Signals*. Alexie has continued to produce works in poetry and fiction, such as the poetry collection *One Stick Song* (2000). His works of fiction include *The Toughest Indian in the World* (2000) and *Ten Little Indians: Stories* (2003). Alexie also wrote and directed the film *The Business of Fancydancing: The Screenplay* in 2003.

Ron McFarland

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## Alford, Thomas Wildcat

**Born:** July 15, 1860; near Sasakwa, Oklahoma

**Died:** August 3, 1938; Shawnee, Oklahoma

**Also known as:** Gaynawpiahika

**Tribal affiliation:** Shawnee

**Significance:** Drawing on knowledge of white customs gained from his education with whites, Thomas Wildcat Alford counseled Indians about their land rights and helped them to cope with rapid cultural changes.

Born in Indian Territory, Thomas Wildcat Alford was the grandson of the pantribal Indian leader TECUMSEH. Educated in tribal customs until age twelve, he thereafter attended a mission school. In 1879, he earned a scholarship to Virginia's Hampton Institute, where he adopted Christianity. Upon returning to Indian Territory, Alford initially was shunned by Indian traditionalists. Nevertheless, the following year, he was appointed principal of a federally funded Shawnee school, a position he occupied for five years.

In 1893, Alford chaired a federally sponsored committee designed to supersede Shawnee tribal government. Utilizing his knowledge of U.S. law, he assisted Indians in safeguarding their land rights during implementation of the allotment system. He also made trips to Washington, D.C., lobbying on behalf of his tribe. In addition, he was employed by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Until his death, Alford continued advising his people, working to meliorate social problems exacerbated after Oklahoma achieved statehood in 1907.

*Mary E. Virginia*

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Nabokov, Peter. *Native American Testimony: A Chronicle of Indian-White Relations from Prophecy to the Present, 1492-2000*. Foreword by Vine Deloria, Jr. New York: Viking, 1991.

## Allen, Paula Gunn

**Born:** October 24, 1939; Cubero, New Mexico

**Tribal affiliation:** Laguna Pueblo

**Significance:** Paula Gunn Allen's prolific works of poetry, fiction, and literary criticism have brought an influential lesbian and feminist perspective to American Indian literature.

Paula Gunn Allen, as an American Indian woman, sees her identity in relation to a larger community. She is proud to be part of an old and honored tradition that appreciates the beautiful, the harmonious, and the spiritual. She also recognizes that since in the United States there are more than a million non-Indians to every Indian, she must work to stay connected to her Native American heritage.

Allen frequently refers to herself as "a multicultural event"; people of many ethnicities are related to her. Her mother was a Laguna Indian whose grandfather was Scottish American. Allen says that she was raised Roman Catholic, but living next door were her grandmother, who was Presbyterian and Indian, and her grandfather, who was a German Jew. Her father's family came from Lebanon; he was born in a Mexican land-grant village north of Laguna Pueblo. She grew up with relatives who spoke Arabic, English, Laguna, German, and Spanish. Her relatives shared legends from around the world.

Even with such cultural diversity in her family, as a teenager Allen could find no Native American models for her writing. Consequently, she read Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre: An Autobiography* (1847) about twenty times; her other literary favorites were Louisa May Alcott, Gertrude Stein, and the Romantic poets John Keats and Percy Bysshe Shelley. When she went to the University of New Mexico and wanted to focus on Native American literature in her doctoral program in English, it was impossible. The scholarship was not there to study. She came to write the books that she wanted to read and teach the courses that she wanted to take.

Allen has taught at San Francisco State University, at the University of New Mexico, in the Native American Studies Program at the University of California at Berkeley, and at the University of California, Los Angeles.

In enumerating the influences that have made her who she is, Allen first honors her mother, who taught her to think like a strong Indian woman and that animals, insects, and plants are to be treated with the deep respect one customarily reserves for high-status humans. She hon-





Paula Gunn Allen. (© Tama Rothschild)

ors her father for teaching her how to weave magic, memory, and observation into the tales she tells. Finally, the Indian collective unconscious remains the source of her vision of spiritual reality.

The collection of essays *The Sacred Hoop: Recovering the Feminine in American Indian Traditions* (1986) documents the continuing vitality of American Indian traditions and the crucial role of women in those traditions. The title comes from a lesson Allen learned from her mother: that all of life is a circle, a sacred hoop, in which everything has its place. These essays, like tribal art of all kinds, support the principle of kinship and render the beautiful

in terms of the harmony, relationship, balance, and dignity that are the informing principles of Indian aesthetics. Indians understand that woman is the sun and the earth: She is grandmother, mother, thought, wisdom, dream, reason, tradition, memory, deity, and life itself.

The essays are all characterized by seven major themes that pertain to American Indian identity. The first is that Indians and spirits are always found together. Second, Indians endure. Third, the traditional tribal lifestyles are never patriarchal and are more often woman-centered than not. Tribal social systems are nurturing, pacifist, and based on ritual and spirit-centered, woman-focused worldviews. The welfare of the young is paramount, the complementary nature of all life forms is stressed, and the centrality of powerful, self-defining, assertive, decisive women to social well-being is unquestioned. Fourth, the physical and cultural destruction of American Indian tribes is and was about patriarchal fear and the inability to tolerate women's having decision-making capacity at every level of society. Fifth, there is such a thing as American Indian literature, and it informs all American writing. Sixth, all Western studies of American Indian tribal systems are erroneous because they view tribalism from the cultural bias of patriarchy. Seventh, the sacred



ways of the American Indian people are part of a worldwide culture that predates Western systems.

*Spider Woman's Granddaughters: Traditional Tales and Contemporary Writing by Native American Women* (1989), edited by Allen, is a collection of two dozen traditional tales, biographical writings, and short stories by seventeen accomplished American Indian women writers. All the women follow the tradition of Grandmother Spider, who, according to the Cherokee, brought the light of thought to her people, who were living as hostages in their own land. These stories are war stories, since all American Indian women are at war and have been for five hundred years.

Some of the selections are old-style stories; others deal with contemporary issues. All are by women intimately acquainted with defeat, with being conquered, and with losing the right and the authority to control their personal and communal lives. They have experienced the devastating destruction of their national and personal identities. They powerfully demonstrate the Indian slogan: We shall endure.

Allen's other works of poetry include *Life Is a Fatal Disease: Collected Poems, 1962-1995* (1997). In 2003, she published *Pocahontas: Medicine Woman, Spy, Entrepreneur, Diplomat*, a well-rounded examination of the life of Pocahontas that delves into many areas ignored in other biographies of the early seventeenth century Powhatan woman.

Constance M. Fulmer

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## Alligator

**Born:** c. 1795; northern Florida

**Died:** c. 1865; Seminole reservation, Indian Territory (now part of Oklahoma)

**Also known as:** Halpata Tastanaki, Halpatter Tustenuggee

**Tribal affiliation:** Seminole

**Significance:** Chief Alligator was considered among the bravest and most capable Seminole leaders during the Second Seminole War.

The Seminole Indians originated among the Lower Creeks living along the Chattahoochee River in Georgia. With encroachment by whites during the late eighteenth century, they began moving down the Florida peninsula and adopted the name Seminole, which meant “separate.” Eventually comprising some twenty villages, the Seminoles fought against the U.S. Army several times during the first decades of the nineteenth century. The fighting in 1817 became known as the First Seminole War. General Andrew Jackson invaded Florida, then under Spanish rule, with some three thousand men and forced the Seminoles to cede most of their lands to the United States. In 1819, Spain ceded all of Florida to the United States.

An 1832 treaty forced the Seminoles to move beyond the Mississippi River, but a large portion of the people refused to adhere to the treaty’s terms. In December, 1835, the Seminoles killed Charley Emathla, a

chief who had signed the treaty and supported emigration, as well as the American agent, General A. R. Thompson. In response, General Winfield Scott, then commander of the U.S. Army, ordered three columns of troops to attack Seminole villages and enforce the treaty. One army of one hundred men was led by Major Frank Dade. On December 28, 1835, Dade's men were ambushed by Seminoles under the command of Chief Alligator and Little Cloud near the Wythlacoche River. Dade and all but one of his men were killed. That attack began the Second Seminole War.

Though information on Alligator is scarce, he appears to have been born in the village known as Halpata Telofa (Alligator Town). His ancestry may have been Eufaula, one of the Creek tribes from southeastern Alabama. He along with Chief OSCEOLA, were the principal commanders of the Indian warriors during the war and proved to be a match for the American armies sent against them.

During the first months of 1836, Seminoles under Alligator and Osceola's leadership fought American armies commanded by Generals Duncan Clinch and Edmund Gaines to draws. Osceola was eventually betrayed and died in prison, but Alligator continued to fight for another year. In December, 1837, Alligator attacked an army led by future U.S. president Colonel Zachary Taylor, killing twenty-six soldiers and leaving more than one hundred men wounded in what became known as the Battle of Okeechobee.

Realizing that continued resistance against overwhelming forces would be ultimately futile, Alligator surrendered shortly afterward. He, along with most members of the Seminole nation, was removed to Oklahoma, where he died sometime in 1865. Meanwhile, the Second Seminole War dragged on for several more years and cost the United States fifteen hundred lives and approximately thirty million to forty million dollars. After the Seminoles were defeated, white settlers occupied the town of Halpata Telofa. For a time, it retained the name of Alligator Town but was later renamed Lake City.

*Richard Adler*

## **American Horse**

**Born:** c. 1840; Black Hills area (now in South Dakota)

**Died:** December 16, 1908; Pine Ridge, South Dakota

**Also known as:** Wasechun-tashunka

**Tribal affiliation:** Oglala Lakota (Sioux)

**Significance:** A skilled orator and negotiator, American Horse advocated peace between whites and Sioux during the Sioux Wars of the late nineteenth century.

American Horse, the Younger, was probably Sitting Bear's son; American Horse, the Elder's nephew; and RED CLOUD's son-in-law. As a young warrior, he fought white encroachment on Sioux hunting grounds during the Bozeman Trail War of 1866. In 1888-1889, after an extended and exhaustive negotiation with General George Crook, American Horse signed a treaty by which the Sioux ceded approximately half of their land in Dakota territory.

As tensions between whites and Sioux escalated, culminating in the Ghost Dance uprising of 1890, American Horse continued to advocate peace. Prior to the Wounded Knee Massacre in 1890, American Horse persuaded BIG FOOT's band to return to the Pine Ridge Reservation. In 1891, he led the first of several Sioux delegations to Washington, D.C., to negotiate for better Sioux-white relations. After Wounded Knee, American Horse was one of several Indian leaders who toured with Buffalo Bill Cody's Wild West show.

*Mary E. Virginia*



*American Horse. (Library of Congress)*

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## **Annawan**

**Born:** Unknown

**Died:** August 12, 1676; place unknown

**Tribal affiliation:** Wampanoag

**Significance:** Annawan led the war chiefs during King Philip's War.

Leader of the war chiefs under King Philip (METACOMET) during King Philip's War (1675-1676) in the New England colonies, Annawan was a trusted adviser and strategist. He was acknowledged as a valiant soldier in this decisive war for the future of Indian-white relations in the Northeast.

After the death of Philip in August, 1676, Annawan became the leader of a short-lived continued Indian resistance, leading attacks on the towns of Swansea and Plymouth. Conducting guerrilla-style warfare and shifting campsites nightly, Annawan was able to evade colonial forces under Captain Benjamin Church for two weeks. Then a captive Indian led Church and a small party of soldiers to Annawan's camp, now known as Annawan's Rock. Church misled the Indians into believing that they were outnumbered, and Annawan surrendered the tribe's medicine bundle, which included wampum belts telling the history of the tribe and of the Wampanoag Confederacy.

Church respected his defeated adversary so much that he asked for clemency for Annawan. During Church's absence, however, Plymouth residents seized Annawan and beheaded him, ending the last vestige of Wampanoag resistance.

*Thomas Patrick Carroll*

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## Antonio, Juan

**Born:** c. 1783; Mt. San Jacinto region, California

**Died:** February 28, 1863; San Timoteo Cañon, California

**Also known as:** Cooswootna, Yampoochee (He Gets Mad Quickly)

**Tribal affiliation:** Cahuilla

**Significance:** A powerful Cahuilla chief, Juan Antonio aided whites on several occasions in California during the turbulent 1850's.

Several competing forces vied for control of California during the 1850's, including ranchers, Mexicans, miners, Mormons, outlaws, and Indians. In 1842, Juan Antonio, leader of the Cahuillas of Southern California, greeted explorer Daniel Sexton at the San Gorgino Pass, granting him permission to explore the region. Antonio likewise assisted Lieutenant Edward F. Beale of the U.S. Army in his explorations of the region, defending Beale's men against raids from Ute warriors led by Walkara. In appreciation for his aid, Beale presented Antonio with a pair of military epaulets.

Antonio continued to assist white Californians. After the outlaw John Irving and his men raided the area, stealing cattle and killing local settlers, Antonio swiftly ended the raid by killing all but one of Irving's men. White settlers, although relieved at Irving's death, nevertheless were ambivalent about Antonio's killing of whites. Consequently, Antonio was officially deposed by white Californians as chief; his Indian followers, however, ignored the white mandate and continued to view him as their leader.

As white migration increased during the Gold Rush, a Cupeño shaman named Antonio GARRA organized Indian tribes to drive whites from the region. Both whites and Indians sought Antonio's assistance. Electing to help white settlers, Antonio captured Garra in 1851, thereby suppressing the uprising. In appreciation, Commissioner O. N. Wozencraft designed a treaty that would enable the Cahuilla to retain their ancestral lands. The California Senate refused to ratify the treaty, however, leading to discontent among the Cahuilla.

Between 1845 and 1846, violence erupted but resistance to whites was largely ineffectual. Furthermore, by 1856 anti-Mormon sentiments had eclipsed the Indian issue, and land speculators and squatters forced Indians from their land. Already facing dispossession and inadequate provisions, California Indians were suddenly devastated by smallpox. The last of the Cahuilla leaders, Antonio died of the disease and was buried in San Timoteo Cañon. During a 1956 archaeological expedi-

tion, Antonio's body was exhumed, identified by his epaulets, and later reburied with military honors.

*Mary E. Virginia*

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## **Apes, William**

**Born:** January 31, 1798; Colrain, Massachusetts

**Died:** April, 1839; New York, New York

**Also known as:** William Apess

**Tribal affiliation:** Pequot

**Significance:** William Apes, a nineteenth century political protest writer, produced the first published autobiography by an American Indian.

Little is known of William Apes outside his own account in his autobiography, *A Son of the Forest* (1829), which recounts his youth and early adulthood. He spent his first four years with intemperate grandparents, who reportedly often beat him and his siblings. While growing up, he recalled, his indenture was sold several times to different families in Connecticut. He had only six years of formal education, took part in the War of 1812, had bouts with drinking, and was reformed by his introduction to Christianity. In 1829, he was ordained as a Methodist minister.

In May, 1833, he traveled to the Massachusetts community of Mashpee, where he immediately took part in a revolt against the Massachusetts Commonwealth. In the context of organizing and leading this revolt, he published an account of Indians' grievances against whites in *Indian Nullification of the Unconstitutional Laws of Massachusetts, Relative to the Mashpee Tribe* (1835). Like the earlier "An Indian's Looking-Glass for the White Man" (1833), this book turns on his political astuteness and sense of fairness. At the Odeon in Boston in 1836, Apes preached *Eulogy on King Philip*, a political and historical account of the Indian wars of the previous century; it was published the same year. Apes returned to autobiography in *The Experiences of Five Christian Indians* (1837), in which he accuses whites of racism. After about 1838, Apes disappeared from the public eye, and nothing is known of his later life.

*Lee Schweninger*



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## Arapoosh

**Born:** c. 1790; northern Wyoming

**Died:** August, 1834; place unknown

**Also known as:** Rotten Belly, Sour Belly

**Tribal affiliation:** Crow

**Significance:** Revered for his extraordinary spiritual powers, Arapoosh was believed to be virtually invincible in battle.

Known to whites as Rotten Belly or Sour Belly, Arapoosh apparently earned his name through his disposition: He was surly, ill-tempered, and impatient. He was also known to be extraordinarily brave. The foremost warrior among the River Crow who lived along the Big Horn, Powder, and Wind Rivers in present-day northern Wyoming and southern Montana, Arapoosh led his people against their traditional Indian enemies, the Blackfeet, Sioux, and Northern Cheyennes.

After receiving a guardian spirit vision from the "Man in the Moon," Arapoosh adopted that symbol, painting it on his medicine shield. Before battle, Arapoosh would roll his shield along a line of tipis, using its position as it fell as an omen for the coming battle. If it landed with his insignia facing down, the project was doomed and consequently abandoned; face up, however, augured well for the engagement and the battle was waged.

Believing his tribe's future was threatened by the proposed reservation, and voicing his suspicions of the ultimate intentions of whites, Arapoosh in 1825 refused to sign a treaty of friendship negotiated between the Crow and the United States. Instead he continued to protect the lush Crow territory from other tribes as well as from whites.

At Pierre's Hole, Idaho, Arapoosh met the trader and Hudson's Bay Company representative William Sublette, who was much impressed with his bearing and reputation.

During a war between the Crow and the Blackfeet in 1834, Arapoosh



prophesied his own death. Resting his shield on a pile of buffalo chips, he claimed that he would die in the coming battle if his shield rose into the air of its own volition. Purportedly it did just that, rising to a height level with his head. Arapoosh died in the battle.

*Mary E. Virginia*

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## **Arpeika**

**Born:** c. 1760; Georgia

**Died:** 1860; Florida

**Also known as:** Aripeka, Apayaka Hadjo (Crazy Rattlesnake), Sam Jones

**Tribal affiliation:** Seminole

**Significance:** Arpeika was the only Seminole leader successfully to resist removal to the West.

Arpeika probably was born in Georgia and moved into Florida in the late eighteenth century as part of the migration of Creeks that created the Seminole Nation. A *hillis haya*, or medicine man, he became a revered figure among the Seminoles and was an ardent opponent of attempts by the U.S. government to remove the tribe to Indian Territory (modern Oklahoma). During the Second Seminole War (1835-1842), he became a military leader despite his advanced age, leading his warriors in a number of battles while unsuccessfully warning OSCEOLA and other Seminole leaders not to trust the American flags of truce.

While most Seminoles were being removed to the West after the war, Arpeika led his band into the Everglades and eluded U.S. forces. In the Third Seminole War (1855-1858), he again fought to avoid removal, fighting beside Billy BOWLEGS. The only major Seminole leader to survive the Seminole Wars and remain in Florida, Arpeika died near Lake Okeechobee in 1860. He was thought to be one hundred years old.

*William C. Lowe*

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## Asah, Spencer

**Born:** c. 1908; Carnegie, Oklahoma

**Died:** May 5, 1954; Norman, Oklahoma

**Also known as:** Lallo (Little Boy)

**Tribal affiliation:** Kiowa

**Significance:** Spencer Asah was one of a group of Kiowa artists who initiated the flat style of easel painting, or traditional American Indian painting.

Spencer Asah was the son of a medicine man. He completed six years of schooling at Indian schools in the Anadarko area, including St. Patrick's Mission School. He, along with other Kiowa youths, joined Susan C. Peters's Fine Art Club. She was the U.S. Indian Service field matron stationed in Anadarko who, with the assistance of Willie Lane, gave the students formal instruction in the arts, including drawing, painting, and beadwork. Peters took Asah to the University of Oklahoma to explore the possibility of his receiving further art instruction. Asah, Jack HOKEAH, Stephen MOPOPE, and Monroe TSATOKE began private lessons in painting in the fall of 1926 with Edith Mahier of the art department, using her office as a studio. They publicly performed dances to raise money for expenses. The four boys were joined by James AUCHIAH in the fall of 1927. This group is often known as the Kiowa Five; it is also referred to as the Kiowa Six when Lois Smoky, who came to the university in January of 1927, is included.

The Kiowa flat style that the Kiowa Six created was illustrative watercolor, with little or no background or foreground and with color filling in outlines, depicting masculine activities. Asah depicted recognizable people. The group's work was shown nationwide and at the 1928 First International Art Exhibition in Prague. Asah was hired to paint murals for various Oklahoma buildings during the Depression. Later he farmed. Asah fathered four children.

*Cheryl Claassen*

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Berlo, Janet C., and Ruth B. Phillips. *Native North American Art*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.

## Atotarho

**Born:** fl. 1500's; present-day New York State

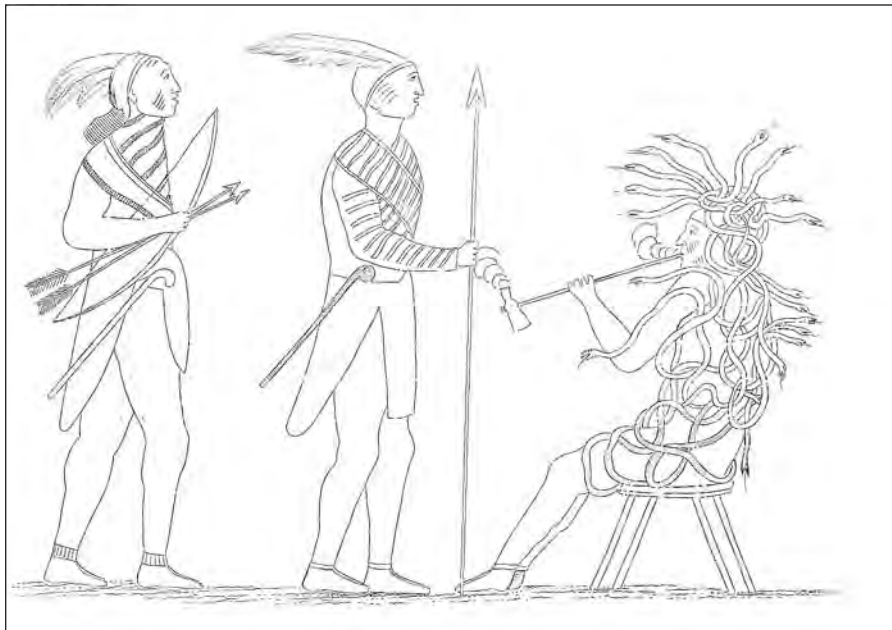
**Also known as:** Tadodaho (Snaky-Headed, or His House Blocks the Path)

**Tribal affiliation:** Onondaga

**Significance:** Atotarho was one of three central figures who established the Iroquois Confederacy.

Atotarho is a historical figure for whom there is almost no historical record. Oral tradition stories hold that Atotarho was a brutal, evil sorcerer. These stories relate that Atotarho had snakes growing out of his head, that he was a cannibal, and that he was soothed by magical birds sent by DEGANAWIDA (the Peacemaker) and HIAWATHA, the other two principal architects of the Iroquois Confederacy. It is probably true that he was a cannibal.

Atotarho was bitterly opposed to the formation of the confederacy. He insisted that certain conditions be met before the Onondagas would join. The Onondagas were to have fourteen chiefs on the council, the other nations only ten. It was also a condition that Atotarho be the ranking chief on the council—only he would have the right to summon the



*European depiction of the sachem Atotarho (right), one of the founders of the Iroquois Confederacy in the sixteenth century. (Library of Congress)*

other nations. In addition, he demanded that no act of the council would be valid unless ratified by Onondagas.

The Onondagas were given the role of central fire-keepers of the confederacy, and to this day they retain not only that role but also the role of keepers of the wampum belt, which records and preserves the laws of the confederacy.

*Glenn J. Schiffman*

#### **FURTHER READING**

Wilson, Edmund. *Apologies to the Iroquois*. New York: Farrar, Straus, Cudahy, 1960.

## **Auchiah, James**

**Born:** 1906; Medicine Park, Oklahoma Territory

**Died:** December 28, 1974; Carnegie, Oklahoma

**Tribal affiliation:** Kiowa

**Significance:** James Auchiah was one of the Kiowa artists who created the Oklahoma style of Native American painting in the early to mid-twentieth century.

James Auchiah was a Kiowa and a grandson of Chief SATANTA. He was an authority on Kiowa history and culture and also a leader of the Native American Church. He took noncredit art classes with the Kiowa Five group at the University of Oklahoma in 1927.

In 1930, Auchiah won an award at the Southwest States Indian Art Show in Santa Fe, New Mexico, which led to commissions to paint murals in a number of public buildings, including the Fort Sill Indian School, Muskogee Federal Building, Northeastern State University (Oklahoma), and St. Patrick's Mission School. The most important of his murals was a commission in Washington, D.C., for the Department of the Interior, in which the Bureau of Indian Affairs is located. This mural, which is 8 feet high and 50 feet long, represents the theme of the Harvest Dance.

Auchiah's work is included in public and private collections, including the National Museum of the American Indian (Smithsonian), University of Oklahoma Museum of Art, and the Castillo de San Marcos National Monument (Florida). He served in the U.S. Coast Guard during World War II and later worked for the U.S. Army Artillery and Missile Center Museum, Fort Sill, Oklahoma.

*Ronald J. Duncan*

**FURTHER READING**

Berlo, Janet C., and Ruth B. Phillips. *Native North American Art*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.

## **Awa Tsireh**

**Born:** February 1, 1898; San Ildefonso Pueblo, New Mexico

**Died:** March 12, 1955; San Ildefonso Pueblo, New Mexico

**Also known as:** Alfonso Roybal

**Tribal affiliation:** San Ildefonso Pueblo

**Significance:** Alfonso Roybal, who signed his paintings Awa Tsireh, gained widespread recognition as a painter during the 1920's and 1930's; his paintings are included in many major museum collections.

As a child in San Ildefonso Pueblo, Awa Tsireh sometimes painted pottery made by his mother, Alfonsita Martínez. Even before attending San Ildefonso Day School, where he was given drawing materials, Tsireh made sketches of animals and ceremonial dances. After completing day school, he began painting watercolors with his uncle, Crescencio MARTÍNEZ, who, in 1917, was commissioned by anthropologist Edgar Hewett to paint a series of depictions of ceremonies held at San Ildefonso.

Tsireh's meticulously precise but sometimes whimsical paintings attracted the attention of Hewett, who hired him to paint at the Museum of New Mexico; in 1920, Tsireh's work was included in exhibitions of Indian art at the Society of Independent Artists in New York and at the Arts Club of Chicago. In 1925, his paintings were exhibited in a one-man show at the Newberry Library in Chicago. In 1931, he won first prize at the opening of the Exposition of Indian Tribal Arts in New York, a show that went on to tour major cities in the United States and Europe.

Tsireh traveled frequently but made San Ildefonso his home for life. Around the time of his death, he was still painting and continued to be among the most popular of Pueblo painters.

*Molly H. Mullin*

## **Bad Heart Bull, Amos**

**Born:** c. 1869; present-day Wyoming

**Died:** 1913; place unknown

**Also known as:** Tatanka Cante Sica (Bad Heart Buffalo), Eagle Lance

**Tribal affiliation:** Ite Sica band of Oglala Lakota (Sioux)