

Red Thunder Cloud

Red Thunder Cloud (May 30, 1919 – January 8, 1996), whose English name was **Cromwell Ashbie Hawkins West** and who was also known as **Carlos Westez**, claimed to be the last native speaker of the **Catawba** Indian language. His obituary was later published in this language in the *New York Times*. Born in **Newport, Rhode Island**, of African-American parents, his maternal grandfather was prominent African-American lawyer and community leader in Baltimore **William Ashbie Hawkins**.

Cromwell West developed a passion for Native American history during his teenage years. He embraced a Native American identity and throughout his life, studied Native American languages extensively.

Gordon (2005) reports the other last native speakers of Catawba died before 1960. There are claims that Red Thunder Cloud is apparently an impostor and he is not really a native speaker of Catawban.^[1]

1 References

- [1] Ives Goddard, “The Identity of Red Thunder Cloud”, Smithsonian Institution, reprinted from *Society for the Study of Indigenous Languages of the Americas Newsletter*, April 2000, accessed 8 Apr 2010

2 External links

- The Identity of Red Thunder Cloud

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3.1 Text

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