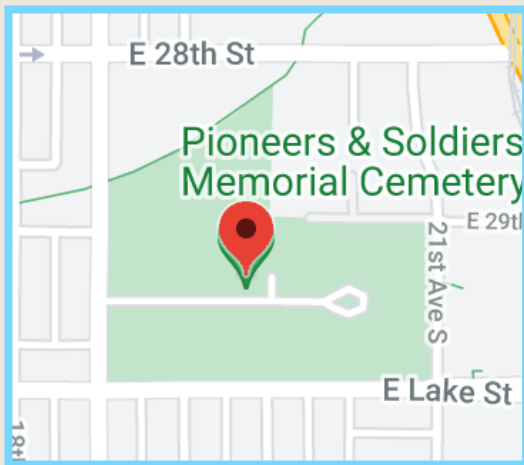


Philander Prescott was one of the casualties during the U.S.-Dakota War of 1862. Na-he-no-Wenah and all of her children survived. She moved to Shakopee, living with her daughter, Lucy Prescott Pettijohn and family.

On March 29, 1867, at age 65, Na-he-no-Wenah died, just 12 miles from her birthplace at Bde Maka Ska. Her obituary describe her as “noble...industrious, frugal, and kind.” In addition, “She was a good wife, a fond mother, and one of the most even-tempered and consistent women we ever knew. She relieved the wants of the poor, visited the sick, and bestowed deeds of charity upon those who were needy. She was never idle.”

Na-he-no-Wenah was buried at the Minnesota Pioneers and Soldiers Memorial Cemetery, the only full-blooded Dakota buried there. She was buried next to her husband, Philander Prescott, as well as their son, Lorenzo Taliferro Prescott, a Civil War veteran, who died from ulcers in 1869 at 30 years old.



Na-he-no-Wenah was buried at the Minneapolis Pioneers and Soldiers Memorial Cemetery, the only full-blooded Dakota buried there.



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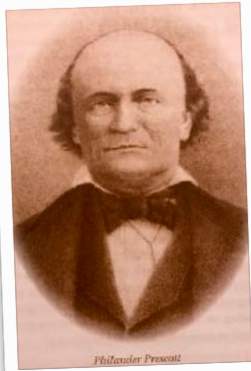
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Na-he-no-Wenah
Spirit of the Moon
Mary Keeiyah
Prescott
1802-1867



Na-he-no-Wenah (Spirit of the Moon) Mary Keeiyah Prescott was born around 1802 on the shores of Bde Maka Ska, daughter of Catherine Totedutawin, a Wahpeton Dakota, and sister of Wapahaša and Keeiyah (Flying Man), brother of Maḥpíya Wičhášta (Cloudman). In middle is Héyate Otunwe, painted by George Catlin between 1835–1836 from the Smithsonian American Art Museum. When Na-he-no-Wenah, age 52, and Philander Prescott, age 63, established a homestead about a half mile from Minnehaha Falls, on right. The house, built in 1852, sat on the main route from Fort Snelling to St. Anthony Falls until it was demolished in 1980.

Na-he-no-Wenah (Spirit of the Moon) maternal parents were Catherine Totedutawin, a Wahpeton Dakota, and sister of Wapahaša and Keeiyah (Flying Man), brother of Maḥpíya Wičhášta (Cloudman). She was born in 1802 on the shores of Bde Maka Ska (Be-DAY Mah-Kah Ska).

Non-Indians continued to arrive in the region, including Philander Prescott. Na-he-no-Wenah, like other native women sometimes entered into unions with Euro-American traders, and later, with soldiers and government officials because they saw such relationships as socially and economically beneficial to themselves and their kin, according to Jane Lamm Carroll. Na-he-no-Wenah found out that Philander decided to ask her father to allow them to be together.

“I began to think about getting married after the Indian manner, so I took ten blankets, one gun, and five gallons of whiskey and a horse” and went to Na-he-no-Wenah’s father, Keeiyah. He learned in three days that the gift had been accepted, but Na-he-no-Wenah did not like the idea of marrying. After a few days, the family moved near Philander’s house. After ten days (and entreaty of the parents), the two came to be a companion as long as they chose to live together. Of course, as it turned out, they were together for 40 years!

Na-he-no-Wenah was 21 years old, and Philander was 32. They had nine children, five who would live to adulthood. In the early marriage, Philander was often apart, working at a trader and traveling for supplies. Na-he-no-Wenah lived near Fort Snelling, and had their first two children. When Philander returned for a visit, Na-he-no-Wenah told him that she was not willing to live apart. And so Philander decided to stay in Minnesota territory with his wife.

Cultural conflicts happened in their early marriage. Philander wanted his son, William, to roll in the Choctaw Academy in Kentucky. He wanted his son to be away from the Dakota influence. He sent him down the river, but William’s grandmother, Totedutawin, followed them down the river, found their encampment, and insisting on bringing the boy back home. When Philander scolded his mother-in-law, his wife, Na-he-no-Wenah left with the children for several weeks.

Na-he-no-Wenah was a resolute woman who remained closed to her family and continued to share the Dakota values. Na-he-no-Wenah and Philander often disagreed about how to raise their biracial children. As it turned out, Philander enrolled William in school in 1834. A year later, William died there at the school because of neglect and abuse.

Prescott had an emotional breakdown, left and headed south where he found a preacher, found God, and returned to Minnesota in 1837. He asked forgiveness and married her in the Christian church. Na-he-no-Wenah took the baptized name of Mary, and after 14 years after their Dakota marriage, they were married by Reverend Samuel Pond.

Na-he-no-Wenah, a Christianized Dakota married Prescott wearing a wedding outfit that combined Dakota and European garb, including moccasins, blue broadcloth pantalets and skirt, several dozen string of dark cut glass beads, and a blue broadcloth blanket thrown over her shoulders.

After living near Bde Maka Ska, Na-he-no-Wenah and her children lived with her Dakota kin at Oak Grove. Prescott tried to support the family with farming and trading. Then he got a job as an interpreter, and so they lived near Fort Snelling for ten years. Then the family moved to a house on the route between Fort Snelling to St. Anthony Falls, where they operated a tavern and inn. While Prescott was hired in 1854 to be a supervisory farmer and government interpreter, he traveled between the homestead and the reservation until, in the late 1850s, Na-he-no-Wenah and three of their children moved to live with Prescott at the Lower Sioux Agency.