# Eras of the West End

## Amazing West End Neighborhoods of Saint Paul.



The white sandstone bluffs of *Imnizha ska*/Downtown Saint Paul. 2018 Image Joe Landsberger

Historians have neglected West Seventh neighborhoods of the City of Saint Paul. Or they date its origins at Fort Snelling and ignore the thousands of years of Native settlement that preceded it, or the waves of immigrants of the modern era that continue to this day. Between Fort Snelling and the Upper Landing/downtown Saint Paul there were no grand events or grand personages to interest them. I disagree.

It begins at Bdote and the advent of the Americans, Fort Snelling. Just as the Mississippi River flows along Fort Road, so also our city's history flows through 17 miles of riverfront, our river's bluffs--and its terraced-plateaus.[1]

With this book, you will wander through hundreds of images and text of history, and of the geology of our neighborhoods. Perhaps you will wonder how not only our neighborhoods, but also our city and state came to be? Half a billion years ago we were in a great sea. Two million years ago came the glaciers. When they melted, the water rushed through the West End--the Great Morain was formed and the history of Native and current settlement began.

The great majority of the first European settlers were immigrants from Bavaria, Bohemia and Baden-Württemberg who drained swamps and cleared the "Big Woods", who worked and built, who organized and socialized. To uncover their story, I looked up building permits from 1880 at the Ramsey County Historical Society, researched genealogies of the builders and read old newspapers for stories. I tried to borrow Native and immigrant voices to tell their stories. As you wander this history, I hope you'll gain a sense of place, of neighborhood and of city that forms our pedestrian West End. Each of our neighborhoods reflects a unique pattern of development, their immigrant roots as well as entrepreneurial spirit. As with my histories of the past twenty years, I've attempted to bring to light not only each neighborhood's uniqueness, but also residential homes, businesses and communities that were their product.

"(Our) city is built on three tables of plateaus. The first is the river bottom proper, raised above high water-mark by the railroads. The second plateau is the main business portion of the city. This plateau is thickly studded with business blocks of commanding appearance, and as it overhangs the river for some distance with a sharp bluff-like bank for several miles up and down the stream, it gives the (West End) a fine appearance to the visitor approaching it by river or rail. Much of this plateau is a bed of limestone, splendid building material, some twenty feet in thickness. The third or highest plateau of land is a semi-circular range of hills, surrounding the main portion of the city, rising to a considerable elevation above the river." [1]

## A Sense of Place

"The relationship of a people to the lands where they live is crucial for understanding their history and culture."[2]

From Bdote to Imnizha ska (from Fort Snelling to Seven Corners) the West End has had a complex geologic and demographic history. Minnesota contains some of the oldest rock on Earth, granitic gneisses that formed some 3,600 million years ago, about 80% the age of the planet.

About two million years ago, an ice sheet expanded and retreated across the region. It retreated for the last time about 10,000 years ago, forming much of the state's ecology. While the north was still frozen, melting glaciers formed Lake Agassiz, the largest fresh water lake in the earth's history. As the great melt occurred, its River Warren drained south, creating the valleys of the Minnesota and Mississippi Rivers, and later the Red River of the North flowing toward Hudson Bay. The lake's southern outflow was catastrophic: rivers drained south in the Minnesota River, called the Glacial River Warren. The Mississippi and Minnesota Rivers entered their most confined stretch in a gorge from the Falls of Saint Anthony in Minneapolis to Saint Paul's downtown.



A "delusion" of three eras of the West End: An imaginary view telescoping three eras of the West End. Top right, St Anthony Falls retreating up the Mississippi River; top left, the retreating River Warren falls that carved St Paul's bluffs, now retreating up the Minnesota River; top center, Fort Snelling at Bdote, at the confluence of both rivers. Lower left, Dakota Natives viewing the past and future. Stuart Loughridge's watercolor interpretation is based on the Henry Lewis chromolithograph."

Glacial terraces rose more than 100-feet above the river. The gorge filled waters to the top of their bluffs, and great waterfalls were created at the current site of Downtown Saint Paul. Over 7,800 years powerful erosion forced the falls to retreat back through the West End. At Bdote-Fort Snelling the falls split: the River Warren falls receded west in the Minnesota River valley and dissolved; the Mississippi River waterfalls retreated to Saint Anthony where they became the only large cataract on the Mississippi River.

This Mississippi River gorge is the only true river gorge on the entire 2,350-mile length of the river. The gorge runs between the confluence of the Mississippi and Minnesota rivers, northward to the Falls of Saint Anthony and is 1,273-feet deep according to a sign in Minnehaha Park. But it's invisible to us, filled with glacial debris and under water because dams keep the river level artificially high enough for barge traffic—nine-feet deep in the shipping channel. Since that time the rivers' channels have changed little.

# Dakota Era



Indians in Camp. Image 1838c Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts-Seth Eastman,

Native settlement of Minnesota followed the retreat of the glaciers 12,000 years ago. The earliest settlers were Paleoindian (12,000-8,000 BCE). They lived by hunting woolly mammoth, giant buffalo and mastodon.

The Archaic (8,000–2500 BCE) people settled near the rivers and lakes with the arrival of the grass prairie or plains. Their diet was varied with berries, nuts and fruit, including water fowl and fish. They made stone tools, flint/chert projectile points, scrapers to process hides and for primitive cultivation.

Woodland (2500-300 BCE) and Oneota (300 BCE–1000 CE) people followed. The Dakota are considered descended from the Oneota. Their lands were called Mni Sota Makoce-Land Where the Waters Reflect the Clouds. Their origin story placed them at Mde Wakan (Mille Lacs Lake) and Bdote-the confluence of the Minnesota and Mississippi Rivers.

A wicasa wakan, a Dakota spiritual leader, Wanbdi Wakiya-Looking Eagle, stated "The power of the Dakotas had always dwelt in the land, from the great forest to the open prairies. Long before the white man ever dreamed of our existence, the Dakota roamed this land."[3] In 1823 geologist William H. Keating observed "The Dakotas have no tradition of having ever emigrated from any other place, to the spot upon which they now reside; they believe that they were created by the Supreme Being on the lands which they at present occupy."[4]

Bdote held special significance as the spiritual home for the Dakota. Across from Bdote rose O-He-Ya-Wa-He-Pilot Knob burial grounds. Prominent sites included Mnirara-Saint Anthony Falls and villages at Mendota, Shák'pí-Shakopee and Bde Maka Ska. Rivers provided the principle network of connection for their seasonal way of life; gatherings of the many Dakota bands centered on Mne Owe Sni-Coldwater Spring in Bdote.

"The Dakota knew Mni Sota Makoce as a network of connected places, each defined in specific ways. They followed a seasonal way of life, hunting game in the woods in winter, pursuing buffalo on the plains in summer, gathering edible plants in the woods and wetlands, fishing the rivers and lakes, ricing and growing gardens on the lakeshores and riverbanks." [5]

Dakota tribal lands included most of Minnesota and were organized as the Oceti Ŝakowiŋ-the Seven Council Fires of eastern and western peoples, with three dialects and seven major bands. The eastern Dakota, D dialect, Bdewakantunwan or Mdewakanton controlled the area of the West End including Bdote. Three other eastern groups were the Wahpetunwan-Wahpeton, Wahpekute, and Sissitunwan-Sisseton. The middle were Nakota/N Dialect and included the Yanktonai and Yankton (who identify as both Dakota and Nakota) and the Teton-Lakota. The Western or Teton Dakota, speakers of the Lakota/L Dialect, were Two Kettle, Blackfoot, Hunkpapa, Brule, Sansarc, Oglal and Miniconjou.

## Cycle of the Seasons and Moons in Dakota Life



Permanent Dakota Residence Image 1846-48 MNHS-Seth Eastman.

A traditional life style of communal support and a deep connection to the land and natural resources were the basis for Dakota society and culture. The Dakota adapted to their environment – meaning life for the Dakota-speaking people living in the eastern wooded areas of Minnesota differed for the Lakota-speaking people living on the prairies to the west.

Eastern Dakota villages were located near water in summer. Women were central keepers of the home and were valued for their architectural skills. Their bark lodges were ridge-roofed, made of a framework of poles, cut and peeled, lashed together with strips of bark. Elm bark covered the walls, moss insulated the roof, and earth the base. Buffalo hide lined the walls and a smoke hole vented the top. Inside, long benches extended from the walls where a family could eat, sit and sleep. Four or more families shared one house, each with their own corner for cooking, eating, sleeping and followed tribal customs of privacy. Exterior scaffolding was for processing meat and hides.

Villages relocated according to the seasons and the work at hand. They set up tipis in camp circles for sugaring, hunting, ricing, harvesting; their portability made them an ideal mobile dwelling. Buffalo hides were sewn together and wrapped around a conical frame of poles. A small tipi took seven or eight hides, a large council up to eighteen. The conical shape was ideal: lesser air volume at the top redirected heat to warm the lower living space. In summer, the edges of the tipi could be rolled and tied to allow for cool summer breezes.[6] In winter the screens of forests provided protection from winter winds

In the spring, women repaired tipis and prepared to move to higher ground from the snow melt. They relocated to sugaring camps where trees were tapped, sap boiled down into syrup and sweetener and poured into molds to cool and harden. (The box elder sap made for the best sweet!) Sap from ash and birch trees was collected for medicine; early berries gathered. Men moved into hunting camps for beaver, otter, martin, muskrat, mink and marten when the fur was thick and more valuable. Children enjoyed the outdoors after being confined throughout the winter.

*The natural world governed patterns of seasonal activities. The moons marked seasons and shaped daily activities, ceremonies, and spiritual beliefs. The full moon brought energy, the new moon introspection. Regardless of council fire and location, life was organized with the seasons.*

# Dakota Moon Cycle

## *Maġa Okada Wi*/April
### Geese Laying Eggs Moon



*Dakotah Village Image 1842 Minneapolis Institute of Arts-Seth Eastman.*

*Minnesota River valley winter elm-bark lodges. Porches allowed for a bit of shade and, up top, a handy spot to dry animal skins.*

## *Wóżupi Wi*/May
### Planting Moon



*Indians Traveling. Image 1850 Minneapolis Institute of Arts-Seth Eastman.*

*Women packed and harnessed dogs and/or horses with travois (double pole sledge) and relocated near rivers and lakes. They dug mounds to plant corn, potato, squash, pumpkin; harvested forest plants; gathered wood and ported water; processed game; and set to household chores including weaving and quilling. Platforms were built to survey crops and scare off birds. Men continued hunting and fishing.*

## *Ważušteca Ša Wi*/June
### Strawberries Ripening Moon



*Indian Sugar Camp-Nicollet Island. Image 1849-55 Minneapolis Institute of Arts-Seth Eastman.*

*When the men returned with game, women prepared the meat and hides. They gathered herbs, strawberries, blueberries, huckleberries, hazelnuts in the forests, and wild turnips, mdo/potato and psinchinca in marshes.*

## *Caŋpa Sápa Wi*/July
**Chokecherries Ripening Moon**



*Dakota Summer Lodge Image 1846-48 MNHS-Seth Eastman.*

*Chokecherries and pin cherries were picked and processed to make pemmican: a mix of dried meat, fat and fruit. Wasna, dried meat and chokecherries, was made and dried for winter use.*

## *Wasutuŋ Wi*/
**August Harvest Moon**



*Image MNHS-Seth Eastman.*

*Platforms served outposts for Dakota women bang on metal pots and wave cloth to scare off crows and blackbirds to protect the corn crop. The Dakota harvested a variety of crops, including: beans, squash, corn, sunflowers, and the beginning of the wild rice harvest. Berries, nuts and herbs were gathered for food, medicine, and dyes. Hunters brought in game, particularly buffalo, and the women processed the meat and hides for clothing and shelter, utensils and even sewing thread. Buffalo horns were used for spoons, cups, ladles and fire carriers. Even buffalo chips were used for fuel. Families gathered regionally to hold feasts and dances to give thanks and celebrate the harvest and to prepare for winter storage. In the late summer and into early fall, family groups collected and processed wild rice from the shallow waters.*

## *Psiŋhnaketu Wi*/
**September**
**When Rice is Laid up to Dry**



*Tanner. Dakota woman dressing a buffalo skin. Image 1853 Digital Public Library of America-Seth Eastman.*

*Villagers relocated to gather and dry wild rice, even cranberries, and continue winter preparations. Families moved to hunting grounds for the annual hunt that also prepared them for the upcoming winter. In autumn, families moved to the year's chosen hunting grounds for the annual hunt that also prepared them for the upcoming winter. As fall turned colder, smaller extended-family groups established mobile camps. Men hunted and women moved to the lodges and prepared food.*

## Dakota Moon Cycle

### *Wáżupi Wi/* October Drying Rice Moon



*Image 1860 Seth Eastman.*

*Ojibwe gathered rice for the harvest. Harvests were dried and stored; preparations were made for the coming winter's shelter.*

### *Tahecapšuŋ Wi/* November Deer Break Off Antlers Moon



*Winter buffalo hunt. Image Nicollet County Historical Society-Seth Eastman.*

*Deer were more easily tracked/hunted in snows, cooked or made into wasna, a mix of dried meat, tallow, and chokecherries. Dakota relocated to their lodges near forests in smaller villages to lessen the drain on local resources. Hunting and gathering activities continued in winter, so lodges often had designated work areas for preparing food and storing supplies. Winter, the most difficult of the seasons, saw people spread-out into smaller groups – mending clothes, subsiding on food gathered during the summer and fall, hunting, and fishing through the ice.*

### *Caŋpopapi Wi/* December Popping Trees Moon



*Hunting muskrats in winter. Image MIA-Seth Eastman.*

*With the freezing of December, twigs broke and popped from the cold. Winter months and long winter nights were spent tool making, crafting, making repairs as well as gathering for storytelling, games, singing and drumming, sharing oral histories and educating the young. Activities strengthened community bonds. They lived off the stores of supplies built up during the previous year, along with continual fishing and hunting.*

## *Wiṫehi Wi*/January Hard or Difficult Moon

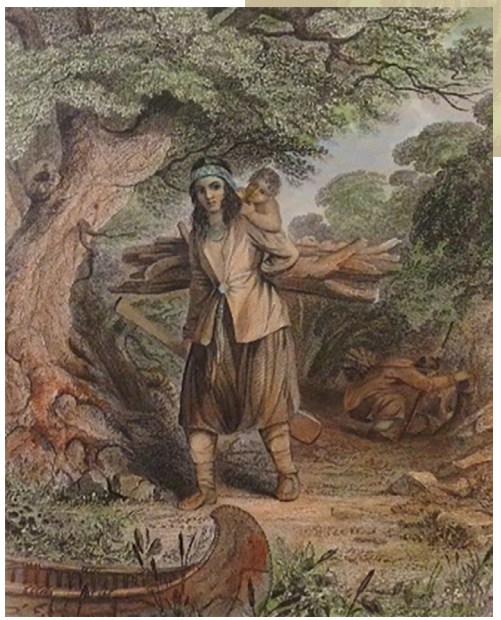
*Ice fishing (with spears). Image: US Capitol Collection, Washington D.C.-Seth Eastman.*



*Subsistence hunting, fishing through ice and gathering was limited by the cold temperatures, wind and deep snow. Fires were maintained from wood gathered in fall, and natives gathered for storytelling and games, drumming and singing.*

## *Wicata Wi*/February Raccoons' moon.

*Gathering wood. Image 1862 Seth Eastman*



*The waning of winter was still challenging for the Dakota. Warmer days and perhaps melting snows enabled hunters to track game as the animals emerged from winter dens—even though the animals provided less meat. Preparations continued to repair tools and tipis, and sew and decorate clothing, and prepare for spring/summer hunts and festivities. The communal fire still offered a location for singing, drumming and storytelling, and educating the young.*

## *Iśta Wicayazaŋ Wi*/March Sore Eyes Moon (snow glare)



*Departure for the Buffalo Hunt Image 1902 Smithsonian American Art Museum Henry Farny.*

*Melting of snows, retreating ice and emerging wildlife brought promise of the new year in April even though stores were dwindling. While the danger of sudden storms remained, the increased socialization and entertainments including wooing by the young. Winter months were spent living off the stores of supplies they built up during the previous year, along with continual fishing and hunting.*

## The Milky Way[10]



The Dakota people did not consider themselves to have a "religion" so much as a way of life. Prayers and spirituality were not separate from everyday life but were an integral part of each day. The word for God in the Dakota language is Wakan Tanka-great mystery. Wakan is the animating force of the universe, the common denominator of oneness. Wanka Tanka is grandfather and father, Maka Ina--earth is grandmother and mother… every step that is taken upon her should be as a prayer.

The spirits of the people came down from Canku Wanagi (the spirit road) made up of the stars of the Milky Way. When they arrived on earth, the Creator shaped the first people from the clay of Maka Ina-Mother Earth. The people were the Oceti Sakowin, a society that reflected their cosmic origin.[7] Dakota viewed the world holistically, in the interdependence of all life forms. All living things were related, fashioned by the Creator for a specific purpose and therefore deserved respect. The symbiotic relationship of the Creator with the earth and its inhabitants is the natural order—only disrupted by humans. With the natural order, animals, plant life and sacred locations act as a conduit for humanity, as do the spirits of relatives who have gone to the spirit world. They provide guidance and wisdom if honored.

The phrase mitakuye oyasin-we are all related/all my relations concludes prayers to express this belief. For the Dakota, the greatest responsibility was to be a good relative. Their society depended on social order and cooperation for survival, and rules governed behavior. Being a relative meant taking care of all of your relatives.

"Everyone who was born a Dakota belonged in it; nobody need be left outside ... I can safely say that the ultimate aim of Dakota life, stripped of accessories, was quite simple: One must obey kinship rules; one must be a good relative. No Dakota who has participated in that life will dispute that ... Without that aim and the constant struggle to attain it, the people would no longer be Dakotas in truth. They would no longer even be human. To be a good Dakota, then, was to be humanized, civilized."[8]

Tyospaye-(extended) family defined Dakota kinship ties that consisted of 10 to 20 conjugal families. "One's first duty was to one's tiyospaye, then to one's conjugal family … In terms of this kinship structure, the Dakota woman's primary role was clearly defined. In a hunting society such as hers, the childrearing in the early years was carried out by the child's mothers, aunts and grandmothers. The perpetuation of the tiyspacy was contingent upon the education of the children by them."[9]

A couple went to live with the bride's family and the husband became a son in the wife's family. If a woman lost her husband to war or sickness, her husband's brother would often take her into his home as a second wife. Children were raised with a wealth of relatives to guide them through life. Orphans were quickly taken in by their relatives. Children were wakan yeja-sacred beings..

The Dakota recognized the importance of elders: wisdom comes with age and elders earned and deserved respect. Another word for God was tunkasila-grandfather.



Natives in Council.
Image Minneapolis Institute of Arts-Seth Eastman .

## Ritual Vision Quest



Indian Doctor Concocting a Pot of Medicine. Image 1855 Seth Eastman



Bdote at high water/flood stage with a framework for a “lodge” with an unattributed and unclear purpose. Image 2024 Joe Landsberger

A vision quest is a rite of passage in some Native American cultures, with various names and practices. "Vision quest" is the English-language umbrella term, and can vary by tribe.

Ella Deloria: "Dakota religious life was purely individual. There was nothing that all must do with reference to God, but only what each man felt as an inner compulsion that could not be denied." This individuality is reflected in the vision quest, in which no one really knows beforehand what to expect, only that it should be performed with an abundance of circumspection.

The quest begins with the guidance of a wicasa wakan, a holy man, and with the smoking of the pipe that is at the center of every critical ceremony. It connects the heart of the smoker with the power of the wakan beings. As Black Elk relates in The Sacred Pipe, the next step is for elders to choose and prepare a sacred site, and build a sweat lodge, or inipi, in which the purification ritual will be enacted.

After instruction and purification, he entered alone clad only in a breech cloth, protected only by a few symbolic feathers and a sacred pipe, sat down in a sacred circle in the great solitude, and in utter humility and complete self-abnegation, prayed and awaited his destiny. He never knelt in stuttering supplication; he never groveled; he faced the Great Mystery as a man alone. He fasted, prayed and cried out to the spirits that he may have a vision, one that will help him find his purpose in life and his role in community. The threshold experience can be characterized with dreams or visions, often involving natural symbolism (animals or forces of nature) that will require interpretation. The most important event provided him his adult name and his destiny.

*Henáka Sápa, commonly known as Black Elk (baptized Nicholas; 1863 -1950, was awičháša wakháŋ ("medicine man, holy man") and heyoka of the Oglala Lakota people. He was a second cousin of Crazy Horse and fought with him in the Battle of Little Bighorn. He survived the Wounded Knee Massacre in 1890. He toured and performed in Europe as part of Buffalo Bill's Wild West. Black Elk is best known for his interviews with poet John Neihardt, where he discussed his religious views, visions, and events from his life. Neihardt published these in his book Black Elk Speaks, William Morrow & Company, 1932.*

## Ptesanwin--
## White Buffalo Calf Woman[12]

One day two men were out hunting. Suddenly a beautiful young woman stood before them. One hunter recognized that she was wakan--mystery but the other hunter saw only a beautiful woman and had lustful thoughts about her. This man was immediately enveloped in a cloud of smoke. When the smoke cleared, a pile of bones was left in the place where the man had stood.

The other hunter became very afraid but the woman reassured him. She told him that she came bearing a gift for the people and instructions for a good and sacred way of living. She told the hunter to return to his people and tell them to prepare for her to visit. The next day, the woman returned bearing the sacred pipe and instructed the people in the sacred ceremonies of the people.

After the woman instructed the people for four days, she left the pipe and walked away from the camp, making four transformations in appearance until she became a white buffalo calf.

The legend of Ptesanwin, or White Buffalo Calf Woman, explains how the Lakota/Dakota people came by the sacred calf pipe and their most important ceremonies.

This specific pipe, which is still kept to this day, is considered the most sacred possession of the Lakota/Dakota people. Pipes are used in ceremonial manner to represent truthfulness between those who smoke it.

## Pipestone Quarry



George Catlin's Pipestone Quarry on the Coteau des Prairies (in Southwest Minnesota) Image 1836 Smithsonian American Art Museum

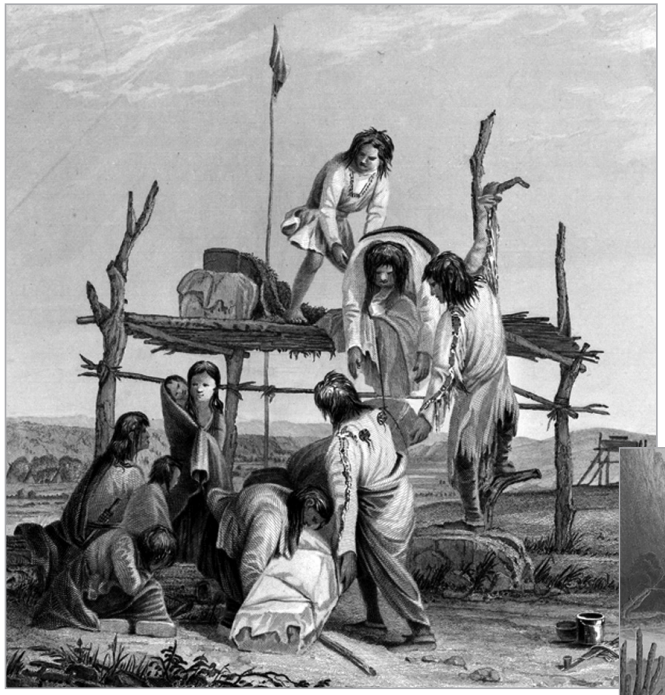
*George Catlin:*
*From the very numerous marks of ancient and modern diggings or excavations, it would appear that this place has been for many centuries resorted to for the red stone; and from the great number of graves and remains of ancient fortifications in its vicinity, it would seem, as well as from their actual traditions, that the Indian tribes have long held this place in high superstitious estimation; and also that it has been the resort of different tribes, who have made their regular pilgrimages here to renew their pipes.*[11]

## 2009: Dakota-Ojibwe Alliance

Wiyaka Sinte Win-Tail Feather Woman was a young Dakota who in the mid-1870s, created a spiritual drum from a vision she experienced when her hunting camp came under attack by U.S. soldiers. It was delivered by her relatives to the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe with instructions for its ceremonial use as an instrument of peace and friendship between the Dakota and Ojibwe. In 1878 the Mille Lacs Ojibwe passed duplicate drums to Ojibwe relatives at other reservations with instructions for ceremonial use. Before long, the ceremonial drum society was established throughout Minnesota and Wisconsin Ojibwe villages, and among the Wisconsin Menominee and Potawatomi villages. Ceremonial drum services progressed into multi-day gatherings of tribal societies, each devoted to spiritual ritual, sermons and celebration, all conducted in the Ojibwe language, with a focus on the example set by Tail Feather Woman.

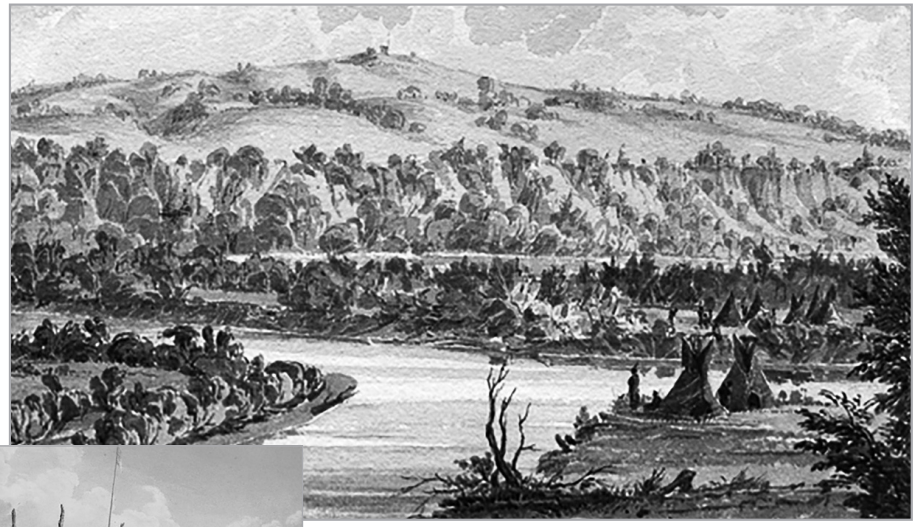
On April 18, 2009 Santee Dakota spiritual leaders presented a horse to Ojibwe spiritual leaders from the Mille Lacs Tribe in northern Minnesota at the conclusion of a lengthy Ojibwe drum ceremony. It was held to commemorate an armistice arranged between them more than 130 years earlier.

## Burial practice



Indian Burial. Image 1853-56 Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts-Charles Kennedy Burt after Seth Eastman

At death, eyes and mouth were closed, the body cleansed and wrapped with personal effects, and mourning begun. After a wake, the body was elevated on scaffolding for a year, heads pointed south. Wailing and communicating with the spirit of the deceased then continued for the year, when the bones were gathered and mourned for the last time and interred in burial mounds.



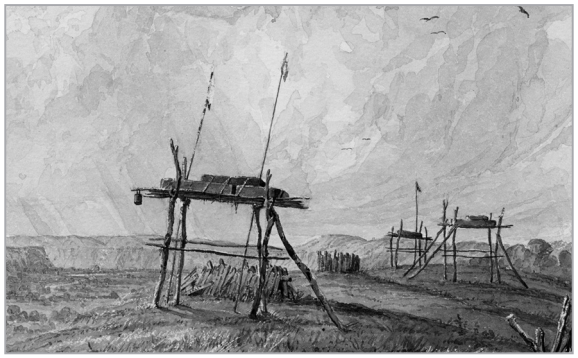
View towards O-He-Ya-Wa-He (Pilot Knob) burial grounds from Bdote. Image c 148 MNHS-Seth Eastman



Two Dakota women offering food to the deceased at a burial scaffold. Image 1851 Library of Congress Prints and Photographs-Seth Eastman



Native American burial mounds in Indian Mounds Regional Park. Image 2010 Wikipedia-McGhiever.



Indian Burial Ground (detail). O-He-Ya-Wa-He (Pilot Knob) Dakota Burial Place near Fort Snelling. Image 1846-48 MNHS-Seth Eastman.

## Sights and Sites of My Dakota Homeland
## An Historical Fiction by Sam Darling



Winona views the carving of Wakinyan on the limestone bluff of the Mississippi on the way to Bdote. An artistic depiction by Stuart Loughridge 2024.

My Mother's lodge is in our summer village of Kaṗoża along the Haha Wakpa-River of the Falls/Mississippi River that our neighboring tribe to the north, the Ojibwe, call the Misi-ziibi-Great River. Our lodge is quite large and five families sleep around its walls. I am called Winona as all eldest daughters are named. I am not yet of marrying age, and still learning about my tribe's customs and even place names. When we returned from maple sugaring—my favorite is candy from box elder trees—and the men returned from winter muskrat hunting, my mother decided that she and I should visit our Dakota prominent sites along the great river, and also take gifts of tobacco to neighboring villages for ball playing and a dance later in summer. Since she paddled her husband on fishing and hunting trips, my mother was very expert and began to introduce me to these skills.

My mother already has taught me to plant corn and beans and gather wild rice, the arts of bead and quill work with my own awl, and making and repairing clothing from skins she prepared, as well as building our elm bark lodges and tipis from hides. A woman's work is never done!

Our first site up river was the caves of Wakáŋ Tipi-Dwelling of the Great Spirit/ (Carver's Cave), our place of ceremony and burial for many ages. The six caves contain ancient drawings of Uŋktehi-a water serpent spirit, though fallen rock has blocked

## Homeland, continued

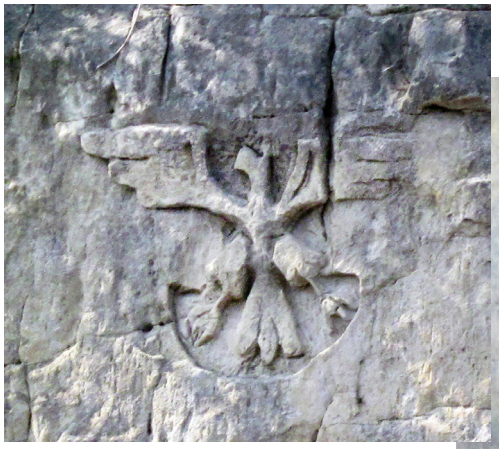
some entrances. On the bluff, several scaffolds hold the painted and wrapped blankets, food and their precious items, of our deceased tribal members.

As we continued up river, my mother told me of a dream she had of the conflicting Uŋktehi and Wakinyan-Thunderbird, carved into the soft stone bluff of the river. She pointed out the place of her vision, but I did not understand.

We continued our way to Bdote where the rivers joined and passed the white bluffs of Imnizha ska, and then the great cave of In-Yan Ti-Pi-Fountain Cave. Soon in the distance I began to see O-He-Ya-Wa-He-Hill Much Visited/Pilot Knob or Wotakuye Paha-Hill of all the Relatives, our sacred burial place of centuries. This hill has been our gathering place that we shared with the Ojibwe and Iowa people, and a place for ceremonies and burials. We honored my mother's father's spirit and burial mound and sang his death song as his wanagi-spirit made its way in the spirit world.

From O-He-Ya-Wa-He we crossed the rivers Haha Wakpa and Wakpa Mnisota (Minnesota River), my first experience with this sacred place. We call it Bdote, where the rivers came together and our Dakota nation came to be, one center of our spirituality and history. Here there are no villages: all the land and waters are reserved for our spiritual practices and tribal gatherings especially the drum and pipe ceremonies, dances and gaming, of the many Dakota villages and clans of the Oceti Ŝakowiŋ.

### Wakinyan



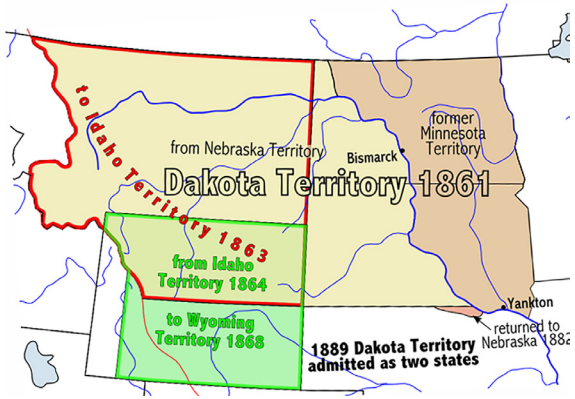
*Wakinyan*, the Thunderbird rock carving on the West End's limestone bluffs: Wakinyan, the Thunderbird, is a powerful sky spirit in the form of a giant bird, with wings that make the sound of thunder and eyes that shoot lightning. Wakinyan is the enemy of Unktehi. Anonymous *wapiya wicasta*/sculptor. Image 2017 Joe Landsberger.

### Unktehi



*Unktehi*, the Serpent Spirit rock carving on the West End's Mississippi River limestone bluffs. The Serpent Spirit, has "existed since the beginning of time" and is "the connection between the human, the plants, and the animal world, and the philosophy was that he always lies underneath the earth, and all things grow from him, such as trees, the roots, the plants, the waters, everything".[13] Anonymous wapiya wicasta/sculptor. Image 2017 Joe Landsberger.

### Dakota Homeland , 1861-1889




Dakota homeland Image 1861-1889 Wikimedia

## Ceremonial Dance



Camp of Dakota in a medicine dance. Image 1849 American Museum of Western Art-Seth Eastman

Dances served many ritual purposes.

The Beggars Dance is a serious fundraiser. Participants sing as loudly as possible, dancing with purpose, encouraging the audience to contribute goods to those in need--generosity being a hallmark of communal living among the Dakota.

The Sun Dance is a sacred ceremony of prayer and sacrifice. It lasts approximately one week and involves piercing the skin of the breast, shoulders or back.

The becoming-woman ceremony celebrates the time when a young girl begins her menstrual cycle and officially becomes a woman.

The "spirit keeping" ceremony keeps a deceased relative's spirit for one year. After that time, it is "released" with a feast, give-away and ceremony.

In the vision quest ceremony, a young man goes upon a hill to fast and pray for a vision that will tell him the purpose of his life.



Beggars Dance. Encouraging donations to be shared with those in need. Image 1850 Minneapolis Institute of Arts-Seth Eastman.

The making-relative, or "hunka," ceremony is used to adopt a non-blood relative.

Throwing of the ball ceremony is a symbolic "game" that showed thankfulness for life.

The wacipi--powwow is a traditional celebration of life. People gather to dance, sing, celebrate and renew friendships. Meaning "they dance" in the Dakota language, the wacipi has transcended generations and has taken on new forms and meanings over the years. Historically, it was a time to gather at the end of a season, to celebrate a good hunt or to recognize a positive event.

## Role of Native Drums



Native American Drums.
Image 2024 The American History.org

Native American drums were an important instrument in most Native American Indian tribal celebrations, ceremonies, and spiritual festivals. While the native people sing and dance to the beat of the drums, they try to find a close connection with their gods or creator. The Native American drums were acknowledged as their own being and symbolize a strong relationship with their creator. To most indigenous tribes, the Native American drums contain thunder and lightning. When struck, it gets the attention of the creator and helps to connect with the spirits of the Indian's forefathers.[14]

## Takapsicapi-lacrosse ballplay



Ballplay of the Dakota on the St. Peters (Minnesota) River in Winter. Image 1848 Museum of American Art-Amon Carter

Dakota ballplay or takapsicapi-lacrosse was played with a hooped ball racket or club and a wooden or leather ball by teams of up to a hundred men and/or women, whether between tribes (Ojibwe; Dakota; Ho-Chunk; Sauk and Fox) or between villages, in summer or in winter on frozen waters, lasting several days over a half-mile field. Betting was common practice with enthusiastic fans along the sidelines (policed!) with plentiful food etc. Players' body paint reflected cultural themes (sky, animals, birds) with flowing decorations.

## Plum Stone Game



Dakota women playing Plum Stones game. Image 1850 MNHS- Seth Eastman

The plum stone game was accompanied by songs and playful mocking while betting on which colors the thrown stones will show. Often played during pow-wows and other tribal get-togethers.

## Native Gaming

In Bryan v. Itasca County (1976) the Supreme Court of the United States held that a state did not have the right to tax property of a Native American (Indian) living on tribal land and that Native gaming was to be regulated exclusively by Congress (not state) governments. The Court held that states lacked the authority to regulate Native activities on their reservations. With tribal sovereignty, benefits of gaming became available to recognized tribes.

Aside from revenue, casinos became centers for native crafts, entertainment, derivative services and often were their counties largest employers.

## Haŋpa Apena/Moccasin Game [15]



Native American men playing the moccasin game. Image 1926-1959 MNHS- Frances Theresa Densmore.

Haŋpa Apena/Moccasin Game is a guessing game to find which moccasin hid the (rock).

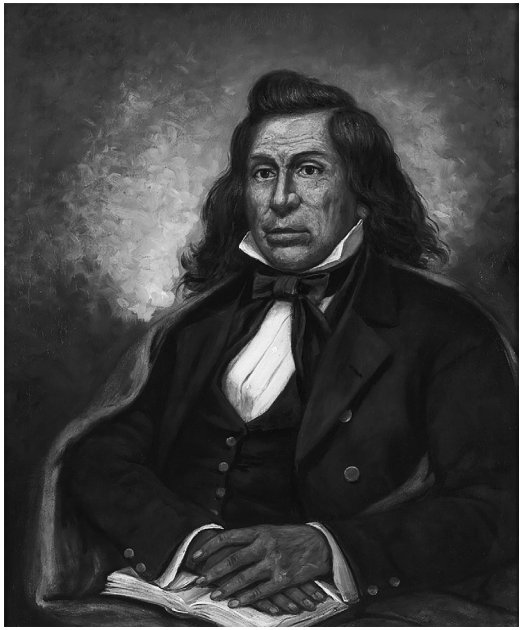
The Dakota story of the game's origins, as told by Darell Decoteau. In a time of famine, two hunting parties, Dakota and Ojibwe, came across an elk in a disputed territory. To keep the peace, they devised a game that involved chance and sleight of hand. Moccasins were lined up, and players took turns striking the moccasin with a bow they thought hid an arrowhead. The first to collect all the arrows won. The rules are complicated!) Legend has it that the winning team became the stewards of the elk herd.

## 1818-1863: Taoyateduta (Little Crow)[16]

Taoyateduta (Little Crow) succeeded his father in 1846, and was recognized as a spokesperson for all the Lower bands of Dakota. He was a negotiator and signer of the Treaty of Mendota in 1851 and the Treaty of 1858. While he adopted some European customs, he ”staunchly refused to compromise his Dakota religious beliefs....

On September 7, 1862 — three weeks into the fighting of the US-Dakota War of 1862, Little Crow sent a letter to Henry Sibley pinpointing the reasons Lower warriors went to war. Little Crow's letter condenses decades of frustration over misuse of government funds, late annuity payments and poor relations between government officials and Dakota leaders into a few terse sentences.

After the Battle of Wood Lake, he left Minnesota and attempted to gather support for a continued war in the west and Canada. He was killed on July 3, 1863 after returning to Minnesota. For many years some of his remains were put on display by the Minnesota Historical Society before being returned to his descendants for burial.

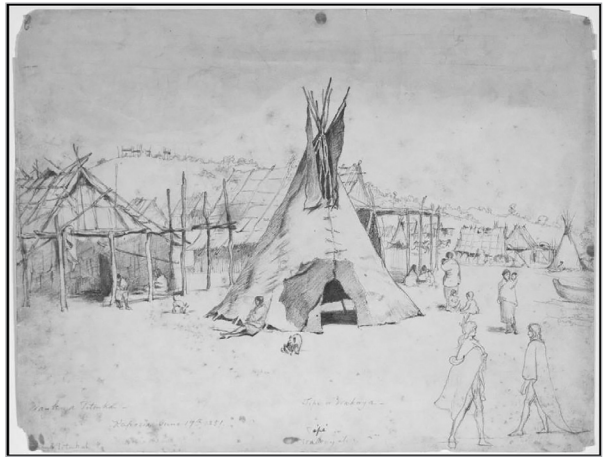


Taoyateduta (Little Crow) Image 1863 Minneapolis Institute of Art-Henry H. Cross,



Looking toward Bdote from the St. Peter's (Minnesota) River. Image ca. 1848 MNHS-Seth Eastman

## 1851: Kap'oża Village of Little Crow



Kap'oża Village of Little Crow. Sioux Indian drawings and oil paintings. Image 1851 Frank Blackwell Mayer

Frank Blackwell Mayer (1851) traveled to Minnesota Territory and attended the signing of the Treaty of Traverse des Sioux between the Dakota and the U.S. government. He was invited by missionary Dr. Thomas Smith Williamson to visit his residence at Kap'oża, or Little Crow's village at the Lower Landing (Phelan Creek). The village was “situated on a small piece of bottom land which intervenes between the bluffs & the Mississippi river.” Kap'oża was known for making dugouts, made by hollowing pine trees with axes and adze.

## Mdewakanton (Eastern) Dakota Tribal Recognition.



Wabasha's village of Mdewakanton Dakota on the Mississippi River, Image 1845 MNHS-Seth Eastman.

After 1862 the U.S. government terminated all treaties with the Dakota and about 1,300 Dakota people, many of whom were Mdewakantons, were taken from Minnesota to the Crow Creek Reservation in South Dakota. Those who stayed were rendered landless and homeless.

In the 1880s, the federal government purchased land for Minnesota Mdewakantons, and federally recognized communities of the Lower Sioux, Upper Sioux, Prairie Island and, in 1969 the Shakopee Mdewakanton Dakota.

The Mendota Mdewakanton Dakota Tribal community (MMDTC) is a fifth Dakota community in Minnesota. It was officially formed in 1997 as a non-profit and is currently in the process of applying for federal acknowledgment by the Department of the Interior. Members are descendants of French and Indian intermarriages, majority of descendants of Angelique Renville and her husband Hypolite Dupuis. Renville was a descendant of Cetan Wakuwa Mani who was also known as "Little Crow."

To gain federal recognition, prospective tribes must meet seven criteria:

1. Indian entity identification: American Indian entity on a substantially continuous basis since 1900.

2. Community: distinct community and existed as a community from 1900 until the present."

3. Political influence or authority: maintained political influence or authority over its members as an autonomous entity from 1900 until the present."

4. Governing document: a governing document including its membership criteria.

5. Descent: individuals who descend from a historical Indian tribe

6. Unique membership: composed principally of persons who are not members of any acknowledged North American Indian tribe."

7. Congressional termination: petitioner nor its members are the subject of congressional legislation that has expressly terminated or forbidden the Federal relationship."

The cultural practices of the MMDTC look much the same as the broader Dakota people's, carried down from precolonial times. The Mendota Community have the distinction of "Keepers of the Eastern Gate," which is the concept that tribes at each cardinal direction defend the Dakota people as a whole. Over 125 current members in good standing meet monthly at the DuPuis House in Mendota, Minnesota. They offer monthly tribal meetings, a yearly Wacipis (Pow Wow), classes on the Dakota language and on cultural activities. These practices allow the community to uphold their ancestors' beliefs and practices and to educate others.