

## Densmore's Primary Informants

**Itǎ́kasaŋ Lúta (Red Weasel)**, a member of the Teton division of the tribe.

Concerning the Sun Dance, Red Weasel is considered the highest authority among the Teton Sioux. He acted as Intercessor four times, the last occasion being the Sun Dance of 1881, the final ceremony held by the Teton in Dakota. He also took part in the dance four times, once being suspended from the pole and three times by receiving cuts on his arms. In earlier years he was trained for the office of *Khuwákhiyapi* (Intercessor) by *Wí-ihánbla* (Dreamer of the Sun), who died about the middle of the last century.

When Red Weasel gave his information concerning the Sun Dance he was approximately 80 years old, yet he traveled 43 miles by wagon in order to participate. The sun shone in a cloudless sky while he was at the agency, and his presence was so highly esteemed by the old people that many said, "We have fine weather because Red Weasel is with us."



**Ziŋtkála Lúta (Red Bird)**, a Teton Sioux, took part in the Sun Dance at the age of 24 years, receiving 100 cuts on his arms in fulfillment of a Sun Dance vow. His uncle was an Intercessor in the Sun Dance and Red Bird was receiving instructions from him with a view to filling that office when the Sun Dance was discontinued. His uncle's name was *Tǎčháǵula* (His Lungs) who died in the year 1868.



**Mathó Khuwápi (Chased-by-Bears)**, a Santee-Yanktonai took part in the Sun Dance twice as Leader of the Dancers and was present at the final Sun Dance of The Teton. His first participation in the dance was in 1867, when at the age of 24 years he had “spoken the vow” of a war party. On that occasion as well as at the Sun Dances he cut the arms of men, suspended them to the pole or fastened buffalo skulls to their flesh, according to the nature of their vows. He said that he once saw a vision. He was dancing in the Sun Dance, and as he looked steadily at the sun he saw a man beneath the sun, the man’s face being painted red and white. Chased by Bears died in February 1915.



**Mathú Watǵákpe (Charging Bear)**; he is best known, however, as **John Grass**. He was noted as a warrior against other tribes, but was always friendly to the white men. John Grass is a Teton and was a successful leader of war parties. When the Black Hills treaty and other treaties were made with the Government, he was the principal speaker for the Sioux tribe. Since that time he has constantly influenced his people to adopt the customs of civilization. He has been to Washington as a tribal delegate and for 30 years has been the leading judge of the Court of Indian Offenses on the Standing Rock Reservation. As a young man, he was selected to choose the Sun Dance pole, but never made a Sun Dance vow.

**Itǎ́ŋkasaŋ Mathó (Weasel Bear)** is a Teton Sioux. He was once selected to choose the Sun Dance pole but never fulfilled a vow at a Sun Dance. He once made a similar vow which, however, was fulfilled privately. Weasel Bear is hereditary chief of a large band and belongs to one of its wealthiest families. As a young man he was successful in war, a prominent member of the White Horse Riders, and a leader in the grass dance. When negotiations with the Government were begun he was one of the tribal delegates to Washington. In his later years, he is known as one of the most prosperous native farmers on the reservation.



**Wakínyaŋ Watǎ́kpe (Charging Thunder)**, a Teton Sioux, is an hereditary chief of a band and a highly respected member of the tribe. He took part in the Sun Dance four times, at the ages of 21, 23, 24, and 25. On each occasion, he had vowed that 100 cuts should be made on his arms, but the last time there was not room for all the cuts on his arms, so about 20 were made on his chest. He is a man of genial countenance and powerful physique. In speaking of himself he said, “My prayer has been heard and I have lived long.”

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GOOSE

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**Mağá (Goose)**, was a member of the Teton division, and at the time of giving his information was 76 years of age. He still continued the practice of native medicine and was considered the best Indian doctor on the reservation. He took part in the Sun Dance at the age of 27, being suspended from the Sun Dance pole. Goose served for a time in the United States Army. The records of the War Department show that he enlisted September 11, 1876, in Buffalo County, Dakota Territory, as a scout, U. S. A., and served almost continuously in that capacity until July 10, 1882.

BUREAU OF AMERICAN ETHNOLOGY BULLETIN 61 PLATE 1

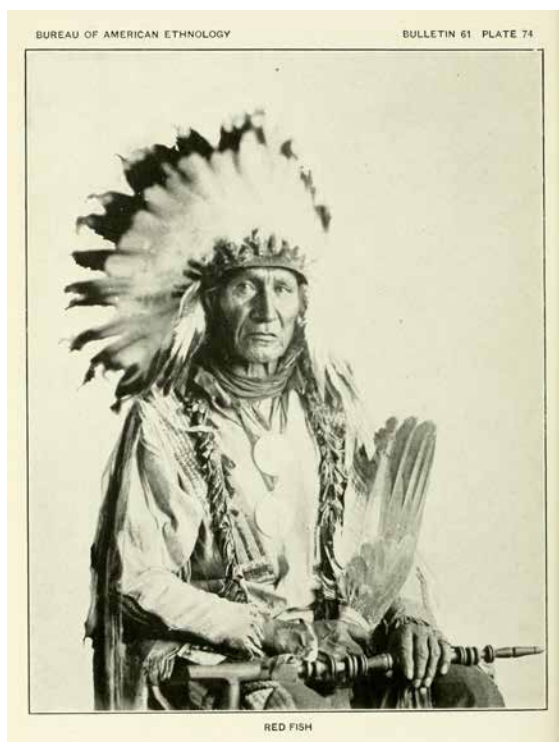


ŠIYA'KA

**Šiyáka (Teal Duck)**, was a Yanktonai-Teton. Instead of being known by the English equivalent of his Sioux name he was known as Siya'ka, the name used in the present work. He was not an hereditary chief, but was elected chief of a band. He took part in the Sun Dance twice as a young man and was also one of the four young men selected to choose the Sun Dance pole. The first time he took part in the Sun Dance was at the age of 21 in fulfillment of a vow made on the warpath. His second participation in the Sun Dance was at the age of 25, and he bore three long scars on each arm as an evidence of the ordeal. He was once a tribal delegate to Washington. Šiyáka died in March, 1913.



**Třokála Lúta (Red Fox)**, is a member of the Teton band. He was prominent in the Sun Dance, taking part three times, at the ages of 19, about 30, and 40 years. The last time, he had several buffalo skulls fastened to his back. As evidence of his other Sun Dance vows he bears nine long scars on each arm, three near the wrist, four near the elbow, and two on the upper arm. In 1911 Red Fox adopted Frances as his daughter giving her the name of Two White Buffalo.



**Hoǵán Lúta (Red Fish)**, a Santee-Yanktonai, is a chief and is a prominent man in the councils of the tribe. He took part in the Sun Dance twice, first when he was 26 years old, and the second time at the age of 40.



**Išnála Wičhá (Lone Man)**, a Teton, took part in the Sun Dance when 20 and when 31 years of age, and has 100 scars on each arm. He was chosen on one occasion to help select the Sun Dance pole and on another occasion to sing at the drum. He was prominent in tribal wars and took part in the Battle of the Little Bighorn.

**Mázakħaŋ-Wičhákiŋ (Seizes-the-Gun-away-from-Them)**, a Teton, took part in the Sun Dance, being suspended from the pole. He stated that when he was on the warpath, all the warriors made a Sun Dance vow, so he joined them, asking that he might conquer the enemy and capture horses, also that he might find his friends alive when he reached home. In fulfilling this vow he remained suspended for more than an hour, after which he was “jerked down,” but the flesh still refused to tear and only the sticks were broken. The flesh was then cut and the splinters of wood remaining underneath were removed, after which a tiny portion of flesh was offered as in the case of that cut from the arms.



**Ṭhaṭḥanka Hoḳšila (Buffalo Boy)**, is a Santee-Yanktonai. At the age of 30 he carried six buffalo skulls when fulfilling a Sun Dance vow. Ten years later, he took part in the dance again. He received his name from a dream in which he saw the buffalo.



**Čhanté Waníča (No Heart)** a Yanktonai, is a well known Medicine Man of the tribe and is able to depict events by means of drawings. He took part in the Sun Dance when 20 years of age and has 100 scars on each arm.



**Ptesán Máni (White-Buffalo-Walking)**, is a Teton and took part in the final Sun Dance in 1882.