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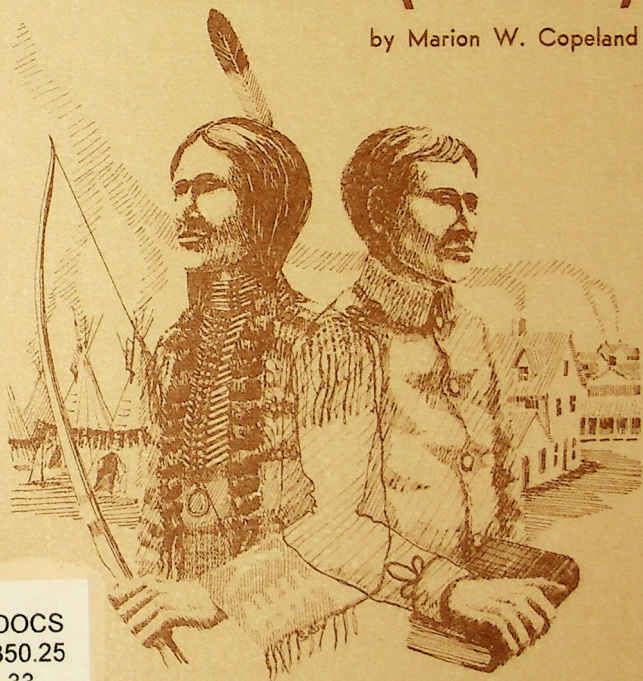


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No. 33

# CHARLES ALEXANDER EASTMAN (OHIYESA)

by Marion W. Copeland



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BOISE STATE UNIVERSITY  
BOISE, IDAHO



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Eastman (Ohiyesa)*

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Library of Congress Card No. 78-052562

International Standard Book No. 0-88430-057-9

Printed in the United States of America by  
The Caxton Printers, Ltd.  
Caldwell, Idaho

*Charles Alexander Eastman (Ohiyesa)*

## Charles Alexander Eastman (*Ohiyesa*)

Because Charles Eastman's best known book is his earliest, *Indian Boyhood* (1902), and because that autobiography and its sequel, *From the Deep Woods to Civilization* (1916), have been most often used as sources for studies of the cultural transition of the Sioux, the literary value of those and of Eastman's later books has gone largely unexamined. Eastman subtitled the 1916 volume *The Autobiography of an Indian*, but one cannot therefore assume that the conventions of European-American autobiography control Eastman's work.

In *Plains Indian Autobiographies*, Lynne Woods O'Brien explains that Indian autobiography does not "limit itself to 'real' or historical events in the autobiographer's present or past life" (p. 5). In fact, the forms of Plains Indian autobiography suggest that the Indian's reality is quite distinct from the historical perspective of the European tradition. "Vision," for instance, "allows the autobiographer to explore his future life by spiritual means" (O'Brien, p. 5), while the war or *coup* story recounts what white culture would call a historical event. Chronological tracing of a life was not traditional among the Plains tribes because, in their days of solidarity, the life of one member of a tribe differed very little from that of any other member. Only great achievements and visions were recorded, and they were significant only in their effect upon the tribe.

*Ohiyesa's* (Eastman's) vision quest, he tells us in both *Indian Boyhood* and *From the Deep Woods*, began among his uncle's

exiled band in the wilderness of Ontario's Turtle Mountains when he was fifteen.

I had already begun to invoke the blessing of the Great Mystery. Scarcely a day passed that I did not offer up some of my game, so that he might not be displeased with me. My people saw very little of me during the day, for in solitude I found the strength I needed. I groped about in the wilderness, and determined to assume my position as a man. My boyish ways were departing, and a sullen dignity and composure was taking their place. (*Boyhood*, p. 285)

The youth's father, Many Lightnings, who was believed dead for over ten years, appeared at the apex of the boy's quest for vision. Determined to take his son back with him, Many Lightnings—whose story is a part of Eastman's autobiography rather than of his vision quest—seemed to the boy to be a ghost, a being from the Spirit Land, who snatched him away from a lifestyle appropriate for a Sioux warrior. In a state of shock, Ohiyesa, his grandmother, and young cousin left the band of Mysterious Medicine. "I felt," he would write later, "as if I were dead and travelling to the Spirit Land" (*Boyhood*, p. 288).

Eastman, feeling that he had been ripped untimely from the "womb of our mother, the Earth" (*Soul*, p. 13), came in time to understand the events recorded in *From the Deep Woods to Civilization* not as "real" but as a period of trial (*Seeing with a Native Eye: Essays on Native American Religion*, Walter Holden Capps, ed., is a helpful aid to the reader's vision). The intervening events, Eastman's autobiography, are a clear history up to the point where Eastman breaks off in *From the Deep Woods*. The vision quest takes place in the volumes not easily recognized as autobiography—*Red Hunters and the Animal People* (1904), *Old Indian Days* (1906), and *Wigwam Evenings* (1909). A non-Indian needs to know some of the histo-

rical events of Eastman's career in order to follow him on his vision quest.

*Indian Boyhood* traces the travels of the Leaf Dweller or Wahpeton band of Santee Sioux, headed by Eastman's paternal uncle, after the Minnesota Massacre in August 1862. Eastman's brothers and his father, Many Lightnings, had been taken prisoner and were believed to have been executed. Actually, as his son was later to learn, they had been pardoned by President Lincoln and had been converted, providing the occasion on which Many Lightnings dropped his Sioux name in favor of Eastman, his half-breed wife's paternal name. Then they became successful homesteaders in Flandreu, South Dakota. Eastman's appearance at his brother's camp in the woods of Manitoba in 1873 ended his son's Indian boyhood. He brought Ohiyesa back to Flandreu.

On his arrival at Flandreu, Ohiyesa was baptized Charles Alexander. He and some thirty other families joined the community of Christian Sioux which included his brothers and his maternal uncle David Weston, who was once named Appearing Sacred Stone and who had become a Christian minister. Eastman never knew reservation life until he returned to South Dakota as a physician years later, although his father's aversion to the white man's reservations early solidified Eastman's view that they had been the death of Sioux manhood (*The Indian Today*, p. 98). He was immediately sent to school in Flandreu, and the next year he began in earnest "to master the secret of the white man's power" (*Today*, p. 100). One senses that Jacob Eastman tried to lessen his son's cultural shock by interpreting the boy's education as a warrior's quest. He instructed his son to follow the white man's "trail . . . to the point of knowing" (*Deep Woods*, p. 28). The boy complied, and from 1874 to 1876 he attended Santee Normal School in Nebraska, where he fell under the influence of Alfred L. Riggs. Although Riggs believed less in "civilizing the savage" than did

Pratt's Carlisle School and Armstrong's Hampton School for the Indian where Eastman's wife-to-be, Elaine Goodale, received her training as a teacher of the Sioux, Riggs played an important role in shaping Charles Eastman, model Indian. The shaping continued at Beloit College (1876-1877), Knox College (1877-1880), Dartmouth (1883-1887), and at Boston University Medical School (1887-1890).

At Boston University Eastman began what was to be an important secondary career as a public lecturer. Even then his role as apologist superseded his conviction that the Sioux had a viable perspective, a reality distinct from that which he had learned to understand through his education in civilization. Until he retreated from civilization in 1921, he fell into the role of functionary to one faction after another whose primary concern was to control and convert the Indian.

At Pine Ridge, Eastman met Elaine Goodale, who was then serving as supervisor of Sioux education. He became engaged to her immediately after the Ghost Dance War Massacre at Wounded Knee, and he served at Pine Ridge as reservation physician from 1890 to 1893.

Their records of the encounter at Wounded Knee—of the mismanagement of Indian affairs before and after it, and of the role of the press in causing the eruption—have served as sources for every historian who has dealt seriously with those events. Eastman resigned within two years, disgusted with the agents' and government's double-dealing, but the significance of Wounded Knee as the death knell of the Sioux had not yet struck him. Determined not to remain in government service, he attempted to set up a private practice in St. Paul (1893). Although his attempt failed, the landscape around St. Paul, "the home of my ancestors," he later wrote in *From the Deep Woods* (p. 136), served to rekindle interest in things Sioux. He began writing the essays that, after their publication in *St. Nicholas*, became the chapters of *Indian Boyhood*. Later, in *From the*



*Deep Woods*, he was to see those chapters as repentance for abandoning the ways of his childhood in favor of "civilization and Christianity" (p. 125).

The next few years would teach him much about white values. Unable to make a living in St. Paul, he became the YMCA representative to the Indians (1894-1897). Speaking trips to the East and travel among the Plains peoples forced him to assess the relative worth of the two ways of life. Efforts to gain financial support for the Indian without compromising his lifestyle proved unsuccessful. Equally unsuccessful was his work in Washington, D. C., as attorney for his people (1897-1900). A three-year term (1900-1903) as physician to the Sioux at Crow Creek, South Dakota, proved to him that, although the old ways were viable, they were also irretrievable. Therefore, he took his growing family away from the reservation and settled them in Amherst, Massachusetts, with his wife's father, Henry Sterling Goodale. Amherst was to remain his seat of operations for sixteen years, and his wife would remain in the area for the rest of her life.

During those sixteen years most of Eastman's energies were directed toward writing and public speaking: "We Sioux," he wrote in *From the Deep Woods*, "are now fully entrenched, for all practical purposes, in the warfare of civilized life" (p. 165). But for Eastman, his father's wish that he fight-the-good-fight in Christian armor became each year more impossible to fulfill. In the first place, he was increasingly struck with the surface role that Christianity played in the life of the white man. In the concluding chapter of *From the Deep Woods* (1918), he wrote:

I confess I have wondered much that Christianity is not practiced by the very people who vouch for that wonderful conception of exemplary living. It appears that they are anxious to pass on their religion to all

racés . . . but keep very little of it themselves. I have not yet seen the meek inherit the earth, or the peace-makers receive high honor . . . . When I let go of my simple, instinctive nature religion, I had hoped to gain something far loftier . . . . Alas! . . . when I reduce civilization to its lowest terms, it becomes a system of life based upon trade . . . . (pp. 193-194)

A commission from the University of Pennsylvania Museum to find and purchase Indian artifacts sent Eastman back to the deep woods in 1910. There the reclamation of his Indian point of view was completed, although one sees the indelible marks of his re-evaluation in his writing and lectures between 1900 and 1910. Begun in earnest in 1903, his literary career was "not to entertain, but to present the American Indian in his true character . . . . Really it was a campaign of education in the Indian and his true place in American history" (*Deep Woods*, p. 187).

An appointment by the Office of Indian Affairs in 1903 involved Eastman in the revision of the allotment rolls and virtually ended his willingness to serve his country. Assigning family names proved but another way to control land. Similar experiences made Eastman ripe for the University of Pennsylvania's expedition and, in the same year (1910), for a seminar at Ohio State University from which emerged the first Native American effort at Indian solidarity—The Society of American Indians. Organized by Professor Fayette Avery McKenzie, the group supported both assimilation and cultural integrity. The contradiction in the goals of the society eventually turned Eastman and Carlos Montezuma, an Apache professor of medicine at the University of Chicago, away from it.

During the years 1910-1920, Eastman served as representative of the North American Indian at the First Universal Race Congress in London (1911) and became involved with yet another Christian group, the Boy Scouts of America. Because he had

hoped to renew the Indians' ritual sports through the YMCA's program, he seems to have been hopeful that young white people might learn "through this movement much of the wisdom of the first American." The shift of emphasis from red to white audience is important. *From the Deep Woods* and *The Indian Today* make it clear that Eastman's hope to rekindle the old Indian days was gone. But he still dreamed that the values of those days could be inherited by the whites. In a rush of enthusiasm, he involved his whole family in establishing a summer camp in Granite Lake, New Hampshire. Opening in July 1916, Camp Oahé, the Hill of Vision, offered girl campers Sioux education and values in a wilderness that reminded Eastman of the woods of his boyhood. The following summer he opened Camp Ohiyesa for boys.

All the "burdensome responsibilities" (*Voices*, p. 31) of the camps fell to Elaine Eastman and her three eldest daughters, but their efforts could not save the venture from financial ruin. In 1918, the Eastmans admitted that their marriage had failed along with their camp. Eastman left New England in 1921, deeding the camp to Elaine. He was sixty-three, and his public career was essentially at an end. He wrote no more. His public appearances grew fewer until only his neighbors at his property in Stone Lake, Wisconsin, saw him. The sparsely recorded events of those silent years belong more to Eastman's vision quest than to his autobiography.

The vision quest is recorded, as Sioux tradition demands, in the tales of the tribal story teller: *Red Hunter and the Animal People*, *Old Indian Days*, and *Wigwam Evenings*. *The Soul of the Indian: An Interpretation* (1911) and *The Indian Today: The Past and Future of the First American* (1915) serve as interpretive guides, making clear that Eastman saw himself and his audience—red and white alike—as late-comers, to whom the story-tellers' wisdom was alien. Nonetheless, Eastman strives to tell each story "as true as I can make it to my childhood teach-

ing and ancestral ideals, but from the human, not the ethnological standpoint" ("Foreword," *Soul*, p. xii). It is an effort to share "flesh and blood" rather than "more dry bones" (*Soul*, p. xii).

Eastman himself tells us in *Soul of the Indian* that he knows that much of the "symbolism or inner meaning" of his journey will be "largely hidden from the observer" (p. xi). His audience must learn to look with a Sioux eye, to see that reality may be what the mind envisions rather than what the eye observes. To understand that the seven chapters of *Soul* imitate the sevenfold structure of nature and, in turn, the seven divisions of the Sioux nation, is a beginning. Even when historical vicissitudes and political convenience after 1850 created varying "actual" divisions among the Sioux, they saw themselves as comprised of the Seven Council Fires, meeting annually to reaffirm and reassert the "cohesiveness of the nation" through the ritual of the Sun Dance (Royal B. Hassrick, *The Sioux*, pp. 3-7). In other words, Eastman tries to point out that what the reader perceives largely as myth or theory—what is in the mind—defines the reality which the Sioux perceives.

The first of the seven chapters of *Soul* provides a glimpse of the reality, The Great Mystery, that possessed Eastman as Christianity never could. His grandmother's teaching had been that

The worship of the "Great Mystery" was silent, solitary, free from all self-seeking. It was silent, because all speech is of necessity feeble and imperfect; therefore the souls of my ancestors ascended to God in wordless adoration. It was solitary, because they believed that He is nearer to us in solitude, and there were no priests authorized to come between a man and his Maker . . . . Our faith might not be formulated in creeds, nor forced upon any who were unwilling to receive it; hence there was no preaching, proselytizing, nor perse-

cution, neither were there any scoffers or atheists. (pp. 4-5)

In white culture, silence is thought of as a void to be filled and feared. In Sioux culture, silence is a positive expression of openness to the harmony of the natural order. Eastman tells us in *Soul of the Indian* that

The religion of the Indian is the last thing about him that the man of another race will ever understand.

First, the Indian does not speak of these deep matters so long as he believes in them, and when he has ceased to believe he speaks inaccurately and slightly.

Second, even if he can be induced to speak the racial and religious prejudice of the other stands in the way of sympathetic comprehension.

Third, practically all existing studies on this subject have been made during the transition period, when the original beliefs and philosophy of the native American were already undergoing rapid disintegration. (pp. x-xi)

He goes on to describe the problems inherent in white studies of native religions, but the relevant point is that he suggests his own incapacity at the time of the writing to discuss or to participate in the silence of the true believer.

In the foreword to *Four Indian Masterpieces of American Indian Literature*, John Bierhorst suggests that all American Indian narrative is revivalistic, "a focused progression away from the old and into the new, building to a climax in which the awaited transition is at last made possible through the mechanism of a sacred 'mystery'" (p. xviii). Elaine Goodale Eastman and other Friends of the Indian, in all goodwill, understood the "new" to mean the transition into "civilization," into the ways of the white man; hence for them *Indian Boyhood* and

*From the Deep Woods* represent progress. For the Sioux, progress is distinct from evolutionary progress. The looked-for transition is renewal of health and cleanliness, restoration of what was. The worshipper (or patient) reaches wholeness through a journey which returns him, renewed, to his point of departure.

The symbolic structure of *Soul of the Indian* prepares us for the symbolic progression of Eastman's volumes of Indian tales. Eastman assumed the role of the story-teller, and his narrative impetus was the shattering of the Sioux nation. Because he had been chosen as a "medicine man," his personal quest was for the sacred mystery that would return the Sioux to their original health and power. In *Red Hunter and the Animal People*, Eastman characterizes the narrator of these silent lives as a "biographer and interpreter" (p. 125). The tale of Pezpeza, the founder of the prairie-dog nation, is true Plains Indian biography, for it is a tale of tireless journeys to re-establish the community each time disaster destroys its center.

Eastman's Pezpeza is an example of ritual action. When he can no longer function to cleanse and re-establish, another of the people fills his role—as is true in this case—or, failing that, the people slowly die out. Eastman's account of his own birth and naming suggests that he saw himself as destined to fill a similar role. Both the deathbed request of his mother (*Waken Tankawin*) and the deathbed prophecy of the medicine man who attended her support that sense of responsibility.

Eastman's maternal grandmother was *Waken-inejin-win* (Stands Holy), daughter of Cloudman, who was chief of the Lake Calhoun Sioux, a band that had converted to the agricultural ways of the whites. But Eastman's mother did not entrust her son to her own mother; instead, she asked that he be raised by her husband's mother in the traditional hunting culture of her Dakota ancestors. Her death was preceded by a

prophecy which is as prophetic of Eastman's failure as of his responsibility:

"Another medicine man has come into existence, but the mother must die. Therefore, let him bear the name 'Mysterious Medicine.'" But one of the bystanders interfered, saying that an uncle of the child already bore that name, so for the time [Eastman noted in *Boyhood*, p. 5], I was only "Hadakah" [the Pitiful Last].

Many Lightning's mother, Eastman's grandmother (Uncheedah), was in her own right "a great singer" (*Boyhood*, p. 7) and a "noted medicine woman of the Turtle lodge" from whom Eastman learns what he later refers to as his "life's realities" (*Boyhood*, p. 11). Those realities were distinct from those which *Waken Tankawin* knew her son would encounter at Lake Calhoun among her own father's band.

The boy's first vivid recollection involves an active conflict between white and Sioux realities. Those who remained of Hadakah's family after the Minnesota Massacre began their journey to Canada in an ox-drawn lumber wagon which seemed "like a living creature" to the four-year-old (*Boyhood*, p. 13). He remembers his brothers leaping from the moving wagon and writes of his own effort to join in their play:

I was sure they stepped on the wheel, so I cautiously placed my moccasined foot upon it. Alas! before I could realize what had happened, I was under the wheels, and had it not been for the neighbor immediately behind us, I might well have been run-over by the next team as well.

This was my first experience with a civilized vehicle. I cried out all possible reproaches on the white man's team and concluded that a dog travaux was good enough for me. (*Boyhood*, p. 14)

Having begun with this preference for "dog-travaux," a Sioux mode of transportation, Hadakah continued to feel his initial distrust and hatred of the whites for the rest of his journey. Choosing a Sioux mode of transportation symbolizes the boy's unconscious inheritance of his mother's choice of the Sioux over the white way. The fact that dogs were of religious significance to the Sioux is evidenced by their presence in the graves of their masters. But the personal significance of Eastman's choice is dramatically emphasized by the recollection of his dog Ohitika in *Indian Boyhood*. The tale—for it is narrated in third person—is of a Sioux boy's first "personal offering to the 'Great Mystery'" (p. 102). One senses that remembering Ohitika's death startles Eastman into a renewed awareness of the meaning of that early dedication to the warrior's life. He begins the tale-telling that is to characterize his vision quest, introducing the character of old Smokey Day, his tutor and—perhaps—his alter ego. Smokey Day has none of the contamination by white culture that Eastman later felt kept him from fulfilling his own obligations to his people.

One spring Chatanna, Hadakah's "brother"—who was actually his cousin, inasmuch as the term indicates merely close friendship—accompanied his father to the trading post on the Assiniboine, and at this time Hadakah's distrust and disrespect for the white way was heightened. Hadakah recalled that "a Canadian with whom my uncle had traded much had six daughters and no son, and when he saw this handsome and intelligent little fellow, he at once offered to adopt him," promising to bring him to see his father two or three times a year and assuring White-Foot-Prints that the exchange would strengthen their friendship.

White-Foot-Prints agreed to his Canadian friend's proposal, because the Sioux commonly practiced extreme self-sacrifice in order to offer proof of friendship, sincerity, great grief, or great happiness. (Uncheedah had demanded that Hadakah sacrifice his dog, Ohitika.) But Chatanna was never seen by his family



again. Nor was the trader seen, although Uncheedah demanded that her son return to retrieve the boy immediately. Her argument—"that the white man's education was not desirable for her boys" (*Boyhood*, p. 85)—foreshadowed the argument that she would repeat to Many Lightnings (Jacob Eastman) some years later. Again it would be too late.

Uncheedah, the old story-teller Smokey Day, his uncles, and the wilderness were to be as lost to Hadakah as Chatanna had been—or nearly so. Both Hadakah—now ironically named Ohiyesa, the winner—and his little cousin, Oesedah, were carried off to receive the white man's education. "But she," Eastman tells us in *From the Deep Woods*, "could not endure the confinement of the schoolroom . . . she suffered greatly from the change to an indoor life, as have many of our people, and died six months after our return to the United States" (p. 86).

Ohiyesa had become a warrior when, at fifteen, he had been presented with his first gun, a flintlock. The "mysterious iron" filled him with echoes of the war songs he had heard as a child. The rite of passage, amply prepared for by his grandmother and uncles, was swift and silent: "It seemed as if I were an entirely new being—the boy had become a man!" (*Boyhood*, p. 205), and the man was eager and able "to avenge the blood of my father and my brothers!" To that end, as we have seen, he "had already begun to invoke the blessing of the Great Mystery" and had begun to seek the "sullen dignity and composure" necessary to his task. Then Jacob Eastman appeared. His son's comment is brief: "They were Indians but clad in the white man's garments. It was as well that I was absent with my gun" (*Boyhood*, p. 286).

The metaphor of Indians clad in white man's garments haunts *From the Deep Woods to Civilization* and *Soul of the Indian*. One has the sense that Eastman's view of himself is encompassed by this figure and that it is symbolic of his feeling that first his father and brothers and then he himself inhabited a

foreign land, wore foreign garb, and participated in an alien mode of life. Contrastingly, the figure is absent—or nearly so—in his books of tales: *Indian Boyhood*, *Old Indian Days*, *Red Hunters and the Animal People*, and *Wigwam Evenings*. It is in these recollections of Sioux myth and folklore that Ohiyesa best reveals the indelible education of his childhood, his true sense of self and of reality. Once he had realized the implications, how could he share his wife's and her Friends of the Indian's opinion that his progress was proof that the savage could better himself if given the white man's guidance? Perhaps the Eastman who had first spoken to the assemblage at the Mohonk Conference in 1895, and whose introductory remarks were, "Although I am myself an Indian, and travel among Indians and study their nature as if I were not of the same race," would not have objected. Having recently been disillusioned by his attempts to serve his people at Rosebud, Eastman shared their broken spirit. But in his speech he added prophetically that the Indian "can never accomplish anything unless it [their spirit] is revived." In 1907 Eastman spoke again to the same group:

What is my Indian today? He is a profane man. He had no profane language; it was unknown to him as a child, just the same as he never knew the devil or hell until the missionary came to him. Today he looks at the white religion as a mere business, as a profession . . . a salary is attached to it; a collection must be taken . . . he who can entertain the audience best gets more pay. This is the position of the Indian today who is educated, who has been all over Europe, all over this country, and has taken an external view of you, just the same as your snap-shot judgment of his knife and tomahawk.

Eastman's "Indian" is, of course, himself, "clothed and fed"

by the white society. The anecdote he told that October evening of an old Indian who said to him, "Ah, my Great Mystery is lost; my Great Mystery is lost! My son loves the jingling of money . . . and he has thrown away our Great Mystery and taken nothing in place of it" may be apocalyptic, but it speaks for Eastman's position. Eastman concluded his address:

you have taken a great many things from us, you may have forced us out of these beautiful lands, but when you took our great mystery away from us it is your duty to give us one in its place . . . turn him loose among you and let him find the Great Mystery, your Great Mystery himself.

Still later he was to see that there was No Great Mystery to be found among the whites and that even his wife wanted to silence what might remain of the Sioux's old ways. Her concern for women's rights led her to plead for the release of the Sioux woman from an education that trained her to pass through a metamorphosis from a butterfly to a "loving drudge" and finally to a "feminine autocrat"—the Uncheedah or grandmother. In Elaine Goodale's address to the Mohonk Conference in 1895, her hostility toward the Sioux grandmother's power parallels her husband's resurrection in *Indian Boyhood* of the woman who, in Goodale's words, "becomes a barrier, a real hindrance and obstacle in the way of civilization. It is the grandmother who almost invariably predicts an early death for the child who goes to school, and who prophesies every misfortune for those who accept the new way. She is invariably suspicious of the white man, and takes no pains to hide her dislike of him. She revives some of the worst features of the old Indian life in her songs, her death-dirges, and songs upon every possible occasion."

Goodale must have viewed with alarm her husband's increasing involvement with those old songs, although she encouraged him to write. The ghost of Uncheedah becomes a real presence

in the pages of the books that followed, and her lessons become again for Eastman a map to the reality of the old ways. The "physical activity and endurance," which he had connected with the goals of the YMCA when he first became an agent for that organization in 1893, he now saw could be taught only by the rigorous and self-imposed discipline of his boyhood. It was now lost to reservation and free Indians alike. Uncheedah had taught that a "medicine giver must learn that there are many secrets which the Great Mystery will disclose only to the most worthy. Only those who seek him fasting and in solitude will receive his signs" (*Boyhood*, p. 22). Eastman's Smokey Day, the old story-teller, taught a similar wisdom to the children who came to his teepee along "deep, narrow trails, like sheep paths, in the hard-frozen snow" (*Wigwam Evenings*, p. 4):

"... silence is greater than speech. This is why we honor the animals, who are more silent than man, and we reverence the trees and rocks, where the Great Mystery lives undisturbed, in a peace that is never broken."

By the same logic, Uncheedah taught Hadakah that good fortune must be celebrated at the traditional midsummer festivities with sacred games, feasting, and rites of passage. At such a festival on the banks of the Minnesota, Hadakah had received his second indication that he was one chosen to serve the Great Mystery. The band's medicine man chose him to represent "a Celestial" at the center of the sacred circle; thus he became responsible for seeing that the center held. The responsibility was deepened when, as a result of his band's winning the sacred lacrosse-like contest, it was decided, "this little warrior shall bear the name *Ohiyesa* (Winner) through life . . ." (*Deep Woods*, p. 39).

Eastman's narration of the game that bestowed his fortune is detailed and extended, indicating that in his mind the naming had great personal and social significance. The outcome, already

known to the reader, is not the point. The ritual process is what the reader must follow if he is to understand the moment when the name is conferred. With the sacred name-giving the boy's formal education began. He was four. It is important to understand the "systematic education" of the Sioux, a process divinely instituted. The customs connected with the child's growth "were scrupulously adhered to and transmitted from one generation to another" (*Boyhood*, p. 49).

In the old days a Sioux child's education began before his conception. Conception, itself a sacred act, began a process of prenatal influences in which both of the parents as well as the whole band participated. The goal was to give "the new comer the best they could gather from a long line of ancestors" (*Boyhood*, p. 49). In this process the mother's task was primary. Elaine Goodale has overlooked this consideration in her summary of the tasks of the Sioux woman.

From birth the Sioux boy was conditioned by songs of hunting and war, both of these things to be understood as sacred rituals maintaining tribal solidarity. He was taught to think of himself as the "defender of his people" while his sisters were conditioned to become the "mothers of a noble race." It became the child's task to preserve and transmit the legends of the people. A tale told by the story-teller one night must be retold perfectly the next, while the household provided the child with both audience and critics. *Wigwam Evenings*, subtitled *Sioux Folk Tales Retold*, suggests that Ohiyesa had learned his lessons well from Smokey Day. *Red Hunters and the Animal People* (1904) precedes the twenty-seven tales of *Wigwam Evenings* (1909), and of all Eastman's work it is the richest in the wisdom of silence.

The foreword quotes "one of the philosophers and orators of the Red men" as saying, "AND who is the grandfather of these silent people? Is it not the Great Mystery? For they know the laws of their life so well! They must have for their Maker

our Maker. Then they are our brothers!" The silence of the animals is proof of their wisdom. Because their wisdom is great, the Sioux "regards the spirit of the animal as a mystery belonging to the 'Great Mystery' . . . ." For that reason, hunting was a sacred act from which the hunter—man or animal—gains the obvious physical sustenance, but above that a spiritual sustenance, also. Knowledge of the laws that govern the hunters' lives is the real reward, and despite the marked restraint of Eastman's claims for the book, the tales teach a great deal about the laws that govern Sioux reality. In the Sioux world

Many a hunter has absented himself for days and nights from his camp in pursuit of this knowledge. He considered it sacrilege to learn the secrets of an animal and then use this knowledge against him. If you wish to know his secrets you must show him that you are sincere, your spirit and his spirit must meet on common ground, and that is impossible until you have abandoned for the time being your habitation, your weapons and all thoughts of the chase, and entered into perfect accord with the wild creatures. (p. vi)

Events which "might appear incredible to the white man, are actually current among the Sioux and deemed by them worthy of belief" (p. vii). For instance, Eastman felt that the white man would not understand the Sioux's belief that the land itself was sacred: "The scene of the stories is laid in the great Northwest, the ancient home of the Dakota or Sioux nation, my people" (p. vii). Before 1870, "when the buffalo and other large game still roamed the wilderness and the Red man lived the life I knew as a boy" (p. viii), the nation's hoop had been whole and the tree at its center, the symbol of that wholeness, had flourished. Man, animals, plants, rocks—all peoples lived in harmony with the laws of the land. That harmony is recreated in Eastman's tales. They begin in "The Great Cat's Nursery." The setting, specific and

realistic, is also symbolic of the reader's position: he is a baby to be shaped by the story-teller's words. The process is imitative and ritualistic, beginning in the waters of "a deep and winding stream, a tributary of the Smoking Earth River, away up at the southern end of the Bad Lands. It is, or was then, an ideal home of wild game, and a resort for the wild hunters, both four-footed and human" (p. 4). The tale centers upon the struggle of a mother puma to keep her cubs alive once the red hunters have determined to rid the area of any rival hunters.

The reader might wonder how strictly the tale should be understood as *exemplum*, as how one should behave when faced with an irresistible enemy. There is no thought of surrender or compromise in the Igmu's mind. Her abiding concern is not for herself but for the survival of her kind. The red hunter's shout of triumph as the Igmu gave a last "gentle lick" to her cub's "wooly head before she dropped her own and died" (p. 23), comes from having matched wits and strength with an equal. Hers is a noble death, worthy of emulation by the Red hunters who take home with them "the last of the Igmu family, the little orphaned kitten" (p. 23). They will nurture the remaining cub in her memory, turning it loose when grown to live according to its own laws rather than forcing it to conform to its captor's laws.

In the second tale, "On Wolf Mountain," the Mayala clan of wolves has "been driven away . . . on account of their depredations upon the only paleface in the Big Horn valley" (p. 24). Seeking unclaimed territory, the clan encounters a band of Sioux—"quite another kind of man" (p. 26)—who are also seeking land free of the white man. Unlike the Indians, the wolves declare war on "that Hairy-faced man who had lately come among them to lay waste the forests and tear up the very earth about his dwelling, while his creatures devoured the herbage of the plain" (p. 30). That the effort ultimately aborts is

less important than that it demonstrates a solidarity that the Sioux lack. Eastman's wolf hero, Manitoo, survives and breeds; and this achievement is unusual in the realism of Eastman's animal tales.

In "The Dance of the Little People" two young warriors, Teola and Shungela, learn from Padanee, a story-teller, "the delicate sign-language of the Hetunkala," the field mice (p. 48). The political and social structure of the mouse band is remarkably like that of a Sioux band. But the central point of the story is that these seemingly insignificant beings once sacrificed themselves each month in order to retain lunar balance—"these Hetunkala," the boys learn, "are the Moon-Nibblers" (p. 55). Their self-sacrifices continued until a generation carelessly nibbled deeper than was proper, leaving holes in the fabric of the moon. They were hurled down to earth. Ever since that time, the mouse-tribes gather monthly to dance on the shore at the full of the moon, recording their tragedy—the loss of a rôle in the pattern of nature—in "the finest of tracery, like delicate handwriting, upon the moonlit sand" (p. 65). Again one is aware of a message. One learns from the mice the price paid for growing careless in carrying out the sacred functions for which one has been created.

In "The Mustering of the Herd," a white buffalo calf is born in secret during the funeral of "Ptesanwee, the white buffalo cow, the old queen of the Shaeyela herd" (p. 93). The white cow queen is sacred to both the buffalo people and the Sioux. The Two-Kettle join the buffalo band in mourning under the direction of Buffalo Ghost.

They tied or hobbled their ponies at some distance, and all came with tobacco or arrows in their hands. They reverently addressed the dead cow and placed the tobacco gently around her feet for an offering. Thus strangely ended the first spring hunt of the year upon the



Shaeyela, the ancient home of the buffalo people, where always the buffalo woman chief, the white cow, is seen—the most sacred and honored animal among the Sioux.  
(p. 98)

I think that Eastman meant his reader to contrast the actions of these red hunters with those of the irreverent white hunters in the previous story.

The whites do not distinguish between seasons which are considered proper for unity and which are proper to competition. By May the new buffalo queen is old enough to be introduced to the herd, and the rituals of the buffalo are again juxtaposed to the Sioux's own spring rituals. Both peoples still follow carefully the ways of the Great Mystery, but each desires to possess the white calf and the special powers she brings. The preparations of the hunters, the buffalo dance, the painting and ornamenting of themselves and their ponies, all these things attest to the sacred nature of the hunt for the calf that "looked like an earth-visiting spirit in her mysterious whiteness" (p. 103).

"It is the will of the Great Mystery," said they, "to recall the spirit of the white calf. We shall preserve her robe, the token of plenty and good fortune! We shall never be hungry hence forth for the flesh of her nation. This robe shall be handed down from generation to generation, and wherever it is found there shall be abundance of meat for the Indian." (p. 105)

Eastman's tone is ironic. Only when the Sioux are worthy does the Great Mystery provide tokens like the calf. Having deserted the old ways, Sioux story-tellers can only rehearse rituals of failure and despair as the mouse peoples do.

The most obvious of the tales, "The Gray Chieftain," affirms that the tales are intended, like those of Smokey Day, to "remind us to inquire of our own weakness" (*Wigwam Evenings*, p.

34) and to "learn and profit by the stored-up wisdom of the past" (*Evenings*, p. 41). The tale takes place in "the inner circle of the Bad Lands" (p. 143)—sacred land—among its "labyrinth of caves and pockets" (p. 145).

Two red hunters happen upon the Gray Chieftain while he is secretly chipping his horns. "Some of them die starving, when they have not the strength to do the hard bucking against the rock to shorten their horns" (p. 148). Thus the ram's relation to nature is seen as rigorous, pitiless. The rock must be met head on or the sign of his own leadership, his magnificent horns, will destroy him.

Although the hunter Gray Foot knows that the "chipping-place is a monastery to the priests of the spoonhorn tribe . . . , their medicine lodge," he has never come upon "the secret entrance." His companion wishes to shoot the ram and finish the hunt. But Gray Foot stops him: "Let us know him better . . . I never care to shoot an animal while he is giving me a chance to know his ways . . . We are not hungry" (p. 152). The red hunters trail the ram, encounter his mate and son, allow them to live, and dare the treacherous landscape which the spoonhorns inhabit. The two hunters discover the spoonhorns' secret pass into the chipping-place, where they surprise the old ram, exhausted and asleep. Then they do not hesitate to shoot him, for their skill, not his, has determined the outcome of the hunt. His reign rightfully ends when he is outwitted.

This lesson is more complex than the lesson which the first of the Red Hunter tales has taught. Like Pezpeza, the prairie-dog hero of "A Founder of Ten Towns," the Gray Chieftain neither compromises his nobility nor offers to struggle against a timely death. The Sioux consider it a special and sacred wisdom to perceive the right time for passive acceptance. It is appropriate for the old ram priest to teach the lesson of noble death in his secret monastery. Eastman follows his tale with that of "Hootay, the medicine man of the Little Rosebud coun-

try" (p. 160), an aged grizzly bear who is held sacred by the Sechangu Sioux who shared his territory. As with the Gray Chieftain, we meet Hootay at the end of his time: "He had eaten of every root-medicine that he knew, but there was no relief" (pp. 160-61). The Sechangu chief, High Head's son-in-law, Zechah, called from sleep by the night wind, is led by the moon and stars to find abundant game to feed his people. In his hunt, he comes upon the old bear wallowing in a gully filled with snow. Though he is about to shoot him, he pauses. The bear, weakened, starving, rewards the warrior with words: "No, Zechah, spare an old warrior's life! My spirit shall live again in you. You shall be henceforth the war prophet and medicine-man of your tribe. I will remain here, so that your people may know that you have conquered Hootay, the Chief of the Little Rosebud country" (pp. 173-74). So it was that Hootay remained as helpless as the Sioux would one day be. The critical difference is that Hootay passes on his spirit-gift. Not respecting their victims as equals, the conquerors of the Sioux reject their spirit-gift. It is that rejection that offers the greatest obstacle to Eastman's vision quest.

The next tale, "The River People," is an allegory of the resulting Sioux despair. The Beaver, the river people, though not warriors as old Hootay or the Gray Chieftain were, "are considered wisest of the smaller four-legged tribes." The author reminds us that even man "gains wisdom and philosophy from a study of their customs and manners" (p. 179). Primary among their customs is the reciting of their legends on long winter nights. The old beaver matriarch, Chapawee, much like Eastman's own Uncheedah, knows that unless they are taught, "some things do not remain in the blood" (p. 180). She and her mate search for a land in which they and their kind can survive and "be true to the customs of their people" (p. 191). Her autobiography occupies the central position of Eastman's tales. It is not European autobiography but a quest story like Eastman's own.

As we have learned to expect, the pair is introduced "half-blind and toothless" after the years of their greatness (p. 193). Agents of the American Fur Company, based on the Sioux reservation in Minnesota, determine to trap in the Big Sioux region that is now occupied by the beaver. Two Sioux trappers, headed for the Big Sioux River, happen upon Chapawee's extensive community in the rivers that cut through the Sioux's sacred Pipestone Quarry. Despite their admiration for the old beaver, the hunters do not hesitate to destroy their dam in order to drain the dams of their children and grandchildren farther up the river. The massacre takes two days. At its completion the hunters return, intending to repair the old beavers' dam. Their efforts are, of course, useless. Haze and Chapawee

had gone out in the dark to rebuild their dam, according to the habit of a long life. Then they visited some of their children's homes for aid, but all were silent and in ruins. Again they came back to work, but it was all in vain. They were too old; their strength had left them; and who would care in such a case to survive the ruins of his house? (p. 199)

Compliance with the white man's greed and adoption of the white man's weapons will leave the red hunters' bands weak and despairing. In "The Challenge," Eastman makes clear that Sioux skill, endurance, and wisdom can be tested only without the white man's weapons. Five hunters from the Big Cat band of Sioux go to Upanokootay, Elk Point, without "mysterious iron and gunpowder" (p. 203). Not even a pair of ponies was allowed, since with those, even a "woman or a white man" (p. 210) could hunt successfully. The test brings Eastman's reader full circle, "From the Great Cat's Nursery" and its natural cycle of death and birth, to the wisdom which the Great Cat warriors learn in "The Challenge."

The afterword, "Wild Animals from the Indian Stand-Point,"

clarifies Eastman's feeling that the presence of "civilization" (the white way) is the Indians' death knell. Through old Hohay, he tells us

The wild man is bad enough, but there comes another man—the paleface—who has no heart for what is dearest to us. He wants the whole world for himself! The buffalo disappears before him—the elk too—and the Red man is on the same trail. I will stop here, for it brings me bad thoughts. (p. 245)

Eastman's own silence and retreat from tale-telling is still two decades away. In the eyes of his public, the years between the publication of *Red Hunters* (1903) and 1923 were successful ones. He was hailed by J. T. Faris in 1922 as one of the *Men Who Conquered* (Ravel, 1922, pp. 57-68). Despite Eastman's efforts in his books and lectures, Faris still saw Eastman's story as an example of how a savage "Out of an Indian Tepee" could become a model of civilized living. It is no wonder that once Eastman had officially resigned as physician at the Crow Creek Agency (March 1903) his faith in finding a place in either white or red society dwindled. His marriage, almost an allegory of that intercultural impossibility, had already become a "compromise, a relationship of convenience and necessity" (Miller, p. 203). He devoted himself to writing and lecturing, but the spirit of the story-teller/medicine-man was faint. Perhaps he created old Smokey Day in *Wigwam Evenings* (1909) to replace his own voice. *Old Indian Days* (1907), written only two years earlier, seemed to cast Eastman himself in the story-teller's rôle. It is a particularly interesting volume in that it outlines the education and role of both "The Warrior" (Part I) and "The Woman" (Part II).

The hero of Part I, Young Antelope, is first seen perched "spirit-like among the upper clouds" of Eagle Scout Butte, "fasting and seeking a sign from the 'Great Mystery' . . ." (p. 3).

His career opens where Eastman's autobiography ends in *Indian Boyhood*, and this narrative represents the spirit autobiography which Eastman needed. Chosen to protect the peace of his people, Antelope faces the encroachment of hostile tribes into the foothills of the Big Horn Mountains. The enemy is the Utes, traditional foe of the Sioux, and Antelope—like the wolf-hero, Manitoo, of *Red Hunters*—is capable of impeding their attack, proving himself a warrior and claiming a mate.

The tale shows that the traditional ways allow Antelope to deal even with the spirit-world. Returning from a raiding party, he finds that his band is gone and that only a single teepee—his own—remains. Taluta, his wife, lies in it, dead. Intense mourning, accompanied by ritual cleansing, allows him to “obtain a sign from her spirit” (p. 32), and rejoining the band, Antelope returns to his duties. In the course of a peace mission, he discovers Taluta's “twin” in Stasu, the daughter of a Ree chief. The allegory is thinly disguised. As long as the lovers remain isolated from relatives, their union is as Edenic as the first years of Eastman's had been: “man and wife, in their first home of living green” (p. 51). Quite literally arranged by a spirit, the marriage is kept holy in “a silent place” (p. 58).

It is fruitful, but in time their thoughts turn to their own people, and they envision their son taking his rightful place among them. Each “entertained the hope that he would some day be *waken*, a mysterious or spiritual man, for he was getting power from his wild companions and from the silent forces of nature” (pp. 61-62). At length the wife proposes that they sacrifice pride and even life in order to return the child to one tribe or another. Being a typical Sioux warrior, Antelope prefers to sacrifice life to pride: “If I am to die at the hands of the ancient enemy of the Sioux, I shall die because of my love for you, and for our child. But I cannot go back to my own people to be ridiculed by unworthy young men for yielding to the love of a Ree maid” (p. 64).

However, because the Rees admire Antelope's bravery, they accept the young family and receive Stasu as one returning from the dead. Such a return had been impossible for Eastman. But even here, the momentary peace is broken when, in the next tale, two young Yankton Sioux warriors shoot a Ree chief totally on impulse.

"The Madness of Bald Eagle" is a strange tale which questions the values of White Ghost, a Sioux patriarch who has not kept the old ways holy. Power passes from him to a young warrior who, like Antelope, reinforces the ritual ways. A strange wood spirit, Oglugechana (or Chanote-dah), a hairy little man who lives in the hollow stump of a tree that has been downed by lightning, draws travellers to him, robs them of their senses, and makes of them great war-prophets or medicine men. To retain lucidity and to come upon the spright is to risk one's own death or that of a close relative. But Eastman's hero, Anookasan, is willing to take the risk, and he follows the Oglugechana's music. It leads him to a hairy white man in a log cabin playing what we recognize as a fiddle. Outraged, he attacks the musician—and the action of the tale freezes, to be held static until the end of Part II of the tales. The unusual narrative technique calls attention to itself.

In Part II, the mixed-blood Antoine Michaud—like Anookasan—finds himself alone in the woods. By winding the story back to the end of Part I, we slowly realize that Michaud is the bearded fiddler who was attacked by Anookasan and that the full-blood does not recognize the musician as being of his own kind. But the Yankton responds to Michaud's passivity, accepts him, and becomes destined to the fate of the Oglugechana's victims, for the Yankton Sioux will all die soon, as the fourth tale of Part I, "Famine," suggests.

Alienation, loss, starvation, and death are clearly the themes of *Old Indian Days*, just as they are the themes of *Red Hunters*. But the time in this volume is closer to the time of the Sioux's

real loss. The setting is in Manitoba on the Assiniboine sometime after the Minnesota Massacre of 1862. Little Crow, the last of the strong Sioux chiefs, is dead, and White Lodge, his son, controls only a small band of renegades. The medicine men prophesy famine and ascribe its cause to the people's desertion of the old ways. "The Famine" juxtaposes the spiritual battle of Face-the-Wind and Eyah, the god of famine, with the white man's interpretation of that battle. To McLeod, trader at Fort Ellis, where Face-the-Wind has come for help, the brave's dying request is simply "delirium," yet McLeod defeats Eyah by ringing the fort's bells as Face-the-Wind has requested. McLeod assumes that he has found the starving band because Magaskawee, one of White Lodge's twin daughters who had lived with missionaries for a time, had sent a written message with the runner to McLeod's son Angus. But the Sioux know that Eyah fears the jingling of metal and that the bell had saved them. It would be easy to miss the juxtaposition of realities at the end of the tale as Angus and Three Stars, the other twin's lover, arrive just in time—accompanied by "the jingle of dog-bells" (p. 113).

The fifth story, too, juxtaposes realities. It is the history of the 1862 massacre. Tawasuota, "The Chief Warrior," having proved his bravery, has been made Little Crow's *ta akich-itah* (chief soldier). Details of treaties signed and broken are accurately recorded in the tale, but the Sioux code of honor is the real subject of the story. Obligated by his position, Tawasuota joins the attack on the agency and shoots a man who puts up no defense. At first he is so conscience-stricken by his act that he drops from the fight and rejoins his fellow warriors only when the United States cavalry appears. His uneasiness is accompanied by a strong sense of loss, and he finds his people possessed of a "strange stillness" that is distinct from silence. Some of them have retreated to the protection of the whites in



Faribault, his wife and sons among them, and have thereby broken up the band irreparably.

In theme and tone, the tales of Part I of *Old Indian Days* move relentlessly away, from "The Love of Antelope" to "The Grave of the Dog," from the days of Sioux glory to their days of agony. Although there are seven tales, no one remains who remembers that seven is a sacred number or what the number represents. The unity of the Sioux is forgotten. Passing wagons of fugitives, Tawasuota goes to Faribault and determines that his sons can survive only if they stay with his wife among "the lovers of the whites." Although she protests, "he disappeared in the shadows, and they never saw him again" (p. 133). Eastman's postscript to the tale summarizes: "The chief soldier lived and died a warrior and an enemy to the white man; but one of his two sons became in after years a minister of the Christian gospel, under the 'Long-Haired Praying Man,' Bishop Whipple, of Minnesota" (p. 133). There is no overlapping of the lives of the white lovers and haters, or of the agriculturalists and the hunters who are traditionalists. In historical terms, the agriculturalists had been led by Eastman's own maternal grandfather, Cloudman. To survive, they sold what was not theirs—the earth—and committed sacrilege by cutting into it with plows. The question which the story raises is whether survival is of itself worthwhile. Tawasuota becomes emblematic of the Sioux's dilemma.

The sixth story in *Old Indian Days* is also history. It opens by focusing upon the ritual arrangement of a Sioux camp: a circle or hoop with the council lodge at its center. In that center, "the minds of all were alike upon the days of their youth and freedom" (p. 134), days obviously past. The group recounts stories "of brave deeds and dangerous exploits . . . with as much spirit and zest as if they were still living in those days" (p. 134). The Sioux have slipped into the white man's historical time. Their stories have become history rather than reality. Zuyamani's tale

of the winter that follows the Minnesota massacre is the autobiography of a man "upon the white man's errand" (p. 148) rather than a quest tale. Even as he wrote the words, Eastman knew himself to be upon the white man's errand.

The faithful dog, Shanka, becomes the narrator of the concluding tale, "The Warrior." While his master sleeps, the dog sets out "to discover the truth" (p. 156). The next day he leads the band to what remains of the buffalo, and when the hunters are overtaken by a blizzard, Shanka's barking leads rescuers to where his master lies beneath two frozen buffalo carcasses in a womb of hay and buffalo hair. His sense of loyalty, mission, and dedication to the truth serves as a contrast to the loss of loyalty, mission, and sense of truth in Tawasuota and Zuyamani, the heroes of Eastman's "historical fiction." It becomes clear, then, that the real values which Eastman understands as Sioux values remain only in the silent peoples. The "Grave of the Dog" commemorates a way of life whose loss we have watched through the seven tales that would have marked a ritual way in *Old Indian Days*. One suspects that Shanka is the spiritual heir of the dog Ohitika, whose sacrificial death had marked the beginning of Eastman's initiation into the life of a Sioux warrior (*Boyhood*, pp. 110-111).

Part II of *Old Indian Days*, "The Woman," develops "Winona" as the counterpart to Antelope. "Winona" is the name of Eastman's mother, who on her death-bed remained loyal to the Sioux. Her tale begins with a lullaby. The singer is her grandmother, who, like Eastman's own, takes her "among the father and mother trees" to learn their language. To be "nature-born" (p. 171) is to become a part of the Sioux reality. Essentially Part I of Winona's story is another tract on Sioux child-rearing. She learns much—as Eastman's reader must—from the four-footed peoples.

For Eastman a significant fact is that for

the Sioux of the old days, the great natural crises of

human life, marriage and birth, were considered sacred and hedged about with great privacy. Therefore the union is publicly celebrated after and not before its consummation. (p. 192)

Winona and her mate's silent time alone in the wilderness is a decided contrast to the highly public union of Charles Eastman and Elaine Goodale at the Church of the the Ascension in New York City and to the high society reception provided by the Frank Woods, in Dorchester. The reception and the honeymoon at "Sky-Farm in the Berkshires" received much attention from the press. In later years, headlines such as "She Will Wed a Sioux Indian" (*New York Times*, June 7, 1891) and "The Bride of An Indian" (*New York Times*, June 19, 1891) must have pained both of the Eastmans.

Winona concludes her tale with an example of "womanly nobility of nature." An orphan who was reared by her grandmother, Her-Singing-Heard used herself to form "a blood brotherhood" between the Sioux and the Sacs and Foxes, ending what she saw as "cruel and useless enmity" (p. 195). The fifth tale, "The Peace Maker," shows how *Eyatonkawee* (She-Whose-Voice-is-Heard-Afar) brings together the disparate bands of Sioux into a nation. She herself, a member of Eastman's band, the Leaf Dweller Sioux, is a historical figure. The tale of her exploits served to retain peace among the bands of Sioux on several occasions. Her tale culminates with her chanting of how she countered the Sac and Fox attacks in which her young husband was killed. It ends with the young mother—"victorious over three!"—making her infant son "count with his tiny hands the first 'coup' on each dead hero" (p. 228). With the same ax that she used to kill the enemy, she puts a dramatic end to her chant by smashing the keg of whiskey from which her listeners drink—"So trickles under the ax of Eyatonkawee the blood of an enemy to the Sioux" (p. 228).

The seventh tale, which is symbolic of the harmony of nature and of the Sioux nation, recalls a more recent occasion, the celebration by the Uncpapa Sioux of their Sun Dance. Forty years before Eastman wrote *Old Indian Days*, the way had been remembered, and man and animal had joined to keep the nation whole.

But Eastman's last tale shatters the harmony of the seventh. It introduces a new voice, that of Smokey Day, "for many years the best-known story-teller and historian of the tribe" (p. 260), but long dead at the time of the book's writing. The ghost voice continues as Eastman's narrator in *Wigwam Evenings*, suggesting that the living no longer remember the words of the traditional way. Smokey Day makes clear—as perhaps Eastman can not in his own "educated" voice—that the Sioux do not make the white man's distinction between fiction and history. In fact, he makes it clear that *Old Indian Days* and Smokey Day's own tales in *Wigwam Evenings* are perhaps a more accurate reflection of events than are Eastman's later hero-tales in *Indian Heroes and Great Chieftains* (1918).

In the eighth tale, Tamakoche's three sons are killed in battle; so he urges his daughter, Makatah, to think and act as a warrior. She rejects many suitors and instead of marriage chooses to accompany her three cousins on an attack upon the Crows.

When, in the retreat, her pony tires, the threat becomes a test of her suitors. The braggart, Red Horn, chooses to save his own life while the humble orphan, Little Eagle, sacrifices his life to save Makatah's. Returning to camp, she declares herself "the widow of the brave Little Eagle" (p. 276) and remains true to his spirit for the rest of her life. Although the Sioux woman's usual role was as "a link in the genealogy of her race," Eastman shows here that in the face of unworthy life, loyalty to the dead is preferable. Since no warrior was worthy, the woman must choose—as do so many of the silent people in *Red*

*Hunters and the Animal People*—to break the genetic link. Thus subtly but undeniably, this eighth tale marks the conclusion of *Old Indian Days*.

In *Wigwam Evenings* Smokey Day is younger and less despairing than he is in the earlier books. But despite the efforts of Elaine Goodale, who co-authored the volume, Eastman's increasing despair surfaces. What should be parables for red children have become fables for white children, Ohiyesa's fable among them. The tales of *Wigwam Evenings* seem to use nature as Aesop might. Their morals are accented as though the teller has no faith in his audience's ability to respond to "every accent, every gesture" (p. 175) of the teller, as Smokey Day's original listeners had been trained to do. Despite this difference, the tales retain ritual emphasis and traditional values. We meet in them the balancers of nature which the whites hear only as voices of discord.

We learn that the Sioux emerged originally from a splinter in the toe of He-who-was-First-Created (p. 125). This is a decidedly more modest vision of man's significance than the view which gives western man his sense of superiority over nature. We learn that originally all things spoke a single language (p. 157) and possessed a single spirit. Not until Man is destroyed by Unk-tay-keep does He-who-was-First-Created take on a Prometheus-like role, reviving man and giving him fire and weapons to help him survive in a world now unbalanced. When he uses fire and weapons instead of ritual, the animals and plants see Man as enemy. Reinforcing the lesson of *Red Hunters*, therefore, Eastman shows that man himself creates discord in nature. Only the coming of the Star Boy, son of Star and the Earth maiden, will return balance to the earth. The reality that the Star Boy represents is the interpenetration of the physical by the spiritual world which white logic has destroyed.

The two concluding tales of *Wigwam Evenings* are tales of magic and of the supernatural in which the Sioux spirit world

penetrates white reality. But the penetration is possible only as long as the Sioux believe in and retain the conditions necessary to that coexistence. The old people in "The Magic Arrows" retain this belief, even though the young husband in "The Ghost Wife" forgets. His moment of carelessness loses him his family and his world. The loss is irretrievable, for the Sioux world is as dangerous and remorseless as the world of the animals in *Red Hunters*.

Ohiyesa (Eastman) is in the tales no longer an apologist or an apocalyptic prophet, but the revealer of an irreversible reality. Like the young warrior's, the Sioux's family and world are "gone from him forever" (p. 253). His people will produce no more heroes, chiefs, or warriors to replace those who are recalled in *Indian Heroes and Great Chieftains*. In *Soul of the Indian*, Eastman writes of the Sioux way as dead. Yet I think that each of the volumes is part of a ritual way that Eastman began later in life than was usual. In the narrative which is a substitute for the ritual he returns to that penultimate day when, at sixteen, he stepped into the Spirit Land. Considering his works as a ritual, one can see a strength in the developing character of Ohiyesa that he himself seems not to have seen until the late 1920's.

In a chapter called "Back to the Woods," in *From the Deep Woods to Civilization*, he details the first steps of his journey back from civilization to the deep woods. On Bear Island in Leech Lake, he came upon a group who "still sustained themselves after the old fashion by hunting, fishing, and gathering of wild rice and berries" (p. 168). Their hunting trails are "deeply grooved in the virgin soil" (p. 169), and they hold the Grand Medicine Dance annually. The voice of the narrator becomes poetic as it speaks of the "clear Black waters" which have "washed, ground, and polished these rocky islets into every imaginable fantastic shape" (p. 173). Leech Lake bestows a sense of the sacred, and from this point on, Eastman and

his readers know that "the out-of-doors was the essential vehicle" for Eastman's spiritual quest (p. 242).

The fact that the historical Charles Eastman was buried in Grand Lawn Cemetery in Detroit on January 11, 1939, seems less important than the spiritual reality of a journey which he defines at the opening of *From the Deep Woods*: "a little mountain brook should pause and turn upon itself to gather strength for the long journey toward an unknown ocean" (p. 1). It must experience being a part of "a resistless river" (p. 26), it must hear the "voice of the waterfall" (p. 36), and it must be caught up by "the deepening current" (p. 28).

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