



Wabaša Village

Near Morton

Chief Wabaša (Wabasha) was a leader of the Mdewakanton band of Dakota. His community originally lived along the lower Mississippi River around Winona, but moved seasonally as far north as Fort Snelling.

After the Treaty of 1851, Chief Wabaša moved his people to the newly formed reservation and lived in small villages along the Minnesota River. A marker near Morton identifies where Wabaša's band moved in 1853 after ceding millions of acres to the U.S. government. Wabaša and his people were expelled from Minnesota, even though he had opposed the war.

“You have said you are sorry to see my young men engaged still in their foolish dances. I am sorry... It is because their hearts are sick. They don't know whether these lands are to be their home or not.”

Chief Wabasa to Bishop Henry Whipple

Above: Wabaša, ca. 1858.



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Learn about early Dakota villages and the role of chiefs in community life.