



Resplendent in eagle feathers, William Spotted Crow, a tribal "elder statesman," typifies the former majesty of the Sioux.

# THE SIOUX

The windswept South Dakota plains remain, but tribal glories are past

by **DONALD WAYNE**

**Y**OU know right away you're in Sioux country. The almost treeless sweep of tawny buffalo grass extends from horizon to horizon, and the sky is the vast blue dome of the northern plains. It is serene, lonely country—a wind-swept domain roughly embracing what is now Western Nebraska, the Dakotas and the east-

ern ranges of Wyoming and Montana. This is the ancestral land of the Sioux, the grassy plains they once roamed and ruled. And walking over the rolling tableland I could discern the phantom images of another day—the ranging buffalo herds, the hunters and plainsmen and cowboys, the covered-wagon trains and gold rushers, the hard-riding bugle-blowing United States cavalry and, of course, the In-

dians. This whole pageant of the past is easy, even natural, to daydream in the original setting, for time has not touched it. It is a rather exhilarant experience, with a pleasant lingering effect, which is badly shattered when you see the Sioux—see them, that is, as they are.

Once the most fearsome, relentless, and lordly of all Western tribes, they have sunk into a corresponding extreme c