

CLASSICS IN ANTHROPOLOGY

Paul Bohannon, Editor

THE GHOST-DANCE RELIGION

and the

SIOUX OUTBREAK OF 1890

By James Mooney

Abridged, with an Introduction

by Anthony F. C. Wallace

Originally published as Part 2 of the *Fourteenth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology to the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, 1892-93* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1896)

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 64-24971

The University of Chicago Press, Chicago & London

The University of Toronto Press, Toronto 5, Canada

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Published 1965

Printed by The University of Chicago Press
Chicago, Illinois, U.S.A.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS / CHICAGO & LONDON

CHAPTER II

The Doctrine of the Ghost Dance

You must not fight. Do no harm to anyone. Do right always.—*Wovoka*.

The great underlying principle of the Ghost dance doctrine is that the time will come when the whole Indian race, living and dead, will be reunited upon a regenerated earth, to live a life of aboriginal happiness, forever free from death, disease, and misery. On this foundation each tribe has built a structure from its own mythology, and each apostle and believer has filled in the details according to his own mental capacity or ideas of happiness, with such additions as come to him from the trance. Some changes, also, have undoubtedly resulted from the transmission of the doctrine through the imperfect medium of the sign language. The differences of interpretation are precisely such as we find in Christianity, with its hundreds of sects and innumerable shades of individual opinion. The white race, being alien and secondary and hardly real, has no part in this scheme of aboriginal regeneration, and will be left behind with the other things of earth that have served their temporary purpose, or else will cease entirely to exist.

All this is to be brought about by an overruling spiritual power that needs no assistance from human creatures; and though certain medicine-men were disposed to anticipate the Indian millennium by preaching resistance to the further encroachments of the whites, such teachings form no part of the true doctrine, and it was only where chronic dissatisfaction was aggravated by recent grievances, as among the Sioux, that the movement assumed a hostile expression. On the contrary, all believers were exhorted to make themselves worthy of the predicted happiness by discarding all things warlike and practicing honesty, peace, and good will, not only among themselves, but also toward the whites, so long as they were together. Some apostles have even thought that all race distinctions are to be obliterated, and that the whites are to participate with the Indians in the coming felicity; but it seems unquestionable that this is equally contrary to the doctrine as originally preached.

Different dates have been assigned at various times for the fulfillment of the prophecy. Whatever the year, it has generally been held, for very natural reasons, that the regeneration of the earth and the renewal of all life would occur in the early spring. In some cases July, and particularly the 4th of July, was the expected time. This, it may be noted, was about the season when the great annual ceremony of the

sun dance formerly took place among the prairie tribes. The messiah himself has set several dates from time to time, as one prediction after another failed to materialize, and in his message to the Cheyenne and Arapaho, in August, 1891, he leaves the whole matter an open question. The date universally recognized among all the tribes immediately prior to the Sioux outbreak was the spring of 1891. As springtime came and passed, and summer grew and waned, and autumn faded again into winter without the realization of their hopes and longings, the doctrine gradually assumed its present form—that some time in the unknown future the Indian will be united with his friends who have gone before, to be forever supremely happy, and that this happiness may be anticipated in dreams, if not actually hastened in reality, by earnest and frequent attendance on the sacred dance.

On returning to the Cheyenne and Arapaho in Oklahoma, after my visit to Wovoka in January, 1892, I was at once sought by my friends of both tribes, anxious to hear the report of my journey and see the sacred things that I had brought back from the messiah. The Arapaho especially, who are of more spiritual nature than any of the other tribes, showed a deep interest and followed intently every detail of the narrative. As soon as the news of my return was spread abroad, men and women, in groups and singly, would come to me, and after grasping my hand would repeat a long and earnest prayer, sometimes aloud, sometimes with the lips silently moving, and frequently with tears rolling down the cheeks, and the whole body trembling violently from stress of emotion. Often before the prayer was ended the condition of the devotee bordered on the hysterical, very little less than in the Ghost dance itself. The substance of the prayer was usually an appeal to the messiah to hasten the coming of the promised happiness, with a petition that, as the speaker himself was unable to make the long journey, he might, by grasping the hand of one who had seen and talked with the messiah face to face, be enabled in his trance visions to catch a glimpse of the coming glory. During all this performance the bystanders awaiting their turn kept reverent silence. In a short time it became very embarrassing, but until the story had been told over and over again there was no way of escape without wounding their feelings. The same thing afterward happened among the northern Arapaho in Wyoming, one chief even holding out his hands toward me with short exclamations of *hǎ! hǎ! hǎ!* as is sometimes done by the devotees about a priest in the Ghost dance, in the hope, as he himself explained, that he might thus be enabled to go into a trance then and there. The hope, however, was not realized.

After this preliminary ordeal my visitors would ask to see the things which I had brought back from the messiah—the rabbit-skin robes, the piñon nuts, the gaming sticks, the sacred magpie feathers, and, above all, the sacred red paint. This is a bright-red ocher, about the color of brick dust, which the Paiute procure from the neighborhood

of their sacred eminence, Mount Grant. It is ground, and by the help of water is made into elliptical cakes about 6 inches in length. It is the principal paint used by the Paiute in the Ghost dance, and small portions of it are given by the messiah to all the delegates and are carried back by them to their respective tribes, where it is mixed with larger quantities of their own red paint and used in decorating the faces of the participants in the dance, the painting being solemnly performed for each dancer by the medicine-man himself. It is believed to ward off sickness, to contribute to long life, and to assist the mental vision in the trance. On the battlefield of Wounded Knee I have seen this paint smeared on the posts of the inclosure about the trench in which are buried the Indians killed in the fight. I found it very hard to refuse the numerous requests for some of the paint, but as I had only one cake myself I could not afford to be too liberal. My friends were very anxious to touch it, however, but when I found that every man tried to rub off as much of it as possible on the palms of his hands, afterward smearing this dust on the faces of himself and his family, I was obliged in self-defense to put it entirely away.

The piñon nuts, although not esteemed so sacred, were also the subject of reverent curiosity. One evening, by invitation from Left Hand, the principal chief of the Arapaho, I went over to his tipi to talk with him about the messiah and his country, and brought with me a quantity of the nuts for distribution. On entering I found the chief and a number of the principal men ranged on one side of the fire, while his wife and several other women, with his young grandchildren, completed the circle on the other. Each of the adults in turn took my hand with a prayer, as before described, varying in length and earnestness according to the devotion of the speaker. This ceremony consumed a considerable time. I then produced the piñon nuts and gave them to Left Hand, telling him how they were used as food by the Paiute. He handed a portion to his wife, and before I knew what was coming the two arose in their places and stretching out their hands toward the northwest, the country of the messiah, made a long and earnest prayer aloud that *Hesánanin*, "Our Father," would bless themselves and their children through the sacred food, and hasten the time of his coming. The others, men and women, listened with bowed heads, breaking in from time to time with similar appeals to "the Father." The scene was deeply affecting. It was another of those impressive exhibitions of natural religion which it has been my fortune to witness among the Indians, and which throw light on a side of their character of which the ordinary white observer never dreams. After the prayer the nuts were carefully divided among those present, down to the youngest infant, that all might taste of what to them was the veritable bread of life.

As I had always shown a sympathy for their ideas and feelings, and had now accomplished a long journey to the messiah himself at the cost

of considerable difficulty and hardship, the Indians were at last fully satisfied that I was really desirous of learning the truth concerning their new religion. A few days after my visit to Left Hand, several of the delegates who had been sent out in the preceding August came down to see me, headed by Black Short Nose, a Cheyenne. After preliminary greetings, he stated that the Cheyenne and Arapaho were now convinced that I would tell the truth about their religion, and as they loved their religion and were anxious to have the whites know that it was all good and contained nothing bad or hostile they would now give me the message which the messiah himself had given to them, that I might take it back to show to Washington. He then took from a beaded pouch and gave to me a letter, which proved to be the message or statement of the doctrine delivered by Wovoka to the Cheyenne and Arapaho delegates, of whom Black Short Nose was one, on the occasion of their last visit to Nevada, in August, 1891, and written down on the spot, in broken English, by one of the Arapaho delegates, Casper Edson, a young man who had acquired some English education by several years' attendance at the government Indian school at Carlisle, Pennsylvania. On the reverse page of the paper was a duplicate in somewhat better English, written out by a daughter of Black Short Nose, a school girl, as dictated by her father on his return. These letters contained the message to be delivered to the two tribes, and as is expressly stated in the text were not intended to be seen by a white man. The daughter of Black Short Nose had attempted to erase this clause before her father brought the letter down to me, but the lines were still plainly visible. It is the genuine official statement of the Ghost-dance doctrine as given by the messiah himself to his disciples. It is reproduced here in duplicate and verbatim, just as received, with a translation for the benefit of those not accustomed to Carlisle English. In accordance with the request of the Indians, I brought the original to Washington, where it was read by the Indian Commissioner, Honorable T. J. Morgan, after which I had two copies made, giving one to the commissioner and retaining the other myself, returning the original to its owner, Black Short Nose.

The Messiah Letter (Arapaho version)

What you get home you make dance, and will give you the same. when you dance four days and in night one day, dance day time, five days and then fift, will wash five for every body. He likes you ^{folk} you give him good many things, he heart been satting feel good. After you get home, will give good cloud, and give you chance to make you feel good. and he give you good spirit. and he give you a good paint.

You folks want you to come in three [months] here, any tribes from there. There will be good bit snow this year. Sometimes rain's, in fall, this year some rain, never give you any thing like that. grandfather said when he die never no cry. no hurt anybody. no fight, good behave always, it will give you satisfaction, this young man, he is a good Father and mother, dont tell no white man. Jueses was on ground, he just like cloud. Every body is alive again, I dont know when they will [be] here, may be this fall or in spring.

Every body never get sick, be young again,—(if young fellow no sick any more,) work for white men never trouble with him until you leave, when it shake the earth dont be afraid no harm any body.

You make dance for six ^{weeks} night, and put you foot [food?] in dance to eat for every body and wash in the water. that is all to tell, I am in to you. and you will received a good words from him some time, Dont tell lie.

The Messiah Letter (Cheyenne version)

When you get home you have to make dance. You must dance four nights and one day time. You will take bath in the morning before you go to yours homes, for every body, and give you all the same as this. Jackson Wilson likes you all, he is glad to get good many things. His heart satting fully of gladness, after you get home, I will give you a good cloud and give you chance to make you feel good. I give you a good spirit, and give you all good paint, I want you people to come here again, want them in three months any tribes of you from there. There will be a good deal snow this year. Some time rains, in fall this year some rain, never give you any thing like that, grandfather, said, when they were die never cry, no hurt any body, do any harm for it, not to fight. Be a good behave always. It will give a satisfaction in your life. This young man is a good father and mother. Do not tell the white people about this, Juses is on the ground, he just like cloud. Every body is a live again. I don't know when he will be here, may be will be this fall or in spring. When it happen it may be this. There will be no sickness and return to young again. Do not refuse to work for white man or do not make any trouble with them until you leave them. When the earth shakes do not be afraid it will not hurt you. I want you to make dance for six weeks. Eat and wash good clean yourselves [The rest of the letter had been erased].

The Messiah Letter (free Rendering)

When you get home you must make a dance to continue five days. Dance four successive nights, and the last night keep up the dance until the morning of the fifth day, when all must bathe in the river and then disperse to their homes. You must all do in the same way.

I, Jack Wilson, love you all, and my heart is full of gladness for the gifts you have brought me. When you get home I shall give you a good cloud [rain?] which will make you feel good. I give you a good spirit and give you all good paint. I want you to come again in three months, some from each tribe there [the Indian Territory].

There will be a good deal of snow this year and some rain. In the fall there will be such a rain as I have never given you before.

Grandfather [a universal title of reverence among Indians and here meaning the messiah] says, when your friends die you must not cry. You must not hurt anybody or do harm to anyone. You must not fight. Do right always. It will give you satisfaction in life. This young man has a good father and mother. [Possibly this refers to Casper Edson, the young Arapaho who wrote down this message of Wovoka for the delegation].

Do not tell the white people about this. Jesus is now upon the earth. He appears like a cloud. The dead are all alive again. I do not know when they will be here; maybe this fall or in the spring. When the time comes there will be no more sickness and everyone will be young again.

Do not refuse to work for the whites and do not make any trouble with them until you leave them. When the earth shakes [at the coming of the new world] do not be afraid. It will not hurt you.

I want you to dance every six weeks. Make a feast at the dance and have food that everybody may eat. Then bathe in the water. That is all. You will receive good words again from me some time. Do not tell lies.

Every organized religion has a system of ethics, a system of mythology, and a system of ritual observance. In this message from the high priest of the Ghost dance we have a synopsis of all three. With regard to the ritual part, ceremonial purification and bathing have formed a part in some form or other of every great religion from the beginning of history, while the religious dance dates back far beyond the day when the daughter of Saul "looked through a window and saw King David leaping and dancing before the Lord." The feasting enjoined is a part of every Indian ceremonial gathering, religious, political, or social. The dance is to continue four successive nights, in accord with the regular Indian system, in which *four* is the sacred number, as *three* is in Christianity. In obedience to this message the southern prairie tribes, after the return of the delegation in August, 1891, ceased to hold frequent one-night dances at irregular intervals as formerly without the ceremonial bathing, and adopted instead a system of four-night dances at regular periods of six weeks, followed by ceremonial bathing on the morning of the fifth day.

The mythology of the doctrine is only briefly indicated, but the principal articles are given. The dead are all arisen and the spirit hosts are advancing and have already arrived at the boundaries of this earth, led forward by the regenerator in shape of cloud-like indistinctness. The spirit captain of the dead is always represented under this shadowy semblance. The great change will be ushered in by a trembling of the earth, at which the faithful are exhorted to feel no alarm. The hope held out is the same that has inspired the Christian for nineteen centuries—a happy immortality in perpetual youth. As to fixing a date, the messiah is as cautious as his predecessor in prophecy, who declares that "no man knoweth the time, not even the angels of God." His weather predictions also are about as definite as the inspired utterances of the Delphian oracle.

The moral code inculcated is as pure and comprehensive in its simplicity as anything found in religious systems from the days of Gautama Buddha to the time of Jesus Christ. "*Do no harm to any one. Do right always.*" Could anything be more simple, and yet more exact and exacting? It inculcates honesty—"Do not tell lies." It preaches good will—"Do no harm to any one." It forbids the extravagant mourning customs formerly common among the tribes—"When your friends die, you must not cry," which is interpreted by the prairie tribes as forbidding the killing of horses, the burning of tipis and destruction of property, the cutting off of the hair and the gashing of the body with knives, all of which were formerly the sickening rule at every death until forbidden by the new doctrine. As an Arapaho said to me when his little boy died, "I shall not shoot any ponies, and my wife will not gash her arms. We used to do this when our friends died, because we thought we would never see them again, and it made us feel bad. But now we know we shall all be united again." If the Kiowa had held to

the Ghost-dance doctrine instead of abandoning it as they had done, they would have been spared the loss of thousands of dollars in horses, tipis, wagons, and other property destroyed, with much of the mental suffering and all of the physical laceration that resulted in consequence of the recent fatal epidemic in the tribe, when for weeks and months the sound of wailing went up night and morning, and in every camp men and women could be seen daily, with dress disordered and hair cut close to the scalp, with blood hardened in clots upon the skin, or streaming from mutilated fingers and fresh gashes on face, and arms, and legs. It preaches peace with the whites and obedience to authority until the day of deliverance shall come. Above all, it forbids war—"You must not fight." It is hardly possible for us to realize the tremendous and radical change which this doctrine works in the whole spirit of savage life. The career of every Indian has been the war-path. His proudest title has been that of warrior. His conversation by day and his dreams by night have been of bloody deeds upon the enemies of his tribe. His highest boast was in the number of his scalp trophies, and his chief delight at home was in the war dance and the scalp dance. The thirst for blood and massacre seemed inborn in every man, woman, and child of every tribe. Now comes a prophet as a messenger from God to forbid not only war, but all that savors of war—the war dance, the scalp dance, and even the bloody torture of the sun dance—and his teaching is accepted and his words obeyed by four-fifths of all the warlike predatory tribes of the mountains and the great plains. Only those who have known the deadly hatred that once animated Ute, Cheyenne, and Pawnee, one toward another, and are able to contrast it with their present spirit of mutual brotherly love, can know what the Ghost-dance religion has accomplished in bringing the savage into civilization. It is such a revolution as comes but once in the life of a race.

The beliefs held among the various tribes in regard to the final catastrophe are as fairly probable as some held on the same subject by more orthodox authorities. As to the dance itself, with its scenes of intense excitement, spasmodic action, and physical exhaustion even to unconsciousness, such manifestations have always accompanied religious upheavals among primitive peoples, and are not entirely unknown among ourselves. In a country which produces magnetic healers, shakers, trance mediums, and the like, all these things may very easily be paralleled without going far from home.

In conclusion, we may say of the prophet and his doctrine what has been said of one of his apostles by a careful and competent investigator: "He has given these people a better religion than they ever had before, taught them precepts which, if faithfully carried out, will bring them into better accord with their white neighbors, and has prepared the way for their final Christianization." (*G. D.*, 4, and *A. G. O.* 5.)

We may now consider details of the doctrine as held by different tribes, beginning with the Paiute, among whom it originated. The best account of the Paiute belief is contained in a report to the War Department by Captain J. M. Lee, who was sent out in the autumn of 1890 to investigate the temper and fighting strength of the Paiute and other Indians in the vicinity of Fort Bidwell in northeastern California. We give the statement obtained by him from Captain Dick, a Paiute, as delivered one day in a conversational way and apparently without reserve, after nearly all the Indians had left the room:

Long time, twenty years ago, Indian medicine-man in Mason's valley at Walker lake talk same way, same as you hear now. In one year, maybe, after he begin talk he die. Three years ago another medicine-man begin same talk. Heap talk all time. Indians hear all about it everywhere. Indians come from long way off to hear him. They come from the east; they make signs. Two years ago me go to Winnemucca and Pyramid lake, me see Indian Sam, a head man, and Johnson Sides. Sam he tell me he just been to see Indian medicine-man to hear him talk. Sam say medicine-man talk this way:

"All Indians must dance, everywhere, keep on dancing. Pretty soon in next spring Big Man [Great Spirit] come. He bring back all game of every kind. The game be thick everywhere. All dead Indians come back and live again. They all be strong just like young men, be young again. Old blind Indian see again and get young and have fine time. When Old Man [God] comes this way, then all the Indians go to mountains, high up away from whites. Whites can't hurt Indians then. Then while Indians way up high, big flood comes like water and all white people die, get drowned. After that water go way and then nobody but Indians everywhere and game all kinds thick. Then medicine-man tell Indians to send word to all Indians to keep up dancing and the good time will come. Indians who don't dance, who don't believe in this word, will grow little, just about a foot high, and stay that way. Some of them will be turned into wood and be burned in fire." That's the way Sam tell me the medicine-man talk. (*A. G. O.*, 6.)

Lieutenant N. P. Phister, who gathered a part of the material embodied in Captain Lee's report, confirms this general statement and gives a few additional particulars. The flood is to consist of mingled mud and water, and when the faithful go up into the mountains, the skeptics will be left behind and will be turned to stone. The prophet claims to receive these revelations directly from God and the spirits of the dead Indians during his trances. He asserts also that he is invulnerable, and that if soldiers should attempt to kill him they would fall down as if they had no bones and die, while he would still live, even though cut into little pieces. (*Phister*, 3.)

One of the first and most prominent of those who brought the doctrine to the prairie tribes was Porcupine, a Cheyenne, who crossed the mountains with several companions in the fall of 1889, visited Wovoka, and attended the dance near Walker lake, Nevada. In his report of his experiences, made some months later to a military officer, he states that Wovoka claimed to be Christ himself, who had come back again, many centuries after his first rejection, in pity to teach his children. He quotes the prophet as saying:

I found my children were bad, so I went back to heaven and left them. I told them that in so many hundred years I would come back to see my children. At the

end of this time I was sent back to try to teach them. My father told me the earth was getting old and worn out and the people getting bad, and that I was to renew everything as it used to be and make it better.

He also told us that all our dead were to be resurrected; that they were all to come back to earth, and that, as the earth was too small for them and us, he would do away with heaven and make the earth itself large enough to contain us all; that we must tell all the people we met about these things. He spoke to us about fighting, and said that was bad and we must keep from it; that the earth was to be all good hereafter, and we must all be friends with one another. He said that in the fall of the year the youth of all good people would be renewed, so that nobody would be more than forty years old, and that if they behaved themselves well after this the youth of everyone would be renewed in the spring. He said if we were all good he would send people among us who could heal all our wounds and sickness by mere touch and that we would live forever. He told us not to quarrel or fight or strike each other, or shoot one another; that the whites and Indians were to be all one people. He said if any man disobeyed what he ordered his tribe would be wiped from the face of the earth; that we must believe everything he said, and we must not doubt him or say he lied; that if we did, he would know it; that he would know our thoughts and actions in no matter what part of the world we might be. (*G. D.*, 5.)

Here we have the statement that both races are to live together as one. We have also the doctrine of healing by touch. Whether or not this is an essential part of the system is questionable, but it is certain that the faithful believe that great physical good comes to them, to their children, and to the sick from the imposition of hands by the priests of the dance, apart from the ability thus conferred to see the things of the spiritual world.

Another idea here presented, namely, that the earth becomes old and decrepit, and requires that its youth be renewed at the end of certain great cycles, is common to a number of tribes, and has an important place in the oldest religions of the world. As an Arapaho who spoke English expressed it, "This earth too old, grass too old, trees too old, our lives too old. Then all be new again." Captain H. L. Scott also found among the southern plains tribes the same belief that the rivers, the mountains, and the earth itself are worn out and must be renewed, together with an indefinite idea that both races alike must die at the same time, to be resurrected in new but separate worlds.

The Washo, Pit River, Bannock, and other tribes adjoining the Paiute on the north and west hold the doctrine substantially as taught by the messiah himself. We have but little light in regard to the belief as held by the Walapai, Cohonino, Mohave, and Navaho to the southward, beyond the general fact that the resurrection and return of the dead formed the principal tenet. As these tribes received their knowledge of the new religion directly from Paiute apostles, it is quite probable that they made but few changes in or additions to the original gospel.

A witness of the dance among the Walapai in 1891 obtained from the leaders of the ceremony about the same statement of doctrine already mentioned as held by the Paiute, from whom also the Walapai had adopted many of the songs and ceremonial words used in connection

with the dance. They were then expecting the Indian redeemer to appear on earth some time within three or four years. They were particularly anxious to have it understood that their intentions were not hostile toward the whites and that they desired to live in peace with them until the redeemer came, but that then they would be unable to prevent their destruction even if they wished. (*J. F. L., 3.*)

The manner of the final change and the destruction of the whites has been variously interpreted as the doctrine was carried from its original center. East of the mountains it is commonly held that a deep sleep will come on the believers, during which the great catastrophe will be accomplished, and the faithful will awake to immortality on a new earth. The Shoshoni of Wyoming say this sleep will continue four days and nights, and that on the morning of the fifth day all will open their eyes in a new world where both races will dwell together forever. The Cheyenne, Arapaho, Kiowa, and others, of Oklahoma, say that the new earth, with all the resurrected dead from the beginning, and with the buffalo, the elk, and other game upon it, will come from the west and slide over the surface of the present earth, as the right hand might slide over the left. As it approaches, the Indians will be carried upward and alight on it by the aid of the sacred dance feathers which they wear in their hair and which will act as wings to bear them up. They will then become unconscious for four days, and on waking out of their trance will find themselves with their former friends in the midst of all the oldtime surroundings. By Sitting Bull, the Arapaho apostle, it is thought that this new earth as it advances will be preceded by a wall of fire which will drive the whites across the water to their original and proper country, while the Indians will be enabled by means of the sacred feathers to surmount the flames and reach the promised land. When the expulsion of the whites has been accomplished, the fire will be extinguished by a rain continuing twelve days. By a few it is believed that a hurricane with thunder and lightning will come to destroy the whites alone. This last idea is said to be held also by the Walapai of Arizona, who extend its provisions to include the unbelieving Indians as well. (*G. D., 6.*) The doctrine held by the Caddo, Wichita, and Delaware, of Oklahoma, is practically the same as is held by the Arapaho and Cheyenne from whom they obtained it. All these tribes believe that the destruction or removal of the whites is to be accomplished entirely by supernatural means, and they severely blame the Sioux for having provoked a physical conflict by their impatience instead of waiting for their God to deliver them in his own good time.

Among all the tribes which have accepted the new faith it is held that frequent devout attendance on the dance conduces to ward off disease and restore the sick to health, this applying not only to the actual participants, but also to their children and friends. The idea of obtaining temporal blessings as the reward of a faithful performance

of religious duties is too natural and universal to require comment. The purification by the sweat-bath, which forms an important preliminary to the dance among the Sioux, while devotional in its purpose, is probably also sanitary in its effect.

Among the powerful and warlike Sioux of the Dakotas, already restless under both old and recent grievances, and more lately brought to the edge of starvation by a reduction of rations, the doctrine speedily assumed a hostile meaning and developed some peculiar features, for which reason it deserves particular notice as concerns this tribe. The earliest rumors of the new messiah came to the Sioux from the more western tribes in the winter of 1888-89, but the first definite account was brought by a delegation which crossed the mountains to visit the messiah in the fall of 1889, returning in the spring of 1890. On the report of these delegates the dance was at once inaugurated and spread so rapidly that in a few months the new religion had been accepted by the majority of the tribe.

Perhaps the best statement of the Sioux version is given by the veteran agent, James McLaughlin, of Standing Rock agency. In an official letter of October 17, 1890, he writes that the Sioux, under the influence of Sitting Bull, were greatly excited over the near approach of a predicted Indian millennium or "return of the ghosts," when the white man would be annihilated and the Indian again supreme, and which the medicine-men had promised was to occur as soon as the grass was green in the spring. They were told that the Great Spirit had sent upon them the dominant race to punish them for their sins, and that their sins were now expiated and the time of deliverance was at hand.¹ Their decimated ranks were to be reinforced by all the Indians who had ever died, and these spirits were already on their way to reinhabit the earth, which had originally belonged to the Indians, and were driving before them, as they advanced, immense herds of buffalo and fine ponies. The Great Spirit, who had so long deserted his red children, was now once more with them and against the whites, and the white man's gunpowder would no longer have power to drive a bullet through the skin of an Indian. The whites themselves would soon be overwhelmed and smothered under a deep landslide, held down by sod and timber, and the few who might escape would become small fishes in the rivers. In order to bring about this happy result, the Indians must believe and organize the Ghost dance.

The agent continues:

It would seem impossible that any person, no matter how ignorant, could be brought to believe such absurd nonsense, but as a matter of fact a great many Indians of this agency actually believe it, and since this new doctrine has been ingrafted here from the more southern Sioux agencies the infection has been wonderful, and so pernicious that it now includes some of the Indians who were formerly numbered with the progressive and more intelligent, and many of our very best Indians appear dazed and undecided when talking of it, their inherent superstition having been thoroughly aroused. (*G. D., 7.*)

The following extract is from a translation of a letter dated March 30, 1891, written in Sioux by an Indian at Pine Ridge to a friend at Rosebud agency:

And now I will tell another thing. Lately there is a man died and come to life again, and he say he has been to Indian nation of ghosts, and tells us dead Indian nation all coming home. The Indian ghost tell him come after his war bonnet. The Indian (not ghost Indian) gave him his war bonnet and he died again. (*G. D., 8.*)

The Sioux, like other tribes, believed that at the moment of the catastrophe the earth would tremble. According to one version the landslide was to be accompanied by a flood of water, which would flow into the mouths of the whites and cause them to choke with mud. Storms and whirlwinds were also to assist in their destruction. The Indians were to surmount the avalanche, probably in the manner described in speaking of the southern tribes, and on reaching the surface of the new earth would behold boundless prairies covered with long grass and filled with great herds of buffalo and other game. When the time was near at hand, they must assemble at certain places of rendezvous and prepare for the final abandonment of all earthly things by stripping off their clothing. In accordance with the general idea of a return to aboriginal habits, the believers, as far as possible, discarded white man's dress and utensils. Those who could procure buckskin—which is now very scarce in the Sioux country—resumed buckskin dress, while the dancers put on "ghost shirts" made of cloth, but cut and ornamented in Indian fashion. No metal of any kind was allowed in the dance, no knives, and not even the earrings or belts of imitation silver which form such an important part of prairie Indian costume. This was at variance with the custom among the Cheyenne and other southern tribes, where the women always wear in the dance their finest belts studded with large disks of German silver. The beads used so freely on moccasins and leggings seem to have been regarded as a substitute for the oldtime wampum and porcupine quill work, and were therefore not included in the prohibition. No weapon of any kind was allowed to be carried in the Ghost dance by any tribe, north or south, a fact which effectually disposes of the assertion that this was another variety of war dance. At certain of the Sioux dances, however, sacred arrows and a sacred bow, with other things, were tied on the tree in the center of the circle.

Valuable light in regard to the Sioux version of the doctrine is obtained from the sermon delivered at Red Leaf camp, on Pine Ridge reservation, October 31, 1890, by Short Bull, one of those who had been selected to visit the messiah, and who afterward became one of the prime leaders in the dance:

My friends and relations: I will soon start this thing in running order. I have told you that this would come to pass in two seasons, but since the whites are interfering so much, I will advance the time from what my father above told me to do, so the time will be shorter. Therefore you must not be afraid of anything. Some of my relations have no ears, so I will have them blown away.

Now, there will be a tree sprout up, and there all the members of our religion and the tribe must gather together. That will be the place where we will see our dead relations. But before this time we must dance the balance of this moon, at the end of which time the earth will shiver very hard. Whenever this thing occurs, I will start the wind to blow. We are the ones who will then see our fathers, mothers, and everybody. We, the tribe of Indians, are the ones who are living a sacred life. God, our father himself, has told and commanded and shown me to do these things.

Our father in heaven has placed a mark at each point of the four winds. First, a clay pipe, which lies at the setting of the sun and represents the Sioux tribe. Second, there is a holy arrow lying at the north, which represents the Cheyenne tribe. Third, at the rising of the sun there lies hail, representing the Arapaho tribe. Fourth, there lies a pipe and nice feather at the south, which represents the Crow tribe. My father has shown me these things, therefore we must continue this dance. If the soldiers surround you four deep, three of you, on whom I have put holy shirts, will sing a song, which I have taught you, around them, when some of them will drop dead. Then the rest will start to run, but their horses will sink into the earth. The riders will jump from their horses, but they will sink into the earth also. Then you can do as you desire with them. Now, you must know this, that all the soldiers and that race will be dead. There will be only five thousand of them left living on the earth. My friends and relations, this is straight and true.

Now, we must gather at Pass creek where the tree is sprouting. There we will go among our dead relations. You must not take any earthly things with you. Then the men must take off all their clothing and the women must do the same. No one shall be ashamed of exposing their persons. My father above has told us to do this, and we must do as he says. You must not be afraid of anything. The guns are the only things we are afraid of, but they belong to our father in heaven. He will see that they do no harm. Whatever white men may tell you, do not listen to them, my relations. This is all. I will now raise my hand up to my father and close what he has said to you through me. (*Short Bull; War, 4.*)

The pipe here referred to is the most sacred thing in Sioux mythology and will be more fully described in treating of the Sioux songs. The sacred object of the Cheyenne is the "medicine arrow," now in the keeping of the band living near Cantonment, Oklahoma. The Crow and Arapaho references are not so clear. The Arapaho are called by the Sioux the "Blue Cloud" people, a name which may possibly have some connection with hail. The sprouting tree at which all the believers must gather refers to the tree or pole which the Sioux planted in the center of the dance circle. The cardinal directions here assigned to the other tribes may refer to their former locations with regard to the Sioux. The Cheyenne and Arapaho, who now live far west and south of the Sioux, originally lived north and east of them, about Red river and the Saskatchewan.

The most noted thing connected with the Ghost dance among the Sioux is the "ghost shirt" which was worn by all adherents of the doctrine—men, women, and children alike. It is described by Captain Sword in his account of the Ghost dance, given in the appendix to this chapter, and will be noticed at length hereafter in treating of the ceremony of the dance. During the dance it was worn as an outside garment, but was said to be worn at other times under the ordinary dress. Although the shape, fringing, and feather adornment were practically the same in every case, considerable variation existed in

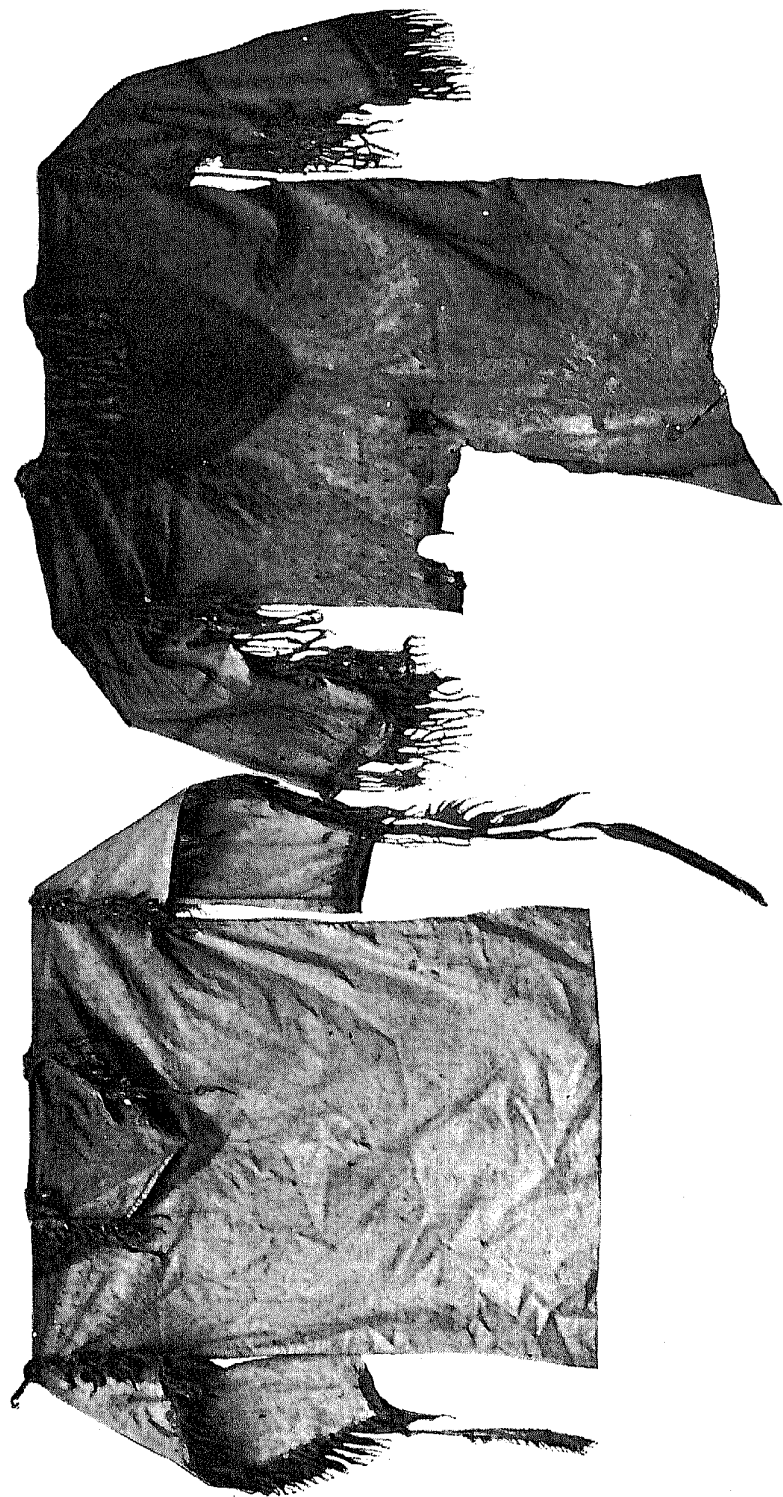


FIG. 3.—Sioux ghost shirts from Wounded Knee battlefield

EXPLANATION OF FIGURE 3

The originals of these ghost shirts, now in the National Museum, were taken, by scouts present during the fight, from the bodies of Indians killed at Wounded Knee, and were obtained by the author, at Pine Ridge, from Philip Wells and Louis Menard, mixed-blood interpreters, the former having also been present as interpreter for the Indian scouts during the fight. They are made of coarse white cloth, sewn with sinew. One of the shirts is partially burned, having probably been taken out of one of the tipis overturned and set on fire during the action. Two other ghost shirts, said to be from the same battlefield, are also in the National Museum.

regard to the painting, the designs on some being very simple, while the others were fairly covered with representations of sun, moon, stars, the sacred things of their mythology, and the visions of the trance. The feathers attached to the garment were always those of the eagle, and the thread used in the sewing was always the old-time sinew. In some cases the fringe or other portions were painted with the sacred red paint of the messiah. The shirt was firmly believed to be impenetrable to bullets or weapons of any sort. When one of the women shot in the Wounded Knee massacre was approached as she lay in the church and told that she must let them remove her ghost shirt in order the better to get at her wound, she replied: "Yes; take it off. They told me a bullet would not go through. Now I don't want it any more."

The protective idea in connection with the ghost shirt does not seem to be aboriginal. The Indian warrior habitually went into battle naked above the waist. His protecting "medicine" was a feather, a tiny bag of some sacred powder, the claw of an animal, the head of a bird, or some other small object which could be readily twisted into his hair or hidden between the covers of his shield without attracting attention. Its virtue depended entirely on the ceremony of the consecration and not on size or texture. The war paint had the same magic power of protection. To cover the body in battle was not in accordance with Indian usage, which demanded that the warrior should be as free and unincumbered in movement as possible. The so-called "war shirt" was worn chiefly in ceremonial dress parades and only rarely on the war-path.

Dreams are but incoherent combinations of waking ideas, and there is a hint of recollection even in the wildest visions of sleep. The ghost shirt may easily have been an inspiration from a trance, while the trance vision itself was the result of ideas derived from previous observation or report. The author is strongly inclined to the opinion that the idea of an invulnerable sacred garment is not original with the Indians, but, like several other important points pertaining to the Ghost-dance doctrine, is a practical adaptation by them of ideas derived from contact with some sectarian body among the whites. It may have been suggested by the "endowment robe" of the Mormons, a seamless garment of white muslin adorned with symbolic figures, which is worn by their initiates as the most sacred badge of their faith, and by many of the believers is supposed to render the wearer invulnerable. The Mormons have always manifested a particular interest in the Indians, whom they regard as the Lamanites of their sacred writings, and hence have made special efforts for their evangelization, with the result that a considerable number of the neighboring tribes of Ute, Paiute, Bannock, and Shoshoni have been received into the Mormon church and invested with the endowment robe. (See the appendix to this chapter: "The Mormons and the Indians;" also "Tell It All," by Mrs T. B. H. Stenhouse.) The Shoshoni and northern Arapaho occupy the same

reservation in Wyoming, and anything which concerns one tribe is more or less talked of by the other. As the Sioux, Cheyenne, and other eastern tribes make frequent visits to the Arapaho, and as these Arapaho have been the great apostles of the Ghost dance, it is easy to see how an idea borrowed by the Shoshoni from the Mormons could find its way through the Arapaho first to the Sioux and Cheyenne and afterward to more remote tribes. Wovoka himself expressly disclaimed any responsibility for the ghost shirt, and whites and Indians alike agreed that it formed no part of the dance costume in Mason valley. When I first went among the Cheyenne and neighboring tribes of Oklahoma in January, 1891, the ghost shirt had not yet reached them. Soon afterward the first one was brought down from the Sioux country by a Cheyenne named White Buffalo, who had been a Carlisle student, but the Arapaho and Cheyenne, after debating the matter, refused to allow it to be worn in the dance, on the ground that the doctrine of the Ghost dance was one of peace, whereas the Sioux had made the ghost shirt an auxiliary of war. In consequence of this decision such shirts have never been worn by the dancers among the southern tribes. Instead they wear in the dance their finest shirts and dresses of buckskin, covered with painted and beaded figures from the Ghost-dance mythology and the visions of the trance.

The Ghost dance is variously named among the different tribes. In its original home among the Paiute it is called *Nänigükwa*, "dance in a circle" (*nüka*, dance), to distinguish it from the other dances of the tribe, which have only the ordinary up-and-down step without the circular movement. The Shoshoni call it *Tänü'riyün* or *Tämanü'rayära*, which may be rendered "everybody dragging," in allusion to the manner in which the dancers move around the circle holding hands, as children do in their ring games. They insist that it is a revival of a similar dance which existed among them fifty years ago. The Comanche call it *A'p-anéka'ra*, "the Father's dance," or sometimes the dance "with joined hands." The Kiowa call it *Mänposo'ti guan*, "dance with clasped hands," and the frenzy, *guan á'dalka-i*, "dance craziness." The Caddo know it as *Á'á kákí'mbawí'ut*, "the prayer of all to the Father," or as the *Nänisana ka au'-shan*, "nänisana dance," from *nänisana*, "my children," which forms the burden of so many of the ghost songs in the language of the Arapaho, from whom they obtained the dance. By the Sioux, Arapaho, and most other prairie tribes it is called the "spirit" or "ghost" dance (Sioux, *Wana'ghi wa'chipi*; Arapaho, *Thigú'nawat*), from the fact that everything connected with it relates to the coming of the spirits of the dead from the spirit world, and by this name it has become known among the whites.

APPENDIX

THE MORMONS AND THE INDIANS

While the Indian excitement was at its height in 1892, a curious pamphlet was published anonymously at Salt Lake City in connection with a proposed series of lectures, from which we make some extracts for the light they give on the Mormon attitude toward the Indians. The pamphlet is headed, "The Mormons have stepped down and out of Celestial Government—the American Indians have stepped up and into Celestial Government." It begins by stating that the Messiah came to His people at the time appointed of the Father—March, 1890—notwithstanding the assertion in the Deseret Evening News, made January, 1892: '1890 has passed, and no Messiah has come.'" It goes on to say:

"1891 has passed, and no pruning of the vineyard." The vineyard of the Lord is the house of Israel.—Isa. 5:7. In the part of the vineyard the American Indians, descendants of the righteous branch of Joseph, who were led to the Western Continent or hemisphere—Zion—we find the vine, the stone-power of the Latter Days. Ps. 80.

The celestial prophet, seer, and revelator, Joseph Smith, jr., prophesied on the 2d of April, 1843, that the Messiah would reveal himself to man in mortality in 1890. Doctrine and Covenants, 130, 15, 17, which reads: "I was once praying very earnestly to know the time of the coming of the Son of Man, when I heard a voice speak the following: 'Joseph, my son, if thou livest until thou art eighty-five years old, thou shalt see the face of the Son of Man.'"

Five years later (than 1882) the sign that was to usher in the work of the Father was given to the American Indians, while March, 1890, witnesses the organization of a church under the restored order, where twelve disciples were chosen and ordained, whose first allegiance is given irrevocably to the Lord God, whereas that of the Celestial Church is given to the government fostering it.

The following seven signs were to precede the fullness of the Gentiles upon the land of America; Zion, the time, place, and parties given with each. [The first, second, and third "signs" are omitted here.]

4. When the Bible and Book of Mormon become one in the hands of the Messiah. Ezk. 37:19; III Nephi, 21:1-7. In 1887, sixty years after the plates were delivered to Joseph Smith, jr., the Book of Mormon in Spanish was delivered to the American Indians, with the promise to those who are identified with the Gentiles that if they will not harden their hearts, but will repent and know the true points of my doctrine they shall be numbered with my covenant people, the Branch of Joseph. Doctrine and Covenant, 19:59-62; 20:8-17; III Nephi, 21:1-7.

5. The coming of the Messiah. Three years later, March, 1890, the people of God, who were notified by the three Nephites, met at Walkers lake, Esmeralda county, Nevada, where a dispensation of the Celestial kingdom of God—the gospel in the covenant of consecration, a perfect oneness in all things, temporal and spiritual—was given unto them. Twelve disciples were ordained, not by angels or men, but by the Messiah, in the presence of hundreds, representing scores of tribes or nations, who saw his face, heard and understood his voice as on the day of pentecost. Acts 2, also fulfilling sec. 90:9, 10, 11 of Doctrine and Covenant. Ezk. 20:33-37.

6. The Fulness of the Gentiles. In 1492, the Lord God let His vineyard to the nations of the Gentiles, to punish His people the Branch of Joseph for 400 years (Gen. 15:13), bringing the fulness of the Gentiles the end of their rule over the American Indians. October, 1892, Rom. II: 25-26; Gen. 50: 25; New Trans. Matt. 21: 33-41.

7. The Pruning of the Vineyard. The husbandmen upon this land began the last pruning of the vineyard in 1891. Prominent among which stands our government in fulfilling Matt. 21: 33-41, saying, let us kill the heirs and hold the inheritance, as shown in the massacre of Wounded Knee; the butchery of Sitting Bull; the imprisonment of Short Bull and others; the breaking up of reservations, and the attempts to destroy the treaty stipulations above mentioned by forcing the mark of the Beast, citizenship and statehood, upon the American Indians, which will ultimately terminate in a war of extermination. Isa. 10: 24-27; Dan. 2: 34; Isa. 14: 21.

According to the astronomical, prophetic, and historical evidence found in the Bible, Book of Mormon, and Doctrine and Covenants for the redemption of Zion and the restoration of Israel, there are seven celestial keys of powers to be used which can not be handled by apostles, prophets, or angels. They can only be handled by the Messiah and his Father.

2. The key of power that restores the heirs, the American Indians, to their own lands consecrating to them the wealth of the Gentiles.

3. The key of power that turns away ungodliness from Jacob (the American Indians) enabling them to build the temple on the spot pointed out by the finger of God (Independence, Jackson County, Missouri), on which the true sign of Israel is to rest, the glory of the living God of the Hebrews, the cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night by the close of this generation, 1896.

On and after July 10, 1892, free lectures illustrated by figures, will be given weekly, on Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday, from 6.30 to 8.30 p. m. (weather permitting), at the book stand in the Nineteenth Ward, opposite Margett's Brewery, No. 312 North Second West.

First. On the coming of the Messiah to the Hebrews, at the sacrifice of Esau, near the close of the 400-year bondage of Jacob in the morning of the Abrahamic Covenant, B. C. 1491.

Second. On the coming of the Messiah to the Jews, at the Meridian sacrifice of Jacob at the close of the last 1921 years of the covenant, the year one A. D.

Third. On the coming of the Messiah to the American Indians, the remnants, at the evening sacrifice of Esau, near the expiration of the evening bondage of Jacob of 400 years, 1892, in the last 430 years of the covenant.

PORCUPINE'S ACCOUNT OF THE MESSIAH

The following statement was made to Major Carroll, in command of Camp Crook, at Tongue River agency, Montana, June 15, 1890, and transmitted through the War Department to the Indian Office:

In November last [1889] I left the reservation with two other Cheyennes. I went through [Fort] Washakie and took the Union Pacific railroad at Rawlins. We got on early in the morning about breakfast, rode all day on the railroad, and about dark reached a fort [Bridger?]. I stayed there two days, and then took a passenger train, and the next morning got to Fort Hall. I found some lodges of Snakes and Bannocks there. I saw the agent here, and he told me I could stay at the agency, but the chief of the Bannocks who was there took me to his camp near by. The Bannocks told me they were glad to see a Cheyenne and that we ought to make a treaty with the Bannocks.

The chief told me he had been to Washington and had seen the President, and that we ought all to be friends with the whites and live at peace with them and

with each other. We talked these matters over for ten days. The agent then sent for me and some of the Bannocks and Shoshones, and asked me where I was going. I told him I was just traveling to meet other Indians and see other countries; that my people were at peace with the whites, and I thought I could travel anywhere I wished. He asked me why I did not have a pass. I said because my agent would not give me one. He said he was glad to see me anyhow, and that the whites and Indians were all friends. Then he asked me where I wanted a pass to. I told him I wanted to go further and some Bannocks and Shoshones wanted to go along. He gave passes—five of them—to the chiefs of the three parties. We took the railroad to a little town near by, and then took a narrow-gauge road. We went on this, riding all night at a very fast rate of speed, and came to a town on a big lake [Ogden or Salt Lake City]. We stayed there one day, taking the cars at night, rode all night, and the next morning about 9 o'clock saw a settlement of Indians. We traveled south, going on a narrow-gauge road. We got off at this Indian town. The Indians here were different from any Indians I ever saw. The women and men were dressed in white people's clothes, the women having their hair banded. These Indians had their faces painted white with black spots. We stayed with these people all day. We took the same road at night and kept on. We traveled all night, and about daylight we saw a lot of houses, and they told us there were a lot more Indians there; so we got off, and there is where we saw Indians living in huts of grass [tulé?]. We stopped here and got something to eat. There were whites living near by. We got on the cars again at night, and during the night we got off among some Indians, who were fish-eaters [Paiute]. We stayed among the Fish-eaters till morning, and then got into a wagon with the son of the chief of the Fish-eaters, and we arrived about noon at an agency on a big river. There was also a big lake near the agency.

The agent asked us where we were from and said we were a long ways from home, and that he would write to our agent and let him know we were all right. From this agency we went back to the station, and they told us there were some more Indians to the south. One of the chiefs of the Fish-eaters then furnished us with four wagons. We traveled all day, and then came to another railroad. We left our wagons here and took the railroad, the Fish-eaters telling us there were some more Indians along the railroad who wanted to see us. We took this railroad about 2 o'clock and about sun down got to another agency, where there were more Fish-eaters. [From diagrams drawn and explanations given of them in addition to the foregoing, there seems to be no doubt that the lakes visited are Pyramid and Walker lakes, western Nevada, and the agencies those of the same name.]

They told us they had heard from the Shoshone agency that the people in this country were all bad people, but that they were good people there. All the Indians from the Bannock agency down to where I finally stopped danced this dance [referring to the late religious dances at the Cheyenne agency], the whites often dancing it themselves. [It will be recollected that he traveled constantly through the Mormon country.] I knew nothing about this dance before going. I happened to run across it, that is all. I will tell you about it. [Here all the Indian auditors removed their hats in token that the talk to follow was to be on a religious subject.] I want you all to listen to this, so that there will be no mistake. There is no harm in what I am to say to anyone. I heard this where I met my friends in Nevada. It is a wonder you people never heard this before. In the dance we had there [Nevada] the whites and Indians danced together. I met there a great many kinds of people, but they all seemed to know all about this religion. The people there seemed all to be good. I never saw any drinking or fighting or bad conduct among them. They treated me well on the cars, without pay. They gave me food without charge, and I found that this was a habit among them toward their neighbors. I thought it strange that the people there should have been so good, so different from those here.

What I am going to say is the truth. The two men sitting near me were with me, and will bear witness that I speak the truth. I and my people have been living in ignorance until I went and found out the truth. All the whites and Indians are brothers, I was told there. I never knew this before.

The Fish-eaters near Pyramid lake told me that Christ had appeared on earth again. They said Christ knew he was coming; that eleven of his children were also coming from a far land. It appeared that Christ had sent for me to go there, and that was why unconsciously I took my journey. It had been foreordained. Christ had summoned myself and others from all heathen tribes, from two to three or four from each of fifteen or sixteen different tribes. There were more different languages than I ever heard before and I did not understand any of them. They told me when I got there that my great father was there also, but did not know who he was. The people assembled called a council, and the chief's son went to see the Great Father [messiah], who sent word to us to remain fourteen days in that camp and that he would come to see us. He sent me a small package of something white to eat that I did not know the name of. There were a great many people in the council, and this white food was divided among them. The food was a big white nut. Then I went to the agency at Walker lake and they told us Christ would be there in two days. At the end of two days, on the third morning, hundreds of people gathered at this place. They cleared off a place near the agency in the form of a circus ring and we all gathered there. This space was perfectly cleared of grass, etc. We waited there till late in the evening anxious to see Christ. Just before sundown I saw a great many people, mostly Indians, coming dressed in white men's clothes. The Christ was with them. They all formed in this ring around it. They put up sheets all around the circle, as they had no tents. Just after dark some of the Indians told me that the Christ [Father] was arrived. I looked around to find him, and finally saw him sitting on one side of the ring. They all started toward him to see him. They made a big fire to throw light on him. I never looked around, but went forward, and when I saw him I bent my head. I had always thought the Great Father was a white man, but this man looked like an Indian. He sat there a long time and nobody went up to speak to him. He sat with his head bowed all the time. After awhile he rose and said he was very glad to see his children. "I have sent for you and am glad to see you. I am going to talk to you after awhile about your relatives who are dead and gone. My children, I want you to listen to all I have to say to you. I will teach you, too, how to dance a dance, and I want you to dance it. Get ready for your dance and then, when the dance is over, I will talk to you." He was dressed in a white coat with stripes. The rest of his dress was a white man's except that he had on a pair of moccasins. Then he commenced our dance, everybody joining in, the Christ singing while we danced. We danced till late in the night, when he told us we had danced enough.

The next morning, after breakfast was over, we went into the circle and spread canvas over it on the ground, the Christ standing in the midst of us. He told us he was going away that day, but would be back that next morning and talk to us.

In the night when I first saw him I thought he was an Indian, but the next day when I could see better he looked different. He was not so dark as an Indian, nor so light as a white man. He had no beard or whiskers, but very heavy eyebrows. He was a good-looking man. We were crowded up very close. We had been told that nobody was to talk, and even if we whispered the Christ would know it. I had heard that Christ had been crucified, and I looked to see, and I saw a scar on his wrist and one on his face, and he seemed to be the man. I could not see his feet. He would talk to us all day.

That evening we all assembled again to see him depart. When we were assembled, he began to sing, and he commenced to tremble all over, violently for a while, and then sat down. We danced all that night, the Christ lying down beside us apparently dead.

The next morning when we went to eat breakfast, the Christ was with us. After breakfast four heralds went around and called out that the Christ was back with us and wanted to talk with us. The circle was prepared again. The people assembled, and Christ came among us and sat down. He said he wanted to talk to us again and for us to listen. He said: "I am the man who made everything you see around you. I am not lying to you, my children. I made this earth and everything on it. I have

been to heaven and seen your dead friends and have seen my own father and mother. In the beginning, after God made the earth, they sent me back to teach the people, and when I came back on earth the people were afraid of me and treated me badly. This is what they did to me [showing his scars]. I did not try to defend myself. I found my children were bad, so went back to heaven and left them. I told them that in so many hundred years I would come back to see my children. At the end of this time I was sent back to try to teach them. My father told me the earth was getting old and worn out, and the people getting bad, and that I was to renew everything as it used to be, and make it better."

He told us also that all our dead were to be resurrected; that they were all to come back to earth, and that as the earth was too small for them and us, he would do away with heaven, and make the earth itself large enough to contain us all; that we must tell all the people we meet about these things. He spoke to us about fighting, and said that was bad, and we must keep from it; that the earth was to be all good hereafter, and we must all be friends with one another. He said that in the fall of the year the youth of all the good people would be renewed, so that nobody would be more than 40 years old, and that if they behaved themselves well after this the youth of everyone would be renewed in the spring. He said if we were all good he would send people among us who could heal all our wounds and sickness by mere touch, and that we would live forever. He told us not to quarrel, or fight, nor strike each other, nor shoot one another; that the whites and Indians were to be all one people. He said if any man disobeyed what he ordered, his tribe would be wiped from the face of the earth; that we must believe everything he said, and that we must not doubt him, or say he lied; that if we did, he would know it; that he would know our thoughts and actions, in no matter what part of the world we might be.

When I heard this from the Christ, and came back home to tell it to my people, I thought they would listen. Where I went to there were lots of white people, but I never had one of them say an unkind word to me. I thought all of your people knew all of this I have told you of, but it seems you do not.

Ever since the Christ I speak of talked to me I have thought what he said was good. I see nothing bad in it. When I got back, I knew my people were bad, and had heard nothing of all this, so I got them together and told them of it and warned them to listen to it for their own good. I talked to them for four nights and five days. I told them just what I have told you here today. I told them what I said were the words of God Almighty, who was looking down on them. I wish some of you had been up in our camp here to have heard my words to the Cheyennes. The only bad thing that there has been in it at all was this: I had just told my people that the Christ would visit the sins of any Indian upon the whole tribe, when the recent trouble [killing of Ferguson] occurred. If any one of you think I am not telling the truth, you can go and see this man I speak of for yourselves. I will go with you, and I would like one or two of my people who doubt me to go with me.

The Christ talked to us all in our respective tongues. You can see this man in your sleep any time you want after you have seen him and shaken hands with him once. Through him you can go to heaven and meet your friends. Since my return I have seen him often in my sleep. About the time the soldiers went up the Rosebud I was lying in my lodge asleep, when this man appeared and told me that the Indians had gotten into trouble, and I was frightened. The next night he appeared to me and told me that everything would come out all right.

THE GHOST DANCE AMONG THE SIOUX

The following was written originally in the Teton Dakota dialect by George Sword, an Ogalala Sioux Indian, formerly captain of the Indian police at Pine Ridge agency and now judge of the Indian court. It

was translated by an Indian for Miss Emma C. Sickels and is published by her courtesy. The copy of the original Sioux manuscript is in the archives of the Bureau of Ethnology:

In the story of ghost dancing, the Ogalala heard that the Son of God was truly on earth in the west from their country. This was in the year 1889. The first people knew about the messiah to be on earth were the Shoshoni and Arapaho. So in 1889 Good Thunder with four or five others visited the place where Son of God said to be. These people went there without permission. They said the messiah was there at the place, but he was there to help the Indians and not the whites; so this made the Indians happy to find out this. Good Thunder, Cloud Horse, Yellow Knife, and Short Bull visited the place again in 1890 and saw the messiah. Their story of visit to the messiah is as follows:

"From the country where the Arapaho and Shoshoni we start in the direction of northwest in train for five nights and arrived at the foot of the Rocky mountains. Here we saw him and also several tribes of Indians. The people said that the messiah will come at a place in the woods where the place was prepare for him. When we went to the place a smoke descended from heaven to the place where he was to come. When the smoke disappeared, there was a man of about forty, which was the Son of God. The man said:

"My grandchildren! I am glad you have come far away to see your relatives. This are your people who have come back from your country.' When he said he want us to go with him, we looked and we saw a land created across the ocean on which all the nations of Indians were coming home, but, as the messiah looked at the land which was created and reached across the ocean, again disappeared, saying that it was not time for that to take place. The messiah then gave to Good Thunder some paints—Indian paint and a white paint—a green grass [sagebrush twigs?]; and said, 'My grandchildren, when you get home, go to farming and send all your children to school. And on way home if you kill any buffalo cut the head, the tail, and the four feet and leave them, and that buffalo will come to live again. When the soldiers of the white people chief want to arrest me, I shall stretch out my arms, which will knock them to nothingness, or, if not that, the earth will open and swallow them in. My father commanded me to visit the Indians on a purpose. I have come to the white people first, but they not good. They killed me, and you can see the marks of my wounds on my feet, my hands, and on my back. My father has given you life—your old life—and you have come to see your friends, but you will not take me home with you at this time. I want you to tell when you get home your people to follow my examples. Any one Indian does not obey me and tries to be on white's side will be covered over by a new land that is to come over this old one. You will, all the people, use the paints and grass I give you. In the spring when the green grass comes, your people who have gone before you will come back, and you shall see your friends then, for you have come to my call."

The people from every tipi send for us to visit them. They are people who died many years ago. Chasing Hawk, who died not long ago, was there, and we went to his tipi. He was living with his wife, who was killed in war long ago. They live in a buffalo skin tipi—a very large one—and he wanted all his friends to go there to live. A son of Good Thunder who died in war long ago was one who also took us to his tipi so his father saw him. When coming we came to a herd of buffaloes. We killed one and took everything except the four feet, head, and tail, and when we came a little ways from it there was the buffaloes come to life again and went off. This was one of the messiah's word came to truth. The messiah said, "I will short your journey when you feel tired of the long ways, if you call upon me." This we did when we were tired. The night came upon us, we stopped at a place, and we called upon the messiah to help us, because we were tired of long journey. We went to sleep and in the morning we found ourselves at a great distance from where we stopped.

The people came back here and they got the people loyal to the government, and those not favor of the whites held a council. The agent's soldiers were sent after them and brought Good Thunder and two others to the agency and they were confined to the prison. They were asked by the agent and Captain Sword whether they saw the Son of God and whether they hold councils over their return from visit, but Good Thunder refused to say "yes." They were confined in the prison for two days, and upon their promising not to hold councils about their visit they were released. They went back to the people and told them about their trouble with the agent. Then they disperse without a council.

In the following spring the people at Pine Ridge agency began to gather at the White Clay creek for councils. Just at this time Kicking Bear, from Cheyenne River agency, went on a visit to the Arapaho and said that the Arapaho there have ghost dancing. He said that people partaking in dance would get crazy and die, then the messiah is seen and all the ghosts. When they die they see strange things, they see their relatives who died long before. They saw these things when they died in ghost dance and came to life again. The person dancing becomes dizzy and finally drop dead, and the first thing they saw is an eagle comes to them and carried them to where the messiah is with his ghosts. The man said this:

The persons in the ghost dancing are all joined hands. A man stands and then a woman, so in that way forming a very large circle. They dance around in the circle in a continuous time until some of them become so tired and overtired that they became crazy and finally drop as though dead, with foams in mouth all wet by perspiration. All the men and women made holy shirts and dresses they wear in dance. The persons dropped in dance would all lie in great dust the dancing make. They paint the white muslins they made holy shirts and dresses out of with blue across the back, and alongside of this is a line of yellow paint. They also paint in the front part of the shirts and dresses. A picture of an eagle is made on the back of all the shirts and dresses. On the shoulders and on the sleeves they tied eagle feathers. They said that the bullets will not go through these shirts and dresses, so they all have these dresses for war. Their enemies weapon will not go through these dresses. The ghost dancers all have to wear eagle feather on head. With this feather any man would be made crazy if fan with this feather. In the ghost dance no person is allow to wear anything made of any metal, except the guns made of metal is carry by some of the dancers. When they come from ghosts or after recovery from craziness, they brought meat from the ghosts or from the supposed messiah. They also brought water, fire, and wind with which to kill all the whites or Indians who will help the chief of the whites. They made sweat house and made holes in the middle of the sweat house where they say the water will come out of these holes. Before they begin to dance they all raise their hands toward the northwest and cry in supplication to the messiah and then begin the dance with the song, "*Ale misunkala ceya omani-ye,*" etc.

SELWYN'S INTERVIEW WITH KUWAPI

On November 21, 1890, it was reported to Agent E. W. Foster, in charge of Yankton agency, South Dakota, that an Indian named Kuwapi, from Rosebud agency, was on the reservation teaching the doctrine and ceremony of the Ghost dance. He at once had the man arrested by a force in charge of William T. Selwyn, a full-blood Yankton Sioux, who had received a fair education under the patronage of a gentleman in Philadelphia, and who had for several years been employed in various capacities at different Sioux agencies. Selwyn had recently come from Pine Ridge, where he had learned and reported to Agent Gallagher something of the religious excitement among the

western Sioux, and had afterward repeated this information to the agent at Yankton. While Kuwapi was in his custody Selwyn questioned him at length concerning the new doctrine, and forwarded the following report (G. D., Document 36861—1890) of the interview to Agent Foster:

YANKTON AGENCY, SOUTH DAKOTA,

November 22, 1890.

Colonel E. W. FOSTER,

United States Indian Agent, Yankton Agency, South Dakota.

DEAR SIR: It has been reported here a few days ago that there was an Indian visitor up at White Swan from Rosebud agency who has been telling or teaching the doctrines of the new messiah, and has made some agitation among the people up there. According to the request of Captain Conrad, United States Army, of Fort Randall, South Dakota, and by your order of the 21st instant, I went up to White Swan and have arrested the wanted man (Kuwapi, or One they chased after). On my way to the agency with the prisoner I have made little interview with him on the subject of the new messiah. The following are the facts which he corroborated concerning the new messiah, his laws and doctrines to the Indians of this continent:

Q. Do you believe in the new messiah?—A. I somewhat believe it.

Q. What made you believe it?—A. Because I ate some of the buffalo meat that he (the new messiah) sent to the Rosebud Indians through Short Bull.

Q. Did Short Bull say that he saw the living herd of roaming buffaloes while he was with the son of the Great Spirit?—A. Short Bull told the Indians at Rosebud that the buffalo and other wild game will be restored to the Indians at the same time when the general resurrection in favor of the Indians takes place.

Q. You said a "general resurrection in favor of the Indians takes place;" when or how soon will this be?—A. The father sends word to us that he will have all these caused to be so in the spring, when the grass is knee high.

Q. You said "father;" who is this father?—A. It is the new messiah. He has ordered his children (Indians) to call him "father."

Q. You said the father is not going to send the buffalo until the resurrection takes place. Would he be able to send a few buffaloes over this way for a sort of a sample, so as to have his children (Indians) to have a taste of the meat?—A. The father wishes to do things all at once, even in destroying the white race.

Q. You said something about the destroying of the white race. Do you mean to say that all mankind except the Indians will be killed?—A. Yes.

Q. How, and who is going to kill the white people?—A. The father is going to cause a big cyclone or whirlwind, by which he will have all the white people to perish.

Q. If it should be a cyclone or whirlwind, what are we going to do to protect ourselves?—A. The father will make some kind of provisions by which we will be saved.

Q. You said something about the coming destruction on the white people by your father. Supposing your father is sick, tired out, forget, or some other accidental cause by which he should not be able to accomplish his purpose, what would be the case about the destroying of the white people?—A. There is no doubt about these things, as the miracle performer or the father is going to do just as what he said he would do.

Q. What other object could you come to by which you are led to believe that there is such a new messiah on earth at present?—A. The ghost dancers are fainted whenever the dance goes on.

Q. Do you believe that they are really fainted?—A. Yes.

Q. What makes you believe that the dancers have really fainted?—A. Because when they wake or come back to their senses they sometimes bring back some news from the unknown world, and some little trinkets, such as buffalo tail, buffalo meat, etc.

Q. What did the fainted ones see when they get fainted?—A. They visited the happy hunting ground, the camps, multitudes of people, and a great many strange people.

Q. What did the ghost or the strange people tell the fainted one or ones?—A. When the fainted one goes to the camp, he is welcomed by the relatives of the visitor (the fainted one), and he is also invited to several feasts.

Q. Were the people at Rosebud agency anxiously waiting or expecting to see all of their dead relatives who have died several years ago?—A. Yes.

Q. We will have a great many older folks when all the dead people come back, would we not?—A. The visitors all say that there is not a single old man nor woman in the other world—all changed to young.

Q. Are we going to die when the dead ones come back?—A. No; we will be just the same as we are today.

Q. Did the visitor say that there is any white men in the other world?—A. No; no white people.

Q. If there is no white people in the other world, where did they get their provisions and clothing?—A. In the other world, the messenger tells us that they have depended altogether for their food on the flesh of buffalo and other wild game; also, they were all clad in skins of wild animals.

Q. Did the Rosebud agency Indians believe the new messiah, or the son of the Great Spirit?—A. Yes.

Q. How do they show that they have a believe in the new messiah?—A. They show themselves by praying to the father by looking up to heaven, and call him "father," just the same as you would in a church.

Q. Have you ever been in a church?—A. No.

Q. Do you faithfully believe in the new messiah?—A. I did not in the first place, but as I became more acquainted with the doctrines of the new messiah that I really believe in him.

Q. How many people at Rosebud, in your opinion, believe this new messiah?—A. Nearly every one.

Q. Did you not the Rosebud people prepare to attack the white people this summer? While I was at Pine Ridge agency this summer the Oglalla Sioux Indians say they will resist against the government if the latter should try to put a stop to the messiah question. Did your folks at Rosebud say the same thing?—A. Yes.

Q. Are they still preparing and thinking to attack the white people should the government send our soldiers with orders to put a stop to your new business of the messiah?—A. I do not know, but I think that the Wojaji band at Rosebud agency will do some harm at any time.

Q. You do not mean to say that the Rosebud Indians will try and cause an outbreak?—A. That seems to be the case.

Q. You said something about the "son of the Great Spirit," or "the father." What do you mean by the son of the Great Spirit?—A. This father, as he is called, said himself that he is the son of the Great Spirit.

Q. Have you talked to or with any Indian at White Swan about the new messiah, his laws and doctrines, or have you referred this to anyone while there?—A. I have told a few of them. I did not voluntarily express my wish for them to know and follow the doctrines of the new messiah.

Q. Yes, but you have explained the matter to the Indians, did you not?—A. Yes, I have.

Q. Do the Yankton Indians at White Swan believe in your teaching of the new messiah?—A. I did not intend to teach them, but as I have been questioned on the subject, that I have said something about it.

Q. Did any of them believe in you?—A. Some have already believed it, and some of them did not believe it.

Q. Those that have believed in you must be better men than the others, are they not?—A. I do not know.

Q. Do you intend to introduce the doctrines of the new messiah from Rosebud to this agency as a missionary of the gospel?—A. No, I did not.

Q. What brings you here, then?—A. I have some relatives here that I wanted to see, and this was the reason why I came here.

Q. Where does this new messiah question originate? I mean from the first start of it.—A. This has originated in White mountains.

Q. Where is this White mountain?—A. Close to the big Rocky mountains, near the country that belong to the Mexicans.

Q. Do you think that there will be a trouble in the west by next spring?—A. Yes.

Q. What makes you think so?—A. Because that is what I have heard people talk of.

This is all that I have questioned Kuwapi on the subject of the new messiah.

Respectfully, your obedient servant,

WILLIAM T. SELWYN.