

~~the same valley in Wovoka's boyhood.~~ Possibly the discrepancy might be explained by an unwillingness on the part of the messiah to share his spiritual honors.

In proportion as Wovoka and his doctrines have become subjects of widespread curiosity, so have they become subjects of ignorant misrepresentation and deliberate falsification. Different writers have made him a Paiute, a half-blood, and a Mormon white man. Numberless stories have been told of the origin and character of his mission and the day predicted for its final accomplishment. The most mischievous and persistent of these stories has been that which represents him as preaching a bloody campaign against the whites, whereas his doctrine is one of peace, and he himself is a mild-tempered member of a weak and unwarlike tribe. His own good name has been filched from him and he has been made to appear under a dozen different cognomens, including that of his bitterest enemy, Johnson Sides. He has been denounced as an impostor, ridiculed as a lunatic, and laughed at as a pretended Christ, while by the Indians he is revered as a direct messenger from the Other World, and among many of the remote tribes he is believed to be omniscient, to speak all languages, and to be invisible to a white man. We shall give his own story as told by himself, with such additional information as seems to come from authentic sources.

Notwithstanding all that had been said and written by newspaper correspondents about the messiah, not one of them had undertaken to find the man himself and to learn from his own lips what he really taught. It is almost equally certain that none of them had even seen a Ghost dance at close quarters—certainly none of them understood its meaning. The messiah was regarded almost as a myth, something intangible, to be talked about but not to be seen. The first reliable information as to his personality was communicated by the scout, Arthur Chapman, who, under instructions from the War Department, visited the Paiute country in December, 1890, and spent four days at Walker lake and Mason valley, and in the course of an interview with Wovoka obtained from him a detailed statement similar in all essentials to that which I obtained later on. (Sec. War, 3.)

After having spent seven months in the field, investigating the new religion among the prairie tribes, particularly the Arapaho, and after having examined all the documents bearing on the subject in the files of the Indian Office and War Department, the author left Washington in November, 1891, to find and talk with the messiah and to gather additional material concerning the Ghost dance. Before starting, I had written to the agent in charge of the reservation to which he was attached for information in regard to the messiah (Jack Wilson) and the dance, and learned in reply, with some surprise, that the agent had never seen him. The surprise grew into wonder when I was further informed that there were "neither Ghost songs, dances, nor ceremo-