

position to get accurate knowledge of the extent and nature of the excitement. It may be remarked here that, under present conditions, when the various tribes are isolated upon widely separated reservations, the Ghost dance could never have become so widespread, and would probably have died out within a year of its inception, had it not been for the efficient aid it received from the returned pupils of various eastern government schools, who conducted the sacred correspondence for their friends at the different agencies, acted as interpreters for the delegates to the messiah, and in various ways assumed the leadership and conduct of the dance.

In the fall of 1889, at a council held at Pine Ridge by Red Cloud, Young Man Afraid, Little Wound, American Horse, and other Sioux chiefs, a delegation was appointed to visit the western agencies to learn more about the new messiah. The delegates chosen were Good Thunder, Flat Iron, Yellow Breast, and Broken Arm, from Pine Ridge; Short Bull and another from Rosebud, and Kicking Bear from Cheyenne River agency. They started on their journey to the west, and soon began to write from Wyoming, Utah, and beyond the mountains, confirming all that had been said of the advent of a redeemer. They were gone all winter, and their return in the spring of 1890 aroused an intense excitement among the Sioux, who had been anxiously awaiting their report. All the delegates agreed that there was a man near the base of the Sierras who said that he was the son of God, who had once been killed by the whites, and who bore on his body the scars of the crucifixion. He had now returned to punish the whites for their wickedness, especially for their injustice toward the Indians. With the coming of the next spring (1891) he would wipe the whites from the face of the earth, and would then resurrect all the dead Indians, bring back the buffalo and other game, and restore the supremacy of the aboriginal race. He had before come to the whites, but they had rejected him. He was now the God of the Indians, and they must pray to him and call him "father," and prepare for his awful coming. Selwyn's account of this delegation, which was accompanied by representatives of several other tribes, including Porcupine the Cheyenne, and Sitting Bull the Arapaho, agrees with the statements of the Arapaho as given in chapter XIV. Three of the Sioux delegates found their way to Umatilla reservation in Oregon and remained there several days discussing the new doctrine. (Comr., 30—Dorchester, 529.)

The delegates made their report at Pine Ridge in April, 1890. A council was at once called to discuss the matter, but Selwyn informed the agent, Colonel Gallagher, who had Good Thunder and two others arrested and imprisoned. They were held in confinement two days, but refused to talk when questioned. The intended council was not held, but soon afterward Kicking Bear returned from a visit to the northern Arapaho in Wyoming with the news that those Indians were already dancing, and could see and talk with their dead relatives