



So That a Nation May Live

The Pawnee Ghost Dance and Cultural Renaissance

*By Todd E. Leahy**

The “messiah” returned to his people just when they needed him most. They were at their wits’ end. Something had to change, and the choices were not good on either side. Either the people would be forced to become like their white brothers, or they would be trapped in a cycle of hunger and poverty for all eternity.

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The messiah had indeed come just at the right time. He would fulfill his promise, the world would turn over, life would return to the way it once was. All they had to do was participate in the dance and follow the rules laid out by the messiah. Life would be great again if all they did was dance. And dance they did, and dance they still do.

In 1889 a Paiute named Wovoka, who lived in Nevada, dreamed that he journeyed to the spirit world. There, God ordered him to return to his people and teach peaceful coexistence with whites. Rituals done in a particular manner would prompt God to wipe out illness and white domination, make food plentiful, bring back dead relatives, and allow Indians to live as they once had lived.¹ Members of numerous tribes learned of Wovoka's vision and immediately dispatched envoys to meet with the man who claimed to have met God. They returned with instructions on how to end the frustration, hunger, and death that was life on the reservation. Although the most famous Indian envoys to visit the Ghost Dance prophet were two Lakotas, Kicking Bear and Short Bull, the story of the Ghost Dance is not just a Lakota story.



Eagle Chief, a Pawnee leader in the 1890s, in traditional attire (OHS Research Division photo).

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The Lakotas' experience with the Ghost Dance is one of violence and bloodshed. Their story ends with the tragic slaughter of more than three hundred people at Wounded Knee Creek in South Dakota on December 29, 1890. After the massacre at Wounded Knee, Indian agents worried that the new religion would lead to violence, as it had that snowy December. Agents were encouraged to watch the behavior of their charges and be aware that Wovoka's vision moved out of the Nevada deserts like a sandstorm, clouding the hearts and minds of Indian people with visions of return to the past.² Tribes in Indian Territory were as susceptible to Wovoka's doctrine as were their counterparts on the northern plains. The Pawnees were just one of the Indian Territory tribes that adopted the Ghost Dance. In following it, they embarked on a journey leading to a resurgence of their traditional culture that would sustain them throughout the twentieth century.

When the Pawnee nation moved in 1874–76 from their Nebraska reservation to one in Indian Territory, they did so in hope of establishing a new life. They had been beset by problems from all sides, whether Lakota warriors, demands for assimilation, or nature itself turning the already-dry plains into parched areas of dust. Life in their Nebraska homeland had quickly become untenable. They believed that in the land to the south, surrounded by other Indian people, they could retain aspects of their culture that would otherwise die in the baking sun of the Nebraska plains. As a result, they moved to Indian Territory.³ Their new lands, in present north-central Oklahoma, were bounded on the north by the Arkansas River and on the south by the Cimarron River. To the west lay the Oto, Kaw, and Ponca reserves, to the south lay the Sac and Fox Reservation, and to the east lay the Osage lands and a corner of the Creek Nation.

Far from being a promised land, Indian Territory was the site of more death and destruction for the Pawnees.⁴ As a result of disease, malnutrition, and drought, they suffered population loss far greater than the natural increase of the population that followed their arrival in Indian Territory. The Ghost Dance had not yet blossomed among them, but the Pawnees took extra care to calm the fears of U.S. Indian Agent D. J. M. Wood, in charge of the Pawnees, Poncas, and Otoes. Wounded Knee would not be repeated in Indian Territory. Responding to a letter from the Office of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs in early 1891, Wood attended a Pawnee dance and afterward assured his superiors that "there has been no Ghost Dance here or at any of our agencies."⁵ The Pawnees gave the appearance

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Traditional Pawnee earth lodge (OHS Research Division photo).

of quietly going about their business and ignoring the new dance that was sweeping through Indian Territory. This tactic, of diverting suspicion from themselves, allowed them to explore the Nevada religion and quietly adapt it to their own traditions and beliefs. The result was a veritable renaissance among them—a resurgence in Pawnee cultural life that bettered their physical and emotional condition. In short, the Pawnees survived in Indian Territory because they rushed headlong into the sandstorm blowing out of the Nevada deserts. Cultures in crisis often turn to religion in order to retain their identity; the Pawnees were no exception.⁶ Less than a year after the tragedy at Wounded Knee, the Pawnees began participating in the Ghost Dance.

Many Indian societies believed that when a person passed away, he or she journeyed to the spirit land and was reunited with family members. This belief was held by the Pawnees, whose mythology contains numerous and frequent interactions between the living and the dead.⁷ Thus, the Ghost Dance was not without its precedents in Pawnee culture. The commonalities between already-existing Pawnee traditions and the tenets of the Ghost Dance allowed the Pawnees to adapt the dance to their situation once their messiah arrived with a message of hope for liberation from the Indians' subjugation to whites.

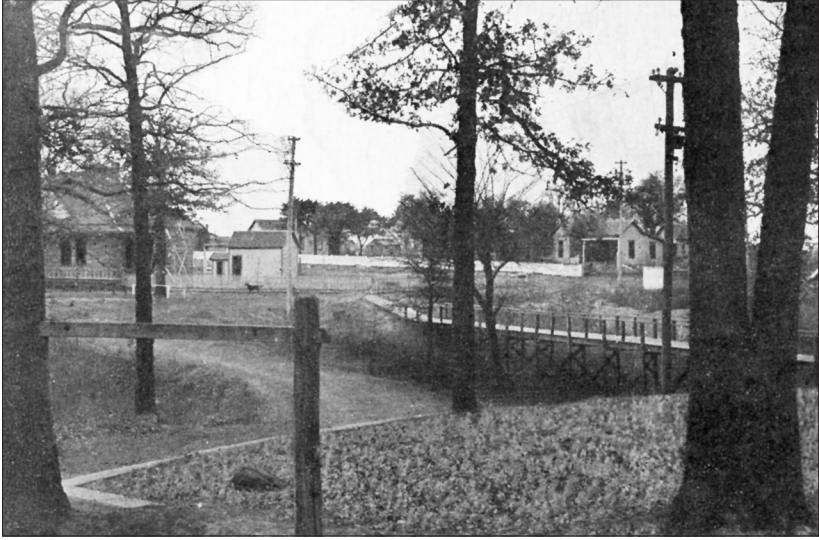
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In the summer of 1891 Frank White, a Pawnee living in western Indian Territory with the Caddos and Wichitas, met a man named Sitting Bull. He was a Northern Arapaho who was in Indian Territory visiting relatives among the Southern Cheyenne. Along with glad tidings from the north, Sitting Bull brought with him the Ghost Dance doctrine. From the Southern Cheyennes he traveled to nearby reservations, teaching the Ghost Dance and advising tribes to accept allotment of lands and take annuity payments from the government. He argued that doing what the United States wanted would not effect the messiah's coming—when the messiah came, all Indian people would be returned to the lifestyles enjoyed before the arrival of the whites. When word of the dance reached the Caddos and Wichitas, Frank White was a ready and excited convert to the religion. During these dances he learned the doctrine, and in late summer 1891 he returned home to the Pawnees.⁸ White brought with him the Ghost Dance doctrine and began to hold dances and attract followers. By fall 1891, after three generations had tried to live with the Americans, the Pawnees stood poised on the brink of a cultural impasse.⁹

The dance that Frank White gave to the Pawnees was not the same as the one Sitting Bull gave to the Caddos. Many of White's songs were in the Pawnee language. He said that the Creator had given them to him in the language of his people and called him to be a prophet among them.¹⁰ White's dance even had a different focus than Wovoka's. White told the people that "if they made up their minds to dance and see the Messiah and their dead relatives, they would fall and see them; the principal thing in the dance was to mourn and be humble in spirit."¹¹ The Pawnees enthusiastically accepted the Ghost Dance and began to dance almost daily.¹²

Much of the early dancing took place behind the agent's back. The first government acknowledgment of the existence of the Ghost Dance came in November 1891 when Pawnee Subagency Clerk Charles Hill wrote a letter informing Agent Wood about the dancing. Hill wrote that "during the latter part of the month [October] what was called the Ghost Dance, was reported as being in progress in the Petahawerat [*sic*] band on Camp Creek. I at once sent an order that it be discontinued, and the Indians dispersed."¹³ The claim that the dance had begun among the Pitahawirata coincides with a discussion of the Ghost Dance by native Pawnee ethnologist James Murie in his work "Pawnee Indian Societies."¹⁴ The accusation, however, that all the dancers dispersed because of the agent's stern warning is at best premature. Not only did the dances continue sur-

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Pawnee Agency, circa 1910 (OHS Research Division photo).

reptitiously, out of sight of the reservation's staff, but Frank White began to consolidate his power over the reservation.

White gathered a small group of loyal followers and began to teach them the Ghost Dance songs. These were mostly Wichita and Arapaho in origin, but in keeping with Ghost Dance traditions, a few were Frank White originals. He chose four men and three women as his personal assistants.¹⁵ Their charge was to keep the dances functioning if he fell into a trance. White's Ghost Dance was unique to the Pawnees in several ways, but its most important characteristic was that even though White saw himself as a prophet, he had the utmost respect for ancient Pawnee traditions and customs.

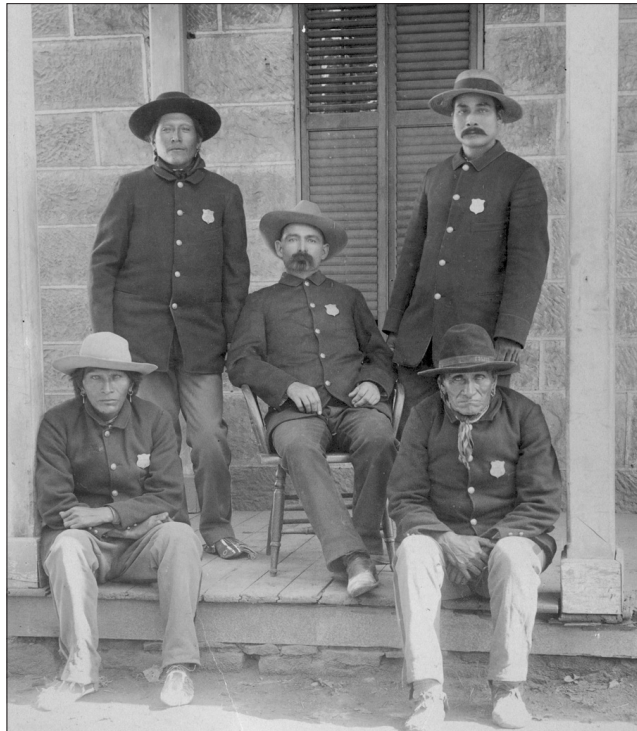
Respecting the Pawnee tradition of meeting with elders to discuss a vision, White first stopped among the Pitahawirata to visit the leaders of the sacred societies.¹⁶ The leaders accepted his account of his vision and were satisfied with him in the new role as Ghost Dance prophet. The elders told White to erect a special tipi near the ground that he selected as the dance circle. This tipi held all of the power of the Ghost Dance prophet. In short, the tipi was White's headquarters. From his new home he called all interested Pawnees to bring paint to his tipi so that he could paint their faces and they could take part in the new dance. People came in large numbers, bearing gifts befitting one who was the purveyor of sacred

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teachings. He organized a dance in honor of those first participants. After that dance the Pawnees accepted the Ghost Dance with great gusto and began to practice White's teachings almost daily, right under the nose of their unsuspecting agent. The Pawnees so committed themselves to the new ritual that in his 1894 report to the Bureau of American Ethnology ethnologist James Mooney stated that of all the tribes in North America, the Pawnees "had the most interest in the Ghost Dance."¹⁷

Interest in the Ghost Dance developed among a large cross section of Pawnee society. Even members of sacred societies began to follow the new prophet. Further, the elders' interest in the dance developed in response to an ever-climbing death toll. Ancient curing ceremonies and appeals to the sacred beings seemed to have been sent to deaf ears as soon as the Pawnees crossed into Indian Territory. The societies' leaders gave up more than their rituals by becoming Ghost Dancers; they gave up their vaunted tribal positions and turned religious leadership over to Frank White.

*Pawnee Tribal
Police, circa 1891
(OHS Research
Division photo).*



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Thereafter, he supervised all dance activities and performances. By waving a feather in a dancer's face he could induce the sought-after trance. If it resulted in a vision, he served as interpreter and verifier.¹⁸ In a very short time he added new features to the dance, eventually constructing an entire ritual celebration and further proving his ability to commune with the sacred beings. Singers wore eagle and crow feathers in their hair. To begin each dance, they chose a woman to consecrate the dance ground. Seated at the door of White's tipi, her face painted, for one day she was holy. At the end of each day of dancing White instructed the dancers to move to the center of the circle and then to back out slowly and shake their blankets or shawls. In this way each dancer cast off the burden of another day without the coming of the messiah.¹⁹ So concerned were the Pawnees with their future salvation that by December 1891 they neglected their farms to attend dances.

Agent Wood, by that time surely aware of the bloody affair at Wounded Knee a year past, now realized that he must attempt to avoid a dire situation at his reservation. No "good agent" would allow *his* Indians to continue Ghost Dancing. In an effort to return order to the reservation Wood ordered the mill to stop producing flour for the people and warned members of the tribal police that any of their number caught at a Ghost Dance would be immediately relieved of his duty.²⁰ Despite his actions the dance continued. On December 6, 1891, while studying his native Pawnee culture, James Murie attended a Ghost Dance. He soon wrote a letter to Agent Wood to report that there was nothing to fear and that the dances were peaceful.²¹

Wood's response is unknown, but Murie's letter caused the agent to write directly to Frank White on December 19, 1891. Wood demanded that White immediately cease holding Ghost Dances.²² He also ordered him to return to the Kiowa Agency (Wood had been told that White had come from that agency). If White refused to return to the Kiowa Agency, Wood said, then he must return to the Wichita Agency. Wood also drafted a letter to the Wichita agent stating that because White's name was on the Wichita roll, he was therefore under that agency's jurisdiction.²³ White, however, chose not to leave his people or abandon the Ghost Dance. Moreover, he moved to widen the ceremony's body of adherents, and in late December 1891 Delawares, Otoes, and Osages attended dances on the Pawnee reservation.²⁴

As the Ghost Dance prospered among the Pawnees, Agent Wood became more and more concerned. Early in 1892 he received a let-

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ter from the Indian Office outlining abuses alleged to be taking place on the Pawnee Reservation as a result of the Ghost Dance.²⁵ Wood moved quickly to respond to the accusations by trying to disprove some of them. He claimed that most of the so-called abuses were “false statements made at his expense.” The biggest charge that he had to answer was that he had tolerated the Ghost Dance and had done nothing to return stability to the reservation.²⁶

Wood plainly stated that he would not take a position that he could not enforce against the Ghost Dancers. He argued that the Pawnees would grow bored with of the ceremony and tire of Frank White’s assertiveness; all the government needed to do was wait. If that strategy would not satisfy the Indian Office, then the only way to stop the dance was to use force. Although military intervention had ended the Ghost Dance among the Lakota, Wood cautioned using it against the Pawnees, because “it would undoubtedly end in another Wounded Knee disaster.”²⁷

The agent devised another tactic to solve the Ghost Dance “problem”; he would use his powers of persuasion. In his 1892 report to his superiors he explained that he had “plainly told [the Pawnees] that the dance could not be tolerated and would not be; that this government would last and assert her power, and that they should be obedient to the law and be good Indians, return to their homes and cultivate their farms, and raise something to eat.”²⁸ While his charges may have perceived his language patronizing, Wood believed that his word alone was enough to stop the Pawnees from Ghost Dancing. Now made aware of the government’s serious intentions, the practitioners moved their gatherings to remote locations, far from the watchful eye of Agent Wood, and they continued to dance.

Secret dance sites now dotted the once-quiet reservation. Frank White sanctified sites along Black Bear and Camp Creeks and the Arkansas River, and other dancers ventured into the reservation’s wooded areas nearer the agency. They danced and sang very quietly, so that the sound would not carry to the ears of the facility’s personnel.²⁹ Despite their attempts at secrecy Agent Wood discovered them, called a council of tribal leaders that included Frank White, and more firmly outlined the government’s expectations. Wood demanded that they stop Ghost Dancing, return to their farms and improve them, plant corn, beautify their homes, have good family relations, respect the laws of the government, and go home and be good Indians.³⁰ They agreed to six of the seven demands, but the first, they flatly refused.

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When the assembled Pawnees rejected the very first directive, to stop Ghost Dancing, the council turned into a confrontation. Angered, Wood demanded that Frank White immediately leave the reservation and never return. The chiefs quickly rose to White's defense. The argument lasted six long hours, and at the end nothing had been decided.³¹ Wood and the Pawnees left the council even less willing to negotiate. In March 1892 a Pawnee leader even approached the agency clerk and asked him to place Frank White on the Pawnee annuity rolls, but Hill refused. The Pawnees were now even more determined to follow Frank White and persist in their new religious practice. Also in March, Hill heard rumors that a Ghost Dance was taking place in the woods. He left his post and went out to investigate but found nothing. The dance's adherents drew such a veil of secrecy around their activities that even tribe members were not aware of when and where dances were held.³²

In his reports Agent Wood began to downplay the role of the Ghost Dance among the Pawnees. Privately, he resented Frank White for undermining his authority and defying his orders to leave promptly and never return. Wood blamed White for all of the reservation's problems and believed that if White were removed, the peaceful atmosphere that had existed prior to the prophet's arrival would return.³³ The situation grew desperate when on March 23, 1892, Wood learned that the Otoes had hosted a Ghost Dance—and that Frank White had presided. Wood dispatched a letter to F. W. Miller, the Oto Subagency clerk, informing him that the Ghost Dance was illegal. Wood demanded that Miller arrest Oto chief Black Buffalo and have White brought under guard to the Pawnee Agency. Wood also ordered that if White refused, Miller was to arrest him.³⁴

After he failed to persuade the Pawnees with words, Wood resorted to force. He informed the Indian Office that he had "procured the assistance of [a] deputy United States Marshall [*sic*], and he went to Pawnee and arrested the supposed prophet, Frank White, and took him to Guthrie, Okla., before a United States Commissioner, and he was held over until the district court for inciting Indians to insurrection, and remanded to jail to await his trial before the district court."³⁵ In addition to arresting White, Wood obtained a series of subpoenas ordering the followers of the Ghost Dance to testify against their prophet. Rather than do so, the Pawnees pleaded for White's release. Following Woods's orders, Subagency Clerk Hill warned the Pawnees that White would be held for a considerable amount of time. He noted in his report that "the Pawnees

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seemed to be somewhat scared at the thought of having to go to jail [and] I said the U.S. Court might make him stay in jail for ten years, and that others would have to go too if the dance was not entirely given up." Seeing that they were intimidated, Hill "made the thing as impressive as I could, and got Doctor's copy of the U.S. Statutes and read to them from that and their treaties." Suitably impressed, at that point the Pawnees asked Hill to ask Wood to write to the Indian Office and negotiate, and they promised to stop Ghost Dancing if Frank White was released.³⁶

Taken to Guthrie, Frank White and Black Buffalo appeared before United States Commissioner John Boles to face charges of inciting Indians to rebellion. Both prisoners were escorted to Wichita, Kansas, to stand trial in U.S. District Court. For the first time in their relationship with the federal government the Pawnee people entertained thoughts of violence. Threats of death for all government employees began to circulate on the reservation.³⁷ In an effort to avoid war at the Pawnee Agency, the U.S. District Court in Wichita sent White back to Oklahoma Territory to appear before Chief Justice E. B. Green. Wood ordered Hill to meet White at the border, return him to the Pawnee Agency, and keep a close watch over him. At the first sign of a Ghost Dance Frank White would again have to leave the reservation.³⁸ In early April Clerk Hill reported that the Pawnees had been upset and restless, and he had thought they "might become unruly," but that they had finally calmed down.³⁹

Wood had achieved a partial victory: White remained on the Pawnee Reservation, but his power began to decline. Under pressure of trial and deportation, he signed a letter on May 16, 1892, in which he promised to stop holding the Ghost Dance, obey the agent's orders, and start his own farm. He would be arrested and removed from the Pawnee Reservation should he ever lead another Ghost Dance.⁴⁰ By summer 1892 White's influence had faded. William Hunt, a former tribal policeman, emerged as a new Ghost Dance prophet. He drastically altered the Ghost Dance forms that White had instituted. Rather than dancing, Hunt offered a doctrine that included the laying on of hands. Angered, White sent a letter to Charles Hill demanding Hunt's immediate arrest and deportation from the agency for practicing the Ghost Dance. Rather than being concerned that the Ghost Dance might be expanding, Hill blithely remarked to Wood that if they would let as many prophets arise as want to, "by the time they get to quarreling among themselves the balance of the tribe will come to their senses."⁴¹ Both Hill and Wood

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fully expected that their threatening tactics were bringing a permanent close to the new dance doctrine.

But the Pawnees needed the Ghost Dance. They had adopted it when they faced issues of severe droughts, a shrinking land base, mounting deaths, and most importantly, the annihilation of their culture. The dance gave many of the young men the courage to confront a federal government that sought to control their daily lives. Promising the easy disappearance of the whites, the Ghost Dance doctrine added a sense of destiny to the confrontation. Further, Frank White taught that any Pawnee who followed “the white man’s church” would disappear with the whites.⁴² The Ghost Dance did much more for the Pawnees than provide them with a tool to oppose the government. The destruction of White’s credibility opened the way for lesser prophets to perpetuate a new religious belief and merge it with existing ways of coping with reservation life. The process helped the Pawnees remain a cohesive people. In the fall of Frank White, the Pawnees rediscovered their traditions.

Pawnee dancers, circa 1920 (OHS Research Division photo).



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White quickly fell out of favor among the Pawnees. He had grown rich from gifts he had received from Ghost Dance followers. Although Pawnee sacred leaders customarily received presents, somewhat like honoraria, it was important that they share them with the community—a traditional redistributive custom that White neglected.⁴³ Although the shepherd lost the flock, he remained a presence on the reservation. The fallen prophet appeared at numerous gatherings either drunk or high on peyote, a drug that, he claimed, helped him acquire wisdom.⁴⁴ White's fall from grace left a void in Pawnee culture. Attempting to fill the space, numerous Pawnees traveled west to visit Sitting Bull, the Arapaho who had presided over the dances where White received his vision.⁴⁵ Frank White died on January 26, 1893. James Murie related that "after [White died] the strength and unity of the religion quickly disappeared among the many rival prophets."⁴⁶ In most religions, when a leader is gone, beliefs and practices begin to change. The Ghost Dance was no exception. Although the dance changed drastically, it never vanished from the Pawnee Reservation.

The Pawnees remained so dedicated to the Ghost Dance doctrine that in 1894 a contingent traveled west to Walker Lake, Nevada, with a gift of thanks for Wovoka. Although other tribes were abandoning Wovoka's ceremony, the Pawnees held strong to it.⁴⁷ On January 24, 1896, newspapers reported that despite the best efforts of the federal government, the Pawnees continued to practice the Ghost Dance.⁴⁸

As the twentieth century dawned, little changed around the Pawnee Agency—the dancing continued. In October 1900 Sitting Bull and his entire family visited the Pawnees to attend a Ghost Dance. In May 1902 anthropologist George Amos Dorsey informed the Office of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs that he had spent the previous year with the Pawnees and was confident that the Ghost Dance continued.⁴⁹ Angered, Pawnee Day School Superintendent John Jensen refuted Dorsey's claim, arguing that the Ghost Dance had been replaced with a new ritual and new belief structure. Jensen wrote that "while the Ghost Dance is most popular with them, they do not hold the same views respecting this as were originally held by the Indians. It has come to be a semi-religious affair, its leaders claiming to be students of the Bible and under inspiration from and in communion with the Deity."⁵⁰ Once again the Pawnees had shrouded themselves in secrecy. The campaign of misinformation developed by the Pawnee Ghost Dancers was effective.

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In 1904 a Pawnee contingent again traveled to Walker Lake, Nevada, to meet with Wovoka. Even as other Indian people abandoned the Ghost Dance and Wovoka was increasingly marginalized, the Pawnees remained faithful to the original prophet's teaching. At their meeting with Wovoka the Pawnees learned more about the initial vision that had brought the Ghost Dance into existence. Death, destruction, and disease in Indian Territory had created in the Pawnees' hearts and minds a longing for a redeemer who would free them. The prophets Wovoka and Frank White promised a path toward salvation and redemption.⁵¹

Although forced to hide their devotion, the Pawnees continued to practice the rituals brought to them from the prophets of this inspiring dance. In 1914, as the world grew increasingly concerned with war in Europe, the Pawnees continued to Ghost Dance. In a 1937 interview James Murie attested to the fact that "the religion still flourishes." But the secrecy that surrounded the dance was impenetrable even for non-Ghost Dancing Pawnees like Murie. He also noted that "[the Ghost Dance] has evolved into a Christian ethical belief demonstrated by a ritual. The trance and its intensity have passed out, but dreams and ordinary visions are still valued."⁵²

The long-time informant to anthropologists and agents may have called an end to the Ghost Dance doctrine too soon. Despite the contention that doctrinal changes occurred within the Ghost Dance, other Pawnee elders confirmed the continuation of the dance throughout the first half of the twentieth century. One of them, Nora Pratt, stated that the last Pawnee Ghost Dance she could recall was "in the twenties, I guess, twenties or thirties."⁵³ Even Pratt was incorrect in her dating of the end of the Ghost Dance. It has been reported that the last actual Pawnee Ghost Dance took place in 1975 when the Pawnee Heritage Club held a dance and feast at the Pawnee Reserve Tribal Campgrounds to celebrate one hundred years of Pawnee life in Oklahoma.⁵⁴

The Pawnees still dance. In another effort to assuage the fears of their neighbors but continue to practice their beliefs, they adapted the Ghost Dance into one of their ancient traditions. Early in the century the U.S. Indian Office had condoned the Pawnee hand game as a suitable social activity, part of a wide distribution of Indian guessing games. Sensing an opportunity, the Pawnees added the Ghost Dance doctrine to that game, which traditionally had involved gambling.⁵⁵ The game had deep roots in Pawnee tradition. Now, Ghost Dance songs were sung at Pawnee hand game gather-

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Pawnee round dance house at Pawnee, Oklahoma, circa 1999 (Fred Weimer / SHPO photo).

ings. Even into the twenty-first century, when a Ghost Dance song is requested and the drumming begins, the players stop, join hands, and dance in a circle, praying for a vision.⁵⁶

In Pawnee, Oklahoma, an annual tribal powwow is held in early July, when the summer buffalo hunt used to occur. Under the direction of the Pawnee Veterans Council, the event features dances, music, games, and food. The Pawnee people travel by train, plane, or car to this homecoming to celebrate the perseverance of a people who overcame adversity. The disintegration of Pawnee culture that took place after 1876 was the result of a change in a people's material life, a transformation that stemmed from direct attacks upon ancient customs by the United States government. After generations of attempting to adjust to their new living conditions, the Pawnees had determined that accommodation was an option, but only until the messiah turned the world over and returned the people to their former glory on a lush, fertile, buffalo-rich plain.

ENDNOTES

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¹ James Mooney, "The Ghost Dance Religion and Sioux Outbreak of 1890," *Fourteenth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, 1892-1893*, part 2 (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1896), 926.

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² *Ibid.*, 927.

³ For a full discussion of this aspect of Pawnee history see Richard White, "The Winning of the West: The Expansion of the Western Sioux in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries," *Journal of American History* 65 (September 1978), 310–43.

⁴ Martha Royce Blaine, *Some Things Are Not Forgotten: A Pawnee Family Remembers* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), 51.

⁵ D. J. M. Wood to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, January 21, 1891, Ponca Agency Records, 16:64–65, Research Division, Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma [hereafter cited as OHSRD]. The U.S. Indian Agency on the Ponca Reservation, where Wood was headquartered, maintained subagencies, with clerks, on the Pawnee and Oto reservations. In early 1891 Agent D. J. M. Wood estimated the combined reservations' Native populations at 1,780 persons. At the time of the Ghost Dance revival, the Pawnee Subagency clerk was Charles M. Hill, who took the position in mid-July 1891. Charles Hill to D. J. M. Wood, July 30, 1891, Pawnee Agency Records, 7:258, OHSRD.

⁶ Anthony F. C. Wallace, "Revitalization Movements," *American Anthropologist* 58 (April 1958): 264–81.

⁷ See George Bird Grinnell, *Pawnee Hero Stories and Folktales, with Notes on the Origin, Customs and Character of the Pawnee People* (1889; reprint, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1961).

⁸ James Murie, interview by Goldie Turner, July 7, 1937, Indian-Pioneer Papers, 107:202. See also Alexander Lesser, *The Pawnee Ghost Dance Hand Game: Ghost Dance Revival and Ethnic Identity* (2d ed.; Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1978), 57, and Blaine, *Some Things Are Not Forgotten*, 52.

⁹ Lesser, *The Pawnee Ghost Dance Hand Game*, 52.

¹⁰ Blaine, *Some Things Are Not Forgotten*, 56.

¹¹ Murie interview, 203.

¹² *Ibid.*, 207.

¹³ Charles Hill to D. J. M. Wood, November 7, 1891, Pawnee Agency Records, 7:322, OHSRD.

¹⁴ James Murie, "Pawnee Indian Societies," *Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History* 2, part 7 (N.p.: The Trustees of the American Museum of Natural History, 1914), 634–35. See also James R. Murie, *Ceremonies of the Pawnee*, ed. Douglas R. Parks (1981; reprint, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1989).

¹⁵ Blaine, *Some Things Are Not Forgotten*, 57.

¹⁶ James Murie is almost single-handedly responsible for the survival of Pawnee traditions. His many works, including the above-cited "Pawnee Indian Societies," discuss tradition and custom at some length and shed valuable light on the inner workings of the Ghost Dance and its acceptance into Pawnee tradition.

¹⁷ Mooney, "The Ghost Dance Religion," 902.

¹⁸ White's dance conduct is discussed at length in Blaine, *Some Things Are Not Forgotten*, 60–62.

¹⁹ Murie interview, 208. See also L. G. Moses, *The Indian Man: A Biography of James Mooney* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1984), 56.

²⁰ Blaine, *Some Things Are Not Forgotten*, 62. See also Charles Hill to D. J. M. Wood, December 22, 1891, Pawnee Agency Records 7:348–49, OHSRD. Hill reported that David Ah-ka-pa-kish, one of the agency's eight Indian policemen, had resigned because, in the clerk's opinion, "he has too much dance in his head. . . . The only evil effect of the dance seems to be that it makes them neglect their work . . . [and] they are very superstitious."

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²¹ James Murie to D. J. M. Wood, December 6, 1891, copy in Wood to Noble, January 21, 1892, Ponca Agency Records, 18:454–55, OHSRD.

²² D. J. M. Wood to Frank White, December 19, 1891, copy in Wood to Noble, January 21, 1892, Ponca Agency Records, 18:459, OHSRD.

²³ *Ibid.*; D. J. M. Wood to Wichita Agent, December 18, 1891, copy in Wood to Noble, January 21, 1892, Ponca Agency Records, 18:460, OHSRD.

²⁴ Charles Hill to D. J. M. Wood, December 22, 1891, copy in Wood to Noble, January 21, 1892, Ponca Agency Records, 18:461–62, OHSRD; Charles Hill to Charles Davis, Clerk, Oto Agency, December 28, 1891, Pawnee Agency Records, 7:357, OHSRD.

²⁵ F. Conway to John Noble, January 25, 1892, Pawnee Agency Records, 8:460, OHSRD. See also D. J. M. Wood to John Noble, January 21, 1892, Ponca Agency Records, 18:461, OHSRD.

²⁶ D. J. M. Wood to John Noble, January 21, 1892, Ponca Agency Records, 18:461, OHSRD. See also Charles Hill to D. J. M. Wood, January 27, 1892, Pawnee Agency Records, 7:375, OHSRD, and Charles Hill to D. J. M. Wood, January 28, 1892, Pawnee Agency Records, 7:377, OHSRD. Subagency Clerk Hill reported to Wood that in one instance he had investigated a suspicious activity and had discovered the Pawnees holding a traditional Doctor dance, not a Ghost Dance.

²⁷ D. J. M. Wood to John Noble, January 21, 1892, Ponca Agency Records, 18:461–64, 465, OHSRD.

²⁸ D. J. M. Wood to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Thomas Morgan, August 20, 1892, *Annual Report to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1892* (Washington, D.C.: Office of Indian Affairs, 1930), 369 [hereafter cited as *Annual Report*].

²⁹ Blaine, *Some Things Are Not Forgotten*, 67.

³⁰ D. J. M. Wood to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Thomas Morgan, January 26, 1892, Ponca Agency Records, 18:484–86, OHSRD.

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² Charles Hill to D. J. M. Wood, March 7, 1892, Pawnee Agency Records, 7:408–09, OHSRD.

³³ Blaine, *Some Things Are Not Forgotten*, 68.

³⁴ D. J. M. Wood to F. W. Miller, March 23, 1892, Ponca Agency Records, 19:340, OHSRD.

³⁵ D. J. M. Wood to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Thomas Morgan, August 20, 1892, *Annual Report*, 396.

³⁶ D. J. M. Wood to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Thomas Morgan, March 29, 1892, Ponca Agency Records, 19:389–90, OHSRD; John Boles to D. J. M. Wood, April 1, 1892, Ponca Agency Records, 19:370, OHSRD; D. J. M. Wood to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Thomas Morgan, August 20, 1892, *Annual Report*, 397; Charles M. Hill to D. J. M. Wood, March 25, 1892, Pawnee Agency Records, 7:418–19, OHSRD.

³⁷ Blaine, *Some Things Are Not Forgotten*, 70.

³⁸ D. J. M. Wood to Clerks Miller and Hill, April 9, 1892, Ponca Agency Records, 19:469, OHSRD.

³⁹ *Ibid.*; Charles Hill to D. J. M. Wood, April 1, 1892, Pawnee Agency Records, 7:420, OHSRD.

⁴⁰ Frank White to D. J. M. Wood, c/o George Phillips, May 16, 1892, Pawnee Agency Records, 7:429, OHSRD.

⁴¹ Charles Hill to D. J. M. Wood, June 30, 1892, Pawnee Agency Records, 7:436–37, OHSRD.

⁴² See Alexander Lesser, *The Pawnee Ghost Dance Hand Game* (1st ed.; New York: Columbia University Press, 1933).

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⁴³ Murie, "Pawnee Indian Societies," 56.

⁴⁴ Lesser, *The Pawnee Ghost Dance Hand Game*, 72.

⁴⁵ Blaine, *Some Things Are Not Forgotten*, 72.

⁴⁶ Murie interview, 209.

⁴⁷ L. G. Moses, "'The Father Tells Me So!' Wovoka, the Ghost Dance Prophet," in *American Indians in American History, 1870–2001*, ed. Sterling Evans (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 2002), 55.

⁴⁸ *Edmond (Oklahoma) Sun-Democrat*, January 24, 1896, July 31, 1897. See also Blaine, *Some Things Are Not Forgotten*, 73.

⁴⁹ Quoted in Blaine, *Some Things Are Not Forgotten*, 73.

⁵⁰ John Jensen to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, n.d., *Annual Report to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1902* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1902), 297.

⁵¹ Moses, *The Indian Man*, 88.

⁵² Murie interview, 210.

⁵³ Nora Pratt, interview by James Riding In, April 2000, Pawnee, Oklahoma, transcript in possession of the author, 2.

⁵⁴ Blaine, *Some Things Are Not Forgotten*, 79.

⁵⁵ Lesser, *The Pawnee Ghost Dance Hand Game*, 124.

⁵⁶ The phenomenon of the Ghost Dance addition is visible at any of the July powwows in and around the area of Pawnee, Oklahoma. The author has had the special privilege of seeing this activity in person. See also Blaine, *Some Things Are Not Forgotten*, 78–80.