

# United States Indian Service,

June 25, 1890

The Adjutant General U. S Army  
Washington, D.C  
Through Headquarters Division of the Missouri.

Sir:

I have the honor to enclose, herewith, for information copy of statement received from Major Carroll, 1st Cavalry, in command of camp at Tongue River Agency, of Cheyenne medicine man Porcupine narrating his travels in search of, and interview with, the Indian Messiah or new "Christ." A like copy has been furnished to the Commanding General Department of the Platte, in whose command the travels and transactions are mainly said to have occurred.

Very respectfully,  
Your obedient servant,  
Thes. H. Ruger,  
Brigadier General,  
Commanding.

Note.- The report of the appearance of a Messiah for the Indians has recently had quite a wide diffusion and excited much interest amongst a number of tribes, particularly the Arapahoes and Cheyennes and those nearly related to them.

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## STATEMENT OF THE CHEYENNE "PORCUPINE" OF MEETING WITH THE NEW "CHRIST"

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"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 Fort Bridger. I stayed there two days, and then took a passinger train, and the next morning got to Fort Hall.

I found some lodges of Snakes and Bannocks there. The chief of the Bannocks took me to his camp nearby. 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 all ought 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 at Fort Hall then sent for me and some of the Bannocks and Shoshones, and asked me were 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 that 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

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me anyhow, and that the whites and Indians were all friends. Then he asked me where I wanted a pass to. I told him that I wanted to go further, and that some Bannocks and Shoshones wanted to go along. He gave us passes- five of them- to the chiefs of the three parties. We took the railroad to a little town nearby, 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 (trains) at night, rode all night, and the next morning about 9 o'clock saw a settlement of Indians. We traveled south 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 banged. 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 day-light we saw a lot of houses, so we got off, and there is where we saw Indians living in huts of grass (tule?). We stopped here and got something to eat. There were whites living nearby.

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. (Pyramid and Walker lakes, western Nevada?)

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 Morman country) I knew nothing about this dance before going. I happen to run across it, that is all. I will tell you about it. (Here all the Indians 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 there will be no mistake. There is no harm in what I 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 seem to know about this religion. The people there all seemed 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 the truth. All the whites and Indians are brothers, I was told there. I never knew this before.

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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 arrived 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, ect. 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 Christ had 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 a while he rose and said he was very glad to see his children. "I have sent for you and am very glad to see 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 the 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 him 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 wispered 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.

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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 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 to 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 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 that 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 that all of 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 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 the 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 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 new 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 to our camp to have heard my words to the Cheyennes.

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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 that I am not telling the truth, you can go and see this man (Wovoka) 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 anytime you want after you have seen him and shaken hands with him once. Through him you can go to heaven and see your friends. Since my return I have seen him often in my sleep. At 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."

S.C Robertson

1 Lieut. 1st Cavalry  
Camp Crook, Mont. :  
June 15, 1890 :