SHORT BULL

Lakota Visionary, Historian and Artist

Ronald McCoy

Anonymity shrouds the identities of many of the warrior-artists who created Plains Indian biographical art during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Occasionally, though, one of these artist-chroniclers emerges from obscurity. Among them is Short Bull (Tatanka Ptecela), a renowned visionary who preserved his memories of Lakota culture in drawings (Fig. 1).

Short Bull was probably born in Nebraska's Niobrara River country. The year of his birth is not known and has been given variously as 1845 and 1852, though 1847 may be closer to the mark (DeMallie 1980:284; Robinson 1910:554; Wildhage 1990:35). Short Bull belonged to the Sicangu (Burned Thighs), one of the seven Lakota tribes, a group usually referred to by the French version of the name, Brulé. Although a Brulé, Short Bull enjoyed intimate, lifelong associations with the Oglala, another Lakota tribe. These two peoples intermingled so much over the years that it was often difficult to distinguish between them. In fact, after the Plains Indian Wars ground to a halt in the late 1870s, many Brulé, like Short Bull, ended up living not on their own Rosebud Reservation in South Dakota but on the immediately adjacent, nominally Oglala Pine Ridge Reservation (Utley 1963:78).

Although information about Short Bull's life prior to 1890 remains sparse, details about scattered events sometimes emerge. Probably between 1865 and 1875 —as shall be seen, it is likely the time can be pinpointed to the year 1869—a brother of Short Bull's died in a fight with Crows and he took the body home (Wildhage 1990:38) (Fig. 9). A participant in the Battle of the Little Bighorn in 1876 (Haberland 1988:13), Short Bull reappears three years later as a leader of some Brulé who were apprehended by the army after escaping from Rosebud with the intention of joining Sitting Bull in post-Little Bighorn Canadian exile, in response to their agent's threatened ban of the Sun Dance (Clow 1977:16-18). By the late 1880s, the Lakota knew Short Bull as an introspective holy man, a warrior of proven bravery and a leading member of the tribe's "non-progressive," anti-assimilationist element (Utley 1963:62). Then, in 1889, Short Bull's involvement in a series of intensely observed, widely reported events catapulted him into historical focus.

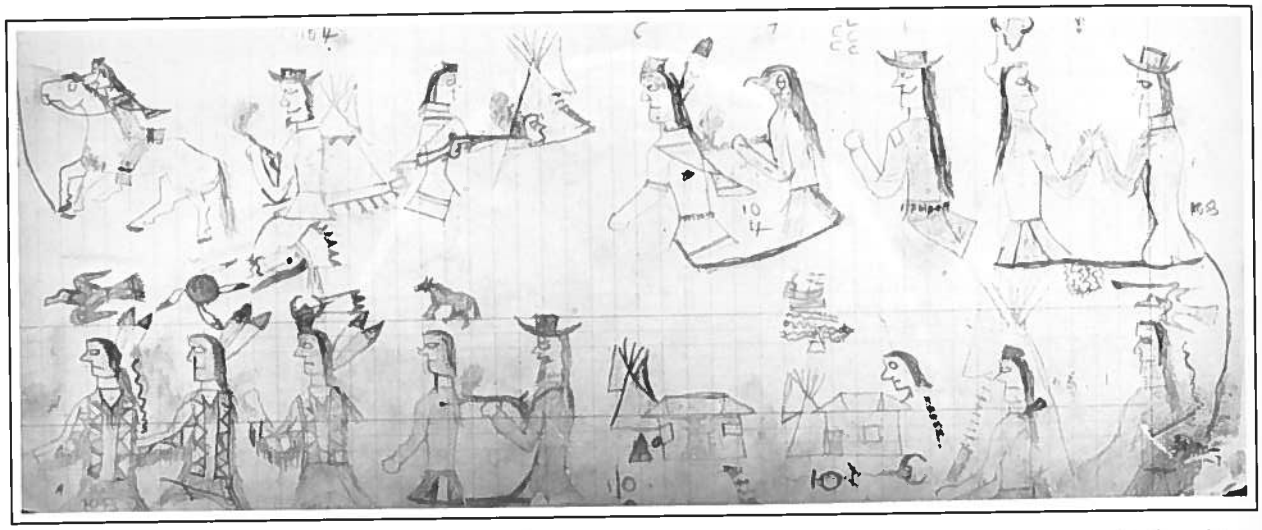
In 1889, word reached the Lakota of an Indian messiah living in Nevada. The Lakota, a desperate people aware that the culture on the reservation was dying, grasped hold of anything that offered even the barest chance for relief. Late in 1889, a council of elders meeting at Pine Ridge gave Short Bull, his brother-in-law Kicking Bear and eight others the task of seeking out the messiah. The delegation traveled on horseback, walked and rode trains on their way to meeting with the messiah and returned to Pine Ridge in the spring of 1890 with good news. They had been told that by linking hands and dancing a special dance, the Lakota could make the whites disappear and the buffalo reappear; everything would be as it had been before the culture's destruction. With the reinstatement of old ways would come reunion with dead relations; hence this messianic revivalist movement's name: Ghost Dance.

Short Bull and Kicking Bear assumed the mantle of the Ghost Dance's chief apostles among the Lakota, preaching fervently and rallying followers. Thinking the whites might panic, Short Bull assured his followers that they need not fear, because by painting sacred designs—thunderbirds, buffalo tracks, stars, crescents, spider webs and the like—on the loose-fitting shirts and dresses they wore, Ghost Dancers rendered themselves invulnerable to bullets.

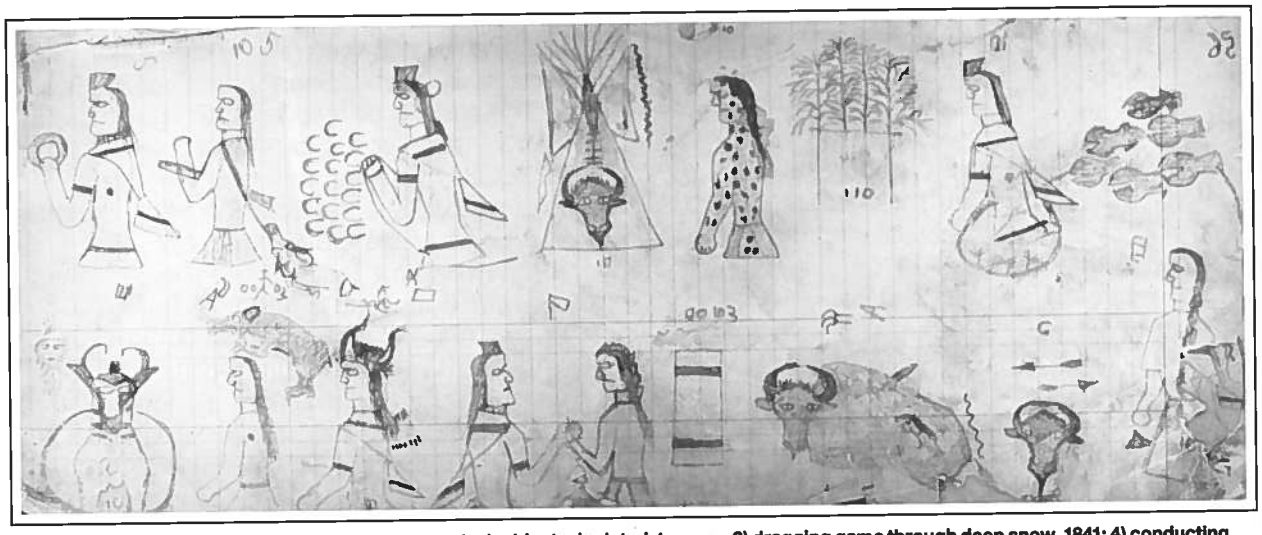
One of Short Bull's Ghost Dance sermons survives. On October 31, 1890, speaking to believers gathered at Red Leaf's camp on Pine Ridge Reservation, Short Bull claimed "the whites are interfering so much" that he would amend his forecast that "two seasons" would pass before deliverance. Now, he proclaimed, "the time will be shorter.... I will soon start this thing in running order." Ghost Dancers "must not be afraid of anything. Some of my relations have no ears, so I will have them blown away" (Mooney 1896:788). At this point, Short Bull launched into a visionary statement replete with symbolic meaning for the Lakota.

> 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.... I will start the wind to blow....
>
> 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 in the north, which represents the Cheyenne tribe. Third, at the rising of the sun lies hair, representing the Arapaho tribe. Fourth, there lies a pipe and nice feather at the south, which represents the Crow tribe.... 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. 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 (ibid:789).

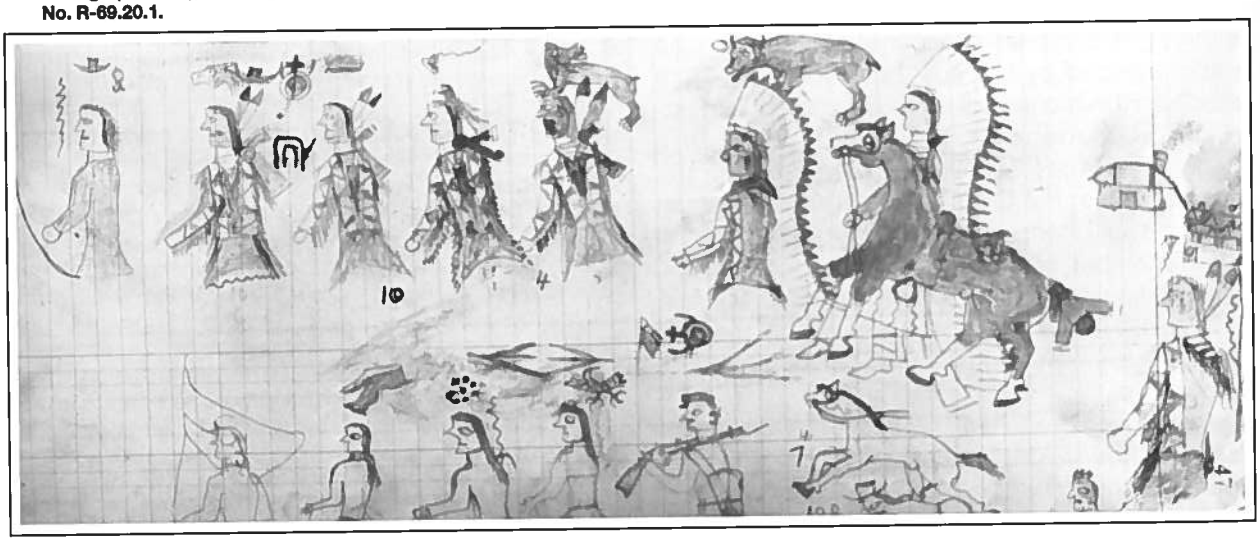
1. Short Bull posed for an unknown photographer, probably at Pine Ridge Reservation, South Dakota in the 1890s. Courtesy South Dakota State Historical Society. Neg. No. 43.906-N.



2. Page from Short Bull's winter count, meant to be read from left to right along the top line of images and from right to left along the bottom. The event represented in the upper left corner is probably the killing of a Crow warrior on a white horse in 1872. The fifth drawing from the left along the top line may commemorate the Lakota who signed up with the U.S. Army to fight the Cheyenne in 1876. On the bottom line, the third drawing from the left shows the name glyph of Eagle Bull and likely refers to his imprisonment in 1883. 15" high (38.1 cm); 16" wide (40.6 cm). Courtesy U.S. Department of the Interior, Indian Arts and Crafts Board, Sioux Indian Museum. Cat. No. R-69.20.1.



3. Page from Short Bull's winter count. Among the incidents depicted, top row: 2) dragging game through deep snow, 1841; 4) conducting a ceremony with a buffalo head, 1843; 5) measles or smallpox, 1844; 6) camp in an ash grove, 1845; 8) camp with many buffalo, 1847. Bottom row: 1) killing a Crow berdache, 1848; 2) battle while hunting, 1849; 3) finding an old woman inside a buffalo, 1850; 4) issuing blankets at Fort Laramie, 1851; 5) Crow chief visiting Lakotas, 1852; 6) Four Horns killed, or did not return, 1853; 7) Conquering (or Brave) Bear killed, 1854. 15" high (38.1 cm); 16" wide (40.6 cm). Courtesy U.S. Department of the Interior, Indian Arts and Crafts Board, Sioux Indian Museum. Cat. No. R-69.20.1.



4. The last page of Short Bull's winter count. The second, third and fifth drawings from the left on the top row may commemorate the deaths of American Horse (1908), Red Cloud (1909) and Afraid of Bear (1912). 15" high (38.1 cm); 16" wide (40.6 cm). Courtesy U.S. Department of the Interior, Indian Arts and Crafts Board, Sioux Indian Museum. Cat. No. R-69.20.1.

Short Bull suggested his followers gather at Pass Creek, "where the tree is sprouting" and "we will go among our dead relations" (ibid:789).

> You must not take any earthly things with you.... 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 (ibid:789).

Fearing an uprising, the government rushed troops to the Lakota reservations and events spiraled out of control, culminating in the Wounded Knee massacre on December 29. Short Bull helped lead a few hundred Lakota deeper into the Badlands, but the end came on January 15, 1891 when he and the last Ghost Dance diehards surrendered to General Nelson A. Miles at Pine Ridge.

Short Bull and eighteen other prisoners of war were sent to Fort Sheridan, Illinois. Bewildered by what to do with its charges, the government quickly agreed when William F. (Buffalo Bill) Cody suggested they join his famed Wild West Show, then on a tour of Europe. This marked the beginning of Short Bull's brief career in show business, during which he crossed the Atlantic and traveled over two continents (Russell 1960:369, 371-372, 374, 377-378).

Departing from Philadelphia aboard the steamer *Switzerland,* bound for Antwerp, Short Bull and his compatriots linked up with Buffalo Bill's hundred or so other Lakota at Strassbourg, where sharpshooter Annie Oakley topped the bill. During the 1891 season Short Bull visited several German cities, appeared before Kaiser Wilhelm II, moved on to Belgium, then Holland, where troupers visited Queen Wilhelmina before settling into British venues. The following year, Short Bull debuted at Earl's Court in London and met Queen Victoria. The 1893 season featured a stint with Buffalo Bill's Wild West and Congress of Rough Riders of the World at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago. The next year, Thomas Edison filmed Short Bull and Buffalo Bill conversing in Plains Indian sign language at the prolific inventor's West Orange, New Jersey laboratory (Burke 1974:226). During the rest of his life Short Bull stayed closer to Pine Ridge where, in the fall of 1913, he and General Miles appeared in Buffalo Bill's filmed reenactment of the Ghost Dance and Wounded Knee (Russell 1960:457).

Throughout, Short Bull's status and influence as a shamanic figure among the Lakota remained intact, as James R. Walker, agency physician at Pine Ridge, learned. Setting himself the goal of preserving knowledge of vanishing tribal ways, Walker spent nine years convincing Oglala elders of the wisdom of imparting important ritualistic information. The principal actor in this drama of the empowered members of one culture passing sacred knowledge to someone from another culture was Short Bull. In 1905, the elders announced that conversations could take place, but only if Short Bull received a vision sanctioning the sessions (Walker 1983:3). Walker never learned details of this vision, but the former Ghost Dance leader eventually approved of the endeavor. The resulting flow of information formed the basis for important works by Walker (1917, 1980, 1982, 1983), who related his impressions of Short Bull to a fellow researcher:

> Dr. Walker describes Short Bull as an open, generous and kind-hearted man who attends with diligence to his own business, frequenting public places only when necessity makes this necessary, and remaining quietly at home most of the time. He is one of the few chiefs remaining. When any person for whom he has a special regard comes to his house he bestirs his followers in a truly lively and commanding way to provide the most appropriate entertainment for the visitor; and in all respects in which it could be expected of him he proves himself a real gentleman. His face always wears a smile, telling unmistakenly that nature made him gentle and benevolent (Ricker 1906-1907:97-98).

Short Bull made substantially the same impression on Natalie Curtis, noted folklorist and collector of ethnic songs (Hitchcock and Sadie 1986:557; Kurath 1971:420-421; Upton 1958:288-289).

Intent on becoming a concert pianist, Curtis had studied music in New York, Paris and Bonn before finding herself drawn to American Indian music during a trip to Arizona around 1900. Abandoning plans for the concert stage, she set about collecting the more than two hundred songs from eighteen tribes which formed the basis for *The Indians' Book,* first published in 1907. There, she described Short Bull, with whom she spent time at Pine Ridge circa 1906 (DeMallie and Jahner 1980:57) as "revered among his people as a great medicine-man, a prophet, and a worker of miracles" (Curtis 1987:44). The Ghost Dance, Short Bull explained to Curtis, had been misunderstood:

> Who would have thought that dancing could make such trouble? We had no wish to make trouble, nor did we cause it of ourselves. There was trouble, but it was not of my making. We had no thought of fighting; if we had meant to fight, would we not have carried arms? We went unarmed in the dance. How could we have held weapons? For thus we danced, in a circle, hand in hand, each man's fingers linked to those of his neighbors (ibid:45).

Short Bull advised Curtis, "Look for the new day." Relying on the basic Ghost Dance theme, he envisioned America's Indian peoples someday experiencing a renaissance through a reversal of the roles played by the conquerors and the conquered (ibid:47).

From Short Bull, Curtis collected five songs and a notebook containing at least thirty-nine drawings done in pencil, ink, watercolors and crayon (Sotheby's 1987) (Figs. 8, 10). These drawings depict exactly the sort of events one would expect from an old-time buffalo culture warrior-artist: battle and horse-raiding scenes involving Crow, Pawnee, Hidatsa and Omaha enemies; even an exceptionally rare glimpse at legendary Oglala visionary and warrior Crazy Horse. One, showing Short

5. Short Bull, his medicine bird attached to an eagle feather warbonnet, attacks ten enemies armed with rifles. Although bullets fly around him, Short Bull remains unscathed. 7¼" high (18.4 cm); 10" wide (25.4 cm). Courtesy private collection.

Bull wearing a split-horn warbonnet with a long feather trailer, wielding a lance and riding a wounded horse, decorated the title page of the Dakota section in *The Indians' Book* (Fig. 6).

The drawings Curtis collected are almost certainly older than those German visitor Frederick Weygold collected from Short Bull in 1909 which are now housed in Leipzig (Museum für Volkerkunde) and Hamburg (Museum für Volkerkunde) (Wildhage 1990:38); and they are probably even older than forty-three pencil and crayon drawings by Short Bull in a notebook collected in Germany prior to 1893, while Short Bull toured with Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show. That notebook, too, is now in Leipzig's Museum für Volkerkunde (Wildhage 1990:42).

The nature of the subject matter depicted by Short Bull fuels speculation that the Curtis-owned drawings may antedate Weygold's by more than just a few years. Although most of the German material remains unpublished, the published images run to pre-1883 Sun Dance and 1890 Ghost Dance scenes. Curtis's collection contains no ceremonial subjects; all of the images are war-related and commemorate events that must have occurred prior to 1877.

In addition, in some drawings Weygold collected, Short Bull has attempted to create the illusion of perspective by positioning figures in half circles; front-facing figures also appear. Curtis's drawings contain neither technique, both decidedly unconventional for a warrior-artist from Short Bull's generation. Too, hands in Weygold's drawings show greater modeling than in the Curtis pieces. This is not to say that members of Short Bull's generation never adjusted their styles of artistic expression. (Witness, for example, Sitting Bull's attempts at modeling in drawings made after he apparently followed the advice of German artist Rudolph Cronau, whom he met in 1881 [Stirling 1938:35, 38-56].) But the absence of these adjustments in Curtis's drawings and their presence in Weygold's weigh in favor of the former's earlier position in Short Bull's stylistic development.

The drawings Short Bull gave Natalie Curtis remain intriguing on a number of counts. For one thing, this collection speaks to the presence of an element in Plains Indian warrior art that obviously existed but is seldom commented upon: the existence of microstyles — that is, an individual artist's creative deviation from some of the features understood within his or her culture as representing the established norm for graphic expression. In his drawings, Short Bull showed more expressive features on people than was customary for someone from his culture and era. Frequently, the vis-

6. Short Bull, wearing a split-horn bonnet decorated with a trailer made of red trade cloth and eagle feathers, depicts himself in a fight with Crows. His horse has been shot, evidently by the gun-toting Crow in the trio of enemies confronting the Lakota. Short Bull, thrown from his horse, bears a leg wound. 7¼" high (18.4 cm); 10" wide (25.4 cm). Courtesy private collection.

ages of friends and foes alike display an intriguing hint of grim determination, shock or resignation, an impression reinforced by the square-jawed appearance of all participants. (The composition and weight of quite a few of these images are more than a little reminiscent of the styles of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Japanese woodblock prints.) Eyes, in particular, seem to focus intently upon a foe or to roll back at the approach of death.

Looking at these images, one is struck by the fact that for those living in Short Bull's milieu the images linked together, forming a comprehensive chronicle. In several drawings Short Bull makes his own presence unambiguous, depicting himself wearing the stuffed skin of an unidentified bird (possibly an eagle) attached to his hair, warbonnet or roach (Figs. 5, 7, 11). His horse, too, stands out with distinctive thunder and lightning zigzag patterns painted along its legs. The episodes depicted are not generic; specific information about some of them survives in brief handwritten English-language notations based on information presumably supplied by the artist.

In one of Curtis's drawings (Fig. 9) Short Bull shows himself involved in a herculean battle with Crows. No fewer than twenty-four dead Crows (possible twenty-seven or more) lie within a series of lines designating a barrier of some sort. Outside of that barrier are at least seven dead Lakota, one of them Short Bull's own brother. As for the warrior-artist himself, he is shown as suffering three wounds during the course of the engagement. This is clearly a larger than normal Lakota-Crow fracas, possibly the one some Lakota historians remembered as "Killed Thirty Crows." This fight took place during the winter of 1869 in Montana. There, on the headwaters of Big Dry Creek, the Lakota cornered a party of thirty Crow warriors on a knoll later called Crow Rock and within half an hour, at a cost of fourteen killed and eighteen wounded, succeeded in slaying all of the enemies (Vestal 1957:113-117).

Although well within the late-nineteenth-century Plains Indian warrior art tradition, Short Bull's compositions have enough idiosyncratic elements that they become easily recognizable. We see not only the work of someone operating within an established mode but also the successful efforts of an innovative artist driven to building upon an existing structure of culturally accepted expression.

In May 1912, James R. Walker, still the agency physician at Pine Ridge, wrote to Clark Wissler of New York's American Museum of Natural History, for whom he gathered an immense amount of information about Lakota culture. Walker reported Short Bull's willingness

7. In a compositionally dramatic scene, Short Bull and a Pawnee foe meet like a pair of medieval knights. 7¼" high (18.4 cm); 10" wide (25.4 cm). Courtesy private collection.

to make a pair of paintings on canvas depicting Sun Dance scenes.

"I told him to take his time and make them well, and true to the old time manners and customes [*sic*]," Walker wrote Wissler, "and I think he will do so." Although Walker suggested Short Bull work with oils, "he denured [*sic*], as he does not understand their use, and then it would not be characteristic." Walker sent Wissler a list of what Short Bull required: watercolors – there "will be needed more of the red, black, blue and yellow than of the other colors" – and "a cheep [*sic*] brush for each color" (Walker 1912). Wissler immediately dispatched a package containing the requested items. "It was not possible for us to get the exact colors [needed by Short Bull]," Wissler apologized. "We did the best we could. If Short-bull [*sic*] is skillful enough, he can get the colors he wants by mixing these" (Wissler 1912).

The resulting paintings, done on two pieces of ducking canvas measuring roughly two-and-a-half feet in width and five feet in length, preserve Short Bull's recollections of the third and fourth days of the Sun Dance (Figs. 12, 13), banned by the government since 1883. The tipis are not the plain ones of reservation days but the spectacularly painted dwellings decorated with vision-inspired motifs so typical of the old-time buffalo culture. While Short Bull's primary purpose in making these paintings was clearly descriptive and instructive, the second picture makes a brief detour into less solemn territory by showing a pair of courting Lakota couples carrying umbrellas. In 1918 Walker sent the Sun Dance paintings to the American Museum of Natural History (Walker 1918).

Short Bull also maintained a winter count, a picture-chronicle in which he recorded the most memorable event of each winter, or year as measured from the first snowfall of one year to the first snowfall of the next (Figs. 2, 3, 4).

This chronicle, which apparently covers the period from 1840 to 1920, is drawn on five pages of lined paper. Each page contains two rows of figures, meant to be read in boustrophedon pattern – that is, the uppermost row of images is to be read left to right, the lower row right to left. (Short Bull may figure in the event selected for another Lakota's winter count: White Bull's chronicle designates 1872 as "A Crow Riding a White Horse was Killed" and that "Short Bull, a Brulé, counted coup" on this enemy [Vestal 1934:268-269]. He is certainly the man referred to in High Hawk's winter count for the year 1890: "Short Bull held a Ghost Dance" [Curtis 1908:181].) The Sioux Indian Museum in Rapid City, South Dakota obtained Short Bull's winter count from his grandson in 1969. The count, which consists of pictures drawn on paper, has been commented on by Howard (1971) and Wildhage (1990:38-39).

Other artifacts associated with Short Bull are rare. Furst and Furst (1982:173, Pl. 158) identify a superb Lakota shirt in the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Natural History (Cat. No. 175754) as Short

8. Short Bull, wearing a hide mantle (fox?), turns and fires his pistol at a group of pursuing Crows. 7¼" high (18.4 cm); 10" wide (25.4 cm). Courtesy private collection.

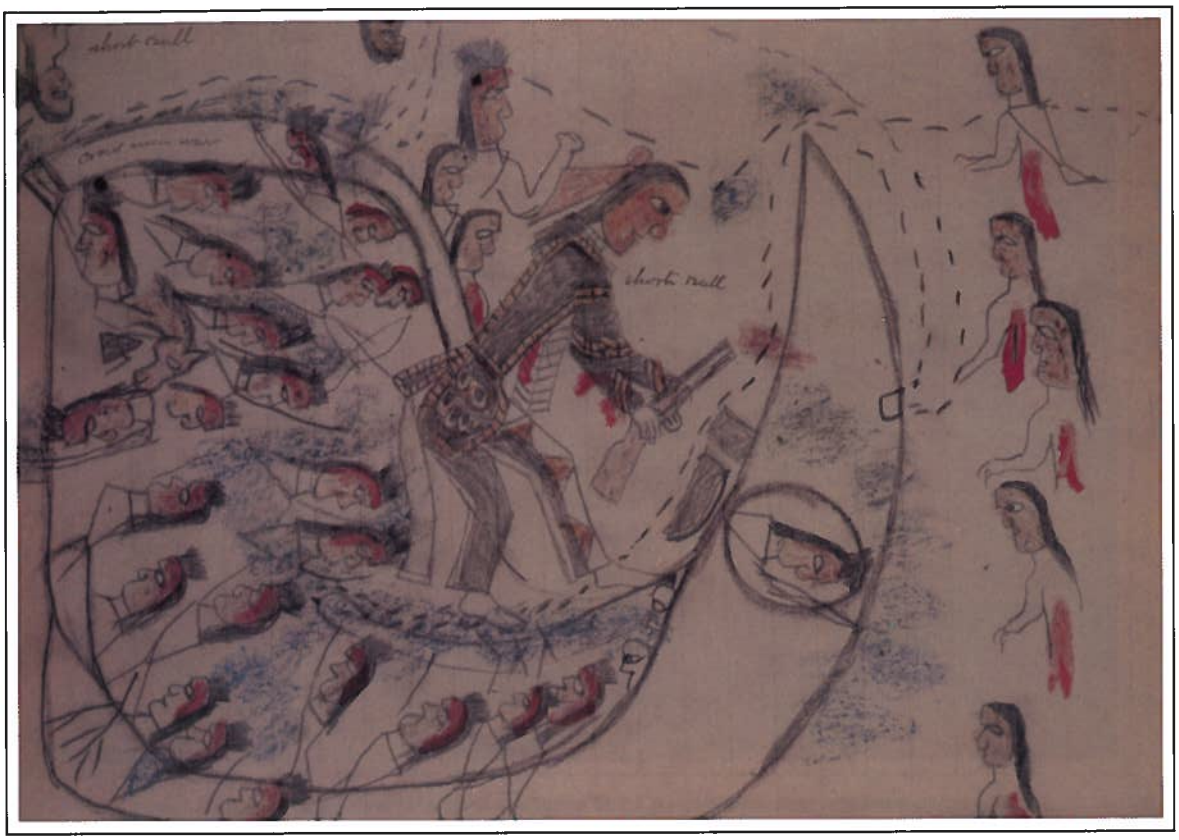
Bull's. However, the catalogue card states that it was obtained from Kicking Bear when he visited Washington, D.C. in 1896; and no Short Bull association with the garment is known (Pickering 1991). Furst and Furst also identify a shirt at Yale University's Peabody Museum of Natural History (Cat. No. 49194) as Short Bull's "Ghost Dance shirt." While the catalogue information for the piece repeats this information (Furst and Furst 1982: 174, Pl. 159; Pospisil 1991), this seems odd: beaded American flag designs, not exactly a prominent Ghost Dance motif among the Lakota, decorate the yoke.

James R. Walker collected a Ghost Dance shirt for the American Museum of Natural History (Cat. No. 50/6384) which he reported was made in 1890, blessed by Short Bull, and worn by an Oglala named Shell Woman (Williamson 1991). Wildhage (1990:38) reports that the catalogue of the Eugene Buechel Lakota Museum on Rosebud Reservation includes four Short Bull entries: a scalp taken from a Crow, a war club, a whetstone and a cane carved in 1891 with depictions of some of Short Bull's war exploits. These Short Bull exploits include killing Crows, taking Crow horses (in the fight in which his brother was killed), fighting Flatheads and bringing three dead comrades home. Wildhage (1990:38) also notes that a Ghost Dance shirt and small tipi probably painted by Short Bull and collected by Weygold in 1909 eventually wound up in Hamburg and Leipzig museums, where they were destroyed during World War II.

Various dates are given for Short Bull's death, including 1915 (Dockstader 1977:265; Waldman 1990:326) and 1923 (Snodgrass 1968:173). Actually, Short Bull lived somewhat longer. He was interviewed in 1924 and photographed as late as August 1933 (McCoy and McCoy 1976:211; Powers 1986:92). But the actual year of Short Bull's death remains in doubt. Wildhage (1990:35), an exhaustive researcher who delved deeply into the man's background, concludes that he "actually died in 1935 after being run over by a car." A man named Short Bull did die in an automobile accident on Pine Ridge Reservation in 1935. But he was probably not the Short Bull who concerns us here.

Conducting research into even some of the more conspicuously visible Plains Indians of Short Bull's generation is often a maddening business. Take the case of identical names in general and the widespread practice of frequent name changing. At least ten Indians named Short Bull, or the synonymous Little Bull, served in the U.S. Army during the Plains Indian Wars and their immediate aftermath.

When the Nebraska State Historical Society issued a collection of Eleanor H. Hinman's interviews with some of Crazy Horse's associates, a 1930 interview with Short Bull was included. However, the name was given as Short Buffalo "to escape confusion with the Brulé medicine man of Ghost Dance fame" (Nebraska State Historical Society 1976:49). But the photograph accompanying the published interview shows the Ghost



9. Short Bull is wounded in a fight with Crows. This battle may be the one some Lakota winter count keepers called "Killed Thirty Crows," which took place along Montana's Big Dry Creek in 1869. The inscription in the upper left corner indicates that Short Bull's brother died in this melee. 7¼" high (18.4 cm); 10" wide (25.4 cm). Courtesy private collection.

Dance apostle of the same name!

According to the federal government's military pension records, Grant Short Bull was killed August 20, 1935 in an automobile accident on Highway 18, north of Oglala, South Dakota (National Archives 1936). Grant Short Bull (or Short Buffalo) served with the U.S. Army for more than five years, first enlisting in 1877. During the Ghost Dance he saw thirty days service against its believers and was continuously involved in military activities with the 9th U.S. Cavalry between November 2, 1889 and May 1, 1890. Grant Short Bull, reported as living in 1934, was an uncle of Amos Bad Heart Bull, famed creator of an intriguing pictograhic history of the Oglala (Bad Heart Bull and Blish 1967:7). One of Amos Bad Heart Bull's drawings shows Grant Short Bull positioned as a uniform-clad intermediary bringing General Miles and Kicking Bear together in the aftermath of Wounded Knee (ibid:412). Whatever Short Bull, artist and the Ghost Dance apostle, may have been doing during that period, he could not have served in any capacity with the army.

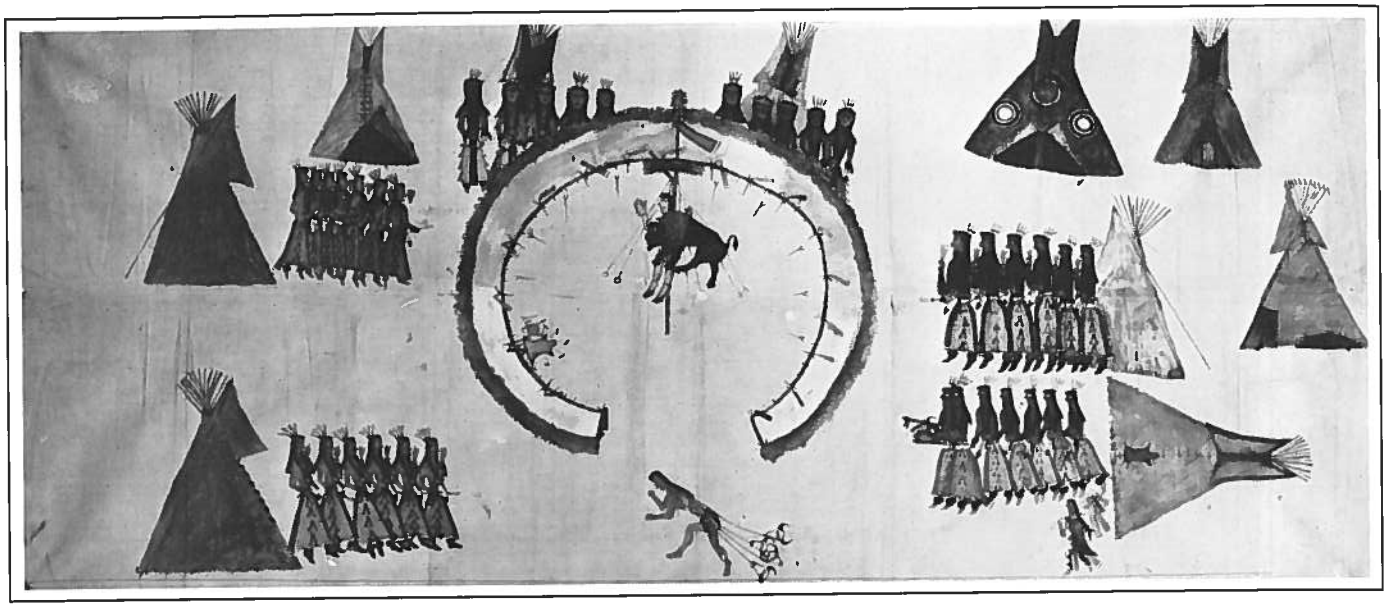
Perhaps Short Bull did die in 1935, at about ninety years of age. It was time, to be sure, for his generation was rapidly passing from the scene. In any event he cannot have lived many more years.

In a way, this touch of ambiguity serves as a metaphor for Short Bull's life. Well known in his own Lakota society, Short Bull emerged for outsiders only briefly, during the Ghost Dance and its immediate aftermath. Then he returned to the reservation and again disappeared from view. Occasionally, a Natalie Curtis, Frederick Weygold or James Walker sought him out. With remarkable prescience, Short Bull provided each with information that will ever aid in attempts at completing the cultural mosaic of Lakota life. More, Short Bull left his drawings and paintings: combat scenes from his fiery youth, glimpses of ceremonies and a winter count in which he attempted to preserve his perception of tribal history. In his own language, no difference existed between the words for "painting" or "writing," nor for "picture" and "letter" (Buechel 1970:411, 613). Thus, Short Bull, steeped in the buffalo culture's nonliteral communicative tradition, served both as an artistic scribe and an eloquent artist.

Whatever Short Bull saw in his own visions cannot be known. But his drawings put viewers in contact with the way of life he epitomized. That way of life no longer exists, but traces linger — like his vision of the sprouting tree — through the living American Indian art of Tatanka Ptecila, Short Bull, Lakota visionary, artist and historian.

10. Short Bull in combat with a Crow, who fires his rifle at the Lakota. The Crow wears a capote, or blanket-coat, indicating that this is a cold weather scene. An animal hide (fox?) is draped over Short Bull's shoulders. 7¼" high (18.4 cm); 10" wide (25.4 cm). Courtesy private collection.

11. Short Bull lances a Pawnee warrior, identifiable by his distinctive hairstyle. Short Bull wears his medicine bird in his hair and a warrior society sash. One of the Pawnee's arrows strikes Short Bull's shield and another wounds his horse. The horse is painted with wavy thunder or lightning lines. 7¼" high (18.4 cm); 10" wide (25.4 cm). Courtesy private collection.



12. "The Third Day of the Sun Dance," painted by Short Bull in 1912 for Dr. James Walker at Pine Ridge Reservation, South Dakota. 29¼" high (74.3 cm); 68½" wide (174 cm). Watercolor on ducking canvas. The man and buffalo hanging from the Sun Dance pole represent rawhide cutouts. Courtesy Department Library Services, American Museum of Natural History. Neg. No. 326848.

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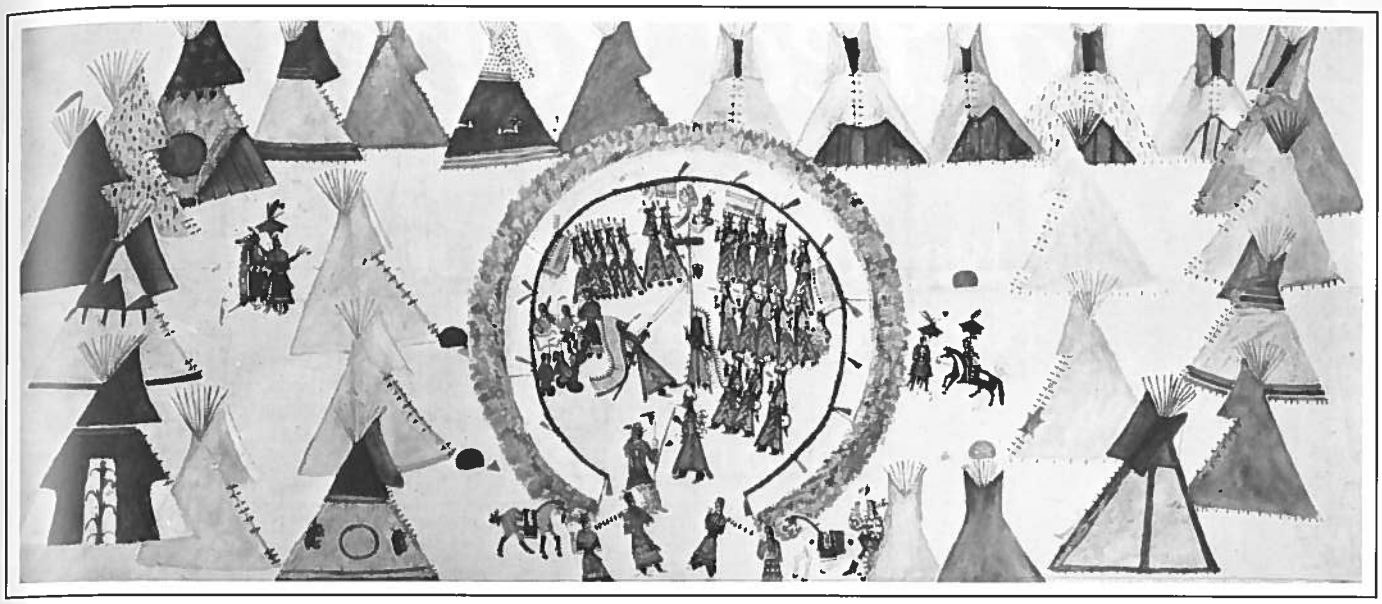

13. "The Fourth Day of the Sun Dance," painted by Short Bull in 1912 for Dr. James Walker at Pine Ridge Reservation, South Dakota. 29¼" high (74.3 cm); 66¾" wide (170 cm). Watercolor on ducking canvas. The central circle represents the Sun Dance arbor as seen from above. Courtesy Department Library Services, American Museum of Natural History. Neg. No. 326847.

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Ronald McCoy is an assistant professor of history and director of the Center for Great Plains Studies at Emporia State University in Emporia, Kansas.