

HUM IF YOU DON'T KNOW THE WORDS: NAVIGATING THE COMPLEXITIES  
OF CULTURE, AUTHORITY, AND CITIZENSHIP IN SOUTH DAKOTA'S  
EPISCOPAL DIOCESE, 1910-1923

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Abstract:

This thesis explores the relationships between Episcopal families and ministers in the Episcopal Diocese of South Dakota approximately between 1910 and 1923. It presents the assimilationists efforts Episcopal leaders utilized in sermons, education, and politics while also demonstrating the ways in which Indigenous members of the Diocese maintained their language and traditional values within the Episcopal Church. This study explores themes of resistance, survivance, and patriotism while also demonstrating the ways in which this community of Indigenous and Euro-American Episcopal Christians responded to the trials of World War I as a Diocese and the contributions which they made to the war effort.

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## Introduction

### **“Beneath the Banner and in Presence of the Assembled Company”: Unity and Patriotism Celebrated at a Home Wedding, 1914**

Miss Mary Walker Brave proceeded arm in arm with her father, Reverend Ben Brave, down a grassy aisle to the sound of Mendelsohn’s wedding march while nearly two hundred guests looked on. The bride wore blue satin messaline adorned with an embroidered white net, a beaded turquoise bandeau, and a bouquet of blue and white asters. She married Mr. John Waldron Frazier before the eyes of the bishop, the governor and his wife, many of the Lower Brule Reservation’s residents, and more than a hundred Euro-American visitors from the surrounding area as well as travelers from Pierre, Chamberlain, Oacoma, and Reliance.<sup>1</sup>

The wedding took place on September 23, 1914, at the home of the bride’s parents on the Lower Brule Reservation in South Dakota. Owing to the immense crowd, South Dakota’s bishop the Rt. Reverend George Biller, Jr. performed the Episcopal

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<sup>1</sup> A Pierre paper, reported the governor’s journey grudgingly, assuming the state would be asked to pay his expenses. The column concluded, however, with a message signed by an auditor named H. B. Anderson who stated that that the expenses for traveling to the wedding would not be taken from the state. See, “An Indian Wedding,” *Pierre Weekly Free Press*, Pierre, South Dakota, Thursday, January 7, 1915, 6. Accessed through Newspapers.com.

ceremony on the lawn. The wedding party positioned themselves near a flag pole; an American flag flapping in the wind above them. Music included the “Star Spangled Banner,” sung by the whole assembly as well as “America.” Both the bishop and Governor Frank M. Byrne offered speeches to the crowd before the bride’s father concluded the program and invited the whole company to share in a feast instructing them to: “be sure and do not leave the place unless you have enough to eat.”<sup>2</sup> Luke Walker, Lower Brule’s Indigenous minister, offered the benediction.

Both the bride’s and groom’s father, Ben Brave from Lower Brule and Albert Frazier from Santee Nebraska, served as Episcopal and Congregational ministers and held influential positions in their communities. The number of guests – some prominent guests – attested to the strong relationships both families maintained across the reservations, the predominately white communities populating the plains, as well as the hierarchy of the Episcopal Diocese and state government. The bride’s father did not miss the symbolic power of the momentous occasion. “We have gathered here but two races (red and white) to witness this (Indian’s) home wedding,” he told the guests. He considered it a historic moment for his family.<sup>3</sup> The occasion’s significance rested in the diversity of the guests present who celebrated together in one accord despite their ethnic and cultural differences. The ceremony’s program, furthermore, signaled, to the joy of its organizers, another apparent commonality: patriotism toward the United States.

The Brave-Frazier wedding occurred amidst decades of federal policy – often in tandem with the work of Christian denominations – which promoted the assimilation of

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<sup>2</sup> “A Beautiful Home Wedding,” sent from Ben Brave to Dr. Edward Ashley, from Edward Ashley Papers, A1/1, 1914-1915, Center for Western Studies, Sioux Falls, South Dakota, 3.

<sup>3</sup> “A Beautiful Indian Home Wedding.”



Indigenous peoples toward Euro-American values and customs. These assimilationist attempts came in many forms including federal and denominational investments in boarding schools for Indigenous children and the Dawes Act which divided tribal lands into individual family plots and siphoned millions of acres from Indigenous ownership for the purpose of white settlement.<sup>4</sup> Through education, churches, and administrative roles on the reservations, the Episcopal Church attempted to steer its Indigenous congregants toward adopting Euro-American practices and rejecting the aspects of traditional Dakota culture which they found contrary to Christianity. American flags, a testament to these Americanization efforts, appear frequently in the background of photographs taken at Episcopal conventions and in the recorded memories of participants along with the patriotic songs and pledges they sang at social gatherings.

For Episcopal ministers invested in promoting patriotism among their Indigenous congregations, reverence to American symbols such as the flag often marked the progress these ministers believed Indigenous peoples were making towards Americanization and or patriotism toward the United States. In the wedding bulletin and summary Reverend Brave sent to Missionary Deacon Edward Ashley afterward, the presence of the flag flying overhead appeared twice. First, the report said the immense crowd forced them to hold the ceremony outside, “on the lawn underneath the floating folds of the American flag, which was duly suspended to the breeze above the happy participants of this joyous

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<sup>4</sup> President Grant signed his Peace policy directed toward Native American Nations in 1869. This policy utilized denominational organizations to administrate reservations and attempt to assimilate Indigenous families into Euro-American society. While the government believed ministers would make better and more honest administrators, corruption continued to surround Reservation Agencies, and the usage of denominational workers as reservation overseers ended during Rutherford B. Hayes’ presidency; however, denominational investment in boarding schools and other assimilationists enterprises continued after the Peace Policy formerly ended. See Joseph C. Genetin-Pilawa’s *Crooked Paths to Allotment: The Fight over Federal Indian Policy after the Civil War*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2012) for more information regarding federal policy toward Indigenous nations after the Civil War.

occasion.”<sup>5</sup> The second occurrence was in reference to the wedding party marching down the aisle, “to the place so appropriately prepared for the ceremony beneath the banner and in presence of the assembled company.”<sup>6</sup> Despite the significance Episcopal leaders, both Indigenous and Euro-American, placed on patriotic symbols such as those represented in the Brave-Frazier wedding, patriotic actions did not necessarily represent the true emotions and motives of those performing them.

The Lakota, Dakota, and Nakota nations and the branches and individual families within these nations never exhibited a unanimous response toward Americanization, citizenship, and patriotism. In a time when the federal government outlawed Native American religious practices and many cultural customs, some members of the Indigenous communities in the Dakotas and Nebraska presumably went through the motions expected of them by federal and denominational authorities while still harboring devotion to the customs of their own nations. Furthermore, patriotism and aspects of traditionalism were not necessarily mutually exclusive and, in some cases, seemed to be practiced in tandem.<sup>7</sup> Furthermore, participation in Episcopal activities, patriotic or otherwise, contributed to building strong relationships which allowed Indigenous participants to introduce Euro-American settlers to aspects of their own flourishing, though threatened, culture as they saw fit.

The Episcopal Diocese of South Dakota provided a space where both Indigenous families and Euro-American settler families often came together for purposes of worship,

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<sup>5</sup> “A Beautiful Indian Home Wedding.”

<sup>6</sup> “A Beautiful Indian Home Wedding.”

<sup>7</sup> Paul C. Rosier, *Serving Their Country: American Indian Politics and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century*. (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2009). See chapters One and Two, 12-70.

Christian acts of service, education, and fellowship. Many of these activities bore deep-rooted assimilationist ideals in their design, boarding schools such as St. Mary's and St. Elizabeth's the most prominent example, and leaders in the diocese enjoyed significant amounts of political and social influence even after the federal government removed their administrative roles on the reservations. Euro-American ministers supported Indigenous adoption of Euro-American standards of living and regulation or abandonment of Native American dancing, giveaways, and other traditional ceremonies. Correspondence between Diocese ministers and lay workers revealed that – at least while speaking to their bishop and archdeacon – a few Indigenous ministers and helpers expressed desire for regulated dances which they deemed as distractions impeding farm production. Working in tandem with leaders from other denominations, Episcopal ministers also petitioned for a stronger federal response to dancing and giveaways in the early 1920s.

Episcopal activities did not merely provide a platform for the missionaries in their efforts to, in theory, “Americanize” a significant portion of their congregants. Instead, events such as the Annual Niobrara Convocation served as a conduit that Dakota men and women utilized to bring Euro-American guests into an environment where Dakota was spoken freely, multi-generational families celebrated together, and where Indigenous contributions to the Diocese and global mission field was honored with ceremony. Using the Episcopal faith as a commonality between unique groups, Indigenous families often shared aspects of their culture with Episcopal settler families. They shared the customs they wished and invited them to observe and sometimes join their family's lives and traditional activities.

Scholarship surrounding the Episcopal Diocese in South Dakota, particularly as it pertains to the early twentieth century, is deeply interwoven with the lives of the congregants themselves and their own family histories. These historians, professional and lay, tend to create their works at the behest of the organization or in an independent effort to regain or record personal family and community history. Historians both attached and unattached to the community are often drawn to the role of women and children in the creation and maintenance of the Episcopal community be they missionary families or the families of Indigenous ministers. This is in part due to the lack of official recognition women and children traditionally received in the written records of the organization as well as authors wanting to do justice to the role of women after personally observing the central contribution women make and made to the health and survival of the community.

Perhaps the most recognizable history of the Episcopal Diocese in South Dakota is Virginia Driving Hawk Sneve's *That They May Have Life: The Episcopal Church in South Dakota 1859-1976*.<sup>8</sup> Sneve, a historian and children's writer of Lakota and French descent belongs to the Episcopal Church as have several generations of her family many of whom served as ministers and lay leaders of local congregations. Sneve wrote this history at the behest of the contemporary Episcopal leadership in 1976 to capture the work of the Episcopal denomination in South Dakota especially as it pertained to the Sovereign Nations.<sup>9</sup> Another of her publications, *Finishing the Circle*, explores the

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<sup>8</sup> Virginia Driving Hawk Sneve, *That They May Have Life: The Episcopal Church in South Dakota 1859-1976*, (New York: The Seabury Press, 1977).

<sup>9</sup> Sneve dedicates a large amount of her book to the work of Bishop William Hobart Hare, South Dakota's first bishop. A large percentage of scholarship pertaining to the Diocese focuses on his life or aspects of his leadership and work. He was generally loved by his Diocese and his colleagues; however, one nationally-noted court case between he and another missionary created a scandal for the Church and put both men's characters and ministries in question. Concerning this ordeal see: Brian Cooper Hosmer, "Hinman vs. Hare: A Case Study of Conflict and Change in the Episcopal Mission to the Santee Sioux,

family genealogies and histories of her own family, including but not limited to the Fraziers, Howes, Driving Hawks, and Rosses, demonstrating the many ways this Lakota family with strong French ancestry integrated traditional wisdom and practices with the teachings of the Episcopalian Church.<sup>10</sup> She records finding an incident concerning Christian family members participating in a traditional *Yuwipi* Ceremony to locate the body of a missing son, and initially, she presents the story as ironic. However, Sneve states her research for *That They Might Have Life* uncovered multiple examples of baptized Native American congregants who attended Sunday services and Communion while also participating in the Native American Church, as well as Sweat and Pipe Ceremonies. Sneve argues these Episcopal members seemed to practice both Christian and Indigenous customs without personal or theological issue.<sup>11</sup>

Sneve describes the Episcopal Church as far gentler and lenient to Lakota and Dakota traditions in comparison to other denominations working in the area, especially during Grant's Reconstruction period. "Episcopalians were often accused of being lax with their Indian charges by permitting them to continue some of their old practices, such as placing food on the graves of the dead," Sneve writes in the first chapter of *That They May Have Life*. "The other denominations of the more puritanical Calvinistic creeds attempted to maintain a tighter control over their Indians; but the early Episcopalian missionaries felt that too much discipline would make Christianity unpalatable to the Indians."<sup>12</sup> Sneve also incorporates examples of how she saw Christian doctrine as

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1869–1887," MA Thesis, University of Texas at Austin, 1986, and Taylor Spence, "Naming Violence in United States Colonialism," *Journal of Social History* 53, no. 1 (2019): 157–193.

<sup>10</sup> Virginia Driving Hawk Sneve, *Finishing the Circle*, (University of Nebraska Press: Lincoln & London, 1995).

<sup>11</sup> Sneve, *Finishing the Circle*, 77-78.

<sup>12</sup> Sneve, *That They May Have Life*, 9.

similar to Dakota virtue and argues Dakota women found conversion to Christianity easier than their husbands did in light of the similar virtues valued for women in both Christian and Dakota customs.<sup>13</sup>

Another historian who has explored the roles women played in their Episcopal congregations in South Dakota is Ruth Ann Alexander. *Patches in a History Quilt: Episcopal Women in the Diocese of South Dakota 1868-2000* by Ruth Ann Alexander explores the intricate role of both Euro-American and Indigenous women in the daily life of the Diocese, local congregations where they worked to provide many of the physical needs of the Church and its families using the metaphor of a quilt.<sup>14</sup> Like Sneve, Alexander has been a member of the Episcopal Diocese since childhood. Realizing the absence of ordinary Episcopal women's stories, she used her book to uncover the lives of Episcopal women in their daily service to the Church from the early missionary wives beginning in 1868 and continuing into contemporary times.<sup>15</sup>

More recently, Linda M. Clemmons has studied the families of early evangelical missionaries working in the Dakotas in the mid-1800s. She particularly investigates concerns missionary mothers held over raising their children away from established centers of white society as well as the perspectives and career choices of those missionary children in her article: "'Substitute in this army of the Lord:' Missionary Parents, Their Children, and the Conflicted Nature of Missionary Work."<sup>16</sup> Clemmons argues the evangelical press perceived missionary children as uniquely suited for ministry amongst

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<sup>13</sup> Sneve, *That They May Have Life*, 3.

<sup>14</sup> Ruth Ann Alexander. *Patches in a History Quilt: Episcopal Women in the Diocese of South Dakota 1868-2000*, (Sioux Falls: Episcopal Women's Council, 2003).

<sup>15</sup> Alexander. *Patches in a History Quilt*, x-xii.

<sup>16</sup> Linda M. Clemmons, "'Substitute in this army of the Lord:' Missionary Parents, Their Children, and the Conflicted Nature of Missionary Work," *South Dakota History* Vol. 51 No. 2 Summer 2021, 166-195.

Native American nations due to their early exposure to Indigenous languages, their friendships with Indigenous children, and years of observing the service and sacrifices of their parents' ministries.<sup>17</sup> Some of these children did take their parents' places upon adulthood, others did not.<sup>18</sup>

Prolific writer and activist Vine Deloria Jr.'s father Vine Deloria and grandfather Philip Deloria were both prominent ministers and leaders in South Dakota and the Episcopal Church whose ministries spanned decades across the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.<sup>19</sup> Vine Jr. did not follow his father and grandfather into the Episcopal ministry; however, he does record aspects of his experience with the Episcopal Church, Christianity, and family memories in books such as *Custer Died for Your Sins: an Indian Manifesto* and *God Is Red: A Native View of Religion*.<sup>20</sup> He also records short vignettes of memory alongside a few other Episcopal congregants in a collection titled *County Congregations: South Dakota Stories* edited by Charles L. Woodard.<sup>21</sup> One story Deloria chose to include in this collection recounted an instance of Episcopal members integrating traditional ceremonies and a butte associated with vision quests with Christian

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<sup>17</sup> Clemmons, "Substitute in this army of the Lord," 167.

<sup>18</sup> Those who did decide to become missionaries themselves had no misconceptions regarding the hardships they would face serving in the Dakotas with little financial backing. Clemmons records some of the internal wrestling second generation missionaries faced. Some children included in her study are John P. Williamson, three prominent siblings: Alfred, Martha, and Thomas Riggs, as well as Mary Huggins. See "Substitute in this army of the Lord," pages 190-195.

<sup>19</sup> Reverend Philip Joseph Deloria also known as Tipi Sapa, born in 1853 to Yankton/Nakota parents, is considered the first Dakota Christian minister ordained to serve his own community. His son Vine Deloria followed his father into the ministry. Both Phillip and Vine participated in the Brotherhood of Christian Unity which according to Philip Deloria's great-grandson, also named Phillip J. Deloria: "effectively organized South Dakota Sioux Christianity—and put the emphasis on the *Sioux* as much as it did on the *Christianity*." See *Indians in Unexpected Places*, (Lawrence: University of Kansas, 2003), 114.

<sup>20</sup> Vine Deloria Jr. *Custer Died for Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto*, (New York: Avon Books, 1969) and *God is Red: A Native View of Religion*, Golden, Colorado: Fulcrum Publishing, 1994).

<sup>21</sup> Charles L. Woodard, editor, *Country Congregations: South Dakota Stories*, (Brookings, South Dakota: South Dakota Humanities Foundation, 2002).

prayers and services. Residents of Pine Ridge organized prayer meetings on Eagle Nest Butte amidst the damaging droughts seen in the 1930s. The bishop participated, and people camped on the butte for a few days each year praying, socializing, sharing Communion. “Finally,” Deloria wrote, “many people walked around the sides of the butte, placing flowers and tobacco sacks with their prayers.”<sup>22</sup> This short story serves as only one example of Indigenous Episcopal coordinating with the bishop and other Episcopal officials to create revered and sacred occasions which contained elements of traditional custom in spite of continued national efforts to suppress Indigenous expression through ceremony.

Vine Deloria Jr.’s son, Philip J. Deloria centers his grandfather Vine Deloria, an impressive athlete as well as minister, as a central character in the third chapter of his book *Indians in Unexpected Places*, which focuses on athletics in Indigenous culture and memory. Concerning the monumental role his grandfather and great-grandfather played in establishing the Episcopal Church in South Dakota, he writes: “Some claim that the conversion of a majority of Sioux Episcopalians was due to proselytizing of my grandfather and his father, my namesake, Philip J. Deloria.”<sup>23</sup> Similarly, Vine Deloria Jr. addresses the lives of Philip J. Deloria (his grandfather) and the childhood of his father Vine Deloria in an introduction to Ella Deloria’s anthropological work *Speaking of Indians* originally published in the 1940s but surviving through multiple editions.<sup>24</sup> A

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<sup>22</sup> Vine Deloria Jr., “Eagle Nest Butte Church, Rural Wanblee,” taken from Charles L. Woodard’s *Country Congregations*, 6-7. Deloria writes, the “old-timers” said rain often occurred after these meetings. The tradition continued until 1943 when fuel rationing made it difficult for the bishop to attend. See page 7.

<sup>23</sup> Philip J. Deloria. “‘I Am of the Body’: My Grandfather, Culture, and Sports,” Taken from *Indians in Unexpected Places*, (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2004), 109.

<sup>24</sup> Ella Deloria, Introduction by Vine Deloria Jr., *Speaking of Indians*, (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1998). See Part III: The Reservation Picture.”



chapter of Ella Deloria's book, focuses on reservation life and the role of the Episcopal Church in South Dakota according to anecdotes she knew through family history and her personal observations as a minister's child and boarding school student herself.

The scholarship and historical memory created by those like the Deloria family and Driving Hawk reveal both tension and harmony as Episcopal leaders and congregants practiced Christianity and continued to engage with elements of traditional and lasting Dakota culture. In this study, I explore the complexities Episcopal members faced as they navigated their role in the community, their cultural and religious identities, and their relationships to each other within the Episcopal Diocese of South Dakota between 1910 and 1923. These mark the first years following the death of South Dakota's first Episcopal bishop, William Hobart Hare. This time period also saw significant changes in the state, prompted by the Great War, both economically and socially. The following chapters present glimpses of the Episcopal Diocese as represented in amateur photographs, memories, local media, and the papers of its bishop and archdeacon. It emphasizes the community's place within a global perspective as they depicted it in their own media and writings. This study contains themes of resistance, colonized education and religion, and survivance. It adds to ongoing conversations concerning the legacy of Christian missions on Native American reservations, and it demonstrates how Episcopal families and leaders created religious spaces together and navigated the social, cultural, and political intricacies these spaces entailed.

The interconnectedness of Lakota, Dakota, and Nakota families and European settlers dating back from French exploration and the thriving fur industry creates complications for defining the role of race, ethnicity, and culture when discussing

Episcopal families. For example, the Frazier branch of Sneve's family identified as Indigenous with a strong French heritage as well. The Deloria family also traced members of their family to French trappers, as did many Indigenous families in South Dakota and its surrounding states.<sup>25</sup> Added to these complexities, is the vulnerability of Midwestern documents and artefacts. Frequent fires, tornadoes, and other natural disasters and human error posed a constant threat to church and family documents, which if they had survived, might have provided more insight into matters of religious and familial concern such as specific school records, baptismal records, and genealogies. This being the case, genetically exact information concerning historical actors' heritages can at times be difficult to determine with complete accuracy.

The term Euro-American is used for actors who often emigrated or were descendants of emigrants from the eastern states if not Europe itself as was the case of Edward Ashley, a British born missionary. These actors, while often considerate of Indigenous culture, generally promoted assimilationist policies and often physically settled on land that the federal government took from Indigenous stewardship or ownership. As a general rule, these missionaries and settlers, referred to their Indigenous neighbors as either Indians or as Dakota.

While Episcopal sources often refer to Native Americans in South Dakota as "Dakota," this term generally combined the Dakota, Lakota, and Nakota speaking nations and their smaller tribal bands within these nations as together. The term Dakota appears in this study as reflected in individual sources and details regarding tribal affiliation and

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<sup>25</sup> Lucy Eldersveld Murphy's 2014 book *Great Lakes Creoles: a French-Indian Community on the Northern Borderlands, Prairie Du Chien, 1750-1860* explores the dynamics of an Indigenous-French community over several generations.

reservation residency as they are provided in the source materials. People who identified or were labeled as Indigenous could also have had ancestors of European descent, including but not necessarily limited to the French and British. While items such as the *South Dakota Churchman* divided the diocese between the “Indian Field” and the “White Field,” these two groups were in many ways connected both through proximity, experiences, and genealogies. As such, this study views the Episcopal Diocese in South Dakota as one multi-faceted unit, distinguished by ethnic and cultural boundaries but entangled together nonetheless.

The following three chapters explore the Episcopalian community from three primary focuses including a white woman invited into to fellowship with Dakota families, children of both Indigenous and Euro-American ancestry in boarding schools during World War I, and the hierarchical Episcopal leadership in South Dakota. These three groups reveal both the persistence of Dakota culture despite conflicting pressures as well as the level of respect Euro-American congregants and leaders held for Dakota ways of life despite wrestling with what they deemed to be the most appropriate way to practice Christianity and live.

Chapter One features Elizabeth Bradley an independent white woman from Omaha who used her business prowess and determination to carve a space for herself on land taken from the Rosebud Reservation for white settlement and to establish herself as a respected business woman in the state. She shared her devout Episcopal faith with her Dakota neighbors. Through the generous invitation of her friends, she traveled with the Indigenous caravan to their annual Niobrara Convocation and recorded her experiences with her pen and typewriter in letters and memoir drafts. A photographer as well as

entrepreneur, Bradley captured images of Episcopal life and its cultural complexities while attending Convocations and visiting boarding schools, including one at which her older sister worked.

Chapter Two examines the First World War as religious educators presented it to Episcopal students who watched global events unfold from the physical but not intellectual isolation of the Northern Plains. During the war, President Wilson expected everyone to do their part in obtaining victory. Adults did not spare children of this same burden; however, South Dakota's children demonstrated a keen awareness of how their actions affected movements on a global scale. They demanded they be taken seriously by their elders, and worked tirelessly for the war effort despite many of the female and Indigenous students having no certain guarantee of future participation in America's democracy when they began their service projects in the spring of 1917.

Chapter Three examines the relationships between the hierarchal organized church leadership from the bishop, to the local ministers, to the deaconess who oversaw the local boarding school in Wakpala. Amid a growing resurgence in Indigenous ceremonies and practices, the Episcopal leadership, both Euro-American and Indigenous, faced the task of maintaining harmonious communities between the congregations on the various reservations as well as between what leadership termed "the White Field" and the "Indian Field." They also debated the virtue of Indigenous customs in their communities and pressed for federal aid in regulating traditional Indigenous ceremonies and the popular dances occurring throughout the state. By the 1910s, despite Episcopalian workers' expectations that their religiously educated, Indigenous congregations would have no need for translators while they listened to English speaking ministers. Dakota

language remained prominent in Episcopal services, and in written communications forcing the leadership to create a new edition of the Dakota Prayer Book during World War I.

Other Dakota traditions were not so eagerly accepted by leadership, however. As war subsided and the decade turned, the ministers witnessed not only traditional persistence, but also its increased resurgence. The Epilogue examines conversations between ministers and the bishop regarding the prominence of dances, giveaways, and “the vices” they deemed to be associated with such celebrations. While leaders had witnessed the integration of Indigenous philosophies into Episcopalian practice for multiple generations, the question then became whether this merger would continue, or if they would see significant numbers of their Indigenous congregants break away from the Church completely in favor of Dakota traditions.

The landscape of South Dakota changed as automobiles appeared on the roads in increasing numbers, Euro-American settlements established themselves on stolen reservation lands, and men and women left and returned from combat and medical service on the war front. This thesis demonstrates the pressures of assimilation and patriotism which appeared throughout the Episcopal community be it in the rhetoric of light and darkness utilized in ministers’ sermons, educators’ calls for students to demonstrate patriotism in the war, and the leadership’s involvement in the personal matters of congregants’ families and lifestyles. It further argues Dakota culture persisted within the Episcopal Diocese through the continued use of the Dakota language in Episcopal ceremonies and the actions of Indigenous families and ministers who invited Euro-American members to practice Christianity as they did and who contributed

significantly to missions as well as the war effort. Despite decades of assimilationists' best efforts, those who continued to participate in the Episcopal community did so of their own choosing, integrating their cultural practices and worldviews with the Anglican practices they deemed compatible or desirable.

## Chapter I

### **“And there was I, Istato, jogging along with them”: Elizabeth Bradley’s Invitation to Witness the Sacred**

Elizabeth Bradley began recounting her summer’s adventure in a letter to her sister Grace on a Sunday morning in late August of 1910. Bradley decided to write her letter a little bit at a time and suspected Grace, a matron at St. Elizabeth’s Episcopal School in Wakpala, South Dakota, on the Standing Rock Reservation, might read her story about attending Convocation with Dakota friends in installments as well.<sup>1</sup> Drawing from memory and the sermon notes she wrote on small pieces of paper four and a half inches long and less than three and a half inches wide, Bradley recorded the daily itinerary and notable events which occurred on her journey to the Greenwood Agency and the proceedings of the first convocation held after the death of South Dakota’s first bishop, William Hobart Hare.

Her tale is filled with details about her experiences traveling in an Indigenous caravan while responding to white settlers’ who taunted the travelers before enjoying the

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<sup>1</sup> Elizabeth Bradley, “My Dear Grace,” Prairie Hill, August, 1910, Elizabeth B. Bradley Papers, the Center for Western Studies, 1.

ceremonies of Convocation and meeting old acquaintances. It spanned eighteen pages typed on a typewriter. She told Grace that “Granny” might be interested in the story and recommended her sister might, “save the account, because I’ll never again write such a full one.”<sup>2</sup> Though her adventure traveling with Winona’s family marks a seminal place in the papers she left upon her death, Bradley experienced a long and eventful life living on the edge of reservation lands while treading a thin line between that of a colonizer – reaping the benefits of Indigenous lands – and a guest to her Dakota neighbors’ Indigenous social circles.

Bradley settled on the Rosebud a few years after, in her words it was “thrown open to white settlers.” She was an independent business woman and free-lance photographer.<sup>3</sup> During her many years in South Dakota, she worked as a real estate and insurance agent as well as a notary and remained active in the Episcopal Diocese. At one point she donated her office space in town for Sunday services. She enjoyed fellowship with her Dakota neighbors and photographing their families on the way to gatherings and photographing the environment of a nearby boarding school where she documented the class room and living quarters as well as the adult staff enjoying their free time. Her recorded memories and photographs provide glimpses of the strong Dakota roots at the heart of the Dakota Episcopal Diocese which persisted, sometimes to the chagrin of the bishops and clergy from the East, but which long outlasted their tenure.

Strategically molded to substitute certain social aspects of the Sundance ceremonies, the annual Niobrara Convocation began in 1870 and persisted as an annual

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<sup>2</sup> Instead, she would go on to write several drafts of her story, as time went by. Elizabeth Bradley, “My Dear Grace,” Prairie Hill, August, 1910, 18.

<sup>3</sup> Elizabeth Bradley, “My Friends, the Sioux,” Colome, South Dakota, Elizabeth B. Bradley Papers, 1.



event to the present day with few exceptions. Congregations on the reservations took turns hosting the gatherings each summer. “The Niobrara Convocation, although it had no Indian ceremonials within it served the same social function as the Sun Dance, when friends and relatives came together in the summer from all directions,” Sneve wrote. “The convocation custom of the Indians from the different reservations camping together was not unlike the traditional spots held in the camp circle by various tribes.”<sup>4</sup> Sneve depicts the Convocation as a fulfilling substitute of the Sun Dance without addressing any of the psychological or spiritual ramifications this substitute might have caused traditional participants of the Sun Dance which the government had forbidden them to practice. Nevertheless, the intent to replace Indigenous tradition, aspects of Dakota culture remained present in the ceremonial gatherings such as use of the Dakota language and the centrality of generosity to the gatherings.

Elizabeth B. Bradley was a settler as well as an intermediary, an ally while at the same time an infringer who enjoyed seemingly all aspects of her hosts’ lifestyles. The snippets of conversations and descriptions she included in her writings and the photographs reveal embarrassment for the lack of virtues reservation settlers possessed and the subsequent ironies of championing Euro-American settler culture over Indigenous customs. In addition, she illustrated the generosity, fortitude, and strength Dakota families demonstrated as they faced the onslaught of settler’s ridicule and practiced traditional values and culture in tandem with and complimentary to their devotion to the Episcopal Church.

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<sup>4</sup> Sneve, *That They Might Have Life*, 10.

**“I had none of the fear which my city friends felt for me”: Elizabeth Bradley Settles on the Rosebud**

Elizabeth Bradley filed a claim in Tripp County in October of 1909. Determined to last on the prairie, she signed up to pay for her 160-acre plot on a five-year proof.<sup>5</sup> Despite her friends’ apprehension to the prospect of leaving the comforts of the city and stable employment, Bradley had few misgivings. She already shared connections with the Episcopal Diocese in South Dakota and had visited the state before. “I had none of the fear which my city friends felt for me in this new venture,” Bradley wrote in her memoir, “My sister had been a teacher in an Episcopal Mission School. Through her I seemed already acquainted with my prospective neighbors.”<sup>6</sup> Her ties to the Episcopal Church would help strengthen her relationships with her new neighbors as she built her farm and opened her new business.

Bradley took satisfaction and pride in overseeing the details of her homestead and taking part in the physical labor of building a home and farming herself. Interested in her progress two years later, the *Omaha Daily Bee* recounted Bradley’s creation of “Prairie Hill” for her hometown’s readers. Bradley designed the small home herself then, “Down on her hands and knees with hammer and mouth full of nails, she laid the flooring,” for her 18x22 foot house divided by living room, kitchen, and bedroom.<sup>7</sup> With the help of farming pamphlets and magazines and some hired help, she cultivated sweet potatoes, peanuts, melons, tomatoes, potatoes, squash, turnips, pumpkins, onions, beets, sod corn,

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<sup>5</sup> “Omaha, Woman is Making Good on a South Dakota Farm,” *The Omaha Sunday Bee*, Omaha Nebraska, December 24, 1911, 5. Accessed through Newspapers.com.

<sup>6</sup> Elizabeth Budington Bradly, “My Friends, the Sioux,” Colome, South Dakota, 1.

<sup>7</sup> “Omaha, Woman is Making Good on a South Dakota Farm,” *The Omaha Sunday Bee*, Omaha Nebraska, December 24, 1911, 5. Accessed through Newspapers.com.

and hay. The paper labeled Bradley as an “enthusiastic preacher and successful exponent of the back-to-the-land gospel,” and listed some of the things Bradley enjoyed such as “Starting things and watching them grow and develop, learning ever new secrets of Mother Nature; seeing an entire sunrise or sunset from your own front stoop and being out of doors all you want.”<sup>8</sup> Though enthralled by the miracles of nature and crop cultivation, she quickly diversified her income and maintained a busy schedule.

Drawing from her professional experience in Omaha, Bradley provided real-estate and financial services for the surrounding area. She hung a sign on her property reading: “E.B. Bradley and CO., Farm Loans, Real Estate, Insurance, Notary Public, Relinquishments.” In an attempt to increase the perceived legitimacy of her business to the skeptical observer wary of working with a female agent, she disguised her gender in the title and used the “CO.” to portray a thriving partnership. The “‘E.B.’ was used instead of Elizabeth,” because it seems more business-like,” the paper reported, “The ‘C.’ is ‘E.B.’ herself; she is also the officers, board of directors and the office force.”<sup>9</sup> She used a desk in her living room for her office space, and went out in her horse and buggy after the morning’s chores to assess real-estate and loans as well as act as a locating agent for other settlers who had drawn lots on the Rosebud.

What time she had left after farming and tending her business, she spent in

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<sup>8</sup> “Omaha, Woman is Making Good on a South Dakota Farm,” *The Omaha Sunday Bee*, Omaha Nebraska, December 24, 1911, 5. Accessed through Newspapers.com.

The perceived closing of the frontier in the early 1900s and the end of the romanticized pioneer, contributed to what David M. Wrobel referred to as “frontier anxiety” in his book *The End of American Exceptionalism: Frontier Anxiety for the Old West to the New Deal*, (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1993). Wrobel associates frontier anxiety to the school garden movements begun in the Gilded Age and back-to-the-land movements (See page 47). Bradley might have seen the opening of the Rosebud as a last opportunity to claim “unsettled” land and live remnants of the pioneer life whilst relying on the land and removing herself from city society.

<sup>9</sup> “Omaha, Woman is Making Good on a South Dakota Farm,” *The Omaha Sunday Bee*, Omaha Nebraska, December 24, 1911, 5. Accessed through Newspapers.com.

organizing a Sunday school for her neighbors to attend as a family. The local school house stood one mile away from her claim, and she used it for her Sunday school which was not necessarily held on Sunday and where three generations of family members attended together and stayed “as long as they like.”<sup>10</sup> Gaining the interest of a lady patron in New York, Bradley organized donations of hymnals, Sabbath school books, and a folding organ for what the paper recognized as her “little parish.”<sup>11</sup> Bradley did these things of her own accord and without the status of a Diocese personnel, but this Sunday School was only the beginning of her work organizing opportunities for Christian fellowship and serving as a patron and host for her local Episcopal congregation.

Bradley’s presence on the Rosebud demonstrates the seeming conundrum frequently found in the Diocese, especially on federally stolen reservation land, though she does not personally reflect on it in her writings. As a Euro-American citizen, Bradley took advantage of the government’s opening cheap land to settlers. Enamored by the idea of living off the land like the earlier, romanticized, pioneers, she fell in love with her plot of land and used her business to facilitate others like her onto to their own piece of colonized reservation land. Though she occupied stolen land and shared familial and religious ties to champions of Euro-American education for Indigenous children in the form of boarding schools, she shared deep fellowship with her Christian Dakota neighbors. These neighbors invited her into their family.

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<sup>10</sup> The paper includes, among others, a photograph of Bradley’s Sunday School class posed outside of the school. There are between 25 and 30 people of varying ages and genders in the photograph; however, it is difficult to discern certain details about individuals given the poor quality of the printed photo. This group likely consisted of both Euro-American and Indigenous families. “Omaha, Woman is Making Good on a South Dakota Farm,” *The Omaha Sunday Bee*, Omaha Nebraska, December 24, 1911, 5. Accessed through Newspapers.com.

<sup>11</sup> “Omaha, Woman is Making Good on a South Dakota Farm,” *The Omaha Sunday Bee*, Omaha Nebraska, December 24, 1911, 5. Accessed through Newspapers.com.

### **“Istato”: Bradley Joins Winona Fast Walker’s Family for Convocation**

One of Elizabeth Bradley’s first friends in her new home was Winona Fast Walker. Bradley was already familiar with the name Fast Walker. Her memoir described excitement and curiosity as she studied maps of the area where the settler plots adjoined Indigenous owned and named lands. She claimed she, “seemed already acquainted with my prospective neighbors,” through her sister Grace.<sup>12</sup> She recorded questions – stereotypical of questions Euro-Americans often asked regarding Indigenous names -- about the family names she heard like: “Winona Fast Walker ever slacken her pace, and was Moses Pretty Boy as handsome as his name implied?”<sup>13</sup> Bradley met Winona Fast Walker in a small town near her plot shortly after Bradley settled in South Dakota, and they became close friends. Educated at a government school, Fast Walker was near Bradley’s age, and to Bradley’s delight, she could speak English as well as Dakota and willingly explained the history of the Dakota words Bradley was curious about.<sup>14</sup>

Fast Walker’s generosity went far beyond sharing her language. Having previously explained the anticipation surrounding her family’s impending wagon journey to the Greenwood Agency for the annual Niobrara Convocation, Fast Walker told Bradley that her mother and uncle, whom she would be travelling with, had instructed Winona to invite Bradley to come along.<sup>15</sup> Bradley enthusiastically said yes. In her memoir draft, edited fifty years afterward, Bradley noted she had since learned what “a

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<sup>12</sup> Elizabeth Bradley, “My Friends, the Sioux,” Colome, South Dakota, 1.

<sup>13</sup> Elizabeth Bradley, “My Friends, the Sioux,” Colome, South Dakota, 1.

<sup>14</sup> Elizabeth Bradley, “My Friends, the Sioux,” Colome, South Dakota, 2.

<sup>15</sup> Bradley, “My Friends, the Sioux,” Colome, South Dakota, 3.

great honor,” an invitation like this was.<sup>16</sup>

Winona’s uncle, Mr. John Good Voice, picked Bradley up in the family wagon. Good Voice, “privileged” Bradley to “adopt” him as her “Uncle John” and he referred to her as his “*tozan*” (niece). In addition, Bradley reported he – or the family as a whole -- gave her the name “*Istato*” (Blue Eyes).<sup>17</sup> When they returned to the Good Voice home for the night, she met her “new aunt,” Lizzie Good Voice.<sup>18</sup>

That night, Bradley heard her host family tell a humorous parable about a white man, years before, taking shelter in a Dakota man’s cabin during a blizzard. “Before being shown to his ‘corner’,” the story went, “he [the white man] asked his host, ‘Are my goods safe in your cabin?’ The Indian, with never a change of expression, replied, ‘Yes, yes, my friend, there isn’t another white man within ten miles of this place.’”<sup>19</sup> Bradley enjoyed the joke and understood the underlying pretenses. Centuries of abuse and corruption from the federal government and Euro-American settlers led white men to be the target of many Indigenous jokes, and Bradley both understood and was appalled by the repeated misconduct of those she considered to be her own people; especially when those people claimed Christianity for themselves. Throughout her trip, Bradley compared the virtue and devotion of her Indigenous Episcopal friends to the settlers she saw around her.

The caravan of travelers from Rosebud assembled the following day near the Good Voice home and set out the day after. Bradley felt touched by the site. She recorded a total of, “seventy-four wagons, over two hundred fifty horses (many saddle horses

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<sup>16</sup> Bradley, “My Friends, the Sioux,” Colome, South Dakota, 3.

<sup>17</sup> Bradley, “My Friends, the Sioux,” Colome, South Dakota, 3.

<sup>18</sup> Bradley, “My Friends, the Sioux,” Colome, South Dakota, 3.

<sup>19</sup> Bradley, “My Friends, the Sioux,” Colome, South Dakota, 3.

besides the teams), dogs and more dogs, families of them trotting alongside the wagons, they could not be left at home.”<sup>20</sup> More important than the sheer size of the traveling party, she was struck by the image of the families. “But the human side of this great caravan,” she continued, “350 to 400 human souls, young and old, large and small, wee babies on their mothers’ backs CHRISTIAN INDIANS, all seriously bound for their annual Episcopal Convocation.”<sup>21</sup> Proud to be beside them on this seemingly sacred adventure, Bradley acknowledged her place beside them in her narrative writing: “And there was I, Istato, jogging along with them.”<sup>22</sup>

Bradley witnessed intimate scenes between family and friends in the camp circle that night. This circle was “more important” to her than the one she saw from the night before when she and her host family slept in the cabin.<sup>23</sup> This time she was a part. They ate *Aguypi* (fry bread), jerked beef, and *pezutasapa* (coffee). Bradley’s host family also enjoyed bread, cookies, and “various dainties” which Lizzie and Winona had prepared for the trip.<sup>24</sup> The campers, some reuniting for the first time since the last Convocation, broke into groups to visit. The men smoked what Bradley described as a “long stemmed Indian pipe,” and as “the very vivid evidence of harmony.”<sup>25</sup> Meanwhile, the women, “chatted merrily,” Bradley remembered, “joking, laughter, hushing the babies.” The women spoke in Dakota, and Winona translated for Bradley.

Bradley recreated distinct memories of her first night sleeping in the family tent as she completed her memoir. She called to mind two famous lines from Alexander

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<sup>20</sup> Bradley, “My Friends, the Sioux,” Colome, South Dakota, 4.

<sup>21</sup> Bradley, “My Friends, the Sioux,” Colome, South Dakota, 4.

<sup>22</sup> Bradley, “My Friends, the Sioux,” Colome, South Dakota, 4.

<sup>23</sup> Bradley, “My Friends, the Sioux,” Colome, South Dakota, 5.

<sup>24</sup> Bradley, “My Friends, the Sioux,” Colome, South Dakota, 5.

<sup>25</sup> Bradley, “My Friends, the Sioux,” Colome, South Dakota, 5.

Pope's ten-part poem "An Essay on Man: Epistle I," which she also referred to in the notes of her photography scrapbook and in variations of her memories. Her account in her memoir, "My Friends, the Sioux reads:

I had a strange feeling as I took my assigned place on the floor of our tipi, with Mother Earth my mattress. Wrapped in quilts, I stretched out at the opposite end from the door, with my faithful Winona close by my side. Next, Aunt Lizzie, and Uncle John by the flap of the tent. I was quite sometime closing my eyes that night. Not fear, but thinking of my friends, the Christian Indians with whom I was traveling. There came to my mind the words from Alexander Pope's verses, which so fascinated me in school years before;

"Lo, the poor Indian! whose untutored mind  
Sees God in clouds, or hears Him in the wind."<sup>26</sup>

The first phrase of the lines Bradley quoted had become famous and frequently referenced in and out of context. Bradley attached the phrase to images she took during prior travels to South Dakota of tipis one complete and one containing only the poles. For irony – nodding to the stereotype associated with missionaries giving up the comforts of home to live a rugged life on the Plains – she labeled a photograph (see Figure 1) of her sister's elegant and comfortably furnished bedroom at the school, "Room of a poor missionary. Grace."<sup>27</sup> In another memoir draft, she would return to the concept of "Lo," once in her own home again.

They held Sunday services the following morning in the fresh air. "In his native tongue a Dakotah clergyman read from the ritual of the Episcopal Church," Bradley wrote. "The congregation took part earnestly, and in my modest tone, I tried to say with them the Lord's Prayer: '*Ate unyapi, mahpiya etka cin, Nicaje wakandapi nuwe*' ,

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<sup>26</sup> Bradley, "My Friends, the Sioux," Colome, South Dakota, 6-7.

<sup>27</sup> Bradley, "Room of a poor missionary. Grace," and "Lo the poor Indian." Elizabeth Bradley Papers. Photos (Scrapbook), Vol. X. Box 1 out of 2, August and September, 1903.



following the first lines, and had to give up, and conclude in my native tongue.”<sup>28</sup>

Elizabeth Bradley’s memoirs strikingly reflect certain themes in Elaine Goodale Eastman’s autobiography: *Sister to the Sioux*. American readers knew Elaine Goodale as a child-prodigy poet from Massachusetts, and a prolific writer and editor concerning Indigenous education and history. Though she began her teaching career at the Carlisle Indian Industrial School, the young Episcopal woman relocated to South Dakota, to the chagrin of her family, and taught in several South Dakota schools for Indigenous children, sometimes under the oversight of Bishop Hare, before becoming the Superintendent of South Dakota. While fulfilling her role as Superintendent, Goodale tended the injured after the Wounded Knee Massacre in 1890 alongside her future husband Dakota physician Charles “Ohiyesa” Eastman.

Like Bradley, Goodale enjoyed a privileged position as a beloved guest among some of South Dakota’s Indigenous communities. She traveled with them, as the only white woman present, often shirking the customs and behaviors which society generally deemed appropriate for a young single white woman from the East. Goodale exhibited some pride for her disregard for these social rules and dedication to adventure. “I often spent the night in a well-filled tipi,” she wrote in her memoir, “entirely surrounded by men, women, children, and dogs, all without the slightest self-consciousness.”<sup>29</sup> Her comfortability with camping on the prairie would only increase when she took on the role

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<sup>28</sup> Bradley, “My Friends, the Sioux,” Colome, South Dakota, 7. Bradley also recorded their singing of hymns, including “Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah,” which she followed along with in English: “*Yus amayan ye, Jehovah, Onsiya waun kin ded, Qanape umakiya ye, Haced on wakinkta ce.*” Bradley recorded these words on a typewriter, in addition to having limited knowledge of the Dakota language, though she might have copied these lyrics directly from a published Dakota hymnal. For this reason, her Dakota lines will not necessarily contain the nuances of the language which might appear in a fluent, handwritten text or with the standardized accent marks found in modern forms of the alphabet.

<sup>29</sup> Elaine Goodale Eastman, *Sister to the Sioux*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2004), 65.

of Superintendent as she travelled across the state in a wagon with few companions visiting agencies and schools.

Goodale's travels put her in the position to witness the Ghost Dance just before the Massacre unaware of what was soon to come. "Anyone might look on," she wrote about the dance occurring, "and on a bright November night I joined a crowd of spectators near Porcupine Tail Butte—the only person who was not a Sioux."<sup>30</sup> Goodale was horrified by the atrocities which occurred that December at Wounded Knee and immediately began to publicly depict it as a massacre and not a battle. The misconduct of whites in comparison to the gentle and generous virtues she observed among the Dakota – especially the women – would play an ever-present role in her memoir.

Bradley witnessed settlers objectify her companions, treating the caravan as a novel display for their own entertainment as they laughed and heckled them. "Of course the white people on route ran to the road and stared as though it was a circus parade," Bradley wrote to her sister.<sup>31</sup> Bradley shared several of their exchanges. Winona, whom she also refers to as Alice, told some of the gawkers: "It's so nice of you to come down so we can see you."<sup>32</sup> Similarly, she said, "Please come closer to the road so we can see you," to someone Bradley described as, "a young homesteader who stood with eyes and mouth open."<sup>33</sup> Another man yelled, "Where's the celebration at?" Winona replied more

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<sup>30</sup> Eastman, *Sister to the Sioux*, 148.

<sup>31</sup> Bradley, "My Dear Grace," *Prairie Hill*, Sunday A.M. August 1910, 2.

<sup>32</sup> Bradley, "My Dear Grace," *Prairie Hill*, Sunday A.M. August 1910, 2.

<sup>33</sup> Bradley, "My Dear Grace," *Prairie Hill*, Sunday A.M. August 1910, 2. In her memoir, "My Friends, the Sioux," Bradley describes a slightly different alteration of Winona's joke and how she was embarrassed by the behavior of those they met early on the road writing: "Enroute, particularly during the early part of the journey, curious whites (homesteaders) were very rude, I was embarrassed for them. Several persons came nearer the road, from their claim shacks, and were laughing at us. It was too much for Winona, who had said in her well modulated voice, 'You please come little closer, we can't see you very well,'" see page 8.

simply and less sarcastic, “There isn’t any celebration.”<sup>34</sup> Bradley did not report personally engaging with these settlers, though she would respond to jeers similar to theirs before they reached Greenwood.

For the time being, Bradley simply reviled the settlers which she did not look so different from. “It made me as disgusted with the whites as it did Alice and I forgot that I was a pale face.” Though she claimed to forget her ethnicity, the settlers on the road promptly reminded her, “And how the whites stared at me,” she continued. “We could see their lips say, ‘Why she looks white,’ as we drove along.”<sup>35</sup> Her disgust and defiance seemed to grow as the trip progressed. When they stopped by a town populated with more Euro-Americans and Railway graders who also went out to the camp to satisfy their curiosity and laugh while they watched the campers kneel in prayer, she acted. She was satisfied with her results writing:

As Hymn 31 was announced I stepped back to some smarties and said ‘This next hymn is ‘Nearer My God To Thee’ and though you don’t know the Dakota, please hum the tune. These Indians are very sensitive about your laughing at them.’ The whites were surprised and looked at me wondering who I was because it was too dark to see, so I said, ‘I am the only white person traveling with this big crowd, so please don’t disgrace the whites.’ And I noticed that they hummed the tune, too.<sup>36</sup>

Having gained confidence as her journey to Greenwood progressed, Bradley seemed pleased with her intervention and its success. While those whom Bradley defined as “smarties” saw the congregating people and their Dakota hymns as a joke, they complied with Bradley’s expectations, joined in the service as they had not intended, and added their hums to the tune.

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<sup>34</sup> Bradley, “My Dear Grace,” Prairie Hill, Sunday A.M. August 1910, 2.

<sup>35</sup> Bradley, “My Dear Grace,” Prairie Hill, Sunday A.M. August 1910, 2.

<sup>36</sup> Bradley, “My Dear Grace,” Prairie Hill, Sunday A.M. August 1910, 2-3.

**“Some of my dear Episcopal Sioux Indian friends:” Scenes from Bradley’s  
Visits in South Dakota and Convocation**

As Bradley stated in her writings, she had frequently visited South Dakota, including Convocation meetings, prior to her official move to her Rosebud claim. Sometimes she stayed with a minister’s family and sometimes she visited schools like Grace’s. While most of her written records concerning Convocation refer to her journey with Fast Walker’s family, which was her most special Convocation because she attended as a guest of Fast Walker’s family, she took many photographs during her earlier travels.

These photographs often contain vibrant details and layers of depth from the clothing the subjects were wearing to the tools and utensils laying around them, and the Dakota landscape in the foreground. She attached many of these photographs to black paper and stored them in personal scrapbooks with her own captions written underneath. Sometimes, Bradley noted when the subject did not realize their picture was being taken, such as a photo of an old Euro-American couple outside near one of the schools which is labeled they “didn’t know the camera was loaded” and a picture likely from a Convocation of men, women, and children gathered under an open tent titled “taken unawares.”<sup>37</sup> While many of her other photographs are clearly posed, it is unclear how many of her subjects gave their consent to be photographed.

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<sup>37</sup>Elizabeth Bradley, “Mr. and Mrs. Herring,” EB7.b, Elizabeth B. Bradley Photo Collection. Box 1 out of 1. 40011.01, and “Taken Unawares,” Elizabeth Bradley Papers. Photos (Scrapbook), Vol. X. Box 1 out of 2.

Some of Bradley's photos reveal depictions of life beyond Convocation such as the environment of St. Elizabeth's or a Fourth of July celebration, or families at home. These photographs captured the paradoxes of Diocese life. "Staff of Life" seems to depict two Indigenous girls in the kitchen of St. Elizabeth's with a woman staff member looking on. They are in the midst of baking dozens of loaves of bread (See Figure 2). Girls baking in the kitchens appear frequently in collections of boarding school photos both from federal and denominational schools, and bread making appeared on the girl's curriculum in most, if not all, boarding schools of the early 1900s in the United States.<sup>38</sup> It is therefore no surprise to find girls baking at St. Elizabeth's while Bradley visited. The two girls wear patterned dresses underneath their white aprons with slightly puffed sleeves and layers ruffles at the shoulders and ankle-length hems. Three large bowls stand on the table with dough rising over the bowl rims. Baking pans also lay on the counter waiting to be filled.

In another photo captioned "School girls at home," (See Figure 3) two Indigenous girls, perhaps slightly younger than those baking bread, stand outside a tipi set between two tents looking away from the camera. Beside the tent and tipi are two wagons and a buggy, the horses have already been unhitched and taken somewhere beyond the photo. The two girls wear single braids and plaid shawls that obscure much of the dresses underneath. The girls on the left appears to wear a simple patterned dress with a white apron partially visible over the skirt.

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<sup>38</sup> For studies regarding boarding school curriculums, the effects, and experiences of Indigenous students see: Brenda J. Child, *Boarding School Seasons: American Indian Families, 1900-1940*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1999) and Clifford E. Trafzer, Jean A. Keller, and Lorene, Sisquoc, *Boarding School Blues: Revisiting American Indian Educational Experiences*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006).

They appear to wear boots.

“Staff of Life” and “School girls at home,” demonstrate the contrast between the boarding schools and the homes students returned to on their breaks. Given the girls are at home, while leaves still hang from the trees behind the tents and the ground is bare of snow, Bradley likely took the “School girls at home” photo during the summer season on her way to a Convocation. The two girls’ family (or families) might have been readying for Convocation themselves. Ideally, the Diocese would have liked to see all students who grew up attending their schools to live in an Euro-Americanized house structure which the curriculums of boarding schools prepared girls to maintain and care for. This included the production of European styled bread, a distinctly colonial food not found in traditional Dakota diets until government rations required Dakota families to begin cooking with flour. However, as is demonstrated in the “School girls at home” photo, many children returned to traditional, nomadically structured homes where they could choose to apply a few of the housekeeping methods they learned or not. Given that Bradley also photographed girls on school grounds, she might have seen this photo as a comparative between life at school and at home. Once they returned home, governing their choices and influences became impossible for the schools to dictate.

Bradley also possessed a photo formatted closer to a postcard than a picture for a scrapbook, which she believed came from around 1908 (Figure 4A). On the back she captioned the photo saying the older Native American man and two young girls were her Sioux friends dressed for a Fourth of July celebration

(Figure 4B). The two girls standing in the front wear tight braids around their head. The girl on the left wears a dark colored dress with silhouettes of light flowers embroidered across the skirt. She also wears a belt of what could be metal discs. The girl on the right is wearing lighter colors as well as a belt and rows of beads hanging like an apron over the skirt. Meanwhile, the man behind them wears two braids, and he holds some sort of flag, a long skinny staff, and a bundle of grasses/herbs in his arms.

As I will elaborate in subsequent chapters, Fourth of July presented special opportunities to endeavor in traditional customs and aesthetics so long as it was under the guise of a patriotic celebration often with the Stars and Stripes flying overhead to confirm the holiday was the center of the event.<sup>39</sup> Historians such as Thomas A. Britten trace a surge in these disguised or multi-functional ceremonies to World War I and home front efforts; however, accounts and photos such as Bradley's confirm at least some elements of traditional style and custom existed at Fourth of July celebrations well before the war began. At these celebrations adults and children alike donned traditional clothing and practiced forms of banned ceremonies.

Bradley also took many photographs during Convocation proceedings and around the camp. In her memoir, Bradley described the layout of the grounds. "We 'the ROSEBUDS', were directed to our segment of the great circle partly formed," she wrote, "Others were the Pine Ridge, Standing Rock, Crow Creek,

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<sup>39</sup> For examples of these Fourth of July celebrations across reservations see: Thomas A. Britten, *American Indians in World War I: At War and At Home*, (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1997) and Thomas Grillo, *First Americans: U.S. Patriotism in Indian Country After World War I*, (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2014).

Lower Brule, Yankton, Sisseton, Santee, and Cheyenne River.”<sup>40</sup> Each of these groups had their own distinctive banner and a chosen honoree carried this banner to the services.<sup>41</sup> Though not necessarily taken during the same Convocation Bradley attended with Fast Walker’s family, these photos represent the scenes occurring annually at the Episcopal gathering including her trip in 1910.

Her photograph “Callers” (Figure 5) depicts a Native American man and woman sitting on blankets in between a Euro-American woman and what seems to be a Euro-American couple. The edge of a tipi stands to the left of the group and they are sheltering under the shade of a tarp or blanket stretched between two wagons and a supporting pole if not the tipi poles as well. The Native American woman is wearing an unadorned cloth dress while the Native American man wears trousers and a white button up shirt with a hand kerchief. While the white woman on the left is wearing a relatively plain blouse and skirt, the white man, very likely a minister, wears a black waistcoat and tie and the woman beside him wears a white blouse, skirt and hat. Visiting and reunions like this took place all across the camp before and after services.

The main services and smaller business meetings and the yearly planning took place under the cover of hand-built bowers (See Figure 6). “In the center of this huge circle was the most beautiful cathedral I ever saw,” Bradley wrote, “Made of poles, covered with boughs, and which seated several thousand persons. The very old people preferred the ground, within hearing distance.”<sup>42</sup> A similar scene takes place in one of the smaller bowers where the women’s group held their meeting as seen in Bradley’s photo

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<sup>40</sup> Bradley, “My Friends, the Sioux,” Colome, South Dakota, 8.

<sup>41</sup> Bradley, “My Friends, the Sioux,” Colome, South Dakota, 9.

<sup>42</sup> Bradley, “My Friends, the Sioux,” Colome, South Dakota, 9.



“Meeting of the Women’s Auxiliary. \$1056 was brought in” (See Figure 7).

In this photo, women wrapped in shawls sit and stand inside and around the meeting place. Each year, the women ceremoniously counted the money each branch of the auxiliary gave from the proceeds of their sewing projects throughout the year.<sup>43</sup> Sneve argued Dakota women converted to Christianity before their men because, “acceptance of Christianity did not mean an abandonment of their former roles as wife and mother.”<sup>44</sup> The generosity and sacrifices made by the women in Dakota households garnered them respect both in traditional culture as well as in the Church. Concerning the ceremonies performed in 1910, Bradley recorded, “The women brought \$4246.77 which they had earned in their sewing societies since the previous gathering. Money for Missions, some going to China, they wanted to do their part, they did it.”<sup>45</sup> Some of their social activities evolved as they took on responsibility for the needs of their congregations; however, they added their own significance to their work in the Diocese in part through the ceremonies they performed at Convocation.

The main service occurred the day after Bradley arrived. Stephen Blacksmith, whom Bradley said was blind, played a small organ while the congregation sang their Dakota hymns. They used tin pie plates to take the offering.<sup>46</sup> The programming at the Convocation often focused on the hope and joy attributed to the Dakota transition to Christianity and the Diocese led by Bishop Hare particularly. Sermons and pageants

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<sup>43</sup> For more information about the Women’s Auxiliary and local Guilds, see Ruth Ann Alexander’s *Patches in a History Quilt*.

<sup>44</sup> Sneve, *That They Might Have Life*, 3. Also see Susan Sleeper-Smith’s *Indian Women and French Men: Rethinking Cultural Encounter in the Western Great Lakes*, (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001).

<sup>45</sup> On this occasion, Bradley’s Convocation notes credit Ella Deloria as the translator as Miss Peabody administrated the proceedings. Bradley, “My Friends, the Sioux,” Colome, South Dakota, 9.

<sup>46</sup> Bradley, “My Friends, the Sioux,” Colome, South Dakota, 9.

referenced the spiritual darkness and physical destitution of reservation communities which the light of the gospel and Christian community, in theory, alleviated. For the first Convocation after the Diocese' beloved first bishop's death, the sermon focused on Bishop Hare's coming to the Midwest and the honor which the congregations bestowed on him in his death. The Reverend Philip Deloria, translated for Bishop Frederick F. Johnston, the honorary speaker.

Johnson paired the contrast between life on the isolated plains with the bustling industry of New England to personify the perceived sacrifice Bishop Hare made in answering the call to go to South Dakota and work to bring the Dakota people into the Christian fold. The harsh climate of the Northern Plains and the bustling infrastructure of the Eastern Seaboard played a prominent role in his imagery. "I am thinking this morning of a beautiful city," he said, "It lies upon the ocean toward the rising of the sun. There were no blizzards in this city, there were no barren prairies, there were no Indian tipis. People of the city lived in home of comfort."<sup>47</sup> Using the paternalistic terms found in reference to a shepherd and sheep as well as the stance missionaries and the government took toward native peoples, the speaker recounted Bishop Hare's calling as he perceived it. "But a friend was needed for a friendless people, a shepherd was needed for a forgotten flock of sheep, a guide was needed for men and women wandering in the dark." He continued, "The Holy Ghost said to the Church this word, 'Separate me, William Hobart Hare, for the work to which I appointed him.'"<sup>48</sup> Hare came to a land

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<sup>47</sup> "Bishop Frederick F. Johnston's sermon, Indian Convocation, Greenwood Agency, on Aug. 26, 1910. the first Convocation after Bp. Hare's death," Interpreted by Rev. Philip Deloria. As recorded by Elizabeth B. Bradley. Bradley papers, 1.

<sup>48</sup> "Bishop Frederick F. Johnston's sermon, Indian Convocation, Greenwood Agency, on Aug. 26, 1910. the first Convocation after Bp. Hare's death," 1.

where the people, according to the speaker were dead.

He marked the time before Hare by the military posts stationed throughout the Plains meant to keep order. He said the order which the government instructed the military to maintain could not bring hope to the Dakota. “There were military posts, and armies on the plains, but the people were dead.”<sup>49</sup> He insisted the work of Hare changed this.

Hare’s first sermon to the Dakota occurred upon his arrival in 1873. Bradley recorded in her memoir that, when the speaker referenced this sermon, “Tears dimmed the eyes of many old Indians who had heard that sermon—in 1873.”<sup>50</sup> The speaker cited this first sermon as a catalyst for the growth of the Episcopal Church among the Dakotas; however, Hare resided as bishop in South Dakota for many decades and ordained many Indigenous leaders. The speaker marked the importance of these decades writing: “For almost 40 years his eye, voice and manner spoke to you. You looked into his eye and felt life, you listened to his voice and had the message of life, you beheld his manner and felt you wanted to live.”<sup>51</sup> Upon his death, the Diocese marked his passing with gifts. “You brought me a letter signed by the clergy and laity of your churches and with it you handed over \$1000.00 in money,” he said, “You asked me to put it into the ‘Bp. Hare Mem. Fund’. His memorial is in Christian lives, Christ in homes and Christian schools, throughout this country. His prayers and his gifts have gone up as a memorial before

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<sup>49</sup> “Bishop Frederick F. Johnston’s sermon, Indian Convocation, Greenwood Agency, on Aug. 26, 1910. the first Convocation after Bp. Hare’s death,” 1.

<sup>50</sup> Bradley, “My Friends, the Sioux,” Colome, South Dakota, 9.

<sup>51</sup> “Bishop Frederick F. Johnston’s sermon, Indian Convocation, Greenwood Agency, on Aug. 26, 1910. the first Convocation after Bp. Hare’s death,” 1.

God.”<sup>52</sup> Besides this spiritual memorial built by the bishop himself, a more physical marker was to be made with the gifted money. “The money you sent me we shall use to build another memorial of stone and I thank you from the bottom of my heart for your loving gifts,”<sup>53</sup> the speaker told the gathered people before concluding.

Food also played a central role to the gathering. The yearly hosts provided a special feast. In 1910, the Greenwood residents, as the hosts were responsible for organizing the banquet. “Many beeves were butchered and distributed,” Bradley wrote, “hundreds of pies baked, loaves of bread, wash boilers of coffee, to serve that mighty throng sitting in a circle, and on the ground.”<sup>54</sup> The ground provided the logistical needs of serving a large crowd on prairie during meals and the services; however, sitting on the ground echoed back to traditional ceremonies and feasts. The older generations insistence they sit on the ground instead of the seating which hosts could signify another piece of Indigenous custom kept current even amidst a Christian gathering riddled with themes of progress and rejection of pre-Christian beliefs and actions.

When the Convocation ended, everyone made ready to leave, but without the organization and planning which went into the journey to Greenwood. “The homeward journey was made with less militarism,” Bradley wrote, “Many dropped out to visit relatives, or to camp by some stream, and rest. My ‘family’ proceeded home and ere long I was again in my little homestead house, the richer for such an experience with my friends, the Sioux.”<sup>55</sup> Bradley attended many Convocations both prior to and after

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<sup>52</sup> “Bishop Frederick F. Johnston’s sermon, Indian Convocation, Greenwood Agency, on Aug. 26, 1910. the first Convocation after Bp. Hare’s death,” 2.

<sup>53</sup> “Bishop Frederick F. Johnston’s sermon, Indian Convocation, Greenwood Agency, on Aug. 26, 1910. the first Convocation after Bp. Hare’s death,” 2.

<sup>54</sup> Bradley, “My Friends, the Sioux,” Colome, South Dakota, 9.

<sup>55</sup> Bradley, “My Friends, the Sioux,” Colome, South Dakota, 9-10.

attending with her friend and new found family; however, this Convocation in 1910 clearly remained the most important to her for the duration of her life.

### **Conclusion**

Bradley maintained a full schedule throughout her adult life, giving particular attention to concerns for children. She served on the Child Welfare Commission as a governor appointee, and lectured on “the problem of the delinquent child in districts,” at the annual summer conference for church workers held at All Saints.<sup>56</sup> She earned the name “Deaconess of St. Paul’s Mission” when she opened her office space to Sunday services until an official church building could be raised in the vicinity.<sup>57</sup> After building a life in South Dakota, Bradley retired in 1951 and spent the final years of her life with her friend and life-long business assistant, Miss Fannie Zerbe in a newly built cabin outside of Longmont, Colorado; the same location Bradley vacationed to in 1934.<sup>58</sup> She continued to be involved in the local Episcopal church and spoke to the congregation about the ministries continuing amongst Indigenous people in South Dakota.

She wrote to her friends in South Dakota and told them of her happiness. W. Blair Roberts, a bishop of the diocese, responded to one of her letters on January 31, 1952. “It is good to hear from you and to know that you are so happy in your new life and in your churchwork at Longmont,” Roberts wrote. “We think about you very often and speak

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<sup>56</sup> “7 Appointments Made by Berry: Governor Renames Number of Persons to State Boards and Commissions,” *Argus-Leader*, Sioux Falls, South Dakota, 03 Jul 1934, Tue, 10. Accessed through Newspapers.com.

“Social Service Course at Summer Conference,” *Argus-Leader*, Sioux Falls, South Dakota, 14 Jun 1924, Sat, 12. Accessed through Newspapers.com

<sup>57</sup> Bradley took several photos of her office space often decorated for service. See EB-34: Elizabeth B. Bradley, “The Deaconess of St. Paul’s Mission” of Colome, S. Dak. Bradley Papers.

<sup>58</sup> Elizabeth Bradley, EB-54: “My cabin in the South St. Vrain Canyon, and right on the river bear—ing the same name.” Bradley Papers.

about you very often. It does not seem possible that you have really left South Dakota and the Rosebud.”<sup>59</sup> Roberts had full confidence Bradley would gain the interest of the Guild she would be speaking to. “I am so glad that you are going to speak about our Indian work,” he wrote, “and I know that you will give a most interesting talk.”<sup>60</sup> She remained in Colorado until her death in 1967. Her body returned to Nebraska the state of her birth.

Winona Fast Walker and her family’s symbolic adoption of Bradley into the family and their lives provided Bradley with insights not accessible to many others settling on the Rosebud. Elizabeth Bradley’s documentation of Convocation and scenes from the reservations demonstrated the relationships created within the Diocese between Dakota families, Episcopal settlers, missionaries, and Dakota ministers. While girls made bread in boarding schools and learned housekeeping and English, Euro-American ministers and their wives sat on the ground outside of tents and tipis visiting with Dakota friends before listening to services in Dakota. While women like Bradley organized donations from patrons in the East for Sunday school materials, Dakota women gave money and time to social needs and missions in foreign countries whose missionization they actively invested in financially. Indigenous culture remained at the center of the Convocation gathering, while ministers and guests like Bradley learned to sing along to the Dakota hymns.

Bradley served as a founding settler to the town of Colome and the surrounding area through her contributions to financial and real estate development in the area and her dedication to charities, youth, and the local church which called her office home. She

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<sup>59</sup> W. Blair Roberts, “Dear Miss Bradley, January 31, 1952,” Elizabeth Bradley 40005.02 ¼.

<sup>60</sup> W. Blair Roberts, “Dear Miss Bradley, January 31, 1952,” Elizabeth Bradley 40005.02 ¼.

accomplished much in her lifetime professionally and socially, but her relationship to Fast Walker and the journey she made with her adopted family marked one of the most significant experiences in her life. She reveled in being the only white person present in a caravan of Indigenous families and expressed shame for the behavior of other settlers in the area who mocked the travelers. More than the novelty of the journey, however, Bradley returned home from her experience struck by the beauty, virtue, and grace her friends exhibited as they worshiped God in their own tongue despite ridicule and celebrated family and fellowship whilst inviting her to join them in the sacredness of the occasion.



**Figure 1. "Room of a poor missionary. Grace' room."**

Taken from Photo Album: "Sioux Indians of South Dakota Elizabeth B. Bradley August and September 1903 Vol. 'X.'" 40005.02\_VolX\_Pg023. Courtesy of the Center for Western Studies, Sioux Falls, South Dakota.





**Figure 2. "The 'Staff of Life.'"**

Taken from: "Sioux Indians of South Dakota, Elizabeth B. Bradley, August and September, 1903, Vol. 'X.'" 40005.02\_VolX\_Pg047. Courtesy of the Center for Western Studies, Sioux Falls, South Dakota.



**Figure 3. "School girls at home."**

Taken from: "Sioux Indians of South Dakota, Elizabeth B. Bradley, August and September 1903, Vol. 'X.'" 40005.02\_VolX\_Pg023. Courtesy of the Center for Western Studies, Sioux Falls, South Dakota.



**Figure 4A. “Man and two girls (identified only as “Episcopal Sioux”) dressed for a Fourth of July celebration at Crow Creek Agency in South Dakota, ca. 1908.”**

Print developed in 1960 and labeled in 1962. See separate scan of back of photograph for photographer’s additional notes. Elizabeth B. Bradley. 40011.01\_EB\_028. Courtesy of the Center for Western Studies, Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

Some of my dear Episcopal  
Sioux Indian friends, attired  
for a Fourth of July cele-  
bration, many years ago. This  
taken at Crow Creek Agency, S.D.  
Taken in about 1908.

by

Elizabeth B. Bradley,  
"Is'tato", ( as Ish-) or  
"Blue Eyes", my Sioux  
name.

I lived in Omaha, Nebr., at that  
time and enjoyed vacations at the  
home of the Mission clergy and  
his family. Since the early  
80's the Episcopal Church very  
prominent in the Indian work.,  
In South Dakota. EBB

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Sep. 24, 1962- Longmont, Colorado.

J 025

**Figure 4B. "Elizabeth B. Bradley's identification of photograph."**

Elizabeth B. Bradley. 40011.01\_EB\_028\_Back. Courtesy of the Center for Western Studies, Sioux Falls, South Dakota.



**Figure 5. "Callers."**

Taken from "Views taken at the annual Indian Convocation held at Crow Creek, S.D. in August 1903. Sioux Indians, Elizabeth B. Bradley Vol. XI."

40005.02\_VolXI\_Pg012. Center for Western Studies, Sioux Falls, South Dakota.



**Figure 6. "Shade house where services were held."**

Taken from: "Views taken at the annual Indian Convocation held at Crow Creek, S.D. in August 1903. Sioux Indians. Elizabeth B. Bradley Vol. XI." 40005.02\_VolXI\_Pg014. Courtesy of the Center for Western Studies, Sioux Falls, South Dakota.



**Figure 7. "Meeting of the Women's Auxiliary. \$1056 was brought in."**

Taken from: "Views taken at the annual Indian Convocation held at Crow Creek, S.D. in August 1903. Sioux Indians. Elizabeth B. Bradley Vol. XI." 40005.02\_VolXI\_Pg016. Courtesy of Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

## **Chapter II**

### **“What God Looks to You Girls and You Boys to Do”: The Globalized Experience and War Efforts of South Dakota’s Episcopal Students in World War One, 1917-1919**

Enthusiastic teachers and parents admired the costumes the young women of All Saints School in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, donned for their masquerade dance on the evening of October 25, 1917. On the other side of the ocean, Red Guards occupied government buildings in Petrograd, Russia, and members of the 1<sup>st</sup> Division of the American Expeditionary Force joined the 18<sup>th</sup> French Division in the trenches of Lorraine, France, for training. Despite the distance between the Episcopal school for girls and the violence unfolding in Europe, the students at All Saints witnessed colossal changes underway in the world and their country. No mere onlookers, they saw themselves as participants in these events. The costumes presented at the All Saints’ annual celebration reflected the young women’s international interests, home front efforts, and the symbols they saw as relevant to contemporary society from literature and media.

Physical education instructor and soon to be renowned Lakota writer and anthropologist Ella Deloria and her companion Helen de Laubenfels led the procession of



masked party goers dressed as two contemporary cartoon characters: Buster Brown and Mary Jane.<sup>1</sup> The students' ensembles ranged from mythical creatures like the Three Fates, to dime novel staples such as cowboys and Indians, and contemporary icons like the Red Cross nurses they read about in the papers. Beatrice Nichol and Gene Fleckenstein dressed as fairies and won the contest for the most beautiful costumes alongside Vernetta Zink, Margaret Kerfoot, and Ruth Wagner who dressed as sacks of sugar and flour tied to Uncle Sam. The faculty awarded prizes for Edith Ross and Irene Cravens' costume, "the Cure for War," for its uniqueness.<sup>2</sup>

The monthly Episcopal magazine the *South Dakota Churchman*, which recorded the details of this party, labeled several costumes as "striking" and "particularly noticeable" despite their lack of awards. Some of the costumes considered notable possessed acculturated features of Mandarin and Japanese dress. Others included a Red Cross knitting bag, Dutch Cleanser Maids, a sailor, and Peter Pan.<sup>3</sup> Appearing midway through the list of notables with no further explanation, were two girls dressed as the Ku Klux Klan.<sup>4</sup> The report provides no further information regarding the details of any costumes nor the inspiration or reception of individual pieces.

Despite the brevity of the *Churchman's* masquerade report, most of these costumes are traceable to items the girls found in their households, bookshops, theaters,

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<sup>1</sup> "The Church Schools: All Saints," *The South Dakota Churchman*, November, 1917, 11, South Dakota Episcopal Diocese. Center for Western Studies. Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

<sup>2</sup> "The Church Schools: All Saints," *The South Dakota Churchman*, November, 1917, 11. Also see: "All Saints Masquerade Party Last Evening," *The Argus-Leader*, Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Thur. October 25, 1917, 8. Accessed through Newspapers.com.

In the nearly identical report found in Sioux Fall's local paper the *Argus-Leader*, Ross and Cravens' costume is defined as "the peace cure." According to the *Argus-Leader's* account, about 80 girls participated in the procession. The school offered classes from kindergarten through senior year, and this procession likely included a broad range of ages.

<sup>3</sup> "The Church Schools: All Saints," *The South Dakota Churchman*, November, 1917, 11.

<sup>4</sup> "The Church Schools: All Saints," *The South Dakota Churchman*, November, 1917, 11.

local news, and national media. For example, Dutch Cleanser Maids referenced the logo of a popular household cleaning product. The children's literary classic *Peter Pan* was only eleven years old in 1917, and the overwhelmingly popular pro-Klansmen film *Birth of Nation* re-featured at the local Orpheum theatre that August, two years after its release in 1915.<sup>5</sup> The image of the KKK in local media would shift during the war years as members of the Klan increasingly committed anti-German and anti-socialist acts of terror.

The enthusiasm the All Saints students displayed for wartime conservation methods and Red Cross work mirrored the same enthusiasm for the home front efforts found throughout South Dakota's Episcopal communities. For Americans, World War I was outwardly a war over democracy in Europe, but many of the Episcopal children in South Dakota – even if they had been old enough – could not expect to participate in democracy at home under contemporary eligibility prohibitions including the disenfranchisement of women and the inconsistent citizenship status of tribal members in the United States. Nonetheless, the Episcopal students in South Dakota, both of European and Indigenous descent, exhibited eagerness to do their part and inhabit the same political and cultural world of the adults around them.

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<sup>5</sup> "Birth of a Nation, Orpheum, Return Engagement, Fours Days, August 26, First Time at Popular Prices," *Argus-Leader*, Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Friday, August 24, 1917, 9. This popular film was adapted from Thomas Dixon Jr.'s *The Clansmen*. It depicted extreme violence against African Americans and portrayed Klan members as protective heroes citing harmful stereotypes and false narratives including the supposed aggression of African American men towards white women to justify the Klan's actions. Kathleen M. Blee studies the role of women in the Klan beginning in the 1920s in her book: *Women of the Klan: Racism and Gender in the 1920s*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991). Also see: "Scenes from a *Birth of a Nation*, Orpheum Theater, All Week Starting Sunday, February 18," *Argus-Leader*, Sioux Falls South Dakota, Sat, February 17, 1917, 6. The film also played in Sioux Falls in 1916 to large audiences. See: "Orpheum: *Birth of a Nation*," *Argus-Leader*, Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Sat, March 11, 1916, 6. Accessed through Newspapers.com.

While the Espionage Act (1917) and Sedition Act (1918) criminalized any dissent for America's participation in the war and quelled what was considered pro-German sympathy, American leaders -- including many religious clergy -- promoted the supplying and mobilization of troops. First Lady Edith Wilson led a campaign for food saving and sock knitting while a herd of woolly sheep grazed on the White House lawn.<sup>6</sup> Authorities arrested prominent political figures such as the socialist and frequent presidential candidate Eugene Debs on June 30, 1918 for speaking against the draft while locally William C. Rempfer's own life was threatened by the Klan for his alleged support of Germany.<sup>7</sup> As the Parkston attorney and executive secretary of the South Dakota branch of the People's Society for Democracy and Terms of Peace, Rempfer refuted the claims and said the terms of peace which he supported mirrored those of President Wilson, and if one was pro-German, then so was the other.<sup>8</sup>

With these stories looming in the news alongside public visibility of who was conserving resources and who was not, citizens faced immense pressure to contribute to the cause through food consumption choices, bonds, and acts of labor and service. As the government increased expectations of civilian efforts and religious leaders increasingly wove the story of a righteous war into their rhetoric, adults laid these same pressures on children.<sup>9</sup> The local *South Dakota Churchman* and the monthly Episcopal magazine *The*

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<sup>6</sup> Betty Boyd Caroli, *First Ladies: From Martha Washington to Michelle Obama*. (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2010). 150.

<sup>7</sup> "Rempfer Receives Threatening Letter: 'One More Peep Out of You and Your Light Goes Out,' Says Anonymous Missive," *Argus-Leader*, Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Saturday January 26, 1918, 3. Accessed through Newspapers.com.

<sup>8</sup> "Rempfer Receives Threatening Letter: 'One More Peep Out of You and Your Light Goes Out,' Says Anonymous Missive," *Argus-Leader*, Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Saturday January 26, 1918, 3.

<sup>9</sup> While many religious ministers supported the war, there were those, including some Episcopal leaders who continued to promote pacifism. For the role of clergy and the American Church during World War I, see "Changing Patterns of Religion and Government: The Impact of World War I," Chapter Seven of

*Spirit of Missions* frequently encouraged Episcopal children to support traditional missions unwaveringly and praised the children for playing their part in the home front efforts.

From the pages of newspapers and film screens, South Dakota's Episcopal students witnessed The Great War, the Bolshevik Revolution, and the battle for women's suffrage in the United States. Within their communities, they experienced the Spanish Flu, a resurgence of Lakota traditions, and later citizenship for Native American veterans. The student perspective is a unique but under-utilized window into these events. Virginia Driving Hawk Sneve, touches on some aspects of family life and the Episcopal community during World War I in her quest to record her own family's heritage in her 1995 book: *Completing the Circle*.<sup>10</sup> Ruth Ann Alexander, explores the role of Episcopal women in South Dakota throughout the Diocese's history in her book. Some of the women included in Ruth Ann Alexander's *Patches in a History Quilt: Episcopal Women in the Diocese of South Dakota 1868-2000*, such as Helen Peabody and Ella Deloria, were beloved teachers during the war.<sup>11</sup> The vital role of Native American soldiers in World War I – many of whom had only recently left boarding schools themselves – and their role in revitalizing Indigenous traditions and gaining citizenship status for Native Americans in 1924, is addressed in books like Thomas Grillot's *First Americans: U.S.*

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Robert T. Handy's, *Undermined Establishment: Church-State Relations in America, 1880-1920*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014).

<sup>10</sup> Virginia Driving Hawk Sneve, *Completing the Circle*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1995).

Driving Hawk Sneve's family played significant roles in the history of the South Dakota Diocese. Many of them were ministers, and lay participants and leaders of many Episcopal organizations.

<sup>11</sup> Ruth Ann Alexander, *Patches in a History Quilt: Episcopal Women in the Diocese of South Dakota 1868-2000*, (Sioux Falls: Episcopal Women's Council, 2003).

*Patriotism in Indian Country After World War I.*<sup>12</sup> The South Dakota Episcopal community's involvement in world affairs went far beyond the state and national level.

Episcopal magazines and local papers circulated in South Dakota between 1916 and 1919 reveal the students' global awareness, their service and contributions to the military, and the way contemporary culture and Episcopal traditions intertwined and shaped their educational activities during the war. These students and the teachers who guided their education existed within a multi-ethnic community which – despite the relative isolation of the Northern Plains – saw themselves as participants in the world at large. While the oldest students left school to join the military, younger students contributed money and gifts to the Red Cross and other religious charities meant to relieve the suffering of the war-torn world. Despite their young age and the varying degrees of American rights each could personally experience when the U.S. entered the war in 1917, they sponsored the war through acts of generosity, labor, and sacrifice alongside their parents and community leaders.

### **“Its Affairs are a Genuine Concern of Theirs”: Student Media Consumption and Community Investment in Global Affairs**

Boys and girls at St. Elizabeth's School on Standing Rock Reservation listened attentively to weekly current events lectures and asked their teachers for new magazines and newspapers. They bombarded their instructors with questions about what they saw in the pictures, and teachers felt pleased with the student engagement they saw. The staff member who recorded this success in the *Churchman* wrote: “they are not only interested

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<sup>12</sup> Thomas Grillot, *First Americans: U.S. Patriotism in Indian Country After World War I*, (New Haven: Yale, 2018).

in the important occurrences of the world in general, but...they are realizing that its affairs are a genuine concern of theirs.”<sup>13</sup> The national efforts to conserve resources for the use of the military made the war immediate to them.

The Current Events course began in the fall of 1917 and conversations started in class appear to have carried on outside of class. After conversations about the United States’ role in the war, the Red Cross, and the Food and Fuel Administration, a faculty member, perhaps the Reverend Philip Deloria or a teacher, passed a group of boys speaking in Dakota. The author writes: “Samuel, age six, was talking volubly in Dakota. He caught my eye. ‘We are talking about our country,’ he said!”<sup>14</sup> Though still young, Samuel was one of many Indigenous students exploring their roles as members of Indigenous nations as well as participants in the United States’ patriotic activities. While, according to this article, Samuel enjoyed special meetings to discuss current events, the Current Events course at Wakpala was not entirely unique.

The popularity of current events clubs was not limited to students. The *Argus-Leader* in Sioux Falls contains several examples of women meeting to discuss

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<sup>13</sup> “The Church Schools: S. Elizabeth’s School, Wakpala,” *The South Dakota Churchman*, February, 1918, 13. South Dakota Episcopal Diocese Archives. Center for Western Studies, Sioux Falls, South Dakota. St. Elizabeth’s was an Episcopal boarding school founded by Bishop William Hobart Hare (the first Episcopal bishop of South Dakota). Though, historically, Indigenous boarding schools in the United States and Canada were rampant with cases of physical, sexual, and emotional abuse, Hare’s schools had a reputation for treating students comparatively well. While, several of the policies and curriculums in Hare’s schools can and should be classified as contributing to the attempted cultural genocide of Indigenous children (such as providing boarding schools which separated children from their familial environments as opposed to day schools and attempting to engrain the idea that Euro-American lifestyles were superior to those of the children’s tribes), Hare championed—in direct opposition to the government—the use of the Dakota language in education. Samuel and his friends are examples of students who still managed to practice their own language while in school. For a historical account of Bishop Hare and his work in South Dakota and his legacy, see Virginia Driving Hawk Sneve’s *That They May Have Life: The Episcopal Church in South Dakota, 1859-1976*, (New York: Seabury Press, 1977).

<sup>14</sup> “The Church Schools: S. Elizabeth’s School, Wakpala,” *The South Dakota Churchman*, February, 1918, 13. Reverend Deloria was fluent in Dakota and would therefore understand what Samuel and the other children were saying. If another faculty member of the St. Elizabeth’s mission wrote the above story, they may or may not have been able to confirm what the children were saying in Dakota.

contemporary affairs and to read articles about other cultures. The Current News Club held a luncheon on Monday January 8, 1917 at Mrs. J. S. Bandy's house where sixteen women present read a chapter from *The White Umbrella* and two papers titled "Isthmus of Tehuantepec" and "Oaxache and Its Potteries."<sup>15</sup> These women seem interested in deepening their knowledge rather than merely discussing the topics of the week's news. In April 1918, the women participated in conversations about the third liberty loan, furlough houses for the troops in France, and voted to each donate a dollar to the Cause as suggested by the National Federation of Women's Clubs. They still had time to read a paper titled "Principal Cities of Hawaii," listen to a presentation on leper settlements in Molokai, and a presentation on Hawaiian music accompanied by examples on a Victrola.<sup>16</sup>

Though America had not entered the war yet, the famine and humanitarian crisis in Belgium as a result of the war held the interest of South Dakota papers. Articles appealed to readers for donations to the relief effort. In the summer of 1916, Roger Dennis of the Sioux Falls firm Dennis and Dennis personally travelled to Europe. He reported to the *Argus-Leader* in March of 1917 about the Belgium relief fund's need for more money and the gratitude the Belgians expressed to him and his brother. He reassured readers that: "In giving...our citizens may know that their donations are doing a double duty. They may be sure that they are going where the need is measureless and

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<sup>15</sup> "Current News Club Luncheon—" *Argus-Leader*, Sioux Falls, South Dakota, January 9, 1917, 5. Accessed from Newspapers.com.

<sup>16</sup> "Current News Club—" *The Argus-Leader*, Sioux Falls, South Dakota, April 9, 1918, 12. Accessed through Newspapers.com.

may know further that they are donating to a distinctly American charity.”<sup>17</sup> The governor declared March 9<sup>th</sup> as “Self Denial Day” which was meant for individuals to make donations.<sup>18</sup> In promotion of “Self Denial Day,” the papers published an appeal from the Literary Digest asking all public-school teachers to read their students stories about the suffering children and ask each student to bring ten cents the following day for the fund.<sup>19</sup> The appeal stated: “South Dakota must lead, not follow, in this great work,” and “This is God’s work and his blessings I know will accompany our efforts.”<sup>20</sup> When it came to starvation in Belgium, media and fundraisers expected children and adults alike to contribute without complaint.

Congregations enjoyed hearing from each other through the *South Dakota Churchman*. A monthly magazine informing its readers of local Episcopal activities, the paper provided updates from Episcopal organizations which their donations often supported in other states and countries. Both the *Churchman* and the *Argus Leader* covered stories about the Russian Revolution. One article from the *Argus Leader* cited a *Reuter* correspondent’s report concerning the body of the Russian mystic and priest Rasputin being found on a river bank.<sup>21</sup> The report reminded the readers that this was not the first time reports claimed Rasputin had been murdered, but this time it was true. As

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<sup>17</sup> “Endorses Effort To Secure Big Fund For Relief of Belgians: Roger Dennis Who Visited England and France Last Summer Tells of Needs,” *Argus-Leader*, Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Friday March 9, 1917, 3. Accessed through Newspapers.com.

<sup>18</sup> “The Belgium Relief Fund,” *The Daily Deadwood Pioneer-Times*, Deadwood, South Dakota, Tuesday March 6, 1917, 2. Accessed through Newspapers.com.

<sup>19</sup> “Appeal To Public School,” *The Daily Deadwood Pioneer-Times*, Deadwood, South Dakota, Tuesday March 6, 1917, 2. Accessed through Newspapers.com.

<sup>20</sup> “Appeal To Public School,” *The Daily Deadwood Pioneer-Times*, Deadwood, South Dakota, Tuesday March 6, 1917, 2.

<sup>21</sup> “Rasputin, Mysterious Russian Monk, Dead?: Man Who Sways Empire Again Reported to Have Been Assassinated,” *Argus-Leader*, Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Tuesday, January 2, 1917, 2. Accessed through Newspapers.com.



the Russian Revolution escalated and the religious crisis in Russia increased, *The Churchman* printed the pleas of a Russian bishop begging for the attention of the American Church as Russia reeled from the Reign of Terror.<sup>22</sup> The Russian bishop, according to the article, looked to the American Church for hope and viewed: “the Episcopal Church of America as the one body in the world that can most help stricken Russia.”<sup>23</sup> Statements like these blatantly implied that the money distributed to global missions and relief funds from the Episcopal Church was responsible for determining the success and health of the international Church. Failure to provide could result in catastrophe.

The monthly Episcopal magazine *The Spirit of Missions*, founded in 1836, allowed American Episcopal members to stay informed about outreach programs across the country and world, follow the lives of individual missionaries, and keep a financial sense about who received their offerings and how individual, organizational, and state offerings compared to each other. The opening piece in the January, 1918, issue provided a clear mission for the magazine. “It is the point of contact between the Church at home and Her twenty-nine hundred missionaries in many parts of the world,” the editor wrote; “Few of you can have the opportunity of meeting the individual missionary—all may read his story.”<sup>24</sup> For the editor, the magazine provided concrete evidence of the good work being done and optimism for the future. He closed his introduction for the new year writing: “Grateful for the past, confident of the future, we begin this eighty-third year in

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<sup>22</sup> Hugh L. Burlison, Bishop of South Dakota, “Deep Distress of the Russian Church,” *The South Dakota Churchman*, July, 1919. South Dakota Episcopal Diocese, Center for Western Studies, 6.

<sup>23</sup> Hugh L. Burlison, Bishop of South Dakota, “Deep Distress of the Russian Church,” *The South Dakota Churchman*, July, 1919. 6.

<sup>24</sup> “The Progress of the Kingdom,” *The Spirit of Missions*, January, 1918, Edited by Arthur S. Lloyd, Vol. 83, No. 1, 5-6. Accessed through Hathi Trust Digital Library.

the certain hope that God is going to use us more than ever before for His glory.”<sup>25</sup> The content provided in the wartime issues spoke to the opportunities available for students contemplating joining the mission field, knowledge of different cultures and other countries’ involvement in the war, as well as encouragement for children to play a role in supporting missions in war time.

The close following of Episcopal missionaries in the media continued an American Protestant tradition which began many decades before and is explored in the anthology titled *Competing Kingdoms: Women, Mission, Nation, and the American Protestant Empire*. The 19<sup>th</sup> century saw a rapid growth in missionary media coverage and the explosion of women’s mission societies.<sup>26</sup> The proverbial mission field allowed many women to pursue adventure and missional purpose outside of their home and in some cases, delay or forgo marriage. By World War I, many Episcopal women continued to experience comparative freedom in their roles as teachers and leaders of hospitals and churches residing in isolated regions. These women’s experiences made for exciting reads in the magazine.

In 1918, South Dakota readers could learn about Miss Effie Jackson who conducted Divine Service, taught school and Indigenous liturgy, and tended to the sick in Stephen’s Village, Alaska.<sup>27</sup> Late for a furlough, Miss Harriet Bedell took her place. Hudson Stuck, a boat captain traveling with the Episcopal Foreign Secretary, recorded

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<sup>25</sup> “The Progress of the Kingdom,” *The Spirit of Missions*, January, 1918, 6.

<sup>26</sup> Edited by Barbara Reeves-Ellington, Kathryn Kish Sklar, and Connie A. Shemo. *Competing Kingdoms: Women, Mission, Nation, and the American Protestant Empire, 1812-1960*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010), 2.

<sup>27</sup> Hudson Stuck, D.D., F.R.G.S. “With the Foreign Secretary in Alaska: A Narrative of the Tenth Cruise of the *Pelican*,” *Spirit of Missions: An Illustrated Monthly Review of Christian Missions*. Arthur S. Lloyd, Editor. V. 83. No. 1. January, 1918, 20-21. Accessed through Hathi Trust Digital Library.

Bedell saying: “she was never happier in her life,” despite the hardships of running a mission. Though Jackson and Bedell enjoyed their work as lone missionaries, Stuck expressed his own concerns writing: “We thank God continually in Alaska for our brave, devoted women. Yet I have always an uncomfortable feeling that it is not right to leave a woman so situated; there should be two of them.”<sup>28</sup> Even if these women worked as a team, their isolation from any male ministers seems to have allowed them more freedoms to lead divine services, which was not formally allowed in the Episcopal Church until 1974.

With the coming of Lent, “The Progress of the Kingdom,” column urged for the global participation of Episcopal students to give towards missions, writing: “we hope everyone will take courage in the fact that many small efforts make a really great result.”<sup>29</sup> The columnist proceeded to tell a story, either true or exaggerated to serve the author’s point, about a young Indigenous girl and her response to learning about the war in order to provide an example for how he wanted other children to behave. According to the article, the girl was eager to do her part. The story says, “she came to our missionary and said: ‘I can’t shoot a gun but I can set a snare!’”<sup>30</sup> The author believed this girl’s outlook should be reproduced for the Lenten Offering. He instructed his young readers: “what God looks to you girls and you boys to do, is to perform that which is natural for you to do.”<sup>31</sup> He explained children understood the large offerings of adults as well as the little girl understood the guns only the adults were allowed to use. “But we do *know*

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<sup>28</sup> Hudson Stuck, D.D., F.R.G.S. “With the Foreign Secretary in Alaska,” *Spirit of Missions*, Arthur S. Lloyd, Editor. V. 83. No. 1. January, 1918, 20-21.

<sup>29</sup> “The Progress of the Kingdom,” *Spirit of Missions*. February, 1918, Vol. 83. No. 2. 85. Accessed through Hathi Trust Digital Library.

<sup>30</sup> “The Progress of the Kingdom,” *Spirit of Missions*, February, 1918, Vol. 83. No. 2. 85.

<sup>31</sup> “The Progress of the Kingdom,” *Spirit of Missions*, February, 1918, Vol. 83. No. 2. 86.

about our mite chests,” he wrote, “and how to work hard to earn money to put them in, and so God expects each one of us to do that...Our Lord started his soldiers out to fight wickedness and suffering, and He wants everyone to ‘do his bit’ gladly and cheerfully and faithfully.”<sup>32</sup> This call for the Lenten Offering echoed many similar calls for children to give to the war effort and charities meant to relieve suffering. The line between giving to missions and giving to the war became vague such as when the editor used the Alaskan child’s response to the war as the proper response for the offering. South Dakota’s children seem to have eagerly responded both to the missional front and the home front.

#### **“Four Patriotic Duties”: Acts of Service and Sacrifice for the War Effort**

On March 13<sup>th</sup>, 1917, Miss Corine Cloverdale received a letter from a wounded soldier in France. Miss Cloverdale was not the only student at All Saints who sent care packages or “comfort bags” to wounded soldiers at Christmas time; however, she was the first at the school to find a personal message in the mail from the French soldier who received her gift.<sup>33</sup> The *Churchman* printed the translated version of the letter sent from Nice on February 19, 1917, in full for everyone’s enjoyment. The letter read:

‘Mademoiselle. At the hospital of The Grand of Nice, where I am being taken care of for a wound in the leg, caused by the bursting of a shell, we had this morning the charming surprise of the distribution of the gracious gifts presented through the generosity of the amiable American ladies. I had the pleasure to receive your pretty bag, which contains such lovely things and I thank you most sincerely. I am very deeply touched by the good thought that you had in sending this kind present to the soldier so far away from, his family. ‘With my warmest thanks, receive Mademoiselle, the assurance of my respectful friendship, ‘G. BOUE, "Hospital No. 14, The Grand Hotel, ‘Nice, Alpes-Maritimes.’<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> “The Progress of the Kingdom,” *Spirit of Missions*, February, 1918, Vol. 83. No. 2. 86.

<sup>33</sup> “The Church Schools: All Saints,” *The South Dakota Churchman*, April, 1917, Episcopal Diocese of South Dakota, 13.

<sup>34</sup> “The Church Schools: All Saints,” *The South Dakota Churchman*, April, 1917, 13.

The All Saints reporter felt touched by the sincerity of the soldier's prompt reply. As for the young women, the letter provided tangible proof that the girls' gifts of labor and craft affected – in simple but valuable ways – strangers on the other side of the world.

When America joined the war, the *Churchman* became the place for the South Dakota Diocese to encourage one another's sacrifices and provide guidelines for supporting the war. A 1917 bulletin in the Editor's Notes divided the home front efforts into "Four Patriotic Duties." They included: buying a liberty bond, joining the red cross, signing a conservation card, and remembering the soldiers "by support and by prayers."<sup>35</sup> By 1919, the listed duties varied little. In the July issue, approximately eight months after the war ended, the bulletin read: "Pray for the men in service—help the Chaplains. Support the Red Cross. Buy Victory Liberty Loan Bonds. Buy War Savings Stamps. Hold your Liberty Bonds. Conserve food for the suffering nations."<sup>36</sup> The students took these duties seriously for the duration of the war and peace negotiations. They utilized every avenue open to them, and if they were not in a position to buy bonds, they used their resources to promote the purchases by someone else such as making posters or promoting them through their costumes. The organizational leaders and teachers encouraged these actions throughout the war and proudly recorded the children's efforts in the media.

Despite Americans' great reluctance to enter the war, societies and individuals quickly mobilized to provide for troops and conserve resources. The South Dakota

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<sup>35</sup> "Editor's Notes: Four Patriotic Duties," *The South Dakota Churchman*. October, 1917, Episcopal Diocese of South Dakota, Sioux Falls, South Dakota, 4.

<sup>36</sup> "Patriotic Duties," *The South Dakota Churchman*, July, 1919, Episcopal Diocese of South Dakota, Sioux Falls, South Dakota, 7.

Diocese and its children played a part in this rapid production. Episcopal students began organizing their collective efforts less than a month after the United States officially entered the war. The All Saints students held meetings and organized committees for gardening and sewing among other projects. Meanwhile, Camp Fire squads focused their efforts on work for the Red Cross and Belgium relief.<sup>37</sup>

The June issue continued to proudly report that the girls at All Saints found time for Red Cross work despite their courses and “school festivities.”<sup>38</sup> This work included sewing, making posters, and knitting. Termed an “old fashioned art,” the vocabulary of knitting soon weaved its way back into the school girls’ conversational vocabulary. The article claimed the girls were: “rapidly acquiring the old-fashioned art of knitting. The click of needles, the comparison of ‘English’ and ‘German’ methods of knitting and the talk of measurements, ‘dropped stitches,’ etc.—all these are becoming familiar conversation in our halls.”<sup>39</sup> It is unclear exactly what about the German and English methods the girls were comparing. They likely debated whether it was more efficient to hold the yarn in the left or right hand, but perhaps, in light of the anti-German campaigns popping up throughout the United States, some of the girls thought the German method was inappropriate while creating clothing for the soldiers.

The monotony of the work was interrupted occasionally by the arrival of artifacts from the war front. The June report continues: “At rare intervals, some one girl becomes the heroine of the hour, as the last recipient of a letter from the trenches acknowledging

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<sup>37</sup> “The Church Schools: All Saints,” *The South Dakota Churchman*, May, 1917, South Dakota Episcopal Diocese, 16.

<sup>38</sup> “The Church Schools: All Saints,” *The South Dakota Churchman*, June, 1917, 21.

<sup>39</sup> The primary difference between the English or German stitch is which hand the yarn is held in and how the yarn is set on the needle. “The Church Schools: All Saints,” *The South Dakota Churchman*, June, 1917, 21.

another of the famous ‘comfort bags’ sent over to France before Christmas.”<sup>40</sup> Responses to their efforts never ceased to bring excitement.

Sometimes the children worked in tandem with the adult women in their community. Traditional organizations like the Woman’s Guild and its junior offshoots dedicated themselves to the same objectives. Grace Church in Huron, S.D. saw their Woman’s Guild dedicating most of its time to Red Cross activities in the fall season while the Girls’ Club sold homemade candy at the state fair.<sup>41</sup> The thirty-seven dollars in candy proceeds went toward Red Cross supplies. The *Churchman* reported that those girls would “spend the winter working for the Red Cross,” as well.<sup>42</sup>

Nearly two hundred miles to the northwest, the students at St. Elizabeth’s School in Wakpala planned a performance of “The Red Cross Magazine” for Thanksgiving Eve, 1917. Utilizing tableaux, presentation topics included Food Conservation, the Boy Scouts, the Y.M.C.A. and Red Cross Assistance.<sup>43</sup> The school instructor reported: “We hope to stimulate special interest in food conservation by these pictures and incite our Dakotas to do their bit in the world struggle.”<sup>44</sup> Encouraging students to make great sacrifices in the spirit of the holidays went beyond the local level.

As the Christmas holidays approached, the Committee of Religious Education began to think how they could further encourage the children under their influence to give more in the spirit of the season. The committee’s December column in the *Churchman* read: “The children may well be asked to make some individual gifts for

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<sup>40</sup> “The Church Schools: All Saints,” *The South Dakota Churchman*. June 1917, 21.

<sup>41</sup> “White Field: Grace Church, Huron,” *The South Dakota Churchman*, November 1917, 13.

<sup>42</sup> “White Field: Grace Church, Huron,” *The South Dakota Churchman*, November 1917, 13.

<sup>43</sup> “The Christian Schools: St. Elizabeth’s,” *The South Dakota Churchman*, December, 1917, 14.

<sup>44</sup> “The Christian Schools: S. Elizabeth’s,” *The South Dakota Churchman*, December, 1917, 14.

needy children at home or abroad. With the consent, or advice, of the local Red Cross committee, the different schools may be able to make gifts of money \_ or suitable articles of clothing.”<sup>45</sup> The schools’ options included a “manger service” or a “giving tree.” The committee intended for the children to practice the joy of giving rather than receiving as they wished to nurture a “spirit of service” in the children.<sup>46</sup> The encouragement to give went far beyond the Committee of Religious Education. Giving was a staple theme in sections of the Episcopal papers reserved for students and young children.

The Children’s Corner, generally written by Bishop Burleson and or his wife, served as a place for the Burleson’s to reach their young charges with targeted devotionals and facts on the children’s level. This part of the paper provided moral lessons sometimes using tidbits about nature, such as ants decorating their mounds with quartz and beads, as analogies. In addition, the “Children’s Corner” included news about children’s groups from other regions of the country.<sup>47</sup> Some articles detailed how children’s participation in fundraisers from a certain region compared to children in other locations. The November, 1917, issue stated: “In New York, last May, 3,000 girls finished 15,000 articles begun in March...The boys asked permission to learn to knit, and they were as clever as the girls, and, moreover, made quantities of knitting needles, which proved a very helpful contribution.”<sup>48</sup> Noting the good impression the children’s work left on the adults and the willingness of the children to participate in traditionally gendered activities together, this summary was meant to inspire South Dakota’s children

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<sup>45</sup> “Committee on Religious Education,” *The South Dakota Churchman*, December, 1917, 6.

<sup>46</sup> “Committee on Religious Education,” *The South Dakota Churchman*, December, 1917, 6.

<sup>47</sup> “Children’s Corner: The Artistic Ants,” *The South Dakota Churchman*, December, 1917, 14, Episcopal Diocese of South Dakota, Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

<sup>48</sup> Children’s Corner: The Red Cross and the Schools. November, 1917. 11.



and perhaps promote friendly competition.

The work never stopped even though the soldiers came home. Instead, time and money continued to be spent on projects for the missions or relief efforts. Meanwhile, a group of women set their needles to work on other projects including socks for the St. Elizabeth and St. Mary's school children; the same children who devoted their own time and resources to supplying and supporting the troops.<sup>49</sup>

### **“His Name is Isaac Patensi”: Letters Home and Remembering the Dead**

On a cold snowy day in early January 1918, Reverend Philip J. Deloria helped to bury the body of a soldier he had baptized when the soldier was a boy in 1896. The twenty-two-year-old army volunteer died at Fort Riley, Kansas.<sup>50</sup> Rev. Deloria claimed: “This is the first Indian young man, being a soldier, who has died in his country's service. Faithfully he did his duty and his body came home. Everybody who knows it seems to have accepted it in a reverent way.”<sup>51</sup> An estimated two hundred and fifty people or more attended his funeral. An American flag led the procession to the grave. Twelve drafted men carried the coffin. The young man was buried in his uniform and an Episcopal Confirmation cross.<sup>52</sup>

Deloria reflected on the funeral scene in the *Churchman* writing: “This teaches me the Father in Heaven working upon the Indian hearts through His Church instructions

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<sup>49</sup> “Women Workers,” *The South Dakota Churchman*, October, 1919, The Center for Western Studies, 16.

<sup>50</sup> “The First Indian Soldier To Die in the Present Service For The Country,” *The South Dakota Churchman*, February, 1918, Episcopal Diocese of South Dakota, Sioux Falls, South Dakota, 13.

<sup>51</sup> “The First Indian Soldier To Die in the Present Service For The Country,” 14.

<sup>52</sup> The confirmation cross he likely wore was originally designed by Bishop Hare and was given to all L/Dakota converts in place of a baptismal certificate they likely could not read at the time. In 1975, the Diocese made the Niobrara Cross available to all members of the Diocese and it is still in use present day. See the Native American Resources page of the Episcopal Church South Dakota website for more information: <https://episcopalchurchsd.org/native-american-resources?rq=Niobrara%20Cross>.

with the Holy Spirit, will tame any man. When a man is tame he has the same love toward God it seems to me as the Son of God had for the Father.” Deloria compared the virtues of a “tame man” to the colors of the American flag saying: “Because he is a tame man, he is brave, he is true, and he is pure,—same meaning as the red, white and blue, of the United States flag.” Deloria saw this soldier’s patriotism as an example of the conduct he desired from all the young men. He went on to claim: “what the Indian most needs is the Church teachings—better means- than any other. I think this young man pointed his finger to a road to good Christian people in general—also to heathen people—showing the Way more effectively than any other young man up to this date.”<sup>53</sup> Many more men would come after, and the significance of their patriotism and their place within their Indigenous nations would be debated among communities and local and federal governments in the years leading up to Native American citizenship in 1924 and after. Deloria’s reflection ended with these final words: “His name is Isaac Patensi.”<sup>54</sup>

This funeral, while the first WWI casualty witnessed at Standing Rock, was similar to many reservation funerals over the next few years. Like Patensi, the lengthy lists of service members printed in the monthly *Churchman* represented many young men who received their education in South Dakota and participated in the Episcopal congregations. Barely older than students themselves, many had siblings still in the Episcopal schools and were sometimes welcomed home by the same communities who taught them and baptized them.

The *Churchman* recorded the first military funeral for Bon Homme County (located along the Missouri River on the southern edge of the state and beside the

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<sup>53</sup> “The First Indian Soldier To Die in the Present Service For The Country,” 14.

<sup>54</sup> “The First Indian Soldier To Die in the Present Service For The Country,” 14.

Yankton Reservation) in July, 1918. Like Patensi, he died in camp this time by what the *Churchman* termed as “camp pneumonia.” He too, received military honors.<sup>55</sup> A few months later, grief came to All Saints when the news reached Sioux Falls that their former Head of the Music Department Earl B. Staley died in France on Armistice Day.”<sup>56</sup>

Funerals of the Indigenous soldiers often became very public affairs. Thomas Grillot argued the families of repatriated soldiers became bystanders as members of Native American and non-Native American veteran organizations accompanied the casket to its final destination wrapped in flags and followed by students, clergy, and other community members.<sup>57</sup> Communities and legions laid heavy emphasis on the first soldier to die from each reservation which could lead to debate and confusion.<sup>58</sup>

Care for the soldiers rested on the community not just on individual families. In addition to the care packages and sewing projects engaged in by students and adults in South Dakota, a woman named Dora Vannix created a letter writing program to both white and Native American soldiers and veterans. The *Churchman* occasionally published these letters.<sup>59</sup> As a result, the soldier’s experiences, at least the ones they chose to publicly record, became a part of their home communities through the press.

St. Clair Vannix, Dora’s son, wrote home from Conflans, France on June 4, 1919. He reported about his recent trip through Alsace-Lorraine writing it was: “a land where the people put themselves out for the American soldier, instead of charging him double; a

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<sup>55</sup> Rev. Dr. C. E. Coles, Deacon in charge, “The White Field: Church of the Ascension, Springfield,” *The South Dakota Churchman*. July 1918, 25, Episcopal Diocese of South Dakota, Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

<sup>56</sup> “Earl B. Staley Dead in France: Former Head of Music Department of All Saints School Loses Life Abroad,” *Argus-Leader*, Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Thursday December 5, 1918, 8. Accessed through Newspapers.com.

<sup>57</sup> Thomas Grillot, *First Americans: U.S. Patriotism in Indian Country After World War I*, 59.

<sup>58</sup> Thomas Grillot, *First Americans*, 59.

<sup>59</sup> Ruth Ann Alexander, *Patches in a History Quilt: Episcopal Women in the Diocese of South Dakota 1868-2000*, 56.

land of pretty girls, pretty scenery, pretty cities... a happy, joyous populace made doubly happy by their recent deliverance from their oppressors.”<sup>60</sup> While waiting for a train in

Luxemburg City, he reflected:

I remember how I used to go down to the depot, in Omaha or Kansas City...and stand around watching the crowds come and go. The rich, the poor, all classes and conditions, in the space of a few minutes. That forenoon in Luxemburg City took me back to those times, and I found the same conditions there—the rich, the poor, the happy, the sad, all in one, endless procession, each one to his or her destination. The laughing bunch of school girls that you see anywhere, were there, too; the old couple, enjoying themselves in a quiet corner, content to look upon the mad throng pressing forward through the gates. Human nature is the same the world over.<sup>61</sup>

Vannix described a European scene his younger peers would likely never see; however, he has an epiphany while waiting for the train and realizes the Midwest is not so much different than Europe after all; even on the borders of Germany.

Indigenous veterans of World War I received citizenship in 1919 while citizenship extended to Native Americans without veteran status in 1924. Students in reservation schools could look forward to voting after all, though they had no such guarantee when they joined the war efforts or celebrated the Armistice. Though women and Native Americans could not enjoy full citizenship rights at the beginning of the war, Episcopal schools took pride in America and its role in the global Church. This pride passed to the students through curriculum and activities.

## **“We Will Carry the Light”: The Centrality of Patriotism and Missions in Episcopal**

### **Education**

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<sup>60</sup> “News for the Home Folks,” *The South Dakota Churchman*, July 1919, 7, Episcopal Diocese of South Dakota, Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

<sup>61</sup> “News for the Home Folks,” *The South Dakota Churchman*, July 1919, 7.

The students of St. Elizabeth's School performed for the Episcopal congregation in Wakpala on November 9, 1919. Their rendition of the play "The Light that Lighteneth the World" represented the history of missions and the Episcopal Church's goals for continued gospel outreach. Girls dressed in white robes and veils represented the early churches of Jerusalem, Rome, Gaul, and Ireland, followed by England.<sup>62</sup> The Church of Jerusalem. played by an eighth-grade girl, lit a candle by a flame at the foot of a cross. One by one, the girls lit their candles from each other's flames. The girl representing England then lit the candle representing America.

Florence L. Everett described in a detailed report in the *Churchman* what happened next. The Church of Jerusalem asked the Church of America "to show what she had been doing toward spreading the Light of the Gospel." The girls representing New York, Ohio, and Wisconsin mentioned work done by some notable bishops while a girl dressed in a Native American costume "spoke affectionately of Bishop Hare."<sup>63</sup> A girl wearing furs described the work of Bishop Rowe in Alaska and a "mountaineer" representing the "Southern Highlands" said, "America had indeed been attempting to brighten many places in her own land."<sup>64</sup> The play continued. Everett wrote: "Japan and China in native garb, Africa and the Philippines, received the Light from America's torch and begged for her prayers and her ministrations."<sup>65</sup> All of the school children proceeded to the front and the Church of America and South Dakota lit all the children's candles. "These children," Everett explains, "representing the Junior Auxiliary, asserted 'We have

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<sup>62</sup> Florence L. Everett, "S. Elizabeth's School," *The South Dakota Churchman*, December, 1919, 15.

<sup>63</sup> Florence L. Everett, "S. Elizabeth's School," *The South Dakota Churchman*, December, 1919, 15.

<sup>64</sup> Florence L. Everett, "S. Elizabeth's School," *The South Dakota Churchman*, December, 1919, 15.

<sup>65</sup> Florence L. Everett, "S. Elizabeth's School," 15.

come to help. We will carry the Light.”<sup>66</sup>

More than one year after Armistice Day, the St. Elizabeth’s congregation still faced the repercussions of war though their globally minded ministries never faltered even as the congregation continued to navigate ways to integrate Episcopal practice with the Dakota language and spirit of generosity. After the pageant, the congregation sang bilingual hymns in English and Dakota while messages, according to Everett, were translated by Samuel Redbird. Philip Deloria spoke before the congregation took up an offering for the Armenians.<sup>67</sup> The experiences of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire appeared frequently in the media. While the congregation sought to meet the physical needs of the Armenians they read about, the pageant held prior to the offering represented the South Dakota community’s unfailing eagerness for sharing what the performance termed “the Gospel Light.” The Junior Auxiliary’s statement “We have come to help” demonstrates their determination to see themselves as active participants in spreading the gospel and sharing personal responsibility for the spiritual fate of nations. Once again, they understood the role their small reservation community played in the Church as a whole and how their offerings would meet global needs.

The activities, which Indigenous and non-Indigenous children participated in at local Episcopal schools such as St. Elizabeth’s and All Saints, focused on the children’s role in the Church as well as the country. The curriculum and activities forced children to contemplate the differences between the American way of life, held in high regard by their teachers, and the traditional lifestyles of their grandparents, some of which the students still practiced at least in part themselves. The schools steeped themselves in

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<sup>66</sup> Florence L. Everett, “S. Elizabeth’s School,” 15.

<sup>67</sup> Florence L. Everett, “S. Elizabeth’s School,” 15.

patriotic imagery, and praised American ideals of right living; however, the literacy tools taught allowed students to read widely and gain the national and global knowledge they hungered for.

Literacy acted as a main theme for the St. Elizabeth's report in the May issue of the *Churchman* in 1918. The author recorded the thoughts of several older students as they reflected on the importance of reading as a class assignment. Some said, "it enabled them to read the newspapers and they could learn, at present, about the war; that they were enabled to read the Prayer-Book and Hymnal, at home, and to use them for praise."<sup>68</sup> Staying informed about current events and accessing liturgical materials were practical uses of their education. They also explained the benefits to the mind. They said: "it helped one to reason, gave one more to think about, that pleasure came through reading, that one's voice grew louder when one read, often, aloud...several were glad that their ability to read would always enable them to learn more about the world."<sup>69</sup>

Student interest in nonfiction transferred to an appreciation for stories teaching good conduct. A fourteen-year-old student in the sixth-grade named Sophie Shields wrote:

I like to read the books that are true. I have read a few books. They are Longfellow's "Brook," Bible, a story of Noah and his ark, and the history of America. These books are very interesting to me, because they are true stories. It helps me to know something about the world...My mother told me to read the books that are good, and that will help me to be good and honest. If I don't read books, I don't know anything about the world, and so I always read, when I have spare time. When I read the Bible, it helps me to know more things about God, that will help me to be good.<sup>70</sup>

Shields wrote to a specific audience passing through the hands of her teachers before

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<sup>68</sup> "The Church Schools: S. Elizabeth's School, Wakpala," *The South Dakota Churchman*, May, 1918, 15.

<sup>69</sup> "The Church Schools: S. Elizabeth's School, Wakpala," 15.

<sup>70</sup> "The Church Schools: S. Elizabeth's School, Wakpala," *The South Dakota Churchman*, May, 1918, 15.

appearing in the news. As such, her composition, reflecting on reading as a way to learn virtue as well as being informed about the world, likely pleased her teachers, but may or may not have accurately reflected her personal opinions.

Shield's paragraph followed another student essay published a year earlier which exemplified virtue, hard work, and life in a Christian community as opposed to community life in a tribe before her ancestors received what she called "Christian hope." The June issue of the 1917 *Churchman* celebrated Margaret Iron Cloud as the first graduate of St. Elizabeth's. Deemed ready for high school courses, the paper printed an essay of hers in full titled: "An Indian Girl's Outlook."

Echoing the rhetoric found in biographical sketches of Bishop Hare's coming to South Dakota, Iron Cloud divided her essay between two sections titled "Looking Backward" and "Looking Forward," which separated life before and after Christianity became widespread in Dakota Territory. The first half of the essay describes the way Indigenous people lived when her grandparents were alive from the way they designed cookfires, their hunting saddles, traveling to visit friends, frequent wars between Indigenous nations, and children's roles in daily chores alongside their parents.<sup>71</sup> She then writes: "the Indians never knew what Sunday was; they never went to church; they never had anybody to say the grace before meals; they lived and died without the Christian hope."<sup>72</sup> Iron Cloud makes no mention of traditional Indigenous spirituality or sacred practices. Instead, she attributes the Episcopal Church as the hinge upon which the tribes became religious writing: "But since Bishop Hare came to us, we have been glad to have a holy day, each week, and to have good Christian homes. All children are brought

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<sup>71</sup> "The Church Schools: S. Elizabeth's School," *The South Dakota Churchman*, June, 1917, 22-23.

<sup>72</sup> "The Church Schools: S. Elizabeth's School," 22-23.



up to be Christians; we all have Christian hope. S. Elizabeth's School, which I have attended, since I was a little girl, is teaching me a good Christian life."<sup>73</sup> Iron Cloud applied her Christian education to her life at home with her family.

The second half of the essay speaks to the way her peers should strive to behave over their summer vacation away from the school. She instructed: "we should try to live as well as we live in school. Every boy and girl can help keep the home clean, neat, and cheerful. Then our friends would be glad to visit us, our mothers and fathers find us always helpful." This sentence reflects the chores which Lakota children practiced in her "Looking Back" section as well as the social custom of providing hospitality for visiting friends.

Aside from helping parents, she reflects on options for community involvement and service writing: "When Sunday comes we can always attend Church. Many of us can help in Sunday School and in the Women's Auxiliary."<sup>74</sup> She also has hope for fulfilling careers in the future. "I suppose before many years, Indian girls will be teachers in the school and some may learn to be nurses," she mused, "But whether we work in our homes or in the school, let us always climb up to what is best and be loyal to our Church."<sup>75</sup> Like Shield's essay, Iron Cloud's composition contains reflections on Christian virtue and loyalty which the Episcopal education system attempted to cultivate; however, her writing provides insight into how she perceived herself in the community and the options she thought might be available to her someday.

Christian loyalty often blended into patriotic loyalty at the schools. At St.

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<sup>73</sup> "The Church Schools: S. Elizabeth's School," *The South Dakota Churchman*, June, 1917, 22-23.

<sup>74</sup> "The Church Schools: S. Elizabeth's School," 22-23.

<sup>75</sup> "The Church Schools: S. Elizabeth's School," 23.

Elizabeth's, children celebrated President Lincoln's birthday by saluting the flag as it raised outside the school at dawn and gave the pledge allegiance.<sup>76</sup> That evening they celebrated the school's February birthdays and Valentines in the dining room which was bedecked with American flags. They sang a verse of the "Star Spangled Banner" before eating and the music was followed by a boy and girl entering the room dressed as the King and Queen of Hearts and bearing heart shaped cookies and Valentine. After the younger students went to bed, the older students, with a few alumni present, had a "salmagundi party," played ring games, and ended the night with more singing. Mite boxes replaced the festive decorations the following day.<sup>77</sup> While the students in Wakpala celebrated Lincoln's birthday and combined the occasion with other festivities, students at All Saints found another occasion for everyone to don elaborate costumes.

All Saints' annual Colonial Ball on January 30<sup>th</sup> 1918 mirrored the masquerade ball which they would hold in October that year. The *Churchman* reports almost one hundred parents and friends showed up to this ball while Ella Deloria and Helen de Laubenfels led the procession once again; this time as George and Martha Washington. The young women then followed dressed as either "stately colonial maidens, or men of that period."<sup>78</sup> The students performed solo and group dances during the ball's intermission hour followed by refreshments. This ball allowed students to perform and demonstrate the dancing skills acquired through the All Saints curriculum as well as celebrate the colonial past taught through much of the literature read in class.

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<sup>76</sup> "The Church Schools: S. Elizabeth's School, Wakpala," *The South Dakota Churchman*, March, 1918, 14.

<sup>77</sup> The Salmagundi party might have been a party of assorted games, or perhaps they ate a salmagundi dessert. "The Church Schools: S. Elizabeth's School, Wakpala," *The South Dakota Churchman*, March, 1918, 14.

<sup>78</sup> "The Church Schools: All Saints School," *The South Dakota Churchman*, March, 1918, 13.

The *Churchman* articles generally lack nuance when discussing school activities and the significance and or possible irony of the costumes and celebrations presented in ethnically mixed schools or the acculturated influences which prompted students to compare the lifestyles of present and past and celebrate the colonization of sovereign tribal lands. The snippets of school life presented in the papers can, however, reveal the ways students viewed their place in the war and how they found fun amidst their academic toils. Most importantly, these school newsletters demonstrate the ways students asserted their value to the communities they lived, as well as ways they held on to aspects of Native culture such as the persistence of Dakota in services despite decades of English instruction on the reservations.

### **Conclusion**

The Great War directly or indirectly affected students throughout the United States. They watched empires crumble, revolutions ignite, and their own government make bold strides in domestic policy to quell dissent and rally support from the oldest to the youngest. Children were not spared the troubles of foreign policy. Instead, figures of authority expected them to perform alongside adults in the rationing of resources, raising of money, and supplying soldiers with necessities. Amidst the frenzy, the students found ways to combine fun with service and patriotism as they emulated the actions of the adults around them and eagerly demonstrated their value to the community.

Films, novels, and the media influenced students' play; especially those associated with the war. As the masquerade party at All Saints demonstrated, the children's play resembled the influences upon their environment and reinforced certain

world views, ideas, and stereotypes. Denominational, local, and national media helped to broaden their view of the world and provided religious projects and humanitarian charities to pour their resources into and incorporate into their school and church activities. Their global perspective and outlook prepared them for their role in the war. They understood the effects of the war on each country's government and economy and how their donations would affect individuals and global movements at large such as funding relief for Belgium and the Russian Church.

The war years were a tumultuous time nationally and globally. While empires in the Eastern Hemisphere broke apart, women won the right to vote and Indigenous veterans gained right to citizenship in the United States. Though citizenship was not a universal desire among Indigenous populations, Indigenous veterans gained the right to citizenship and the sacrifices of Indigenous soldiers contributed to Native Americans gaining citizenship in 1924. When America joined the war and the Wilson administration demanded support and sacrifice, Episcopal students could not be certain what would happen over the next few years. Pleas from the media for volunteers and money did not distinguish between rich and poor or levels of citizenship. For the Episcopal children of South Dakota, social status and citizenship status did not matter. The Episcopal papers encouraged all children to act, and they responded in force.

### Chapter III

#### **“As to consulting the translators of the Bible”: New Generations and Navigating Complexities of Identity and Authority as Diocese Leaders 1913 - 1920**

The Bishop White Prayer Book Society in Philadelphia wanted to ensure the generous funds they agreed to provide for the production of the new Dakota Prayer Book would sponsor a quality, long-lasting edition with properly translated texts. At the behest of the Society’s committee members, Dr. Washburn, the bishop’s primary contact at the Society, requested documents validating the contents of the prayer book. First, the Society wanted a certificate from the translators verifying the translation was a “true and accurate translation of the Book of Common Prayer.”<sup>1</sup> Secondly, they wanted a signed certificate explaining what content, which the Book of Common Prayer did not include, would be present in the bilingual Dakota edition. One member of the committee also requested second opinions regarding the accuracy of the translation. He preferred to ask the translators of the original Dakota Bible for their expert opinion. Washburn dutifully requested these early translators’ names and locations.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Loui C. Washburn, “My dear Bishop,” March 4, 1919, B1/43, 1.

<sup>2</sup> Loui C. Washburn, “My dear Bishop,” March 4, 1919, 1

Bishop Hugh L. Burleson found the request for the Bible translators humorous and the desired certificate far from necessary. After all, the ministers who first translated the Bible into Dakota died decades before and the expertise of his current team of translators far exceeded those who created the Dakota Bible. Burleson complied and acquired the certificates, but he also wrote to the Society concerning the excellent qualifications of the translators and their tireless efforts in making religious texts obtainable to the Indigenous communities in the Diocese. These translators included Dr. Edward Ashley who possessed forty-six years of experience and whose expertise in the Dakota language caused his services to be called upon by both the Church and government; Reverend A.B. Clark possessing thirty years' ministry experience in the Diocese; Reverend Philip Deloria, a native speaker, who had served the Episcopal church faithfully for forty-two years who Burleson described as, "quite the out-standing Dakota presbyter in ability, influence and insight;" and Reverend William Holmes who had been in service for thirty years whom the bishop described as, "our best educated and most scholarly Dakota."<sup>3</sup> No one could check these men's work because they were arguably better qualified than any other living persons. "What can I more say?" the bishop concluded.<sup>4</sup>

Needing Ashley to write up the certificates, he relayed Washburn's letter to him likely expecting Ashley would enjoy the irony and impossibilities of their requests.

Ashley did find the letter amusing and responded to the bishop in good fun. "As to

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<sup>3</sup> Burleson, "My dear Dr. Washburn, March 19, 1919," B1/43, 1.

<sup>4</sup> Burleson, "My dear Dr. Washburn, March 19, 1919," 1.

Concerning Dr. Asley, Virginia Driving Hawk Sneve writes: "He is credited with understanding the Indians far better than any other white man. He was a student of their language and customs and spoke and wrote better Dakota than the Indians did themselves." See, *That They May Have Life* page, 32.

consulting the translators of the Bible,” he replied, “seeing they are dead, if that he insisted upon, I fear we shall have to wait for the book till Gabriel blows his trumpet!”<sup>5</sup> Ashley knew the original translation of the Bible was riddled with errors owing to the relative inexperience of the missionaries who made it. “With out boasting,” he continued, “I think we can safely say that those who prepared the Dakota copy are better able to translate, and set forth the same as accurate than the Presbyterian and Congregational translators of the Bible. Some of us know how faulty that translation is, and the need of a revision.”<sup>6</sup> In the same strain as Ashley’s joke, Burleson added his own hint of sarcasm telling Mr. Washburn, if Mr. Goodwin, the committee member who made these particular requests, wanted to ask the Bible translators opinions, “he would be glad to name them, - the Rev. Drs. Riggs and Williamson- provided he can secure their present addresses. Both of them died many years ago.”<sup>7</sup> After Burleson’s affirmations and the translators’ certificates, the Bishop White Prayer Book Society decided to proceed and partnered with the bishop in producing the needed Dakota Prayer Books.

While the two Episcopal leaders found relative humor in the committee’s naivety and or ignorance, the Society’s request echoed the prejudices often displayed toward the work of Indigenous scholars. While the Philadelphian society questioned who held the proper authority when it came to confirming the accuracy of bilingual religious texts, A.B. Clark, Ashley, Deloria, and Holmes maintained the highest respect in their community and state. These four men served the Diocese alongside Bishop Hare as well as Bishop George Biller, Jr. who served prior to Burleson. Society looked much different

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<sup>5</sup> Ashley, “My Dear Bishop, March 17, 1919,” Ashley Papers, A1/6. 1.

<sup>6</sup> Ashley, “My Dear Bishop, March 17, 1919,” 1.

<sup>7</sup> Burleson, “My dear Dr. Washburn, March 19, 1919,” B1/43, 1.

than it had in the early days of Bishop Hare's tenure, however. A new generation of ministers, such as A.B. Clarke's sons, John B. Clark and David Clark, were coming into the profession. The increased use of automobiles altered the previous modes of travel and sped up – provided the weather allowed and snow did not block the roads – the time it took to visit across reservations. Most importantly, the Great War influenced politics nationally and locally as manifested in the move for women's such suffrage and an increased practice of traditional Indigenous dances often under the pretense of raising money for the Red Cross or Fourth of July celebrations.

The multilingualism of the Diocese as well as its multi-faceted cultural divides between white settlers, varying Indigenous bands and tribes, and generational perspectives made leadership in the Diocese a complex and demanding endeavor. Successful management also demanded Diocese leaders coordinate with Agency personal who possessed far more legal authority over reservation residents than the clergy did. Disconnects between the priorities of the Church and the Agencies also led to tension as agents became less likely to enforce policies against dances and the Church, especially older ministers, attempted to dissuade Episcopal members' participation and eliminate opportunities for dances and drinking to occur.

The correspondence which passed over the desks of Ashley and Burleson depict tensions as well as solidarities among leaders as difficult decisions had to be made. Nevertheless, the rhetoric of the bishop and clergymen's advocacy for further adoption of Euro-American lifestyles and English fluency for their Indigenous congregants, the leaders also showed a dedication to producing materials accessible in a Dakota format all dialects of the language could easily understand and utilize. Indigenous persistence in



maintaining Dakota fluency in spite of decades of religious and federal education through boarding and day schools forced these leaders to continue translation work and produce new Dakota editions, even in wartime, in order to maintain relevancy for their numerous Indigenous congregants in the face of evolving attitudes toward traditionalism and the place of the Church and Euro-American values in daily life.

**“Women Folks had been Twitting Her with Reference to Her Marrying an Old Man”: Mediation, Discipline, and Advocacy for Families**

The Superintendent of the Cheyenne River Agency deemed Black Spotted Horse as one of the leading members of his reservation. Black Spotted Horse served on the business council and served on a delegation which went to Washington, D.C. concerning tribal matters.<sup>8</sup> About a month before his departure to Washington, Reverend Good Teacher, under the sanctioning of Dr. Ashley, presided over the marriage of the sixty-four-year-old widower to a thirty-three-year-old widow of two years named Mrs. Percy Philip, formerly Julia Veo, mother of four. Both were members of the Episcopal Church. The groom made sure she was comfortable before he left on April 4, 1914, and suggested she stay with family members if she liked while he was absent.

When Black Spotted Horse returned home, he found that his new wife had left him and taken preliminary steps to securing a divorce. Knowing that she stayed with her uncle, Louie Dewitt on the Lower Brule, Black Spotted Horse was heartbroken and

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<sup>8</sup> An article from the *Pierre Weekly Press*, records six delegates names which were Chief No-Heart, Frank N. Dupris, Albert Madison, Harry F.C. Kingman, Harry F.C. Woods, and Joseph Black Spotted Horse. The delegates returned with, “the federal promise of permission to remove the Indian agency from Cheyenne river near Forest City to Eagle Butte or some other convenient place nearer the railway on the Indian reservation.” See “To Move Near Railroad,” *Pierre Weekly Free Press* (Pierre, South Dakota), 28 May 1914, Thu, 8. Accessed through Newspapers.com

determined to make what amends he could and restore the new union. It fell to Ashley and the Agency superintendents, to bridge the divide between the two partners. Once Black Spotted Horse requested help and the superintendents and Ashley became involved, conversations became public as the author of each letter generally had copies sent to all parties involved.

The Cheyenne River Agency Superintendent contacted Superintendent O. J. Green on Lower Brule on June 3, 1914 concerning the situation and the facts he knew. According to what Black Spotted Horse told him, the superintendent wrote: “there had been no unpleasantness between them,” and that Black Spotted Horse had taken her to stay with her sister before his departure and had made sure she was comfortable before his departure.<sup>9</sup> “Black Spotted Horse informs me that some of the women folks had been twitting her with reference to her marrying an old man,” the superintendent wrote. “He thinks that possibly she took this seriously, and it might have had a great deal to do in influencing her to take the steps she has.”<sup>10</sup> The superintendent reported there was no “ill feeling” on Black Spotted Horse’s part, and that, desiring her to come back, he would pick her up from Lower Brule when her visit was out or would send money for her to travel back.

The superintendent said he did not remember ever meeting Mrs. Black Spotted Horse. “However,” he wrote, “she is well spoken of and I think is a sensible woman and I am sure that she will do the right thing in this instance and will listen to what is best for

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<sup>9</sup> Superintendent Cheyenne River Agency, “Supt. O.J. Green, June 3, 1914,” Ashley Papers 1913-1914, A1/1. 1.

<sup>10</sup> Superintendent Cheyenne River Agency, “Supt. O.J. Green, June 3, 1914,” Ashley Papers 1913-1914, A1/1. 1.

her.”<sup>11</sup> He suggested Mr. Green coordinate a meeting between the woman and Dr. Ashley in the event Ashley visited the reservation in a timely fashion. The superintendent was sure she would respect Ashley’s advice, and that if he was unavailable, a local representative of his should be called in to meet with Mrs. Black Spotted Horse in person. “While I realize we cannot prevent Mrs. Black Spotted Horse from going to Court in this matter,” the superintendent concluded, “still I think that she will listen to your advice and return to her husband, and I also desire that you tell her that it is my personal request that she do this.” The superintendent affirmed he knew Black Spotted Horse could care for her and her children well and that being a “well preserved” man he would likely continue to be able to care for them for some time despite his older age.<sup>12</sup>

Agents had the authority to grant travel passes, and they often attempted to keep track of all visitors to the reservation staying for an extended time.<sup>13</sup> Hence, superintendents could ask their colleagues for favors such as looking into Mrs. Spotted Horse’s actions. As the Cheyenne agent requested the Lower Brule agent to do, agents also could ask residents to come to the Agency to address issues, even private ones, in an effort to mediate and direct residents in the course of action the agents and clergymen, who often worked in tandem, wished for them to take.

Receiving a copy of the letter sent between superintendents and a request for intervention by the Cheyenne Agency, Ashley sent his condolences and guidance to

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<sup>11</sup> Superintendent Cheyenne River Agency, “Supt. O.J. Green, June 3, 1914,” Ashley Papers 1913-1914, A1/1. 1.

<sup>12</sup> Superintendent Cheyenne River Agency, “Supt. O.J. Green, June 3, 1914,” Ashley Papers 1913-1914, A1/1. 1.

<sup>13</sup> For a study demonstrating BIA Agent’s attempts to regulate inter-reservation travel and extended visits to reservations other than their designated home, as well as Native Americans’ successful resistance to travel regulations and their communications methods across reservations nationally see: Justin Gage, *We Do Not Want the Gates Closed Between Us: Native Networks and the Spread of the Ghost Dance*, (Norman: Oklahoma State University, 2020).

Black Spotted Horse on June 20th. "I had hoped both of you would be happy together," he wrote. "Your wife is much younger than you, and for that reason you should be very kind to her," he told him saying it might also "counteract" what her friends said about their ages.<sup>14</sup> He described the trip to Washington as an honor and duty; however, being present to care for his family was an honor and duty as well. In hindsight, Ashley wished he had not gone to Washington, and noted, in his opinion, Black Spotted Horse should have gone to see his wife immediately to demonstrate his care and attention. He recommended Black Spotted Horse go to see her soon as he imagined: "While you are away from her, and she from you, she will be thinking all the time of what her friends have said, and are saying to her about her marriage to you."<sup>15</sup> Ashley acknowledged he did not have the full story regarding their marriage and what might have happened in the short time they were together, but that those were his recommendations as a friend. Apparently, Black Spotted Horse was someone Ashley would have normally written to in Dakota, but he intended to send copies of his letter to Black Spotted Horse and to "friends" who did not read Dakota.<sup>16</sup> Once, the agents and clergy became involved, privacy was disregarded in order for all intermediaries to coordinate and keep a clear record of events and actions still to be taken.

Ashley's letter to Julia Black Spotted Horse on the same day took a sterner tone. He said he wrote as a mutual friend to both Julia and Joseph at the behest of her friends and his. He began with sympathy toward her situation, but quickly reminded her of the commitment she made under the eyes of God. "You married Joseph, and not some others,

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<sup>14</sup> Edward Ashley, "Mr. Joseph Black Spotted Horse, June 20, 1914," Edward Ashley Papers. Box. 1 out of 6. #40002.01, File A1/1, 1.

<sup>15</sup> Edward Ashley, "Mr. Joseph Black Spotted Horse, June 20, 1914," 1.

<sup>16</sup> Edward Ashley, "Mr. Joseph Black Spotted Horse, June 20, 1914," 1.

and while he is older than you, you took each other for better or worse...you must be brave to carry out your part of the contract, and not allow others to come between you and your husband.”<sup>17</sup> Still hoping to hear her side of the situation and any details which might dictate what further action to take, he concluded, “I shall be glad if you will write me, as then I may be able to help you more intelligently.”<sup>18</sup> While none of these letters reveal Julia Black Spotted Horse’s decision, they do demonstrate the added complexities to domestic disputes when the couple in question lived under the religious jurisdiction of the Episcopal Church, which firmly discouraged divorce, and the physical and legal jurisdiction of the Agencies.

The Black Spotted Horse situation followed on the heels of another Indigenous woman’s ordeal. The Rosebud Agency, Bishop Biller, Jr., Reverend A.B. Clark, and the friends and family of Amy “Emma” Gunhammer all coordinated to bring her home from boarding school in the East. On June 24, 1913, the superintendent at the United States Indian School in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, wrote to Bishop Biller concerning the confusion surrounding Gunhammer’s contract at Carlisle. “I am informed,” Mr. Friedman wrote, “that the friends of Emma Gunhammer are under the impression that she enrolled at Carlisle for a period of three years only, and that she is now held a prisoner at this school.”<sup>19</sup> To persuade those concerned that nothing was amiss, he included a copy of Amy Gunhammer’s contract which included the appropriate signatures and the term of five years clearly written in two locations as well as copies of the correspondence already circulated between interested parties. “In further reference,” he continued, “I desire to say

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<sup>17</sup> Edward Ashley, “Mrs. Julia Black Spotted Horse, June 20, 1914,” Edward Ashley Papers, A1/1, 1.

<sup>18</sup> Edward Ashley, “Mrs. Julia Black Spotted Horse, June 20, 1914,” Edward Ashley Papers, A1/1, 1. This set of correspondences give no indication what Julia Spotted Horse decided to do.

<sup>19</sup> M. Friedman, Superintendent, “Rt. Rev. George Biller, Jr., June 24, 1913,” B1/55, 1.

that she is not held as a prisoner. This school does not hold Indians as prisoners. She has the freedom of the grounds and is accorded all the privileges which are given to other students of the school.”<sup>20</sup> He associated the ability to walk around and to live like other students as freedom. Those students who wanted to escape the rigid structure of the system and leave school grounds would not have agreed with the superintendent’s idea of freedom. Having checked with the matron, he assured the bishop Gunhammer was “getting along nicely” and was in “good health.”<sup>21</sup> He further directed the bishop’s attention to the contract which showed no sign of alteration or adjustment, and reminded him that the contract was signed in the Rosebud Agency office before being sent to the school. He found it unlikely a mistake could be made when three separate parties signed the form.<sup>22</sup> The superintendent did say Gunhammer would be allowed to return home if her family needed her at home badly enough to terminate her contract early and if the Rosebud superintendent approved. In a last effort to demonstrate the qualities of the school, curriculum, and benefits of attendance, his letter concluded by saying he included two annual reports for the school, a catalogue, and several pamphlets.<sup>23</sup>

The application showed Gunhammer’s birthday as December, 1890 (the same month as the Wounded Knee Massacre), but the exact date is not included. She was labeled as belonging to the Sioux Tribe. Her father Isadore Gunhammer was labeled as having  $\frac{3}{4}$  degree of Indian blood while her mother Rosa Gunhammer was full. Her enrollment history listed ten years at Oak Creek Day, before attending Rosebud Boarding School from 1906 to 1908, and then St. Francis Mission between 1908 and 1909. Being

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<sup>20</sup> M. Friedman, Superintendent, “Rt. Rev. George Biller, Jr., June 24, 1913,” B1/55, 1.

<sup>21</sup> M. Friedman, Superintendent, “Rt. Rev. George Biller, Jr., 2.

<sup>22</sup> M. Friedman, Superintendent, “Rt. Rev. George Biller, Jr., 2.

<sup>23</sup> M. Friedman, Superintendent, “Rt. Rev. George Biller, Jr., 2.

twenty years old at the signing in 1910, she signed her name as Amy Gun Hammer in the line reserved for a parent or guardian's signature with a P.O. address in Carter, South Dakota. The blanks for two witnesses remain empty while William R. Bebout, physician at Rosebud Agency signed confirming she did not have tuberculosis or anything which would endanger other students. J.B. Woods signed on the line left for an agent or superintendent on August 25, 1910. A note at the bottom of the page says the age limit is fourteen to twenty and that fourteen- to eighteen-year-olds were preferred.<sup>24</sup> As such, Gunhammer far exceeded even the desired age of attendance.

Included in the copied correspondences is a letter from a John Wright, from Carter, South Dakota, on June 17. He told Friedman, "I had a letter from Amy Gunhammer and she stated she was not allowed to come home because her term is not out...Now in regard to her term I know she intended to signed[sic] for only three years and (Mr. Leach, Day School Inspector at the time) told me she was going to school for only three years."<sup>25</sup> He informed the superintendent that those who knew her, and knew she planned to stay three years, were expecting to see her that summer.

He did, however, have what he thought was a reasonable explanation for the mistake. "Now I'll say this," he continued, "the same parties that thought Amy will be home did not expect Little Rice to come home this summer because she intended to sign for five years and I think there was a mistake made in the blank when the girls signed at the office."<sup>26</sup> He requested the superintendent investigate and then, as he thought Gunhammer had plenty of money, send her home. Wright felt personally responsible for

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<sup>24</sup> "Brief Application for the Enrollment of Amy Gunhammer in the Indian School at Carlisle, Pennsylvania," B1/55.

<sup>25</sup> John Wright, "M. Friedman, Supt., Carlisle Ind. School, 6-17-13," B1/55, 1.

<sup>26</sup> John Wright, "M. Friedman, Supt., Carlisle Ind. School, 6-17-13," 1.

Gunhammer's well-being as he claimed to be the one who talked to her about Carlisle and encouraged her to go and learn. "For that reason," he concluded, "I thought it is my duty to write to you about it."<sup>27</sup> While Wright begged for Gunhammer's return after what he was certain was a mistake affecting two girls, confusion also existed over whose authority could bring Gunhammer home.

On June 16th, the Carlisle superintendent wrote John H. Scriven, the Rosebud superintendent, saying, Gunhammer's return could not be arranged unless her family legitimately and desperately needed her help at home. He told the agent the need for her help had to be, "sufficiently great to warrant a favorable recommendation from your Office."<sup>28</sup> He did, however, expect Gunhammer back in school once her summer leave expired.<sup>29</sup>

After examining the application sent with Wright's letter and the letter sent to Scriven, Biller wrote to Rev. Clark, who ministered on the Rosebud to confirm the application did indeed say five years. Biller did not find the application a compelling reason for Gunhammer to continue attending the school though. He told Clark the application showed her to be twenty-three years old, and he underlined the number.<sup>30</sup> He did not believe a woman of that age should be held in the school against her will, and he requested he let him know Scriven's opinion on the matter as she would be allowed to return upon his approval.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> John Wright, "M. Friedman, Supt., Carlisle Ind. School, 6-17-13," 1.

<sup>28</sup> Superintendent M. Friedman, "Mr. John H. Scriven, June 16, 1913," B1/55, 1.

<sup>29</sup> Superintendent M. Friedman, "Mr. John H. Scriven, June 16, 1913," 1.

<sup>30</sup> Rt. Rev. George Biller, Jr. "Missionary District of South Dakota Office of the Bishop Sioux Falls, S.D., June 26th," B1/55, 1-2.

<sup>31</sup> Rt. Rev. George Biller, Jr. "Missionary District of South Dakota Office of the Bishop Sioux Falls, S.D., June 26th," 1-2.



Gunhammer's return did not, in fact, require Scriven's approval. Clark responded promptly to the bishop on June 2nd saying he had just seen Scriven. Scriven approved Gunhammer's return assuming the school authorities also consented. However, Clark said Scriven: "will not interfere because he has no authority over her now in the matters of school attendance because of her age."<sup>32</sup> Even her age was debated, though according to each date, she still exceeded the desired age for students. Clark had already determined Gunhammer was twenty-two according to Agency records, and according to their church records, her birthday was in November of 1891, and she was baptized by Clark on December 29<sup>th</sup>, 1891.<sup>33</sup>

Once again, Biller's papers did not reveal Gunhammer's fate. While the clergymen she was acquainted with and even, it seemed, the agent of her reservation saw Gunhammer as an adult with agency over her own decisions, the superintendent of Carlisle focused only on contracts and chose to ignore any reason the woman might want to return home to her family. The confusion and miscommunications existent between the authority figures in her life concerning which of them *could* claim actual authority in this matter delayed her return further as they sent letters back and forth assessing and arguing over her predicament. The superintendent infringed upon Gunhammer's liberties by mandating her presence at the school despite the fact she reached the age of adulthood and surpassed the age in which her reservation agent could dictate decisions regarding her education. Though the superintendent looked to bishop to settle matters in South Dakota, the bishop and local minister's authority to resolve the matter in conversation with the reservation agent was more imagined than a legal reality. In this case, the

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<sup>32</sup> A.B. Clark, "My dear Bishop, Rosebud July 2nd, 1913," B1/55, 1.

<sup>33</sup> A.B. Clark, "My dear Bishop, Rosebud July 2nd, 1913," B1/55, 1.

ministers and agent acknowledged this lack of authority where the superintendent did not. Though the Diocese' ability to dictate matters of education on the reservations had significantly lessened by the 1910s, their ability to dictate family matters such as marriage, remained more stable.

In 1920, Ashley gave Bishop Burlison his requested opinion on another complicated marriage and divorce case on Pine Ridge under Reverend Joyner's jurisdiction. In this instance, an Indigenous clergyman, Stephen King, married Thomas Blue Bird and Nancy Red Kettle. The issue was, Blue Bird had a prior wife named Eva Bush, and Blue Bird and Red Kettle eloped regardless. "In reference to Mr Joyner's letter about matrimonial conditions at Pine Ridge," Ashley determined, "It would appear from Mr Joyner's letter, that Eva Bush was the innocent party her husband Thomas Blue Bird having eloped with Nancy Red Kettle. It is unfortunate that the matter was so complicated by Stephen King marrying Thomas Blue Bird to Nancy Red Kettle."<sup>34</sup> Just as Ashley had stived to reunited the Black Spotted Horses in 1914, he nor the Church condoned the marriages of divorcees especially not without due process and consideration by the Church. For example, "We must caution our native clergy to be careful and not to perform marriages with divorced persons as has been done in this case," Ashley wrote.<sup>35</sup> Ashley wrote they must caution Native clergy, and not the clergy as a whole in this matter. Presumably, he believed Indigenous clergy were far less likely to question those asking to be married, divorce was far more common in pre-Christian Indigenous communities, than in Church sanctioned communities who closely regulated marriages, and this was likely not the first time, Ashley saw an incident like this occur.

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<sup>34</sup> Ashley, "My dear Bishop, Aberdeen, S.D., December, 28, 1920," Ashley 1920, 1.

<sup>35</sup> Ashley, "My dear Bishop, Aberdeen, S.D., December, 28, 1920," 1.

When it came to leading families, the bishops and missionaries did their best to adhere to Anglican rules for divorce; however, this was easier said than done. Not only did they have to establish clear courses of action within the Diocese for others to follow, but they also had to coordinate their efforts with federal officials whose own responsibilities could remain in confusion for many onlookers. While the clergy struggled to balance their efforts to assimilate their congregants with seeking the general happiness of students who wanted to return home or wives unhappy with familial situation, they found themselves in, opportunities for Indigenous congregants to ignore their ministers and return to older customs increasingly presented themselves.

**“The dance belongs to all of the old ways and customs which he promised to give up when he became a Christian”: Navigating Tradition, Vices, and Dual Loyalties, 1913-1917**

Reverend Amos Ross served in Allen, South Dakota, and frequently corresponded with Dr. Ashley in the Dakota language. In February, 1913, Ross responded, in English, to a group of questions sent by Bishop Biller Jr. to the clergy. Ross’ response began with an explanation on why he thought it was useless for missionaries to try to interfere with the government. In 1900, a committee at Convocation, hosted at Cheyenne River Agency, organized a petition to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs to request that agents stop Indian dances on the agencies due to what Amos termed “the harm these dances were to the Indians’ Moral and physical well being.”<sup>36</sup> Ross believed the agencies had been instructed to stop the dances but were not complying with the order for “reasons of their

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<sup>36</sup> Amos Ross, “Rt Rev George Biller Jr Belleville N. J.” Allen S.D. Feb 4<sup>th</sup>, 1913. Burelson Papers, B1/53, Center for Western Studies, 1-2.

own.”<sup>37</sup> This was only one example of a handful of reasons Ross said he could offer concerning poor interactions with agents. This was also the reason he believed attempts to influence government policy was a futile endeavor.

Officially, the practice of Native American religions was illegal during the Progressive Era; however, this prohibition in no way meant communities had ceased these practices or had not found ways of circumventing the rules or, at the very least, extracting features of those religions into supposedly non-spiritual endeavors. Local ministers’ responses to questionnaires concerning the matter demonstrated a growing rift between ministers and agents on the matter of regulating traditional practices, and an increase in the dances occurring in South Dakota.

According to Reverend Joyner’s own observations, dances occurred twice each month in the “Omaha (or dance) houses” in several camps on the first and third Friday of the month. The residing agent was Major John R. Brennan, and he gave permission for the dances though he did not allow mescal bean use or other intoxicants and sent his police to enforce such rules. Joyner hated the dances writing, “The result is harmful. The dance is in every way opposed to the influence which the church and the government are trying to bring to bear upon the Indians in fitting him for Christian citizenship.”<sup>38</sup> Though he found the dances counter-productive to his life’s work on Pine Ridge, he was pessimistic as to whether ending the dances would aid his cause. He assumed the vacuum created by ending dancing would fill with something equally or more detrimental writing:

One can easily see the evil affect of the dance upon a Christian Indian who goes back to the dance for the dance belongs to all of the old ways and customs which he promised to give up when he became a Christian... While the dance is harmful and belongs to the customs of a

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<sup>37</sup> Amos Ross, “Rt Rev George Biller Jr Belleville N. J.” Allen S.D. Feb 4<sup>th</sup>, 1913, 1-2.

<sup>38</sup> Joyner, “Pine Ridge Reservation,” February 7, 1913, Burleson Papers, B1/53, 1-2.

dark past which will and must go as civilization makes its steady advance which it is making, were the dance forbidden the innate desire for the pleasure of social intercourse might express itself in some not less harmful way.<sup>39</sup>

Joyner was an assimilationist who saw civilization as a steady progression toward the consistent and exclusive practice of Euro-American standards of living and religious practice. He recognized the social role dances played, however, and expected this need would be met either by dancing or through what he would consider another social vice. Regardless of what ministers like him believed about the subject, dances were increasing not decreasing over time.

Ashley said an “Indian Fair and celebration” occurred at the Agency, presumably the one he was stationed at the time, in October of 1911. He described the elements associated with fairs as “meager.” Instead, he described the eight days as predominantly filled with “old time Indian dances.” He added the time spent dancing to this fair to the ten days of dancing which occurred at a fair near Dupree that September. He noted these daily dances had even been allowed on Sunday. He concluded the Indigenous of Cheyenne Reservation danced more during these two fairs than they had done in the twenty years prior writing, “From the time I came here in 1889 to 1905 the Cheyenne River Sioux did not dance, having abandoned the old life.”<sup>40</sup> He does not provide any underlying reasons they might have stopped dancing such as likely pressure from the reservation administrators, missionaries, and or the military. Ashley equated the increase in dances or “the revival of the old customs” with a decrease in “industrial pursuits,” farming, and a decrease in the number of horses and cattle kept by those who had horses

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<sup>39</sup> Joyner, “Pine Ridge Reservation,” February 7, 1913, Burleson Papers, B1/53, 1-2.

<sup>40</sup> Edward Ashley, “My Dear Bishop,” Feb. 3, 1913, B1/53, 1.

and cattle formerly. Ashley, considered the Superintendent who not only allowed, but encouraged these practices as naïve. “Morally also these customs are detrimental,” he wrote, “The Superintendent does not realize, nor does he always know the immoralities connected with the dances. Every right minded Indian speaks of them as immoral.”<sup>41</sup> Having thirty-eight years of experience in the field, Ashley felt confident in his opinion. “My own conviction is that these old dances are degrading to the people, incompatible with the civilization, and derogatory to the moral and spiritual uplift of the Indians,” Ashley concluded, “Indeed the old ways cannot go side with progress.”<sup>42</sup> Like Joyner, Ashley, whose peers saw him as one of the authorities on Dakota culture and language, saw dancing as incompatible with Euro-American styled civilization.

On February 17, 1913 Rev. William Holmes, who often served as a translator, replied from the Santee Agency in Nebraska saying dances were held every Friday in towns nearly every week in the winter despite the Superintendent’s efforts to stop them. He called the dances a “detriment to this race,” citing drinking, playing cards, and gambling in the vicinity and claimed the dances should be stopped “at once.”<sup>43</sup> The practice of vices such as drinking and gambling in tandem with the dances only increased ministers’ concerns. Given many of them already believed dances to be a relic of the past, they saw the dances as a needless liability which only increased immorality in the form of substance abuse and gambling. Though Ashley knew many congregants who chose to abstain from dancing, not everyone did, and the types of dancing they participated in varied.

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<sup>41</sup> Edward Ashley, “My Dear Bishop,” Feb. 3, 1913, 1.

<sup>42</sup> Edward Ashley, “My Dear Bishop,” Feb. 3, 1913, 1.

<sup>43</sup> Rev. William Holmes, “Rt. Rev. George Biller, Jr.” Santee Agency, Nebraska, February 17, 1913, Burleson Papers, B1/53, 1-2.

Episcopal leaders and laymen not only scrutinized traditional dances, but also saw Euro-American styled dances as a possible stumbling block as well. Ashley wrote to a Mr. Mounsey after hearing complaints about his participation in dances. This was not the two men's first conversation on the subject. "Since we last talked over the matter further complaints have come relative to white man's dances," Ashley wrote, "The complaints seem to feel aggrieved at your taking part in them."<sup>44</sup> While Ashley did not seem to take issue with participating in these types of dances themselves, he recognized it as a source of confusion or moral ambiguity to some. He resorted to the writings of Apostle Paul, specifically First Corinthians chapter Eight to persuade Mounsey to stop. "I know how you feel on this matter," Ashley began, "but I remember that St. Paul said 'All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient.'" <sup>45</sup> Ashley continued to explain the passage writing, "he [Paul] speaks of meats offered to idols before sale in the market place, translated into present conditions in the Indian field is worthy of thought." Ashley reminded Mounsey of Paul's sacrifice saying, "He for the sake of the weaker brother was willing to abstain from things lawful for him, if the use should cause offense."<sup>46</sup> Ashley likely was concerned some congregants would either participate in white dances instead of paying attention to the industry of their farms, that more serious vices would be practiced amidst the dancing, and or that Mounsey's peers would interpret dancing, white or Indigenous, as acceptable based on the example Mounsey set. "I do not desire to insist on my own ideas, but as I am interested in you, and hope for your success, and the welfare of the Church in your community, the question comes, Shall we not practice a

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<sup>44</sup> Ashley, "My Dear Mr. Mounsey, July 9, 1917," Ashley Papers 1917, A1/4, 1.

<sup>45</sup> Ashley, "My Dear Mr. Mounsey, July 9, 1917," 1.

<sup>46</sup> Ashley, "My Dear Mr. Mounsey, July 9, 1917," 1.

little selfdenial here for the greater good.”<sup>47</sup> Ashley’s response implied he did not see white dances as a personal stumbling block to Mounsey, but that others would stumble instead.

Ashley, Joyner, Holmes, and Ross had served in the Episcopal Church for many years. Two were of Euro-American descent while two were Indigenous. Regardless of ethnic background, they all took firm stances against the revitalization of publicly noticeable dances and expressed concern for any form of entertainment that they thought might hinder Indigenous families’ financials or health. Persistent traditional practices which no amount of Christian or federal education could quell and morphing habits in entertainment increased as the decade progressed. The question of how to respond and how to demonstrate a consistent position for their conflicted members haunted the Episcopal leadership for many years after.

**“I wish sometimes that I were two instead of one so that I could get more done”:**

**Bishop Burleson, Dr. Ashley, and Leadership Management, 1918-1920**

The Munich Studio, a Chicago based company specializing in ecclesiastical stain glass windows, sent a letter to Bishop Burleson on January 23, 1919. The company manager implored the bishop to make the Reverend Luke C. Walker on the Lower Brule Agency to tend to his three-hundred-dollar bill which the Munich Studio claimed Walker had been wholly ignoring.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Ashley, “My Dear Mr. Mounsey, July 9, 1917,” 1.

<sup>48</sup> “The Munich Studio: Stained Glass Ecclesiastical Art Figure Windows,” January 23, 1919. Ashley Papers, A1/6. 1.



The bishop promptly replied on February 1st writing: “The three windows sent to the Rev. Walker I know have been received and I supposed they had been paid for. Please accept my assurance that they will be. Mr. Walker is an Indian and naturally dilatory and increasingly so because of his old age.”<sup>49</sup> The bishop assured Mr. Shanahan of the Munich company that the money needed to pay Walker’s bill was available. The same day Burleson, who was in New England at the time, sent word to Ashley requesting he address the issue. “Luke certainly should have attended to this,” Burleson wrote. “I am quite certain he has had the money for some time, so Reuben Estes told me. At any rate, will you take the matter up?”<sup>50</sup> Seeing to Walker’s bill would be only one of many urgent matters Ashley needed to attend to in the bishop’s absence.

Arguably the bishop’s most trusted advisor, Ashley maintained a regular correspondence with Burleson both before and after he achieved the rank of Archdeacon, but responses often came slowly owing to the two men’s constant travel between congregations, reservations, and sometimes the East. Their letters often waited for the receiver in a stack on the desk of their home offices until the receiver’s return, while the bishop replied to his forwarded letters as soon as a break in his public engagements allowed him while he was in the East.

The windows were a relatively minor issue compared to two other problems involving staffing and the image of the Church which Burleson and Ashley faced between 1917 and 1920. These were in no way the only issues that the two men had to resolve. However, the question of how to guide Deaconess Baker through a pending court

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<sup>49</sup> Bishop Burleson, “Mr. D. S. Shanahan, The Munich Studio, 300 W. South Water Street, Chicago, Illinois,” February 1, 1919, Ashley Papers 1919, A1/6. 1.

<sup>50</sup> “The Venerable Edward Ashley, D.D., Aberdeen, South Dakota,” February 1, 1919. Ashley Papers 1919, A1/6.

case over a disciplined student at St. Elizabeth's and their failure to provide medical assistance to Mr. Paul Hawk caused them great concern and sorrow both for the well-being of their leaders and the image of Church, which they zealously tried to protect.

While still in the East, Burleson received disturbing news concerning St. Elizabeth's from a doctor named A.J. Button. The doctor warned the bishop that Deaconess Baker, who oversaw the boarding school, would likely be sued by William Skinner, a Wakpala resident and the father of a fifteen-year-old student. Button wrote to the bishop saying, based on reliable sources, Baker would likely be sued for five thousand in damages for the punishment she administered to Skinner's daughter.<sup>51</sup> "Am at a loss as to what to do to help Deaconess and thought I would refer the matter to you," Button wrote.<sup>52</sup> Rather than worry about the validity of the charges, Button expressed more concern for how this case would affect the image of the Episcopal Church and how their Catholic neighbors might take advantage of the situation. He was so concerned, he wrote the bishop, "without authority for anyone," and wished for his name to be left out of the matter.<sup>53</sup> Button declared Skinner's case, if continued, was "bound to hurt the Episcopal Church in this vicinity."<sup>54</sup> Button did not seem to consider himself a gossip by relaying the sensitive information he did not want his name tied to in a private letter to the bishop; however, a gossip is precisely how he perceived the Catholic doctor Skinner had turned to for a medical opinion.

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<sup>51</sup> "My dear Dr. Ashley: The following letter has just come to the Bishop," January 30, 1919, forwarded by Mary Peabody. Original letter sent by Dr. A. J. Button to Bishop Burleson, 1-28-19, Ashley Papers 1919 A1/6. 1

<sup>52</sup> "My dear Dr. Ashley: The following letter has just come to the Bishop," 1.

<sup>53</sup> "My dear Dr. Ashley: The following letter has just come to the Bishop," 1.

<sup>54</sup> "My dear Dr. Ashley: The following letter has just come to the Bishop," 1.

This doctor's behavior was precisely why Button was concerned for the reputation of the Episcopal Church. "Skinner has had the girl's bruises examined by a Catholic doctor," Button warned, "and of course you know that will be meat for Catholics as this M.D. is notorious for spreading gossip."<sup>55</sup> Button hoped by sending his letter, the bishop could act quickly to resolve the situation.<sup>56</sup> Unfortunately for the bishop, he was traveling in the East and could not personally handle the situation.

Ashley was not in a place to immediately respond to the bishop's concerns being in the midst of a busy travel schedule and then catching what most likely was a case of the Spanish Flu on the road. "Pardon delay in acknowledging the receipt of some letters," Ashley wrote on the third of February, "When they came I was more than busy, and then rushed off to Flandreau for Jan. 25, thence to Santee to translate the Lessons for March. While on the way I think I had some attack of the 'flu', but I pushed the work so that I could return home, and on reaching home Friday I felt I should go to bed. I did so for a couple of days and am feeling much better."<sup>57</sup> He addressed several business issues but does not address the pressing matter at hand till a second letter on the same day.

Anxious but unable to do anything from his location, he wrote to Ashley again this time on paper headed by the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church also in New York. "I take it for granted that you already have acted, if you can do so helpfully, on the letter of Dr. Button of which Miss Peabody forwarded you a copy," Burselson wrote, "I hope there is nothing serious in the development, but please safeguard the matter as much as possible." He added, "Of course

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<sup>55</sup> "My dear Dr. Ashley: The following letter has just come to the Bishop," 1.

<sup>56</sup> "My dear Dr. Ashley: The following letter has just come to the Bishop," 1.

<sup>57</sup> "Ashley, "My Dear Bishop, Feb. 3, 1919," Ashley Papers 1919 A1/6. 1.

I am helpless at this distance.”<sup>58</sup> Ashley traveled to St. Elizabeth’s and conducted his own inquiry. Ashley summarized Deaconess Baker’s side of the story for Burleson writing:

Deaconess told me that last Fall the girl ran away. On account of the ‘flu’ she did not come back for some time. Finally she was returned by Skinner who told Deaconess that she ought to punish her for running away. At that time she was not punished. Later on she ran away, when after coming back Deaconess ordering her to lay on the floor gave ten strokes with a strap, then Miss. Flugel, at Deaconess’ request gave her 10 more strokes. After the punishment the girl went and mixed with the other girls, and was in School ten days without complaining of being hurt, or any of the other girls saying she had been hurt. At the end of the ten days she ran away again, then she told her folks how she had been punished.<sup>59</sup>

Running away was a frequent occurrence across Native American boarding schools. Homesickness prompted many runaways, but the act of running away also served as a means of resisting and defying strict and abusive boarding school structures.<sup>60</sup> In this case, Skinner’s daughter – their letters never offer the girl’s name – resisted the authorities of the school and visited home. Ashley was under the impression Skinner sought legal advice “under the influence of others.”<sup>61</sup> Though Baker asked Ashley whether she should get a lawyer, Ashley thought it was best to contact the bishop first. In the meantime, Ashley went to the Deloria home where others were currently gathered. One of them was named Brown Elk who was “displeased” about Mr. Skinner’s actions.<sup>62</sup> Deloria advised Brown Elk how he could aid the Deaconess. “I told him that it was the duty of men like him to go to Skinner and reason with him,” Ashley said, “Altho[sic] I

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<sup>58</sup> Burleson, “The Rev. Edward Ashley, L.L.D., Aberdeen, South Dakota, February 7, 1919,” Ashley Papers, 1919, A1/6, 1.

<sup>59</sup> Ashley, “My Dear Bishop, Feb. 7, 1919,” Ashley Papers 1919 A1/6. 1.

<sup>60</sup> For information regarding runaways and other acts of resistance see Trafzer, Keller, and Sisquoc’s *Boarding School Blues* and “Runaway Boys, Resistant Girls,” Chapter Four of Brenda Child’s *Boarding School Seasons*, 87-95.

<sup>61</sup> Ashley, “My Dear Bishop, Feb. 7, 1919,” 1.

<sup>62</sup> Ashley, “My Dear Bishop, Feb. 7, 1919,” 1.

did not say so I felt the[sic] Mr. Deloria himself should see him and try to reason with him.”<sup>63</sup> It is unclear why Ashley did not tell Deloria to talk to Skinner. Deloria’s stance on the matter remains unclear though he kept Ashley updated as the situation unfolded.

At a later date, Burleson thanked Ashley for taking swift action after receiving Buttons letter and left further instructions. Burleson’s first plan of action was to personally contact Phillip Deloria and request he attempt to resolve the issue. As for Ashley, Burleson advised he seek legal council from a Judge Gates, and not to bother seeking a lawyer until he received Gates’ answer and they saw how the matter progressed.<sup>64</sup> The matter never made it to court despite the bishop’s preparation. Button wrote Ashley from the Riverview Hospital in Mobridge on the twenty-second of February saying, “Am certain he is in no hurry to push the charges but is waiting for some of us to steer him off. He has a, decidedly good feeling for the Episcopal Church and will be answerable to any reasonable proposition made by you.”<sup>65</sup> Skinner’s threats unraveled relatively quickly, though the lawyer he engaged pursued the matter a little while longer.

Ashley wrote to the bishop on March 3, with the end result. “In regard to the Skinner matter, the backfire I started has been effective,” he said, “On my way out to Timberlake last Wednesday I met Mr. Deloria who informed me that S. had decided to quit the action.”<sup>66</sup> Still concerned, Button organized a meeting between himself, Ashley, and Skinner’s attorney in Mobridge. The attorney expressed he did not want to hurt the Church, but firmly believed something “ought to be done” having seen the girl’s bruises

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<sup>63</sup> Ashley, “My Dear Bishop, Feb. 7, 1919,” Ashley Papers 1919 A1/6. 1.

<sup>64</sup> Burleson, “The Rev. Edward Ashley, D.D., February 10, 1919,” Ashley Papers, A1/6, 1.

<sup>65</sup> Arthur J. Button, “Dear Doctor Ashley, 2-22-19,”

<sup>66</sup> Ashley, “My Dear Bishop, March 4, 1919,” Ashley Papers 1919 A1/6. 1.

and given his understanding of the event.<sup>67</sup> The meeting ended on friendly terms, according to Ashley, despite their opposing views and Ashley proceeded to collect the documents he needed to lay the matter to rest. “I have asked Deloria to procure and send me a copy of Skinner’s withdrawal, and he promises me that he will, Ashley concluded for the bishop, “Deaconess writes Mrs. A. [Ashley’s wife] that the matter is settled.”<sup>68</sup> The girl’s perspective of the ordeal was never addressed between the men’s letters. The exact nature of her injuries, whether serious or a ploy for money or some other gain, remained unclear. Physical discipline clearly occurred by Baker’s own admission; however, to Button, Burluson, and Ashley, having been told by Baker of Skinner’s initial suggestion of punishment and the girl’s quiet response to the beating afterward, the threat to the Church and not the girl seemed at the forefront of their minds.

In the midst of resolving this legal crisis, Ashley’s endeavors as a translator and organizational leader stretched him increasingly thin during the war, Spanish flu, and the Diocese’ ambitious campaigns and publication endeavors. “I am more than busy translating matter on the Nation Wide Campaign for Anpao, and other distribution,” Ashley wrote, “I ought to have arranged to be at Flandreau for Sunday, but as I go to Pine Ridge next Tuesday I must get this copy of on type writer for the printer. I wish sometimes that I were two instead of one so that I could get more done.”<sup>69</sup> Ashley managed many responsibilities for many years; however, this heavy work load might

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<sup>67</sup> Ashley, “My Dear Bishop, March 4, 1919,” 1.

<sup>68</sup> Ashley, “My Dear Bishop, March 4, 1919,” 1.

<sup>69</sup> The Nationwide Campaign was a national fundraising endeavor which Diocese across the country contributed to. *Anpao* was a newspaper written in Lakota. Dr. Edward Ashley, “My Dear Bishop, Dec. 12, 1919,” Ashley Papers, 1919, A1/6, 1.

have contributed to his missing an important event in the life of one of the Indigenous leaders under his jurisdiction.

On June 2, 1920, Mr. Edgar M. Keith from Manderson, South Dakota, wrote Ashley concerning a serious case of neglect on the part of the Episcopal leadership. Paul Hawk was a candidate for orders whom Ashley and Burleson planned to advance.<sup>70</sup> Hawk experienced paralysis in September of 1919 but received no aid from the Diocese. Keith wrote to Ashley notifying him of this failure to respond to Hawk's illness.

Ashley responded to Keith immediately upon receiving the letter, which was not until the eighth of June and sent letters to Joyner and Hawk himself. "I had never heard of his illness and should have been only too glad to have provided for him, had I known," Ashley wrote, "I have funds for just that sort of need and he was entitled to my care."<sup>71</sup> The realization of his failure to provide for Hawk was made all the more bitter by Hawk's decision to join the Roman Catholic Church who had been more responsive to his needs. "I am exceedingly sorry that that he has taken this step without letting me know, and I shall write and tell him so," Ashley wrote to Keith, "Of course I do not want to enter into competition with the Roman Church to buy people; but Paul Hawk has served for long years and is entitled to every consideration we can give him."<sup>72</sup> Keith also wrote to Burleson who in return wrote to Ashley.

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<sup>70</sup> Ashley, "Mr. Edgar M. Keith, Manderson, S. Dakota, June 8, 1920," Ashley 1920, A1/7, 1.

<sup>71</sup> Ashley, "Mr. Edgar M. Keith, Manderson, S. Dakota, June 8, 1920," 1.

<sup>72</sup> Ashley, "Mr. Edgar M. Keith, Manderson, S. Dakota, June 8, 1920," 1.

Burleson was just as upset as Ashley if not more so. Keith's letter informed them the doctor had told Hawk to go to a hospital.<sup>73</sup> Keith apparently wrote Joyner about the situation, but he never received a response. Already feeling neglected, no minister visited him until a Roman priest named Father Lewis called on him two weeks prior to Keith's letters. Both Hawk and his wife then promptly joined the Roman Church at the Holy Rosary Mission on May 20, 1920, and Hawk made plans to go to St. Joseph's Hospital in Omaha. "He has been a faithful worker here for 26 years, and it seems inexcusable for this to have happened," Burleson wrote. "What do you know about this matter? It is absolutely new to me. I have never even heard that he was ill."<sup>74</sup> Burleson expressed similar feelings regarding the Dexter fund which was designated for emergencies like Hawk's and a wariness of entering a bidding war with the Catholic Church for Hawk's loyalty. "Since he is one of the men we have on our list as a candidate for orders, it is rather distressing and the more unfortunate because there is ample money in the Dexter fund to have done the right thing for Paul Hawk, - money which was given for exactly this purpose," Burleson wrote to Ashley, "I do not want to buy him back from the Roman Catholics, but it does look to me as though Mr. Keith was correct in feeling that it is inexcusable."<sup>75</sup>

Paul Hawk's situation was an embarrassment to the image of the Episcopal Diocese as Ashley and Burleson realized their mistake and the Catholic Church filled the need which they should have provided for. Hawk felt betrayed

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<sup>73</sup> Burleson, "My dear Dr. Ashley, June 8, 1920," Ashley 1920, A1/7, 1.

<sup>74</sup> Burleson, "My dear Dr. Ashley, June 8, 1920," 1.

<sup>75</sup> Burleson, "My dear Dr. Ashley, June 8, 1920," Ashley 1920, A1/7, 1.



and therefore, justifiably, turned elsewhere for help and comfort. Due to the near constant competition between the Episcopal and Catholic Churches for members of the Indigenous community, the option to change loyalties was readily available to Hawk, and he acted in what he considered his best interests. The large expanse of Ashley and Burleson's jurisdiction across South Dakota, and their inability to maintain consistent contact with all their workers cost them a dedicated leader.

Burleson and Ashley cared about the well-being of their organizational leaders and often went to great preventative lengths to keep their staff in good standing with the public and that, despite the low pay of a typical missionary or Indigenous minister, their leaders had access to necessary resources to provide for their health and other things that they would need to do their work effectively. Having close relationships with most of the Diocese's professional and lay leaders, these needs were important to the bishop and archdeacon; however, the image of the Church, especially to outsiders, remained paramount as they made decisions including when a minister was no longer completing his tasks, and what financial and legal aid they should grant to leaders finding themselves in trouble. Unfortunately for Paul Hawk, planning was not sufficient when they lost contact with events happening in the field, such as his illness, amidst the chaos of their positions.

**“All those working among them believed that 30 years would see English the language of the people”: Printing the Dakota Prayerbook in Wartime**

Edward Ashley talked with printers in his home of Aberdeen to determine the feasibility and expense of locally sourcing the task of printing newly translated religious

materials in Dakota. The number of influenza patients had gone down in the city; however, pneumonia cases were increasing, and Mrs. Ashley had been called to help nurse the sick. After working a partial day, she had returned to work at the detention hospital for a full second day. The pandemic and the metal rations made printing the book both difficult and expensive.

Ashley found that the *Aberdeen News* was the only company there with the capacity to print the *Niobrara Course*, a five-year cycle of lessons in Dakota following the catechist and Church calendar meant to be used in place of Sunday sermons with Linotype. Using Linotype would mean new metal plates with the Dakota alphabet would not be necessary, but the Dakota pages would still come at a higher cost than English editions. Ashley hoped that this method might be what the bishop had in mind when he imagined the immense project before them.<sup>76</sup>

The war and the corresponding flu pandemic complicated things immensely. Pastors had to find creative ways of holding services and communion or go without them to prevent the spread of the so-called Spanish flu, and despite the enthusiasm for new prayer books and the *Niobrara Course*, raising the required funds and successfully printing quality copies was no small feat. Despite the difficulties, Episcopal leadership felt the new materials were an urgent need for the spiritual health of the Christian Indigenous community.

The clergymen who had served in South Dakota for several decades had not expected to need a second edition of the Dakota Prayer book. After decades of consistent efforts to educate Indigenous children in the English language, they expected the majority

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<sup>76</sup> Ashley, "My Dear Bishop, Oct. 30, 1918," Ashley Papers 1918, A1/5. 1.

if not all of their congregations would be fluent in English and that both translators and Dakota texts would not be necessary. They were greatly mistaken. The bishop explained to the fundraisers in the east: “The language spoken in three-fourths, probably nine-tenths of the homes is still Dakota and even in the selected groups of workers, like Clergy and Catechists who are more in touch with the white life and language, I should not dare make an address in English and expect it to be understood unless it were at the same time interpreted.”<sup>77</sup> Not only did their people want new, revised texts, they also wanted quality and elegant materials to make a lasting and beautiful possession.

Bishop Burleson asked Ashley what he thought the most pressing publishing needs were in the Diocese so he could determine costs and prepare a clear presentation of financial needs to interested individuals or Christian charity societies on his trip to the East. “Of course, we must have a new Prayer Book,” Burleson wrote, “but I judge the Hymnals are adequate for the present, although we may need an addition. What should we ask for in the way of other literature, such as catechisms and Sunday School material for the Dakotas?”<sup>78</sup> Burleson believed these publications were the primary need of the Diocese even over physical improvements to their churches and ministers’ homes, and he believed a “concrete statement” as to expenses could convince a potential patron these religious materials were a good recipient of their generosity.<sup>79</sup> Though he would find investors, it was not a simple matter of sending the bilingual texts to the printers.

The team of translators needed to complete texts and provide several reviews and edits to ensure accuracy for the printers. These tasks had to be completed alongside their

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<sup>77</sup> Burleson, “My Dear Dr. Washburn, February 27, 1919,” 2.

<sup>78</sup> Hugh L. Burleson, “My dear Archdeacon, Philadelphia, January 23, 1918,” Ashley Papers 1918, A1/5, 1.

<sup>79</sup> Hugh L. Burleson, “My dear Archdeacon, Philadelphia, January 23, 1918,” 1.

regular ministries, which the effects of war and disease only made more difficult. The flu affected translation work being done on the Niobrara course and the Archdeacon and bishop's ability to visit congregations.<sup>80</sup> Ashley canceled a trip to the Rosebud after John Clark warned him not to come because of "flu" regulations. The boarding school at Cheyenne River had already closed preventively. Ashley reported to the bishop of one white person who was in quarantine at the Cheyenne River Agency while a cattleman on Virgin Creek had died.<sup>81</sup>

While Ashley said, presumably still referring to Cheyenne residents specifically, "The Indians are not down with it," the real threat came from the schools in Pierre and Rapid City. Ashley reported that many of their children had died there. He was deeply concerned about the virus passing to others when their bodies were returned home and the remains were viewed at the funerals. He told the bishop he was sending a word of caution.<sup>82</sup> Ashley took precautions at the one congregation he was able to preside over that week in guidance with the sanctions of the local authorities. While he reported only three or four were in the physical church itself, Mr. Rouillard went outside where the rest of the congregation stood and offered them the Holy Communion.<sup>83</sup>

In the meantime, Burleson considered having the *Aberdeen News* print their materials. He had several concerns such as their ability to get matrices with Dakota letters for the linotype, whether it would be cheaper to have plates made, and where they would

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<sup>80</sup> Ashley, "My Dear Bishop, Oct. 30, 1918," Ashley Papers 1918, A1/5. 1.

<sup>81</sup> Ashley, "My Dear Bishop, Oct. 22, 1918," Ashley Papers 1918, A1/5. 1.

<sup>82</sup> Ashley, "My Dear Bishop, Oct. 22, 1918," 1.

<sup>83</sup> Ashley, "My Dear Bishop, Oct. 22, 1918," 1.

store plates for two hundred and fifty plates if they proceeded down that route. He chose to request matrices first and maintain plates as a backup option.<sup>84</sup>

As the bishop stated in a letter to potential donors in the East, the translators and designers of the *Niobrara Woonspe Ookuwa Kin* or the Niobrara course intended the Indigenous congregations would have Dakota Bibles and Prayer Books to accompany the lesson plans.<sup>85</sup> Burleson rallied supporters in the East and gained their interest in the translation work the translating team was creating. "I have high hopes of getting the Service Book financed, though cannot be sure of that for a few days yet," Burleson eagerly wrote Ashley, "I found the greatest interest in the Niobrara Course everywhere in the East. You may have received several requests to be put on the mailing list."<sup>86</sup> Though Burleson eventually found the funds he was looking for, they did not come easily. The war left to many demands on societies for many people to consider in depth printing projects, and the flu made it difficult for board members to even vote on funding an investment. Burleson was turned down before he found the right patrons.

E.S. Gorham, The New York Bible and Common Prayer Book Society's secretary, wrote Burleson on January 13, 1919. The Society could not consider the bishop's request for assistance in the Diocese's endeavor to print Dakota prayer books. "The recent meeting was not largely attended, owing to the prevailing illness of this City...Meanwhile, the Society is far behind in taking care of the applications, which are constantly coming to it, as the funds have been very much diverted from their usual

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<sup>84</sup> Hugh L. Burleson, "My dear Dr. Ashley, November 1, 1918," Ashley Papers 1918, A1/5, 1.

The *Niobrara Woonspe Ookuwa Kin: Omaka Takaheya* or "The Niobrara Course: First Year," was printed with the Dakota text on one page, and the English translation on the next page. For example, see:

<sup>85</sup> Burleson, "Rev. Louis C. Washburn, D.D., February 27, 1919," B1/43, 3. The American Bible Society provided the necessary Bibles while the bishop continued to garner support for the needed Prayer Books.

<sup>86</sup> Hugh L. Burleson, "My dear Dr. Ashley, March 4, 1919," Ashley Papers 1919, A1/6, 1.

course, by the demands of the Army and Navy during the past three years.”<sup>87</sup> Gorham also had concerns that the new translation would become obsolete when the Church completed next revisions to the Prayer Book which he believed was not too far in the future. He asked is the cost of the plates could be covered by soliciting and, in that event, the Society might be able to cover the manufacturing costs. “In any event, the extreme cost of the labor and the cost of making plates is something enormous at the present time. It does not seem to us that it can continue, nor do we think the cost of paper and binding, and printing will be so great as at present.”<sup>88</sup> He referred to it as the Indian language as opposed to Dakota.

After Gorham’s rejection, Burleson wrote a lengthy pitch for the Dakota Service Book to the Executive Committee of the Bishop White Prayer Book Society in Philadelphia. Burleson explained Bishop Hare published a Dakota Service Book in 1875, and that it was the only Dakota book the Diocese had.<sup>89</sup> Though they printed later editions of this book, multiple problems presented themselves. Burleson explained three major issues:

- (1) The Prayer Book has changed very considerably in the intervening years. The revision of 1892 embraced many permissions which would be most useful in the Indian field where we should have greatly simplified services.
- (2) The original book was in the Santee dialect of the Dakota language. There are three main divisions of this Indian nation, each with its own dialect. The Santee is the Eastern, the Yankton the Central and the Teton the Western division. At the time when the Service book was published we had only reached the Santee people with our ministrations and, naturally, our literature was put into that language

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<sup>87</sup> E.S. Gorham, “Right Reverend dear Bishop Burleson, New York 1/13/19,” Hugh L. Burleson Papers. Box. No. 1 out of 4. #40001.03. File B1/43 Dakota Prayer Book, 1-2.

<sup>88</sup> E.S. Gorham, “Right Reverend dear Bishop Burleson, New York 1/13/19,” Hugh L. Burleson Papers. Box. No. 1 out of 4. #40001.03. File B1/43 Dakota Prayer Book, 1-2.

<sup>89</sup> Burleson, “Rev. Louis C. Washburn, D.D., February 27, 1919,” B1/43, 1.

but all Dakota literature of recent years is published in the intermediate dialect – the Yankton – which is far more intelligible to the Eastern and Western divisions of the people than either the Teton or Santee would be to the opposite division. It was evident, therefore, that any new book should go into the Yankton dialect.

- (3) This translation took place in the early years of the Mission work. Translators were not thoroughly familiar with the language and had to depend largely on the decisions of Indian helpers who had little education and small knowledge of a religious and doctrinal vocabulary. There are many places in the Prayer Book where the translation is inadequate and should be materially changed.<sup>90</sup>

Though he had explicitly made clear the faults in the Dakota Prayer Book, Burleson took the time to explain why a Dakota book was necessary at all from the Church worker's perspective. "It was the expectation of everyone when the first book was published that the Indians would be anglicized within a generation and that no other book would be needed," Burleson stated, "All those working among them believed that 30 years would see English the language of the people, and their old tongue largely disused."<sup>91</sup> Burleson wrote fourteen years after the expiration of the early missionaries predicted timeline. "This has not happened," he stated plainly. Burleson explained the prevalence of Dakota in the homes of both regular congregants as well as the more educated ministers in training. "The language spoken in three-fourths, probably nine-tenths of the homes is still Dakota," Burleson told them, "and even in the selected groups of workers, like Clergy and Catechists who are more in touch with the white life and language, I should not dare make an address in English and expect it to be understood unless it were at the same time interpreted."<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> Burleson, "Rev. Louis C. Washburn, D.D., February 27, 1919," 1-2.

<sup>91</sup> Burleson, "Rev. Louis C. Washburn, D.D., February 27, 1919," B1/43, 2.

<sup>92</sup> Burleson, "Rev. Louis C. Washburn, D.D., February 27, 1919," 2.

Burleson did not expect to see during his lifetime an English service understood by every Indigenous congregant, and he told the committee as much. “Therefore,” he concluded, “for some years to come we must reach these people in their own language.”<sup>93</sup> Burleson had hoped the bilingual text of the prayer book would have some effect in making his dream of a solely English sermon possible someday. He told the Society the proposed Prayer Book would have both Dakota and English translations side by side. He defined it as “a useful agent in familiarizing the people still further with the English.”<sup>94</sup> The Bishop added this information as if the Society might have been more prone to support an endeavor geared toward the furthering of English literacy as a long-term investment in the proverbial mission field.

Burleson sought to offset the Society’s cost by further fundraising as well as the investments of the Dakota congregations themselves. “I am sure I could guarantee to find, within the near future, at least \$1,000.00 for this purpose,” Burleson claimed, “I also believe that the Indian people themselves will give according to their ability in order to secure the new books.”<sup>95</sup> He concluded his letter by once more posing investment in bilingual Prayer books as an investment in assimilating Native Americans into white society writing, “By this means, I believe we can raise the whole level of the people and prepare them for the day not too far distant when they must take their place among the white population and become integral parts of the nation.”<sup>96</sup> The Dakotas never stopped

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<sup>93</sup> Burleson, “Rev. Louis C. Washburn, D.D., February 27, 1919,” 2.

<sup>94</sup> Burleson, “Rev. Louis C. Washburn, D.D., February 27, 1919,” 2.

<sup>95</sup> Burleson, “Rev. Louis C. Washburn, D.D., February 27, 1919,” 2.

<sup>96</sup> Burleson, “Rev. Louis C. Washburn, D.D., February 27, 1919,” 3.



speaking their language as a result of the Prayer Books, but Burleson found his financial sponsor nonetheless.

The logistical undertaking of completing proofs, ensuring the accuracy of the type, and printing the materials amidst pandemic and war was exhausting and costly both financially and for the ministers' ability to complete their other duties. The publicist, thinking only a few accented words would exist in the manuscript were unpleasantly surprised to find the plethora of accent marks found in individual sentences and paragraphs. They hastily ordered new matrices trying to rectify their assumptions without delay.<sup>97</sup>

Burleson insisted to his publishing agent that the Diocese had no intention of skimping on the quality of the books. Burleson preferred to have 5,000 copies made though he expected the 10,000 members would quickly use of this supply in a matter of two years.<sup>98</sup> Beyond quantity he wanted quality, or at least as an option. He inquired as to the binding options writing:

The majority I believe would be a black cloth something like the ordinary prayer book but a little wider. It seems Perhaps the page would also be a trifle longer though probably not much. I should like some of them done in a leather binding such as I am sending you under separate cover today. Kindly keep it for reference. I should like to have perhaps a thousand in this style."<sup>99</sup>

Charles H. Clarke, his publicist contact, knew money could be an issue so he tried to supply the bishop with cheaper options including imitation leather or red-edged pages

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<sup>97</sup> Charles H. Clarke, "The John C. Winston Co, August 10, 1919," File B1/43, 1.

<sup>98</sup> Burleson, "Mr. Charles H. Clarke, Messrs. John C. Winston Co., July 31, 1919," File B1/43, 1.

<sup>99</sup> Burleson, "Mr. Charles H., The John Winston Company, July 23, 1919," File B1/43, 1.

instead of gilded.<sup>100</sup> The bishop inquired around and responded with the following: “With regard to the binding, I find that many of the Indians prefer the leather binding to cloth and are willing to the extra amount. So if you will bind 2000 instead of 1000 in leather and 3000 instead of 4000 in cloth, I will pay the difference.”<sup>101</sup> He also told him, to use the pages which were gilded on the top.

Though the Prayer Books did not come by the next Convocation as the bishop hoped, he and the Dakota congregations found the finished work satisfying.<sup>102</sup> “The Dakota Prayer Books are selling well and giving great satisfaction,” Burleson told Clarke, “On the whole it is an exceedingly creditable production and will be highly valued. The few imperfections in it are our own fault, I think, in most cases... Taking it altogether, it is an excellent piece of work.”<sup>103</sup>

Despite decades of assimilationist policies and education, Dakota remained dominant in the home even as the war raged. The Diocese made faithful and careful efforts to accommodate non-English speakers and meet the precedent which the community set instead of forcing English materials on to them and telling them to hum the tune until they understood the nuances of the English passages.

## **Conclusion**

The Episcopal Diocese of South Dakota observed a strict hierarchy of authority beginning with the presiding bishop. As demonstrated in Burleson and Ashley’s close

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<sup>100</sup> Charles H. Clarke, “Bishop Burleson, Bishop’s House, September 22, 1919,” B1/43, 1 and Charles H. Clarke, “The John C. Winston Co., November 26, 1919,” B1/43, 1.

<sup>101</sup> Burleson, “My dear Mr. Clarke, September 12, 1919,” B1/43, 1.

<sup>102</sup> Burleson, “Mr. Charles H. Clarke, Messrs. John C. Winston Co., July 31, 1919,” File B1/43, 1.

<sup>103</sup> Burleson, “My dear Mr. Warner, April 5, 1920,” B1/43, 1.

relationship, the bishop often relied on those who had more experience working in “the Indian Field” and who better understood the language and culture of his Indigenous congregants when making important decisions which might affect daily lives such as divorce cases or legal issues. Burleson would not think of formally responding to these sensitive choices and issues without Ashley’s insight first.

The authority of Diocese leadership was limited when it came to regulating lifestyles. The Agencies, not the clergy, chose how rigidly to police dances and what substances would be allowed. While ministers such as Ashley, Biller Jr., and A.B. Clark attempted to coordinate with an Agency superintendent to bring Amy Gunhammer home and reconcile the Black Spotted Horses, the growing leniency of agents when it came to regulating perceived vices discouraged some ministers like Amos Ross to continue attempting to affect government policy.

Despite the animosity the Diocese leadership expressed toward any resurgence in the traditional dances of the Dakota people, they went to great lengths to perpetuate Christian doctrine in the Dakota language, and to ensure that Christian texts were accessible to everyone within the Diocese while also hoping the bilingual productions would in the long term, promote English literacy. Granted, Ashley and Burleson would not likely have worked so hard in their translation and publishing work had their congregants not ensured the perpetuation of their native tongue in spite of decades of assimilationist education in favor of English.

While many of Burleson and Ashley’s concerns and decisions came from a desire to maintain the image of the Church, they made mistakes due to

ignorance about workers in the field and sometimes they did not ask as many questions as they should have. Though Deaconess Baker's punishment of his daughter did not seem to effect Mr. Skinner's overall loyalty to the Episcopal Diocese, their regrettable neglect of Paul Hawk did cause them to lose a faithful servant to the Church. As World War I came to a halt and the soldiers came home, the hierarchy of the Diocese would face another competitor for the loyalty of reservation residents: the increased participation in traditional dances and ceremony.

## Epilogue

### **“They did not use anything they learned at the school:” Diocese Responses to Dances and Give-Aways, 1920-1923**

In 1923, Bishop Burleson sent a survey to his superintendents for distribution to all Episcopal workers willing to provide their thoughts on what he deemed an increasing spiritual and moral crisis for the Indigenous in his diocese. The problem, in his eyes, rested in the revitalization of traditional dancing increasingly on the rise since the World War. In his letter introducing his poll questions, he stated he wanted the opinions of everyone, not just those who already believed the dances led to immoral behavior.<sup>1</sup> He sought those who might have a different opinion and petitioned them to state their feelings on the matter in order to make a decision of what to do. Despite his openness to opinion, the questions themselves already implied dancing was the culprit causing the Indigenous people’s decline in virtue. His survey questions read:

1. Do you feel that the moral and religious condition of the Indian people whom you know is growing worse or better?
2. If worse, to what facts or conditions or practices would you attribute the change?

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<sup>1</sup> Burleson, “My dear Mr.” Burleson Papers B1/53.

3. Do you note a change of this kind among the young people especially?
4. Do you feel that the increase of the Indian dances is an injury to your people? If, so why?
5. Is the practice of the dance increasing rapidly? And is it the old or the young who do the dancing?
6. Do you know personally of any instances of immorality, drunkenness, or the use of peyote connected with those dances?
7. How does attendance at these dances affect the industry of the Indians? And is the 'give away' practiced in any form?
8. What other influences beside the dance are doing harm, and how do you think they could be corrected?
9. Tell me fully in your own words anything that you know about conditions which may not be covered by the previous questions.<sup>2</sup>

The bishop and or archdeacon sent out polls fairly regularly, sometimes recycling the same questions, and many ministers and lay workers – both Indigenous and white – provided their opinions as they felt comfortable. The concern expressed through the questionnaire distributed in 1913, only increased amidst the Great War and its aftermath.

Many Indigenous nations revitalized traditional ceremonies and dances as the United States increased its involvement in the war. Native American communities sent soldiers to training camps and the front lines with variations of traditional war songs and prayers.<sup>3</sup> Participation in the war also allowed men the opportunity to achieve the feats of bravery required to join elite warrior societies whose membership had rapidly declined in the previous decades.<sup>4</sup> Upon veterans' return, many communities and families honored them with traditional ceremonies and dances once more.<sup>5</sup> Many of these ceremonies occurred in South Dakota and in full view of Episcopal ministers and the BIA. Aside from rituals conducted on behalf of soldiers and the war effort, dances that many

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<sup>2</sup> Burleson, "My dear Mr." Burleson Papers, B1/53.

<sup>3</sup> Britten, *American Indians in World War I*, 149-150.

<sup>4</sup> Britten, *American Indians in World War I*, 64-65, 72, 101.

<sup>5</sup> Britten, *American Indians in World War I*, 150-152.

ministers judged as more recreational or even exploitive than part of traditional ceremony also increased in prominence.

The rise in dancing, giveaways, and peyote troubled the bishop and the Episcopal workers who believed the Indigenous parishioners should concentrate on their farms, practice temperance and judicial saving, and participate in activities they deemed more suitable and appropriate for Episcopal families. In so doing, they ignored the similar values Indigenous participants often associated with peyote and other ceremonies. They also exhibited disdain for government workers who they felt not only allowed traditional customs to be practiced once more but even encouraged it. Despite the long-anticipated distribution of the Dakota Prayer Books and Niobrara Courses to members of the diocese, Episcopal leadership – as well as every Christian denomination operating in the state – faced a widening gap between those who desired to return to traditional practices, those who wanted to incorporate elements of Christianity into Indigenous ceremony such as the Native American Church which officially began in 1918, or those who wanted to abstain from traditional practices all together in pursuit of Christian-Euro-American models of living. Though the 1920s witnessed a period of shifting social structures and dynamics of power and authority, the Episcopal Diocese continued to thrive in South Dakota, and traditions like the annual Niobrara Convocation still continue to the present day. However, leaders serving in the immediate post-war era expressed concern for the state of their field and feared what effects a resurgence in Indigenous customs and their inability to regulate them might have on their community and the economic health of the reservations.

According to Ashley, the dances occurring on Fourth of July posed a great risk for the Christian Dakotas. “Complaints are coming to me that our people (the Christians) are about to be demoralized by reviving in a manner the old time war dance for the returned Indian soldiers on the Fourth of July,” Ashley wrote to Burleson in the summer of 1919, “and to that end dances are being continually held at places upon the several Reservations. I notice in the public press this is the program at Wakpala for the Fourth of the July.”<sup>6</sup> Even more ludicrous to Ashley was the public display of these dances federally and nationally. “Another report, or rumor, has it that prominent Indian dancers are to be invited to Washington to give such exhibitions on the White House grounds!” he continued to write exasperated, “I hope this letter is not true. It is bad enough to revive the old custom on the Reservations.”<sup>7</sup> Ashley’s horror at the thought of dances being revitalized even on the White House lawn came approximately a year after he expressed concerns about Red Cross fundraisers being merely an avenue to continue practices that otherwise would be unacceptable in the eyes of the Agencies and the Church.

On July 11, 1918, Ashley expressed his concern over the fundraisers in the middle of discussing other managerial issues requiring the bishop’s attention. “During the past winter much dancing has been had to raise money for Red Cross,” Ashley told him, “I mean the dancers have taken advantage of Red Cross work to continue the old custom. While sums of money was raised in the dance, some Agents had to order the dancers to quit.”<sup>8</sup> At least in this case, the agents seemed to be more alert and protective of the dancing conducted and ended it when they decided it had gotten out of hand. “I think the

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<sup>6</sup> Ashley, “My Dear Bishop, June 23, 1919,” Ashley Papers 1919, A1/6, 1.

<sup>7</sup> Ashley, “My Dear Bishop, June 23, 1919,” Ashley Papers 1919, 1.

<sup>8</sup> Ashley, “My Dear Bishop, July 11, 1918,” Ashley Papers 1918, A1/5. 1.



Missionaries have felt grieved over the matter,” he continued. “The old timers, aided by some younger Indians, some of whom are returned students seem to be always on the alert for a chance to keep up the old customs. And on every reservation there are periodical dances.”<sup>9</sup> These dances, at the time under the protection of a Red Cross fundraiser, continued after the war and sometimes evolved in their nature.

Perhaps the primary concern expressed by the clergy regarding dances was the impact participation would have on the industriousness of Indigenous peoples and their attentiveness to their farms and livestock. In 1920, Philip Deloria delegated a poll response to Dominick Longbull. Deloria believed Longbull would have better first-hand knowledge on the matter having personally observed the dances more than himself.<sup>10</sup> According to Longbull’s observations around the Wakpala area, the dances, “made them to neglect their duties as to work looking after their farms or other things.” He also noted, “those better Christians have their family devotions.”<sup>11</sup> In this instance, Longbull judged the sincerity of congregants both on whether they allowed dances to draw them from their domestic responsibilities but as well as their attentiveness to practicing Episcopal devotions, which acted as a way to train up children in the faith instead of allowing them to be enamored with traditional customs as well.

It was not easy to keep Episcopal families away from exposure to, if not participation in, the dances. Dances often took place at venues not marketed solely for dancing. As Ashley noted back in 1913, fairs were a popular event where dances frequently occurred. In 1920 Joyner reported, “during the early fall in nearly every little

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<sup>9</sup> Ashley, “My Dear Bishop, July 11, 1918,” Ashley Papers 1918, 1.

<sup>10</sup> Philip Deloria, “Dear Brother, Wakpala, S.D. Nov. 17. 20,” B1/53, 1.

<sup>11</sup> Philip Deloria, “Dear Brother, Wakpala, S.D. Nov. 17. 20,” 2.

town surrounding the reservation there are fairs. Just after one fair closes, another one opens up.”<sup>12</sup> Indigenous residents attended these fairs, and Joyner stated: “we may naturally suppose that the ‘purpose’ [for their attendance], is to dance for the entertainment of the spectators.”<sup>13</sup> His concerns and those of his peers only intensified as time went by and they increasingly questioned the motives of dance organizers and the effects these occasions had on the industriousness of their congregants.

Dr. Ashley sent out a discussion questionnaire in the fall of 1920. Addressing his letter as “Dear Brother” he requested the Presbyters and their Native workers consider whether or not the Indian dances and give-away were “detrimental to progress” in Christian and “true civilization.”<sup>14</sup> Ashley continued:

In the minds of many these are preventing true progress. This being so I desire to suggest further:

- (a) That all Christian people upon each Reservation, in a body, let the Superintendents know that the practices are harmful and that Christian public opinion is opposed to them.
- (b) Whenever at the Fourth of July Celebration, and Fair, Dances and other Indian customs are to be held, our workers (white and native) be urged to stay away, and thus mark their disapproval, as well as attending to matters at home.<sup>15</sup>

Reverend Joyner, on Pine Ridge, wrote a treatise in response to Ashley’s questions spanning more than three pages. In response to the first question, he believed Ashley suggestion was good, but recommended it would have been better for each denomination to have already taken the action in September and that readdressing the issue at Convocation would be much more successful among the Indigenous people than letters

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<sup>12</sup> Joyner, “My dear Dr. Ashley,” Pine Ridge, So. Dak. December 17, 1920, Burlson Papers, B1/53, Center for Western Studies, 1-2.

<sup>13</sup> Joyner, “My dear Dr. Ashley,” Pine Ridge, So. Dak. December 17, 1920, 1-2.

<sup>14</sup> Ashley, “Dear Brother, Aberdeen. S.D. September, 16, 1920,” Ashley 1920 A1/7, 1.

<sup>15</sup> Ashley, “Dear Brother, Aberdeen. S.D. September, 16, 1920,” 1.

sent out by Ashley.<sup>16</sup> While he thought Ashley's second suggestion was also good, he pointed out they had been doing so for many years with few results with the same number staying away and the same number disapproving.<sup>17</sup> Joyner searched for a more expedient and effect alternative writing:

Isn't there some better way? Cannot we get some substitutes for Indian dances and give-aways and any other hurtful Indian practices? Is there not some way of rooting it up? Are we as a Christian Church – and when I say Christian Church I include the other two denominations doing work among the Sioux – are we doing all we can to teach the Indian the relation between Christian being and Christian doing? Are we doing our utmost to teach the Indian that there is a most intimate connection between a man's belief in Jesus Christ, and Christian service? Is it not time for Missionaries, white and native, of all denominations in the Sioux countries, to try to pound it into the heads of our native people that no man can hope to be a real Christian, however firm his belief in Jesus Christ may be, as long as he sit[sic] in Idleness and allows his wife and children to go without proper food and proper clothes?<sup>18</sup>

Not only did Joyner call for inter-denominational unity and action using rhetoric denying the validity of every man's salvation if they did not maintain a Euro-Americanized form of daily work, but Joyner also romanticized symbols of the midwestern farm and called for a new series of sermons utilizing these images.

Joyner's campaign for instilling his idea of industriousness began with the articles of clothing a farmer wore and the products he cultivated. "A man should be proud of, and not ashamed of over-alls and work shoes," Joyner wrote, "To be sure, beans and bacon and butter and milk, pigs and poultry, are very common things."<sup>19</sup> He acknowledged some in the audience might think conversations about these simple things might stand in

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<sup>16</sup> Joyner, "My Dear Dr. Ashley, Pine Ridge, So. Dak. October 12, 1920," Ashley 1920, 1.

<sup>17</sup> Joyner, "My Dear Dr. Ashley, Pine Ridge, So. Dak. October 12, 1920," Ashley 1920, 1.

<sup>18</sup> Joyner, "My Dear Dr. Ashley, Pine Ridge, So. Dak. October 12, 1920," Ashley 1920, 2.

<sup>19</sup> Joyner, "My Dear Dr. Ashley, Pine Ridge, So. Dak. October 12, 1920," Ashley 1920, 2.

the way of deeper theological conversation; however, Joyner saw these items as the very core of humanity and nationhood. Joyner claimed: “we can never get around the fact that these common things which I have named above lie at the very basis of the civilization of any land; they are the bed-rock, without which nothing enduring can be built.”<sup>20</sup> Joyner’s argument contains obvious flaws and miscalculations. Joyner’s Euro-centric perspective and claims, for example, actively ignored multiple societies and empires who historically and continually abstained from pork products as well as any society dwelling in climates inconducive to growing his listed crops and livestock.

Joyner acknowledged the controversial potential of his viewpoint and his suggestions for encouraging and regulating industriousness. “I know there are those who will differ with me,” he wrote, “but I do not think any man should be appointed in our Indian country to the Sacred Ministry, unless he can prove to the examiners that he does work his own garden, milk his own cows, and raise enough pork every year to supply his own table.”<sup>21</sup> These tasks took no small percentage of a farmer’s day. Joyner acknowledged there would have to be a few exceptions; however, he did not support freely handing these exceptions to Indigenous ministers. He specified, exceptions should be rare, “where an Indian of the old regime has been advanced to the diaconate.”<sup>22</sup> Joyner believed this would change the attitude of both ministers and laypeople when they saw with what seriousness the ordinary things were being handled with. It is hard to imagine, however, the practicality of these demands considering the strict schedules and requirements laid upon clergy, deacons, and other leadership positions whose

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<sup>20</sup> Joyner, “My Dear Dr. Ashley, Pine Ridge, So. Dak. October 12, 1920,” Ashley 1920, 2.

<sup>21</sup> Joyner, “My Dear Dr. Ashley, Pine Ridge, So. Dak. October 12, 1920,” 3.

<sup>22</sup> Joyner, “My Dear Dr. Ashley, Pine Ridge, So. Dak. October 12, 1920,” 3.

responsibilities often demanded traveling across the reservation if not state. A cow might not be milked if a family called their reverend to a sickbed, for instance. Joyner does not present these potential issues, however.

Instead, Joyner concluded industry was the only hope for Indigenous and the answer to resolving the Church's dancing issue. "Industry is the only hope of much further advancement in the Indian countries," he wrote, "if we can persuade our people to have real homes, cultivate their lands, provide for themselves, it will do more towards uprooting the Indian dances and give-aways and every other hurtful or objectionable Indian custom, than all of the resolutions and petitions we can draw up in the next thousand years."<sup>23</sup> Not only does Joyner despise traditional Indigenous ceremony in this letter, he also disparages Indigenous homes which do not meet his criteria for being a good and "real" home. His expectations were unrealistic to the life of a minister in the Dakotas, and he seemingly half-expected his peers in the clergy to ignore his suggestions. Ironically, there is a scribbled note at the end of his letter asking pardon for the mistakes in the typed letter due to the haste he dictated amidst the rush of his day. Perhaps his religious duties were demanding that day, or perhaps he was busy milking his cows.

In 1921, Philip Deloria answered Burleson's nine question prompt. He too, was discouraged by these dances, but provided a simpler course of action than Joyner had. Deloria believed the moral and religious conditions of the Indigenous people whom he knew was growing worse, and he blamed "Indian dances" as well as "white people's dances," and "drunkenness."<sup>24</sup> This included young people. When asked whether he

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<sup>23</sup> Joyner, "My Dear Dr. Ashley, Pine Ridge, So. Dak. October 12, 1920," Ashley 1920, 3.

<sup>24</sup> Philip Deloria, "Please write your answer in the spaces and return to me as soon as possible," sent by Gertrude Baker on July 20, 1921, B1/53, 2.

believed the increase of Indian dances were an injury to his people, he responded, “Yes. Because lost all good that they had been learned from the Church teaching.”<sup>25</sup> For a minister who had served in the Church for decades, this belief must have been particularly disheartening as he thought the progress of his work was quickly evaporating. He also believed the youngest were doing more dancing than the older. He described “Failure to make arrests” as another influence doing harm. His suggestion to correct such harm was, “Teach people good things.”<sup>26</sup> According to Vine Deloria Jr., Philip Deloria became increasingly concerned over the loss and threats to traditional customs as he progressed with age.<sup>27</sup> Possibly, Deloria was more conflicted about these dances than he demonstrated on paper. Likewise, ministers of his generation might have harbored concerns about the ways dances were conducted or underlying issues they did not make explicitly clear to the bishop and archdeacon in polls like these.

In another response from Standing Rock, Walter Strongheart agreed the dances weakened Indigenous people, but claimed it did not affect their morals. According to him, dances were increasing at Bull Head and Little Eagle but not at Wakpala. Sometimes participants got drunk, but he reported no use of peyote. He said the Give-away was practiced, but he argued it was “not always harmful.”<sup>28</sup> Regarding how the harm of dances might be corrected, Strongheart argued, “The young people need good

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<sup>25</sup> Philip Deloria, “Please write your answer in the spaces and return to me as soon as possible,” sent by Gertrude Baker on July 20, 1921, B1/53, 2.

<sup>26</sup> Philip Deloria, “Please write your answer in the spaces and return to me as soon as possible,” sent by Gertrude Baker on July 20, 1921, 2.

<sup>27</sup> Vine Deloria Jr. Introduction to Ella Deloria’s *Speaking of Indians*, see Introduction.

<sup>28</sup> Walter Strongheart, “Please write your answers in the spaces and return to me as soon as possible,” sent by Gertrude Baker on July 20, 1921, B1/53, 3.

clean pleasures,” such as athletics, a pool table at St. Elizabeth’s, music, and white dancing at the school.”<sup>29</sup>

Stephen King, an Indigenous minister writing from Kyle, South Dakota, believed the moral and religious condition of those Indigenous people he knew was indeed decreasing. He also exhibited disappointment in the young people writing, “they did not use anything what they learned at the School. But they go back to old Indian custom.”<sup>30</sup> He also noted the government allowed these Indian dances to take place and that peyote was also utilized.<sup>31</sup> King provided an antidote concerning the give-away which he found harmful and Fourth of July celebrations writing: “The celebration of the 4<sup>th</sup> of July is connecting with an Indian custom is harm for the Indians. The Indian chief made a necklace out of a penny, and distributed to the children, (that’s mean urged to give-away) so the parents works out for the next 4<sup>th</sup>, and when the 4<sup>th</sup>. comes, they makes feast and gave-away all what they got the properties, money and horses too.”<sup>32</sup> Practicing forms of traditional dances on Fourth of July was not isolated to the war or post-war years. American flags flew over celebrations to safeguard the dances from Euro-American suspicion or concern for violence.<sup>33</sup> During the war, these holiday dances often brought in copious amounts of money for the Red Cross and the war effort.<sup>34</sup> These giveaways continued after the war in honor of family members and the practice continued into the

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<sup>29</sup> Walter Strongheart, “Please write your answers in the spaces and return to me as soon as possible,” 1.

<sup>30</sup> Stephen H. King, “Please write your answers in the spaces and return to me as soon as possible, Aug. 4, 1921,” B1/53, 1.

<sup>31</sup> Stephen H. King, “Please write your answers in the spaces and return to me as soon as possible, Aug. 4, 1921,” 1.

<sup>32</sup> Stephen H. King, “Please write your answers in the spaces and return to me as soon as possible, Aug. 4, 1921,” 1.

<sup>33</sup> Guillot, *First Americans*, 113.

<sup>34</sup> Guillot, *First Americans*, 84-87.

1920s, to the dismay of many missionaries who saw the events as expeditious methods of losing the material gains their congregants made over the years.

A few days after Stephen King's reply, Daniel Red Eyes, a Helper from the Corn Creek Districts, replied to the bishop. Red Eyes believed Peyote associations were increasing among young people for the worse and that it was "a tempt to each one. and therefore loosing self-preservation by the churches and by living."<sup>35</sup> Red Eyes also expressed that the previous five years were, "not like this."<sup>36</sup> Red Eyes feared the effect peyote would have on its partakers spiritually and physically. While Red Eyes feared perhaps for the worst, Joyner responded in 1921 with mild optimism.

Always prone to write more than his colleagues, Joyner wrote a lengthy letter once again on July 22, from Pine Ridge. His optimism stemmed from the fact he believed conditions were not worse given "all that is being done for the Indian by the Church and by the Government," he did think, however, if conditions were not worse than there were, "making painfully slow progress."<sup>37</sup> Joyner recognized the things which clearly worried the bishop were a result of gradual change over time. "The question is not acute nor has it come about suddenly." Concerning the perceived instigators of backsliding he wrote:

Among the causes we may mention the change from the old life to the new, gasoline and motor cars, the cheap white dance near the reservation, the fairs held in little towns near by and the Indian dance, which I believe is not more hurtful than the above. But above all else the great outstanding cause of immorality, irreligion and poverty is Idleness. I came to this conclusion years ago, I have not changed. I have been preaching industry in season and out of season. I have been quite alone. My position has not been popular. My message has not always been well received. For years we have been in a rut. We have been satisfied with the status quo. The

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<sup>35</sup> Daniel Red Eyes, "My dear Faithfully Bishop H. L. Burleson, Aug. 9 1921," B1/53, 1.

<sup>36</sup> Daniel Red Eyes, "My dear Faithfully Bishop H. L. Burleson, Aug. 9 1921," B1/53, 1.

<sup>37</sup> Joyner, "My dear Bishop," July 22, 1921, Burleson papers, B1/53, Center for Western Studies, 1.



emmense [sic] gatherings and enormous offerings at our annual Convocations while most inspiring and in many instances marks of great sacrifice are the very means that take our eyes away from one of the greatest needs of our people.<sup>38</sup>

He called such things as divorce, the Omaha Dance, and the Give-away as “recognized evils and anyone who knows anything knows that the Omaha dance and the give away are relics of barbarism.”<sup>39</sup>

The Episcopal Church was not the only denomination who desired to control and abolish dances. In October of 1922, representative missionaries from several denominations found in the Dakotas adopted six resolutions and sent them to the Department of the Interior. They included:

1. That the Indian form of gambling and lottery known as the ‘ituranpi’ (translated ‘give away’) be prohibited.
2. That the Indian dances be limited to one in each month in the daylight hours of one day in the midweek, and at one center in each district; the months of March and April, June, July, and August being excepted.
3. That none take part in the dances or be present who are under 50 years of age.
4. That a careful propaganda be undertaken to educate public opinion against the dance and to provide a healthy substitute.
5. That a determined effort be made by the Government employees in cooperation with the missionaries to persuade the management of fairs and ‘round-ups’ in the towns adjoining the reservations not to commercialize the Indian by soliciting his attendance in large numbers for show purposes.
6. That there be close cooperation between the Government employees and the missionaries in those matters which affect the moral welfare of the Indians.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Joyner, “My dear Bishop,” July 22, 1921, Burleson papers, B1/53, Center for Western Studies, 1.

<sup>39</sup> Joyner, “My dear Bishop,” July 22, 1921, Burleson papers, B1/53, 2.

<sup>40</sup> Chas. H. Burke, Commissioner, “Department of the Interior Office of Indian Affairs: Indian Dancing, February 14, 1923, 1.

These objectives exhibited an attempt to make dancing easier to supervise and control by limiting locations and standardizing the times dances occurred. In addition, the chosen times likely discouraged heavy use of substances such as alcohol by designating the time a dance should end and placing it in the middle of the week. Most importantly, these missionaries wanted to end the generational passing of traditions from adults to children by only allowing the oldest generations to continue to participate in hopes the practice would become irrelevant upon their deaths. Lastly, they wanted greater coordination between government employees and the missionaries, not unlike the days of Grant's reconstruction policy, especially in order to end the corruption they believed thwarted the original spiritual aspects of the dances but also encouraged their continuation. For example, David W. Clark wrote concerning the moral aspect of the dances at Crow Creek in 1923 saying: "The young people are drawn into actual participation in the dance which has now degraded into a low class Indian and low class white dance. The leaders and promoters of the dance today are not dancers, with few exceptions, but promote and encourage dancing for selfish purposes. Home life, family life, individual morals are destroyed, broken up, lowered."<sup>41</sup> His primary concern was the participation of young people as opposed to elders who would theoretically take the practice with them to the grave, and he saw the Give-away as the most significant aspect of the dance.<sup>42</sup>

On April 29, 1923, *The Rapid City Daily Journal's* second page headline read: "Indian Can't Dance During the Summer: Commissioner Burke Won't Let Them Waste

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<sup>41</sup> David W. Clark, "Concerning Indian Dances," B1/ 53, 1.

<sup>42</sup> David W. Clark, "Concerning Indian Dances," 1.

Time.”<sup>43</sup> This article drew from new additions to Burke’s Circular No. 1665 produced in 1921. Though the circular stated support for dancing in and of itself, it claimed dances which included “self-torture” or dances which caused participants to neglect homes due to the time committed to dancing and traveling among other stipulations would be restricted.<sup>44</sup> The Commissioner and former South Dakota Representative, banned ceremonial dances across the country as the *Rapid City Daily Journal* reported. Burke had a particular interest in ending the “Snake Dance” practiced by Hopi peoples; however, his general premise was the dances took too much time away from productivity in the growing season.<sup>45</sup> The stance taken by Burke incorporated the wishes of many missionaries across denominations including those in the Episcopal Diocese such as Bishop Burleson.

The general consensus of Church workers, both Indigenous and white, was that the traditional dances were a detriment to the community causing financial strain on families as well as a reverse in displayed Christian devotion. To some, white dances posed a similar problem to Indigenous families when attended without moderation and or with the accompaniment of alcohol. Most of all, Episcopal leaders wanted to eliminate the opportunity for students to join in the traditions continued by their elders.

Some workers did express skepticism over whether the dances or the giveaways themselves were a problem while others chose not to answer the questions for undefined reasons. Regardless of the animosity of Church leaders, the post-war era saw staggering

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<sup>43</sup> “Indian Can’t Dance During the Summer: Commissioner Burke Won’t Let Them Waste Time,” *The Rapid City Daily Journal*, Rapid City, South Dakota, April 29, 1923, 2.

<sup>44</sup> For more information regarding Circular No. 1665 and its revisions, see Clyde Ellis’ *A Dancing People: Powwow Culture on the Southern Plains*, (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2003), 14-15.

<sup>45</sup> “Indian Can’t Dance During the Summer: Commissioner Burke Won’t Let Them Waste Time,” 2.

increases in traditional activities often conducted in the name of patriotism, raising money, and honoring veterans. In addition, ministers experienced frustration by what they saw as BIA Agents' leniency in their enforcement of rules and a failure to prevent traditional dances and peyote use. As seen in the action of Commissioner Burke in 1923, however, the general demeanor of the federal government was still hostile toward Indigenous ceremony and traditions. In the coming years, Commissioner John Collier partially reversed these policies as championed aspects of Indigenous culture and especially endorse the production of Indigenous arts.<sup>46</sup> Freedom to practice Indigenous religions without prosecution, on the other hand, would not become federally recognized until the American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978. In the meantime, the Episcopal Church needed to navigate between the priorities and expectations of their congregants and leaders in order to survive in any significant way on the reservations.

## **Conclusion**

Despite federal and societal pressures, Indigenous peoples could negotiate their place in the Diocese and evaluate other possible options. Some people joined the Catholic Church or participated in the Native American Church before attending Sunday services at the local Episcopal church. Furthermore, the language ministers and translators conducted services in continued to be Dakota despite many in the congregations having attended boarding schools or other forms of English education. This remained the case, in part, because of ministers like Philip Deloria, William Holmes, and Edward Ashley who

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<sup>46</sup> For information regarding the tensions and collaborations between denominational leaders and Collier's new BIA agenda see: David W. Daily, *Battle for the BIA: G.E.E. Lindquist and the Missionary Crusade Against John Collier*, (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2004).

both accommodated Dakota speakers as well as helped to promote the continuation of Dakota materials. The most significant factor in the continued practice of Dakota in Episcopal settings was the persistence and resilience of the large Lakota, Dakota, and Nakota population within the Diocese who continued to speak Dakota dialects and championed the production of new relevant materials.

Dakotas often set precedent for their activities in the Episcopal Church rather than let themselves be swayed into giving up their identities in favor of an Anglicized Christianity foreign to them. Instead of conforming to expectations of the missionaries and agents, they sang their own Dakota songs and integrated their culture and values into the Episcopal Diocese. As a result, Episcopal leaders faced the choice of accepting these aspects of their Diocese and building their religious curriculums accordingly or relinquishing their relevancy to the congregation. Though the federal and denominational education systems expected them to learn the English words and texts as children, it was settlers like Bradley and missionaries like Ashley who hummed the tunes to the hymns until they learned the Dakota words.

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