George First Rider of the Blood Reserve was born in 1904. He had no formal schooling but became an accomplished horseman and worked for a time on the rodeo circuit. After working as a farmer he ended up in jail as a result of alcoholism and theft. He attributes his reform to his conversion to Christianity.

He prides himself on his ability as a storyteller and on his knowledge of Blood culture, particularly the holy societies, many of which he joined as a young man.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- Story of the origin of the Ghost Dance.
- Story of the acquisition of the Shaggy Pipe.

Okay, now we will tell a story of the Ghost Dance. In the past the old people that tell stories they gather together. One man will not work alone on the stories they are to tell. There will be a group of men and one will tell a story and an argument will come up until the truth is given. Now the old people that tell stories said a man had been sick for a long time. He was treated but he never got better. When he died he was taken to the bush on a hillside and he was laid down and while he laid there he heard someone giving invitation calls. The ones that were called were dead long ago and he knew them
all. So he also went as he was also a dead man. As he came to the people that were assembled they said, "We are going to have a dance." So they sang. They drummed on a rawhide. When they started dancing they mingled. Women, children, men - as they were dancing they started to disappear. All he was hearing now was the drumming. He didn't see the singers any more. Then he saw a patch or flash. He was hearing them shouting while they were dancing. All he saw then was a flash. It glowed and then the noise started. It was going up into the heavens in the northern direction. He was just hearing them making noise on and on. He couldn't hear them any more when they were far off. The distance looked like a fog with flashes. These were their motions in dancing. They left a trail in their dance and the old people called the misty looking thing the Wolf Trail (Milky Way).

And now they are saying, after that a story was told. We said that the white men from the woods were dancing. The dead man came back to life. He came back to the camps. When the relatives saw him they were afraid of him. He was four days at his burial place, then he came back to the camps. "There is nothing wrong with me," they were told by him. "I naturally came home. There are men. They told me, 'Nothing is going to happen to you yet. Go home, come back some other time. You will put up a dance for the people.' That is the reason why I came home." Then the relatives went to his burial place. They took back what he was buried with. It is called They Robbed The Grave. They came back with the stuff. The man lived and then he told them, "I am going to put up a dance. We will tell the old people. And now, as we are going to have a dance, if someone thinks to take the dance that I am going to put up, this is the dance of the ghosts. You know that the ghosts have a different kind of life and now if someone wants to boil the berry soup for the dance that I am going to put up he can boil the berry soup." The other one, we will say he is ambitious, and we will also say he doesn't hesitate then. We will say he is determined to do everything; that is the meaning of this. So he told him "I will prepare a berry soup and you will transfer your dance to me so it will carry on." So he boiled a beef tongue in blood.

When the tongue was brought into the tipi the ground was not scraped. The incense burning place was not scraped. Earth was just spread out on the ground. The meaning of spreading earth on the ground - a white earth is taken and emptied on the ground. That is what it is; the scraping of the ground is different. It will be scraped. The other one is just spreading of the earth on the ground. A small pipe is there. A small piece is chipped off from a manure and this is placed by the incense burning place at the back. The pipe bowl faces to the right and the stem to the north. The chip of manure is there and the pipe is put there leaning against this small piece of manure. The pipe is not supposed to fall, the small pipe. The one that is going to officiate the ceremony sits even with it. He is just dressed neat. He didn't wear a medicine hat or anything else. He is just dressed neat. He
owns the incense material. He owns the incense tong. It's the stick with two prongs to pick up the hot charcoal that is called the incense tong. He owns them and he owns the small pipe. The one that the tongue is going to be boiled for, himself, he owns the chopped tobacco and he fills up the pipe. He owns the tamp stick. He used it on the pipe and set it down. On the left hand side where he sat at the back, on the right hand side that is where the woman sat and the one that is sponsoring the ceremony sat on the left hand side. This is the one that prepared the boiled tongue.

Okay, when the participants were all seated they know the young people. It could be one girl and a boy or they could be both boys or they could be both girls. They didn't wear masks. There were no masks in those times. They just painted their faces in a horrible way and messed up their hair. Some say some would just tie their hair into a great big topknot. This is how they're dressed and there they sat by the doorway. "We are all seated. Where is the tongue?" The one that prepared the tongue had a good knife. He handed over the knife and an oval shaped tool (knife sharpener). An oval shaped tool is to sharpen knives on; it was handed over with the others. The tongue was painted with black ochre. The one that prepared the tongue was initiated into it; he held the knife. They held the knife over the incense. His hand was then held towards the tongue to cut it again. The knife is held over the incense and once more towards the tongue. There was an elderly man who got up and counted coups. "I was successful at a certain place. I took a lot of grub." So to cut the tongue at another place. "I stole some grub. I never was caught with the groceries that I stole." So to cut the tongue, the elderly man will count four coups.

The man will hold the knife over the incense four times and on the fourth time he will be initiated into cutting but he will not actually cut the tongue. The woman that is going to boil the tongue will cut the tongue. She cuts it up and boils it. When it boils into the soup and then blood is added. And they had other food to serve besides the tongue. When everything was done they ate. The tongue was not a very big tongue. It came from a young buffalo bull and the tongue is cut right in half and one half is served with the soup to the one that sat at the head. We will say he is the one that is officiating the ceremony. After the feast the painting of faces commences and then they will sing. They'll sing only one song, then the most renowned children started to go forward to have their faces painted. They'd give some tobacco or some dry goods. They'd put these down in front of the shaman and the shaman will paint the face with ochre and with a border of black paint around the face and one black dot on the nose. This is done on the little children. Some of the elderly people will have their faces painted too. The people that sat around then all went forward and their faces are all painted and they too paid the one that painted their faces.

After their faces were all painted they sat down. Some of the
ones that had their faces painted went out and the ones that sat inside just sat inside. The ones that dressed and painted themselves like clowns sat inside too. Of them there would be one that will dress like a clown. There are some that are coming back in to watch them. The dance commences, the Ghost Dance. And there it started. It is going to start and there is someone, they are helping the ceremonialist, he went to the door and went out. He went in the direction where the sun rises and stood there as the ceremony is about to start and he gave out invitation calls. Whoever he knows that has been dead long ago, that has supernatural powers and that has a famous name, a chief, that is the one he invites. And then he'll give an invitation call to someone else who is a famous elderly man and a chief. He invites him. He calls him by his name. "You are invited." And he again calls another person who is famous and who is a chief and a wealthy man. He calls him. He also tells him, "You are being invited. There is something that is boiled for you again." He calls a different person who is famous and who is a chief and a gentle person. "You are being invited. Go and attend. Here is something boiled for you." He then comes in. As he enters the participants all gave thanks. Nothing is reserved. Inside a person will sit anywhere and whoever wants to go in will go in. It is not said that such a kind of person will not go in. Who believes in the Ghost Dance will just go in and whoever is eager to see the Ghost Dance will just go in. That is how it is. After they are seated they sang. Their songs are mysterious game songs (hand game songs). They sound a little different, the way they were sung. So they sang. It was the same song but he sang it four times over.

When he sang the other song he made the hand game motion. He crossed his arms, the right hand on top of the left hand with folded fists, and made the hand game motion while he was performing. He then tried to get up. He just tried to get up and sat down. They kept singing and he was performing and again he tried to get up. He didn't get up. He sat down again and still performing. The ones that sat around performed in the same manner. Nobody was dressed in dancing outfits, just their ordinary clothes. The people in the past don't wear slippery foot gear (shoes). They wore moccasins. They never leave their robes while they were performing. They had their robes over them. They didn't sit bare and they performed. They tried to get up for the third time at this point. The fourth time then they got up. When they stood up, after they all stand, they stopped singing and they all made a relief sound "sho-o-o-o-wah." When they stood at ease then they started praying.

They didn't pray to any holy being. They prayed to the ghosts and the ones that died long ago. They will call a dead person and they will tell him, "You are a saint now. May the one that prepared the soup and all these little children live a healthy life." They call on the dead and all the people that stood around prayed. Whoever is praying will call and pray to the one that he knows that is dead long ago. They didn't listen to each other. They just started to pray and they didn't sing.
After they had prayed they sang. The song is a hand game song. They sang it a little different. He stood up with his robe. He didn't have it secure around the waist. He wore it low, crossways. It's like this. He didn't cover his right arm. His left arm was covered half ways to the elbow. He wore it low, crossways. That is how he held his robe. The men didn't get up to dance without their robes. The same with the women. The shaman sang. As he sang they didn't sing. Only one song. There are a lot of other songs that they sing. As he started singing he started swinging his right arm in a to-and-fro motion. They were all singing and they started to dance. They danced. Nobody danced away. They didn't sit down and when they started singing again they started dancing. The ones that sat by the doorway didn't start acting crazy yet. They were dancing again and again moving their heads. We say "slipping neck motion"; that is how they danced. They are not going to act funny yet. They started dancing again and again they stopped dancing and then time rushed. At this point they sang different songs in every dance.

You will hear the songs. As the shaman started to sing again the song sounded a little faster. The shaman started to dance forward very slow with trotlike steps. He didn't dance very hard. Now he picks up the pipe at this point, the small pipe filled with tobacco. He takes it at this point. He held the stone (pipe bowl) in his right hand and the stem with his left hand. He held it in this way. The shaman stood in front of where the others stood. He didn't walk on the incense burning place. He just got very close to it and stood a little ways from it. As he came dancing to the incense burning place he stopped dancing. Then he prayed. He held the pipe towards the incense. It's the mouthpiece of the stem that he held over the incense. He held it up and turned it around to the left and he held the stone (pipe bowl) over the incense. He is standing up. Now this time the man had his robe secured around the waist. After he held the pipe bowl over the incense he turned it around again and the mouthpiece over the incense. He turned it around again and held the pipe bowl over the incense. Then he turned it around and held it up and he prayed. He didn't pray to any holy being. He prayed to the moon and to the ghosts.

He prayed and the participants started to sing faster, swinging their arms in a to-and-fro motion. The clowns stepped forward too. They didn't get to the fireplace and they just stood there. The ones that sat inside were watching them and they started to perform and act funny. The shaman was praying and the participants swung their arms real hard and singing very hard they danced and danced. They sang one song four times over. They didn't make turns while they were dancing like to turn around to face the wall and to turn around again facing the other way. They remained in their positions and swinging their arms real hard; then they stopped singing. The man that is praying held the pipe up and he lowered the pipe and held it over the incense. "Okay, earthly being, here is your smoke." The people stopped singing; the people all sat down. The one
that prepared the soup stepped forward too. He didn't walk in front of the incense, he just stood by the shaman and as the shaman raised the pipe he made a brushing downward motion from the head down to the elbows to the shaman and told him, "May we get to be old." Then he took the pipe. He stepped to the right and walked towards the door and sat down with it. A stick is already set by the fire. It is for lighting the pipe. It didn't burn into flames. It just got into a hot charcoal and the small pipe was lit. He puffed on it and blew a smoke on the palm of his hand and made a brushing downward motion on his side, twice on each side of him, and then he walked back with it. And the one that officiated and that carried on, that prayed with the pipe was given back the pipe; he did the same thing too. He blew a smoke on the palm of his right hand and made a downward brushing motion on himself and on the other side. He made two downwards brushing motions, on his right side with the smoke that he blew on his hand and twice on his left side. And the pipe had burned out by now as it was a small pipe but they were puffing on the pipe. The pipe was immediately handed to the one that sat nearest the shaman and it was handed down. All the ones that sat inside touched themselves with their smokes twice on each side. It was handed past the door and the clowns also smoked and made the same motions and the pipe was passed on. And when it was given back to the shaman he took it and put it back where it was before. The one that prepared the soup had sat down and after they had smoked and after they had packed away the pipe they demonstrated what are called the Mystic Eyes (ghosts). How they gave away their dance it is not called the Ghost Dance; it is called the Mystic Eye Dance. The Ghost Dance sounds bad. Now life has differed gradually.

After the pipe was packed away they demonstrated where the Mystic Eyes (ghosts) come from and their dance. Their taboos are not to tell lies; they will not sing falsely. They are instructed by the shaman just the way their transferals were and the dance went into full swing. This is the last dance. The ghost dancer danced only four times. Now they are through with the pipe and now dance is going to be obstrusive(?) and now the dance went into full swing again.

They didn't mingle in dancing. They remained where they stood. A child that is sitting in there, if she or he can dance, will dance. There is not one that will not dance. The dance got under way in full swing again. The songs are not fast dancing songs. You will hear them; they will be sung. So they started dancing, swinging their arms in a to-and-fro motion. They danced in a punting-like motion and the only one that danced forward was the one that sat at the back and he danced in line with the others to three dancing songs. He was just watching. The ones that he is leading in dancing, the ones that sat by the doorway, the clowns, danced a little forward. They didn't jump around but they were just making light bounding steps. They came forward a little. They didn't come forward too far and they started to perform with funny motions. The shaman who sat at the back was just watching the participants. They were
singing, singing the song that we danced to and swinging their arms in a to-and-fro motion. And they never leave their robes.

And the ones that stood at the doorway, their robes were lonely blankets (gray blankets), ugly blankets that they wore. They didn't let them go. They were raggy. Maybe what they wore were saddle blankets, and there they were performing and acting funny. If one of the dancers laughs at the clown and the shaman will point the one that laughed and it's a mystery. When the one that laughed is pointed at he will not be able to laugh any more. Supposing he laughed again he will be pointed at again and it is a mystery. They will pity themselves. They will pity themselves and they will stand there crying, those who laughed. Supposing if someone else laughed, even a child, the shaman will point at him. He will not tell him or her to keep quiet, he'll just point at the person.

The songs that they are dancing to are all game songs. They are not the hand game songs. They didn't sound fast; they sounded slow. The game songs, they are noticed that they are game songs. They kept on dancing. At this point they danced long. The ones that are dancing by the door will suddenly dance around facing the door at this time and I must say they would wiggle their rear ends while they're dancing. They didn't wave their hands but they just swung their arms hard and when they noticed that the singing was going to stop they danced slowly towards the door and out and the participants stopped singing. So they sat down. There were pipes set ready. These pipes were filled with tobacco and they sat down for a sociable smoke.

The one that the Ghost Dance was transferred to him wore a head ornament. He wore a head ornament. No clothing was given to him in the transferal, just a head ornament. His head ornament was a plume. He was painted with real paint. There are some that say they are painted with white earth. No, they are not painted with white earth. A dead person will not be painted with white earth. Just the way a dead person lies his face will just be painted. The elderly man, the one that the soup is prepared for, the reason why he sat with this elderly man - they didn't sit together. The elderly man sat on the north side and then the spread out earth was designed. Before it was designed this same elderly man counted coups. Then it is designed. This is where the incense was burned. It is called the Spread Out Earth. It is not called the Scraped Earth, it is called the Spread Out Earth. The elderly man that sat there is called Child Old Man. "Child Old Man to design it. Here is the black ochre." And he explained why he took the black ochre. "Okay, here is the paint to design it," and again he explained how he took the paint. Okay, the yellow ochre, and again he explained about the yellow ochre just how he can tell about it. Then the white clay. With the white clay he counts coups about what he did successfully during the winter. The designs were four. Those are called - the Water Bundle Society worded them in songs as the sun dogs as they are so called. The Ghost Dance, the ghosts will imitate
everything. So that is how it came to be there. The Bloods still transfer the Ghost Dance amongst themselves. It came from Montana. The people did it accurately. It's a one big bundle. I saw it. The contents of the bundle are all from the ghosts; they're in a big bag. These ghost stuff must weigh about fifty pounds. That is what the South Peigans transfer amongst themselves. They are called the supernatural possessions.

Diane: What was in the bag?

George: They're all ghost bones and some other ghost stuff are in the bag. Ghost stuff, ghost property are all in the bag. Those are called the supernatural possessions. A man that is on the war path will take it along. Not the whole bag. He'll take some of the items to war. It is said that they will not be noticed when they steal as you can't see a ghost. The songs to this bundle are very nice. The South Peigans transfer this bundle to the renowned children. The Ghost Dance originated from the bundle and the lying-in also originated from the ghosts.

The Shaggy Pipe was not built by a person that is still breathing. It's a mystery. The ghosts came to life and they built it. The man that received the Shaggy Pipe, the same thing happened to him. He was laid in a bush on a hillside at this time when the dogs barked; they all howled. The dogs were howling and running. Some of the dogs were like as if they were going to bite. The dogs were howling away to the bushes on the hillside. Drumming was heard. A Medicine Pipe Dance went into full swing. Everybody was awakened by it and they heard the ones that were singing songs of praise. The one that was laid on a scaffold came back the next morning. He came back with what is called the Shaggy Pipe. "This was given to me," he said and while he lived on earth he captured a man with it. The one that was captured with it thought the Shaggy Pipe was a false bundle so he refused it. It is said that he didn't even last four days and he died. The people were scared to take the pipe. Very few people took the pipe. That is why the Shaggy Pipe was not transferred to very many people. The ones that took the pipe don't live very long and they die. Nobody cared for it. People were afraid of it and after the last one that owned the pipe died his relatives didn't keep the pipe and so again it was taken back to the grave.

There was a Blackfoot Indian, his name is Seen Afar. We don't which one of the See Afar he was the one. The dogs started barking. The man that was sleeping jumped up and ran making loud grievous sounds. He got up and ran. His wife grabbed him and his boys that were all sitting there grabbed him too and he was making loud grievous sounds. He told them, "Let me go. Here is the Shaggy Pipe. I am captured with it." But they wouldn't let him go. They thought that he had a nightmare but they had a firm hold on him so a fire was built. They used to say that a fur is burned and the stinking scent will wake them up. So a fur was burned with a stinking scent for him and so
he quieted down. He told them, "You have mistreated me. We are not supposed to refuse the Shaggy Pipe. I was captured with it now." And the elderly Blackfoot Indians came into his tipi and he told them what had happened and they advised him to accept the pipe. And as it was summer, morning came. He was just preparing himself during the day. Whoever he knows of the elderly men are pious men, were praying for him. The ones that have ghost charms, when a person's spirit is going to come to him, it is called The One That Owns A Ghost Charm. His ghost charm is a ghost, and when that ghost is coming to him it is called Setting Up A Lodge. They started setting up lodges as it was day. "Tell your spirit to go and tell the ghosts that the one they captured will be there this evening." So messages were sent to the ghosts. The ones that sent the messages were real people. They were sending messages. He'll go and transfer the Shaggy Pipe to him. The pipe was at the burial place for a long time. He went to the ghosts so he went and as he was looking ahead he saw the scaffold here. It's a scaffold built with tipi poles so he laid down and darkness came. It was not long into the night. He wasn't gone to sleep yet but he held his robe over his head. He laid there. There was nothing wrong with him. He was not ill, but he just purposely went to get the pipe. Then he heard someone giving invitation calls. He knew the ones that were invited that are dead long ago. He didn't see them but he just knew that they were being invited and from one direction he faintly heard some singers.

Ah, they are singing Medicine Pipe owners. As he laid there he heard the sloping of mouths at his feet in "o-o-o," and someone immediately sang a song of praise. A ghost was singing a song of praise for him.

The dogs started barking at the camps and the people all came out and they heard the one that was singing a song of praise. A song of praise was sung for the one that was lying on the ground. Whoops have been done for him and he was captured at that point and the people at the camps just sat back. Medicine Pipe Dance went in full swing in the bush on the hillside. The capturing song was sung then. The people knew that he was carried into the tipi. It wasn't long when it went into full swing. The people were not sleeping. They were hearing the ones that were having a dance; the ones that were having a Medicine Pipe dance. The people said, "The transferal is commencing," and then it was quiet. It's a mystery as the ghosts, the women are buried with their dishes. The berry soups, they were that pure they drank them.

So this was the man that brought back the Shaggy Pipe. He never did transfer it and he never did capture anyone with it and he lived with the Shaggy Pipe and a dance was never put up for the Shaggy Pipe. They never had a dance with the Shaggy Pipe like they used to have with the Medicine Pipes. It was owned by one person. He didn't have his wife for a partner; he owned it alone himself. And it was never opened to know what it is. Before it was taken to the grave and when it was first brought in it was all in plumes; that is why it was called the Shaggy
Pipe. And as it was brought back again, as the man was buried with it, and when it was brought back again it was never opened and it laid around and the man died. It laid around and the ones that were keeping it were always getting haunted by it so at last it was disposed of again and that was the end of the existence of the Shaggy Pipe. These were the Ghost Dance.

A man that was with a war party was the only survivor and he was walking along. He slept at a certain place and he heard a man singing coming towards him. The words in his song were, "I love that tree and that was where he was buried." When the man came to him he heard him hoot like an owl from above. He got up and his tobacco. "Here, smoke this. May I be cunning and may I get home happily." He didn't go away from the place but he curled up again. At this point the man approached him. The man told him, "Sonny, I am glad that you came neighborly. I have lived here for a very long time. Now I give you my home. All the birds that fly will be an easy prey to you with it." The lying-in came from the ghost dancers too. How can a real person capture anything that flies - the eagle? It is called, the only way a person can explain it, his transferal has concluded. It is not a transferal. It will be called, the older people called it, After The Ghost Had Provided Him. After he had given him instructions what to do he went home; he got home happily.

Okay, he invited the people. Every time he sleeps more songs came to him and he dreams about the ones that he learn. And then at this time he invited the old people. He told them, "I am not going to go fancy lying." Fancy lying is a person will go away and sleep in various places to gain supernatural powers, like to be a shaman. "Now I am going to lie in." Now he is going to lie in the ghost digging. Inside the tipi all

the upright pillows that linked pillows (backrests) were all put down. Blankets were just laid around the tipi and earth was spread out the ground, was not scraped. The earth spread out to the back. The woman was told, "Now your food containers and make some pemmican with those blade roast dried meat." They put their drippings in a bowl made out of tripe. "Don't ruin the tripe bowl with her grease in it." They are called the strained grease. "And the food container with the pemmican, don't ruin that too. You will put them here side by side." Okay, the man that is going to sing the Water Bundle society also sang the lying-in songs. There are a lot of them. You will hear them in the future; I will sing them - the lying-in songs. Then he started to instruct his helpers. He told them, "Beware. Don't mend your moccasin in this tipi, I might get pinched. And don't eat any rose hips because they will be scratching themselves." There are some obscene words that he said for the people that are sitting in the tipi not to sleep. An eagle will be just sitting and sleeping, he won't eat. He told them, "There is a coyote that I have killed and skinned it." And he cut a hole in the ribs and smeared it with blood. It is called Cutting A Hole In The Chest. And he cut the neck off of the buffalo that he slaughtered and he stuck
the neck into the hide that he skinned from the coyote and the
hole that he cut in the chest. He cut a hole on the skin on
the rib side and the meat was showing. He carried it away.

On a hilltop where the view is clear all around, he laid down
the coyote. So he started digging. He dug and dug like the
way we dig the ghosts (a grave). He dug a hollow just where
his ribs were going to be and on the left side he dug another
hollow. He had the dirt that he scooped out on his robe and
walks away with the dirt and empties it on another dirt by a
den. He took the dirt to various places. He must have taken a
lot away. Then he took some twigs and made a floor over the
dugout and he threw some grass on top. Then the coyote was
laid on top, then he went back home. Then it started. It is
called the Singing For Luck. Then at that point after they got
through singing for good luck they sat up all night. He took
off just when the daylight was coming; his robe was a fur robe.
He stopped at a distance from the dugout and he picked up a
willow and turned around brushing the grass to cover his
tracks. He went backward all the way to the top. When he got
to the place at this point the coyote had been there all night
and the magpies had discovered it. When he got there he folded
his fur robe. He stood where the sun rises from (east side).
He swung his robe around and slammed it on the ground and
the fur robe sound like a gun shot. At this point he gave an
invitation call to the ghosts.

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### Notes ###
- IH-AA.005 refers to the inventory number.
- GHOST DANCE indicates the associated category.
- The numbers 2-12 indicate specific pages or references.