

White Cloud, the prophet, was Black Hawk's evil genius. He was a shrewd, crafty Indian, half Winnebago and half Sac, possessing much influence over both nations from his assumption of sacred talents, and was at the head of a Winnebago village some thirty-five miles above the mouth of the Rock. He had many traits of character similar to those possessed by Tecumseh's brother, but in a less degree. His hatred of the whites was inveterate; he appears to have been devoid of humane sentiments; he had a reckless disposition, and seemed to enjoy sowing the seeds of disorder for the simple pleasure of witnessing a border chaos. He was about forty years of age when his sinister agitation bore fruit; was nearly six feet in height, stout and athletic; had a large, broad face; a short, blunt nose; full eyes, large mouth, thick lips, a full head of shaggy hair, and his general appearance indicated deliberate, self-contented savagery. In council the prophet displayed much zeal and persuasive oratory. In the matter of dress he must at times have been picturesque. An eye-witness, who was in attendance on a Pottawattomie council wherein the prophet was urging the cause of Black Hawk, describes the wizard as dressed in a faultless white buckskin suit, fringed at the seams; wearing a towering head-dress of the same material, capped with a bunch of fine eagle feathers; each ankle girt with a wreath of small sleigh-bells which jingled at every step, while in his nose and ears were ponderous gold rings gently tinkling one against the other as he shook his ponderous head in the warmth of harangue.¹

In the spring of 1830 Black Hawk and his band returned from an unsuccessful hunt to find their town almost completely shattered, many of the graves plowed over, and the whites more abusive than ever. During the winter the squatters, who had been seven years illegally upon the ground, had finally preëmpted a few quarter-sections of

¹ The name of the prophet, in the Winnebago tongue, was Waubakeeshik, meaning "white eye," having reference to the fact that one of his pupils was without color. Pioneers now living, who remember the prophet, differ in opinion as to whether he was totally blind in that organ. He died among the Winnebagos in 1840 or 1841.