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Yanktonai Sioux Water Colors: Cultural Remembrances of John Saul. By Martin Brokenleg and Herbert T. Hoover. Sioux Falls, South Dakota: Center for Western Studies, 1993. Frontispiece, foreword, introduction, the plates, notes on the plates, index. 66 pp. \$29.95.

John Saul, a Yanktonai, grew up at Fort Thompson on the Crow Creek Reservation in South Dakota. He was trained as a blacksmith, but he became a craftsman in many arts before being employed by the Works Progress Administration Art Project to recreate traditional objects, build model villages, and paint murals. Sometime during his work for the WPA, John Saul found time to paint twenty-three water colors depicting various aspects of traditional plains Indian life. For the first time, full color reproductions of these paintings are now available to the public.

Yanktonai Sioux Water Colors is a slim volume, consisting of a biography of the artist, photographs of the artist, and four chapters describing various aspects of John Saul's life. Following the introductory essays are full color plates of the water colors and brief comments discussing the plates.

The Yanktonai are one of the poorest known Plains tribes, so any publication dealing with them makes a significant addition to knowledge. In this case the addition is two-fold. First, the book introduces us to a Yanktonai man, explaining something of his family and his life. John Saul, like others of his generation, grew up in a world surrounded by non-Indians. He managed to balance both Native and non-Native ways and painting traditional scenes for the WPA is a clear example of how well he accomplished this.

Second, the water colors provide details about Yanktonai life that are not known from other sources. They also provide corroborative evidence for some aspects of Yanktonai life, for example the use of earthlodges along with tipis as shown in Plate VII. A number of the paintings illustrate steps in making traditional objects. Plate XIX clearly shows how to use a bone awl for stitching a rawhide sole

onto a moccasin upper. Another plate shows how to make a bow and arrows.

In addition to the information on Yanktonai tribal culture, the book also adds to our knowledge concerning the impact of the WPA, part of Franklin Roosevelt's "New Deal", on Indian artists. Books on the WPA generally fail to appreciate how providing support to Native artists enabled them to record and revive tribal ways.

Unfortunately *Yanktonai Sioux Water Colors* is not what it could be. People unfamiliar with Plains Indian culture will not know how to interpret the water colors and the comments are not sufficiently detailed to overcome this problem. In 1971 James Howard published descriptions of some of the water colors in the Oklahoma Anthropological Society Newsletter. Howard combined a thorough knowledge of traditional Plains Indian culture with interviews with John Saul to give the average reader a good understanding of the paintings.

Some other problems will be noticeable only to the professional. Although several people are given credit for the book none of the chapters is signed. Even more strange is the reordering of the water colors. Each water color is numbered, yet they are not published in the order in which they are numbered. No explanation for the shift is given. Ordinarily, one does not reorganize an artist's work—it's like rewriting a text, without indicating why the change was made.

Despite these quibbles, the water colors will please a large audience. Surely John Saul would be happy to know his work would be shared by so many.

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