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SIGN LANGUAGE. FREMONT. 1842-1843-1844. ARAPAHO, SHOSHONI, TLAMATH.
OTHER TRIBES WEST OF ROCKIES.

The Exploring Expedition to the Rocky Mountains in the year 1842, and to Oregon and North California in the years 1843-'44, by Brevet Capt. J.C. Fremont, Printed by Order of the House of Representatives, Washington, Blair and Rives, Printers. 1845. (House Doc. 166).

(28) June 8, 1842, Upper Platte. "The sound of his own language seemed to shock the savage, and, swerving his horse a little, he passed us like an arrow. He wheeled, as I rode out toward him, and gave me his hand, striking his breast and exclaiming 'Arapaho!'"

(141) August 29, 1842. Bear River Valley. "Putting our horses into a gallop on some fresh tracks which showed very plainly in the wet path, we came suddenly upon a small party of Shoshonee Indians, who had fallen into the trail from the north. We could only communicate by signs; but they made us understand that the road through the chain was a very excellent one, leading into a broad valley which ran southward."

(143) August 30, 1842. Bear River Valley. "Several of the Indians (Diggers) drew aside their blankets, showing me their lean and bony figures; and I would not any longer tempt them with a display of our merchandise to part with their wretched subsistence, when they gave as a reason that it would expose them to temporary starvation. A great portion of the region inhabited by this nation formerly abounded in game; the buffalo ranging about in herds, as we had found them on the eastern waters; and the plains dotted with scattered bands of antelope; but so rapidly have they disappeared within a few years, that now, as we journeyed along, an occasional buffalo skull and a few wild antelope were all that remained of the abundance which had covered the country with animal life."

(148) September 1, 1842. Digger Indians. "From the few words we could comprehend, their language was that of the Snake Indians."

(174) October 10, 1842. Snake River. "In common with all the other Indians we had encountered since reaching the Pacific waters, these people use the Shoshonee or Snake language, which you will have occasion to remark, in the course of the narrative, is the universal language over a very extensive region."

(185) October 31, 1842. Below junction with Umâtilla River. "We met on the way a party of Indians unusually well dressed, wearing clothes of civilized texture and form. They appeared intelligent, and, in our slight intercourse, impressed me with the belief that they possessed some aptitude for acquiring languages."

(205) December 11, 1842. Tlamath Indians, Tlamath Lake. "The language spoken by these Indians is different from that of the Shoshonee and Columbia river tribes; and otherwise than by signs they cannot understand each other. They made us comprehend that they were at war with the people who lived to the southward and to the eastward; but I could obtain from them no certain information. The river on which they live enters the Cascade mountains on the western side of the lake, and breaks through them by a passage impracticable for travellers; but over the mountains, to the northward, are passes which present no other obstacle than in the almost impenetrable forests."

(221) January 24, 1843. South of Tlamath, attempting to reach the valley of the Sacramento, across the Sierra Nevada range. By a present of scarlet cloth, and other striking articles, we prevailed upon this man (Indian) "to be our guide of two days' journey. As clearly as possible by signs, we made him understand our object; and he engaged to conduct us in sight of a good pass which he knew. Hear we ceased to hear the Shoshonee language; that of this man being perfectly unintelligible."

- 2 -

SIGN LANGUAGE. FREMONT. 1842-1843-1844. ARAPAHO, SHOSHONI, TLAMATH,
OTHER TRIBES WEST OF THE
ROCKY MOUNTAINS.

The Exploring Expedition to the Rocky Mountains in the year 1842, and to Oregon and North California in the years 1843-'44, by Brevet Capt. J.C. Fremont, etc. Washington, 1845.

(226) January 29, 1843. South of Tlamath and east of Cascade Mountains.
 "They" (the Indians) "looked at the reward we offered, and conferred with each other, but pointed to the snow on the mountain, and drew their hands across their necks, and raised them above their heads, to show the depth; and signified that it was impossible for us to get through. They made signs that we must go to the southward, over a pass through a lower range, which they pointed out; there, they said, at the end of one day's travel, we would find people who lived near a pass in the great mountain; and to that point they engaged to furnish us a guide. They appeared to have a confused idea, from report, of whites who lived on the other side of the mountain; and once, they told us, about two years ago, a party of twelve men like ourselves had ascended their river, and crossed to the other waters. They pointed out to us where they had crossed; but the, they said, it was summer time; but now it would be impossible."

(228) January 31, 1843. Heading for the Cascade Mountains.
 "He" (the Indian) "told me that, before the snows fell, it was six sleeps to the place where the whites lived, but that now it was impossible to cross the mountain on account of the deep snow; and showing us, as the others had done, that it was over our heads, he urged us strongly to follow the course of the river, which he said would conduct us to a lake in which there were many large fish. There, he said, were many people; there was no snow on the ground; and we might remain there until the spring. From their descriptions we were enabled to judge that we had encamped on the upper water of the Salmon Trout river. It is hardly necessary to say that our communication was only by signs, as we understood nothing of their language; but they spoke, notwithstanding, rapidly and vehemently, explaining what they considered the folly of our intentions, and urging us to go down to the lake. Tah-ve, a word signifying snow, we very soon learned to know, from a frequent repetition. ----- Pulling a bunch of grass from the ground, after a short discussion among themselves, the old man made us comprehend that if we could break through the snow, at the end of three days we would come down upon grass, which he showed us would be about six inches high, and where the ground was entirely free. So far, he said, he had been in hunting for elk; but beyond that, (and he closed his eyes) he had seen nothing; but there was one among them who had been to the whites, and, going out of the lodge, he returned with a young man of very intelligent appearance. Here, said he, was a young man who has seen the whites with his own eyes; and he swore, first by the sky, and then by the ground, that what he said was true."

(231) February 4, 1834. Attempting to Cross Cascade Mountains.

"We had now begun to understand some words, and, with the aid of signs, easily comprehended the old man's simple ideas. 'Rock upon rock - rock upon rock - snow upon snow - snow upon snow,' said he; 'even if you get over the snow, you will not be able to get down from the mountains.' He then made the sign of precipices, and showed us how the feet of the horses would slip, and throw them off from the narrow trails which led along their sides." Our Chinook, who comprehended even more readily than ourselves, and believed our situation hopeless, covered his head with his blanket, and began to weep and lament."

- 3 -

SIGN LANGUAGE. FREMONT. 1842-1843-1844. ARAPAHO, SHOSHONI, TLAMATH,
OTHER TRIBES WEST OF THE
ROCKY MOUNTAINS.

The Exploring Expedition to the Rocky Mountains in the year 1842, and to Oregon and North California in the years 1843-'44, by Brevet Capt. J.C. Fremont, etc. Washington, 1845.

(243) March 4, 1843. Across coast range, in San Francisco Bay watershed.
 "These" (Indian women) "did not make any lamentations, but appeared very much impressed with our appearance, speaking to us only in a whisper, and offering us smaller baskets of the plant, which they signified to us was good to eat, making signs also that it was to be cooked by the fire. We drew out a little cold horse meat, and the squaws made signs to us that the men had gone out after deer, and that we could have some by waiting till they came in. We observed that the horses ate with great avidity the herb which they had been gathering; and here also, for the first time, we saw Indians eat the common grass - one of the squaws pulling several tufts, and eating it with apparent relish. Seeing our surprise, she pointed to the horses; but we could not well understand what she meant, except, perhaps, that what was good for the one, was good for the other."

(244) March 6, 1843. Near the Sacramento river.

"Following the tracks of the horses and cattle in search of people, we discovered a small village of Indians. Some of them had on shirts of civilized manufacture, but were otherwise naked, and we could understand nothing from them; they appeared entirely astonished at seeing us."

(245) Same date. Another Indian village.

"They" (the Indians) "immediately crowded around us, and we had the inexpressible delight to find one who spoke a little indifferent Spanish, but who at first confounded us by saying that there were no whites in the country; but just then a well-dressed Indian came up, and made his salutation in very well spoken Spanish."

(267) May 5, 1844. Headed east, and bordering Mojave country.

"Their language being probably a dialect of the Utah, with the aid of signs some of our people could comprehend them very well."

(267) Same date and place.

"A man who appeared to be a chief, with two or three others, forced himself into camp, bringing with him his arms, in spite of my orders to the contrary. When shown our weapons, he bored his ears with his fingers, and said he could not hear. (Digger Indians on Virgin river.)"

LANGUAGE. MC LEAN. 1820-1845. TRIBES NORTH OF FORTY NINTH PARALLEL.

John McLean's Notes of a Twenty-Five Years' Service in the Hudson's Bay Territory. Toronto, The Champlain Society, XIX. (1932).

(184) Language. An erroneous opinion seems to have gone abroad regarding the variety of languages spoken by the Indians. There are, in reality, only four radically distinct languages from the shores of Labrador to the Pacific: Sauteux, Chippewayan, Atna and Chinook. The Cree language is evidently a dialect of the Sauteux, similar in construction, and differing only in the modification of a few words. The Nascopies, or mountaineers of Labrador, speak a mixture of Cree and Sauteux, the former predominating.

Along the communication from Montreal to the foot of the Rocky Mountains, following the Peace River route, we first meet with the Sauteux tribes, who extend from the Lake of the Two Mountains to Lake Winnipeg; then the Crees to Isle a la Crosse; after them Crees and Chippewayans to Athabasca; and along the banks of Peace River, the Beaver Indians occupy the lower, and

(185) the Tsekanies the upper part. The Chippewayan is evidently the root of the Beaver, Tsekany and Carrier dialects; it is also spoken by a numerous tribe in the McKenzie's River district - the Hare Indians.

On the west side of the Rocky Mountains the Carrier language is succeeded by the Atna, which extends along the Columbia as far down as the Chinooks, who inhabit the coast. The Atna language, in its variety of dialects, seems to have as wide a scope as either the Sauteux or Chippewayan.

NOTE: Correct for the St. Lawrence*Great Lakes Basin, to the north thereof, and to the north of the Hudson's Bay divide. Also, west of the Rocky Mountains, to the Columbia River basin.

Chippewayan is now known as the Athapascan Linguistic Stock.

Sauteux means Ojibaway, which, with Cree, belongs to the Algonquian Linguistic Stock.

Atna refers to Selish, belonging to the Selishan Linguistic Stock.

Chinook, belonging to the Chinookan Linguistic Stock.

Forty Years a Fur Trader on the Upper Missouri, Charles Larpenteur.
Edited by Elliott Coues. Harper, 1898. Vols. I and II.

No mention of a Sign Language in Larpenteur. Maximilian, and Kurtz, who worked among the same Indians on the Upper Missouri, and were contemporaries of Larpenteur make mention of Sign Language, and Maximilian gives list of signs. q.v.

Larpenteur, however, has this Sign, which he gives in passing:

(407) Indians have no words for swearing or cursing, like whites, but they have a way to express wrath a great deal more scornfully than a white man can in words. This is done by gathering the four fingers against the thumb and letting them spring open, at the same time throwing out the arm, straight in one's face, with the body and face half turned away, saying, "Warchteshnee,"*which means, as nearly as I can interpret, "You villain!" *Washtee, good, shni, no.

The above sign is still used by Assiniboin for No good, meant as a personal insult, and was so used by Red Stone and Girl's Band of Assiniboin at Fort Belknap, Montana, in 1905 and 1906. JGC.

SIGN LANGUAGE. DE SMET. 1840-1846. FLATHEAD, CROW AND BLACKFOOT.

Chittenden and Richardson, Father de Smet's Life and Travels Among the North American Indians. (1905).

(337)
(337) September 5, 1840. Meeting of the Flatheads with the Crows on the Yellowstone River below Clark's Fork of that river.

The Crow chiefs received us with cordiality and gave us a great feast. The conversation was really pleasing; the language of the two tribes being different, it was carried on by signs. All the tribes of this part of America know the system and understand one another perfectly.

(589) September 14, 1846. With the Flathead and Blackfoot south of Judith Gap.

All communication was by signs. ---- To return to our Blackfoot observer, he ended his pantomime by giving us to understand that he liked two things very much; play and drink; but that notwithstanding he would not be the last to leave these delights, a resolve which he frequently renews, since his children were baptised.

SIGN LANGUAGE. PARKMAN. 1846. ARAPAHO.

The Oregon Trail, by Francis Parkman, Volume XVI, Frontenac Edition.

The Arapaho on the upper Arkansas, below Bent's Fort. (1846).

(394) Henry explained by signs what we wanted, and the Indian, gathering his buffalo-robe about his shoulders, led the way towards the village without speaking a word.

(395) The language of the Arapahoe's is so difficult and its pronunciation so harsh and guttural, that no white man, it is said, has ever been able to master it. Even Maxwell, the trader who has been most among them, is compelled to resort to the curious sign-language common to most of the prairie tribes. With this sign-language Henry Chatillon was perfectly acquainted.

SIGN LANGUAGE. GARRARD. 1846. CHEYENNE.

Wah-To-Yah, and the Taos Trail by Lewis H. Garrard, Edited by
Walter S. Campbell (Stanley Vestal), Oklahoma City, 1932.

(59) November, 1846. Garrard in the Cheyenne camp, near the present
site of Lamar, Colorado.

So complete and comprehensive is their mode of communication by signs, that they can understand each other without a word being said, and with more facility than the lips.

The author of this journal was born in Cincinnati, Ohio in 1829.
At the age of 17 he persuaded his family to let him spend a year
in the far west. He was induced to do this by reading Fremont's
Report of 1842-1843. He left St. Louis in 1846 and traveled over
the buffalo plains with a wagon train. Upon his return he wrote
this narrative.

SIGN LANGUAGE. KURZ. 1847. TRIBES OF THE MISSOURI RIVER.

Bulletin 115, Bureau of American Ethnology, Smithsonian Institution,
Journal of Rudolph Friederich Kurz, Translated by Myrtis Jarrell,
Edited by J.N.B. Hewitt. (1937).

(32) July, 1847. On the Missouri River.

My intercourse with these Mountaineers was very pleasant. Those with whom I talked were half-breeds who gave me much information and taught me, besides, the Indian language of signs which, however much their dialects may differ, is the same throughout all tribes on the Missouri. This knowledge of the sign language was of the utmost importance to me, even in St. Joseph, for I came in contact there with Indians from so many different tribes that I was at first hopelessly confused by their various dialects. One of my hobbies was to collect Indian weapons, decorations, and apparel. Before I had learned the sign for "swap" I rarely succeeded in making a purchase unless I had an interpreter. The reason was, as I found out, that, in my bungling manner, I had made the sign meaning "give." When a man presses the desired object to his breast and gives the Indian a questioning look he is requesting a gift; when he indicates or points out the article he wishes, then strikes his right forefinger twice across his left forefinger, he means barter or trade. I soon became better acquainted with the Indians, when I was able by means of signs to purchase moccasins, bows and arrows, tobacco pipes, embroidered purses, bracelets and cloth-

(33) ing. For a very slight compensation I was enabled thus to proceed with my studies. The Iowa I found especially friendly. The Fox Indians and the Potawatomi were far more reserved. The Iowa have been a well disposed tribe from the first; there is no record of any hostile act on their part toward the white race.

Adventures in Mexico and the Rocky Mountains, Ruxton. New York, 1848. p.275

The language of signs is so perfectly understood in the Western country, and the Indians themselves are such admirable sign talkers, that, after a little use, no difficulty whatever exists in carrying on a conversation by such a channel; and there are few mountain men who are at a loss in thoroughly understanding and making themselves intelligible by signs alone, although they neither speak nor understand a word of the Indian tongue.

William Tomkins in his Universal Indian Sign Language, 1937 edition, page 94, makes use of the above quotation, but states that it applies to Ruxton's experience with regard to the southwestern tribes, although the quotation itself does not bear this assertion out, since it speaks of the Indians of the western country, which is very general.

The above quotation first appears in Garrick Mallery, Sign Language among the North American Indians, First Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, Washington, 1879-1880, at pp. 324-325. Of this quotation Mallery says, p. 324, "Ruxton" (citing his work) "sums up his experience in regard to the Western" (325) "tribes so well as to require quotation. Then he quotes. Tomkins says: "Ruxton" (citing his book) "sums up his experience with regard to the southwestern tribes so well as to require quotation." He then gives the same quotation that Mallery gives. The quotation itself says "western country."

SIGN LANGUAGE. 1852. MARCY. COMANCHE AND KIOWA.

32 Congress, 2d Session, Senate, Executive No. 54. Exploration of Red River of Louisiana, in the year 1852, by Randolph B. Marcy, Captain Fifth Infantry, U.S. Army, assisted by George B. McClellan, Brevet Captain, U.S. Engineers. Washington, 1853.

(102) Their

(103) language is verbal and pantomimic. The former consists of a very limited number of words - some of which are common to all the prairie tribes. The latter, which is exceedingly graceful and expressive, is the court language of the plains, and is used and understood with great facility and accuracy by all the tribes from the Gila to the Columbia; the mottions and signs to express ideas being common to all.

SIGN LANGUAGE. DENIG. 1853-1854. ASSINIBOIN.

Forty-sixth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, Indian Tribes of the Upper Missouri, The Assiniboin, by Edwin T. Denig, Edited by J.N.B. Hewitt, pp. 395-626. Washington, 1930. (1853-1854).

(420)"In counting with the hand, an Indian invariably begins with the little finger of the left, shutting it down forcibly with the thumb of the right; when the five fingers are thus shut he commences on the thumb of the right, shutting it with the left fist. When wishing to telegraph by signs a certain number less than 10 he holds up that number of fingers beginning with the little finger of the left hand and keeping the others shut. Should the number be 7, then all the fingers of the left and thumb and finger of the right would be extended, holding up his hands, the rest of the fingers closed. Tens are counted by shutting and opening both hands; thus, 100 would be indicated by shutting and opening both hands 10 times in succession. The number 7 has two names, shakkowee and enshand (the odd number). They count fast enough in continuation from 1 to 100 but must not be interrupted."

(447) The soldier Chief, Assiniboin, "now presents the pipe in the same way to his own chief and going round the other side smokes all his people, and hands the pipe to another soldier, who goes the whole round again, and this is repeated over in silence for at least two hours, when the pipe is laid down by the chief, and speeches or signs begin by which they arrange the preliminaries of a peace."

The Narrative of Samael Hancock, 1845-1860. McBride, 1927.

(121) I questioned my Indians as to our whereabouts and was told that here was "Highas close Illihs"; that is that here the land was good.

(Chinook jargon: plenty good land).

(123) so I laid down ~~feasting~~ my eyes on the scenery around, until they announced the muck-a-muck was ready. (Muck-a-muck, Chinook jargon, food)

(135) They came within a quarter of a mile and ceased paddling, when I spoke to them in five different languages, none of which they seemed to understand. I then spoke to them in the Chinook ~~orr~~ jargon that is used quite generally by the Hudson's Bay Company with all the different tribes yet they apparently could not comprehend a word I said. I was then pretty well satisfied that they had not been accustomed to seeing white people, as all the Indians I had seen on the coast, who had ever had any intercourse with the whites, could give some evidence of the knowledge of the jargon so generally spoken. I then made signs inviting them to come on shore and show me where to find ~~something~~ to eat, offering to give them a handkerchief; but No! they made me understand they were afraid; I then thought it best for ~~them~~ to see our whole company, as they were probably suspicious of a considerable force. I assured them that we five constituted the whole company, and would not hurt them, when they ventured a little nearer and halted; I insisted that they should come on but in vain.

(142) They asked me by signs to go with them to their village which pleased us very much and we determined to go, asking them to get in the boat ~~and~~ pilot us; this they refused to do but gave us to understand by signs that we could go in our boat, while they would go on shore and show us the place.

(149) I was obliged to talk with them by signs, as they did not understand any language I was familiar with. I requested permission to go in their houses to warm, but they refused, and told me to stand still. I then told them myself and four companions were lost from a ship, and were both cold and hungry. They seemed to understand this, but still refused me admission to their houses. When I asked for a piece of fire, one of them brought me a chunk, which I carried to my friends, and we took it into the brush close by and commenced clearing away the snow to build a fire, when an Indian brought us some dry wood and we soon had a cheerful fire.

(154) I hailed them in the Chinook language or jargon, used by the Hudson Bay Company and all whites on the Coast in their intercourse with the Indians, and they responded in the same language. I asked how long it would take us to reach Victoria and they said four days.

1858. PIEGANS AND KOOTENAI. W.T. HAMILTON. SIGN LANGUAGE.

Contributions to the Historical Society of Montana, Volume III, Helena, Montana, 1900. Trading Expedition of William T. Hamilton. 1858.

(56) With some Piegans, near Teton River, October 20, 1858. I then interpreted the note to them, the contents of which were to the effect that the Agent (Colonel Vaughan) was my friend and that he wanted Little Dog and all his people to be my friends also. All these Indians are expert sign talkers and they gave me credit to be their equal, if not their superior, hence the name "Sign-talking-White-Man," which name I retain amongst the Piegans.

(77) In Kootenai camp, near head of North Fork of Milk river, October 26, 1858. These Kootenai Indians were slow but beautiful sign talkers and seemed somewhat surprised in discovering that I was very proficient in that art, and asked me what tribe I had been raised by. Upon my replying they seemed to have doubts about my not being raised by some Indians and asked McKay, who understood considerable sign talk. He answered I was a white man, together with a lot of other information.

(36) At Army Post near present site of Spokane, Washington, September, 1858 I was then credited with being the most expert sign talker among the Indians. This knowledge came almost natural to me and therefore I do not give myself any particular credit for proficiency in that art. The knowledge of the sign language is necessary to mountaineers and scouts. It assists themselves from many difficult dilemmas. All wild tribes of Indians have great

(37) respect for a man who meets them boldly and can converse with them by signs. It is the reverse with them when they meet a man they cannot make understand.

SIGN LANGUAGE. PETROFF. 1866. INDIANS OF LOWER KINNIK RIVER, ALASKA.

1st Annual Report Bureau of American Ethnology, (1879-1880), Sign Language Among the North American Indians, Garrick Mallery, pp. 492-498.

(492) "The following introductory notes are furnished by Mr. Ivan Petroff, who contributed the Dialogue: ---

(493) In the month of September, 1866, there arrived on the lower Kinnik River, a stream emptying it's waters into Cook's Inlet, two Indians from a distant region, who did not speak the Kenaitze language. The people at the settlement at which the strangers made their first appearance were equally at a loss to understand the visitors. At last a chief of great age, bearing the name of Chatidoolts (mentioned by Vancouver as a youth), was found to be able to interpret some of the signs made by the strangers, and after a little practice he entered into a continued conversation with them in rather a roundabout way, being himself blind. He informed me that it was the second or third time within his recollection that strangers like those then present had come to Kinnik from the northeast, but that in his youth he had frequently "talked with his hands" to their visitors from the west and east. He also told me that that he had acquired the art from his father, who, as the old man expressed himself, had "seen every country, and spoken to all the tribes of the earth." The conversation was carried on by the help of the old man's sons, who described to their blind parent the gestures of the strangers, and were instructed in turn by him with what gestures to reply." -----

(494- Follows a list of 116 signs, which are undoubtedly the same signs
498) as are employed in the Sign Language of the Plains tribes.

NOTES; The above conversation occurred in 1866. At that time white men, bringing in with them other Indians who had traversed and come in contact with the buffalo hunting Plains tribes, had been trading up and down the Pacific coast for over sixty years. The informant also states that he acquired this gesture speech from his father, who, the informant states: "had seen every country, and spoken to all the tribes of the earth." Making all allowances for possible exaggeration, infomants father must have been a widely travelled man, and it is not surprising if he should have picked up sign langage in the course of his travels, from whites or Indians who had themselves picked in up in the fur trade among the plains tribes, among whom it is known to have existed from early times.

ACCOCESSAWS. WEST SIDE OF COLORADO RIVER. BUSHMANN. YEAR NOT GIVEN.
(FROM MALLERY)

First Annual report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, Washington,
1879-1880, Sign Language of the North American Indians, Garrick Mallery.

(p. 324) In Bushmann's Spuren, p. 424, there is reference to the
"Accoressaws on the west side of the Colorado, two hundred miles
southwest of Nacogdoches," who use thumb signs which they understand.

1877-1904. H.L. SCOTT MS. SIGN LANGUAGE. NEZ PERCES.

H.L. Scott Manuscript. Jacket labeled "Sign Language, Area in which used"
Files of Bureau of American Ethnology, Smithsonian Institution, Washington,
D.C. Fragment of note.

NEZ PERCE INDIANS, in Oregon, Washington and Idaho. Subsisted on meat of deer, antelope, elk, and upon the salmon that came up the rivers to spawn. They dug the roots of the camas and other plants. Each year a portion of the tribe was accustomed to go east to the buffalo country, across the Bitter Root Mountains, and brought back buffalo meat and robes. They were accompanied often by some of the Selish or Flathead Indians, for mutual protection from the Blackfeet and other plains Indians with all of whom they were constantly at war, save the Absaroka, a crow tribe, in whose village I first (1877) saw a few of their lodges on the Yellowstone.

Besides their own language they spoke the Chinook Jargon of the Columbia, and although they were out of the Sign Talking country, they had to learn it on the Plains for intertribal communication East of the Mountains. Joseph was an excellent Sign Talker, when I first knew him, but lost the (art in later years).

Joseph died in September, 1904.

SIGN LANGUAGE. FLATHEAD. 1927-1928. TEIT EDITED BY BOAS.

Forty Fifth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, Salishan Tribes of the Plateaus, The Flathead Group, by James A. Teit, edited by Franz Boas. Page 373, VIII, Sign Language.

The Flatheads were noted as adepts in the sign language, and all the tribes used it extensively in talking with strangers. The Chinook jargon was unknown, except in recent times among some of the Spokane and a few other Indians who had traveled extensively in the West, or who had been associated with the fur traders of Fort Colville. However, even at Colville and other interior trading posts, Chinook was not used a great deal, the principal language being French. Some Indians spoke a little French. The sign language was also employed to some extent by the traders, who had learned it from the Indians. The sign language in vogue was the same as that used by the Crow and other tribes of the western plains, or only slightly different.

NOTE: The Flathead, Kootenai, Pend d'Oreilles and Nez Perce tribes made annual hunting excursions into the buffalo country east of the Rocky Mountains. The Flathead were on friendly terms with the Crows, but were generally at war with the Piegans and Atsina, who were also hostile to the Crows. It is therefore believed that the Flathead learned sign talk from their friends the crows. Their most ordinary mode of communication with the Piegan and Atsina was with arrows, knives and bullets.

SIGN LANGUAGE. KUTENAI. 1941. TURNEY-HIGH. AMERICAN ANTHROPOLOGIST.

Supplement to American Anthropologist, Volume 43, No. 3, Part 2. No 56, 1941. Memoirs of the American Anthropological Association. Ethnography of the Kutenai by Harry Holbert Turney-High.

(53) When mid-June arrived the Upper Kutenai would go over the mountains on the summer bison hunt. Unlike the Flathead, they went definitely for meat, not hides. In similar contrast to their Salishan neighbors, they claim to have felt no fear in crossing the mountains into Blackfoot territory. --- The summer hunting region was not distant. As soon as they got out of timber they expected to find bison close to the mountains. --- Very rarely did the summer hunt last more than four weeks. Indeed, most people expected to get their summer supply of meat much before this.

(190) The entire Plains sign language was used by the Kutenai, expertly by the Upper bands, fairly well by the Lower.

The Indian Sign Language with brief explanatory notes by W.P. Clark, U.S. Army, Philadelphia, L.R. Hamersly & Co., 1885. (Copyright, 1884.)

(3) HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE UNITED STATES.

WASHINGTON, D.C., July 7th, 1884.

LIEUT.-GENERAL P.H. SHERIDAN.

SIR. - I have the honor to submit herewith, in compliance with your instructions, a work upon the Sign Language of the Indians living within the territory of the United States, with some account of their tribal histories and race peculiarities.

This work is based upon my own observations, made among the Indians themselves during a period of more than six years, supplemented by a careful study of the principal authorities on Indian habits and customs.

Very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

W.P. CLARK,

Captain, Second Cavalry.

(5) In 1878-9 and 1880, my duties carried me farther to the northwest, and though engaged mostly in field operations during these years, the character of the service was such that I was thrown into intimate relations with the Cheyennes, Sioux, Crows, Bannacks, Assinaboines, Gros ventres of the Prairie, Mandans Arickarees, and other tribes in that region, and had almost constant use for my knowledge of gesture speech. I found this of great value, not only in imparting and receiving information, but as a check upon unreliable interpreters.

(242) Mandans. Nearly all the Mandans, Arickarees, and Gros Ventres are conversant with the sign language, and use it constantly in their daily intercourse with each other, and with the surrounding tribes.

1876-1877. PAWNEE, SHOSHONI, ARAPAHO.

(5) During the Sioux and Cheyenne war of 1876-77 in November of 1876, I found myself in command of some three hundred friendly enlisted Indian scouts of the Pawnee, Shoshone, Arapaho, Cheyenne, Crow and Sioux tribes; six tribes having six different vocal languages. I had, of course, before known of the sign language used by our Indians, but here I was strongly impressed with its value and beauty. On the march, by their camp-fires at night, and in the early gray of morning, just before charging down on a hostile Indian village, I took my first lessons in this language and in Indian tactics. I observed that these Indians, having different vocal languages, had no difficulty in communicating with each other, and held constant intercourse by means of gestures. For the practical benefits that would immediately ensue, I devoted myself to the study of the gesture language and the people. I found that the Indians were wonderfully good and patient instructors, and that the gesture speech was easy to acquire and remember. The campaign ended. I was ordered to Red Cloud Agency and remained there and at Spotted Tail Agency for a year, my duties bringing me in close and constant contact and intercourse with the Sioux, Cheyennes, and Arapahoes, - in their camps, at their feasts, festivals and funerals, and in the field with scouting-parties.

1st Ann. Rep. Bur. Amer. Ethn. Sign Language Among the North
American Indians by Garrick Mallery.

(316)

"Col. Richard I. Dodge, United States Army, whose long experience among the Indians entitles his opinions to great respect, says in a letter:

'The embodiment of signs into a systematic language is, I believe, confined to the Indians of the Plains. Contiguous tribes gain, here and there, a greater or less knowledge of this language; these again extend the knowledge, diminished and probably perverted, to their neighbors, until almost all the Indians of the United States east of the Sierras have some smattering of it. The Plains Indians believe the Kiowas to have invented the sign language, and that by them its use was communicated to other Plains tribes. If this is correct, analogy would lead us to believe that those tribes most nearly in contact with the Kiowas would use it most fluently and correctly, the knowledge becoming less as the contact diminishes. Thus the Utes, though nearly contiguous (in territory) to the Plains Indians, have only the merest 'picked up' knowledge of this language, and never use it among themselves, simply because, they and the Plains tribes having been, since the memory of their oldest men, in a chronic state of war, there has been no social contact.'

In another communication Colonel Dodge is still more definite:

"The Plains Indians themselves believe the sign language was invented by the Kiowas, who holding an intermediate position between the Comanches, Tonkaways, Lipans, and other inhabitants of the vast plains of Texas, and the Pawnees, Sioux, Blackfeet, and other northern tribes, were the general go-betweens, trading with all, making peace or war

(317)

with or for any or all. It is certain that the Kiowas are at present more universally proficient in this language than any other Plains tribe. It is also certain that the tribes furthest away from them and with whom they have least intercourse use it with least facility."

New Mexico Historical Review, July, 1936. Vol. XI, No. 3. Bourke on the Southwest, (Capt. John G. Bourke, U.S.A.), X, Edited by Lansing B. Bloom, Chapter XVIII, Second Visit to the Navaho, Pages 239 and 240.

(239) Fort Defiance, Navaho Agency, Friday, May 27th, 1881, informant Chi, or Red, a Navaho Indian.

At noon, I questioned Chi very closely about the "sign language." I explained to him with great care what the "Sign language" was, what tribes used it &c., but he insisted that his people never employed it. Then I asked him what he would do if he were to meet a strange Indian whose language he didn't understand, and from whom he wished to obtain a drink of water. Chi promptly made the sign for a drink, exactly as a plains Indian would have done; so, too, when I asked how he would invite the stranger to trade with him,

(240) he very promptly moved his forefingers past each other in the form of an X. So far, so good; he broke down completely when I inquired the signs for "horse," "road," "tired," "sleep," and "tomorrow." These were incomprehensible to Chi, who admitted that he was making up the signs I asked for, and that he was trying to see how he should get along if he were to run upon such a stranger as I had described.

He was very much astonished when I told him of our campaign against the Sioux and Cheyennes, (1876-1877) of the Custer Massacre, and especially of the little band of Crow Indians sent out by General Terry to open up communication with Gen'l Crook. How they reached our camp and delivered their dispatches; how they were unable to comprehend a word of our language or of that of the Shoshonee allies who were with us, but how, by means of the "sign language" they were enabled to hold a three hours conversation with General Crook, in which they described every circumstance of Terry's part of the campaign - the massacre of Custer - the arrival of Gibbon & Terry with reinforcements, the rescue of Reno, the march back to the steam-boats on the Yellowstone - everything great or small that Gen'l Crook was anxious to learn.

My opinion of the "sign language" is that it grew up from the necessities and surroundings of the Plains Indians, all of whom depended upon the roving herds of buffalo as a means of subsistence. In following the buffalo, tribal limits would be obliterated and people of different tongues brought into a contact, more or less intimate, and generally amicable, altho' often hostile. Under these circumstances, the "sign language" grew up - because it was a necessity. To people living as the Navajoes and Zunis, in well defined territories and deriving their support from the soil or from flocks and herds, the need of commerce with adjoining tribes would be so slight that the necessary language would naturally be left to a chosen class of interpreters - either captives or traders making it an object to speak a number of dialects.

1881. BOURKE. PUEBLO OF TAOS. NEW MEXICO. SIGN LANGUAGE. SLIGHT KNOWLEDGE. BUFFALO.

Bourke on the Southwest, XI. Edited by Lansing B. Bloom. Chapter XX, At Taos in 1881. New Mexico Historical review, Vol. XII, No. I, January, 1937.

(49) (July 20, 1881) Hieronymo and Concha gave me today the "signs" for Sioux, Utes, Kiowas, Arapahos, Comanches, Pawnees or Nipomani, and Crows or Soratiqui. These showed that they possessed a slight knowledge of the gesture-language, probably enough and not more than enough to aid them in their former annual traffic with the Plains' tribes.

(47) (July 20, 1881) Manuel Concha, Hieronymo and Pedro - the three men with whom I was speaking on this floor, all said that in former days, very far back, the buffalo roamed in this valley. I accepted this tradition without hesitancy, knowing from the appearance of the valley that it must have presented every attraction to the Bison which in our own days have been killed on the other side of the Range. While we were speaking, I was seated upon a buffalo robe which, Manuel told me, had come from the Llano.

(48) (July 20, 1881) The Taos eat elk, deer, black & white tailed, antelope, buffalo, rabbit, jack-rabbit (liebre), bear - (the fat only), trout, beaver, beef, mutton and goat, but deny any appetite for horse, mule or burro.

(49) (July 20, 1881) In the two pueblos of Taos, there are no less than nine different estufas, or underground work-shops and places of religious assemblage; four of these are in one pueblo and five in the other, but not all are now in common use. The first one I descended may be taken as a representative of all the others: it was circular, almost entirely under-ground, 20' in D, 9' in height; and altho it looked new, was quite black on the inside with smoke. Close to the fire-place, was a wooden shovel and a bundle of small dry sticks to be

(50) used in cleaning and lighting the pipes of the old men who assembled here. For musical instruments, there was a drum made of a hollow cottonwood log, 2' long, 1' in D, covered with buffalo or elk-hide, painted on the sides and also a raw hide, as among the Sioux, at their Sun Dance.

(50) (July 20, 1881) In one of the houses, I came across an old man, stretched naked on the floor; a young girl, about 10 or 12 years old was making "tamales" at the fire in the corner. This old man must have been fully one hundred years old, if not more; his skin hung in great flabby wrinkles over his body, his limbs were shrunken to nothing while his face was so heavily seamed and lined that the features apparently ran into each other. My guide, in speaking of this old man, said that his recollection extended back to the days when his people used to hunt buffalo on the Cimarron.

Bourke, New Mexico Historical Review, October, 1937, Vol. XII, No. 4.

Laguna Pueblo, October 30, 1881.

(375) They used to hunt buffalo on the Llano Estacado, using the robes for bedding and "jerking" the meat.

(377) (October 31, 1881) (Laguna) In giving the name of his gens, he made assign for Badger at same time, by drawing the 1st and second fingers of his right hand down his face from eye to chin.

1881. BOURKE. PUEBLO OF TESUQUE. SIGN LANGUAGE. COMMERCE WITH PLAINS.

Bourke on the Southwest, VII, Edited by Lansing B. Bloom, Chapter XIV, Holy Week in Santa Fe. vol. X, No. 4. New Mexico Historical Review, October 1935. (At Pueblo of Tesuque, April 16, 1881.)

(313) Finding him (the cacique or gobernador of Tesuque) in a communicative mood, I asked him to name the tribes with which they had commercial relations. He promptly told off on his fingers - Apaches, Navajoes, Utes, Shoshonees, Comanches, Kiowas, Arapahoes, Napanannoes (Lipans) Tissuroquis (Absorokas - Crows?) and two other tribes whose names I cannot recall by from the direction given by his finger, I am certain they were cheyennes and the Pawnees or Sioux. I made him go over the list three times and did all I could to shake him in his assertion, but he stuck to his statement and said further that the Susonee, (Shoshonees) were the same as the Utes, but lived a little beyond them. Furthermore, he said the Susonee, the Ute, the Comanches, the Kiowas, the Tissuroquis, and the Arapahoes were one and the same people, even if they didn't speak the same language. The Napannannos (the Lipans) were "la misma sangre" (the same blood) with the Apaches and Navajoes. In communicating with people who didn't understand their language or Spanish, they (Tesuques) spoke with their fingers (i.e. used the sign language).

Bourke on the Southwest, III, Edited by Lansing B. Bloom, Chapter V, Arizona's Indian Problem, 1870-1872. Vol. IX, No. 2, New Mexico Historical review, April, 1934.

(179) At the Devil's Well, the first band of Apache-Mojaves, some one hundred and twenty-five in number, made their submission (February, 1872) under their old chief, Ah-cu-la-huata and Enacinyusa - (The Setting Sun and Red Rabbit). ---- One of the young squaws with this band did not look to be more than 15 years old and yet she carried in her arms a little mite of a half-frozen baby which she told me by signs was only seven sleeps old. This she had carried across the mountains, keeping up with the rest of her family, on their way in to surrender.

The Indian Sign Language with Explanatory Notes, etc., by W.P. Clarke, U.S. Army. Philadelphia, 1885. (transmitted to Lieut.-General P.H. Sheridan, July 7, 1884, by W.P. Clarke, Captain, Second Cavalry).

(339) "SIGN LANGUAGE. --- In found, in my special investigation, that the evidence of the Indians as to its existence or non-existence in other tribes was not worthy of implicit confidence. Many of them stated to me that in former times this language was the one common and universal means of communication between all the tribes of American Indians who spoke different vocal languages. As they expressed it, 'the old people of all the tribes used it.' Little Raven, the former head-chief of the Southern Arapahoes, said to me in regard to the use of gestures, 'I have met Comanches, Kiowas, Apaches, Caddos, Snakes, Crows, Pawnees, Osages, Mes-calero Apaches, Arickarees, Gros ventres, Nez Perces, Cherokees, Choctaws, Chickasaws, Sacs and Foxes, Pottawattomies, and other tribes, whose vocal languages, like those of the named tribes, we did not understand, and we communicated freely in sign language. The summer after President Lincoln was killed we had a grand gathering of all the tribes to the east and south of us. (Little Raven was at his agency near Fort Reno, Indian Territory.) Twenty-five different tribes met near old Fort Abercrombie on the Wichita River. The Caddos made a different sign for Horse, and also for Moving, but the rest were made the same by all the tribes.' From personal investigation, I found subsequently that some of the tribes named had scarcely any knowledge of the sign language used by the Arapahoes. The Kickapoos, Shawnees, Otoes, and Iowas, as well as the Caddos, Delawares, Wichitas, and others, claimed to have learned such gestures as they used from the Plains Indians. Chief Joseph, of the Nez Perces, said that his tribe learned the language from the Blackfeet some forty years ago, and yet it is a well known fact that these Indians used gesture speech long before this time. Nichelle, chief of the Pend d'Oreilles, said, 'All the tribes talk in signs when they meet, if they cannot understand each other's vocal language. The Blackfeet, Crows, Flatheads, Koutenays, Pend d'Oreilles, Coeur d'Alenes, Spokans, Nez Perces, Yakimas, Pelouses, Cayuses, and others, all make the same signs. When I was a young boy, my grandfather told me that a long, long time ago, when two tribes met who did not speak the same vocal language, they always talked in signs.'

(340) Father Ravalli, whom I met at Stevensville, rather confirms this, as he informed me that some thirty-five or forty years since he prepared a work on the sign language, and claimed its extensive use when he first came among these people. (see Flathead.) And still there is no doubt but that the Chenook jargon, compounded from English, French and Indian languages, has long been and is still used by the numerous small tribes on the Pacific slope in the extreme Northwest, just as Spanish, or rather Greaser Mexican, has been used by the Pueblos, Navajos, Southern and Incompahgre Utes, Apaches, and some other tribes in the Southwest. The remarks made by White Cloud, head-chief of the Chippewas, are worthy of special consideration, and shed a great deal of light on this subject, viz.: 'Indians had no particular trouble in communicating ideas by means of signs. If two Indians of different tribes were seated on the ground, and a white man approached them, he would see no difference, but if an Indian approached them, he would discover at a glance the difference, and would probably know to what tribes they belonged.' So in gestures, one Indian described some article of wearing apparel to another, and the tribal identity is revealed. I do not think it can properly be said that any gesture speech, which can be called a language, exists among the majority of the Ojibways or the Algonquin family north of the British

SIGN LANGUAGE. CLARKE. 1876-1884. INDIANS OF THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA.

The Indian Sign Language with Explanatory Notes, etc., by W.P. Clarke, U.S. Army. Philadelphia, 1885.

line, who, occupying a country which stretches from the Rocky Mountains to the mouth of the St. Lawrence River, speak the same language or dialects easily understood. The peculiar nature of their relations with the Plains Indians and other tribes, and the great geographical area covered by their own vocal language, has obviated the necessity for their developing or learning gestures. Some few, like the Pembina band, have been thrown more with the Plains people, and are fairly good sign-talkers. It can, however, be said of these Indians, as well as of the Indians of other tribes, who are not at the present time fully conversant with gesture speech, that such signs as they do make are in the main similar to the gestures used by those who are proficient."

SIGN LANGUAGE. HADLEY. 1893. FAILURE OF WHITE MEN TO OBSERVE ITS EXISTENCE.Indian Sign Talk by I.F. Hadley. Privately Printed. Limited Edition. 1893.Preface. -----

Having lived nearly all my life in contact with Indians, I have noticed their habit of gesturing in their communications between themselves, and when talking to whites; but it did not occur to me that their gestures meant any more than those of some white men who throw their arms about like the sails of a crazy old wind mill without thought of method, or of conveying any idea whatever.

But, when the Smithsonian Institution asked collectors of Indian matters to take notice of signs and make it a part of their work, I began to believe there might be something in it, and when in 1880 the Bureau of Ethnology issued its voluminous report on this, and other matters, I became fully interested and determined to drop the collection of Indian words and devote myself to the investigation of the gestures called Sign Talk.

NOTE: Here is a man who lived among, and communicated with, Indians all of his life, and did not observe the existence of Sign Talk among them until the fact was brought to his attention from an outside source. It is highly probably that many missionaries, explorers and travelers may have observed Sign Talk, and yet did not make note of it because they did not realize what it meant. On the other hand many fur traders may have used this medium of communication, but considered it such a commonplace and everyday matter, that mention of it was not worth recording. On the other hand many references made to Signs may refer only to graphic and improvised pantomimic gestures, and not to Sign Talk, which is a system of communication by well understood, highly conventionalized movements of the hands, which are generally unintelligible to those who are not versed in the Sign Talk. An understanding of pantomime, on the other hand, depends wholly on the cleverness of one party in imitating the thought sought to be conveyed by his actions, and the understanding of the other party in grasping the meaning of those actions. Much confusion thus arises in perusing the early narratives, as to whether the narrators were referring to Sign Talk or to Pantomime.

Some Memories of a Soldier by Hugh Lenox Scott, Major-General, U.S. Army, Retired. New York, 1928.

(32) (Fort Abraham Lincoln, Dakota, Headquarters 7th Cavalry, 1876.)

I soon found that the Sioux language was quite limited in the scope of its usefulness, but that the sign language of the Plains was an intertribal language, spoken everywhere in the buffalo country from the Saskatchewan River of British America to Mexico, east of the Rocky Mountains and west of the Missouri, and I began the study of this at the same time with the Sioux, and have continued its study down to this very day.

(102) (Fort Totten, Dakota, 1878.)

This was the agency mainly of the Eastern Sioux from Minnesota, who had lived east of the sign-talking area, and when I tried to use signs with them they thought I was crazy to make those foolish gestures.

(188) (Fort Sill, Oklahoma, 1893-4, Apache prisoners of war.)

Several hundred Kiowas and Comanches came to see them (the Apaches) on arrival and tried to talk to them in the sign language. They had come from far west of the sign-talking country and thought those people (189) crazy for making such foolish gestures. It was not until each side produced a Carlisle boy that the amazing spectacle was seen of three Indian tribes unable to communicate with each other except through the English language.

WHAT IS THE SIGN LANGUAGE OF THE PLAINS INDIAN.

The Sign Language of the Plains Indians is an intertribal language of gesture signs, made with the hands, that was spoken on the High Plains of North America, to a varying degree by every tribe that lived with the buffalo, and those in contact with those tribes. Why do we assert that this language was a part of the Plains culture derived from the buffalo? How could the buffalo influence the language? The Plains Indian depended upon the buffalo mainly for his shelter, food and clothing, and had to stay near the buffalo to procure his living. The buffalo had to shift continually for grass and the Indian had to shift also. This shifting brought him continually in contact with other tribes of alien speech, with whom he was unable to communicate until the Sign Language was evolved to supply this need.

You will be told that all Indians speak this (Sign) language, but it is not a fact. It belongs only on the Plains of the buffalo.

Algonquin dominated the territory from the Ohio river to the Churchill Factory of Hudson's Bay, and it is clear that no other intertribal language was needed in this territory. In the same way the Mobilian and Chickasaw trade language dominated the country south of the Ohio, in the timbered section on both sides of the Mississippi to its mouth, and around to the Eastward along the Gulf of Mexico to Florida. The Apache and Navajo of New Mexico and Arizona both belong to the Ahtabascan family of the far North, and understand each others dialect. The smaller and more stationary tribes like the Hopi and Zuni, as well as the Pueblos of the Rio Grande, were everywhere weak and pacificistic. If they had anyhting worth having the Apache and Navajo took it away from them, and if they wanted to speak to an Apache or Navajo they could learn their language or hold their peace. His lordship could not be bothered with their lingo. The wide, dry Plains of Utah, Nevada, Wyoming and Idaho were occupied by manysmall bands of the Shoshone linguistic family, who had no need for an intertribal language, other than their own, except when xressing the Mountains to the Plains of the buffalo on their yearly pilgrimages after meat and robes, where they, the Nez Perces and Flatheads were accustomed to encounter some of the Plains tribes, and learn their signs. There were small remnants of different linguistic families about the mouth of the Columbia River of Oregon that were served by the Chinook Jargon, spoken far up the Columbia, and the coast of British Columbia. It existed in a small way in prehistoric times, but has been improved and amplified since the coming of the white man, and now contains French, English and Iroquois terms from the Fur Traders, besides many from the Nisqually and Chinook language, from which it derived its name. It is a mixture of terms from many languages without form or grammar, and is in the same primitive stage as the Sign Language. There is besides another Jargon atbthe mouth of the Yukon, and another at the mouth of the McKenzie, both mixtures of the Esquimo and language of the whalers. The great forest north of the Saskatchewan river is served in trade by the Cree, a member of the Algonquin family, leaving only the Plains of the buffalo for the Sign Language, which accounts for its presence there, and its absence elsewhere. When the Chiricahua Apache from Arizona were brought to Fort Sill, Indian Territory, as prisoners of war, coming from far west of the Sign Talking country where they had never seen or heard of the (Sign Language)---

Before any subject can be well understood we must first know something of its origin and history. When we interrogate the Plains Indian concerning the origin of the Sign Language we get many and diverse answers, which all, however, lead to the same end. Beginning in the far North the Blackfoot tells us "the crow made it." The Crow tells us "the Cheyenne made it," or invented it. The Cheyenne says the Kiowa made it, and the Kiowa refers back to the Cheyenne. By all this circumlocution we are forcibly reminded of the World War, that was started by somebody else. We know very well, however, that the sign language was not "made" or invented by any one, but is an evolution, that started from very small beginnings, sometime in the far prehistoric past, among the different tribes of alien speech then living with the buffalo, (it may be with a variety now extinct), grew through the consenting labor of hundreds of thousands of individuals of the red race; became more and more refined, adaptable and polished, all down through the ages, by practical use operating under the laws that govern the life and growth of language, well understood by linguistic science, until it has become what we now see it. The Blackfoot people grew up as a tribe in the great forest that stretches 700 miles north of the Saskatchewan river of Canada, toward the Arctic sea, where they were forest Indians, and knew nothing of the Sign Language of the Plains. Their intertribal needs were satisfied by the Cree, the Court language of the forest area of the far North. They began to come down out of their great forest to the Plains of the Bow and the Belly about 1730, and there learned the Sign Language from the Crow. And what more natural for them to believe the "crow made it?" None of the present occupants of the Plains were out on the Plains of the buffalo when the Sign Language began its career, but have come out since. Except, possibly the Gaddoan family, and the Texas Apache, both of whom were found in possession on the southern Plains, using Signs, by the first Europeans. The traditions of the others tell of their learning the Sign Language from some other tribe, and it was natural to believe this tribe invented it. It proves the honesty of their traditions, that none were willing to claim the honor of the invention, that did not belong to any of them, and substantiates the fact of the antiquity of origin. (Whitney Lang quotes and theoretical discussion of origin of speech and signs omitted). The origin of Sign Language was brought about just as the origin of every other language was brought about, vocal and otherwise, by imitation. The Sign Language by imitation of visible attributes, of acts or qualities. The imitation of the sights of nature, as the vocal speech by the imitation of the sounds of nature. (More Whitney. Was you there Eddie?) Philologists have compared the roots of most of the American languages, and have recognized some 56 separate and distinct linguistic families north of Mexico, comprising some 300 dialects. Many of these were spoken on the Plains of the buffalo in great variety. It has been stated before that the Sign Language is one of the most important elements of the culture of the buffalo plains, derived from the buffalo. It has been omitted by eminent authorities from the list of these elements, probably because little was known of it. We are apt to be met here with a vast incredulity, and asked "how such a wild, wandering animal as the buffalo could have any sort of influence upon human speech." The answer is prompt, simple and convincing. The Plains Indian depended almost entirely for his shelter, food, and clothing upon the buffalo, and the latter upon the grass. The vast hordes of the buffalo soon exhausted the grass in any locality, and

H.L. SCOTT MANUSCRIPT. DIFFUSION OF SIGN LANGUAGE. B.A.E. FILES.
SIGN LANGUAGE, ORIGIN AND HABITAT.

had to move elsewhere for food. The Indian soon had to move also, or starve. This constant travel brought the Indian into frequent contact with other tribes of alien speech, engaged in the same occupation, viz., following the buffalo, and speaking some of those 300 dialects mentioned before, with whom he was unable to communicate freely, until the evolution of the Sign Language had satisfied this intertribal need. Whenever two persons of different speech meet anywhere in the world even today and desire to communicate with each other, they first make the endeavor by using their own language in a louder tone. "They think they will be heard from their much speaking." They soon become convinced of the futility of this method, and one begins to enact a pantomime, a little drama, by the imitation of some act or attribute that will serve by the association of ideas to place his thought in the mind of the other. We have all done it in foreign countries, and have seen it done many times by others. This pantomime being temporary and individual in its nature, although it may have within itself the germs of language, cannot become language unless it is accepted and used by some community which alone can make it language. When Father Hennepin was a prisoner in the Sioux village at Mille Lacs, about 100 miles north of Saint Paul, Minnesota, in 1687, he desired to better his condition as a prisoner by learning the Sioux language from the children. He was obliged to enact a pantomime by running back and forth between two lodges until the children caught his meaning, and gave him the desired Sioux work for "run." This pantomime was temporary and individual in its nature, and having served the purpose where the desired word was obtained, was doubtless soon dropped and lost, because there was no more need for it. It is most probable that the same pantomime was used further west on the Plains of the buffalo, where frequent need was felt for a proper sign, this running back and forth between the lodges was too clumsy to be used long as language, and the original pantomime was, without doubt, soon reduced, by the law of economy of effort, until only the characteristic motion of the arms in running remained, as we now see it. This pantomime if apt and easily executed would be taken up in other communities, and still others, until a better sign was encountered elsewhere, in another community of different vocal speech, more apt, more easily understood, and executed, that would replace the first. And thus the signs acted and reacted on each other for ages, the fittest only surviving and accepted in wider and still wider circles, continually improved and polished by use, operating under the laws that govern the life and growth of language; the scope of the execution brought down to an area two feet in diameter in front of the body, as we now see (these signs executed).