

INDIAN
BROTHER
BUFFALO



DA

Indian Brother Buffalo

By

LENA LOCKHART DAUGHERTY

GLADYS WHEELER JEFFORDS

Copyright—Lena Lockhart Daugherty
Gladys Wheeler Jeffords

1968

1971

'The Indian,"
ods, animals

hings TO BE.
er. To every
n. Therefore,
IERS.

in substance;
er killed wan-
, propitiation
for necessary

VATION. By
wherein lay
dian became
t, the Indian
er, the Indian
sdom and the
was so.



Legend of The Sacred White Buffalo

Snow was falling, the tiny white flakes whirling silently through the air like Indian spirit arrows. The crystal flakes touched the wooliness of the large white buffalo that stood apart from a brown, milling herd. Breath vapors, like frost, hovered over buffalo heads.

Slowly, the white buffalo moved to the edge of the cliff and peered down at the tipis set up in the valley far below. From tipi smoke holes greyish puffs spiralled into a night of stars.

For a long time the white buffalo watched the figures silhouetted against yellow flames which reached out and upward. The monstrous jumping, animal-appearing shapes danced and chanted, their horn-

BUFFALO WAS INDIAN LIFE



EVERYTHING in the Indian's tipi world centered about Brother Buffalo. Brother Buffalo was GREAT MEDICINE. He satisfied all material and spiritual needs of Indian man. A never-seen buffalo ruled buffalo world. This buffalo taught Indian medicine man where to find certain herbs and plants which healed sick bodies. This buffalo looked down, with pity, upon Indian man and led Indian man to find buffalo herds when food was needed.

Indian man was always mindful of this. A buffalo picture painted on a tipi, on a war shield, or a buffalo forelock tied to the top of the tallest tipi pole...

HOW DID BROTHER BUFFALO VANISH SO QUICKLY? Hide hunters and their guns. It was a lucrative business. Some hunters prided themselves in killing complete stands. Decimation of buffalo did Indian life no good. Indian man needed his brother to survive, and while he found good use for buffalo bones, the Indian required ALL BUFFALO parts to live as an Indian. He had no use for fertilizer and that was white man's use for buffalo bones.

Hide hunters respected no boundary lines and the United States Army protected the hide hunters. "Kill the buffalo and we rid ourselves of Indians," was the cry. Thus ended Indian life as an Indian.



AND

er than actual size, with horns set high. This gave the buffalo a goat-like, vacuous look.

Buffalo, in Indian days, were majestic in appearance. Measuring ten feet from nose to tail, standing a few inches higher than six feet, with a huge head which never come any season lost its forelock and beard, BROTHER BUFFALO was awe-inspiring. Small wonder the Indians believed the legends passed down through time by their story tellers. The male buffalo weighed in the neighborhood of fifteen hundred pounds, the cow somewhat less. Calves were similar to calves dropped by cattle, as humps did not form until the animals were a few weeks old.

In summertime, buffalo hair was stringy and straggy, very matted, and when infested with vermin, caused the giant beasts to rub against trees or to wallow in mud flats, in their urge to remove the biting insects.

In winter, heavy long hair covered buffalo bodies. And contrary to Thevet, buffalo horns set well down on the large wooly heads and curved upward. Unlucky indeed was horse or man impaled on a buffalo's horns. Buffalo might be dumb in manner awaiting his death, but buffalo knew the value of horns. The Indian and his pony also recognized this power.

When stampeding, buffalo moved swiftly, their short tails standing straight out or curled over their backs, dew claws rattling along the ground keeping rhythm with striking hooves. The noise carried for miles, the ground fairly shaking beneath running feet.

Where did Brother Buffalo come from and where did he go when hunts ended? According to Indian tales, buffalo sprang from the ground and went back into it. This is what Osages believed. Other tribes claimed the buffalo came from beneath the waters of a lake far to the west, far did it

, was not
to cattle,
or moved
ost of the

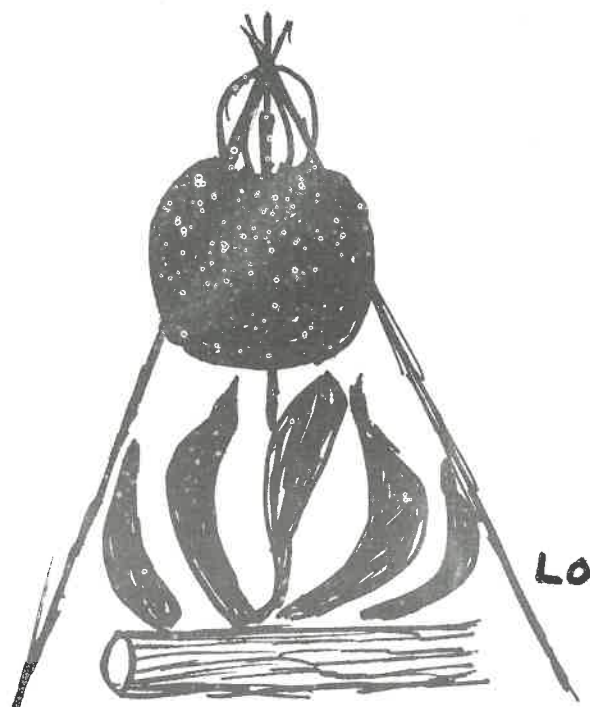
ers came, the
ns, for spongy,
e their bodies

d many Indian
ntinuously the
nts began and

y his brother
ore, searching
g winter days
mes small in
that number.
nters, Buffalo
The vast herds
greater-size-
ew outran the

, the hunters,
in education
in was schoof-
ian. NATURE
the world in
ments of na-
f grasses and
cation, Indian
be for Indian

lives to preserve their lands from Mexicans, Spaniards, American buffalo hunters and intruders. The Comanche's respect for his tribal hunting grounds, his hatred of ALL INTRUDERS, held back the formation of territories and states for many years.



S LO HUNT

summer and winter
ne very old, the sick,
d caches and family
unters or small groups
RULES were obeyed.

he leader, not neces-
s adeptness in laying
ecure adequate meat
arising during hunt
arose over kills; his
ans, and old ones.

o the hunt. If a rule
efor. There was never

Should it be a first
stered, or the offend-

out or shoot before everything was ready and the signal so given, a herd might stampede with many lives lost, and a village go hungry through winter moons.

A Hunt Leader sent out scouts to look for Brother Buffalo, to bring back news of buffalo coming. Indian scouts were important personages in Indian village life. In some tribes the scout rated higher than the warrior, for it was the skill of scouts that brought hunters to the Buffalo. It was the scout's talents that brought meat into hungry tipis. Scouts rode out alone, no war parties went with them. Scouts rode up into high hills where they could look out into the distant spaces. They watched trails as they rode along, looking closely at each crushed grass or twig. They kept their ears to the ground, listening for the clapping hooves. Whenever BUFFALO HINT was certain, the scouts reckoned the number, the direction of movement, and the time the herd could be encountered by hunters. Then, the scouts rode back, jubilantly giving the buffalo sign — hands fisted with thumbs enclosed, pressed tightly to temples, forefingers curled forward to simulate curved buffalo horns.

When the hunt signal came, hands of Indian women moved skillfully and speedily. Where no permanent lodges were maintained, tipis must be dismantled and loaded on travois which were drawn by ponies. An Osage missionary who once traveled along on an Osage buffalo hunt declared that Indian men without reservation were lazy and thoughtless. "These men," said he, "permit their women to do a man's work." The Osage missionary did not understand Osage thinking. Putting up and taking down tipis WAS Indian woman's work. Osage men did not stoop to such. Their work was protecting families, scouting, warring, hunting, riding, treatying, counting coup on enemy ponies. IT WAS INDIAN TRADITION.

It was Indian man, too, who offered feasts for help, for thanks,

hide coverings. Other horses
parfleches, clothing, cradle-
to walk many miles. Indian
maller travois on which were
children were assigned re-
sponsibly. While Indian women
the ponies, as each family's
buffalo hunt.

there was laughter and song,
meat in the cooking pots? It
village of five hundred was
and hills. Before the pony
entirely by foot. As the vil-
lagerside the procession, chased
rows from imaginary bows.
mothers. Warriors rode back
the young maidens in beaded
check on family possessions,
be with their family.

er called HALT, and women
then food must be prepared,
must be tended to.

til permanent camp signal
s were taken out to pasture,
in collecting wood for cook-
by name, and went with the
wood the children could pile
This was one reason for the

In years before the pony, Indian hunters killed buffalo in sev-
eral different ways. One method was driving the buffalo over a
cliff. Hunters attired in buffalo robes moved ahead and in back of
the herd. On a given signal the hunters ahead shouted and ran to
hide themselves in crevices just large enough to afford shelter when
the buffalo stampeded. The buffalo garbed hunters in back of the
herd shouted and drove the herd forward, and eventually over the
cliff. An entire herd could be destroyed quickly, if food and hides
were needed by the Indian village.

Sometimes, Indian hunters dressed in wolf hides. They crawl-
ed near the buffalo herd, then swiftly, with lance or bow and arrow,
dispatched the buffalo of their choice.

There were what was called "Indian surrounds", when the
hunters assembled on four sides of a herd, gradually moving closer,
working the herd into one milling circle, then hunting tools were
brought into use.

Now and then, a prairie fire was started. The herd panicked
from the fire and Indian shouts. At certain seasons or on certain
hunts, a definite age animal might be required by the Hunt Leader.
Perhaps, it was the three-year-old buffalo or the four-year-old, or
the young calves whose soft hides furnished cradle-board lining and
robes for the young children. Other times, the older bulls would be
killed as their hides furnished tipi covers, snowshoes, boots, bull
boats and shields.

Woe to the hunter who shot a cow, a young calf, mistakingly
for a four-year-old. Worse yet, should he shoot an OLD bull with
cracked horns! Mockery would be his lot. "A-yee! A-yee! There
goes one whose eye cannot see difference between cow and bull!

h, counting coup on

inds and shouts and
ahoo! Clouds of dust
unters from buffalo.

these ponies saved
worthy hunters who
quivers slung across
t their smiles were

ickly was that run-
its meat value. Such
ed.

hunt Leader signaled
lls were readily rec-
n which animal was

A hunter knew the
reements arose, and
thy spots, then the

ght horses to carry
idian days, what the
whichever the Hunt
nmer hunt measured

buffalo hide. This
damage to a robe.
served in cutting up

ed three women to a large buffalo, and they worked without stop-
ping, without talking. Each woman performed a special task. Young
Indian girls watched their mothers. Later, they were directed in
small duties, and soon became adept in the art. For art it was. Indian
girls learned nothing was to be thrown aside. From horns to hooves,
hair to hide, tip to tail, Indian man had a USE.

Certain parts were rare delicacies. Buffalo liver was sometimes
eaten raw, with drops of gall to heighten the flavor. Indian chil-
den stood silent, munching on entrals, as their mothers cut up the
buffalo. Buffalo fat was carefully preserved. White hunters remark-
ed that buffalo fat never gave indigestion like cattle fat. Today,
Indian food habits are commended by leading dieticians in what a
human body must have to remain at its best.

Some tribes chose to leave the buffalo heart with certain bones.
This offering to BUFFALO SPIRIT was a propitiation ritual. Other
tribes offered a buffalo hide.

When the women were finished, day was long past. Oftimes
the moon had risen and had set, with dawn breaking when the
women trudged or rode back into camp, where more work awaited
their hands. But it was the time of the hunt, and physical weariness
soon passed.



RNS TO TAIL

in innumerable ways.
a bullboat for travel-
was also used by the

and meats and soups
Indian village. Then,
hold of the black pot
ches were hung from
as poured water. Not
Indian women heated
ng with bits of meat
e meat mixture boiled
as stuffing pouches.
ere dried by stringing
d about sticks which
most times for curing
l fifty pounds of this
made after meat had
en pounded away un-

after years with white hunters and travelers through Indian lands.

Bones were for soup pots. Indian women, when warm spring winds blew down, needed the shoulder blades to plant corn and other vegetables. War clubs were made of buffalo bones and bone marrow fat enhanced Indian cooking.

No one, not the white hunters nor the skimmers, ever attained the expertise of Indian women in the art of tanning buffalo hides. It is interesting to note that many years after Indian woman tanning art was no more and hunters dressed their own robes, that Auguste P. Chouteau (Father of the Osages) was reprimanded soundly by his eastern cohort on the UNFIT condition of buffalo robes Chouteau was shipping east. Chouteau's partner urged him to seek out better skins, preferably, he insisted, WINTER SKINS, as "summer skins (1837-38) are unfit for ANYTHING except vermin which well-gluts all robes."

Hides were carefully pegged to the ground, hair side down, flesh side up. After the hide had dried to a texture the Indian women preferred, the remaining buffalo flesh was carefully chipped away. This was accomplished with the shoulder blade of the buffalo or adze shaped instrument. Scraping flesh from hides required care, time and patience, for a cut hide indicated negligence of the woman tanner. Flesh chippings were never thrown away. The chippings were pitched into hot water, to which berries were added. One writer likens the taste of such to potato soup. Sometimes Indian women added dried fungus to the boiling pot. This they had found on old tree stumps, and this, say the writers, had an oyster-like taste.

To keep the buffalo hides soft and pliant when rains came, a mixture of ashes and water was poured upon the hides. Later, the women rubbed buffalo brains into the hides. after which the hides

d another purpose. The
h for Indian hair.

ories and diaries relate,
s treat is made in many
rough Indian country.
an lodges and eat food

most tough and made
ld was quite an Indian
o participate. Buffalo
ons, scoops. Medicine

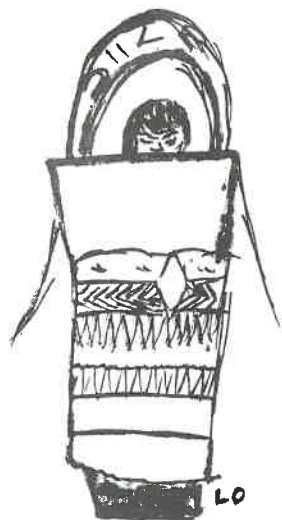
adequate for Indian
lance points, wherever
strings and backs of
omen for thread when
s. Sinews were used
s.

was carefully washed
and braided into hal-
their own hair braids

es come summer.
blankets or throws.
e outside of the tipi
times the picture de-
ed. Perhaps the pic-
egends handed down

from father to son were used. Hides were made into saddles, bridles,
lassos and thongs.

Last, but certainly not least, buffalo gave meaning to INDIAN
NAMES, especially in certain clans. There was Standing Buffalo,
Sitting Buffalo, Running Buffalo, Mighty Buffalo, Brave Buffalo,
Two Buffalo, Four Horns, Hollow Horn Buffalo, Little Standing
Buffalo, Big Buffalo, Little Buffalo, Mad Buffalo, Struck Buffalo,
Buffalo Standing in Water, and the like.



DISAPPEAR PLAINS



could not understand
necessity, never to ex-
or stand. Indians cer-
traveled about Indian
invited, sportsmen who

d Duke Alexis. The
and General Sheridan
at he wanted. Alexis,
res signified a desire
ans to help and help
special dances for the
the Sioux

men parted with lives easier than with their favorite guns. After Alexis had missed several shots, Buffalo Bill rode alongside telling the Duke when to shoot and where. Alexis downed his buffalo, one being enough so the story goes, and that evening his cortege ladled out champagne to toast his coup. Thereupon, Alexis returned to Russia. What Spotted Tail thought is not recorded.

In later years the buffalo and Alexis were immortalized in a New Orleans Mardi Gras song —

If ever I cease to love, If ever I cease to love,
May the Grand Duke Alexis, Ride a buffalo to Texas,
If ever I cease to love.

Buffalo Bill Cody was quite a hunter in his heyday. His keen eye and keener shooting downed many a buffalo. His prowess won him the job of buffalo head hunting for a railroad construction gang which numbered more than a thousand. It was Buffalo Bill's contract to kill twelve buffalo daily and to supervise the manner in which the meat was cut up. At that time the railroad was laying lines to the western mountains. Because of this, the giant herds split, into what was known later as NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN herds. The hammering blows of the construction crew scared and stampeded the buffalo for the sounds carried for miles on the prairies. This made it necessary for Buffalo Bill to ride farther afield for his daily twelve buffalo. There was Indian danger too, for Indians had decided the white man was NOT their friend and certainly was not the buffalo's either.

Once, during Buffalo Bill's railroad contract, he entered into a buffalo shooting contest with another renowned buffalo hunter. Many bets were placed and many heads were cracked afterwards. It took Buffalo Bill three such contests to prove he was KOB (King

ent of the chase."

as a sportsman by
ly could not. Cook's
ls, numbered 88 buf-
erheated during this
nd's gun.

ne very last buffalo,
southward into land
ely INDIAN HUNT-
tates. The Arkansas

was money the hunt-
ry Indian to achieve
hunters rode in and
to protect the white
ustice for the white
o for his Brother the
s own death chant.

o every 100,000 buf-
t white buffalo fell,
named Prairie Dog
ne thousand dollars.
ite buffalo, its skin,
ly the sacred poles.
sh. It was END for

into being. White
land for farms and

In 1874, seven million went. Still, as years passed, until buffalo
coup de grace in 1887, the bones piled upward. From Indian Terri-
tory, carts and wagons rattled along deep rutted trails to the north,
carrying bones to railroad shipping points.

Now, two new uses had been discovered for Indian Brother
Buffalo. Chips or droppings where trees were scarce afforded fire
for cooking and keeping warm. A poet by name of Scott Cummings
penned his famous Ballad of the Bonepickers on a buffalo shoulder
blade. The bones shipped east became fertilizer.

Much outcry was beginning to be heard over buffalo slaughter
and the plight of the buffalo's brother, Lo the Poor Indian! (Alex-
ander Pope) Helen Hunt Jackson penned her Century of Dishonor
depicting the Indian's distress. While few worried about Lo, con-
cern was felt for the buffalo. Canada declared a permanent closed
season on a buffalo herd that ranged in a region almost too hardy
for hunters. In 1907 Canada honored Brother Buffalo further by
purchasing several hundred buffalo from one Michael Pablo.

Michael Pablo's herd was then in the Flathead Reservation,
Montana. He had acquired his original buffalo from a Metis named
Walking Coyote. Walking Coyote, it is said, drove thirty buffalo
into the Flathead Reservation way back in 1830. Michael was forced
to sell or destroy his herd for the Department of Interior flatly
denied him further pasture permit for his animals. Desperately,
he appealed to the Canadian government, first for pasture. "Give
me grazing land," he cried, "and if you cannot, please buy my
buffalo. I cannot kill them!"

It was a tremendous job for Michael Pablo to corral and ship
the buffalo, as his herd now numbered 2000, but he never said a

val, it was a little late
c in 1862 forewarned
by offering "Pleasure
from Leavenworth to
id trip for ten dollars
buffalo.

ie visited Washington
" he told McCormick
ke war. If Indian kills
ildren from starving,
ught to say when they
hite man when white

year it joined with
lahoma. This was in
lo future. The United
cation, established a
intains. A Comanche
ed the buffalo herd,
ot record Geronimo's

ed. It was necessary
he summer of 1971
was reduced to 500.
i7, fifty buffalo were
ed with meat selling
ntal feeding with the
n this area.

Chief Plenty-Coups of the Crows, one of many great Indian leaders who watched the slaughter of buffalo, summed up the situation succinctly —

WHEN THE BUFFALO WENT AWAY, THE HEARTS OF
MY PEOPLE FELL TO THE GROUND AND THEY COULD NOT
LIFT THEM UP AGAIN.

Something About INDIAN BROTHER BUFFALO ARTIST

Artist for front and back covers for this book is WILLIAM WOLFE. Wolfe is a fullblood Cherokee, presently living in that part of northeastern Oklahoma called by his ancestors CHEROKEE NATION. Later, this was a part of the Five Civilized Tribes (Cherokee, Choctaw, Chickasaw, Creek, Seminole) or INDIAN TERRITORY.

His people came west along one of the many trails to be known as TRAILS OF MANY TEARS, due to the heartaches, injustices, and deaths suffered all along the way.

Wolfe is self-educated in his art. His paintings are to be seen in the Five Civilized Tribes Museum, Muskogee, the Cherokee Arts and Crafts Museum, Tahlequah, trading posts, and in private collections. He is married to the former Juanita Newberry, also of Cherokee blood. The Wolfes have four children, Mickie, Rorie, Rachel and Shaun.



22



"BUFFALO COME"

Indian Scout Signal