

Benkelman Nebr
Jan 22d 1940

Mr. W. S. Campbell
Univ Of Okla
Norman Okla.

Dear Mr. Campbell

Mr. E P Wilson, professor of History, Nebraska Normal College, Chadron, Nebraska, has been conducting a study of the buffalo, their migrations, habits, and influence on the early Indian troubles..I have been attempting to assist.

As you know, there is two very definite "schools of thought" concerning the buffalo migration. Hornaday asserts there was a great mass movement from the north to the south in the fall, and an exodus from the south in the spring to the northern feeding grounds.. Others, who seem very well posted, claim there was no mass movement. Then, there were those who advance the thought that roughly speaking, there were three great herds. A Northern herd, which came as far south as the Yellowstone and into the Dakotas.

A middle herd that ranged from the Dakotas into Kansas.

And a southern herd.

Old trappers, old buffalo hunters (however these men were not here during the unobstructed buffalo movements) and some Sioux whom I have talked too, seem of the opinion that there were three great herds, that there was a migration within their range, and that this migration, without doubt caused a surge or impulse on the surrounding herds. But, they generally feel that the buffalo never migrated to a warmer climate, but migrated because instance made them use a different winter pasture than they used in the summer.. This theory seems logical for the reason it accounts for the great herds that wintered in some very cold and bleak highlands, or in the mountain parks.

I am merely rehearsing this to lay a foundation for my reason in writing..

Sometime ago I had read your book, Kit Carson. I read it for the historical value, and to gather information.. When the buffalo question came up, I recalled your many references to the herds of buffalo in Wyoming, in the mountain parks of Colorado, and the immense herds that wintered on the Arkansas in S E Colorado..All of which, seemed to prove that the buffalo went where there was feed, but not necessarily SOUTH..

Mr. Heffan of Colorado makes statements similiar to yours. Other writers say much the same thing.

Your Mountain Men --carry the same meaning, I think I am safe in saying..War Path is more definite..

I have just had a letter from Mr Schwartz, who went into the Blackfeet country in the late 60's and is yet alive and still in Montana. He married an Indian woman and became an adopted member of the tribe. He is now in the Indian Affairs of the U S His wonderful book. "My life As An Indian" makes no less than 25 statements of the immense herds that wintered in Canada, Montana, Wyoming and the Dakotas..

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