

Buffalo

J. F. Evans

Providence has in every age of the world and in every land been considerate of the wants of her primitive children, and was ever generous to the tribes of the middle west, the plains tribes who subsisted almost entirely on meat. To them was given the American buffalo, unequaled by any animal that has ever existed. Their flesh was both meat and bread. They fed, clothed, shod, housed and bedded entire tribes who looked to no other source. They were easily killed, yet their numbers were inexhaustible by native methods and demands.

Native to a considerable part of North America, they flourished most in the plains country east of the Rocky Mountains and stretching from the arctic to the Gulf of Mexico...where they were ~~xx~~ numbered by millions, or rather were in unnumbered ~~xx~~ millions. They were migratory, moving north during spring and summer and south during fall and ~~xxxx~~ ~~xxxx~~ winter in herds estimated by millions.

In 1874 General Crook in command of U.S. troops in Western Kansas and Nebraska estimated that there were fifty million buffalo in the U. S. and fifteen million between the Arkansas and Canadian Rivers.

In the winter of 1867 I was in the Red River Valley country and found buffalo on the Little Wichita in Clay County, and from there west across the Big Wichita and to the Pease River (far as I went) and south for some miles. There were immense herds.

I have seen them grazing in bunches of half dozen to fifty a few yards apart, but looking over them, they appeared as a compact herd stretching for miles - as far as the eye could reach.

On one occasion with a couple of wagons and a dozen horsemen, I was in the path of a moving herd. They split and passed on either side of us a few yards away, coming together after passing. We were in a diamond shaped island for a long while. I do not know what the time was kept - or any estimate as to numbers, but there were several tens of thousands. We were in no danger. They pressed away as far as they could.

I was then on the southeast edge of the herd so that when it is taken into account that these herds were scattered over the country for 250 or more miles west and 300 miles north in Texas alone - I leave you to estimate the numbers.

The great commercial hunt for hides and slaughter did not begin until in the seventies (1870s) after railroads had reached the ranges. The last great hunt was in the winter of 1877. After that year, so called sportsmen searched out and exterminated the pitiful remnant.

The story of the hide hunters calls for its own chapter. However, it is proper to say that the destruction of the great herds was the most important step in the conquering of savage indian tribes. They were his all. He was left without food, clothing or shelter - and ~~xxxx~~ forced onto reservations.

Neither ranches or farm interests could exist in a country over which buffalo herds roamed. No fence would have stayed their march and they would have absorbed and carried away domestic cattle.

... moderate of the wants of her primitive children, and was generous to the tribes of the north-west, the plains tribes subsisted almost entirely on meat. To them was given the buffalo, unequalled by any animal that has ever existed. Meat was both meat and bread. They ate, dressed, made, and bedded entire tribes who looked to no other source, were easily killed, yet their numbers were inexhaustible by the methods and demands.

... to a considerable part of their herds, their hunting was in the plains country east of the Rocky Mountains and extending from the mouth of the Red to Mexico. There they were numbered by millions, and their range is estimated by millions of square miles. Their numbers were estimated by millions of square miles.

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On one occasion while hunting for a herd of buffalo, I was in the path of a herd of buffalo. The herd was on either side of us a few rods away, and they were all looking at us. We were in a direct line with them, and they were all looking at us. They were in a direct line with them, and they were all looking at us. They were in a direct line with them, and they were all looking at us.

I was then on the northern edge of the herd, and I saw it in seven days' march that these herds were scattered over the country for 200 or more miles west and 100 miles north to Canada. I leave you to estimate the numbers.

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The story of the hide hunters tells for its own chapter. However, it is proper to say that the destruction of the great herds was the most important step in the conquering of savage Indian tribes. They were his aid. He was left without food, clothing or shelter - and turned toward reservations.