

that *d*, *l*, *n*, and *r*, are interchangeable consonants. Prince Maximilian writes the word Manitari (adding a plural ending), which represents a way in which the Mandans often pronounce it—the Mandan word for water being *mani*.

Hidatsa was the name of the village on Knife River farthest from the Missouri, the village of those whom Lewis and Clarke considered the Minnetarees proper.* It is probable that after the epidemic of 1837 the survivors of the other villages moved thither, or that the majority of all the survivors came from Hidatsa, which then lent its name to the whole tribe—a name now generally used by this people to designate themselves, and for which reason the one most frequently employed in this essay.

The origin of the word Hidatsa is obscure. It is said by some to mean *willows*; but I know of no species of willow that bears this name. By a few of the tribe it is pronounced Hidaátsa, and in this form bears a slight resemblance to the word midahádsa, the present Minnetaree generic name for all shrub willows. It may possibly be an old form of the latter word; but, according to my present knowledge of the formation and phonetic changes of this language, I have no reason for believing it to be so.

There is little doubt that the tribe, or a portion of it, was once called Willows; and this may be the reason why some suppose Hidatsa to mean *willows*. But it is evident that even in former days travelers or their interpreters were uncertain with regard to the application of the name Willows, and later inquiries on the part of the writer have done little toward clearing the difficulty. In Lewis and Clarke's journal (1804), we find the inhabitants of Amatiha, the first village on Knife River above its mouth, spoken of as "Minnetarees Metaharta, that is, Minnetarees of the Willows";† while Prince Maximilian (1834) says that Hidatsa, or the village on Knife River farthest from the Missouri (above Amatiha), was called "Eláh-sa (the village of the great willows)."‡ It is plain that "Eláh-sa" is but a form of Hidatsá, for the aspirate is often pronounced or heard indistinctly; *d* and *l* are interchangeable with one

* p. 96.

† p. 97.

‡ p. 178.