SIGN TALK
A UNIVERSAL SIGNAL CODE WITHOUT APPARATUS
FOR USE IN ARMY, NAVY, CAMPING
HUNTING AND DAILY LIFE

ERNEST THOMPSON SETON
SIGN TALK
A Universal Signal Code, Without Apparatus, for Use in the Army, the Navy, Camping, Hunting, and Daily Life

By
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THE GESTURE LANGUAGE OF THE CHEYENNE INDIANS
With additional Signs used by other tribes, also a few necessary Signs from the code of the Deaf in Europe and America, and others that are established among our Policemen, Firemen, Railroad Men, and School Children
IN ALL 1,725

Prepared with assistance from
General Hugh L. Scott, U. S. A.

The French and German equivalent words added by
Lillian Delger Powers, M. D.

700 ILLUSTRATIONS BY THE AUTHOR

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PREFACE

In offering this book to the public after having had the manuscript actually on my desk for more than nine years, let me say frankly that no one realizes better than myself, now, the magnitude of the subject and the many faults of my attempt to handle it.

My attention was first directed to the Sign Language in 1882 when I went to live in Western Manitoba. There I found it used among the various Indian tribes as a common language, whenever they were unable to understand each other's speech. In later years I found it a daily necessity when traveling among the natives of New Mexico and Montana, and in 1897, while living among the Crow Indians at their agency near Fort Custer, I met White Swan, who had served under General George A. Custer as a Scout. He had been sent across country with a message to Major Reno, so escaped the fatal battle; but fell in with a party of Sioux, by whom he was severely wounded, clubbed on the head, and left for dead. He recovered and escaped, but ever after was deaf and practically dumb. However, sign-talk was familiar to his people and he was at little disadvantage in daytime. Always skilled in the gesture code, he now became very expert; I was glad indeed to be his pupil, and thus in 1897 began seriously to study the Sign Language.

In 1900 I included a chapter on Sign Language in my
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projected Woodcraft Dictionary, and began by collecting all the literature. There was much more than I expected, for almost all early travellers in our Western Country have had something to say about this *lingua franca* of the Plains.

As the material continued to accumulate, the chapter grew into a Dictionary, and the work, of course, turned out manifold greater than was expected. The Deaf, our School children, and various European nations, as well as the Indians, had large sign vocabularies needing consideration. With all important print on the subject I am fairly well conversant, besides which I have had large opportunities in the field and have tried to avail myself of them to the fullest extent, carrying my manuscript from one Indian tribe to another, seeking out always the best sign-talkers among them, collecting and revising, aiming to add all the best signs in use to those already on record.

The following are the chief printed works on Sign Language:


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It was preliminary to the much more extended work published the year following, and combines in itself all the important vocabularies published up to that time, including: Wm. Dunbar's List pub. Trans. Am. Phil. Soc., January 16, 1801; about 60 signs; Prince Maximilian von Wied-Neuwied's List, Reise, Nord. Am., 1832-34, 1837; Capt. R. F. Burton's List pub. in "The City of the Saints," 1862; Dr. D. G. MacGowan's List pub. in Historical Magazine, Vol. X, 1866, pp. 86-97; also Manuscript Lists supplied by Col. R. I. Dodge, Dr. William H. Corbusier, U. S. A., and about forty other contributors.


1885. The Indian Sign Language by Capt. William Philo Clark, U. S. A., 244 pp. octavo, quite the best book on the subject, giving over 1,000 signs with photographic exactness; it is also one of the best early encyclopedic books on Indians in general; unfortunately, it is without illustrations and is out of print. Published by Hamersly & Co., of Philadelphia, 1885.

This is practically the only publication quoted in preparing this work. I have referred to it continually as a standard—as the highest available authority. (W. P. Clark was born July 27, 1845, at Deer River, Lewis Co., New York. Graduated from West Point June 15, 1868. Served on the Plains in 2d Cavalry during the Indian
wars of 1876 to 1880. Died at Washington, D. C., September 23, 1884.)

HADLEY INDIAN SIGN PRINTS

About twenty-five years ago there lived in Anadarko, Indian Territory, an enthusiastic missionary worker named Lewis F. Hadley, known to the Indians as Ingonompashi.

He made a study of Sign Language in order to furnish the Indians with a pictographic writing, based on diagrams of the signs, and meant to be read by all Indians, without regard to their speech. Pointing to the Chinese writing as a model and parallel, he made a Sign Language font of 4,000 pictographic types for use in his projected works. He maintained that 110,793 Indians were at that time sign-talkers and he proposed to reach them by Sign-Language publications.

In pursuance of his plan, he issued the following:

1887. List of the Primary Gestures in Indian Sign Talk. "Only 19 copies were printed." It was intended as a prodrome to "extended works and a magazine in Hands-talk[ing]."

It consists of 63 pages with 684 crude woodblocks of white lines on black ground, illustrating signs, alphabetically arranged, but without captions or text of any kind, except the explanation on the title page, abridged as above.

1890. A Lesson in Sign Talk, designed to show the use of the line showing the movement of the hands in the Indian Gesture Language, by In-go-nom-pa-shi, Fort Smith, Ark., 1890. Copyrighted by Lewis F. Hadley, 12 pp. A portrait of him by himself is on p. 11, inscribed "In-go-nom-pa-shi, drawn by himself at 60 years."
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It devotes 3 pages to general discussion of Sign Talk, 1½ pages to reform of our spelling, the rest is given to general remarks with 12 poor illustrations in white line, also a Scripture text with 15 signs drawn, the Lord’s Prayer with 55 drawn signs, and on p. 12, The Indian Little Star, a novel version of “Twinkle, Twinkle,” rendered in 97 drawn signs.

1893. Indian Sign Talk. Being a Book of Proofs of the matter printed or equivalent cards designed for teaching sign-talking Indians as much English as can be explained through the medium of their “Universal” Gesture Language, by Ingonompashi, copyrighted May 15, 1893, “only 75 copies are saved.”

This is Hadley’s most extended work. It is a dictionary of the Sign Language, in 268 large octavo leaves printed on one side only of each sheet.

It consists of 9 pages of Preface and general matter, 192 pp. of dictionary alphabetically arranged, each page having three gestures figured and beside each the equivalent in English. A total of 577 signs (including a double). Pages 193 to 205 are given to small reproductions of the sign drawings to illustrate “measurements of type”—his font—about 800 illustrations, two pages of appendix with compound sign words, and 14 illustrations, 1 page of black type, 18 in number, 53 pages of reading matter in signs, the above cited version of “Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star” and the story of “Wolf and the White Man” in signs; the rest being Scripture texts and exhortations and the 19th Psalm, ending with the Lord’s Prayer.

The cards referred to I have. They consist of 577 separate cards with an illustrated sign on each and additional matter on the back. Besides which there are
about 100 separate cards each with a scripture text, chapter, or sermonette on it, about 1,000 illustrations in all. The same being the matter of the dictionary proper reproduced on separate cards, the diagram on one side and the text on the other. The front matter and the type measurements do not, however, appear on the cards. Though poor as art, the drawings are of some value to the student.

This is the most ambitious work extant on the subject of Sign Language, but seems to be quite unknown to most ethnologists, and is not in any library, so far as I can learn, except the Library of Congress, the Smithsonian Institution, the New York Public Library, the Library of Prof. J. C. Elsom of Wisconsin State University, and my own collection.

Of the 75 copies issued, only these 5 have been accounted for, but cards comprising the dictionary part were issued to the extent of 100,000 in sets of 571 each, and the reading matter on cards to the number of over 27,000.

1910. The Sign Language, by Prof. J. Schuyler Long, State School for the Deaf, Council Bluffs, Iowa, published at Washington, D. C., 1910. A valuable dictionary of about 1,500 signs used by the deaf, with 500 admirable photographic illustrations. Of these signs a large number seem to be arbitrary, but many are evidently of good construction and quite acceptable to Indian sign-talkers.

To these should be added:

1832. La Mimica, by Andrea de Jorio. "La mimica degli antichi investigata nel Gestire Napoletano." Napoli, 1832, 8vo, 372 pp., 21 plates.
This interesting Italian work on Sign Language was written to show that the gestures figured on antique vases, etc., may be explained by their modern parallels, especially as observed in Naples. The 21 plates illustrate about one hundred of these gestures—about half of these are reproduced in Mallery's 1881 publication.


An extended study of Finger-talking as used by the deaf, the savages, etc. About 30 American Indian signs are described and compared with those of the deaf. No illustrations.


An interesting but not very important dissertation on the Gesture Language in use among the deaf, the Cistercian Monks, and the American Indians. No illustrations.

1883. Sign Language, Remarks on, by Wilfred Powells in his "Wanderings in a Wild Country." An account of a three years' residence in New Britain (to the north of New Guinea), 1883, pp. 254-261, with 14 good figures, showing the digital origin of numbers.


A considerable discourse on the Sign Language as used by the very primitive races. Many figures.

My thanks are due to General Hugh Lenox Scott,
U. S. A., one of the best living sign-talkers, for a general review of the text, with new signs and explanations as indicated.

To John Homer Seger of Colony, Oklahoma, for much assistance. He was for 45 years in official control of the Indians at Darlington and Colony, Oklahoma. They were of the Southern Cheyenne, Kiowa, and Arapaho tribes chiefly. All his communications with them were in the Sign Language, so that he became one of our best experts. We have corresponded much, and during a prolonged visit to his home in August, 1915, we together went over every sign in this Manual. His signs were of the Cheyenne dialect.

To the Reverend Walter C. Roe (since dead) of Colony, Oklahoma, for many notes and comments. He was so expert that he preached every Sunday in the Sign Language.

To Sheeaka, or Cyiaka (The Mudhen), a Yanktonnais Sioux living at Standing Rock. He worked over my entire manuscript with me in 1912, endorsing most of the signs given by Clark, as well as adding those that are accredited to him. He was considered the best sign-talker on the reservation. His familiarity with the Sign Language was largely due to the fact that a member of his family was a deaf-mute, so that he has kept up the method while others of his generation are forgetting it. Frank Zahn, an intelligent and educated half-breed, acted as interpreter and helped with many suggestions.

In the autumn of 1916 I took my manuscript to Montana and received valuable help from the following Blackfoot Indians:

Bearhead, an old-time, full-blooded Piegan Indian,
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with a pronounced contempt for modern ways and modern signs; George Starr or Bull Calf, a half-blood, who acted as interpreter for Bearhead; Medicine Owl, Eagle Child, Three Bears, Two-Guns Whitecalf; all full-blooded Piegans and excellent sign-talkers.

Heavy Breast, a half-blood, acted as interpreter, with assistance from James C. Grant.

I am also indebted to Chasing Bear (Ma-to Hu-wa-pi), a Santee, and to Chief Tom Frosted, a Yanktonnais; both of Standing Rock. About a dozen good signs were given me by C. B. Ruggles, of Taos, New Mexico; and helpful information was received from Thomas La Forge, official interpreter for the Crow Nation, and Clitzo Deadman, an educated Navaho at Ganado, Arizona.

In the spring of 1917 I spent some time among the Cheyennes at Concho, Oklahoma, checking up my lists. My chief source of information was Robert Burns, an intelligent and educated Cheyenne, who spoke excellent English and was also a good sign-talker. At the same time I got much valuable assistance from Cheyenne Fanny (Mrs. Hamilton), Deafy Fletcher, and numerous old Cheyennes and Arapahoes about the Post. Father Isadore, of the St. Patrick’s Mission, Anadarko, Oklahoma, and the Reverend Sherman Coolidge (Arapahoe), of Sheridan, Wyoming, also contributed.

In the case of special or unusual signs, I give the name of the best of my authorities; but when, according to my own observation, the sign is in general use and indorsed by practically all, no authority is cited.

I have to thank my friends James Mooney and F. W. Hodge of the Smithsonian Institution, and Professor J. Schuyler Long, of Council Bluffs, Iowa, for much help-
ful criticism; Professor Elmer D. Read, of the Pennsylvania School for the Deaf, for a review of the Introduction; also, Doctor Charles A. Eastman (Ohiyesa), Colonel W. F. Cody (Buffalo Bill), Hamlin Garland, Miss Frances Densmore, and Mrs. Mary Austin for contributions or criticism.

For the French and German equivalent words I am chiefly indebted to Doctor Lillian Delger Powers, of Mt. Kisco, New York. Some assistance was given by Miss Dorothy Dwenger, of Greenwich, Connecticut, and Harry G. Seides, Professor of German, Jersey City High School, New Jersey.

The drawings throughout are by myself.

Ernest Thompson Seton.
INTRODUCTION

ITS ANTIQUITY

Many thoughtful men have been trying for a century, at least, to give mankind a world-speech which would overstep all linguistic barriers, and one cannot help wondering why they have overlooked the Sign Language, the one mode common to all mankind, already established and as old as Babel. Yes, more ancient than the hills.

As far back as the records go, we find the Sign Language in use. General Hugh L. Scott has pointed out nineteen examples in Homer. Greek vases, Japanese bronzes, ancient Hindu statuary, as well as songs and legends older than history, give testimony in like tenor. While Egyptologists remind us that the oldest records show, not only that the Sign Language was then used, but that the one original code was much like that in use to-day. The fact that it is yet found all over the world wherever man is man, is proof of its being built on human nature in the beginnings. We might even argue that it is more ancient than speech.

Ideas certainly came before the words that express them. The idea of "hunger" must be a thousand times as old as any existing "word" for "hunger." When it became necessary to communicate to another the idea of hunger, it certainly was easier and more direct to communicate it by gesture than by word. The word had, perforce, to be more or less arbitrary, but the gesture was
logical, and could at once indicate the pain, its place, and even hint at the cause.

The possible variations of a mere squeak in a concealed pipe are obviously less in number and far less graphic and logical than the various movements of two active, free-moving, compound, visible parts of the body that utilize all the dimensions of space, all the suggestions of speed, motion, physical form and action, juxtaposition, yes, even a measure of sound, and that could in a multitude of cases reproduce the very idea itself.

Animals have far more gestures to express thoughts and emotions than they have sounds, and children instinctively use gestures for various ideas long before they acquire the sound for them. In all races as a rule the very young children’s gestures are the same, but the different words imposed by the different mothers have little or nothing in common, and no obvious basis in logic. All of which goes to prove the greater antiquity of eye-talk over ear-talk. To which conclusion we are forced also by the superiority of sight over hearing as a sense. “Seeing is believing,” is conviction: hearing is more open to challenge.

Nor can the sign-talk have changed radically, for it is founded on the basic elements of human make-up, and on mathematics, and is so perfectly ideographic that no amount of bad presentation can completely divert attention from the essential thought to the vehicle; while punning is an impossibility.

It had all the inherent possibilities of speech, was indeed capable of even greater subtleties, as we have noted, and had a far greater distance range, three or four times that of spoken words.
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In view of the greater antiquity and many advantages that hand gestures have over spoken language, one is prompted to ask: Why did it not develop and continue man's chief mode of inter-communication? The answer is, doubtless, partly because it was useless in the dark or when the person was out of sight or partly hidden by intervening things. Diagrammatically expressed it was thus:

Speech therefore covers all directions night and day.Gesture covers one-third of the circle in hours of light. Therefore speech serves six times as many occasions as gesture.
But the chief reason for the triumph of the appeal to the ear is doubtless because the hands were in constant use for other things; the tongue was not; was indeed practically free to specialize for this end.

ITS UNIVERSALITY

Being so fundamental, ancient, and persistent, Sign Language is, perforce, universal. In some measure it is used by every race on earth to-day. Eskimo and Zulu, Japanese and Frenchman, Turk and Aztec, Greek and Patagonian. And whenever two men of hopelessly di-
verse speech have met, they have found a medium of thought exchange in the old Sign Language—the pantomimic suggestion of ideas.

Latin races are proverbially hand-talkers, so that the Sign Language is more widely used among them than with Anglo-Saxons.

But the American Plains Indian is undoubtedly the best sign-talker the world knows to-day. There are, or were, some thirty different tribes with a peculiar speech of their own, and each of these communicated with the others by use of the simple and convenient sign-talk of the plains. It is, or was, the language of Western trade and diplomacy as far back as the records go. Every traveller who visited the Buffalo Plains had need to study and practise this Western Volapuk, and all attest its simplicity, its picturesqueness, its grace, and its practical utility.

Many of the best observers among these have left us long lists of signs in use, Alexander Henry in his gossipy journal among the Mandans of the Missouri in 1806 tells us of the surprise and interest he felt in watching two Indian chiefs of different tribes who conversed freely for hours on all subjects of common interest, conveying their ideas accurately by nothing but simple gestures.

The European races are much less gifted as sign-talkers. But we all have a measure of it that is a surprise to most persons when first confronted with the facts. Our school children especially make daily use of the ancient signals.

AMONG SCHOOL CHILDREN

In taking observations among school-boys and girls, I had this uniform experience: All denied any knowledge
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of the Sign Language, at first, but were themselves surprised on discovering how much of it they had in established use.

One very shy little girl—so shy that she dared not speak—furnished a good illustration:

"Do you use the Sign Language in your school?" I asked.

She shook her head.

"Do you learn any language but English?"

She nodded.

"What is the use of learning any other than English?"

She raised her right shoulder in the faintest possible shrug and at the same time turned her right palm slightly up.

"Now," was my reply, "don't you see you have answered all my three questions in signs which you said you did not use?"

Following the subject, I said: "What does this mean?" and held up my right hand with the first and second fingers crossed.

"Pax," she whispered; and then, after further trials, I learned that at least thirty signs were in daily use in that local school.

This was in England. In America the sign "Pax," or "King's cross," is called "King's X," "Fines" or "Fins" or "Fends," "Bars up" or "Truce," meaning always, "I claim immunity."

This is a very ancient sign and seems to refer to the right of sanctuary. The name "King's cross," used occasionally in England, means probably the sanctuary in the King's palace.

In general I found about 150 gesture signals in
established use among American school children, namely:

- **Me** (Tap one's own chest).
- **You** (Pointing to you).
- **Yes** (Nod).
- **No** (Shake head).
- **Good** (Nod and clap hands).
- **Bad** (Shake head and grimace).
- **Go** (Pushing flat hand forward, palm forward).
- **Come** (Drawing in flat hand, palm toward one).
- **Hurry** (The same repeated vigorously several times).
- **Come for a moment** (Beckon with forefinger, hand unmoved).
- **Stop** (Flat hand held up, palm forward).
- **Gently** (Flat hand held low, palm down, gently waved).
- **Good-bye** (Flat hand held high, palm down and forward, fingers quickly waved up and down).
- **Up** (Point up).
- **High** (Flat hand, palm down, held up at arm's length).
- **Deep** (Left flat hand palm down at level of mouth, right palm up, as low as possible).
- **Heaven** (Point up very high and look up).
- **Down** (Point down).
- **Forward** (Swing index forward and down in a curve).
- **Backward** (Jerk thumb over shoulder).
- **Across** (Hold left hand out flat, palm down, run right index across it).
- **Over or Above** (Hold out flat left, palm down, and above it hold ditto right).
- **Under** (Reverse of foregoing).
- **Hush** (Index finger on lips).
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Listen  (Curved hand behind ear).
Look    (Flat hand over eyes).
Look there (Point and look in same direction).
Touch   (Reach out and touch with index).
Taste   (Lay finger on tongue).
Smell   (Hold palm to nose).
Friendship (Hand shake).
Warning (Index finger held up).
Threatening (Fist held up).
Weeping (With index finger at each eye, trace course of tears).
Shame on you (Point one index at the person and draw the other along it several times in same direction).
You make me ashamed (Cover eyes and face with hands).
Mockery (Stick tongue out at person).
Disdain (Snap fingers toward person).
Scorn (Throw an imaginary pinch of sand at person).
Insolent defiance (Thumb to nose, hand spread).
Arrogant (Indicate swelled head).
Pompous (Indicate big chest).
Incredulity (Expose white of eye with finger, as though proving "No green there").
I am no fool (Tap one side of the nose).
Joke (Rub side of nose with index).
Connivance (Winking one eye).
Puzzled (Scratch the head).
Crazy (Tap forehead with index then describe a circle with it).
Despair (Pulling the hair).
Sleepy (Put a fist in each eye).
Bellyache (Hands clasped across the belly).
Sick (A grimace and a limp dropping of the hands).
Applause (Clap hands).
Victory (Swing an imaginary flag over head).
Upon my honor (Draw a cross over heart or cross the hands over breast).
I am seeking (Looking about and pointing finger in same directions).
I am thinking (Lay index on brow, lower head and look out under brows).
I have my doubts (Slowly swing head from side to side).
I will not listen (Hold flat hands on ears).
I will not look (Cover eyes with hands).
I forget (Slowly shake head, and brush away something in air, near the forehead).
I claim exemption, or "Fins" or "Bar up" (Middle finger crossed on index).
I beg of you (Flat hand palm to palm, pointing to the person).
I pray (Clasped hands held up).
I am afraid, or surrender (Hold up both flat hands, palm forward).
I wind him around my finger (Make the action with right thumb and index around left index).
I have him under my thumb (Press firmly down with top of right thumb).
You surprise me (Flat hand on open mouth).
I send you a kiss (Kiss the finger tips of right hand and throw it forward).
Search me (Hold the coat flaps open, one in each hand).
Swim (Strike out with flat hands).
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Dive (Flat hands together, moved in a curve, forward and down).
Will you come swimming? (Two fingers in V shape held up level).
Will you? or Is it so? (Look, nod and raise brows).
Fool or Ass (A thumb in each ear, flat hands up).
Cut-throat (Draw index across throat).
Indifference (A shoulder shrug).
Ignorance (A shrug and a head shake).
Pay (Hold out closed hand, palm up, rubbing thumb and index tips together).
Jew (Flat hands waved near shoulders, palms up).
Bribe (Hold hollow hand, palm up, behind one).
It is in my pocket (Slap pocket with flat hand).
Give me my bill (Beckon, then write on air).
Match (Make the sign of striking a match on the thigh).
Set it afire (Sign match, and then thrust it forward).
Pistol (Making barrel with left index, stock and hammer with right hooked on; snapping right index from thumb).
That tastes good (Smack the lips).
The food was good (Pat the stomach).
Bad taste (Grimace and spitting out).
Bad smell (Hold the nose).
Bend (With right hand bend left index).
Break (With fists touching, make as though to bend a stick, then swing the fists apart).
Hot (Wet middle finger in mouth, reach it forward and jerk it back).
Cold (Fists near shoulder and shaken).
Paint (Use flat right as a brush to paint flat left).
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Shave  (Use finger or thumb on face as a razor).
Wash   (Revolve hands on each other as in washing).
Knife  (With right fist as though holding knife, whittle left index).
Revolver (Hold out right fist with index extended and thumb up).
Gun or shooting (Hold hands as in aiming a gun).
Drive horses (Work the two fists, side by side).
Give me  (Hold out flat hand, palm up).
Write   (Make the action with index).
Strike  (Strike down with fist).
Fighting (Make the fists menace each other).
Drinking (Lift right hand to mouth as though it held a glass).
Smoking (Make as though holding a pipe and drawing).
Rub it out (Wet tips of right fingers, and seem to rub).
Thank you (Bow and, at the same time, swing flat right, palm up, a little way down and to one side).
Church (Hands clasped, fingers in, but index fingers up and touching).
Get up  (Raise flat right, palm up, from low up high).
Sit down (Drop flat right, palm down, from high, down low).
Here   (Pointing down, hand swung in small circle).*

In all, 110; besides the compass points, the features of the face, the parts of the body, the numerals up to 20 or 30, and a great many half-established signs, such as

*Professor Elmer D. Read writes me that all of these are in use among the deaf also, except the signs for "shame" and "church"; for these they make the Indian signs "red" and "house prayer," respectively.
book, telephone, ring the bell, etc., which, if allowed, would bring the number up to nearly 200.

As another line of observation, I have asked New York boys, "How many signs does the Broadway policeman use in regulating the traffic?" Any bright child remembers presently that the officer seldom speaks, could scarcely be heard if he did. Indeed, he relies chiefly on Sign Language and hourly uses the established signs for "Stop," "Come on," "Come here," "Go right," "Go left," "Go back," "Hurry up," "Go easy," "I warn you," "I'll punish you," "Pass," "Keep behind me," "Scorn," and, perhaps, one or two others.

While not infrequently the small boy responds with the sign of "insolent defiance" that is used the world 'round, and was probably invented by Cain and Abel.

Similarly, the car conductor uses the signs for "Do you want this car?" "Do you want transfer?" "How many?" "Go on," as well as most of the above.

Evidently, then, the Sign Language is used of necessity in much of our life where speech is impossible.

CODES, ETC.

It is inevitable that a world-wide language be split into variant forms. Besides the fragmentary Sign Code among our children, the more copious list of signs among Latins, and the code of the Cistercian or Trappist Monks, there are the Deaf Code and the Sign Language of the American Indians. Only the two last are widely established and at all complete as languages to-day.

DEAF CODE

The Sign Language used by the deaf was originated in France by Abbé de l'Épée about 1759, with a view to
facilitating the intercommunication of the deaf. His signs were largely arbitrary or founded on the spelling of French words, usually in abbreviated form, so that it was merely a short-hand of French done into finger-spelling.

While this was the case at its beginning, the deaf themselves had instinctively done so much in the way of introducing pantomime and expressive gesture, that they have half redeemed the Code from its unfortunate original plan, and, in so doing, have made themselves intelligible to an immensely larger audience.

THE INDIAN CODE

So far as I can learn, no student hitherto has compared the various methods without being convinced that the American Indian Sign Language is the best extant. It is theoretically perfect and practically complete. In order to make this evident, I must offer a definition and some comparative details.

A true Sign Language is an established code of logical gestures to convey ideas; and is designed as an appeal to the eye, without the assistance of sounds, grimaces, apparatus, personal contact, written or spoken language, or reference to words or letters; preferably made by using only the hands and adjoining parts of the body.

Measured by these standards, there is only one true Gesture Language in the field to-day; that is the sign-talk of the American Indians. It is established over the whole area of the Great Plains; and, though varied locally, is essentially the same from Saskatchewan to Rio Grande.

In general, it is claimed that there are two well-marked
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dialects of this: the northern, which is a *whole hand* and a *two-hand* dialect; the central and southern, which is a *finger* and *one-hand* dialect.

The former is better for far signalling; the latter for conversation. There are, however, many exceptions to these rules; and, in any case, they are so close akin that Indians from opposite extremes of the Plains have no difficulty in conversing with each other.

The Cheyennes originally lived in a central region where they had intercourse with a dozen tribes whose spoken language differed from their own; so they became very expert sign-talkers, perhaps the best. They have amplified to the number of several thousand signs, and simplified until theirs has become largely a one-hand code; therefore, as far as possible, I make the Cheyenne sign-talk my standard. All signs herein given I have found in use among the southern Cheyennes and are understood to be Cheyenne except when another source is specifically mentioned.

Clark gives first place among gesture talkers to the Cheyennes and their associates the Arapahoes, whose sign-talk was the same, though their speech was very different, so that the signs for which he is authority may also be considered Cheyenne.

The signs given me as Indian by Sheeaka and his friend, Tom Frosted, should be cautiously received if one would study the ancient code. Sheeaka had in his family a deaf-mute, who probably imported some signs from the Deaf Code, as indicated.

In cases where there were different signs for the same idea, I have selected the simplest and clearest, the least
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like other signs; or, other things equal, the one most extensively used, preferring a one-hand to a two-hand sign.

Usually that sign is best from the locality where the idea is most familiar. Thus the Sioux sign for “tree squirrel” is poor; the Modoc sign is very good. The Navaho signs for “domestic sheep” are numerous and clearly differentiated; those of the north are not, and refer back to the “bighorn.” Southern signs for “snow” are descriptive and cumbersome, while those of the northern tribes are simple and perfect.

A COMPARISON OF THE TWO CODES

A comparison of the Deaf and Indian Codes seems to emphasize the superiority of the Indian. The Deaf was intended to convey, word by word, a vocal language; it assumes that you know the other man’s speech, and can spell. Whereas, the Indian was invented to over-ride linguistic barriers and, knowing nothing of spelling, deals only with ideas.

The next great advantage of Indian style is its picturesqueness. The two systems can be illustrated and fairly compared by the signs for the months.

First the Deaf:
January—Sign for Month, then J, N, and R, that is 4 signs.
June—Sign for Month, then J and N, that is 3 signs.
July—Sign for Month, then J and L, again 3 signs.

Whereas the Indian calls January the Snow Moon, thus moon or “Horns in the sky” and snow, that is two signs. June is Rose Moon i.e., horns or Crescent in the sky and rose (the right hand plucking an imaginary petal from each finger tip of the left). July is the
Thunder Moon, i.e., horns in the sky, then the right index darted downward in a quick zigzag to imitate lightning. All need but two signs each.

The first involving a certain amount of spelling is limited to those who can read, and who use that word. The second, touching nothing but the idea, is widely acceptable, much shorter, and visible much farther off. It was apparently developed for the safe distance beyond arrow range.

Again the Indian method is strong in its dignity. The deaf often spoil their sign-talk by grimacing, the Indian never does so. One may occasionally help the idea by facial expression, but it should be used with great reserve, as there is nothing more unlovely or likely to harm the study of the Sign Language than the excessive grimacing that one sometimes sees in an uneducated deaf-mute. The Indian sign-talker’s face is calm and little changed, his head is moved in graceful sweeps, and never jerked unless to express some jerky action. His communication is indeed a study in beautiful, dignified gesture. There is not an Indian sign in this book that depends on facial expression for its usefulness, and there are but few that involve the face in any way.

Last year (1910) my friend Hamlin Garland met a party of moving picture men returning from a business tour among the Indians. He asked, “Did you get two old chiefs talking together in the Sign Language?” They said “No, hadn’t heard of it.”

“Then,” he replied, “you have missed one of the most graceful and rewarding chances for your special art that the western country affords.”

They were so much impressed with his description
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that they went back. Having brought together two chiefs of diverse speech they got results on their films which amply justified their time and trouble.

Finally a large number of the signs used by the deaf are conventional and arbitrarily fixed, dating back about 100 years, whereas each Indian sign is the slow evolutionary product of ages, with its roots deep in human nature. It is never arbitrary, but so logical and so reasonable that it is easily and quickly learned.

Every interested person, therefore, must regret profoundly that the teachers of the deaf should have gone out of their way to fabricate an unnatural, localized code, when there was awaiting them ready-made, and already established, a system founded on universal human nature, old as the hills, full of the charms of grace and poetry, and so logical that any one of any race can learn it in a tithe of the time required for the acquisition of the merest smattering of a spoken language, and the adoption of which would at once have greatly lessened the handicap of the deaf. One can only suppose that the founders of the code were unaware of the other's existence.

Undoubtedly actual service has done much to reform and redeem the Deaf Code and make it more nearly a true Sign Language, but one cannot help wishing that their teachers would take the inevitable step at once and adopt the natural system.

Thus we have logic with us as well as the opinion of ethnologic students in giving preference to the Indian System. While in the extent of usage honors are about even, I am credibly assured that about 100,000 people are daily using the Deaf Code and an equal number using the Indian.
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It is my belief that an available popular Manual will soon establish the latter as the universal code and result in its further and full development.

ATTITUDE TOWARD THE SIGN LANGUAGE

There are two distinct attitudes toward Indian Sign Language:

First, that of the student who sees in it a beautiful product of evolution, a perfect demonstration of the subtle laws of speech growth, the outcome of human mind yearning for converse with human mind, rebellious at its shut-in loneliness, battering with its hands the prison walls, till it could reach out and signal to the next locked-in, before it had yet found the way of modulated sounds. This, then, was the means which responded to the demand for communion and mental fellowship before there was a spoken speech. It began, as all codes must, with the broadest, simplest root ideas, and expressed their inter-relationships at most by context, sequence, proximity, or emphasis, but not by inflection.

Every student of the Sign Language is impressed by this thought and very naturally considers every true sign of the old Sign Language a thing sacred, precious as a pre-Homeric manuscript. He believes that to modify it or tamper with it would be to rob it of all value as a living expression of growth, and much like trying to readjust the crystalline forms on a frost-covered pane by shaping them with a hot iron. The student recognizes it as his first and highest duty to make faithful, unadulterated, untooled records of the oldest types of signs. This is the academic attitude. I am fully in sympathy with it.
Second, the practical attitude which realizes that Sign Language, never dead, is coming to its renaissance and can serve many useful ends among us here to-day. But to complete its possibilities it must be brought up to date by the addition of elements that stand for the latest modern ideas; and therefore does not hesitate to seize on and adopt these elements wherever they may be found. Thus, it may be held, is a contamination of the thought by interminglement of spurious recent creations. But it is merely submitting the code to the ordinary rules of all language. We should remember, further, that the ancient signs, as well as the modern, were invented by men who had need of them. The only difference is that the one was invented recently, the other maybe thousands of years ago; and that without such changes the Sign Language could not serve its beneficent purpose to-day among the deaf, the distant, the roar-environed, the moving picture folk, and those of unknown speech about us. Hand-talk fully developed will find much good work to do; and it matters little where the elements of the code were gathered so long as they meet with general acceptation; which implies that they be needed, serviceable, and of sound construction. The forty odd Deaf Signs included here have been admitted on this basis.

PROPER NAMES

There is at least one place where all pure Sign Language must fail; that is in dealing with proper names, especially new proper names. If I wish to signal "New York State" to an expert sign-talker, I can use the nickname "Empire State" and signal "Country great crowned"; or, for "Kentucky" I can signal "Country
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blue grass”; or Boston, “The Hub City”; or Chicago “Windy City”; but when I come to South America or Oberammergau or Poughkeepsie, I am obliged to fall back on the white man’s method and spell the name. For this reason then we begin our sign-talk by teaching the one-handed sign alphabet of the deaf. The two-handed will answer, but obviously a one-handed sign is better than a two-handed, other things equal. We aim at simplicity; and there are many occasions when one has but one hand free.

TO WHAT PURPOSE?

My own interest in the study had been growing for thirty years, and to satisfy myself that it was not a mere fad of slight and passing import, I set down carefully the reasons for studying and using the Sign Language, not forgetting its limitations. I set these also in hostile array and will give them first:

It is useless in the dark.

It cannot serve over the telephone.

It can scarcely be written, except by cumbersome pictographs.

It cannot give new proper names; they must be spelled.

But the reasons for the study were more numerous and stronger.

1st. *It develops observation and accurate thinking.* All races that excel in sign-talking are noted for their keenness of observation. Which is cause and which effect one cannot certainly determine, but it is sure that this method of communication is excellent practice to develop observation, and it makes for a wonderfully graphic descriptive power.
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Herein, perhaps, is its most enduring, the least obvious, claim to a high place. There is a sweet reasonableness, a mathematical accuracy, in the fabric of the Sign Language that has an insistent and reactionary effect on the mental processes and pictures of those who use it. Therefore, it is valuable for the kind of mind it makes.

2d. It is easily learned. Unlike most languages, it is very easily acquired, for most of the signs are natural in concept, and so logical that they explain themselves where their history is known. Six hundred signs (that is ideas) make a fairly good sign-talker.

3d. It is Indian talk. By means of this you can talk to any Plains Indian no matter what his speech; and there are many tribes each with its own tongue or dialect. In some measure it is understood and used by savages and keen observers all over the globe.

4th. A cognate code is the talk of the deaf; and is used the world round by them in preference to the manual alphabet when possible; so that a wide use of the much better Indian Sign Language will certainly result in their accepting it and thus tend to lessen the barrier between the deaf and their more fortunate brethren.

5th. It is silent talk. It can be used on occasions when it is necessary to give information, but improper or impossible to speak aloud. Thus, lecturers use it in directing their lanternist; friends use it for necessary information during musical performances; it is used at the bedside of the sick, the actors in a moving picture can utilize it, and so be comprehended the world round; the pantomime stage, forbidden to use speech, can easily make clear the plot by sign-talk.
In a recent letter, Prof. J. S. Long has furnished me with a touching instance (one that has since recurred) that indicates another and final service that the silent method can render: An eminent divine was on his deathbed. His life had been devoted to ministering to the deaf, he knew the Sign Language perfectly; for several hours before the end his power of ordinary speech had deserted him, but his mind was clear, and to the last he conversed freely with those about him, in this, the universal talk, the one which for its exercise depended on muscular powers that in his case were the last of all to fail.

6th. *It allows talk in an uproar.* It can be used when great noise makes it impossible to use the voice; therefore it can be of daily service in modern life, city or country, and each year it discovers new uses. Friends talk across a rackety thoroughfare or from a moving train; firemen and policemen, or sailors in a storm find it of growing service. The baseball umpire uses it when the roar of the multitude makes him voiceless; the catcher talks to the pitcher; the aeroplanist talks to his friends on earth; the stockholder on the curb buys and sells in it; the football captain or the army officer issues clear sign orders when the uproar of fight would drown even the trumpet call. The politician facing a shrieking mob may find it useful for conveying a few crude truths to his crude, unruly audience, thus opening the way for a more usual form of harangue, or failing in the attempt, he can at least inform his friends of his next move and his audience what he thinks of them. In St. Paul’s epoch-making address on the stairs of Jerusalem we have a good illustration of the first part of this.
7th. *It is practical far-talk.* It is a valuable method of talking at a distance, far beyond earshot. Compared with the other modes of far-signalling it has the great advantages of speed, for it gives a sentence while semaphore, Morse, or Myer code give a letter, and of inconspicuousness at short range, or in a crowd; also it is independent of apparatus.

8th. *It is a true universal language.* It is already established. Instinctively the whole world has adopted it in a measure; and daily proofs of this are seen. Rasmussen among the Eskimo would have been helpless, he tells us, for he knew not their tongue, and they not a word of his, but they were expert sign-talkers and the lingual barrier was swept away. So also Henry among the Mandans, and Butler among the Basutos, while a thousand other cases could be aligned.

It is so complete that Dr. W. C. Roe and many others regularly *preach* and *lecture* in the language of Signs, to congregations in which several spoken tongues are used and would be necessary to the preacher were he limited to sounds.

It is so fundamental indeed that it is the easiest means of communicating with animals; the best trainers of dogs and horses use Sign Language as the principal medium of command.

But, for lack of standards and codification, its use is much smaller than it might be; and yet larger than commonly supposed. At least 100 of the 725 signs herein given are in daily employ among hearing white folk in America. After a little extension of the study, as is inevitable with a standard code, one will be able to travel all over Europe, the world indeed, on Sign Language alone.
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No matter what the otherman's language may be, French, German, Russian, Greek, all are the same in the Sign Language because it expresses ideas, not words. This, then, is its chief obvious strength—It is a universal language.

It was with this in view that the French and German equivalents were added after each sign; and since it is impossible to render in one word a sign that stands for a broad idea and is capable of conveying many meanings, according to the context and sense, the foreign equivalents are understood to deal only with the simplest root idea, that which usually is expressed by the first of the English words given.

It is my earnest hope that we may have an International Society of the Sign Language whose functions would be to keep it pure, to add new signs as they are needed, and to aim at its complete development.

Also, that in furtherance of this a thorough, full, and careful record of the old Indian Sign Language will be made before it is too late; that is, before all the old-time Indians of the Plains are dead.

My own effort is meant not as a record of the past, but a starting point for the future.

SYNTAX OF THE SIGN LANGUAGE*

The Sign Language is a system of root ideas expressed by gestures, preferably made only by the hands, without

*"After going carefully over your syntax I approve it in the main but I think it quite likely that many of the rules are not so inflexible as this makes them seem; besides which, there must be always a certain amount of modification by transliteration from the spoken language of those using the signs. This would manifest itself in a growing conformity of the Sign Language syntax to that of the more dominant spoken language."
—F. W. Hodge (Ethnologist, Smithsonian Institution).
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sounds or reference to letters, or words, spoken or written, and not delimited by anything corresponding to words. There can be but little doubt that Sign Language preceded all audible speech.

Being fundamentally a true spontaneous language, wholly removed from any spoken language, it must necessarily have its own syntax and idiom.

Its syntax is simple and primitive, much like that of spoken language in its earliest or monosyllabic stage, as defined by Hovelacque. Yet clearly many signs are amplified by an associated but subsidiary root, so that we may consider it entering the second or agglutinative stage. Thus deer, signed by holding up the hands to indicate branching horns, is a simple or isolated root; but white-tailed deer which gives first deer, then adds the qualifying sign banner tail by waving the right index up high, is in close correspondence with agglutinative language. Still more so are the signs finished or done added to a verb to show the past tense, or the different twists to the sign give that turns it respectively into give me or give you, or the variations of talk which make it mean I talk to you, you talk to me, or they talk to each other.

The sentence construction is elemental. Dependent sentences are not used nor are negative or involved questions.

The relation of one idea to another is indicated chiefly by proximity and sequence, rarely by connectives and (with a few exceptions) never by inflection. So that the same sign may be the equivalent of a noun, a verb, or a phrase, etc., according as it is used.
NOUNS AND PRONOUNS

The Nominative and Objective cases are not distinguished except by context and sequence, that is, the Nominative precedes, the Objective usually follows, the verb.

A partial exception is the first personal pronoun—the starting point of most inflection—for I, mine, and me are sometimes given as cognate but distinctive signs.

The Possessive case is usually shown by the addition of the possessive sign, equivalent to "his," "hers," "its," etc. "That man's" horse would be signed: Man, that, his horse, or Man, that there, possession, horse.

The Gender of nouns is indicated when necessary by adding the signs male or man and female or woman. Thus "A She bear" would be rendered Bear Woman.

The Number of nouns is indicated by the signs 1, 2, 3, 4, etc., many or few.

In the Personal Pronouns the plural is made by adding all to the singular. Thus Me all is the equivalent of "We," You all of "Ye." He all is the equivalent of "they."

The Person by pointing to myself, to you, or to the third person. The first person is understood unless otherwise indicated.

VERBS

The Verb is usually placed between the subject and the object, but need of emphasis may change this so the verb comes last.

The Tense of verbs is marked by the auxiliary prefixes now, future and past, finished or done. Thus "I have eaten" would be I done eat, "I shall eat" will be I time ahead, eat.
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The present is understood, unless otherwise stated; but the sign is plastic and may be any part of the verb, according to context. Thus Arrange, Arranged, or Arranging are the same.

The Number of the verb is shown by the context.

The Voice is assumed to be active, indeed the passive is not used.

The Imperative is shown by following the verb with the sign must, that is, strike down with right fist, giving the significance of command, or else by emphasis.

The Subjunctive is shown by the signs if, so that, perhaps.

ADJECTIVE AND ADVERB

The Adjective usually follows the substantive. Thus "A bad man" would be rendered Man bad. But numerals are exceptions to this rule.

The Adverb of time precedes the verb.

Qualities are compared by the use of the signs little, more, much, most, ahead, and behind. They are further modified by adding such signs as strong, brave, very much, or very strong.

The Numeral sign is often prefaced to small numbers to prevent confusion. Thus when prefaced by the numeral sign the sign Wolf may become two and Man become one.

Mere particles and expletives, as "a" "the," etc., have no equivalent signs.

PREPOSITIONS

Prepositions were little used by the Indian sign-talkers, though they did have above, about, across, around, at, below, beside, beyond, by, for, from, in, near, on, out, to,
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under, upon, with, etc. Of or pertaining to has been added by the deaf.

CONJUNCTIONS

And or also (add on) but or if (pick out or cut off), so that, with are the equivalents of conjunctions. Sometimes the close continuity of two signs serves the purpose of “and,” conversely a pause may indicate a full stop.

INTERROGATION

The sign of interrogation always precedes the question, but is sometimes added after it as well, for emphasis or certainty.

PERIOD OR FULL STOP

For period, the sign finished is generally used. The Blackfeet make the sign broken off and often clap the flat right down on the flat left, palm to palm, for both beginning and end of a sentence.

ABSTRACT IDEAS

Abstract ideas are not copiously rendered in signs. But it often happens that a gesture with the index alone is specific, while the same gesture with the flat hand becomes abstract. For example, compare yonder and far, up and up there.

OPPOSITION

The principle of opposition as pointed out by Mallery plays an important part in the pairing of signs. Thus above being fixed, below is the reverse; the sign come is reversed in go, and out reversed in in, etc.
EMPHASIS

Emphasis is sometimes given by using both hands for a sign that can be made by one, sometimes by repeating the sign, sometimes by energetic rendering, and sometimes by adding the sign very much or heap.

PARALLEL OR DUPLICATE SIGNS

Many signs are made by parallel action of both hands. Most of these are permissibly rendered by using only one hand as, woman, abandon, gratitude, etc.

ENUNCIATION OR DELIVERY

In actual and expert practice most signs are abbreviated. But the beginner, as in all new arts, should go slowly and be careful to make each sign clear-cut and complete in itself.

The hands are always held or moved so as to illustrate—as far as possible, the action in mind or its manner, or its direction, or the point where it takes place, or the shape of an object, or their relative positions if two objects are being considered.

ELEGANCE

Grace and dignity are of large importance in all good sign-talk. Ugly or vulgar gestures should be abandoned. Even angular gestures should be avoided, except to express some angular idea.

Many times my Indian teachers have said to me as I imitated their signs, “Yes, that is correct enough in a way, but it is awkward”; or “it is not graceful. We do it this way.” Then they sketched the same structure,
but in sweeping lines. In this work many movements are indicated in straight lines, for the sake of simplicity. As a matter of fact, I never saw a Cheyenne make a straight-line movement, all had a graceful curve.

Many signs are followed by a changeable liaison; that is, by an introduced sweep to join it on to the sign that follows and avoid a jerk or unpleasant movement. This elegant manner is what I call an Indian accent, few whites achieve it.

In a dignified way, the expression of face and the pose were used in elucidation of the gesture, but very sparingly.

THE CONCEPT AND ITS VALUE

The student of vocal language finds vital help in remembering the derivation of words; so also the sign-talker.

Most signs were pantomimic originally, but through much use have become shortened, till now they are conventional. Yet it is well worth while in each case to note the original concept as fully as possible; first as a great help to the memory, and second as a guard against slovenly gesture and a guarantee of point, power, and structural accuracy. Some of the concepts given are evidently right, but some are mere guesses, probably wrong in many cases. It is quite permissible in any one to challenge any of them.

Nevertheless, the fact that most signs are capable of logical explanation does not mean that they are self-explanatory. Indeed nearly all have become conventional, and each must be learned separately before it can be rightly used.

Signs which make the heart the seat of the mind are,
I think, older than those which give the place of honor to the brain.

**THE MANUAL ALPHABET**

Although not at all Indian, it is exceedingly helpful to know the single-hand alphabet as given in the cut on page II; partly because it must sometimes be used for giving proper names and also because it saves time in describing hand positions. For example, we say “position A or B” instead of describing each hand all over again for each new sign.

**THE NUMERALS**

*Fingers* and *numbers* are nearly synonymous the world round when making signs, manual or written, hence the universality of the decimal system. The Indian Code, the Popular Code, and the Deaf Code are nearly alike in this, but in most points of difference the Indian is best.

To prevent mistakes in certain cases preface the number with the sign of *numbers* or *arithmetic*.

**THE ORDINALS**

For Ordinals, make the figure sign, 1, 2, or whatever it is, then without changing the position of hand or arm, give the hand a twisting from the wrist, to add point or emphasis, meaning “number-so-and-so.” This is not Indian but adopted from the Deaf, nevertheless quite logical.

**ILLUSTRATIONS OF SIGN LANGUAGE**

Clark gives the following (pp. 17-18) as a good illustration of the syntax of the Sign Language:

*In English.* “I arrived here to-day to make a treaty—my one hundred lodges are camped beyond the Black
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Hills, near the Yellowstone River. You are a great chief—pity me, I am poor, my five children are sick and have nothing to eat. The snow is deep and the weather intensely cold. Perhaps God sees me. I am going. In one month I shall reach my camp."

In Signs, this literally translated would read, I—arrive here—to-day—to make—a treaty. My—hundred—lodge—camp—beyond—Hills—Black—near—river—called—Elk—you—chief—great—pity me—I—poor—My—five—child—sick—food—all gone (or wiped out)—Snow—deep—cold—brave (or strong). Perhaps—Chief Great (or Great Mystery)—above—see—me—I—go. Moon—die—I—arrive there—my—camp.

"An Indian in closing or terminating a talk or speech wishing to say, 'I have finished my speech or conversation,' or, 'I have nothing more to say, simply makes the sign for 'Done' or 'Finished.'"

THE LORD'S PRAYER

FATHER ISADORE'S VERSION

Our Father up high, medicine thy name. Thy sit-aboard down here on earth as up high. Give us all bread. Forgive our bad as we forgive bad. Lead us bad not. Ended.

Professor Elmer D. Read has supplied me with the foregoing two examples done into the Sign Language of the deaf, as below:

I—came—here—to-day—make—agreement (think parallel)—name (written). My—r C (100) tents—beyond—B-l-a-c-k H-i-l-l-s, near Y-e-l-l-o-w-s-t-o-n-e
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The Lord’s Prayer in Deaf Signs:

Our—Father—sky—into.
Honored—thy—name—truly.
Thy—kingdom—come;
Thy—law—do—on—earth—as—in—sky.
Give—us—our—bread—daily.
Forgive—us—our—lawbreaking—as—we—forgive—those—injure—us.
Lead—us—not—in—temptation,
But—save (break our tied hands)—us—from—law-breaking.
Because—thine—kingdom, power, and—glory—for-ever.
Amen.
PICTURE-WRITING

As already noted, a weakness of Sign Language is the difficulty of writing it without translating it into words, and thereby changing its nature and its world-wide application. Yet it can be written; and some mention of its recorded form may fitly round out this introduction.

The characters used, because they represent ideas, not words or letters, are called ideographs or picture-writing. It is widely believed that Sign Language is the oldest of all languages, that indeed it existed among animals before man appeared on earth. It is universally accepted that the ideograph is the oldest of all writing. The Chinese writing, for instance, is merely picture-writing done with as few lines as possible.

Thus, it is said that their curious character for Hearing was once a complete picture of a person listening behind a screen, but in time it was reduced by hasty hands to a few scratches; and War, now a few spider marks, was originally a sketch of Two women in one house.

We may also record our Sign Language in picture-writing, as was the custom of many Indian tribes; and we shall find it worth while for several reasons: it is picturesque and useful for decoration; and it is likely that a pictographic inscription dug up 10,000 years from now would be read, whether our language was understood or not.*

*Since the above was written, I have come across L. F. Hadley's pictographic writing of the Sign Language, fully set forth in the bibliographical matter. E. T. S.
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When the French Government set up the Obelisk of Luxor, in Paris, and wished to inscribe it for all time, they made record, not in French or Latin, but in pictographs.

It is, moreover, a good thing to take the young through the stages of race development; just as the young bird must run for a send-off, before it flies, so pictography, being its earliest form, is the natural first step to writing.

In this dictionary I give the written form after many of the signs that have an established pictograph. These are chiefly from Mallery, 10th Annual Report Bureau of American Ethnology. A few are popularly accepted among ourselves.
NOTE

The letters, initials, etc., after the paragraphs indicate the chief authority for the sign.

Where no authority is given, it means that the sign was observed by myself among the Cheyenne Indians. Those ascribed to other Indians also were observed by myself. Besides these the following are cited:

C. Standing for Captain William Philo Clark, U. S. A.

Scott, for General Hugh L. Scott, U. S. A.

Seger, for John M. Seger, of Colony, Oklahoma.

R. B., for Robert Burns, the Cheyenne interpreter at Concho, Oklahoma.

Long, for Major Stephen H. Long, U. S. A.

Pop. for Popular; that is, established among ourselves.

D. for Deaf Sign, as given in J. Schuyler Long's Dictionary.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

The drawing shows the hands as seen by the second person.

The digits are named: thumb, first or index finger, second or middle finger, third or ring-finger, and fourth or little finger.

The following marks, etc., are used in the illustrations:

Unless otherwise stated the solid outline indicates the position of the hands at the beginning of a sign, the dotted outlines indicate the position of the hands at the finish.
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Dotted lines indicate the course of hand employed in the sign.

\[\rightarrow\] Indicates the commencement point of the movement.

\[\rightarrow\] Indicates the direction of movement.

\[\times\] Indicates the point in the gesture line at which the hand position is (x) changed.

\[\bigcirc\] Or full stop represents the termination of the movement.

"A hand" means like A, and "B hand" means like B, etc., in the one-handed Deaf Alphabet (Cut i) on next page. The positions meant by "4 hand," "5 hand," "flat hand," "flat fist," or "compressed hand," are figured on the same page.

Begin by learning the Single-hand Manual alphabet as noted above.

Next learn the Numbers and the signs for Question and its combinations; also Yes and No, Good and Bad, Come and Go, Big and Small, Truth and Lie, Strong and Weak, Understand, Perhaps, Talk and Sign-talk, after this refer to the Dictionary for the signs that serve your purpose and use them according to the rules of syntax as herein set forth.

Never lose a chance of talking the Sign Language with an old Plains Indian, preferably of the Cheyenne or Arapahoe tribes. Their wonderful facility and grace are as hard to convey on paper as the pronunciation of French, and are as essential for the best style in Sign Talk. One may, indeed, know every sign in this book and not be a good sign-talker, so fundamental is this correct accent, or manner.
SIGN TALK

A Universal Signal Code, Without Apparatus, for Use in the Army, the Navy, Camping, Hunting, Daily Life and Among the Plains Indians
SIGN TALK
OF THE AMERICAN INDIANS

BY
ERNEST THOMPSON SETON


A

Abandon, Give It up (Thrown away, chucked). Hold both S hands, backs up, near left breast, briskly swing both down to left side, opening them with a snap and giving a slight rebound to the hands after the movement, as though emphatically throwing away something. Sometimes only one hand is used. Compare Bad, Hate, and Charge. See Divorce.

Fr. abandonner; Ger. aufgeben.

Able. See Can.

Aboard (Sitting down on). Left hand out flat, palm up, right S hand on it, thumb up. Compare Sit down.

Fr. à bord; Ger. an Bord.

About or Around. Hold the flat left hand pointing forward, up and to the right, encircle it several times with the right G finger. If possible, make it concrete by indicating the very thing that was encircled.

Fr. autour; Ger. um . . . herum.
About, in the sense of Near by or Almost. See Close.

Above or Over (One thing above another). Bring the flat left hand, back up, in front of and a little to the left of body; left forearm horizontal, fingers pointing to right and front; bring the flat right hand, back up over the left in a semi-circle upward large or small, as best suggests the actual distance. Has been used for More than. Compare Beyond.

Fr. au-dessus; Ger. über.

(Above is the reverse of this.)

Absent. See Empty.

Abuse to Scold or Defame (Throwing lies against one). Hold the right V hand near the mouth, pointing to left. Jerk it forward toward person once or twice. For Abusing me make the sign lower opposite the left breast and inward toward one's self.

Fr. calomnier, injurier; Ger. schmähen, beschimpfen.

 Accident. See Free, also Luck.

Ache or Pain. Thrust G finger many times in different directions over and parallel to the part. Compare Wound and Sick.

Fr. la douleur; Ger. der Schmerz.

Across, Cross, or Over (Crossing a ridge). Hold the flat left hand out, palm down, and pointing forward and toward the right, pass the flat right hand edgewise across the back of the left. If but one person is meant,
the right G is sometimes used. This sign as illustrated is often used for Council. See Council and Laws.

Fr. d'un côté à l'autre, traverser; Ger. hinüber.

Act, as in a theatre play. Hold A hands in front perpendicularly, move up and down alternately as though the thumbs were two puppets. (Deaf sign, not used or understood by Indians.) Compare Play and Follow.

Act, as in a play. Sign Face, Two, Dance (that is dancing with a mask) (not established).

Fr. jouer; Ger. spielen.

Act or Deed. See Work.

Add to (Piling up). Flat left hand pointing to the right and front, palm up, forearm horizontal; the palm of flat right hand is placed on top of left hand a number of times, the left hand being raised a couple of inches each time, to meet it; the movement ends with left hand as high as top of the head. Often it is done as in the illustration but with palm of left down.

Adjectives, see Comparative.

Adulation. Kissing the back of the hand. (Pop.) Not Indian, but they understand it now. (R. B.)

Fr. la flatterie; Ger. die Schmeichelei.

Advance. Both flat hands back up, pointing forward, tandem, right in advance, six inches ahead (the fingers extended) moved forward together in gentle jerks. Compare Move camp.

Fr. avancer; Ger. vorschreiten.
Advance Guard (The one ahead, looking). Flat left hand back up, pointing forward, breast high; place G right just before it, then turn right G into V to mean Looking. Also used for Scout. Compare Ahead.

Fr. l'avant-garde; Ger. die Vorhut.

Advise or Advice. Sign Talk, Make, Way. (C) Sign Help and Talk would be near it.

Fr. conseiller; Ger. raten.

Afraid (Shaking heart). Sign Heart then shake it up and down two or three times, to indicate the throbbing action of the heart under influence of fear. Or more strongly, sign Heart and then finish by raising the hand until its back strikes the chin, to mean the heart rises in the throat.

Fr. effrayé; Ger. ängstlich.

Afraid or Cowardly (Seger says this means Buffalo backing out of fight; that is, “drawing in his horns.”) Hold out both G hands level, backs out, G fingers hooked like horns, draw them straight back together for six inches. Mostly but one hand is used. Compare Bring.

Fr. lâche, poltron; Ger. feige.

Afraid of no one. Point right G in several directions, then add Afraid, Not.

Fr. peur de personne; Ger. vor niemand Angst haben.

After, Behind, or Late (Time or space). G fingers pointing forward at an angle in front of body; left in advance. Draw the right over and behind the left. Draw it back a little way for a little bit after; but far back and low
down for a long way behind. Some finish by clenching the right hand.
If it meant that one is behind the rest, use the flat left hand, palm down, in advance, with right G behind.
Fr. après; Ger. hinter, nach.

Afternoon. Make a circle of right thumb and index and sweep it over the afternoon half of the sky from the zenith down. Compare Sunset.
Fr. l'après-midi; Ger. der Nachmittag.

Again. See Repeat or More.

Against, i.e., Go Against. Thrust the tips of the flat right, back out, square against the palm of the flat left held pointing level forward, back to left. See also Oppose. Compare Quandary.
Fr. contre; Ger. wider.

Agent, Indian. Sign Whiteman and Chief, Give all. The Southern Cheyennes sign Chief and pull teeth, because their first agent had false upper teeth.

Agitate. See Excite.

Agree. Sign You, I, think, same. Sometimes use Equal. See also Treaty.
Fr. s’accorder; Ger. übereinstimmen.

Agreement. See Treaty.

Ago, Time back, Past, or Back. Sign Time and point back over the right shoulder with right finger G. Some-
times the thumb or the whole hand is used instead of the index. See Back.

Fr. passé, il y a quelque temps; Ger. vorher, früher.

**Ahead or Before** (In time). Hold out the left G pointing forward and up; swing the right G over the left to a place in front of it, both pointing the same way. Some finish by closing and lowering the right fist. Compare *After*.

Fr. avant; Ger. vor.

**Ahead or Before others** (In space or rank). Hold out flat left, back up, near breast, pointing forward and slightly upward; then hold right G just before it. Compare *Advance Guard*, which it exactly resembles, except that this omits *Looking*.

Fr. en avant; Ger. vor.

**Air.** See *Wind*.

**Alight or Descend.** Indicate from what, then drop right V fingers downward onto flat left palm. See *Dismount*.

Fr. descendre; Ger. absteigen, hinuntersteigen.

**Alike, to Look like or Resemble** (Of persons). Make the signs *Face* and *Equal*.

Fr. semblable; Ger. ähnlich sein.

**Alive, Live, Life, or All right** (Walking about, upright). Hold index of right hand upright, move it about shoulder high, forward in long slow zigzags sidewise, always turning it so as to move palm forward. Also used for *Be* or *Exist*. See *Life, Deer*, and *Nothing*. The Blackfeet use the sign *Grow* for this idea. See *Wandering*.

Fr. vivant; Ger. lebendig.
All. With right hand flat and back up, describe a large horizontal circle, shoulder high.
   Fr. tout; Ger. alles.

All gone or Empty (Hands swept clean). Both 5 hands in front of body, backs out, right nearer; loosely brush fingers of right on left palm, moving right outward, then reverse and repeat. Sometimes begin with sign All. See Wipe out.
   Fr. vide; Ger. leer.

Alliance or Friendship (Linked together). Form two circles with thumbs and index fingers, and link them together, other fingers closed. Some use only index fingers hooked together.
   Fr. l'alliance; Ger. das Bündnis.

All right. See Good or sometimes Alive.

All the time. Hold up the left G, pointing upward, forward, and to the right; strike on it with right G near the tip, then every inch or so up to the arm. See Many times, Cheyenne and Buy.
   Fr. toujours; Ger. immerzu.

Alone or Only (Living and moving singly). Move the right G hand, pointed upward, slowly forward and to left in a line slightly waving to right and left. Compare Alive, Life, Man, One and Up there.
   Fr. seul; Ger. allein.

Already. See Now.
Always, Ever, or Forever (Going on in cycles). With elbow at side, hold the right G hand pointing forward; move hand forward, describing circles with the index, the result a spiral, ending with the index raised. (Frosted, borrowed from the Deaf Code.)

Always. Sign Long time, Wiped out, and Not. Sometimes sign Stop, Not. (Blackfoot signs.) See All the time.

Fr. toujours; Ger. immer.

Ambitious (Pushing to rise). Indicate a person, then sign Push and Rising man, or omit last.

Fr. ambitieux; Ger. ehrgeizig.

American. See Nationalities.

Ammunition (Cartridges in belt). Lay the flat hands, palm in, on belt, then add Shoot by shooting the right G forward. (Not Cheyenne, but understood.)

Fr. les munitions; Ger. die Munition.

Among. Hold the left 5 hand in front of neck, pointing upward, move right G index (pointing down) in and through. Sometimes use With.

Fr. parmi; Ger. unter.

Ancestor. Repeat the sign for Father several times, with the flat left hand held back out on the breast, and each time pushed farther away, the Father sign made beyond it. (Crow sign.) The Cheyennes sign Father and Old.

Fr. l'ancêtre; Ger. der Vorvater.
And or Also (Meet and go together). The spread flat right hand, breast high, back forward, drawn six inches to the right and closed to flat hand. (Deaf sign.) Compare Horse. The Cheyennes use Equal or Increase, according to the sense; or sometimes With or Add.

Fr. *et, aussi*; Ger. *und, auch*.

**Angry** (Mind twisted). Twist the A hand against or near the forehead.

Seger maintains that this means a “mad buffalo breaking off his own horns.” Possibly he is right; for the older signs make the heart, not the head, the place of the mind, and this must be a very old sign. Some of the Blackfeet make this sign over the heart. Some grind on the heart with the flat right fist, palm in, after pointing to the person; meaning, “he grinds my heart.” See Sorrow.

Fr. *en colère*; Ger. *böse, zornig*.

**Animal** or **Quadruped** (Jumper). The compressed right hand, back up, advanced in short jumps, as in Frog and Weasel. Sometimes the sign Ground is made, first by sweeping the flat right across, palm up. “Leaping” is generic for the quadruped as “Flying” is generic for Bird. Compare Jump. Used by Blackfeet. The Cheyennes considered it incomplete.

Fr. *l’animal*; Ger. *das Tier*.

**Annihilate.** See Exterminate or Wipe out.

**Annoyance.** See Trouble.

**Annul.** See Rub it out.
Another or Other (one other). Hold out flat right, back up, swing it slowly up, out, far to right and down low, turning it palm up. Compare Fall and Lie down.
Fr. *un autre*; Ger. *ein anderer*.

Another person. As above, but use right G. (Blackfoot.) In this, as usual, the index up alone means *Man*. This gesture is so natural that many whites use it; as, for example, in saying impatiently: “That was another man altogether.”

Answer (Talk come back). Push right G from themouth in the sign *Talk*, then draw back reversed; that is, pointing to one’s own face or ear. (Blackfoot.) The Cheyennes use *Talk, Arrived here*.

Answer, Reply, Respond (The word that follows the other). Right G index upright on lips, left six inches ahead and parallel; move them together toward the person. (Frosted, borrowed from the Deaf Code.)
Fr. *la réponse*; Ger. *die Antwort*.

Antelope (Pronged horns of the animal). Bring the L hands palm toward and alongside of the head, near the base of the ears.
Fr. *l'antelope*; Ger. *die Antilope*.

Anxious. See *Want*.

Any (Scattering). Place the right A hand near left side, elbow high; draw it down and out to right side in a shaky curve. (Deaf sign.) Use *Here* and *There*. (Cheyennes.)
Fr. *quelconque, quelque*; Ger. *irgend ein*.
Apache. See Indian.

Appear, To come into view. See Come into view.

Appears, Seems, or Looks like (See and Same). Hold up flat right hand, thumb toward self, shoulder high; throw it forward and turn palm toward self, fixing the eyes on it and sign Same. Sometimes use the sign for Look before Same. (Frosted; probably adopted from Deaf Code.)

Fr. paraître; Ger. aussehen, erscheinen.

Applause. See Approval.

Approach or Moving toward. Hold partly bent left hand well in front, breast high, to left side, palm to you and right similarly to right, but quite near to you; move the latter slowly forward toward former, but not to touch it by several inches. Some use right G. See Arrive there and Quandary.

Fr. approcher; Ger. näher kommen.

Approval, Applause, or Praise. Make the motion of clapping the hands, but without noise. A white man’s sign, but now generally understood.

Fr. l’approbation; Ger. der Beifall.

Arise or Get up. Hold out right G, back down; raise the arm with a swing and snap and bend the wrist till the finger points straight up. For a large number, use both 5 hands.

Fr. se lever; Ger. aufstehen.

Arithmetic. See Numeral.
Around. See About.

Arrange (Parfleches placed in teepee). With flat right, slightly curved, back out, strike half a dozen times in a circle, turning to watch the hand; then add Good. Sometimes omit Good. Or, sign Work and Fix. See Ready.

Fr. arranger; Ger. ordnen, einrichten.

Arrest or Imprison (To seize hold of and tie at wrists). Sign Seize and then add Prisoner; that is, cross the wrists, hands closed. Sometimes the upright left forearm with S hand, back to left, is held near the left shoulder, grasp left wrist with right hand and pull it a little distance to right.

Fr. arrêter; Ger. verhaften.

Arrive here or Get here. Hold the flat left hand, back out, near the breast, fingers pointing to right; carry right G, back to front, well out in front of body; bring the right hand briskly against back of left. Often the flat right is used instead of right G.

Fr. arriver ici; Ger. hier ankommen.

Arrive there or Reach. Hold the flat left hand, back to front, well out in front of body, about height of neck, pointing to right; bring right G hand, palm outward, in front of and close to neck, carry the right hand out sharply to strike the palm of the left.

Fr. y arriver; Ger. hinkommen.

Arrogance. A haughty lifting of the eyebrows and sidelong, disdainful look down as upon an inferior. (Scott.)
Sign Head, Big. In the popular code, indicate big chest. See Conceit and Pride.

Fr. l'arrogance; Ger. die Anmaszung.

Arrow. Make, with a long swing, the motion of drawing an arrow from the left hand.

Fr. la flèche; Ger. der Pfeil.

As or Than. Both hands, G fingers parallel, level, forward near right side; carry them over to left in similar position. (A sign borrowed from the Deaf, Frosted.) This is the same as Who; only the context can show which is meant. Sign Same or Beside.

Fr. comme, que; Ger. wie, als.

Ascend. Indicate the object (hill, tree, etc.), then press right G against it, raising the same in jerks. Compare Famous.

Fr. monter; Ger. hinaufsteigen.

Ashamed or Bashful (Drawing blanket over face). Flat hands pointing up, palms in, close to face and moved in till the wrists crossed, right nearest the face; bow the head a little. Compare Blind and Dark. The bowing of the head was not generally done, yet is the only feature to distinguish it from Dark.

Fr. honteux; Ger. verschämt, verlegen.

Ashamed (I am ashamed). Cover the face and eyes with both hands. (Pop.)

Fr. avoir honte; Ger. sich schämen.
Ashamed (You should be).  See Shame.

Ashes.  Sign Fire and Powder.
Fr. la cendre; Ger. die Asche.

Ask.  See Beg.

Assiniboin.  See Indian.

Astonishment or Wonder.  Lay the flat palm of left hand over the open mouth and draw the body backward. Sometimes, also, raise right hand flat, palm forward.
Fr. l'étonnement; Ger. die Verwunderung.

Astray.  See Lost.

Astride.  See Horseman.

At.  Hold left flat hand, back up, pointing partly up; strike the back with right flat hand.
Fr. à; Ger. an, auf.

Attempt.  See Try.

Attention (A command).  See Call.

Aunt.  Sign Father (or Mother) and Sister.  Or, sign Woman with right, then tuck compressed right, point down, under left arm pit.  (R. B.)
Fr. la tante; Ger. die Tante.

Aurora or Northern Lights.  Both hands, backs down,
half closed, thumb and finger tips together, raised very high and spread with a sweep to indicate flashes. It should be done facing north. It is helped if the hands when at the highest are swung apart in an arch.

Fr. l'aurore boréale; Ger. das Nordlicht.

Automobile. See Motor car.

Autumn (Leaf-falling time). Make the sign for Tree with both hands, then for Leaf with the right near the left finger tips, then drop the leaf with tremulous, wavy motion down and to right.

Fr. l'automne; Ger. der Herbst.

Avoid or Miss. Hold up G hands, move them toward each other as in Meet, but carry left well outside, past and beyond without meeting. Compare Meet, Trade, and Mistake.

Fr. éviter; Ger. vermeiden.

Awl. Bore right G finger into left palm. Or, over the left G as in sewing.

Fr. l'aléne; Ger. die Ahle.

Axe or Hatchet. Hold out the flat right hand, back to right, wrist bent downward. Make as though chopping with it; that is, strike down once or twice. Some also grasp it near the elbow with left index and thumb, but the Cheyennes omit this. For Hatchet, indicate Size. See Tomahawk.

Fr. la hache; Ger. das Beil.
Baby. Swing the flat right hand (sometimes left hand) in the hollow of the left arm as though it were a baby. Add signs for sex and size when needed. Compare Tomahawk.

Fr. le bébé; Ger. das Kindchen, der Säugling.

Bachelor. Sign Man, Marriage, No. (C)

Fr. le célibataire; Ger. der Junggeselle.

Back or Again. See Repeat.

Back, Backward, Ago, or Past (In time or space). Throw right 5 hand thumb first back over right shoulder once or twice. See Ago.

Fr. en arrière; Ger. hinten, zurück.

Backbite. Lay the right V hand on the mouth, as in Lie, then lay it on the back of the right shoulder. (Blackfoot.)

Fr. médire de; Ger. verleumden.

Bacon (Meat and thin). Hold out the flat left hand, thumb edge up; with thumb and finger tips of right back down, rub little finger of left. Hadley gives this with the right hand over. It makes a better sign, but I never saw it used that way. Compare Meat and Thin and Oil.

Fr. le lard; Ger. der Speck.
Bad or Evil (Suddenly thrown away). Hold clenched fist, back up, near breast; throw it forward, down, and aside, opening the hand. Sometimes for emphasis both hands are used. Compare Abandon, Charge, and Hate.

Fr. mauvais; Ger. schlecht.

Badger (Walks under ground). Sign Hole, Enter, and Walk. The Blackfeet sign is Striped-face with size and pawing indicated.

Fr. le blaireau; Ger. der Dachs.

Bad Taste. See Taste Bad.

Bag. Left C hand, back out; drop compressed right into this; then sometimes indicate thickness with flat hands pointing straight up.

Fr. le sac; Ger. der Sack.

Bald. Lay the flat right hand on the forehead, draw it up and back to the top of the head. Touch the hair and sign Wiped-out. (Blackfoot.)

Fr. chauve; Ger. kahlköpfig.

Band or Patrol (Banded together). Hold the compressed left hand pointing up; encircle it with the right forefinger and thumb. (Chasing Bear.) Not a true Indian sign and not used, but would understand it. (Seger.) Sometimes use Bunch or Few. See Tribe or Troop.

Fr. la bande, la patrouille; Ger. die Schar, die Truppe.

Bankrupt. See Done.
SIGN TALK

Bar or Saloon (House of drink). Sign Crazy, Drink, House.
Fr. le cabaret, la buvette; Ger. die Bierstube, die Kneipe.

Bark (Like a dog). Sign Talk, but use index and middle finger against thumb.
Fr. aboyer; Ger. bellen.

Barracks. Sign White, Soldier, House.
Fr. la caserne; Ger. die Kaserne.

Barren. Sign Born and All gone.
Fr. stérile; Ger. unfruchtbar.

Bar up. See Fins.

Baseball signs. These, of course, are not Indian; they differ locally, but the three following are used by most umpires:
A strike. The sign “Yes.”
Out. The Same as the “No” sign (as tho striking something to one side with the back of hand).
Safe. Hand raised as in “Easy.”

Bashful. See Ashamed.

Basin or Hollow (A spread out circle). Hold the L hands low in front, backs up, forming an incomplete horizontal circle, not touching, the index fingers nearer each other than thumbs; swing the hands apart by wrist action so the index fingers point nearly forward.
Fr. le bassin; Ger. die Vertiefung, die Grube.
Basket. Sign Kettle, then interlock fingers as in House of logs, to show structure. The Cheyennes understand this, though usually they sign Kettle and Sew.

Basket. Lock the fingers of the hollowed hands, backs down, join the thumbs as for a handle, then with the right hand grasp left thumb and raise the hand a few inches. (Sioux.) Compare Corral.

Fr. le panier; Ger. der Korb.

Bat. Sign Night and zigzag flight; i.e., flat hands side by side, breast high, flapped first to right side next to left. (C)

Fr. la chauve-souris; Ger. die Fledermaus.

Battle, Combat. Sign Fight, after which make Shoot with each hand toward the other. (C) Compare Fight and Kill.

Fr. la bataille, le combat; Ger. die Schlacht.

Battle-cry or War-cry. Open the mouth as in saying “O” and pat it with flattened fingers of right hand. (C) The Cheyennes use Yell.

Fr. le cri de bataille; Ger. der Schlachtruf.

Bay. Sign Water, then bring right L hand well out in front of body, forming a horizontal half-circle. (C)

Fr. la baie; Ger. die Bucht.

Bayonet. Sign Gun, then lay left G index alongside right G, the latter one-third ahead. If there is doubt, indicate drawing it on the barrel tip.

Fr. la baionnette; Ger. das Bajonett.
Be, to be or exist (Living). Sign Alive and then finish with Now or Past to indicate tense, and Many to indicate plural. Sometimes use Dwell or Recover for this idea. Compare Alone.
Fr. être; Ger. existieren, sein.

Beads. Hold out the flat right, slightly hollow; drop it a little with a sidewise quivering to suggest the shimmering of a handful of beads. (C)

Beads. Simulate holding beads between the left index and thumb, while threading them with a needle in the right. For Beadwork add a design or sign for Work.
Fr. les perles; Ger. die Perlen.

Beans (One picked out of a handful). Right hand flat, palm up, index and thumb joined with the tip of index projecting. (Chasing Bear. Understood by Cheyennes.)
Fr. les haricots; Ger. die Bohnen.

Bear. Hold out the Y hands, backs up, and strike both down; push both forward in a series of jerks, or swing down, forward and up.

Bear. Hold up flat fists near ears, palms forward, to indicate round ears. (Blackfoot.) Some indicate the paws by holding up both curved 5 hands.
Fr. l'ours; Ger. der Bär.

Bear, Grizzly. As above, but indicate the gray color.
Fr. l'ours gris; Ger. der graue Bär.
Beard. Hang the compressed right hand, point down, under chin. The hand or hands are differently placed for different cuts of whiskers.

Fr. *la barbe*; Ger. *der Bart*.

Beat, or Overcome. Use *Kill*.

Beautiful, Handsome, or Pretty. Hold up flat right hand, and look on the palm as in a mirror, then make the sign *Good*.

Beautiful. Draw the flat hand down near the face, back forward, and sign *Good*.

Fr. *beau*; Ger. *schön*.

Beaver (Tail of beaver striking mud or water). Hold left flat hand in front of body, left arm horizontal; strike up against the left palm once or twice with back of right flat hand.

Fr. *le castor*; Ger. *der Biber*.

Because. Sign *Consider*, then *Behold*. Understood by Cheyennes and Blackfeet, though not well established.

Fr. *parce que*; Ger. *weil*.

Become or Turn into. Sign *Grow* and *Same or Arrive there*.

Fr. *devenir*; Ger. *werden*.

Bed (Spreading blanket for sleep). Hold flat hands palms up, points forward, one behind the other, left ahead, push it forward, at same time draw back right, then add *Sleep*.

Fr. *le lit*; Ger. *das Bett*.
SIGN TALK

Bee. Sign Fly, Arrow, and One. (C) In Cheyenne, sign Small, Bird, Make, Taste.
Fr. l'abeille; Ger. die Biene.

Before. See Ahead.

Before, that is, Future. Sign for Time, but hold left hand near breast and swing right forward, up and over. Or sign After, Many Sleeps.
Fr. avant; Ger. ehe.

Beg (To ask alms). Hold out the flat right hand, palm up, as a beggar does. Swing it forward and upward, then draw it toward self, slightly curving the fingers.
Fr. mendier; Ger. bettlern.

Beg, I beg of you, Ask, I pray you. Lay the flat hands together, palms touching, fingers pointing up (or clasp them) and hold them toward the person. A white sign now understood by the Indians. Compare Pray.
Fr. supplier; Ger. bitten.

Begin, Commence, Must, Push, Try, Go ahead (Start in a race). With elbow at sides and arms level, push fists forward two or three inches, right a little behind. Or use Go. See Strong.
Fr. commencer; Ger. anfangen, beginnen.

Behavior. See Way.

Behind. See After.

Behold. Hold out flat right, palm up, pointing forward and moved slowly down to below level. Sometimes use both hands. Compare Show.
Fr. regardez!; Ger. siehe da!
Believe. Sign Think, Straight.
Fr. croire; Ger. glauben.

Belonging to. See Possession.

Below, Beneath, or Under. Is the reverse of Above; which see.
Fr. dessous, sous; Ger. unter.

Belt. With both hands, make as though putting on a belt.
Fr. la ceinture; Ger. der Gürtel.

Beneath. See Below.

Bend or Bent. Take left index in right finger and thumb and bend the middle joint of it at right angles. Or sign Break very slowly.
Fr. plier; Ger. biegen.

Berry. With right middle finger and thumb hold tip of right index, letting it project a little; add Bushes. Or, sign Tree, Pick, and Eat. This is a descriptive phrase rather than an established sign, but it is a good illustration of impromptu constructions which are continually made and are at once understood because in harmony with the main principles of Sign Talk. Compare Fruit, Cherry, and Bullet.
Fr. la baie; Ger. die Beere.

Beside or By (By the side of). Like With, but right G about three inches off left palm. Sometimes use Close.
Fr. à côté de, près de; Ger. neben.
Bet or Wager (Placing on each of two piles). Indicate the event, as Race, then sign Place; that is, hold out partly compressed hands backs up; swing both forward up and down nearly together at finish.

Fr. le pari; Ger. die Wette.

Between. Hold up the flat hands, palm to palm, six inches apart; then thrust the right G on line close past left palm.

Fr. entre; Ger. zwischen.

Beware, Caution, or Look out. See Warning.

Beyond or Other side. Hold the flat left hand, back up, in front of body about ten inches, fingers pointing to right; bring flat right hand, back up, between left and body at same height, fingers pointing to left; swing the right hand upward, outward, and then downward on curve, beyond left hand, turning right hand back down in movement. Compare Fall and Other.

Fr. au-delà de; Ger. jenseits.

Bible. Sign Book and Medicine.

Fr. la Bible; Ger. die Bibel.

Big. Hold the curved 5 hands with palms toward each other, well out in front of the body, hands a little lower than shoulders and a few inches apart, pointing forward; separate hands, carrying right to right, left to left, keeping them opposite each other. Also used for Long. Compare Great and Long.

Fr. grand, gros; Ger. grosz.
SIGN TALK

Bighorn. See Sheep.

Bird. With flat hands at the shoulders, palms down, imitate the motion of wings. Using different speeds for different birds. Compare Fly, which progresses.
   Fr. l'oiseau; Ger. der Vogel.

Birth. See Born.

Bison. See Buffalo.

Bit (Of a bridle). Place the L hand palm down on the mouth.
   Fr. le frein; Ger. das Gebiss.

Bite. Bring the right C hand, back outward and upward, a little in front of the body; snap sharply together the tips of the first and second fingers and the tip of thumb against the back of the left flat hand, repeating the motion. Some omit left hand. The Blackfeet make this from the mouth.
   Fr. mordre; Ger. beissen.

Bitter or Sour. Touch tongue with tip of right G and add Bad. Compare Salt, Sugar, Taste, Taste bad.
   Fr. amer; Ger. bitter.

Black. See Color.

Blackfoot. See Indian.

Blackguarding or Reviling (Lies from both). Hold up right V, pointing nearly level forward, opposite right shoulder; left ditto at left shoulder; swing them alternately at each other.
   Fr. outrager, insulter; Ger. jemanden beschimpfen.
**Blanket or Robe** (Wrapping about shoulder). Bring the A hands palms toward each other, opposite and above each shoulder near the neck; move the right hand to left and left to right till the wrists are crossed, right hand nearest body. Compare Fond.

Fr. *la couverture*; Ger. *die Decke*.

**Bless you** (Drawing from above and spreading out). Hold the flat hands high up in front, palms forward, apart, at arm’s length. Lower them a little and slightly push toward the person meant. (C)

Fr. *que Dieu vous bénisse*; Ger. *Gott segne dich*!

**Blessing the food.** Hold both 5 hands over the food, then add Talk upward.

**Blind.** Bring both flat hands, backs outward, in front of and close to eyes, right hand nearest and both hands parallel to face; move right hand slightly to left, left to right; then place the tips of the fingers against closed eyes. (C)

Fr. *aveugle*; Ger. *blind*.

**Blood** (A wounded buffalo bleeds at the nostrils). Raise the right V hand so the tips of the fingers are pressed one against each nostril; move the hand to the right and downward, giving it a tremulous motion. Add Red. Some omit Red.

Fr. *le sang*; Ger. *das Blut*.

**Bloom or Blossom.** See Flower.

**Bluff.** See Hill.
SIGN TALK

Boat. Bring the hands together hollowed, fingers straight, little fingers joining, the thumbs somewhat apart, to represent the body of a boat, held before the breast. Push it forward to indicate movement. Add the motion of paddling for Canoe, or Rowing for bigger boat. Usually the Boat sign is omitted; Paddling or Rowing being enough by itself. Compare Bowl.

Fr. le bateau; Ger. der Kahn.

Boil. See Cook.

Fr. bouillir; Ger. kochen.

Bone. Hold up the left hand, palm down, wrist a little bent; with right G tap the wrist bone on outer side of left; then add Hard.

Fr. l’os; Ger. der Knochen.

Bonnet, that is, Warbonnet. Sweep 5 hands along near each side of head from front to back. Sometimes also sweep right 5 hand down behind for the Tail.

Fr. le bonnet de guerre; Ger. die Federkappe.

Book. Open and close the flat hands like cover of a book, then indicate the lines of writing. Sometimes show the thickness to distinguish it from Letter. Compare Open and Shut.

Fr. le livre; Ger. das Buch.

Born, Birth, or Parturition (Issuing from loins). Flat right in front of and near the body, pointing downward and to front, moved downward and outward on a curve. Compare Dive.

Fr. né; Ger. geboren.

Borrow. See Lend.
Boss. Use Chief.

Both. Sign Or, that is, hold up the left V, pointing forward, and tap each tip of V, and in turn, with right G; then over left V add All with right. Sometimes point to each and add Two. Sometimes use All. Blackfeet use Two and Same.

Fr. tous les deux; Ger. beide.

Bow (Weapon). The left A hand held still, a little advanced, the right A hand touches it and makes the motion of drawing the cord of the bow.

Fr. l’arc; Ger. der Schiessbogen.

Bowl (A vessel). With curved hands side by side, fingers bent, palms up, indicate shape. (C) Compare Boat. For a larger vessel, use Basin.

Fr. le bol; Ger. die Schale, die Schüssel.

Box. Hold out both flat hands side by side, backs up; then swing apart and down at right angles, turning the hands at the angle so the backs are out.

Fr. la boîte; Ger. der Kasten.

Boy. Sign Man, Young.

Fr. le garçon; Ger. der Knabe.

Brag. See Bravado.

Brain. Touch forehead with N hand.

Fr. le cerveau; Ger. das Gehirn.

Brand or Name. All fingers of right closed but thumb and index, these form a "C," which lay on the palm of
flat left, pointing forward, thumb up. Sometimes lay it on left shoulder outside. Compare Name.

Fr. la marque, marquer avec un fer rouge; Ger. das Zeichen, das Brandmal, einbrennen.

Bravado or Brag. Sign Fire, Talk, True, and No. (C)

Fr. la bravade; Ger. die Prahlerei.

Brave (Strong heart). Sign Heart and Strong.

Fr. brave; Ger. mutig, tapfer.

Brave, as an intensive. See Very much.

Bread (Making a cake). Gently clap the slightly hollow right hand over slightly hollow left hand, then reverse so left is on right and clap them together again; repeat.

Fr. le pain; Ger. das Brot.

Break. Make the motion of seizing a stick, hold it horizontally with both hands and breaking it in the middle. The thumbs finish wide apart.

Fr. casser, briser; Ger. zerbrechen.

Breakfast. Sign Sunrise and Eat.

Fr. le déjeuner; Ger. das Frühstück.

Breeze. See Wind.

Bribe. Hold the hand behind the back, hollowed, open and palm up. (Pop.)

Fr. corrompre; Ger. bestechen.

Bridge (Lifting over water). Sign Water; hold out the
flat hands horizontally in front of body, pointing forward, palms up; and Across.
Fr. le pont; Ger. die Brücke.

Bridle. Like Bit; but raise the hand till near the eyes.
Fr. la bride; Ger. der Zaum.

Bring, Take, or Fetch. Move the right G hand briskly well in front or to right or left of body; draw the hand with a sweep in toward the body, at the same time curving index finger. Compare Come in which the index is held vertically, and Steal.
Fr. apporter, prendre; Ger. bringen, nehmen, holen.

Broad or Wide. Same as Big, but keep the hands flat and palms up.

Broad and Spreading is the same as above but with palms down. Compare Prairie.
Fr. large; Ger. breit.

Broke or Dead broke. See Done (No.2.)

Broken down. See Decrepit.

Brook. See Creek.

Brother (Suck together). Lay nearly horizontal N of right hand on lips; draw it away and down, then add Male.
Fr. le frère; Ger. der Bruder.

Brother-in-Law. Left forearm across breast; with lower edge of flat right, strike down past left elbow. Probably means relative on the side. (R. B.)
Fr. le beau-frère; Ger. der Schwager.
Bucket. Sign Bowl, then indicate the handle.
Fr. le seau; Ger. der Eimer.

Buffalo (Curved horns). Hold the curved G fingers palms toward and close to sides of head; raise the hands slightly and carry them a little to the front. To distinguish domestic cattle, add Spotted. The Navahos reverse this; that is, with them the curved horns as above means Cattle, to which they add Beard, to mean Buffalo.
Fr. le bison; Ger. der Büffel.

Bullet. Sign Fire off; then grasp the forefinger of the hand with the second finger and thumb, so that the tip of it will so extend beyond them and represent the ball.
Fr. la balle; Ger. die Kugel.

Bunch (Of fruit). Hold out the compressed right hand opposite throat, fingers pointing down. Compare Beard.

Bunch (A small herd grazing). Hold out curved right hand, back up and forward. See Herd. Sometimes use Enclosure.
Fr. le troupeau; Ger. die Anzahl, die kleine Herde.

Burn. Sign Fire and Wipe out.
Fr. brûler; Ger. brennen.

Bushes or Brush. Like Grass, but breast high; and draw right hand to you and left far ahead.
Fr. la broussaille; Ger. das Gebüsch.

Fr. occupé; Ger. beschäftigt.
But, Except, Save, or Unless (Of all one pulled back). Sign All, with right swung to left; then sign One, with left at left side, and pull it to right side between forefinger and thumb of right.

But. Sign All Go, One, Sits.

But (One drawn back). Point right G down, forward and to right; hold it a second, then jerk it back four or five inches. (Hadley.)

Fr. mais; Ger. aber.

Butte. See Hill.

Buy. Sign Money and Trade, making it clear who gives the money.

Buy or Sell i.e., Market. Tap three times on side of left G index with side of right G index. Compare, All the time, Peas, and While. See Sell.

Fr. acheter; Ger. kaufen.

By. See Beside.

By and By (After a little time). Hold the pinched index and thumb of each hand as in Time, but half an inch apart. Or sign Time afterward. Compare Some-time.

Fr. plus tard; (C) Ger. später.

C

Cache. See Hide.

Call, Attention! Say! Strike the palm of the open left hand with the tips of right fingers, then swing right G a little toward the person.

Fr. dites donc; Ger. hören Sie!
Called or Named. Lay the back of the crooked right G on lips, pointing to front and left, its tip pressed against the thumb, which is nearly straight; then move the hand upward and forward in a curve, straightening out the index finally with a snap, pointing toward the person or thing. Compare Talk in which the action is repeated. See also Name.

Fr. appelé; Ger. genannt.

Camera. Sign Picture and See. Compare Photograph.

Camp (Set up the lodge). Sign Teepee, holding the hands face high; drop the hands together for a foot with energy.

Fr. le camp; Ger. das Lager.

Camp-fire. Hold left hand flat, palm down, fingers a little spread; then lay right hand fingers similarly held across at right angles, to indicate the wood laid ready, and add the sign for Fire. (Sheeaka.) Not a true Indian sign, but sufficiently descriptive for the Cheyennes to understand it.

Fr. le feu de camp; Ger. das Lagerfeuer.

Camp-fire Girls. Sign Camp-fire, then raise the right index in a spiral for Smoke.

Camp-fire man are you? Give the signs Question, you, camp-fire, and man or briefly make the Camp-fire sign and look inquiringly.

Fr. Êtes vous membre du Camp-fire Club; Ger. Sind Sie ein Mitglied des Lagerfeuer Klubs?
Can, Able, or Power. Hold both S hands in front, elbows at sides, thumbs up; drop the hands for six inches with a jerk. (Sheeaka and the Blackfeet.) Sometimes use only one hand. The Cheyennes sign Own, Strong, Medicine.

Fr. pouvoir; Ger. können.

Candid (True, clear as day and good). Sign True, Day, and Good. (C)

Fr. sincère; Ger. aufrichtig.

Candle. Hold up left G finger and with right hand sign Fire on its tip, then indicate length on left arm.

Fr. la bougie; Ger. die Kerze.

Candy-stick. Sign Sugar; then on left G index held upright, show stripes. (C)

Fr. le bonbon; Ger. das Zuckerwerk.

Cannon. Sign Gun and Big.

Fr. le canon; Ger. die Kanone.

Cannot, or Unable, Fail, Failure (The arrow that failed to stick). Hold the flat left hand out in front, thumb edge up; strike the palm of it with the forefinger of the right G hand, which then at once rebounds and is thrown forward and down to rest on its back.

Fr. ne pas pouvoir, incapable; Ger. nicht können, unfähig.

Canoe. Sign Boat and Paddle.
Canoe of birch bark. Push forward compressed right, back down, to represent the curved prow, then add Paddle.

Fr. *la pirogue, le canot*; Ger. *das Kanu, der Rinden-kahn*.

Canyon (Between hills). Hold up the fists, palms toward each other, about six inches apart, face high; then indicate *Go between*; that is, hold the left unchanged but thrust forward the flat right hand, palm to left. (Blackfoot.) Compare *Between*.

Fr. *le canyon, le grand ravin*; Ger. *die Schlucht*.

Cards. Hold imaginary cards in left and deal with right hand.

Fr. *les cartes*; Ger. *die Karten*.

Caribou. Sign *Deer, High*, and lay the flat right hand on forehead so the fingers slightly spread point forward, showing the brow shovel. (Blackfoot.) Sometimes omit *High*.

Fr. *le renne, le caribou*; Ger. *das Karibu*.

Carriage, or Covered Wagon. Sign *Wagon*, then raise the hands, palms down, flat, but bent at an angle, up above the head, and move forward about two feet to represent the carriage top.

Carriage or Buggy. Sign *Wagon, Small*, and sometimes add *Black*.

Fr. *la voiture*; Ger. *der Wagen*.

Carry or Pack. Both closed hands held opposite the temple as if holding the tump line, the shoulders slightly forward as though bearing a pack.

Fr. *porter*; Ger. *tragen*.
Carry in the hand. With one hand make as though carrying a basket by the handle.

Cars. See Railroad train.

Cartridge. Hold right G hand, back up, in front of body, index horizontal and pointing to front, thumb pressed against side of index, with the thumb tip just back of second joint; add Shoot. See Ammunition.

Fr. la cartouche; Ger. die Patronen, (artill) die Kar-tusche.

Cat (Flattened or turned-up nose). Lay A hand on nose, rotating a little out and up. (C) Sign Nose, Short, Dog.

Fr. le chat; Ger. die Katze.

Catch. Same as Get but action quicker. See Get.

Fr. attraper; Ger. jagen.

Catholic. Indicate gown by sweeping the 5 hands down over the sides and outward; then add Black. Sometimes make the sign of the Cross.

Fr. catholique; Ger. katholisch.

Cattle. Sign Buffalo and Spotted. (Blackfoot.) Compare Buffalo. Or, sign Buffalo and Whiteman.

Fr. les bestiaux; Ger. das Vieh.

Caution. See Warning.

Cavalry. Soldier and Ride.

Fr. la cavalerie; Ger. die Kavallerie.
Centre. With thumbs and index fingers of L hands make a horizontal circle; then, keeping the left unchanged, indicate centre with right G finger. Sometimes draw a horizontal circle with right G, then drop same down into its centre.

Fr. le centre; Ger. die Mitte.

Certain. Sign I, Know, Good. Or use True.

Fr. certain; Ger. sicher.

Challenge, Defy, or Dare. Spring the middle finger with a vigorous snap toward the person, the other fingers closed; hand held face high, back up. A European sign given by Butler. Compare There and Defiance.

Fr. défier; Ger. herausfordern.

Chance. See Luck.

Character (Shape of heart). Lay right C hand on heart, draw it out, that is, forward, a little and with both A hands outline a human figure. (D) Sign Heart, Good, Bad. (Blackfoot.)

Fr. le caractère; Ger. der Charakter.

Charge (Military, against others). Swing both fists from right shoulder forward and a little down in an up curve, away, rising a little, at the same time springing them open.

Fr. la charge (contre les autres); Ger. die Attacke, der Angriff (gegen andere).

Charge (Military, against us). Similar but reversed, springing the hands open toward one’s face.

Fr. la charge (contre nous); Ger. die Attacke (gegen uns).
Chase. See Follow.

Cherries (Choke). Sign, Tree, Pick, and Pound. (Blackfoot.) See Berry.
Fr. les cerises; Ger. die Kirschen.

Cheyenne. See Indian.

Chicken. Sign Bird, then Red and with 5 hand on crown show Comb. (C) Or sign Bird and Whiteman.
Fr. le poulet; Ger. das Huhn.

Chief (People with one man rising above them). Hold up left 5 hand, palm to right, pass index of right G hand at several inches above left. (Scott.) The Cheyennes omit left hand; they shoot the right G up over and much down in a long sweep, finishing lower than it began.
Fr. le commandant; Ger. der Häuptling.

Child or Offspring. Compressed right hand, points up, swung well out in front and dropped a foot to the height of the child. Compare Young.
Fr. l'enfant; Ger. das Kind.

Children (Springing up). Hold out both hands, palms up, very low, fingers pointing up and scarcely spread; alternately swing them up and down for six inches. Compare Grass, in which they are held low and are spread widely; also Bushes.
Fr. les enfants; Ger. die Kinder.

Choose, Make choice, or Select. Hold right G shoulder high, back up, a foot in front of the breast, swing it in a
circle with a succession of little bounds or up curves, as though pointing at many different objects in succession, the head turned to follow always; then finish by throwing the G finger forward in a curve; or, in some cases, finish by picking up the imaginary object selected, using index and thumb for this. Compare *Find*, *Hunting*, and *Look*.

Fr. *choisir*; Ger. *wählen*.

**Chop.** Use the flat right hand, little finger down, as an axe, chopping first from right, then from left, once on each side. Sometimes do this on back of left hand, which stands for the log. Compare *Free*, which is two or three cuts on right side only.

Fr. *couper*, *trancher*; Ger. *hauen*, *hacken*.

**Christmas** (The day of the shining tree). Sign *Tree*, then hold hand with fingers spread and crooked, palm down, level of face. Lower it six inches in short, quick zigzags to suggest glittering or shimmering. (W. C. Roe.) In *Snow* the hand is lowered in long zigzags for about two feet. See *Shimmer*. Or sign *Middle*, *Winter*, *Tree*, and *Hanging*; for the last, hold the curved 5 hands, backs up, at level of the eyes; jerk them a little apart. (R. B.)

Fr. *le Noël*; Ger. *Weihnachten*.

**Church** (Steeple house). Cross clasp the fingers so the tips are within, then raise both index fingers to form the steeple. (Pop.)

**Church.** Sign *Medicine*, *Talk*, *House*.

Fr. *l'église*; Ger. *die Kirche*. 

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**SIGN TALK**

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Cigarette. Sign Tobacco; then lay G fingers side by side pointing opposite ways; roll one about the other. Sometimes omit Tobacco; sometimes give Cigar (2nd sign) and Little.

Fr. la cigarette; Ger. die Zigarette.

Cigar (2). Sign Cigarette, Black, and Smoking. Sometimes hold right G at corner of mouth, pointing forward. Cigar and Cigarette are recent signs and changing rapidly.

Fr. le cigare; Ger. die Zigarre.

City (Big town). Make sign for Town, then add sign for Big. Or omit Big but swing the hands far apart.

Fr. la ville; Ger. die Stadt.

Cities. Many are indicated by their initial letter enhanced with twisting motion. (D) For some we may use their nickname but this is merely a suggestion.

**Boston** (The Hub). Sign for City and Centre.

**Chicago** (Windy City). Sign for City and Wind. The Cheyennes call it Big Lake City.

**Kansas City** (Buffalo Head City). Sign Buffalo Head and point up high to the wall. (Cheyenne.)

**London.** Sign City, Chief, and Red Coats.

**New York** (Knickerbocker City). Sign for City and trousers cut off below the knee; i.e., draw flat of hand down over thigh then below knee and stop, turning edge of hand in. Or sign Big Island City. (Blackfoot.)
SIGN TALK

Ottawa. Sign City, Chief, and Capotes.

Philadelphia (Quaker City). Sign City, then make sign for broad hat with rim curled up by drawing both index fingers across mid-brow, level in front, then twisting them up at the place of the rim. Or "no name, just Big City, nothing distinctive." (Blackfoot.)

Pittsburg (Smoky City). Sign for City and Smoky.

Rome (Eternal City). Sign City and Forever.

Washington. Sign Father, Chief, Sits. (Cheyenne.)

Clean-handed or Innocent (Great Spirit see no blood on these hands). Lift hands over shoulder, palms up higher than head and add Blood, No. (C) Or, sign Work, Bad, No.

Fr. innocent; Ger. unschuldig.

Clear (Clear Sky). Sign Clouds, then swing the hands wide apart, finishing with palms up at arm's length, up high. Or, sign Clouds, Wiped out. (Blackfoot.)

Clever. See Cunning.

Close, Near, Nearly, Soon, Early, About, or Almost (Draw near). Bring the flat curved right hand, back to right, well out in front of body, about height of shoulder; draw the hand in toward the body and slightly downward. Compare Far. See also Soon.

Fr. près, presque; Ger. nahe, beinahe.

Clothes. See Coat.
**SIGN TALK**

**Clouds** (Rolling). Rotate the flat hands over each other from in front of the face, to over the head.

**Clouds** (Rain). Look upward, swing the flat hands at arm’s length, palms down over the head; then add *Rain*.  
Fr. *les nuages*; Ger. *die Wolken*.

**Coal.** Sign *Hard, Fire, and Good*.  
Fr. *le charbon*; Ger. *die Kohle*.

**Coat or Clothes.** Hold the L hands near the breast, palms in; swing them down to the waist.  
Fr. *l’habit*; Ger. *der Rock*.

**Coffee (Grinding coffee in mill).** A few inches over the flat left hand, back down, move the right A as though turning the crank of a coffee mill. Or, sign *Black Drink*. Compare *Tobacco*.  
Fr. *le café*; Ger. *der Kaffee*.

**Coin.** Close hollow right over hollowed left and shake as tho jingling coin. (Sheeaka; not Indian, but now understood.) See *Dollar*.  
Fr. *la pièce d’argent*; Ger. *die Münze*.

**Cold** (Shivering). Bring the fists in front of and close to body, height of shoulder, elbows at sides, shoulders drawn in, and shiver. See *Winter*. Compare *Blanket*.  
Fr. *froid*; Ger. *kalt*.

**Color.** With the finger tips of right hand (thumb crooked under) rub circularly on the palm of left hand as though rubbing color. Often add *Same or Equal*, to make more clear.  
Fr. *la couleur*; Ger. *die Farbe*. 
SIGN TALK

Color—Continued

Black. Sign Color and touch the hair or eyebrow.
   Fr. noir; Ger. schwarz.

Blue. Sign Sun with left hand and then draw the right G finger around it to mean color of sky around the sun. (Sheeaka). Or, sign Color and Sky.
   Fr. bleu; Ger. blau.

Brown. Sign Color and Deer.
   Fr. brun; Ger. braun.

Gray. Sign Color, Little, and White.
   Fr. gris; Ger. grau.

Green. Sign Color and Grass.
   Fr. vert; Ger. grün.

Red (Cheek color). Sign Color and lightly brush the right finger tips over the cheek, points to right.
   Fr. rouge; Ger. rot.

White. Sign Color and rub thumb nail of left A hand with tip of right G finger; i. e., nail color, white in Indians.
   Fr. blanc; Ger. weiss.

Yellow. Sign Color and point to any yellow object, such as a straw or dead grass. Or sign Color, Grass, and Dead.
   Fr. jaune; Ger. gelb.
For other colors, touch or indicate some object of the tint meant.
Comb. With all fingers of right hand hooked, comb the right side of the head and down as far as the breast two or three times. Compare Woman.

Fr. le peigne; Ger. der Kamm.

Combat. See Battle.

Come. Carry right G hand, back out, fingers up, in a graceful sweep from arm's length to within a foot of one's face. Many use the flat hand swung down and to you, palm under and toward you. Railroad men use the whole arm, swinging it across the body at an angle of 45 degrees, so as to be seen in a dim light.

Fr. venez; Ger. kommen Sie.

Come back. Hold flat left, back forward, near breast; swing right ditto pointed up from arm's length in against back of left. See Arrive here.

Fr. revenez; Ger. kommen Sie zurück.

Come between or Intervene. Hold out left hand flat, back out, at arm's length and pass flat right, thumb up, between left and body.

Fr. s'interposer, intervenir; Ger. dazwischen kommen.

Come gently. See Easy.

Come for a moment. Right hand held forward and up, fingers closed except index, with which beckon by crooking and straightening, the hand not moved. (Pop.) White sign, now fully adopted by the Cheyennes.

Fr. venez une seconde; Ger. kommen Sie einen Augenblick her.
SIGN TALK

Come into view or Appear. Hold out flat left hand, back forward, thrust right G index up, farther off, under and behind, until it appears above.
Fr. paraître; Ger. erscheinen.

Comfort (See how smooth or fat). Draw flat right hand, palm in, down breast, then off and up in curve forward, palm up. (Sheeaka.) Compare Confess. Sometimes use Glad. (Blackfoot.)
Fr. le bien-être; Ger. die Behaglichkeit.

Comfortable. Alternately rub left palm over back of right hand, then right over left back, always palm up; then swing both forward. (Sheeaka. Probably from Deaf.)
Fr. confortable; Ger. gemütlich.

Coming. Hold out the flat right, palm to you and pointing nearly up; draw it to you in little jerks.
Fr. venant; Ger. kommend.

Coming man. See Rising man.

Commence. See Begin.

Compass points. North—Wind cold there.
Fr. le nord; Ger. der Norden.
East—Sunrise there.
Fr. l'est; Ger. der Osten.
South—Wind warm there.
Fr. le sud; Ger. der Süden.
West—Sunset there.
Fr. l'ouest; Ger. der Westen.
Complete. See Done.

Comparative, etc., of Adjectives.
For Positive, give first the adjective then swing the flat right hand out a little, level, palm up. (Sheeaka.)
For Comparative, give first the adjective then raise the right G hand to the height of the chin, pointing up. (Sheeaka.) See More, and sometimes use Ahead or Above after the adjective.
Fr. *le comparatif*; Ger. *der Komparativ*.
For Superlative, give first the adjective then add Strong and Ahead or Very much.
Fr. *le superlatif*; Ger. *der Superlativ*.

Conceal. See Hide.

Conceit (Swelled Head). Hold hands open and curved, one on each side of the head, two or three inches away. A whiteman's sign, but quite well known now to the younger generation of Indians.
If in unbelievable degree, stretch the right hand at full length sidewise, and work the first finger as though scratching the ear which is supposed to be just above the hand. (Pop.)

Conceit. Sign *He, Think, Strong*.
Fr. *la vanité, la présomption*; Ger. *die Einbildung, der Dünkel*.

Conduct. Same as Way.

Confess (Show the heart). Lay points of both compressed hands on centre of breast, then spring them away, out and aside, turning them flat and palms up. Sometimes but one hand is used. I am inclined to
think that this should be simply *Heart* and *Behold*, although none of my Indians made it that way. Sometimes sign *You*, *Tell*, *True*.

Fr. *confesser*; Ger. *gestehen*.

**Congress.** Sign *Whiteman, Chief, Council* (No. 2).
Fr. *le Congrès*; Ger. *der Kongresz*.

**Connivance** (Wink, that is, close one eye). This ancient sign assumes that the person who should see, closes the eye next his accomplice. (Pop. Also Cheyenne.)
Fr. *la connivence*; Ger. *die Konnivenz, das (strafbare) Einverständniss*.

**Consider, Ponder, or Weigh** (Wisdom looking on the ground). Sign *Wolf* (i.e., *wisdom*, analogous with our word "foxy"), then turn downward the points of the two fingers representing the wolf ears, back of hand near the eyes and moving the hand from right to left as in surveying the ground. (Scott.)

**Consider.** Hold the right "4" hand near the heart, pointing to left, rotate a little back and forth. (Blackfoot.) The Cheyennes use V hand, which makes it the same as *If*. See *Because*.
Fr. *considérer*; Ger. *erwägen*.

**Constable.** See *Policeman*.

**Contempt.** See *Scorn*.

**Contented.** To make contented, Satisfied. Use *Glad* or *Sit, Good*. (Blackfoot.)
Fr. *content*; Ger. *zufrieden*.

**Continue.** Sign *Go and Long Time*. (Blackfoot.)
Fr. *continuer*; Ger. *fortsetzen*.
Conversation. See Discussion, Speech, and Talk.

Cook (In the abstract). See Make and Food.
Fr. faire cuire, cuisiner; Ger. kochen.

Cook (By boiling). With both L hands make a horizontal circle, then holding left unchanged, put something into it with right and add Fire. Compare Centre and Hole.
Fr. cuire, bouillir; Ger. kochen.

Cook (By frying). Place flat right on flat left hand, palm to palm, then flip the right like a pancake, turning it palm up as it drops on the left.

Cook (By broiling). As in the above Frying, but leave out the left hand entirely.
Fr. griller; Ger. braten, rösten.

Cook (noun). Sign Man, Makes, Food.
Fr. le cuisinier; Ger. der Koch.

Coon. See Raccoon.

Corn (Shelling the corn). Hold out the left A hand, thumb straight and resting on index finger; place the ball of the thumb of right A hand on back of left thumb near its base; twist the right hand by wrist action to the right and downward until the right thumb slips off with a snap against the right index. Repeat once or twice.
Fr. le maïs; Ger. der türkische Weizen, der Mais.

Corral or Fenced Field or Pasture (Area embraced or held). Interlock the fingers, hold arms curved in
front, horizontal; then add Enclosure, i.e., swing the hands apart and draw back each in a half circle till their heels meet near you.

Fr. le corral; Ger. die Einzäunung.

Council (Sitting in a circle and talking). Bring the A hands, back outward, well out in front of body, a little lower than the shoulders, little fingers touching; swing them apart and toward the body so they meet close to it, forming a horizontal circle; palms forward; then add Discussion.

Council(2). Exactly like Across, but repeated two or three times. This is a recent sign among the Cheyennes, but is becoming popular. See Across and Law.

Fr. le conseil; Ger. die Ratsversammlung.

Counsel or Advice. See Advice.

Counting. See Numbers.

Count coup or Make a hit or a Strike (Striking a dead body with the coup stick). Strike the top joint of the right G index on the middle of the left G index, as the right is swung from below up. Grand Coup sign Coup and Great.

Fr. le coup; Ger. der Treffschus.

Country. See Land.

Coup. See Count coup.

Courting (Driving or rounding up in secret). Thrust the right L hand back nearly up under flat left, held
palm down, twisting the right by wrist action. Compare *Sweetheart* and *Glitter*.

Fr. *fairela cour*; Ger. *das Courmachen*, *das Hofmachen*.

**Coward.** See *Fear*.

**Coyote.** Sign *Wolf* and *Small*.

Fr. *le coyote*, *le loup des prairies*; Ger. *der Präriewolf*.

**Crab.** Place base of wrist of right hand, palm down, on some flat surface, thumb and little finger extended and curved (others closed) to represent claws. Then move the hand sidewise backward, waving the claws. (Scott.) Compare *Spider*.

Fr. *le crabe*; Ger. *die Krabbe*.

**Crave.** See *Want*.

**Crayfish.** Hold out the V hand level; draw it back, opening and shutting the V. Compare *Dog*.

Fr. *l'écrevisse*; Ger. *der Krebs*.

**Crazy, Foolish, Mad, Demented** (Brain in a whirl). Raise compressed right hand, all fingers together, tap the forehead with it and make one or two quick circles with finger tips in the air. (Sheeaka.) Tap the forehead, shake the head and point to the person. (Pop.)

**Crazy.** Swing the 5 hand in horizontal circles near the forehead, going with the sun. Going the reverse way always raises a laugh among Cheyennes; it both intensifies and makes the idea ridiculous.

Fr. *fou*; Ger. *verrückt*.

**Cree.** See *Indian*. 
Creek, Brook, or Rill. Sign Water, then draw right G hand, back up, held low, from opposite left side, past body to right side; finger level, pointing to left and waved sidewise. Compare River, Snake, Crooked, and Wire.

Fr. le ruisseau; Ger. der Bach.

Crime or Sin. Sign Strong, Bad, Work.

Fr. le crime; Ger. das Verbrechen.

Crooked or Wrong. Point the right G forward and slightly down; push it slowly forward in a succession of large, horizontal zigzags, each arched a little.

Cross or Sulky. Rest the forehead low on the left hand. Or sign Heart, Bad.

Fr. maussade; Ger. mürrisch.

Cross (of Christ). Hold right G upright, left G at right angles across last joint of right.

Fr. le crucifix; Ger. das Kruzifix.

Cross. See Across.

Cross the heart. With right index make a little cross over the heart. This means "I give you my word of honor." (Pop.)

Fr. parole d'honneur!; Ger. auf mein Ehrenwort!

Crow. Sign Bird and Black.

Fr. la corneille; Ger. die Krähe.

Crowded. See Few.

Crow Indian. See Indian.
Crush. See Exterminate.

Cry out. See Yell.

Cry, To weep. With G forefingers near the eyes trace the courses of tears. If excessive, sign Rain from the eyes. (Blackfoot.) Compare Pity.
Fr. pleurer; Ger. weinen.

Cunning, Smart, or Clever. Make the sign for Wolf and add the sign Equal. Compare Consider.
Fr. rusé; Ger. schlau.

Cut. Saw the lower edge of the flat right across the palm or edge of the flat left.
Fr. couper; Ger. schneiden.

Cutting up. See Meat.

Cyclone or Whirlwind. With flat right hand, back to the right and level with the right shoulder, make a spiral upward. A very small one for a little dust whirlwind, and a large violent one for a dangerous cyclone.
Fr. le cyclone; Ger. der Wirbelsturm.

D

Dam. Sign for Stream or River and Hold. (Blackfoot.)
Fr. la digue, l'écluse; Ger. der Damm.

Dance (People jumping together). Bring the flat (or "5") hands in front of body about height of breast, with fingers pointing nearly up, palms toward each other
about six inches apart. Move the hands briskly upward and downward a few inches several times, simultaneously, mostly by elbow action. Compare People.

Dance (Drumming). Hold up one flat hand face high, back to side, thumb raised and up: jerk up and down. (C)
Fr. danser; la danse; Ger. tanz, der Tanz.

Danger (The Scout or Wolf going ahead and coming back to report danger). Right V hand, back upward, moved directly and slowly forward in front of the right shoulder and then suddenly and quickly drawn back at the same time the body is thrown back a little. (Sheeaka.)

Danger. Sign Look, Little, Afraid (No. 2).
Fr. le danger; Ger. die Gefahr.

Dangerous (Of a man). Sign Strong and Bad.
Fr. dangereux; Ger. gefährlich.

Dare you. See Challenge.

Dark, Unknown, Obscure. Bring the flat hands, back outward, in front of face, right hand nearest face, left a little ahead, hands crossed, tips of fingers about opposite centre of forehead; bring the hands very slightly toward face. Compare Ashamed and Blind.
Fr. obscur; Ger. dunkel.

Daughter. Sign Born and Female.
Fr. la fille; Ger. die Tochter.
Day. See Time.

Daybreak. Sign Little, Sunrise.

Daybreak (A peep through darkness). Hold right flat hand above left flat hand and in same plane; right little finger on left index then raise the right hand a few inches higher. (C)

Fr. l’aube; Ger. der Tagesanbruch.

Dead, Death. Make the sign for Die and Sleep. (C)
The Cheyennes use Die.

Fr. mort; Ger. tot.

Deaf (Hearing ground out). Press the palm of extended right hand slightly against right ear, and move the hand in small circle parallel to and close to the ear. Sometimes add Not.

Fr. sourd; Ger. taub.

Debt. See Owe.

Deceive. Sign Give and Lie.

Fr. tromper; Ger. betrögen.

Decide, Determine, Make up one’s mind (Think, then act or settle it). Lower the head and raise right fist to chin; then raise the head and cut down with the little finger edge of the flat right hand. (Sheeaka.)

Decide. This is a sentence rather than a sign. With 4 hand over heart, sign Consider; point slowly in two or three directions for Ways; sign That by vigorously swinging the right G index out, pointing down; then
add *So* by raising it slightly up and then down. (Black-foot.)

Fr. décider; Ger. sich entscheiden.

**Decrease, Reduce, or Make smaller.** Hold flat right hand, palm down, high above, a little to the side of flat left hand, palm up; move them together in succession of little jerks. Sometimes for emphasis finish by compressing all right fingers to a point in the left palm. Compare *Increase* and *Heap*.  
Fr. diminuer; Ger. verringern.

**Decrepit, Old, or Broken down (Bent with disease or age).** Hold up G hand, back to right, higher than shoulder; lower the hand several inches, at same time bend the index. (C)

**Decrepit.** Hold up the right G, shoulder high, with index bent in a hook; rotate as in *Old*.  
Fr. décrépit; Ger. altersschwach, gebrechlich.

**Deed.** See *Act*.  

**Deep.** Hold the left flat hand horizontal, chin high, back up, fingers pointing to right; then drop right arm to full length down with flat right hand palm up, under left, fingers pointing forward.  
Fr. **profond;** Ger. **tief.**

**Deer.** Both hands fully spread, palms in and held up to the side of the head to represent the horns of a deer. (Sheeaka.) This is generic for *Deer*. Compare *Elk*.  
Fr. **le cerf;** Ger. **der Hirsch.**
Deer, Mule or Rocky Mountain Blacktail. Sign Deer then set compressed hand at each ear pointing up and forward to indicate the large ears, as in a mule. (Scott.) Compare Bear.

Fr. le cerf mulet; Ger. der langohrige Hirsch.

Deer, Whitetailed or Virginian. Raise the right G hand, pointing up and shoulder high; switch it from nearly horizontal right to nearly horizontal left and back, several times, pausing at the low point each time. Sign Deer if need for clearness.

Fr. le cerf de la Virginie; Ger. der Hirsch aus Virginien.

Defame. See Abuse.

Defend, Protect, Defense, Forbid, or Protection. Sign the same as the first part of Corral, but swing the joined hands to left and right. So also to separate the hands means to Loose or Remove protection. See Hold or Protect.

Fr. défendre; Ger. verteidigen.

Defiance, Defy, Dare, Challenge, or I defy you. Point the T hand toward the person. This is an extremely insulting challenge implying also the extreme of hatred and contempt. See Challenge.

Fr. le défi, défier; Ger. die Herausforderung, trotzen.

Defiance, Insolent. See Mockery.

Delight. See Excite.

Depart. See Go.
Describe, Explain, or Tell about (Tell all about it). Sign Talk and All—that is, swing the curved flat right hand, palm down, and to left, in a horizontal circle in front of the right cheek.  
Fr. *décrire*; Ger. *beschreiben*.

**Desire.** See *Want*.

**Destroy.** See *Exterminate*.

**Determine.** See *Decide*.

**Devil.** Sign *Medicine, Horns, and Tail*. A purely modern sign.  
Fr. *le diable*; Ger. *der Teufel*.

**Dew.** Sign *Night, Grass, and the Shimmer*; i.e., pass curved right 5 hand, palm down, with a tremulous motion just above the grass and add *Water*. (C)  
Fr. *la rosée*; Ger. *der Tau*.

**Die** (To go under; i.e., underground). Hold left hand flat, fingers horizontal, palm to you, breast high, pointing to right. Hold right G hand pointing to left above and within; pass it down, under and up beyond, still pointing to left.  
This is capable of modification. Thus passing the right hand under and drawing it back means to be near death but to *Recover*. To make the sign *Little* after this means to *Faint*.  
Fr. *mourir*; Ger. *sterben*.

**Die out.** See *Melt*. 
Different or Wrong (Push aside). Hold up the flat right, pointing forward and a little up, back to right. Swing the whole arm a foot to right, forward and upward, without bending the wrist, then back to first pose and repeat; a much-used and very plastic sign. Compare Bad and No.

Fr. différent; Ger. anders.

Difficulty. See Trouble.

Dig. Use flat right hand as a spade.
Fr. creuser; Ger. graben.

Dime. Sign White, Little, Money.

Dinner. Sign Noon or Night, as may be, and Eat.
Fr. le diner; Ger das Mittagessen, die Haupmahlzeit.

Direction. Point the G finger forward and down, swing it forward in a curve till it is about horizontal and pointing in the line intended.
Fr. la direction; Ger. die Richtung.

Dirt or Soil. See Earth.

Dirty. Rub the tips of the 1st and 2nd fingers with the tip of the thumb, exactly as in Powder, and add Bad.
Fr. sal; Ger. schmutzig.

Disappear. Hold out the flat left, palm in, then shoot compressed right, points first, over and down; then rub upper edge of left with palm tips of right to mean wiped out.
Disappear. Look around and sign See, Not. Sometimes use Hide.
Fr. disparaître; Ger. verschwinden.

Disbelief. Sign That, True, I think, No.
Fr. l'incrédulité; Ger. der Unglaube.

Disciple. See Learner.

Discouraged. See Sorrow.

Discovery. Found out.

Discussion, Conversation, or Debate (In a general sense). Hold out both flat hands, palms, up, level, six inches apart, breast high; swing both to left, then back to right several times, to signify the handing of words back and forth.

Discussion or Conversation (Between two). Make the sign for Talk alternately right at left and left at right.
Fr. la conversation; Ger. das Gespräch.

Disgust or Dislike. Push both flat hands forward palms out, fingers up, and turn away head. Or Heart, Tired. (C) Sometimes use Scorn.
Fr. le dégoût; Ger. der Ekel.

Dismount. Sign Horseman, then separate and lower right V hand, points up. If the points of the A hand were down, it would mean “looking on the ground.” See Mount.
Fr. descendre de cheval; Ger. absteigen.
Disobey. Sign Hear, Not. Compare Obey.
Fr. désobéir; Ger. nicht gehorchen.

Distant. See Far.

Distress. See Sorrow.
Fr. la misère; Ger. die Not.

Dissolve. See Melt.

Dive (To plunge into water). Place flat hands palm to palm and make the action of diving.
Fr. plonger; Ger. tauchen.

Dive or Swoop (Like a bird in air). Hold out flat left hand, back outward, bring flat right hand, back out, some inches in rear of and higher than left hand, pointing downward and forward; then shoot the right hand downward and outward, back of hand grazing under the left hand and up beyond. Compare Born.
Fr. s’élancer; Ger. niederschiessen au.

Divorce. Sign Marry, then swing the fingers apart horizontally. This is a legal divorce. When Abandon is used it means leaving one’s mate without legal divorce.

Do. See Work.

Doctor. Sign Chief and Medicine. (C) The Cheyennes omit Chief.
Fr. le médecin, le docteur; Ger. der Arzt.

Doer or The one who does or Man who (of all, that one). Sign Man, then swing right G on the level a foot, and
SIGN TALK

back six inches; then raise and strike with same G down on middle of the line. (Sheeaka. Apparently no other Indian knew it.) The Cheyennes sign Man and Work, or Man and Knows.

Fr. l’auteur, celui qui fait; Ger. der Täter.

Dog (Drawing lodge poles). With V hand back up in front of body draw the double trail down and backward. Compare Wolf. Seger maintains that the idea here is the dog’s ears point backward as he runs. See Bark.

Fr. le chien; Ger. der Hund.

Dollar. Sign Money and One. This would vary with the country, the sign stands for the unit of currency.

Fr. le dollar; Ger. der Dollar.

Done, Ended, Finished, Complete, Period, or Full Stop (Chopped off). Hold left hand flat, fingers touching, point forward, thumb up and with edge of right similarly held, chop down close past the tips of the fingers.

Also used as an auxiliary past tense, as I done eat.

Done (2) Finish, Quit, Break off. Hold up both fists at level of chin, palms down, middle knuckles of left touching ditto of right; jerk them a foot apart as though breaking a cord; swing them apart, down, along and up. This is also used as a Period at the end of sentence and I have seen it used for Bankrupt. It is a northern sign recently established among the Cheyennes. Compare Fat and Break.

Fr. fini; Ger. fertig.
Don't Care (I am defiant). Tap chest with tips of right flat hand, then swing the hand briskly and high to right, keeping palm facing the left. (Sheeaka.) Merely shrug the shoulders. (Blackfoot.) The Cheyennes sign Go ahead.

Fr. cela m'est égal; Ger. ich mache mir nichts daraus.

Do not or Don't. Hold up flat right hand, palm out, and forward at an angle; sharply shake the hand by wrist action back and forward (not sidewise), also sometimes the head. Compare Easy and Rub it out. Sometimes use Stop.

Fr. ne faites pas; Ger. tun Sie das nicht.

Don't want. See under Want.

Door. Sign Teepee or House, then hold flat left hand, thumb up, and lay flat right across the palm with little finger of the right as the hinge; swing it till it lies flat on left palm. (C) The Cheyennes sign House, then pull and swing an imaginary door.

Fr. la porte; Ger. die Tür.

Doubt, I am doubtful. Very slowly shake the head. (Pop.) Cheyennes and other Indians add—right hand held out palm forward and down, open and shaken; really a slow, slight Question sign. See If.

Fr. le doute, j'en doute; Ger. der Zweifel, ich bezweifle.

Down, Downward, or Below. Point straight down with right G, lowering the same. (Blackfoot.) Some use flat hand for this. Compare Here.

Fr. en bas; Ger. unten.
Down-hearted. See Sorrow.

Dream (See while sleeping). Sign Sleep and See; keeping the eyes closed.
- Fr. le rêve; Ger. der Traum.

Dress. Pass the palm of the L hand over the part of the body to be covered. Compare Hat, Moccasin, Robe, etc.
- Fr. la robe; Ger. das Kleid.

Drink or Drinking (From a cup). The O hand to the mouth as in drinking. Compare Want.

Drinking in the abstract would be: Draw the hollow hand level to the mouth from slightly above and down past chin, fingers pointing nearly forward. This combines Water and Swallow. See Water. Compare Speech.
- Fr. buvant; Ger. trinkend.

Drinking liquor (Half a finger). Hold up right G hand back to you, then lay left G across back to indicate liquor, then add Drink. (Sheekas.)
- Fr. buvant une boisson alcoolique; Ger. Schnaps trinkend.

Drive (Sense of driving a herd, or running off a herd). With L hands horizontal, opposite each other and same height, about an inch between tips of thumbs; move the hands simultaneously in the direction of the drive.
- Fr. mener; Ger. treiben.
Driving (A team). Hold both hands, backs out, as though holding reins, thumbs straight, with index of each around its point. See-saw the hands on the same level.
Fr. conduisant; Ger. lenkend, fahrend.

Drought. Sign, Long time, Rain, No.
Fr. la sécheresse; Ger. die Dürre.

Drown. Sign Water and Die.
Fr. noyer; Ger. ertrinken.

Drum. With G fingers draw a large circle, beginning together well forward, each making half-circle, ending near body; then strike on it several times with right A.
Fr. le tambour; Ger. die Trommel.

Drunk or Drunkard. Sign Crazy, Drink, and Much.
Fr. ivre; Ger. betrunken.

Dry (Of a stream or spring). Sign Stream, Water, All gone.
Fr. sec; Ger. trocken.

Dry. See Thirsty.

Duck. Sign for Bird and make the broad bill with flat hand held under the nose, back up, pointing forward; push it forward a few inches, or else with thumb below and first and second fingers above.
Fr. le canard; Ger. die Ente.

Dull (Of a tool). Sign Cut and Not or Bad. Compare Saw.
Fr. émoussé; Ger. stumpf.
SIGN TALK

Dull. See Dunce.

Dumb. Press the finger tips of the flat hand on the mouth; add Talk and No.
Fr. muet; Ger. stumm.

Dunce or Dull (Blockhead). Strike forehead with right fist knuckles. (D) A Cheyenne signed it Behind, Book, Know, Not.
Fr. le benêt, l'imbécile; Ger. der Dummkopf.

During. See While.

Dust. Rub tips of right fingers with tip of right thumb, as in Powder; then with flat right hand horizontal, palm down, pat several times toward the earth. (Scott.) See Earth and Land.
If the dust is in the air, pat down with one flat hand, then wave both 5 hands, points up, near the eyes; sometimes blink and draw back to make it more expressive.
Fr. la poussière; Ger. der Staub.

Duty (That, me, sends). Sign for That, Me, and Go (emphatically).
Fr. le devoir; Ger. die Pflicht.

Dwell or Inhabit (Alive and moving about in). Right flat hand, face high, pointing up, twisted slowly from left to right two or three times. Compare Appear, Alive, and Doubt.

Dwell (2) (Sitting, emphatic). One fist above the other in front as though grasping a stake, then with both hands
push it down and slightly forward. (Blackfoot.) Compare Sit.
    Fr. demeurer; Ger. bewohnen, wohnen.

Dwindle. See Decrease.

**E**

**Eagle.** The sign for Bird is slowly made, then with the
G hand in front of the face, back to right, describe a
downward curve from between the eyes to indicate the
curved bill of the eagle. This same sign is given for
Roman nose, but hold the back of the hand forward.
    Fr. l'aigle; Ger. der Adler.

**Early.** See Soon.

**Early evening.** Sign Sunset and Little of. (C) The
Cheyennes understood this, but preferred to swing the
Sun sign down to near, but not quite, level.
    Fr. au commencement du soir; Ger. früh am Abend.

**Early morning.** Sign Little and Daybreak, or Sunrise.
    Fr. de bon matin; Ger. frühmorgens.

**Ear-rings.** Make a ring of each index and thumb and
apply to each ear-lobe, backs of hands out, other fingers
raised.
    Fr. les boucles d'oreilles; Ger. das Ohrgehänge.

**Earth, the World** (All land). Sign All with both flat
hands, palms down, then pat down with both hands
twice. Compare Land.
    Fr. le monde; Ger. die Erde, die Welt.
Earth, Soil, or Dirt.  Point down, then with thumb and finger tips, lift and rub some imaginary soil as in Powder.
Fr. la terre; Ger. die Erde, der Schmutz.

Easy, Softly, or Gently.  Hold flat hand at face height, fingers half spread and a little curved, palm forward, leaning toward the person and gently and slightly shake the hand from side to side. (Sioux and Blackfoot.) With slight modification, much used on the railway in shunting. Compare Rub it out, Question, and Do not.
Fr. doucement; Ger. sachte.

Eat or Food.  Throw the nearly compressed right hand lightly in a curve past the mouth several times. Compare Water and Drink.
Fr. manger; Ger. essen.

Eaten enough (Full to throat).  Sign Eat, then lay L hand on breast, palm in, and raise it to opposite chin. Compare Hang.
Fr. assez mangé; Ger. satt gegessen.

Effect.  See Result.

Effort.  See Try.

Egg.  Sign Bird and Born; then indicate the size of the egg with finger and thumb of one or both hands.
Fr. l'oeuf; Ger. das Ei.

Either, Or.  Hold out left V hand, back up; tap each finger in turn with right G.  Compare Both.
Fr. l'un ou l'autre, ou . . . ou; Ger. entweder . . . oder.
**Elk** or **Wapiti.** Hold the hands above the head at arm's length on each side, thumb and first two fingers of each spread, others closed; jerk them forward two or three times for three or four inches. Compare **Deer, Moose,** and **Caribou.**

Fr. *le cerf du Canada;* Ger. *das Elentier.*

**Empty, Absent, Gone, or Out of.** Place the right hand, points up, in the left hand, which is back, forward, and down; drop the right hand down out of the left, closing left to O. Compare **All gone.**

Fr. *vide;* Ger. *leer.*

**Encamp.** See **Camp.**

**Encircle.** See **Surround.**

**Enclosure.** Hold out both hands level, palm to palm, finger tips touching; swing them apart in a horizontal circle; draw them back; end with fingers wide apart and heels touching. A much-used sign. See **Corral.**

Fr. *l'enclos;* Ger. *die Einzäunung.*

**End.** See **Done.**

**Endure, Suffer, or Stand it** (Suffering, but strong and erect). Hold flat curved right hand close in front of breast, breathe heavily, swinging the hand near and from; then raise the right hand in a curve out and up, about head high. (Sheeaka.) Understood, but not used by Cheyennes.

Fr. *supporter;* Ger. *aushalten, leiden.*

**Enemy.** Sign **Shake hands and Not.** Sometimes use **Hate.**

Fr. *l'ennemi;* Ger. *der Feind.*
Engaged or Betrothed (Ring-bound). Sign Prisoner, then with right index indicate a ring on ring finger of left hand. (D)

Fr. fiancé; Ger. verlobt.

Engagement (i.e., Business). Swing the flat hands, palms up, up and down for six or eight inches, as in Road, but not progressing. Or, sign Road and Meet.
Fr. l'engagement, l'obligation; Ger. die Verabredung.

Enlist. Sign Work and Soldier.
Fr. enrôler; Ger. sich anwerben lassen.

Enough or Full in general sense ( Levelling off a full measure). Hold out left O hand, back to left, and across the top from right to left pass the flat palm of the open right hand. Sometimes add Strong, to mean Plenty. See Eaten enough.
Fr. assez; Ger. genug.

Enter or Come into. Hold out hollow left, back up, and pass compressed right hand under and beyond.
Fr. entrer; Ger. eintreten.

Equal, Even, Same, Too, Also (Even race). Hold G hands in front of breast, side by side, backs up, pointing to front, about two inches apart; push them forward together and a little up in a sweep. A much-used sign. Compare Race, Parallel, Marry, and Mate.
Fr. égal, le même; Ger. gleich, egal, genau so.
Erase or Annul. Sign Wrong and Wipe out. See Rub it out.
Fr. effacer; Ger. auslöschen, ausstreichen.

Escape. See Free.

Even or Same. See Equal.

Evening. Sign Night and Little of. (C) See Early evening.
Fr. le soir; Ger. der Abend.

Ever. See Always.

Evil or Sin. Sign Work and Bad.

Evil Eye. Close all fingers of right hand, except index and little finger; to point these at any one means "You have the Evil Eye." In Italy this is an insult. (Pop.)
In France it means "Shame on you," or "I put you to shame." (Pop.)
Fr. la main à corne; Ger. das Hexenauge.

Except or Unless. See But.

Excessive, Too much, Unjust, Too (Extremely, piled up).
With right palm down, make a succession of curves, marking stages each higher than the last, beginning very low; then finish by swinging both hands, palm down, away up and forward. (Sheeaka.) Or sign Heap. Sometimes use Enough.
Fr. excessif, trop; Ger. übermässig, zu viel.

Exchange. See Trade.
Excite, Agitate (Heart flutters). Sign Heart, then hold the 5 hand near the heart, back to right, pointing upward; raise it a foot shaking the fingers. The Blackfeet use this for Glad, and in most cases among the Cheyennes it implies pleasant excitement.

Fr. exciter; Ger. aufregen.

Excuse. See Wipe out.

Exist. See Be.

Expect. See Hope.

Explain. See Describe.

Exterminate, Annihilate, Crush, Destroy, etc. (Crushed and wiped out). Drop flat right on flat left, palm to palm, grind them together, then brush the right over the left tips, to front and beyond. Compare Wipe out.

Fr. exterminer; Ger. vernichten.

Face. Sweep the flat right hand, palm in, across the face and down. This is sometimes used for Person.

Fr. la figure; Ger. das Gesicht.

Fade. See Melt.

Faint. Signs for Die and Recover.

Fr. s'évanouir, faible, épuisé; Ger. ohnmächtig werden, schwach.

Fall or Tumble. The right flat hand in front of breast, back up, swept briskly out, forward up and down, to rest palm up. Compare Another and Lie Down.

Fr. tomber; Ger. hinfallen.
Fall. See Autumn.

Fall (Of water). Sign River or Creek, then hold out flat left, back out, and push flat right over it, bending right fingers over far edge, making them tremble.
Fr. la cataracte; Ger. der Wasserfall.

Fail, that is, to lack success. See Cannot.

Fail (In business). Sign Work, Backward. (Blackfoot.) The Backward is indicated by holding the flat left well forward, drawing the flat right back in jumps.
Fr. faire faillite; Ger. bankrott werden.

False. See Lie.

Fame. See Glory.

Famous (Standing on a hill). Sign Hill, then over that hold right G, palm forward, index just above left thumb. Or, sign Chief and Brave.
Fr. fameux, célèbre; Ger. berühmt.

Far object, Distant or Far forward, Over there. Move the G hand forward and upward in a long slow arch, finishing at arm’s length with down curve.

Far (In general). Flat right hand curved, pointing to left, back forward, pushed out and up at arm’s length. Compare Close.
Fr. loin; Ger. entfernt.

Farm. Sign Land and Planting.
Fr. la ferme; Ger. der Pachthof.
Farmer. Sign Corn and Chief.

Fr. le fermier; Ger. der Ackerbauer.

Fast, Quick, Rapid, or Swift (Pass by). Hold out the flat left hand, back to left. Bring the flat right hand, back to right, several inches in rear of and slightly to right of left, pointing to front and downward; carry right hand swiftly past left and close to it, and as it passes, by wrist action, raise the hand so that fingers will point upward and in front, making a curve; at the same time, draw back the left a little.

Fr. rapide, vite; Ger. schnell.

Fat (Shape of a fat animal’s hips). Hold the fists out side by side, thumb to thumb, then swing them apart in two curves, up, out, down, and a little forward. Compare Done and Break.

Fr. gras; Ger. fett.

Fat or Grease. See Oil.

Father (Nurse, male). With compressed right hand, pluck at the right breast two or three times, as though drawing out milk. Sometimes add Male. Compare Mother.

Fr. le père; Ger. der Vater.


Fault-finding (Striking, knocking). With flat right hand, arm at full length, make a succession of short chops down. This is fault-finding with another. For “fault-finding with me” chop toward the breast. (Sheeaka.) See Abuse, Chop, and By itself. The Cheyennes use You, All time, Scold.

Fr. blâmer, censurer; Ger. das Tadeln.
Fear, Cowardice, Coward. The head stooped down and the right arm thrown up, palm out, as though to ward off danger. (Sheeaka.) The Cheyennes understand, but prefer Woman, Heart. See Afraid.

Fr. la peur; Ger. die Furcht.

Feather (Small). Pluck an imaginary feather from left arm with index finger and thumb of right hand and blow it away from the mouth with one puff, at same time opening the finger and thumb to let it go.

Feather, i. e., Quill Feather. Sign Wing, then make as though pulling out and holding up One feather.

Fr. la plume; Ger. die Feder.

Feel (That is, heart feels). Place the tip of the middle finger, others extended and lifted, against the heart; then draw it up a little way. (D)

Fr. sentir; Ger. empfinden.

Feel or Touch (to touch). The hand as above, but pushed forward and moved a little from side to side. (Sheeaka.) See Hot.

Feel or Touch. Hold out left flat hand, back up; press tip of right flat hand on it at various places. Compare At.

Fr. toucher; Ger. tasten, berühren.

Female or Woman. Draw the flat right hand, palm in close to the side of the head, finger tips about on line with the top of head; lower the hand, at the same time curving fingers as though combing with them the hair over ears and cheeks; finish with a snap at line of shoul-
ders. Two hands are used in the north. Compare Comb. For White woman indicate an immense hat. (Sheeaka.)

Fr. la femme; Ger. das Weib.

Fetch. See Bring.

Few. See Small.

**Fight or War.** Hold loosely clenched A hands well out in front of body, thumbs toward body, about height of shoulders and about three inches apart; bring right hand in toward body few inches, at same time move left out about same distance; then carry right out and bring left in, repeating these two or three times, making them by wrist and elbow action. This is a fight of many; for a fight of two, use the G fingers same way. In old days, according to Father Isadore, the signal for Battle was a handful of dust thrown in the air. The gesture of doing this came to mean Fight.

Fr. le combat, la guerre; Ger. der Streit, der Krieg.

Find. Sign Look around here and there, then shoot out the V hand and pick up an imaginary something with finger and thumb. Compare Choose and Hunt.

Fr. trouver; Ger. finden.

**Fingers crossed, To claim Sanctuary.** Also called Bar up, King's X, King's Cross, Pax, Truce, Fins, Fines, etc. Hold up right hand with first and second fingers crossed. This means “I claim privilege, what I do now is outside the game.” (Universal in our schools and probably very ancient.)

Fr. être exempt; Ger. die Immunität, verschont sein.
Sign Talk

**Finish.** Hold out flat left, palm up; rub flat right on it, palm down, making two sunwise circles. Also use *Done.*

**Fire** (Blaze, flaring up with smoke). Hold the right hand down and forward at arm’s length, back in front of the body; fingers hooked so the tip of thumb is over the nails of first three fingers and holds them down; raise the hand six inches and spring the fingers upward, free, separate, and straight. Do this twice. Compare *Aurora.*

Fr. *le feu*; Ger. *das Feuer.*

**Fire, Spark of.** Hold up right thumb and index as though holding something and blow it steadily; add *Fire* if needed for clearness. Compare *Feather* (small).

Fr. *l’étincelle*; Ger. *der Funke.*

**Fire, Set it afire.** Make the motion of striking a match on the side of the thigh and thrusting it forward.

Fr. *allumer*; Ger. *anzünden.*

**Fire off, Shoot, or Gun-Fire** (Blaze shooting forward). Right hand in front of right shoulder; throw palm forward six inches and at same time straighten and spread all fingers with a jerk. Some add a hand clap or many for *Volley firing.*

Fr. *décharger, faire feu sur, tirer*; Ger. *schiessen, abfeuern.*

**First** (Of all, number one). Hold up left 5 hand, palm to right; push it forward, then tap the little finger with the right G. (Sheeaka. A Sioux sign, but understood by Cheyennes.) Compare *Last and Guide.*
First. Sign *Ahead.*
Fr. *le premier;* Ger. *der Erste.*

Fish. Make sign for *Water;* then hold flat right hand, back to right, in front of right shoulder, elbow high; and move the hand sinuously forward. Often omit *Water.* Compare *Snake.*
Fr. *le poisson;* Ger. *der Fisch.*

Fisher or Pekan. Sign *Marten* and *Big* (suggested, not established).
Fr. *le pékant;* Ger. *der kanadische Marder.*

Fix. Lay low edge of flat right hand on upper edge of flat left near thumb base. Push right forward and down, turning left back up. (C) Or, sign *Work* and *All right.* Compare *Mend,* *Council,* and *Law.*
Fr. *ajuster,* arranger; Ger. *herrichten,* in *Ordnung machen.*

Fix, In a Fix. See *Quandary.*

Flag. Hold flat right well out, back to right. Lay left G on wrist of right. Wave right sidewise.
Fr. *le drapeau;* Ger. *die Flagge.*

Flat. See *Prairie.*

Flesh. See *Meat.*

Float. Flat left hand, back up; place flat right on it, palm down, and move both to right as on waves. (C)
Understood by Cheyennes.
Fr. *flotter;* Ger. *oben auf schwimmen,* auf dem *Wasser treiben.*
Flood. Indicate source of Water, then hold up both flat hands, backs up, side by side, waist high; raise them neck high and sign Charge. Omit Charge unless needed.

Fr. Finondation; Ger. die Flut.

Flour. Sign Bread and Powder.

Fr. la farine; Ger. das Mehl.

Flower, Bloom, or Blossom. Sign Grass, but higher; then clasp right index and thumb over left ditto, others closed; then turn the hands so the little fingers touch and the thumbs point up. (C)

Flower. Sign Grow; hold both compressed hands together in front, pointing up, backs out; spring them out into 5 hands, forming a circle pointing up.

Fly (The insect). Sign Bird, Small; then point here and there on the arm anywhere. Sometimes omit Small.

Fr. la mouche; Ger. die Fliege.

Fly (To). With flat hands held near shoulders simulate wings, beating exactly as in Bird, but move the hands forward a foot or more horizontally. Compare Bird.

Fr. voler; Ger. fliegen.

Fog (Water, peep through). Sign Water and hold the 5 hands, fingers crossed, in front of the eyes. (C) The Cheyennes understand this, but prefer the next:

Fog (Mud in the sky). Sign Turtle, then raise both 5 hands, palms forward, from the horizon up high; then spread them out. This expresses "turtles in the sky";
probably because the sky is clouded as is the water when the turtle moves in it.

Fr. *le brouillard*; Ger. *der Nebel*.

**Follow or Chase.** Left G hand pointing nearly up, moved ahead and variously pursued six inches behind by right G hand. Sheeaka used his thumbs for this.

Fr. *suivre*; Ger. *folgen, nachlaufen*.

**Fond, Fondness, Love, Affection, Regard,** etc. (Pressed to the heart). Cross wrists of A hands, backs out, over the heart, right nearest body, few inches from it; draw both against the body and bend the head over them. With one hand it is *Like*; with two hands, *Love*. (Black-foot.) Compare *Blanket*.

Fr. *affectueux*; Ger. *zärtlich, liebevoll*.

**Food.** See *Eat*.

**Fool, Do you take me for a.** With the right G index, draw down the lower eyelid a little; as though to say, "Can you see any green there?" (Pop.)

Fr. *le sot, me croyez vous bête*? Ger. *der Narr, denken Sie ich bin dumm?*

**Foolish.** See *Crazy*.

**Foolish or Unwise.** Sign *Crazy* and *Little of*.

Fr. *imbécile*; Ger. *närrisch*.

**Football signs.** See page 233.

**Footprints** (Visible walk). Sign for *Walk* and for *See* with the fingers pointed down. This is *Human tracks*; for *Horse tracks*, sign *Walk* with the index and thumb of each hand in a three-quarter circle, other fingers closed, and then add *See* as here.

Fr. *les empreintes des pieds*; Ger. *die Fusstapfen*. 
Footrace. Sign Walk quickly, and Race.
Fr. la course à pied; Ger. der Wetlauf.

For (Giving to). Throw the flat right hand forward and palm down, slowly toward the object. Compare Stop, Give, and Wait.

For. Sometimes use Belongs. Hold out the two G hands nearly back up, a foot apart; swing them together till the G tips are about two inches apart. (Sheeaka.)

For. Lightly close the right as though it held some object, push it forward and upward, back to right. (Blackfoot.)
Fr. pour; Ger. für.

Forbid. See Defend.

Forest, Timber, or Woods. Hold both forearms upright, with all the fingers much spread, meaning Trees, the right hand nearest the body, its back against the palm of left; then separate them, drawing right hand toward the body, moving the left away and upward in a curve. See Tree.
Fr. la forêt; Ger. der Wald.

Forever. See Always.

Forgive. See Excuse.

Forget or Forgot (Swept from my brain). Touch the forehead with the right N finger. Shake the head and motion as though to brush away an imaginary fly from near the nose. (Sheeaka and Pop.) See Remember not.
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Forget or Forgot. Clap right hand down on left (for surprise); lay right G, palm forward, on forehead, and add \textit{Hid}.

Fr. \textit{oublier}; Ger. \textit{vergessen}.

Forward (In space). See \textit{Ahead}.

Forward (In time). See \textit{Future}.

Found it. Sign \textit{I Saw}, then reach forward and with index and thumb pick up an imaginary object. Compare \textit{Choose}.

Found it. At a distance, hold both hands high above the head, fingers closed, thumbs pointing toward each other. (Pop.)

Fr. \textit{je l'ai trouvé}; Ger. \textit{ich habe es gefunden}.

Found out, i.e., You are found out. Point forefinger at the person. (Sheeaka.) Or sign \textit{You, I, Understand}.

Fr. \textit{démasqué}; Ger. \textit{erlapppt}.

Four-foot. See \textit{Animal}.

Fox. Indicate the size of animal and bushy tail.

Fr. \textit{le renard}; Ger. \textit{der Fuchs}.

Free, Escape, Safe, Save, Relief, Permit, Turn loose (Unbinding). S hands crossed at wrists. With an effort, break the imaginary bonds and throw the hands apart, turning palm sides up. Sometimes add \textit{Go}. See \textit{Pardon}. 
Free, Wild, or Free of Incumbrance (Cut loose).
Hold flat right hand in front of breast, fingers forward, back down; move by wrist action sharply to left a few inches; then jerk back to place two or three times as though cutting something loose. Compare Chop and Wild Animal.
Fr. libre; Ger. frei.

Freeze over, Form ice. Sign for Cold, Water, then raise and move till the flat hands are touching in front, side by side, backs up and at arm's length. (C) See Ice.
Fr. geler; Ger. gefrieren.

Friend, Friendship, or Chum (Brothers growing up together). Hold right N hand in front of neck, palm forward, pointing up; raise it head high, slightly advancing it. Alliance is sometimes used, or even Peace.
Fr. l'ami; Ger. der Freund.

Frog (Water hopper). Water; then with compressed right hand make long hops forward.
Fr. la grenouille; Ger. der Frosch.

From. Touch digit of right G hand to right shoulder, then throw it in a long sweep up and forward. Sometimes Indians use flat hand for this.
Fr. de; Ger. von.

Frost. Sign, Cold, White, and Strong.
Fr. la gelée; Ger. der Frost.
SIGN TALK

**Fruit.** Sign *Tree*, then make a ring of right index and thumb, others closed, and place it here and there in the branches, and add *Eat*. Compare *Berry*, *Leaf*, and *Money*.

Fr. *le fruit*; Ger. *die Frucht*.

**Full.** See *Enough*.

**Future** (Time ahead). Make the signs for *Time* and *Far ahead*. See also *Will*.

Fr. *futur, l'avenir*; Ger. *zukünftig, die Zukunft*.

**G**

**Gallop.** Sign *Ride*, then hold out flat hands, palm to palm, right in advance; work them up and down together, the tips describing vertical curves. Compare *Fast* and *Work*.

Fr. *galoper*; Ger. *galoppieren*.

**Gamble.** Hold the hands out level, six inches apart; swing to left and right simultaneously, in easy curves down and up, keeping them near each other as though swinging a tom tom. Compare *Drive* and *Herd*.

Fr. *jouer*; Ger. *spielen*.

**Gap, Gorge, or Mountain Pass.** Sign *Mountains*, then hold out left L hand, thumb pointing to left and upward, pass flat right between, touching at bottom.

Fr. *le défilé*; Ger. *die Kluft, die Schlucht*.

**Garden.** Strike down with right G as in *Here*, but in several directions, then add *Plant* and *Eat*.

Fr. *le jardin*; Ger. *der Garten*.

**Gather.** See *Together*. 
Generous. Sign Heart and Big; or, Heart, Pities.
Fr. généreux; Ger. groszmütig, freigiebig.

Gentle. See Kind.

Gently. See Easy.

Get or Obtain (That is, he gets, or obtains). Reach out left hand, back up; then with right hand, grasp something on top of it; then close and draw back the right. If it is the first person who gets, finish by drawing the hand toward oneself. Sometimes omit left hand.
Fr. obtenir; Ger. erlangen, erhalten.

Get well. See Recover.

Ghost, Soul, or Spirit. Bring right G hand in front of centre of body, pointing down; then draw it upward, as though drawing the forefinger out of the mouth, upward and to the front and at the same time exhale a breath. (Scott.) The Cheyennes sign Big eyes (as in Owl), and shaking the hands at the same time. See Spirit.
Fr. l'esprit; Ger. der Geist.

Gift. Hold left hand, hollow up; with right hand pick an imaginary object out of the left; carry it forward, at the same time turning right hand flat, palm up, and fingers pointing down and forward. Or, sign Give and Free (2nd).
Fr. le cadeau; Ger. das Geschenk.

Girl (Woman sprout). Sign Female, Young.
Fr. la fille; Ger. das Mädchen.
SIGN TALK

Give. Hold out flat right, back to right, shoulder high; swing it out and down.
   Fr. donner; Ger. geben.

Give you. Swing the hand from the person giving toward you. This, with the sign below, shows the beginning of a conjugation.

Give me. Bring the flat right hand well out in front of body, about height of neck, back of hand nearly to left, lower edge nearest to body, pointing upward; draw the hand in toward the body and a little down; at the same time, bend the hand and the wrist so the fingers touch the chest. Compare Tell me and Half-Breed.
   Fr. donnez moi; Ger. geben Sie mir.

Give it up. See Abandon.

Give up, Lose hope, or Discouraged. See Sorrow.

Glad, Pleasant, Happy, or Merry (Sunshine in the heart). Sign Heart and Day.
   Fr. heureux; Ger. froh, glücklich.

Glitter or Shining (The mirror signal). Hold out the L hand with index pointing forward, back up. Rotate with a flash, or jerk so the thumb is upright and back to its original pose. Do this once or twice. See Courting and Sweetheart.
   Fr. étinceler; Ger. glitzern.

Gloomy, Cross, or Sullen (Clouds close). Sign Clouds, then draw them down near head. (C) Or, sign Thinking and Bad. Compare Cross and Angry.
   Fr. sombre; Ger. finster, trübe.
Glory or Fame. Sign All, Good, Know. See Famous.
Fr. la gloire; Ger. der Ruhm.

Glow, Splendor, Wonderful (Spread in the sky). Hold up both 5 hands, palms forward, pointing up, at arm’s length, nearly level; raise up very high and at the same time spread widely. A much-used and very plastic sign. May sometimes mean Weather.
Fr. la splendeur; Ger. das Glühen, die Pracht.

Go, Went, or Travel. Hold flat right hand, back to right, breast high, pointing to front and down; swing it up and out till the fingers point forward and upward. Often combined with Arrive there.
Fr. aller; Ger. gehen.

Going. Hold up right G, palm forward; move it forward in short pushes.
Fr. allant; Ger. gehend.

Go away, Go ahead, Go farther (Imperative). Hold flat right hand in front of body, palm forward, fingers upright; move the hand to front in a slight curve to right; repeat once or twice. See Begin.
Fr. allez! Ger. gehen Sie!

Goat. Sign Horns, with the straight G fingers on each side of head, and Beard. Sometimes omit Horns, signing only Beard.
Fr. la chèvre; Ger. die Ziege.

Fr. Dieu; Ger. Gott.
Gold. Sign Money and Yellow, or Hard and Yellow.

For Gold coin sign, Chief, Money.
   Fr. l'or; Ger. das Gold.

Gone. See Absent.

Good, All right, Level, Fair, Just (Level with the heart). Hold the flat extended right hand, back up, level, touching the left breast; swing the hand briskly out to front and slightly up in a curve.
   Fr. bon; Ger. gut.

Good-bye. Hold right hand flat, palm down, pointing forward horizontally at height of head and shake the hand up and down by wrist action. A whiteman's sign recently adopted by Indians.
   Fr. adieu, au revoir; Ger. lebe wohl!

Good-morning. Sign Day and Good.
   Fr. bonjour; Ger. guten Morgen.

Goose. Sign Bird, moving the wing hands slowly; hold both flat hands low, side by side, a little apart, backs up; push them down sharply a few inches, for flat feet. Sometimes also make the honk sound.
   Fr. l'oise; Ger. die Gans.

Gorge. See Gap.

Gossip. See Telltale.

Grain, of any kind. Hold both hands hollow together, as in Bowl; shake, then point to the hollow of the left with right G. (Sheeaka.) The exact kind must be
specified. In Cheyenne, Wheat is Bread and Sow; Oats is Horse, Eat, Sow.

Fr. le grain; Ger. das Getreide.

**Grandchild.** With the flat right, pat one's own back where the baby is carried. Among the Cheyennes, only the grandmother uses this.

**Grand Coup.** See Count Coup.

**Grandfather.** Sign Old and Father.

**Grandfather** (Father once removed). Sign Father, then hold curved left hand in front of body, palm in; and on outer side make the sign Father again. For Great grandfather, repeat the sign for Father once more. For Ancestors, many times. (Crow signs given me by La Forge.)

Fr. le grand-père; Ger. der Großvater.

**Grandmother.** As above, but use Mother sign. (LaF.)

**Grandmother.** Sign Old, Mother.

Fr. la grand'mère; Ger. die Großmutter

**Grasp.** See Keep.

**Grass.** Hold both hands low, palms up; turn all fingers upward straight and swing hands slightly apart. For Grass growing, raise the hands a little. Compare Children.

Fr. l'herbe, le gazon; Ger. das Gras, der Rasen.
Gratitude. Use Thank you sign. Or else raise the flat right hand, palm forward and face high; draw it downward in a sweep several times as though stroking the other person's breast. For emphasis use both hands.
Fr. la reconnaissance; Ger. die Dankbarkeit.

Grave. Hold out both flat hands, thumbs up, six inches apart, pointing level forward; draw them back level to you, sign Die; then hold out left flat hand as before and slap on it two or three times with the flat right, for cover up.
Fr. le tombeau; Ger. das Grab.

Great. Hold out the slightly curved 5 hands in front of breast, few inches apart, palms toward each other, pointing to front; separate hands the right to the right and up a little and near the body; the left to the left and down a little and farther away. Compare Big and Wide. Sometimes use Much or High.
Fr. grand; Ger. grosz.

Greater than. Sign A head, Great. So also Less than would be Behind, Small.
Fr. plus grand que; Ger. gröszer als.

Grief. See Sorrow.

Grieve. Sign Heart, Down. See Give up and Mourn.
Fr. se chagriner, pleurer; Ger. trauern.

Ground. See Land.
Grouse or Prairie Chicken. Sign Bird and show size; then with right hand low, palm up, fingers closed except first curved up like neck, imitate forward walking. (Sioux.) Sign Bird then indicate fast wing beats and whirring. (Blackfoot.) Sign Bird and Tail cut off. (Cheyenne.)

Fr. la gelinotte; Ger. das Waldhuhn.

Grow, Become, or Turn into. Hold right G hand low, back down, index finger pointing upward, in front of body; raise the hand by gentle jerks.

Fr. pousser, croître, devenir; Ger. wachsen, werden.

Guide (Verb). (Show trail and Lead.) Point with right index forward and downward; then add Lead. (Sheeaka.)

Fr. conduire; Ger. führen, leiten.

Guide (Noun). Hold up left G hand, little finger forward, and ahead of the right G, all moved forward in easy swings.

Fr. le guide; Ger. der Führer.

Gun. Make the motion of holding and aiming a gun; then add Fire-off. For Rifle, add the working of the lever.

Fr. le fusil, la carabine; Ger. das Gewehr.

Gun, i.e., Shot-gun, sign Gun, then clasp the hands twice and hold up two fingers. See Revolver.

Fr. le fusil de chasse; Ger. die Flinte.

Gun-fire. See Fire.

Gun-powder. Sign Gun and Powder.

Fr. la poudre à canon; Ger. das Schiesspulver.
**Habit** (Thought bound). With G forefinger draw a small circle on forehead, then sign *Prisoner*. (D)

**Habit** (Road smoothed by repeated strokes). Sweep the flat hands, palms down, back and forth; then strike three times down with the right G. (Sheeaka.) Or sign *Way* and *Keep*. (Seger.)

**Habit** (Long time the same). Hold out left G, draw right G back from left knuckles to shoulder; add *Same*.  
Fr. *l'habitude*; Ger. *die Gewohnheit*.

**Hail.** Sign *Rain*, *Cold*, and with curved right index on thumb indicate size of stones.  
Fr. *la grêle*; Ger. *der Hagel*.

**Hair** (Of animal). Hold out left forearm horizontally in front of body and sweep the curved right 5 hand, palm up, along it from elbow to wrist. For *Human hair*, touch one’s own hair. Compare *Wing*.  
Fr. *le poil*; Ger. *der Pelz*.

**Half.** Hold left flat hand in front of breast, back out. Lay the lower edge of right flat hand on upper edge of left index, in middle, and jerk it toward the tips of left. Sometimes the right hand alone is used edge downward, drawn back and down as though its under side were cutting something. Compare *Part*.  
Fr. *le demi, la moitié*; Ger. *die Hälfte*.
**Half-breed.** With flat right hand pointing up, little finger next middle of the breast, palm to right, halve the body down breast, swing it far to left, return to centre, then swing far to right and give the tribal sign for each half. Or, give the first sign only; that is, the hand cutting in the middle.

Fr. *le métis*; Ger. *der Mischling*.

**Halt or Stop.** Hold the right flat hand, palm outward and downward, in front of the body, pointing upward and to front, hand about height of shoulders; move the hand sharply to front and downward, stopping it suddenly. Sometimes merely raise the hand flat forward.

This means also *Keep quiet, Wait a moment*, etc., when made gently. “This sign is world wide. In a journey around the world, I have used it in every country visited and found it instantly recognized. I saw a train stopped by it in the Himalayas, also jinrikishas stopped in Java, Singapore, Saigon, Canton, Hong Kong, Nagasaki, and Manila.” (Scott.)

Fr. *Halte! Ger. Halt!*

**Halve.** Same as *Half*; but jerk one part to right and one to left. (C)

Fr. *couper ou diviser en deux*; Ger. *halbieren*.

For *One-Quarter*, lay the “knife hand” at last joint of left index; for *Three-Quarters*, near base; see also *Quarter*.

Fr. *le quart*; Ger. *das Viertel*.

**Handsome.** See *Beautiful*.

**Hang** (To be executed). Swing the right L hand over the head down to the neck, palm in; close the thumb and
index, then draw it up to height of head, index pointing down. This is done in two graceful sweeps.
Fr. pendre; Ger. hängen.

Hang. Hang right G index like a hook on straight left G index.
Fr. accrocher; Ger. aufhängen.

Hanker. See Want.

Happen. See Luck.

Happy. See Glad.

Happy Hunting Ground. Sign Die, Beyond, and Dwell.
Fr. les Champs Elysées des Indiens; Ger. die seligen Jagdgesilade.

Hard (Like rock). Hold out the left hand flat, edge down, and strike the palm with the knuckles of the right two or three times.
Fr. dur; Ger. hart.

Hat (Head cover). Bring the L right hand, back outward, in front, close to, and a little above the head; lower the hand until thumb and index are about opposite the eyes; spread thumb and index, passing down close to forehead.
Fr. le chapeau; Ger. der Hut.

Hatchet. See Axe.
Hate. Hold up both hands opposite left side of face in pose for Fire-off, back of each to its side; spring both out as in Fire-off, to left side, turning the left very little, so that it shoots forward; the right shoots to the left. Compare Abandon and Scorn; also Defiance. Sheeaka used only Defiance sign.

Fr. détester; Ger. hassen.

Have (To possess). See Possession.

Have to, Bound to, Must, Obliged to, Compelled to (Bound down). Sign Prisoner and Work. Or, That, Work, Strong.

Fr. être obligé; Ger. müssen.

Hawk. First make Bird sign, then imitate the seizing of the prey with both feet hawk-fashion, by means of both hands placed in front of body opposite neck, palms outward, make grasping motion forward. (Scott.) Or sign Bird and with curved G indicate bill. See Eagle.

Fr. le faucon; Ger. der Habicht.

He. Make the sign Male; or point with the thumb, other fingers closed.

Fr. il; Ger. er.

Headache. Touch head; then hold curved flat hand near and flirt the fingers from behind the thumb two or three times to show the throbbing.

Fr. le mal de tête; Ger. das Kopfweh.

Healthy. See Well.
**SIGN TALK**

**Heap or Very Much.** With curved hands show shape, beginning at the lowest points. Compare *Many*, *Mound*, and *Much*.

Fr. *vamas, le tas*; Ger. *der Haufe(n)*.

**Hear.** Move the right G hand (pointed forward) from behind the right ear, past the ear and forward. Compare *Listen* and *Indian Nez Percé*.

Fr. *entendre*; Ger. *hören*.

**Heart.** Bring the compressed right hand against the left breast, over heart and pointing downward.

Fr. *le coeur*; Ger. *das Herz*.

**Heat.** See *Hot*.

**Heaven.** Simply point up with right G, back to right and head high. Compare *Heavens* and *Happy Hunting Ground*; also, *Tall*.

Fr. *le paradis*; Ger. *der Himmel, das Paradies*.

**Heavens, Skies, or Sky.** Hold both flat hands palms down, tips touching, over and in front of the head; sweep them down sidewise in outline of the dome. Compare *Clouds*, *Carriage*, *Hot Weather*.

Fr. *le ciel*; Ger. *der Himmel*.

**Heavy** (Cannot hold up). Hold flat hands, a few inches apart, at same level, backs down, in front of body and pointing to front. Raise them slightly and let them drop several inches, finishing low. Compare *Light*.

Fr. *lourd*; Ger. *schwer*.
Help. Hold left forearm horizontally in front of body, hand A, and place flat right hand under left forearm and lift it slightly. (Sheeaka; borrowed from the Deaf.) Or, sign Work and With.
Fr. aider; Ger. helfen.

Her. See Possession.

Herd of Animals. Hold out left 5 fingers a little curved, level, far advanced, shoulder high, backs up and out; moved forward and a little down together. For Herd grazing hold right 5 over left 5 wrist; draw right back toward body in a slight arc up and down.
Fr. le troupeau; Ger. die Herde.

Herd (Verb). See Drive.

Here (This spot). Swing the right G, back up, from pointing up, to forward and down; then stab toward the ground two or three times. Compare Down, Earth, Place.
Fr. ici; Ger. hier.

He who. See Doer.

Hide, To Cache, Conceal, or Lose. Swing the flat or else compressed right hand, palm down, under the flat left hand held in front, palm down; the left hand rests on the right at end of sign. (Sheeaka.) Sometimes add Hush. Compare Enter and Night.
Fr. cacher; Ger. verstecken.

Hide (Skin). Hold extended left hand, back up, in front of body, and with the right thumb and fore-
finger gather up, with a pinch, the loose skin on the back of left hand. Sometimes sign Robe.

Fr. la peau; Ger. das Fell.

High or Height. Hold the flat right hand, back nearly up, pointing to front, in front of right shoulder; raise the hand according to the height intended. If it refers to humans, hold the right hand (compressed or G) vertically pointing upward. (C) To show height of small objects or animals, hold the flat left, palm up, under right. See Tall.

Fr. haut; Ger. hoch.

Higher. See Superior.

Hill, Bluff, or Butte. Push right A fist, back out, straight up, face high. For plural use both hands moved alternately up and down at different places. Compare Ridge, Lump, and Mountain.

Fr. la colline; Ger. der Hügel.

His. See Possession.

History or Story (Pictures of the past). Hold up flat left, palm forward, and sketch on palm with right G; then sign Past. (C) Or, Sign Long, Past, Tell me.

Fr. l'histoire; Ger. die Geschichte.

Hit (To make a hit). See Count Coup.

Hoax (To wolf or beguile). Sign I, Make, Him, Wolf. (Seger.)

Fr. mystifier; Ger. jemandem etwas aufbinden.
Hog or Pig. Indicate size, then with a circle of two thumbs and two index fingers in front of mouth show muzzle; last, with flat right hand, or flat fist back up, make a snout and root. Usually give only the last sign.

Fr. le cochon; Ger. das Schwein.

Hold (to hold a prisoner). Arms in a level circle, flat right hand inside flat left and overlapping, both palms toward you; swing to right and left. Compare Defend, Keep, and Corral.

Fr. tenir prisonnier; Ger. gefangen halten.

Hole. Form a circle with thumbs and fingers of L hands. If need be, for clearness, hold left hand in position and pass the compressed right through the imaginary hole. Compare Cook and Boil.

Fr. le trou; Ger. das Loch.

Holler. See Yell.

Home. Sign My, Teepee.

Fr. la demeure, le foyer, le chez-soi; Ger. das Heim.

Home-sickness. Sign Heart, Want, and Teepee.

Fr. le mal du pays; Ger. das Heimweh.

Honest (Straight walk). Point right G straight forward from near throat; push it down and up in a slight curve till it is upright, then push it forward in two or three little jerks. See also True.

Fr. honnête, intègre; Ger. ehrlich.

Honor (Upon my honor). With right index draw a small cross on the heart. (Pop.)

Fr. parole d' honneur! Ger. auf Ehre! bei meiner Ehre!
Hope. Sign *Heart, Want.*  
Fr. l’espér; Ger. die Hoffnung.

Horse. Hold the flat left hand, back to front, before face, fingers level; move it to right; and then, for a moment, place the first and second fingers of right astride it, as in *Ride.* Some omit the last gesture. The movements of the hand indicate the height, action, and speed of the horse.  
Fr. *le cheval;* Ger. *das Pferd.*

Horseman. Sign *Man and Ride.* Or, place the V right astride of the flat left and push both to right.  
Fr. *le cavalier;* Ger. *der Reiter.*

Hot or Heat (As water or iron). Hold the hand as in *Feel;* touch the middle right finger tip to tongue; reach it forward and down, as though touching a hot iron, quickly jerking it back. (A northern sign understood by Cheyennes.) The use of the middle finger is general, no doubt because it is longest.  
Fr. *chaud;* Ger. *heisz.*

Hot weather (Rays of sun beating down). Hold the 5 hands a few inches apart, backs up, above and in front of head, pointing toward each other. Lower the hands to level of face.  
Fr. *les grandes chaleurs;* Ger. *das heisse Wetter.*

Hot or Sweating (Personally). Draw right index crooked across the brow, left to right, as though to run off the sweat, others and thumb closed.

Hotel. See *Restaurant.*
Hour. See Time.

House. Indicate the double slope of the roof by flat hands, pointing nearly up and joined together at the tips. Some use only the next sign for House.

Fr. *la maison*; Ger. *das Haus*.

House of logs (Corners of a log house). Bring the hands in front of body and interlock the fingers near tips, fingers at nearly right angles and horizontal. Some add *Roof* by joining tips of flat hands as in *House*. Compare *Basket*.

Fr. *la cabane en bois, la hutte*; Ger. *das Blockhaus*.

How! or Ho! The Indian salutation is sometimes used with hand salute; that is, all fingers closed except index and middle, as in *Friend*.

Fr. *Ho!* Ger. *Grüss Gott*!

How? See Question.

How many? See Question.

How much? See Question.

Hundred (Whole circle of tens). Hold up both 5 hands, palms-forward, opposite right shoulder; thumbs nearly touching; swing to left and down. Precede this with *one* for *one hundred*, *two* for *two hundred*, etc.

Fr. *cent*; Ger. *hundert*.

Hungry or Hunger (Cuts one in two). Draw the lower edge of flat right hand, back down, across the stomach; emphasize by drawing back and forth.

Fr. *avoir faim, la faim*; Ger. *hungrig sein, der Hunger*.
Hunt or Searching for (In the sense of seeking for). The fingers of the right V hand brought near the eye, but pointing forward; then swing horizontally from side to side, the eye looking wherever they point. Compare Choose, Find, and Look. Or, shade the right eye with the right hand and swing the head. (Pop.)

Fr. chercher; Ger. suchen.

Hunting (With gun or bow). Hold out both G hands, one behind the other; swing in up-curves forward and sidewise, but always one behind the other.

Fr. chasser; Ger. jagen.

Hurry, to Come or to Go quickly. Make the sign for Come (or Go) three or four times, very quickly and emphatically. (Sheeaka.)

Hurry (Ride fast). Jump the flat hands up and down before you, quickly, palms up. Compare Light, which is similar, but slower.

Fr. se dépêcher; Ger. eilen.

Husband. Make sign Male and Marry.

Fr. le mari; Ger. der Mann; der Gatte.

Hush. See Silence and Halt.

Hypocrite. Sign Wolf and Like. Or Face and Two. According to Ruggles, the Paiutes sometimes use this second combination for Liar; the Cheyennes understand it but do not use it.

Fr. le hypocrite; Ger. der Heuchler.
I, Me, Myself, Mine. For I touch the centre of the breast with the right thumb extended, other fingers closed. This and the next are used indiscriminately by the Cheyennes.

Me is touching the breast with point of compressed fingers.

My. Lay the A hand on the forehead, palm to left, thumb pointing up; swing it forward and down level; that is, sign Possession, assuming the first person.

Fr. je, moi, mien; Ger. Ich, mich, mein.

Ice. Sign Water and Hard. Sometimes add Cold.

Fr. la glace; Ger. das Eis.

Icicle. Sign Water and Cold; then hold up right G, pointing downward and dropped a little.

Fr. le glaçon; Ger. der Eiszapfen.

Idea, Thought (Thought expressed). Lay the right G on the forehead, pointing up, palm to left; swing it down to horizontal at mouth level, then push it straight forward and up in a curve. Compare So.

Fr. l'idée; la pensée; Ger. die Idee, der Gedanke.

Idle. Sign Work and Not.

Fr. paresseux; Ger. müßig.

If, Doubt, Undecided, Perhaps, or Maybe so (Heart looking two ways). Lay the right V hand on the heart, pointed down and to left front; rotate the hand on the wrist so the back is alternately up and out. When
many emotions (i.e., *perplexity*) are to be expressed, use all fingers extended. See *Consider.*

Fr. *si, peut-être*; Ger. *wenn, ob, vielleicht.*

**Ignorance** (I don’t know). Shrug shoulders and raise one flat hand. (Pop.) Or, sign *Know, Not.* Compare *Forget.*

Fr. *l’ignorance;* Ger. *die Unwissenheit.*

**Imperative Mood.** Sign the verb in question, then strike the flat right, palm down, onto the flat left, palm up. Or add *Push.* (C)

**Impossible.** Sign *Can* and *Not.* See also *Cannot.* The Cheyennes use *True, Not.*

Fr. *impossible;* Ger. * unmöglich.*

**Imprison.** See *Arrest.*

**In, Inside, or Within** (To put into). Make a semi-circle of the left arm held out level; then drop the compressed right hand downward between the left and the body. *Outside* begins the same, but the right drops outside the left.

**Inside, i.e., in a Hole.** Make a horizontal ring of the left index and thumb, then drop the right index down into it. For a house, use *Enter.*

Fr. *en, dedans, dans;* Ger. *in, drin, im Innern.*

**Incite.** Sign *Push, Talk,* and *Go;* that is, try to talk into going.

Fr. *inciter;* Ger. *anreizen.*
Increase. Hold out the flat hands, palm to palm, well apart at same height; separate them more and more in slight jerks; or, if it is more explicit, do it with the flat hands one above the other. See Add to. Compare Decrease.

Fr. augmenter; Ger. vermehren, vergrößern.

Indian. With the tips of right flat fingers, rub the side of the flat left held out back up, in short strokes; meaning reddish, because all men's hands out west are red at this place. Compare Smooth.

Indian. Indicate the eagle feather at back of head. (Sheeaka.) Or sign Man and Red. (Scott.)

Fr. l'Indien; Ger. der Indianer.

Indian Tribe or Nation. Give the Tribal sign and add All in each case.

Indian Tribal signs:

Apache (Probably using the notched-stick fiddle). Draw the right G finger up and down along the left G several times, from near the point to the base, a foot long each stroke. Compare Poor.

Arapahoe. With all fingers of right hand compressed so the points are together, tap the left breast, that is, sign Mother. As Sherman Coolidge tells me, the Arapahoes claim theirs to have been the mother of all tribes. In the south, the sign is rub the side of the nose with the right G, referring to their one-time salutation of nose-rubbing.
Indian Tribal Signs—Continued:

**Banak.** Sign for *Lodge* and *Bad.* (C)

**Blackfeet.** Sign for *Moccasin* and *Black.*

**Caddo.** Draw the right N over the left N from the tips back to the knuckles (because they wore pants). (Father Isadore.)

**Cheyennes.** (Perhaps meaning “striped tail,” because they used turkey feathers; or, more likely, “fingercutters,” because they chopped their fingers when in mourning). Hold out left G finger and cut it with the edge of the right G finger drawn across it once or twice, each time further up the hand. Compare *Often* and *And all the time.*

**Chippewa.** See *Ojibwa.*

**Comanche.** Sign for *Snake,* pushing the hand forward. Compare *Shoshoni.* (Seger.)

**Cree.** Sign *Rabbit, People;* but usually omit *People.*

**Crow.** Sign *Bird* slowly. Sometimes only one hand. Or hold S hand, palm forward, at brow for “Pompadour Indians.”

**Dakota.** See *Sioux.*

**Flathead.** See *Kutenais.*

**Gros Ventre.** Sign *Big Belly.*

**Hopi.** Sign *Dance* and *Snake.*
Indian Tribal signs—Continued:

Kiowa. With the tips of the flat right, palm up, back to left, describe an upright ellipse near the right ear; because they used to cut their hair on that side to show the ear ornaments or ear painted red.

Kootenai. Sign for White-tailed Deer. (C)

Mandan (Tattooed chin and cheek). With right hand compressed so all tips touch, tap the chin and jaw. (C)


Nez Percé (Pierced nose). Pass index of right G hand level under nose from right to left. Compare Hear.

Ojibwa or Chippewa (Living in the Woods). Sign Tree and People; or sign Paddle, People. (Blackfoot.)

Osage (Shaved heads). Rub the flat right hand, palm out, over the side of the head and down, as though shaving the head; the little finger being the sharp edge.

Paiute. Sign Rabbit, Robe.

Pawnee (Wolf). Hold up the right V hand, palm forward, near right ear; then swing finger-tips forward.

Piegan. Rotate half closed hand, palm in, near right cheek.
Indian Tribal signs—Continued:

Pueblo. Sign Two Quivers; that is, Arrow, Two; then drop compressed left once or twice into C right hand.

Sac (Shaved heads). Same as Osage sign.

Shoshoni or Snake Indians. Sign for Snake and sometimes add Bad, Lodge.

Sioux (Cut throats). Draw the right G finger across the throat.

Uncapapa (From their position in camp). Sign for Sioux and Encamp, then make an incomplete circle with index fingers and thumbs; then, holding left in pose, strike last joint of index with tip of right G and similarly right index with tip of left G. (C)

Ute. Sign Black and Red.

Wichita (Tattooed rings). With right G finger tap the forehead in a circle.

Yankton. Sign for Sioux and Nez Percé. (C)

Indian Agent. See Agent.

Indifference (None of my business). Both hands held down by the thighs; at the same time a shrug of the shoulders. (Pop.)

Fr. l'indifférence; Ger. die Gleichgültigkeit.

Infantry. Sign Soldiers and Walk.

Fr. l'infanterie; Ger. die Fusztruppen, die Infanterie.
Inferior (To one). Hold up both G fingers, the one representing the inferior much lower.

Inferior (To many). For several inferiors use the 5 hand to represent them, while the G of the other hand up high represents the superior.

Fr. inférieur; Ger. untergeordnet.

Inhabit. See Dwell.

Injure, Doing evil to. If with reference to another person, make sign for Work and Bad. If with reference to one's self, make signs Do, to me, Bad.

Fr. faire du mal; Ger. beschädigen.

Innocent. See Clean-handed.

In order that. See So that.

Inside. See In.

Interrogate. See Question or Query.

Intervene. See Come between.

Invalid. See Sick one.

Investigating. See Searching; also Consider.

Iron. See Metal.

Island (Round thing surrounded by water). Sign Land, then with L hands make a horizontal circle; hold left hand in pose, sign Water with right hand; then com-
press it and draw it point down around the circle just made. Compare Lake.
Fr. l'île; Ger. die Insel.

Itching. Scratch the left palm with nail of the right G index; or else the thigh.
Fr. la démangeaison; Ger. das Jucken.

J

Jealous (Elbowing aside). Hold the fists near the breast; alternately swing each elbow out and back a little. (C)

Jealous (Hide and stab). Hold out flat left, back up, and with right G stab under it once or twice.
Fr. jaloux; Ger. eifersüchtig.

Jesus (The Cross above). The right G finger upright and crossed on top with the left G; this cross then placed above the eyes, the face looking upward; then the cross pushed toward the sky to the full extent of the arms. The real meaning being, "He who was crucified and is now in heaven." (Scott.) Or sign Big, Medicine, Child.
Fr. Jésus; Ger. Jesus.

Joke (Play talk). Sign Play; that is, hold the right hand near the mouth, back down, fingers a little curved; swing the hand forward and upward; then add Talk.
Fr. la plaisanterie; Ger. der Scherz.
Joyous. Sign Heart, Glad, and Sing. (C) Sign Heart, Happy, or Playing.
Fr. joyeux; Ger. fröhlich.

Judge. See Consider.

Jump (Human). Stand right V on left palm; assume these to be legs and make them jump up and down. (Sheeaka.)

Jump or Spring (Anything). Hold compressed right hand, pointing to left, near right shoulder; swing it up forward and down in a long curve. Also used for Animal, in which case use several short jumps.
Fr. sauter; Ger. springen.

Junior. See Younger; also Inferior.

Just or Fair. From a position near each side, bring the extended O hands, palms inward, together so the tips of right thumb and index touch tips of left thumb and index, like two balance pans side by side. (D) Or, sign True and Same, or Good.
Fr. juste; Ger. gerecht.

Just so. Make the sign Yes once or twice; or else, use True.
Fr. justement, précisément cela; Ger. genau so, ganz richtig.

K

Keep, Grasp, or Remember: Hold out flat right hand, back to right, fingers level; hold up left G hand, back to left; swing them together; grasp left index in closed
right hand and move the hands slightly to right and left. Compare Hold and Remember.
Fr. tenir, retenir; Ger. halten, behalten.

Keep close. Sign Good and Near. (C)

Keep quiet. Sign Stop and Sit down, or simply Stop. See Hush.
Fr. taisez vous, tenez vous tranquille! Ger. ruhig sein! schweigen!

Kettle. Indicate the shape of the mouth with both L hands; then, holding left unchanged, pass the right G into it; then, with right, lift as if by a handle. Some omit the "handle." Compare Basket and Cook.
Fr. le chaudron, la chaudière; Ger. der Kessel.

Kidney. Hold up the two compressed hands, then swing them back against the kidneys.
Fr. le rein, (d'animal) le rognon; Ger. die Niere.

Kill, Overcome, Win, or Be victor (Striking with a club). Hold the right A hand, back nearly up, in front of shoulder, back of hand making a slight angle with wrist; strike to the front, downward and little to left, stopping hand suddenly and giving it slight rebound. For Kill me or Beat me, make the sign toward one's self,
Fr. tuer, vaincre; Ger. tot schlagen, siegen.

Kin, Kinsman, or Kinship. Sign Brother and Distant or Near, as the case may be.
Fr. le parent; Ger. der Verwandte.
Kind or Gentle. Sign Heart and Good.

Fr. aimable; Ger. freundlich, sanft.

King's X. See Fins.

Knife (Penknife or Jack-knife). (Whittling a stick.) With right A hand make motion of whittling the index finger of the left G hand. (Blackfoot and Pop.) The Cheyennes sign Cut and Bend.

Fr. le canif, le couteau; Ger. das Messer, das Taschenmesser.

Knife or Dagger. Thumb up straight, rest of fingers closed, hand at side. (Pop.) Compare He, Turn down, and Opossum.

Knife. Hold left hand near mouth, then with lower edge of flat right make as though cutting off a piece of meat held between the left hand and the teeth. Understood but not used by Cheyennes. They indicate length with right G on flat left back and add Cut.

Fr. le couteau, le poignard; Ger. das Messer, der Dolch.

Know or Be acquainted with. Sign Know, as below.

Fr. connaître; Ger. kennen.

Know or Understand (See, it is in my heart). Lay the right L hand, back up, on heart; swing it out, up in a slight curve, and down a little, palm up.

Fr. comprendre, savoir; Ger. wissen, verstehen.

Know, I don't. Shrug the shoulders and shake the head and raise the right hand open, palm up, to level of shoulder, inclining the head to the side. (Pop.) Compare Don't care.
Know. I know what I'm doing (Perhaps "I smell a rat" is the verbal form of the sign). Lay the right index on right side of nose.  (Pop.)

Fr. je ne suis pas aveugle; Ger. ich weiss was ich mache.

Knowledge or Intelligence. Tap the forehead and add Big. Compare Conceit.

Fr. le savoir, l'intelligence; Ger. die Kennnis, das Wissen.

L

Labor. See Work.

Lake. Sign Water and with both L hands make an incomplete horizontal circle, then bring wrists together and swing finger tips apart. The last gesture is to suggest Wide. Compare Island.

Fr. le lac; Ger. der See.

Lame (Bobbing of horse's head). Right A hand out in front, back up, moved forward a little and at the same time jerked down by wrist action and to left; repeat. Compare Old and Kill.

Fr. boiteux; Ger. lahm.

Land, Country, Ground, or Earth (Flat and extended). Pat toward ground with one or both flat hands; then swing them apart, flat, palms down, on a broad upward sweep left and right.

Fr. la campagne, la terre; Ger. das Land, die Erde.
SIGN TALK

Lantern. Sign Enclosure, but make it perpendicular; then in the same space sign Fire twice.
Fr. la lanterne; Ger. die Laterne.

Large. See Big and High.

Lasso. Sign Rope, then hold right L hand over right shoulder, back nearly to right, index pointing up; throw it forward, upward, and down, close index and thumb and jerk the hand back. Often omit Rope.
Fr. le lasso; Ger. die Wurfschlinge.

Last. Hold up the left 5 hand, thumb nearest you; push it straight away, then tap the thumb with the G of the other hand. (Sheeaka.)

Last (One, After). Hold up 5 left hand and, away behind it, the G right. (Blackfoot.) Compare First and Guide.
Fr. le dernier; Ger. der Letzte.

Last year. Sign Winter, Beyond.
Fr. l’année passée; Ger. voriges Jahr.

Late. See After.

Laugh. Hold both curved 5 hands, palms up, near the sides, a foot apart; then shake them up and down. Compare Play.
Fr. rire; Ger. lachen.

Law (Written road). Sign Write, then Across two or three times. Compare Council (No. 2.)
Fr. la loi; Ger. das Gesetz.
Lawyer.  Whiteman, Law, and Know.
Fr. l'avocat; Ger. der Advokat.

Lazy or Tired.  Shake the head, throw it back, then drop both nearly open hands limply, one held out at each side motionless.  Compare Weak and Tired.
Fr. paresseux, fatigué; Ger. fad, träge, müde.

Lead.  With right hand fingers grasp the flat left hand and drag it forward. (Sheeaka; borrowed from the Deaf.) Sometimes used also for Teacher.

Lead.  Hold right A hand high in front of right shoulder, back to right; move it forward by gentle jerks, as though leading a pony.  See Guide.
Fr. conduire; Ger. führen.

Leaf.  Sign Tree, then shake right hand shoulder high, with thumb and index pointed nearly up, forming an incomplete circle, others closed.  Compare Money and Fruit.
Fr. la feuille; Ger. das Blatt.

Learn.  Sign Book, then follow the lines with the right G finger and last draw it to Me.  Or sign Book, Look, Know, making the last sign once or twice toward the Book.  See Lesson.
Fr. apprendre; Ger. lernen.

Leggings.  Draw the L hands, backs out, one on each leg from well down to near hips.
Fr. les grandes guêtres; Ger. die lederenen Gamaschen.
Lend, Loan, or Borrow. Sign Give you (or me) and By and By, Give me (or you). Or, Give, Little while.
   Fr. prêter, emprunter; Ger. leihen, borgen.

Less (Compressed). Hold the open flat hands a foot or two apart, palm to palm, one above the other. Hold the lower hand stationary and then draw the upper in jerks down toward the lower. See Decrease.
   Fr. moins; Ger. weniger.

Let it alone. See Abandon.

Letter (Sticking on the stamp). Indicate size of letter, then close right hand, thumb extended; wet thumb end on lips and press on open left palm.
   Fr. la lettre; Ger. der Brief.

Level, All right. See Good, also Prairie.

Liar. Make sign for Lie; then indicate the person. To add the intensive Very much makes it equivalent to the strong and unprintable English expression that is used in extreme cases.
   Fr. le menteur; Ger. der Lügner.

Liberal. See Generous.

Liberate. Sign Prisoner, throw the hands up and apart, then add Go. (C) See Pardon.
   Fr. délivrer; Ger. befreien.
Lie or False (Two tongues or forked tongue). Hold the right V hand, back out, a little in front and to the right of mouth, and pointing to left; move the hand to left, past mouth, and downward.

Fr. le mensonge; Ger. die Lüge.

Life. See Alive.

Light (Not dark). See Day.

Light (Not heavy). Hold out both flat hands, palms up; raise briskly together in one or two jerks. Compare Heavy, which is the same in pose, but in which the hands drop briskly. See Hurry, which is similar but much faster and raised each time in one movement.

Fr. léger; Ger. leicht.

Lightning or Thunderbolt. With right G index held high, make a quick zigzag downward.

Fr. l'éclair; Ger. der Blitz.

Like (To be partial to). Sign Want.

Like or Alike. See Equal.

Listen, I will not. Cover both ears with the hands and shake head. (Pop. and Blackfoot.)

Fr. je n'écouterai pas; Ger. ich will nicht zuhören.

Listen. Hold right L hand back to right near and around right ear; rotate the hand by wrist action (Cheyenne). Or hold hollowed right hand behind the right ear. (Popular sign understood by Cheyennes.) Compare Hear.

Fr. écouter; Ger. horchen.
Little of, Small, Piece of, Part. Hold right hand in front of body, shoulder high, back to right, end of thumb pressing against under side of index so that only about half an inch of index is seen beyond the thumb, other fingers closed. For emphasis, point at right with left G.

Little or Small of Stature. For small animal, person, etc., indicate the stature by holding out flat right, palm down, above the ground or above the flat left, palm up. See Boy.

Little or Small degree or matter, Weak. Hold the right fist above the left as though both were grasping a thin stick, backs out. Twist the right hand and draw it in a little to the breast, turning it so the palm is a little upward instead of a little downward. Compare Few. Note Strong is its analogue.

Fr. petit, peu; Ger. klein, wenig.

Live. See Alive.

Live in. See Dwell.

Liver. Compress the right hand, bend it much at the wrist, hold it so the back is forward and down, fingers level and pointing back; lay it on the right side under the ribs, draw it to the middle of the body following under side of ribs.

Fr. le foie; Ger. die Leber.

Lock. Against flat left palm turn thumb and index of right as a key.

Fr. fermer à clef, la serrure; Ger. schlieszen, das Schloß.
**SIGN TALK**

**Long.** Fully extend the left arm forward and downward, hand flat, palm down; lay right G finger on the left wrist; then draw it up to the shoulder. Often use Big.

Fr. *long*; Ger. *lang*.

**Longing.** Sign *Heart* and *Want*; or *Heart*, *Want*, and *See*.

Fr. *le désir ardent*; Ger. *das Verlangen*.

**Long time** (Drawn out). Slowly draw the hands very far apart as though pulling out a piece of gum or elastic. See *Time*.

Fr. *longtemps*; Ger. *lange*.

**Look.** Make V hand and point with fingers in line of sight. Compare *Hunting* and *See*.

Fr. *regarder*; Ger. *ansuchen, hinsehen*.

**Look at that.** Point with forefinger at object and add *See*. Compare *There*.

Fr. *regardez cela, voyez*; Ger. *sehen Sie das an*.

**Look out.** See *Warning*.

**Loose or Set Free.** See *Liberate*.

**Lose, Lost, or Astray** (Hid, find, and not; apparently referring to the game of hide in the hand). Hold out both fists together, palms up, for *Hid*; then look about and point with right G hand behind here and there and to one side; add *Not*. (Sheeaka.)

**Lose.** The Cheyennes use *Hide*, which see. Compare *Night*. 
Lost, I am lost. Sign Look, Way, See, Not. (Black-foot.)

Fr. perdre, perdu; Ger. verlieren, verloren.

Love. See Fond.

Low. Hold flat right hand low, back up.

Fr. bas; Ger. niedrig.

Luck, Happen, Chance, or Accident (What turns up). Extend both G hands in front, palm side up; turn them in toward each other till the backs are up; forefingers still extended. Then add Good or Bad. (D) This suggests the gambling sticks in the Indian game. See Of.

Fr. la chance, l'accident; Ger. der Zufall.

Luck (Whatever befalls me). Sign Medicine, or shake the head and the flat hand in front of the neck, then swing right G in a curve till it strikes the breast. (Sheeaka. A doubtful Sioux sign.)

Fr. les poumons; Ger. die Lungen.
**SIGN TALK**

**Lynx.** With the C hand at each side of the face indicate ruffs; with rings of index fingers and thumbs, show the eyes; then on the G right with the G left show the bob tail. (Sheeaka.) This is a description rather than a name.

Fr. *le lynx*; Ger. *der Luchs*.

**Lynx, Bay, or Bob-cat.** Sign *Cat* and *Short tail*. (Scott.) The Cheyennes, who do not know the true *Lynx*, sign *Animal* and *Short tail*.

Fr. *le lynx rouge*; Ger. *der Rolluchs, die amerikanische Wildkatze*.

**M**

**Mad.** See *Angry* and *Crazy*.

**Make or Manufacture.** Hammer the top of one fist with the other two or three times, giving both hands a twisting motion. (Sheeaka. Adopted from the Deaf.) Compare *Work*, which is mostly used by *Indians* for *Make*.

Fr. *fabriquer*; Ger. *anfertigen*.

**Make up one's mind.** See *Decide*.

**Man or Male** (The one alone; the erect one). Right G held up at height of chin, palm forward; many Cheyennes make it back forward. For *Boy* sign *Man* then drop the hand down to a level that indicates height, and turn it palm to you.

Fr. *l'homme*; Ger. *der Mann*.
Mandan. See Indian Tribes.


Manner. See Way.

Man who. See Doer.

Many (Many tens). Hold up both hands, face high, half closed, palms forward; throw them forward in 5 shape. Repeat several times. See also Heap and Much.

Fr. plusieurs; Ger. viele.

Many times, Often, or All the time. Hold out left arm level, hand flat palm in; tap it a few times with right G hand from near wrist, moving each time an inch or so toward elbow. Compare Cheyenne.

Fr. souvent; Ger. oft.

Married or Marry (Side by side, united as one). Sign Trade, that is, Bargain; then lay right G beside left G touching, both pointing forward level, not moved. (C) The Cheyennes omit Trade. Compare Equal, Parallel, and Mates.

Fr. marié, épouser; Ger. verheiratet, heiraten.

Marten or Sable. Sign Weasel; that is, curve right G and push it forward, back up, in bounds; indicate size, yellow throat; then, running up a tree. This is a suggested description, as I found no established sign.

Fr. la marte, la zibeline; Ger. der Marder, der Zobel.
Match. Strike an imaginary match on right thigh, or left arm.

Fr. l’allumette; Ger. das Streichholz.

Mate or Partner (One teepee and side by side). The G fingers in tent form, then up side by side, touching. (Sheeaka.)

Mate or Chum. Sign Friend, Same.

Fr. le camarade, le compagnon; Ger. der Kamerad.

May or Maybe. See Perhaps.

Me. Touch one's own chest with the tips of the compressed fingers of the right hand. (Sheeaka.) Compare I.

Fr. moi; Ger. mich.

Meals. For Breakfast, sign Eat and Sunrise; for Lunch, sign Eat and Noon; for Dinner, sign Eat and Sunset.

Fr. les repas; Ger. die Mahlzeiten.

Mean or Intend. Sign Want and Say.

Fr. avoir en vue, vouloir dire; Ger. beabsichtigen, meinen.

Mean or Stingy. Sign Heart and Few.

Fr. avare; Ger. geizig.

Meanwhile. See While.

Meat (x). Hold out the flat left, back up; then with the flat right, palm up, slice pieces off the left palm. This is generally used, but often with left palm up.
Medicine, Mystery, Holy, Sacred, or Wonderful (In the sense of Sacred Mystery). Hold V right hand close to forehead, palm forward, pointing up, separated; move the hand upward, twisting it so that the tips of the extended fingers will describe a spiral curve. This is hardly translatable.

Fr. le mystère sacré; Ger. das heilige Geheimnis.

Medicine (A curative drug or potion). Hold out left C back to left and pour into it from a bottle in right C hand. If a powder, pour on flat left palm. If a pill, pour on palm and afterward pick up with index and thumb. (Pop.) Sign Medicine and Eat. (Cheyenne, recent.)

Fr. la médecine, le remède; Ger. die Arznei.

Medicine-Man or Shaman. Make signs for Man and Medicine.

Fr. le magicien, le médecin; Ger. der Medizinmann, der Schamane.

Meet. Hold forefingers of both G hands a foot apart, pointing up, left farthest off; move together till touching at the tips. Compare Trade, Mistake, and Avoid.

Fr. rencontrer; Ger. treffen, begegnen.

Melancholy. Incline the head slightly forward and rest forehead on left hand, left forearm close to body. Understood by Cheyennes, but they prefer Heart on the Ground.

Fr. triste; Ger. schwermütig.

Melt, Fade, Die out, Dissolve. Hold up both "5" hands six inches apart, fingers pointing up, palms toward
SIGN TALK

Message, i.e., Spoken. See Speech.

Metal. Sign Hard and describe or point to a piece of the metal in question. Or sign Strong, Hard.
    Fr. le métal; Ger. das Metall.

Meteor. Sign Star and with hand up high sign Fire and let it drop in a wavy line across the sky.
    Fr. le météore; Ger. das Meteor, die Feuerkugel.

Midday or Noon. Sun and Straight up.
    Fr. le midi; Ger. der Mittag.

Middle (The point dividing in half). Hold out the left G hand, finger level. Drop the right G hand down onto it at the middle joint. Compare Half and Centre.

Middle. Strike down with lower edge of flat right between the fingers of left V held pointing up.
    Fr. le milieu; Ger. die Mitte.

Middle one. Hold up three fingers of left, tap the two outer with right G, then bend the middle one down.
    Fr. celui au milieu; Ger. der Mittlere.

Midnight. Sign Night and Middle.
    Fr. le minuit; Ger. die Mittelnacht.

Mile (Stake, measure, and stake). Hold out closed left at arm’s length in front of shoulder, back up, index and thumb joined at top; drop it six inches, point down; then place index and thumb of similar right against it and swing right out level to right for two or three feet and drop it as before.
    Fr. le mille; Ger. die Meile.
Milk. With both S hands make motion of milking.
   Fr. le lait; Ger. die Milch.

Milky Way (Spirit’s Trail). Die and Way, and sweep
the right hand high across the sky to show where.
   Fr. la voie lactée; Ger. die Milchstrasse.

Mingle. See Mix.

Mink. Sign Water, Creek, and Animal. (Blackfoot.)
Sometimes indicate size.
   Fr. le souriau, le mink; Ger. der Mink, der Nerz.

Minute (Division of time). See Time. Hold left O
hand horizontal for Watch; tap around it with right G
finger for hours; then for minute add One, Small, and
Time. Second would be the same with added signs Few
or Very. (Sheeaka.)
   Fr. la minute; Ger. die Minute.

Minute (Very small). Sign Small.
   Fr. tres petit; Ger. winzig.

Mirage. Hold right 5 hand high, opposite left shoulder,
back out, pointing to left; move it horizontally to right
with a tremulous motion. (C)
   Fr. le mirage; Ger. die Luftspiegelung.

Mirror. Flat right, points up, opposite face, shaken
a little forward and back as though adjusting the
distance. Sometimes sign Look first.
   Fr. le miroir; Ger. der Spiegel.
**SIGN TALK**

**Mislead.** Sign *Way*, then thrust right G to right and to left, but not straight. Or sign *Tell, Straight, Not.*

Fr. *égorer*; Ger. *verleiten*.

**Miss.** See *Avoid*.

**Mist.** See *Fog*.

**Mistake** (Mark missed). Hold up left G hand, then pass it by with right G hand.

Fr. *l’erreur*; Ger. *der Irrtum*.

**Mix or Mingle.** Hold up the 5 hands, face high, points up, palm to palm touching; rotate one against the other. If in cookery, imitate the movement of stirring. Compare *Play*.

Fr. *mélanger*; Ger. *mischen*.

**Moccasin.** Pass the open hands over feet from toe to ankle. Usually but one hand is used, and it need not touch the foot.

Fr. *le mocassin*; Ger. *der Mokassin*.

**Mockery or Insolent defiance.** Spread the right hand with fingers straight, point of thumb to point of nose, little finger toward the enemy. (Pop.) Not Indian originally, but all understand it now.

Fr. *la moquerie, la dérision*; Ger. *die Verspottung*.

**Modesty.** Cover the eyes with one flat hand, its fingers well apart. (Pop.) See *Ashamed* and *Fog*.

Fr. *la modestie*; Ger. *die Sittsamkeit, die Bescheidenheit*.

**Money** (Coin). With right thumb and index, others closed, make a horizontal circle. Compare *Sun, Fruit*, and *Leaf*.

Fr. *l’argent*; Ger. *das Geld*. 
Money (Paper). Sign Writing and Money

Money (Bills). Draw the flat left hand edgewise' between the thumb and fingers of the right; then on left palm indicate shape. (C)

Fr. billets de banque; Ger. die Banknoten.

Monkey (Man’s face, dog’s run). Sign Face, Man, Dog, Goes.

Fr. le singe; Ger. der Affe.

Month (One Moon). Sign for One and Moon and Die.

Fr. le mois; Ger. der Monat.

Each tribe had, of course, its own names for the months. I have selected the ones most likely to be widely popular, without regard to their origin.

January (Snow Moon). Sign Moon and Snow.

Fr. le janvier; Ger. der Januar.

February (Hunger Moon). Sign Moon and Hunger.

Fr. le février; Ger. der Februar.

March (Crow Moon). Sign Moon and Crow.

Fr. le mars; Ger. der März.

April (Grass Moon). Sign Moon and Short grass.

Fr. l’avril; Ger. der April.

May (Planting Moon). Sign Moon and Planting.

Fr. le mai; Ger. der Mai.

June (Rose Moon). Sign Moon and Rose.

Fr. le juin; Ger. der Juni.
July (Thunder Moon). Sign Moon and Lightning.
Fr. le juillet; Ger. der Juli.

August (Red Moon). Sign for Moon and Red.
Fr. l'août; Ger. der August.

September (Hunting Moon). Sign Moon and then draw a bow as in hunting.
Fr. le septembre; Ger. der September.

October (Leaf-falling Moon). Sign Moon and Leaf-falling.
Fr. l'octobre; Ger. der Oktober.

November (Mad Moon). Sign Moon and Mad.
Fr. le novembre; Ger. der November.

Fr. le décembre; Ger. der Dezember.

Moon (Horns in the sky, or crescent). Close right hand except thumb and first finger, which forms a half-circle or crescent, held above the right ear, back of hand forward. Sometimes expressed as Night and Sun.
Fr. la lune; Ger. der Mond.

Moose (Elk with flat horns). Hold up flat hands for horns; but swing both backward and forward to indicate width; then, with both "L" hands, indicate the hanging muzzle. (Blackfoot.)
Fr. l'originel; Ger. das Elentier, der Elch.
More. Hold out the flat left hand, palm up; then with right make as though throwing sand on it more and more, three times. (Sheeaka.) Compare Most. See Repeat, Add to, and Ahead.
Fr. plus; Ger. mehr.

Morning or Day (Opening up). Both hands palms down, flat, near together. Sweep them up, out, and apart; turning the palms up. The same as Day.

Morning or Dawn. Hold out both arms level, full length, side by side, hands flat, backs forward, tips touching; raise them slowly to half height.
Fr. le matin; Ger. der Morgen.

Mosquito. With right index and thumb make as though pricking right cheek with a thorn; then slap the place with right palm.
Fr. le moustique; Ger. der Moskito, die Stechmücke.

Most. Sign More, then raise the right flat hand high above it. (Sheeaka.) Or sign Ahead, All.
Fr. le plus; Ger. meist, am Meisten.

Mother (Nurse or parent, female). With the finger tips of the right hand, make as though drawing milk from the left breast; add the sign for Female if necessary. (Scott.) Note the left breast for Mother, nearer the heart; the right breast is for Father.
Fr. la mère; Ger. die Mutter.

Mother-in-law. Sign Brother-in-law, Old, Woman.
Fr. la belle-mère; Ger. die Schwiegermutter.
Motor car. Make signs for Wheels, Horse, Not. Or sign Fire twice then make as though holding and turning steering wheel.

Fr. l'automobile; Ger. aas Automobil.

Mound or Low Hill. Flat hands together, backs up; separated and swept down to show shape. Compare Heap, which is just the reverse; also see Box.

Fr. la petite éminence; Ger der Erhügel.

Mount (A horse). Hold right V to right side pointing up; swing it up to right, over and down, points down, onto flat left, which is held thumb up. Or, omit left. (Blackfoot.)

Fr. monter; Ger. steigen.

Mountain. Hold up A hand as in Hill, but higher, and add Hard. Use both hands alternately up and down in various places for plural. Compare Hill and Lump.

Fr. la montagne; Ger. der Berg.

Mountain Lion, Cat. Sign Cat, Long tail, and Jump. (C) Or with both L hands indicate large round tracks; then, with right G, pointed down, raised and down, each time, indicate the zigzag trail. (Paiute sign, given me by C. B. Ruggles.)

Fr. le couguar. Ger. der Kuguar.

Mountain Pass. See Gap.

Mourn. With the flat hands used like knives, backs up, little fingers as though sharp edges, make as though to cut off the hair at each side of the head, and add Cry.

Fr. s'affliger; Ger. trauern.
Mouse (Night nibbler). Sign Animal, with very small jumps, indicate size and Night; then, with right forefinger and thumb, nibble at left G forefinger.

Fr. la souris; Ger. die Maus.

Move, To move camp (Teepee poles, travois). Both G hands in front, backs out; lay right forefinger on left at middle joint, crossing at an angle of 45 degrees, and push both hands forward in slight jerks, each jerk a day's journey.

Fr. changer de place, déménager; Ger. fortziehen, wegrücken.

Mowing machine. Sign Grass and Knife; the last at right lower than waist. Add Wagon if needed to indicate horse mower.

Fr. la machine à faucher; Ger. die Mähmaschine.

Much or Many. Hold curved 5 hands, palm to palm, a foot apart; swing down together and up face high, closing them; swing a little apart at the finish.

Much (Heap.) Hold the flat hands so the palms are toward each other, the left lower, and draw them apart, the left downward, the right upward. The extent to which they are drawn apart indicates the quantity. Compare Big, Great, Heap, Increase, and Decrease.

Fr. beaucoup; Ger. viel.

Much, Too. See Excessive.

Mud. See Soft.
Mule. Hold extended hands alongside of ears, palms to front, fingers pointing upward; by wrist action, flop the hands to front and rear, representing motion of mule's ears.

Fr. le mulet; Ger. das Maultier.


Fr. le meurtre; Ger. der Mord.

Must. See Have to; also Begin or Push. See Imperative.

Muskrat or Musquash. Sign Beaver and Small.

Muskrat (Tail, swimming and lump). Hold out right G, back up, nearly level, pointing forward and to left; shake it, draw it to right; then hold up compressed right hand, back up, pointing forward, and grasp right wrist on lower side with left hand. (Blackfoot.)

Fr. le rat musqué du Canada, l'ondatra; Ger. die Bisamratte.

My, Mine, or My own. Sign Possession; that is, hold out the A hand, thumb straight up; then swing it in till it touches the breast; or sometimes lay the spread flat hand on the breast. (Sheeaka.) See I.

My, Mine, or My own. Touch breast with point of compressed right, then sign Possession.

Fr. mon; Ger. mein.

Mystery. See Medicine.
Name (Of a man). Sign Called. "What is your name?" would be Question, You, Called.

Name (Of animal). With right forefinger and thumb, others closed, make an incomplete circle and lay it palm down against the palm of the flat left hand, held forward, back to left. Compare Brand and Called. Scott gives it as illustrated.

Fr. nommer, le nom; Ger. (be) nennen, der Name.

Name, To sign one’s (Thumb print). Press the thumb tip of the A hand against the palm of the flat left. Compare Letter.

Fr. signer son nom; Ger. seinen Namen unterschreiben.

Named. See Called.

Narrow. Hold flat hands out, palm to palm, about six inches apart, fingers level and pointing forward; move them toward each other until but one inch apart. Compare Fast, Between, Few, and Road.

Fr. étroit; Ger. eng.

Nation (People all). Hold up both 5 hands, swing them toward each other and away in a great circle. (Sheeaka.) Not well established.

Fr. la nation, le peuple; Ger. die Nation, das Volk.

NATIONALITIES:

American. Sign Thirteen, Fires. This was once used on the Ohio, referring to the Council Fires of the thirteen original colonies. Then add Country by
patting the ground with both flat hands and swinging them apart and up.

According to Clark, sometimes called Long Knives. Draw a long line east and west; then with flat hand, point up, indicate all south of it. (Blackfoot.)

Fr. l'Américain; Ger. der Amerikaner.

**British** (Red coat). Touch the coat; then with fingers brush the cheeks for red.

Fr. les Anglais, les sujets anglais; Ger. die Briten, das britische Volk.

**Canadian** (Shaking off the snow). Shake the coat lapel with right hand. (D) The Blackfeet draw a long line east and west then with flat hand point to indicate all north of that line.

Fr. le Canadien; Ger. der Kanadier.

**Chinaman.** Indicate long tail by signing Rope at back of head.

Fr. le Chinois; Ger. der Chinese.

**Dutchman** (Long pipe). Place thumb of Y hand at the mouth, draw it down and outward to indicate the long pipe. (D)

Fr. le Hollandais; Ger. der Holländer.

**Englishman.** Sign White Man, Far. (Blackfoot.)

Fr. l'Anglais; Ger. der Engländer.

**Frenchman.** Hold out the F hand well toward the left, palm up; draw it across in front of self from left to right, turning it palm down. (D) To sign Hairy Man would translate the nickname “Poilu.”

Fr. le Français; Ger. der Franzose.
German (The double eagle). Cross the wrists of both 5 hands, thumb palm against thumb palm, and work the fingers. (D) Fr. l'Allemand; Ger. der Deutsche.

Great Britain (Red-coat land). Land, Coat, and Red. Fr. la Grande-Bretagne; Ger. das Grossbritannien.

Holland. Same as Dutchman.

Indian. See Indian on p. 106.

Irishman. Hold out left S hand, back up; swing right V around it and end with V resting on back of left. (D) Green Island Man would be more acceptable. Fr. l'Irlandais; Ger. der Iränder.

Japanese. Sign Country and Rising Sun. Or sign Man, Short, Eyes, Oblique. The last by pushing up the outer corners of the eyes with G fingers. (These are suggested.) Fr. le Japonais; Ger. der Japaner.

Jew (Long beard). Placing the fingers of the bent 5 hand on the chin, draw them down and off, letting the hand assume the flat position as it leaves the chin. (D) (As a slang term.) Spread both hands open from opposite each shoulder, palms forward, and rotate them slightly on the wrist back and forth. (Pop.) Fr. le Juif; Ger. der Jude.
Italian. With the little finger of I hand trace a cross in the centre of the forehead. (D)
   Fr. l’Italien; Ger. der Italiener.

Mexican (Bearded White Man). Sign for White Man and Beard. In this case, Beard is made by rotating and jerking the 5 hand before the chin, points up.
   Fr. le Mexicain; Ger. der Mexikaner.

Negro. Sign White Man, Black face. (C) Sheeaka also fumbled the open right over the knuckles of the half closed left, to indicate kinky hair.
   Fr. le nègre; Ger. der Neger.

Ontario (Land of Lakes). Make signs for Country and Lakes. (Suggested.)
   Fr. l’Ontario; Ger. das Ontario.

Russian. Arms akimbo, i. e., C hand on each side of the waist. (D) The Cheyennes call them Ride Easy from the Cossack circus performers; but it is not an established sign. Bear Man is suggested.
   Fr. le Russe; Ger. der Russe.

Scotchman (Plaid clothes). Cross the fingers of the right 5 hand with those of the left 5 hand on the chest, then let each drop to continue the lines. (D)
   Fr. l’Écossais; Ger. der Schotte.

Spaniard. Sign Old, Mexican.
   Fr. l’Espagnol; Ger. der Spanier.
White Man (Hat man). With G right hand draw first finger across the brow. (C) For illustration see White Man among W's.

Fr. l'homme blanc; Ger. der Weisze.

Other countries are indicated in the Deaf Code by making the initial letter in the single-handed alphabet and swinging them in a circle in front of the forehead; but this mode contravenes the fundamental principle of Signs. (See Introduction.)

Therefore, it is better to wait till a true sign is discovered.

Near or Nearly. Same as Close, which see.

Near by. See By.

Nearest. See Next.

Need or Need to. See Must.

Needle. Make the sign for Sew. (C)

Fr. l'aiguille; Ger. die Nadel.

Neighbor. Sign Close and Dwell, or Sit, Close.

Fr. le voisin; Ger. der Nachbar.

Nephew. Sign Brother's (or Sister's) Son. (C)

Fr. le neveu; Ger. der Neffe.

Never (Ever and Not). Right elbow fixed at side and with right G hand out straight, describe a complete upright circle, left to right; then throw the hand down to right in Not. (Sheeaka; probably borrowed from Deaf.)

Fr. jamais; Ger. niemals.
SIGN TALK

Never mind. See Rub it out.

New. Sign Little time, Traded. Or, Little while, Made, Good.
   Fr. neuf; Ger. neu.

News. With right G struck down to right and left (for this and that) and Hear.
   Fr. les nouvelles; Ger. die Nachrichten.

Newspaper. Sign Writing and Tell (i.e., Talk) to right and left.
   Fr. le journal; Ger. die Zeitung.

Next. See Neighbor.

Next or Second. Hold out the flat 4 left hand, palm down; with right G draw the left index toward the right; then tap the middle finger of left with right index. Or sign Close.
   Fr. prochain; Ger. nächst.

Night (Earth covered up). Bring the flat hands, backs up, well apart, out in front of body, breast high; move them together in outline of a dome, finally resting right wrist on left. Compare Hide.
   Fr. la nuit; Ger. die Nacht.

No. Hold flat right hand, back up, in front of body, fingers pointing level and nearly forward. Swing the hand in a graceful curve to right and front, at the same time turning it thumb up, finishing with the back of hand to right and downward; the hand is swept into its
position on a curve. Usually abbreviated into a short jerk of the flat hand to right, its palm kept facing left. Compare Bad and Different.

For short range, shake the head; this is simple and universal. It is so natural that babies and animals do it when offered bitter medicine, for example. (Popular and Indian generally.)

Fr. non; Ger. nein.

No, I won’t listen; or Go away, the matter is ended. Right G hand upraised to level of face, palm out, index upright; wave the finger hand from side to side by wrist action. Chiefly used by Cheyennes when joking. It is general in Latin countries. Compare White-tailed Deer.

Fr. non, allez! Ger. Punktum! Schluss!

None, Nothing, I have no money. Turn the flat palms forward, one near each trouser pocket. (Pop.)

Fr. il n’y a rien; Ger. nichts.

Noon. See Midday.

Notify. See Tell.

Now (Emphatic “right now”). Hold up right G, back to right and pointing upward about eight inches in front of the face; and, without stopping, carry it a little to front; then stop and give a slight rebound. Sometimes look up to make it clear that it relates to time of day, that is, the sun’s course. Often it means this as in this day; this moment; this night.

Fr. maintenar; Ger. jetzt.
Numbers and Counting. Up to ten as shown on the fingers at the foot of previous page and this.
For 20—Sign 10, close the hands, then repeat it.
For 25—Sign 20, then drop left, close right, and sign 5.
For 30—Sign 10 three times; or else as below.
For 20, etc., sign 10, then hold out left 5 hand pointing forward and draw right G along each finger from base to tip; each finger so pointed stands for 10.
If over 50, do same with right hand and left index till enough tens are shown.
For 100—Both 5 hands held up, palm forward, thumb tips touching, low, opposite right shoulder; swing in a vertical arch to low opposite left shoulder. This mode of multiplying by ten may be applied to other numbers.
For 1,000—Sign 100 and on flat hands spread and pointing forward, palm down, with index of other hand show number of hundreds as above.

Numbers or Counting. Or, with the thumb of the same hand, touch each of the finger tips in succession. (Popular and sometimes used by Cheyennes.)
Fr. les nombres, les numéros, compter; Ger. die Zahlen, zählen.

Numbers ordinal. Point at or indicate the person or thing; then turn down the first finger for 1st and the second finger for 2d and so on. Also see First, Next, and Last.

Numeral Sign, Arithmetic, or Counting. Hold the left 5 hand, palm up, fingers a little bent; with right G turn one or two left fingers down on left palm.
The Deaf mode is the figure-sign, then, without changing position of arm or hand, give the hand a twisting jerk from the wrist, which swings it in a small circle.

Fr. les nombres ordinaux; Ger. die Ordinalzahlen.

**Nun.** Sign Woman, Black, Hat.
Fr. la religieuse; Ger. die Nonne.

**Oath or Swear.** Tap the chest with the tips of the flat right hand, then hold it at head height, palm forward. (Sheeaka.) Sometimes point to Heaven and Earth, then hold up flat right hand. (C) Neither is Cheyenne, but both are understood by them. See Promise.

With right G make a small cross over the heart. (Pop.)
Fr. le serment, jurer; Ger. der Eid, schwören.

Obey. Make sign for Listen. For emphasis add Yes. Disobey is putting the flat hands over the ears.
Fr. obéir; Ger. gehorchen.

**Obliged to.** See Have to. (C)

**Ocean.** Sign Water and Very broad. Some add Salt.
Fr. l'océan; Ger. der Ozean.

Of (That from that). Hold right G hand out straight from right side, palm up; rotate the hand so the index tip describes a small half-circle inward and finally the palm is down. (D) Compare Luck.
Fr. de; Ger. von.
**Offer or Propose.** Hold the flat hands, palms up, near you, then move forward as though offering something. (Blackfoot.) The Cheyennes sign *Want* and *Give*.

Fr. *offrir, proposer*; Ger. *anbieten, vorschlagen*.

**Office.** Sign *Writing House*.

**Officer.** Sign *Chief*; or, if military, sign *Chief, Soldier*. Or indicate with the right index on the left shoulder or arm the insignia of the particular rank.

Fr. *l'officier*; Ger. *der Beamte, der Offizier*.

**Offspring.** See *Child*.

**Often.** See *Many times*.

**Oil** (Blowing oil off surface in pot). With both L hands form a big level circle; then tilt it low on forward side and blow across it. (Blackfoot, but understood by Cheyennes.)

Fr *l'huile*; Ger. *das Öl*.

**Oil or Grease.** Hold out the flat left, thumb up; with right thumb on palm and right index on back (others closed); rub back and forth with short, quick jerks. Compare *Thick, Thin, Bacon*.

Fr. *la graisse*; Ger. *das Fett*.

**Old** (Walking with a stick). Hold right A hand, *back to right*, about twelve inches in front of right shoulder, about height of breast; move the hand a little upward, to front, downward and back into its first position on small curve, repeating motion. Compare *Lame*.

Fr. *vieux*; Ger. *alt*.
Old Man. Hold up the right index finger as in *Man*, then drop, crook, and swing it in *Old*. See *Decrepit*.
Fr. *le vieillard*; Ger. *der Greis*.

Old, How old are you? Sign *Question, Snows, You*; or *Question, Counting, Colds, You*.
Fr. *quel âge avez-vous?* Ger. *wie alt sind Sie?*

On or Upon. Lay the flat right hand, palm down, on back of the flat horizontal left, palm down. Compare *At*.
Fr. *sur*; Ger. *auf*.

Once. Dip the finger ends of the right compressed hand down against the palm of the flat left hand, bringing it away quickly. For *Twice*, do it twice, etc. (Sheeaka.) Compare *This* and *Repeat*.

Once (One go). Sign *One* with right G index and push it forward low down. (So, also, *Twice* is *Two* pushed forward, etc.)
Fr. *une fois*; Ger. *einmal*.

One who, or The man that does. See *Doer*.

Onion. Sign *Potato* and *Bad, Smell*.
Fr. *l'oignon*; Ger. *die Zwiebel*.

Only. See *Alone*.

Open. The flat hands together, palm to palm, opened out flat as a book. The same as *Book* with *Writing* omitted. Compare *Day, Book, Shell, and Shut*.
Fr. *ouvrir, ouvert*; Ger. *öffnen, offen*.
**Opossum.** Hold out the flat right, fingers doubled on palm, thumb straight up; move it forward level. The thumb represents the tail. This is an Australian sign given by E. C. Stirling. It is offered as a suggestion and as a reminder that the Sign Language is world-wide. The Cheyennes sign *Tree, Climb, Hang by tail.*

Fr. *l'opossum, le (la) sarigue;* Ger. *das Opossum.*

**Opposite or Against.** Hold the G fingers up opposite each other, pointing at each other. Compare *Against.*

Fr. *opposé, en face;* Ger. *gegenüber.*

**Or.** See *Either.* Sometimes use *Different.*

**Orderly or Put in order.** See *Ready.*

**Ordinal Numbers.** See *Numbers Ordinal.*

**Other.** See *Another.*

**Other side.** See *Beyond.*

**Otter (Wrapping the hair plait).** With right thumb, index and middle fingers together, others closed, describe a small spiral from near the right ear down. Because the otter skin was the kind used in strips to wrap the plaits of the Indians’ hair.

Fr. *la loutre;* Ger. *der (die) Otter.*

**Our.** Sign *All, My.*

Fr. *notre;* Ger. *unser.*

**Out of.** See *Absent.*
Outside or Out of. Make a semicircle of the left arm out level; drop the compressed right hand without and beyond the semicircle. Compare In, which it resembles, except in the last movement.

Fr. dehors, hors de; Ger. drauszen.

Over or Above. See Above.

Overcome. See Kill.

Overtake. Hold out flat left hand at arm's length, palm forward, fingers pointing up; hold the right G hand near the breast, palm out, pointing up; move it forward till it strikes the left hand. Use the left G if only one is pursued. Compare Arrive there.

Fr. atteindre; Ger. einholen.

Owe or Debt (Recorded and given). Write on the left palm and swing it from you to me or otherwise, according to the case. (Sheeaka.)

Owe. Sign Trade, Time, Money, Give.

Fr. devoir; Ger. schuldig sein.

Owl. Sign Bird and Big-eyes; the latter by putting around each eye a half-circle of thumb and index. (For Horned Owl indicate the horns with G hands.) For Burrowing Owl, sign Owl, Hole, and Dancing.

Fr. la chouette, le hibou; Ger. die Eule.

Own. See Possession.

P

Pack. Hold out left flat hand, back to left (this is the horse); bring right flat hand and place palm against
left thumb, fingers pointing to front (this is the right pack); raise the right hand and place palm against upper part of left (this is the left pack); repeat these motions quickly.

Fr. emballer; Ger. packen.

**Pain.** See Ache.

**Paint.** Use all the fingers of right hand as a brush painting the left palm. Recent Cheyenne.

Fr. peindre; Ger. anstreichen, malen.

**Paint the cheeks.** Sign Red, then rub the cheeks and front of the face with palm of flat right hand moved in small circles.

Fr. se farder; Ger. schminken.

**Palsy.** Both flat hands, backs up, near breast, shaking.

Fr. la paralysie agitante; Ger. die Schüttellähmung.

**Panther.** See Mountain Lion.

**Paper** (Square to write on). With G fingers outline a square, then make as though to write on it with right G.

Fr. le papier; Ger. das Papier.

**Parallel, or Side by Side.** The index fingers of G hands laid side by side, not touching and not moving. Some make right index point to left and left to right in this. Compare Equal, Race, and Marry.

Fr. parallèle; Ger. parallel, gleichlaufend.
Pardon, Liberate, or Turn Loose (Removing a halter). Hold both L hands, palms up, near the neck, one on each side; sweep them up, over, forward and down, as though removing a halter; at the finish the index fingers are pointing forward and down. Sometimes add Go. See Excuse and Free.

Fr. pardonner; Ger. begnadigen.

Part. If one-half, indicate it as in the sign for that word; if less, hold the right hand nearer end of index, according to portion desired to be represented. See Half and Some.

Fr. la partie; Ger. der Teil.

Partner. See Male.

Parturition. See Born.

Pass by. See Avoid.

Past (Time back). Make the sign for Time and jerk the thumb backward over the right shoulder, all fingers closed. (Sheeaka.) Or throw the flat hand back over shoulder. In general, sign Time, Back. See Ago and Back.

Fr. le passé; Ger. die Vergangenheit.

Pasture. See Corral.

Patrol. See Band.

Pawnee. See Indian Tribes.
**SIGN TALK**

**Pawnshop** (House of three balls). *House* and hold left hand up with thumb, first and second fingers pointing straight down; then make a hoop of right thumb and index and apply it in succession to the three hanging tips. (Pop. and acceptable to Indians.)

Fr. *le Mont-de-Piété*; Ger. *das Leihhaus, das Pfandhaus*.

**Pax.** See *Fins*.

**Pay** (i.e., "Will you give me?" or "Will you pay?"). Hold the right hand forward at level of waist, palm up, fingers half closed, rubbing the tip of first finger and tip of thumb together. (Popular and understood by Sheeaka.) The Cheyennes sign *Money, Give me*.

Fr. *payer*; Ger. *bezahlen*.

**Peace.** Clasp the hands in front of body.

Fr. *la paix*; Ger. *der Friede*.

**Peak.** Sign *Mountain, Part*; then hold up high all fingers of right hand in a point, back under.

Fr. *le pic*; Ger. *die Spitze*.

**Peas.** Sign *Plant*, then with right index and thumb as in *Little of tap five or six times in a row along the side of the left G*.

Fr. *les pois*; Ger. *die Erbsen*.

**Pekan.** See *Fisher*.

**Penny.** Sign *Red, Money*.

**People.** Hold up the 5 hands, points up, and add *All*. Compare *Nation* and *Dance*.
People. Hold up both G hands at various heights, as in Man sign. (Sheeaka.)
Fr. le peuple; Ger. die Leute, das Volk.

Pepper (Black sprinkler). Sign Black, then use right O hand as tho it held a sprinkler. A Blackfoot sign understood by Cheyennes.
Fr. le poivre; Ger. der Pfeffer.

Perhaps. See If.

Permit. See Free.

Perplexed. See If and Consider.

Petrol. See Spirit.

Period or Full stop. Use Done both No. 1 and No. 2.
Fr. le point; Ger. der Punkt.

Persevere, Persist, or Stick to it. Hold both fists near breast and firmly push them forward once or twice. That is, sign Push repeatedly.
Fr. persist; Ger. beharren.

Person or Individual. Sign Man.
Fr. la personne; Ger. die Person.

Photograph. Hold out the nearly flat left hand at arm’s length, face high, palm to you, fingers level, pointing to right; from near it, draw back right fist, palm to left and up, thumb out straight, as though drawing something to the eye; then near the face change the right hand to flat, slightly curved, back forward, fingers
pointing to left, and push it forward against palm of left, as in Print.

Fr. la photographie; Ger. die Photographie.

**Picture.** Indicate the subject, then hold up both L hands to outline bottom and two sides of a square. With imaginary pencil in right draw on this; left remaining as it was. See Portrait and Photograph.

Fr. le tableau; Ger. das Bild.

**Pie.** Sign Bread, Round (i. e., with right G, indicate a horizontal circle of proper size), and Sweet. Then side-wise slide the flat right exactly over the flat left, both with palms up. A description, rather than a sign.

Fr. le pâté, la tarte; Ger. die Pastete.

**Piece.** See Little of.

**Pig.** See Hog.

**Pipe.** Hold out right G breast high, back down, with index curled up, pointing forward; jerk it forward once or twice.

Fr. le pipe; Ger. die Pfeife.

**Pistol.** See Gun.

**Pity or Mercy** on another (Cry or shed tears for you). Hold G hands, palms downward, index fingers up, in front of and near heart, few inches apart, equally advance and same height; move the hands outward and slightly downward, or toward person. Compare Cry.

Fr. avoir pitié de quelqu’ un; Ger. jemanden bemitleiden.
Pity or Have mercy on me (Cry for me). Hold G hands well out in front of body, as described above, but with backs out; bring them toward body, slightly raising them.

Fr. plaignez-moi, ayez pitié de moi! Ger. haben Sie Mitleid mit mir!

Place or Put (Verb). Hold out flat left, back up; swing compressed right over onto it, then open the right a little. Sometimes omit flat left, or use instead compressed left hand held points up. Compare Bet.

Fr. mettre; Ger. stellen, legen, setzen.

Place (Noun). With right G pointing down, indicate a large circle on the ground. (A Pai-ute sign given by Mallery p. 500, also a popular sign.)

Fr. la place; Ger. der Ort, die Stelle.

Plant or Planting. With right fingers and thumb, open as though to drop a seed, then closed and moved on to drop another farther, and another, all in the same row. Compare Animal and Jump. See Sow.

Fr. planter; Ger. pflanzen.

Play or Recreation. Hold up both slightly curved 5 hands, points up and forward, palm to palm, about eight inches apart. Swing them from side to side together, rotating them so the palms are once to front, once to back on each swing. Compare Dance and Children.

Fr. le jeu; Ger. das Spiel.

Playing or Fooling. Hold out in front of shoulder the slightly curved 5 hand, palm up; rotate slightly by wrist action. See Joke and Laugh.

Fr. jouer; Ger. das Spielen.
**Plenty** (Many, piled up). Push forward with both 5 hands, palms first, three times (i.e., sign *Many*); then raise the hands very high, palms forward and down. (Sheeaka.) Or sign *Heap* or *Full*. Compare *Many*.

Fr. *l’abondance*; Ger. *die Fülle*.

**Ploughing.** Hold both fists forward as though holding plough, elbows high; and push forward. Also used for cultivation in general.

Fr. *le labourage, labourer*; Ger. *das Pflügen*.

**Poison-ivy** (Vine, nibbler). Sign *Vine*; that is, hold left forearm upright, as in *Tree*, and with right G finger trace a climbing *Vine* about it; then with thumb and first two fingers of right hand, scratch on edge of flat left, held out back up.

Fr. *le toxicodendron*; Ger. *der Giftefeu, der Giftsumach*.

**Polecat.** See *Skunk*.

**Policeman or Constable.** Place the curved right index and thumb, little finger out, against left coat lapel. Compare *Medal, Brand*, and *Name*.

Fr. *le sergent de ville*; Ger. *der Schutzmann*.

**Police-station.** Sign *Policeman* and *House*.

Fr. *le poste de police*; Ger. *das Polizeibureau*.

**Ponder.** See *Consider*.

**Poor in property** (Scraped bare). With right G finger scrape down the left G finger held up, from tip to base, several times. Compare *Indian Apache*, and *Shame*.

Fr. *pauvre*; Ger. *arm*. 
Poor in flesh.  See Thin.

Porcupine  (Prickly hair).  Sign Hair; then with tips of right 5 hand strike or prick the left palm, held facing the right.
  Fr. le porc-épic; Ger. das Stachelschwein.

Portrait.  Hold up the flat left hand, back forward, as though it were a Mirror, then sketch on the same with an imaginary pencil, add Face and indicate the person. See Photograph and Picture.
  Fr. le portrait; Ger. das Bild(nis).

Positive of adjectives.  See Comparative.

Possesses, Possession, Yours, His own, Belonging to, etc.  (Held in the hand.)  Hold right A hand, back to right, in front of the neck, or even the forehead, and a few inches from it.  Swing it forward and down so the thumb is pointing straight forward.
  Fr. posséder; Ger. besitzen.

Potato.  Curved 5 right hand held as low as possible, back down.
  Fr. la pomme de terre; Ger. die Kartoffel.

Pour.  Hold out the left O hand, back to left, and pour into it with the right O hand.
  Fr. verser; Ger. gieszen.

Powder.  Hold out left hand, palm up; just above it, rub thumb and finger tips of right.  Or commonly omit left hand.  Compare Dust.
  Fr. la poudre; Ger. das Pulver, der Puder.
Power. See Can.

Prairie, Smooth land, Flat, or Level (Level wide). Flat hands side by side, palms up; then slowly wide spread on same plane. In conversation, usually but one hand is used. Compare Free and Broad.
   Fr. la prairie, la plaine; Ger. die Prärie, die grosse Ebene.

Prairie-chicken. See Grouse.

Prairie-dog. Sign Mound, Hole; then push right G up through hole and add Talk.
   Fr. la marmotte de la prairie; Ger. der Präriehund.

Praise. See Applause.

Pray. Lay the flat hands palm to palm, point them to the sky, then draw down toward self; repeat. (Sheeaka.)

Pray. Look up, sign Talk (No. 1.) straight.
   Fr. prier; Ger. beten.

Present (Time). Same as Now.

Pretty. See Beautiful.

Pride, Proud, or Vain. Draw the flat hand, palm down, over face to breast; throw back head, look up and add Good. (Blackfoot.) This is their sign for Beautiful with the addition of the head thrown back. Or sign He, Think, He, Big Chief. See Conceit.
   Fr. la fierté, fier; Ger. der Stolz, stolz.
Priest. Sign Robe and Black.
Fr. le prêtre; Ger. der Priester.

Print. Push the back of right flat curved hand slowly and firmly against the palm of the left curved ditto, as in Picture, only several times. Compare Quandary, Approach, Photograph etc.

Prison (House of bars). Sign for House, then hold 4 hands up, side by side for prison bars. Add Man and Look through.

Fr. la prison; Ger. das Gefängnis.

Prisoner (Arrested). Clinch the fists and cross the wrists as though bound, and press down a little.
Fr. le prisonnier; Ger. der Gefangene.

Private. See Secret.

Produce and Product. See Result.

Prominent or Conspicuous (Stands on a hill). Sign Hill up high, then lay right G against it, pointing up, palm to self, back of right against left hand. See Famous.
Fr. éminent; Ger. hervorragend.

Promise (Word bound). Place the forefinger of right G perpendicularly against mouth; bring down fist and, parallel with it, the other fist, thumbs up; strike both down together twice. (Sheeaka.) Also see Word of Honor, or Cross my Heart.
Promise. Sign Talk (i.e., Word), Give.

Promise, Sworn (I swear). Tap the chest with tips of flat right hand, then raise it, palm forward, and add Talk. (Sheeaka.) Compare Oath.

Fr. la promesse, promettre; Ger. das Versprechen, versprechen.

Proof or Prove. See Show.

Propose. See Offer.

Protect. See Defend.

Fr. protéger; Ger. beschützen.

Push. The same as Begin, which see.

Fr. pousser; Ger. schieben.

Put. See Place.

Quality. See Rank.

Quandary, In a fix, Run against, or Up against it. Hold out the curved left hand nearly at arm's length, back forward; push the ditto right from near the breast right out briskly and hard against the left. Sometimes use Against. Compare Approach, which is similar, but is slow, and right does not touch; also, Print, which pushes and is repeated.

Fr. l'embarras; Ger. die Verlegenheit.

Quarter (But one of four). Hold up the left 4 hand, back out; then with the right G turn the little finger
down on the palm. Sometimes sign *Half*, then again half of the tip portion.

Fr. *le quart*; Ger. *das Viertel*.

**Quarrel** (Two persons springing at each other). Hold up both G hands and alternately jerk left at right and right at left.

Fr. *la querelle*; Ger. *der Streit*.

**Quench.** *Fire and Wipe out.*

Fr. *éteindre*; Ger. *löschen*.

**Question, Query, Interrogation,** *I am asking you a question, I want to know,* usually equivalent to *"Is that you?"* (Groping or uncertain.) Hold up the right hand toward the person, palm down and forward, fingers and thumb open, spread, but a little curved; by wrist action, swing the hand in small vertical semi-circles. The diagram below the illustration indicates the finger tips seen from in front. The motion shown for the little finger is, of course, shared by all. This is a very important and much-used sign; it appears before all questions.

If the person is quite distant, hold the hand higher, more spread, and wave it several times to right and left.

When very near, merely raise the eyebrows. For long distance, raise both arms like Y with hands flat and waved a little. (Crow.) See *Consider.*

Fr. *l'interrogation*; Ger. *die Frage*.

The following are needed in asking questions:

**How?** Sign *Question* and *Work* and *Way*.

Fr. *comment?*; Ger. *wie?*
Question—Continued

How many? or How much? Sign Question; next hold the left hand open, curved, palm up, fingers spread; then with right G digit, quickly tap each finger on left in succession, closing it back toward the left palm, beginning with the little finger.

Fr. combien?; Ger. wie viele?

What? (As in "What are you doing?" "What is it?") Sign Question; follow with the same sign much exaggerated; that is, with the arm action, swing the right 5 hand, palm under, fingers slightly bent and separated and pointing forward, in an arc of about a foot from right over to left and back once or twice. The Cheyennes in general use this, though they denied it when questioned. But it seems a good logical sign, the large arc being equivalent to "object."

Fr. quoi? que?; Ger. was?

When? If seeking a definite answer as to length of time, make signs for Question, How many? and then specify time by sign for hours, days, etc. If asking in general When? sign Question and Time.

When? If asking for an exact date or point hold up the left G, make a circle around its tip with right G, which always points at it. On reaching the starting point, the right G stops, touches the tip of left G. (Sioux, given by Sheeaka.) This probably represents the shadow going around the tree. See Time.

Fr. quand?; Ger. wann?

Whence? Strike to left with right G, back up, then over to right a foot away, then back and again; point
Question—Continued

to the person and sign *Come*. Usually it needs no *Question*.

Fr. *d’où*?; Ger. *woher*?

**Where? or Whither?** (What direction?). Sign *Question*; then with forefinger sweep the horizon in a succession of bounds, a slight pause at the bottom of each, the head following the finger. (Sioux and Arapahoe.) The actual line of the finger is illustrated in the lower plan, the hand being gracefully rotated on the wrist in doing it. Or sign *Question* and *Somewhere*.

**Where?** Sign *Question* and *Look*.

**Where?** (In an abstract sense). Extend the open hands, palm up, from the sides out low to the front, and swing them from side to side with a look of inquiry on the face. (Pop.)

Fr. *où*?; Ger. *wo? wohin*?

**Which?** (When the objects are in sight). Sign *Question* and point with right G in three or four directions, downward or toward the objects in question.

**Which?** (When the objects are not in sight). Sign *Question*; then hold left hand in front of you, with palm toward you, fingers to right and held apart; place the end of the right forefinger on that of the left forefinger and then draw it down across the other fingers.

Fr. *quel, lequel*?; Ger. *welcher*?
SIGN TALK

Question—Continued

Whither? Sign Question and Go, in two or three directions.
Fr. où ? ; Ger. wohin ?

Who? Sign Question and Man.
Fr. qui ? ; Ger. wer ?

Why? Sign Question, but do it very slowly. (C)

Quick. See Fast and Hurry.

Quiet, be, Be not alarmed, Have patience. The palm of the flat hand held toward the person and gently depressed once or twice. See Easy.
Fr. soyez tranquille; Ger. beruhigen Sie sich.

Quiet, be. See Silence.

Quit. See Give up; also Finish.

R

Rabbit. Move the M hand straight to the front, back up and undulating on the wrist, to imitate the rabbit hopping forward; then make V right hand and turn it to look back. (Scott.) The Cheyennes omit the second part of this.
Fr. le lapin; Ger. der Hase.
Raccoon or Coon. Draw the V hand horizontally across the face and nose. If necessary, also indicate Size and striped tail.

Fr. *le raton*; Ger. *der Waschbär*.

Race. Move the index fingers forward and up, side by side, as in *Equal*; but keep them moving a long way forward and upward. Compare *Parallel, Marry*.

Fr. *la course, le concours*; Ger. *das Wettrennen, der Wettlauf*.

Rags, In rags. Touch Coat, add *Old*; then hold left 5 slightly curved, back up and use ditto right as though to comb out the fingers of left, once or twice.

Fr. *les guenilles, en loques*; Ger. *die Lumpen, zerlumpt*.

Railroad train or Cars. Sign *Fire* twice upward for puffs, then add *Fast*. Compare Motor car.

Fr. *le train [de chemin de fer]*; Ger. *der Eisenbahnzug*.

Railroad. Indicate *Train* as above; then push the right G finger quickly along the back of the left V hand and on beyond. (Sheeaka.)

Railroad. Sign *Road*; then with the two G hands, backs up, indicate rails as in *Parallel*.

Railroad. Sign *Hard* (i.e., metal); then hold out two G fingers, backs up, six inches apart, and push both together far forward and a little up.

Fr. *le chemin de fer*; Ger. *die Eisenbahn*. 
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**Railroad Station.** Make the signs of *Railway* and *House*; adding, if necessary, *Alight* and *Aboard.*

Fr. *la gare*; Ger. *der Bahnhof.*

**Rain** (Falling from clouds). Hold A hands, backs up, opposite forehead, near each other; lower them slightly, mostly by wrist action; at the same time open and separate fingers and thumb so they point downward; repeat.

Fr. *la pluie*; Ger. *der Regen.*

**Rainbow.** Sign *Rain* then indicate the arch with a slow sweep of the flat right hand, back up, high above head.


**Rank or Quality** (Of a soldier.) With the right G, indicate stripes on left arm, or else touch each shoulder for epaulets.

**Rank or Quality.** Sign *Chief*; then lay upright right G, palm forward, against back of left ditto, as in *Rising man*, sliding the right up and down to various heights.

Fr. *le rang*; Ger. *der Rang, die Würde.*

**Rank, What is his?** Sign *Chief, Big; Chief, Little; Question.* Sometimes omit *Chief, Little. *

Fr. *quel rang-a-t-il ?*; Ger. *Welchen Rang bekleidet er ?*

**Rapid.** See *Fast.*

**Rapids.** Sign *River, Rock*; and pass the right 5 hand, back up, points first, swiftly forward and down, in an up and down waved course.

Fr. *le rapide*; Ger. *die Stromschnelle.*
Rash (Going forward blind). Hold left hand on eyes and point right G index forward, moving it to front.
Fr. imprudent; Ger. unvorsichtig, verwegen.

Rattlesnake. Sign Snake, then hold right G finger, pointing up, near shoulder, and shake it.
Fr. le serpent à sonnetes; Ger. die Klapperschlange.

Reach. Arrive there.

Ready, Orderly, or Arranged. Extend the open hands, palm to palm, a few inches apart, pointing outward and parallel to each other, over toward the left side; lift them both together from the wrists, move toward the right a little and let them come down again; repeat the motion until by stages the hands have been moved over to the right side. (D)

Ready. Sign All, Good; or use Arranged, or combine them into Arranged, All, Good. See Arranged.
Fr. prêt; Ger. bereit, fertig.

Recall to memory. See Bring back.

Receive. Hold out hollow right hand, palm up, half open; draw it back, slightly closing fingers. Compare Give to me.
Fr. recevoir; Ger. erhalten.

Recover, Get well, Get all right again, Revive, or Save. Hold right G hand, back up, in front of breast, pointing to left and front; raise the hand with a graceful sweep, at same time turn it back to front and index pointing
upward. The actual course of the index tip, if seen from above, is as in the dotted line under the hand.

If one is near death by disease, this may be used to denote recovery; if in great danger, this would mean escaped.

Fr. se porter mieux, se rétablir; Ger. sich erholen.

Recreation. See Play.

Reduce. See Decrease.

Reflect. See Idea and Consider.

Refuse. See Won’t.


Fr. la religion; Ger. die Religion.

Remain. See Sit.

Remember. Sign Heart, Know. Or, in popular code, touch the forehead with right G, raise the brows and nod.

Remember, I; or Understand. Hold right G index upright and grasp it firmly with left hand, face high.

Fr. je me souviens; Ger. ich erinnere mich.

Remember not (It slips from my grasp). As above, but let the right G index slip down and out. See Forget.

Fr. je ne me souviens pas; Ger. ich erinnere mich nicht.

Remembering. See Memories.
Repeat, Again, or Back. Place the finger tips of the compressed right hand on the left palm, as the latter is held in front of the body, back down, and strike once or twice. (Sheeaka. Probably borrowed from Deaf.) Compare Once, Twice, Often, and More.

Repeat. Hold up right G, chin high, back up, pointing to left and forward; lash down with it like a whip twice or more as best fits in. Sometimes sign Come back. Compare All the time.

Fr. répéter; Ger. wiederholen.

Reply. See Answer.

Request. See Beg.

Resemble. See Alike.

Respond. See Answer.

Responsible. Sign I (or whoever it is), Do, That Or My (or His) Way. (Seger.) Sign Carry and That (Suggested.)

Fr. responsable; Ger. verantwortlich.

Restaurant or Hotel. Sign for House and Eat.

Fr. le restaurant, l'hôtel; Ger. das Restaurant, das Hotel.

Restrain or Prevent. Sign Hold and Keep quiet. Sometimes use Do not.

Fr. réprimer, empêcher; Ger. zurückhalten, verhindern.
SIGN TALK

Result. Sign After, Work, See.
     Fr. le résultat; Ger. das Ergebnis, die Folge.

Retreat (Of many). Sign Charge, then reverse and withdraw the hands.

Retreat (Of one). Sign Going, then turn the G hand palm toward you and draw it back with similar action.
     (Understood; not established.)
     Fr. la retraite; Ger. der Rückzug.

Reverie. Bow the head, resting the mouth on the A fist. Compare Memories.
     Fr. la rêverie; Ger. die Träumerei.

Revile. See Blackguarding.

Revive. See Recover.

Revolver. Sign for drawing from belt behind and present the same, using right G hand, back to right.
     Add Fire-off, if need be. See Gun.
     Fr. le pistolet, le revolver; Ger. der Revolver.

     Fr. riche; Ger. reich.

Ride (To ride an animal). Hold the hands as in Horse, and then move the hands to the front on short vertical curves.
     Fr. aller à cheval; Ger. reiten.

Ridge (Of hills). Hold the A hands touching, thumbs toward face and upright; draw them apart a foot. Compare Soldiers and Hill.
Ridge. Sign Hill with right, then hold 5 out at arm’s length, face high, flat, and bent, so the fingers point to the left; swing it slowly horizontally across to the right. This last seems to mean “lying across the horizon” and appears in several combinations. See Mirage.

Fr. la crête; Ger. der Kamm.

Rifle. See Gun.

Right. See Good.

Rill. See Creek.

Ring (For finger). Hold up left 5 hand; then with right index and thumb make as though slipping a ring on the ring finger.

Fr. la bague; Ger. der Ring.

Rising man, or Coming man (Man rising to stand on a hill). Hold up left as in Hill; lay right G behind or beside it, against the thumb, palm forward, pointing up; push right up until the base of the index is sitting on top of the left; that is, becomes Prominent. See Prominent and Famous.

Fr. l’homme qui arrivera; Ger. der Mann der Zukunst.

River, Big stream, or Running water. Sign Water then with tremulous movement draw flat right 4 hand, palm down, from opposite left breast to opposite right; fingers always level and pointing to left. Compare Creek and Rill.

Fr. la rivière; Ger. der Fluss.
Road (i.e., Highroad; especially between high banks, hills, or fences). Holding the open hands, palm to palm and pointing forward, carry them forward, as if they represented the sides of a road; then add Going by pushing the flat right hand forward in line between, palm to left, fingers level. (Sheeaka.) Or sign Way and Wagon.

Fr. le chemin, la route; Ger. der Weg, die Landstrasse.

Robe. Sign Coat; but instead of ending at waist, sweep the hands as low as possible.

Fr. la robe; Ger. das Kleid, die Robe.


Fr. la roche, la pierre; Ger. der Fels, der Stein.

Root. First sign Tree or Grass, as may be; then point down, place the 5 hands together at the wrists, backs up and level; pointing left to front and left, right to front and right; then move them out and apart.

Fr. la racine; Ger. die Wurzel.

Rope (Trailing after the horse and twisted). Sign After; then, as right is drawn to rear, make tip of index describe a spiral curve. Commonly omit the left hand.

Fr. la corde; Ger. das Seil, der Strick.

Rose (Flower). Hold the fingers of the left hand straight, little separated, arranged in a circle, back to left and front; in front of body, index finger horizontal and pointing to right and front; with right hand make as though picking berries from the left finger tips. (C)

Fr. la rose; Ger. die Rose.
Rotten (Meat). Indicate smell, etc.
Fr. *pourri*; Ger. *faul, verfault*.

Rub it out, Erase, Annul, Never mind, As you were. Put middle finger of right hand to tongue, then rub left palm and wipe the palm with under side of right forearm. (Sheeaka. A white man’s sign now understood by Indians.)

Or, if afar, simply shake the flat right hand quickly and vigorously from side to side as it is held palm forward in front of the face. (Pop.) Compare Easy and Erase.

Fr. *effacer*; Ger. *auswischen, “Schwamm drüber!”*

Rumor (A little flying thing). With flat 5 right hand, palm down, shoulder high, swing out level from throat to right, working all the fingers as in playing piano. (A Paiute sign, given me by Mary Austin.) A combination of Wind and Fly.

Fr. *la rumeur*; Ger. *das Gerücht*.

Run. Swing the fists at each side as in running.
Fr. *courir*; Ger. *laufen*.

Run against. See Quandary.

Run away, Slip away, Clear out, Sneak (Run under cover). Hold out flat left hand, palm down; push right G hand under it quickly and sinuously. Sometimes preface it by laying one hand over the eyes. Compare Jealous.

Fr. *filer, se sauver*; Ger. *ausreiszen, weglauen*. 
Running Water. See River.

S

Sacred. See Medicine.

Sad. See Sorrow.

Saddle. Hold out both S hands, palms up, side by side (sometimes inches apart), about height of shoulders, forearms vertical, wrists bent so backs of hands are nearly down.

Fr. la selle; Ger. der Sattel.

Safe. See Recover or Alive.

Sage Brush (Bunches). With all finger tips together pointing up, swing the hand to various places in front of right shoulder. (C) Compare Peak and Canoe.

Sage. Sign White, Good smell, Grass.

Fr. la plante aromatique de la prairie; Ger. der Präriebusch.

Salt. Sign Powder, then the act of sprinkling with finger and thumb. (Blackfoot.) Touch the tongue cautiously with the right G. Compare Sugar and Pepper.

Fr. le sel; Ger. das Salz.

Same. See Equal.

Sanctuary, to claim. See Bar up.

Satisfied. See Contented.
Save. See Recover, also Free.

Save or Except. See But.

Savey or Sabe. This word universal in the west is the same sign as Know.

Saw. With lower edge of right, thumb up, saw across the upper edge of left wrist held out horizontally.
   Fr. la scie; Ger. die Säge.

Say. See Call.

Scalp (To). Point to scalp, make as though pulling it forward and sign Cutting under. The last two gestures being done out in front of the body.
   Fr. scalper; Ger. die Kopfhaut abziehen.

Scatter! (A command to scouts). See Go and Scatter.

Scatter or Sow (As seeds). Hold the closed hands, backs up, near each other and close to breast; move right hand well to front and right, left well to front and left; that is, widely separate the hands, swinging each in a half-circle out, so the palms are a little outward, at the same time extending and separating fingers and thumbs. (C) Compare Bad and Scorn; in these the hands are not moved apart.

Scatter. Swing closed right to left, there opening to 5 so palm is to left and forward; then same movement with hand opened to right, each time in a graceful sweep. The Cheyennes say the above is Throw away.
   Fr. disperser, semer; Ger. ausstreuen, säen.
Schoolhouse. Sign *House* and *Writing*; usually preceded by *Children*.

Fr. *l'école*; Ger. *die Schule*.

Schoolteacher. Sign *Book* and *Chief*.

Fr. *le maître d'école*; Ger. *der Lehrer*.

Scold. See *Abuse*; also *Fault-finding*.

Scorn. Turn the head away and with one hand throw an imaginary handful of sand toward the feet of the person. This is the same as *Bad*, except for the turn of the head.

Fr. *le mépris*; Ger. *die Verachtung*.

Scout. Same as *Wolf*, but hold the hand near the right ear. Sometimes use *Advance Guard*, which see. The Cheyennes sometimes sign it as *Wolf, Soldier*.

Fr. *le coureur (d'armée)*; Ger. *der Späher*.

Scout, to. Sign *Wolf* and *Look*.

Fr. *aller à la découverte*; Ger. *spähen*.

Scout; that is, *Boy Scout*. Hold up the right hand with finger and thumb forming a ring, other three fingers straight up. (Pop.)

Fr. *le petit éclaireur*; Ger. *der jugendliche Pfadfinder*.

Scout; of the *highest degree*. Add the sign *Wolf* to the foregoing. (Suggested.)

Scout leader or Patrol leader. Sign *Boy Scout*; then lay the 4 left hand on left side of head to indicate plume. (Suggested.)
Scout, Tenderfoot. Make signs Boy Scout and Small. (Suggested.)

Sculptor. Right fist closed, thumb held up straight and free, then used as a trowel on an imaginary wall. (Pop.)
   Fr. le sculpteur; Ger. der Bildhauer.

Search me. With a hand grasping each lapel, spread open the coat. (Pop.)
   Fr. examinez-moi; Ger. was weiss ich? (Pop.)

Seasons. The four seasons are Little Grass (Spring); High Grass (Summer); Leaf Fall (Autumn); and Cold or Snow (Winter). Each is given in alphabetic place.

Secret or Private (Talk under cover). Left hand flat, horizontal, near left cheek; with right, sign Talk under it. Usually sign Talk and Hide.
   Fr. le secret; Ger. das Geheimnis.

Seek. See Hunt.

See. The fingers of V hand pointed forward (as in Look) then advanced a little in the line of sight; sometimes for extra point, it is changed into G hand and pushed forward. Also compare Hunt and Lie, Look and Find. The difference between Look and See is not observed by most Indians; but it is well to maintain it.
   Fr. voir; Ger. sehen.

See me. Point at one's own chin with the right V hand and touch breast.
   Fr. voyez-moi; Ger. sehen Sie mich.
Seem. See *Appear*.

Seize. Move the open hands forward; grasp and draw back as though seizing some object.
   Fr. *saisir*; Ger. *ergreifen*.

Select. See *Choose*.

Sell. See *Trade*. On the Stock Exchange, the clenched fist thrown forward and down means *Sell*. Probably in imitation of the auctioneer’s hammer. See *Kill*.

Sell, Sold or Bought i.e., Marketed. On middle of side of left G held out, tap two or three times with middle side of right G. This is also used for *Buy*, which see for illustration. It is supposed to have had origin in an old gambling game. See *Trade*.
   Fr. *vendre*; Ger. *verkaufen*.

Send (Command and Go). Hold the right A near the breast; swing it out, up and down a foot; then swing the right G higher and farther. (Sheeaka.)
   Fr. *envoyer*; Ger. *senden, schicken*.

Separate or Apart. Lay the G fingers side by side, backs up; spring them apart, widest at tips, moving them forward and out.
   Fr. *séparer*; Ger. *trennen*.

Several. Extend the fingers of the right A hand, one at a time, beginning with the index. (Sheeaka.)
   Fr. *plusieurs*; Ger. *mehrere*.
Sew. Hold flat left hand index edge up, thumb level with index; move right G hand index with extended thumb, across left index once or twice as in sewing; each time nearer the body and each time turning the right index nail down, as it is moved forward. Compare Awl.

Fr. coudre; Ger. nähen.

Shade. Sign Sun, Not.

Shadow (Of a person). Indicate the person; then sign Going, There by me, Same. There by me is indicated by pointing to the ground on the left side with right G.

Fr. l'ombre; Ger. der Schatten.

Shall. See Will.

Shaman. See Medicine-man.

Shame (On you). (The finger of scorn made sharper.) Point left index at person, all others closed; and with right index similarly held, rub it on back of left index from middle to tip and beyond. (Pop.) See Ashamed. In France the idea is conveyed by the Horns. See Evil Eye.

Fr. fi! fi donc! (Pop.); Ger. Schäme dich!

Sharp or Keen. Hold out flat right hand, palm up; touch little finger edge lightly with ball of left thumb and add Good. For Sharp points see Porcupine.

Fr. affilé; Ger. scharf.

Shave. Use the flat right hand as a razor, palm to
right, points up, little finger next right cheek as the edge; move it toward the right ear.

Fr. (se) raser; Ger. (sich) rasieren.

**Shawl.** Sign Blanket and Fringe. For Fringe, hold out the left 5 hand points forward, level; then push the similar right over it forward several times.

Fr. le châle; Ger. der Schal.

**She.** Sign Female and point with G finger at the person.

Fr. elle; Ger. sie.

**Sheep, Mountain, or Bighorn.** With compressed hands above each eye, pointed backward, trace the sweep of horns, ending below ears, with points turned forward.

Fr. le mouton sauvage; Ger. das amerikanische Groszhornschaaf.

**Sheep, Common.** Sign Bighorn and White Man.

Fr. le mouton; Ger. das Schaf.

**Shell.** Hold the curved hands side by side, close and open them on the under side, as though hinged on top. Compare Boat, Book, Bowl, and Open.

Fr. la coquille; Ger. die Muschelschale.

**Shield (Noun).** With both L hands a little apart, index fingers pointed down, make a large incomplete circle to left of left breast. See Protect.

Fr. le bouclier; Ger. der Schild.

**Shine, Shimmer, or Glitter.** Hold out the curved right 5 hand, palm down; lower it slightly, shaking it quickly sidewise. Compare Snow, Glitter, and Easy.

Fr. briller, étinceler; Ger. scheinen, glänzen.
Ship. Raise and spread thumb and two first fingers to be masts, others closed; then push the hand forward slowly in a rising and falling line. (Deaf sign for Sailing Ship. For Indian sign see Boat, Big.)

Fr. le navire; Ger. das Schiff.

Shoe. Sign Moccasin, White Man.

Fr. le soulier; Ger. der Schuh.

Shoot (A gun). See Fire.

Shoot (An arrow). Sign Bow, then snap the index fingers out straight. To add Hit with an arrow, hold up the flat left and thrust the right G through it.

Fr. lancer (une flèche); Ger. schieszen.

Shop. See Store.

Short. For things which grow, hold the flat hand back forward, fingers pointing up at desired height. For things which do not grow, use the flat hand, palm down; or else, both flat hands side by side, palm to palm. The same as Low.

Fr. court; Ger. kurz.

Shot-gun. See Gun.

Shout. See Yell.

Show, Prove, Proof, or Behold. Raise flat left hand, palm forward. Lay index of right G on it and turn the two about, pushing them forward as though to show something. (Sheeaka. Borrowed from the Deaf.)
Show, Prove, Proof, or Behold. Hold out the flat left, palm up, pointing forward and down. Point to the person in question with right G, then at left palm with right V.

Fr. montrer; Ger. zeigen.

Sick, Suffering, Sick one, or Invalid (Throbbing). Hold flat hands out near breast; move the hands quickly outward and back several times. Compare Lungs.

Fr. malade; Ger. krank.

Side by Side. See Parallel.

Sign Language, To talk in Sign Language. Touch the back of left hand with tip of right, the back of right with tip of left and add Talk. (C)

Fr. le langage des signes; Ger. die Gebärdensprache.

Silence, Silent, or Hush. Lay the extended index, pointing upward, over the mouth. In the more vigorous form of Shut up, lay the flat hand on the mouth (recent).

Fr. silence! taisez-vous!; Ger. schweigen! still!

Silly. See Foolish.

Silver. Sign Money and White.

Fr. l’argent; Ger. das Silbergeld.

Sin or Badness. Same as Bad. See Evil.

Since. See After.
Sing. Hold right V hand, back to right, in front of face; finger tips a little higher than and close to mouth, pointing nearly up. Move the hand briskly so finger tips describe a small horizontal circle. Compare Lie and Abuse.

Fr. chanter; Ger. singen.

Sioux. See Indian.

Sister. Sign Woman and Brother.

Fr. la soeur; Ger. die Schwester.


Fr. la belle-soeur; Ger. die Schwägerin.

Sit, Sit down, or Remain. Hold the right A hand in front of and a little lower than right shoulder, back to right; move the hand emphatically downward a few inches. Compare Wait and Aboard.

Fr. s'asseoir; Ger. sitzen.

Skin. See Hide.

Skinny. See Lean.

Skunk or Polecat. Indicate Size and tail up; that is, curving G up, palm forward; move in gentle jerks forward, and then add Smell, Bad. Compare Weasel.

Fr. la bête puante, la mouffette; Ger. das amerikanische Stinktier.

Sky. See Heavens.

Sled or Sleigh (The runners). Both G hands, backs down, 4 inches apart; index fingers curved and pushed forward. The idea is helped by Snow on Ground.

Fr. le traineau; Ger. der Schlitten.
Sleep. Hold both flat hands, backs up, in front of breast, same level; swing both over to the left in an up and down curve, in which the right (only) turns palm up; the left continues back up; then lower the head a little to right. Some finish with both palms up.

Journeys are one sleep, two sleeps, etc., on the Plains.

Fr. *le sommeil, dormir*; Ger. *der Schlaf, schlafen*.

Sleepy. Rub the eyes with the fists. (Pop.) Or yawn and lay the head on one side, closing the eyes. (Sheeaka.) Both of these are understood by the Cheyennes, but they use *Want, Sleep*.

Fr. *avoir sommeil*; Ger. *schläfrig*.

Slow. Hold out the flat left hand, palm to right; ditto right hand opposite, palm to left; in slow jerks, move the left hand forward; at the same time, jerk the right, making the latter fall behind. Compare *Fast*.

Fr. *lent*; Ger. *langsam*.

Small, Few, or Crowded. Compress both hands so the fingers are straight, but at an angle with the back of the hand; hold them about eight inches apart, backs out, pointed up and forward, right higher; move them together till the right is over the left. Sometimes the Cheyennes made this sign with the closed fists to mean *Few*. Compare *Little*.

Fr. *peu*; Ger. *wenig*.

Smaller, to make. See *Decrease*.

Smart. See *Cunning*. 
Smell. Hold V hand, back up, fingers pointing to chin; swing fingers up so the nose passes between them. Compare Blood and Brother. Place the palm close before the tip of the nose. (Pop.)
Fr. *sentir*; Ger. *riechen*.

Smell, A bad smell, or Stink. Sign Smell and hold the nostrils, or sign Bad. (Sheeaka.)
Fr. *la mauvaise odeur, la puanteur*; Ger. *der üble Geruch, der Gestank*.

Smell, A good smell. Sign Smell and Good.
Fr. *la bonne odeur*; Ger. *der gute Geruch, der Duft*.

Smoke. For distant smoke, like a signal-fire smoke, make sign for Fire and continue raising hand in a spiral till higher than head.
Fr. *la fumée*; Ger. *der Rauch*.

Smoke a pipe (Action of filling it). Hold up the left A, thumb up, tap on top two or three times with flat right, then add Pipe, jerking it forward two or three times.
Fr. *fumer (une pipe)*; Ger. *rauchen (eine Pfeife)*.

Smoke a cigarette. Put index and thumb to mouth as though holding a cigarette. (Blackfoot.)

Smooth or Level. Rub the back of the flat left hand, held palm down, with whole palm of the flat right, back and forth, in long strokes. Sometimes use Prairie. Compare Indian and At.
Fr. *lisse*; Ger. *glatt*.

Smooth Ground. See Prairie.
Snake (Its motion). Hold the right H (or sometimes G) hand, back to right, waist high, fingers pointing to front; move it several inches to front in a sinuous line from side to side. Compare Fish, Creek, and Rope.

Fr. le serpent; Ger. die Schlange.

Sneak. See Run away.

Snow. Raise and spread both hands a foot apart, backs up, fingers curved; then softly lower them in slow, short zigzags. For Rain, the lines down are straight. Years are commonly called Snows or Winters. Compare Shimmer.

Fr. la neige; Ger. der Schnee.

So, Just so (That's true). Swing the right G index from 45 degree angle down to level; then add Straight, swinging index up slightly at finish. Sometimes sign Yes. Compare Idea.

Fr. si, précisément cela; Ger. so, ja-wohl.

So that; In order that (So, that). Strike down a foot with the right G in front of breast, then strike it on the left flat hand held opposite left breast. (Sheeaka.)

Fr. de sorte que, pour; Ger. um, dami.

Soap. Rub the hands together as in washing them.

Fr. le savon; Ger. die Seife.

Soft or Muddy Ground (Animal's legs going down). Form a horizontal half-circle of left index and thumb; drop the right fist into it; reverse the hands and repeat.

Fr. la terre molle, la boue; Ger. die weiche Erde, der Schlamm.
Soft, in general. Sign Hard and Not.
Fr. mou; Ger. weich.

Soil. See Earth.

Soldiers (In a row, spread out). Hold the flattened fists out in front, side by side, backs up so basal joints of the fingers are nearly level and the middle joints form a row; then swing them apart.

In many whose fingers are stiff the row is made with the basal joints plumb, as in the upper cut; but the correct way is as below.

“This represents the line of the Indian soldiers that, pending the order to charge, held back the people in the buffalo hunt.” (Scott.) Compare Ridge, Done, and Fat.
Fr. les soldats; Ger. die Soldaten.

Some (Here and there one). Point with index finger downward and at some near spot on the ground, then change to another farther off, then to another. (Scott.)
Fr. quelques; Ger. einige.

Some, A part of. Hold out level flat left, back forward and out; lay flat right thumb up on left index near the tip; then jerk it toward tip and beyond. This is much like Half; but the right is casually brushed along the edge of the left and at no time precisely placed.
Fr. du; Ger. etwas.

Sometimes (Different times). Sign Time, moving the hands apart in short jerks. (Seger.) Compare By and by.
Fr. quelquefois; Ger. zuweilen.
Somewhere. Hold right G up near right shoulder; swing it in a curve up and down to opposite left shoulder and back. Also used in the question Where? Fr. quelque part; Ger. irgendwo(hin).

Son. Sign Born and Male.
Fr. le fils; Ger. der Sohn.

Song or Poem (Written singing). Sign for Sing and Write.
Fr. la chanson; Ger. das Lied.

Soon or Early. Sign Time, then stop with the fingers an inch apart. Compare Sometimes, Time, By and by, Close.

Sorrow, Distress, Discouraged, Down-hearted, Sadness, or Sad (Heart on the ground). Lay the right compressed hand on the heart, pointing down; then throw it forward and down, ending the sign with the flat hand very low, palm up, near the ground.
Fr. le chagrin, la douleur; Ger. das Leid.

Sorry (It grinds my heart). Rub the fist on heart in circle two or three times. (Blackfoot.)
This is less strong than Sorrow and is used as a polite expression of interest, equivalent to "What a pity." (Eastman.) See also Trouble.
Fr. j’en suis fâché; Ger. leid tun, es thut mir leid.

Soul. See Spirit.

Sour. See Bitter.
Sow. See Sew.

Sow Seeds. See Scatter.

Spark. See Fire.

Speak. See Talk.

Spear. Make as though thrusting a spear with both hands.

Fr. la lance; Ger. der Speer.

Speech, Message, or Talk. That is, a long talk, as at council, by oneself. (Handing out words.) Hold the flat right hand, back down, pointing to left, at lower lip and swing it forward several times. Compare Discussion and Talk.

Fr. la harangue; Ger. die Rede.

Speech to me or Tell me. Speech by another addressed to oneself is the same as the preceding, but swing the right hand in toward the chin instead of out. Compare Drink, Water, Discussion, and Talk.

Spell, that is, Spell it. Make writing in the air, then sign Talk.

Fr. écrivez le; Ger. buchstabieren Sie es.

Spider. Hold the palm of the right hand about one and a half inches from a flat surface; spread the fingers and thumb and work them like legs; the hand represents the body. (Scott.) Compare Bunch and Herd.

Fr. l'araignée; Ger. die Spinne.
Spirit or Petrole (Water of strong power). There is no established sign; but Sheeaka understood this combination: Water and Strong. A Cheyenne gave it Lantern, Different, Strong, Pour.

Fr. l’essence, le pétrole; Ger. das Benzin.

Splendor. See Glow.

Spoon. Use the cupped right hand as a spoon.

Fr. la cuiller; Ger. der Löffel.

Spotted. Hold out the level left arm and with right curved 5 hand finger tips tap the left arm at various places on the inside, from the wrist up, as though flecking it with the tip of a brush, at both up and down strokes. Compare Striped.

Fr. tacheté; Ger. getupfelt.

Spring (Water coming up and spreading). Make the sign for Water, then a large horizontal circle with L hands (as in Hole); then push the right compressed hand up through the left L hand and, as it comes up, extend the fingers with a slight snap to represent the bubbling water.

Fr. la source; Ger. die Quelle.

Spring (Little grass time). Sign Grass and Short. Add Time if there is doubt.

Show longer grass for June, etc.

Fr. le printemps; Ger. der Frühling.

Squeeze. See Few.
SIGN TALK

Squirrel. Hold both compressed hands near the mouth and give a quick motion of the lips. (Ruggles.) Or sign Tree with left hand, then with compressed right hand as in Animal indicate running up and around.

Fr. l'écureuil; Ger. das Eichhörnchen.

Squirrel, Flying. Sign Squirrel, Fly; and then with right hand flat, palm down, simulate flight down and up in a long sweep. This is merely a description, not an established sign.

Fr. l'écureuil volant; Ger. das Flughörnchen.

Stand (As a man). Make right V hand stand on left palm, the fingers representing legs. For an animal, use all four fingers of right. See Alight.

Fr. se tenir debout; Ger. stehen.

Stand up (As a tree or pole). Hold G hand, back forward, erect over shoulder. Compare Tall and Up.

Fr. être debout; Ger. aufrecht stehen.

Star. Make the sign for Night, then cross the right G with left G near the tips and hold up high. Some flirt the index tip from behind the curved thumb in different directions up high, to mean twinkling. This is nearly like Talk up high.

Fr. l'étoile; Ger. der Stern.

Stay. Sign Stop, Wait, and Sit down.

Fr. rester; Ger. bleiben.

Steal (To seize under cover). Hold out flat left hand pointing out, back up; reach right G hand under
wrist, then draw it back with a sweep, curving it into a hook at the same time.  
Fr. voler; Ger. stehlen.

Steamboat. Sign Boat, Big, Fire, holding the hand above the forehead for the last.  
Fr. le bateau à vapeur; Ger. das Dampfboot.

Stingy. See Mean.

Stink. Sign Bad Smell.

Stir. Hold left as in C, back out, and make as though stirring its contents with a ladle held in right. Compare Tea.  
Fr. remuer; Ger. rühren.

Stone. Sign Rock and Lump.

Stop. See Halt.

Stop or Full Stop. See Period.

Store or Shop. Sign House and Trade.  
Fr. le magasin, la boutique; Ger. der Laden.

Storm. Sign Strong then Wind, shaking the fingers when opened and sometimes adding the sound of blowing.  
Fr. l’orage, la tempête; Ger. der Sturm.

Story. See History.
Straight. See Honest; also True.

Stranger. Sign, My, People, Not. Or Man, Different.
Fr. l'étranger; Ger. der Fremde.

Stream. See River.

Strike. Hold out flat left, palm up; strike it with the edge of flat right hand. Compare Chop and Kill.
Fr. frapper; Ger. schlagen.

Strike, To make a. See Count Coup.

Striped. Hold out flat left with forearm level and draw the right flat palm across it at different points on the upper side. Compare Spotted.
Fr. rayé; Ger. gestreift.

Strong. With left fist, back out, grasp an imaginary stick; then also grasp it four inches higher with right fist, back in. Give a strong outward twist to the right, finishing with the right fist below the left and back downward. The left is not moved. This means physically strong in most cases, and few Indians distinguish this from Very much; which see. Compare Little.
Fr. fort; Ger. stark.

Subtract or Take from. Holding out the flat left, palm toward you, with all the right fingers and thumb make as though seizing something on the left palm; draw the right to you and down. (Sheeaka. Borrowed from the Deaf.) Compare Place.
Fr. soustraire; Ger. abziehen.
Fr. réussir; Ger. Erfolg haben.

Suffering. See Sick.

Sugar or Sweet. Rub the tongue with tips of extended index and second finger of right hand, then add Good. Compare Salt and Bitter.
Fr. le sucre; Ger. der Zucker.

Sullen or Sulky. Sign Heart, Angry, Hide. (Black-foot.) See Gloomy.

Summer (Time of high grass). Sign High, Grass. Or sometimes sign Hot only.
Fr. l'été; Ger. der Sommer.

Sun. Form a circle with index and thumb of right hand; hold hand toward east and swing it in a great up-curve toward the west. In conversation, the circle is often incomplete.
Fr. le soleil; Ger. die Sonne.

Sunday. Sign Day and Medicine.
Fr. le dimanche; Ger. der Sonntag.

Monday is Day after Medicine Day.
Fr. le lundi; Ger. der Montag.

Tuesday is Two Days after Medicine Day.
Fr. le mardi; Ger. der Dienstag.

Wednesday is Three Days after Medicine Day.
Fr. le mercredi; Ger. der Mittwoch.
Thursday is Four Days after Medicine Day.
Fr. le jeudi; Ger. der Donnerstag.

Friday is Two Days before Medicine Day.
Fr. le vendredi; Ger. der Freitag.

Saturday is Little Medicine Day.
Fr. le samedi; Ger. der Sonnabend.

Sunrise. Make a ring of the right index and thumb, others closed, level, at full length toward the east; then raise it, chiefly by wrist action, so the ring is nearly at an angle of 45 degrees.
Fr. le lever du soleil; Ger. der Sonnenaufgang.

Sunset. The reverse of Sunrise; that is, hold the ring to the west and swing it down from 45 degrees to level or lower.
Fr. le coucher du soleil; Ger. der Sonnenuntergang.

Superior or Higher (One above another). Hold both G fingers side by side, upright, one of them higher to represent the person or thing. When it is One above many use the left "5" hand instead of left G. See Rising Man, also Chief.
Fr. supérieur; Ger. höher(stehend), vorgesetzt.

Superlative. See Comparative; also Very much.

Supper. Sign Night and Eat.
Fr. le souper; Ger. das Abendessen.

Surprise, You surprise me. Hold flat hand on the mouth. This can be made stronger by using both
hands. Sometimes also for emphasis precede this with a slap down of the flat right on the flat left, palm to palm. See Astonishment.

Fr. étonner; Ger. überraschen.

Surrender or Give up. (No weapons.) Hold both 5 hands, palms forward, at height of head. Sometimes one hand only.

Fr. rendre, se rendre; Ger. sich ergeben.

Surround or Encircle. Hold out both L hands at arm's length, then swing them together to form a level circle. See Enclosure.

Fr. entourer; Ger. umgeben.

Swap. See Trade.

Swear. See Oath.

Sweat. Draw the hooked right index across the brow as though wiping off sweat. See Hot.

Fr. la sueur; Ger. der Schweisz.

Sweat Lodge or Turkish Bath. Sign Medicine and Wickey up. (C) Or with 5 hands indicate the shape beginning at top, then sign Open, Enter, Sweat.

Fr. le sudatorium, le bain turc; Ger. das Schwitzbad.

Sweet. See Sugar.

Sweetheart or Lover. Touch G to lips and add Heart. (Modern, but now in general use among Cheyenne boys.)
Sweetheart or Lover. Thrust the right L hand forward, level, back up and to right, turning slowly by wrist action so the thumb rises two or three inches up and down on the axis of the index. Compare Courting and Glitter.

Fr. le bien-aimé; Ger. der Geliebte.

Swift. See Fast.

Swim (Probably to suggest a fish tail in action). That is, "Will you come in swimming?" Hold right hand as high as the face, back forward, all fingers closed except index and middle, these are spread like V and pointed to left. Move the hand a little to right.

Fr. nager; Ger. schwimmen.

Swimming. Sign Water, then strike out with hands as in swimming.

Fr. nageant; Ger. schwimmend.

Swoop. See Dive.

Table (Flat top, square shape). Swing flat hands, palms down, as in Broad turn sharply and draw both toward you; with a V hand on each side, strike down for legs, then sign On and Eat. A description, not an established sign.

Fr. la table; Ger. der Tisch.

Tail. Right G hand, back up, at left side, pointing back and down.

Fr. la queue; Ger. der Schwanz.
**SIGN TALK**

**Take or Bring** (From some one else). Reach out the G hand, hook the index and draw it toward you, in and upward, as though pulling a string up and back. Compare **Steal**.

Fr. *prendre* (de quelqu’un); Ger. *nehmen* (von Jemandem).

**Take** (From oneself). The same, but point index toward body, hook it and draw away.

Fr. *prendre* (de soi-même); Ger. *nehmen* (von sich selber).

**Take from.** See **Subtract**.

**Talk or Say** (A little talk). Hold right hand under mouth, index and thumb tips together, pointing forward, and move slightly forward, snapping the index from behind the thumb two or three times. Compare **Called, Telltale, Speech, Bark**.

Fr. *parler*; Ger. *sprechen*.

**Talk, to me.** Make the same gesture as above, but point and draw the hand toward the cheek.

**Tall or High.** Move the flat right straight up to arm’s length, back out.

Fr. *grand, haut*; Ger. *hoch, groß*.

**Tangle or Tangled.** Revolve the 5 hands, in and out, one about the other. Compare **Play**.

Fr. *embrouter*; Ger. *verwirren*. 
Taste. Join the first finger and thumb, rest their points on the lower lip and work the lips. Compare Salt, Sugar, Sour, and Bitter.
   Fr. goûter; Ger. schmecken.

Taste bad (To taste and throw away). Sign Taste and Bad. (Seger.)
   Fr. avoir un goût mauvais; Ger. schlecht schmecken.

Tattler. See Telltale.

Tattoo. Tap the place with all five finger tips in a point.
   Fr. tatouer; Ger. tätowieren.

Tea (Stirring it). Trace the rim of the left O hand with the thumb and finger tip of the right O hand, other fingers extended. (Sheeaka.) Compare Stir. Or sign Leaf, Drink.
   Fr. le thé; Ger. der Tee.

Teacher. Sign Writing and Chief. See also Guide.
   Fr. le professeur; Ger. der Lehrer.

Team. Sign Horse, Two; with L hand indicate Halter and add Coat for Harness.
   Fr. l’attelage; Ger. das Gespann.

Teepee or Lodge. Cross the tips of the G fingers held high. In Tent they are not crossed.
   Fr. la loge (la hutte) des Indiens; Ger. die Indianerhütte.

Telegraph. On forefinger of left G hand, palm up, tap with crooked forefinger of right hand, as though
telegraphing; then shoot it along left forefinger and on in line. (Crow sign, La Forge.)

**Telegraph.** Sign Wire, then tap on it two or three times with right G and add Talk, shooting it far ahead.
Fr. *le télégraphe*; Ger. *der Telegraph*.

**Telephone.** Sign Wire; raise O hand to the ear like the receiver, then add Talk.
Fr. *le téléphone*; Ger. *der Fernsprecher*.

**Tell about.** See *Explain* and *Speech*.

**Tell me.** See *Talk* and *Speech*.

**Tell-tale, Tattling, or Tattle** (Magpie or Chatterer). Make a bill with forefinger and thumb; hold it at the mouth, pointing forward; open and shut it, but do not advance it. Note, it does not get anywhere; Talk does.
Fr. *le rapporteur*; Ger. *der Ausplauderer*.

**Tenderfoot.** Make signs for *Scout* and *Little*. (Scott.)
Fr. *le novice*; Ger. *der Neuling*.

**Tense**, of verbs, indicated by *Now*, *Time Back*, and *Future*, that is *Time Ahead*.

**Tent.** Like *Teepee*, but do not cross the fingers. Sometimes add *White Man*.
Fr. *la tente*; Ger. *das Zelt*.

**Than.** See *As*. 
Thank you, or Gratitude. Raise the open right hand within a foot of the face, back down and to right; then carry it outward and downward toward person, bowing at same time (Pop). For this the Cheyennes use one hand as in Gratitude, which see. Sign Give, Good. (Blackfoot.)

Fr. merci, je vous remercie, la gratitude; Ger. ich danke dir (or Ihnen), die Dankbarkeit.

That. Point with right G at the person or thing. Compare This, There, and Yonder.

Fr. ce...là; Ger. der, jener.

That or Which, relative pronoun (The one behind that). Left L hand pointing to right. Lay right forefinger on end of left, then turn it up and back to touch the thumb. (D)

Fr. qui, que, lequel; Ger. welcher.

That place. Hold out right G, back up, at arm’s length, face high, pointing forward; strike it down three or four times, chiefly by finger action. Compare Then and Here.

Fr. là; Ger. da, dort.

Theatre. Sign House, Look, Big, Many. (Sheeaka.)

Fr. le théâtre; Ger. das Theater.

Their. See Possession.

Then (That time). Swing right G, point first, forward and down in an 18-inch curve. Compare Yonder and That place.

Fr. alors; Ger. damals.

There. Simply point with middle finger, others closed, hand held breast high. Compare Challenge.
Sign Talk

Thick. Hold out flat left, back to left, place right underneath palm up; clasp left with it, rub right fingers and thumb tips back and forth on the middle of the left hand in long, slow rubs. Compare Meat, Thin, Oil, and Bacon.

Fr. épais; Ger. dick.

Thief. Sign for the person and add Steal. (C)

Fr. le voleur; Ger. der Dieb.

Thin (Not thick). Like Thick, but rub lower edge and little finger of left with tips of right thumb and index finger united, others closed. Usually the little finger side is the Edge. Compare Bacon, in which all of the fingers are used; also, Oil, Thick, and Meat.

Fr. mince; Ger. dünn.

Thin or Poor in flesh (Flesh clawed off). Bring both 5 hands, backs forward, in front of breast and touching it. Move each to its side, curving the fingers more.

Fr. maigre; Ger. mager.

Things. The 5 hands similarly pointing forward, backs up, waist high, one at each side of the body; swing once or twice in small circles nearly vertical, but a little forward in the upper part.

Fr. les choses; Ger. die Dinge.

Think (Drawn from the heart). Lay right G on the heart, back up, and swing it outward ten inches and a little up.

Fr. penser; Ger. denken.
Thinking. See Consider.

Thirst, Dry, or Drouth. Sign Want and Drink.
Fr. la soif; Ger. der Durst.

This. Hold flat left palm up near body and thrust right G down to it. For These repeat it several times.
Fr. ce . . . ci; Ger. dieser.

Thought. See Idea.

Thousand. Sign Hundred and then Ten times. See Numbers.
Fr. mille; Ger. tausend.

Thread. Rub thumb and index together, as though twisting a thread, and sign Sew. Compare Powder.
Fr. le fil; Ger. der Faden.

Threaten. Shake clenched fist toward the person.
Fr. menacer; Ger. drohen.

Through. Push the right flat hand edgewise outward between the middle and third fingers of the left, which are held pointing upward. Compare Between.
Fr. par, au travers de; Ger. durch.

Thunder. Clap the hands loudly in front of face and add a rapid zigzag with the right G finger for Lightning.
Fr. le tonnerre; Ger. der Donner, das Gewitter.

Thy or Thine. Sign You. Possess.
Fr. ton; Ger. dein.
SIGN TALK

Ticket. Hold out H left, back up; lay the right G across it at the middle knuckles; add Writing and indicate Railway, Theatre, Pawn, etc., as needed.
Fr. le billet; Ger. das Billett.

Till. See To.

Time (Duration). Join the index finger and thumb of each hand at tips, other fingers closed; hold back of right hand to right, left to left, thumb tips touching; draw the hands apart, slowly and level. A little apart means Little time; a long way is Long time, etc. Sign After, Little time, for Bye and bye. So leaving the hands touching means Now; and Time, Long, Behind means Long time ago. A much-used sign. See Ago and Past.
Fr. le temps; Ger. die Zeit.

Time afterward, After a little time, Bye and Bye. Hold out the left G level, pointing forward, breast high; lay the right G on the back of the left, draw it back toward the wrist an inch. For Time ahead, sign Time and Ahead, that is, hold up left G and swing right G parallel and far ahead in the same line. Or sometimes for Time ahead or Future give the Time sign first given, but draw the right forefinger and thumb in an up and over curve far ahead, instead of to the right.
Fr. plus tard; Ger. später.

Time (Shadow around tree). Hold up left G, point right G at it and swing it around, finally touching it at top. (Sioux, Sheeaka.) This is used for exact point or date.
Fr. l'époque; Ger. die Zeit, der Zeitpunkt.
Hour. Indicate in the sky the position of the sun at that hour.

Hour (i.e., sixty minutes). Hold up the left hand with back toward you, index and thumb joining in a complete vertical circle; with right G on this as a pointer, move an inch and add One.

Fr. l'heure; Ger. die Stunde.

Minute or Moment. Hold the flat left hand pointed forward, thumb up; lay the right G on it like a pointer and move it the least bit. (Sheeaka.) The Cheyennes sign Hour and Small. In giving Time it is safest to do it in railway style; that is, 45 minutes after 4 would be 4 hours and 45 minutes; not a quarter before 5.

Fr. la minute; Ger. die Minute.

Second. Make the signs Minute and Very small. (Sheeaka.)

Fr. la seconde; Ger. die Sekunde.

Day or Light (The opening up, as contrasted with Night, the closing over). Hold out the level flat hands in the same horizontal plane, backs up, pointing to front, a few inches apart. Swing them upward apart to right and left, and then downward on a curve, turning the palms up; ending when the hands are about opposite shoulders and a little higher than at the start.

For the days of the week, see under Sun.

Sometimes "one sun" is "one day."

For To-day the sign for Now is first made.

Fr. le jour; Ger. der Tag.
**SIGN TALK**

**Time of Day,** as morning, forenoon, noon, afternoon, etc. Point to the sun's position in the sky at the time. See *Midnight.*

Fr. *l'heure du jour*; Ger. *die Tageszeit.*

**Week.** Sign *Suns, Seven* (Sheeaka) or *One Medicine Day.* Compare *Sunday.*

Fr. *la semaine*; Ger. *die Woche.*

**Month.** Crescent or Horns in the sky. See illustration in M.

Fr. *le mois*; Ger. *der Monat.*

**Seasons.** *Spring,* Short grass; *Summer,* High grass; *Autumn,* Falling leaf; *Winter,* Cold or Snow.

Fr. *les saisons*; Ger. *die Jahreszeiten.*

**Year.** Sign *One Cold* (Cheyenne). Or better perhaps, though not general, sign *Snow,* then swing the right G in a circle to left, down and up on right, then again make *Snow,* meaning from snow around to snow. (Sheeaka.) Sign *One Snow* (Blackfoot).

Fr. *l'an, l'année*; Ger. *das Jahr.*

**Tired** or **Weary.** Hold out G hands, backs up, six inches apart, drop them and draw them to you a little. Sometimes used for *Quit.* See *Lazy.* Compare *Afraid.*

Fr. *fatigué*; Ger. *müde.*

**To, Till,** or **Until.** Hold the left G a little forward, palm to you; swing the right G upward till the forefingers meet at tip. (Sheeaka; probably borrowed from the Deaf.) Compare *Meet.*

Fr. *jusqu'à*; Ger. *bis.*
Tobacco (Ground in the palm). Hold flat left hand, back down, in front of body; grind on it the heel of closed right in small circles.

Fr. *le tabac*; Ger. *der Tabak*.

**To-day.** Sign *Day* and *Now*.

Fr. *aujourd'hui*; Ger. *heute*.

**Together or Gather** (Gathered together). Press the palms of the flat hands together two or three times, swinging them apart and together once or twice, so the tips describe six-inch vertical circles going down on the outside and up on the inside of each. Note this also means *Gather*. See also *With, Meet, and Heap*.

**Tomahawk.** Hold the flat right hand in the hollow of the horizontal left arm (C). Compare *Baby*. Or sign *Axe* and *Smoke*.

Fr. *le tomahawk, la hache de guerre des Indiens*; Ger. *die Streitaxt der Indianer*.

**To-morrow.** Sign for *Another* and *Sunrise*. Compare *Yesterday*.

Fr. *demain*; Ger. *morgen*.

**Too, Too much.** Sign *Enough*, but raise both hands at arm’s length above the head. (Scott.) Sometimes use *Heap*. See also *Excessive, Ahead, and Over*.

Fr. *trop*; Ger. *zu viel*.

**Too or Also.** Sign *Equal, With, or And*.

Fr. *aussi*; Ger. *auch*.

**Touch.** See *Feel*. 
Town. Sign *House*; then, keeping the flat hands at same angle, swing them wide apart, keeping left near body, right far away. Add *White Man* if needed.

Fr. *la ville*; Ger. *die Stadt*.

Track or Trail; i.e., to follow by *Trail*. Sign *Walk* and point to the ground with right G; move it forward in a sinuous course. Sometimes add *Look*.

Fr. *tracer*; Ger. *aufspüren*.

Trade, Exchange, Swap, Bargain, Buy, or Sell. Hold G hands pointing up, one at each shoulder; move them together in a down curve till wrists are crossed. See *Avoid*.

Fr. *trafiler, troquer, faire le commerce*; Ger. *tauschen, handeln, Handel treiben*.

Trail (A road). See *Way*.

Train. See *Railroad*.

Trap or To trap. Make a large level circle of forefingers and thumbs for the trap; then snap these up together, index alongside index, thumb alongside thumb to indicate the closing.

Fr. *le piège, prendre au piège*; Ger. *die Falle, mit der Falle fangen*.

Travel. Hold out the 5 hands, palm to palm, but left a foot advanced and six inches higher, both of them vibrated up and down. This means *Keep on Going*. See *Work, Go, and Walk*.

Fr. *voyager*; Ger. *reisen*.
Treaty. Sign Shake Hands and Write; that is, write with right index on flat left palm.
Fr. le traité; Ger. der Vertrag.

Tree. Hold right forearm upright in front of shoulder, fingers straight, spread upward. For plural use both hands. For Forest, hold left outside and touching right; draw right near body and push left far away. See Forest.
Fr. l’arbre; Ger. der Baum.

Tribe or Troop. See Bunch.

Triumph. Wave one hand in circle above the head as swinging a flag. At a distance, wave a hat, coat, or blanket.
Fr. le triomphe; Ger. der Triumph.

Troop or Tribe. See Bunch.

Trot. Indicate the kind of animal, then with S hands, backs up, indicate movement of feet as in trotting. (C)
Fr. le trot, trotter; Ger. der Trott, traben.

Trouble or Perplexity. See Consider, Doubt, Sorry, and Sorrow.
Fr. le trouble, la perplexité; Ger. die Sorge, die Bestürzung.

True, Truth, Certain, Sure, Straight (One straight trail). The G forefinger pointing straight forward under the chin, then moved forward with an upward curve. Compare Honest.
Fr. vrai, la vérité; Ger. wahr, die Wahrheit.
SIGN TALK

Try or Attempt.  Sign Work and Begin.

Fr. essayer; Ger. versuchen.

Turkey.  Sign Bird; then indicate Beard with compressed right hand under the chin, pointed down and shaken.  (C)

Turkey.  Sign Bird; then hold right G at forehead, back up, curved, pointed down, and drop it past the nose down below chin.

Fr. le dindon; Ger. der Truthahn, der Puter.

Turkish Bath.  See Sweat Lodge.

Turn him down or Thumbs down.  This dates from the Roman arena.  Right arm at full length, fingers closed, thumb extended and pointing downward; meaning “Kill him” or “it.”  See Knife.

Turn into.  See Grow.

Turn loose.  See Free and Pardon.

Turtle or Tortoise.  Hold right hand low, back up, flat, but fingers bent back on palm; push it forward, giving it by wrist action a serpentine course.  See Fog.

Fr. la tortue; Ger. die Schildkröte.

Twice.  See Once.

Twinkle.  Sign Star and Talk.

Fr. étinceler; Ger. funkeln.
Twins. Lay V fingers, palm in, on abdomen and add Born.
Fr. les jumeaux; Ger. die Zwillinge.

Typewrite. Sign Write; then with both hands strike here and there at keys.
Fr. écrire à la machine, dactylographier; Ger. mit der Schreibmaschine schreiben.

Ugly. Sign Face; i.e., swing the right hand in a circle near the face, and add Bad.
Fr. laid; Ger. hässlich.

Unable. See Can’t.

Uncertain. Sign Perhaps, Know, and Not.
Fr. incertain; Ger. unbestimmt.

Uncle. Sign Father (or Mother) and Brother.
Fr. l’oncle; Ger. der Onkel.

Undecided. Bow the head forward, resting the right G on the lips. See also Thinking and If.
Fr. en doute; Ger. unschlüssig.

Under. See Below.

Understand. See Know; also, Keep.

Unfair. See Excessive.

United. Sign Alliance or With.
Fr. uni; Ger. vereinigt.
United States of America. There is no well-established sign, but the Indian of a hundred years ago referred to the United States as the "Thirteen Fires," i.e., Council Fires. So that Thirteen and Fires would answer. The Blackfeet indicate the Boundary Line running east and west, then all south of it.

So, also, for the individual States, in the absence of established signs, we may use their nicknames. These, however, are mere suggestions.

Fr. les États-Unis d'Amérique; Ger. die Vereinigten Staaten von Nordamerika.


Arkansas (Bear State). Country and Bear Black, to distinguish from Russia.

California (Golden State). Country and Gold; for gold pinch the lobe of the ear, or point to any gold or yellow thing in sight; if it is near, take an imaginary pinch of it, to exclude the object that is made of it.

Colorado (Centennial State). Country and 100 Years or Snows.

United States—Continued

Dakota, North (Flickertail State). Country and holding G hand, palm up, wag the index to express the tail of the Flickertail gopher.

Dakota, South (Coyote State). Country and Small Wolf.

Delaware (Diamond State). Country and, for Diamond, place the right thumb and index on an imaginary stone on ring finger of left; then add Twinkle.

Florida (Peninsular State). Country and Water. The half into the left C hand, held level and facing the right, lay the right N fingers, backs up.

Georgia (Cracker State). Country, Corn, and Grind, as in Coffee. The Crackers were so called because of their cracked corn diet.


Indiana (Hoosier State). Country and Who is here?

Iowa (Hawkeye State). Country, Hawk, and Eye.


Kentucky (Blue Grass State). Country, Grass, and Blue.

Louisiana (Pelican State). Country, Bird, Long bill; and with index show outline of the pouch.
SIGN TALK

United States—Continued


Maryland (Terrapin State). Country and Turtle.

Massachusetts (Bay State). Country and Bay.

Michigan (Wolverine State). Country and Wolverine or Bushy-tailed Bear. Indicate Bear, then Tail and Bushy.

Minnesota (Gopher State). Country and Small Striped Animal. With compressed right hand, back up, indicate a small animal; then draw the fingers of left 4 hand along it for stripes.


Missouri (Banner State). Country and Flag. Or else, "Show me State," thus, with flat right hand shade right eye, knit brows, look here and there.

Montana (Land of the Blackfeet.) Country and Blackfeet.

Nebraska (Shallow River). Country, River, Broad, and Low. Or Pawneeland, Country, and Wolf, which is the Pawnee sign.

Nevada (Silver State). Sign Country, Metal, and White; bring right hand hollow under left and shake as though jingling coins.

United States—Continued

New Jersey (Blue State). Country, Color, and Blue.

New Mexico (Sunshine State). Make sign for Country and Sun.

New York (Empire State). Country and Crowned, which is indicated by placing both 5 hands on the sides of the head like the feathers in a war-bonnet

North Carolina (Tar Heel State). Country, Heel, and Black.

Ohio (Buckeye State). Country, Deer, and Eye.

Oklahoma (Sooners State). Country and Soon, or else Country and Kiowa.

Oregon (Beaver State). Country and Beaver.

Pennsylvania (Keystone State). Country and Keystone, thus: Hold up right hand, fingers out, pointing up, a space between the ring and middle fingers only; hold all fingers of left hand extended and join at tips to form a wedge; put this wedge in the opening between the fingers of the right hand.


South Carolina (Palmetto State). Country and Leaf; then indicate the shape of leaf with flat hand and fingers spread to their utmost.

United States—Continued


Utah (Mormon or Many Wives State). Country, Mates, Many.

Vermont (Green Mountain State). Country, Mountain, Color, and Grass.


Washington (Evergreen State). Country, Green, and Always.

West Virginia (Panhandle State). Country and Cook by frying; then hold out flat spread left hand, palm up, and grasp the wrist with the right.

Wisconsin (Badger State). Country and Badger.

Wyoming (Land of Cheyennes). Country and Cheyennes or Finger Choppers.

Unjust. Sign Honest and Not. See Excessive.
Fr. injuste; Ger. ungerecht.

Unless or Except. See But.

Unlucky. Sign Medicine and Bad.
Fr. malheureux; Ger. unglücklich.

Until. See To.

Unwise. See Foolish.
Up or Upward. Point up with flat hand or else the right G, raising the same about head high. The index means specifically "that thing up there"; whereas the flat hand means the abstract idea "up." Compare Tall and Stand.

Fr. en haut, haut; Ger. auf, hinauf, aufwärts.

Us. See We.

V

Vain. Sign Beautiful; then draw head and body back with an arrogant look. (Blackfoot.) Sign Paint, Dress, Good, Love. (C) See Pride.

Fr. vain; Ger. eitel.

Valise. Hold out both arms, level, low, parallel; hands flat, but bent at right angles to arms; palms to you, tips touching. Add Clothes and Enter twice or three times.

Fr. la valise; Ger. der Handkoffer.

Very Much, Heap Much, Strong, Brave, Superlative. Hold left S hand, back out, in front of body; forearm horizontal and pointing to right and front; bring the ditto right hand some six inches above and a little in front of left hand; strike downward with right hand, mostly by elbow action, the second joints of right hand passing close to and about on a line with knuckles of left hand. This is very like Strong and seems in some renditions to be the same.

It is also used for Very, Very Much, and for a certain strong English adjective that is omitted from the Sunday School readers. Compare Strong.

Fr. beaucoup, très; Ger. sehr, viel.
Vessel. See Bowl.

Victor. See Kill and Triumph.

Vigilant or Watchful. Sign Look, in different directions, and All the time.
Fr. vigilant; Ger. wachsam.

Village (Many Lodges). Sign Lodges or Teepees and Many.
Fr. le village; Ger. das Dorf.

Vine. Sign Tree with left; then with right G trace the vine's course about it.
Fr. la vigne; Ger. die Ranke.

Volley. See Fire.

Vomit. Hold compressed right hand back up below chin, pointed to left and upward, move it upward forward and down, point first, once or twice.
Fr. vomir; Ger. (sich) brechen, sich übergeben.

W

Wager. See Bet.

Wagon. With index and thumb of each hand make two vertical circles, hands held backs up, a foot apart and shoulder high; by wrist action rotate these circles and move them forward a little.
Fr. la voiture; Ger. der Wagen.
Wait (Stop here). Flat hand up, palm forward; then gently bent forward to nearly level, palm down. Compare Halt.

Fr. attendez!; Ger. warten!

Waken. Sign Sleep and Arise (That is, lay the right G horizontally on breast and swing it out upright a foot away, back to right). Or sign Sleep and Done, i. e., Ended.

Fr. réveiller, s'éveiller; Ger. wecken, erwachen.

Walk or March. (For a person.) (Shape and movement of feet.) Hold out the flat hands, backs up, a few inches apart, pointing to front; swing the right forward, upward, and downward to same height as when starting; then the left ditto; draw the right hand to rear. Repeat these motions.

Walk (For an animal). With the S hands, backs up, go through the same as above.

Fr. marcher; Ger. gehen.

Wall or Fence. Push flat hands straight forward, points up, palms in; then, when well out, turn palms toward you and swing together. Compare Valise and Box.

Fr. le mur; Ger. die Mauer, das Gitter.

Wandering. Hold up right G, palm forward; advance it with excessive sweeping zigzags from side to side, forming loops. These loops are 18 inches across; their plan, seen from above, is in the lower scroll. Compare Alive and White-tail Deer.

Fr. errant; Ger. wandernd.
SIGN TALK

Want (To), Crave, Desire, Wish, Anxious for, Will (Thirsty for). Hold the right hand, back to right, in front of and near chin; form a vertical incomplete circle with G index and thumb. Swing the hand down past the mouth, outward and upward, turning it at the finish so that the little finger is as high as the index. Fr. désirer; Ger. wünschen.

Wapiti. See Elk.

War. See Fight.

War-cry. See Battle-cry.

Warm, To (One's hands). Hold out both flat hands, side by side, breast high, backs up, slightly curved as though over a fire; then rub them together. (Blackfoot.)

Warm, I am warm. Draw the 5 hands down over breast, then hold out together, palms down, pointing forward. See also Hot.

Fr. chaud; Ger. warm.

Warning, Beware, Caution, or Look out. Raise right index, rest closed; turn hand so as to have right eye, index, and the person in line; at the same time, shake the head a little. (Sheeaka.)

Fr. l'avertissement, prenez garde!; Ger. die Warnung, Vorsicht!

Warpath, To go to War (The thumb chasing the index). With its index at a right angle with the palm and pointing toward the left, other fingers closed, its thumb ex-
tended and upright near base of the index, back of hand outward; move the right hand forward with a long downward then upward curve in front of the right shoulder.

Fr. *le chemin de guerre*; Ger. *der Kriegspfad*.

**Washing Clothes.** Rub with both fists as on a rubbing board. Old gesture was to rub the right fist circularly, palm down, on the left, palm up.

Fr. *laver*; Ger. *waschen*.

**Washington.** Sign *White Man, All, Chief, High.* (Shee-aka.)

**Watch** (A timepiece). Form a horizontal circle with thumb and index of left hand, others closed; tap around on this with the tip of right G.

Fr. *la montre*; Ger. *die Taschenuhr*.

**Watch.** See *Look*.

**Water, Running.** See *River*.

**Water** (In general). Bring the slightly cupped right palm from forward nearly level to near the chin. Compare *Drink and Speech*.

Fr. *l’eau*; Ger. *das Wasser*.

**Waterfall.** See *Fall of Water*.

**Way, Manner, Road, Method, Custom, Plan, Trail, Law,* etc. Both hands flat, palms up, but thumb sides higher, side by side, pointing front, breast high, alternately advanced and withdrawn. Much used among
Indians and sometimes equivalent to -ship or -ness, as in Kingship or Goodness. Compare Walk and Road.

Fr. le chemin, la manière; Ger. der Weg, die Art und Weise.

We, Us, and Our (Me all). Touch one’s chest with right thumb, fingers closed, then add All. (Sheeaka.) The Cheyennes sign Me, All, and Together.

Fr. nous, notre; Ger. wir, unser.

Weak. Swing the bent arms slowly from side to side as in walking weakly. Or Strong, and No. See Tired and Lazy.

Fr. faible; Ger. schwach.

Weary. See Tired.

Weasel. With right G curved, back up, imitate bounding; then indicate Tail and Half, Black. (Sheeaka.)

Fr. la belette; Ger. das Wiesel.

Week. See Time and Sun.

Weep. See Cry.

Weigh (Metaphorically). See Consider.

Welcome. Sign Come and Good.

Fr. bienvenu; Ger. willkommen.

Well, Good Health (Body strong). Flat hands one on each side of the body; draw them away, clench them and move them down with a jerk. (Sheeaka.) The Cheyennes sign All, Body (as above), Hard. Compare Sick and Lungs.

Fr. bien portant, la bonne sante; Ger. wohl, die Gesundheit.
What? See Question.

When? See Question.

Whence? See Question.

Where? See Question.

Wherever (All places). Hold right G out, back up, pointing toward horizon. Swing slowly in a half-circle up and over to left, then back to right; repeat.

Fr. *en quelque lieu que ce soit*; Ger. *wo auch nur*.

Whether. See *If*.

Whetstone. Sign *Hard*, then hold out left N hand and rub right N hand on it, with long, sweeping strokes.

Fr. *la pierre à aiguiser*; Ger. *der Wetzstein*.

Which? See Question.

Which. See Who.

While, After a. See *Bye and bye*.

While, Every Little While. Hold out left G, pointing to right; with left G tap on it several times, each time moving the right nearer the base of left G. See, *All the time*. Compare *Peas and Buy*.

Fr. *à chaque moment*; Ger. *jeden Augenblick*.

While, Meanwhile, or During. Sign *Time*, slowly moving hands until about six inches apart. Some shake the right hand in drawing it back. Or sign *Time, Sit*. Compare *Time, Sometimes, Soon*.

Fr. *pendant*; Ger. *während*.
**Whirlwind.** See *Cyclone*.

**Whiskey.** Sign *Fire* and *Water*, or *Crazy, Water*. Although some Cheyennes call beer fire-water, because of the explosion and froth.

Fr. *le whiskey, l'eau-de-vie*; Ger. *der Whisky, der Branntwein*.

**Whisper, or Speak Privately.** Hold up flat right hand, thumb at one side of the mouth, and incline the head. Or sign *Hide* and *Talk*.

Fr. *chuchoter*; Ger. *flüstern*.

**White (Color).** See *Colors*.

**White or White Man (Hat or Cap wearers).** Hold right G hand, back up and to right, in front of, close to, and a little to left of face, pointing to left; draw the hand to right, index finger passing horizontally in front of eyes. Sometimes add *Man*.

Fr. *l'homme blanc*; Ger. *der Weisze*.

**Whither?** See *Question*.

**Who or Which (This equals that).** Hold the two G fingers side by side on left; then, keeping the relative positions, swing them to the right. (W. C. Roe.) Probably modern. This is the same as *As*; the context alone shows which is meant.

**Why?** See *Question*.

**Wicky-up.** Swing the curved G fingers together in dome shape, left tip resting on right tip; then change to curved 4 hands and swing down and apart on a curve. (C)
Wife. Make signs for Female, then Marry. Usually sign My (or His) Woman.  
Fr. la femme; Ger. die Frau, die Gattin.

Wild. Sign Bad; then push both 5 hands forward, thumbs up, six inches apart, switching them simultaneously from side to side. Sometimes use Crazy or Free.

Wild (Wild animal). Sign Look backward, then add Go quickly. Sometimes use Free.  
Fr. sauvage; Ger. wild.

Will. See Want.

Will or Shall (Futurity). Hold the right open flat hand, palm to left, pointing straight out and elevated near ear. Push it straight forward and upward the length of the arm. Sometimes sign Time Ahead or Far Ahead. Compare Past and Future.  
Fr. le futur exprimé par l'inflexion du verbe; Ger. werden, wollen.

Win or Overcome. Make sign for Kill; and indicate in what way. Thus, a person winning at gambling “Kills” the other in that way.  
Fr. gagner, vaincre; Ger. gewinnen, siegen.

Wind. Hold up the 5 hands, shoulder high, backs up, a few inches apart, pointed forward and hands moved with a tremulous motion in direction of wind.
strong wind, preface this with Fire-off or Charge. Or Sign Forward, using both hands. See Rumor and Storm.
Fr. le vent; Ger. der Wind.

Wing. Hold out left arm level, bent; sweep flat right 5 hand over it from shoulder down. Or, sometimes flap one hand as in Bird. Compare Hair.
Fr. l’aile; Ger. der Flügel.

Winter (Cold time). Hold closed hands in front of body, forearms about vertical, hands several inches apart; give a shivering, tremulous motion to hands; Sometimes, and particularly with Northern Indians, the sign for Snow is made. Add Time, if there is any doubt.
Fr. l’hiver; Ger. der Winter.

Wipe Out, Excuse, or Forgive (To wipe it off). Hold left hand flat, palm up; smartly brush it with finger tips of right flat hand, from wrist to fingers and beyond. Compare Exterminate and Color. For the stronger idea, see Pardon.
Fr. excuser; Ger. verzeihen.

Wire. Hold right G back nearly up, pointing to left, about face high, near left shoulder; draw it across level to right shoulder. Compare Creek and Rope.
Fr. le fil de métal; Ger. der Draht.

Wise, Wisdom (Heart and head good). Sign Heart, then touch forehead and sign Good. (C) Or, Heap, Understand. Sometimes use Cunning.
Fr. sage, la sagesse; Ger. klug, die Weisheit.
Wish. See Want.

Witch. Cross the upright thumb of right hand on the middle of the index, which is a little bent, other fingers straight, held so one can sight over the thumb at the person meant. (Ruggles.) Also used for Distrust and Discredited. Widely established in the mountains.

Fr. la sorcière; Ger. die Hexe.

With or Together. Hold out the flat left, fingers forward, level, back to left; and lay the side of the right G finger, pointed forward, against the centre of the left palm. Sometimes means Add. See Together and Beside.

Fr. avec, ensemble; Ger. mit, zusammen.

Within or Inside. See In.

Wolf. Hold the right V hand, palm forward, near right shoulder, pointing straight upward; move it a little forward and up. See Scout.

Fr. le loup; Ger. der Wolf.

Wolverine. Sign Bear, Small, and indicate bushy tail. This is merely a description, not an established sign.

Fr. le carcajou, levolserenne; Ger. der braune Vielfrasz.

Woman. Make the sign for Female; sometimes also indicate height. Compare Comb.

Fr. la femme; Ger. die Frau.

Wonderful. See Glow.

Wood or Timber. Sign Tree, then indicate size and shape. Add Chop and throw forward (i. e., onto fire).

Fr. le bois; Ger. das Holz.
Woodchuck or Groundhog. With compressed right, back up, pushed forward, rolling from side to side, indicate the animal, its Size; then, with left H hand near upper lip and right H hand near lower, show the action of the front teeth, which differ from those of other rodents its equal in size in being White. This is not an established sign, but suggested as a description.

Fr. la grande marmotte d'Amérique; Ger. das virginische Murmeltier.

Woodcraft Boy. The Y hand; this denotes the Horned Shield, the symbol of the Order. (Not Indian.)

Woodcraft Girl. Make the sign of Sun on the heart and then raise it to the zenith. (Not Indian.)

Woodpecker. Sign Bird, then hold left arm upright for Tree and on this place the partly compressed right; make it hop up and tap the left palm with curved right G.

Fr. le pic, le pivert, l'épêiche; Ger. der Specht.

Word (One piece of talk). Make C and lay it on the mouth, then swing it forward and a little down. (A very doubtful sign given by Sheeaka.)

Fr. le mot; Ger. das Wort.

Word of Honor. See Cross the heart. (Pop.)

Work, Doing, Make, or Act. Hold the flat hands four inches apart, palm to palm, level, left a little ahead; push them forward a little, simultaneously, and, at the same time, swing the points upward and downward briskly by wrist action, so that the finger points follow
the lines shown in the cut. To complete the sign, the action should be repeated at the left side with the hands reversed with regard to each other; but usually the first only is given. Possibly refers to fleshing a hide, which was about the hardest work in an Indian camp. For *Work hard*, use both A fists instead of flat hands.

Fr. *travailler*; Ger. *arbeiten*.

**World.** See *Earth*.

**Wound** (The course of arrow or bullet). Swing the right G hand toward the body, point first, back of hand to left and front, so that the tip just grazes the surface of the body and passes on, as though glancing off. Compare *Ache*.

Fr. *la blessure*; Ger. *verwunden*.

**Wrap.** Bring the slightly compressed hands, backs outward, in front of body, backs of fingers of right hand resting against inner surface of left, index fingers about horizontal; rotate the hands around each other.

Fr. *envelopper*; Ger. *einwickeln*.

**Wrestle.** Cross the wrists about two feet in front of the face, hands clenched as in *Prisoner*; then wriggle them from side to side.

Fr. *lutter*; Ger. *ringen, kämpfen*.

**Wring.** Hold the left A hand palm up and the right A hand back up, index of each touching thumb of the other as though holding a rope; then twist by wrist action till the position of each hand is reversed.

Fr. *tordre*; Ger. *ringen*. 


Wrinkle. Wrinkle the skin of forehead and pinch same; also draw lines on face with finger tip. Sometimes omit last.

Fr. la ride, le pli; Ger. die Runzel, die Falte.

Write or Writing. With an imaginary pencil in right fingers, write on left palm; or in the air simply.

This last preceded by Come is commonly used in European hotels for "Give me my bill."

Fr. écrire; Ger. schreiben.

Wrong. Sign Honest and Not; or else Bad. Sometimes use Different and Bad. See Crooked.

Fr. tort; Ger. unrecht.

Y

Year. See Time.

Yell, Holla, or Cry Out. Place the G hand on the mouth, jerking it much upward and a little forward to show the sound coming out of the mouth and going far. Compare Called.

Fr. holá! hé! Ger. holla!; hallo schreien.

Yes (Bowing of the head and body). Hold right hand upright near shoulder, index and thumb only extended, others closed; move it slightly to the left and a foot downward, at the same time closing the index over the thumb. Or simply nod.

Fr. oui; Ger. ja.
Yesterday (Beyond the night). Sign Night; then, holding left in position, swing the right upward and to right on a curve, finishing at height of left, palm up, i. e., Beyond. Or, sign Before and Day. Or, One; Sleep, Behind.
Fr. hier; Ger. gestern.

Yonder, Over yonder. Point as in There, or with G, then swing the finger up over and down farther ahead. Compare Far.
Fr. là-bas; Ger. drüben, dort.

You or Thou. Singular, point at the person; for plural, point, then add All; that is, swing the finger in a horizontal circle (You, all).
Fr. vous; Ger. Sie.

Young (A sprout). Hold the hand as in Grow; then lower it emphatically a foot. Sometimes use Old and Not.
Fr. jeune; Ger. jung.

Younger. Sign Born and After.
Fr. plus jeune, cadet; Ger. jünger.

Your. See Possession.
## APPENDIX

### FOOTBALL SIGNALS

Code of Signals Used to Indicate Various Fouls

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Signals</th>
<th>Fouls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grasping of wrist</td>
<td>Holding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shaking fists</td>
<td>Unnecessary Roughness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crossed legs</td>
<td>Tripping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sifting of hands</td>
<td>Illegally in motion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hands on Hips</td>
<td>Off-side</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arm aloft</td>
<td>Refusal of Penalty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arms extended sidewise</td>
<td>Incompleted F. Pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arms folded</td>
<td>Interlocked interference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both arms aloft</td>
<td>Score</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military Salute</td>
<td>Loose-ball foul</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE—These signals will be given to the press-stand by the referee from behind the offensive team.

FRANK BIRCH, Referee.
BOOKS BY ERNEST THOMPSON SETON

WILD ANIMALS I HAVE KNOWN, 1898
The stories of Lobo, Silverspot, Molly Cottontail, Bingo, Vixen, The Pacing Mustang, Wully and Redruff. Price, $2.00. (Scribners.)

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The story of a long hunt that ended without a tragedy. Price, $1.50. (Scribners.)

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