

Excerpt from "The Founding of the Wichita National Bison Herd," by William T. Hornaday, in the 1905-1908 American Bison Society Annual Report:

On October 10th, between 11 A. M. and 5.30 P. M., thirteen Bison of the Wichita herd were successfully crated and delivered at the railroad. Trouble was experienced with only two of the fifteen animals. One young cow objected to entering the crate, as also did the largest bull. With a very brief delay, however, both were eventually driven into their crates, and the whole fifteen head were placed on board the cars at Fordham Station without the slightest accident.

Through the efforts of the late Charles T. Barney, Chairman of the Executive Committee, Mr. Dudley Evans, President, and Mr. H. B. Parsons, Vice-President of the Wells-Fargo Express Company, consented that their Company should transport the two Arms Palace Horse Cars containing the Bison from St. Louis to Cache, free of charge. Mr. James C. Fargo, President of the American Express Company, also offered, on behalf of his company and the New York Central Lines, to transport the cars free of charge from New York to St. Louis. These complimentary services were rendered because of the public interest attaching to the object in view, and were equivalent to a gift to the Zoological Society of \$1,000.00, or thereabouts. In fact, but for this concession on the part of the two express companies, it would have been impossible to have shipped the buffaloes by passenger train service, in which event the shipment would have been far longer in transit, and the buffaloes would have been much reduced in strength by the long journey in close confinement.

The shipment left Fordham Station, New York City, on October 11th, in charge of Chief Clerk H. R. Mitchell, of the Zoological Park, and Mr. Frank Rush, who were also accompanied by Mr. Elwin R. Sanborn, of the Zoological Park staff. Thanks to the experience and knowledge of Mr. Mitchell in matters relating to railway transportation, the journey from New York to Cache was made in seven days—the distance being 1,858 miles. Naturally, the fact that two carloads of Buffaloes were being sent from a crowded eastern city back to the southern Buffalo range, attracted great attention; and in Oklahoma,

behind the raised door, in order to drop it as soon as the animal enters. The bottom of the crate should be covered with hay, and hay should be strewn along the corral for a few feet of the distance leading into the crate. For loading a large number of Bison, it is much the best that the crates should rest upon a raised platform, similar to that in use at the Zoological Park. The other method is in some respects more difficult. It consists in throwing a lariat around the horns of the Bison, or around its neck, and dragging the animal in by main strength. This method often is useful as a last resort, and once an animal is roped, it is quickly drawn to its place.

When the bison corrals of the Zoological Park were rebuilt two years ago, a permanent chute was erected for the loading of Bison that might require to be sent away.

The following animals were selected to constitute the nucleus of the Wichita National Bison herd:—

- 1 large bull, 5½ years old,
- 1 bull, 3½ years old,
- 2 bulls, 2½ years old,
- 1 spike bull,
- 1 bull calf, 6 months old,
- 6 adult cows, all breeders,
- 1 cow, 2½ years old,
- 1 cow, 1½ years old,
- 1 female calf, 6 months old.

Total, 15 head.

The Bison thus selected represent four distinct strains of blood. The large breeding bull is not related to any of the other members of the herd. It is the belief of the writer, based on recent studies of the development of wild animals derived from a small number of progenitors, but ranging free on large areas of territory, that on any range for animals as large as that of the Wichita Bison Range, the dangers of evil results from inbreeding are too small to be considered seriously, provided the original stock is sound and healthy. Of course it is well known that diseased parents transmit their diseases to their offspring, and the greatest evils of inbreeding arise from this source.