

INDIAN TRAP PITS ON THE MISSOURI

DR. HRDLIČKA's paper in the *Anthropologist* for December, p. 546, "Indian Trap Pits Along the Missouri," conveys to me the impression that he regards the eagle-catching pits there described as something new, but this is perhaps hardly what he means.

The practice of catching eagles by means of these pits, or by means of small enclosures built above ground and roofed over, has been well known to some ethnologists for at least twenty-five years, and, in fact, was practised by many Plains tribes up to the middle of the last century. It was the ordinary way of securing eagle feathers by the Blackfeet, Mandan, Arikara, Sioux, Cheyenne, and Arapaho, and presumably was employed by all the tribes of the plains.

It was alluded to as long ago as 1891, in the *Folk-Lore Journal*, described in 1892 in *Blackfoot Lodge Tales*, and later in other books, and, finally, is mentioned in volume II of the *Handbook of American Indians*, p. 801—Traps. All this is presumably well known to Dr. Hrdlička, and I may be to blame for not quite getting at his meaning.

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