

THE INSTITUTE FOR SEMANTOGRAPHY

A Non-Profit Institution for the Promotion of Semantics and Semantography

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SYDNEY NEWSPAPER ARTICLES OF 1946 ABOUT SEMANTOGRAPHY

When I arrived in Australia on the 16th July, 1946, I was met by reporters who boarded the ship. The captain, no doubt, advised them that I was one of the interesting passengers and, therefore, they interviewed me. I was delighted, not knowing that such interviews are the usual procedure with every incoming ship. I proceeded to give them an account about my Semantography and was very happy when I found a note in the Daily Mirror of July 16th. This is what the Daily Mirror wrote -

New Writing Invented by Internee

Three years in an internment camp at Shanghai were used by Mr. C. K. Bliss, who arrived by the Defender to-day, to invent a system of writing, which, he claims everybody in the world can read.

"My system has about 60 elementary signs and by using them in combination, every word can be expressed," said Mr. Bliss. "It can be typed on an ordinary adjusted typewriter."

Nearly three quarters of the world's population could not read or write but they could with ease, understand his signs he said.

Mr. Bliss said that artificial languages, like Esperanto, had proved a failure.

When he arrived in Shanghai six years ago, he was fascinated by Chinese writing, which was more pictorial than alphabetical. Each sign represented a meaning, and not a sound.

In that, he considered, was the solution for devising an international means of communication, by a series of simple signs. End of Note.

The reporter of the Sun, however, thought that a short note about my work would not be enough and therefore, he decided on an article which should show also two sentences in Semantography which read - "I am happy having arrived in Sydney where I intend to write a book about my world writing". With the symbols I delivered a complete explanation as to how and why these symbols express the words above. The reporter cut my explanations short and, therefore, some of my symbols are not fully explained, the others are distorted, as for instance the symbol for book. Nevertheless I was very happy and hopeful about the article and thought that some public support will be forthcoming. In this I was disappointed. Here below then is the article (the original will be attached until stock runs out).

New Writing in One Easy Lesson.

When a man with an active mind is confined in a small space for a long time anything is likely to happen. Mr. C.K. Bliss, a research worker and an enthusiastic photographic expert, was interned in Shanghai by the Japanese and he produced his system of "World-Writing," an example of which is reproduced here.

Mr. Bliss arrived in Sydney last week from Shanghai on the Defender.

He got his World-Writing idea during his study of Chinese character writing during his stay in Shanghai.

Remembering his own difficulties in student days - wading through books of many languages in European universities, Mr. Bliss is convinced that the greatest obstacles to scientific advancement is the lack of a suitable means of communication.

Also a businessman - he managed a battery manufacturing firm in England before the war - Mr. Bliss thinks that his World-Writing will be a boon to international business, especially for radiophoto cables instead of ordinary coded business cablegrams.

Mr. Bliss claims that his World-Writing can be read easily into any language. It is as intelligible, he says, to Eskimos and Indians as it is to English and Greeks. Combinations of 60 basic signs can express almost everything; from the simplest to the most abstract words.

World-Writing, says Mr. Bliss, who gets very excited about it, can be typed by any ordinary adjusted typewriter and could be used by science, international business, traffic, information as well as in the instruction of the 1,500,000,000 people of the world's population who cannot read or write.

One characteristic of the writing is its simplicity. The signs are similar to those scraped on rock by early cavemen or drawn on paper by young children. They represent the meanings of words and not the sound, and are easily remembered. Many are recognisable immediately.

Because the signs represent things and not sounds, Mr. Bliss is confident that World-Writing will be a success, where Esperanto and other international languages have failed. Everyone, he says will read the writing in his own tongue.

The sign for house is a horizontal line with a vertical line at each end. The roof is an inverted V on top of the character so that the whole resembles the simple sketch of a house.

By itself, the V upside down means roof, covering and similar words. The horizontal line can stand for floor, base, earth, fundament, etc.

The horizontal line with the vertical lines at each end - a sign that resembles an open square - means opening. But it can have more than 100 meanings such as aperture, hole, gap, chasm, yawning, perforation, interstice, or orifice.

With the verb indicator (the arrowhead pointing down) it stands for to open, to perforate, to uncover, to unclose, to unlock to unveil, to reveal, to bare, to expose and many others.

With the adjective indicator (the arrowhead pointing upwards) it means open, agape, gaping, ajar, unobstructed, uncovered, unprotected, exposed, bare etc.

Mr. Bliss overcomes the problems of the difference in grammar of the various languages by taking the viewpoint of the physicist.

He says, anticipating a wide audience, that his "Universal Grammar," consisting of only three groups, is valid on earth as well as on celestial bodies.

There are material things which perform actions. A brick falls; a man thinks. The fall and thought are actions and the brick and man are things. Things and actions can be qualified. The brick is light or heavy. The man is intelligent or stupid. The fall is rapid or slow. Lightness, heaviness, intelligence, stupidity, rapidity, slowness are all qualities.

These three divisions, plus a few connector words, such as and, or, if, with, etc., and a few rules of universal syntax is all that is needed to manipulate the few signs of World Writing.

With a little practice, says Mr. Bliss, World Writing can be used quite skilfully.

But just for fear it isn't as clear as it might be, he's going to write a book during his stay in Australia and then tour America and England giving lectures.

End of Article

Further articles and newspaper notes appear in other issues of the Semantography Series.