

FREE BROWNE LOWMYER  
MADISON, WISCONSIN

Indian Folk Lore

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Prepared for the use of Students of the

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SUMMER SESSION



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## INDIAN MYTHS

### THE CREATION OF THE WORLD

Wisûkejak was traveling when he heard a noise behind him and turned to find the waters rising. He fled and climbed into a tall tree. The water rose higher and higher until it reached his neck. Then he saw a beaver and a muskrat. He called to them and they came. He begged them to dive down into the waters and bring him a little mud. First the beaver tried and failed. Then the muskrat went down into the water. After several trials he brought up a little sand in one paw and with this Wisûkejak formed the earth. (*Cree.*)

The earth is a great island floating in a sea of water and suspended at each of the four cardinal points by a cord hanging down from the sky vault, which is of solid rock. When the world grows old and worn out, the people will die and the cords will break and let the earth sink down into the ocean, and all will be water again. The Indians are afraid of this. (*Cherokee.*)

Everything was water except a small piece of ground. On this were the Eagle and Coyote. Then the Turtle swam to them. He was sent to dive for earth at the bottom of the water. He barely succeeded in reaching the bottom and touched it with his foot. When he came up Coyote examined his nails and found a grain of earth.

He and Eagle took this and made the earth as large as it is. From it they also made six men and women. They were sent out in pairs in different directions. After a time Eagle sent Coyote out to see what they were doing. He found them eating the earth. The Eagle said: "That is bad. Let us make something for them to eat." They sent the Dove out to find something. It found a single grain of meal. They put this in the ground and the earth became filled with seeds and fruit. They told the people to eat these. When they were ripe the people gathered them. Then the people increased and spread. But water is still under the world. (*Yokuts.*)

### MAN

Having made the earth, Earthmaker decided to make a man. He built a little oven of stones. Then moulding with his hands a little figure of clay, he put it in the oven to bake. Soon he took it out. It was not baked enough; it came out white. That was the white man.



He tried again but this time he left the figure in the oven too long. It was burnt and came out black. That was the negro. He tried again and watched the fire carefully, and behold he had a perfect man, an Indian, "baked just right." (*Cree.*)

Falcon proposed to Coyote that he show his power by creating human beings. Coyote said that it would mean a great deal of work, but he would try.

Coyote threw himself on the ground and pretended to be dead. Soon a large number of crows and buzzards gathered about him and began to eat his flesh. Coyote, rising suddenly, caught a number of them. Falcon plucked out their feathers, and on each hill placed some of them. Coyote named the places where they were put. The crow feathers became common people and the buzzard feathers, chiefs. (*Miwok.*)

### THE ANIMALS

An Eskimo was chopping down a tree. He noticed that the chips which fell into the water became water animals and those that fell on the land became land animals. Before this time the earth had been covered with water. The water went away and dry land appeared. The seaweed and kelp became trees and grass. (*Eskimo.*)

### THE SUN AND MOON

A brother and his sister quarrelled. She would not make up. He chased her 'round and 'round the house. Then she ran up into the sky and he after her. They became the sun and the moon. The sun is constantly following the moon. Sometimes they meet (when there is an eclipse). (*Eskimo.*)

The Sun was a young woman and lived in the East; her brother, the Moon, lived in the West. The girl had a lover who came every month in the dark of the moon to court her. She could not see his face in the dark and he would leave before daylight. He would not tell her his name. She wondered who he was. At last she hit on a plan to find out. So the next time she came, when they were sitting together she slyly dipped her hand into the ashes of the fireplace and rubbed it over his face, saying "Your face is cold, you must have suffered from the wind. She pretended to be very sorry for him. After a while he went away.

The next night when the Moon came up in the sky she saw that his face was covered with spots, and knew that he had been the one who had been coming to court her. He was so ashamed that he kept as far away as he could at the other end of the sky all the night. Ever since he tries to keep a

long way behind the Sun. When he sometimes comes too near her in the West he makes himself as thin as a ribbon so that he can hardly be seen. (*Cherokee.*)

### THE WINDS AND RAIN

There is a giant spirit who lives in the North. When he blows his breath, violent snowstorms occur. Other spirits live in the East and West. They breathe soft winds and summer rain. They live up in the sky and keep the rain in bags. When they run across the sky the water escapes. The thunder is the noise of their running. (*Eskimo.*)

Gluskap was staying at Chief Raven's village. For many days none of the Indians had done any hunting or fishing, for it was so windy that no one could get near any game, nor did any one dare to launch a canoe. Gluskap knew why it was windy, for Wind Bird was flapping his wings harder than usual. He advised the chief to send some of his men up the mountain, where Wind Bird lived, to tie his wings. It was so windy that they climbed the mountain with difficulty. Wind Bird was making so much noise that he did not notice them. One of the men knocked him down with a stone. Then they tied him fast with cedar bark ropes.

For a while everything was delightful. There was no wind at all. They caught many fish and killed much game. After a time all the waters became stagnant. It was very warm, too, for there was no cooling breeze. The chief consulted Gluskap, who told him to send the men back to untie one of Wind Bird's wings. Since then everything has gone well. Only occasionally there is a high wind. That is when the Wind Bird is trying to escape. (*Malécite.*)

### THE THUNDER BIRDS

These great birds have their nests on the top of the highest mountains. When the weather is stormy they fly about high up in the air. When they flap their great wings you hear the crashes of thunder. When they open-and-close their eyes the lightning flashes are seen. When their wings strike the clouds it rains. When they are angry they drop their eggs on the villages and then people are killed. They set fire to the forests and shatter the rocks. They carry away people, who are never heard of again.

The old birds sometimes say to the young ones, "Be careful or you will scare the Indians. You will fly very easy over their camps and villages." If the birds know that anyone is afraid of them, they are the ones they go after. They are

burned or killed. If you watch for them when it storms you may see or hear the Thunderers. (*Chippewa.*)

### THE RAINBOW

Sais-ta-go-wa, the Rainbow, was a sea monster. Hah-gweh-da-et-gah, the Bad Minded, brought him forth to destroy the beautiful rivers and hills, which Hah-gweh-di-yu, the Good Minded, had created. He began his work of destruction. When Hah-gweh-di-yu hastened to the rescue he fled to the sky. Here the Sun found him and throwing him across the sky, clasped him down to the east and the west, so he could do no further injury.

He-no, the Thunder, passing on his way through a storm admiring his beautiful colors as he stretched across the sky, picked him up, saying: "My Lightning Hunter needs this for his bow," and carried him to his lodge.

Sais-ta-go-wa is restless in his captivity, and when He-no is busy directing his storms, endeavors to escape. The ever-watchful Sun detects him and again bending him across the sky, paints him with its brightest colors, that he may be discovered by He-no, who quickly comes and carries him back to his lodge. (*Iroquois.*)

### THE SEVEN STARS (The Pleiades)

Seven boys were playing and dancing together in the shade of a large tree. After a while they became hungry. One went to a wigwam and asked an old woman for food. She would give him none and told him to go on dancing. They danced again, then another boy went to the house. She still refused to give them anything to eat.

They danced again around the tree. One made a drum. They began to be lifted upwards, their feet leaving the ground. They kept on dancing and still higher they ascended. The old woman went to the tree with food. She saw them dancing high above the tree. She called to them to come and eat. Too late, they would not listen to her. She called again and again, but they did not hear her. They kept on dancing, still moving upwards. The old woman wept. The seven stars which we now see in a cluster high in the heavens, are the dancing boys. (*Huron and Wyandotte.*)

### STARS

There are different opinions about stars. Some people say they are balls of light, others say they are human, but most people say they are living creatures covered with luminous fur or feathers.

Some hunters once found two of them. They were strange creatures with round bodies covered with fine fur or downy feathers, from which small heads stuck out.

The hunters took them home. Every night they would grow bright and shine like great stars. In the daytime they were only balls of grey fur. One night they suddenly rose from the ground, like balls of fire, and were soon above the tree tops. Higher and higher they went while the wondering hunters watched, until at last they were only two bright points of light in the dark sky, and then the hunters knew that they were stars. (*Cherokee.*)

Two stars, large and bright, married two Indian girls. The girls were very unhappy, however, since they only saw their husbands at night and never in the day time. (*Cree.*)

#### THE MILKY WAY

Some people had a corn mill, in which they pounded corn into meal. On several mornings when they came to fill it they noticed that some of the meal had been stolen during the night. They examined the ground and found the tracks of a dog. The next night they watched and when the dog came from the North and began to eat the meal they sprang out and beat him. He ran off howling, with the meal dropping from his mouth as he ran, and leaving behind a white trail where we now see the Milky Way, which the Indians call by a name meaning "Where the dog ran." (*Cherokee.*)

The Milky Way is the "bird's path." The fowl and birds follow it southward in the autumn and back again in the spring. It is also the "spirit path" along which the spirits of the dead journey. (*Timiskaming.*)

#### THE AURORA BOREALIS

In the direction of the North Wind live the Manabaf wok (giants) of whom the old people tell. They are our friends but we do not see them any more. They are great hunters and fishermen and whenever they are out with their torches to spear fish we know it, because the sky is then bright over the place where they are. (*Menomini.*)

#### INDIAN SUMMER

When the late summer Sun "walks crooked" he is on his way to the south sky, where during the winter he rests, leaving his "sleep spirit" on guard in his absence.

Before his departure he smokes the peace pipe to veil the earth (autumn mists) as he councils with the great mother. (*Iroquois.*)

## THE OBTAINING OF FIRE

The hill people had no fire. Only to the West, on the plains, was there a man who had fire, and he had it all.

When he slept, the antelope, selected for its swiftness, was sent to steal his fire. It took a fire brand and fled. Before it could get back to the people rain fell and put it out. Other animals tried to get fire but failed. At last the jackrabbit tried. After he had stolen it he hid it in a thick bush. Then he crouched over it to shield it from the rain. From this the palms of his hands are black. So he obtained fire for the Indians. (*Yokuts.*)

## CORN

Among the birds which came from the sun land, Ga-gaah, the crow, carried a kernel of corn. Ha-gweh-di-yu planted his mother (the earth) and it became the first grain, the life of the redman. By this birthright, Ga-gaah, claiming his share, hovers above the fields, guarding the young roots from the foes that infest them. (*Iroquois.*)

Two Indians had killed a deer and were roasting a part of it to eat. A beautiful woman was seen to descend from the clouds and alight upon the earth. They concluded that she must be hungry and had smelled the meat. They invited her to eat. When she left she told them to return, in one year, to the spot where she had been sitting and they would find there a return for their kindness and generosity.

The two men returned to the village and told the Indians what they had seen and done—but they were laughed at by their people.

When the time arrived they went to the spot where they had seen the sky woman. They found where her right hand had rested on the ground, *corn* growing—and where the left hand had been, *beans*, and where she had been seated, *tobacco*. (*Sac.*)

## TOBACCO

Ma nabush was passing a mountain when he detected a delightful odor issuing from a crevice. He found the mountain to be the home of a giant, who was the keeper of tobacco. He crept into a cavern and found the giant. He asked Ma nabush what he wanted. He asked for tobacco, but the giant refused. Ma nabush saw a large number of bags filled with tobacco. He snatched one and ran out of the cavern pursued by the giant.

Ma nabush climbed to the mountain tops, leaping from peak to peak, the giant following. On the edge of a high cliff Ma na-



bush suddenly threw himself flat on the rocks. The giant leaped over him and down into the chasm beyond. He was much bruised but he managed to climb up the face of the cliff and almost reached the top. There he clung. Ma nabush grasped him by the shoulders, and, drawing him upward, threw him violently to the ground saying: "For your meanness you shall become Kakú ene ('the jumper'—grasshopper), and you shall be known by your stained mouth. You shall become the pest of those who raise tobacco."

He divided the tobacco among his brothers and younger brothers giving to each some of the seed, that they might never be without it for their use and enjoyment. (*Menomini.*)

### MAPLE SUGAR

A woman was collecting maple sap. She found a lump of maple sugar in the wooden trough which she had placed beneath the spile driven into the tree to convey the running sap. The tree spirit told her not to eat it. She was told to keep it as a charm, and use it when making sugar.

By making a mark in the big kettle with the lump the boiling sap would always fill it to that spot. It brought her good fortune. (*Huron.*)

### THE COMING OF THE WHITE MAN

When the white man first was seen here, in the old time, he began to barter with our ancestors. Nowhere could he step without coming across a redman (all the land being occupied). The stranger came with a cow's hide, saying that he wanted a piece of land. The Indian thinking that he wanted a piece of land of that size agreed to trade.

The white man, however, cut the hide into a long string and measured off a large piece. The Indian said: "This is the way the white man does. He cheats the Indian." And he had to give away the land measured by the string. (*Huron.*)

### ETERNAL LIFE

Once Nānibozhu was at home and beating a water drum. Four men heard it, and travelled toward the sound. They walked for eight days but the drummer seemed to be as far away as ever. All at once they came upon him. Nānibozhu gave them various medicines. He said: "That's why I was drumming, to call you." He promised to give them anything they should wish for. Three of the men asked to live until their hair was white. The fourth begged for eternal life. Nānibozhu turned him into a stone. (*Chippewa.*)

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# MOCCASIN TALES . . .



INDIAN SHORT STORIES OF THE CHIPPEWA,  
WINNEBAGO, DAKOTA, POTAWATOMI,  
MENOMINI, SAUK, FOX, AND  
OTHER TRIBES



FOR STORY TELLING AT  
THE CAMPFIRE  
AND FIRESIDE



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CHARLES E. BROWN  
State Historical Museum  
Madison, Wisconsin

1935

## MOCCASIN TALES

So named because of an Indian custom of beating with a moccasin any boys or girls who fall asleep while stories are being told by an older person in the wigwam on an autumn or winter night.

### THE SKY MAN

An Indian maiden married a fine-looking Indian who came to the village of her tribe. She didn't know that he was a sky man. She was not happy because every evening he left his wigwam to do his work in the sky. She complained to him about his being so much away from her. She wept every day. She asked him to take her with him. He said that that would be impossible, but at last he consented. He built a wigwam for her among the clouds. In one place in this wigwam there was a large bundle wrapped with buckskin and tied with cords. She asked her husband to tell her what was in it but he would not do so. Every day she asked him. He would tell her nothing, and told her never to meddle with it. One day, while he was away at his work, she thought that she would take just one peep at its contents. Kneeling on the wigwam floor beside it she finally succeeded in untying the knotted cords at one end of the bundle.

When it was open a number of shining objects suddenly poured out upon the floor. She tried to grasp them and put them back. More and more fell out and they rose and flew in all directions. Many flew out of the door and the smoke-hole in the roof before she could close the bundle. They were stars. When her husband returned he was greatly displeased at her disobedience. He scolded her but the mischief was done. And that is why, say the Indians, there are not so many stars as there once were.—(Winnebago-Fox.)



## THE MOONSHINE MOCCASINS

An Indian and his wife were living together very happily. The woman became sick. . She said to her husband, "If I had moonshine moccasins I would get better, even if I only saw them I would get better." The Indian went all over looking for the moccasins, but he couldn't find them anywhere. His sister went to look for the moccasins. At the lake shore she saw a kingfisher sitting on the end of a log. . She asked him what he was doing and he said he was looking for something to eat. Then she asked him if he had moonshine moccasins. But the kingfisher didn't know anything about them. The girl saw a muskrat sitting on a log. She asked him what he was doing. He said he was looking for something to eat. Then she asked him, "Do you know where I could get moonshine moccasins?" "Why do you want them?" said the rat. "Well", said the girl, "my sister-in-law is sick. She says she would get better right away if she had moonshine moccasins. If she just saw them she would get better." "I have a pair," said the rat. "If you will wait I will get them for you." So the girl took the moonshine moccasins to the sick woman. . When she saw them she began to get better. When she put them on her feet she got well. The muskrat never came for the moccasins.—(Chippewa.)

## MUKEWEJIS PUNISHES HIS NEPHEW

Mukewejis, the Great Spirit, had a nephew Wassamowin, also called Heat Lightning. Mukewejis, when he was angry, could hurl his arrows (thunderbolts) to earth with tremendous force and great accuracy. He never missed his mark, whether it was a tree, a rock or a human being. His nephew also had the power of casting thunderbolts, a supply of which he always carried in his quiver. Such was his success in throwing his arrows that after a while he thought that he was as powerful as his uncle.

For a time Mukewejis tolerated the loud boasting of his nephew. Finally he became very angry. He challenged Heat Lightning to an arrow combat. This melee, when it occurred, was a tremendous affair. The flying thunderbolts which the two gods hurled at each other lighted the entire

heavens. At times they seemed on fire. Mukewejis vanquished his nephew. As a punishment for his presumption and boasting he placed him high in the sky over Lake Superior. He also broke and cast away all of his arrows. There over the great lake the presence of Heat Lightning is often made known by the momentary reddening of the sky just before a storm. He may not leave his post. He often prays his uncle Mukewejis to restore him to his former position and power, but Mukewejis refuses to listen to his pleading. So he remains high over Lake Superior.—(Chippewa.)

### THE DOLL BEING SPIRIT

A long, long time ago a number of Indian children were playing with dry sticks in the forest near the village where they lived. Some of the children were not satisfied to play with just plain sticks. So they cut heads and faces on them and then wrapped them with leaves, grass and moss. After playing with them for a time they laid them down. When they later returned they were surprised to find that the little stick-dolls had become alive. They were standing up and some were walking about. Some were rolling their eyes as real dolls sometimes do. The children became frightened and told their parents. They immediately prepared a ceremony to appease Nawneetis, the Doll Being Spirit.

One little Indian girl named Wanetha kept one of the little stick-dolls. She played with it and loved it dearly. It seemed to like her too and would walk and even dance for her. One day she lost it. She grieved so over its loss that she became sick. She became very sick and her parents were greatly alarmed. They went to the prophet of the village and told him of the little girl's doll and of her illness. He decided that she would get well only if the doll was found. That very night the Doll Being Spirit appeared to Wanetha in a dream. It told her how to direct her parents to find the doll. Wanetha told her parents of her dream and of what the Doll Being Spirit had said. "Find me and keep me in your wigwam always. You must make new clothing for me and hold a dance and give a feast for me every spring. Do as I say and all will be made. If you fail misfortune will surely come." The doll was found by her parents. They dressed it. They made

some hominy, prepared some venison and held a dance in its honor. This rite they performed for years. This was not done because they feared the Doll Being Spirit but for the sake of the great love they had for their children.—(Delaware.)

### **TURTLE FIGHTS THE INDIANS**

Turtle thought he was a great warrior and he wanted to fight the Indians. He decided to make up a war party and he invited the animals of the woods to join it. Deer came along and offered to join the party. Turtle asked him to show how well he could fight. Deer then started to fight a big tree but he broke off one of his horns. Turtle told him he would never do for the war party. Bear came along and wanted to join. Turtle told him to fight a tree. Bear rushed at the tree, growling. He fought hard but he broke one of his claws. Turtle said he would not do for the war party. The Indians would surely kill him. Other animals came along and offered their services, but Turtle had some fault to find with all of them. He would have none of them for his war party.

Turtle took his war-club and went alone to fight the Indians. He soon came to the Indian village. While he was planning how best to attack it some Indians, who were returning from a hunt, came along and captured him. They decided to punish him. Some wanted to throw him into the fire. Finally they decided to drown him. So they took him to a lake and threw him into the deep water. He made a big splash as he went down. They thought that he was dead but he soon came up again. He then told them that the lake was his home. So his life was saved.—(Mascouten.)

### **RACCOON AND THE BLIND MEN**

Raccoon was a mischief maker. He just loved to play a joke on anyone. He lived at the top of a hollow tree near the Indian village. In this village lived two old blind men. Because they could not see they tied a cord from the wigwam where they lived to a tree in the woods. This was to guide them when they went out. They were afraid of getting lost. One day Raccoon happened to come that way. He saw the cord fastened to the tree and untied it. He tied it again to

a small tree that stood on the bank of the lake. Then he climbed up into a tree and waited. Soon after this one of the blind men came out of the wigwam and with one hand on the cord walked to the lake bank. There he fell into the water. Then the other blind man also came out and followed the cord to its end. He fell into the water and on top of the other man, who was trying to get out of the lake. Each accused the other of pushing him into the water. They began to scold and to fight each other. Raccoon enjoyed their mishap very much. He laughed and laughed. The people of the village rescued the old blind men from the water. Raccoon was still laughing harder than ever. They found him and shot him and fastened his hide to the trunk of a tree. And that was the end of Raccoon.—(Winnebago.)

### THE GEESE HOLD A COUNCIL

Away out in the middle of the lake the Wild Geese were holding a council. There were many of them and they were making quite a lot of noise. Wisaka sat on the lake shore. He was hungry and he wished to have some of them to roast and eat. He thought of a good way to get them. He made some strong basswood cords and entered the water. He was afraid of scaring them so he swam under the water until he got out to where they were. He was a very good swimmer. They were all talking and did not notice him. Now he was under them. He tied the cord to the leg of a goose, and then to the leg of another. When all were tied he suddenly rose to the surface of the water. The frightened geese rose into the air and carried him along. They flew for the lake shore. There Wisaka killed those which he wanted to eat and let the rest of them go. To this day the Wild Geese are always watching out for him. That is why they are so hard to get. They fear that he may be hungry and wish to kill more of them.—(Mascouten.)

### THE INDIAN AND THE SPIDER

Once an Indian was trying to find a way to cross a deep river. He walked up and down the bank but could find no place where he could ford it. Then he heard a tiny voice speaking, "What do you want walking back and forth?" He

answered, "I want to cross the river." The little voice spoke, "You just step into the water and walk across it as if it was ice, and after you get across come back." So the Indian stepped on the water. It held him up and he crossed safely to the other bank. Remembering his promise he then ran back to the other bank. Here he heard the tiny voice again, almost by his side. It said, "I will always help you this much—if you want to walk on the water do so." He looked in the bushes and in the trees, but he could not find the owner of the tiny voice. So he went back to his village and told the old men of his experience. They laughed at him. "It was a spider that spoke to you. You were looking up. If you had looked down you would have seen the spider and his web bridge across the water. This means that you will become a great hunter—no stream will stop you in the hunt," said they. And so it always afterwards happened. This hunter could always cross any stream because of the power given by the little spider.—(Potawatomi.)

### ON THE WAR-PATH

Ten bad Indians once went on the war-path. They were going to attack another Indian village and steal horses. They were armed with bows, spears and clubs. They traveled all day and as night drew near they found themselves in a large forest. There they decided to camp until morning. After they had spread their robes on the ground one warrior said, "I am thirsty. I must get some water to drink." Some of the other Indians were also thirsty. He said he would bring water for them. He took a bark bucket and went to a spring not far away. He returned to the fire with the water. When the other men went to drink the water they found that it had turned to blood. No one cared to drink it. Being frightened the men said, "Put it away until morning and see what happens." In the morning the blood in the bucket was gone. The warrior who had brought it from the spring was dead. This was a bad sign, the Indian spirits were angry. All of the men now became frightened and they said, "We must not go to war, or we will all die." So they returned to their village.—(Sioux.)

## **BEARS AND BEECHNUTS**

You know those funny little three-sided nuts they call beechnuts? The trees grow in many places. Whenever the nuts are plentiful and scattered over the ground in the fall many bears come. Yes, many bears. They eat the little nuts. They like 'em. Bears come from everywhere. Big black bears and little black bears. You better be away when they come, too. They are pretty hungry. Where do they come from? Why they just come out of the creeks and the springs. Why? They live there. They just come out of the creeks and springs when beechnuts are on the ground. If you poke a long pole down into one of the springs they get pretty mad. You can hear them growl. Yes they come out when beechnuts are on the ground.—(Menomini.)

## **CRAYFISH WANTED SPEED**

When Turtle came out of the water he found Crayfish sitting on the muddy lake bank. His friend asked him where he was going. Turtle said he was about to visit some relations who were giving a feast. Crayfish asked Turtle if he could go along to the feast and Turtle invited him to do so. After they had traveled quite a distance Crayfish began to get tired. He said he was so tired that he could go no further. So Turtle invited him to ride on his back. After they had been walking for a while Crayfish said, "Can't you go a little faster?" So Turtle quickened his pace. After a while Crayfish grasped Turtle's neck with a claw and said, "Can't you move faster than this? We will not get to the feast in time." So Turtle began to run to please his passenger. But Crayfish was not satisfied. Grasping Turtle's neck and pinching it with both claws, he said, "If you can't run faster than this I will not go along." Now at last Turtle became angry. Rolling over suddenly he dumped Crayfish off his back saying, "If you are not satisfied with my pace do some running yourself." And the ungrateful Crayfish had to crawl along by himself. While he was doing so a Fox met him and made a feast of him.—(Sauk.)

## **HUNTING MUSKRATS**

Two Indians were once spearing muskrats. While they were going to the marsh where these animals had their homes



the old Indian said to the younger man. "The one who spears the least muskrats will have to carry all of the dead muskrats home." This the young hunter agreed to. Both were soon busy. The young hunter was wise. He hid most of the muskrats he speared and didn't let the older man know how many he got. When they were about to start for home the old man proudly showed his bundle of rats and said, "I guess you will have to carry all home." "Now just wait a bit," said the young hunter. Then he began to gather all the rats he had hidden. He had by far the larger number. The old hunter was surprised. He had to carry all of the muskrats home. When they returned to the village the people were watching. They had expected to see the young man carrying all of the muskrats. They were prepared to laugh at him.—(Miami-Chippewa.)

#### **Other Folklore Booklets**

Paul Bunyan and Tony Beaver  
Tales, Old Stormalong Yarns, Cowboy  
Tales. Ghost Tales, Prairie Stories,  
Gypsy Lore and Cloud Lore.

# Birchbark Tales



*Animal Stories of the  
Wisconsin Indians*

FOR CAMP FIRE, FIRESIDE  
AND SCHOOL-ROOM



CHARLES E. BROWN  
Wisconsin Folklore Society  
Madison, Wisconsin

1941

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## CHIPMUNK ESCAPES

"Kakik, the Chipmunk, is a little fellow but he has strong power. One day Panther, hunting for food, surprised Chipmunk at play away from his home. He ran up a tree to get away. Here he stopped just out of reach. Panther lay down at the base of the tree waiting for him. He laughed when he thought of how he would finally catch Kakik. After a while Kakik began to come down very cautiously, circling the tree trunk. Panther followed him around, but when he got to the opposite side all that he saw was a striped garter snake crawling away in the grass. Chipmunk had made use of his magic and transformed himself to a snake to escape." (Menomini)

## THE OWL

"The Indian folks say that the Owl always remains in the woods. There he has his home in a hollow tree. In the spring he hoots to call his friends. When the Indian people hear this call they know that the Owl is near and they put tobacco in the wigwam fire so that the Owl can smoke. In return for this kindness the Owl brings good luck to them. The Indians ask for success in fishing and hunting and the Owl gives it to them because they put tobacco in the fire for him. When children get lost in the woods the Owl helps to find them." (Potawatomi)

## TURTLE'S RACE

A Turtle who lived in a lake made a bet with an Elk who came to feed there that he could beat him in a race. The Elk laughed at him, but he accepted the challenge. A date for the race was set and a course agreed upon. Turtle called together his numerous brothers who promised to help him win. On the day of the race Turtle posted his brothers at even distances along the course. When the signal for the race was given the two runners started off. Elk ran fast and soon left Turtle behind. After he had run a short distance Elk saw Turtle running just ahead of him. Elk passed him and ran on, only to find a turtle always ahead of him. As he neared the finish line he saw Turtle just crossing the goal. Elk was bewildered by his unexpected defeat. Turtle killed and ate Elk, that was the bet he had made. (Chippewa)

## DAY AND NIGHT

Bear wanted it to be night all the time. Partridge wanted day, so they decided to have a calling contest to see who would have his way. The contest was to last ten days. Bear began to say "tipikut, tipikut, tipikut" (to be dark, to be dark, to be dark). Partridge cried "kitw apin" (let it be day). When Bear had cried for seven days he was tired out and fell asleep. Partridge kept on with his cries and won. The number of days he called are marked on his tail feathers with black bars. (Menomini)

## THE PRAIRIE CHICKEN WOMAN

"A Prairie Chicken lost her husband. She wanted another husband. All of the birds and animals were afraid to marry her, because they thought that she was a witch. They brought presents to her but they would not marry her. She saw a woman working in a field. A little boy was with her. Prairie Chicken made herself large like an eagle. She swooped down and carried away the boy and took him to her home. There she made medicine to make him grow. He grew to be a man and married Prairie Chicken. The mother hunted for her boy. She did not know him when she saw him because he had grown up. She is still hunting for him. Prairie Chicken is very happy with her husband." (Chippewa)

## THE BOY WHO BECAME A ROBIN

"Once, a very long time ago, there was an Indian boy who fasted for many days to obtain blessings. His father and mother made him a little wigwam to live in while he fasted. There was a smoke hole in its roof. Every day the father went to see his son. On the tenth day of his fast the boy was very weak. He asked his father to give him some food and told him that he was dying. The father said, "No. my boy, not yet. Maybe tomorrow I will bring you something to eat."

The next day his parents decided to feed him. His mother made some hominy for him. This the father took to the little wigwam. When he got there he saw a Robin fly out of the smoke hole and to a tree. The boy was gone. The Robin began to sing. The father called the bird to come back, but

he flew away, and that was the last that he saw of his boy. And in the spring when the robins sing they say, "I'm a bird. I'm a bird." (Winnebago)

### **HOW THE ANIMALS GOT THEIR FAT**

In a council of animal people, it was discussed as to how much fat each animal should carry. In the center of the lodge there was a large kettle of fat. This was to be distributed among the animals. While they were considering the matter the wily Fox, who had been watching for this chance, suddenly sprang into the kettle and then out again. He became very fat. Bear, who was acting as chief of the council, shouted to the doorkeepers to hold Fox. He was caught before he could escape. He was dragged before the council and all of the fat squeezed out of him except a little above his fore legs. Then he was thrown out of the meeting. For this reason Fox is always thin and poor. Then the animals were bathed in the kettle and each was given the amount of fat that he could carry. All were pleased with the distribution. (Winnebago)

### **THE WOODPECKER MAN**

A girl went out from her father's village with other girls to pick hazelnuts. They carried baskets for the nuts. In the picking the girl lost her friends in the brush. While she was hunting for them a young man came up. He had fine clothes and wore on his head a red roach. He spoke to her, "You will do for a wife." She was afraid and cried out, but the other girls did not hear her. He took her away to a place in the woods where there were many dead trees. Here she saw many woodpeckers, but no people. She married the Woodpecker. She cried so much that at last he let her go. He showed her the way home. At home she was despised by her people. She wished that she had remained with her husband; she built a wigwam in the brush and lived there. (Chippewa)

### **THE GEESE HOLD A COUNCIL**

The Wild Geese were holding a council away out in the lake. They were making such a noise that they could hardly

hear each other. Wisaka sat on the lake shore. He wished that he might feast on goose flesh. Then he thought of a good way to get some of them. He secured some basswood fibres, twisted them into cords and entered the water. He was afraid of scaring the birds so he swam under water until he got to them. They were still talking. Swimming beneath them he tied a cord to the leg of a goose and then swam beneath another. When all were tied he suddenly rose to the surface. The frightened Geese flew into the air and carried him along. When they reached the shore they became entangled in the trees and brush. He killed those which he wanted to eat and let the rest of them go. (Potawatomi)

### BEAR LOST HIS TAIL

One day when Bear was walking along over the hills he met Fox. Fox was carrying a nice long string of fish. Bear asked his friend where and how he got them. Fox told him that he had caught them with his tail. Bear wanted to know just how he did this. So Fox told him to go to the lake and cut a hole in the ice and put his tail in it. The fish would bite the tail, and when Bear felt a bite he was to jump and pull the fish out on the ice. He was not to do this until the fish took a good bite. They would just nibble at first. Bear followed Fox's directions. He cut a hole in the ice and sat there on his haunches waiting for the fish to come. Soon he felt a nibble and then other nibbles. That was the ice freezing about his tail. Then he felt a good bite and gave a jump and broke off his tail which had frozen into the ice. So Bear has only a stub for a tail. (Chippewa)

### REDBIRD AND BLACKBIRD

Once there were two men whose names were Redbird and Blackbird. They used to dig for wild potatoes which was all of the food they had. One day they went across a lake where there were great fields of wild rice. Some of the rice they decided to gather for food.

The next day they went to this place and began to gather the rice in baskets. While they were doing this some people, who were also gathering rice, came up and greeted them.

These people said, "Why we have never seen you before." The men answered that they had come across the lake to gather some wild rice, they had never had any other food than wild potatoes. The people pitied them and said that they did right in coming over. Wild rice was good food.

When they had gathered all of the wild rice that they could carry they shook hands with the people and went home. After the two men had left, the people decided to go over to their wigwam, kill the two men and steal all of their potatoes.

Blackbird, however, knew that they would be attacked so the two men transformed themselves into birds. They knew that if they stayed they would be killed, so they decided to go away. Blackbird flew to another lake and Redbird to the woods. (Chippewa)

### THE FIREFLIES

A small Indian girl in walking through the woods one day from her father's to her grandfather's wigwam went astray on a trail and never reached her destination. When she failed to arrive her relatives went out to search for her, but she was not found. Her father went to an Indian medicine man and asked him to use his magic power to find the little girl. This man called all of the animals of the woods and the birds of air to assist in the search. They hunted everywhere but were not successful in finding the child.

At last a tiny insect, a Firefly, came to report that he had found the lost one asleep beneath a bed of leaves in the woods. Being lost, tired and cold she had crawled into the leaves and there had fallen asleep. She was found and her parents rejoiced at her safe return. The Manido has given to these little insects, the Fireflies, (Wah-wah-too-see) little lanterns which they carry about with them after dark. As they fly about in the brush, showing their lights, they search for lost persons to guide them to their homes. (Mascouten)

### RABBIT AND THE LYNX

Rabbit lived in a den in the woods. One day while he was out walking Rabbit met Lynx. "Hello Lynx," said he. "Hello Rabbit," answered Lynx.

"Where are you going?" asked Lynx.

"I am going to "Wrinkled-face Hill," answered Rabbit. "Where are you going, Lynx?" asked Rabbit. "I am going to "Long eared Hill," replied Lynx.

Then sat down and smoked their pipes. After a while Lynx said he must be going. He left and soon came to a pond. In the water he saw his face. Then, he said, "So Rabbit is making fun of me. Well Rabbit this is the last day that you will live." So he returned to get Rabbit. Rabbit saw him coming and started to run. He ran about in all directions making trails to fool Lynx. Then he made for his den. He took his medicine drum and sang a song about Lynx. He knew that Lynx must be near at hand and would hear the song. Then he ran off into the woods.

Lynx hid in the brush. Rabbit thought that he had fooled Lynx again and came hopping by on one of the trails he had made. Lynx jumped out and grabbed him. "Huh!" said Lynx, "I thought that I would get you before nightfall." That was the end of Rabbit. (Chippewa)

## THE VAIN BLUE JAY

The Blue Jay once had a beautiful voice. His songs were the finest of those of any of the birds. At every gathering of the birds he was asked to sing, and he never failed to receive the loud applause of all who were present. With his melodious voice Earthmaker had given him a beautiful coat of sky blue, ornamented with white and black colors and a fine headdress.

After a while Blue Jay, because of the applause his singing and costume always received, became very vain. He became so proud of himself that he just strutted about to show off his fine raiment. He refused to do any work at all. Then he began to steal food from the other birds.

Hearing of this Earthmaker decided to punish Blue Jay. He took from him his beautiful voice. At the next council held by the birds Blue Jay was again asked to sing. He sat on a limb before the company, puffed out his chest and



opened his mouth. Instead of his beautiful song only the harshest notes came forth. He tried again and again to sing but with no better result. The birds knew then that he had been punished. Ashamed and humbled he flew away. His once beautiful voice has never been returned to him. (Winnebago)

### **RACCOON AND THE BLIND MEN**

Two old Indians were blind so they tied a cord from the wigwam where they lived to a tree in the woods. This was done so that they could take a walk when they wished to and would not get lost in the woods.

One day Racoon happened to come that way. He was fond of a joke, he untied the end of the cord and tied it again to a sapling that stood on the edge of the lake bank. Then he sat down under a tree and waited for something to happen. Soon one of the old blind men came from the wigwam and with a hand on the cord walked to its end at the lake bank. There he stumbled and fell into the water. While he was struggling the second old man left the wigwam, walked to the cord's end and also fell into the lake. Each of the men accused the other of pushing him into the water and they began to fight. Racoon sat on a limb of a tree and laughed until he could laugh no more. Some of the people in the Indian village, who heard the noise of the fighting, came to the lake and rescued the two old men. One man heard Racoon still laughing in a tree and shot and killed him with an arrow. His skin was fastened to a tree to warn other tricksters. (Potawatomi)

### **THE PORCUPINE**

At first Porcupine had no quills so he was always in danger from the Bear and other animals who wanted to catch and eat him. He had some narrow escapes. One day he sought refuge in the branches of a thornapple tree which had sharp thorns. These pricked and kept his enemies away. When he came down from the tree he broke off some of the thorny branches and put these on his back.

Just then Bear came along and ran for him. Porcupine curled up on the ground and Bear could do him no harm for the thorns pricked him badly.

Nanabush was watching and he called to Porcupine and asked him "how he learned such a trick." Porcupine told him and how he was always in danger when Bear was near and hungry. Nanabush then took some of the thorns and peeled off the bark until the white wood showed. He put some clay on Porcupine's back and stuck the thorns in it. He sent Porcupine into the woods to try out his new suit of armor. The Wolf came along but went away when he saw the thorns. Since then all of the Porcupines have thorn-like quills. (Chippewa)

### THE INDIAN AND THE SPIDER

An Indian stood on the bank of a river which he wanted to cross. It was quite large and deep. He had no canoe and he could not swim. While he was walking and thinking of how to cross he heard a little voice speaking. "What do you want walking back and forth?" He replied. "I want to cross the river."

The little voice spoke again, "You step on the water and walk as if you were walking on ice. After you have crossed come back in the same way." He did so. After his return he looked for the owner of the small voice—he searched the bushes on the river bank and looked up in the trees, but he could see no one.

He went back to his village and there told the old men of his adventure. They laughed loudly and said. "It was a Spider that spoke to you. If you had looked down you would have seen him and his web (bridge) stretching across the water. This means that you will become a great hunter,—no stream will ever stop you in the hunt. The Spider is your friend." (Potawatomi)



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# LAKE MENDOTA INDIAN LEGENDS

Prepared for the use of Students

University of Wisconsin

Summer Session



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CHARLES E. BROWN  
Chief, State Historical Museum  
Madison, Wisconsin  
1927

Here, often by Mendota's tree-hung shore,  
By ancient mounds in form like beast or bird,  
Weird music of their sacred rites was heard,  
And swaying dancers symbolized the lore  
Of mighty deeds of man and Manitou.

—Sam Bryan.

## LAKE MENDOTA INDIAN LEGENDS

Obtained from the Winnebago Indians whose camps and villages were located at different places on its shores up to 1840 and later.

### THE FOUR LAKES

The Winnebago numbered the Madison lakes differently from the whites; they began at the north and called our Fourth Lake, first, and so on through the series. Their names for them are:

Their first (our Fourth or Mendota Lake) Wonk-sheck-ho-mik-la, the lake where the Indian lies.

Their second (our Third or Monona Lake) Tchec-ho-bo-kee-xa kay-te-la, tepee lake.

Their third (our Second or Waubesa Lake) Sa-hoo cha-te-la, rushes lake.

Their fourth (our First or Kegonsa Lake) Na-sa-koo-cha-te-la, hard-maple grove lake.

All of these names are self-explanatory and appropriate except the first. Its significance is given in the following legend:

Long ago, when the Winnebago dwelt around the Four Lakes, a young man, who had fasted long, was blessed with a vision of a spirit maiden who dwelt in a large lake. So this young man and his intimate friend, for the institution of friendship between youths was very strong, set out to find the fulfillment of the dream. They passed along the shore of the southernmost lake just after the first light snow had fallen, when they saw the tracks of what appeared to be a giant raccoon, come out of the lake and lead to a tall tree. They followed the trail and at the foot of the tree, looked up and saw two great eyes shining down at them. The first

youth was very hungry and he persuaded his friend to climb the tree and endeavor to catch the animal; but when the friend mounted the tree and looked down into its hollow trunk, there was no raccoon there, only a great catfish. The hungry lad asked his friend to kill the catfish and throw it down for them to eat, but the first youth was superstitious and would not do so—"It is a spirit fish," he said, "for it was changed from a raccoon, no good comes to anyone who kills and eats it." But the hungry Indian persisted, and at last his friend to oblige him reached down into the hole, hauled up the great fish, killed it with a blow of his stone axe, and threw it down on the shore where the hungry youth had already kindled a fire. Then the young man who had dreamed, cooked and ate the fish, while his friend stood by refusing to partake because of his fear.

After eating the fish the Indian grew very thirsty, and asked his friend for water several times. Finally his friend said, "You may as well go down to the lake yourself and drink your fill." He did so, and did not return. When his friend went to look for him there was no Indian there, but only a great catfish swimming around in the water. His friend cried out, "I was afraid this would happen, I warned you, but you would not listen."

Then the fish opened its mouth and cried, "Friend, I brought you here purposely as I have been blessed by a spirit maiden who dwells in the largest lake. There are two beautiful maidens and I thought we might both go and marry them and live there forever. But you refused, so I will go alone. Nevertheless I will bless you with long life upon the earth." So saying he darted forth with a great noise and made a leap from first into second lake, then he made another dart and noise in the next lake, and the same in the third, until he reached the large lake where he had been told the spirit maiden dwelt. There he found her and there he remained, so the lake has ever since been called, because he dwells there with his Indian maiden, "the Lake where the Indian lies."

### MAPLE BLUFF

Many years ago two Winnebago Indians who were hunt-

ing game found near the ford of the Catfish (Yahara) River the track of a raccoon, which they followed. It lead them to the point on the east shore of the lake now known as Maple Bluff. Here they saw the animal which crawled into a hollow log. The raccoon was a wakanda (spirit). It so informed the hunfers. One of the Indians refused to heed this warning. He killed and made a hearty meal of the animal. Then he laid down to sleep. When he awoke he was very thirsty. He went to a spring on the shore of the lake and drank deeply. But this did not appease his thirst. The more he drank the more thirsty he became. His thirst soon became so bad that he waded out into the lake. As soon as he was in the water his thirst left him but returned again when he came on shore. So he was compelled to remain in the deep water and here he soon sank from sight.

On quiet nights the Indians say one may hear at Maple Bluff, coming from the lake, the cries of this unfortunate Indian and the beating of his war drum.

#### GOVERNORS ISLAND

Water spirits (wak 'tcexi) live in the deep water off the shore of Governors Island. Only a few old men have ever seen them. These long-tailed water monsters were feared by the local redmen. When they are angry they cause the waters to become very rough and at such times they overturn the Indian canoes and people are drowned. At night they crawl out on the bank. They are regarded as "bad" spirits and were frequently at war with the powerful Thunderbirds. Tobacco offerings were formerly made on the waters of the lake to retain their good will. When Earthmaker created the earth he put four water spirits under it to keep it from turning. Then he scattered stones over its surface and the earth became quiet. The large panther effigy (with a long curved tail) on the State Hospital lawn is said to represent one of these water spirits. The bird mounds located there are probably effigies of Thunderbirds.

#### RATTLESNAKE LEDGE

Many rattlesnakes were formerly found on Governors Is-

land. Their dens were in the cracks and crevices in the limestone wall along its waterfront. They were regarded as sacred by the Indians who would not kill them. They were created by Earthmaker first and placed in the earth to keep evil away from the homes of men. The Winnebago snake clan had a feast in which snakes were specially honored with songs and offerings. This was held in the fall when they crawl into their dens for their winter sleep, and "close their doors." Some Indians will not tell a story in the summer time when these reptiles are active.

### KENNEDY POND

When Earthmaker was engaged in creating the world he misplaced one small lake. It was afterwards found here. This is Kennedy Pond or "Lost" Lake, located in the woods a short distance north of Morris Park. There are several Water Spirit (panther) mounds on its shores and the pond may have been regarded as a retreat of these powerful underground spirits.

### FOX BLUFF

The top of Fox Bluff, on the north shore of Lake Mendota, was a place where the Thunderbirds sometimes roosted. Old Indians claim to have seen these huge bird deities roosting here in early days. Their nests are said to be on the tops of mountains in the far North. When the weather is stormy, one or a number of Thunderers can be seen flying high up in the sky. Lightning is caused by the flashing of their eyes and peals of thunder by the flapping of their wings. When their wings strike the clouds it rains. When they are angry they drop their eggs on wigwams and villages and then people are killed. They set fire to forests and shatter the rocks. They sometimes carry away people who are never heard of again. The Indians regard the Thunderbird as a very powerful deity. He is the ancestor of the most important Winnebago clan. The Thunderers made the first fire with their fire-sticks. They thus gave fire to the Indian.

## MERRILL SPRINGS

Springs are the openings through which the animals enter the spirit world. The Winnebago in former times made offerings of tobacco, food, and stone and bone implements to the animals at these places to obtain their "blessings."

One of the springs at Merrill Springs was a "medicine" spring and its waters were believed to possess special healing properties. Wishes made while drinking its waters might be fulfilled.

## EAGLE HEIGHTS

The Winnebago name for Eagle Heights was Sho-heta-ka (horse hill). They believed that this highest hill on the shore of Lake Mendota was inhabited by a spirit horse. It could be heard neighing and stamping its feet at times. On cloudy or misty days its form could sometimes be seen on top of the hill. Being a sacred place some of the Indians went to this hill to fast and dream and to gain inspiration and power from this spirit horse. No Indian has seen the horse for many years.

## BLACK HAWK CAVE

At Blackhawk on the shore of Lake Mendota is a cave in which the Sauk Chief Black Hawk is claimed to have hid during his retreat to the Wisconsin River, in July 1832. There is no foundation for this legend. Black Hawk was retreating too rapidly before the pursuing U. S. troops and militia to have an opportunity to hide in any cave. Similar fictitious Black Hawk myths have in the past few years "grown up" about a number of localities in southern Wisconsin.

## OBSERVATORY HILL

On the top of Observatory Hill is an Indian mound representing a turtle. Turtle was the Winnebago war spirit. Earthmaker sent him down to earth to instruct the Indians how to live and he forgot his mission and taught them how to make war instead. He created so much trouble that he was recalled by Earthmaker and Hare sent to the earth in his place. The turtle mound on Observatory Hill has two tails. Their purpose is not explained.

Mary Stuart Foster

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# INDIAN FLOWER TOYS AND GAMES

PREPARED FOR THE USE OF STUDENTS

University of Wisconsin

Summer Session



*Milkweed Pod Birds*

Charles E. Brown  
State Historical Museum  
Madison, Wisconsin  
1931



## INDIAN FLOWER TOYS AND GAMES

In their fondness for home-made toys Indian children are like the young people of other nations. Of flowers, leaves, stems, roots, fruits and seeds they fashion many interesting toys and with them play many delightful games. Indian boys and girls used as much ingenuity in contriving flower toys and games as white children do. Some of their toys and games of this nature are as old and as widespread as our own.

"Among the Zuni Indians flowers are associated with butterflies and music. The God of Music created a mythical plant bearing blossoms of the colors of the six cardinal points yellow, blue, red, white; all colors for the zenith, and black for the nadir. With the musical notes of his flute he can draw to him the flowers and butterflies of the world."

### FLOWERS

Small flowers of various kinds are woven by Indian girls into pretty necklaces, headbands, girdles and garlands. Single flowers are trust into the hair in play. Flowers with long stems are wrapped with large leaves tied on with blades of grass and used as dolls. Indian names are given to these. Roses and other flowers were inverted on a piece of bark and made to dance by gently shaking it. Iroquois children played a little game with violets in which the spurs of the blossoms are interlocked and their heads pulled off. Cherokee children play this game to which they have given a name which means "they pull each other's heads off." Omaha children divide into two parties. One takes the name of their own tribe or village and the other that of some other. The two groups sit facing each other, each player snapping violets with his opponent until one of the other had no flowers remaining. The victors taunted their opponents with being poor fighters. Some Winnebago girls used flower petals as counters in games. To keep them these were pierced with a grass stem, being withdrawn as required. In mimic encounters Chippewa boys pelt each other with thistle blossoms, shouting a war cry as they do so. Omaha boys shoot at thistle blooms with the bow and arrow. These they call by a name meaning "the enemy." The youth making the most hits is believed to show promise of becoming a successful warrior.



## LEAVES AND STEMS

Menomini children hold basswood leaves to their mouths and blow through them making an explosive noise. Chippewa children fill the pitcher shaped leaves of the pitcher plant with sand or berries and use them as playthings. The native name for this plant means "frog's leggings." These children also make dolls from bunches of grass and from cattail and other leaves. Little ducks are also woven from the leaves of the abundant cattail. These they place on the surface of a pool and by blowing them cause them to swim about as if alive. Bright autumn leaves are used in playing a game of "post office." The letters (leaves) are delivered by a "postman" and the little folks pretend to read their contents. The markings on the leaves represent words and sentences. Pine needles are used in making toy "snowshoes." The needle is bent and inserted in the socket at its base. The resemblance to the wooden frame to a snowshoe is good. Many such needles are interlaced to form a necklace. Small girls weave little mats from rushes similar to the large ones made by their mothers. Dolls are also constructed of little tufts of Norway pine needles. The bunch is trimmed at the bottom and also cut across half way up. These latter are intended to represent a shoulder shawl. These little figures are placed in a tin pan or on a flat piece of metal and "dance" about when it is shaken. Autumn leaves (maple) are bent up the middle by Potawatomi children and tossed in the air to become make-believe butterflies or birds.

Leaves are also bent in the form of tiny canoes. Flowers are placed in these to represent people. Children of the Nebraska tribes construct little tipis with the leaves and stems of cottonwood trees. The leaves are rolled into the form of small cones and pinned with stems or splinters. The tops of the cones are torn and bent down to make the smoke flaps. These little tents are stood in little circles to imitate the arrangement of a Plains Indian encampment. Stock-bridge girls bend and overlap leaves to form a toy wigwam.

Plains Indian young people use the joints of the horsetail or scouring rush for the making of toy whistles, also for tubes in sucking up sweetened water. They are also pulled apart and strung in necklaces. Girls throw the dodder vines over their shoulders. If, in falling, they attach themselves to a plant they know that their sweethearts are true. Girls imitate their mothers in placing a bunch of bedstraw in their girdles. This is a favorite Indian perfume.

Elder and highbush cranberry stems are used by boys in the making of popguns. The wadding used in these guns is pith or thistle-down. Chippewa youths make little whistles out of wild onion stems. The stems are allowed to dry a little and a hole is cut in their sides. The whistling is produced by blowing across their ends. Oneida boys used these stems as pea-shooters for blowing missiles consisting of small seeds.

Pop guns and bean-shooters are made by the children of other Western tribes.

Some Winnebago youth were warned by their elders not to mutilate the horsetail lest the snakes should come. Some, however, played with the giant horsetail, using it as whips or pretended fish-poles. Zuni and Hopi boys also make pea-shooters from hollow plant stems. Dakota Indian boys played a "cactus game" with the low cactus plants which grow on the hilltops. A boy who was a good runner would impale a cactus plant on a stick. This he held out for other boys to shoot at with bows and arrows. When a boy hit the plant the holder would run after him and strike him with the cactus.

Omaha children play a game of jackstraws with stems of prairie joint grass. These are dropped in a little heap. The players in turn try to remove the grass stems with another stem without disturbing the heap. The boys of this tribe use sunflower stalks as hobby horses. The blossom represents the head of the horse. Often they ride one stalk and trail one or two others behind. These latter are "spare horses." Ponca boys sometimes use large sunflowers as targets in archery contests. To make arrows for their toy bows Plains Indian boys take the stiff stems of wild grass. A thorn inserted in one end served as a point. Iroquois girls make toy hammocks out of bunches of grass stems.

Wisconsin Indian children construct a little circle out of grass. This is attached by a piece of twine to the blunt end of a little pointed wooden pin. The ring is tossed up and the player tries to catch it on the pin. A little bundle of grass is sometimes used instead of a ring.

In playing the game of battledore and shuttlecock Zuni youth construct the latter of ribboned cornhusks fashioned into little pads. These are ornamented on top with small feathers which stand upright. On the Plains, Indian children gather chewing gum from the stem of the compass plant. The cottony fruits of the cottonwood are also chewed. The green and unopened fruits are used as beads and pendants in play.

## FRUITS AND SEEDS

Menomini children tossed small pine or spruce cones to each other in playing ball. The resin on cones was used as chewing gum. It is called *pe-ke-ke-suck* or "little gum." Small cones and oak galls were used as play earrings being suspended from the ears by a loop of basswood twine. The name of the gall was *pa-ku-ta-ko* or "lumpy berry." A marble game (*sa-tey-se-win*) was also played with these galls. Three small holes are made in the ground. The two players cast their marbles toward the most distant hole. The one whose marble was nearest tried to drive his opponent away from the hole. After both players had "holed-in" the next hole was played for. Children strung cranberries on twine for necklaces. Other berries were also used, the berries being pierced with a thorn or awl. Several such necklaces were worn in play. Games were also played with acorns. Chippewa boys make tops (*toweigan*) out of acorns and other nuts. Among the California Indians buzzer toys are made of acorns pierced and strung on fiber strings. One or several acorns are used. Lima beans were used by Creek and Cherokee children in games or as game counters.

Plains Indian children collect a handful and eat the prickly fruits of the wild gooseberry. The children take turns in eating. If one laughs during the eating he or she must pay a forfeit.

Among the Omaha the wild cucumber is called the "ghost melon." Children sometimes pelt each other with these prickly fruits in play. Omaha and Ponca boys use the pods of the little rattle-pod when ripe for rattles in dancing.

Prairie Potawatomi children in Wisconsin sometimes used the pods of the false indigo in a similar way. Some Winnebago children were given dried lotus pods for rattles. Plains children "pop" the inflated calices of the ground cherry on the forehead in play. This was considered good fun. The green fruits were strung as beads. Seeds are used by children of various tribes in necklace making.

Children gathered the pods of the wild sweet pea. These they roasted and ate in play. Ogalala boys used the milkweed plant in play as a headdress. The bright red autumn leaves of the sumach were sometimes used by Wisconsin Indian boys in constructing play headdresses. These children also pluck milkweed pods and impale them on the thorns of hawthorne trees or on the barbs of a wire fence to make "birds." They look very lifelike.

Hopi boys play a game in which darts made of corncobs and

feathers are hurled at a cornhusk ring. These darts have a wooden point, the feathers are at its other end.

Cornhusk dolls were made by or for the children of Eastern woodland tribes. The husks were tied to form a head, arms and legs. Corn-silk furnished the hair.

## ROOTS

Iroquois and Algonkian children wove rootlets and grass stems into toy baskets. Chippewa children make ducks from bullrush roots. These they floated on water. Figures of men and animals were also made from these. They were partially dried and made into figures by tying them with basswood fibre.

Haida boys play a game in which a head of wild celery, called "the porpoise," is placed on the ground and speared with short sticks. It is surrounded by pieces of the plant. If a boy succeeds in spearing it his side wins, if he fails he loses his arrow. When a piece of the plant is hit by a boy he takes it.

## MUSHROOMS

Large flat bracket fungi are removed from trees by Chippewa children and etched in patterns resembling those on woven yarn bags. They are used by little girls in their play being placed along the walls in imitation of the yarn bags in their mother's wigwams.

Parasol mushrooms are employed in play as parasols and umbrellas. The rough or scaly tops are believed to represent raindrops.

Earth stars (a-pa-kuk) are thought by the Menomini to be stars which have fallen during a rain. Children gather them believing that they may again rise and become real stars in the sky.

## BARK

The bark of trees, and especially birch-bark, is used by Indian children of the woodlands in the making of dolls, buzzers, toy furniture, dishes, baskets, cradle-boards and canoes. Such toys are also made for them by their parents or relatives. Dolls having a birch-bark body are dressed in buckskin or cloth. Animal figures are cut out of bark. Small birch-bark cones filled with maple sugar are given to children. Birch-bark tubes and torches are used by them in their play.

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# LAKE MENDOTA

## Prehistory, History and Legends

THE WISCONSIN ARCHEOLOGICAL  
SOCIETY



*Wisconsin Indians*

CHARLES E. BROWN  
*Secretary*  
Madison, Wisconsin  
1933

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# LAKE MENDOTA

## HISTORY

The Winnebago Indian name for Lake Mendota or Fourth Lake is Wonk-shek-ho-mik-la, meaning "where the man lies". The name Mendota, given to this lake in 1849 by Frank Hudson, a Madison surveyor, is a Sioux Indian name meaning "the mouth of the river". The Prairie Potawatomi called the lake Mantó-ka, "snake maker", referring perhaps to the early abundance of rattlesnakes at different places along its shores.

The Four Lakes region, was known to the Winnebago Indians as Tay-cho-pe-ra. The other three lakes are Monona, Waubesa and Kegonsa. Lake Wingra, a smaller lake, is connected with Lake Monona by a creek. The length of Lake Mendota is  $6\frac{1}{10}$  miles and its greatest breadth  $4\frac{1}{2}$  miles. Its area is 151.50 square miles. The walking distance around the lake is 24 miles. The greatest depth of the lake is 84 feet and the average depth  $37\frac{1}{2}$  feet. The Yahara or Catfish river (Myän-mek) flows into Lake Mendota on its north shore. This stream connects the four lakes with each other.

The earliest American travelers to visit the Four Lakes were James D. Doty (afterwards territorial governor of Wisconsin), Morgan L. Martin of Green Bay, and Lieut. Jefferson Davis (afterwards president of the Southern Confederacy), then stationed at Fort Winnebago, at Portage. John Catlin and Moses Strong staked out the center of the plat of Madison in February, 1837. Mr. and Mrs. Eben D. Peck, the first white settlers, came to the site of Madison from Blue Mounds, April 15, 1837.

They erected a log cabin near present King street, overlooking Lake Monona. Here the men who came to erect the first Madison state capitol building were boarded. Oliver Armel, a Frenchman, then had an Indian trading cabin between the capitol site and the Lake Mendota shore. At West Point, on the northeast shore of the same lake, Wallace Rowan, another Indian trader, had a cabin in 1832. In 1833 he disposed of this post to Michel St. Cyr, a French

Canadian. He traded with the Winnebago Indians until after the building of Madison. The Sauk chief Black Hawk with his warriors and women retreated over the site of Madison on his way to the Wisconsin river in July 1832. A monument on the upper University campus marks the line of his pursuit by U. S. troops.

## INDIAN VILLAGES

Winnebago Indian villages and camps were located at a number of places on the shores of Lake Mendota before and after white men came to this region. Their dome-shaped wigwams consisted of a framework of bent saplings covered with strips of bark or rush matting. They grew corn at all of their villages. In 1837 one of their large villages was located on the shores of a large marshy area, now Tenney Park, on the east shore of the lake and the adjoining lake shores. It had several hundred inhabitants. Its name is given as Chee-nunk, "village".

Another village was located on the banks of the Yahara river and the adjoining lake shores, on the north shore of the lake. This was Ne-o-sho. One of its planting grounds was on the lake shore lawn of the State Hospital and another at the eastern boundary of Morris Park. Some Indian corn hills remain at the latter locality and traces of some at the former place. The best known village was at the mouth of Pheasant Branch on the northwest shore of Lake Mendota. This was known as the "Four Lake village" or Tay-cho-pe-rah. It had at times, it is reported, from several hundred to five hundred inhabitants. White Crow, Kaw-ray-kaw-saw-kaw, was one of its chiefs. Other Winnebago camp grounds were at Mendota Beach, Merrill Springs, Second Point, Picnic Point bay, and below Observatory Hill on the Wisconsin University grounds. From these village and camp sites and from other lands about the shores of Lake Mendota large numbers of stone and some native copper and other implements, ornaments and ceremonials have been collected. Many of these are preserved in the exhibition halls of the State Historical Museum, in the Historical Library building. Some are attributed to an Indian people who occupied some of these sites in prehistoric time, before its occupation by the Winnebago. The Yellow Thunder, Wa-kun-zah-gah, was the war chief of the Winnebago of the Four Lakes villages. His oil portrait hangs in the Museum. The Winnebago call themselves Ho-chun-ga-ra, "fish-eaters." They are a tribe of the great Siouan stock of North American Indians.

The Sauk Indians, an Algonkian tribe, whose village was located at the present site of Sauk City and Prairie du Sac on the Wisconsin river, in 1766, also camped and hunted in the Four Lakes region.

## INDIAN MOUNDS

Over 11,000 Indian mounds have been located in Wisconsin by the State Archeological Survey. These earthworks consist of conical or round, oval, platform or flat-topped, linear or embankment shaped and animal or effigy mounds, pits, and enclosures. Most remarkable of these are the effigy or emblematic mounds. Two of these were constructed in human form. One of these is preserved in Man Mound Park near Baraboo. The most famous of the enclosures is known as Aztalan and consisted of the earth heaped about the wooden stockade of a stockade-protected prehistoric Indian village. Some of the outworks (mounds) of this ancient village (Cahokia culture) are preserved in Aztalan Mound Park, near Lake Mills. Among the numerous effigy mounds in southern and central Wisconsin some of the animals represented are the bear, panther, wild cat, fox or wolf, buffalo, beaver, mink, deer or elk, the turtle, frog, fish, snake, eagle or thunderbird, wild goose and other birds.

About one thousand Indian mounds were formerly located about the five Madison Lakes. Many of these have been destroyed in the cultivation of land, in road building and the growth of Madison. There were about 350 mounds on the shores of Lake Mendota. Mounds or mound groups remain on the campus of the University of Wisconsin, in Burroughs Park, at Maple Bluff, Bernards Park, the State Hospital and the State Memorial Hospital grounds, Morris Park, Fox Bluff, Kennedy Pond, West Point, Camp Sunrise, Mendota Beach, Merrill Springs, Black Hawk Country Club, Eagle Heights, and on Picnic Point. Some of these are permanently preserved and are marked with descriptive tablets, others are being protected.

The finest of these mounds are on the lawn of the State Hospital at Mendota, on the north shore of the lake. A bird effigy located there has the immense wingspread of 624 feet. It is the largest bird effigy mound in the world. Near it are two other huge bird mounds. A panther or water spirit effigy has a large tail which curves over its back. At the Y. M. C. A. Camp at Morris Park there is a large panther effigy with a large, tapering, straight tail. On a fairway of the Black Hawk Country Club there is a large wild goose effigy. Near it are three bear mounds. On Observatory Hill on the Uni-

versity grounds a bird effigy and a turtle effigy are preserved. Linear and round mounds are in some of the Lake Mendota mound groups.

Many of the mounds located here have been excavated. These contained human interments of several kinds—bone re-burials, flexed or folded burials and full length burials. One mound showed evidence of human cremation. Rude stone altars and burned stones were found in some of these mortuary mounds. A stone chamber built of large lake boulders was found in one mound. One mound was constructed of layers of several different kinds of earth. Stone and copper implements, earthenware vessels and stone and shell implements and animal bones accompanied the burials in some of the mounds investigated.

Archeological researches were begun in Wisconsin by Dr. Increase A. Lapham at Milwaukee, in 1836, and continued by him and his associates until the date of his death in 1875. In 1850 he published the results of his investigations in a book, *The Antiquities of Wisconsin*. Since the year 1901 this work has been continued by The Wisconsin Archeological Society. This Society has published to date twenty-two volumes of archeological reports.

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

Some very interesting Indian myths and legends of Lake Mendota have been collected and published. These add very much to the aboriginal lore of this beautiful lake. At Maple Bluff, in the long ago, an Indian hunter killed and ate a "spirit raccoon" with dire results. In the deep water near Governors Island there was a den of water monsters—water spirits whose anger overturned canoes and caused other water disturbances. On the top of Fox Bluff the powerful thunderbirds, "Thunderers", sometimes rested during their flights. Kennedy Pond, or Lost lake, is a small lake lost or misplaced by Earthmaker when he created and distributed the lakes of Wisconsin. At Merrill Springs there is an Indian medicine and-wishing spring. Eagle Heights was the place of abode in Indian days of a "spirit horse" whose form could be seen to rise above this high hill on misty days. To this vicinity the Indians went to fast and pray and to obtain the "blessings" of this spirit. A spirit abode was at Second Point near the present University Summer Session camp ground. An Observatory Hill legend tells of an Indian girl whose lover went away with a war party. There are other Indian folklore tales about great Lake Mendota.

## ADDITIONAL

An Indian spirit stone on the Historical Library grounds represents an unfortunate Indian who asked the Great Spirit for the gift of everlasting life. At West Point a boulder marker marks the site of a council held with the chiefs of the Winnebago by Col. Henry Dodge, on May 25, 1832, to urge this tribe not to take part in the then impending Black Hawk War.

Wisconsin archeological, historical and folklore literature and information may be obtained at the State Historical Museum.



# WINABOZHO

HERO-GOD OF THE INDIANS  
OF THE OLD NORTHWEST

MYTHS, LEGENDS AND STORIES



Dedicated to  
Dr. Eberhard J. W. Notz, Milwaukee

CHARLES E. BROWN  
Wisconsin Folklore Society  
Madison, Wisconsin  
1944

## WINABOZHO

Preceding Paul Bunyan, the mythical giant prince of the American lumberjacks, by centuries in the region of the Great Lakes, was the mighty Indian hero-god, Winabozho, creator of plant and animal life and ever-active friend and benefactor of the redmen. Known to the Algonquian Indian tribes from Maine to the Pacific Coast by a variety of names such as Nenabozho, Manabush, Wisaka, Kloskap, Michabo, Wisakedjak, Napik and others, the fame of his undertakings is recorded in Indian song and story. Winabozho was the eldest of four sons born of Earth Mother. The second was Chipiapoos, a gentle and beloved spirit. Wabesho, 'Maker of White', was the third. The fourth was the villain, Chakekenapok, named from chert, flint and fire. On being born he caused the death of his mother. Because of this bloody deed his brother, Winabozho, pursued him over the world. He finally overtook him and killed him by striking him with a deerhorn or piece of flint. The widely scattered parts of his body are the great rocks and masses of flint which are found wherever these brothers fought. Chakekenapok was the personification of cruel winter, death and destruction followed in his trail.

Wabesho, the third brother, took up his abode in the far north, there assuming the form of a white hare.

## CHIIAPOOS

The mild and gentle Chipiapoos, the second of the four god brothers, was the least gifted of his kin. Because of this he was under the special care of Winabozho. He was under strict orders not to leave their lodge or to separate from him even for a moment. But disregarding this admonition, he one day ventured out of the lodge and went on the ice of a great lake, probably Lake Michigan. Here he broke through the ice and was drowned by evil manidos. Winabozho recovered his body and waged relentless war and destroyed most of these fiends. The four remaining manidos, seeing their own fate, finally made peace with Winabozho. They presented him with a peace pipe and medicine bag, initiating him into the mysteries of the grand medicine. Chipiapoos was given a torch and sent to rule the country of the manes. With the torch he was to kindle a fire for all who should repair to that distant and happy land of the departed.

## THE FOUR WINDS AND THUNDER

"Winabozho placed four giants, one at each of the four cardinal points or world-quarters, to aid in promoting the welfare of the Indian people. The one at the east supplies light and starts the sun on his daily journey over the sky; the one at the south supplies warmth, heat, and the refreshing dews that cause the growth of the soothing tobacco plant, and of corn, beans, squashes, and all the herbs and shrubs that bear fruit; the one at the west supplies cooling

and life-giving showers; lastly the one at the north supplies snow and ice, enabling the tracking and successful pursuit of wild animals, and who causes them to seek places of concealment from the cold of winter.

"Under the care of the man-being of the south, Winabozho placed lesser humanized beings, dominantly bird-like in form, whose voices are the thunder and the flashing of whose eyes is the lightning, and to whom offerings of tobacco are made when their voices are loud and menacing."

Some of the Thunders or Thunderbirds have remained in the North, nesting on the tops of the Lake Superior mountains. When they move their great wings one hears the peals of thunder. Their eyes flash the lightning. The tears which drop from their eyes become hail. The eggs they lay in their flights are thunderbolts which strike rocks, trees and dwellings. Some carry lakes on their backs, that slop over and cause downpours of rain. The Thunders taught the Indians the making of fire with fire-sticks which they provided.

## HE DESTROYS MONSTERS

The earliest Indian people were plagued by many monsters who lived on both the land and in the water. Some of these were witches who lived in caves and lured children and young women away from the Indian villages; some were giants (windigos) who stalked the forest trails seeking victims. Among the water monsters were the powerful and crafty water spirits, the horned serpents and giant fish. The former were able to travel on land as well as in the water. They wrecked canoes and did other damage to mankind. They carried their captives to their underwater dens and there held them as prisoners or killed them.

In his many journeys over the land Winabozho met or searched for and destroyed many of these ferocious monsters. He wrestled with and overcame the giants. The witches he smoked out or burned in their caverns. The horned serpents and water spirits he killed with his magic arrows or his war club. In the killing of these he had the assistance of the powerful thunderbirds. Other evil things such as famine and fevers he dispersed or taught the Indians to avoid by a proper mode of living.

## THE FLOOD

Winabozho was one day seated at the mouth of a river. There he saw a log rising and sinking in the water. Its motion interested him and he swam out and sat on it. Riding it was good sport. His grandmother had taught him two little water songs. The subject of one song was "the water should become smaller" and the other "the water should spread out." Winabozho became curious to know what would happen if he sang the last song. So he sang it. Almost immediately the log upon which he was seated sank into the water. He went down with it. When he came to the top there was water everywhere. He could see no land at all in any direction.

Animals were swimming around on all sides of him. They had all lost their homes in the flood. He spoke to them. None could account for their misfortune. He asked Muskrat to dive down into the water and bring some mud from the lake bottom. Muskrat did this and was drowned. Otter tried and fared no better. Then Beaver went down. He was gone a long time but he brought up some mud in one of his paws. Winabozho rolled the mud into a little ball. This ball grew and grew as he rolled it round and round in his hands. Soon it became large enough for Fox to jump on it. Then it became so large that all of the other animals and the birds who were alive could jump, crawl or fly on it.

Winabozho sent the birds to bring seeds. These he planted, and plants, vines, shrubs and trees grew on the naked world. The animals and birds built their homes again and all were happy.

## THE GIANT SMITH

Some of the old Chippewa Indians of the Lake Superior region have a tale in which Winabozho figures as a blacksmith. His forge, they say, was located in the Smoky Mountains, in the southwestern part of Bayfield County. Here he used the highest mountain peak for his anvil.

Here he shaped the miswabik, or native copper of the Brule River region, into various useful weapons and implements for the Indians. He was especially skilful in shaping axes, knives and spear points and the strong fishhooks required for the catching of the giant senesueggo or speckled trout, which abounded in the clear waters of the Brule.

Winabozho's forging was done by moonlight and the ringing blows of his hammer were heard by the Indians as far down the Lake Superior shore as the Sault Rapids. These booming noises still echo down the length of the Brule and St. Croix valleys. The glow of his forge fire reddened the entire sky.

The clang of his great hammer was considered a lucky portent or blessing by his Indian children, who believed that his presence and industry protected their villages and camps.

## NAMEKAGON

The name Namekagon is given to a large lake in Bayfield County. It is said to signify "place where there are many sturgeon." An Indian legend of this lake tells of a very fierce monster fish which once inhabited its waters. It was so very large and so powerful that it could overturn canoes by rising under them, or crush them with a slap of its tail.

After many Indians had been injured or drowned by this fish Winabozho was appealed to. One day he went in search of this terror. When he found him he waded out into the lake, and, after a bloody battle, killed him with a club, the trunk of a tree he had torn from the ground. The huge sturgeon no longer bothered the Indians who traveled this waterway.

On another occasion Winabozho leapt on the back of another huge fish. He rode it down the Namekagon River while it tried every trick to drown him or to cast him off.

## WINABOZHO DANCES

Winabozho lived in a pretty little valley with his grandmother, Nokomis. One day, against her wishes, he went away to explore the surrounding region. After a short walk through the woods he climbed a ridge. From its top he looked into another valley. There in a clearing he saw a lot of people. They were dancing. Winabozho was a good dancer and he wanted to dance with them. So he climbed down the side of the ridge and joined them. He danced with them all day and greatly enjoyed himself. None of the dancers spoke to him or to each other. They just danced and danced. When, at sunset, the wind died down, he discovered the dancers to be only cattails. He was quite tired out but he climbed over the ridge to his home valley. There he found his grandmother cooking a stew over a fire. She asked him where he had been and he said that a lot of people had invited him to take part in a dance. The soles of his moccasins were quite worn out.

## THE ANVIL CONTEST

Winabozho was proud of his great strength. He could hurl huge boulders for long distances and uproot the biggest forest trees. One day he met Chezaon, the dwarf, a small misshapen being with great muscular limbs. He also had a big reputation for feats of strength. Winabozho challenged the dwarf to a trial of strength to prove which one was the master. Taking a large anvil, Winabozho threw it high in the air, far above the highest trees. Then he said to Chezaon, "Now, Little One, try if you can beat that?" "Put it back where it was," replied the wily dwarf, "and you shall see what I do with your anvil."

Stepping up to the anvil and shading his eyes to look up into the sky, he said, "Wait until the clouds pass." A few minutes later when the clouds had gone by and the sky was clear, he placed one hand on the anvil and shouted upwards, "Ho! You up there! Here is the anvil you sent me down for! Where do you want it?" He was just about to lift it and hurl it upward when Winabozho stopped him saying, "Wait a minute, I don't want to lose my anvil, I need it every day!" And that ended the contest.

## HE HUNTS A DEER

Winabozho was hunting in the Brule River country. He had his powerful bow and a quiver filled with arrows slung over his back. At the edge of the big woods he saw the fresh tracks of a deer. These he followed into the woods. It was a big deer and the giant Winabozho, looking over the tree tops, could trace its movement in the forest as

it ran. Now and then he could see the tips of its antlers. He quickly shot an arrow to that spot, but the leaves and branches always prevented his striking the animal.

Winabozho followed the deer all the day and shot away all of the arrows he had in his quiver. He was disgusted with his failure to kill the deer and threw away his bow. When the deer reached the shore of Lake Superior it ran into the water and swam out into the lake. When Winabozho came to the water the deer was already far out in the lake. He was so angry at its escape that he grabbed up several handfuls of rocks and threw them in its direction. These rocks, falling into the water, became the Apostle and other islands, lying where we see them today.

## THE BEAVERS

Where is now Lake Superior was once a stream flowing through dense forests. Amik, the chief of the Beavers, set his people to work to dam this stream and to convert its waters into a huge pond or lake. They began by felling the great trees on its banks and rolling and dragging them into the water. They soon constructed two great dams, one at the place now called Sault Ste. Marie and the other five leagues below it. These dams flooded the surrounding and distant lands.

Winabozho, who disliked the beavers, learned of their obstruction of his stream. He resolved to destroy these dams. When he reached the first he walked upon it and crushed it down into the water. Great falls and whirlpools still mark its former position. The second dam he completely destroyed. No waterfalls remain to indicate where it once was. But the lake had been created and remains.

Winabozho drove the beavers from the lake. Some fled into northern Wisconsin and Minnesota. There they dammed other streams and created hundreds of large and small lakes. Winabozho hunted and trapped the beavers whenever he could, but their number was too great for even the hero-god to contend with.

## THE BEAR

Winabozho was walking in the pine woods when he heard a crashing of fallen limbs and saw a big black bear rushing towards him. He had once angered this bear by whacking him over the nose with a stick when he sat asleep under a big tree. This injury the bear remembered. He determined to have his revenge when he again met Winabozho. His opportunity to do so had come.

As Winabozho ran toward the lake, his only avenue of escape, he grabbed up an handful of big stones. As he entered the water he dropped or threw them before him, one after another. He jumped from one to another and safely reached the other shore of the lake. Over these stones the baffled bear did not dare to follow Winabozho. Safe on the other shore Winabozho "made a nose" at the bear. Some of the stones still remain in the lake as evidence of the god's escape.



## THE HELLDIVER HAS RED EYES

Winabozho was very hungry. He had no weapon and was obliged to depend on his wits to obtain animal food. Swimming in the lake near him were a lot of waterfowl. He decided to have some of these ducks. So he called to them—"Ho! Ho! All of you feathered ones who want to sing and play with me come here!" He called several times. The ducks at first paid no attention. Then they listened to his invitation. After counseling with each other they decided to accept it. They came flying to the shore where he stood.

He had them stand in a circle and dance around. "Close your eyes and sing as loudly as you can," said Winabozho. He lead the singing. When they were dancing and singing well, Winabozho grabbed one after another and wrung their necks. Soon he had a nice heap of ducks lying at his feet. The remaining ducks continued to sing and dance. They did not suspect what was going on. Finally one bird, the Helldiver, opened his eyes. He saw what was being done and yelled—"We are betrayed! Winabozho is killing us!" This aroused the remaining ducks and with frightened cries they flew away.

When they did so Winabozho in a rage cried—"From this day, Helldiver, you and all your descendants shall always have red eyes." And so they all have red eyes.

## THE POPLAR TREE

Winabozho had killed a deer and was roasting some of the meat over a fire. A poplar tree stood only a few feet away. Just as he was preparing to eat his meat in peace and comfort a wind stirred the leaves of the tree, and they began to rustle. The noise irritated the hero-god. He said to the tree, "Can't you stop that noise?" But the leaves continued to rustle. Winabozho turned to the tree again and said, "Won't you stop that noise?" But the wind blew harder and the noise of the moving leaves increased in volume. It became almost deafening.

Now Winabozho became very angry. He rose and struck the tree a resounding blow. When he struck a second time his fist got caught in a crotch and he could not withdraw it. He struggled to free himself but the tree would not let go. While he was thus held prisoner a pack of hungry wolves came along and devoured all of the deer meat. Then the poplar tree released Winabozho. He left the spot very hungry.

## RACCOON FOILS WINABOZHO

Raccoon was seated at the top of a tall dead pine tree when Winabozho came along. He was a mischief-maker, and he called to the giant and began to make fun of him, taunting him with his failure to accomplish this or that. Winabozho got more and more angry as he listened to the remarks and laughter of Raccoon. When he could

no longer stand this ragging he climbed the tree in pursuit of his tormentor.

When Winabozho was nearing the top of the tree trunk in his climbing, Raccoon quickly slid down into the tree, which was hollow. Winabozho now thought he had Raccoon and clambered down after him to the bottom of the tree. But there was no Raccoon there. He had made his escape by a limb-hole halfway down the tree.

Winabozho tried to climb back to the top of the tree but the wood was slippery and there were no finger or foot holds. He was trapped, and he was mad. Exerting all of his great strength, he began to rock the tree back and forth until it broke away from its roots and fell to the ground. Then he crawled out. He vowed vengeance, but Raccoon had fled. He could hear him laughing somewhere in the thick woods.

## SNARING DUCKS

Winabozho and his friend Chezaon, the dwarf, were wandering over the country. They came to a lake on whose surface were swimming many ducks and geese. Winabozho called to them and invited them to come ashore, but none came. Chezaon, who chided his friend for his failure to attract the birds, picked up a big stone and hurled it at them. But his aim was bad, and the missile fell short of the game. The frightened birds flew away.

The two wandered on until they came to another lake. On its bosom were a multitude of waterfowl. Chezaon thought of a scheme to get them. With his knife he stripped off the inner bark of a large fallen basswood tree. This he twisted into a long stout cord, Winabozho assisting. This cord they laid about the shores of the lake in a large loop tied with a slipknot. Then both sat down behind a bush to wait.

When the swimming fowl were closely grouped, Winabozho and Chezaon gave the end of the cord a sharp hard pull. The noose flew out into the lake and caught the surprised waterfowl by the wings and legs. Winabozho and his friend built a fire and had a grand feast of roasted birds.

## HE RETIRES

"It is believed by the faithful that Winabozho, resting from his toils, dwells on a great island of ice floating on a large sea in the northland, where the seraphim of auroral light keep nightly vigil. It is also believed that should he set foot on the land the world would at once take fire and every living being would share with it in a common destruction."\*

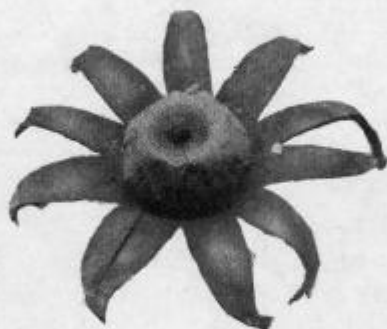
\*Handbook of American Indians.

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# INDIAN STAR LORE

PREPARED FOR THE USE OF STUDENTS  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN

SUMMER SESSION



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Dept. of Debating and Public Discussion

# INDIAN STAR LORE

## THE HEAVENLY REGIONS

The ends of the land and sea are bounded by an immense abyss, over which a narrow and dangerous pathway leads to the heavenly regions. The sky is a great dome of hard material arched over the earth. There is a hole in it through which the spirits pass to the true heavens. Only the spirits of those who have died a voluntary or violent death, and the raven, have been over this pathway. The spirits who live there light torches to guide the feet of new arrivals. This is the light of the aurora. They can be seen there feasting and playing football with a walrus skull.

The whistling crackling noises which sometimes accompany the aurora are the voices of these spirits trying to communicate with the people of the earth. They should always be answered in a whispering voice. Youths and small boys dance to the aurora. The heavenly spirits are called selamiut, "sky-dwellers", those who live in the sky. (Labrador Eskimo)

## THE SKY GOD

The sky is the home of a god who keeps a watchful eye over every star. He has dominion over three heavens. He sometimes amuses himself by hurling stars from their stations. On their passage to earth he causes some to become demons who wrong and perplex the Indians. The constellations of stars are council gatherings summoned by the sky god. The brightest are leading spirits appointed as rulers and guardians of the lesser stars. Clusters of stars are the populous cities of the sky people. Some of these sky people sometimes come to earth to dwell among the Indians. Some human beings have become stars. "Were all of the stories of the skies written it would be found that each star has connected with it some strange event." (G. Copway—Chippewa)

## THE STARS

There are different opinions as to the nature of stars. Some Indians say they are balls of light, others say they are human, but most people say they are living creatures covered with luminous fur or

feathers. Some hunters returning from a hunting expedition once found two of them. They were strange creatures covered with fine fur or downy feathers from which small heads stuck out. The hunters took them home. Every night they would grow brighter and brighter and shine like great stars. In the day time they were only balls of fur. One night they suddenly rose from the ground, like balls of fire, and were soon above the tree tops. Higher and higher they went while the wondering hunters watched, until at last they were only two bright points of light in the dark sky. Then the hunters knew they were stars. (Cherokee)

The stars are the children of the sun and moon. The members of a certain tribal group were stars who came down to the earth like meteors and became people. (Osage)

### RED AND BLUE STARS

The stars which have a reddish color represent the spirits of Indians who were great warriors and returned from war raids with one or more scalplocks in their raids upon the enemy villages in the olden time. They are greatly honored even in the Sky World. The stars with a bluish or greenish tint are the shades of powerful medicine men. They exercise their powers even above. (Prairie Potawatomi)

### THE STARS THAT MARRIED SISTERS

Two Indian girls married stars. They were not aware that their husbands were stars until after their marriage. These girls were very unhappy, their husbands provided well for them bringing game and other food, but their wives only saw them at night. During the day they were always away. Anyone can pick out these two stars at night. They are large and bright. (Eastern Cree)

### STAR MYTHS

When Mukat was sick, many of his people left his house and went away without telling him. There were three sisters planning to do this, but they told him about it. Mukat was glad they told him. He said to them that they would know when he was dead by the frost around the house. These sisters went up to the sky and became stars. One day, looking down from above they saw frost

around the house and knew that he was dead. They cried and could be heard far off. Whenever we have frost now these three sisters are seen in the sky.

Papinut is a star which comes up over the horizon just a little. This star twinkles more than the others do and they call this jumping. It jumps all night. They say Mukat put it there to be funny; so it is spoken of as the funny star.

In the constellation known as Orion, there are three stars in a row known as the Belt, which are mountain sheep. Below are three smaller stars in a row, pointing toward the first three; the Sword. These represent an arrow shot at the mountain sheep by a hunter. The great star below, Rigel, is the hunter who has shot the arrow at the mountain sheep.

Chehaum, three girls, are the Pleiades. Tukwishhemish is a woman star near them. Isilhnup and Holinach, two stars, one brighter and one smaller than the other, are on opposite sides of the Pleiades. Their half-brother, Kunvachmal is a bright star that rises only a little above the horizon like Papinut. Tukvachtahat, father of the three brothers, is also a star. All are characters in Cahuilla myths.

The old people can tell what the weather is to be like by watching these stars. If they throw a dim light, the weather will not be good, but if the light is bright and clear the weather will be fine. (Cahuilla)

An Indian went up into the Sky Country to hunt for his wife who had died. He felt very lonely without her. The people there tried to kill him. A spider woman let them down to earth with a strand of web. (Tlingit)

## THE MILKY WAY

Some Indians had a corn mill in which they pounded corn into meal. On several mornings, when they came to empty it, they noticed that some of the meal had been stolen. They examined the ground and found the tracks of a dog. The next night they watched and when the great dog came from the North and began to eat the meal they sprang out from their place of hiding and beat him. He ran off into the sky howling, the meal dropping from his mouth as he ran, and leaving a white trail where we now see the Milky Way. This the Indians call by a name meaning, "Where the dog ran." (Cherokee Tale.)



The Milky Way is the "bird's path." The fowl and birds follow it southward in the autumn, and back again in the spring. It is also the "spirit path" along which the spirits of the dead journey. (Tish-kaming)

An Indian hunter pursued a large animal into the sky. His foot-prints formed the Milky Way. (Tlingit). What we call the Milky Way is the dust raised by Isil the Coyote, and Tukut, the Wildcat running a race. (Cahuilla)

### THE MAN FROM THE SKY

Some Indians were walking over the plains when they saw someone sitting in the grass. It was a man. When they approached he halted them by raising his hand. He said, "I don't belong here, I dropped down from above." They wished to take him home with them. He told them to go home and clean the place where he was to stay. Then he would return with them. After they had done this they came back for him. He was a nice looking man, clean and shining bright. He stayed with them. Every day at sundown, he watched the sky. In a clear voice he said, "Something will come down, I will go up." He said that he had been running in the sky. There was an open place, he couldn't stop running, so he dropped through.

One day in the afternoon he said, "Now its coming." Everyone looked up but they could see nothing for a long time. The man who had kept Sky-man at his home could see better than the others. He saw a bright star shining way up in the sky. The other Indians didn't see it until it came near the ground. They had never seen anything nicer in the world. Two men got hold of it and pulled it down. Sky-man got into it. Then it rose into the sky and he was gone. They had tried to get him to stay but he said, that he must go. He is up there yet. You can see him on clear nights. (Chip-pewa Tale)

### THE BOY WHO SHOT A STAR

Two boys were great playmates, but one of them said something that displeased the moon, and the moon carried him off. The other boy shot an arrow into a star in the sky and kept on shooting until he made a chain reaching down to the earth. This became a ladder on which he mounted. He lived on berries which were borne on twigs stuck into his hair. On his arrival in the sky country he met

an old woman. She told him where to find his friend, and how to rescue him. He went to the moon's house. There he found his friend in a place near the smoke hole where he had been kept a prisoner. He pulled him out and placed a large cone there to take his place.

When the moon discovered that the captive was gone she pursued. The boys threw behind them some things that the old lady had provided. These became great obstacles and they escaped to her house. By her direction they lay down and went to sleep. When they awoke they found themselves on the earth below. (Tlingit Tale)

### THE WATER LILY

One night the Indians saw a star that shone brighter than all others. Its location was far away in the South near a mountain peak. For many nights it was seen. Many doubted its being as far away as it seemed to be. Examination showed it to be only a short distance away, near the tops of some trees. A number of warriors were sent to ascertain what it was. On their return they said that it resembled a bird. A committee of the old men of the village was called to consider the strange phenomena. They feared that it might be the omen of some disaster.

One night a young warrior had a dream in which a beautiful maiden stood at his side. She informed him that she was charmed with the Indian country and had left her sisters in the world above to dwell among men.

The next morning the young man told of his dream at a meeting held at the council house. That night five tall braves were sent to welcome the stranger to earth. They presented a pipe of peace, filled with sweet scented herbs. They were rejoiced when the star accepted this offering. As they returned to the village the star followed and hovered over their homes till the dawn of day. Again it appeared to the young man in a dream. It desired to know where it might live and what form it should take. Places were named. On the top of giant trees, or in flowers. At length it was asked to choose a dwelling for itself.

At first it dwelt in the white rose in the mountains. There it was so buried that it could not be seen. It went to the prairie, but it feared the hoof of the buffalo. It next sought the rocky cliff, but

that was so high that the children whom it loved most could not see it.

"I know where I shall live," said the bright fugitive, "where I can see the gliding canoe of the race I most admire. Children, yes, they shall be my playmates and I will kiss their brows when they slumber by the side of cool lakes. Nations shall love me wherever I am."

She then alighted on the waters where she saw herself reflected. The next morning thousands of white flowers were seen on the surface of the lakes. The Indians gave them the name 'Wah-be-gwon-nee', (White Lily). (G. Copway—Chippewa Tale.)

### THE MORNING STAR

Partridge and his family were very short of food and nearly starving. One day he went out to gather berries. While he was at work picking berries he saw a flint-pointed arrow fall through the air and strike the ground. He started to pick it up but a voice called out to him, "Tci! Tci! Tci! Tci! Don't touch that." Then a man came and spoke to him. It was Morning Star. He gave Partridge certain instructions, which he obeyed. He gave him a bag filled with chopped ice and told him if he heard voices to pay no attention to them. He was to pour the ice in a hole. Partridge obeyed. The next morning he found this hollow filled with fine sturgeon. There were enough to last all winter. (Menomini Tale.)

### TURTLE AND THE WITCHES

Once, in the olden time, the Indians were very much troubled by the witches. No Indian dared to go into the woods to hunt because of them. They were in the springs and the women would not go to get water. Then Turtle, who was a warrior god, offered his services to his children. He fought the witches and beat them badly. Then he called them to a council and they agreed not to bother the Indians any more. The single star in the center of a circle of stars is Turtle talking to the witches. (Winnebago Tale)

### THE DIPPER

Once upon a time an Indian family were camping at a certain place in the woods. There were seven girls and one boy. They went off to play forgetting to tell their parents where they were going. They wandered quite a way from the camp. The oldest girl proposed

that they play the "catching bear". One little girl finally consented to be the bear. They asked her not to bite too hard when she caught any of them.

So they began their game. At first the girl who was playing bear did not bite hard. Then she began to bite harder and harder when she caught any of the other children. They began to get scared. The little girl was turning into a real bear. The bear said, "When I catch one of you I will bite very hard and you will die." Now they knew that their little sister had become a bear.

The bear pursued them. They hid in a cave on the mountain side but the bear found them there. They asked the bear not to kill them. The bear said, "It is all your fault. I did not want to be the bear. Now I must catch and kill you." They fled to the top of the mountain. The bear followed and almost reached them while they were climbing. They asked the mountain to help them and the mountain began to move upward and to grow taller and taller. Now it reached the sky. The bear continued after them. They could go no farther and were in despair. Then the boy said, "Let us see what is up there." Then they followed him into the sky. If you look for the stars called "the Dipper" you will see the seven Indian children who there escaped from the bear. (Kiowa Tale)

### THE FISHER STAR

A beautiful young Indian woman learned that her husband was untrue to her. He had made believe to join a war party. He afterward informed her through others that he was dead. Every night for four nights he went to the bottom of a hill and played his flute. A mouse informed her of his desertion. She became possessed of a magic song which she sang for four nights. All of the people became frightened knowing her to be a powerful spirit. On the last night she threw herself on the ground and became a small animal, a fisher. In this disguise she found her husband and killed him. Then she jumped into the heavens and became the "Fisher Star", the Dipper. There she remains as a sign to the Indian people. (Menomini Tale)

### ORION

The wolf constantly hunted, but he never gave his wife and two boys any meat. Once in the morning he went hunting. Then his

wife, the crane, ran off. He returned and found her gone. He followed her. He was angry and wanted to kill her. He saw her and tried to shoot her, but she was high up in the air. Slowly she settled and at last lit far off. He shot and hit her. He went to her. With her bill she tried to stab him. They fought and she killed him. Then she went away with her sons. They became stars in the sky. She is in advance; her two boys are following her. They are called yibish, the three stars of Orion. (Yokuts Tale)

### THE STARS DEHNDEK AND MAHOHRAH

Dehn-dek of the Snake Clan married Oh-tseh-eh-stah of the Big Turtle Clan. The village where they lived was on the shores of a lake. Behind it were blue hills. Clear streams rushed down their sides beneath the pines and into the sparkling waters of the lake. Here the otter swam and the beaver built his lodge. To their lodge in this village came a little daughter. They named this child Mah-ho-rah she who sees another (when she looks into the water.) Before her eighth year Mah-ho-rah became very wise. The beasts of woodland and lake loved her. The snakes came when she called them. The fish rolled in the shining waves at the sound of her voice. The trees bowed their heads and talked to her with their leaves. The streams smiled as she looked into their dark depths. The little streams sang to her. Now a deep sickness fell upon Mah-ho-rah. All efforts made by the medicine men to save her life were of no avail. They saw her bright spirit arise from the ground and depart to a far country, the Land of the Little People.

Dehn-dek, who was a mighty warrior, sorrowed greatly over the loss of his daughter. He resolved to bring her back to his home and her village. He wandered long and far until he came to the hills above the forbidden city where dwells Heh-noh, our grandmother, who fell down from the sky. A man guided him to the city beneath the big stones which roll and crash to crush pilgrims. In the city in a rock vault, lighted by the torches of our grandfather, laid Heh-noh on a couch covered with bearskins. He saw her just as the sky roof above him was coming down to fasten him down forever. He asked her to return his daughter to him and her people. Heh-noh replied that Mah-ho-rah had been there. She had gone from her presence to return to her people. She was bearing two torches to light her homeward way.

Then the roof was rent with a great sound, and Dehn-dek saw Mah-ho-rah. She was passing into the sky along the way of beautiful colors. She was as bright as the torches in her hands. Standing in the vault were the three deer of our grandfather. They were harnessed to a sledge. They smote the stone floor with impatient feet. He seized the thong which guided the impatient deer. They fled with him swifter than lightning to pursue Mah-ho-rah. As they sped over the beautiful way harsh thunder groaned. Dehn-dek called to his daughter to return to her people, but she turned not from her course.

The three stags are the belt of Orion. Dehn-dek drives them yet in the cold nights of the northern winter in pursuit of his daughter. Mah-ho-rah is seen fleeing in advance with her torches, forming the sword of Orion. Sometimes they are far away in the heavens, but they are again seen driving up the eastern sky in the old race. (Huron Tale)

#### THE SEVEN STARS (The Pleiades)

Seven Indian boys were playing and dancing together in the shade of a large tree. After a while they became hungry. One of their number went to a nearby wigwam and asked the old woman who lived there for some food. She would give him none, and scolding told him to return to his companions. The boys danced again, then another boy went to the old woman's wigwam and asked for food. She became very angry and again refused to give the boys anything to eat. The boys formed a circle and danced again around the trunk of the great tree. One of the boys had made a drum. Now the dancing boys began to be lifted upwards, their feet leaving the ground. They kept on dancing and still higher they ascended. The old woman was watching them and she now became frightened. She went to the tree with a tray of food. She saw them dancing, round and round, high above the tree.

Now she called to them to come and eat. Too late, they did not hear, or would not listen to her. They kept on dancing, still moving upwards. She called again and again and lifted up her tray. Now she wept. They kept on dancing, paying no attention to her. The seven stars which we now see in a cluster high in the heavens, are the seven dancing boys. (Huron Tale)



## METEORS

Comets are spirits which are trying to return to their Indian brothers on the earth. (Sauk). The little earthstars (fungi) found so commonly in many sandy places are stars which have fallen from the sky. When the weather is dry they curl up. When it is wet they unfold. Then they return to their place in the sky. When a star falls from the sky it does not die. It leaves a fiery trail behind. Its spirit goes back to its place in the sky world to shine again, brighter than before. (Menomini)

## THE MOON SPOTS

Manabus became very angry with his grandmother, because she refused to obey his orders. After beating her soundly he threw her up into the moon where she will remain as long as the world lasts. Indians see the spots in the moon and say, "There is Manabus grandmother." (Menomini)

Moon is the wife of the Sun. Sun often goes hunting. Then Moon begins to feel lonely and follows him. (Choctaw)

An Indian girl had a lover. He only came to visit her after dark. She never saw his face. One night she dipped her fingers in the ashes of the fire. She touched his face with her hands. The next night when she saw him in the sky she knew by the spots on his face who her sweetheart was. (Potawatomi)

In presenting this small collection of Indian star and sky lore the writer acknowledges his indebtedness to George E. Laidlaw, John B. Satterlee, Oliver Lemere, A. B. Reagan, C. M. Barbeau, Daniel Shepard, Lucile Hooper, K. B. Judson, A. L. Kroeber and other friends and investigators.

Mary Stuart Foster

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# WIGWAM TALES

*Indian Short Stories for the  
Fireside and Camp Fire*



*Myths and Legends from the Folklore  
of American Indian Tribes*

MADISON, WISCONSIN  
1930

# WIGWAM TALES

*Thunder Birds, Water Spirits, Horned  
Serpents, Tie Snakes, Wind Bird, Windigos,  
Little Indians, Spider Men and Witches,  
Creation Myths, Star Lore, Animal Lore  
and Other Indian Folktales*

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First Edition  
1930

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## ORIGIN OF MAN AND THE ANIMALS, WINDS AND RAIN

In the north lives Torngarsoak, a powerful spirit. He made a man from nothing. The man traveled a long way over snow and ice. Here he found a woman whom he married. They built an igloo for a home. From them came all the Eskimo people. One day Torngarsoak placed some puppies in a pair of old skin boots and put these in the sea. They drifted away in different directions. After a long time one of the puppies returned to the land where he had started bringing with him the Indian people. A long time afterward the other puppy also came back. With him in the umak were some people with white skins. These were the white men.

An Eskimo wished to get rid of his daughter. So he took her in his umaik to a lonely island. There he threw her into the sea. She seized hold of the boat to save herself from being drowned. So he cut off her fingers with his knife and she sank into the waters. Her thumb became the walrus, her first finger the seal, and the middle finger the white bear. The caribou, the deer and the muskox came afterwards. Thus the Eskimo people were provided with animals for food.

Another story says that an Eskimo was one day chopping down a tree. It was hard work and he often stopped to sharpen the blade of his axe on a stone. Some of the chips which he struck off with his axe fell into the water. He noticed that these moved about. They became water animals. Other chips fell on the land. These also moved. They went in several directions. They became the land animals.

Before he began cutting down the tree the land was covered with water as far as one could see. Then the water went away and dry land appeared. The seaweed and kelp became grass and trees.

There is in the north a giant spirit. Violent snowstorms come when he blows his breath. In the east and west live other spirits. They breathe soft winds and summer weather. To the south dwell female spirits. They send the summer rain and the flowers. They live up in the sky and they keep the rain in big bags. When they run across the sky the water falls out of their bags. The thunder is the noise made by their running. (Eskimo Tales)

## MAN

The Great Spirit at first created the sun and the moon.

One day while walking about and feeling lonely, he said, "I will make a human being to keep me company." He came to an uprooted hemlock tree. Its roots had raised a heap of thin, pale, sandy, soil. From this earth he made a human being. The soil was so poor and light-colored that this man had a pale sickly complexion. The Great Spirit breathed on him and he stood up and walked. That was the white man. The Great Spirit was not pleased with his creation. He resolved that he would try again. Now he came to an overturned walnut tree. The mound of earth beneath its base was black. With this earth he moulded another human being. Being black he had too much color. He breathed upon him and he also walked away. That was the colored man or negro. The Great Spirit was not satisfied with him, either.

Going on farther he came to an uprooted sugar maple tree. The earth beneath the roots of this tree had a fine, deep red color. From this soil he made a third human being using great care in moulding his face and body. With this creation he was greatly pleased. He said, "He will do; he looks like me." This last human being was the Indian. He breathed upon him and he walked with the Great Spirit. (Seneca Tale)

## THE WHITE MAN

When the white man was first seen here in the olden time, he began to barter with our ancestors. Nowhere could he step without coming across a red man, all of the land being occupied. The stranger came with a piece of cow's hide, saying that he wanted a piece of land. The Indians, thinking that he wanted a piece of land of that size, agreed to trade.

The white man, however, cut the hide into a long string and measured off a large piece of land. The Indian said: "This is the way the white man does. He cheats the Indian." But he had to give away the land measured by the string. (Huron Tale)

## SUN AND MOON

The Sun was a young woman and lived in the East. The Moon lived in the West. The girl had a lover, who came every month at night to court her. She could not see his face in the dark.



He always left her long before daylight. She wondered who he was. At last she hit on a plan to find out. The next time he came she dipped her hand in the ashes of the fireplace and rubbed his face saying: "Your face is cold, you must have suffered from the wind." She pretended to be very sorry for him. He left before dawn.

The next night when the Moon came up in the sky the Sun saw that his face was covered with spots. Then she knew who had been coming to court her. He was so ashamed that he kept as far away as he could at the other end of the sky. Ever since then he tries to keep a long way behind the Sun. (Cherokee Tale)

## DAY AND NIGHT

In the beginning of things there was no light, everything was dark. So the animals left it to Bear and Rabbit to decide what to do about it. The Bear wanted it to be night all the time so that he could go around and hunt in the dark as he usually does at night. The Rabbit wanted daylight some of the time. The Bear said "kit-dba-kit," which means night. The Rabbit said "wau-bin" in a high small voice. This means day. He was afraid that if it were dark all of the time the bears would soon kill and eat all of the rabbits and other small animals.

So they decided to have a contest. They shouted together each trying to outdo the other. The Bear growled out "kit-dba-kit, kit-dba-kit, kit-dba-kit," and the Rabbit cried as fast as he could, "wau-bin, wau-bin, wau-bin." The Rabbit repeated his words many times before the Bear growled his words twice. Pretty soon the Bear got confused and made the mistake of growling "wau-bin, wau-bin, wau-bin," instead of "kit-dba-kit, kit-dba-kit, kit-dba-kit." And so daylight came. The Rabbit had won the contest.

They were seated facing each other at this time. The Bear was very angry and tried to strike the Rabbit. But the Rabbit was too quick for him. The Bear's paw just brushed lightly across the Rabbit's face and hit him on the nose. As he turned away the Bear's other paw caught his tail and pulled nearly all of it off. There was little left of the long tail which the Rabbit once had. So that is why we have day and night, and the Rabbit a short face and a short tail. (Potawatomi Tale)



## THE STARS

There are different opinions as to the nature of stars. Some people say they are balls of light, others say they are human, but most people say they are living creatures covered with luminous fur or feathers. Some hunters returning from a hunting expedition once found two of them. They were strange creatures covered with fine fur or downy feathers, from which small heads stuck out.

The hunters took them home. Every night they would grow brighter and brighter and shine like great stars. In the day time they were only balls of grey fur. One night they suddenly rose from the ground, like balls of fire, and were soon above the tree tops. Higher and higher they went while the wondering hunters watched, until at last they were only two bright points of light in the dark sky. Then the hunters knew that they were stars. (Cherokee Tale)

## THE SEVEN STARS (THE PLEIADES)

Seven Indian boys were playing and dancing together in the shade of a large tree. After a while they became hungry. One of their number went to a nearby wigwam and asked the old woman who lived in it for some food. She would give him none and told him to go back to his fellows. The boys danced again for a time, then another boy went to the old woman's wigwam, and asked for food. She still refused to give the boys anything to eat.

They danced again around the trunk of the great tree. One of the boys made a drum. Now the dancing boys began to be lifted upwards, their feet leaving the ground. They kept on dancing and still higher they ascended. The old woman now became frightened. She went to the tree with a tray of food. She saw them dancing, round and round, high above the tree.

Now she called to them to come and eat. Too late, they did not hear, or would not listen to her. They kept on dancing, still moving upwards. She called again and again. Now the old woman wept. The seven stars which we now see in a cluster high in the heavens, are the seven dancing boys. (Huron Tale)

## THE DIPPER

Once upon a time an Indian family were camping at a certain place in the woods. There were seven girls and one boy. They went off to play forgetting to tell their parents where they were going. They

wandered quite a way from the camp. The oldest girl proposed that they play the "catching bear." One little girl finally agreed to be the bear. They asked her not to bite too hard when she caught any of them. So they began their game. At first the little girl who was playing the bear did not bite hard. Then she began to bite harder when she caught any of the other children. They began to get scared. The little girl was turning into a real bear. The bear said, "When I catch one of you I will bite very hard and you will die." Now they knew that their little sister had become a bear. The bear pursued them. They hid in a cave on the mountain side, but the bear found them there. They asked the bear not to kill them. The bear said "Its all your fault. I did not want to be the bear. Now I must catch and kill you." They fled to the top of the mountain. The bear followed and almost reached them while they were climbing. They asked the mountain to help them, and the mountain began to move upward and grow taller and taller. Now it reached the sky. The bear continued to follow them. They could go no farther and were in despair. Then the boy said "Let us see what is up there?" Then they followed him into the sky. If you look for the group of stars called "the Dipper," you will see the seven Indian children, who there escaped from the bear. (Kiowa Tale)

### THE MILKY WAY

Some Indians had a corn mill in which they pounded corn into meal. On several mornings, when they came to empty it, they noticed that some of the meal had been stolen during the night. They examined the ground and found the tracks of a dog. The next night they watched and when the great dog came from the north and began to eat the meal they sprang out from their place of hiding and beat him. He ran off into the sky howling, the meal dropping from his mouth as he ran, and leaving a white trail where we now see the Milky Way. This the Indians call by a name meaning, "Where the Dog Ran." (Cherokee Tale).

The Milky Way is the "birds path". The fowl and birds follow it southward in the autumn and back again in the spring. It is also the "spirit path" along which the spirits of the dead journey. (Timiskaming).

## THE AURORA BOREALIS

In the direction of the North Wind live the Manabai wok, giants of whom the old people tell. They are great hunters and fishermen and whenever they are out with their torches to spear fish the Indians know it because the sky is bright over the place where they are. (Menomini)

## THE WIND BIRD

Gluskap was staying at Chief Raven's village. For many days none of the Indians had done any hunting or fishing. It was so windy that no one could get near any game, nor did anyone dare to launch a canoe. Gluskap knew why it was windy. Wind Bird was flapping his wings harder than usual. He advised the chief to send some of his men up the mountain where Wind Bird lived to tie his wings. It was so windy that the men climbed the mountain with difficulty. Wind Bird was making so much noise that he did not notice them. One of the men knocked Wind Bird down with a stone. Then they tied him fast with cedar bark ropes. The men then returned to the village.

For a while everything was delightful. There was no wind at all. The fishermen caught many fish and the hunters killed much game. Then came a change. All of the waters became stagnant and ill-smelling. It became very warm too for there was no cooling breeze. Chief Raven again consulted Gluskap. He told him to send the men up the mountain again and untie one of the Wind Bird's wings. This was done. Since then everything has gone well at this village. Only occasionally is there a high wind. That is when the Wind Bird is trying to escape. (Malecite Tale)

## THE RAINBOW

Sais-ta-go-wa, the rainbow, was a sea monster. Hah-gweh-da-et-gah, the Bad Minded, brought him forth to destroy the beautiful rivers and hills, which Hag-gweh-di-yu, the Good Minded, had created. He began his work of destruction. When Hah-gweh-di-yu hastened to the rescue he fled to the sky. Here the Sun found him and throwing him across the sky, clasped him down to the east and west, so he could do no further injury.

He-no, the Thunder, passing on his way through a storm, admiring the beautiful colors as he stretched across the sky, picked him up

saying: "My Lightning Hunter needs this for his bow", and carried him to his lodge.

Sais-ta-go-wa is restless in his captivity, and when He-no is busy directing his storms, endeavors to escape. The ever-watchful Sun detects him and again bending him across the sky, paints him with brightest colors, that he may be discovered by He-no, who quickly comes and carries him back to his lodge. (Iroquois Tale)

### THE WHIRLWINDS

The Whirlwinds are bad spirits. Their homes are in ant holes. They are women and they steal other spirits. If a firebrand is put or thrust into their homes they become very angry. Then they make a whistling sound and are likely to seriously injure or kill the person who thus disturbed them. Indians are therefore always very careful not to anger them.

Once an Indian saw a Whirlwind coming towards his home. She was making a whistling noise and whirling along. He was not afraid of her and he took a club and chased her, beating her as she whirled. As he struck her she became smaller and smaller. Then she vanished.

He boasted to his Indian friends of what he had done. They scolded him and warned him that his act would surely bring trouble. But he only laughed. Whirlwinds never forgive an injury. One day while he was away from home a Whirlwind came along and tore down and carried away his house. When he returned he was without a home. Whirlwinds often carried away and killed and ate their victims. Sometimes they became flames and chased people. People were never quite safe from them. (Cahuilla Tale)

### LITTLE INDIANS

The "Little Indians", or fairies, have both good and harmful characters. The largest are only about two feet high. When an Indian sees one he knows that something is going to happen. They bring good luck to some people. They are not seen often now. Some lure people into the forests with their calls, and these are never seen again. They are experts with the bow, and with the canoe. They sometimes bless hunters with success in hunting.

A very old Indian woman, who was trudging along a forest trail, saw a little child just ahead of her. She tried to catch it but it

disappeared. Where it had been she smelled a nice perfume. So she knew that the child was a Puckwidjini. She knew that someone was going to die. She lost her husband.

Two Indians were gathering ginseng roots in the woods. They were camping and were running out of food. One went to get some provisions. The other Indian began to prepare the food which remained. He made a fire and placed some meat and roots in the kettle. When he looked up he saw a Little Indian. He was so small that the Indian became frightened and ran away. He found his friend and they returned to the camp together. No one was to be seen, and the food was not burned. The Little Wild Indian had taken care of the Indian's cooking while he was away.

An Indian girl left her father's village one day and wandered into the forest. When night came she had not returned. Her Indian lover feared that something had happened to her. He went out into the woods to search for her. While following a forest trail he saw a faint glow in a little clearing, and heard the beating of an Indian drum. Creeping nearer to the spot he saw a group of Little Indians and their women dancing about the drum. Dancing with them was the Indian maiden whom he loved. Drawing nearer he spoke to her and asked her to return with him to her father's village. This she refused to do. That he might be always with her he also joined the Puckwidjini. Neither he nor his sweetheart ever returned to their homes. (Chippewa Tales)

## WINDIGOS

The Windigos are powerful giants of the woodlands. They catch and kill Indians for food, cut them up and boil them in their kettles. They are greatly feared because of their magic.

An Indian learned that during the winter a Windigo was coming to eat him and his family. So he fasted long and prayed for strength. One night he told his wife that he was going out to fight the giant. Then he went out over the winter trail into the forest. After he had gone his wife listened at the door of the wigwam. After a little while she heard trees falling over. So she ran to the forest and saw two tall men struggling with each other and tearing up the great trees as they fought back and forth over the ground. When her husband came home he was no larger than he was when he went out to battle with the Windigo. He had won the fight.

The trees and brush were all torn up and trampled down. Near the dead Windigo was his knife and big kettle. The Indian and his wife gathered wood. They made a big fire and burned the Windigo to ashes.

Long ago another big Windigo stole an Indian boy. The boy was thin, so he did not eat him right away. He traveled with the boy waiting for him to put on flesh. He had a knife with which he cut his victims hand to see if he was fat enough. But the boy did not grow fat. One day he sent the boy to an Indian village to procure food. The boy told the Indians that he was the captive of the Windigo and showed them the cuts on his hand. The Indians went to where the Windigo was and killed him. So the boy's life was saved. (Ontario Chippewa Tales)

### THE IKTOMI OR SPIDER MEN

Flint arrow points were made in the old days by the Iktomi. They supplied the Indians with arrows. They are little people, dwarfs, who turn into spiders when not busy at their labors. One can often see them running about among the leaves and grass. It brings bad luck to step on them. They do not wish to be seen so they transform themselves in this way. "At night, especially if the moon is bright, you can sometimes hear the light tap-tap-tap-ping of the dwarf's hammers chipping the flints into shape. There are regular quarries where these "little men" work—usually in the side of a sandy hill." They do not like to be disturbed when they are at work. Once a party of Indians were digging into a hill when they struck rock. To their surprise it sounded hollow. Breaking through the rock they found a cavity. It was filled with arrow heads. It was a workshop of the Iktomi or Spider Men. The Iktomi are still about but they no longer make arrows for the Indians. They have chiefs and a language of their own. They sometimes spin webs through the grass or from a bush to a bush to guide them in the daytime in going from place to place. (Dakota Tale)

### WITCHES

Several hundred years ago there was an old Indian woman. She was suspected of having killed a number of people. She died and soon after the people saw an owl perched on the limb of a tree near her wigwam. In this owl they recognized the old woman. She was



a witch. They cut the tree down and burned the wigwam and she never returned.

An Indian was hunting in the forest and there he saw two men witches sitting on a big log. On the surface of this log they had drawn pictures of the persons whom they wished to kill. They were afraid that the hunter would tell others of their character so they offered to instruct him in their witchcraft. He refused their offer and killed them with his tomahawk. He burned their medicine bundles and went home.

An old witch disguised herself in a turkey's skin when she wished to fly. One day she went to a hoeing bee leaving her turkey skin at home in her witch bundle. A boy who lived with her watched her through a hole in his blanket. When she left he took the turkey skin and put it on. With its help the boy flew over to the hoeing bee. All of the people began to cry: "Look at the witch, look at the witch." The witch herself was very angry. The people took off his skin and found that the supposed witch was only a boy. They then killed the witch. She had bewitched and killed many people. (Ontario Chippewa Tales)

## THE THUNDERBIRDS

The Thunderbirds are mythical birds which occupy the highest position of respect with the Indians of the woodlands and the plains. They are held in great awe. These enormous birds have their nests on the peaks of the highest mountains. When the weather is stormy they fly about high in the air. When they flap their great wings one hears the crashes of thunder. When they open and close their eyes the flashes of lightning are seen. When their wings strike a cloud it rains. They carry a lake of fresh water on their backs. When these slop over a regular downpour of rain occurs. Hailstones are the tears which sometimes drop from their eyes. When they are very angry they drop their eggs on the villages and then people are killed. Their eggs are round black stones. They set fire to the forests and shatter the rocks.

The Thunderers are of different colors—red, blue, yellow and white. They are able to take human form. They sometimes carry away people who are never heard of again. A Chippewa Indian hunter who was carried away to its nest by a Thunderbird saved his life by killing one of the young birds and flying back to earth in its

skin. In the springtime the Thunderbirds awaken life on the earth by the showers they produce.

When they are flying the old birds say to the young ones, "Be very careful or you may hurt the Indians. You will fly easy over their camps and villages. They are our own people." If the Thunderers know that anyone is afraid of them they are the ones they go after. They are burned or killed. The Thunderbirds gave fire to the Indians. This they produced with their firesticks. Persons who have been struck by lightning and have recovered possess powers of magic and sorcery. (Forest and Plains Indian Tales)

### WATER SPIRITS

Water spirits (wak tcexi), also called underground panthers, live in the deep waters of various lakes and streams. These long-tailed, often horned, water monsters, are feared by the woodland Indians. When they are angry they cause the waters to become very rough. At such times they overturn canoes and their occupants are often drowned. At night they crawl out on the lake banks. Only a few Indian old men have ever seen them. In the spring they break up the ice. Tobacco offerings were formerly cast upon the waters to gain their good will. When Earthmaker created the world he thrust four water spirits through it to keep it from turning. Then he scattered stones over its surface and the earth became quiet. The powerful thunderbirds and the water spirits were often at war with each other. Devils Lake is one of the places where they fought. The water spirits shot great columns of water and boulders into the air, and the thunderbirds shot their arrows (thunderbolts) down into the lake. Thus the rocks about that lake are rent and tumbled down as we now see them. Once an Indian witnessed a terrible fight between a thunderbird and a water spirit. The water spirit would draw the great bird down in the water, then the thunderbird would exert its great strength and bear the water spirit up into the air. This fierce struggle continued for a long time. Each contestant asked the Indian to shoot and kill his adversary. But he was afraid of both and ran away. Some of the effigy, or animal shaped, mounds of Wisconsin are very probably earthen representations of these water spirits and thunderbirds. (Winnebago, Chippewa, Potawatomi Tales.)

## HORNED SNAKES

Once three Indian women were paddling across a lake when a huge tail stuck up out of the water and wrapped around their canoe. Two of them cried out, "Ya oke. Oh, our sister." But the third struck it with a sacred ax, given to her in a dream, and cut off the tip of the tail. The monster was ashamed because he had lost his tail and sought shelter within the den under water. He was disgraced and the other horned snakes drove him out. He traveled all over the world looking for shelter, which was always refused him. Finally a very evil one took him in. He promised all of the gods never to disgrace them again.

A misikinubik once stole a baby. The Indians trailed him to his lair under a rock. A loon, who was swimming about in the lake, warned the horned snake. The Indians attempted to drain the lake to get the snake. Every time they nearly reached him he stirred up the waters so that they were nearly drowned. It then burst forth and was attacked by the Indians. Their weapons had no effect upon its tough skin. It escaped but it never returned to its den. (Menomini Tale.)

## THE TIE-SNAKES

The Tie-snakes live in the swamps. There are very many of them and they have a king of their own. One day Rabbit saw a Tie-snake in a pool and proposed a trial of strength. The Snake, to humor the little fellow, accepted. Rabbit went to another pool and made a similar proposal to another Tie-snake. Then he got a long grape-vine and put an end of it in each pool and gave a signal. The Snakes now began to pull against each other. First one was pulled out of the water and then the other. Each was amazed at the little Rabbit's strength. Then each Snake shortened his hold on the vine and continued to pull. Soon they saw each other and knew how Rabbit had fooled them. After talking the matter over the Snakes agreed that Rabbit should not be allowed to drink any more water in the swamp because of his deception.

A tired Indian hunter sat down on a hollow log. Then he went to sleep. When he awoke he noticed that a large Tie-snake had knotted its tail tightly around one of his legs and crawled into the log. While he was thinking how to best release himself the snake crawled out of the other end of the log and quickly knotted its head

about his other leg. Now he was fast. He struggled to release himself, but in vain. He was doomed.

Soon afterward another Indian hunter appeared, and seeing his friends sad plight, drew his knife and cut off the snake's head and tail. Afterwards this Indian always wore garters tied around his leggings as a reminder of his escape from the Tie-snake. (Creek Tale)

### THE ORIGIN OF FIRE

The Indian people living in the foothill country had no fire. They were often cold, and they had no means of cooking their food. Living in the plains country to the west was a man who had fire. He had it all and he would not part with any of it. So the chiefs of the Indians held a council. They selected the antelope, who was a very swift runner, to go to the man's home while he slept and steal some of his fire. The antelope was successful in this, but before he could reach the Indians with it, a rain came up and put out the fire. Other animals were chosen and tried to bring fire but were also unsuccessful. At last the jackrabbit tried. After he had stolen a firebrand, he hid in the thick brush. There he burrowed into the ground. In this burrow he placed the fire, holding it with his hands, and crouching over it. Thus he saved it for the Indian people. But the palms of his hands were burned black by holding the fire. (Yokuts Tale)

### INDIAN CORN

Two Indians had killed a deer and were roasting a part of it to eat. While they were seated near their fire a beautiful Indian woman was seen to ascend from the clouds and finally alight upon the earth. They decided that she must be hungry so they invited her to eat with them. She was grateful for the food given to her. When she left she told them to return in a year to the spot where she had been sitting and they would find there a reward for their kindness and hospitality.

The two men returned to their village and told the Indians what they had seen and done—but they were laughed at by their people.

When a year had passed they went again to the spot where they had seen the sky woman. They found where her right hand had rested on the ground, *corn* growing—and where the left hand had been, *beans*, and, where she had been seated, *tobacco*. These were her gifts to the Indian people. (Sac Tale)

## THE GIFT OF CORN

An old Indian, in wandering about, found some seeds which he did not know. He had never seen any like them before. They were white, and blue, and red in color. He thought that he had found something of great value, so he buried them in a mound of earth. One day he thought that he would go and see if they were safe. When he came to the mound where he had hidden the seeds he found growing upon it tall stalks bearing ears having kernels of these colors. He took an ear of each kind. The rest he gave to his Indian neighbors to experiment with. They ground up some of them into flour, others they cooked in their kettles. This food they found to be good and nourishing. Ever since then they have called it their life. They afterwards planted some of the kernels in earth mounds like the one in which the old Indian had first hidden it. These they made with a spade made of the shoulder blade of an elk or buffalo. The corn sprouted and grew and so they always had abundant food. (Omaha Tale)

## MAPLE SUGAR

An Indian woman, well known for her great goodness, was engaged in collecting maple sap. While she was busy with this work there appeared on the scene a Sugar-tree-top in human form. When this tree spirit came the sap in the nearby maple tree at once ceased to flow and lay still in the tree. It was changed into a sugar lump as big as a large round pebble. It now appeared on the wooden sap spile which the woman had driven into the tree. She was much surprised, but she took it and started to eat it. The spirit told her that it was a good-luck charm and that she must not eat it. He advised her to keep it in a box and to use it only when engaged in making maple sugar. When the sap was boiling she must make a mark in the big kettle with the charmed sugar-lump. Then the maple syrup would fill the kettle up to that spot. He told her to keep the charm forever and it would always bring good fortune. After this her friends always wondered why her maple sugar was so much sweeter than theirs, and her supply so much greater. But she always kept her secret. (Wyandot Tale)

## WINNEBOUJOU

Winneboujou, the blacksmith, was an all-powerful manitou. His forge was near the Eau Claire Lakes, in northern Wisconsin. He used the highest flat-topped granite peak for his anvil. Here he shaped the "mis-wa-bik", or native copper of the Brule River, into various useful implements for the Chippewa Indians. He was especially skillful at shaping the strong copper spear points and fish-hooks required for the catching of the giant "sen-e sug-ge-go," or speckled trout, that abounded in the clear spring waters at the Lake Superior mouth of the Brule. Much of his forging was done by moonlight and the ringing blows of his pewabik (iron) hammer was heard by the Indians even as far down the shore of Lake Superior as the Sault Rapids. These booming noises yet echo down the Brule Valley and Lake Region especially on clear moonlight nights. The sound of his great hammer was "good medicine" to the Chippewa and was held in particular awe by the visiting Sioux. Any Indian hearing the noise became imbued with industry and strength. Winneboujou's summer home was on the Brule near its source because he had to keep his eye on Ah-mik, the Beaver, a rival manitou, who might, if not watched, slip across the "o-ne-gum" (portage) to the St. Croix River, and then, by way of the Mississippi, reach the Gulf. (Chippewa Myth)

## THE AWL CASE

An old Indian woman lived by herself. Her only companions were two dogs who hunted for her. It was a very cold winter and the snows lay deep on the plains and in the woods along the frozen streams. Her food cache was empty, there was no game to hunt, and the old lady and her dogs were starving. She sat by the fire in the tipi with her two great dogs sleeping nearby. Then she heard a tiny voice speaking. It seemed to come from nowhere. She looked at her dogs but they were asleep. The little voice said: "There is plenty of game across the river." The old lady thought that she must be dreaming so she continued to drowse by her fire. Then she heard the tiny voice again:—"There is plenty of game across the river." She looked everywhere but there was no other person present and she could not ascertain where the sound came from. Then it spoke again, and now she noticed that it came from a little quill-work ornamented awl case which hung from the wall of the tipi.



There was a little Indian spirit in the awl case and it was talking to her. Now she aroused the sleeping dogs, opened the flap of the tipi and sent them forth to hunt. Soon afterwards she heard them baying in the woods across the frozen river. After a time they returned each dog bringing a deer which he had run down and killed. So she and her dogs had an abundance of food during the rest of the long, cold winter. She made an offering to the little spirit in the awl case which had brought this great blessing to her humble home. (Arapaho Tale)

### THE LODGE POLES

An Indian, who desired to build a wigwam, one day left the village where he lived and went into the forest to cut down some lodge poles. It was late in the autumn afternoon and he wandered deeper and deeper into the thick woods. In the middle of the forest he came upon a growth of young trees. These, he decided, were just the right kind of trees for his purpose. So he took his hatchet and struck several blows into the trunk of one of them. Then he noticed to his great amazement and horror that instead of sap, a small stream of red liquid was flowing from the wound. It was blood. He was frightened. He dropped his hatchet and ran from the place. The shades of night were now falling. He became more frightened and ran faster and faster. The trees along his path were angry, they raised their roots and tripped him. He fell down again and again. They blocked his path with their trunks and limbs. He bumped into them and fell. Always he regained his feet and stumbled on. He was nearly dead with fright and exhaustion when he reached a little clearing in the woods. Here he fell in a swoon. When he recovered he built a little fire of sticks and crouched beside it. Now he was safe. All through the long night the great trees on the edge of the clearing groaned and howled and shrieked and tried to get him. They reached for him in vain with their limbs and roots. He was just beyond their reach.

The next day a party of men from his village set out to hunt for the missing Indian. They finally found him by the site of his little fire in the clearing and carried him back to his home. He was sick for a very long time. (Ottawa Tale)

## SHUT-EYE DANCE

Mä'näbus invited all of the waterfowl to a dance to be held in his lodge. The ducks, geese and swans were pleased and all of them came. He asked them to close their eyes while they danced. He beat his water drum and sang loudly while the guests circled round and round. As they danced by him he caught one bird after another, wrung its neck and threw it in a corner. One of the birds cried out while it was being strangled. Its flapping wings struck Wood Duck, who opened his eyes and saw what was happening. "Mä'näbus is killing us!" he shrieked. Then the frightened birds saw the carnage and rushed out through the door and burst through holes in the lodge walls. Mä'näbus was angry and decreed that Wood Duck should always have red eyes as a punishment for his disobedience. (Menomini Tale)

## THE TAR BABY

Rabbit was stealing potatoes. Day after day he went to the same field and stole more potatoes. This made the owner of the field very angry. He saw that he would soon have no potatoes left for his family. So he made an image of tar in the shape of a small man and set it out in the field to scare the thief away. Rabbit came soon afterward and saw the image. He asked the Tar Baby for potatoes, but it would not answer him or give him any. This made him angry, he hit it with his fist but his hand stuck to it. Then he hit the Tar Baby with his other fist, but that stuck also. He kicked it and his foot stuck. The same thing happened to the other foot. Now he was everywhere fast. The man found him and wrapped the tar around Rabbit and killed him. That ended his potato stealing. (Alabama Tale)

## THE MAGIC POTS

Sha-bwa-cumig-oke was a noted maker of Indian pottery. On a shelf in her bark wigwam she kept five earthen vessels of different sizes and shapes. They were beautifully ornamented. They were magic pots and not used for cooking or storing food. When an Indian woman desired to make a pottery vessel she went to the old woman's wigwam to study these pots and to receive the instructions of their owner for the gathering and preparation of the clay and

the firing of the vessel. Thus the Indian women used the magic pots for patterns for many years.

One year the people in the village went berry picking. Sha-bwa-cumig-oke went with them. Five small girls remained in the village. They played about for a time. Then out of curiosity they went to the old woman's wigwam and peeped in at the doorway to see the magic pots. Soon they became bolder and entered and lifted the beautiful pots from the shelf. They took them outside and began examining and playing with them. This was a very wicked thing to do for Sha-bwa-cumig-oke had forbidden anyone to ever touch them.

While they were thus engaged a great yellow wolf suddenly appeared. In their fright the small girls ran in several directions to seek shelter in neighboring wigwams. In running one of them overturned the magic pots. This was followed by a noise like a roll of thunder. When they later returned to the scene of their play they found that the pots had been broken into many small pieces.

When Sha-bwa-cumig-oke returned she was very angry to find her magic pots broken. She called the girls to her wigwam and raising her withered old hands over their heads used her magic upon them for their disobedience. Instantly they were changed into five black crows and flew away cawing loudly. Since then the old lady has never been seen. On almost any day in the summer time one may see the five black crows swinging in the top of some tall tree and uttering a mournful "Caw, caw, caw." (Minnesota Chippewa Tale)

### THE MOONSHINE MOCCASINS

An Indian and his wife and his sister were living in a bark lodge in the woods. The wife became sick and it looked as if she would die. She said to her husband, "If I had moonshine moccasins I would get well, even if I only saw them I would get well." Her husband went everywhere looking for the moccasins but he could find none anywhere. His sister next went out to search for the moonshine moccasins. She went to the lake shore and there she saw a kingfisher sitting on the end of a log. She asked him what he was doing and he replied that he was looking for something to eat. Then she asked him if he had any moonshine moccasins, but the kingfisher knew nothing about them.

The girl saw a muskrat sitting on the top of his house. She asked him what he was doing, and he said that he was looking for

food. He asked the girl what she was doing, and she told him that she was looking for moonshine moccasins. The rat asked her why she wanted them. Then she told him that her sister-in-law was sick. If she had moonshine moccasins she would get well, or if she only saw them she would get well.

"I have a pair," said the rat. "If you wait I will go and get them for you." He then dove beneath the water and soon returned with the moccasins. The girl thanked the muskrat and ran to the sick woman with them. They were beautifully made and ornamented. When her sister-in-law put them on she immediately began to recover her health. Soon she was entirely well. Her life was saved by the moonshine moccasins. (Ontario Ojibwa Tale)

### THE MAGIC ARROW

Wisukejäk, who was traveling, heard a peculiar noise in the woods ahead of him. Being anxious to learn what it was he walked in the direction of the sound. Although he walked fast he did not reach it on the first nor the second day. On the third day he came upon a man who was making an arrow. He was fashioning it with great care. Wisukejäk asked him why he was spending so much time and care on the making of an ordinary arrow. It must be a very important weapon. In reply the stranger told him that it was a medicine or magic arrow. Its owner had only to wish for whatever game he desired, shut his eyes, and pull the bow-string. Whatever game he had wished for would lay before him when he again reopened his eyes. Wisukejäk wanted the arrow very badly and begged so hard for it that the stranger, who was a manitou, finally said he would give it to him provided Wisukejäk would let him shoot at him with the arrow three times. So he stood up and let the stranger shoot at him.

The first shot was so swift and hard that it knocked Wisukejäk down. The second was harder than the first, it tumbled him over and over. The third laid him flat. He was almost killed by the blow. But he now had the magic arrow. The stranger disappeared. Then Wisukejäk tried the power of the arrow. He closed his eyes and wished for a deer. He drew the bow and fired. Then he opened his eyes and there lay the deer. He was greatly pleased so he went farther into the woods. Now he wished for a bear, but he forgot and opened his eyes before he pulled the bow. The magic arrow sped away and never came back. (Cree Tale)

## THE FIRE-STICK GIRLS

When Kwattie, the principal Quileute Indian deity, lived here, on the earth in the long ago, some young women went to the prairie to dig garlic. Each girl wore a headband from the front of which there extended upward a long, pointed stick. To the end of this stick were tied little bundles of pitch shavings. These formed torches. They were having a lot of fun while digging the garlic and laughed and joked and sang as they went along. Just for the fun of it, although it was daylight, they had lighted the torches which were burning brightly. Now Kwattie came along, also singing a song. He was a man; they were girls. They did not know that there was a man near the place until they heard his song. When he saw the burning torches above the tall ferns, he yelled: "Hay, hay!" The girls did not know that he was a god and fell flat on the ground to hide themselves. The big ferns caught fire (the prairie is always covered with dry ferns in the springtime), and the whole prairie was soon burning.

The fire burned towards Kwattie who ran towards the village. The fire followed him at a terrible pace. The faster he ran the faster the fire burned behind him. Just as the flames overtook him he reached the river and jumped in. The water was boiling hot and scalded him, so he quickly jumped out again onto the other bank. The girls were unharmed by the fire. They laughed loudly to see the man run. They did not know that he was a God. (Quileute Tale)

## THE GIANT CLOUD-SWALLOWER

Häki Suto was a giant who lived among the great cliffs of the north, when the world was new. His hair he wore done up in a tuft on his forehead like the crest of a quail. He was not only a cannibal, killing and eating Indians, but he also swallowed the cloud-breaths of the gods which gave the rain which the earth required. Because of this snow ceased to fall in the north and west; rain no longer fell in the south and east, and the mists in the mountains were gone. So the waters in the valleys dried up, the corn withered in the fields, and men hungered and died in the cliff houses and villages. Hero after hero died in the attempts to kill the giant.

Ahaiyuta and Matsailëma, the Twin Gods of War, decided to help their children. When walking down the trail they met Grand-

mother Spider, who agreed to help them. It was Häki Suto's custom to lay down with his legs over the trail where men traveled. His great legs arched over the pathway like the fallen trunks and branches of the pine trees after a wind-storm. When a hunter tried to pass he would snatch him up and cast him over the cliff to be eaten by his family.

Grandmother Spider approached him noiselessly and climbing up behind his great ear and wove her web in and out over his eyelashes. When the Twin Gods reached the giant Aha'yuta ran to the left. Mätsailëma ran to the right. Häki Suto sprang to catch them, but his eyes were so blinded with cobwebs that he missed them. Then they turned on him and killed him and threw his body over the cliff. Then they killed the young giants. Fearing that the waters would never again refresh their canyons, the ancients fled away to the southward and eastward. Only those remained who perished when the drouth came. They are dead in their homes in the cliff-towns, dried, like their cornstalks that died when the rain stopped long, long, ago, when all things were new. (Zuni Tale)

#### SKULL AND MAGIC

Once there was a pretty Indian girl whom all of the young men wished to marry. They brought presents of game to her parents, but none found favor in the eyes of the critical maiden. At last to the surprise of neighbors and kinsmen she chose for her husband one who was a man by night and a skull by day. Then they all laughed at the marriage, saying, "One man in this valley has a bone for a son-in-law."

One morning the crier of the village made this proclamation: "To-day we hunt deer in the mountains to the northward!" Skull went ahead of the party and hid in a defile in the mountains. When the hunters came driving the game before them the deer all fell dead at the sight of gruesome Skull; so the people had an abundance of venison without the trouble of trailing and killing. Thus it was that Skull arose in their regard and ridicule was no longer heaped upon him.

Next day had been appointed for the footrace in which the runners would kick the ball. Skull entered as one of the contestants, though his neighbors laughed and said: "How can one ball manage another?" But when he reached the goal a winner the last voice of contumely was silenced. (Pima Tale)



## AN INDIAN CINDERELLA

Down in the Pueblo Indian country in the Southwest there lived an Indian family. They had three daughters. They also had a fine flock of turkeys. The two older sisters were very lazy and conceited girls. They had pretty clothes of which they were very fond. The youngest sister took care of the turkeys and did other work about the home. She was always dirty and had only the old clothes of her selfish sisters to wear. She was treated as if she were just a servant. One day there was a dance and a feast across the river. All of the family were invited and went but the poor little girl who remained at home to care for the turkeys. She felt very sad because she could not go to the dance also. While she was crying her turkeys gathered about her. She had always been very kind to them. They were sorry to see her crying and soon learned the cause of her sorrow. So they decided to help her. They told her to wash and to comb her hair. When this was done, and she had removed her old and dirty clothes, Mother Turkey fluffed her feathers and down fell a beautiful dress. Then each of the other turkeys provided some article of dress in the same way. One a colored underdress, another a green sash, one a fine pair of moccasins, and another a necklace of turquoise beads, and another a dainty white shawl. With these Mother Turkey dressed the little sister. Then Father Turkey took her on his back and flew across the river with her. So she went to the dance.

There she was well received. She took care to keep away from her sisters and parents. No one knew who she was. All of the girls admired her beautiful clothes and her turquoise beads. Everyone was very kind to her and she had a wonderful time. Before the feast was over she went back to the river bank. There Father Turkey was waiting for her and again carried her across. There were the turkeys and she told them all about the good time which she had had at the dance and the feast. When her parents and sisters returned they saw what a pretty girl she was and also admired her beautiful costume. All knew that they had wronged her. They asked her to forgive them and all treated her better after that. The turkeys were given their freedom for their generous act and flew away to the distant mountains. The little girl felt sad for she loved the turkeys. (Tewa Tale)

## THE RACE

Once the Terrapin proposed to the Deer that they run a race across seven high hills. When the day for the race arrived the Terrapin called his relatives together and placed one near the top of each hill. He put a white feather on the head of each one, and one on his own head. The Deer and the Terrapin then started to run. The Deer ran very fast. When he reached the top of the first hill he whooped. Then he saw a Terrapin wearing a white feather on the crest of the hill just ahead of him. It also whooped. The Deer ran faster and faster but every time he reached the top of a hill he saw a Terrapin going over the top of the hill just beyond. When he crossed the last hill he saw a Terrapin sitting down at the goal. The Terrapin said, "I told you I could outrun you." "You look like a different Terrapin", said the Deer. "No, I am the same one." "I don't think you are the same because your eyes are so red. When we started your eyes were not so red as that". "As I ran I got hot and dust got into my eyes. That is why they are so red." So the Deer lost the race. (Natchez Tale)

## THE BEAN MOUSE

The Indians of the Western Plains regard the little bean mice with great admiration and reverence. These little animals harvest the seeds of the wild bean plant and store them away in their burrows for the winter. They are very industrious little folks. The Indians regard it as very wicked to take any of their beans without making a return gift for them. When they take any of them they put in their place some kernels of corn or other food. Both the mice and the Indians are benefitted by the exchange.

Once an old Indian woman stole the stored beans of some of the little Hintunka people. She would not give anything in return for them. The next night she heard a woman crying. This was one of the bean mice women crying because her children were hungry. An Indian spirit also came and warned her, telling her that her own children would suffer from hunger unless she returned some food for that which she had taken from the Hintunka. She told her husband of her vision. He scolded her but she was hard-hearted and stubborn and would not right the wrong which she had done to the bean mice. Soon afterward came a prairie fire and swept over the place where the unjust Indian woman lived. It burned her tipi and its

contents. The woman and her family had to flee for their lives. They had no food or shelter and wandered about on the plains, the children crying loudly for food which was not to be had. So they all perished. (Plains Tale)

### COTTONTAIL SHOOT THE SUN

A long time ago the Sun was so close to the earth that everything was beginning to burn up. The prairie grass and plants were scorched and the springs and rivers were all drying up. Even the Indian people were getting burned. It was a very serious state of affairs. So the chiefs called a council to consider the matter. After due deliberation they decided that someone must shoot the Sun and make him behave better. Cottontail was one of the bravest warriors of the tribe so they appointed him to undertake the adventure.

Cottontail accepted the appointment as a duty to his tribe. Taking his bow and arrows he walked all the next day and finally reached the place where the Sun rose every morning. Here he dug a deep pit and in this he hid himself. When the Sun rose the next morning he shot one arrow after another at its face until his quiver was empty. All fell to the ground burned and without injuring the Sun. Then he took the stick of his fire-drill and discharged it at the Sun. It struck and wounded the Sun which then fell into the pit. Cottontail was burned where pieces of the Sun struck his body. These marks he carries to this day. He then returned to his people and was received with great honor. A new Sun arose from the old one which Cottontail had brought to earth with his fire stick. It always keeps a good distance from the ground and never harms the Indians. (Shoshone Tale)

### MUSKRAT HAD A NICE TAIL

Muskrat once had a beautiful tail. Its hair was fine and silky. Muskrat was very proud of his fine tail. Beaver had a very poor rat-like tail. He wished to go to a dance so he went to Muskrat and asked him to loan to him his tail for the occasion. This Muskrat was not willing to do. But Beaver begged so hard that Muskrat at last consented to trade tails with him for a little while. So Beaver took Muskrat's fine tail and went to the dance. There his tail was admired by all of the other animals who were present. After he came home Muskrat asked him to return his tail, but Beaver would not trade back again. He would not listen to either

Muskrat's demands or pleadings. Muskrat is still asking Beaver to return his tail. (Kickapoo Tale)

### HOW THE ANIMALS GOT THEIR FAT

In a council of the Animal People, who gathered from far and wide, it was discussed how much fat each member of the tribe should carry. In the center of the council house there stood a large kettle of fat. This was to be apportioned among the different animals. While they were considering this important matter, the crafty Fox jumped into the grease kettle and emerged very fat. The Bear, who was acting as leader of the council, shouted to the other animals near the kettle to hold the Fox. They caught him, and, by the orders of the council, all of the fat was squeezed out of him except a little above his forearms or legs. He was then thrust out of the council house. Because of his escapade the Fox is never fat.

The animals then each went through the fat bath in turn. Each received the amount of fat to which the council thought him to be entitled. (Winnebago Tale)

### THE WOODPECKER

Manabush killed the evil spirit O-ku-kwon, who had slain many Indians. This he accomplished by shooting him with his arrow in a vulnerable spot. Then he took some of his blood and smeared it on the woodpecker's head. He also marked a stripe around his neck. This he did as a reward for what the woodpecker had done in telling him how to get rid of O-ku-kwon. (Chippewa Tale)

### THE FOX HAS A BLACK NOSE

A fox lived with some Indians. He often went away and was gone half a day. He said nothing when he returned. When they asked him where he had been he remarked that he had been digging up something he had stored away. At night he went away again. When he returned they questioned him again. He said he had dug up the rest of what he had stored and eaten it all.

So he continued to go and come. One night several of the Indians, who were suspicious followed him. They saw he went to a graveyard and dug up the dead. He then took some charcoal and blackened his nose and mouth. Thus he hid the traces of what he had done. He did not want anyone to know that he was a grave robber. In punishment for his crimes he has a black nose to this very day. (Musquawkie Tale)

**AMERICAN FOLK LORE  
PAUL BUNYAN TALES**

**Prepared for the Use of Students of the**

**University of Wisconsin  
Summer Session**



**CHARLES E. BROWN  
Chief, State Historical Museum  
MADISON, WISCONSIN  
1922**

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He also scooped out the hole for Lake Superior. This he used for a reservoir as he was needing water to ice his logging roads. The Mississippi river was caused by the overturning of a water tank when his ox slipped.

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To sharpen their axes the men sometimes rolled boulders down steep hillsides and running after them ground the blades against the revolving stones.



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The ox pulled and out came the log "as clean as a whistle." Babe sometimes got into mischief. Once he broke loose at night and ate up two hundred feet of tow line. Sometimes he slipped in behind the crew, drank the water in the river and left the drive high and dry. Some of the lakes in Wisconsin and Minnesota are in holes made by his feet.

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Another version of this tale says that the tote teamster was driving across a frozen lake with a load of peas when the ice suddenly thawed and the ox was drowned. Bunyan dammed the lake, fired the slashings on shore, and then, opening the dam, sluiced down the river to his men pea soup with an ox-tail flavor.

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### WILD ANIMALS

Haunting the woods about the logging camps were numerous fabulous animals. Some were very wild and fierce and others harmless. There was a bird which laid square eggs so that they would not roll down hill. The upland trout built its nest in tall trees and was very difficult to catch. The side-hill dodger had two short legs on the up-hill side. The pinnacle grouse had only one wing. This enabled it to fly only in one direction about the top of a conical hill. Snow snakes were most active in the winter time. They made victims of men who wandered in the woods after dark. The rumpfusel and the hodag were beasts of great ferocity.

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Haunting the woods about the logging camp were numerous fabulous animals. Some were very wild and fierce and others harmless. There was a bird which laid square eggs so that they would not roll down hill. The upland trout built its nest in tall trees and was very difficult to catch. The side-hill dodger had two short legs on the up-hill side. The pinnacle grouse had only one wing. This enabled it to fly only in one direction about the top of a conical hill. Snow snakes were most active in the winter time. They made victims of men who wandered in the woods after dark. The rumpifusel and the hodag were beasts of great ferocity.

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# PAUL BUNYAN TALES



PAUL BUNYAN

*Mythical Hero of the American Lumber Camps*

MADISON, WISCONSIN

— 1929 —



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## Paul Bunyan's Timber

Courtesy of John Francis Chetlain

Where are the men, and where are the trees  
That used to nod in the hurricane breeze?  
Trees that were thick, trees that were tall,  
Trees that it took real men to fall?  
The tales of Paul Bunyan alone remain,  
A notion of those sights to gain.  
The northwest forests pale beside  
The silent depths where redwoods hide,  
And these seem but as bushes by  
Those one-time trees which brushed the sky.  
But list to the tale which Bunyan penned,  
Their massive size to comprehend—

Two sturdy fallers matched their strength  
With a tree for a run of two weeks length,  
When they started to walk around the tree,  
Its all-tremendous girth to see.  
On journeying half way around  
Two other fallers there they found,  
Who said that they themselves had cut  
For twenty days upon that butt.  
That night the wind blew mightily,  
And swept to earth this massive tree.  
The strangest part of the tale will follow—  
They looked, and Behold!—the tree was hollow.

1954



## Paul Bunyan Tales

The Mythical hero of the lumberjacks is Paul Bunyan and tales of his great strength and wonderful exploits are, or formerly were, told by the fires of bunkhouses in the logging camps from Maine to Wisconsin and Minnesota to Washington.

All lumberjacks believe, or pretend to believe, that Paul really lived and was the pioneer axeman in the lumber country. Some of the older "river pigs" even claim to have worked for him or to have known him or members of his famous crew.

In Wisconsin the former location of one of his camps is stated to have been "45 miles west of Rhinelander." Various lakes are indicated as the famous "Bean Soup" Lake.

### PAUL'S BIRTHPLACE

Paul Bunyan, say his biographers, was born on Prince Edward Island at the eastern seacoast of Canada, of poor, but honest and deserving French parents. This information was obtained by them from Canadian fishermen and others in a position to know. No manuscript proof of this fact is now available, because the parish records, if indeed such ever existed, have long been missing.

### HIS BABYHOOD

Very little real romance attaches to his baby years. Three hours after his birth, as confirmed by several of the old French women present, Paul was a "chunk of a boy" weighing a full eighty pounds. He soon made himself heard in the humble home, his baby voice being "a sort of cross between a buzz-saw and a bass drum," his first shriek fairly "raising the roof" of the little cottage. The first time that he yelled "maa" (in French of course) every lifeboat along the coast for forty miles put to sea thinking that the whole fishing fleets were in distress, and the steeple on the village church turned upside down.

Paul grew so very fast that although all of the women on the island kept their looms working day and night they could not weave cloth fast enough to keep the child supplied with clothes and blankets. Some of the looms got red-hot. It was a problem to get buttons big enough to fasten his garments, but finally the Ladies Aid Society prevailed upon the men to contribute the wheels of their wheel barrows.

An old lumber wagon was used as his baby carriage. Because the Island roads were narrow, his nurses had to tie his arms down to keep them from knocking down the rail fences and other structures along the highway. His large feet would get over the end of the wagon and tear up the road surface. This was not the child's fault

because his feet were so far from his head that he but seldom or never saw them. One day a fly settled on his nose. To get rid of it he blew so hard that he completely wrecked several clouds which were floating above.

Paul's christening was a big event. The islanders came from many miles around to attend. Malpeause Bay was the only place along the coast which was big enough for the baptismal ceremony. He was lowered into the water with a steam crane, but one of the chains broke and the child hit the water with such a great splash that it started a tidal wave in the Bay of Fundy which has not entirely subsided yet.

### A PRODIGIOUS FEEDER

Even as a child, Paul Bunyan was a very heavy feeder. The nurse was given orders to keep count of the amount of food he ate in order to safeguard his health. This girl was poorly educated and could only count up to thirty-two. After that number she lost count and Paul ate seventy-four buckets of oatmeal porridge and almost bloated himself. The girl was then discharged and Paul's worried mother then invented the card index system now in such general use. After that there was less trouble about his diet.

### HIS MUSICAL TALENT

Early in his childhood Paul began to take an interest in lobster factory music. It was very difficult to keep him away from the lobster factories where many of the witty sayings of the Island and many of its songs were originated. He was very musical, so his father bought all of the instruments of a German band that went broke in Maine. He had the village blacksmith hammer them all together into a single instrument. While he was doing this a bumblebee and a screech owl flew into one of the big horns and he welded them into the mess, and that is how the saxophone came into existence.

Paul liked to go down to the beach to play his saxophone. By doing this he completely ruined the commerce of the Island. The ships' captains heard his playing and thought it was a foghorn, and sailed up the St. Lawrence or went to Halifax instead of landing there. One ship that got directly in the path of the wind of his horn sailed clear down to the south end of South America before it could stop itself, even with all of its anchors down. During their swift passage the captain and mates aged twenty years through fear of sailing across an island or two, or ruining a Brazilian coffee plantation.

### SCHOOL DAYS

Paul's fond father thought that something ought to be done to give his son an education. He wrote to the Canadian government asking for



help. All that he received in reply was an autographed photograph of the Governor General and some agricultural pamphlets of small value. He finally decided to send him to the village school, but, luckily perhaps for the boy, he contracted a bad case of mumps. He was sick for eleven years (Jim MacDonald, who claims inside information, says twenty-two), and it took three doctors, an osteopath, twelve chiropractors and a mind reader to pull him through.

After his recovery he started school in the eighth grade. He carried a tin bucket which his indulgent mother filled with bread, meat and other food. One day he sat down on it, and that, we are informed, is the way the hamburger sandwich was invented.

His teachers were always complaining about Paul, and the school board began protesting also. Every time he wrote his name he wore out a lead pencil. As he could not get more than one letter on each page of his copybook his teacher would not let him spell words of more than four letters, except on his birthday. It took a strong ox-team to bring his geography to school. He could only study one subject a day in order to keep the school-yard from being jammed with teams.

Paul never did get much satisfaction out of his schooling. All of the pretty girls were afraid of him and he seldom got a chance to carry home their books. The boys would not fight him unless he tied his feet at the ankles and his hands behind his back.

### HELPING ON THE FARM

Like other Island boys, he had to help on his father's farm. He was so strong that, with his copper-toed boots, he could kick out potatoes so fast that his father was able to grow three or more crops a year. Sometimes a tuber flew a long distance. One hit the dome of the capitol at Washington, D. C., and nearly became the cause of a severing of diplomatic relations between the two governments.

Paul's father, at about this time, gave him two blue ox calves. These Paul named Babe and Benny. Like everything else on the place they grew so fast that every time one looked at them they were three feet taller. Crazy Jim, the bull-driver, broke them. He developed their speed by tying an orange-colored sash around their middles and driving them through the Irish settlement on St. Patrick's day.)

### HE GOES WEST TO SEEK HIS FORTUNE

While still very young Paul decided to go west to seek his fortune. One fine morning he drove the Blue Oxen up to the door of his home, loaded in his keister and bedding roll, kissed the old folks good-bye and moved away. Right up to the last minute he was thoughtful of his parents. He

waited until he reached the bridge over the creek before he took his saxophone out of his pocket and played "Home Sweet Home"; so that the only damage done was to a few dozen hens which were blown out to sea and a few sheep which were driven crazy.

He promised to write home but he never did. He once tried to send a postcard, but the two strongest mail carriers in eastern Canada strained their backs trying to lift it. Then the postal employees union got out an injunction to restrain Paul from breaking down the mails and he never tried to write home again.

His parents and former neighbors on Prince Edward Island kept some track of him and his logging exploits in Canada, Maine, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota and the Far West through the numerous tales that his great fame produced.

### PAUL BUNYAN

Bunyan was a powerful giant, seven feet tall and with a stride of seven feet. He was famous throughout the lumbering districts for his great physical strength. So great was his lung capacity that he called his men to dinner by blowing through a hollow tree. When he spoke, limbs sometimes fell from trees. To keep his pipe filled required the entire time of a swamper with a scoop shovel. He could not write and ordered the supplies for his camp by drawing pictures of what he wanted. Once he ordered grindstones and got cheeses. He forgot to draw the holes. He kept the time of his men by cutting notches in a piece of wood.

No undertaking was too great for Paul. Lumberjacks say that he is the man who logged the timber off North Dakota.

(He also scooped out the hole for Lake Superior. This he used for a reservoir as he was needing water to ice his logging roads. The Mississippi River was caused by the overturning of a water tank when his ox slipped.)

### HIS LOGGING CREW

His logging crew on the Big Onion River, "the winter of the blue snow," in about 1862 or 1865, was so large that the men were divided into three gangs. One of these was always going to work, a second was at work and a third was always returning to camp from work. This kept the cooks busy, for when they had finished preparing breakfast for one crew they had to prepare dinner for another and supper for a third.

To sharpen their axes the men sometimes rolled boulders down steep hillsides and running after them ground the blades against the revolving stones.

Jim Liverpool was a great jumper. Planting his feet on the bank of a river he could jump across it in three jumps.



Black Dan McDonald, Tom McCann, Dutch Jake, Red Murphy, Curley Charley, Yellow-head and Patsy Ward were other well-known members of his daredevil crew. One of the men had two sets of teeth which could saw through anything. One night, while walking in his sleep, he encountered a grindstone and before he awoke he chewed it up.

### JOHNNY INKSLINGER

Paul's camp bookkeeper was Johnny Inkslinger, a very efficient man. He kept the time of the crews, purchased supplies, paid the men, tended the camp store, and performed many other duties that fall to the lot of a camp clerk. The first winter that he was employed by Paul he hit on the plan of leaving off the dots from the i's and the crosses from the t's and thus saved Paul nine barrels of ink on the payroll alone.

### THE CAMP

The cook shanty was so large that it took half a day to walk around its outside. Three forties had to be cleared each week to keep up a fire in the big cook-stove. An entire cord of wood was needed to start a blaze. The loaves of bread were gigantic. When the men had eaten the insides the crusts were used for bunks (some say bunk-houses).

One day, Joe Mufferon, the cook, put a loaf in the oven and started around to the other side to remove it, but before he got there it had burned to a crisp. Before he began to make pancakes he strapped hams on the feet of his two colored assistants and had them skate over the top of the stove to grease it.

His eyesight being poor, one day he mixed some blasting powder with the batter. It blew up and the colored assistants went through the roof and never did come back. That was "the winter of the black snow."

Seven men were kept busy with wheelbarrows hauling prune stones away from the camp. The chipmunks ate these and grew as big as tigers.

Paul had much trouble with his cooks. He was always having to hire new ones. One got lost between the potato bin and the flour bin and nearly starved to death before he was found. The horn which Paul or the cook used to call the men to dinner was so big that it once blew down ten acres of pine. Next time the cook blew it straight up and that caused a cyclone.

The dining room was so large that when a man told a yarn at one end it grew so big by the time it reached the other that it had to be shoveled out.

Doughnuts (sinkers) were carried from the kitchen by two men on poles which they carried on their shoulders. Sometimes they were rolled down the length of the tables, the men catching them as they went by. Big Ole, the blacksmith, cut the holes in them with a punch and sledge.

## THE BLUE OX

Bunyan was assisted in his lumbering by a huge blue ox, Babe, of whom he was very fond. This ox had the strength of nine horses and it weighed ten thousand pounds. It measured seven axe handles between the eyes. Its horns were of immense size. The men tied a line to their tips and hung clothing on it to dry. The original color of the animal was pure white. One winter it snowed blue snow for seven days and the ox lying down in it all winter was dyed blue.

With the ox Paul dragged a whole house up a hill, then he dragged the cellar up after it. When he wanted to peel a log he hitched the ox to one end and himself took hold of the bark at the other.

The ox pulled and out came the log "as clean as a whistle." (Babe sometimes got into mischief. Once he broke loose at night and ate up two hundred feet of tow line. Sometimes he slipped in behind the crew, drank the water in the river and left the drive high and dry. Some of the lakes in Wisconsin and Minnesota are in holes made by his feet.

Bunyan had many other oxen besides Babe. When strung out in a line if each took the tail of the other in his mouth they would stretch halfway across the state. Their yokes piled up made one hundred cords of wood. One day he drove his oxen through a hollow log which had fallen across a great ravine. When they came through he counted them and saw that several were missing. These, he found, had strayed into a hollow limb.

## BIG OLE

Big Ole was Paul's blacksmith at the Big Onion camp. He was a very powerful man and when he struck his anvil the ring of the metal could be heard in the next county. He alone could shoe Babe, the ox, single handed. Once he carried two of his shoes for a mile and sunk knee deep in the solid rock at every step. Every time the ox was shod a new iron mine had to be opened up.

## THE PYRAMID FORTY

At Round River, in section 37, there was a forty shaped like a pyramid, with a heavy growth of timber on all of its sides. To see to the top "took a week." It was "as far as twenty men could see." Bunyan and his crew labored all one winter, "the winter of the blue snow," to clear it. From it they cut one hundred million feet of timber. Some of the men got one short leg from working all winter on one side of the slope.

## THE ROUND RIVER DRIVE

The crew rolled the logs cut on the pyramid forty down to the bank and in the spring started them down the river. They drove for "two weeks or more" hoping to reach a mill town where they could dispose of them. It was not until they had



passed their camp several times that they realized that the river was round and had no outlet. Someone recognized the pyramid.

### FORTY JONES EXPLOIT

One day Forty Jones, the straw boss, saw some deer tracks near the river. He watched for them and at night when they came to drink removed the key-log from a pile of logs forty feet high, which rolled down hill and killed two hundred of the herd.

The camp then had enough venison to last all winter.

### THE BUCKSKIN HARNESS

The barn boss made a harness of the hides for the blue ox.

Later Pink-eye Martin was hauling in logs for firewood. When he started with his load it began to rain and the buckskin to stretch and when he reached camp Babe was beside him but the load was still down in the woods. He tied the ox and went in to dinner.

While he was eating the sun came out very hot, dried the harness and hauled the logs to camp.

### BEAN SOUP LAKE

Near the Round River there was a hot spring. One day the tote team bringing up a mammoth load of beans overturned near the spring and the beans fell into it. The teamster expected to be discharged for losing the beans. Joe, the cook, took some salt, pepper and pork and threw them in among the beans. So the camp had good soup all winter. The book's assistants, however, were angry because each day they had to tramp three miles to bring soup to the camp.

Another version of this tale says that the tote teamster was driving across a frozen lake with a load of beans when the ice suddenly thawed and the ox was drowned. Bunyan dammed the lake, fired the slashings on shore, and then, opening up the dam, sluiced bean soup with an ox-tail flavor down the river to his men.

When the men were working at a distance from the camp the cook got the soup to them by freezing it onto sticks and pieces of rope.

### WILD ANIMALS

Haunting the woods about the logging camp were numerous fabulous animals. Some were very wild and fierce and others harmless. There was a bird which laid square eggs so that they would not roll down hill. The upland trout built its nest in tall trees and was very difficult to catch. The side-hill dodger had two short legs on the up-hill side. The pinnacle grouse had only one wing. This enabled it to fly only in one direction about the top of a conical hill. Snow snakes were most active in the winter time. They made victims of

men who wandered in the woods after dark. The rumptifusel and the hodag were beasts of great ferocity.

The gilliegalue bird had a voice which was "melodiously groug," like the "grinding of rocks in a mill" or the "threshing of beans with a flail." It was but seldom seen but when in good voice could be heard for a long distance. One of the worst nuisances in the woods was the axe-handle hound. It prowled about at night looking for axe-handles, these being the only food which it was known to touch. The hide-behind watched for its prey from behind tree trunks and rocks.


### PAUL AS A HUNTER

Paul Bunyan was a good hunter. He hunted only for his own amusement or when the supply of "salt horse" in his camps was running low. During this time he invented a shotgun that would shoot geese so high up in the air that by the time they fell to the ground they were spoiled. Once, while hunting, he spied a deer sticking its head over a log two or three miles away. Paul took careful aim and fired and the deer dropped. A few seconds later the deer again peered over the top of the log. Paul shot again, and the occurrence was again repeated. With only twenty-eight cartridges, Paul fired every one. With the last shot the deer stayed down. Distressed at his poor gunnery Paul went to get his deer. Judge of his great surprise when he found twenty-eight dead deer lying behind the log, each one shot squarely between the eyes.

As a trailer of game Paul was unsurpassed. Once he came upon a moose in the woods that had died of old age. Having some spare time on his hands and being just then in an inquiring turn of mind he in a short length of time traced this moose back to the place where it was born.

### HIS LITERARY FRIENDS

Bernice Stewart, E. S. Shepard, Esther Shepard, James Stevens, W. Laughead, Pat Cook, Donald Hough, Gregory Clark, and other friends of Paul Bunyan, have recorded many of the exploits of the immortal hero of the lumber camps. If the reader desires further information concerning Paul he is earnestly requested to read the magazine articles and books written by them.





**PAUL BUNYAN** ♦

and **TONY BEAVER TALES**



**PAUL BUNYAN**

Mythical Hero of the American Lumber Camps  
and His Southern Cousin

**TONY BEAVER**

© 1930

Madison, Wisconsin  
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Tall Yarns of the Prince of American  
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Charles Edward Brown

Publisher of  
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Cowboy Tales (Pecos Bill)  
The Mushroom Book  
Scenic and Historic Wisconsin  
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First Edition  
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C. E. Brown  
2011 Chadbourne Avenue  
Madison, Wisconsin



# PAUL BUNYAN TALES

The hero of the American lumberjacks is Paul Bunyan and tales of his boyhood, his great strength and wonderful exploits are, or formerly were, told by the fires of bunkhouses in the logging camps from Maine to Wisconsin, and from Minnesota to Oregon, British Columbia and California. His cousin, Tony Beaver, cut tall timber the the forests of the South, and his blood brother, Pecos Bill, reigned over the cow camps and cattle trails from Texas to beyond the Canada boundary.

All lumberjacks believe, or pretend to believe, that Paul really lived and was the pioneer axeman in the lumber country. Some of the older "river pigs" even claim to have worked for him or to have known him or members of his famous logging crew.

In Wisconsin the former location of one of his famous big camps is reported to have been "45 miles west of Rhineland". The late Gene Shepard identified the location by means of the "perfumed moss" which grew abundantly on the site of the old camp buildings. Various lakes are indicated as the famous "Bean Soup" Lake. A village in northern Wisconsin is named for Paul. In the Memorial Union building at the University of Wisconsin a room is dedicated to to Bunyan's memory.

## PAUL'S BIRTHPLACE

Paul Bunyan (Bon Jean), say his biographers, was born on Prince Edward Island at the eastern seacoast of Canada, of poor, but honest and deserving French parents. This information was obtained from Canadian fishermen and others in a position to know. No manuscript proof of it is now available because the parish records, if such ever existed, have long been missing.

## HIS BOYHOOD

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Paul's fond father thought that something ought to be done to give his son an education. He wrote to the Canadian government asking help. All that he received in reply was an autographed photograph of the Governor General and some agricultural pamphlets of small value. He was advised to carry the matter higher up to Queen Victoria but he felt no hope of success and did not carry out the idea. He finally decided to send him to the parish school, but, luckily perhaps for the boy, he contracted a bad case of mumps. He was sick for eleven years, and it took three doctors, an osteopath, twelve chiropractors and a mind-reader to pull him through.

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One day Forty Jones, the straw boss, saw some deer tracks near the river. He watched for them at night and when they came to drink removed the keylog from a pile of logs forty feet high. These rolled down and killed forty of the herd. The camp then had enough venison to last all winter.

## THE BUCKSKIN HARNESS

The barn boss made a harness of the deer hides for the Blue Ox. Later Pink-eye Martin was hauling in logs for firewood. When he started with his load it began to rain and the buckskin to stretch and when he reached camp Babe was beside him but the load was still down in the woods. He tied the ox and went in to dinner. While he was eating the sun came out very hot, dried the harness, which shrunk and dragged the logs to camp.

## BEAN SOUP LAKE

The tote teamster was driving across a frozen lake with a load of beans for the camp when the ice suddenly broke and drowned the oxen and spilled the beans into the water. Paul dammed the outlet of the lake and fired the slashings on the shore while Joe, the cook, threw into the water a quantity of salt and pepper. So the camp had good soup with an ox-tail flavor all the winter. When the men were working at a distance Joe's assistants got the soup to them by freezing it onto sticks and pieces of rope. Some of the men drilled holes in their axe handles and filled these with soup. Their hands on the handles then kept the soup warm.

## PAUL'S HUNTING

Paul Bunyan was a good hunter. He hunted only when camp supplies were running low. He invented a shotgun that would shoot geese so high up in the air that by the time they fell to the ground they were generally spoiled. Once, while hunting, he spied a deer sticking its head over a log two or three miles away. Paul took careful aim and fired and the deer dropped. A few minutes later the deer again peered over the log. Paul shot again, and the occurrence was again repeated. With only twenty-eight cartridges, Paul fired every one. With the last shot the deer stayed down. Distressed at his poor gunnery Paul went to get his deer. Judge of his great surprise when he found twenty-eight dead deer lying behind the log, each one shot squarely between the eyes.

As a trailer of game he was unsurpassed. Once he came on a moose in the woods that had died of old age. Having some spare time Paul in a short time traced this moose back to the place where it was born.

Paul had a little hunting dog called Elmer. One night he thought that he heard a rat in the shanty. He flung an axe and cut his favorite dog in two. But he got up and stitched the dog together again. This was in the dark and he got the hind end of the dog the wrong way with the legs pointing up instead of down. When Elmer got well he was one of the smartest dogs in the north woods. He could catch any animal in the bush. He would run on one pair of legs until he was tired, then turn over and use the other pair.

## WILD ANIMALS

Living in the woods near the logging camps were numerous wild animals. Some were very wild and fierce, and others harmless. The hillside plover laid square eggs which would not roll down hill. The upland trout built its nest in trees and was very difficult to catch. The side-hill dodger had two short legs on the uphill side. The pinnacle grouse had only one wing. This enabled it to fly only in one direction about the top of a conical hill. Snow snakes were very poisonous. They were most active in the winter months. The hodag, with an armored back and tail, great jaws and claws, and the rumpfusel, were powerful beasts of great ferocity. The luferlang was an animal with a dark blue stripe running down its back. Its tail was in the middle of its back. It could run in either direction. Its bite was almost certain death. The hide-behind watched for its prey from behind trees. It was always behind something. It accounted for many hapless lumberjacks. One of the worst nuisances of the woods was the axe-handle hound. It prowled about at night looking for axe handles, these being the only food which it was known to touch. Cords of axe handles were eaten by this pest.

## THE HOT-HOT-HOT SUMMER

In his spare time, when not engaged in logging, Paul Bunyan sometimes turned his attention to agriculture. One year he planted the entire state of Iowa to corn. This was the fateful year of the Hot-Hot- Hot Summer.

His big corn crop was growing very nicely, the stalks were already 17 feet tall and earing-out well, when a spell of very hot weather came along. It grew steadily hotter and hotter. The corn now matured very rapidly. Still hotter became the weather. The sun burned small holes in the soil. The corn ears were ripened and the kernels fell on



the ground. In many places they covered the ground to the depth of a foot or more.

And still the terrible heat increased. Now the fallen kernels began to pop. The popping was incessant and soon the earth was hidden beneath three or four feet of white popped corn. Now a big wind from Kansas swept the fields, piling up the white corn in great drifts and heaps. Some of Paul's cattle had strayed into the fields for food, and the poor cows, believing that there had come a great snowstorm and blizzard, actually froze to death before they could be rescued. Some of Paul's farm hands were also badly frost-bitten, or suffered from frozen noses, ears fingers and feet.

(All this happened during the Hot-Hot-Hot Summer of which many lumberjacks can tell. There never was such a torrid year. Over in Illinois, where Paul was trying to grow grapes, the fruit swelled to such size in the great heat that the grapes burst and the rivers of grape juice flooded out a number of Mississippi River towns. Down in Tennessee the huckleberries grew to the size of a man's two fists and a heap of them reached the size of pumpkins.)

## TONY BEAVER TALES

Tony Beaver was a cousin, or at least a sort of relative of Paul Bunyan's. The loggers and lumberjacks of the Southern forests and mountains tell quite a few tall yarns of Tony and his crew. Tony was a giant in stature and equal to almost any nearly impossible feat. Like Paul, he had had but few educational advantages in his youth. Most of the men employed in his camps have been described as "great big, two-fisted, Jim-bruiser fellows, boss hands at fellin' trees, spuddin' tan-bark or skiddin' logs."\* While Tony possessed but few social graces of his own, he valued such accomplishments in others. Whenever possible he kept one or two Eyetalians in his crew. These little fellows didn't amount to anythin' as wood-choppers, but they were always very polite and graceful in speech and manners and gave some tone to his camps. In the Cumberland Mountains they say that one of his camps was located "up Eel River". Another was "way up in the Smokies". Big Henry was one of his hard-workin' assistants.

Tony always did, or tried to do, everythin' in a big way. His loggin' crews were large, his camps were of huge size, and he had a real genius for pickin' out the tallest and the best timber. One of his yokes of oxen was so huge that it took a crow a week to fly between their horns. Once he hitched the oxen to the wheels of time and "had time goin' and comin'". When he smoked his big pipe the hill folks thought that the whole mountains were on fire. When he emptied it by strikin' it against a tree or rock the sound was like a clap of thunder. The lickin' brewed in his camp still was so powerful that one swallow would make a bear turn inside out. Some say that it would make "a ribbit spit in a bulldog's eye." Tony had the trick of swingin' a bucket of water around so fast that not a drop would fall out. Then he would settle it over his head and not spill a drop. He was a past master at swappin' knives. He could set out with a Barlow knife with a broken blade, and in a short time own enough Keen Cutters to outfit a hardware store, and have money in his pocket to boot.

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\* Mary P. Montague, *Atlantic Monthly*, 1923

## TONY AND THE BIG "PAINTERS"

When Tony was a boy he was one day walkin' to school when he saw two big "painters" (catamounts or mountain lions) on either side of the path. Knowin' that the varmints were out lookin' for trouble he quickly called out "Sic em!, sic em!", and the two big cats immediately flew at each other. They jumped as high as his head and were tusslin' with each other. Then he called out "Sic em! sic em!, sic em!", and they jumped as high as a tree and fought harder than ever. Then he went to school with the cats still fightin'. After school he returned along the same path. He could not then see the varmints, they were fightin' high up in the clouds, but bits of fur were floatin' down to the ground on every side. Thus Tony Beaver, by his presence of mind saved his life from the two "painters".

## HIS GRANNY'S FRY CAKES

Tony's granny was famous for the wonderful fry cakes she could make. She liked Tony better than any of her grandchildren and always had some for him when he visited her cabin. One day the Big Boy was returnin' from a visit to her when he met Brer Rabbit. Rabbit was a very smart fellow and he knew that Tony was totin' a package of those fine fry cakes. Of course he wanted to get them if he could. He himself had some persimmons he was carryin' in a pouch. So he proposed that they play a little game that he knew about. By his magic he would increase both the number of the fry cakes and of the persimmons.

Rabbit put a persimmon on the top of a big log and the Big Boy laid a fry cake next to it. Then Rabbit laid down another persimmon, and the boy another fry cake. So they kept on layin' down a persimmon and a fry cake until all were down and the cakes and wild fruit stretched out in a line clear across the top of the log. All the time Rabbit kept singin' in a low tone this magic verse:

'Simmon an' a fry cake  
A layin' on de log,  
You get none  
'En I play hog.

Then Brer Rabbit suddenly shouted "Keno!, keno!" and jumped to gather up all the cakes and persimmons. Rabbit was very quick but the Big Boy, who was at the other end of the log, was watchin'

and hit him such a tremendous box on the ear that Rabbit, turnin' over and over, rose high above the tree tops. As he went up he dropped all his plunder and folks say it rained fry cakes and persimmons after that for three days in Alabama and Mississippi. Rabbit kept well out of the way of Tony after that.

### BIG HENRY'S AXE

Big Henry needed a new axe, so he went to the store and bought one. The next day he brought the axe back. He said it was no good. What he wanted was an axe that, when swung, would come down "boo". So the storekeeper had the blacksmith make a very large and heavy axe for the big lumberjack. It weighed twenty pounds.

Henry was greatly pleased with this man-size axe. But several days after he came back with this axe. It was no good. It came down "boo" all right, he said, but it didn't come up "boo". It stuck in the logs.

### THE BIG MELON

Tony Beaver once grew an immense watermelon. It was so large that it took his whole crew to load it and a flat car to hold it. After it had been loaded Tony sat astride it. The railroad grades are very steep and the curves very sharp in the Eel River country. In rounding one of the curves the big melon and Tony suddenly left the car and slid down the bank into the Eel River. They got the train stopped when they saw the accident and the crew ran back to see what had happened to their boss and the melon. In going down the bank the melon had busted to pieces. They looked and there in the river, wavin' his hands and shoutin', was Tony. He was ridin' on one of the watermelon seeds in the current. He called to the crew and they got seeds too and soon the whole lumberjack gang went yellin' down the river ridin' on those black watermelon seeds.

### BROTHER MUTTERS

Bro. Moses Mutters was an old mountain preacher, who hung about Tony's Eel River camps. He was always mutterin' somethin', hence the name given to him by the log-choppers and bull-punchers. He objected to most of Tony's big undertakin's with the words, "You can't do it, Tony—its ergin reason." As a preacher he wasn't half bad, but he was only just tolerated by the 'jacks. He was of

some use at christenin's, weddin's and buryin's. Then he tuk his pay in a jug of applejack.

Once a missionary woman from Up North, "from Maine or Spain", came to Eel River to try to convert Tony Beaver from his "hellish ways", but she departed without any success.

### SAWDUST SAM

Sawdust Sam one day found a mirror which some traveler had lost in the mountains. "Well, if it ain't my old dad," said Sam, as he looked in the mirror. "I never knowed he had his pitcher tuk."

Sam took the mirror to his cabin and there hid it. But Mrs. Sam was suspicious of his actions and found it while Sam was asleep. "Hum-hum," said she, looking into it, "so that's the old hag Sam's been courtin'."

Someone sent Sam a calendar. His wife tore it up saying she wasn't goin' to have him tryin' to read "any of them dime novels".

### PAUL BUNYAN VISITS TONY

It was through Tony that Paul Bunyan heard of the yellow pine of the South and of the cypress trees of Louisiana. Tony sent an invitation to his cousin to come down and see this big timber and Paul sent word by the geese flyin' south that he would accept the invitation.

The boys in the bull-pine mills along the Arkansas-Oklahoma line decided to grow a sure-enough big cypress in honor of Paul's coming. So they selected a nice cypress tree and hauled more than a thousand loads of manure about its base and also pruned off all of its limbs except its crown. Then they built a large crane near it and by systematically stretchin' it, they got it growin' upwards at the rate of fourteen feet a day. When Paul arrived this tree was more than a thousand feet high, the biggest tree this side of the California red-woods.

Paul enjoyed his visit among the Southern lumberjacks. While he was there there came a spell of red rain. It rained continually for 16 days and 17 nights. The water which fell, was as red as red barn or railroad paint. The stream it cut in drainin' off is now called Red River. Its waters still run red.

Paul taught the Arkansas wood choppers a thing or two about fellin' trees. Tyin' a rope to the end of his axe-handle he cut forty



acres of standin' timber at one swing. Attachin' a log chain to the end of a large log he jerked the heart-wood right out of it before anyone could say Jack Robinson. He sent North for Jim Liverpool to bring down his big saw. This saw stretched across a quarter section of land. But Jim was busy practicin' jumps across Lake Superior and never came.

When in Louisiana Paul had his saw-tooth hound with him. This dog could, when encouraged, bite right through the trunk of a big tree. But the hound was killed by a flyin' squirrel which flew from the top of a cypress and hit him square between the eyes. Paul buried the dog. The big bones which they are now findin' all over Louisiana are those of Paul's saw-tooth hound. Paul had to hurry home to Wisconsin after that because Johnny Inkslinger had secured for him the contracts to log off North Dakota and Kansas.

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# Paul Bunyan American Hercules



WISCONSIN TALL TALES OF THE PRINCE OF  
AMERICAN LUMBERJACKS AND HIS  
LOGGING CREWS



FOR STORY TELLING AT  
THE CAMPFIRE  
AND FIRESIDE



CHARLES E. BROWN  
2011 Chadbourne Avenue  
Madison, Wisconsin  
1937

WISCONSIN

# PAUL BUNYAN

## AMERICAN HERCULES

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The hero of the American lumberjacks is Paul Bunyan and tales of his boyhood, his great strength and wonderful exploits are, or formerly were, told by the fires of bunkhouses in the logging camps from Wisconsin to Maine, and from Minnesota to Oregon, British Columbia and California. His cousin, Tony Beaver, cut tall timber in the forests of the South, and his blood brother, Pecos Bill, reigned over the cow camps and cattle trails from Texas to beyond the Canada boundary. Kemp Morgan, a waif whom Paul adopted, dug all of the important oil wells in Texas and Oklahoma.

All lumberjacks believe, or pretend to believe that Paul really lived and was the pioneer axeman in the lumber country. Some of the older "river pigs" even claim to have worked for him or to have known him or members of his famous logging crew.

In Wisconsin the former location of one of his famous camps is reported to have been "45 miles west of Rhinelander." The late Gene Shepard identified the location by means of the "perfumed moss" which grew abundantly on the site of the old camp buildings. Various lakes are indicated as the famous "Bean Soup" Lake. A village in northern Wisconsin is named for Paul. In the Memorial Union building at the University of Wisconsin a room is dedicated to Bunyan's memory, its walls decorated with mural paintings depicting some of the outstanding exploits of the great logger's career.

### PAUL BUNYAN

Paul Bunyan was a powerful giant, seven feet tall and with a stride of seven feet. He was famous throughout the lumbering districts for his great physical strength. So great

was his lung capacity that he called his men by blowing through a hollow tree. When he spoke limbs sometimes fell. To keep his pipe filled required the entire time of a swamper with a scoop shovel. He could not write and ordered the supplies for his camp by drawing the picture of whatever he wanted. Once he ordered grindstones and got cheeses instead. He forgot to draw the holes. He kept the time of his men by cutting notches in a piece of wood.

For a big man Paul was very quick on his feet. He could go to one end of the bunkhouse, blow out the light and get into his bunk before it got dark.

No undertaking was too great for Paul. Lumberjacks say that he is the man who logged the timber off North Dakota. He also scooped out the hole for Lake Superior. This he used as a reservoir when he needed water to ice his logging roads. The Mississippi River was caused by the overturning of a water tank when his big ox slipped.

### **HIS LOGGING CREW**

His logging crew on the Big Onion River, "the winter of the blue snow", in 1862 or 1865, was so large that the men were divided into three gangs. One of these was always going to work, a second was at work, and a third was always returning to camp from work. This kept the cooks busy, for when they had finished preparing breakfast for one crew they had to prepare dinner for another and then supper for a third. To furnish light for the night crew he invented the Aurora Borealis.

To sharpen their axes the men sometimes rolled boulders down the steep hillsides and running beside them ground the blades against the revolving stones. One shantyboy pressed his nose to one of the stones by mistake and had it ground neatly off.

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One day Forty Jones, the straw boss, saw some deer tracks near the river. He watched for them at night and when they came to drink removed the keylog from a pile of logs forty feet high. These rolled down and killed forty of the herd. The camp then had enough venison to last all winter.

### **THE BUCKSKIN HARNESS**

The barn boss made a harness of the deer hides for the Blue Ox. Later Pinkeye Martin was hauling in logs for firewood. When he started with his load it began to rain and the buckskin to stretch and when he reached camp Babe was beside him but the load was still down in the woods. He tied the ox and went in to dinner. While he was eating the sun came out very hot, dried the harness, which shrunk and dragged the logs to camp.

## **BEAN SOUP LAKE**

The tote teamster was driving across a frozen lake with a load of beans for the camp when the ice suddenly broke and drowned the oxen and spilled the beans into the water. Paul dammed the outlet of the lake and fired the slashings on the shore while Joe, the cook, threw into the water a quantity of salt and pepper. So the camp had good soup with an ox-tail flavor all the winter. When the men were working at a distance Joe's assistants got the soup to them by freezing it onto sticks and pieces of rope. Some of the men drilled holes in their axe handles and filled these with soup. Their hands on the handles then kept the soup warm.

## **PAUL'S HUNTING**

Paul Bunyan as a good hunter. He hunted only when camp supplies were running low. He invented a shotgun that would shoot geese so high up in the air that by the time they fell to the ground they were generally spoiled. Once, while hunting, he spied a deer sticking its head over a log two or three miles away. Paul took careful aim and fired and the deer dropped. A few minutes later the deer again peered over the log. Paul shot again, and the occurrence was again repeated. With only twenty-eight catridges, Paul fired every one. With the last shot the deer stayed down. Distressed at his poor gunnery Paul went to get his deer. Judge of his great surprise when he found twenty-eight deer lying behind the log, each one shot squarely between the eyes.

## **ELMER THE REVERSIBLE DOG**

Paul had a little hunting dog called Elmer. One night he thought that he heard a rat in the shanty. He flung an axe and cut his favorite dog in two. But he got up and stitched the dog together again. This was done in the dark and he got the hind end of the dog the wrong way with the legs pointing up instead of down. When Elmer got well he was one of the smartest dogs in the north woods. He could catch any animal in the bush. He would run on one pair of legs until he was tired, then turn over and use the other pair.

## THE BIG MOSQUITOS

When Paul was cutting big timber in the St. Croix River region his men were harassed by the big mosquitos. These were so large and strong that they carried away and devoured many a juicy lumberjack. Paul would have lost all of his crew had not someone told him of a race of big bumblebees down in the Golf Country. He sent Jim Liverpool down to get some of them. Jim jumped all of the big and little rivers on the way and returned in record time.

The bumblebees and the mosquitos began to fight each other and many bloody battles occurred. After a time the two declared a truce. They became friends and intermarried. The offspring were far worse than either parent. They were armed with stingers at both ends. But Paul had finished his work and moved his camp to Minnesota.

### Note

See Paul Bunyan Natural History describing the wild animals, birds and fish of the old time logging camps.



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# PAUL BUNYAN CLASSICS

Authentic Original Stories Told In The Old Time  
Logging Camps Of The Wisconsin Pineries

Paul Bunyan Super-Lumberjack, His Camp and Logging Crew, Babe  
The Blue Ox, The Pyramid Forty, Pea Soup Lake, The Round River  
Drive, The Buckskin Harness, The Reversible Dog, The Big Mosquitos  
and Other Tall Tales



Dedicated To  
Gladys J. Hancy  
W. W. Charters  
"Ranger Mac" McNeel

CHARLES E. BROWN  
Wisconsin Folklore Society  
Madison, Wisconsin  
1945

## PAUL BUNYAN

Paul Bunyan, the legendary hero of American lumberjacks, is now generally acknowledged to be the most famous figure in American folklore. Tales of his boyhood, of his great strength and wonderful exploits, formerly were and are still told by the stove fires in bunk-houses of logging camps from Wisconsin to Maine, and from Minnesota to Oregon, British Columbia and California. Even in the forests of Mexico tales of Paul are told. Numerous newspaper articles, magazine articles, pamphlets and books have been printed about him. Songs and verses and music have been written, plays staged, and Bunyan murals and paintings and statuary prepared. His tall tales frequently appear in radio programs. They are among the most appreciated of the stories told at vacation camps and in many other places throughout Our Country\* Paul Bunyan has become a worthy symbol of American strength and resourcefulness.

Wisconsin is said to have the best right to claim the birthplace of Paul Bunyan. The Bunyan tales were first told, as stories, in the Wisconsin logging camps in the 1850's to the 1880's.

In the 1880's they became attached to the legendary hero, Paul Bunyan. Many of the best tales very probably originated in Wisconsin. Lumberjacks employed in Wisconsin camps carried the stories back with them to their home states and to Canada.

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\*Paul Bunyan Twenty-five Years After. Bunyan Bibliography. Gladys J. Haney. The Journal of American Folklore. Vol. 55. No. 217, 1942.

**PRINCE OF AMERICAN LUMBERJACKS**—Paul Bunyan was a powerful giant. He was seven feet tall and had a seven-foot stride. He was famous throughout the entire timber country of America for his great physical strength and his ability to accomplish great things. No undertaking was too great for Paul. He constructed the Great Lakes and Niagara Falls, he created the Mississippi River. He logged off the Dakotas, Nebraska and Kansas. He piled up the mountain chains, and constructed the Grand Canyon and Puget Sound. American geography owes everything to Paul Bunyan.

So great was his lung power that he called his logging crews by blowing through a hollow tree. Once he blew through it and felled ten acres of pine. He blew it upward and caused a destructive cyclone. To keep his big pipe filled required the entire time of a swamper with a scoop shovel. He could not write and ordered the supplies for his camp by drawing a picture of whatever he wanted. Once he ordered grindstones and got cheeses instead. He forgot to draw the holes. With his double-bit axe tied to the end of a piece of strong rope he could cut down acres of timber with a single stroke.

For a big man Paul Bunyan was very quick on his feet. He could go to one end of the bunkhouse, blow out the light and get into his bunk before it got dark.

**HIS LOGGING CREW**—Paul Bunyan had a great crew up in the Wisconsin pinery the Year of the Two Winters. His men were a well selected lot, coming from Maine, New Brunswick, Vermont, Pennsylvania, Ontario, Michigan and Wisconsin. Chris Crosshaul, the camp foreman, had such a sharp sight that he could see to the tops of the tallest pine trees in three looks. Big Joe Muffraw, the boss cook, could make flapjacks on the top of his big cook stove faster than two flunkies with baskets could catch them. Before he began he strapped hams on the feet of two colored boys and had them skate over the top of the stove to grease it. His assistant, Sourdough Sam, baked break loaves so big that Paul used some of them for bunkhouses.

Shot Gunderson was the best log-spinner in the camp. Taking a 75-foot log he could spin it so fast with his feet that the log slid out of the bark and he walked ashore on the bubbles. Jim Liverpool was a great jumper. Planting his feet on the bank of the widest river he could jump across it in three jumps. Big Ole, the Swede, was the camp blacksmith. He was a very powerful man. When he struck his anvil the ring of the metal could be heard in the next county.

He alone could shoe Babe, the Blue Ox. Once he carried two of Babe's shoes from his shop to the barn and sank knee deep in the solid rock at every step. Every time Babe was shod a new iron mine had to be opened up. In his spare time Big Ole punched the holes in the camp doughnuts.

Brimstone Bill was Babe's keeper. He invented swearing. His supply of cusswords was unlimited. When anything went wrong and Bill really tore loose he could only be quieted with a tub of water.

**BABE, THE BLUE OX**—Paul Bunyan was assisted in his logging by his huge Blue Ox, Babe. Of this ox he was very fond. Babe had the strength of ninety horses and he weighed ten thousand pounds. He measured seven axe-handles between his eyes. His horns were of great size and so far apart at their tips that Paul's men sometimes hung the camp washing on a line stretched between them. The original color of Babe was a pure white. One winter, when Paul was cutting big timber in the Little Gimlet River Region, it snowed a blue snow. Lying down in the drifts Babe's hide was dyed a deep blue.

Paul sometimes used Babe to straighten out the crooked logging roads. With his help he dragged his quarter-mile long cook shanty, cellar and all, to a new uphill location several miles away. When he wanted to peel a large log he hitched Babe to one end and himself took hold of the bark at the other end. Babe pulled and out came the log, "as clean as a whistle."

Babe was sometimes up to mischief. Once he ate up two hundred feet of tow-line. Sometimes he slipped in behind a driving crew, drank up the water in the river and left the logs high and dry. Some of the numerous lakes in northern Wisconsin are holes made by his huge hoofs.

**JOHNNY INKSLINGER**—Johnny Inkslinger, the camp clerk, was a very efficient man. He kept the time of the camp crew, paid the men, purchased supplies, sold clothing and tobacco, and performed many other duties that fall to the lot of a camp clerk. The first month that he was in Bunyan's employ he hit on the plan of leaving off the dots from the i's and the crosses from the t's. Thus he saved to Paul nineteen barrels of ink on the payroll. In his spare time Johnny surveyed the whole United States. It was he who invented the fountain pen by attaching a hose to a barrel of ink.

**THE PYRAMID FORTY**—At Paul Bunyan's Big Onion River camp, in Section 37, there was a forty-acre tract of land shaped like a pyramid. It had a heavy growth of pine timber on all of its four sides. It was so very high that to see its peak "took a week" of steady looking. It required twenty men, each looking as far as he could see, to do this. Several men became blind in just trying to see half-way up.

Paul and his logging crew of two thousand men worked a whole winter in clearing this forty. From it he cut one hundred million feet of timber. Some of the men got one short leg from working on the steep slope. They sharpened their axe blades by holding them on boulders which they rolled downhill. The slope was so steep that the upland grouse laid square eggs to keep them from rolling out of their nests. When Paul's axemen reached the top of the Pyramid in their cutting, the stumps at the bottom had sprouted and already shot up young trees seventy feet in height. Paul did not bother with these trees as they were second-growth timber and of no value to him.

**PEA SOUP LAKE**—The French Canadian lumberjacks in Paul's big camp were very fond of pea soup. His cooks tried to keep them well supplied with their favorite food. One winter day the tote teamster was driving his ox-team and sleigh across a frozen lake near Paul's camp. He was transporting a load of dried peas. Near the middle of the lake the ice suddenly broke and down into the icy water went the oxen and their load. The teamster was rescued but the oxen were drowned.

The loss of the peas was a real calamity for Paul Bunyan. But he was, happily, probably the most resourceful man who ever lived. He set a crew of his lumberjacks to damming the lake outlet with logs. Another crew cut the brush and timber and piled it on the shores of the lake. This he set afire and boiled the lake. Paul's cook, Joe Muffraw, threw in a quantity of salt and pepper. When the lake cooled off the liquid was the best of pea soup with a fine ox-tail flavor.

It was hauled to the camp in casks and the loggers had pea soup all winter. When the men were working at a distance from the camp the cooks got the soup to them by freezing it onto pieces of rope and sticks. Some of the men drilled holes in their axe and peavy handles and filled these with soup. Their hands on the handles kept the soup always warm.



**THE ROUND RIVER DRIVE**—One day in the spring, when the water in the Big Auger River was high, Paul's crew rolled the logs cut on the Pyramid Forty into the river. Soon the men were away on the biggest drive in logging history. They drove for two weeks or more hoping to arrive at a sawmill town where they could dispose of the logs. It was not until they had driven past their former camp several times in the course of a month that the drive foreman became suspicious and went ashore. He found the site of the old camp. He realized then that they were in a fix. They were driving on a river that was round and had no outlet.

**THE BUCKSKIN HARNESS**—One day Forty Jones, Paul's straw boss, saw some deer tracks on the banks of the Sawdust River. He watched for them one night. When the deer came to drink he removed the keylog from a pile of logs forty feet high. These rolled down on the deer and killed them. From these deer he made a rawhide harness for Babe, the Blue Ox. It was a good, strong harness.

Pink-eye Martin was one day hauling in logs for camp firewood. When he started from the river bank with his load it began to rain. The harness became wet and began to stretch. When Pink-eye reached the camp Babe was beside him, but the sleigh and log load were still down near the river. He tied Babe to a tree and went into the cook shanty to eat his dinner. While he was eating the sun came out very hot. It dried the wet harness, which shrunk and dragged the load of logs to camp.

**ELMER, THE REVERSIBLE DOG**—Paul had a smart little dog called Elmer whom he used in his hunting. One night Paul thought that he heard a rat in a corner of the bunkhouse. Reaching beneath his bunk for his double-bit axe he threw it in the direction of the noise. He heard a yelp. Going to the corner he found that he had cut Elmer in two. He was very fond of the dog. He put the two parts together and wrapped a gunnysack about his middle. This was done in the dark. He got the hind end of the dog placed the wrong way. The rear legs were up instead of down. Elmer got well and became the smartest hunting dog in the North Woods. He could outrun any deer. He would run on one pair of legs until they were tired. Then he would turn over and use the other pair.

**THE BIG MOSQUITOS**—Living near the logging camps were numerous wild animals. Some were very wild and fierce, others were harmless. Happily most of them are now extinct. Snow snakes, hoop snakes and side-winders were all very poisonous. The sliver cat watched for its prey from the limbs of trees. The hide-behind lurked behind trees. The luferlang had a blue stripe running down the middle of its back. Its bite was certain death. The axe-handle hound was one of the worst nuisances. It prowled about at night looking for axe-handles, these being the only food which it was known to touch. Giddyfish and whirligig fish were in the lakes. Upland perch nested in trees.

Paul's men were harassed by the big mosquitos. They were so big that they carried away and devoured many juicy lumberjacks. To destroy them Paul Bunyan imported a herd of big bumblebees from Texas. When they arrived they attacked the mosquitos and bloody battles ensued. After a time the two declared a truce. They became friends and intermarried. Their offspring were more deadly than their parents. They were armed with stingers at both ends.

#### **OTHER BUNYAN LITERATURE**

We have previously printed the following Paul Bunyan booklets. Most are now out of print.

**Paul Bunyan and Tony Beaver Tales, 1930**

**Paul Bunyan Natural History, 1935**

**Paul Bunyan American Hercules, 1937**

**Whiskey Jack Yarns, 1940**

**Flapjacks from Paul Bunyan's Cook Shanty, 1941**

**Brimstone Bill, 1942**

**Bluenose Brainerd, 1943**

**Johnny Inkslinger, 1944**

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# PAUL BUNYAN NATURAL HISTORY



Describing the Wild Animals, Birds, Reptiles  
and Fish of the Big Woods about Paul Bunyan's  
Old Time Logging Camps

CHARLES E. BROWN  
MADISON, WISCONSIN

1935

# PAUL BUNYAN NATURAL HISTORY

Describing the Wild Animals, Birds, Reptiles and Fish  
of the Big Woods about Paul Bunyan's  
Old Time Logging Camps

Habitat and Habits of the Flitterick, Gumberoo, Hangdown,  
Hidebehind, Hodag, Luferlang, Rumptifusel, Sliver  
Cat, Shagamaw, Goofus Bird, Hoop Snake,  
Whirligig Fish and Others.



CHARLES EDWARD BROWN

Author of Paul Bunyan Tales, Old Stormalong Yarns, Cowboy  
Tales, Moccasin Tales, Prairie Stories, Gypsy Lore,  
Wigwam Tales and Cloud Lore.



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# Paul Bunyan Wild Animals

Inhabiting the big pine woods, the swamps, lakes and streams in the vicinity of Paul Bunyan's old time logging camps were a considerable number of very wild animals. These differed considerably or greatly from the common bear, deer, wildcats and wolves of the timber lands. Most of them are now extinct or but rarely seen. Some were quite harmless, but most of them were of a very vicious or poisonous nature. Most were active only during the winter months, during the summer they hid in thickets or windfalls, hibernated in caves or hollow trees, or migrated to the North Pole. Tall tales of encounters with some of these mythical wild animals were often told in the lumber camp bunkhouses at night to create mirth or to impress and frighten the greenhorns. The information here collected concerning these Bunyan beasts, birds, reptiles and fish was obtained from various reliable, as well as unreliable and doubtful sources. The descriptions of these are arranged in alphabetical order for convenience of ready identification.

## ANIMALS

**AXEHANDLE HOUND.** Like a dachshund in general appearance, with a hatchet-shaped head, a short handle-shaped body and short, stumpy legs. It prowled about the lumber camps at night looking for axe or peavy handles, this being the only kind of food it was known to touch. Whole cords of axe handles were eaten by these troublesome wild hounds.

**ARGOPELTER.** This hoary beast lived in the hollow trunks of trees. From this point of vantage it dropped or threw chunks or splinters of wood on its victims. It but seldom missed its aim and a considerable number of lumberjacks were annually maimed by its gunnery. No complete description of it has ever been obtained and its life history is unknown.

**CAMP CHIPMUNK.** Originally small animals, they ate the tons of prune stones discarded from Paul Bunyan's camp cook



shanty and grew so big and fierce that they killed all of the bears and catamounts in the neighborhood. Later Paul and his men shot them for tigers.

FLITTERICKS. The variety of flying squirrels which frequented the vicinity of the lumber camps were very dangerous because of the great rapidity of their flight. It was impossible to dodge them. One struck an ox between the eyes with such force as to kill the animal.

GUMBEROO. It lived in burned-over forests and was therefore easily avoided. It was very ferocious. It was "larger than a bear and had a round, leathery body that nothing could pierce. Bullets bounded off its tough hide. Often they struck the hunter on the rebound and killed him. The only thing that could kill a gumberoo was fire. Often at night the lumberjacks were awakened by loud explosions. These were caused by gumberoos blowing up in flames." A foolhardy photographer once took a picture of one but this also finally blew up.

GYASCUTUS. Also called the Stone-eating Gyascutus. This sordid beast has been described as "about the size of a white-tailed deer. Has ears like a rabbit and teeth like a mountain lion. It has telescopic legs which enables it to easily graze on hills. It has a long tail which it wraps around rocks when its legs fail to telescope together. It feeds on rocks and lichens, the rocks enabling it to digest the tough and leathery lichens. It is never seen except after a case of snake-bite."

HANGDOWN. Its Latin name is unknown. This utterly foolish animal lives in big woods "where it hangs down from the limbs of trees, either with its fore or hind paws, either head down or head on, either way making no difference to its digestion. It climbs along the bottom of a limb after the manner of a sloth. Its skin brings a high price. It is more easily hunted at night when a tub must be placed over it. It is then killed with an axe."

HIDEBEHIND. A very dangerous animal which undoubtedly accounted for many missing lumberjacks. It was always hiding behind something, generally a tree trunk. Whichever way a man turned it was always behind him. From this posi-

tion it sprang upon its human prey, dragged or carried the body to its lair and there feasted on it in solid comfort. Because of its elusive habits no satisfactory description of it has ever been obtained.

**HODAG.** The Black Hodag (*Bovinus spiritualis*) was discovered by E. S. "Gene" Shepard, a former well-known timber cruiser of Rhinelander, Wisconsin. Its haunts were in the dense swamps of that region. According to its discoverer, this fearful beast fed on mud turtles, water snakes and muskrats, but it did not disdain human flesh. Mr. Shepard found a cave where one of these hodags lived. With the aid of a few lumberjacks he blocked the entrance with large rocks. Through a small hole left in the barricade he inserted a long pole on the end of which he fastened a sponge soaked in chloroform. The hodag, thus rendered unconscious, was then securely tied and taken to Rhinelander, where a stout cage had been prepared for it. It was exhibited at the Oneida County fair. An admission fee was charged and a quite large sum of money earned. Later Mr. Shepard captured a female hodag with her thirteen eggs. All of these hatched. He taught the young hodags a series of tricks, hoping to exhibit the animals for profit.

This ferocious beast had horns on its head, large bulging eyes, terrible horns and claws. A line of large sharp spikes ran down the ridge of its back and long tail. Colored photographs of it can be obtained at Rhinelander. The hodag never laid down. It slept leaning against the trunks of trees. It could only be captured by cutting deeply into the trunks of its favorite trees. It was a rare animal of limited distribution.

**LUFERLANG.** A curious animal with a dark blue stripe running down the length of its back. Its brushy tail was in the middle of the back. Its legs were triple-jointed and it could run equally fast in any direction. It attacked its prey without provocation and its bite was certain death. "It bites but once a year, so if one met one that had already bitten someone, one was perfectly safe."

**ROPERITE.** A very active animal as large as a pony. It had a rope-like beak with which it roped the swiftest rabbits. Sometimes it got a tenderfoot logger. It generally traveled in small herds. Probably now extinct.

**RUMPTIFUSEL.** A very ferocious animal of large size and great strength. When at rest it wraps its thin body about the trunk of a tree, a clever stratagem for securing its prey. A lumberjack mistakes it for a fur robe, approaches it and is thereafter missing.

**SIDEHILL DODGER.** It lived on the sides of hills only. It had two short legs on the up-hill side. It burrowed in hill-sides, having a number of such burrows and was always dodging in and out of these. It was harmless but its very strange antics frightened many a lumberjack into fits.

**SLIVER CAT.** This fierce denizen of the pineries was a huge cat with tasseled ears. Its fiery red eyes were in vertical instead of horizontal eye slits. It had a very long tail with a ball-shaped knob at its end. The lower side of this knob was bare and hard, on its upper side were sharp spikes. The big cat would sit on a limb waiting for a victim. When one passed beneath it would knock him down with the hard side and then pick him up with the spikes. Paul Bunyan's crews suffered continual losses from the depredations of these big cats.

**TEAKETTLER.** A small animal which obtains its name from the noise which it made, resembling that of a boiling tea-kettle. Clouds of vapor issued from its nostrils. It walked backward from choice. But few woodsmen have ever seen one.

**TOTE-ROAD SHAGAMAW.** An animal enigma. Its hind legs have the hoofs of a moose and its fore legs the claws of a bear, making it very hard to track. When it tires of using one set of legs it travels on the other set. It prowls along the tote roads devouring any coats or other articles of lumberjacks' clothing which it finds hung on trees or logs. It is fierce in appearance but is shy and harmless.

**TRIPODERO.** It had tripod legs. "Its beak is like the muzzle of a gun with a sight on the end. Going through the brush it raises and lowers itself to look for game. Upon seeing a bird or small animal it tilts itself to the rear, sights along its beak and lets fly a pellet of clay. A quantity of squids of this material it carries in its cheeks. It never misses

a shot." This is more particularly an animal of the vicinity of the civil engineering and railroad construction than of the logging camps.

## BIRDS

**GOOFUS BIRD.** One of the peculiar birds nesting near Paul Bunyan's old time camp on the Big Onion River. It was the opposite of most other birds—it always flew backwards instead of forwards. This curious habit an old lumberjack explained: "It doesn't give a darn where it's going, it only wants to know where it's been." It also built its nest upside down.

**GILLYGALOO.** This hillside plover nested on the slopes of Bunyan's famous Pyramid Forty. Living in such a locality it laid square eggs so that they could not roll down the steep incline. The lumberjacks hardboiled these eggs and used them as dice.

**PINNACLE GROUSE.** This bird had only one wing. This enabled it to fly in only one direction about the top of a conical hill. The color of its plumage changed with the seasons and with the condition of the observer.

**PHILLYLOO BIRD.** It had a long beak like a stork and long legs. It had no feathers to spare. It flew upside down the better to keep warm and to avoid rheumatism in its long limbs. It laid Grade D eggs.

**MOSKITTOS.** The naturalist in Paul Bunyan's camp classified these as birds. When Paul was logging in the Chipewewa River region the mosquitos were particularly troublesome. They were so big that they could straddle the stream and pick the passing lumberjacks off the log drive. Sometimes a logging crew would find one in this position, quickly tie his legs to convenient trees and use him for a bridge across the river. Paul imported from Texas a drove of fighting bumblebees to combat the mosquitos. They fought for a while, then made peace and intermarried. The result of this crossing made the situation worse than ever before for the loggers. The offspring had stingers at both ends.

## SNAKES

**HOOP SNAKE.** A very poisonous reptile. It could put its tail in its mouth and roll with lightning-like rapidity after its prey. The only way to avoid it was to quickly jump through its hoop as it approached. This so confused the large serpent that it rolled by and could not get back. Its sting was in its tail. A hoop snake once stung a peavy handle. This swelled to such great size that Paul Bunyan cut one thousand cords of wood out of it.

**SNOW SNAKE.** These reptiles came over from Siberia by frozen Bering Strait during the very cold year of the two winters. Being pure white in color they were always more plentiful during the winter time. They were very poisonous and savage. Tanglefoot oil was the only remedy for their bite.

## FISH

**COUGAR FISH.** This savage fish, armed with sharp claws, lived in the Big Onion River. It was the cause of the disappearance and death of many river drivers, whom it clawed off the logs and beneath the water. Paul Bunyan offered a big reward for their capture and extermination, but the fish heard of it and stayed away. None were taken.

**GIDDY FISH.** They were small and very elastic, like India rubber. They were caught through holes in the ice during the winter. The method pursued was to hit one on the head with a paddle. This fish would bounce up and down. Taking the cue from him the other fish would bounce also. Presently all would bounce themselves out of the water onto the ice. There they were easily gathered up.

**GOOFANG.** This curious fish always swam backward instead of forward. This was to keep the water out of its eyes. It was described as "about the size of a sunfish, only larger."

**LOG GAR.** These big fish had a snout so well armed with large saw teeth that they could saw right through a log to get at a juicy lumberjack. Once in the water they made mince meat of him.



**UPLAND TROUT.** These very adroit fish built their nests in trees and were very difficult to take. They flew well but never entered the water. They were fine pan fish. Tenderfeet were sent out into the woods to catch them.

**WHIRLIGIG FISH.** Related to the Giddy Fish. They always swam in circles. They were taken in the winter months through holes in the ice, like their relatives. The loggers smeared the edges of the holes with ham or bacon rind. Smelling this the fish would swim around the rims of the holes, faster and faster, until they whirled themselves out on the ice. Thousands were thus taken.

### **BUGS**

Chiefly bed bugs and greybacks. The men soon got used to them and tolerated them. Wood ticks were in the brush but were out of date and inactive in the winter time.



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# FLAPJACKS

*From Paul Bunyan's Cook Shanty*



## Miscellaneous Yarns

Dedicated to James J. McDonald  
Dr. C. A. Deadman Lake Shore Kearney  
August Derleth H. J. Kent

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CHARLES E. BROWN

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Wisconsin Folklore Society

State Historical Museum

Madison

Wisconsin

1941

## FLAPJACKS

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**THE BIG BUNKHOUSE**—The year of the Two Winters when he was cutting timber in the Fool River region in northern Wisconsin, Paul Bunyan had a logging crew of a thousand men and he needed a big bunkhouse for them. That summer he hired two loggers to build it. (They were small men). These men hired other undersize woodcutters, and all worked night and day to construct it. When Paul's crew came to occupy it the men had to crawl into it on their hands and knees, it was so low. Paul was mortified; he tore it down and had some of his big Yanks, Canucks and Swedes reconstruct the building. These men built it so high that telephones were needed to wake the men sleeping in the top bunks. At that, some of them slept overtime.

This big bunkhouse occupied twenty acres of land. It had eight entrances and sixteen exits. High as it was, Paul could kick his initials into the ceiling with calked boots. The floors of the bunks sloped so that the men could roll out easily and quickly in the morning. Whenever Paul changed the location of his camp, he put skids under the building—hitched Babe, his Big Blue Ox, to it—and moved it to its new location "in a jiffy."

**FLAPJACKS**—Flapjacks were the most important part of the breakfast fare at Paul's big camps. No cook that Paul ever had, not even Sourdough Sam, could make flapjacks fast enough to satisfy his hungry crews.

At his early Big Onion River camp Paul used a small frozen lake as a griddle. A big hole was dug under the bed of this shallow lake, filled with dry wood, and this set afire. When the fire was going good the cook and his assistants spread pancake batter on the ice. Other helpers followed with shovels, flipped the cakes, and, when they were done, tossed them into baskets.

Then Paul bought a huge iron range for the cook shanty. Colored boys, with hams strapped to their feet, skated over the top to grease it.

The pancake batter was mixed with a concrete mixer and squirted on the range with a squirt gun. The cook flipped the pancakes through a hole in the roof when they were brown on one side. A man on the roof caught them and dropped them back on the range. Later an improvement in this method was made. A kernel of popcorn was placed beneath each cake. A tookee caught the pancakes in a basket when the corn popped. Later the cook added cackleburs to the batter. That made the pancakes stick to the men's slats. One day some blasting powder got into the mixer and the nigger boys went out through the roof with the explosion. That was the Winter of the Black Snow.

Johnny Inkslinger, Paul's efficient camp clerk, kept track of the number of pancakes eaten by the crew that first winter. The number was 12,443,331, a record later far surpassed.

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**THE DINNER HORN**—All members of Paul's logging crew were very hearty eaters. Eating was a real business to them. When the men came in from their day's work in the woods, they would rush into the cook shanty in a mad scramble and seat themselves at the tables like a lot of wild men. Their bad table manners didn't please Paul Bunyan. To bring about a better order of things, he had a big dinner horn made. It was a hundred and thirty feet in diameter at the noisy end. The first time that Joe Muffraw, the cook, blew this horn he held it out straight and knocked down several sections of timber. Some of the men were blown so far away that they did not get back to camp until breakfast time. Some men never returned to camp; they were later located in Nova Scotia.

Paul didn't like to have his timber ruined. It was money out of his pocket. He told Joe to blow the horn up in the air the next time. Joe followed his orders the next day and the men came running in from the woods. All seemed to work out well. But the next day Paul got complaints from the U. S. Weather Bureau and from shipping companies. Blowing the big dinner horn had caused cyclones, a hurricane and other storms. Paul then decided to junk the horn, and finally sold it to an Eastern railroad whose officers made it into a roof for a Union depot.

**GRINDSTONES**—It was necessary to keep the men's axes always sharp. Not even a lumberjack can accomplish anything with a dull axe.

When he was logging the Pyramid Forty, Paul had his axemen sharpen their axes by rolling boulders down the steep slopes. The men ran beside them, sharpening their axes on the revolving stones as they ran.

But a logging camp cannot get along without grindstones; and Paul couldn't write. He ordered supplies for his camp by drawing pictures of the things he wanted. He sent an order for grindstones to a Chicago mail-order house—he got cheeses instead. He forgot to draw the holes. This was a real misfortune. So he had the cook bake a huge doughnut. This was then frozen solid and mounted in a frame. It solved the problem. A big lumberjack turned it; it was of such large size that every time it made a revolution another pay day had passed.

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**QUICK ON HIS FEET**—For a man of his great size and weight, Paul Bunyan, in his best years, was very quick on his feet. When all the lumberjacks had crawled into their bunks at night, Paul would go to the far end of the big bunkhouse and blow out the light in the lamp, or the flame on the big candle. Then he would run for his own bunk at the other end of the room—moving so lightning fast that he would reach and crawl into it before the room got dark. In the morning he was always the first man up.

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**BUNYAN CHICKENS**—Paul brought a flock of chickens to his camp on the Big Auger River. His men were fond of hen fruit, and many eggs were used by the cook in preparing other food. The chickens, which were a special breed imported from China, did very well. When the supply of chicken food was low, the cook experimented with mixing sawdust with their grain. It seemed to increase their laying. Then the cook fed them only on sawdust. After a week or two of this sawdust diet the fowls still layed; but they layed knotholes instead of eggs. In the end Paul found it cheaper and easier to grow eggplants for his camp. An infirm lumberjack gathered the eggs from these plants every day.



WRITING HOME—It was so cold during one winter at one of Paul's logging camps that even the fire in the big camp range froze. When a lumberjack wanted to write a letter to his home, he just stepped outdoors and shouted the words he wished to write. These froze solid. He wrapped them up in a gunnysack and sent them home. When the sack arrived, all his folks had to do was to thaw them out in or on the kitchen stove, and they had the letter just as it was spoken.

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#### OTHER TALL YARNS

The stories of Paul Bunyan and his logging crew; the blacksmith, Big Ole; Johnny Inkslinger, the camp clerk; the Blue Ox; the Cow, Lucy; Elmer, the Reversible Dog; the Pyramid Forty; Bean Soup Lake; the Round River Drive; the Buckskin Harness; the Wild Animals; and the Big Mosquitos, have been told in booklets previously published.

# BRIMSTONE BILL

FAMOUS BOSS BULLWHACKER  
OF PAUL BUNYAN'S CAMPS  
TALL TALES OF HIS EXPLOITS

Babe and Benny, the Great Lakes, Hauling Snow,  
Cow Lucy, Goat Billy, Paul's Pigs, His Courting, Saw Mills,  
Babe Sick, and Finis for Bill



Dedicated to  
H. J. Kent and Alonzo W. Pond

Charles E. Brown  
Wisconsin Folklore Society  
Madison, Wisconsin  
1942

## BRIMSTONE BILL

Brimstone Bill figures prominently in tales of Paul Bunyan's Big Onion, Little Garlic and Gimlet river camps in Wisconsin. Bill was a tough, burly man with a florid complexion and a full white beard. His usual costume was a slouch hat, red shirt, blue jumpers, and boots. His homeland was in the Wild River country in Western Pennsylvania. There he had once been a school teacher in a backwoods school. He had both seafaring and lumberjack ancestors. From these he probably inherited his great ability to use cusswords. He is credited with having invented most of those in use today. Learning of his outstanding accomplishments in this field Paul Bunyan hired Bill to become the boss bullwhacker in his camps.

**Nursemaid to the Oxen.**—Brimstone Bill was the keeper and driver of Paul Bunyan's Big Blue Ox, Babe, and of his Little Blue Ox, Benny. Babe was a giant ox. He measured seven axe handles and a plug of tobacco between the eyes, weighed ten thousand pounds and had the strength of ninety horses. Benny was only half as large as his companion and but little inferior to him in strength. The dispositions of the two oxen were quite different. Babe, with occasional outbursts of mischief and waywardness, was on the whole a tractable animal. Benny, whom Paul brought to Wisconsin from Maine as a calf, had a restive and fiery temperament. Except when yoked up with Babe he never would stay put. He carried away and wrecked nearly every stable he was put in and walked away with everything he was ever tied to.

He was always getting away and Paul was always paying rewards for his return. Bill sometimes used up his entire supply of ten thousand cusswords in trying to control Benny, and at the end of the day was speechless. The air around camp was blue for several days afterwards. On one occasion he nearly burned down the barn.

**Babe.**—The story of the famous Babe has been told by many writers of Paul Bunyan literature. He could pull anything that had two ends. Paul used him to straighten out the camp tote roads, to haul whole sections of timber to camp and to move the bunkhouses, cook shanty and barns when he moved his camp to a new location. Babe was chock full of mischief. Once he broke loose and ate up two hundred feet of tow rope. More than once he slipped up behind a driving crew, drank all of the water in the river and left the logs high and dry. Some of the lakes in Wisconsin are holes made by his hoofs.

Brimstone Bill remarked that he knew the "pernicious old reptyle" as thoroughly "as if he had been through him with a lantern."

**The Great Lakes.**—When Paul Bunyan was getting started in the logging business he needed reservoirs for drinking water, both for his numerous yokes of oxen and for the two thousand lumberjacks in his employ. Babe drank a whole lake full every morning and Benny nearly as much. So Paul dug the Great Lakes.

Lake Ontario he dug first, but it was too small for his needs, so he dug Lake Erie. That was larger. Even this was not enough so he finished the job by digging the other lakes of the chain—Huron, Michigan and Superior. Then, at last, he had an adequate water supply.

Brimstone Bill and Babe filled these reservoirs. They hauled the water from the Atlantic Ocean, first removing the salt by running the water through a sieve.

The digging of the Great Lakes was Paul's biggest contribution to the map of our continent.

**Skinner's Dictionary.**—It was during these years that Brimstone Bill gathered and prepared the material for his famous "Skinner's Dictionary" which is still the best handbook of torrid terms and sayings used for driving oxen, mules and horses.

It is said that Bill's early home religious training in Pennsylvania accounts for the fact that so many of the words in this popular book are the names of people and places mentioned in the Bible.

**Hauling Snow.**—The Winter of the Big Thaw there was no snow on the ground and Paul Bunyan was hindered in hauling logs from the woods to the river landings. Fortunately for him the Pacific Ocean was frozen over, and Brimstone Bill and Babe and Benny were kept busy hauling snow from Siberia.

At this time Bill made the first ox-yokes from cranberry wood. These were very elastic and once they got started pulled the oxen along whether they wanted to move or not. Bill never profitted by his invention because other loggers stole it before he could get it patented. Bill got a lot a new and novel cusswords from the Siberians. With them he blistered all the trees for miles around Paul's camp.

**Lucy.**—Paul Bunyan's cow, Lucy, kept his camp supplied with milk. Brimstone Bill was in charge of her. She was a curious critter, part Jersey and part wolf. She was always hungry. Bill soon quit trying to feed her and mostly let her forage for a living. The Winter of the Deep Snow, when the tallest pine trees were buried to their very tops, Bill outfitted her with snowshoes, put green goggles over her eyes and tied a big bell around her neck. He turned her out to graze among the snowdrifts.

Being fooled by the goggles she did very well. In spite of her rations she kept a dozen men busy carrying the milk she gave to the cook shanty. When she fed on evergreen boughs her milk got so strong that the men used it for cough medicine and liniment. The butter made from this milk Paul used to grease his logging roads.



**Billy the Goat.**—A good friend presented Paul Bunyan with a goat. This was a kind of animal Paul had no experience with. Paul kept him tied near the bunkhouse. After this ram-bunktious animal had butted the daylights out of everybody and everything within reach, he was turned over to the tender mercies of Brimstone Bill.

Bill at first tried to control Billy with kindness. But it was just no go. After he had butted Bill right over the roof of the stable, and nearly caused his death on several other occasions, Bill learned that it was always best to have an axe or a peavy handle handy when near Billy.

One day Bill tied Billy out to feed in a clearing. There was a big rock. The goat thought that it was an enemy and ran to butt it. The rock never moved. This angered Billy and he went back to butt it again. Bill watched the goat butting the stone for some time, then he went to dinner at the cook shanty. When he returned to the battleground, an hour later, the fight was still going on. Billy was gone, all but his tail, and that part of him was still running at the big rock and butting it.

**Paul's Pigs.**—Pork was a very important article of food at Paul's Bunyan's camps. In order to always have on hand an abundant supply of pork Paul kept a large drove of hogs. These were in Brimstone Bill's keeping. This job was wished on Bill, and he couldn't object. He kept the pigs in log pens, but they were always burrowing out and getting away into the woods. Bill and his helpers undertook the job of building a hog-proof fence around the pens. Before starting this work Bill's men somehow managed to get hold of a keg of "Hudnut's Budge."

As a result of their inebriated condition they built the crookedest and craziest fence that human beings ever erected. Paul Bunyan was very much disappointed in this barrier when he saw it. Just the same the fence proved to be very effective.

The hogs would burrow under it. Then, because of its crooked and bewildering nature, they would burrow right back again. So it held the pigs after all. They never knew were they in or out of the enclosure.

**Bill Courts a Widow.**—When he went to work for Paul Brimstone Bill was courting a widow lady in Pennsylvania. She had a home and farm of her own, and Bill had his eyes on these as promising old age comforts. His courting never got very far.

He wrote several love letters to her, but in them he used so many cusswords that the post office refused to deliver them. One of these letters set fire to the railway mail pouch.

During the very cold Winter of the Two Winters, when everything froze solid, and Paul's men were sending home their frozen letters in gunnysacks, a letter of Bill's got into the wrong sack and was misdelivered. When the farmer family who received it were thawing the letter out behind the kitchen stove, the stream of profanity which came forth was so very terrible that it frightened them and drove them of doors.

**Babe Gets Sick.**—Brimstone Bill remained with Paul Bunyan through the years of his later lumbering in Minnesota and was with him when he logged off the Dakotas and Kansas. It was during these years that Bill published his "Bartender's Vocabulary", a most useful volume. When Babe, the Big Ox, became ill after all of Paul's big work, it was decided to try a change of climate for him. Paul and Bill walked beside him all the way to Colorado, feeding him Indian medicine and keeping cold packs on his head. By the time they got to California Babe was completely recovered. He and Brimstone Bill were ready to assist Paul in all of the great exploits he afterward conducted in the forests of California, Washington, Oregon, British Columbia and Alaska.

**Finis For Bill.**—At the age of eighty years Brimstone Bill still held the national record for profanity. No one has surpassed him since. He could still burn the bark off a big spruce tree with his flow of lurid language. During his last years in Paul's service Brimstone compiled books of cusswords for the use of cabmen, mill hands, rivermen, railroadmen, soldiers, sailors and other men engaged in soul-trying occupations.

Paul Bunyan wept for several weeks when his faithful friend passed on. He excavated Kilauea, the largest mountain in the Hawaiian Islands and there buried Brimstone Bill. There his body "cremated itself". The mountain became a volcano, "the largest and most spectacular of all craters."

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# JOHNNY INKSLINGER

Deacon Seat Tales Of Paul Bunyan's  
Industrious Camp Clerk At His  
Sawdust River Camp, In Wisconsin



Dedicated To Louis A. Maier, President Of The Mystic  
Knights Of The Blue Ox

WISCONSIN  
FOLKLORE SOCIETY

CHARLES E. BROWN  
Wisconsin Folklore Society  
Madison, Wisconsin  
1944

## JOHNNY INKSLINGER

When Paul Bunyan, mighty legendary hero of the American lumberjacks, was operating his Sawdust River logging camp in Wisconsin his very efficient and industrious camp clerk and bookkeeper was Johnny Inkslinger. As Paul's "office boy" Johnny's duties were varied and numerous. He hired and kept the time of the large crew of fourteen thousand lumberjacks, paid them off when they had any pay coming, purchased and sold camp supplies, did odd jobs of surveying and performed many other duties that fall to the lot of a camp clerk and bookkeeper. The camp wanigan was his kingdom, and there he tolerated no intrusion or fooling. Although a small man he was brave and mighty handy with an axe-handle.

## PAUL DISCOVERS JOHNNY

Paul was not a scholar himself, and he came to think everything of Johnny and his accomplishments. He relied on his small assistant all of the time and often counseled with him when big undertakings were under way. How Paul found Johnny is a story in itself. One winter day when he was trailing a moose he came upon a small, studious looking man sitting on the top of a hill and engaged in putting down rows of figures on a big sheet of birch-bark. He was holding three pencils between the fingers of each hand and in this way he was able to put down six rows of figures at a time. He would add a column of figures with one hand while he was subtracting, dividing or multiplying with the other. Behind each ear were thirteen other pencils and an eraser was fastened to the tip of his long nose. He had a curved, pointed mustache, which could be used for a memorandum file, and he wore strong glasses. This was Johnny Inkslinger. After watching him for a while Paul Bunyan decided that here was just the man he needed for his camp bookkeeper.

## HIS JOB

Johnny was hired by Paul. In return for his services he was to have free board and lodging and to have all of his spare time to himself to do anything he wanted to do. Paul was employing fourteen thousand loggers in his Sawdust River camp that winter so that Johnny's work was not hard. Johnny just lived for figures. He had invented accounting and bookkeeping at about the same time that Paul Bunyan invented logging. He had perfected nearly all of the appliances used in offices today. It was Johnny who invented the fountain pen by attaching a small hose to a barrel of ink and using a pen point instead of a nozzle. On his desk was a trained pet mouse who blotted the timesheets by rolling over them. The lumberjacks bought their shoepacks, socks, mittens, shirts and tobacco and other things they needed from Johnny.



## HIS OFFICE EFFICIENCY

In his position as camp clerk and bookkeeper Johnny was efficiency itself. His employer's interests were his. The first month that he worked for Paul he hit on the plan of leaving off the dots from the I's and J's and the cross marks from the T's. Thus he saved Paul nineteen barrels of ink on the month's payroll. The next month he omitted all of the periods and commas, saving an additional nine barrels. The next month he invented a shorthand system, saving still more ink. Then the ink factories began to complain to Paul. The typewriter and adding machine were among his later inventions. The cash register also.

He was accused of using a split pencil when charging the loggers for socks, tobacco and mackinaws. In this manner he charged each man double and made money for the camp. Investigation proved this accusation untrue. Johnny was as honest as the day is long. He had a big watch that he bought from a peddler. This he fixed so that it gained so much time that it paid for itself in a single week.

## SPEEDING UP CAMP PRODUCTION

Johnny was always working toward promoting camp production and efficiency by cutting corners and in other ways. It was he who suggested to Sourdough Sam, the camp cook, the idea of putting kernels of popcorn in the pancake batter so that the flapjacks would turn themselves.

It was he who hit on the idea of putting green goggles on the camp oxen and turning them out to graze in the snow. In this manner a thousand tons of hay were saved to the camp. He persuaded Big Ole, the camp blacksmith, to cut the holes in the doughnuts with his punch and sledge, thus saving time and trouble for the cooks. He suggested the making of the buckskin harness which shrunk in warm weather and drew loads of firewood from the woods to the cook shanty.

When Paul's cow, Lucy, fed on spruce and balsam foliage one winter and her milk was found to be undrinkable, Johnny had it put in bottles and sold it to the loggers for cough syrup. The butter churned from this milk was so tough that Johnny turned it over to the woods foreman for use in greasing the tote roads. This enabled Paul to haul logs all summer.

## HIS ONE MISTAKE

Johnny Inkslinger is unjustly blamed for one mistake. At the Sawdust River camp the big mosquitos became so thick and malicious during the Winter of the Blue Snow that the fourteen thousand lumberjacks in that camp were kept so busy fighting mosquitos

that they could do but little work. Johnny is credited with suggesting to Paul Bunyan that he import sixteen yoke of big, ferocious bumblebees from the Gulf coast. The bumblebees were supposed to kill the mosquitos. When they arrived warfare between the two continued for a time. Then they declared a truce during which they fell in love and married each other. The children were worse than their parents, they had a stinger at both ends.

## MUSICAL MOSQUITOS

It was Johnny who taught the mosquitos to sing. Once, it is said, they made no noise at all and attacked without any warning. Johnny thought this very unfair. One night he met their leaders in the woods and argued the matter with them. He hummed a simple song to them. They were pleased with his song and taught it to their followers. These taught it to others and soon the whole mosquito tribe were accomplished singers. They owe their war song to Johnny.

## AS A SURVEYOR

In his spare time Johnny Inkslinger surveyed the entire United States. He carefully noted all of its geographical features on the maps which he made. These were very helpful to Paul in his future lumbering operations. He was the first conservationist, for he planted a native tree at the corners of each state. In the course of his surveys in Wisconsin he discovered Section 37. This enabled Paul Bunyan and the lumbermen who followed him to prolong their logging operations and added to their wealth.

## HIS BIRTHPLACE AND LAST YEARS

Of Johnny Inkslinger's early life history but little is known. He always refused to be interviewed on this subject. It is known that he was born in Vermont. As a young man he studied accounting and surveying. Both proved to be very useful accomplishments. He continued to work for Paul Bunyan during his lumbering in Michigan and Minnesota and was his bookkeeper when he logged off the Dakotas and Kansas. He moved west with him when Paul established his big logging camps in the forests of Oregon, Washington, British Columbia and California. No one of Paul Bunyan's mighty assistants deserves greater credit for aiding his master to win success and fame than his able camp clerk, Johnny Inkslinger.

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# *Bunyan Bunkhouse Yarns*

Original Tall Tales Told In Paul Bunyan's Logging Camps  
On The Big Onion, The Little Garlic, The Gimlet, The  
Sawdust, The Round And Other Famous And Fabulous  
Streams In The Old Northwest

PAUL BUNYAN SUPER-LUMBERJACK, HIS LOGGING CREW  
AND CAMPS, BABE, THE GREAT BLUE OX, THE PYRAMID  
FORTY, PEA SOUP LAKE, THE ROUND RIVER, THE BUCKSKIN  
HARNESS AND OTHER TALL TALES



Dedicated to the Memory of the Thousands of Old Northwest  
Lumberjacks Who Worked for Paul in Those Camps  
Or Who Knew Men Who Did

CHARLES E. BROWN  
Wisconsin Folklore Society  
Madison, Wisconsin  
1945

## PAUL BUNYAN

**PAUL BUNYAN**—He was a giant, seven feet tall and with a seven-foot stride. He was famous throughout the whole timber country of America for his great physical strength and his ability to accomplish great things. No undertaking was too great for him. He dug the Great Lakes, constructed Niagara Falls, created the Mississippi and the Missouri Rivers. He logged-off the Dakotas, Nebraska and Kansas. He piled up the Appalachian Mountains and the Rocky Mountain Chains. The Grand Canyon, Puget Sound and the Alaskan Glaciers are among his major achievements. American geography owes everything to Paul Bunyan.

He was so powerful that with his hands he could pull up by the roots or tie a knot in a tall pine tree. With his double-bit axe tied to a rope he could cut down acres of timber with a single swing. So great was his lung power that he called his logging crews to their meals by blowing through a hollow tree. He was very fast on his feet. He could go to one end of the big camp bunkhouse, blow out the oil lamp, and get into his bunk at the other end before it got dark.

**THE LOGGING CREW**—Paul Bunyan had a crew of ten thousand men in his pinery camps in Wisconsin. They were a select army of lumberjacks, having learned timber-cutting in the wilds of Maine, New Brunswick, Vermont, Quebec, Pennsylvania, Ontario and Michigan. All were powerful men undaunted by great cold, wind or water. Big Joe Mufraw could fell a giant pine with two strokes of his axe. Cris Crosshaul, one of the camp foremen, had eyes so sharp that he could see to the tops of the tallest hills in three looks. Pink-eye Martin could put a big pine log on his shoulder and walk away with it. Jim Liverpool could jump across the widest river in three jumps. Shot Gunderson was the champion log-spinner. In a fast-flowing stream he could birl a big log so fast that the water boiled and he walked ashore on the foam. Giant Ole Olson, the camp blacksmith, struck his anvil with his sledge and the ring of the metal was heard throughout the state.

Sourdough Sam was Paul Bunyan's chief cook. His range was an acre in extent. He strapped hams on the feet of his colored boy flunkys and had them skate over its top to grease it. The pancake batter was poured from a concrete mixer. Popcorn kernels in the batter made the pancakes turn themselves. Hot Biscuit Slim, the camp baker, baked bread loaves so large that Paul used some of them for bunkhouses. Ole Olson, the smith, punched the holes in the doughnuts. Piebelly Smith's apple pies spoke for themselves. Ten men with wheelbarrows removed the prune stones from the cook shanty. The chipmunks ate the kernels and grew as large and as fierce as tigers.

**BABE, THE BLUE OX**—Paul Bunyan was assisted in his logging by his huge Blue Ox, Babe. Of him Paul was very fond. He had the strength of ninety horses and he weighed ten thousand pounds. He

measured seven axe-handles between his eyes. His large horns were so far apart at their tips that Paul's men sometimes hung the camp washing on a clothes line stretched between them.

The original color of Babe was a pure white. One winter it snowed a blue snow. Lying down in a drift Babe's hide was dyed a deep blue. Paul Bunyan used Babe to straighten the crooked logging roads by hitching him to one end and taking hold of the other. With his help he dragged his big camp buildings to a new uphill location several miles away. The northern Wisconsin and Minnesota lakes were dug to provide drinking water for Babe. The Mississippi River was created when he overturned the camp water tank.

Brimstone Bill was Babe's keeper. While he was holding this job he invented swearing. His supply of cusswords was unlimited. He published a dictionary of these. When Bill "tore loose" he could only be quieted with a fire-extinguisher. Every time Babe was shod a new iron mine had to be opened up in Wisconsin or Minnesota.

**JOHNNY INKSLINGER**—He was Paul's trusty camp clerk. He kept the time of the camp crew, purchased supplies, sold clothing, snuff and tobacco, and performed numerous other duties. The first month that he was in Bunyan's employ he hit on the plan of omitting the dots from the i's and the crosses from the t's. Thus he saved Paul nineteen barrels of ink in preparing the payroll. He invented the fountain pen by attaching a hose to a barrel of ink.

In his spare time Johnny surveyed the whole United States for Paul. He staked out the boundary between our country and Mexico. The typewriter and the adding machine were invented by him.

**THE PYRAMID FORTY**—At Bunyan's Big Onion River camp, in Section 37, there was a forty-acre tract of land in the shape of a pyramid. It had a dense growth of pine on all of its four sides. Its peak was so high that to see it "took a week of steady looking." Paul's crew worked a whole winter in cutting the big trees on this forty. One hundred million feet of timber were cut. Some of the men got one short leg from working on the steep slope. They sharpened their axes by holding them on boulders which they rolled downhill. The bird's laid square eggs to keep them from rolling out of the nests. When the men reached the peak of the Pyramid in their cutting the stumps at the bottom had sprouted young trees seventy feet in height.

**PEA SOUP LAKE**—One winter day the supply teamster was driving his oxen and sleigh across a frozen small lake near Paul's camp. He was transporting a load of bags of dried peas. When he reached the middle of the lake the ice broke under the weight and down into the water went the oxen and the load. The teamster was rescued but the load and oxen were gone.

The loss of the peas was a real one for Paul Bunyan. The French-Canadian lumberjacks in his big camp were very fond of pea soup. But Paul was not daunted by this mishap. He set a crew of his men to damming the lake outlet with logs. Another crew cut the brush



and trees and piled them up on its shores. This he set afire and boiled the lake. Paul's cooks threw in salt, pepper and bags of onions. When the water cooled it was the best of pea soup and with a fine ox-tail flavor. It was hauled to the cook shanty in casks and the loggers had pea soup all that winter.

**THE ROUND RIVER DRIVE**—One day in the spring, when the water in the Big Auger River was high, Paul's crews rolled into the stream the logs cut on the Pyramid Forty. Soon the men were away on the biggest drive in logging history. They drove for several weeks expecting to arrive at a sawmill town and dispose of their logs. It was not until they had driven past their camp several times in the course of several months that the drive foreman became suspicious and went ashore. He found the site of the old camp. He realized that they were in a fix. They were on a river that was round and had no outlet. Here the cook, Sourdough Sam, saved the situation. He placed a large quantity of sourdough in the water. This soon raised the log drive up on the bank. Babe, the Blue Ox, was harnessed to large numbers of the logs at a time. He dragged them to another river and the difficulty was overcome.

**THE BUCKSKIN HARNESS**—One day, Forty Jones, Paul's straw boss, saw some deer tracks on the banks of the Sawdust River. He watched for the animals. When they came to drink he removed the keylog from a pile of logs forty feet high. These rolled down on the deer and killed them. From the skins of these deer he made a harness for Babe, the Blue Ox.

Pink-eye Martin was one day hauling logs with Babe for camp firewood. When he started from the river bank with his load it began to rain. The harness became wet and began to stretch. When he reached the camp Babe was at his side, but the sleigh and the load were still down near the river. He tied Babe to a tree and went into the cook shanty to help with the crew's dinner. While he was there the sun came out very hot. It soon dried the harness, which shrunk, and dragged the firewood load to camp.

**ELMER, THE REVERSIBLE DOG**—Paul had a smart little dog named Elmer. He used him in his hunting. One night Paul thought he heard a rat in a corner of the bunkhouse. Reaching beneath his bunk for his double-bit axe he threw it in the direction of the noise. He heard a yelp. Going to the corner he found that he had cut Elmer in two. He was very fond of this poor dog. He put the two parts together and wrapped and tied a gunnysack about his middle. This was done in the dark. He got his hind end placed the wrong way. The rear legs were up instead of down. With good nursing Elmer got well. He became the best hunting dog in the North Woods. He could outrun any deer. He would run on one pair of legs until they were tired. Then he would turn over and use the other pair. Elmer hunted with his master for many years.

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# SHANTY BOY

Bard of Paul Bunyan's Wisconsin and Michigan  
Logging Camps

TALES OF THE GREAT SINGER, STORYTELLER AND DANCER,  
THE BLUE HILLS, PAUL'S FARM, CAMP EVANGELIST  
AND OLD ABE'S VISIT



Dedicated To  
Dorothy Moulding Brown  
Lorraine Charlotte Alfred  
Helene Stratman-Thomas

Charles E. Brown  
Wisconsin Folklore Society  
Madison, Wisconsin  
1945

## SHANTY BOY

**SHANTY BOY**—He was the famous entertainer of Paul Bunyan's logging camps. His birthplace was somewhere in New Brunswick, Canada. His first employment as a lumberjack was in the Maine woods. Paul had heard of his unsurpassed achievements as a storyteller, singer and dancer. He promptly hired him. He was equally distinguished as a woodsman. On Johnny Inkslinger's big camp payroll his name appears as "Shan T. Boy."

It is said that his fond mother selected his baptismal name from her Bible. It was a long and queer one. She found it by simply opening the good book at any place. The first name on that page was the one she chose. He was too young to raise any objections. The name was distasteful to him. When he grew up he changed it. A trusty recorder of Paul Bunyan lore has written of him: "He was more than a mere entertainer. The mightiest of Paul Bunyan's loggers lived in Bookhouse 1 (there were 1,000 bunkhouses). Shanty Boy was the peer of any of them. He could notch a tree or work in white water with the best of the fallers and rivermen. He held his own in rough bunkhouse frolics. He was Paul's favorite faller and the great logger often carried him to the woods on his shoulder. He had an equal rank with Hot Biscuit Slim, the chief cook, Shagline Bill, the freighter, and Big Ole, the Blacksmith. A time came when he reached the greatest height of glory ever attained by a plain logger."\*

**CAMP BARD**—By all who have heard Shanty Boy sing he was lauded as the "King Bee" of all of Paul Bunyan's bunkhouse bards. Standing on the deacon seat he sang the lumber camp and river songs and ballads as they never were sung before and have not been sung since. Among his favorite melodies were "On the Banks of the Little Eau Pleine," "The Big Eau Claire," "The Jam on Gerry's Rocks," "The Plover River," "Silver Jack," "The Little Brown Bulls," "The Bold MacIntyres," "Shanty Boys" and "The Indian's Lament." His repertoire of songs was endless. Some he himself composed. He was always introducing new ones. Other lumber camp bards sent their music to him. The sweet singers of all of the other bunkhouses came to hear him. His full melodious voice filled the bunkhouse from end to end.

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\*Paul Bunyan, by James Stevens. 1925

His singing was "so affecting and inspiring that his hard-boiled audience was by turns laughing and weeping. "The clapping of hands and the stamping of feet was often so great that it shook the bunkhouse. On special occasions Shanty Boy was often accompanied in his singing by Curly Charley with his guitar, by Patsy Ward with his banjo or Red Murphy and his fiddle. The "Alphabet Song" got a big hand. Old lumberjacks say that to hear Shanty sing "The Banks of Little Eau Pleine" would melt the hardest heart.

One even-ing last June as I ram-bled  
The green woods and val-leys among.  
The mo-squi-to's notes were mel-o-dious.  
And so was the whippoorwill's song.

The frogs in the marsh-es were croaking,  
The tree-toads were whistling for rain;  
The partridges round me were drumming  
On the banks of the Little Eau Pleine.

After its singing the applause was deafening. His whistling was as thrilling as his singing." In logging camps everywhere throughout the Nation Shanty Boy's singing will never be forgotten. P. T. Barnum, the famous circusman, heard of the lumberjack vocalist and offered him a large wage to join his performers, but Shanty Boy would not leave Paul Bunyan's camps.

**OLD ABE'S VISIT**—President Lincoln was invited by Paul Bunyan to visit his big Wisconsin camp. This invitation the President accepted. When he came he was given a great reception. All of the lumberjacks turned out. A fine program of athletic and other events was prepared. There were chopping, sawing and other contests in which Paul's champions took part. Shanty Boy gave an exhibition of log spinning. He took a fifty-foot hemlock log. This he floated in the Sawdust River. From the bank he jumped on to it and guided it to the middle of the stream. Here he began to slowly maneuver it with his cleat-shod boots. Soon it was moving in a circle. Then 'round and 'round, faster and faster, until the spinner could only be barely seen in the mist and spray. Then he gradually brought it to a stop and birlled it in the opposite direction. It moved so fast that the bark came off, a full wooden cylinder. It left the log at one end and floated downstream, Shanty Boy stood on top of it and guided it to shore. Paul Bunyan took the log and bark and had Ole Olson, the big camp blacksmith,

make a big whistle of them. This he presented to the President. This whistle was used in the White House to announce the dinner hour. It was used by all of the succeeding presidents until President Teddy Roosevelt's time—then it was no longer needed.

In the evening a fine program of storytelling, singing, dancing and lumber camp games was given in one of the big bunkhouses. This program President Lincoln greatly enjoyed. He told a few of his own best stories. These were retold in Wisconsin camps for many years after.

**DANCING AND STORYTELLING**—Some of the bunkhouse nights were given over to dancing. On these occasions a number of the lumberjack dancers gave exhibitions of their art. They were good but Shanty Boy excelled all of them, both as to variety and performance. Jigs, hornpipes, hoe-downs, buck and wing, reels, double-shuffle and other dances were all in his line. "He not only danced with his feet but with his hands and eyes." He was a constellation. He could cake-walk with the best. He put his whole soul into every dance. With his nimble feet he imitated a team or teams crossing a wooden bridge, an approaching railroad train, a nest of angry hornets, a sawmill or a waterfall. With them he could sing a song or deliver a message. Somersaults and cartwheels were a part of some of his acrobatic dances. As a bunkhouse storyteller he easily out-distanced all rivals. Many of his best yarns he brought from Maine and New England. Most were humorous tales. Some of the best of the Paul Bunyan legends he originated. Some tales he told in the Swede or in the French-Canadian lingo. Of Indian and Negro stories he had a bagfull. His tales of the ferocious wild animals of the pinewoods filled the greenhorn lumberjacks with such fear that it was necessary for some of the older men to put them in their bunks when the entertainment was over.

Shanty Boy obtained a hymnal somewhere. After a while he began to sing some of the fine old Gospel hymns. These became very popular with the men. So came Shanty Boy's gradual transition from camp entertainer to camp evangelist. In this camp role he also obtained wide fame.

**PAUL'S FARM**—Paul Bunyan had a big farm in Iowa. During the Hot-Hot-Summer he sent Shanty Boy and a small crew to Iowa to manage it. That year the corn he had planted matured very rapidly.



The popcorn ears were quite ripe when an army of hungry crows one day descended on the field. In a very short time these robbers devoured every kernel. Then a curious thing happened. The kernels began to pop in the birds' stomachs. Soon the crows were "exploding" in the air all over the field. Some hungry raccoons, who visited the field, also burst with a loud noise. The loss of the popcorn was serious enough but it did save Paul's regular crop of flour corn. Shanty Boy did not like bossing farm hands but he remained on the farm until Paul re-opened his big Whistling River camp in the late autumn. When he returned he brought with him some specimens of the "exploded" birds and animals for Paul's inspection.

**BLUE HILLS**—Paul Bunyan was engaged in logging off the last of the timber in the Northern Michigan Peninsula country during the Year of the Two Winters. Lake Superior had frozen solid to its very bottom. His men cut the ice in blocks. With the help of Babe, the great Blue Ox, they were hauled up on the lake shore. There the sun would melt them more quickly and fill the rivers when spring came. The only timber left for Paul to cut was on the steep Blue Hills at a great distance from his camp. In getting his men to and from them he lost a lot of time. The road was very crooked. He constructed a serpentine bobsled and had Babe haul the crew to the hills and back every day. Babe traveled so fast and the going was so rough that many of the loggers got hurt or seasick. They soon refused to be longer transported in this manner. They complained to Paul. Paul thought of moving his camp to the Blue Hills. He dug a well for water but the water vein was so deep that it took an entire week to hoist a single bucket. At this point he called the resourceful Shanty Boy to a conference. One morning the loggers awoke to find that he and Babe had hauled the Blue Hills right up to the camp. They and Paul were overjoyed at this triumphant exploit. The sun had melted the ice and Paul was soon able to roll his logs into the lake and rivers.

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# OLE OLSON

Tales of the Mighty Swede Blacksmith of Paul  
Bunyan's Wisconsin and Other Great  
Logging Camps

HIS SMITHY, SHOEING BABE, THE BLUE OX, THE CAMP  
DINNER-HORN, PAUL'S WATCH, WHIRLING LAKE, SKY PILOT,  
THE VACATION AND OTHER STIRRING YARNS  
OF THE PINERIES



Dedicated To  
Harry G. Dyer  
"Lakeshore" Kearney  
Jos. Lucius  
Otis W. Terpening

CHARLES E. BROWN  
Wisconsin Folklore Society  
Madison, Wisconsin  
1945

## OLE OLSON

**OLE OLSON**—When Paul Bunyan was cutting big timber at his Auger River camp in Wisconsin he was in great need of a competent blacksmith. At this time he favored Scandinavians so he had his camp clerk, Johnny Inkslinger, send a cablegram to the King of Sweden. He asked him to find and send to him the best smith in his kingdom. The king sent to America Ole Olson, a giant smith of wide fame in Sweden. Ole reached New York after a long voyage. He wanted to see the country, so he walked from New York to Wisconsin. One day he reached camp carrying his big wooden tool chest under one arm and a big bundle of clothing under the other. He was a mighty man and nearly as big as Paul. Paul had built a smithy and forge for his use and Ole was soon at work. He could do anything with iron. There were several other blacksmiths in the camp but he was the only one who, unassisted, could make and put a set of shoes on Babe, the great Blue Ox, and his smaller, but more troublesome brother, Benny. Babe wore out his shoes in no time at all. Every time Ole shod Babe, Paul had to open up a new iron mine in the Gogebic Range or in Minnesota. His shoes were so large and heavy that once, when Ole was carrying a set of them from the forge to the stable, his feet sank deep in the solid rock at every step. Ole did a vast amount of work about the logging camp, such as repairing the half-acre size cooking range, forging chains, mending the big kettles, making sheetiron shells for Paul's shotgun, repairing his big watch, caring for the ironwork on the sleds and wagons, etc. He was always busy, working at his forge from daylight until after dark.

**THE DINNER-HORN**—Paul Bunyan wanted a dinner-horn to call his Auger River woods crew to their meals at the cook shanty. One of the first implements Ole made for him was this horn. It was made of sheetiron and when finished was 75 feet in length and 25 feet in diameter at the open end. It was so powerful that the first time that Paul blew into it (he held it straight out) he blew down forty acres of pine. That was a heavy loss to Paul. The next time he held it up towards the sky and caused a hurricane. This was so destructive that it got Paul into real trouble with the U. S. Weather Bureau. Paul discarded the horn and it became a winter resort of families of big woods mosquitos. These became so troublesome that Paul was obliged to blow into it again to rout them out. Thus they came to

found new mosquito colonies in Maine and Nova Scotia. When Paul finished the timber cutting at his Auger River camp he had Ole flatten the horn. He sold the sheetiron to a Pennsylvania railroad who used it for a roof for their new Union depot in Philadelphia.

**WHIRLING LAKE**—This fabled lake, a round lake, located near Paul's Sundust River camp, was always whirling round and round. As it gained in momentum the friction caused by its water rubbing against the shore and rocks filled the whole country with steam, smoke and fog. This, when there was no wind to carry it away, became so dense that Paul's loggers could do no work. In attempting to reach camp many lost their way. Some ran into trees or fell into streams. Some were never seen or heard of again. Sometimes the lake changed direction in its whirling. Then the fog became just terrible. Lumberjacks and oxen, who accidentally stepped into its waters, were just whirled away. This lake became a terror to the camp. Many lumberjacks asked for their time and left. Paul feared that it might set other nearby lakes to whirling. The lake whirled only in the daytime. At night it was quiet. Paul sent Ole Olson to stop it if possible. The big blacksmith went to it one evening with a crew of men and teamloads of long poles. With his big sledge he drove piles across its diameter in several directions. Thus the lake was unable to start whirling. It troubled Paul no more.

**PAUL'S WATCH**—Paul Bunyan had a big watch given to him by his admiring friend, the King of Sweden. It was the biggest pocket timepiece in the world. Its huge silver case was elaborately engraved. It bore Paul's name. He was very proud of it. His big camps were run by its time. At night he kept it under his sweet-grass pillow. Ole was a trained watchmaker besides being a blacksmith. He repaired Paul's watch when this was necessary. When its works were removed for a general overhauling the parts covered a hundred square feet of ground. They formed a small hill. Ole had several of his helpers guard the wheels, levers, springs, hands and jewels night and day to prevent their being misplaced or stolen. The watch was an old-fashioned stem-winder. Only Paul or Ole could wind it. When in good order it had the soothing murmur of a machine shop. Paul said that the noise it made always reminded him of a heavenly angel orchestra. To keep this monster watch properly oiled took the work of six soft-grease monkeys and six hard-grease monkeys working from daylight until

dark. One day, when it lay on the ground near the smithy, a curious small lumberjack wandered into it. He got lost among its works. He was found by Ole after a several-days search. Ole had to sift the works to find him. Paul was offered fabulous sums for the big watch but he refused to part with it because of its gift to him by his friend, the King of Sweden.

**HIS RELIGION**—Ole, the blacksmith, had little or no religion. He said that he didn't need any in his line of work. To him went Shanty Boy, once the most famous entertainer in Paul Bunyan's camps and now become camp evangelist. Among his numerous other conquests he was determined to convert Ole and set him on the right path. Ole did not attend camp revivals. So Shanty Boy took to visiting him at his forge. There the two engaged in some hot arguments. When they got to going good sparks and flames issued from all of the shop doors and windows. The more determined the gospel shark was to make a real Christian of Ole the more Ole decided to remain a rank heathen. One day, when Shanty Boy came to the smithy to engage in a religious argument, they had a regular fight. Both were mighty men. At the end of their tussle Ole seized the vanquished Shanty Boy and stuffed him up the forge chimney. When he emerged on the roof he was covered from head to foot with black soot. He looked more like the Devil than a bush preacher. Thus ended the attempts at Ole's conversion.

**HIS VACATION**—When Paul Bunyan was logging off North Dakota he wanted to make a clean job of it. Ole helped him by driving the big pine stumps underground with his sledge. Two blows with this implement and the stump disappeared. One went clear through to Mongolia to the surprise of the natives. At this time Ole wanted to return to his home in Sweden for a visit. Paul would not let him go. He feared that he might decide to remain there. Babe, the Blue Ox, always needed new shoes. There was no one who could make them but Ole. Paul wanted Ole for a husband for his daughter, Teenie. Ole was very slow in courting her. His love-making consisted largely in burning a heart with her initial (T) on the trunks of trees. If he married the girl, Paul thought, he would always have the Big Swede in camp and not have to raise his wages. Teenie paid little attention to Ole's wooing. She had too many other admirers. There



were too many pretty Swede girls in the homeland and Paul thought that Ole might fall in love with one of them. Ole was disappointed in not getting a vacation. He missed most of all the lutefisk and lingonberries of his homeland. He was always going to quit Paul's camp. He could get higher wages in some other camp. But he never did. For many years after this he was the chief smith in all of Paul's camps throughout the western country.

# SOURDOUGH SAM

Paul Bunyan's Illustrious Chief Cook and Other  
Famous Culinary Artists of His Great  
Pinery Logging Camps

Old Time Tales of Kitchen Wizards, the Big Cook  
Shanty, the Camp Fare, the Dinner Horn  
and Sam's Cook Book



Dedicated to the Memory of  
Eugene S. Shepard, Matt. R. Stapleton  
and Otis W. Terpening,  
Wisconsin Woodsmen.

Charles E. Brown  
Wisconsin Folklore Society  
Madison, Wisconsin  
1945

## Sourdough Sam

**PAUL'S COOKS**—Paul Bunyan needed the best of cooks in his logging camps in Wisconsin, Northern Michigan and Minnesota. He employed an army of lumberjacks. As his camps grew larger and larger he needed more and more cooks and cook's helpers. Some had to be specialists in the baking of bread of which vast quantities were eaten, the roasting of meat, the boiling of vegetables, the baking of beans, the cooking of soups, the baking of pies and doughnuts and the preparation of preserves. He was always discharging cooks and hiring new ones to take their places. His crews were very particular about their food. His renowned chief cook, Sourdough Sam, he obtained through a Chicago employment agency. Sam had cooked on some of the biggest vessels on the Great Lakes, also on some of the finest of the Ohio and Mississippi river packets. He thought that it might injure his reputation to cook for a lot of wild lumberjacks in the pinewoods. Paul convinced him that he would add to his culinary laurels. He was a generally mild-mannered man, but now and then, when angered, he simply "flew off the handle." Then only Paul Bunyan could quiet him. Once, when in a rage, he soused him in a rainwater barrel. Sam had lost one leg by a sourdough "explosion" and used a crutch. He supervised the cooking in all of Bunyan's Old Northwest camps. The logging crews swore by Sam. Among Sam's very efficient assistants were Joe Muffraw (ancestral name Murphy), who came from Quebec. He was a huge laughing man and a master logger. Paul persuaded him to become a cook. Hot Biscuit Slim had been a cook with the Barnum & Bailey Circus. He was an artist at baking bread, biscuits, buns and cookies. Pieface Charley excelled in the preparation of dried apple, pumpkin, lemon and other pies. Pea Soup Pierre, a "Frenchy" from New Brunswick, "took a back-seat" from no one in the country in the making of meat and vegetable soups. Pea soup was one of his many triumphs. The present paper shortage prevents the mention of the names and accomplishments of other master cooks who worked for Paul.

**THE COOK SHANTY**—This structure was about a half mile in length. It took a half day just to walk around it. Wooden tables ran down its length with benches on either side. At one end was the cooking range several acres in extent. Three forties of timber had to be cut every week to keep up the fire. Several cords of wood were needed to start it. A detail of twenty men cut the wood, brought it to the cook shanty and attended to the fire. Its draft was so great that when a man put a piece of cordwood on the fire he had to be careful not to be drawn into the range and out of the chimney with its charred remains. When some loaves of bread were put in the oven they were burned to a crisp before an assistant cook, running around to the other side, could remove them. Some of the bread loaves baked in this oven were so big that Paul Bunyan used the crusts for bunkhouses. When pancakes were being baked a number of colored boys with slabs

of bacon or hams strapped to their feet skated over its top to grease it. A concrete mixer was used to mix the batter. Popcorn kernels were put in the batter and these caused the pancakes to turn themselves. The griddle was 260 feet across. Dynamite once got in the batter and the colored boys went out through the roof in the explosion. That was the "Winter of the Black Snow." Doughnuts, strung on long poles, were carried to the cook shanty by two men, after big Ole Olson, the camp blacksmith had punched the holes in them. They were rolled down the tables and the men speared them with their forks as they went by.

At one end of the cook shanty the chief cook had a desk. Here he listened to food complaints of the men. None who went there for this purpose ever went again. If their complaints were unreasonable they were hit with a potato masher or rolling-pin and thrown out of the window.

**CAMP FARE**—At daylight when the big bell called them to breakfast, the crew were already in their places at the big dinner table. Absolute quiet was the rule enforced by the foremen and cooks. Everyone attended strictly to the business of eating the food before him. The food heaped on the plates consisted generally of oatmeal or cornmeal mush, fried salt pork ("sow-belly" or "salt-horse"), pancakes, boiled potatoes, bread, sorghum molasses ("black-strap"), thick slices of bread, prunes and tea or coffee. For dinner the men carried to their work in the woods cold meat, bread, doughnuts, hot vegetables and hot tea. One heavy logger is said to have once accidentally sat on and crushed his dinner bucket and its contents. Thus, they say, the hamburger sandwich was invented.

A very hungry crew ate supper in the cook shanty. It consisted of pea or bean soup, boiled beef, fried or baked potatoes, boiled rutabagas or turnips, bread, dried-apple sauce, apple or pumpkin pie or cake, and tea, coffee. On Friday fish was served. The upland perch were shaken from their nesting places in the trees near the Bunyan camps. They were abundant and very good when fried or boiled. Whirligig fish were caught from holes cut in the ice of the nearby rivers and lakes. The edges of these holes were smeared with cheese or bacon rind. In their efforts to taste it these fish whirled themselves out on the ice and were gathered up in baskets. The giddyfish also rose to the baited surface of the ice in schools. They were very elastic. When one or several were hit with a paddle all started to bounce. Bouncing more and more all soon bounced themselves out on the surface of the ice. Indian fishermen also brought quantities of larger fish to the cook shanty. Johnny Inkslinger, the economical camp clerk, paid the redmen for these with bottle-caps and poker chips.

Paul Bunyan was a great hunter and at times kept his camp well supplied with venison and wild fowl. With his big shotgun he could shoot ducks and geese flying so high in the air that they were often spoiled before they reached the earth. So he salted his shot to preserve them.

Waiters on roller skates skated down the middle of the long dinner table to keep the men supplied with bread. These were called

"whistle-punks." The ketchup, horseradish, pepper, salt and mustard wagons, which ran beside the tables, were horse-drawn tanks. Soup was served from metal tanks with a small hose.

**THE DINNER HORN**—Paul Bunyan thought he should have a dinner horn to call the men to supper. At Sam's suggestion he had Ole Olson, the blacksmith, make one. It was forty feet in length. The first time Paul used it he blew it out straight and knocked down several acres of pine. The next time he blew it up in the air. That filled the Mississippi Valley with wind and caused wind storms on the Great Lakes. The shipping companies complained to the U. S. Weather Bureau. Paul then decided to junk the horn. An Eastern railroad bought the sheet iron and used it for a roof for a Union depot.

**ODOROUS GIFTS**—An old friend once sent to Sourdough Sam a gift of a barrel of Milwaukee German sauerkraut. The teamster who brought it to the cook shanty placed it near one end of the big range without informing Sam. At about this same time another "friend" sent to Sam a gift of a cask of Limburger cheese. This another teamster rolled into the cook shanty, depositing it among a lot of salt and sugar casks, again without informing Sam. He was blissfully ignorant of the arrival of both gifts. In the meantime the contents of both casks, aided by the heat of the nearby big range, were gaining "power" daily. In a few days Sam began to sniff the awful smells that were now issuing from the containers. Others who became aware of these also mentioned it to him. Thinking that there might be some dead rats somewhere about the shanty Sam sent a number of his helpers to hunt for the carcasses. The men, after a pretty thorough search, found none.

Every day the smells became worse. The lumberjacks, who were Canada-French, Swedes, Indian breeds and Maine and Vermont Yankees, now hotly objected to eating in such an odorous atmosphere. They charged Sam and his staff with the improper care of the camp garbage. So Sam was driven to an investigation of his own account. When he at last found the casks from which the terrible odors were issuing and identified their contents he had them removed and buried in the woods a half mile away from the camp. There they attracted all of the wild animals of the forests.

**MISCELLANEOUS**—Accidents were not uncommon in the big cook shanty. Babe, the big Blue Ox, once got in, and in his efforts to sample it, overturned the big kettle of pea soup which was simmering on the range. On another occasion he devoured most of a lot of Pieface Charley's pies.

One day a big pot of Jimmy Beanpots' beans "exploded" and hot beans flew all over the shanty. The nearby jacks sought refuge under the big table and nearly overturned it. It was a week before the rain of beans ceased.



Once an entire tribe of Indians got into the shanty just before supper, calmly seated themselves at the lumberjack's places and began devouring the bread and other food already placed there. When the loggers arrived for their supper and found redmen seated at their places they grabbed them and threw them out in a real riot.

Large quantities of prunes were served at nearly every meal. Seven men with wheelbarrows labored all day, from day to day, in hauling prune stones away from the cook shanty. The chipmunks found and ate them and grew as big and as fierce as tigers. They sometimes attacked Paul's men and he had to arm some of his crew with shotguns to reduce their numbers.

The cook shanty was a very busy place from early morning until quite late at night. Forty helpers were kept busy opening salt, pepper, sugar and flour barrels and as large a number in drawing and bringing water from the camp well. Paul's big cow, Lucy, managed by Paul's profane henchman, Brimstone Bill, furnished the milk for the camp. One winter, when her regular food ran out, and she fed on balsam, spruce and other evergreen foliage, her milk was not fit to drink and the men used it for cough syrup. The butter made from it Paul Bunyan used to grease his logging roads. Brimstone Bill won fame as the author of the first dictionary of swearwords.

The doughnuts baked at the camp were often so large that some of the axemen wore them about their necks. As they hewed at the trees the motion of the doughnut revolved the double-hit axe for a new bite.

Once, when the camp range was out of order, Sourdough Sam had his assistants build a fire under a pond and spread pancake batter on the ice. At another time a teamster hauling a load of peas over the surface of a frozen lake broke through the ice. The oxen and peas went down to the bottom. Paul Bunyan cut the brush and trees around its margin and boiled the lake. The camp had all the pea soup it could eat that winter. It had a fine ox-tail flavor.

**SAM'S RECIPES**—Sourdough Sam prepared and published a cook book of what he thought his best logging camp recipes. Thousands of copies of it were sold throughout the United States. Recent research and inquiry has failed to locate any copies on the bookshelves of leading libraries. It has been suggested that, like Sears Roebuck catalogues, they may have found their way into valued use in rural outhouses. Sam never profited by the sale of his cook book. The publisher took all of the money.

# GHOST TALES

Short Stories For Use at the Fireside  
and Camp Fire



Old Time Wisconsin and Other Tales of Ghosts, Spooks,  
Phantoms, Spirits, Skulls, Skeletons, Ghouls, Hexes,  
Undertakers and Burying Grounds

MADISON, WISCONSIN

1931

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### OLD KRUMMEL

Old Krummel was dead and laid in his grave,  
Um, um.....laid in his grave.  
There grew an old apple tree over his head,  
Um, um.....over his head.  
The apples were ripe and ready to drop,  
Um, um.....ready to drop.  
There came an old woman and gathered them up,  
Um, um.....gathered them up.  
Old Krummel jumped up and gave her a knock,  
Um, um.....gave her a knock.  
And then the old woman went hippity-hop,  
Um, um.....hippity-hop.  
The apples were dried and laid on the shelf,  
Um, um.....laid on the shelf.  
If you want any more you may sing it yourself,  
Um, um.....sing it yourself.

Childhood Song.

# GHOST TALES

Ghosts, Spooks, Phantoms, Spirits, Skulls, Skeletons,  
Ghouls, Hexes, Undertakers and  
Burying Grounds

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SHORT STORIES FOR USE AT THE FIRESIDE  
AND CAMP FIRE



CHARLES E. BROWN

Publisher of  
WIGWAM TALES  
Cowboy Tales  
Paul Bunyan Tales  
Tony Beaver Tales

First Edition  
1931

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C. E. Brown  
2011 Chadbourne Avenue  
Madison, Wisconsin

# GHOST TALES

## Largely From Old Home Town Sources

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### NIGGER JONES AND HIS WHITE HORSE

In the eighties there lived in a cottage in the wooded and sparsely settled western outskirts of our city a colored man by the name of Jones.\* Jones was a drayman and he and his large white horse were familiar figures in the western part of the city. Jones at about this time became enamored of a white woman whom he married. This espousal of their sister by Nigger Jones angered the two brothers of the woman and they several times visited the home of the negro and endeavored to urge their sister to leave him. This she refused to do being happy in her married life with her colored husband. The brothers, becoming more and more enraged, one night again visited the cottage and finding Jones at home engaged in a brawl with him during which they killed him. After his burial his white wife either returned to her friends or left the city. The brothers also disappeared on the day following the murder.

The spirit of the dead Nigger Jones, however, refused to rest in his grave. Wearing a black shroud and mounted on his white horse it constantly sought for his murderers. In the dead of night it frequently appeared on the principal street of the western part of the town. Citizens who traveled along this rather dimly lighted avenue late at night sometimes encountered this haunt. In the still night they could hear the hoof-beats of his white horse drawing nearer and nearer. Then, as they sought shelter in a doorway or behind a nearby tree, there would pass by, galloping at a breakneck speed, the great white horse, its eyes and nostrils flashing with fire, and on its back the shrouded figure of Nigger Jones waving its hands. In a few seconds it had passed from sight down the broad avenue.

Such was the general fear of this apparition that but few persons cared to be out on the streets late at night. One neighbor came running home from such a meeting exclaiming to his wife: "My God,—Open the door—Nigger Jones is after me!" After about a year the mad night-riding of the ghost of Nigger Jones on the avenue ceased. Whether he had found his murderers and avenged his own death was not known. His vengeful spirit had found rest and peace at last.

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\*Milwaukee.



## THE MAJOR'S GHOST

At the corner of two streets in a certain Midwest city there formerly stood a large brick house. Its owner, once a Civil War officer, was a business man of prominence in his home town. Whatever may have been the nature of his financial or other troubles is not known, but the Major one day hung himself from a chandelier. Friends found his body suspended there and untied the rope. His death was a great shock to sorrowing relatives and business associates who attended his funeral.

A few weeks after the Major's burial his home was broken up and his executors offered the brick house for renting. Of course no family, when they learned of the tragedy which had occurred there, cared to move into the house. Hence the property was untenanted for some time. It became known throughout that part of the town as a haunted house. Children of the neighborhood sometimes climbed up on the porch and peeped through the heavy-shuttered windows. After a while a family new to the city rented the house and moved into it. Within a month they were seen to be moving out again. Then the house was untenanted until another uninformed renter was found.

This moving in and out of families continued for years. No family cared to, or was able to live there, for long. Members of these families, when interviewed by the neighbors, all had pretty much the same story to tell of their experiences in the haunted dwelling. Strange noises, groans and cries were heard, especially at night. At other times explosive and other sounds appeared to come from both the basement and the attic, stairs creaked as if under the tread of ghostly feet, doors opened noiselessly or closed mysteriously, gas jet flames blew out, and outdoor shutters creaked. Dishes and other objects fell from pantry and closet shelves. These unexplainable happenings were enough to rack the stoutest nerves. No one could long endure them.

The house continued in this unhappy state for years. It was often unoccupied for quite long periods of time. Its evil reputation as a resort of a haunt or haunts was now become so bad and widely known that some persons dreaded to even pass by the house at night. A watchman was once employed by the owners. After spending a night or two on the premises this man refused to watch there again. From the grisly experiences which he had there he thought that it very evident that the Major's spirit wanted no human company.

After being a burden to the owners for years the old brick house was finally torn down and a large flat building erected in its place. Tenants of this modern structure know nothing of the dark history of the corner on which it stands.

## THE TOWN GHOST

There is a small town only a few miles west of the capital city of our state that possesses a ghost all of its own. This locality was originally settled by good Cornish folk who came to this locality to work in the early lead mines of the vicinity.\*

Many of these settlers and some of their descendants have at some time or other had experiences, which they have told of the ghost or apparition which haunts, or formerly haunted, this locality.

This phantom, differing from others of his kind in this respect, was as likely to be abroad and working mischief in the day time as well as at night. He was a very sprightly spirit and the cause of no end of trouble and grief to the settlers, who never relished his various escapades.

One of his favorite "tricks" was to suddenly appear from a roadside thicket and leap on the tongue of a buggy or wagon which was traveling over the country road. His presence on the pole nearly always maddened the horses and so started a runaway which often resulted in a smashup. Sometimes the ghost would leap into the back of the wagon, throw the unsuspecting driver from his seat, assume the reins and whip, and lash the frightened horses into a mad gallop. Such teams, after running themselves nearly to death, returned home without a driver. On one such occasion, when a thunderstorm was rapidly coming up behind a wagon, the team of horses ran so very fast that the rain in falling wetted only the back of the wagon and never reached the driver or team during a drive of a mile or more to the village. The rain was halted at the rear by the presence of the ghost in the wagon box.

Among other favorite pranks of this ghost was the removal of one or two wheels from a wagon, this resulting in the wagons either suddenly crashing to earth, or of reaching its destination on two or three wheels.

Milking cows dry as they stood in the field or barn of their owners was a not infrequent happening for which this phantom was responsible. He would leap on the back of one of a herd of cows or group of horses in a pasture and from its back drive the others in a mad race about the field.

There was in this settlement a doughty Cornishman, the father of a famous wrestler, and himself a wrestler of more than local repute, who proclaimed that if he himself ever met the ghost that he would engage in a wrestling match with him, and "put him down." One evening he set out with the purpose of meeting the ghost, if possible, and of engaging in such a trial of strength. The next day this mighty man was found lying dead, his neck broken, in a field beyond a stone fence. He had met the phantom and it had thrown him over

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\* Ridgeway.

the stone wall. The road over which the two had fiercely struggled was torn up for yards in several directions.)

The coming of the automobile has quieted the activities of this troublesome ghost but we are assured by some people that he is not yet inactive in this rural neighborhood.

## THE GHOST TRAIN

Tales of the appearance of phantom trains or of engines on various railroad lines were in former years occasionally heard. Some old railroad-men in the Middle West assert that during the months of April and May of each year (April 28 to May 3), the anniversary of the passage of the funeral train of President Abraham Lincoln (1865) over the "Big Four", Chicago & Alton and other railroad lines, through the states of Ohio, Indiana and Illinois, on its way to Springfield, a ghost funeral train again rolls over this route.

This phantom train makes its appearance late at night. For its flight the lines are mysteriously cleared. As the time for its appearance approaches everything becomes oppressively quiet. Not a human or other sound is heard. A strange feeling of apprehension and terror takes hold of those who are on duty along the tracks, or who happen to be in the vicinity.

A light is seen in the distance. It is the headlight of the pilot engine of the funeral train. It approaches rapidly, and hurtles by with lightning speed. After it has passed another light is seen and the unearthly shriek of a locomotive is heard. The headlight grows larger and larger and fairly blazes with a blinding glare as it draws near. The muffled engine bell is heard tolling with a mournful tone. This is the funeral train bearing the body of the martyred President and of his young son to their last resting place at Springfield.

The Lincoln ghost train is being run by the dead. In the dimly lighted engine cab are the engineer and fireman, both grinning skeletons. The train, consisting of the funeral coach bearing the caskets and a number of cars, is heavily draped with black and silver mourning drapes. On the platforms of the coaches, swinging lanterns, are the conductors and brakemen. Although fully uniformed, all are also of the dead. Other skeleton faces peer from the coach windows. There is a great rush of wind and the heavy steel rails rumble and seem to groan as this phantom train crashes past and is lost to sight in the dense black of the night.)

Those who claim to have seen the Lincoln ghost train never wish to witness its passage again during their lives.

## THE DOG PARADISE

This lady was a great lover of dogs. She was a widow and the miscellaneous collection of dogs which she harbored and fed were apparently her greatest pleasure in life. Stray canines of every description she gathered in and doctored. Dogs were everywhere about her house and yard. It was said that she had somewhere near the city a small private cemetery where she buried her dog friends when they died. Its location she would never divulge. Her friendship for and humanity to canines continued through her life. She was a kindly woman and a good neighbor. Children had but little interest for her. Dogs were her greatest interest and her best friends. She expected when she entered the Spirit World to meet all her departed dog friends there.

When the "Dog Lady" died she was buried in a beautiful city cemetery. At the head of her grave there stands a large sandstone monument carved to represent a blasted tree trunk, ivy-twined. Peeping from beneath its roots are carved representations of several large and small dogs, her faithful friends in life, and guardians of her grave in death. The carving and erection of this monument she provided for in her will.

A night watchman in this cemetery once said that he carefully avoided the region of this particular grave and monument in his nightly rounds. The "Dog Lady" came there to converse with the spirits of her former canine friends. When all else was dark in the "city of the dead" a faint luminosity could be seen through the trees and shrubbery in the vicinity of her resting place. Dogs were never permitted in this cemetery. At night the iron gates were tightly closed and locked, but they managed to get in somehow. The doleful noises which they sometimes emitted gave even this stout watchman "the creeps".

## THE BASKETS OF SKULLS

Reposing in the garret of the home of a prominent West Side resident in the city were a dozen or more Indian skulls. Being somewhat interested in anthropological studies the owner of the house had acquired them from a friend physician who had himself obtained some of them from Indian scaffold burials during a some-years sojourn as surgeon in a Western army post. In the employ of the citizen's family as a housemaid was a robust Irish girl. One day Bridget having some work to perform in the garret quite unexpectedly discovered these Indian skulls on several shelves, and the poor girl nearly fainted from fright. When she reached the kitchen and had partially recovered from the shock she gave notice of her intention of leaving that house forever. As competent hired girls were difficult to obtain the lady of the house finally suc-

ceeded in getting her to remain with the family by promising that the offending aboriginal crania should be removed.

So one fine summer evening a young man provided with two market baskets went to the citizen's home and bore away the skulls. They completely filled the baskets. As he trudged down the street in the gathering dusk he met an old friend and the two stopped to converse. In order to safeguard the skulls the baskets were placed at the top of the slope of a lawn. While the two young men were talking beneath a curb-side tree three happy girls, their arms locked about each other, came hippity-hopping over the wooden sidewalk. Just as they were about opposite the baskets (which they had not observed) the jarring of the walk by their dancing feet overturned the two baskets and one after another the white skulls came rolling down the slope, and across the walk. At the sight the young women uttered a united shriek and sped away into the night. They covered the next city block at racehorse speed and were still running when they were lost to sight in the darkness.

What they thought or said when they were far enough away and recovered their senses will never be known. The offending crania are now exhibited with others on the shelves of a state museum.

#### INDIAN SKULLS IN THE BARN

A German farmer living a few miles outside of our town had a gravel knoll on his farm. Gravel was required for road construction and in excavating this deposit for this purpose he encountered several Indian burials. Accompanying them were some flint and native copper implements. These he soon disposed of to a collector of Indian relics. The bones he re-buried in a corner of a neighboring field, the skulls he preserved.

At about this time the farmer was building a new barn. In constructing the foundation he left an opening in one corner of the rather thick stone wall and in this recess placed the four Indian skulls. Shortly after this, his wife having died some years before, the farmer married again. After their wedding, according to his own story, strange things began to happen. One night lights were seen and peculiar noises heard in the barn. The man and his wife thought that they could hear the low beating of an Indian drum and the shuffle of feet. When the farmer, urged on by his spouse, visited the barn with a lantern the lights went out and everything was as still as a grave.

These disturbances continued nightly and neither the farmer or his wife could get more than a few winks of sleep. The horses and cows in the barn became so restive that they were difficult to manage. The farmer was at his wits end to fathom the cause of all his troubles. Now his wife learned of the sealing of the Indian skulls in the barn foundation. She was a superstitious woman and decided that these were at the bottom of the mysterious happen-



ings. "The Indian spirits want their heads", said she. She refused to enter the barn on any errand. So the farmer was obliged to tear down this part of the foundation, recover them, and bury them where he had buried the bones. Thereafter peace and quiet came again to the farm home and to the barn and its animal inhabitants.

## THE SKELETON AND THE HUNS

Two young men who were pursuing medical studies at Rush Medical College roomed on the top floor of a tenement building in a rather squalid quarter of the town. They were hard driven to make ends meet as such students formerly often were. The rather cheap living in this poor district suited their slender purses.

Occupying the rooms on the floor just below them was a Hungarian family. These Hunyaks were rather queer but good folks. On at least one night of every week they had a habit of inviting in some of their Old Country relatives and friends for a party. This generally happened on a night when the young medics were endeavoring to study. One of the guests had a zither and another brought along an accordeon. These two provided the music for endless hard-stepping round dances, accompanied by loud-voiced singing of Old Country songs. These hilarious doings began at about eight o'clock and continued with almost no intermission until midnight.

The medics endured these weekly celebrations as long as they could. They pounded on the floor. They complained to the agent of the building and remonstrated with the Hungarians themselves, but to no avail. The celebrations continued. So they resolved to take matters into their own hands.

One Saturday night, when the riotous merrymaking had gone on for about an hour, they hit on a good plan for quieting the Hungarians. One of the boys tied a large nail to a piece of black thread and lowered it carefully to the window of the Hunyak quarters below. After banging this "tick-tack" several times against the window pane he again drew it upward.

Now the dancing ceased and the boys heard the curtain raised as someone peered out into the darkness to learn the cause of the unexpected noise. When the curtain was again lowered the "tick-tack" on the window pane was repeated. On each occasion of the use of the "tick-tack" there was silence in the room below, then the music and the dance were resumed. Now the medics determined on extreme measures. They were the owners of a particularly hideous jointed human skeleton. Attaching a rope to this bundle of bones they lowered it down to opposite the window, and then banged one of its arms against the pane. Almost immediately the curtain was raised and all who could do so peered out of the window. The frequent "tick-tacking" had

already reduced the Hunyaks to a very nervous state of mind. Now there was the greatest commotion as chairs and other furniture was overturned by the frightened Huns on the way to the door. One could hear them shrieking and falling over one another down the long dark staircase and landing with a thud at the bottom.

That was the end of the celebrations held there, and of the Huns themselves. Believing that the place was haunted by an evil spirit or devil the family soon removed to another abode. Peace reigned thereafter.

## GHOST CITIES

Along the courses of the picturesque Wisconsin and Rock rivers and on the banks of some other attractive streams and lakes in our state are the locations of many disappeared towns. These may not improperly be called "ghost cities". Most of these phantom municipalities were laid out in Territorial days of the State's history. Their godfathers were land speculators and others who hoped to reap a golden harvest of shekels from the sale of building lots in these paper towns of their dreams. Attractive maps and plats of these places were prepared to engage the attention and interest of unwary individuals who might be so unlucky as to invest good money in these wild-cat schemes. These plats often showed places set aside for the erection of a "university", an "academy" and one or more churches. A "public square" occupied the center of the plat. Often the lots were staked out by a surveyor. Not a few persons in the East purchased lots in these townsites only to lose title to them again in a few years through the failure of the town to attract actual settlers, of the proprietors of the site to pay the land taxes, or because of other financial discouragements.

Along the course of the Rock river between Beloit and Lake Koshkonong were the sites of no less than ten of these ghost cities. They were once known by such names as Kuskanong, Carramana, Newburgh, Warsaw and Wisconsin City. Dead and deserted these once prospective towns have long, long ago returned to their original state of farm and pasture lands. Almost the only human activities which take place there are the reported occasional gatherings on the sites of their public squares of the wraiths of former proprietors and investors who assemble there in the dark of night to lament the downfall of their hopes. Some bustle about with maps under their arms seeking possible victims while other spirit forms sit on stumps and stones consulting deeds and titles to town lots which will never exist again.

Other cities and villages in southern Wisconsin, once flourishing, have passed away, or have been gradually disappearing, because of the passing of the

lumber rafting industry. The failure to secure a railroad in years gone by gave the death blow to others. Along the Wisconsin river Newport, Independence, Richland City and Prairie DuBay are among these "ghost towns." The foundations of a few early buildings, scattered shingle nails and spikes and fragments of glass and china mark the sites of some of these defunct settlements. In a tangle of weeds and brush are the fallen tombstones of a few of the former citizens.

New Amsterdam, Oostburg, and Horns Pier are among such former towns once situated along our Lake Michigan shore. Aztalan, near Lake Mills, once an early industrial center of some importance, with a number of large hotels, and a contender in its day for the state capitol location, has also passed into the mists of forgotten years. In these "ghost towns" there are said to assemble for nightly rambles and revels the shades of their former inhabitants. Groans, cries and wierd laughter there mingle with the howling of the night wind. They are dead towns frequented now only by the spirits of the departed.

### TRAILED BY A CATAMOUNT

In pioneer days a young man living in a country settlement in southern Wisconsin had a sweetheart residing in a town about seven miles distant. As he had no horse he was obliged to make his courting visits on foot. Once a week he made this journey from his own home to that of the favored young lady. The country through which he passed on these occasions was largely wild and uncultivated land, only two or three farm homes being scattered along the road. There were wolves, bears and wild cats in this region.

One dark night, as he was returning from one of his weekly visits, he thought that he heard something in the road behind him. So he halted and looked behind. The moon had just emerged from beneath a cloud, lighting the dirt road with its beams. But he saw nothing, the brush-lined road seemed to be clear. He resumed his walking. After a while he again thought that he heard a slight noise, so he turned again, but with the same result as before. Now he quickened his pace for he felt that he was being followed. Could it be a spook? He had heard of their following people. Feeling very uneasy he turned again and again to view the road in his rear. On one of these occasions he thought that he could see indistinctly the form of some large animal. Recently he had heard stories of a large catamount or panther which had killed settler's stock over a quite wide territory.

Now he decided that he was being trailed by one of these large and powerful wildcats. In turning again he thought that he could see it quite plainly in the road about a hundred feet behind him. It moved into the brush at the roadside. Now he was in a state approaching terror. He broke into a run.

He thought that he could hear it running behind. A few minutes later he neared a farm house. This farmer he knew to have several large and ugly dogs. He expected to hear these watchful animals bark as he approached the house but they uttered not a single sound. Evidently they smelled one of their ancient enemies and chose to remain quiet.

The young man now reached the farm house and by his loud knocking aroused the farmer. Here he told his story and was asked to remain for the night. The footprints of the catamount from which he had so fortunately escaped were plainly to be seen in the dusty surface of the road on the following morning.

### THE THEFT OF THE CEMETERY FLOWERS

In one of our old German wards there was in the fifties a cemetery known as the "Grenhagen Kirchof." One sunny summer afternoon two young ladies from the old "Bonenviertel" settlement, located across the river several miles away on the East Side of the town, chose to take a walk over on the West Side. When they reached the cemetery they entered its gate and spent an hour or more in wandering about among the graves and monuments. On leaving each girl gathered a bouquet of the flowers which were growing and blooming on graves and in flower beds. Then they took their homeward way.

Before they reached their homes they met an old lady. She admired the bouquets and asked the girls where they had obtained the pretty flowers. After they had told her the old lady in an admonishing tone of voice, and shaking a finger at the girls, said: "Those flowers belong to the dead. You should not have taken them. They will be very angry. To-night they will come and haunt both of you."

What could the ashamed and frightened girls do but hurry back to the somewhat distant cemetery. The evening shadows were falling. Reaching the cemetery at last they threw the bouquets over the fence saying: "There you have your old flowers!" Then they ran away as fast as their limbs could carry them never looking behind them for fear that the spirits of the dead might be running in pursuit. Arrived at their homes neither Molly or Betty cared to tell anyone of their exciting experience, nor did either do so for many years afterwards.

### OLD "BOTTLES"

Old "Bottles" was a well-known character of our home town. With George Washington Scott, a rather pompous negro expressman, and his weak-minded white assistant, "Say", he enjoyed a town-wide celebrity. No one appeared to know anything or much about his origin or life history. "Bottles" lived in a

miserable shack on a city dumping ground at the western limits of the town. This curious and cheerless abode he had built of old boxes and boards and roofed over with pieces of discarded sheetiron. Some old beer and other bottles also entered into its construction.

"Bottles" obtained his rather picturesque name from the continual not-loud call which he emitted of "Bottles! Bottles!" He was generally to be seen wandering up some downtown alley, his time being spent in retrieving from ash-barrels and ash-boxes, and from other places, bottles of every description. These he secreted in the pockets of his faded and worn coat, or carried in his arms. There was in the city at that time at least one firm engaged in the buying and selling of discarded bottles. It may be that old "Bottles", whose real name no one knew, disposed of his glass treasure-trove to this concern, and thus gained some money with which to support life.

"Bottles" was a harmless old man, whose one aim in life appeared to be the collection of glass containers. All of the downtown children knew him. Everyone pitied him. Now and then a sympathetic housewife gave him a bit of food. His only reply to questions asked of him was his plaintive call of "Bottles! Bottles!" One day the old man was found dead in his primitive dwelling. His spirit had departed to a distant world.

Some weeks after this two young medical students at a local medical college came to the dissecting room where they were to begin the dismembering of a "stiff". When they removed the cloth covering of the cadaver they were surprised and horrified to discover that their subject was none other than old "Bottles." As both young men had known him quite well they had not the heart to dissect the body of the old junkman. So they traded his body to two other students for their cadaver. These men were non-residents and had no such scruples. He was sacrificed to the cause surgical science.

The ghost of old "Bottles" is said to still haunt some of the downtown alleys where in other days he hunted bottles for a livelihood. Peering into these uninviting places one almost expects to see his stooping figure and to hear his low cry of "Bottles! Bottles!"

## THE NIGHT OWL

Of all of the fierce creatures of childhood in other days the Night Owl (Nacht Eule) was the very worst. A consort of witches and wizards and of other weird and unearthly beings, the Night Owl was the terror especially of disobedient children. We suspect that he was of German origin because he was most frequently mentioned by children of Teutonic parentage.

During the daylight hours his abode was supposed to be in caves, in tombs and in other dark and mysterious places. After dark he was abroad



generally sitting on a limb of some convenient tree or some tree-top, from which station he could watch the windows of homes in which there were young children.

Naughty boys and girls were taken to the window to see him. Peering out into the darkness through the window pane the children could see his piercing black eyes, yellow-ringed and bright and shining. He was always watching, watching. One good look at this awful night bird was enough. Children who had been noisy or naughty quickly quieted down and became tractable after seeing the watchful Night Owl. It was not known whether he ever carried away any naughty children. He might have done so for he was believed to be the sentinel of and servant of the witches. To them he reported all of the misdeeds of children.

We have not seen the Night Owl for years. No doubt he is still on duty somewhere.

## THE WITCH

When Grandmother was a girl quarrels between the Yankee and the German and Irish boys in her home town were most frequent. In the winter time these heated battles took the form of fierce snowball fights in which many boys were engaged. In other months of the year the missiles used in these fights were sticks and stones. The police sometimes interfered to stop these hot encounters of warring youth.

In leaving the doorway of her home during a battle of this nature between the German and the Irish lads of her neighborhood, Grandmother was accidentally struck on the nose with a stone. The Irish lad who had thrown the missile was caught. He was very sorry and apologized. It was proposed to take him to jail, but at Grandmother's wish he was released. The wound was an ugly one, after weeks of home medical treatment it still refused to heal. Doctors were few in those days and the settlers had no money "to waste" on doctor's fees except in cases of extreme necessity.

There lived in Grandmother's neighborhood a very ugly looking and shriveled old lady. She had the sorry reputation among the settlers of being a witch, or "hex". She was known to possess a great knowledge of herb and other medicines. The children were very much afraid of this old lady. Even the adults avoided her because she was supposed to possess the power to "hex" or cast evil spells upon persons who injured her or whom she disliked. Doubtless her ugliness and her peculiarities were responsible for the bad reputation which this harmless old woman bore.

A friend persuaded Grandmother that this witch woman might be able to heal her wound. Together she and her girl chum went to her cottage. They

were not particularly brave and more than once on the way there they felt a strong urge to turn back and run home. But they kept on.

When they knocked on the door of her humble home the old lady lifted the latch and greeted them in such a friendly manner and voice that their fear left them. She told them that she knew of their coming to consult her. How this could be they could not explain for their visit was supposed to be a very secret one. She placed Grandmother on a low couch, untied the bandages, and then carefully dressed her wound. She applied salve and re-bandaged the sore. While she was thus engaged she muttered words and sentences the exact nature of which neither of the young ladies could afterward remember. Then she walked very slowly several times around the couch speaking other mysterious words.

When the treatment had been completed they thanked the old lady and left her domicile. They were no longer frightened but they felt greatly relieved when they safely reached their own homes. Grandmother's wound soon healed after this experience. To the end of her life she was always very grateful. News of the remarkable cure effected soon spread through the neighborhood and many persons thought and felt more kindly toward the old "hex" after that.)

There were other reputed "hexes", male and female, who lived and plied their evil craft in Grandmother's home town in her childhood. Some other persons were supposed to have entered into secret compacts with the Devil. All were feared and shunned.

## THE LOST SWISS

In the beautiful Swiss cheese country to the south of our own county there lived in early days of settlement a young man. He was employed on the farm of a struggling Swiss farmer relative. He was a hard-working young fellow but possessed of a spirit for adventure. In his spare time, when not engaged in cultivating the fields or in other farm work, he loved to take a gun and wander about in the wooded hills and valleys near his home. Sometimes he walked for a considerable distance into the surrounding wild country.

In the course of one of these exploring trips he one day found in the side of a hill what appeared to be the entrance of a cave. Its mouth was blocked with fallen rock and earth and forest debris. By hard work he cleared away these obstructions and entered the cavern. When night came and the young man did not return to help with the farm chores his relatives were worried. He did not return on the following day, or on the day after. The whole region was searched for him but with no result. No trace of him was found. It was feared that he had met with an accident or been killed by wild animals, or

carried away by Indians. Days, weeks, months and years passed, and he did not return. A few of the more superstitious farmers and others now concluded that the Devil or some other evil spirit had made way with him.

After fifty years had passed there came to this locality one day a stranger. As he entered this region of now fine farms and fine dairy herds he made inquiries for certain people. They had long gone from there. When he mentioned his own name a few thought that they remembered the early incident of a lost farm hand. Then he told his interesting story. After entering the cave he had become bewildered and lost. He had wandered on and on in the darkness, it appeared to him, for several days or longer. At last, weak from walking and lack of food, he reached an opening at the other end of the cavern. He crawled out and found himself in a strange country and among a strange people. They had cared for him and he had remained among them. His memory had gone during his hard experiences in the cave and he could never remember who he was or where he came from.

After fifty years his memory had suddenly returned and like Rip Van Winkle he had set out to find his own people. But his pioneer days friends had gone. People who heard his story thought him a little weak in the head, shook their own heads and walked away.

### THE KOBOLDER TOY MAKERS

It was formerly a belief of children in some German households in a Midwestern city that in the weeks or month before Christmas (Weinachten) the garrets of homes were occupied by dwarfs called kobolders. These little men were described as being attired in close-fitting brown jackets and knitted brown woolen caps (zipfelkappen) terminating in a long point with a tassel. They had full white or gray beards, and wore pointed cloth shoes.

They were servants of good Saint Nicholas. In the fastnesses of the garret these industrious kobolders were employed in making toys for the children of the household. In their spare time, especially at night, these dwarfs often engaged in bowling contests. They were very fond of the game of ninepins. The young folks could, in their imagination, hear the wooden balls rolling across the attic floor, and the noise which they made when the wooden pins were hit.

No one was ever permitted to gaze upon them when at work or at play. No child, no matter how daring, cared to venture into the garret during their occupancy. They became very angry when interfered with. To gain their good will the older children sometimes placed little offerings of hard cookies, "pfeffernüsse", on the attic stairs for their refreshment. These always mysteriously disappeared.

Doubtless these busy dwarfs were of the same breed or tribe as those which disported themselves in the region of the Dunderberg on the Hudson River in New York and served the fabled goblin who inhabited this eminence. This goblin was the dread of the early Dutch navigators who sailed this beautiful river. To him they dropped the peaks of their mainsails in salute as they passed this place. No doubt they are related also to the dwarfs with whom Rip Van Winkle bowled in the long ago on the heights of the Catskill Mountains.

In Wisconsin some early Scandinavian settlers kept up for a time at least the Old World custom of setting out at night a little bowl of porridge for the friendly household dwarf, Tomte Nisse, who in return for this kindness, it was supposed washed the dishes and performed other work about the home. One man is known to have planted a small corner of a farm field for this good elf every year. This was fenced in and tended with particular care. Perhaps some of these dwarf folk of the old Germans, Dutch, Scotch and Scandinavians are still with us?

### THE POTTER'S FIELD

The Potter's Field in a certain Wisconsin county was a rather dreary and desolate plot of ground. The land was boggy and barren, and unsuitable for pasturage or agriculture. Here a neighboring city buried its unclaimed and homeless dead. Among those here interred were suicides whose bodies had been recovered from rivers and a lake, or who had ended their melancholy lives in other ways and places. Victims of murders and disease, lunatics, drunkards, tramps and strays and other unfortunates of human kind found here a last resting place. They were placed in cheap pine boxes, carted to the burying ground and stowed away without ceremony in rather hastily dug graves. Few persons, if any, mourned their loss.

Because of its nature this city of the dead had a rather unsavory reputation. Almost no one ever came to visit it or to there mourn for the departed. No one cared to linger there. It was reputed to be a haunt of ghouls who came on dark nights to exhume bodies for the use of medical men or to dig for articles of value thought to have been buried with the dead. It was also a resort of spooks and other grewsome creatures. Lights were seen to flicker there after dark. Their nature none cared to investigate.

Wooden crosses or painted or unpainted boards stood at the head of the mounded-up or sunken graves. These bore a number or were unnumbered.

This lonely burial place adjoined one of the pasture lot fields of our grandmother's farm on the old Blue Mound road. A path ran diagonally across the Potter's Field from this pasture and across another field to a road

beyond. This was a short-cut to the village, nearly a mile away. In going to the village on errands it was the wont of our girl and boy cousins to take this path. These journeys were sometimes taken in the early summer evenings. There being a small company of children they would start away bravely enough, the older ones leading and the younger ones in the rear. As they walked down the path among the graves in single file the springy nature of the ground caused the nearby crosses and boards to move to and fro, or up and down. Then someone became frightened and the entire little party began to hurry, and to run. Now, as they ran faster and faster, all of the grave markers appeared to be moving. It was as if their dead were trying to arise from their graves and pursue the intruders. Of course the children never halted until in their mad flight they had scaled the fence at the other side of the cemetery. In the field beyond they stopped out of breath and tired. On their way back from the village they always came by the country road, making a wide detour to avoid the Potter's Field. Nevertheless the old burying ground was such an attraction to these children that only a few evenings later they were again ready to adventure across the field of the dead.

The old Potter's Field disappeared many years ago. Whatever may have been its ghostly secrets they are now entirely lost.

### OLD COUNTRY TOMBSTONES

As children we found our occasional visits to the country cemetery always very interesting. There one must be on ones best behavior. In wandering about among the graves one must be very careful not to tread on any of them. Dire things had been known to happen to persons who did this. To pick any of the flowers which grew on graves or in flower beds was a grave misdemeanor also. The dead resented the plucking of any of their posies. Their spirits were known to wreak vengeance on those who did this.

Our interest was particularly attracted by the monuments, of which there were many different forms,—slabs, cubes, rectangles, spheres, broken columns, obelisks, cubes surmounted by urns, and others. Most interesting of these were the quite numerous old white marble tombstones of the pioneers and of other old settlers of the country. Most of these had carved near their tops such old Yankee devices as reclining lambs, weeping willows, rose sprays, gates ajar, cross and crown, square and compass, three links, and many others. Some grave stones were badly weathered, others had broken off at their bases and fallen into the grass.

The epitaphs carved on these stones we read and re-read. Not a few were



of a particularly melancholy nature. One that we always visited carried the "cheerful" verse:

Remember friend as you pass by,  
As you are now, so once was I;  
As I am now, so you shall be,  
Prepare for Death and follow me.

That tombstone and epitaph we always searched for. After we had read it again we often scattered in several directions. There were others as interesting.

It was a custom of some people to place on the graves of young children a box with a glass front through which there could be glimpsed a wreath of wax, wool, cloth or other flowers, a stuffed pigeon, and the child's favorite toys. These graves we always visited.

The water of the cemetery pump always had a peculiar taste. We fancied that this was due to its contact with dead men's bones, yet we always tasted it. The old sexton we feared because of his sombre vocation. The old stone receiving vault was a place of greatest mystery. We wished that we might some day find it open and look into its depths. Families living at a distance often brought a picnic lunch and spent the entire day in the cemetery. One never visits the old village with out a longing to wander out to the old cemetery and to see all of its varied memorials once more.

### UNDERTAKER'S EXPERIENCES

It is natural that in the course of their business undertakers would have some queer or hair-raising experiences. In other years most of the undertakers located in country towns, as well as some of those in the cities, were also in the furniture business. Some are to-day. Some were also in the livery business, and managed to make a comfortable living out of the three. They "laid out" the dead, furnished the coffins (making them out of pine boards when no ready-made caskets were on hand), and conveyed the dead and the mourners out to the graveyards with their own teams.

One rather popular undertaker in a Wisconsin town who presided at many funerals made a practice of always wearing a shiny stovepipe hat when conducting a funeral for a family of any prominence in the community. At obsequies of persons of the poorer classes he wore an ordinary hat and might appear in a mackinaw jacket. He was a very resourceful man and if there was no clergyman to be had could conduct a proper burial service. Among his other clients were the fishermen of neighboring fishing settlements. Once he received word that one of his fishermen friends was bringing his dead wife to town for burial in a sailing vessel. He had carefully wrapped and tied the corpse in a piece of sail-cloth. The undertaker called at the boat landing with

his wagon and received this package. It being late at night he took the wrapped corpse to his undertaking parlors and leaned it up against a wall or table. The next morning, when he removed the canvas, he found to his consternation that the dead woman had been standing on her head all night.

The rear room in another undertaking parlor in another city was a favorite gathering place for a group of card players. When a card game was on at this place even the policeman on this beat sometimes dropped in to watch or play a hand or two. In the basement beneath this room there was a morgue where corpses were prepared for burial. These were stripped of their clothing and stretched out on boards supported at their ends by trestles. A sheet was drawn over them.

One night this genial company and the undertaker's assistant were enjoying a game in the room above the morgue. It was late and the game was progressing well. Now a noise was heard in the basement and the players all stopped to listen. Then followed a tremendous crash as the horses, boards and a dead body, which was resting upon them, fell to the floor. Of course the players, the policeman and the assistant all departed by the nearest exit in a mad scramble. They were safe in the street, without coats or hats, before they realized it. It was some time before even the assistant gathered up courage enough to venture back into the establishment. The natural explanation of the happening was that one or both of the trestles had been improperly placed and a jarring or other movement of the floor had caused them to fall. Anyway it was several weeks before the card players resumed their games at this place.

### THE DEVIL GOT UNCLE JOE

This undertaker's establishment was situated in a rather poor quarter of the town. The undertaker was a white man but his neighbors were nearly all colored folk. Two medical colleges were offering good fees for corpses but there had been no deaths. Business was depressingly poor for undertakers. When an old darkey, living across the alley from the undertaking parlors died, business showed signs of picking up. The undertaker lost no time in securing the corpse for "embalming." Old Uncle Joe had died of a rather unusual ailment and a medical school was eager to pay the undertaker the handsome sum of \$65 for his remains.

On the day of the funeral Uncle Joe's body was exposed to the view of a host of colored friends in the old Darkey's humble home. After the funeral service the coffin was removed across the alley to the undertaker's rooms under the pretense of giving some final treatment to the body. Here, unobserved, the crafty undertaker and his assistant quickly removed the corpse. Then

they filled the empty casket with chunks of coal and slabs of wood, and sealed it. It was placed in the waiting hearse and the mournful procession proceeded to the cemetery beyond the town limits.

At the grave the colored choir had sung, the colored parson had just offered the final prayer, and the undertaker and his helper were just about to lower the coffin into the yawning grave, when a loud shout was heard. Everyone turned. Hobbling toward the grave as fast as his rheumatic limbs would permit came old Uncle Rastus. He had been unable to be present at the ceremonies at the cabin home. He wanted to have a last look at his old friend. Of course the impatient undertaker loudly demurred. The coffin had been sealed and otherwise fastened. The last words had been spoken. He warned the mourners of the probable terrible consequences of again disturbing the remains of the dead. In his expostulations he was supported by the colored parson. But such was the clamor raised by old Uncle Rastus, seconded now by the other mourners, that the undertaker at last consented to remove the seal and pry open the coffin lid. The shadows of night were already beginning to fall when this was accomplished.

When the superstitious darkies who crowded about the casket saw that the Devil had already taken possession of the body of poor old Uncle Joe and changed his corpse to coal and kindling wood they stampeded in every direction and there were not enough tall trees in the cemetery to hold all of them. Uncle Rastus, also, had dropped his cane and was seen bounding away in the distance and hurdling fences and other obstructions in his path with all the speed and grace of a runaway colt.

### MORE AND MORE TOMBSTONES

When Uncle Bill was a young man he received an appointment as a station agent on the line of the old W. & St. P. Railroad. The station was a small one at the western terminal of the line, away out in the prairie country in Minnesota. There was a tiny settlement there. All about it, for many miles, were large farms devoted to grain growing. At this small station he was the sole employee. His duties were numerous. He was the station agent, telegrapher, train dispatcher, baggage agent, freight agent, and deputy mail clerk. For these combined services he received the princely salary of \$40 a month.

The numerous duties which he was required to perform were not as a general thing too heavy. He opened the depot door at 6 a. m. and generally closed his office at about 10 o'clock at night. He ate his dinner and his supper when he found the time to do so. There were but two regular trains a day, one into and the same one out of the station. Now and then, when he was the

busiest, a traveling salesman would appear from somewhere with four or five big sample trunks to be weighed, checked and loaded on the train.

After several bad seasons this had been a year with a heavy grain harvest. The farmers all had plenty of money and were buying machinery and supplies for their farms and homes. So there were always freight cars to be unloaded. One day in the early autumn a large and heavy box car was left by the trainmen on the station siding. On examining it Uncle Will found it to be filled with crates containing marble tombstones. An enterprising agent had encouraged the farmers to purchase monuments for the graves of their dead. Our agent believed that he should have some help in moving these heavy stones. So he sent a telegram to the superintendent requesting assistance. The reply came. It read: "Unload car immediately". A second telegram sent was ignored entirely. It was evident that there was no intention of sending any help. With the assistance of the farmers, after the very hardest kind of back-breaking work, poor Uncle Bill managed at last to get the car unloaded.

About a week later a freight engine arrived and deposited two large box cars on the siding. The agent was very much depressed when he learned that these cars were also filled with a precious freight of marble tombstones. Again he sent a telegram asking permission to hire two men to help unload the slabs. To this message he received no answer. So he sent a second telegram asking for one man. Then came a reply: "Unload cars without delay. No excuses accepted." So he was again obliged to use his own efforts. It was a killing job. The stones were hard to handle, he cut his hands and tore his clothes. With the help of a few farmers who came with their wagons, he was finally able to dispose of this second shipment of tombstones. He was a physical wreck. His only thanks were several telegrams from the august superintendent charging him with "sleeping on the job." Of course he was mad.

Only a few days later, before he had had the time to become rested from his previous labors, two more cars arrived. When he unlocked the doors he was stunned to discover that these also contained memorials for the granger dead. Now he was mad clear through. The farmers for many miles round had evidently entered on a monument buying orgy. There was no knowing when the tombstone shipments might end. He sent another pleading message to the superintendent's office. The ungracious response read: "Unload cars. Send no further telegrams. Cars badly needed elsewhere. Rush." He was paralyzed. Then he sent this final message to his superior: "Am going out of the tombstone business. Please accept my resignation." And the grain-growing prairies of Minnesota knew him no more.



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### THE RIDGEWAY GHOST

Stories of this famous phantom  
of the Old Military Road

Charles E. Brown  
Wisconsin Folklore Society

Madison, Wisconsin  
May 5, 1943.

STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
OF WISCONSIN  
815 State Street  
Madison, Wisconsin 53706



## THE RIDGEWAY GHOST

Charles E. Brown  
Director, Wisconsin Folklore Society  
Madison, Wisconsin

This famous ghost of pioneer days and later years ranged over the length of the old Military Road from the early Pokerville settlement at the Blue Mounds to near Dodgeville in Iowa County, a distance of some twenty-five miles. The settlement of Ridgeway, about midway between these two mining localities was more or less the headquarters of this troublesome phantom, and from this place it took its name. Over this early highway were driven the ox-drawn creaking lead wagons proceeding on their way to Milwaukee from Dodgeville, Mineral Point and other towns and settlements in the Lead Region of southwestern Wisconsin as well as vehicles of various kinds proceeding in the other direction.

Along the highway, between Dodgeville and Pokerville, there were no fewer than ten or a dozen saloons, most of them with an reputation, and frequented by toughs, gamblers and miners. In these taverns fights between drunks and others were of frequent occurrence and robberies and murders were committed.

Over this region, in both daytime and dark traveled the famous Ridgeway Ghost and played his mischievous or harmful pranks on both the inhabitants and travelers. Many of the settlers and miners in this region were Welsh and Cornish folk, a people steeped in Old Country superstitions. It is thought that this spectre was originally "created" by some wag or wags to help rid the region of the disreputable element which hung out at the saloons. Practical jokers helped to spread the growing popular belief in the Ghost whose presence and pranks soon became more or less feared by nearly everyone.

## 2-- The Ridgeway Ghost

In the course of years many inhabitants of the highway settlements and of the adjoining valleys had or thought that they had experiences with the Ridgeway Ghost.

After the Chicago & Northwestern Railroad line was built to Mineral Point, in 1837, the hauling of lead and supplies over the Military Road was discontinued, and with it came the end of most of the saloons and taverns. Now the Ridgeway Ghost also largely vacated the neighborhood he had haunted and terrified for so many years, but the scare and superstition remained for many years. It was said that the Ghost left "because he could not stand the whistle and puffing of the railroad engines and the rattling over the rails of the trains of freight and passenger cars." However, the Ghost was reported to have once been seen seated on the cowcatcher of a railroad engine as it was leaving Ridgeway. Perhaps the wraith was then taking his departure from this region of his exploits?

Several hundred Ridgeway Ghost stories have been collected from present and former inhabitants of this region by the writer, Charles H. Hocking, and others. See my booklet "Ghost Tales", Madison, Wis., 1931, for some of these.

### Some Sample Tales

Two Pokerville men were one evening walking along the road carrying a plank or rail on their shoulders. When they were passing a brush thicket the brush parted and a white apparition leapt on the plank between them. The men were badly scared and began to run, the Ghost lashing them with a switch as they ran. They ran until they were exhausted and fell down on the road. When they rose and recovered from

### 3-- The Ridgeway Ghost

their fright the Ghost was gone.

John Riley, a teamster, who was hauling a wagon load of pig-lead, stopped at a saloon at Jennytown to get a drink or two of "bug juice." He knew that he was near the stamping ground of the Ghost and needed a little liquor to bolster up his courage. When he returned to his wagon after dark he found his oxen had been unyoked and tied to the rear of the wagon. Up the road he saw the Ghost leaving with his lantern and whip. John went no farther on the road that night.

Johnnie Owens was walking toward Ridgeway one night and singing some Welsh songs to keep up his spirits. As he approached a big roadside tree he saw three dark "somethings" hanging from a limb. They were swaying in the moonlight. When he came nearer he saw that they were human bodies hanging by their necks. That was just too much for Johnnie, he ran all the way to Ridgeway. The next morning, with several friends, he returned to the tree but no bodies hung there.

A Welsh farmer living near Ridgeway went to his pump one evening to get two pails of water. When he reached his house he looked back and saw to his astonishment that the pump handle was still going up and down and water was pouring from the spout. He had heard stories of the Ghost and he knew that this obnoxious<sup>x</sup> haunt was operating the pump. He did not feel safe until he had entered his house and locked the kitchen door.

Jim Moore went to see his girl living on a farm near Blue Mounds. When he was returning by road the Ghost suddenly appeared at his side and walked with him, step by step, all the way to Pokerville. Neither spoke. Jim never went to see that girl again.

#### 4-- The Ridgeway Ghost

In 1933, Louis Meuer, the sexton of the Catholic cemetery at Ridgeway did not return home at night. The next day his body was found hanging in a tool shed. For a year he had been in poor health. Afterward there was some whispered talk that Meuer had probably had some disagreement with the Ridgeway Ghost and the Ghost had hanged him.

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# "Cousin Jack" Stories



SHORT STORIES OF THE CORNISH LEAD MINERS  
OF SOUTHWESTERN WISCONSIN



For The Camp Fire  
And Fireside



CHARLES E. BROWN  
Wisconsin Folklore Society  
Madison, Wisconsin  
1940



## **"COUSIN JACK" STORIES**

The prehistoric and early historic Indians dug lead in Wisconsin. Lumps of galena have been found on their village sites and in some of the mounds which they built. In 1690 Nicholas Perrot, a French explorer and trader, reported the existence of lead in the Upper Mississippi Valley. In 1766 Johnathan Carver reported quantities of lead in a Sauk Indian village on the Wisconsin River.

Julian Dubuque engaged in lead mining at Dubuque in 1788. American lead miners engaged in mining at Galena and in southwestern Wisconsin as early as 1816-19. In the years following the number of miners constantly increased. Prominent Wisconsin mining centers were at Platteville, Potosi, Hazel Green, Shullsburg, Dodgeville and Blue Mounds.

The Cornish miners arrived in the Lead Region in 1835. These men were experienced miners. Their arrival gave a new impetus to the lead mining industry.

### **HOWL OR HEAGLE**

Hiram and Ida went from Dodgeville to Madison on their honeymoon. Seeing the sights in the old capitol building they stopped before "Old Abe", the historic war eagle. Ida nudged Hiram's arm and said: " 'iram, 'iram, look! Is it a 'awk or a howl?"

Hiram took another look at the famous bird and replied:  
" 'Tis neither, Hida, 'tis a heagle."

### **THE HAMMER HANDLE**

Mr. Howe a farmer living near Mineral Point wishing to use his hammer for some purpose found the handle broken. He told his hired man, a young Cornishman, to make a new one. The young man took the hammer to the woodshed but soon returned and asked his employer:

"Mr. 'owe, Mr. 'owe. Wot's best, hash, hoak hor helm to make a 'ammer 'andle?"

### **NOT HER BOYS**

Two small boys were playing in the street. A Cornish woman standing on the sidewalk, feared that the boys might

be run over by a passing automobile, she called to them and scolded them for playing in such a dangerous place.

When she had finished her tirade one of the boys called to the other saying, "Wots'er call we for? Us doan't belong to she!!"

American  
mining  
number of miners com-

## COUSIN JACK AND THE DOG

A Cornish miner was trudging to town with a bag over his shoulder to buy some supplies. In walking past the home of a settler he was suddenly set upon by a dog who growled and showed his teeth. While he was trying to defend himself against Towser by swinging the bag about, the owner of the dog called out. "Jock that dorg won't bite, e's waggin' 'es tail!"

"I know that," replied "Cousin Jack," "E's waggin' 'es tail at one hand and barkin' at the hother. I doan't naw which of 'es heads to believe."

is it a bark or a

## THE BABY'S PICTURE

"Jack," said a friend, "ere's my youngest child", and handed him a photograph. "Bean't a fine baby?"

"Yes", said "Cousin Jack", "but 'e ain't got no 'air on 'es 'ead".

"Give me that pitcher", said the friend. "Ye dumb fule yes to holdin' it upside down!"

'man, to make a new  
to the woodshed but

## FIVE CENTS

An old Cornish miner, living in the Dirty Hollow mining settlement at Dodgeville, was approached by his wife, Ann, for some money with which to make some small purchase at the store.

Sandy was known to be pretty tight when it came to laying out money for any purpose. Giving his spouse a hard look he queried: "Whar's the last five cents I gave yer?"

## MICE IN HIS ROOM

A Cornishman spent a night in the old tavern at Dodgeville. They gave him a room up in the third story. After while he came down to the office in his night clothes to register a complaint with the clerk.

"There be two mice a 'fightin' in my room, said he, "and I can't sleep!" To this complaint the irritated clerk replied, "What do you expect for \$2.00—a bull-fight?"

## "COUSIN JACKS" GO HUNTING

Some Cornish folks from the old country came to visit some relatives living near Platteville. They enjoyed their visit. One day the men decided to go hunting, so they borrowed an old shotgun which happened to be around the place. In looking for game they at last spied a pigeon seated on the barn roof. Just as one of them was getting a bead on the bird with his gun, a woman rushed from the house and halted them shouting by calling out, "Don't shoot, "Cousin Jack" for it is the old mother bird".

## HELL ON THE HOUSE

A Cornish minister, Rev. Hawe, of Platteville, thought he needed more room in his house, so he decided to erect an addition. While he was building it a member of his congregation happened along and wanted to know just what he was doing.

"Oh," said the minister, "There is naw nu rum. I be puttin' a hell on the 'ouse." This same minister in his church services invariably used the words "Oly Matrimony", "Oly Ghost" and "Oly Spirit".

## CATS

A miner, living in a frame shanty in a "holler" near Hazel Green, had a number of cats. For their convenience in entering and leaving the house he had several holes cut in the bottom of the door, small holes for the kittens and larger holes for the full-grown cats. A stranger visiting this home

asked about the holes and was told that they were for the use of the felines. The visitor then asked why there were so many holes, he thought that one opening should be enough for all of the cats. "Well", said "Cousin Jack," thee doan't understand. When I say s-caat, I mean SCAT!"

This same man had cans, pans and jugs setting on the floor in different parts of the room. These, he explained were to catch the rain, as the roof leaked. He was asked why he didn't repair the roof. He replied, "When 'ee doan't rain I doan't need to mend 'er, and when 'ee do rain I can't."

### **CORNISH PASTIES**

Closely associated with the Cornishmen are those delectable Cornish pasties, a concoction, worthy to be called "a meal-in-one". The filling for the pasties consists of meat, potatoes and other vegetables, encased in a crust. The miners carried these wrapped in paper inside their blouses, thus keeping not only themselves, but their dinner warm. A story is told of a young lady who once lived in the vicinity of the Cornish miners, but who later moved into a town in Louisiana where she taught school. Here she told of the Cornish miners and their pasties. One day she received a letter from the mother of one of her pupils asking if she might have the "recipe for the pudding that was baked in a blouse."

### **A RUBBER 'ART**

Old man Trelawney was a town character, nearly everyone knew the old man who was always ready to gossip with anyone he met in his daily walks up and down the main street of town. At one time a cement sidewalk was laid in front of a store near his home. It had a very smooth finish. One night after a sleet storm the walk was converted into a regular skating rink.

The next morning Trelawney, out for his walk, stepped off the adjoining wooden sidewalk and on to the new cement walk.

As he did this his feet slipped, then slid for a few feet. He tried to recover his balance and came down in a heap with a thump. His spinster neighbor, Sally Trewitt, coming along just then, saw the fallen man, and, as she tried to assist him to his feet pleasantly remarked, "Arry thee should hav'n rubber 'eels." "Rubber 'eels?" growled the unfortunate man, "I need a rubber 'art."

## THE JUG STORY

A Cornishman walked to town one evening to purchase a jug of whiskey. While at the tavern he found it necessary to sample each of a number of brands of liquor before making his purchase. Then, he started on his homeward way in the dark carrying the stoneware jug over his shoulder on the end of a stick thrust through its handle. He was rather unsteady on his legs and his progress was slow and uncertain.

As he did not return after a reasonable length of time his wife sent their son to find him. When the young man approached the corner of a field he heard someone talking. Drawing near he found his father entangled in a barbed wire fence through which he had tried to pass. Lying a few feet behind him was the jug. Its cork had come out and the precious liquor was flowing out of the neck with a "glug! glug! glug!"

The old man was saying in reply, "Yes I hear 'ee, and I knaw y'ere good, but I canna get to 'ee."

## NO RESULTS

Harry was a newcomer in the lead mining region. Having procured a pick and a shovel he was soon digging in a likely looking hill near his log cabin, hoping to locate there some of the lead "h'ore".

After several days had passed, John, strolling up to the diligent digger, asked him how he was making "h'out". Harry had done a big job of excavating, disembowling the entire hill with his trenches and pits without any results other than the finding of a few burned stones and decayed bones. After meditatively surveying this work of his greenhorn country-



man, John said: " 'Arry, m'son, thee 'er a gert fule. Thee'l find naw h'ore 'ere. 'Er diggin in un o' those 'ere bloody H'injum mounds 'ere always tellin' about."

## THE FIGHT

At Linden arrangements for a prize fight had been made. Goldsworthy, the tavern keeper, was managing the affair, and "Cousin Jacks" had gathered from far and near. The principal event on the fight card were two pugilists who had been brought from Milwaukee for the occasion. Goldsworthy had a suspicion that these two fighters and their managers were likely to put on a fake bout instead of a real fistic encounter. When they stepped into the ring, he stood up and called their attention to the fact that seated all about the ring were hard looking "Cousin Jacks". He then cautioned them that unless they staged a real fight, they would have a fight on their hands in getting away from the place. The "Jacks" had paid to attend and were determined to see a real fight. One look at the crowd was enough. The two professionals then engaged one of the fiercest and hardest fought fistic encounters ever seen in that region. The crowd was well satisfied.

## HE BLAAWED FIRST

Jan Penrose had a horse which he used in his work to haul rock and dirt. He was a broken down old gaul but he served very well for the work which he had to do. One day old "Jinny" was sick. She seemed to have some throat or stomach affliction. So Jan went to town to consult with the veterinary. The horse doctor gave Jan a powder which he was to put in a paper tube and blow down the horse's throat.

A few days later the veterinary happened to meet Jan. He asked him how the horse was getting on. He was told that his condition was not much improved. "Well", asked the doctor, "didn't you follow my directions and blow the powder down the horse's throat?" "Es", replied the miner, "but 'ee blaawed first."

## THE CIRCUS

The old Cornish Primitive Methodist preachers of the Lead Region were very stern "God-fearing, Devil-hating" men. They were never slow in warning their countrymen against all practices which they thought to be devil-enticing. In their sermons in church and at camp-meeting "neither evil or the Devil were spared".

Once when a traveling circus came to Mineral Point, young Francis, delighted at the prospect of seeing the clown and the elephants, spoke rather joyfully to Mr. Ross, the Methodist minister, about it. "My boy," said the preacher, "keep away from that circus. It is the Devil's Church".

## ABIDE WITH ME

"Jan Trelease was pumpin' the church h'organ on Sundays. One day 'long come one o' these 'ere chaps w'at 'ad a wonderf'ul touch on the h'organ. So rector 'ee h'asks 'im to play mornin' service. An' 'ow 'ee could play m'son, E'd start to one h'end of the bloody keys an' dash down to t'other. An' 'ere all the time wuz Jan in the bellus-pit a-workin' somthin' h'awful. After service Jan 'e come h'out an' walkin' h'up to this 'ere h'organ man 'e sez "Mister, I don't naw thee, but I tell thee one thing—if th'art to play service tonight thee can do as thee bloody well pleases, but I'm gawin' to blaw "H'abide Wi'Me."

## DITTO

John and Mary Prideaux, when they began house-keeping after their marriage, made arrangements with the proprietor of the general store to run a charge account. At the end of the first month of their trading, John received a statement from the store. Scanning the bill, John scratched his head

and was very much puzzled. Then he took it to Mary. Its items ran thus:

Tea	.35
"	.35
Sugar	.40
"	.40
Butter	.36
"	.36

"What is this Mary?" asked John. W'at 'ave you bean buying? W'at are these little marks below every other thing?"

"John", replied Mary, after lookin' at the bill, "Those little marks must be some garden seed which 'ee got at the store." This John denied. Being unable to solve the mystery, they went to the storckeeper. He explained to them that the marks stood for the word "ditto", meaning "the same", and represented a second purchase of the previous item. They paid the bill and left, apparently satisfied.

At the end of the second month they received a similar bill. Mary immediately took it to John. Said Mary to John accusingly, "Wa't are all these little marks which 'ee 'ave been buying? John looked at the bill.

"I didn't buy these," said he.

" 'Ee did," stormed Mary.

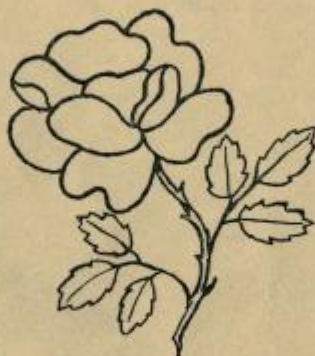
"I didn't," said John, "Yure a gert fule, Mary."

"Ditto", replied Mary, emphatically.

# PRAIRIE STORIES

Wisconsin and Illinois

TERCENTENARY ISSUE



Short Stories For Vacation  
Camps

.....

Madison, Wisconsin

1934

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# PRAIRIE STORIES

Short Stories of Prairie Claims, Cabins, Taverns, Settlers, Preachers, Indians, Fires, Ox Teams, Swine, Bears and Rattlesnakes of Pioneer Days in Wisconsin and Illinois.

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Old Stormalong Yarns  
Cowboy Tales  
Ghost Tales

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# PRAIRIE STORIES

## THE PRAIRIES

"These are the gardens of the West. The soil on the prairies is the richest and finest land. From May to October the prairies are covered with tall grass and weeds, and in the season of flowers the eyes and the senses receive the highest gratification. It is the time of strawberries, thousands of acres are reddened with the finest quality of this delicious fruit. The hunters and farmers annually set fire to the prairies to dislodge and bewilder the game and thus render them an easy prey. The fire spreads with tremendous rapidity and presents the grandest spectacle in nature. The flames rush through the long grass with a noise like thunder; dense clouds of smoke arise, and the sky itself appears almost on fire, particularly during the night. These fires are of great service to the settlers as they save the labor of clearing the weeds, etc." (Wisconsin, 1838) "Look at the prairie from the end of to the commencement again of winter, full of flowers, changing almost every week, one closing to make room for another—more blossoms than there are spears of grass."

## THE PRAIRIE HOME

An early settler on Jefferson Prairie built a temporary house. It was a frail structure. It consisted of four small tree trunks with crotches set in the ground in the form of a small square. On these posts were placed poles. On the poles brush was heaped to form a roof. Indian blankets were hung up to furnish the walls on three sides. The front was open. Sunshine and moonlight sifted through the roof. The floor was made of the boards of a wagon-box laid down as evenly as the ground would permit. The only furniture consisted of straw beds, without a tick. They would hold as many sleepers as could crawl into them. A log heap fronting the door of the prairie shack furnished fire for cooking and warmth.

## CABIN BURNS DOWN

In 1837, a settler made a claim and built a log cabin (near Portage) and was living in it. It was all chinked with dry grass that they cut with their knives. They also cut grass (called prairie feathers) for their beds. They were sleeping quite comfortably one night when the Indians set fire to the tall grass on the windward side of the house, and it caught fire. They were soon awakened by the smoke and flames. They had to run for their lives and get under the bank of the Wisconsin River for protection against their own firearms. There were four loaded rifles and two brace of double-barrelled pistols, also loaded. They were afraid of them not knowing where they might shoot. By this fire they were cast out

of house and home, half naked, their provisions and clothing being all destroyed.

### WALK RIGHT IN

One day, while a settler was away from home, a neighbor from some eight miles away, came near his cabin hunting his stray horses. Being very hungry he called to get something to eat, but the door was fastened on the inside. The owner had taken this precaution to keep hungry Indians away from his food supply. The visitor looked for another place to enter. As the owner had got out without unfastening the door, he ought to be able to get in. Climbing on the roof he removed some shingles. Soon he was inside and cooking supper for himself of what the owner had on hand, and some prairie chicken eggs, which he had found. He had a rare meal for a new country. On leaving, he went out the way he came in, replacing the shingles. When he met the owner again he told him how he had enjoyed his hospitality, and *of course* it was all right.

### THE STAGE TAVERN

In 1836, Dr. James Heath erected a building, 16 by 16 feet square, at East Wisconsin City, on the Rock River. Here he opened a tavern and a store, the first in the town. Here the "customer" was served, and "travelers and boarders" lodged, while the family had ample room for living besides. There being not enough room for beds, which would have been in the way most of the time anyway, the travelers were laid on board shelves. These were arranged in tiers up the walls of the house. They were held in place by wooden pins driven into auger holes in the log walls. They were not the most comfortable places for repose, but they served very well. Sometimes a guest would roll or fall off a shelf at night. They were surprised, but rarely injured. If one snored in his sleep the shelf above made a good sounding board. Late arrivals had to take the top shelves, mounting to them by a box or cask. But very seldom did a traveler complain. Hardly ever did a transient return if he could avoid it. The stage coaches stopped here and the tavern was known as the "Stage House." Both Wisconsin City and the tavern have long since disappeared.

### GENERAL DODGE'S VISIT

It was in 1841, that General Henry Dodge, the Black Hawk War hero, came to the settlement of Cottage Grove and put up at the

Beecher Tavern. His military career was well known to the settlers and the landlord and his wife were greatly pleased to be able to entertain a man of such distinction. Mrs. Beecher determined to set a table worthy of the guest. But the hungry General paid no attention to the "fixings" which had been prepared. He regaled himself with a hearty meal of bread, potatoes and pork, and left the dainties untouched. Of course the landlady was greatly disappointed. His bedroom had been prepared with extra care. A good feather bed and downy pillows had been provided for his comfort. But to the utter amazement of his hosts the General asked the lady to remove these and provide a straw tick. This he deemed a real luxury. Then he retired for the night and slept like a log.

### A PRAIRIE POST OFFICE

Mr. Thomas, a farmer, was the postmaster of his locality. The weekly or monthly mail would be brought from Madison, the nearest post office, to the Cross Plains region. From there it was brought to Farmer Thomas, who attended to its distribution to neighbors, who came from far and wide, at their convenience, to get letters and papers. One day two German settlers went to his cabin to look for letters which they expected. The postmaster was out in the meadow busily engaged in cutting hay with a grain sickle. After the compliments of the day were passed they asked him if there were any letters for them. He said that he would see. Sitting down on his haunches, he very carefully removed with both hands the tall ancient stovepipe hat which he was wearing. From it he tumbled on the ground a number of letters, looked them over, then replaced the letters in the hat, and the hat on his head. The Germans had never before seen a portable post office and were quite dumbfounded. They left without saying a word and that was the first post office in that region.

### BLODGETT'S KINGDOM

Caleb Blodgett was the first settler at Beloit, in 1836. He acquired from Thiebeau, a French trader, for \$250, his rights to a land claim of somewhat indefinite extent. The mode of establishing a claim was to make some improvement on the ground. The amount of land one person could claim in his own name was only 320 acres. But Caleb was equal to the situation. He found some "straw men", "greenings, loafers" and others, who made claims in their own names, but really on his account. Thus he became the owner of a prairie principality. His way of improving his claims was to plow a furrow

through or around the land. Thus no one could dispute his rights. Men in search of land came to him to buy it. One land seeker came one afternoon with a team of horses. He wished to sell the team. Blodgett liked the team and offered a quarter section of land for them. This offer was agreeable to the owner. As soon as the bargain was made Caleb had the horses hitched to a plow. With this new team he in three hours plowed a furrow around the land. This perfected his own claim to it, and this land he the next morning gave to the owner for the horses. It had cost him only the work he had put on it. The stranger had the land and Caleb had a good team of horses.

### SWAMP LAND

In 1845, a large number of Englishmen, members of the British Temperance Emigration Society, from Manchester, came to western Dane County. Some settled near Mazomanie. When one of these men came to settle on his claim he found it to be a "miserable sandy prairie that would not grow white beans." He therefore gave it away and bought a better farm. This so enraged the officers of the Society that some of them sent word back to England that Mr. Crowther had left a nice farm and gone off and settled in a swamp. But the settler prospered on the good land he had obtained. In after years, when they visited him, he would say, "let us go and see my swamp land".

### GREEN FARMERS

Most of the English settlers, coming from manufacturing towns in the old country, were somewhat, or very green, about farms and farming. One inexperienced farmer, having procured a quantity of seed corn, prepared the ground and planted it. He had about an acre planted, when he learned that he had made a mistake; he had buried an ear of corn in each hill. He did not want to dig it up then. When the kernels sprouted the land looked more like brush land than a corn field.

Two other men were about to clear a piece of land when a heavy snow fell. It snowed hard for several days and the snow lay about six feet deep in the woods. A hard crust formed on it and in a day or two the two men began their chopping and sawing down of the tree trunks, working on top of the snow. The logs they hauled away. In the spring the woodlot presented a weird sight, the cut stumps standing six feet above the ground.

## THE WEDDING

A Rock County wedding took place on the open prairie. All of the persons taking part in it were on horseback. A couple desired to be united in the holy bonds of matrimony. They were in search of a magistrate. They met "Squire" Joseph Pierce as he was returning from work at his sawmill. They were in a hurry and the good squire was pleased to help them. Dispensing with the little formalities of license and certificate he pronounced them man and wife. The marriage bonds thus safely tied, the couple thanked the squire and rode off across the blooming prairies, rejoicing as they galloped away.

## DRY MONTHS

The keeper of a general store near Medina, in 1845, bought a barrel of whisky. In that locality it was called "prairie tanglefoot". After the storekeeper had drawn off and sold about a gallon of this beverage, he thought that he would keep up the supply, and poured an equal amount of spring water into the barrel. His customers didn't seem to notice the difference. So he made other additions from time to time. A spell of real cold weather coming on the barrel of whiskey froze solid. Learning of this "stroke of good fortune" a local active temperance worker organized a temperance society. Nearly everybody joined, but in the spring, when the barrel thawed out, there was a very noticeable falling off of the membership. The storekeeper had soon to procure a second barrel.

## DIVIDING THE FEATHER BED

A pioneer couple built a log cabin near Spring Green, on the river prairie. All of the neighbors helped in the log raising, as was customary. The man and his spouse got on very well for a time. Then they began to quarrel. Both were very headstrong and neither one would give in to the other when it came to an argument. Their bickering got worse and worse. Often the woman chased her husband out of the house with a well yielded splint broom. Then he would arm himself and chase her back through the door with a stick of cordwood or an axe.

These quarrels continuing, they decided to separate. Their prize possession was a feather-bed. Both claimed it so they decided to divide it. It was laid on the ground and chopped in two, down its middle, with an axe. Just as it had been cut into two parts a stiff breeze sprang up and the down and feathers flew in all direc-

tions. Each tried to save their half of the tick but that only made matters worse. In trying to carry the halves away all of the remaining feathers were lost. They had straw or cornhusk ticks after that.

### "CLAPPER SLANGS"

Colonel Frost's father hired two Germans to dig and stone-in a well at his farm home. They were hard-working fellows and made good progress in the work. Each day they trudged to work from the village of Madison, carrying their dinner pails. One noon, when the two "Deutschers" were contentedly munching their bread and sausage in the shade of a big tree standing in the rear of the Frost home, a big rattlesnake, on business or pleasure bent, coming up from behind, crawled right up the back and over the shoulder of one of the men, and disappeared in the tall grass beyond. The men were nearly paralyzed by the sight and too badly frightened to eat any more. As soon as they recovered from their fright they hurriedly left the spot, leaving their unfinished meal behind. They now wished to quit the job of well-digging. They didn't care to continue with such friendly "clapper slangen" roaming about.

### THE BLACK BEAR

A pioneer mother and her son, a boy some fifteen years of age, were one summer evening returning home from a visit at a neighbor's cabin. As they were walking along they suddenly saw a large black animal a short distance behind them. Black bears were quite common in those days. Recognizing Bruin the two took to their heels for safety, the animal lumbering along behind them. The mother, seeing that she was likely to be left behind by her stalwart son, seized him by the coat-tails. She hoped to thus escape the savage brute in pursuit.

Imagine her feelings when the boy tried to shake off her hold on his coat saying as he did so, "Let go Ma! What is the use of us both being eat up?" But the poor, hard-breathing mother would not let go. Together they reached the cabin door only a few steps in advance of—not a great, hungry bear, but a pet black calf.

### CAMP MEETING

Traveling evangelists quite regularly visited some of the prairie settlements. Revival meetings were held in the open, often beneath the trees in the oak openings. The exhortations of these wilderness disciples were often at these camp meetings vivid portrayals of "the



tortures of the damned" and the "hot fires of a yawning hell". Those present could almost smell the burning brimstone. Glowing pictures were painted of the day of judgment and the joys of an endless eternity. After the sermon all who wished to be saved were urged to come forward. Here others "wrestled" with their souls. There were tears, groans and cries. There were shouts of joy when some poor sinner "saw the light". Stubborn sinners, "who resisted the spirit", were a real trial to both the evangelist and the meeting, until they finally were overcome. At one of these meetings a tall, fleshy woman who had suddenly been deeply "stirred by the spirit" and "found pardon", sprang to her feet. Rushing forward she seized the evangelist, throwing one arm around him. He was a small man and unable to resist. Pounding him on the back with her fist she shouted, "Glory! Glory! Oh Glory!", with every vigorous blow. And she had the little man almost pounded into a jelly before she was forcibly torn away from him by others. Her salvation had come with dangerous vigor, when it came.

### A POLITICAL SPEECH

At a prairie political gathering in Rock County the candidate for a seat in the Territorial legislature addressed a gathering of voters from a wagon box. He made a brief but pointed speech: "Gentlemen, to begin with, I am rough shod, fourteen ribs on a side and I am hard to handle. If I go to Madison, I expect to go on my own hook, and get back the best way I can. I have no hobby on which to ride into office. My horse's head and tail is down. Some men will promise you a canal, fitted up in every little ravine, for steamboats to ply in, with a glibness. Some one thing and some another; I can't say what I shall do when elected." The speaker then closed and stepped down from the wagon amid considerable applause.

### VISITING THE NEIGHBORS

A man set out one evening to visit a neighbor living at a considerable distance. In his walk he had to cross a river on a plank bridge which had no hand rail. It was not easy to cross it in the dark. Bad luck was with him. When he got on the narrow plank of the bridge, he made a misstep and fell into the water. The water was not deep and he managed to reach the other bank. When he came to the neighbor's home he was dripping wet. The lady of the house made a big fire and dried his clothes. When they were dry she pressed them with a flat iron. In the meantime he wore clothing belonging to her husband.

On the way home he fell off the footbridge again. When he got home he was a sorry sight, with mud and water. His wife put him to bed; he had had adventures enough for one night.

### INDIANS AND SHOATS

The wife of an early settler went to the pig-pen with a pail of swill. There she saw three strapping Indians trying to get one of the best shoats. She called to them to "puckachee" (go away), but they only laughed at her and called her a squaw. She dropped the pail of swill, ran to the house and got her husband's shotgun. They dropped the pig and ran for the stable. She rested the gun on the fence and fired both barrels. The recoil of the gun threw her on the ground. She struggled to her feet moaning with pain and rubbing her shoulder. One of the Indians was hit and the others helped him away.

A neighbor thought that the Indians might come back and kill her. "If they come again," said she, "the dogs and the gun will get some of them." They did not trouble her again.

### NOT AN INDIAN

Mrs. Rowan was the wife of Wallace Rowan, a trader, who kept a log cabin tavern at what is now Poynette. She was a white woman, a good type of the self-reliant, uncomplaining pioneer woman that braved the hardships of the prairie lands. Her skin had a slightly dark color. Governor Horner was once a guest at this prairie hostelry. He was a friendly man and got on very well with most people. In conversation with his landlady, who was busily engaged in roasting some venison for his meal, he asked her to what Indian tribe or nation she belonged. Many traders had Indian wives. The poor lady was rather upset at being considered an Indian. Perhaps she had been mistaken for one before? She replied to his query with the words: "Goll darn it—I don't belong to no tribe. I came from Injianner!" And the Governor did his best to apologize for his error.

### ON A BUST

Mr. Janes, name-giver of Janesville, once sent a man to Racine with three yoke of oxen and a wagon. There the man met some old friends at a tavern. After taking a few drinks it occurred to him that it would be wise to look to his oxen lest they should stray away while he was in the tavern. So he put a bell on one ox and

chained him to a tree, thinking that the other oxen would not leave the sound of the bell. But he was mistaken. When he returned the bell ox was the only one that could be found. This vexed him very much and he started for the place where they had once been kept before removing to Rock River. He did not find them there. A man had found them on the way and had shut them in a yard. The teamster returned to Janesville. From there he went back on foot again over his former route and finally found his cattle after several days of hunting for them. Only one such experience should make a teetotaler of any pioneer.

## PAPER CITIES

Along the course of the Rock and other Wisconsin streams in the prairie counties are the locations of disappeared towns. These paper cities were laid out and exploited in Territorial years of the state's history. Their godfathers were land speculators who hoped to reap a harvest of gold shekels from the sale of building lots in these phantom cities. Attractive maps and descriptions of these townsites were prepared and circulated. In Eastern cities many lots in these "cities" were sold.

A traveler one day reached a place on the banks of the Rock. Here he found Deacon X busily engaged in driving stakes. Stakes were to be seen in all directions on the prairie, these marking the locations of lots, streets, a public square, a future academy, etc. Greeting the proprietor, the traveler said: "This is an almighty big graveyard you are laying out here?" "Graveyard", exploded the irate Deacon X, "this ain't no cemetery. This is the future metropolis of Wisconsin!" And, after a minute or two, he added: "Can't I sell you a lot in Young America?"

## FEEDING CHICKENS

An early settler had a flock of chickens of which he was rather proud. They were such good layers. Fresh eggs were food to be relished. Someone told him to mix sawdust with his chicken feed. He did not know that he was being hoaxed by a practical joker. The settler was a pinch-penny fellow and he followed the man's recommendation. It was economical food and it did seem to increase the laying of his hens. So he increased the amount of sawdust and decreased the amount of grain he mixed in their food. The chickens continued to lay, but, according to the practical joker, they laid knot-holes instead of eggs.

## WILD SWINE

During the prairie years a pig-sty or a hog-pen was unknown. The hogs ran wild in the woods and fattened on acorns or grew poor for the want of them. When they were wanted for meat they were often shot by their owner. They were sometimes sold on sight, it being the purchasers part of the bargain to capture them.

Some of these hogs were of the breed known as the Center breed. They were slab-sided, with slim legs and skins hanging closely to their bony frames. The crown of their heads was just between the beginning of the snout and the tip of the tail. They could eat anything without bulging a bit. They differed from the Third Row breed, whose long slender necks enabled them to reach and devour the third row of corn through the interstices of a rail fence. Both breeds were as wild as March hares. It was years before the descendants of these wild porkers were exterminated.

# Whiskey Jack Yarns



SHORT TALES OF THE OLD TIME LUMBER  
RAFTSMEN OF THE WISCONSIN RIVER  
AND THEIR MYTHICAL HERO



RAFT AND RIVER BANK TALES



CHARLES E. BROWN  
Wisconsin Folklore Society  
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## WHISKEY JACK YARNS

Whiskey Jack was a mythical character of the Wisconsin river in the years before the coming of the railroads, when pine logs were sawed into lumber at sawmills in towns on the upper reaches of the river and floated down the stream. The lumber was made up into rafts which were rowed with large sweep oars to St. Louis and other towns on the Mississippi river. Each raft consisted of a number of sections called "cribs." A certain number of cribs fastened together made a "rapids piece" and a number of these a raft.

Lumber raft navigation was a hard and dangerous employment, there were rapids to be run, river crossings to be made, and snags and sandbars to be encountered. Rafts had to be taken apart and put together again. The raft crew was often in the water for hours at a time. Each raft was in charge of a pilot and carried a cook and helper to prepare meals for the crew. At night the raft was made fast by ropes to the river bank. After supper the men amused themselves by singing river songs and ballads and telling stories. The Whiskey Jack yarns had their origin in the adventures of particularly strong and daring pilots and raftsmen. Whiskey Jack was their Paul Bunyan.

### WHISKEY JACK AND HIS CREW

Whiskey Jack was famous for his great feats of strength. He was over seven feet tall and a Samson in power. In a brawl he was never bested by any man on the river or on its banks. He licked all of the other fighting raft pilots, all of the town bullies and all of the wild Indians along both the Wisconsin and Mississippi rivers. He and his crew were heavy drinkers and with an unbounded thirst for liquor, so that when word reached them that Whiskey Jack and his crew were coming down stream, all of the taverns in the river towns laid in extra quantities of "forty-rod" and "tangle-foot" for their particular benefit.

If there was a wedding or other festivity afoot in any river hamlet, when this famous pilot and his men floated down river, Whiskey Jack would tie up his "sticks" at the bank and never loose a rope or move a sweep oar until the celebration ended. This merrymaking often lasted several days, but the big pilot made up for lost time by rigging a sail on the raft and taking every possible shortcut over islands, sandbars and other obstructions. With such maneuvers as these his raft would often reach Alton or St. Louis a week or several weeks



ahead of schedule. In seasons of low water, if his raft ran aground on a sandbar, Whiskey Jack thought nothing at all of picking up the raft, crib by crib, and carrying it into the deeper water beyond. When the raft progress was too slow to suit him he would sometimes jump into the water and himself tow it for a considerable distance.

## THE BUNDLE OF LATH

On one occasion Whiskey Jack's raft was tied to the bank at Richland City, a once thriving Wisconsin river town, but now off the map or largely in the river bed. The crew were mighty thirsty, but they had no money with which to buy drinks. This was a serious dilemma. Finally, one of the men took a bundle of lath from the raft and walked to the tavern. The tavernkeeper was willing to trade drinks for the lath. He told the raftsman to place the bundle outside the rear door of the tavern. When the man left by this door he picked up the lath and handed it to another member of the crew who was coming up. This man also traded the lath for drinks, leaving the bundle outside the door for another raftsman when he departed. This process was repeated again and again until every member of the raft crew had been served with drinks. When all had gone the tavernkeeper looked out of the rear door and was greatly disappointed to find but one bundle of lath instead of the several dozen bundles he expected to see there.

## THE BIG CATFISH

There were some mighty big catfish in the Wisconsin river. One day, when the raft was floating along, one of the crew hooked one of these big fish. Try as he would he could not land the monster. He called the rest of the crew to help him, and all pulled on the rope line, but they could not budge him. Being unable to bring him to the surface they tied the line to the front of the raft. They thought that pulling the raft would tire him. For a time the catfish, in his efforts to get away, towed the raft at a faster rate than it had ever traveled

before. The men laid down on their stomachs and held on for dear life.

Then the big fish suddenly changed his tactics, he turned about and swam upstream. Before anyone realized what was happening he swam under the raft and the front cribs buckled under after him and the line. The remainder of the raft followed and all of the crew who didn't jump into the river, were drowned. None of the crew ever saw that raft or the catfish again. Only two or three remained to tell the tale afterward.

### **HIRING HELP**

Whiskey Jack was pretty particular about the kind of men who composed his raft crew. They had to be a tough and an efficient lot. He lost so many by drowning that after a while he refused to have any men who could not swim.

One day a very long and lanky rustic came to the river bank where a raft was being assembled and asked Whiskey Jack for a job. He looked the man over and asked him if he could swim. The countryman was over seven feet tall. He replied that he was unable to swim, but that he "was powerful good at wadin'." So Whiskey Jack hired him, but he didn't last very long. The first trip that he made he got tangled with one of the big sweep oars and was strangled to death.

### **HUNTS A BEAR**

The raft crew had tied their raft to the bank of the Wisconsin just above Prairie du Sac. The cook was running out of meat, Whiskey Jack volunteered to go hunting and get a deer. He had only an old muzzle-loading gun.\* He expected to be able to shoot a deer or at least to club one to death, but he encountered a bear instead—the biggest, blackest and ugliest bear he had ever seen.

The gun went off, but the charge of buckshot only stung the bear to madness. He was very angry at being thus assailed, and he made for the raftsmen who dropped his gun and made for the river. The raft crew were sitting on the bank

enjoying the shade of several trees and peacefully smoking their pipes. The bear was on Whiskey Jack's tail. When he neared the crew he shouted, "Look out you river pigs! I have a bear and I'm bringing him back alive!" When they saw the size of the big bear every jack jumped into the river and swam to the raft. There was no fresh meat that day.

### FIGHTING THE "SAUERKRAUTS"

At Sauk City, an old German settlement on the Wisconsin river, the raft crews often tied up their lumber rafts for the night. As soon as they landed they made for some of the several saloons in the town and there had a real frolic. After imbibing freely of the liquor they were ready to enter into an argument with and to fight any of the townsmen who happened to be about.

The Germans, referred to as the "Sauerkrauts", were not bad fighters themselves and there were many broken heads. On such occasions the raftsmen sometimes terrorized the town. Once a fight started because the raftsmen thought that the saloonkeepers did not have the right brand or a large enough quantity of liquor.

Whiskey Jack lead his crew in many a bloody fracas at this town, sometimes himself yielding his fists or a club to great advantage in "mowing down the sauerkrauts". Sometimes the raftsmen got the worst in these fights and were lucky to reach their rafts alive. Some always looked forward to a brush with the Germans at this place.

### THE SUIT OF CLOTHES

On another occasion our hero was a member of a raft crew that rowed and poled a huge lumber raft down the Wisconsin river and then down the Mississippi river to St. Louis. There the raft was sold at a lumber yard and the crew paid. There were "slop shops" in the town where Hebrew gentlemen dealt in clothing, new and second-hand. Most of the rafters needed clothes and they and Whiskey Jack went to

one of these shops to buy them. Whiskey Jack invested in a suit. It looked well on him, but it was shoddy.

After donning his suit and doing some drinking in a nearby saloon, Whiskey Jack had just enough money left to pay his passage north on a steamboat. This boat carried him to Prairie du Chien at the mouth of the Wisconsin river. Here he disembarked and started to walk up-river to the Pineries. This the lumberjacks called "gigging back."

After he had got fairly on his way up the river it started to rain, and getting wet his clothes began to shrink. For two days he walked in the rain. By the time he reached the Wisconsin Portage his trousers had shrunk to his knees, his coat sleeves were up to his elbows and his vest half-way up to his armpits.

From Portage he jogged northward along the Pinery Road. It continued to rain and his clothing continued to shrink. When he reached Stevens Point his coat and vest had disappeared altogether and his trousers had become mere trunks. It rained all of the next day, and he was naked when he reached the saw mills at Wausau. Here he had a hard time of it to convince people that he was not a wild man or crackpot. All fled at his approach, he was arrested by the sheriff and thrown into jail.

## THE CIRCUS

Whiskey Jack and his crew were rowing a raft down the Wisconsin river. When they reached the vicinity of Port Edwards they learned that a circus had come to the village and was to give a performance there.

Because but a few men in the big crew had ever seen a circus, all wished to go. So they tied the raft to the bank and all went to town. Arriving at the circus ground some, who had money, bought tickets, while others, who had none, crawled under the canvas or crushed through the entrance with the crowd. Soon all were seated in the big tent.

The jacks greatly enjoyed the clown, the feats of the bare-back riders, trapeze performers, gymnasts and others and

sampled the red lemonade and peanuts. Just as the elephant was about to enter the ring a big windstorm came up. When the tent began to show signs of collapsing the crowd made for the exits. Then the canvas fell.

The frightened elephant broke loose and got away through the brush and trees to the river bank. Here he drank of the river water, and finding it to his liking, continued to drink. When Whiskey Jack and his crew reached the river they found their raft high and dry on a sandbar. The thirsty elephant had so reduced the water in the stream that their raft was aground. The men had to work all the rest of the day to get the raft back into what remained of the river. Several sand islands had also arisen and they had to shovel and hand-spike these out of their way before they could continue their journey down the river.

### THE BLUE RACER

Whiskey Jack sold his lumber raft down the Mississippi river at a river town in Illinois, paid off the raft crew, and was "gigging" back along the banks of the Wisconsin to the saw mills at Stevens Point. He had "fortified" himself at different taverns along the way with "snake juice" and was tramping along the path when he heard a noise, and looking behind him, saw a large snake.

This big serpent he knew to be a blue racer. These snakes were known to be very fierce and very poisonous, following and attacking human beings whenever they encountered them. They were swift in their movements when chasing their prey.

When Whiskey Jack saw the snake he naturally "lit out" along the path, the wily snake after him. The chase continued for miles. At the site of Sauk City he swam the Wisconsin river in an effort to shake off the deadly reptile. But the snake could swim too and followed him across. Near Merrimac he crossed the stream again, and again at Kingsley Bend near Wisconsin Dells. He tried to trick the snake in other ways but to no purpose. The faster he traveled the faster the snake moved. At the Wisconsin Dells he jumped

the river, from bank to bank, only to see the snake make the same leap.

For two days the reptile pursued him, and until he was just about worn out, and his life was only saved when he finally reached Stevens Point. There his lumberjack friends beat the blue racer to death with their canthooks and pike poles. When measured the big snake was found to be 27 feet long, the largest blue racer ever seen.

### **CATCHING FISH**

The raft crew sometimes ran out of provisions in their descent of the Wisconsin. Towns were often far apart.

Whiskey Jack once solved this provision difficulty by attaching fishhooks to the rope lines which were attached from end to end of the cribs. When they were submerged in passing over a rapids or through rough water these lines, baited with pork rind, were in the water. When they again rose above the water there was a fat catfish hanging from nearly every hook. These the cook prepared and fine catfish steaks were served to the men.

### **LOST THEIR PANTS**

Once a raft crew tied up to the river bank near the mouth of the Wisconsin river. The men thought this a good time to wash their clothing. Soon their shirts, trousers and socks were drying in the sun on a line strung between poles erected on the raft. While they were seated on the bank waiting for their clothing to dry a big wind suddenly came up, and before they could rush to the rescue, it blew all of their apparel over into the next county. After that there was nothing they could do but to float down the river to Prairie du Chien in a state of nakedness. Here several men wearing barrels were sent ashore to purchase clothing for all. It is said that farmers living in the back country could hardly believe their eyes when pants, shirts and socks began to come down near their cabin homes.



## THE RAFT COOK

Cooking on the lumber rafts was done under some difficulties. The cookstove was mounted in a sand-box placed on one of the cribs near the middle of the raft. On windy days a rough screen shelter was erected to protect the cook and his cooking. The raft crew ate their meals from a rough board table nearby. The cooking utensils were a frying pan, coffee pot and a few pots and kettles. The tableware consisted of tin cups, plates, knives and forks.

Big John Marshall was the cook on one of Whiskey Jack's rafts. He was a good enough lumberjack cook, but one day the crew complained about the meals. They were all pretty much the same, day after day. Whiskey Jack thought that the meals could be better, so he talked with Big John and asked him whether he had ever had or seen a cook book. And the cook said, "I got one of them cookery books once but I never could do anything with it. It was just of no use to me." "Was it too fancy for you," asked Jack? "That was it," said Big John, "every one of the recipes began the same way. Take A Clean Dish—and that settled me."

Big John dished up a lot of hash. It was good and one of the crew asked him if he had a regular recipe for making it. "No," said the cook, "it just accumulates."

## SIGNS HIS NAME

Whiskey Jack was no scholar, he didn't care to read, and he could not write. When he signed the payroll or any other document at the sawmill or lumber yard offices he signed with a big "X" instead of his name. He did this for a long time. But one day he signed with an "X X" instead of just an "X". The bookkeeper wondered at this and asked him why he signed with two "X's" instead of just one. And Whiskey Jack explained to him that he and a milliner lady in one of the river towns had just got "spliced", and he thought that now, being a married man, he ought to change his name. Hence the "X X".

## WORKED FOR PAUL BUNYAN

Whiskey Jack once worked for Paul Bunyan in his camp, but they couldn't get along well together. Both were big men. Whiskey Jack said that he couldn't stand for the prunes that were served at the cook shanty every single day, and Paul had no great relish for the frequent catfish steaks that Whiskey wanted introduced in the camp menu. They had other differences of opinion.

When Bunyan took one side in an argument Whiskey Jack was dead certain to take the other, so the two had many a wordy tussle in the bunkhouse and elsewhere.

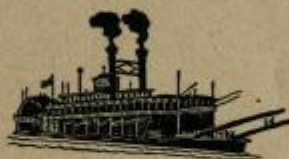
Whiskey Jack was very fond of the ladies in the lumber towns, but Paul didn't care a darn for their company. So the two parted, each to win fame in his own way, but they always remained the best of friends.

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# Old Man River



UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER STEAMBOATING  
DAYS STORIES



TALES OF THE OLD TIME STEAMBOATS  
AND STEAMBOATMEN



CHARLES E. BROWN  
Wisconsin Folklore Society  
Madison, Wisconsin

1940



## UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER STEAMBOATING DAYS STORIES

The Virginia, the first steamboat on the Upper Mississippi, passed up the river on her way to Fort Snelling, Minnesota, in 1823. With the settlement of the Old Northwest the number of steamboats multiplied year after year. Nine out of every ten boats were built on the Ohio river. They were of two types—stern and side-wheel. The largest measured up to 300 feet in length. They often carried as many as 500 passengers. They cost from \$20,000 to \$40,000. George B. Merrick, historian, compiled a list of about 1500 boats which were in use on the Upper River between 1823 and 1900. These were packets, raft boats and ferry boats. The loss of boats up to 1897 by snags, fire, ice, collisions, explosions and other causes numbered 295. Other boats were worn out and dismantled. Steamboating began to decline in about 1870 with the building of railroads to St. Paul and other important river towns.

For these stories we are indebted to George B. Merrick and Harry G. Dyer, noted old time rivermen. To them this booklet is dedicated.

### STEAMBOAT RACES

Steamboat racing was one of the pleasures of the old time river captains, who took great pride in the appearance and speed of their boats. "One of the fastest steamboats on the Upper Mississippi was the swift "Key City," the champion of the Minnesota Packet Company fleet. She was never beaten by any steamboat outside of her own line, and by but one boat in her line—the peerless "Grey Eagle." She shone at all times like a star of the first magnitude. She was a very pretty boat to look at, beautifully proportioned and very serviceable, a river greyhound.

Her captain, James Worden, was a real sport and always ready to accommodate any boat with a race and at any old time. Hank Whitney was her very efficient chief engineer. He always had plenty of rosin on hand and had no objection to "perching a nigger or two on her safety valve." She never suffered a single defeat (1857-66). Captain Worden had a broom with a brush about three feet wide and with a long handle by which it could be firmly affixed to the roof of the pilot house. This broom he offered to any boat that would take it away from the "Key City". He at the same time offered to wager any sum on the result of her racing. Her reputation was known the length of the Upper River.

Of course every captain who had a fast boat sought the first opportunity to test Captain Worden's claims. The "White Cloud," a fast side-wheeler, tried conclusions with the "Key City" and was beaten. The "Northener", a really fast boat, had a race with her through Lake St. Croix. This was a river classic. The race began at St. Paul and ended at Prescott. Here the "Key City" hoisted her broom. Ned West was the pilot of the winning boat, "as fine a pilot as ever turned a wheel."

In one of her following races the "Key City", leaving St. Paul heavily laden with freight, beat the "Keokuk" to Lake City by over two miles. Then she beat her to Reads Landing by about one and one-half miles. At Wabasha her competitor was one mile behind the "Key City". The "Key City" made business landings at Alma, Minnieska, Fountain City, Winona and Trempealeau, thus consuming over an hours time and yet she was only one mile behind her opponent when the "Keokuk" reached La Crosse. The supremacy of the "Key City" was unquestioned.

The "Key City" was loafing along upper Lake Pepin, towing a heavy barge, when she met the "Messenger", a big and fast Lower River side-wheel steamboat. The latter blew her whistle, a challenge for a race. That was enough for Captain Worden. He put some men aboard the barge and set her adrift. His firemen began sifting in rosin with the cordwood, and, it is presumed, hung a grate-bar on the safety valve. It did not take the "Key City" long to strike her gait. The chimneys of both boats were soon red-hot. The "Key City" soon overhauled and passed the "Messenger". Running far enough ahead of her to make such a proceeding safe she ran across the bow of her rival, and circling back returned to her barge.)

Other fast and powerful steamboats, among them the "Tish-mongo", "Tigress" and "Resolute" tried to wrest her laurels from the "Key City", but all had to take the wash of her stern.

The fast run of the "Grey Eagle" in 1858 between Dunleith (East Dubuque) and St. Paul was 24 hours and 3 minutes, with 21 landings. The "Key City's" time for the same run

was 24 hours and 29 minutes with 13 landings. She was very nearly as fast as the "Grey Eagle", the queen of the Upper River. The "Key City" was the grandest boat in the Minnesota Packet Company line. Stories of her triumphs are still told wherever old rivermen gather.

### THE CALLIOPE ON THE DENMARK

The "Denmark", a side-wheel packet of the St. Louis line (1856-62), was the first passenger boat on the Upper River to sport a steam piano, or calliope. This was in position on her hurricane deck. This "music-maker" was added to her equipment by her captain, Robert C. Gray, "as a persuader of custom" from the traveling public of her day. Among the rivermen "opinions differed as to the direction her passengers were persuaded to take—on board or overboard. It was confidently averred that the same passenger never booked himself for a passage on the "Denmark" a second time." Several deluded travelers are said to have ended a more or less miserable existence by jumping overboard enroute. However, to the general public, not "fed-up" on her music, her arrival and departure from the levee of the river towns was a real musical treat. The performer on the calliope was a "real artist and could play popular songs, national airs and well-known hymns with equal facility and enjoyment." "As soon as the "Denmark" rounded the bend of the river below St. Paul the calliope would start to play. That was the signal for everybody, and by the time the boat arrived, the levee was crowded with people."

The "Clarion", a small stern-wheel steamboat, had "a whistle in keeping with her name, but out of all proportion to her size. It was said that her builders at Monongahela, Pennsylvania, took the whistle and then built a boat under it. It was so large that it made her top-heavy. They said that the engineer always had to shut off his engines when the pilot began blowing for a landing." So strong and loud was her blast that a Dutchman in one of the river towns once fell out of the second story window of a hotel when he heard her "wistle" and permanently injured his person.



## CAPTAIN STEPHEN B. HANKS

Most famous of the raftsmen of the Upper Mississippi was Captain Stephen B. Hanks. He was born at Hodgenville, Kentucky, in 1821, and was a cousin of Abraham Lincoln. In 1841, when living at Albany, Illinois, Stephen, a healthy and strong young man, left home for the pine woods of the St. Croix valley. Here he found employment as a lumberjack cutting timber and helping to drive the logs to the saw mill at St. Croix Falls. Here he helped to raft and float the lumber to St. Louis. "In 1844 he made his first trip as pilot of a log raft that floated all the way down the Mississippi from Stillwater at the head of Lake St. Croix to St. Louis."\* This was an undertaking which probably no other riverman could have successfully accomplished in that early day of log rafting. The distance, as the river channel ran, was "a good, long seven hundred miles."\* After ten years of rafting Captain Hanks became a steamboat pilot. From that time on until the year 1892 he stood at the wheel of the fine boats of four different large packet lines. His was a life of rare achievement. He was ninety-six years old when he died, in 1917. He was a Christian gentleman, and "he was held in high esteem by all who knew him." (Walter A. Blair, *A Raft Pilot's Log*)

## THE GREEN TREE HOTEL

On the river front at Le Claire there stands a grand old elm tree, dear to the hearts of many old time rivermen. Its semi-globular crown of foliage has to-day a spread of nearly one hundred feet and its huge trunk is over twelve feet in circumference. This monarch among trees is located at an Iowa Mississippi River town which enjoyed great prominence in old steamboating and rafting days as the home of the skilful rapids pilots and of other steamboatmen of note. Its landing was a stopping place of many great and small steamboats on their way down river. Here they secured pilots to take their boats over the Rock Island rapids.

In the shade and shelter of this great tree, known as the "green tree hotel", many riverman, temporarily out of em-

ployment, once found a retreat. All were welcome there. In this riverside "tavern" there was no landlord to greet, no register to sign, and there were no lodging bills to pay. Put your hat anywhere and stay as long as you like! A man might spread his blanket here or there, or, if he had none, use his coat or shirt for a pillow. On many a summer night lodgers were plenty, river tales were told and river songs were sung. Here a steamboat or raft boat captain might hire a cook, a fireman, deckhands or a raft crew. Much has been written about this famous tree. This sylvan hostelry was known to steamboatmen and raftsmen the whole length of the Upper River. This historic landmark still stands and is cared for by the citizens of this river town.

### TOO MUCH PEPPER

Commodore William F. Davidson of the old White Collar Line of Mississippi River steamboats was a very pious man. It was his custom to assemble the members of his crew on deck on Sunday mornings and to there hold a prayer meeting. On such occasions he always offered the prayer himself. One of these prayers he once concluded, according to a river tale, with the following words:

"And Oh Lord bless the poor. Give to every poor family a Barrel of Pork,—a Barrel of Flour,—a Barrel of Sugar,—a Barrel of Salt,—a Barrel of Pepper." Then, hesitating for a moment, he added:—"Oh h-l no—that's too much Pepper!"

There were other river captains who were well known for their piety. One of these was a resident of La Crosse, a fine upright man, yet this steamboatman was also known to be able to swear harder than almost any riverman of the Upper Mississippi when occasion seemed to require it. In the backyard of his home there was a fine apple tree. The boys of the neighborhood annoyed the good captain very much by stealing its fruit. On one occasion he caught a number of them in the act. Then he let forth such a stream of finished profanity that the young thieves were almost scared to death. One of them has since stated that he will never until his dying

day forget the continuous explosion of swear words which the old officer emitted on this occasion.

### ROLLING STONE COLONY

Land sharks operated along the banks of the Upper Mississippi as they did elsewhere in the Middle West, promoting paper townsites and relieving their victims of their money. "One of the boldest-faced of these swindlers was the so-called Rolling Stone colony. In the spring of 1852, some three or four hundred people, chiefly from New York city, came to seek their purchased lands in Rolling Stone. They brought with them beautiful maps and birds-eye views of the place, showing a lecture hall, library and academy. Each colonist was to have a house lot in the town and a farm in the neighboring country. None had ever had any farming experience. Boarding steamers at Galena, they expected to be put off at the Rolling Stone levee, for the views represented large houses, a hotel, a big warehouse and a fine dock. But the steamboat officers had never heard of such a place. Careful investigation, however, seemed to locate the site three miles above Wabasha, on land belonging to the Sioux Indians. As they insisted on landing they were put off at the log cabin of the only white man within ten miles. They made sod houses for themselves, or dug shelter burrows in the river banks. Sickness came; many died during the summer and autumn, and when winter set in the place was abandoned. The people suffered severely, and the story of Rolling Stone makes a sad chapter in the early history of Minnesota."

### ONCE WAS ENOUGH

On June 14, 1872, the "D. A. McDonald", a famous boat owned by the Van Sant Navigation Company, on her up-river trip, was near North Mc Gregor, when her boilers exploded, killing or drowning eighteen out of twenty-seven men on board—one of the most disastrous explosions ever recorded on the Upper Mississippi. Among those killed was Captain Martin. Several of the survivors of that disaster had

most remarkable experiences. "W. N. Pierce, of Rock Island, an engineer, was on board the steamboat as a guest. He was lying in his berth over the boilers, reading. The blast sent him high up in the air, ahead of the boilers and without getting scalded by any of the steam. He had a thrilling experience, going up pretty well toward the zenith, turning a complete somersault or two, going down to the foundations of the earth under water, coming to the surface and swimming ashore, all within the space of a very few minutes. But, boys,' said Mr. Pierce, 'once is enough. I don't want any more boiler explosions in mine'."

One of the crew, Charley Johnson, also lying in his berth, was blown through the door, or window of his room. On his mattress he fell in the river about forty feet from the boat. Here he caught a big oar, and straddling this he paddled ashore. He had not suffered a scratch. At McGregor he found a dugout and started down river to his home at Le Claire. News of the explosion and of his death had already reached his home town. When he got there some boys, who were swimming at the levee, saw him paddling toward the shore, they fled for home, not even stopping for their clothes. When he passed through the town, he cleared the streets wherever he went, the people believing him to be a ghost and not a flesh and blood visitor. His family had mourned him for dead, and inscribed the date of his demise in the family Bible.

### THE UNLUCKY ALEX MITCHELL

There is a superstition among rivermen that certain steamboats are "hoodooed", and can never be successfully operated. Such a boat was the "Alex Mitchell", a passenger packet (1870-81). "She was thought to be the unluckiest boat ever on the Upper River. If there was anything in the river or over the river, she hit it. When there were no snags to encounter she would bump an island or climb a tree. Hers was a chapter of accidents. To enumerate all of the scrapes she got into would fill a book."

"In 1871 she hit the island at the foot of Coon Slough doing considerable damage to herself. In 1872 a cyclone tried conclusions with her. The mate, who was sitting by her big bell, was blown a quarter of a mile, lighting on the shore without serious injury. The pilot was blown out of the pilot house. This was believed by some to have occurred because Captain Laughton had permitted the members of a German excursion to dance on her deck on Sunday, contrary to the laws of God and of Commodore William F. Davidson, one of the owners of the steamboat line to which she belonged. In July 1878 the "Mitchell" was snagged and sunk at Oquawka, Illinois. She was raised. In November of the same year she hit another snag and was sunk, this time at the mouth of the Des Moines River. In December 1876 she was damaged \$5000 by ice at St. Louis, and, in 1879, by the bridge at Hastings. In 1881 she was dismantled at La Crosse, after a "glorious" river career.

The "Alex Mitchell" was valued at \$30,000 when new, being built at La Crosse in 1870. She belonged at first to the Northwestern Line, then to the Keokuk Line, and, finally to Commodore Davidson's St. Louis and St. Paul line, the famous White Collar Line.

### **STRONG MAN OF THE RIVER**

Captain Oscar F. Knapp, of Osceola, was "the father of steamboating on the St. Croix River." First to last he was the owner, builder and captain of a number of different boats. Captain Knapp "was a giant, physically, several inches over six feet tall, and weighing over two hundred pounds."

In the fifties and sixties hundreds of lumberjacks rode on his boats on their way to the mills and the pineries. Many of these passengers would pay their passage only under compulsion. Captain Knapp insisted on their fares. He kept his "compulsion" with him all of the time. It was always on "tap" and ready for use. When one of the "jacks" refused to pay the good Captain signalled the pilot to run as close to a tow-head as possible. Then catching the unwilling "jack" by the

scruff of his neck and the slack of his pants, he simply tossed him ashore. When this action was resented by five or six of his fellow pirates, the Captain was willing and ready to "lick" the whole gang. One blow of his fist always settled the biggest bully of the lot. At one time or another the Captain thus "colonized" with "jacks" every big sandbar along the picturesque St. Croix. In spite of his primitive methods of preserving order Captain Knapp's boats were always popular with the old time loggers and raftsmen.

### TOO MANY BELLS

There were a few captains on the river who seemed to have a passion for ringing bells. George B. Merrick tells of a pilot who had this bell-ringing habit. From the pilot house he would keep the engineer and his second over busy executing his orders given in this way. On one trip the engineer got so far behind with these orders that after the steamboat had tied up to the bank at a landing it took him "seven hours and a half" to catch up with his bells.

### "CYP." BUISSON

"Cypriane Buisson had been on the river since he was a boy, most of the time in the rafting trade—for twenty years captain of one boat. "Cyp", as he was generally known on the river, knew the Mississippi well from St. Louis to St. Paul, up-stream, down-stream and crossways by day and night. He was conceded to be one of the very best raft pilots on the river. He had plenty of nerve, but no nerves. He never got flustered. In every kind of dilemma or danger he was as cool as under ordinary conditions. An old steamboat engineer said that "Cyp" never rang all of the bells at once, never kicked all of the sash out of the pilot house, and never swore so that it created a blue fog so thick that he couldn't see his bow-boat, whatever the stress might be. That was the river way of saying that he kept cool."



## DIAMOND JOE

Among the widely known big men of the old Mississippi River steamboating days was Joseph Reynolds, "Diamond Jo", owner of a great majority of the stock of the famous Diamond Jo Line of steamboats. This was in its day a great corporation, controlling an investment of half a million dollars. Its fleet of freight and passenger steamboats was large and fine.

Joseph Reynolds, birthplace was at Fallsburg, New York, and the date 1841. He received a common school education. When he was seventeen he began buying cattle, sheep and hogs, peddling the meat in the surrounding country. In the winter he taught school for the meagre wages of \$10 a month and his board. Later he and his brother opened a general store at Rockland, New York. Here he married Mary E. Morton. Her father furnished the money for the purchase of a feed and flour mill. Later he became the owner of a tannery also. Both proved very profitable. After a few years he sold out and came to Chicago. Here, in about 1856, he established a tannery. In the interests of this business he traveled extensively in Illinois and Wisconsin. In shipping packages of hides and furs to Chicago he caused them to be marked with his nickname "Jo" stamped upon a diamond shaped figure. To this "trademark", rather than to the large diamond which he wore in later years in his shirt front or scarf, the origin of his nickname is correctly traced. Negro roustabouts patched the seats of their pants with Diamond Jo "trademarks" cut from wornout bags.

In about 1860 Mr. Reynolds disposed of his Chicago business and engaged in the grain trade at Prairie du Chien, then the terminus of the Milwaukee & Mississippi Railroad. In order to obtain better shipping facilities than the steamboat lines would furnish he built in 1862 the steamboat "Lansing". She carried grain and produce between Lansing and Prairie du Chien. In the winter of 1862-63 he built at Woodman, Wisconsin, the "Diamond Jo". He also built barges for bulk grain. In 1868 he began his first operations as a steamboat line with four boats and Fulton, Illinois, as his headquarters. Here he had a shipping agreement with the Chicago & North-

western Railroad. Here he built and purchased other boats extending the service of his boats to St. Paul. In these years, 1858-74 he handled many million bushels of grain. That year the general offices of his line were moved to Dubuque. Here, at Eagle Point, he also established a shipyard where many of the best steamboats and raft-boats on the river were built in the next twenty years. Captain John Killeen was the very efficient general superintendent of the company. In 1883 the company began to pay more attention to the passenger traffic. The passenger packets (1881-86) included the large and beautiful steamboat, "Mary E. Morton", the "Sidney", "Pittsburg" and "Josephine". In 1883 the line incorporated as the "Diamond Jo Line of Steamers". Mr. Reynolds was its president. It continued without change until his death in 1891.

"Diamond Jo" Reynolds was respected and loved by his associates and employees. He was a very quiet man and had little use for "society." He was well known at many steamboat landings along the river between St. Louis and St. Paul. If one saw a quiet, modest-looking man seated on a box or bale at a steamboat levee, whittling a stick and paying attention only to his own business, that was likely to be "Diamond Jo" Reynolds. He amassed a great fortune in the steamboat business.

### GEORGE BYRON MERRICK

In the years 1854 to 1858 two boys, George and Samuel Merrick "bunked" in the garret of their father's (L. H. Merrick & Co.) warehouse at the old steamboat landing at Prescott, Wisconsin. "There were two windows fronting the river and no steamboat ever landed at the levee, day or night, without two boy spectators carefully noting its distinguishing characteristics." So these lads came to know the steamboats of that day by their shape and size, by their wheels, by the trimmings on their smokestacks, their pilot houses, the colors of their outside blinds and the sounds made by their bells and whistles.

"All of these points and many others, were taken in, and indelibly impressed on their memories, so that if the whistle or bell were again heard, perhaps months afterward, the name

of the boat could be given with almost unfailing accuracy. It was a part of the education of the "levee rats", as the boys were called. A boy, that could not distinguish by ear alone a majority of the boats landing at the levee from year to year, was considered as deficient in education. Every boy in town could tell what craft was coming as soon as she whistled. Every boat had a whistle toned and tuned so that it might be distinguished from that of any other boat of the same line. The bells, which were always struck as the boat came into the landing, also differed widely in tone." And thus the Merrick boys "grew into the very life of the great river as they grew in years." Soon George was ripe for river adventure. He obtained a job as pantry boy on the "Kate Cassell", a stern-wheel steamboat, and remained a member of her crew during the season. Of course he was very proud of his job on this fine boat. The next spring he became a "cub" engineer on another steamboat, the "Fanny Harris". He learned the machinery of the boat. His next step upward came when he became "mud clerk", or second clerk, of the steamer. The duties of a second clerk were arduous. He assisted and relieved his chief in attending to all of the business of the boat, writing up delivery books, checking out freight, measuring wood, and attending to a hundred other duties that fell to his lot. He collected the fares of passengers, assigned rooms, collected freight bills, paid for wood and other supplies. Then, at last, came the opportunity to learn the duties of a "cub" pilot from two of the master steamboat pilots of the Upper River. Under their able instruction he learned the channels, the marks and the intricacies of steering a steamboat. The height of his boyhood ambition to become a pilot was attained. Then came the Civil War, and in 1862 George enlisted and marched away to the front with his regiment, the Thirtieth Wisconsin Infantry. After the War he entered the employ of a steamship company in New York. Returning to Wisconsin he entered the newspaper business, and finally became the auditor of the University of Wisconsin.

George B. Merrick's interest in the Great River and its history continued until the date of his death, in 1931. He became the recognized historian of the Upper Mississippi River.

In 1909 he published a book, "Old Times on the Upper Mississippi", and in later years he contributed many other valuable articles, papers and monographs in which the history of old steamboating days on the river is graphically recorded. Thus this man, who in his boyhood had watched from an attic window of his father's warehouse the big steamboats come and go, made his mark as an author and historian.

### THE TIN FISH

On the crest of a high, wooded river bluff at Minnieska there was for many years a large wooden "fish", supported on the top of a tall pole. This very conspicuous sign was known to all of the steamboatmen and raftsmen plying up or down the waters of the Mississippi. They found it a convenient and unerring guide-post, as well as a weathervane, as it swung around on its wooden pivot. Adult passengers and children, who were being transported on the packets and who were curious about the wooden "fish", often asked questions about it. They were told, in reply by the pilots, mates or members of the steamboat crew, that the Great River was once as deep as the height of the bluffs, and that in the recession of the waters this particular "fish" was left stranded, pinioned to the top of this tall pole.

In recent years this landmark was replaced by a tin fish (16 feet long) and supported by an iron pole upon which it turned, its head always pointed in the direction of the wind. It continues to be a landmark of interest to riverfarers.

### BILLY HENDERSON

Billy Henderson was a well-known fruit man and steamboat bar magnate of the 60's. In 1854 or 1855 he owned the bar on the steamboat "Excelsior." As a side line he peddled oranges and lemons at the various steamboat landings from St. Louis to St. Paul. He was known the length of the river as "Billy". Later this was changed to "Old Bill" Henderson. Even in his younger days he was inclined to be severely economical. He generally wore a red or blue flannel shirt

that he had traded in with some returning lumberman for the out-put of his gin-mill. Some carping critics said that he wore this style of shirt because it never required washing.)

As he attained age and wisdom he bought other bars, until finally he owned the "drug stores" on every boat of the Northern Line. He put in bartenders whom he hoped that he could trust to make correct returns. But he never did trust them, always complaining that he was being robbed. He became wealthy despite his dishonest toddy-mixers.

In his later years he had an axiom which he always imparted to his younger friends. It was: "Never carry any money in your pocket. If you have money in your pocket you will spend it. If you have no money in your pocket you can't spend any money. I never carry any money in my pocket, so I never spend any money". If a newsboy asked him to buy a paper he would draw the boy aside and take particular pains to explain to him why he never carried any money. It was said that when he died he did not take a cent with him—consistent to the last.

### LILLY PADS

Captain George Tromlye, who was taking a raft boat down river, called his son Charley, whom he was teaching the river, to take his place at the pilot wheel while he himself took a little rest. In the middle of the night he arose and went to the pilot house to see how things were going with his son. He asked Charley where he thought that he was. Charley replied that they were in Crooked Slough, which is near Lynxville. "Crooked Slough your ear!" exclaimed Captain Tromlye, and added, "EVER SEE LILY PADS IN CROOKED SLOUGH??" Charley had run the boat down a dead-end slough. This was in about 1875.

### THE YOUNG PILOT

Captain Jerry Turner was the captain and pilot of the steamboat "Pauline", in 1890. Walter Hunter was the other

pilot, Harry G. Dyer, the mate. One day Captain Turner had a felon on his thumb and wanted to leave the boat at his home town of Canton, Illinois. The trouble was that there was no pilot to spell Mr. Hunter while he was away. Hunter informed him that there was a man on board who could steer and called Dyer. He took him into the pilot house and told him to take the wheel. Dyer steered while Captain Turner sat in the rear and criticized.

"You turn your wheel too much," said he. No answer from Dyer.

"You turn your wheel too much!" said Captain Turner again. Dyer paid no attention. "YOU TURN YOUR WHEEL TOO MUCH!" said the Captain in a last attempt to instruct the pilot. No answer from Dyer. That was all, Captain Turner arose, slammed the pilot house door behind him and went away. Old pilots always moved the wheel from one side to the other, young pilots kept the nose of the boat continually on the mark by moving the wheel just very slightly from side to side.

### WRECK OF THE SEA WING

A marine disaster, which occurred on the waters of beautiful Lake Pepin nearly a third of a century ago, will furnish a topic for conversation in that region for many years to come. The loss of the "Sea Wing", on July 13, 1899, was a major event in Upper Mississippi Valley steamboating days history. On that date Captain David Wethern, the owner of this small stern-wheel boat, was conducting an excursion of some 170 happy residents of Diamond Bluff and Red Wing to the Minnesota National Guard encampment at Lake City. The excursionists were mostly women and children. Not a few of the women had husbands, brothers and friends among the soldier boys, and all looked forward with pleasure to an enjoyable day to be spent in their summer camp.

In the afternoon, while the "Sea Wing" and the covered barge, which she towed, were moored at the landing at Lake City, masses of dark clouds were seen to be forming in the sky. As the weather began to look stormy the excursionists



had assembled at the landing. All were very anxious to make a start for home. Captain Wethern argued with them. He knew the uncertain temper of Lake Pepin in a storm. He tried in vain to persuade them to remain at Lake City until it had passed. They were so insistent in their demands that he depart that he finally yielded to their request. This was at about 8 o'clock in the evening. The little "Sea Wing", with her freight of many precious human lives, entered on the fateful voyage that was to lead to their destruction.

She was near Maiden Rock, enroute to Red Wing, when the storm struck her and the barge. She had gone hardly two miles. It struck with the force of a tornado, and the little craft was soon bowled over like an eggshell. "The scene was a nightmare. Before she capsized many persons rushed from the barge to the boat. The barge, cut loose, was swept away down the lake by the heavy gale. She finally ran aground with her passengers safe and sound. The scene aboard the capsizing "Sea Wing" was terrible. Overhead a terrible storm was in progress. Thunder roared, lightening flashed and a gale, that assumed the proportions of a tornado, made the waters a perfect hell. Men, women and children struggled to save themselves, but to no avail. When the storm subsided only a handful had been saved, and nearly five score had gone down to watery graves. Among these were the wife and daughter of Captain Wethern. The work of rescue was begun at once. All through the night bodies were washed or brought ashore. These were laid in a long row on the beach, awaiting recognition by relatives and friends. Fifty-one bodies were taken to Red Wing. More were recovered later, until a total of ninety-nine were found. This grim tragedy cast a gloom on lake excursions, and for years afterward there were no excursions on Lake Pepin." The captain was blamed for this harrowing disaster, because he left port when his own judgement told him that he should have remained there.

### **CAPTAIN ROBERT DODDS**

This little story was told of Bob Dodds, captain of the raft boat, "Charlotte Boeckler". At St. Louis his crew frequented a

saloon kept by a Mrs. Murphy down on the levee. As soon as his men entered the saloon Mrs. Murphy would drive all of the other patrons away from the bar with the words: "Get back from me ba-a-r-r ye paper-collar dudes. Here comes Bob Dodds and his red-shirted rafters!" And all would go back in a hurry. The patronage of this crew was nearly always good for fifty dollars. The "Charlotte Boeckler" made regular trips with log and lumber rafts from the Schulenberg and Boeckler lumber mill at Stillwater to their yard at St. Louis in the years 1881 to 1892.

### THE PRAYER

The steamboat captain stood on the deck of his boat which had struck a snag and was slowly sinking. He spoke to the frightened passengers who were huddled on the main deck. "Is there anyone among you who can pray?" A meek little man in the crowd stepped forward and replied, "Yes, I can pray."

"Good", said the captain, "you start praying while the rest of the passengers put on life preservers. We're one short."

### THE PROTEM LADY

When business was light on one of the boats the chambermaid was ordered to put on her bonnet and best "togs" and sit on the boiler deck where she could be seen by the crew of the opposition packet when they met her on the river. This was to show that the boat was carrying all of the passengers that wished to travel. As soon as the other boat had passed it was back to the washtubs for the protem "lady."

### THE ASPARAGUS BOAT

In the fifties a river packet, name unknown, was proceeding up-stream. She was bound for St. Paul and was carrying a heavy cargo of freight. Among this merchandise were some packages or bags of asparagus seed, this toothsome vegetable being then almost unknown in the home gardens of the Upper

River towns. When this vessel reached Lake Pepin she struck a snag which ripped up her botton so badly that she sank in a comparatively short time. What became of her crew no one knows. Presumably, they, or most of them saved their lives by swimming, or floating, to the tree-grown shore. The packages of asparagus seed, which were on her lower deck, floated ashore. Some of this seed later germinated there, and in the years following asparagus plants were distributed along the roadside and in the fields near Bogus Creek and elsewhere, between Pepin and Stockholm. To-day, in the asparagus season, people from Pepin and elsewhere go to this neighborhood to collect his fugitive asparagus. Few of them have heard of the illfated steamboat which is said to be responsible for its presence. Asparagus roots from this region have been planted in gardens in the entire country round. (Local Myth)

### COMMANDEERING THE COAL

Captain George Winans was coming up the Mississippi in about the year 1870 with his steamboat, the "Juliana", and towing a barge loaded with coal. He had delivered a log raft at St. Louis and was returning to Stillwater. When he reached a locality just below Burlington he found Captain Ira B. Short there with his boat the "Mountain Belle". Captain Short was moving down-river and had got the log raft he was towing stuck on a sand-bar. He was vainly trying to extricate it. When Captain Winans stopped to inquire about his trouble, Captain Short, who was a man of an imperious nature, said, "George, I'll have to commandeer that barge of coal!" He feared that his boat would run out of fuel before he got the raft off the bar. His words and his attitude so irritated Captain Winans that he yelled in reply. "No— you ain't going to commandeer my barge of coal! And if you try to do it, — there will be trouble! I licked the whole Short family once, and, by G-d, I can do it again if you say so!"

As boys George and Ira were playmates. George lived in one river town and Ira in another. On one occasion George

gave Ira a licking, and Ira's two brothers entering the fight he whipped them also. Hence the above reminder.

### WHAT COULD HE DO

Captain Jerry Webber, when a Mississippi river pilot, was once being examined by the U. S. Steamboat Inspectors for a license. In the course of his examination he was asked the following question:— "Captain what would you do if your boat was moving along and you suddenly saw a big rock sticking up out of the water right in front of your boat? You could not go back."

"By—," said Captain Webber without a moments hesitation, "I'd bust into it." No one could have done otherwise, the examing officer agreed.

Captain Webber could swear harder than any captain on the Upper river. Often he would do this quite unconsciously. He had a woman cook on the boat and sometimes he would say to her. "Now Mrs. Black just get as far back on the boat as you can, so you won't hear me. I'm going to talk."

### GO BACK WHERE YOU WERE

One of the best raft captains of the Upper Mississippi was Captain William Dobler. He was an able, courageous and resourceful steamboatman. He was "one of the best raft pilots that ever lived and held the record for log raft towing. One year he made eight trips from the rafting works at West Newton to the Gem City Lumber Company at Quincy, Illinois, in 64 days." Quincy is 120 miles below Rock Island.

One year in making a sharp river turn at Skunk Flats near Pontussa, Illinois, one end of his raft caught a sand-bar. As soon as George Walker, the other pilot, heard the noise he jumped out of bed and started upstairs for the pilot house. Captain Dobler saw him coming and said; "Go right back where you were George. I got her into this and — — I'll get her off." And he reversed and slowly backed the steamboat off the sand.

## THE ROUSTABOUT

When a certain steamboat left St. Louis she carried a gang of negro roustabouts to load and unload the freight. When the boat reached a landing one of the colored hands of this gang could never be found. When the unloading of the freight was accomplished and the boat again on its way, this nigger would appear from somewhere. When asked by the mate where he had been he said that he had been asleep. When the next landing was reached the darkey would be gone again. The mate searched everywhere for him but could not find his hiding place. This happened a number of times during the boats journey. At last the mate, thoroughly mystified, called the negro before him. He promised him that if he would reveal his hiding place he would not require any more work from him until the steamboat reached its destination. This being agreed upon, he asked the man, "Now where was your hiding place?"

"Why," answered the grinning black, "I'se been in your baid."

# Sea Serpents



**WISCONSIN OCCURRENCES OF  
THESE WEIRD WATER MONSTERS**  
In the Four Lakes, Rock, Red Cedar,  
Koshkonong, Geneva, Elkhart, Michigan  
and Other Lakes

CHARLES E. BROWN  
Wisconsin Folklore Society  
Madison, Wisconsin  
1942

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# FOREWORD

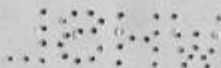
## SEA SERPENTS

Sea serpent literature shows that the belief in these fabulous marine monsters is of considerable antiquity. Numerous legends and stories have been published concerning them. Many accounts have come from the Scandinavian coasts, the British Isles and the eastern coast of North America. The recent Loch Ness, Scotland (1929), sea serpent received world-wide attention. "Cobra grande," reported killed by surveyors in the Upper Rio Negro, Brazil, was said to be 131 feet long and 2½ feet in diameter. Large fish, whales, sharks and devilfish are thought to be responsible for some of the sea serpent tales.

Sea serpents have been reported from the New England coast from as early as 1638 (Nahant). Specimens have been seen at Cape Cod, Gloucester, Nantucket and other localities. "All that have come ashore have proved to be some already known fish or animal." (Andrews)

Sea Serpents have also been reported as occurring in some lakes and rivers in the United States. The first Wisconsin specimen seems to have appeared in 1882. A small collection of the Wisconsin sea serpent stories is offered in this booklet.

Logs, tree trunks, branches, large fish and overturned boats, floating in the water, may account for some of these Wisconsin water dragons. More than likely some of the stories were started by real estate promoters, summer resort hotel proprietors and others likely to benefit from the publicity which a lively sea serpent might give to a particular locality. Superstitious and imaginative persons and local jokers unassisted. A resort lake without a sea serpent was behind the times. Water demons were popular animals in the news columns of forty to fifty years ago. They are still.



## The Serpent "Bozho"

In about the year 1917 a University of Wisconsin student found on the beach of Picnic Point's north shore an object resembling a fish scale. It was of large size, thick and very tough. Never having seen anything just like it before, he took it to his professor. This man, being from New England and acquainted with the species, identified it as a scale from the body of a "sea serpent". This was, so far as one can learn, the first well verified indication that there was such a creature at large in the fairest of Madison's Four Lakes.

Nothing was seen of this strange water denizen until one day in the early autumn of that year. A fisherman angling for perch off the end of Picnic Point received the fright of his life when he suddenly saw a large snake-like head, with large jaws and blazing eyes, emerge from the deep water not more than a hundred feet away. The man was paralyzed by the fearful sight for a few minutes. Upon recovering his senses, he quickly fled from the shore, leaving his pole and fish-basket behind. He told friends of his experience, but no one believed his story. He was well laughed at.

Not so very long after this a university boy and co-ed companion were one day sun-tanning their backs at the end of a frat house pier. They were lying on their stomachs with their feet toward the lake. They had been in this position but a short time when the girl felt something tickling the sole of one of her feet. Whenever this happened she looked at the young man, thinking it might be him. But he was lying quietly with his eyes closed. So the young lady lay down again and closed her eyes, too. A few minutes later something began to tickle the soles of her feet again. This was not to be tolerated. Turning over quickly she saw the head and neck of a huge snake, or dragon, extended above the surface. It had a friendly, humorous look in its big eyes. With its long tongue this animal had been caressing the soles of her feet. She quickly aroused her companion and the two bathers were soon running as fast as they could go to the shelter of the nearby frat house.

Another couple, who were one evening canoeing in University Bay, next saw this marine monster disporting there. Being somewhat familiar with pictures and accounts of Eastern States sea serpents, they readily recognized this creature and hastily paddled to the shore. After this incident other students and citizens of Madison reported that they had seen the serpent at different times and places in the lake. Fishermen stated that they had noted its presence several years before this time. Skeptical persons thought the reputed serpent only a large pickerel, or perhaps a gar fish, with a collection of artificial baits clinging to its head.

This mysterious creature obtained the name of "Bozho", no doubt an abbreviation of the name of the old Indian hero-god, Winnebozho. Several waterspouts which occurred in Lake Mendota were explained as probably caused by this sea serpent. He was taking a shower bath.

Bozho was, on the whole, a rather good-natured animal, playing such pranks as overturning a few canoes with his body or tail, giving chase to sailboats and other lake craft, uprooting a few lake piers and frightening bathers by appearing near beaches. People made more use of the lake when he finally disappeared. It was thought that he left it by way of the Yahara river.

This water dragon is not to be confused with the old Indian water spirits, long-tailed, horned, cat-like animals, believed to have a den in the deep water off Governor's Island on the north shore of the lake.

### **Lake Monona's Monster**

There is a prior record of the presence of a sea serpent in Lake Monona, third lake of the Madison chain.

"Sea Serpent Appears Early This Year—(Wisconsin State Journal, June 12, 1897); WHAT-IS-IT IN THE LAKE?—The Monona sea serpent has made its appearance about two months earlier than usual this season, according to several people in the vicinity of East Madison, who aver that they saw the monster last evening.

"They say it was at least 20 feet long, and traveled east on the surface of the lake until Eugene Heath, agent of the

Gaar-Scott company, fired two shots into it, when it turned and came back; at this juncture either the snake or the spectators appear to have disappeared. It is probably the same animal which is credited with having swallowed a dog which was swimming in the lake a few days ago. Mr. Schott and others who saw the 'thing', whatever it may be, insist that it is a reality and not a joke or a creature of their combined imaginations.

"Its appearance is not that of a serpent. Mr. Schott says, however, that he saw it plainly in the bright moonlight, and its shape was like the bottom of a boat, but it was about twice as long. Mr. Schott's two sons saw it, and were so firmly convinced that it was a dangerous animal that when soon after two ladies desired to be rowed over to Lakeside neither of the Schotts, who had spent a large part of their lives on the lake, would venture out."

In these years a curious monster, perhaps the same sea serpent, was also observed off the Tonywatha and Winnequah resort shores, on the east side of the lake, by different persons. Some huge vertebrae, which years later clogged the pipes of the sandpump, then dredging in the lake off the Olbricht Park shore, were supposed to be from the skeleton of this particular sea serpent.

### **Appears in Lake Waubesa**

Several summers after the appearance of the sea serpent in Lake Mendota, a great snake-like creature was reported seen in Lake Waubesa, a large lake a few miles south of Madison. Could this have been the Lake Mendota specimen which had now taken up its residence there?

On a hot summer afternoon an Illinois resident of Edwards Park, on the east shore of the lake, rowed out into the lake to fish. When this man reached a good fishing ground some distance from the shore and had anchored his boat, he was surprised to see the until then quiet water several hundred feet away begin to heave and move in swells. Soon a part of a huge body, and then a large head, rose to the surface. There the great creature floated, apparently sunning itself. The resorter watched it for a while, wondering what kind of giant

eel or fish this might be. Prudently, he raised anchor and rowed back to Edwards Park.

He described this thing as having a body which he estimated to be from sixty to seventy feet in length and of a dark green color. Of its serpent head he could give no clear description. But as this man was given to drink, (he had a quart of "forty rod" in his boat), his eyesight and veracity were questioned by many when he reported the encounter.

However, his reputation for veracity was partly regained shortly thereafter. A man and his wife who were swimming in the lake near their summer home on the Waubesa Beach shore were nearly frightened to death when they saw the head of an unfamiliar creature rise to the surface a short distance away. Its eyes glittered as it moved slowly in their direction. Perhaps it sought a hearty meal. The couple were good swimmers and did not linger. They afterward disputed as to which one first reached the door of their cottage.

Other accounts of the lake Waubesa sea serpent seen both that and the following summer are fragmentary, and are regarded as more or less unreliable. The creature seems to have roamed pretty well over the entire lake.

### **Kegonsa and Wingra Denizens**

The Lake Kegonsa "dragon" was, it appears, a monster of about the same years as the Lake Waubesa creature. He was seen off both the Colladay Point and Williamson Point shores more than once. Existing accounts of him are rather confused. He seems to have been of a more vengeful and destructive nature than those of the other lakes.

A reputed Lake Wingra water monster on investigation turned out to be a very large snapping turtle with an upright section of a wire leader and float attached to its jaw. His appearance frightened several amateur fishermen.

### **The Rock Lake Terror**

In the August 31, 1882, issue of the Lake Mills Spike, later re-named The Leader, appeared a detailed description of the occurrence of a sea serpent in Rock Lake.

"Again has the lake monster been seen. On Monday evening last, as Ed McKenzie and D. W. Seybert were rowing a race out near the first bar, they discovered on the surface of the water, a little in advance of their boats, what they supposed for a moment to be a floating log and the latter called to the former to look out and not run into it, and at this moment, the object manifested life, and reared its head about three feet out of the water, opened its huge jaws about a foot or more and dived out of sight. Almost immediately its head was thrust a couple of feet into the air close beside Ed's boat. 'Strike him with the oar,' yelled Mr. Seybert. But Ed screamed with terror, stood up in his boat and called ashore for help.

"'Bring a gun, bring a gun, here's a Big Th'ng out here, come quick!' was what Wilson, Lund and others at the steamer landing heard him say. Captain Wilson seized his shotgun and jumped into the swiftest boat and soon reached the frightened rowers. He saw the place at which the monster went down. The air all around was heavy with a most sickening odor. Ed was white as a sheet, his teeth clattering. Seybert said he didn't want to row any further. John Lund said he could from the shore distinctly see the animal. He said at first he thought it was a man struggling in the water. Ol Hurd, from the same position, thought it was a huge dog.

"Ed McKenzie says it was fully as long as his boat, and somewhat the color of a pickerel. He says, 'Let them talk about striking it with an oar, or anything, there isn't one of 'em would do it if they'd see it come up sudden like, with its mouth wide open!'

"This serpent has quite a history. Mr. R. Hassam saw it about 15 years ago, in the rushes. At first he thought it was the limb of a tree. On closer observation he saw it was a thing of life and struck it with a spear, but could no more hold it than an ox. Mr. Harbeck, now of Waterloo, who formerly resided across the lake, frequently saw the saurian while rowing back and forth. On one occasion it hissed at him just as he was entering the rushes. Fred Seaver, Esquire, has encountered his snakeship twice. On one occasion the monster seized his trolling hook, and pulled his boat along



over half a mile at a rushing speed before he let go. Last week it seized John Lund's troller and in attempting to pull it in, the line, before breaking, cut entirely through the skin of his finger."

"Not one or two people, but many, are reported to have seen the monster as it would raise its head from the waters. Perhaps it was a giant species of extinct amphibian origin," adds the Lake Mills Leader, of September 4, 1941, in republishing the above news items.

### **Red Cedar Lake Dragon**

In the Fort Atkinson Union, in 1941, there appeared this "fifty years ago" news item: "Grave fears are entertained that the sea serpent of Cedar Lake is about to change its habitation to Lake Ripley as an underground passage is known to exist between the two lakes, and residents on the bank of the latter lake are positive that they have caught glimpses of his snakeship."

It was in 1891 that a sea serpent was first seen in Red Cedar Lake in Jefferson county. It was then first observed by a fisherman. He had just returned from fishing and was tying his boat when he happened to look out into the lake and there saw the undulated form of what appeared to be a huge snake or fish. Its head was beneath the surface. It was swimming and he watched it until it was out of sight. He told some fishermen and farmers of seeing this thing and others stated that they had also observed it. One man described it as having a very large head with protuberances like saw teeth on its back. It was estimated to be about fifty feet long.

Then someone started the story of the likelihood of this monster's making his appearance in Lake Ripley by the way of an underground channel believed to connect the two lakes. This tale caused not a little consternation among the owners of summer homes on the Lake Ripley shores. Some of these people, it was stated, actually closed their cottages and returned to their city homes. When someone reported having actually seen the serpent in the lake, the excitement increased.

Certain parties, it has been told, were trying to sell lake

lots at Red Cedar lake to prospective summer residents, and the sea serpent story was originated and circulated as an advertising "Joner". After inhabiting the lake for a time this monster was seen no more.

### **Pewaukee Lake Intruder**

A sea serpent was believed to be, in the 1890s, a regular summer visitor at this Waukesha county lake. It was reported most frequently seen off shores of some of the then well-patronized hotel resorts. From time to time, stories of encounters with this creature were told. Summer residents mostly derided these reports as yarns. Fishermen did little more than try to keep out of the path of possible encounter. Sometimes the reputed serpent was seen, "a huge green thing traveling like a gray streak", up or down the lake, its head above the surface and spouting a stream of water. A liberal reward was offered for its capture, but no one seemed interested in view of the peril involved. One man claimed to have hurled a fish spear at it, but the weapon bounded back as though it had struck a rock or iron plate.

In those years a serpent was also seen in Oconomowoc Lake. Of this "demon" of the deep, the late Judge Anthony Derse told several good stories.

### **An Elkhart Lake Report**

There is record of a probable water dragon in Elkhart Lake, once a fashionable summer resort lake located about fifteen miles northwest of Sheboygan. It dates back to the mid-Nineties, and ran as follows:

A fisherman had a set-line fastened to the end of a pier. One morning he went down to see if he had caught anything. As he began to pull in the strong line, it was evident that he had hooked something big. It was so heavy that it was only with great difficulty that he was able to draw it toward the pier. Just when the line was nearing its end the big catch gave a sudden pull so hard and strong that the nimrod went "end over end" into the water. On rising to the surface he saw a large head in the water not far away. Its big jaws were wide open and its eyes were flashing. The fisherman

believed he had made a miraculous escape from the monster. That ended his set-line fishing that summer. His story caused much excitement among his neighbors, and it was some time before swimmers were brave enough to frequent that part of the lake.

### **Denizen Wrecks a Seine**

Indians had a legend of the presence of a destructive water demon in Lake Koshkonong. White residents of its shores, therefore, had every right to similar beliefs.

Some former carp fishermen once told how their seine engaged a very large water animal which completely wrecked its meshes. It may have been a huge pickerel, but they thought otherwise from the way it twisted and tore the stout seine.

A farmer living on the west side of this big lake was quite sure that this same animal devoured several of his pigs which were feeding off shore. Others saw a strange water animal they could not identify off the mouth of Koshkonong Creek. The late well-known naturalist, Halvor L. Skavlem, in one summer caught a large number of big pickerel in this lake. These he killed with an axe handle. A large number of cuts on his handy weapon each represented a dead pickerel. But there is no mark to show that he ever caught and killed the water demon.

### **A Serpent Aristocrat**

Less than fifty years ago some wealthy summer residents at beautiful Lake Geneva were rather alarmed by stories of a local "sea serpent". It was also reported by others. This troublesome animal lurked in the water at The Narrows and seems to have taken a particular pleasure in overturning small water craft. There would be a sudden surge under a boat and its occupants would find themselves upset or hurled into the water. It was also sometimes active at the Fontana end of the lake. Now and then it followed in the wake of a lake steamboat. What became of this terror no one knows. Not long after Lake Geneva had its sea serpent, Delavan Lake also produced a prankful monster.

## A Lake Michigan Madcap

In the late Nineties, or early 1900s, some market fishermen who were setting nets one day in Lake Michigan off the Jones Island shore saw the large head of a ferocious-looking beast above the surface. They were not far away, so got a good look at it before the creature submerged. Returning to shore, they told of what they had seen but were laughed at. Not long after this some young men who were sailing a catboat in Milwaukee Bay saw what they thought to be a large cask floating some distance beyond their boat. When they passed near it they saw that it was the head of a large serpentine animal which was floating at rest. They had no desire to investigate it at closer quarters.

This particular "serpent" was next seen by a man early one morning in the Milwaukee river. As he was leaning on the rail of the Michigan Street bridge, he espied a large grayish-green body moving down river in the murky water. Soon it dove out of sight. He spoke to the bridge tender about it, and the warden said it probably was a log or big timber. Later that morning the "serpent" was reported further down the river near its mouth. A sailor thought he saw the animal in the Kinnikinnick river, but his "water devil" disappointingly proved to be only an overturned boat floating toward the lake. Yet reports of this monster would not down, and were current for some time.

# Bluenose Brainerd Stories

LOG CABIN TALES FROM THE CHIPPEWA VALLEY  
IN THE WISCONSIN NORTH WOODS



CHARLES E. BROWN  
Wisconsin Folklore Society  
Madison, Wisconsin

1943

## HE COMES TO WISCONSIN

Bluenose Brainerd came to northern Wisconsin from some locality in Nova Scotia, in eastern Canada. He never did tell from just what town or region. When asked just how he came he said that he "came in a balloon". In this wind-propelled aircraft he flew westward for days and days. In Wisconsin he landed in the top of a very tall pine tree. In this lofty retreat he subsisted for a week or more on pine cones and bird's eggs.

He might have remained there longer but some lumberjacks came along one day and cut down the tree. When he reached the earth he found that he had landed right in a big logging camp. At the camp he got a job as a sawyer.

## CHASED BY AN UGLY BEAR

Once, when he was wandering in the woods, Mr. Brainerd was chased and had to climb a tree to get away from a big bear, who was for some reason or other in a man-eating mood. He sat on a limb while the bear tried to climb the tree, gave it up, and then waited below for his intended victim to climb down or fall down. After being thus treed for hours, Mr. Brainerd saw no prospect of escaping unless he did something to get rid of the bear. He threw his cap down on Bruin but the bear quickly disposed of that. Next he took off his coat and dropped that on the bear. That also failed to frighten away the animal. What he did to that coat in a few minutes is a tale in itself. Then Mr. Brainerd removed his red flannel shirt. He set it afire with a match before he dropped it. The burning shirt fell right on the bear's head and the scorched bear, with a howl, fled into the woods. Our hero's life was thus saved.

## BLUENOSE WATERS THE GERANIUMS

Mrs. Brainerd was going to town. She asked Bluenose to water her geraniums while she was away. When she had gone Brainerd took the pots from the window sill. Being in a playful mood he threw them into the river, one after



the other. "There", said he, after disposing of the last plant, "I guess they'll get water enough".

When Mrs. Brainerd returned from town on the following day Bluenose was comfortably seated in a chair near the river bank smoking his pipe and reading a newspaper. He asked Mrs. Brainerd what time it was and she went into the house to get his watch. When she returned with it she calmly threw it into the river, saying as she did so. "Mr. Brainerd, if you want to know what time it is go into the river and see for yourself". And Mr. Brainerd was stumped.

### GOING TO TOWN

One day the old lumberjack informed his wife of his intention of saddling a horse and riding to a settlement some distance away. Mrs. Brainerd decided that she wanted to go too. Then a dispute arose. Bluenose said that she should not go and his wife said that she would go whether he wanted her to go or not. Words passed back and forth but the lady would not be shaken in her determination of going along.

As she was not to be gainsaid Brainerd hitched his horse to a carriage and away they went, Bluenose driving and Mrs. Brainerd calmly occupying the rear seat.

The vehicle was one built in such a manner that the rear part could be readily detached from the front. When they reached the top of a small hill Bluenose leaned over and removed the pin which held the two parts of the wagon together. As the rear part containing his wife rolled backwards down the hill, Bluenose yelled, "There, Mrs. Brainerd, didn't I tell you, you could not go along!"

### PORCUPINE IN THE CHIMNEY

One morning Bluenose woke up coughing and with his eyes smarting. The room was filled with smoke and he thought that the house must be on fire. Mrs. Brainerd had also been awakened by the thick smoke and they both rushed outside. Smoke was pouring out of the door and windows, but there was no sign of a fire or flames. Bill noticed that

no smoke was coming out of the chimney. "A porcupine must have crawled or fallen into it", said he, "and stopped it up?" Urged on by an impatient Mrs. Brainerd, he got a rickety ladder and leaning it against the kitchen roof went up to investigate, but he found no porcupine, the flue was clear of any obstruction. In the meantime Mrs. Brainerd fought her way into the smoky kitchen and found smoke streaming from the doors and the top of the stove. Brainerd had kindled a fire in the stove the night before and neglected to open the stovepipe damper. When Brainerd was removing the ladder a mad wife was after his scalp with the stove poker.

Bill remained hidden in the woods until her anger had cooled off.

### LOSING A CAT

Mrs. Brainerd had a cat she wanted to get rid of. It had been hanging around the cabin for some time and was a general nuisance. She ordered Bill to take it far out into the woods and there lose it. Bill didn't like the chore and grumbled considerably. He chased the ornery critter all over the place and finally caught it and got it into a gunnysack. Then he tramped out into the woods with it for several miles cussing most of the way about women and cats. In a tamarack swamp he opened the bag and let the cat out. He had been so busy with his cussing that he had forgotten to mark his trail. Soon he knew that he was lost and it was hours before he reached his home. An irate Mrs. Brainerd met him and said, "Mr. Brainerd—DID YOU LOSE THAT CAT?" And a fagged-out Mr. Brainerd replied, "Lose it! If I hadn't followed it, I'd never have got back home." His wife took after him round the house and barn with the pitchfork.

### FISHING IN A FOG

One spring morning Bluenose Brainerd took his fishpole and bait and went fishing. It was foggy when he left his cabin home and the fog grew thicker and thicker as he tramped through the woods toward the lake where he intended to try his luck.

When he was about a quarter mile from the lake it was so thick that he could no longer make any progress. He was up against a solid bank of fog. Another man would have given up and gone home then, but not Mr. Brainerd. He had come to fish and fish he would. He took his stout rod, fastened a frog to the hook at the end of the line, and made a mighty cast right into the fog. Then he waited and before long he felt a tug on the line. When he reeled it in he found that he had hooked an old boot. By this token he knew that he had not cast far enough, his line had not reached the lake. Nothing daunted, Brainerd added another sinker to his line. He cast again and soon felt a fierce pull at the bait. With a quick yank he set the hook and reeled in the line.

Whatever had hold of the bait made a hard fight for it but he brought it in. This time his trophy turned out to be a section of stovepipe from the roof of some fisherman's shack. Brainerd said that he knew then that he had nearly reached the water. He added a third sinker to the line and put another frog on the hook. This time he made a mighty cast and knew by a muffled sound that his bait had hit the water. Soon he felt a hard jerk and he knew that he had hooked "a live one". When, after a hard fight, he succeeded in reeling in his catch through the dense fog, he found that he had caught "a forty pound muskellunge, the biggest ever caught in those parts".

### THE TRIFLIN' MOSKITOS

Bluenose Brainerd was a good storyteller when he was in the mood and the listeners appreciative. He said that the big moskitos were mighty aggravatin' when he first built his cabin and came to live near the banks of the Chippewa. They were real vicious and thievin' too. They carried away any grub that was unguarded, stole garments from the washline and even appropriated vegetables from his garden. Bill shot a few of them and killed many more with his axe, but these protective measures made little difference to them, their tribe was so numerous. To continually combat them was exhausting. He desired to be at peace with them. One day he bought a jug of lumberjack whiskey in town and when he returned

invited the entire moskito tribe to a jamboree. He poured the liquid fire into a washtub which he put in his ice-house. When the moskitos came he invited them all to enter this log building. They soon discovered the liquor and went for it. They buzzed about the tub making a noise like a portable sawmill and pushing and crowding each other to get their share of the drink. Soon all were dead drunk. When this happened wary Bill had closed the door and he now hauled them out one or two at a time and with pair of pincers nipped off their bills. He never had any trouble with them after that. Most of them starved to death.

## THE UPHILL ROAD

One day Mr. Brainerd drove to town with his horse and buggy to purchase some supplies. After he had completed his various errands he met a lumberjack friend whom he had not seen for a long time and they went to a tavern to talk. There they met other lumberjack acquaintances and there Mr. Brainerd remained the entire afternoon talking and drinking with these men.

While Mr. Brainerd was thus enjoying himself some town wags who knew him found his buggy in the rear of the tavern. Wishing to play a joke on him they changed the wheels of his vehicle putting the small front wheels in the rear and the large rear wheels in front.

It was getting dark when Mr. Brainerd, now under full sail, left the tavern, unhitched his horse, climbed to the buggy seat with some difficulty, and drove for home.

When he reached home Mrs. Brainerd was there with the broom to meet him. She wanted to know where he had been for such a "tarnat.on long time". And her very unsteady spouse replied that the way had been a long one and the driving "up-hill" all of the way. Mrs. Brainerd then saw the condition of the buggy wheels. Mr. Brainerd slept that night in the haymow.

## BACKWOODS MUSIC

From a wandering lumberjack Mr. Brainerd purchased a very much used accordion which he was carrying in his "turkey". Mr. Brainerd was a lover of music and could sing after a fashion. One evening at home he unlimbered the instrument.

Seated in an armchair tilted against the cabin wall he began to play and to sing some of the songs he had learned in the logging camps. After he had sung a dozen or more of these he was treated to an unpleasant surprise. Mrs. Brainerd, who could no longer stand the racket, appeared at the door and doused him thoroughly with a pan of dishwater. She threatened to repeat the bath unless he quickly removed himself and his "come-too-me go-from-me" from the vicinity.

Mr. Brainerd knew that it was no use to argue with her. Taking his unwelcome instrument he sought a safe retreat on the river bank at some distance from the house. Here he was unmolested and fully enjoyed himself. After he had performed here for several evenings he began to have an audience. The wild animals of the surrounding woods seemed to be charmed by the music and came to the place from far and near. A big owl perched on a tree limb and began to hoot. All of the animals joined in the music with squeeks, growls and howls.

Every night the number of his animal audience increased and the din grew louder and louder as they took part in the concert. One night two big bobcats came to add their voices. This got to be just too much for Mr. Brainerd. He left the place, hid his accordion in the barn, and thereafter played and sang only on special occasions, when Mrs. Brainerd was away from home.

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Bear Tales

Wisconsin Narratives of Bears, Wild Hogs, Honey,  
Lumberjacks and Settlers



Dedicated to  
Prof. K. L. Hatch, Madison  
Victor S. Taylor, Lake Mills

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CHARLES E. BROWN  
Wisconsin Folklore Society  
Madison, Wisconsin  
1944



## JUNEAU'S BEARS

Solomon Juneau, the Milwaukee fur trader, had two bears at his trading post in 1836. These he obtained from the Indians who brought them to him as a gift. They were chained to two posts each about twelve feet high. Some people spent a lot of time enjoying the gambols of the bears. They would climb to the top of the posts, place all of their feet close together and from this insecure perch watch the crowd of loafers and idlers who were looking on. They were very playful bruins, but to get too close to either of them was to part with all or a portion of one's clothing. A tipsy Indian, who undertook to pat one of them, when disentangled, was a human ragbag with only his moccasins entire. The bears were killed and eaten at a feast given by Juneau to the Indians in 1837.

## BEAR AND THE COOK

Tom Lee, a Chinese logging camp cook, was enjoying himself walking through the pine woods. He had gone only a short distance among the big trees when he saw a big black bear following him, smelling at his tracks. Tom had never seen a bear, but he had heard of them as maneaters. He had no desire to be devoured. "Hm," said Tom, "you like my tracks? Velly good, I make some more." And, with that, he ran at top speed until he reached the safety of the cook shanty and latched the door behind him. No more woodland strolls for Tom Lee.

## THE BEAR FIGHT

A Northwoods pioneer woman was telling a neighbor of a fight which her husband had with a black bear. She said, "It war the purtiest fight I ever seen. Gus and the bar jest rolled all over the hillside, grabbin' and clawin' at each other an' tryin' to get at each other's throats. Fust Gus would have the bar down and then the bar would have Gus. They fit an' fit. At last Gus got the bar but he war a sight. Honestly it war the fust bar fight I ever seen whar I didn't kar who won."

## BEAR AND HONEY

When Harry D. Dyer was working in a logging camp on the Kettle River, near Duluth, in Minnesota, some of the lumberjacks came into camp one day with a nearly full-grown bear. Bruin soon

made himself at home. He found a supply of wild honey in a log and was satisfying his love for sweets by digging it out with his paws and licking it off with his mouth. In doing this he got some honey on his head and neck, plastering down the hair until he presented a very funny appearance. He also dropped some honey on the leaves and these stuck to the soles of his feet. These troubled him and in trying to remove them he got sticky leaves on his paws and on his face and neck. Now he was in real trouble and he rolled over and over in a vain attempt to remove them. The results were bad. He was now pretty well covered with leaves. His antics in trying to get rid of his leafy garment were such that the men nearly died of laughter. (Unable to divest himself of the leaves he rushed into the brush and woods and was soon lost to sight.)

## SPRING WATER

In the early years of settlement some of the settlers went for water to a spring in the creek bottom of Swan creek on the Lalor farm, at the foot of Lake Waubesa in Dane County. One day a young woman, granddaughter of the farmer, went there to get water. She filled her buckets and started back through the woods to the farmhouse. The buckets she carried suspended from a wooden neck-yoke. Just as she reached the thickest and darkest part of the woods a bear suddenly appeared. He made no effort to get her, but the poor girl was so badly frightened that she dropped her yoke and buckets of spring water, she had come so far to get, and ran home as fast as she could. Arrived there, almost breathless, she told of her narrow escape from the bear. She did not go for water again that day.

## HUNGRY BEAR

A big black bear came often to a logging camp where he fed at the swill-hole. The lumberjacks were not pleased with his visits, some being afraid of him. A Frenchy in the camp proposed to capture the bear by lassoing him. He procured a length of bailing wire at one end of which he tied a noose. He climbed a tree near the garbage dump, tying the other end of the wire about his body. He was climbing the tree when the bear appeared and began to feed on the refuse. Jean had got only part way up the tree trunk, but the opportunity to catch the bear was too good to be lost. Holding on to a stub he skillfully dropped the noose over the bear's head. Some of the men at the nearby cook shanty saw Bruin and came running toward him, shouting and brandishing axes and peavys. The noise frightened the bear and he started to run away dragging poor Jean down the trunk, into the swill-hole, and away into the brush and woods. Neither the Frenchman or the bear were ever seen again.

## BEAR YARN

A lumberjack yarn tells of a man who was walking down a road when he met a big bear coming toward him with his great mouth open and his eyes ablaze. He was on the warpath and looking for a victim. But the man had rare presence of mind. He quickly grabbed two stones from the roadside and threw one right into the bear's open mouth. The shock turned the bear completely around, and he started to run away. The man then quickly threw the other stone. It entered the bear's behind. And the two stones met in the bear's stomach. There they struck fire and burned the luckless bear up on the spot.

## ROSE HILL PARK PET BEAR

"At Rose Hill Park, Milwaukee, in 1882, Adam Roth had a bear cub, which was a great pet. As a compliment to the Racine postmaster the bear was named "North Field." Mr. Field was proud to have his friend thus compliment him, and he sent a beautiful collar for the bear. He was somewhat astonished, a few days later, to receive a letter from Mr. Roth to the effect that it had been deemed advisable to change the name of the bear, and he hoped that Mr. Field would not take offense, as it was no fault of his that the name of the bear had been changed. Mr. Roth would always continue to love and respect his friend the same as though the bear went through life bearing his name. The name of the bear was now "Helen," a name that seemed to give better satisfaction. "Helen Blazes" was the full name of the cub from this out. Mr. Field signified his acceptance of this amendment." (George W. Peck)

## BEAR IN THE HOLE

Two men were walking over the prairie one day and were seen and pursued by a big deer. To get away from the animal one climbed a nearby tree, and the other sought refuge in a cavity under its roots. When the deer went away the man in the hole came out. But the deer saw him and chased him back into the cavity. This happened several more times. The man would crawl out and the deer would chase him back. The man, safe in the branches of the tree, then said to his friend, "Why don't you stay in the hole until he goes away?" "I can't," said the pursued man, "there's a bear in the hole."

## THE PARSON

A backwoods parson enjoyed hunting in his spare time. He had only one arm, but he was a good shot and generally brought home his full share of game. One day when he went hunting and did not return for a long time his friends set out to find him. They finally located him. Despite his one arm he had climbed about thirty feet up a tree and was seated on one of its branches. He had, it appeared, met a hungry bear and had taken this means of escape from him. When asked how he had managed to take his gun with him he replied that he "had climbed down after it."

## BEARS AND BACON

In the late 1870's two lumbermen were cruising a tract of timber in the Wisconsin River valley. One evening these men, Stapleton and Brown, reached a deserted log cabin in the woods. Here they decided to spend the night. As it was hot they spread their blankets on the roof of the cabin. Hanging their packs from pegs on the cabin wall they closed the door and climbed up on the roof. They had had a hard day in the woods and were soon asleep. The next morning's sun rays awoke Brown. He slid off the roof and landed almost in the arms of a big black bear. Almost as quickly as he went down he was on the roof again. In the meantime his partner, Stapleton, had slid off the roof at another place. He came back on the roof as quickly as Brown. He had run into a second bear. Their hair stood on end. Neither man cared to get off the roof again. The bears, also frightened, made off through the brush. They had smelled the bacon in the cruiser's packs and had come to get the possible breakfast. When they were gone the men climbed down to prepare a meal. While one boiled the coffee and fried the bacon the other kept a lookout for bear visitors.

## HOGS WITH MUSIC.

In Racine County the settlers let their hogs run loose to fatten on acorns. In one locality there was a comical old black bear who liked pork and music with his meals. He would pounce upon a hog, get in his hug and proceed to take ham while the hog squealed. About the time the settler arrived with his gun there was little squeal and less hog left, and the bear was missing. After this bear had sampled the pork of a quite wide range of country he was caught and killed by a steamboat crew more than a mile from shore in Lake Michigan. He was a monster.

## BEAR IN THE DEN

In Florence County some Finnish farmers were engaged in repairing a highway. One of the men had a .22 rifle which he had taken along for the purpose of hunting rabbits during the noon hour. He found a cave in the river bank. He did not know that it was a bear den. Looking into it he saw an animal but thought that it was a deer. He shot into the cave a number of times. Then he saw the animal move and knew it to be a bear. He took to his heels. He reported his discovery to the road crew, whose members thought it a "fish story." They went with him to the cave, taking their shovels and picks. They prodded the animal with a long pole and thus affirmed the story, the bear dashed out and scattered the Finns and their tools in all directions. Several climbed small trees. Two of the men, when they recovered from the surprise, followed the bear, much to the horror of the other men. The bear was overtaken. They had clubs and rained blows on his head. He ran in a circle and returned to his den. There they killed him.

## JACK RYAN'S BEAR

At Mercer, Jack Ryan had a saloon, the principal customers of which were lumberjacks. Someone sold Jack a bear which he chained to a post before the door. The lumberjacks would buy a bottle of beer for the cub and he would stand up and drink it. He became very fond of this beverage. He got many a treat. He soon learned to uncork the bottles himself.

Once a friend and his young son were at Mercer and wanted to go to Dan Shay's logging camp. Jack offered to give them a ride out to the camp in his open car. "I want to give the bear a ride, anyway," said he. Ryan unchained the bear and took him in the front seat with himself and another man. After going a block or so there was a real scuffle in the front seat. The bear did not want to ride but Ryan was determined that he should. The bear jumped into the rear seat with the guest and his son. He jumped out of the car but was held by the chain. Ryan got him back in the car and got in the back seat with him. When the car started he jumped all over Ryan. Ryan was a powerful man but he could do nothing with the bear. So he stopped the car. Then Ryan called Kitty, his wife. Out she came and looked over the situation. "Give me that poor bear," said she, "and get in the car." She took the bear by the collar, swung him into the back seat and got in with him. When the car started again the bear tried to leave. Mrs. Ryan took him by the ears and cuffed him just as she would one of her own boys. The bear soon settled down in a corner of the seat and rode along like a good boy to Dan Shay's camp.

## BEAR TRACKS

A farmer living near Bangor, in La Crosse County, was invited by his Norwegian neighbor to help hunt a bear. He was not quite ready to go when his friend called so he told him to go ahead and he would follow him. When he finally got started he soon found some large footmarks in the snow, and supposing these to be those of the Norwegian, he followed them. After following them for a short time these marks proved to be those of the bear. His friend was wearing shoepacks. As he was alone he did not care to further pursue the bear and wisely made a shortcut through the woods to his home.

## SPANKS A BEAR

Out in the pasture a farmer saw a bear trying to wrestle with one of his cows. He was plenty sore. So he went out and whacked the bear soundly with his hand. The bear quit trying to wrestle and lumbered off down the hill.

The farmer went over to the farm of his neighbor. "Say, John," he said, "How can my cow give milk when your tame bear tries to wrestle with her?" John pointed out of the window. His bear was securely chained as usual. The farmer gulped, "My gosh—that was a wild bear I got funny with!"

## RECENT BOOKLETS

We recently issued five Wisconsin folktale booklets:

**Winabozho**—Hero-god of the Indians of the Old Northwest—Myths, legends and stories

**Ben Hooper Tales**—Settlers' yarns from Green and LaFayette Counties, Wisconsin

**Bluenose Brainerd Stories**—Log cabin tales from the Chippewa Valley in the Wisconsin North Woods

**Brimstone Bill**—Famous boss bullwhacker of Paul Bunyan's camps

**Johnny Inkslinger**—Deacon seat tales of Paul Bunyan's industrious camp clerk at his Sawdust River camp in Wisconsin

All are very limited issues and will soon go out of print.



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# Ben Hooper Tales

SETTLER'S YARNS FROM GREEN  
AND LA FAYETTE COUNTIES, WISCONSIN



CHARLES E. BROWN  
Wisconsin Folklore Society  
Madison, Wisconsin  
1944

# Ben Hooper Tales

SETTLER'S YARNS FROM GREEN  
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## Ben Hooper

Ben Hooper was an imaginary character of Green County and adjoining parts of La Fayette County and of whom stories were told by early Yankee settlers. Whenever a group of men were gathered at a cabin or barn raising, at harvest time, or some pioneer festivity, some man might remark, "Have you heard the latest story about Hooper?" Most of these yarns were of the tall tale variety. Most have been told in other regions in the Middle West. Hamlin Garland has recorded several of these stories in his book, "Trail-Makers of the Middle Border."

## His Cabin

When Ben came as a settler the neighbors helped to erect his log cabin. He said afterwards that it was built pretty much "by guess and by God." Their only tools were axes and a saw. Some of the logs soon shrunk so that one "could throw a cat through the wall". The roof leaked. The door was so narrow that one had to enter sideways. A greased skin covered the window. The chimney had such a strong draft that he had to anchor all of his few iron cooking utensils when there was any wind to keep them from going out with the smoke. Ben could have remedied these drawbacks, but when the weather was right there was no need of making repairs, and when it was bad he couldn't make them.

## The Corn Field

Near Ben's cabin there was a rocky hillside where he planted corn. One day a traveler stopped for a drink of water and said, "That is a good stand of corn, but how do you plow the hill, it is pretty steep?" "Wall, stranger", said Ben, "the spring thaws crack the rock and soil, and we stand at the front door and shoot the seed in with a shot-gun. The fall rains uproot the stalks and carry them down to the bottom of the hill. All about as easy as rollin' off a log."

## Cradling Grain

At harvest time Ben Hooper and his neighbors cut their grain with a grain cradle, a sort of combination scythe and rake. Ben was strong and a good cradler. He liked to boast of his prowess. He said, "Once I cut ten swaths, each a half mile long before dinner. Of course I was going good at that time. On my way home I killed a bear and a deer." He was given a leather medal for this feat, but "he somehow lost it".

## The Pumpkin Vine

A relative sent Ben some pumpkin seeds from Pennsylvania. He planted one at the edge of a cornfield. Before planting this seed he rubbed it with skunk oil. That gave it extra vigor. He paid no attention to it during the summer. In the autumn he found the vine, it was six inches thick. He followed it for two miles through the woods where it climbed over trees and crossed several streams. On the prairie beyond he found a golden pumpkin at least six feet high. In examining it he found that a razorback sow and her litter had made their home in the pumpkin. They had fed on the seeds and weighed several hundred pounds apiece. The sow must have weighed half a ton. It took all of the men Ben could muster to saw and cut that pumpkin, and several ox teams and carts to carry it and the hog meat to his home.

## The Lost Horse

Old Deacon Fraser was a near neighbor of Ben's, living about a half mile away. He had a horse that he had brought from the East and of which he was very fond. One day Old Bolly strayed from his pasture into the woods and could not be found. After every attempt to find the "hoss" had failed the Deacon called on his neighbor for help in recovering the animal. Ben was willing to assist his friend and went into the woods to hunt for the "critter". That evening he came to the Fraser cabin with the "hoss". The Deacon was very grateful and asked Ben how he found Bolly. "Wall", said Ben, "I just sodd down and thought where I would go if I was a hoss. Wall I did and he wuz."

## His Oxen

Ben Hooper brought a yoke of oxen from Ohio. They were small but powerful animals and so exactly alike in size and markings that only he could tell them apart. He named them "Josh" and "Jehosophat". He used them in plowing his fields and also in "trompin out" his grain. In threshing he spread the grain sheaves on the ground. The oxen, tied to the end of a pole which revolved around a stake, trod out the grain as they walked around in a circle. They became used to this work.

One day Ben tied them to the long stout branch of a hickory tree. When he returned to them a short time after he found that they had gone around and around the tree and twisted its roots right out of the ground. He was astounded, he wanted that tree. He turned the oxen around and they went in the opposite direction and twisted the tree roots right back into place. When he told this story he exhibited as proof some hickory nuts from this tree, the shells of which had a twisted appearance.

## Shooting Pigeons

Ben was very fond of hunting and was a crack shot with a rifle. It is said of him that he often left his farm work take care of itself while he went into the woods for game. Once, when hunting, he saw about two dozen pigeons sitting on the long limb of a big tree. Ben wanted those pigeons, but he had only his rifle which fired a single ball. Then he got an idea. He moved carefully until he was opposite the end of the limb. Taking careful aim he fired. His ball split the branch, the legs of the perched pigeons dropped into the crack which closed on them and the birds were trapped. Ben then cut the limb from the tree with another shot or two. He went home carrying the limb over one shoulder with the the pigeons dangling from it.

## The Rainwater Barrel

Ben Hooper was thirsty, he wanted a drink of water. There was none in the water bucket and he was too tired to go down to the spring several hundred feet away. To satisfy his thirst he went to the rainwater barrel. There were some wrigglers in the water but in drinking it he strained it through his fingers. "It tastes darn good," said he.

One evening, a few nights later, as he was seated before his cabin door, he was seen to open his mouth wide and out of it came a little cloud of mosquitos. While his neighbors watched he opened it again and again, and each time mosquitos flew out. About this time one of the men gave Ben a swallow of "bug juice" and that ended his belching. He had swallowed a lot of mosquito wrigglers. "Never again", said Ben.

## The Hired Hand

One summer Ben hired a wandering German to help him with his farm work. The next morning he called the man at 4 o'clock and asked him if he was ready to go to work. The hired hand thought that he would feel more like working if he had his breakfast first. After eating a big breakfast he thought that it would be well to eat his dinner too, it was so near dinner time. After he had finished this second meal Ben asked him if he now felt strong and able to begin work. The hand thought that he did, but seeing that supper was only an hour or so away, he thought that he had best eat his supper first and begin working afterwards. After supper he thought that it was just too late to do anything and he went to bed.



## The Hoss Fly

The village band was to play at the head of the funeral procession of a local dignitary. The man who played the big horn was sick so Ben Hooper, who had played a horn back home in Ohio, was pressed into service to play in his place. Before the procession started the band leader cautioned him to be very careful in reading his notes. The band was using notebooks clamped to the instruments.

When the procession was moving and the band playing a solemn dirge the big horn player suddenly sent out an awful blast. It startled the band and everybody. The band leader was mad clear through and walked back to blast the player. And all that Ben could say in defence was, "Gosh, I thought it was a note but it was a hoss fly, and I played it." A big horse fly had settled on the score of his music book.

## The Tunnel

Once Ben took Mrs. Hooper to Chicago for a visit with relatives. While they were there they decided to make a short journey on a railroad train. In the depot Ben bought some bananas. He was assured by the vender that they were good. Neither he or Mrs. Hooper had ever tasted bananas before. After they were on the train and the train well on its way Mrs. Hooper began eating a banana. Shortly after she had finished the train went through quite a long tunnel. It was pitch dark. Mrs. Hooper gasped, crowded closer to Ben and said to him: "Ben, Have you et one of them banyannas yet?" "Nope", said Ben, "not yet". "Then don't, said the groaning woman, "I et mine and just went blind."

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# HERMITS

Tales of Some Wisconsin Hermits and Misers

THE SLAB OF GOLD, OLD BOTTLES, JUNK COLLECTING,  
MYSTERY MAN, BLACK RIVER, HERMIT SAGE, HERMIT  
HOARD, BURIED TREASURE, CATS, WOMAN HERMIT,  
INVENTOR RECLUSE



WISCONSIN

Dedicated To  
Earl S. Holman  
Earl Sugden  
Mrs. Robert E. Friend

CHARLES E. BROWN  
Wisconsin Folklore Society  
Madison, Wisconsin  
1945

## HERMITS

**"OLD DUTCH" FRANK**—He was a mixture of white and Indian. He had been a mail carrier on the Military Road route from Green Bay to Lake Superior. When he retired he went to Thunder Lake in Marinette County and there built a log cabin home. Here he lived by hunting and fishing. His only companion was a large black tomcat. The white settlers of the nearby regions thought him cracked. One night he dreamed that there was a big thick slab of pure gold in Thunder Lake. It was sunk in the water right near the shore. The spirit told to raise it from the water. He must get it before the Fourth of July, if not, it would sink from sight. If he got it, he would be the "richest man in the whole world. He would be elected President of the United States and could share his wealth with all poor people." He explored the lake bank and found some pyrites which he thought precious mineral. He procured a shovel and dug industriously in the sand and water for weeks. He struck quicksand and nearly lost his life. He rigged a rude derrick with a bucket and grappling hook and continued to excavate in likely places. The big slab of gold continued to lure him. But the Fourth finally came and he had failed to get the treasure. Frank disappeared and was never seen again.

**"OLD BOTTLES"** was a character known to many people residing in the West Side downtown district in Milwaukee in the 1890's to the early 1900's. Attired in very shabby clothes, with a burlap bag carried over one shoulder, he roamed the alleys hunting for discarded bottles in ash-cans and junk heaps. His continual cry was, "Bottles, bottles, bottles!" He would talk with no one. His only reply to any question was his familiar cry. He was partly or wholly insane, but harmless. His origin and history was a mystery. His bottles of every kind he sold to an East Side East Water Street old bottle firm. The few pennies he thus obtained kept him alive. He received no help from any city charity, so far as known. "Old Bottles" lived alone in a shack built of old boards and bottles and with sheets of rusty sheetiron for a roof. This was located on the edge of a big rubbish dumping ground at the western limits of the city. Its furnishings consisted of a small square of rush matting on the floor, a small rusty iron stove, several small wooden boxes, which served as a table and cupboard, and a discarded wooden chair without a back. His bed, in one corner, consisted of several dirty blankets and other rags. He had an iron kettle,

tin pans and cans and an earthenware water jug. When anyone came to see him he just closed his door. He wanted no company. When "Old Bottles" was found dead in his shack one morning, the coroner turned his body over to the local medical college.

**HORICON MARSH HERMITS**—In a ramshackle log cabin on the edge of the big Horicon Marsh near Mayville lived two brother hermits, Herman Stroede, 77 years of age, and Julius, aged 74. After their parents died these men lived on a small piece of land once a part of their father's farm. The farmer owner permitted them to live here. These men were quaint characters, everyone knew them. They were collectors of junk, going to the village together and bringing their spoil home in a child's wagon. Nothing escaped their hunting. Around their cabin, rotting in the rain and sun, were piled hundreds of old shoes, pails, umbrellas, old clothes, tools, old papers and tin cans and pans. None of this junk was ever sold. The brothers had a passion for attending fairs and had walked to many of them. Herman hiked to the Chicago (1893) and St. Louis (1904) world's fairs. Both men attended picnics and band concerts at Mayville. On such occasions they wore their world's fair medals. Herman did most of the work about the place while Julius "brought things home."

**"BAGLEY JOHN"**—A mysterious man, spoken of by this name, some years ago, lived the life of a hermit in the Mississippi River bottomlands, near Bagley, in Grant County. There he had built among the tall weeds and brush a rude shack of boards and brush. He was a real "Mystery Man." He would never talk to anyone. He came to town now and then with a basket or bag to buy groceries. He made his wants known by signs or by presenting a written slip of paper to the storekeeper. For his purchases he often paid with a gold coin. Thinking that he might possess more money of this kind some town roughs tried to trail him but he always gave them the slip. He was supposed to have a gun in his shack and no one cared to approach it. He was a powerful man. He was thought to be in hiding for some law-breaking offense in a down-river state.

**"BLACK RIVER"**—This recluse lived in a shelter built of stray boards, sticks and stumps in the large sandy, once pine woods region, between the Lake Michigan shore and the Black River, south of She-

boygan. He had "little of anything." He was on friendly terms with the fishermen and surrounding farmers, but he avoided other people. He was happy in his retreat. He just wanted to be left alone. It was said that he had left the comforts of civilization because of a trouble-making wife and relatives. He subsisted on turtle eggs and turtle meat, on fish which he caught in the river, rabbits which he trapped and on vegetable food which the German farmers gave him. He had a deck of grimy cards with which he played solitaire and several old magazines which he read again and again. Now and then he got hold of an old newspaper or two. After living for a number of years on the Black River sands he drifted away to some other port.

**HERMIT SAGE**—Years ago, with State Senator George W. Wolff of Rhine, we visited John L. Sexton, noted Sheboygan County hermit-sage, in his neat home on the edge of the extensive Sheboygan Marsh north of Elkhart Lake. His bedroom in which we were received was piled on the bed and all around the four walls with bundles of newspapers. There was no chair or place where we could sit. We conversed with this fine old pioneer on subjects of early Indian and county history. He had a fine old face, long white hair and a long white beard. Sexton had a fine record of public service. He taught the first school in the county in a log school. In 1861 he was the postmaster at Russell. He had held other public positions. He was well educated and frequently wrote articles for the newspapers. He had a good garden at the time of our visit. On the night of June 28, 1911, he was murdered by Tony Umbrello, an Italian, who thought that the old hermit had money.

**"WILD CAT" WILSON**—Several years before the Civil War he came to La Pointe on the Lake Superior shore. He could not get on with local officials and chose Hermit Island as his place of retreat. He hired Indians to remove the brush and timber. He paid them with Mexican money. He had money and spent it freely. He was a drinker. Somewhere on the island he was thought to have a hidden treasure of gold and Mexican dollars. He was handy with a gun and no one dared to try to search for it. He was found dead on his island and was buried near the old Mission on Madeline Island. Since then treasure hunters have dug everywhere for his gold and silver hoard but it has not been found.

**OTHER HERMITS**—A Swiss hermit lived on the outskirts of Sauk City. He had a number of cats and stray cats which he adopted. Holes were cut in the bottom of his house door for little and big cats. Living on his farm near Cross Plains was a hermit-miser. Here he lived for 35 years by himself. He spent very little for food or clothing. When he was persuaded to leave the farm his relatives found that Geniges had stowed away about \$6,000 in tin cans, boxes and old clothes. Near Albion, on a small farm in a dilapidated cowshed lived an 84-year-old inventor-hermit. He was at work on a model of a "boltless and screwless" bridge. This he hoped to patent. When he was in bed and it rained he put a washtub on his stomach. He wanted to be alone "in order to think." Sarah Hardwick, a woman hermit, lived for 25 years in a board shanty in the wilderness near the junction of the Yellow River with the Mississippi. She had a small vegetable garden and a ginseng patch. Newspapers she got from a clam fisherman. These she read through and through. She wanted to "keep up with the world." North of Neillsville a college and university trained recluse named Killips lived in peace and contentment in a small tarpaper covered hut. He had many books which he read. Many other interesting hermits living in every part of Wisconsin might be described.



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# LOST TREASURE TALES

Some Wisconsin Lost Treasure Legends and Tales

LAKE MENDOTA CHESTS, WISCONSIN RIVER COIN, JUG OF  
GOLD DUST, POTAWATOMI CACHE, CLARNO GOLD HOARD  
AND OTHER TALES



Dedicated To  
Col. Howard Greene  
Col. (Chief) Yellow Thunder  
Vina Sherwood Bates

CHARLES E. BROWN  
Wisconsin Folklore Society  
Madison, Wisconsin  
1945



## LOST TREASURE TALES

**LAKE MENDOTA LOST TREASURE**—In about the year 1827 a military detachment from Fort Dearborn at Chicago was charged with the duty of transporting two chests of gold and silver coin to the pioneer Fort Crawford, at Prairie du Chien on the banks of the Mississippi River. The party consisted of a lieutenant, a French and Indian guide and four soldiers. Their line of travel was clear across southern Wisconsin in a northwesterly direction. It was through a more or less trackless wilderness. Only the guide had traveled through a part of it before. It was early in the month of November when the military party set out from Chicago at night. Their mission was a very secret one. They had two horses each of which carried one of the small iron-bound chests and the provisions and equipment. On the third day of their travel the guide felt certain that they were being followed, no doubt by Chicago robbers intent on possessing the money chests. In the several days following he did some scouting and felt sure of this. The military party now moved with all possible speed. Their vigilance in guarding the chests prevented enemy attacks. At the end of over a week of difficult travel, the men quite worn out and the horses about ready to drop, they reached the shore of Lake Mendota. This, according to the legend, was near the present site of Mendota Beach. The lake was frozen over, aiding their escape. When they reached its middle, the lieutenant had decided to abandon the chests and to try to save their own lives. The robbers, whiter and Indians, were already approaching the shore they had just left. They were shouting and brandishing their weapons. The chests were quickly unbound and dropped to the bottom of the lake through an opening in the ice. The soldiers then fled across the ice to the north shore of the lake. The robbers abandoned the chase. On the following day a military detail from Fort Crawford met and rescued the Fort Dearborn detail. It is not known whether the chests were ever recovered. Years ago local men dragged the northwest part of the lake for them.

**WISCONSIN RIVER MONEY CHEST**—A small steamboat, "The Idler," was making its way up the Wisconsin River. This was in about the year 1830. She was carrying supplies to Fort Winnebago at the portage of the Fox and Wisconsin rivers. There were on board the boat several civilian passengers and a captain and two soldiers who were conveying a money chest of coin to the Fort. When the boat

reached the vicinity of the present river town of Lone Rock she struck a snag and tore a large hole in her bottom. She was sinking fast and Captain Riggs ordered all ashore. All were landed by the deckhands in two small boats. They were able to save some provisions and the captain and his men the money chest. The latter was heavy and could not be carried. It was buried several feet deep in the sandy shore at the base of a high bluff. They marked the site so that they could return for it with a horse. The portage was about 60 miles away. After nearly a week of travel through wild country, following the river, they safely reached Fort Winnebago. The Indians of that region were hostile and it was a miracle that they escaped attack. The money chest was probably later recovered. There was, however, some doubt about this. In recent years, before the river highway was constructed, treasure hunters had dug many pits along this shore of the Wisconsin in a hope of finding the Fort money chest.

**JUG OF GOLD DUST**—Some children were once playing on a hill at Eastman, in Crawford County. In the course of their games they overturned a rock, and, much to their surprise, found buried beneath it in sandy soil an earthenware crock. In taking off the cover they dropped it. It was filled with bright yellow sand which poured out as the crock, rolled down the hillside and finally broke. The children went home and there told of the finding of the crock but no one thought it of particular interest. Years later a Prairie du Chien old lady, who told the story, said that she had learned that a soldier who once lived at Eastman had buried a jug of California gold dust on the hillside where they played as children. So a fortune sufficient to enrich all of the surrounding settlers was unknowingly lost. The bright yellow sand was grains of pure gold.

**POTAWATOMI CACHE**—In 1835, the U. S. Government removed some 2,000 Prairie Potawatomi from southern Wisconsin to a reservation in Iowa. About an equal number of these Indians remained behind. These fled into northeastern Wisconsin and northern Michigan. Some fled to Canada. The night before some of them left Milwaukee they constructed a cache. This was on the bank of the Milwaukee River not far from the store of the trader, Solomon Juneau. They dug a deep pit and in it placed two large brass kettles. Between them they placed a large thick tin bucket. In this they placed gold and silver coins wrapped in buckskin. Also a quantity of beads and

Indian medicines. Other kettles were inverted over these kettles. Sheets of birchbark were used to cover all. Over this was plastered a thick coating of wet red clay, and a fire built on this to harden it to a cement-like hardness. The pit was then filled with earth. Every sign of digging was obliterated. The next morning all of the Indians left Milwaukee. It has been said that there was some \$35,000 in this Indian cache. So far as known they never returned to dig for it. Large buildings now stand on this site. This was their share of money received at the Chicago treaty.

**CLARNO GOLD HOARD**—An old man who lived alone on a small farm near Clarno near the southern boundary of Green County was reputed to possess a quite large sum of money. This he secreted somewhere on the farm. When he died his relatives and friends searched every part of his land and buildings for the money but were unable to find it. The farm was later sold to a stranger from Illinois. Years passed and the matter of the lost riches was quite generally forgotten. Then there appeared at a bank in a town across the boundary in Illinois a man from Clarno. He showed to the banker a gold coin of which he wished to know the value. The banker recognized the piece as a foreign coin, a numismatic rarity. He asked the farmer if he had more. The man said that he had found a lot of similar coins in cleaning out an old dry well on his farm. These he was asked to bring to the banker for examination. Within a week the countryman returned bringing a bag containing a large number of gold coins and some large foreign silver dollars. After a cursory examination the banker convinced the farmer that under a government law of treasure trove these coins must be left with him until the matter of their value and ownership could be fully investigated. This the finder agreed to. He was given a receipt for the coins. When he returned some time later he learned that the banker had left for parts unknown. The management of the bank had passed into other hands. None of its officers or employees knew anything of the bag of coins. The finding and the loss of the coin hoard will always remain a neighborhood mystery.

**OTHER LOST TREASURES TALES**—Many other lost treasure tales have been recorded from every part of Wisconsin. Of some there are a number of different versions. Some of these legends and stories may be briefly referred to. At Goodnow in Vilas County Big Paddy, an

Irish railroad employee for about five years, hid his wages in the forest. He was killed in a windstorm by a falling tree. His money cache has never been found. "Bill" Tompkins owned a farm south of Portage. He was the owner of some \$50,000 which he had brought with him from the East. This money he secreted somewhere on his land. After his death a search for this money was made but it was not found. The farm was sold. Some years later his daughter found a map supposed to give the location of the secreted money. The farm owner refused to let her search for the money treasure. He wished to regain it himself. Years ago a Bayfield man was traveling out of town on an old road. He learned that he was being followed by two men who intended to kill him and to take a large sum of money he was carrying in his pack-sack. He then took the money and dug it under a stump or rock. He never returned from his journey. On the top of Table Mound located between Black Earth and Cross Plains, Dane County towns, some raiding Indians are said to have buried some money and other valuables. They were being hotly pursued by settlers and rangers. Recent search for has not recovered this plunder.

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AMERICAN FOLK LORE  
**FLOWER TOYS AND GAMES**

Prepared for the use of Students

**University of Wisconsin**

**Summer Session**



CHARLES E. BROWN  
Chief, State Historical Museum  
Madison, Wisconsin  
1923



## PIPES O' PAN

Out in our kitchen garden,  
Where the big green squash vines lie,  
Is the place to find a magic pipe  
To call the fairies nigh.  
First you must trim a leaf off  
And notch the stem just so,  
Then softly play on your squash vine flute  
While the fairies come and go.

—MRS. ARTHUR M. VINJE.

## FLOWER TOYS AND GAMES

Modern young people have had little opportunity to make the acquaintance of the flower toys and games of American children of past generations. Some of these and the rhymes and lines which go with them are as old as our Country, having been played, or played-with, by children since Colonial days. They have become a not unimportant part of the folklore of the Nation. There are many more of these games and toys. Only those personally known to the writer are listed.

### FLOWERS AND LEAVES

Pretty pansy dolls were made by the small girls of a past generation by wrapping leaves about their stems. Hollyhock blossoms tied about the middle with grass formed attractive little ladies with spreading skirts, with whom they might amuse themselves for hours. Poppy blossoms were also so employed.

What a real pleasure it was to hold a golden yellow dandelion to a friend's chin to learn if she or he "loved butter"! Lovely "spit curls" were easily made by splitting dandelion stems and wetting them with the lips, and "beads" by cutting them into small sections with a knife or scissors. Gone to seed these flowers provided "clocks" for the young people. The seeds were blown off, those remaining after several trials telling the hour of the day. Lively jumping-jacks could be fashioned by pushing a grass stalk through the head of the dandelion stem, which had been split in one or several places, and pulling and pushing the stalk up and down. This grotesque little toy never failed to delight small children.

Both dandelion and daisy blossoms were woven by skilful fingers into lovely necklaces, headbands and garlands.

Pulling off the petals of the daisy one by one, girls, having in mind some young man of their acquaintance, recited the familiar little rhyme:

One I love,  
Two I love,  
Three I love, I say,  
Four I love with all my heart,  
Five I cast away. Etc.

Some repeated the words "He loves me—He loves me not," or, in an effort to ascertain the character of a future mate—"Rich man, poor man, beggar man, thief, doctor, lawyer, merchant, chief,"

and repeating this until every petal had been removed. The first two of these "rhymes" were also recited when removing seeds from an apple. Before being eaten the apple was tapped by a friend and given the name of a boy, in response to a request of "tap my apple."

Daisy "grandmothers" were made by removing some petals and leaving enough to represent a bonnet and strings; negro "mammies" in the same manner from black-eyed Susan blossoms. The yellow centers of daisies supplied pretty buttons for dress ornamentation, also, when desired, tasty looking "pumpkin pies" for the doll's dining table. Feverfew blossoms provided white buttons or cakes.

Bleeding heart blossoms when taken apart were found to be made up of "a pair of breeches," "earrings," a dainty pair of "slippers" and a "wine bottle." Some young ladies hung the blossoms over the ears by a thread loop. The flowers of the morning glory and Canterbury bell were blown up and "popped." They made pretty "dresses" for tiny dolls. Bumble bees were imprisoned while visiting the former to hear their angry hum. Rhubarb leaves and mandrake plants became "umbrellas" and "parasols", when such articles were wanted. The game of "fighting roosters" consisted in hooking together by their spurs two violets and pulling on the stems. Poppy pericarps made fine "pepper boxes." By pinching them between the thumb and forefinger little "purses" were made from the leaves of the live-for-ever.

A penny poppy-show was made by pressing the blossoms of various small flowers (phlox, pansies, etc.) against a small square of glass, placing a square of cardboard behind the flowers and wrapping all in a sheet of paper so folded that the flowers could be shown when desired. Before being exhibited to a prospective "customer" these lines were recited:

Penny, penny, poppy-show,

Give me a pin and I'll let you know.

Pressing flowers between the leaves of books was a favorite pastime. Some were arranged in tiny wreaths, often by merely inserting the tip of one small cone-shaped flower into the opening in another. Lilac, phlox, and four o'clock blossoms lent themselves readily to such uses.

By sticking together burdock blossoms, furniture for the doll's house, baskets, toy balls, picture frames, and other articles

were easily made. A rude musical instrument was made by holding a leaf of ribbon grass tightly between the thumbs and blowing on it. Grass stalks of several different lengths were held in the closed hand and were drawn to determine who would be "it" in games.

Leaf wreaths, girdles, and bracelets were constructed by pinning together maple, poplar or other leaves by means of their own detached stems. Linden and other large leaves were rolled into cornucopia form for use as drinking cups, or pinned and inverted to make Indian tipis.

Considerable time was often spent by young people in searching for the four-leaved clover, which was supposed to bring "good luck." Cornhusk dolls were much prized. Corn silk was in demand for doll's hair. It was also employed for the making of wigs, mustaches and beards.

Youthful artists made paints of several colors (and dyes for coloring dolls' dresses) from elderberries, bloodroot stems, live-for-ever leaves and other berries, blossoms and leaves. The paint brush generally consisted of a chicken feather or the chewed end of a stick.

### SEEDS, NUTS AND FRUITS

By cutting them with a jackknife boys converted peach stones into toy baskets and monkeys. Acorns were hollowed out and fitted with a straw stem to make miniature pipes. They were also arranged in lines and "regiments" and paraded as toy soldiers. They provided cups and saucers for the girls' dolls. Two horse chestnuts were perforated and tied to the two ends of a cord. These made a fine toy, being twirled in the hand in opposite directions. The down of the thistle and milkweed launched from the hand or blown into the air made fine "balloons." Caught in a friendly breeze they sometimes traveled far and high.

The little spherical seeds of the basswood or linden, "monkey nuts", impaled on an ordinary pin, were made to "dance" for a moment at the end of a clay pipe stem by blowing gently through the latter when held upright. They were also used as "pills" in playing "doctor." Maple seeds were torn apart and thrown into the air. When properly launched in a direction against the wind they frequently returned with a twirling motion toward the thrower. Pressed between the thumb and finger they could be "squirted" for a short distance. Attractive necklaces were made by stringing various seeds and berries. Flat seeds, as those of the squash and pumpkin, were employed as counters in games.

Stuck in a row on the barbs of a wire fence green milkweed pods made excellent "birds." Seen from a short distance these were quite lifelike. The pods of the sweet pea and common garden pea made good miniature boats. Beans were used in playing the game of "bean-hole." A small shallow hole was made in the ground. The several players standing at a line drawn some six or more feet from this hole each in turn endeavored to cast a bean into it. The one whose bean entered the cavity or was nearest to it had the privilege of snapping the other beans into it, and if he succeeded, winning the other beans. Bean bags for games of catch were made by sewing a handful of beans in a square of cloth.

Cherry pits laid on the palm or back of the hand could be snapped with the fingers of the other at a target. The prickly pods of the wild cucumber when opened were found to contain a pair of lace breeches. By squeezing the pod in the hand the seeds which it contained could be popped out. Rose-hips hollowed out and furnished with a bent-pin handle made nice toy cups.

By the use of wooden pegs potatoes were provided with legs and a tail and thus converted into "pigs" and other toy animals. Hickory nuts furnished heads for "old women" dolls. The little "cheeses" of the common mallow were sought for use at the doll's tea party. Balsam pods were held in the hand to "curl up" when lightly touched. Jewelweed pods were "exploded" by the touch.

Nearly every country boy knew how to make a cornstalk fiddle or a willow whistle, also a popgun or blowgun from the stems of the elder. Small girls collected the gum from the trunks of cherry trees. These imitation "jewels" were stuck to the backs of fingers and to the lobes of the ears. This resin they also chewed.

Long apple peels were thrown over the shoulder with the expectation that when fallen they would spell the name of a friend or beau.

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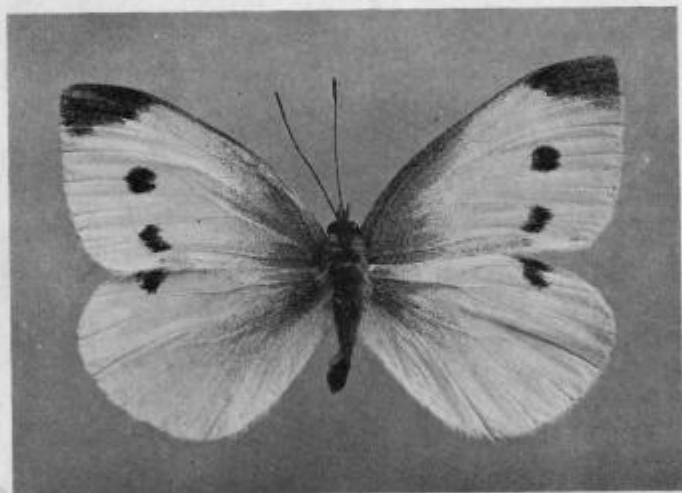
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# AMERICAN FOLKLORE INSECT LORE

Prepared for the use of Students of the  
University of Wisconsin  
Summer Session



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CHARLES E. BROWN  
Director, State Historical Museum  
Madison, Wisconsin

1929.

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## INSECT LORE

### OLD-TIME SUPERSTITIONS AND INTERESTING CUSTOMS CONNECTED WITH INSECT LIFE

Most of these curious beliefs and customs existed in the writer's own home town during his boyhood. A few were common to other parts of the state. Some of these were brought to Wisconsin by settlers from the eastern and southern states and others from England, Germany, Holland and other European countries.

#### BUTTERFLIES AND MOTHS

To catch the first butterfly of the season was considered unlucky. To have a butterfly settle on one's head brought good luck. If a butterfly alighted on one's clothing one would find a new sweetheart; if on one's shoulder one would have a new suit of clothes or a new dress; if on the palm of one's hand one would receive money. To pull off a butterfly's wing or wings would bring bad luck. If a butterfly flew into a house, a lady visitor would come wearing a dress of the same color or colors as its wings.

Butterflies seen in the late fall were a sure sign of the coming of cold weather. White butterflies flying in a garden early in the season were unlucky; the crop would be poor. Whenever possible they were caught and killed. To disturb yellow butterflies settled in a puddle was unlucky, one would "lose a pot of gold." The sombre-colored wood nymph butterflies children thought to be "fairies." The dog-face butterfly, because of his wing markings, was regarded with suspicion. It was unlucky to catch one. Swallow-tail butterflies, like the milkmen, were thought to follow a certain daily round. The sight of a mourning-cloak on a sunny winter day was regarded as a sure sign of an early spring.

German housewives called a moth a "butter hex." Because of their night-flying habits moths were thought to be identified with witches. They bewitched (hexed) the butter by flying or crawling into churns, milk pans and butter jars. All small moths were "millers" and were dreaded because of the injury that all were supposed to cause to clothing and fabrics. A moth singeing its wings in a candle flame or lamp chimney foretold sickness or a dire calamity. A white moth hovering about at night was believed by some persons to be the spirit of a dead relative or friend. The pretty little black eight-spotted

forester moth brought bad luck if it got into a house. The common hawk moth (*Celerio lineata*) is still called a "tobacto buzzer" by some country folk. Its presence in a tobacco field or garden is a bad omen. It is struck down with a shingle paddle.

When the chrysalis of the question-mark butterfly, the "Hop Master," had large golden spots on its back the old-time hop-growers knew that the hop harvest and profits would be large. When butterfly chrysalids were found suspended in well protected places it was considered a sign that there would be heavy rains, if elsewhere, the weather would be dry.

A woolly bear caterpillar crawling hurriedly across a walk in the fall told of the near approach of winter weather. The size of the colored areas on his back indicated whether the winter would be severe or mild. If a measuring worm or span-worm crawled over one's clothes he was thought to be measuring one "for a new suit." If one crawled over a woman's hand she "would have a new pair of gloves."

## BEETLES

Among children the lady-bird or lady-bug (called Marien-käfer by German children) was a general favorite. Tossing the little beetle into the air they would say:

Lady-bug, lady-bug,  
Fly away home.  
Your house is on fire,  
Your children will roam.

To kill a lady-bird was to bring bad luck. Children would not injure one lest it bring rain. These beetles were supposed to be especially lucky when they crawled on one's hand. To have one in the house in the winter time was very lucky. One might find "as many dollars as there were spots on its wing-covers."

Another name which German people had for it, "Herr Gott's Vögele," illustrates the veneration in which the lady-bird was held. In some European countries the lady-bird is dedicated to the Virgin Mary.

Lady-birds were weather prophets. They brought fair weather, when it is to be wet "they fall from their resting places."

June-bugs, or May beetles, were disliked and feared, especially by girls and women, because of the delight which they were supposed to

take in getting entangled in their hair. Their buzzing and blundering flight frightened children. German people threw them into the air saying:

Mai-käfer flieg eweg,  
Die mutter hockt in kühe-dreck;  
Dei vater sitzt im holler-stock,  
Und kocht eine gute holler-supp.

Snap or spring beetles (also called click-beetles) were insect acrobats. Children held them between the thumb and fore-fingers to hear them "click," or placed them on their backs to see them exert their power of leaping. When numbers of tumble-bugs were seen it was thought that a "hard winter" would surely follow. When a fire-fly flew into a house it was said that "someone will go, and someone will come." Children believed them to be "fairies hurrying to a dance," when seen after dark. Old people sometimes remarked that "in fire-fly season toads eat fire." Stag beetles, or "Pinch-bugs," because of their formidable appearance, were sometimes called "Imps-of-the-Devil." They were believed to be capable of great evil. English people thought that they "carried fire coals into buildings in their jaws and thus caused fires." Boys sometimes harnessed them with thread and made them drag small sticks and other small articles. The little "gold beetles," found on the flowers of the spreading dogbane, were childhood "make-believe" jewels. Longicorn or "icng-horn beetles" were dreaded because of their long antennae. Ticking noises in the walls of houses, made by the larva of the little Ptinid beetle, the "Death Tick," were believed by old people to be a death warning.

## BUGS

Bats were believed to bring bedbugs into houses. The impaling of a cockroach on a pin would, it was believed, cause others to leave a building. Dogs had to have a flea or two to be active in their masters' interests. Children who scratched themselves in public were warned "that they would have lice," or were asked if they had lice. Sow bugs had various supposed medicinal virtues. A number were sometimes placed in a bag worn at the neck to cure flushes. Water in which some had been boiled was a cure for jaundice. A "thousand-legs" crawling into a child's ears would "drive it crazy." Walking-

stick insects were regarded with horror. They were supposed to be "sticks come to life."

To "put a flea in a person's ear" was to put him on his guard. Stones lifted from ants nests by children were carefully replaced. It was not lucky to expose the little workers to the weather or other injury. To dream of ants brought prosperity.

## BEES AND WASPS

Bee stings were supposed by some persons to be a cure for rheumatism. A plantain leaf rubbed on the wound would cure a bee sting. If a honey bee flew before one one would "receive a letter." If a death occurred in a family which kept bees the bees must be told of it or they would all leave. A bee-keeper must not count his hives or all of the bees would die. Bees and ants were pointed out to children as models of industry. An eccentric or slightly deranged person was said to have "a bee in his bonnet." Children imprisoned bumblebees in a tumbler or hollyhock blossom to hear their angry hum. Bee-keepers followed the practice of beating pans and making a great noise to cause a swarm of bees to settle. People recited the old English proverb:

A swarm of bees in May,  
Is worth a ton of hay;  
A swarm of bees in June,  
Is worth a silver spoon;  
A swarm of bees in July,  
Is not worth a fly.

A wasp flying into a house brought good luck to the family. If a girl wore a piece of a wasp's nest in her clothing her sweetheart would love her more. Old people thought that this paper from a nest made the best wiper for spectacle glasses. Some housewives said that if you knocked down or removed the nest of a mud-dauber "you would break all your dishes." Clay from such a nest was believed to be a cure for boils. If a hornet built its nest low it was a prophecy that the weather would be cold and stormy, if high, it would be dry and mild. If one injured a yellow jacket's nest its inmates would follow one "until they obtained their revenge."

## FLIES

If you killed a fly "ten flies would come to its funeral." This was a sage reminder of the uselessness of attempting to get rid of them. If a fly flew around one's face continually it was a sign that "a stranger wished to meet you." Children who opened their mouths wide in crying were warned "that flies would fly into them." "Expect rain when flies bite" was a common saying. It was lucky to have a fly in the house in the winter time.

Bluebottle flies in a house "buzzed" because they wished to get out. It brought good luck to release them. German people called them "brimmers." Rain and warm weather was sure to follow the swarming of gnats.

## GRASSHOPPERS, CRICKETS AND LOCUSTS

A cricket in the house was believed to bring cheer and good luck to the fireside. To hear one singing in the house after one had retired was very lucky. To kill one would bring misfortune. His relations would "eat your clothes." Stepping on a cricket would bring rain. When crickets forsook a house it was a sure sign that a death would occur among its inmates.

If a grasshopper was seen dancing rain would follow "within three days." Children squeezed a grasshopper to "make it spit tobacco juice." Grasshoppers were supposed to "idle-away" the summer time, and "starve to death" in the winter in consequence.

Locusts only appeared "every seventeen years." The W on their wings meant "War, Want and Woe." If they were very noisy it was a sign that warm weather was on the way. Ninety days after the first katydid was heard there would be a frost.

## DRAGONFLIES

Dragonflies or "Devils Darning-needles" were feared by children who placed their hands over their ears when they flew by. It was believed by children that they "sewed-up" young peoples' ears when an opportunity offered. They were believed to be evil spirits sent by Satan to work mischief. German children called them "Schneiders" (tailors). They held one by the wings and recited a little verse. Boys called them "Snake feeders" and "Snake-doctors" because of a belief that they acted as feeders and doctors to snakes. They were supposed to warn their snake friends of danger. Some persons called them "Horse-stingers," because of a belief that they

stung horses. If a dragonfly rested on your fishpole or line while you were fishing the fish would not bite. It was bad luck to kill one.

## SPIDERS

There were many interesting superstitions about spiders. A spider crawling on one brought good luck. Bad luck would come if you killed it. If you killed one there would be rain the next day. If killed on a rainy day there would be rain on the following day. To kill one at night was very unlucky. If a spider came down in front of your face or spun a web over your head you would "receive a letter." One crawling over your bed told of the "coming of a stranger." One getting on your clothes "spins your wealth." A spider on a bride's dress was a "blessing on her." To see a spider spin down from a ceiling at night was lucky, in the day-time unlucky.

To walk through a spider's web was lucky. "Brush away cobwebs and you will not prosper." To kill a black spider was very unlucky. If one crawled on one one would "receive a letter from a black-haired person." "Carry a dead spider in your shoe for luck." One put in one's pocketbook would "bring money."

"Clock-spiders" and their webs were supposed to be aids in telling the time. All black spiders were believed to be poisonous. Bright-colored spiders were poisonous. The Platform spider (*Agriope riparia*), called the "Cross spider," was believed very poisonous. It often constructed its web in the orchard and thus kept children away from the fruit trees.

Our grandmothers sometimes used dusty cobwebs to stop the flow of blood from a cut. Swallowing a bit of spider-web was supposed to be a cure for headache. Pills made of cobwebs were believed to stop hemorrhages.

To kill a "Daddy-long-legs" or Harvestman would cause "the cows to go dry," or you would "lose all your cows." "If you kill one there will be a poor harvest." If one crawled on your person you threw him over your shoulder for good luck. If you held one by two of his legs he would point with the others to "where the cows are."

See "Common Facts in the History of Insects," Frank Cowan, 1865.



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# COWBOY TALES



## PECOS BILL

*Mythical Hero of the American Cow Camps*

*Mushmouth, Pretty Pete Rogers, Bean Hole.  
Strap Buckner*



MADISON, WISCONSIN  
1929

### RANGE RIDERS

*"Give us a range and our horses and ropes, open the  
Pearly Gate,  
And turn us loose in the unfenced blue riding the  
sunset rounds  
Hunting each stray in the Milky Way and running  
the Rancho straight;  
Not crowding the dogie stars too much on their way  
to the bedding grounds.*

*"Maverick comets that's running wild, we'll rope  
'em and brand 'em fair,  
So they'll quit stampeding the starry herd and  
scaring folks below,  
And we'll save 'em prime for the round-up time,  
and we riders'll all be there,  
Ready and willing to do our work as we did in the  
long ago.*

HENRY HERBERT KNIBBS in "Riders of the Stars,"  
in John A. Lomax "Songs of the Cattle Trail and Cow  
Camp."

# COWBOY TALES



## PECOS BILL

*Tall Yarns of the Mighty Hero  
of the  
American Cattle Trails and Ranches*



## Other Cowboy Stuff



C. E. BROWN  
Publisher of  
PAUL BUNYAN TALES

First Edition  
1929

C. E. BROWN  
2011 Chadbourne Avenue  
Madison, Wisconsin

# COWBOY TALES

## PECOS BILL

*Mighty Cowboy Hero of the Ranges and Ranches*

Pecos Bill, so-called because he came into existence in the Pecos River region in western Texas, was the boss cattleman and unrivalled broncho buster of the whole Cow Country. This is admitted by every cowhand who ever knew him, or knew of him and his great exploits. He belongs to the old-time cowboys of the wide, open spaces. The mighty deeds of Pecos Bill have been told by generations of cowmen, and will probably continue to be told for generations to come. To try to collect the tales of all would be a real undertaking. Although a Texan his adventures appear to have carried him over a large portion of the West, and probably as far north as the Canada line. In the hey-day of his wild career his cattle herds are reported to have numbered millions of longhorns, and nearly every herd of mustangs bore his brand. Pecos Bill is to the cowboys what the giant Paul Bunyan was, and still is, to the American lumberjacks.

To the American cowboy, of whom Pecos Bill is a much-magnified copy, Emerson Hough has paid this tribute: "The man aspiring to the title of cowboy needed to have stern stuff in him. He must be equal to the level of the rude conditions of the life, or he was soon forced out of the ranks of the society of the craft. In one way or another the ranks of the cow-punchers were filled.

"It was as though the model of the cowboy had been cast in bronze, in a heroic mould, to which all aspirants were compelled to conform in line and detail. The environment had produced its type. The cowboy had been born. America had gained another citizen, history another character.

"Let us not ask whence the cowboy came, for that is a question immaterial and impossible of answer. Be sure, he came from among those who had strong within them that savagery and love of freedom which springs so swiftly into life among strong natures when offered a brief exemption from the slavery of civilization. The range claimed and held its own. The days of the range were the last ones of American free life."\*

### PECOS BILL'S BOYHOOD

Perhaps the best account of Pecos Bill's youthful years is that given by Edward O'Reilly, who has delved somewhat deeply in his history.\* "According to the most veracious historians, Bill was born about the time that Sam Houston discovered Texas. His mother was a sturdy pioneer woman, who once killed forty-five Indians with a broom-handle (some authorities say with a washboard), and weaned him on moonshine liquor when he was three days old. He cut his teeth on a bowie knife, and his earliest playfellows were the bears and catamounts of east Texas.

\*The Story of the Cowboy, D. Appleton & Co., 1898.

\*The Saga of Pecos Bill, Cent. Mag., 106, 1923.

"When Bill was about a year old, another family moved into the country and located about fifty miles down the river. His father decided the place was gettin' too crowded and packed his family into a wagon and moved west. One day, after they had crossed the Pecos River, Bill fell out of the wagon. As there were sixteen or seventeen other children in the family, his parents didn't miss him for four or five weeks, and then it was too late to find him.

"That's how Bill came to grow up with the coyotes along the Pecos. He soon learned the coyote language, and used to hunt with them, and sit on the hills and howl at night. Being so young when he got lost, he always thought he was a coyote.

"One day, when he was about ten years old, a cow-boy came along just when Bill had matched a fight with two grizzly bears. Bill hugged the bears to death, tore off a hind leg and was just settin' down to breakfast when this cow-boy loped up and asked him what he meant by runnin' around naked that way among the varmints."

Bill told him that he was a varmint—a coyote. He pointed out to the cowman that he had fleas and howled around all night, like a respectable coyote. This, the cow-boy explained to him, was no proof since all Texans had fleas and most of them howled. He finally convinced the boy that he was a human being and not a coyote.

"Bill went to town with the cow-hand, and in due time he got to enjoyin' all the pleasant vices of mankind, and decided that he certainly was a human. He got to runnin' with the wild bunch and sunk lower and lower, until he became a cow-boy."

### HIS HORSE WIDOW MAKER

Bill had many horses. Most of them could outrun a streak of lightnin', then double back and outrun the next streak. His favorite mount was a horse he called Widow Maker. No one but Pecos Bill was ever known to ride him successfully. The cemeteries down there in the old longhorn country are crowded with the graves of the cowboys who tried. Bill had raised this colt himself on nitroglycerine and dynamite. This probably accounted for his high spirits and temper. He used to say he had raised him by hand, and showed a hand minus several digits to prove it. When he wanted Widow Maker to give a special performance he fed him a skyrocket, a pin-wheel, or a Roman candle or two. Bonebreaker was another of Bill's cow ponies. Ridin' him, as some found to their discomfort, was like divin' head-foremost into a threshin' machine. Hoof-prints of some of Bill's ponies can be seen imprinted in the rock in a number of places in Arizona.

*Ride him, you cowboy thar, ride him!  
Say, you are shore on some hoss!  
Keep on a settin' astride him  
'Till he has larn't who is boss!*

—F. W. LAFRENTZ in "Cowboy Stuff"

## SUPREME WITH THE LARIAT

As a cowpuncher Pecos Bill was simply the last word. He could ride any broncho that ever was invented. He could rope and brand more steers than any cowhand who ever lived, and keep several chuck wagons busy supplyin' him with grub when on the range. As a roper he was unbeatable. In fact, it is generally acknowledged that he invented ropin'. Some say that the lasso he used was as long as the equator, but truthful ones admit that it was about four feet shorter at its short end. With this lariat Bill could rope a whole herd of steers at a single throw.

Once when he was drivin' thirty thousand cattle north from his range on the Pecos, and had driven them part way there, they somehow got frightened and started stampedin' for home. Bill roped the whole bunch and with the help of his horse, Widow Maker, dragged them clear to Kansas. Now and then, in his wild years, he roped a herd of some other rancher's steers by mistake. The sheriff's posses who went out after Bill on these occasions somehow never came back.

Bill's great skill with the rope once saved the life of a good friend. This cowboy tried to ride Widow Maker and was thrown so high that he came down right on top of Pikes Peak. Pike, they say, didn't own this hill at the time. Of course the cowboy was doomed to a lingerin' death. There seemed to be no hope for him, accident policies were not yet invented, but Bill came to the rescue. Usin' only a short calf-loop he roped his friend 'round the neck and deftly jerked him to a place of safety in the valley, twenty thousand feet below. Curley Joe was always grateful to Bill for thus savin' his life. When he moved his outfit to New Mexico Curley became Bill's horse wrangler and performed cther important duties about the ranch. He always gave Widow Maker plenty of room.

## AS A BAD MAN

There are various tales of Pecos Bill's progress as an outlaw.

"It wasn't long until Bill was famous as a bad man. He invented the six-shooter and train robbin' and most of the crimes popular in the old days of the West. He didn't invent cow stealin'. That was discovered by King David in the Bible, but Bill improved on it." When in action his arsenal was really quite formidable. With a Colt in each hand, and another brace of guns attached to the stirrups, which he could manipulate with the toes of his boots, he was nearly as dangerous as a modern machine gun.

"There is no way of tellin' just how many men Bill did kill. Deep down he had a tender heart, however, and never killed women or children, or tourists out of season. He never scalped his victims, he was too civilized for that. He used to skin them gently and tan their hides. It wasn't long before Bill had killed all the bad men in west Texas, massacred all the Indians, and eaten all the buffalo. So he decided to migrate to a new country where hard men still thrived and a man could pass the time away."

So Bill set out to find the hardest cow outfit in the



world. He saddled his horse and set out for the West. An old trapper, whom he met, gave him some general directions. Bill rode along for several hundred miles until his horse stubbed his foot on a mountain and broke his leg. So he slung his saddle over his shoulder and hiked along. Profanity was a gift with Bill and he used plenty of it at this time. After walkin' about a couple of hundred miles he came on a big mountain lion, who was just spoilin' for a fight. Bill licked the lion to a fare-you-well, then put his saddle on the big cat and went whoopin' and yellin' down the canyon, swingin' his rattlesnake quirt, the cat takin' a hundred feet at every jump.

"Soon he saw a chuck wagon with a bunch of cowboys settin' round it. He rode up to the feed-box splittin' the air with his war-whoops, with that old lion a screechin', and that snake singin' his rattles. When he came to the fire he grabbed the old cougar by the ear, jerked him back on his haunches, stepped off him, hung his snake around his neck, and looked the outfit over. Them cowboys just sat there sayin' less than nothin'.

"Bill was hungry, and seein' a boilerful of beans cookin' on the fire scooped up a few handfuls and swallowed them, washin' them down with a few gallons of boilin' coffee out of the pot. Wipin' his mouth on a handful of prickly pear cactus, Bill turned to the cowboys, and asked: 'Who the — is boss around here?' A big fellow about eight feet tall, with seven pistols and nine bowie knives in his belt, rose up, and takin' off his hat, said: 'Stranger, I was, but you be.'"

Bill had many adventures with this tough outfit. It was about this time that he staked out New Mexico, used Arizona for a calf-pasture, and drove the Spaniards out of California.

### HIS PRIVATE CEMETERY

Those who know, and some who don't, cheerful liars all of them, say that Bill had a graveyard of his own over near Tombstone, Arizona. Bein' at all times very handy with his shootin' irons, he consigned to this haven of perpetual repose many of those who crossed him or otherwise fell under his displeasure. Among those who sought rest in this burial plot durin' the years of Bill's activities were bad men galore, cattle rustlers, nesters, horse thieves, highwaymen, gamblers who dealt from the bottom of the deck, others who shot craps with loaded dice, and other vermin of the then sinful Southwest.

Not even Bill's bosom friends ever cared to question him very much about his buryin' ground, because to do so might bring an urgent invitation for the questioner to also go into residence there. Bill never did take kindly to pryin' into his business affairs.

It is said that all who were numbered among Bill's dead in Gates Ajar "died with their boots on." He was so lightnin' quick on the draw that they never found the time to take 'em off. He took real pride in markin' their graves and kept a standin' order with an eastern mail-order house for marble slabs.

## HIS OUTFIT

Pecos Bill's outfit of hard ridin', hell roarin' mavericks was recruited from nearly every part of the wild and woolly West. Its members were known and their bold exploits related in nearly every cow camp. Among those prominently mentioned in cow-punchin' history were Mushmouth, Gun Smith, Alkalai Ike, Moon Hennessey, Pretty Pete Rogers, Rusty Peters, One Lung Lyon, Scotty Murphy, Arizona Kid, Bullfrog Doyle, Bean-Hole Brown and Broncho Jones.

Mushmouth was the musician, he was a mighty hand with a mouth organ. He rather specialized on such old favorite tunes as "Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep," and "Down in the Coal Mines." With his lip-piano and his doleful airs he could stir up a coyote chorus almost any time. Gun Smith, who came from down in the Panamint Mountain country, was so accurate a shot with his Colt that he could split a bullet in full flight. Rusty Peters had the reputation of being able to do more tricks with a brandin' iron, especially in the way of creatin' new brands, than any steer-hurdler who ever lived. A past master at teachin' tenderfeet and bundle stiffs the mysteries of the dance was Bullfrog Doyle. He always allowed that his mastery of the terpsichorean art was a Heaven-sent gift with him. He took a natural pride in the caperin' accomplishments of his pupils. Moon Hennessey, whose boyhood home was near Bottle Dugout, in Death Valley, could stow away more red-eye at a standin' than any drink-shifter in the West. Once, on a bet, he drank Arizona completely dry, and would have blotted-up Texas too but for the great popular disapproval of his proposal. Another time, while on a toot at night, he ran into a barbed wire fence and followed it clear to Wyoming before he was found. Fat Adams was so very thin, that, when standin' sideways he was invisible. This saved his miserable life on at least one occasion, when the bloodthirsty Apache were on the warpath. On gala occasions, at rodeos and dances, Pretty Pete Rogers with his silver ornamented bridle and saddle, silver spurs, grizzly chaps, and Stetson loaded down with silver cartwheels, was always the best dressed man in the ring. He was a real heart-breaker too and counted his sweethearts by the dozen in every cow town and minin' camp.

Bean Hole was boss of the chuck wagon. They say that some of the pancakes he tossed up from his fryin' pan are gyратin' yet, and never will come down 'till there falls a hard, drenchin' molasses rain.

Such were a few of the bold cowpunchers who rounded up and followed Bill's big herds on the old cattle trails. Any town they shot-up in their playful frolics stayed so for some time.

*Oh, for me a horse and saddle,  
Every day without a change;  
With the desert sun a blazin'  
On a hundred miles of range.  
Just a-ridin', just a-ridin',  
Desert ripplin' in the sun,  
Mountains blue along the skyline,—  
I don't envy anyone.*

—LOMAX, Songs of the Cattle Trail.

## BILL'S COOK BLACK JOE

Black Joe was Bill's cook for some years at the ranch on the Pecos. Joe was a good-enough and willin' enough old nigger, but not a very good cook. The ranch hands always said that anyone who ever ate three of Joe's meals in succession would get the cordovies and just naturally die of the dread disease. In New Orleans, where he came from, and where he learned his trade, the buryin' grounds are full of people who ate his meals regularly. The boys said Bill employed the old nigger purely out of compassion, he was no earthly good for anythin' else anyhow.

Once at Christmas time Bill thought it only appropriate that there should be a little celebration at the ranch house, in honor of the day. So he sent Joe to get a big jug of forty-rod he had cached in the cowyard. Joe found the firewater and started back to the house with it. Just as he was about to enter the door he saw a big rattlesnake which had coiled there. This so frightened the old darkey that he dropped the jug, which broke and spilled all of its precious contents. When Old Joe recovered from his fright he viewed the broken jug, with the sad words: "Dere now, Chrismus hab come, en' gone."

Of course Bill fired the old nigger for that, but on New Years Day, hired him over again at a reduced salary, because of his years.

## RATTLESNAKES

Rattlers were almost as common as dirt down in the Pecos country. Some say they were a sight commoner in some places. With so many of these reptiles 'round and always with an eye open for prospects one had to be almighty spry and considerable of an acrobat to keep on the good side of these pesky critters. Bill didn't make much of them, however. It was a common amusement of his to chase a big diamond-back into a hole, and then, before he had entirely disappeared, grab his tail by the singin' end, and before the snake knew it, jerk him clean out of his skin. Or he would tie a big knot in his tail and slip a stick through it. To save their skins most of the older, knowin' serpents gave Bill a pretty clear right-of-way.

Once Bill sat in the shade of a forty foot cactus (he had removed his boots). Lookin', he saw a rattler on an explorin' expedition crawlin' into each boot. Bill promptly tied the ends of their tails together, and by this means hung his boots to a cactus spine to keep other snakes from enterin' them. He often wore a snake for a hat band, and another around his neck in place of the bandana which cowmen favor. When he needed a rope he knotted a number of them together by their heads and tails, and in ridin' he commonly used a lively snake for a quirt.

One day a big ten-foot rattler coiled right up in Bill's path and undertook to dispute the trail rights with him. As an invitation to Bill to come on he set his musical extremity to singin' and allowed he'd like to match a fight, catch-as-catch-can, side-hold, Greco-Roman, rough-and-tumble, or any old fightin' style. Bill laid down the saddle he was totin', and, just to be fair and square about it, he gave the snake the first

three bites. Then he waded into the pizen reptile and everlastin'ly whaled the venom out of him. The noise of the scrap was heard clear up in Colorado. The old rattler admitted that when it came to fightin', Bill started where he left off. He wanted no more arguments with Bill. The relatives of that unfortunate reptile, a thousand or so, packed right up and moved south to beyond the Rio Grande. They allowed that the country was gettin' too rough to suit them.

*Crawlin' along, crawlin' along!  
Through rocky canyon,  
Through stony land, close to a rock,  
Crawlin' along.  
With head erect,  
Wrigglin' and crawlin' along.*

—PAIUTE SONG

Tarantulas and centipedes had no terrors for Bill. They were a part of his regular diet. He descended to eatin' Gila monsters only when other food was scarce. His enemies say he invented all of these afflictions of human kind. In his idle moments in New Mexico he put horns on the horned toads and thorns on almost everything. This as a joke on his friends.

### RIDES A CYCLONE

Bill could ride anythin' that ever ran or walked. Once he made a bet that he could ride a real rip-roarin' Oklahoma cyclone. This without a saddle or bridle.

"He met the cyclone, the worst that was ever known, up on the Kansas line. Bill eared that tornado down and climbed on its back. That cyclone did some pitchin' that is unbelievable, if it were not vouched for by many reliable witnesses. Down across Texas it went sunfishin', back-flippin', side-windin', knockin' down mountains, blowin' the holes out of the ground, and tyin' rivers into knots." The Staked Plains used to be heavily timbered with whiskey trees and stonewood trees until that big wind swiped them off and left it a bare prairie. More tenderfeet got lost in this great forest than in any other place in the country. Most were never heard of again, the mosquitos were so large and voracious there. One of the few men to escape hid under a big soap kettle. When their stingers penetrated the iron he clinched them on the inside.

"Bill just sat there, thumbin' that cyclone in the withers, floppin' it across the ears with his hat, and rollin' a cigarette with one hand. He rode it over three states, but over in Arizona it got him. When it saw it couldn't throw him it rained out from under him. This is proved by the fact that it washed out the Grand Canyon. Bill came down over in California. The spot where he lit is now known as Death Valley, a hole in the ground more than one hundred feet below sea level, and the print of his hip-pockets can still be seen in the granite."

Some historians dispute some of the details of this story. "Some claim that Bill wasn't thrown but slid down on a streak of lightnin', without knockin' the ashes off his cigarette. Some say he dug the Grand Canyon durin' some of his prospectin' ventures. The

streak of lightnin' comes from a habit he had of always usin' one to light his cigarette."

Admirin' friends afterward invited Bill to ride a West Indies hurricane, but somehow he never accepted.

### BUFFALO HUNTING

Few remember when great herds of buffalo, often numbering many thousands of animals, roamed over the Great Plains from Texas to beyond the Canada line. Bill was a great buffalo hunter. He always claimed that he had killed more of these in their day than any fifty, or even one hundred of the most skillful of the professional buffalo hunters, and that if the hides of the bison he had slaughtered were laid end to end they would stretch twice around the world, with enough left over to cover the whole state of Texas, with the present oily Oklahoma thrown in. No one ever disputed Bill when he made a claim of this nature, that is, no one who is still alive.

Once he was invited by a bunch of Kiowa redskins to join them on a huntin' party. Some cowboys say it was a Comanche bunch he threw in with, but that is of no importance and neither here nor there. "Bill took with him on this hunt his famous squatter hound Norther. This name he is said to have given this hound for the want of a better one. Bill would sick the dog on a big buffalo bull and the dog would run him down and hold the bull by an ear. Then Bill would ride up, grab the buffalo by the tail, give it a peculiar twist, and jerk the hide clean off the animal. He was always a very humane man and would then turn the animal loose to grow a new hide. Buffalo were scarce at that time. In the summer time this sort of treatment of Bill's worked all right, but in the winter time the animals often took cold and died." Of course he did this merely to show his prowess as a hunter. The Indians were astonished, but they were real pleased too because Bill gave them all of the hides. He afterward took Kiowa scalps in pay for these.

### A DEAL WITH PAUL BUNYAN

When his cousin, Paul Bunyan, was busy loggin' off the state of North Dakota, Pecos Bill supplied his big camp with buffalo meat. At the end of the camp Bill presented a statement, painted on cowhide, of the cost of this service. The giant lumberjack objected to the amount of the bill. He claimed that Bill had charged him for more meat than there were buffalo in the whole world. After considerable argument the claim was finally adjusted by Bill's taking a part of his pay in post-holes, skidding machines and stone scythes. For none of these he had any use. He traded them to the ignorant Mexicans for mescal whiskey. After that Paul proposed a partnership, but Bill preferred to play a lone hand and to continue in the cattle business.

### THE RAILROADS

The Western railroads owe nearly everything to Bill. When the cattle business was dull he often lent a hand at helpin' them out. He could lay a whole mile of track at a time. Once he drove some track

spikes clear through to China. Some of these punctured the imperial palace at Peking and this started a Boxer outbreak in the Celestial Empire. When cattle or box cars were needed at a loadin' station he simply walked across to another line, tucked a string of empties under his arm, and came right back. Of course the trainmen objected to this because they never knew exactly where to draw their pay. Sometimes they went to sleep on a sidin' at night and woke up in the mornin' on a line they had never seen, or perhaps heard of, before. Bill thought this a capital joke. He invented the interestin' custom of the old-time paymasters of keepin' the small change to themselves, and the practice of the conductors of tossin' passengers' fares up on the bell-rope.

That was the day of wood-burner engines and Bill once took a contract to supply the Southern Pacific with cordwood. White labor and Irishmen were scarce at the time so he hired a couple of hundred (some say several thousand) Mexican greasers to chop the wood and haul it to the desired points on the line. They were a lazy bunch and would only work when Bill was lookin'. So he sat down to watch them. Whenever a greaser laid down on the job Bill promptly obliterated him with a mouthful of tobacco juice. This worked well but the Mexican employment offices were kept busy supplyin' Bill with men. Each greaser received for pay one-fourth of the wood that he cut and hauled. The Mexicans are queer folks. When a Mexican received his share of the punk he didn't know exactly what to do with it. So Bill took this wood off their hands and never charged them a cent.

Some of the Mexicans were so grateful for this kindness of Bill's that they offered to work for him for life. But he told them that railroad contractin' was only a side line of his, and not one of his regular pleasures. Diaz, the then president of Mexico, offered to decorate Bill if he would come to Mexico City. But he didn't care for such honors and never went. Space is wantin' to tell all that Bill did to promote the welfare of the Western railroads. Almost any old railroader can tell more.

### BUILDS THE BOUNDARY FENCE

Bill took the contract to build the line fence that forms the U. S.-Mexican boundary from the Gulf of Mexico to the Pacific. The idea of this barrier was partly to keep the Yaqui Indians at home where the Mexican rurales could get at them. Bill tried, but couldn't hire any greasers to dig the post-holes. The greasers liked Bill and were always ready to work for him for little or nothin', but they were too busy at the time with one of their everlastin' revolutions and didn't want to lay off. So Bill with the help of his outfit, rounded up an immense colony of prairie dogs and set them to diggin'. Every time one of these industrious little animals dug a nice round hole and started to settle down to housekeepin' Bill jerked him out and set a fence-post in the hole. Paul Bunyan was then engaged in loggin' off Kansas and he supplied the posts. The dumb-founded little animal then started to dig another hole. Bill kept them workin' overtime. When they reached the pacific



most of the dogs were so mortified that they fell or jumped into the salt water and drowned themselves out of very spite. Bill made a good fat stake out of that particular job. Everyone congratulated him on his great business ability but the prairie dogs. No one cares a darn what a prairie dog thinks, or says, anyway.

### COWBOY SONGS

Bill was of a very musical disposition. He originated most of the songs which cattlemen sing. He sang much himself and had a new song for nearly every occasion. Some songs which he made up out of his own head are credited to other westerners, but nearly all of these were stolen from him from where he kept them rolled up in gunnysacks or cowhides in the chuck wagon. He was offered fabulous sums for some of "verses" by the owners of Eastern song mills, but he always refused these offers. He was too considerate of the public. His voice was a sort of cross between that of a crow and a hoot owl. With Mushmouth playin' the accompaniment on his lip-organ and some other fellow performin' on an Indian water-drum, he managed very well. His roarin' always sent most Western settlers to their cyclone cellars. They sure thought a big tornado was on the way.

### SLUE-FOOT SUE

Bill had many brides. He married early and often. Women were a sort of weakness of his. The old-time Mormons had nothin' on him. Slue-Foot Sue was the best beloved of his mates. Sue knew horses. "She was a famous rider herself, and Bill lost his heart to her when he first saw her ridin' a catfish down the Rio Grande, with only a surcingle. Rio Grande catfish are bigger than whales, and twice as active.

"Well, right away after he married Slue-Foot Sue, Pecos Bill, as a special favor and kind of in the way of a weddin' present, told her she could ride his horse Widow Maker. She forked him proper enough, but a minute later she was bound for the moon, and accordin' to all accounts, she actually reached it. It was tipped up, like it is when it predicts rain, and Sue went right over the lower horn.

"Then she descended. Pecos Bill had held up a whole freight outfit on the Santa Fe trail to get the proper trousseau for his bride. Among other things he endowed her with a shore enough steel and whale-bone bustle. When Sue touched the earth, Bill saw what he'd done, for his darlin' was bounced up as high as she had been pitched by Widow Maker. Then followed a heart-wearin' spectacle. Down would come Slue-Foot on her bustle and up she'd bounce again without any slackenin' of speed or height. As she bounced she kept on weepin' and throwin' kisses to her distracted lover. It was all too awful.

"After Sue had bounced for three days Bill mercifully pulled out his six-shooter and shot her. Bill used up all the prickly pear leaves along the Rio Grande weepin' over Sue, and would not be comforted." He buried his bride in his private buryin' ground with her bustle placed on her grave for a tombstone.

\*As told by J. Frank Dabie

## BILL'S DEATH

Bill never did recover from the shock of Sue's death. In the course of time he just naturally pined away. "His stomach got so weak that tarantulas, which he had always used for seasonin', disagreed with him and he died. There is some difference of opinion among authorities as to the exact cause of Bill's takin' off. Some claim it was his drinkin' habits that killed him. He got so that ordinary hard liquor had no kick for him, so he fell into the bad habit of drinkin' strychnine and other kinds of wolf pizen. Even the wolf bait lost its effect, and he got to puttin' fishhooks and barbed wire in his toddy. It rusted his interior and gave him indigestion. That killed Bill. He wasted away to a mere skeleton weighin' not more than two tons; then up and died, and went to his infernal reward." Some say "that he met a man from Boston one day, wearin' a mail-order cowboy outfit, and askin' fool questions about the West, and poor Bill laid down and laughed himself to death." Pecos Bill's last restin' place may never be known. His cowboy friends lovin'ly wrapped his remains up in cactus leaves and spirited them away in the dead of night. But his soul goes ridin' on.

## KNOCKDOWN BUCKNER

A sort of distant relative of Pecos Bill was one Strap Buckner, also known as Knockdown. In Texas at least he won undyin' fame. He was a mighty handy man with his fists and had a real genius for knockin' men down. There was no outdoor sport of his day that Strap enjoyed more than sendin' a man to earth with a well planted blow. All of his victims could be counted out as soon as they were hit. His were sledge-hammer swats.

His career was an eventful one. First he knocked down every one, one at a time, the three hundred residents of his home town. He liked to do it just that way because it prolonged the amusement. Then he tackled an immense Indian tribe. He knocked down every one of the redskins. Their chief he knocked down three times, this in honor of his high office.

After knockin' down everybody in east Texas, Strap mounted his horse and struck out across the plains seekin' new scenes of enjoyment. One day he was in a particularly happy mood with a big jug of tanglefoot by his side. He had just finished prostratin' two more gigantic Indian tribes and a whole caravan of tough freighters. Now, in a loud voice, he issued a challenge to Old Satan himself to come and be knocked down. Next day on the trail Strap met a dwarf. This was the Old Harry in disguise. He had accepted Strap's challenge. Right quickly he transformed himself into a wild cat, then into a bear, and then into the black bull, Noche. Now, with a loud bellow, the bull vanished and in his place stood the Devil himself.

He was of great size when he appeared, and he grew at the rate of a foot a minute. Strap took a big drink from his jug and sailed in to knock him down. The fight was a mighty one. It lasted all day and the sound of their blows was heard far beyond the borders of Texas. Trees were uprooted and the

ground torn up for miles in every direction. Two or three times Strap pretty nearly got the Old Boy. Just at nightfall the Devil finally succeeded in knockin' Strap Buckner down. Then mountin' Strap's pony and throwin' the limp form of the defeated Knockdown over his saddle he rode away with him into the gray clouds. Such was Knockdown Buckner's sad end.\*

### PECOS BILL LORE

In the course of time many other tall tales of Pecos Bill, the Cowboy Hero, will be collected by his friends, and some day we shall probably possess as large a shelf of Pecos Bill literature as is now steadily accumulating for his blood-brother, Paul Bunyan, prince of the American lumberjacks.

*Here's to the passing cowboy, the plowman's pioneer;  
His home, the boundless mesa, he of any man the peer;  
Around his wide sombrero was stretched the rattler's  
hide,*

*His bridle sporting conchos, his lasso by his side.  
All day he roamed the prairies, at night he, with the  
stars,*

*Kept vigil over thousands held by neither posts nor  
bars;*

*With never a diversion in all the lonesome land,  
But cattle, cattle; cattle, and sun and sage and sand.*

—JAMES BARTON ADAMS

STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
OF WISCONSIN  
816 State Street  
Madison, Wisconsin 53706

\*See J. Frank Dobie, *The Giants of the Southwest*, Country Gentleman, 1926.

Mary Stuart Foster

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# Little Stories About GEORGE WASHINGTON

GEORGE WASHINGTON BI-CENTENNIAL, 1732-1932

Prepared for the Use of Students  
University of Wisconsin  
Summer Session



CHARLES E. BROWN  
State Historical Museum  
Madison, Wisconsin

1932

# Little Stories About GEORGE WASHINGTON

## WASHINGTON'S LIFE IN OUTLINE

1732—Born at family homestead on Bridges Creek, Westmoreland County, Virginia. 1733-34—Family moved to farm now known as Mount Vernon. 1743-45—Lawrence Washington, half-brother, builds mansion at Mount Vernon. 1745—George lives with his mother at Fredericksburg. 1748—Becomes surveyor to Lord Fairfax. 1749—Appointed public surveyor. 1751—Military Inspector with rank of Major to protect the Virginia frontier against the French and Indians. 1752—Adjutant-General of Virginia. Mount Vernon willed to him. 1753—Colonel of the Virginia Militia. Great Meadows campaign. 1755—With General Braddock in his campaign. 1758—March to Ohio. 1759—Marries Mrs. Martha Dandridge Custis. Member, Virginia House of Burgesses. 1765—Commissioner to settle military accounts. 1770—Journey to the Ohio and Kanawha Rivers. 1774—Member, Virginia Convention. Member, First Continental Congress. 1775—Member, Second Continental Congress. Elected Commander-in-Chief. Siege of Boston. 1776-83—War of the Revolution. 1783—Peace is proclaimed to the army. 1787—President, Constitutional Convention. 1789—Elected President of the United States. 1793—Re-elected. 1796—Farewell Address. 1798—Commander-in-Chief of the U. S. "Provisional Army." 1799—Dies at Mount Vernon—"mourned by all the world."

## THE CHERRY TREE FABLE

When George was about six years old, he was made the wealthy master of a hatchet of which, like most little boys, he was immoderately fond, and was constantly going about, chopping everything that came in his way. One day, in the garden, where he often amused himself by hacking his mother's pea-sticks, he unluckily tried the edge of his hatchet on the body of a beautiful English

cherry tree, which he barked so terribly that I don't believe the tree ever got the better of it. The next morning the old gentleman [his father], finding out what had befallen his tree, which, by the by, was a great favorite, came into the house; and with much warmth asked for the mischievous author, declaring at the same time that he would not have taken five guineas for the tree.

Nobody could tell him anything about it. Presently George and his hatchet made their appearance. "George," said his father, "do you know who killed that beautiful little cherry tree yonder in the garden?" This was a tough question and George staggered under it for a moment, but quickly recovered himself, and looking at his father with the sweet face of youth brightened with the inexpressible charm of all-conquering truth, he bravely called out, "I can't tell a lie, Pa; you know I can't tell a lie. I did cut it with my hatchet."—"Run to my arms, you dearest boy," cried his father in transports, "run to my arms; glad am I, George, that you killed my tree; for you have paid me for it thousandfold. Such an act of heroism in my son is more worth than a thousand trees, though blossomed with silver, and their fruits of purest gold." (M. F. Weems, *The Life of Washington*.)

### HIS NAME IN CABBAGE PLANTS

To startle George into a lively sense of his Maker, he (his father) fell upon the following very curious, but impressive expedient:

One day he went into the garden, and prepared a little bed of finely pulverized earth, on which he wrote George's name at full, in large letters—then strewing in plenty of cabbage seed, he covered them up, and smoothed all over nicely with the roller.—This bed he purposely prepared along side of a gooseberry walk, which happening at this time to be well hung with ripe fruit, he knew would be honoured with George's visits pretty regularly every day. Not many mornings had passed away before in came George, with eyes wild rolling, and his little cheeks ready to burst with the great news.

"O Pa! come here! come here!"

"What's the matter, my son? What's the matter?"

"O come here, I tell you, Pa: come here! and I'll show you such a sight as you never saw in all your lifetime."

The old gentleman suspecting what George would be at, gave him his hand, which he seized with great eagerness, and tugging him



along through the garden, led him point blank to the bed whereon was inscribed, in large letters, and in all the freshness of newly sprung plants, the full name—GEORGE WASHINGTON.

"There Pa!" said George, quite in an ecstasy of astonishment, "did you ever see such a sight in all your lifetime?"

His father regarded the appearance of George's name in young cabbage plants as a curious affair and pretended to believe that its origin might be due to chance. But this thought did not satisfy George. At last his fond parent, in response to the boyish questioning, told to him at some length the story of the power of the Almighty, in creating all things.

At this, George fell into a profound silence, while his pensive looks showed that his youthful soul was laboring with some idea never felt before. Perhaps it was at this moment, that the good Spirit of God ingrafted on his heart that germ of piety, which filled his after life with so many of the precious fruits of morality.—(Abbreviated from *The Life of Washington*. M. F. Weems.)

### HIS FIRST SCHOOL

The first place of education to which George was ever sent, was a little "old field school," kept by one of his father's tenants, named Hobby; an honest, poor old man who acted in the double character of sexton and schoolmaster. On his skill as a grave digger, tradition is silent; but for a teacher of youth, his qualifications were certainly of the humbler sort; making what is called generally an A. B. C. schoolmaster. Such was the preceptor who first taught Washington the knowledge of letters. Hobby lived to see his young pupil in all his glory and rejoiced exceedingly. Particularly on the General's birthdays—he used to boast that "'Twas he, who between his knees had laid the foundation of George Washington's greatness."

Born to be a soldier, Washington early discovered symptoms of nature's intentions towards him. In his 11th year, while at school under old Mr. Hobby, he used to divide his playmates into two parties of armies. One of these, for distinction's sake, was called French, the other American. A big boy at school, named William Bustle, commanded the former, George commanded the latter. And every day at play-time with cornstalks for muskets, and calabash gourds for drums, the two armies would turn out, and march and

counter-march, and file off or fight their mimic battles, with great fury.

This was fine sport for George, whose passion for active exercise was so strong, that at play-time no weather could keep him within doors. Such trifling play as marbles and tops he could never endure. They did not afford him exercise enough. His delight was in that of the manliest sort, which by stringing the limbs and swelling the muscles, promotes the kindest flow of blood and spirits. At jumping with a long pole, or heaving heavy weights, for his years he hardly had an equal. And as to running, the swift-footed Achilles could scarcely have matched his speed. (Weems, *The Life of Washington*.)

### THE POCKET KNIFE

When he was a boy George Washington is said to have cherished a "burning desire" to become a sailor. The romantic life of the seaman appealed to him. In those long-ago days small sailing ships now and then sailed up the waters of the Rappahannock River from the ocean. These craft unloaded at the wharf at Fredericksburg the cargoes of goods which they brought from England to supply the Virginia colonists. Here they again filled their holds with such products as it was desired to ship to the Old Country. No doubt the boy, George, spent as much time as he could about that landing place. The ships and their masts, sails, and ropes interested him. No doubt he took every opportunity to talk to the seamen and their officers. He must have listened with enjoyment to the stories of their voyages and adventures and of the foreign lands which they had visited. The manner of their life on the "rolling main" appealed strongly to George, and he resolved to "follow the Sea."

The prospect of joining the King's navy looked mightily attractive to the country lad. Indeed preparations were actually made for his departure. At the last moment, however, Mrs. Washington interposed most decidedly. George reluctantly agreed to give up the idea, although well-nigh broken hearted at the collapse of his fondly laid plans. It was no doubt a severe blow to him. The ship on which he wished to embark sailed away without him.

As a token of her appreciation for his willingness to forego the experiences of a sailor in deference to her wishes his mother presented to him a little pocket knife. "Always obey" said she, as

she bestowed the gift. The knife with its single blade, the General "carried on his person for many years." It is reported to be now carefully preserved in the Masonic Lodge Hall at Alexandria.

(Albert H. Heusser, *In the Footsteps of Washington.*)

### HORSES ARE NEEDED

When General Washington sent over the country to impress horses (for military service), and to pay for them, his officers were attracted by a pair ploughing in a field. They were fine, strong specimens. The driver was ordered to unhitch them, but an ebony Mercury ran to warn his mistress who appeared in her doorway. "Madam," said an officer, "we bear General Washington's orders to take these horses." "Does George need horses?" asked his mother, Mary Washington. "Well he can have mine, but he must wait until my field is finished." Her words and her manner were resolute. So the thwarted officers either had to wait until the ploughing of his mother's field was completed, or leave without the horses. (Mrs. Roger A. Pryor, *The Mother of Washington and Her Times.*)

### HE BUYS A SHAD

With riding horses and coaches at his command the General enjoyed walking to the market to purchase food for his table, and did not hesitate to bear home what he bought there.

Once Washington walked among the fishstands at the foot of Market street in Philadelphia. Here fish of various kinds, clams and other shellfish, lobsters and shrimps were offered in quantity. Here he saw in a fisherwoman's basket a particularly fine shad. This he purchased and the old lady kindly offered to send it to his home. Her offer the General refused to entertain. At his request she passed a cord through the gills of the fish and handed it to him. In one hand he carried the shad by the cord and in the other his cane. As he walked along the street to his home he met acquaintances and other men at every turn. These, as they came, raised their hats in salute in his honor. Now he found that carrying the shad was very awkward. In acknowledging their salutes with his own hat, he had to shift his cane to the hand which held the fish or the fish to the hand which carried the cane. It was plain that in transporting the shad he had undertaken more than he could well accomplish. As

his perplexities continued he was obliged to solve the difficulty by removing his hat and placing it beneath his arm. Now he was able to bow bareheaded to all who saluted him. (Paul Wilstach, *Patriots Off of Their Pedestals*.)

## HER CHOICE

Washington was fond of children. Children liked him. When he entered Boston, by what has been in consequence Washington Street ever since, he took up his quarters in what was then the Court boarding house, at the head of what we call State Street. It was kept by a Mrs. Edwards. This lady's grand-daughter was a little girl, whom he would catch up, take on his knee and talk to.

One day he asked her which soldiers she liked the best, the red-coats or the blue-coats? The little girl was frank enough in her reply to his question to say she liked the red-coats best. "Ah, my dear," said the General, "but they don't fight. The ragged boys are the boys for fighting." (Paul Wilstach, *Patriots Off of Their Pedestals*.)

## HE SHARES HIS BED WITH A SLAVE

General Washington was one evening engaged in a conference with Colonel Pickering. The hour grew late while they conversed. The General now announced that he would spend the night with the Colonel, provided that there was a spare blanket and straw bed for him. Primus, the colored servant, stated in reply that there was such accomodation. The beds being spread in the tent, the two officers stretched themselves thereon and went to sleep. Primus, after they had retired, seated himself on a box, and, resting his head on his hands, prepared to sleep in that uncomfortable position.

In the middle of the night Washington awoke. He looked about and descried the sleeping negro. He gazed upon him for a while and then spoke. He asked the startled servant what he meant when he said he had straw and blankets enough. It was apparent that he had given up his own bed that Washington might rest comfortably. He insisted that the bed and blanket were both big enough to provide for both himself and Primus. Primus protested against this proposal, but Washington now ordered him to join him in the use of both. If either sat up all night, both would do so. Primus

was shocked at the idea, but his protests were of no avail. Washington must be obeyed. The servant therefore joined the Commander-in-Chief under the blanket. And thus Washington and the negro servant slept side by side in the same bed until morning. (R. H. Schauffler, *Washington's Birthday*.)

### HE DANCES WITH THE BELLE

Washington loved to dance. He was a tireless dancer, and even after he retired to Mount Vernon often indulged in every set during a whole evening. He was very fond of gay young folks because he never lost the zest of youth. When he discovered that the deference accorded him put a damper on the spirits of the younger folks, he would dance the opening minuet, then bow formally and retire—but only to the adjoining room. Here he would hide behind the door and watch the young folks through the crack, chuckling as how he was participating in their pleasures none the less.

During the Revolution he entered a ballroom one night. Immediately his eyes fell on a particularly beautiful young woman. The officers, young and old, were all aflutter. With a mischievous twinkle in his eye, Washington advanced to her and claimed the first dance. Because of his rank, this was his prerogative and etiquette demanded that no one else approach the young lady until he had departed from her side. The feelings of the other officers may be imagined when we learn that he continued to dance with her for three hours and one-half without once sitting down in a chair to rest. The evening was then over. He had had his sly joke at the expense of every other man in the room. (Chesla C. Sherlock, *Forgotten Facts About Washington*.)

### BETSY ROSS AND OLD GLORY

General Washington felt keenly the lack of national colors on land and sea when he took command of the American army. He had urged the need and as events swept forward to a complete severance of the colonies from Great Britain, the need became more acute. He was well aware of the influence of the flag on the mind of every soldier—its stimulus towards patriotism and loyalty, its inspiration in the face of danger, privation and discouragement.

In 1876, when he left New York for Philadelphia in response to the request of Congress, the flag problem was still on his mind. With

the sessions of Congress crowded with extremely urgent matters, he sought opportunity to discuss other subjects dear to his heart with individual delegates outside. He walked with two friends to the little upholstery shop of Mistress Betsy Ross, at Fourth and Arch streets, only a square away. He had been told that she was the one woman to help him in the matter of a flag. And Betsy welcomed his call. He showed her a design of a flag, with thirteen stars and thirteen stripes. He asked her if she thought that she could reproduce it in bunting, in an effective arrangement in red, white and blue colors. The capable little lady said that she would try. There was a question about the stars—whether they should be five-pointed or six-pointed. This was answered when Betsy deftly folded a piece of cloth and with her scissors cut out a five-pointed one.

On the following day she had finished the flag. Washington was greatly pleased and expressed his grateful thanks. This flag was declared the national emblem by Congress, June 14, 1876. The little shop where Betsy Ross cut and sewed Old Glory has become a national shrine. (Bicentennial Clip Sheet.)

#### "CAPTAIN MOLLY" PITCHER

"Captain Molly" is remembered as one of the picturesque women of the Revolution. On the battlefield of Monmouth her husband, John Hayes, who was serving a cannon, was wounded. Molly was aiding in the fight by carrying pitchers of water to the hot and thirsty patriots. When John Hayes fell by the side of his cannon, she rushed to the piece, grasped the ramrod and rammed home the charge, calling to the gunners to prime and fire. In the smoke and heat of battle she performed admirably the work of a cannoneer. Loud shouts and cheers from the soldiers rang along the American lines. The fire of the battery became more vivid than ever. "Captain Molly" continued to serve the gun until night closed the battle.

General Nathanael Green complimented Molly on her courage and conduct. The next morning he presented her to General Washington. He received her most graciously and assured her that her services were appreciated and would not be forgotten. This remarkable and intrepid woman long survived the Revolution, dying at Carlisle, Pennsylvania, in 1832. On the 100th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, the city of Carlisle erected a monument at the heroine's grave. (Bicentennial Clip Sheet.)



## AT POHICK CHURCH

Because of his commanding presence and personal magnetism it was but natural that other men should respect and honor General Washington. In the neighborhood (of his Virginia home) there lived a number of strong men, among them George Mason and the Lees. One day they were assembled at the Pohick church awaiting his arrival. Someone suggested that the habit everyone had of arising, on his arrival, was unseemly and should be dispensed with; that Washington was common clay like the rest of them and not entitled to such ceremony. It was agreed that henceforth they would keep their seats.

In a few minutes Washington arrived, punctual to the dot. He entered the threshold and paused an instant, his eye sweeping the assemblage. Instantly, even against their will, everyone in that room arose and remained standing until he took his own seat! They were crestfallen in their hearts, but they could no more help it than they could help breathing. (Chesla C. Sherlock, *Ladies' Home Journal*.)

## LOCATING THE CHURCH

Old Mr. Mason, Washington's neighbor of Gunston Hall, was a vestryman of Pohick church. So was Washington. The church grew too ancient for use. A new one was to be built. At the vestry meeting there was a disagreement; Mr. Mason was firm in advocating one site, Colonel Washington as firm in advocating another. The meeting adjourned to a later day for time to consider. The second meeting took place. With eloquence Mr. Mason pleaded the tender associations connected with the old site, endeared, he was sure, to every member of Truro Parish by memories most hallowed and sweet. There was sympathy. Mr. Mason perorated perhaps with a faltering voice. Everybody was touched; minds were about made up.

Colonel Washington unfolded a paper. It contained exact measurements he had personally made of the distance from Mr. Mason's hallowed spot to everybody's house in the parish, and the distances from everybody's house in the parish to Colonel Washington's site, and ended with a sum in arithmetic showing which caused the most people the least trouble. George Washington's site carried.

(Leila Herbert, *The First American*.)

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# GEMS

MAGIC, MYSTERIES AND MYTHS OF PRECIOUS STONES

Prepared for the use of Students  
University of Wisconsin  
Summer Session



*The Cullinan Diamond*

CHARLES E. BROWN  
State Historical Museum  
Madison, Wisconsin

1932

WX  
BR

## GEMS

### MAGIC, MYSTERIES AND MYTHS

Many of the precious and semi-precious stones known and valued to-day for use as jewels were also regarded with high esteem in ancient days. In the books of the Bible gems are frequently mentioned and three lists of them are given. One of these is a description of the jewels on the ephod or coat of Aaron, high priest of the Jews. Four rows of these were on the breastplate on its front these being set in golden sockets. Engraved on each was the name of one of the twelve tribes of Israel. These twelve gems are considered to have been carnelian, carbuncle, jacinth, chrysolite, topaz, sapphire, agate, beryl, emerald, onyx, amethyst and jasper. These were in four rows, three in each row. At the shoulders of this coat were two onyx fastenings upon which the names of the tribes were also engraved, six on each.

Among the gem stones prized and used by the ancients were pearl, ruby, crystal, agate, onyx, sapphire, emerald, amethyst and amber. Some which they used as jewels or for other purposes are now known by different names. On some were engraved figures, symbols and letters or words.

"Man has endowed gems with talismanic, curative, and supernatural powers. Certain gems preserved him from incubi, vampires, and kindred terrors; others protected him from the powers of sorcery or conferred the powers of witchcraft; by their aid he controlled the spirits of evil or was protected from their malign influence. With a suitable gem he could foretell the future, review the past, or conjure up pictures of events taking place at a distance. Protected by their mystic influences he feared neither plague nor poison, while his belief in the marvelous efficacy of their curative powers gave them a place among his most potent remedies. The virtues of gems were diverse. Some procured the favor of the great; others rendered their possessors amiable, wise, strong, and brave; some protected him from fire, lightning and tempests; others from danger and disease; some were preferred as talismans and

charms; others were used as drugs, either alone or with electuaries, and with or without prayers, incantations, or other prescribed formulas. Certain gems brought good or evil through the planetary influence of certain days. Some were appropriate for wear on certain days of the week, others were potent for good during particular months."

Myths and legends endeavor to explain the mystical powers of certain gems. Some were supposed to be teardrops or dewdrops hardened by the rays of the sun. Rock crystal was thought to be frozen water. Other jewels were believed to be obtained from the heads or bodies of natural or mythical animals. Some fell from the clouds in thunder storms. The tropic rays of the sun were responsible for the existence of others. Some gems had the power of rendering their owners invisible at will. A dullness or change of color in any jewel forewarned its owner of illness or death. The Agate was one of the "seven sea gems" which protected travelers journeying by sea.

#### TALISMANS AND CHARMS

Gems were in use as talismans and charms by ancient and modern nations.

Many Egyptian priests wore images made of lapis-lazuli. The Egyptians greatly favored malachite for the cutting of cameos and intaglios. Sardonyx was also used for this purpose. Sacred scarabs were cut from serpentine. The Hebrews believed that the possession of an amethyst assured pleasant dreams. In India and Persia coral, it was thought, prevented spirits from occupying the body after death. In India and Arabia the carbuncle was worn in battle as a protection against wounds. The Persians used rubies in magic rites directed against the forces of evil. For one to change color was a certain sign of misfortune. These people used serpentine for the making of cylinders of authority.

Amulets of white chalcedony were much worn by the Greeks and Romans. This gem stone was sacred to Diana, as was also the pearl, which was worn by virgins and young girls. The Trojan hero, Aeneas, had agate as a fortune stone, protecting him in war, voyages and storms. Greeks and Persians bound an amethyst on the navel to counteract the evil effects of wine. The amethyst was associated with the activities of Bacchus. Chrysoprase, an apple-green chal-

cedony, was a "dream stone" in Greece, Rome and Egypt. In Greece and other countries the names of deities were engraved on the garnet. Lapis-lazuli was a magical stone with the Greeks and Romans. It was the "stone of Heaven." Agate was bound to the horns of oxen to induce a good harvest. The Greeks used obsidian for the cutting of camei and intagli.

Roman women wore amethysts to preserve the affection of their husbands. The amethyst also prevented the attacks of thieves. Coral was a charm against lightning. Coral beads were placed on the necks and the cradles of children to help them in teething and to prevent sickness. The Romans considered coral a love charm.

The diamond was considered a talisman in battle. King John of France wore one on his finger when taken in battle by the Black Prince. Medical practitioners once wore an amethyst on the third finger of the left hand. Horsemen wore it for protection. In Brazil the emerald was worn by medical students after receiving their diplomas. In Scotland the cairngorm was the Highland dress ornament and was in the handles of dirks. This gem was carried in times of epidemics. In the Middle Ages the carbuncle was worn as a protection against the plague. In Turkey carnelians were carried for use in magic. These stones were reputed to possess wonderful powers. In European countries a cat's-eye was placed in a woman's hair as a birth charm.

The Chinese used crystal in the carving of deities and sacred objects. Australian natives used crystal in magical rites and obsidian as a healing stone. In Ireland and Scotland crystal pieces were used as charms for protecting cattle.

In Europe the garnet was a talisman of faithfulness. The Babylonians used jasper for the making of seals. Bloodstone was associated with old Easter ceremonies in Europe. Jet was used for rosaries. Spinel was a favorite gem for doctors, nurses and hospital attendants. A charm for horsemen and horses was turquoise. This gem was much worn by young girls in the Middle Ages for the protection of their virtue. Amber was cut in magical forms for use as an amulet. Coral was a charm against bad dreams. In France no bride would wear pearls on her wedding day, since they would bring tears to her married life.

## GEMS IN MEDICINE

In ancient, as well as in comparatively modern times, certain gems were supposed to possess the power to prevent diseases and others to cure or relieve diseases and disorders. Some were crushed and administered to the sick alone or with other preparations.

Agate: a charm against poisons, a preventive against contagion; powdered and bound to wounds it healed them; held in the mouth it quenched thirst and soothed fevers; a cure for tired eyes; a charm against lightning and storms; placed about the necks of children to prevent falls; carried by ocean travelers as a protection. Amber: a cure for throat, lung and stomach troubles; a charm against evil eye, and witchcraft. Amethyst: an antidote for and detector of poisons; a preventive of intoxication; it dispelled sleep, sharpened the wits, promoted chastity. Beryl: a favorite stone for divination; a charm against diseases of the jaws and throat, a cure for liver trouble. Bloodstone: a specific for dyspepsia; a proof against poison; it had the power of making its owner invisible. Cairngorm: used by physicians for cauterizing wounds; carried in times of epidemics as a protective charm. Carbuncle: worn to protect against plagues, poisons, accidents and wounds in battle; a heart stimulant; when its lustre dimmed the death of its owner was indicated. Carnelian: a cure for tumors; used to stop bleeding; it banished fear and enchantments; it preserved harmony, procured blessings; it gave victory in argument and in battle. Cat's-eye: cured croup, colic and asthma; it assisted the eyesight and cured eye troubles; applied to wounds it healed them; worn by women as a birth charm; it gave mental relief. Chalcedony: carried by ocean voyagers as a protection; it protected against evil spirits; it banished sadness and melancholy; it secured favor and brought victory; it increased the milk of cows. Chrysoberyl: relieved asthma; a charm against evil.

Chrysolite, "the gem of miracles": it drove away evil, gladdened the heart with hope, strengthened the soul; it aided in prophesy. Chrysoprase: a cure for gout; a stone of dreams; it protected the traveler, banished greed and selfishness. Coral: a fever cure; it had numerous other curative and preventive properties. Crocidolite: used for nerve and lung troubles. Crystal: a charm against all evils; a poison detector; much employed in medical practice; used in prophecy and religious rites; used to protect cattle. Diamond: a cure for insanity, a charm against evil; a dream symbol. Emerald:



used in fevers, hemorrhages and eye troubles. Garnet: a health stone; used in averting plague; a defense against storms. Hyacinth: a charm against bowel disorder, a mental tonic. Jacinth: a cure for insomnia, a protector against melancholy, pestilence and poison. Jade: a remedy for all internal disorders; it prevented fatigue, prolonged life and preserved the body after death. Jasper: used for lung and stomach troubles; it checked blood flow; it gave victory in battle; a charm against spiders and scorpions. Jet: a cure for colds, dropsy and loss of hair; a cure for snake bites; used by magicians; used in rosaries; a protection against all evil; burned and used as a charm perfume. Lapis-lazuli: a cure for biliousness, an eye-stone; it reduced swellings and pain; a true stone for friendship.

Malachite: a cure for insomnia, rheumatism and cholera; used for head and kidney troubles; a charm against evil. Moonstone: applied to the temples in fever; it protected against dropsy, cancer, moon-strokes and lunacy; carried by travelers. Moss agate: a lucky stone used in rings, pins and charms; it gave fertility to fields and cattle; used by apothecaries as a base on which to prepare medicines. Obsidian: a charm in sickness and trouble. Onyx: used in magic; believed to cause nightmare; certain varieties used as eye-stones. Opal: an eye-stone and heart stimulant; it possessed the virtues of the stones whose colors it showed; a cure for despondency; more recently considered an unlucky stone. Pearl: a cure for irritability, skin diseases and stomach troubles; worn by virgins and young girls. Ruby: an amulet against poison, plagues and evil spirits; a cure for head-aches, boils and cramps. Sapphire: a holy gem; a cure for nosebleed, an eye-stone; a charm against various disorders. Serpentine: a cure for rheumatism and dropsy; a charm against accidents, snake and insect bites. Spinel: a protection against lightning and storms. Topaz: an easer of hemorrhage; a charm against asthma, accident, drowning and poison. Tourmaline: an electric stone, applied to wounds, etc. Turquoise: an eye-stone; a cure for diseases of the head and heart; a protector of mules, horses, camels and their riders. Zircon: a stimulus for the appetite, an aid to digestion; a sin remover; a charm against evil spirits and plagues.

## JEWELS IN HISTORY

In ancient days emeralds were obtained from the old Kleopatra mines in Egypt. Women were employed to search for them. The

canopy of the Assyrian general Holofernes was ornamented with emeralds and other gems. The fatal emerald of Russia was given to Empress Elizabeth Petrovna by Peter of Holstein (afterwards Peter III). It is believed to have caused the death of some of the emperors who succeeded him on the throne. Nicholas III was the last of these. An emerald ring owned by Philip III of Spain likewise brought misfortune to all who received it. Pope Adrian VIII is said to have confirmed the right to govern Ireland on Henry II of England with a gift of a rare emerald set in gold.

The Roman Senator Nonius wore an opal ring worth 20,000 sesterces. He preferred to be exiled rather than dispose of it to Marcus Antonius who wished to present it to Queen Cleopatra. The opal mines at Cernovitz in Hungary are known to have been worked five hundred years ago. A fine opal found there weighed 3,000 carats and was valued at 50,000 pounds sterling. Australia has produced opals which exceed in beauty any in the world. After the Black Death in Europe, which plague caused the death of thousands of people, the opal became an object of dread. This and other calamities of that time and later years have injured the reputation of the opal.

It was an ancient custom to adorn sacred statues with rubies, these gems being emblems of majesty and power. Queen Elizabeth was very fond of spinel or Balas rubies. King Henry V is reported to have worn this gem at the battle of Agincourt. The turquoise was the death stone of the Scottish King James IV, who was killed at Flodden Field. Henry VIII sent to the dying Cardinal Wolsey a turquoise ring with his love. Caligula wore slippers ornamented with pearls. Nero provided scepters ornamented with pearls for the actors in his theatre. Queen Elizabeth is said to have had her health pledged in a cup of wine in which a pearl worth 15,000 pounds had been crushed. Pope Innocent III commanded all bishops to wear a sapphire. This stone was considered a charm against evil and evil powers. A garnet of the size of a pigeon's egg is in the Green Vaults at Dresden. In the regalia of Saxony, set in the order of the Golden Fleece, is a large pyrope (garnet) weighing 468½ carats. A wonderful aquamarine adorned the crown of James II. Catherine II had a favorite room in her palace ornamented with lapis-lazuli. Persia supplied the world from earliest times with this gem stone.

Among the great men of history who were collectors of precious stones were Alexander the Great, Pompey, Julius Caesar, Augustus and Hadrian. The chief traders in precious stones in Bible times were the Tyrians. These are said to have come from Syria. The robes of their king sparkled with gems.

## FAMOUS GEMS

Some gems have attained world-wide fame because of their size, beauty and value. Up to the year 1700 India was the source of the world's supply of diamonds. These came from the famous Golconda mines which produced the Kohinoor, the Hope and other famous gems. Some diamonds also came from Borneo. In 1725 the Brazilian diamond fields were discovered. The fields in South Africa, which now supply the world's diamond markets were located in 1867. The children of a Boer family are reported to have found the first stone. In 1870 the Kimberly mines were opened. Other diamonds come from Australia, New South Wales, and British Guiana. They are mined in the Ural Mountains. In the United States diamonds have been found in North Carolina, Georgia, Virginia, Kentucky, Ohio, Colorado, Idaho, Nevada and California. About forty diamonds have been found in twelve different localities in Wisconsin.

Among the most celebrated diamonds of the world is the "Koh-i-Nur" (Mount of Light). This gem was the property of the Mogul Emperors since the fourteenth century. It weighed, when first brought to England, 186 1-16 carats. It was recut in 1862 and its weight reduced to 106 carats. It was presented to Queen Victoria and is among the English crown jewels. The "Regent" or "Pitt" diamond was discovered in India in about 1700, and weighed 410 carats. Its present weight is 136 $\frac{7}{8}$  carats. It is "the finest large diamond in the world" and is now in the Louvre. The "Orloff," a 193-carat stone, was set in the sceptre of the Russian emperor. It is supposed to have been stolen by a French soldier from a temple in India. Prince Orloff presented it to Catherine II. The "Great Mogul," the largest known Indian diamond, was found in 1650. When recut it weighed 240 carats. The "Cullinan" weighed about 3,025 carats when found at Pretoria in 1905. It was purchased by the Transvaal Government for 150,000 pounds and presented to King Edward VII. It was later recut into several stones. Two of the largest are among the jewels of the English crown.

The "Hope" is the finest blue diamond. It was purchased in India in 1642. It weighs  $44\frac{1}{4}$  carats and is valued at 18,000 pounds. The "Dresden Green," the finest green diamond, is a pear-shaped stone, weight  $48\frac{1}{2}$  carats. The "Tiffany," an orange yellow diamond, was found in South Africa. It weighs  $125\frac{3}{8}$  carats and is valued at \$100,000.

"The Indians were the first to polish a diamond with its own dust. Louis van Berghem is credited with being the first to cut and polish diamonds in 1456."

The great Australian opal, the "Flame Queen," is among the famous gems of the world. This large oval-shaped stone weighs 253 carats. "Its center, a deep flame, burns scarlet, the border framing it being of a rich green color. Viewed from another angle its color is a vivid emerald and its frame a royal blue." The famous "Hope" pearl weighs 454 carats. The "Hope Sapphire" was of a blue color by daylight and an amethyst color by nightlight. A large specimen of white topaz in the British Museum weighs over twelve pounds. The "Great Braganza," a white topaz which was set in the crown of Portugal, was of a weight of 1680 carats. Queen Mary of England is the owner of a great blue Queensland topaz. The famous turquoises among the royal gems of Spain came from New Mexico.

## OCCURRENCE OF GEM STONES

Amber is obtained chiefly from the coast of the Baltic Sea. It is also found on the Danish coast and parts of Asia. Beryl comes chiefly from the Ural Mountains, Brazil, India, Australia and the United States. Its varieties are of pale blue, sapphire blue, violet, reddish, yellow and greenish yellow colors. Aquamarine includes beryls of sky blue and sea green colors. Chrysoberyl of gem value comes from Brazil, Ceylon, Russia, Australia and Ireland. Its colors are greens of several kinds, golden yellow and brown. The best rubies come from Upper Burma; others come from Afghanistan, Bohemia, Ceylon and Queensland. Fine rubies have been found in North Carolina. Blue sapphires are brought from Ceylon; others are obtained in India, Siam and Queensland. Good specimens have been found in New Jersey and Montana. Sapphires are from light to dark blue, green, white, golden, orange and pink colors. Diamonds are obtained in India, Borneo, Brazil, South Africa, Siberia, Australia and

the United States. These gems have an extensive color range, "including nearly all the prismatic hues." The colored varieties are blues, greens, yellows, browns and reds. The garnets prized as gems are deep blood red to nearly black stones. Some of the best come from Bohemia. Opals are obtained in Hungary, Honduras, Mexico and the United States. The finest now come from Australia. Pearls are found in the Persian Gulf, Ceylon, the Red Sea, New Guinea, South America and the United States. Many fine pearls have been obtained from Wisconsin rivers. Quartz includes a larger number of kinds of gems among its varieties than any other mineral. Among these are agate, amethyst, bloodstone or heliotrope, cairngorm, carnelian, cat's-eye, chalcedony, chrysoprase, jasper, moss agate or mocha stone, onyx, rock crystal, rose quartz and sard. Most of these are distributed all over the world. Spinel has a wide range of colors, its hues being red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and violet. Most of the gem spinel comes from Ceylon, Burma, Siam, India and other Eastern countries. Topaz is obtained in Brazil, Ceylon, Mexico, Australia and the United States. Its colors are wine, amber, honey, straw-yellow, pale blue to pale green, grayish, reddish and white. "Rose-pink topaz is obtained by heating the yellow or brown colored kinds." Tourmaline occurs in Brazil, Russia, Ceylon, Australia, the United States and Canada. The best specimens of turquoise come from Persia. In the United States it occurs in New Mexico, Arizona, Colorado, Nevada and California. The colors of turquoise are sky-blue, bluish green, apple green and greenish gray. Zircon includes the gems known as hyacinth, or jacinth, and jargon. The former gems are of reddish, brownish and orange-red colors, and the latter of yellowish, smoky and colorless kinds.

Practically all gem stones are cut in Holland, Belgium, Hungary and France. Native cut stones from India, Ceylon and China are for the most part crudely cut. Nearly all are re-cut before being put on the European market. Antwerp and Amsterdam are the chief centers of diamond cutting. In several districts in Germany many stones are stained and "synthetic" gems manufactured.

## AMERICAN INDIAN JEWELS

The North American Indians of prehistoric time are, by the revelations of their mounds, graves and village sites, known to have

appreciated the beauty of pearls, turquoise, rock crystal, rose, smoky and other quartz, amethyst, agate, carnelian, chalcedony, jasper, opalized and agatized wood, obsidian, calcite, chlorastrolite, quartzite, tourmaline, mica, hematite and other semi-precious stones. These they used in the manufacture of ornaments, amulets, ceremonials and implements. Turquoise mines in the mountains near Sante Fe and elsewhere were early worked by them. Obsidian was obtained from the Rocky Mountains, mica from sources in Georgia, quartzite of various colors from quarries in Wisconsin, and brown chalcedony from workings in North Dakota. Agate from other quarries in that state. The mounds of Ohio have yielded numerous necklaces of pearls. The Pueblo Indians continue to use turquoise in jewelry.

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS ABOUT GEMS

### THE JEWELLED THRONES

Seated on his lofty throne in his palace on the summit of the high mountain, Olympus, Jupiter, the supreme ruler of the universe, beheld all that happened on earth. This great throne, constructed of cedar wood, was adorned with gold and embellished with settings of precious stones among which were the ruby, emerald, sapphire, opal, amethyst, crystal and other gems. Seated beside Jupiter on another golden, jewel-ornamented throne was his wife, Juno, white-gowned and gold-saddled, greatest and most queenly of all goddesses. These thrones and the magnificent palaces of all of the gods residing on Mount Olympus were constructed by Vulcan, the son of Jupiter and Juno, and god of the fire and the forge. At his great forge in the heart of the mountain the deformed blacksmith-god with the help of Cyclops also manufactured from the gold obtained from the bosom of the earth all of the other furniture in the palaces. This he also embellished with a rich ornamentation of precious stones.

In the great hall of the palace of Jupiter the gods every day feasted on ambrosia and nectar. Here they considered the matters of heaven and earth and quaffed nectar from golden, jewel-encrusted goblets. Hebe, goddess of youth and cup-bearer to the gods kept their goblets always filled. Apollo, god of the sun, music, poetry and medicine, entertained the gods with the sweet music of his lyre. The nine beautiful Muses, daughters of Jupiter, sang for the assembly. Through the garden of the gods flowed scented crystal streams. Here



stood the tree of life, its branches heavily laden with golden apples. Jewels of great beauty were everywhere.

From his golden throne the mighty Jupiter "gathered the clouds, caused the gentle rains and winds, moderated the heat, the light and the seasons, and cast the dread thunderbolts, also forged by Vulcan in his underground smithy. He was worshipped with various rites in many lands. To him were sacred everywhere the loftiest trees and the grandest mountain tops. He required of his worshippers cleanliness of surroundings and of person and heart. He administered justice to both the gods of heaven and the inhabitants of the universe."

### THE AMBER TEARS

Phaeton, son of Apollo, god of the sun, one day asked of his father the great boon of driving the chariot of the sun. The sun-god, arrayed in purple vestments, was seated on a throne that glittered with diamonds. In attendance upon him in his court, also beautifully arrayed, were grouped the Hours, the Days, the Months and the Seasons. It was a scene of great splendor. The god was greatly dismayed at the presumptuous request of his son. He tried in vain to dissuade him from such an undertaking. No one but himself had ever driven the four fiery steeds which drew the flaming sun chariot. Patiently he explained to his son the terrors and perils which beset the sun's path. The heavenly sphere kept revolving all the time, the road was steep and very difficult in places, frightful monsters lay in wait along its course, and the fiery steeds were most difficult to guide.

"The sun chariot, the gift of Vulcan, was of the brightest gold, the axle and pole were of gold, the golden wheels had silver spokes. Bordering the chariot body were rows of chrysolites and diamonds reflecting the sun's splendor. Golden harnesses bound the steeds to the pole."

Phaeton, a conceited youth, would not listen to the warnings of his father. He persisted in his fatal request. At length his reluctant parent consented to allow him to drive the chariot. The time had come for the sun to undertake its daily journey. Aurora flung wide the gates of morn. The Hours were ready to act as escort. Apollo anointed his son to preserve him from the burning sun rays. Phaeton sprang into the chariot and seized the reins and dashed out of

the eastern door of the palace with a flourish. He had been given directions for his drive and cautioned to watch his fiery steeds with the utmost care.

Elated by his exalted position he soon forgot his instructions. He became very reckless, driving the steeds faster and faster. Soon he lost his way, leaving the well-marked road. He lost command of the horses and they ran into pathless places in among the stars. Now they rose high into heaven, now descended almost to the earth. As the chariot hurled along the clouds began to smoke, the mountains burned, the trees and plants shriveled up. The rivers and springs began to dry and the earth to crack. Phaeton beheld the world on fire. He was nearly dead from terror. The people of the land over which he passed were burned black.

Mother Earth, overcome with heat and thirst, now called loudly to Jupiter to save her from total destruction. Jupiter, aroused from a profound sleep, soon saw the great danger and launched his deadliest thunderbolt at the unfortunate youth. The chariot overturned and Phaeton, badly scorched and his hair on fire, fell headlong into the waters of a great river. Here he perished. His mother, poor Clymene, heard of his death and refused to be comforted. His sisters, the three Heliades, as they lamented his sad fate, were transformed into poplar trees. Their tears, which continued to flow, became amber as they fell into the water. The Naiads erected a tomb over the remains of the rash and luckless Phaeton.

## THE HYACINTH

Apollo, the sun-god, one day descended to earth to enjoy the friendship of a beautiful youth called Hyacinthus. The god of the silver bow and of the fiery darts became very fond of the lad and accompanied him in all of his sports. He carried the youth's nets when he went fishing, led his dogs when they followed the chase and accompanied him on his excursions into the woodlands and the mountains. For him he neglected both his tuneful lyre and his unerring bow. Hyacinthus adored his friend and patron.

One day the two friends played a game of quoits. Apollo heaved the quoit high and far. It glittered in the sun like a golden disc as it rose. Hyacinthus, excited with the sport and eager to try his own skill, sprang forward to seize the missile. But it bounded when it reached the earth and struck him in the forehead. Zephyrus, the

god of the south wind, who also loved the youth and was jealous of Apollo, blew the quoit out of its course and caused it to strike Hyacinthus. He fainted and fell. Apollo, horrified at the sad accident raised his friend in his arms. He tried to staunch the flow of blood and have his life. But Hyacinthus died in his arms. The drops of blood which fell from his brow were transformed into flowers of a beautiful red hue (the hyacinth) and others into bright jewels which also bear his name. Apollo ever after mourned the sad fate of his loved friend with his lyre and song. Every returning springtime his memory is revived in the clusters of beautiful flowers. The gem hyacinth is also a reminder of his devotion.

### IRIS

The crystal gem, rainbow quartz, exists in the memory of Iris, (the rainbow) the beautiful companion and attendant of Juno. On her errands as the messenger of Juno she traveled on the rainbow with wings extended, clothed in glorious colors, radiant lights around her head. "Her flight through the air was so rapid that she was seldom seen; and no one would have known she had passed had it not been for the brilliant trail her many colored robe left behind her in the sky."

"Like fiery clouds, that flush with ruddy glare,  
Or Iris, gliding through the purple air;  
When, loosely girt her dazzling mantle flows,  
And, 'gainst the sun in arching colors glows."

—*Flaccus*

Iris was the guide and the helper of the souls of women. During the Trojan War she was the messenger at different times of both Juno and Jupiter. All of the precious gems of the world have borrowed bright colors from the robe of glowing Iris.

### THE AMETHYST

Bacchus, god of wine and revelry, was the son of Jupiter and Semele. "He is generally represented as a handsome youth, crowned with ivy or grape leaves or clusters of grapes, bearing an ivy-circled wand as a sceptre, and riding in a chariot drawn by panthers or

leopards. He was worshipped throughout the ancient world and numerous festivals were held in his honor.

"Bacchus, in the course of his wanderings, fell in love with a beautiful nymph. He was so persistent in his love making that Diana, the moon-goddess, intervened and transformed the nymph into a purple amethyst. Thereupon Bacchus, in respect for her memory, vowed that all who wore this jewel would be protected from the evils of intoxicating wines."

### THE DIAMOND, EMERALD AND RUBY

Draconite, a stone thought to be identical with the diamond, was a brilliant white gem. This stone the ancients believed to exist in the heads of mountain dragons. To obtain the gem was therefore a very dangerous undertaking. In India, hunters of this stone, according to a myth, wove magic letters in a scarlet robe and infused opiates into these. This robe they placed before the cave of the mountain dragon. They then sang songs containing magic spells. The dragon, lured out of his den by the music, crawled out on the robe, laid his head on the mystic letters and went to sleep. The hunters then cut off his head. From it they took the gems of great value. Their stratagem was not always successful. Sometimes the fierce dragon seized the hunters and drew them into his den.

On the floor of a mountain valley were scattered diamonds, rubies, emeralds and other gems. This rich valley was guarded by poisonous serpents. These crawled about everywhere. No man might enter this death valley and hope to leave it alive. But the gem hunters devised a plan to obtain the stones. Standing on the mountain slopes they cast the carcasses of goats down into the valley. They fell among the gems and these adhered to the flesh. Eagles and vultures flying into the valley bore the carcasses up into the mountains. Here the hunters drove away the birds and secured the gems.

The Peruvian goddess Esmerelda was said to reside in an emerald. This stone was about as big as an ostrich egg. It was the custom of this goddess to receive emeralds as offerings from her devotees. Beautiful and flawless stones were brought to her shrine to gain her protection. Those who worshipped her also sacrificed their daughters to her.

The sea king, Polycrates of Samos, cast his priceless emerald ring into the sea. This he did to propitiate the fateful Nemesis, god-

dess of retribution. The ring was swallowed by a large fish which was afterwards caught by a fisherman. It was taken to the palace where the cook found in its body his master's ring. Polycrates was greatly concerned by this occurrence since it foretold his fatal end. He was afterwards killed by his enemy, the Persian satrap Orestes.

"On the Island of Cyprus, guarding a sepulchre, there was a marble lion with emerald eyes. These shone so brightly on the summer sea that the fish were frightened away. The fishermen could catch none of them in their nets. They then replaced the emeralds with other stones. The fish returned and the fishermen were again able to net them in abundance."

### THE MAGIC JEWEL

The Emperor Charles the Great had a palace on the shore of Lake Zurich in Switzerland. Here he held court from time to time. Near the palace was a pillar which supported a bell. From the bell there hung a rope. All persons who sought justice from the emperor had the privilege of ringing this bell. One day the bell rang but no ringer was found. This happened again on the following day. Then the emperor commanded a page to hide in the shrubbery behind the pillar and watch. The page watched. Soon he saw a serpent crawl up from the lake shore. When it reached the pillar it writhed up the rope. This caused the bell to ring. Now the emperor came to the spot. As he approached the serpent bowed to him and then crawled away to its cave. In the cave the emperor found a very large toad sitting on the serpent's eggs. It seemed to be trying to block the entrance. The emperor ordered his escort to kill the creature.

While the emperor was seated at dinner, some days later, the serpent crawled into the hall. It approached the emperor's seat and bowed three times. It arose and dropped a jewel into his goblet. Then it disappeared. The gem the emperor found to be a very beautiful diamond. He caused the stone to be set in a golden ring which he presented to his queen, Fastrada. It seemed to possess magic properties. The attraction which Fastrada exerted upon Charles now became greater from day to day. When she died he could not bear to be separated from her. He would not consent to her burial. In a dream Archbishop Turpin saw the ring on her hand gleaming brilliantly, and enveloping the emperor. So he re-

moved the ring from her hand and placed it on his own. After that the emperor's affection turned to him. He was able to do much good for the country. Later, fearing the power of the ring might bring evil, he flung it into a body of water near Aachen. This water became a celebrated health spring. To it the sick and suffering made annual pilgrimage.

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# Old Stormalong of the Yarns

Old Time Yankee  
Deep-Water Sailors



**ALFRED BULLTOP STORMALONG**

Legendary Hero of the American Seaboard in the  
Day of Wooden Sailing Ships

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MADISON, WISCONSIN

1933

## OLD STORMALONG



Oh, Stormy's dead and gone to rest.  
To my way-ay, Storm-a-long:  
Of all the sailors he was the best.  
Aye, aye, aye, Mister Storm-a-long!

For fifty years he sailed the seas.  
To my way-ay, Storm-a-long!  
In winter storm and summer breeze.  
Aye, aye, aye, Mister Storm-a-long!

And now Old Stormy's day is done.  
To my way-ay, Storm-a-long!  
We marked the place where he is gone.  
Aye, aye, aye, Mister Storm-a-long!

He slipped his cable off Cape Horn.  
To my way-ay, Storm-a-long!  
Far from the place where he was born.  
Aye, aye, aye, Mister Storm-a-long!

A good old skipper to his crew.  
To my way-ay, Storm-a-long!  
An able sailor, brave and true.  
Aye, aye, aye, Mister Storm-a-long!

Old Stormy's heard the bugle call.  
To my way-ay, Storm-a-long!  
So sing his dirge now one and all.  
Aye, aye, aye, Mister Storm-a-long!

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# OLD STORMALONG YARNS

**Small and Tall Tales of Alfred Bulltop Stormalong  
Bravest and Best of the Old Time Deep-  
Water Sailors of the American  
Seaboard**

**With Snatches of Old Sea Chanteys**



**Charles Edward Brown**

Wigwam Tales  
Paul Bunyan Tales  
Cowboy Tales  
Ghost Tales

FIRST EDITION  
1933



C. E. Brown  
2011 Chadbourne Avenue  
Madison, Wisconsin

# Old Stormalong Yarns

## Tales of the Deep-Water Tars

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### WOOD-WIND SHIPS

The years are not so long past when the wooden ships of America sailed to every part of the wide world and were to be seen in nearly every distant harbor. These wind-driven sea-birds—sloops, schooners, cutters, brigs, barks, barkentines, packets, whalers, fishing ships, clippers, privateers and frigates were constructed in the shipyards of Salem, Marblehead, Nantucket, New Bedford, New York, and other American sea ports. Famous in marine history are the Constitution, Constellation, Drednaught, Great Western, Rainbow, Flying Cloud, Essex, Saratoga and other great ships. Commanded by brave and daring officers and manned by hardy and loyal seamen the wooden ships of America carried the Flag to distant ports where it was not known.

The fishing fleets of New England were always active employing many men and boys in their often distant and dangerous cruises, and brought back to their home ports great catches of cod, mackerel and other fish. In the year 1840 the American whaling fleets numbered nearly seven hundred vessels with nearly two thousand sailors. The merchantmen carried on a great trade with the West Indies, China, India, Java and other countries. The famous American clipper ships were then the fastest sailing ships in the world. In the war of the Revolution and the War of 1812 American privateers and frigates more or less ruled the seas. The exploits of John Paul Jones, Jonathan Haraden and of other daring commanders shine in our American naval history.

After the Civil War the number of sailing ships fell off rapidly. Today only a very few big sailing ships remain on the ocean.

The yarns, songs and superstitions of the old time sailors of the wooden sailing ships made a rich contribution to American folklore.

ALFRED BULLTOP STORMALONG, A. B. S.

His Youth

Popular tradition, helped out by the records of the family Bible, gives the information that Alfred Bulltop Stormalong



was born in a seacoast hamlet in the state of Maine, not far from the spot, say some chroniclers, where the big lumberjack, Paul Pinewoods Bunyan, got his start in life. His proud father was one of the first of these dauntless Yankee skippers to round Cape Horn. More than that, all of his ancestors as far back as they can be traced, were sea folk. His dad used to say that they were among those who helped Noah to build and to navigate the Ark.

Even as a boy Stormie was possessed of Herculean strength. None of his mates cared to cross him. He could crack a cocoanut with one hand, and human "cocoanuts" with his fists with equal grace and celerity. He could throw a salt mackerel or cod further and with a more unerring aim than any boy in his home burg. But he never was a lad of a quarrelsome disposition. Few cared or dared to engage in a fracas with him. In the water he was "about as slick as an eel in a kag of oysters."

Like most boys of the Hard Cider State he early went away to sea. At that time he had deep thought plans of becoming a bloody pirate. But when he learned that most of the men who sailed and plundered under the Jolly Roger came to inglorious ends, he changed his mind and decided to become a Jack Tar instead. He was quick to learn and soon became a favorite with the crews of all the ships where he berthed or swung his hammock. At about this time his fond mother gave him a Bible, but some son of a sea cook filched this book from his dunnage his first fare at sea and thereafter he had to steer his own moral course unaided.

Oh, John-nie's gone. What shall I do?

Hoo-lay-ee, I-oh!

Ah, John-nie's gone, and I'll go too.

John-nie's gone to Hilo!

### ON THE RAGING MAIN

Of the old time Yankee deep-water sailormen Alfred Bulltop Stormalong, A. B. S. soon became the popular hero. He was familiarly known as Old Stormie and every old salt knew him or had heard of him. The A. B. S. placed after his name in marine records stands for "able-bodied seaman," and not for "a bum sailor," as some may think. He was a master mariner and after years became the skipper of a big square-rigger. Hundreds of tall yarns of his prowess on sea and land have been spun on the decks of the old wooden sailing ships. No single literary shark could gather them all.

The MARY ANN and the SILVER MAID were among the first ships he signed on. He was the bosun of the good ship ALBATROSS out of Boston. Old Stormie was a mighty man, reported as four fathoms tall in his bare feet. He could sail any windjammer that ever followed the Trades on the briny seas. He sailed in many of the great old time ships.

Haul on th' bowlin',  
Th' ship she is a ro-o-lin!  
Haul on th' bowlin,  
Th' bowlin' haul!

### AS A WHALER

One of his early voyages was aboard a whaling ship, the tough old GRIDIRON of New Bedford. Here he learned to cast a harpoon with great accuracy. Such was his inhuman strength that, when once this deadly iron was deeply and securely imbedded in a whale's body, he would grab the line brace a foot against a mast or the capstan, and haul the big beast right up to the ship almost before his mates could sing out Jack Robinson. Because of the great number of whales which he personally bagged and helped to cut up during this voyage the skipper and part owner of the whaler was able to retire for life after this one cruise. When they got wind of Old Stormies coming after that the whales just naturally fled their native haunts and went to the North or the South Pole on a vacation. And nothing could induce them to return,

Oh, poor old Reuben Ran-zo.  
Ran-zo, boys, Ran-zo!  
Oh, poor old Reuben Ran-zo.  
Ran-zo, boy-ees, Ran-zo!

For Ranzo was no sai-i-lor.  
Ran-zo, boys, Ran-zo!  
No use aboard a wha-i-ler.  
Ran-zo, boy-ees, Ran-zo!

### ON A SLAVE SHIP

As skipper of an American slave ship Alfred Bulltop Storm-along brought to the United States one of the first cargoes of blacks from Africa. He traded sea shells for these heathen. Not that he favored the traffic in humans. He knew that young and struggling America then stood in need of colored cooks, barbers and porters. He felt it his "bounden duty" to supply this urgent need. Yes, the colored race owes an everlasting



debt of gratitude to Old Stormie. They might even be willing to divide their tips with him were he alive today?

'An what d'ye think she had for cargo?

Blow, boys, blow!

A load of blacks, against th' embargo.

Blow, boys. Bully boys, blow!

### STRONG FOR HIS MEALS

Old Stormalong was a great eater. He really enjoyed his food. It is truthfully said of him that he never missed a meal if he could help it. It took a whole lot of provender to feed so big a man. When he settled down to a repast he kept the sea cooks busy scurrying about with his viands. A whole line of seamen with barrows were kept moving between the cook's galley and our hero to supply his needs.

He ate his whale soup from a Cape Cod boat. Whale and shark steaks rare were his favorite meats. He liked ostrich eggs for breakfast, either boiled or poached. But these were not always obtainable. Because of his great fondness for them quite a trade in ostrich fruit was early built up between New England and the Dark Continent. His favorite beverages were whale oil or whale milk cut with Maine hard cider. This was conveyed to him through a fire hose. It took a big vat of this liquid nourishment to wash down his food. After his repasts he would be walking the ship's deck, picking his teeth with a marline-spike.

Oh, th' times was hard an' th' wages low.

Leave 'er, John-nie, leave 'er!

An' th' grub was bad an' th' gales did blow.

An' it's time for us t' leave 'er!

### SCRIMSHAWS

His principal pastime when off watch was whittling scrimshaws. Seated on a coil of rope or a hogshead he would whittle or cut out of pieces of wood, whalebone or ivory with his big seaman's knife the most amazing articles such as knitting needles, jaggin' wheels, seals, knives, tops, rings, darning eggs, needle cases, birds, brooches and other objects of utility and art. On whale teeth and walrus tusks he engraved figures of whale ships, clippers and views of buildings and towns. Several generations of old time sailors learned the intricacies of this art from him. Many of the things he made were of little practical use to anyone. But the marine museums of the East are filled with them.

Old Stormie was very fond of music and he could dance. The jewsharp was his favorite instrument. When he trod a sailor's hornpipe on the deck, in his vigorous style, to the music of Billy Peg-leg, the cook's fiddle, the very timbers of the big ship shivered and shook.

I've a pal called Billy Peg-leg,  
With one leg a wood leg.  
An' Billy he's a ship's cook  
An' lives upon the sea.

An' hanging by his griddle  
Old Billy keeps a fiddle,  
For fiddling in the dog-watch  
When the moon is on the sea.

—Bill Adams

### THE OCTOPUS

Once when the whaling fleet was on the whaling grounds in the North Atlantic, Old Stormie sighted a whole school of whales. Presumably they were off to a whale school picnic with their whale school teacher. The skipper gave the order to hoist the mudhook (anchor) and to take after them. All hands tried to raise it but with no result. They pulled and hauled with all their might but could not budge it. It was fast on the sea bottom, as if glued there. A wily old giant devilfish bent on mischief had taken hold of it. With some of his arms he had hold of the cable and with the others he was holding to the rocks and seaweed on the bottom. To get the anchor up was hopeless.

The Old Man now came to learn what in Tophet was the matter. Stormie leapt over the side of the ship with his big knife in his teeth. What he did to that devilfish in the fight which took place between them it would take a month of Sundays to tell. The ocean water turned red with the blood of that old octopus. Old Stormie succeeded in freeing the anchor. In a spirit of revenge he tied the arms of that devilfish in sailor's knots. Some of them the monster was never able to undo.

Oh San-ty Ana won th' day,  
Hoo-ray, San-ty A-ana!  
Oh San-ty Ana won th' day.  
Along th' plains of Mexico!

### THE BIG SHIP "ALBATROSS"

The biggest ship Alfred Bulltop Stormalong ever sailed on was the ALBATROSS, a huge four-master out of Boston. This

vessel was so very large that all of the officers and the crew were mounted on horses. Even at that many of these horse marines were often too late for their meals, or missed them altogether, Man-alive this ship was so big that even Boston harbor was not big enough to hold her. And the harbor master would not enlarge the harbor to accomodate her. Whenever she arrived at a port all of her cago of merchandise had to be transferred to ordinary sailing ships to land it. No sailor, however sharp his eyesight, could see from one end to the other. There was a whole hours difference in time between her bow and her stern.

The rigging was so immense that no man could take in her sails at a single glance. It took five men, each looking as far as he could, to see the top of a mast. Her masts penetrated the clouds. The tops were hinged. Thus they could be bent down to let the sun and the moon go by. At that they often interfered with comets and meteors. They disarranged several constellations in such a fashion that the very best astronomers have not been able to make very much of them since. Her sails were so immense that all of the sail-makers in Boston were taken out into the Sahara Desert, where there was plenty of room, to sew them. The Arizona Desert was then not very well known, if at all. Young men who were sent aloft to furl or unfurl these sails generally came down as greybeards, the distance was so great. The skipper had to order all hands aloft a week before a storm. At that some of them got to the yards too late to be of service.

Oh! Blow th' man down, bullies. Blow th' man down.

W-ay! Hey? Blow th' man down!

Oh! Blow th' man down, bullies. Blow 'im right down.

It takes a long time t' blow th' man down!

## THE CREW

The ALBATROSS carried a crew of a thousand sailors. None of these Jack Tars ever saw or came to know even a quarter of their shipmates. The quarters to accomodate these seafarers were on every yardarm and in every big pulley. Cook's galleys were built in every handy place to supply the food required by so large a crew. The skipper gave out his orders through a twelve foot megaphone and these had to be relayed through other megaphones by the ten mates. When all hands were ordered forward it took some of the crew a whole week to get there. Some of the seamen got lost because they failed to take their compasses along. Once, in a fog, about half

the crew walked overboard. Some became bewildered in the sea and later turned up at Newfoundland.

It took thirty-four men to turn the ship's big steering wheel. Old Stormie was the only man who could do it alone. Turning it easily with one hand he helped himself to a bite of Navy Twist with the other. Stormalong was a very loyal seaman until he saw a bigger ship. Then he shipped on that one. This was not because of being overworked. He was always willing to do at least ten times his share of labor.

An' now it's time t' say good-bye.

Leave 'er, John-nie, leave'er!

For th' old pierheads a-drawin' nigh.

An' it's time for us t' leave'er!

### HER VOYAGES

The ALBATROSS was a great ship and no mistake. With Stormalong at the wheel she could ride out any storm that ever blew. She busted up completely several hurricanes and typhoons that happened to come her way. The droves of seahorses kept well out of her track. She was so big that she had to keep always to the ocean. Some of the deep bays in America's coastline are merely dents she made in turning around. Now and then she rubbed off the end of a cape. Once she managed to navigate through the English channel. It was a pretty tight squeeze, but she made it. The skipper had her sides well soaped at that. She got into those British waters by mistake. There was no room in which to turn around and she had to see the adventure through. The Dover cliffs scraped off all of the soap on her starboard side. This, they say, explains their pure white color. The waves are still foamy from the soap. A modern laundry would do well there. After that the big ship got into shallow water so that the crew had to throw overboard all of her ballast and a large part of her cargo. These heaps can still be seen. They form the Channel Islands. The Mediterranean sea was forbidden to the ALBATROSS. The authorities never would allow her to sail through the Straits of Gibraltar. There is just no knowing what might have happened if she had.

She's a deep-water ship, an' a deep-water crew.

A-way, you Rio!

We can keep t' th' coast, but we're darned if we do.

An' we're bound t' Ri-i-o Grande!

### THE LODGING HOUSE

Like most old time sailormen, Stormalong had a failing for pretty girls. It made no difference to him whether they were

Dutch or Spanish or Malacca. He treated them right and spent his wages generously. Like many another old salt he was always being taken advantage of by shore folks. Once, when paying his bill at a longshore "hotel," he asked the fair maid behind the counter what she was wearing around her neck. "Oh that is a ribbon," said she. "What did you think it was?" "Oh I thought it was your garter," replied Old Stormie. "Everything is so high around here." And the bouncer wanted to throw him out. But Old Stormie "could whip his weight in sharks" and this attempt was unsuccessful.

I bought her gowns, I bought her la-ces.  
Way, Hay, Roll an' go!  
A-an' took her out t' all th' pla-aces.  
Spent my money on Sa-lly Brown!

### ON SHORE LEAVE

Alfred B. Stormalong visited many foreign countries during his numerous voyages in merchant ships. He took his shore leave with others of the crew. Once, when in Italy, he leaned for just a few minutes against the tower of Piza, and it has been away out of plumb ever since. Tourists buy picture post-cards of this structure without knowing how this Wonder of the World ever came to be. On the shore of the Red Sea he washed his red flannel shirt. And that accounts for its name and color, old sailormen say. In Australia he cast away all of his clothing and bought new gear at a slop-shop. The fleas all got away. They call them kangaroos down there now.

Like many another able seaman Stormalong kept a log of his voyages. His school education had been after all pretty limited. So his log was kept in the characters of some obscure foreign language—Runic, Babylonian or Hindustani. To this day no one has been able to make head or tail of its contents. Several language professors of repute, who tried to decipher it, are in the madhouse, raving maniacs.

Only one more day a-sailing.  
One more day!  
Oh, rock an' roll me over.  
Only one more day!

### THE PANAMA CANAL

Once in the Carribean Sea the ALBATROSS was caught in a terrible storm. Stormalong was at the wheel. She had a tough time of it avoiding the islands. At that she jumped one

or two Haiti narrowly escaped annihilation. Down there some people are still saying their prayers and giving thanks for having escaped the disaster. Right down the coast she raced until she reached Darien. Here, without asking anyone's permission, she plowed right through the isthmus. And there she was in the broad Pacific. So she dug the Panama Canal with no trouble at all. The U. S. engineers, who were pottering around there at the time, could hardly believe their eyes. Naturally they took all the credit for the Canal afterward. Application was made to the Government for a medal for Alfred B. Stormalong. But even after the President had called three special sessions of Congress to deliberate on the matter he never got more than a package of Congressional garden seeds. And thus does our nation reward its real heroes.

Oh, Shen-an-doah's my native val-ley.

Aa-way, you roll-ing ri-ver!

Shen-an-doah is my na-tive val-ley.

Ah-way, we're bound t' go!

### CHINESE PIRATES

Once, when she was on a trading voyage in the China Sea, the BIG BESSIE, the big four-master on which Alfred Bulltop Stormalong was sailing at the time, had a run-in with Chinese pirates. Right here old Stormie used his head. He captured the crews of the three marauding junks by having the sailors stove in the heads of the cargo of hogsheads of New Orleans molasses and allowing it to run over the decks. When the slant-eyed rascals boarded the BIG BESSIE, knife and sword in hand, they stuck fast and were fairly caught. The sailors snared them with ropes from the yardarms. Stormalong brought these Chinks to America. On the way over he personally attended to their education with a rope's end.

They were a pretty docile lot when they reached our coast. In this country he released them on parole to found in America the first Chinese laundries and chop suey joints.

How do you know she's a Yankee clipper?

Blow, boys, blow!

The Stars and Stripes they fly above her.

Blow, my bully boys, blow!

### HE TRIES FARMING

Once Stormalong told his shipmates that he was "all through" with following the sea for a livelihood. He would try farming. The Old Man protested against his leaving, but he



was pig-headed, and putting his sea chest under his arm, he left the ship. He had inherited a piece of land way up in the foothills of the Green Mountains from an ill-meaning relative. Once there he knew that his fortune was made. So he said good-bye to his mates and set out right joyfully for the Promised Land.

When he finally got there he found that his inherited acres were the roughest, stoniest, brushiest, weediest lands on earth. Working every day, from sunrise to sunset, it took him exactly one year, forty-nine and a half days to dislodge the boulders. Some were as large as haystacks. Once on top of the ground he just rolled them down hill. And several Eyetalian hamlets were thus rolled out of existence. Once cleared of stones and brush he plowed and planted his land. He tried again and again but the only crops he was ever able to grow were bull thistles, horseweed and mullein. At last, thoroughly discouraged, he gave up further attempts at farming, donated his inherited acres to the county for a poor farm and returned to a seafaring life.

Oh! A dollar a day is hoosier's pay.

T' roll th' cotton down!

An' ship for more is what they say.

Oh, roll th' cotton down!

#### THE DEATH OF OLD STORMALONG

Alfred Bulltop Stormalong commanded a privateer in the War of the Revolution. He had a real grudge against the John Bulls. No one knows how many British frigates he accounted for. Most were "spurlos versenkt." He was with John Paul Jones in his sea fights and raids.

When Old Stormie "passed in his checks" he was mourned by American sailormen of the wind-driven marine on every sea in every port. It took ten acres of silk sailcloth to make his shroud. His burial at sea was most impressive. The funeral procession of ghost ships was lead by the famous FLYING DUTCHMAN. Legions of seahorses followed in their wake.

A golden chain was used to lower the body of this mighty sailorman to Davy Jones' locker. Mermaids chanted his requiem. Old Neptune lead the mourners. His soul now disports in the haven of all good sailormen—the Fiddler's Green. Thus passed from sight Alfred Bulltop Strómalong, A. B. S., legendary hero of the old time Yankee deep-water sailormen.

Oh! Stormy's dead an' gone t' rest.

To m' wa-ay, Storm-a-long!

Of all th' sailors he was best.

Aye, aye, aye, Mister Storm-a-long!

**CLOUD LORE**  
**Stories and Superstitions**

**University of Wisconsin**



**CHARLES E. BROWN**

Madison, Wisconsin

1935

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# CLOUD LORE

Stories and Superstitions

## CLOUD LORE

A cloud is defined as "a collection of visible vapor or watery particles suspended in the upper atmosphere. Clouds consist of water droplets—when the temperature is above freezing, or of ice crystals when it is below freezing. The droplets vary greatly in size—they may be vanishingly small, or, in the larger, one tenth to one fifth inch in size. The ice crystals also vary greatly in size. They are often of exquisite beauty." The word cloud is said to be derived from clud, a rock or hillock, the application arising from their frequent resemblance to such earth features.

In 1802, Luke Howard, a young English chemist interested in meteorology, proposed a classification of clouds which continued in use for many years. An International System of Classification has been in use since 1905. The following forms of clouds are recognized: (A) Cirrus. Feathery or Fleecy Clouds. These are the most elevated of all clouds, their average altitude being about 30,000 feet. They are thin, delicate and generally white in color. Their forms are varied and beautiful. Often they are feather-like. Sometimes they resemble tufts of hair or carded wool, again they are in curl-like fleecy patches. These are the familiar "mare's tails", the "cat's tails" of the sailor. (B) Cumulus. Woolpack or Cauliflower Clouds. Thick, piled-up clouds, they appear in large masses and are hemispherical or dome-shaped with protuberances. The base is horizontal. They are "common in summer presenting the appearance of gigantic snowy mountains." Their elevation is from 4,500 to 6,000 feet. (C) Stratus. High Fogs. They form in horizontal bands or uniform layers resembling fog. When broken into irregular sheets by wind they are spoken of as "scud clouds." Their elevation is given as 3,000 feet. (D) Nimbus. Rain Clouds. In seasons of continued rain they cover the sky. From them rain or snow falls. They are of

a uniform gray color with ragged edges. Their elevation is below 7,000 feet. (E) Cirro-cumulus, Mackerel Sky or Curdled Sky. They are thin, broken, fleece-like clouds, in small round masses or white flakes. They show no shadows or only very slight ones. The Germans name them "Schafen Wolken" and the French "Moutons." Their elevation is between 10,000 to 23,000 feet. (F) Cirro-stratus. Bed-sheet Clouds. "A thin sheet of milky white cloud completely covering the sky. Sometimes resembling a tangled web." Altitude about 30,000 feet. (G) Cumulo-stratus. Winter Clouds. A form between cumulus and stratus. Large, globular masses or rolls of dark clouds of a blackish or bluish color. Sometimes "great rolls arranged in parallel lines and pressed against one another. They cover the sky, especially in winter. They are generally associated with rain." Height of base 4,500 feet. (H) Fog. Motionless or nearly motionless vapor lying quite low or in contact with the earth's surface.

Among special cloud forms are Billow Clouds or Wave Clouds. These are clouds arranged in "nearly equally spaced bands generally with intervening strips of clear sky." Rain Balls (Mammato-cirrus clouds). Miniature inverted cumulus clouds. Lenz Clouds. They are of lenticular form and are often stationary. Crest Cloud. Usually covering the crest of a mountain peak, often called a cap or hood. Banner Cloud. Floating above a mountain summit like a "great white flag". Boa Cloud. "A boa of delicate texture wrapped around a peak." Funnel or Tornado Cloud. "It hangs down straight or curved from the base of a rain cloud." Waterspout. Funnel-shaped cloud over water.

What are known as "cloud splendors" are colored clouds, iridescent clouds in masses of pink, emerald green, rose, orange and other colors in masses or in strata. Sun Dogs, "sunbeams which find their way through a rift in the clouds and are rendered luminous by dust in their paths". Halos. Bright patterns caused by reflected and refracted light on ice crystals of cirrus and other cold clouds. Rainbow. "A circular bow or arc exhibiting in concentric bands, the colors of the spectrum. Formed opposite the sun by the reflection and re-

fraction of its rays in drops of rain. Lightning. Among the different forms are forked, tree and heat lightning.

## BELIEFS AND SUPERSTITIONS

Both civilized and savage men have always had superstitions about clouds. Those of unusual or curious form, or of dark and menacing aspect, were, in the early centuries of the world's history, believed to be demons at large to wreak vengeance on mankind. Others foretold the coming of such calamities as famine, pestilence and war. To avert these evils sacrifices were made, prayers offered, church bells rung and other protective measures resorted to. Storms and lightning were especially feared. Travelers carried or wore jewels and other amulets as a protection against these.

In the Bible clouds were a sign of the presence of God, "as a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night". Swiftly moving clouds with lightning flashes were evidence of his wrath with erring humanity. The throne of Jupiter (Jove), king of the gods of ancient Greece, was on the top of Mount Olympus, among the clouds. From his lofty seat he cast his thunderbolts on those he wished to destroy. Juno (Hera), queen of heaven and goddess of atmosphere, was his consort. Bellerophon (the orb of day) rode across the sky on Pegasus (the fleecy white clouds) and slew Chimaera. Mercury (the wind) once stole away the cattle of the Sun (the clouds). Iole, the bright-eyed maid was loved by Hercules. She and her train are the violet colored clouds. The sunset clouds are symbols of the enchanted land of the Hesperides.

The American Indian recognizes the flights of thunderbirds in the moving dark clouds in the sky in storm time. Peals of thunder are heard when they move their dark wings and flashes of lightning are seen when they open and close their eyes. From the lakes on their backs came downpours of rain. In Bohemia the clouds of mist which rise over meadows were believed to be the transparent silver-grey veils enrobing the "forest women" in their wild moonlight revels. In some European countries to a girl in love clouds moving rapidly across the sky meant rivals. In the cloud forms others saw giants,



demons, animals, trees, ships, castles and mountains, all having some superstitious significance. A dagger-shaped cloud was a portent of approaching war. Fog is caused by a white bear drinking too much water and bursting. (Labrador).

### CLOUDS AS WEATHER SIGNS

For centuries clouds have furnished weather signs to both land dwellers and seafaring folk. A few of these cloud signs may be mentioned:—A cloud rising out of the west foretells rain. A red or orange sunset indicates that the day following will be fine. It will probably be hot. A rising yellow or purple-tinted cloud in the spring or summer has hail in it. A long black cloud (Noah's Ark) pointing from north to south portends fair weather, from east to west, wind and rain. A halo about the moon is a sign of stormy weather. In a tree-form cloud (weather tree) wind will come from the direction in which the top of the tree points. A rainbow after a rain is a sign that fair weather will follow. In New England they say:

"When the fog goes up the mountain hoppin',  
Then the rain comes down the mountain droppin'."

Travelers were warned of weather change:

"Evening red and morning grey,  
Set the traveler on his way;  
Evening grey and morning red  
Bring down rain upon his head."

When large clouds developed in the morning people said:

"In the morning mountains,  
In the evening fountains."

Sailormen knew that:

"Mackerel scales and mare's tales,  
Make lofty ships carry low sails."

From the old time dream books we learn that to dream of a sky, fair and serene signifies a "peaceful life"; a clouded sky, "misfortune"; passing clouds, "troubles"; thunder, "danger"; lightning, a "love quarrel" and a rainbow, "good fortune."

## AMERICAN INDIAN CLOUD TALES

A giant being swallows clouds. He eats them one after the other. Thus the country is deprived of needful rains. Great heat and drought follow the disappearance of the clouds. The growing crops, lacking moisture, wither and are destroyed and men, women, children and animals starve and die for want of food. A brave Indian shoots the giant and saves the lives of the people that remain. (Southwest).

## THE MANITOU SMOKES

The cottony white clouds, which we often see floating in the sky on a fair summer day, are puffs of smoke from the great pipe or calumet of the Manitou. Seated on a large rock, hill or mountain he draws contentedly at the mouth of his long pipestem. The smoke arises to the sky from its kinikinnik-filled pipe bowl and from his mouth. He is thinking of his Indian children and of their happiness. (Ojibwa).

## GREAT THUNDER

Great Thunder and his sons live above the sky cloud plain. The lightning and the rainbow are their beautiful robes. Medicine men pray to the thunder. There are other Thunders, who live in the mountains. These build invisible bridges from one to the other. They are always plotting mischief. One must never point at the rainbow. (Cherokee).

## THE CARIBS COME

The Caribs of Guiana have a belief that man reached the earth from Cloud Land. The clouds, having brought him down to the earth ascended, leaving him behind. Being hungry, the first men were obliged to eat earth, which they baked. They followed the birds and the beasts to see what berries and roots they ate. These they tasted and found good and nourishing. So they learned to help themselves. They never returned to the Cloud Country.

## THE HUPA DANCE

A large black or yellowish cloud one day appeared over a mountain top in the Hupa country in California. It was thought to be a pestilence cloud, filled with sickness and death. The Indians feared its coming and became panic stricken. A shaman advised that a dance be held. This was done. After each dance the dancers saw that the cloud had retreated a little. They danced for five days before the cloud entirely disappeared. And the Hupa people were happy again. They were saved.

## THE CLUSTER STARS

The Cluster Stars liked to travel about and to dance. They were lazy and wanted to do this all the time. When the planting season came they planted only pole beans, nothing else. One day they danced in a new place in the sky. They danced and danced, having the merriest kind of a time. They were so busy and happy that they did not notice that they were being surrounded by great banks of clouds. Some stars danced into the cloud banks and were lost. They were never found. Some others ate pole beans. When they ate too many, winds blew them away and they also disappeared. That is why there are not so many Cluster Stars as there once were. (Kosati).

## THE SKY COUNTRY

A man whose wife had died felt very lonely. He set off along the ocean shore to hunt for her. He soon found himself on a wide, hard path. He walked for a long time. Then he found himself among the clouds in the Sky Land. Here he found a woman who was tanning a deer skin. She directed him to where his wife was. Among the clouds he finally found her. The sky people who lived there wanted to burn him. He told them that he was more afraid of water. So they threw him in the water to drown. He thus escaped death. A spider woman spun a web for him so he could get back to the earth. She instructed him how to pull away when he got stuck on a cloud. So he reached the earth. (Tlingit).

## **HENO, THE THUNDER SPIRIT**

Heno is the guardian of the heavens. He has the thunder which can be heard above the noise of tempests. His lodge is among the clouds. He sends the rain which refreshes the earth. This he does by moving and shaking the clouds. In his travels he carries on his back a great basket of rocks. These he hurls at the evil spirits he meets. Sometimes they fall to earth enveloped in fire. He wears a magic feather which renders him invulnerable to their attacks. When he desires he can assume the form of a human being. (Iroquois).

## **THE DEATH TRAIL**

When an Indian dies he must travel far on the death trail. The spirit finally comes to a rapid stream which it must cross on a log. The spirit of a good Indian will cross this bridge safely. Bad spirits stand near with stones which they throw. The spirit does not try to dodge these missiles. They fly harmlessly by. The spirit of a bad Indian tries to dodge the stones and falls off the log. It cannot reach the spirit world. The trail winds through the clouds. It at last reaches a place where the sky is clear and blue. The grass is green and there are many buffalo. Here there is always feasting and dancing. (Choctaw).

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# GYPSY LORE

Some Stories of the Romany Rye

University of Wisconsin



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CHARLES E. BROWN

Madison, Wisconsin

1935

## Gypsy Stories

The original home of the Gypsies is said to have been in India. This wandering folk spread over western Asia, north Africa and into Europe. The first Gypsies in our country came from England in the eighteenth century. French Gypsies came to Louisiana at about the same time. Romany folk from other European countries have come since. They are traders, artisans, showmen and some are farmers. Many love to wander in families or groups. They camp on the outskirts of our cities and villages. Some of the women tell fortunes. The men are traders, storytellers and musicians. To them the World owes gratitude for the gift of fairy tales. They are credited with bringing the first fairy stories to Europe.

### PHARAOH

"Once there was a great Egyptian king whose name was Pharaoh. He had a great army and he conquered the whole world. Loving war as he did there was nothing left for him to do. He became despondent. He was most unhappy. At last he challenged God to come down from Heaven with his host of angels and fight with him. God was angry with Pharaoh and decided to punish him. He opened up a huge cavern in the side of a mountain and caused a great wind to blow. Pharaoh and his army were blown into the cavern, the opening was closed, they could not escape. To this day whoever goes to this mountain may hear them shouting and singing in the cavern. Egypt, having lost its warlike king, the other nations turned the people out of the country and they scattered to the four winds. That is why the Gypsy people now wander all over the world."

### THE GYPSY

"Once in the creation, when men had no names, the Lord went walking. As he walked along he saw three men seated



by the roadside. They were waiting 'till some man would give them names. They asked the Lord for them. The first man was white. The Lord called him Gorgio. He received his name. He wore fine clothes and adorned his person with jewels. He went gorgeous. Another man was black. The Lord named him Nigger (nikker, to lounge). He lounged away. He is always lounging in the sunshine, he is happy, but too lazy to work unless punished or compelled to do so. The third was brown. He sat quiet, smoking his pipe. The Lord called him Rom (gypsy). He thanked the Lord for this favor and offered to drink his health. This man went, Romany fashion, a-roaming with his romni (wife). He never troubled himself about anything from that time to this day. He roamed throughout the world. He never rested and he never wished to rest until the Lord speaks the word." (Le-land).

### THE CUP OF GOLD TEA

"Some Gypsies and other men were seated in a tavern drinking and talking. Some of the men boasted about their money and of how they made it. While this talk was going on a Gypsy asked the landlady to provide him with some boiling water, a teapot, a teacup and some milk and sugar. The woman soon supplied him with these. With them before him the Gypsy put half a pint of golden sovereigns in the teapot and poured the boiling water over them. After a few minutes he filled the teacup and added milk and sugar. He then drank it off. 'Now then,' said he, turning to the company, 'is there another man here who can make himself, as I have, a cup of gold tea?' (A half-pint measure will hold more than 250 gold sovereigns). The boasters were silent. None of the men present accepted the Gypsy's challenge." (Norwood).

### THE SPIDER

"Once there was a very nice girl. She was a needleworker and could make a beautiful cloak in one day. She had a sweet-heart who was one day taken to prison for some political or other offense. When she heard of his plight the girl went to the king. She begged him to free her lover. After consider-

ing the case the king promised her that if she would make him a fine cloak—one every day for a week, seven cloaks for seven days—he would release her sweetheart from prison.

“The young lady hastened to begin her task. For six days she worked hard at her sewing. Always in the evening she sent a cloak to the king. The last day she was tired. She did not wish to work because it was raining. She could not bleach or dry the cloth in the sunlight. Because she failed to keep her promise the king kept her sweetheart in prison. He said that the girl did not love him as well as she should. The poor maid was so angry and vexed in her heart that she died of grief. She was changed into a spider. To this day she spreads out her threads when the sun shines. The dewdrops we see on them are the tears which she weeps for her lover.” (Leland).

### THE MAGIC WATCH

A Romany man had a fine gold watch. It was as big as a potato. It had been given to him by a witch. He was told that it would be his as long as he did not look into a looking-glass. (A woman may look at her face in a mirror but a man may not). The Gypsy was very proud of his timepiece. He always carried it in his vest pocket. One day he found himself in need of money. He found a man, a Gorgio, who would buy it and he sold the watch for a good sum. The next day, to his surprise, the watch was back in his pocket. He wondered how it came there. Soon after this he traded the watch for a team of very good horses. Again the watch returned to his pocket. He next traded it for a house wagon, or caravan, and again for food and fine clothing for his family. After each trade the magic watch was returned to him by an unseen hand. He and his family soon became the most affluent people in the Gypsy camp. The Gypsies wondered at his sudden rise to riches. He was by profession a coppersmith, making and mending the kettles of the villagers. He told the secret of his wealth to no one. He became very proud of his fine raiment, of the rich clothing of his family and of his fine horses and caravan. He no longer sought for any work but idled about the whole day long.

One day he forgot the witch's warning. He proudly gazed at himself in his wife's mirror. When he felt for it the magic watch had gone from his pocket. He waited in vain for its return but it never came back. So he was reduced to again work hard for a living.

### KOL-LOY-LL

About thirty years ago a family group of Hungarian Gypsies camped on the edge of University Heights in Madison. There were but few houses there then. These Romany by their dress and rather rough ways soon became pretty much of a nuisance in the neighborhood. They were always begging for food and clothing and frightened the women and children. One night, when one of the women was alone in her home, she heard a noise in the yard and looked out of the window to see what might be its cause. A light was flashing in and out among the bushes. As she gazed, a lighted lantern was suddenly thrust against the window pane and a rough voice called out—"Kol-loy-ll, kol-loy-ll,—kol-loy-ll!" She was very much frightened. The lantern was now carried around to other windows of the house and the cry of "kol-loy-ll,—kol-loy-ll!" repeated at each. As the woman was too badly frightened to open the door the intruders left the premises. When her husband returned he made inquiries at the Gypsy camp. Then he learned that they were again on one of their begging visits and wanted to borrow some coal oil or kerosene for their lanterns. The whole neighborhood was greatly relieved when these Romany left the vicinity.

### THE WINGED PRINCE

"A very clever Gypsy made a pair of wings from goose feathers. These he fastened to his person and flew to the Emperor's palace. The Emperor bought the wings for his son, giving him a bag of gold for them. One day the Prince put on the wings and flew to the South. There, in a wood, he found a large house three stories of which were made of stone and one (the top story) of glass. Here a beautiful Princess was being kept a prisoner. She could not escape from her glass prison. When it was dark the Prince tied on his

wings and flew to her cell. Here he awakened the Princess. She was greatly pleased with his appearance. They fell in love with each other. They planned to escape. Before daylight appeared the Prince flew away. The servant of the Princess learned of the young man's visit and bore the tale to the girl's father. He was very angry and caused dough to be spread on the floor of her prison. When the Prince made a second visit to the Princess he left his footprints in the dough. The angry father caused these footprints to be compared with those of his retainers and of other people in the region. Thus the Prince was detected and made a prisoner. The father caused a great heap of thorns to be made. On this heap the Princess and the Prince were placed to be burned. Many persons came to witness the burning of the lovers.

"When the fire was lighted the Princess suddenly clasped him around the neck beneath his cloak, where were concealed his wings. These opened as he arose and flew away with her to his own kingdom. The stone and glass house fell to earth as they soared away."

### THE MAN IN THE MOON

"In the old time many men lived happily in the moon. They had nothing to do but to keep up the fire that makes the moonlight. Among them was a very wicked, obstinate man. He troubled and hated all the other nice people. He managed to drive them all away and out of the moon. And when they were all gone, he said, 'Now those stupid dogs have gone, I will live comfortably and well, all alone.' But, after a bit, the fire began to burn down, and the man found that if he did not want to be in darkness and die of cold he must go all the time for wood. When the others were there they never did any cutting or carrying of wood in the day time. Now the bad man had to take it all on his own shoulders, and carry wood all night and all day. So the people on earth see the man to this day all burdened down with great bundles of wood. He is bitter and grumbles to himself as he sits alone by the fire. And the poor people, whom he drove away are in heaven and around it. They work for themselves. They

are the stars, planets and lesser lights we see all about." (Leland).

### THE LAME HORSE

"A Gypsy had a lame horse which he wanted to sell. He took it from one man to another. No one wanted to buy it. So he drove a nail obliquely through one of the horse's shoes. It looked as if the horse was lame because it was badly shod. He went to another Gypsy trader with the animal. This man saw the badly driven nail. He bought the nag at a low price. After the horse was driven away by its new owner the Gypsy laughed long and loud.

"The better to enjoy his triumph he walked to the tent of the other Gypsy whom he had fooled. He laughed and jeered at him. The man was entertaining some friends. He came to the door to see what the laughter and noise was about. 'Have you looked well at your horse?' asked the former owner of the lame nag. 'And have you looked well at your money?' asked the other Gypsy. Then the first Gypsy took out his purse and looked at the coins he had received in payment for the horse. They were counterfeit.) Now his mirth subsided. He had no reason to laugh more." (Bercovici).

### THE GIRL AND THE TINKER

A well to do farmer had a daughter who was beautiful. He had other daughters enough. He wished to provide this girl with a good husband.

He let it be widely known that he would give this girl in marriage to the man who would bring to him on a certain day the best gift, to be a part of the daughter's wedding portion. A rich old baron, who wanted a wife, saw the girl. On the appointed day he appeared at the farmer's home. He brought a bag of money. The sum was a little less than he thought that the young woman was worth to him. His offer the farmer rejected. A wealthy merchant came also. He brought a gift of a bag of jewels. Some of these were spurious. The farmer, he thought, would not know their value. All of the jewels were

worth, he knew, less than the beautiful girl. His gift the farmer declined. Then came a Gypsy, a fine young fellow. He was a tinker, strolling about the countryside mending pots, pans and kettles. He brought as a gift his furnace and his bag of tools. It was all that he had. The farmer accepted his gift and gave his daughter's hand to the Gypsy. Here, he saw, was a man who had offered his entire worldly possessions for the maid. He would work for her, provide for her and make her a good husband. The girl was willing and so they were married and went away. She sang, danced and told fortunes and he played the fiddle and mended pots, pans and kettles. They were always happy.

### THE DOCTOR IS PAID

"A doctor, having saved the life of a Gypsy child by his medical treatment, demanded the father's cow in payment. The Gypsy proposed to take the cow to the fair and sell it. The money he promised to give to him. To this plan the doctor agreed. He sent one of his men to the fair to see that the Gypsy did not cheat him. The Gypsy took a chicken to the fair with the cow. Here a farmer asked the price of the cow. 'Half a crown', said the Gypsy. The farmer, a friend of the doctor, decided that the Gypsy was a fool. He concluded that he could buy the chicken as cheaply—for a penny. He asked its price. 'One hundred crowns', said the Gypsy. The farmer decided to buy the cow. But the Gypsy would not sell it without the chicken. At the end of the fair a bargain was closed. The doctor received in payment the half crown received for the cow. The Gypsy kept the hundred crowns received for the chicken. Thus the doctor was punished for failing to trust the Gypsy."

### JACK AND THE SNUFF BOX

"An old man and his wife lived in a great forest. They had one son. The son had never seen any people in his life. He had books and he had read much about them. One day he asked permission to leave home. His mother was very unwilling to let him go but at last consented. She made him a big cake to eat on his journey and scolded him for wanting to leave home. His father gave him a golden snuff-box and wished him well. Jack trudged away for many long miles.



At last he came to a large house. As he was tired and hungry he knocked at the door. A pretty maiden answered his knock and let him in. After asking him many questions she gave him food and drink. Jack had never seen a pretty girl before. The two fell in love with each other. The girl's father, hearing people talking in the kitchen, came to look. The girl introduced Jack to him. He asked the boy if he could work. Jack said he could do anything. The father said that he would set him a task. By sunrise on the following morning he must have near his home a lake large enough to float the largest vessels. 'And, if you do not fulfill this task,' said he, 'you will part with your life.' Jack agreed to provide the lake. That night, as he retired to rest, thinking of the great task he had undertaken, he opened the golden snuff-box. When he raised its cover out popped three little red men. They bowed their heads to him and he told them of his dilemma. The next morning the lake was there. On it were several large ships. Not content with Jack's success in this feat the girl's father set several other very difficult tasks for Jack. All of these he completed with the help of the imps in the golden snuff-box. And he carried away the pretty maiden to be his wife." (Groome).

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# Flower Lore

Lore and Legends of Garden  
Flowers



Charles E. Brown  
Madison, Wisconsin  
1938

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Only a pansy blossom, only a withered flower,  
Yet to me far dearer than all in earth's fair bower.  
Bringing me back the sunshine of a summer long ago,  
The fairest, sunniest summer that I shall ever know.

Eben E. Rexford

## FLOWER LORE

In this leaflet, an attempt is made to encourage a revival of the interest in the lore and legends of some of our common garden flowers. The information presented has been gathered from printed and from original sources. Of interest in flower lore is the traditional association of certain flowers with Christ, the Virgin Mary, with saints, martyrs, heroes and heroines. Other blossoming plants are identified with the activities of witches and wizards, dryads, fairies, dragons, demons and the Devil. The use of many of these old garden flowers in medicine, divination, visions and dreams is well known.

Flora was the goddess of flowers and gardens among the Romans. She was identical with Chloris among the Greeks. In Greek mythology the dryads were the nymphs of vegetation.

## THE FLOWERS

**Alyssum** (sweet). In flower language its significance is "worth beyond beauty". A loved little plant believed to be favored by fairy folk because of its perfume.

**Amaryllis**. This beautiful flower is said to take its name from a rustic maid or sweetheart mentioned by Virgil. It signifies pride.

**Aster**. Also called starwort and Michelmas daisy. As its name indicates this plant is associated with stars and astrologers. A star fell to earth. It was so pleased with what it saw that it would not return to the heavens and became a plant—the aster. Astraea was the daughter of Jupiter and was the goddess of justice.

**Bleeding Heart**. This favorite old fashioned flower is symbolic of love and of wounded hearts. It is a Christ flower. A pretty belief was that if the plant gave forth a red juice when crushed a lover's heart was true. It commemorates the stout heart of King Robert Bruce of Scotland.

**Bachelor's Button** (Cornflower). Bachelors formerly wore a blossom in the button hole of their coats. Young men in love carried a blossom in a pocket, young women in their apron pockets. Queen Louise of Prussia fled from Berlin at the advance of Napoleon. She hid in a grain field and while there braided wreaths of cornflowers for her children. Emperor William thereafter adopted it as the flower of the imperial family. A Greek youth who worshipped Chloris (Flora) devoted himself to gathering flowers for her altars. When he died the goddess gave his name—Kyanus—to this plant.

**Canterbury Bell**. This beautiful plant obtained its name from the resemblance of its bells to those once carried by pilgrims winding their way to Canterbury cathedral to pray at the tomb of the murdered Thomas a'Becket. The fairies were very fond of ringing sweet little chimes on the bells of this plant.

**Campanula.** Venus, goddess of beauty and mother of love, had a mirror which had the magic power of increasing the beauty of anything that was reflected in it. This mirror she mislaid and a wandering shepard found it. Gazing into it he became enraptured with his own beauty. Cupid found him thus employed and became so angry at finding a yokel admiring himself in his mother's mirror that he struck it from his hands. From the soil where the mirror fell sprang up the campanula or bellflower, which was once called Venus' looking-glass. In China, Shetland and Sweden the marebell is believed to give people the nightmare and is shunned.

**Canna.** In India this is a sacred flower, its seeds are used in rosaries. Dewadat, a demon, wished to kill Buddha, whom he hated because of his great fame. From a hill he rolled a boulder down on him. This stone burst and a fragment hit a toe of the saint. Where the blood stained the soil the gorgeous canna came into existence. The earth swallowed the demon.

**Carnation (Pink).** It was said to have been one of the first flowers to appear on earth after the birth of Christ. Pinks were believed to have sprung from tears shed by the Virgin Mary on the sad way to Calvary. A pretty tale says that an Italian countess gave a pink to her lover when he went away with the Crusaders to rescue the Saviour's tomb from the Saracens. When he fell in battle the withered flower was returned to her. From its seed when planted sprang the white flower with a red center. The carnation was regarded as a lucky flower during the reign of Queen Elizabeth of England.

**Fuchsia.** This lovely flower with nodding blossoms is symbolic of happy and fruitful love. Fairy folk "ring" its blossoms as they flit by.

**Chrysanthemum.** It is believed to have blossomed at the time of the birth of Christ in Bethlehem. A symbol of perfection and long life. In the 14th century it became the national flower of Japan. In Hemaji in Japan, there once lived a great nobleman. Among his most prized possessions were ten dishes made of pure gold. To care for these he employed a girl, Okiku (Chrysanthemum). Each morning she counted the dishes and one morning found one of them missing. The poor girl was in despair. She looked everywhere for it. Fearing the anger of her lord she drowned herself in a well. Her spirit is restless and often returns to count the golden vessels in the hope, perhaps, that the missing vessel may have returned.

**Cockscomb.** Foppery in flower language. With one of these plants the Devil threatened to set the world afire. Named from its resemblance to a rooster's comb.

**Columbine.** From the Latin of columba, a dove. It was also once the "lions herb" in the belief that it was a plant favored by lions. Rubbing its leaves on one's hands was believed to make a person brave and daring.

**Crocus.** First flower gem of the earth in the spring. Saffron crocus was used in making a cordial. The juice was used by

Roman women as a hair dye. Saffron is used in coloring cakes and in cookery during the Lenten season. Its flowers were once used to decorate wine cups. They were believed to uplift the spirit. The Greeks have a tradition that the plant sprang from a bank where Jove rested with Juno. A legend says that a child, Krokos, was accidentally killed by a quail flung by Mercury. A flower there sprang into life.

**Dahlia.** The home of this admired plant is Mexico. The Empress Josephine of France planted the dahlia in her gardens. She invited the courtiers to see the flowers. She would not part with even a seed. A Polish prince bribed a gardener to steal some of the plants. After that the Empress lost all interest in her dahlias.

**Daisy** (Marguerite). A dryad, dancing on the green was seen by Vertumnus, god of spring. Smitten with love for her beauty he ran forward to clasp her in his arms. She evaded him and sank to earth there assuming the form of a daisy. The flower is said to bear its name in honor of Margaret, the daughter of a priest of Antioch. He drove her from his home because she would not renounce Christianity. Various Marguerites of history have made the daisy their flower. Girls have long used the daisy in fortune telling.

**Forget-me-not.** When God named the plants in the Garden of Eden he overlooked this one, it was so small. A small voice at his feet asked, "By what name am I called, God?" He looked down, and struck by the beauty of the little flower, said, "You shall be Forget-me-not."

**Foxglove.** This plant figures much in fairy lore. In England it is called fairy cap and witch's glove. A legend says that the "little people" gave some of the blossoms to the fox. He put them on his toes and could not be heard when prowling at night among the bird roosts. In France the blossoms are called "lady's gloves" or "gloves of our lady."

**Galliardia.** Blanket flower or Indian blanket. An old Indian woman engaged in weaving a blanket saw this gaily colored flower and adopted the design and colors. This design she repeated in other fabrics.

**Geranium.** Cinderella among flowers. Sometimes a symbol of melancholy. Mahomet one day washed his shirt and hung it to dry on a mallow bush. When he removed it the humble mallow had become a stately tree. It bore brilliant blossoms which gave forth a pleasant spicy perfume. It had become a geranium, the first of its kind.

**Heliotrope.** To turn toward the sun (Greek). In France it was called the "herb of love." The sun god Apollo was loved by Clytie. He did not care for her and wooed the princess Lenkothea. Clytie informed her father. Furious at his daughter's misconduct he buried the princess alive. Apollo spurned Clytie. Bitterly conscious of her error she fell to the ground. There she lay for days watching Apollo passing in his chariot. The gods changed the stricken woman into the heliotrope.



**Hollyhock.** Staff of the gods or king's scepter. This noble plant of stately beauty was the favorite flower of the famous scientist and educator, Stephen Moulton Babcock, inventor of the milk test. The yard of his home was full of hollyhocks. Children have long made little dolls with fluffy skirts from its bright blossoms.

**Hyacinth.** A symbol of misfortune and sadness. Its story, briefly told, states that Hyacinthus was a handsome lad loved by both Apollo, god of the fine arts, and Zephyrus. One day Apollo was throwing his discus which miscarried and killed the youth. The sorrowing god changed his blood into the lovely flower which bears his name.

**Iris.** This lily types wisdom, faith and courage. Named for Iris (the Rainbow), messenger of the gods and attendant of Juno. Her office was to cut the thread of the soul of those who were dying. The flower of France and Florence. Adopted by King Clovis of France as his armorial device. Called the flower de luce (fleur de lis), flower of light. It was on the white standard of Louis VII in the Crusades, 1137. Fleur de lis ornamented the sword sheath of Joan of Arc.

**Larkspur** (Delphinium). Named delphinium because its buds were thought to resemble a dolphin. Also called lark's heel, lark's toe, lark's claw and knight's spur. A plant dedicated to the Ajax, bravest hero of the Greeks in the Trojan war. From the soil fertilized by his blood came the delphinium.

**Lily.** "Through the ages always sharing the throne of the flower kingdom with the rose." (See Iris)

**Lily of the Valley.** A sacred plant. Called "ladders of heaven" in England and the "tears of Holy Mary" in France. Young men offered this plant to their sweethearts. St. Leonard met and fought the frightful dragon, Sin, for three days. On the fourth day it died. Where his own blood wet the earth there sprang up the lily of the valley.

**Lobelia.** Named for Mathias von Loebel, distinguished physician and botanist of Antwerp. He became botanist to King James I. He had a great influence on flower culture in England. A witch plant and drug plant.

**Lupine.** Latin, a wolf. Stories connect it with the were-wolf, mythical animal demon of Europe.

**Marigold.** A flower of light, like the other bright yellow flowers, "the bride of the sun". Caltha, a Greek maid, fell in love with the sun god. She would remain in the fields all night just to get the first sight of his flashing eye. Consumed by her love she wasted away and died. Where she had long stood the marigold appeared colored like the sun. Also called king's cup, Mary-bud, cowbloom, butterwort and by other names. The Virgin wore the flower on her bosom, hence the name Mary-gold.

**Mignonette** (Reseda). In the Orient it expresses health. Lesser aches and pains were belived charmed away by its perfume. Once used with other fragrant flowers on the rush-covered floors of homes, halls and palaces.

**Mint.** The mints have many medicinal and other uses. Penny-royal was used by witches. Those who swallowed its juice saw double. Pluto, god of the underworld, saw the nymph Mintors and loved her. His wife became jealous and turned her rival into a herb. She lost her beauty but attracted by her fragrance.

**Morning Glory.** Some flowers of her tribe are dedicated to the moon goddess. A busy bee visited a morning glory. He was an ardent lover and she became very fond of his caresses. But she soon saw that she was but sharing his affections with other blossoms. So she determined to punish him. When he visited her again she closed her trumpet and twisting it tight trapped the wayward lover. He struggled and protested but he perished in her arms. Called "belle of the day" in France.

**Monkshood** (Aconite). It is called Odin's helmet in Norway, troll hat in Denmark and iron hat or storm hat in Germany. A plant of evil reputation because of the poison obtained from it. Shunned by the superstitious. It was supposed to be used in the dreaded kettle brews of witches. Growing the plant in a garden invited their visits. It was the "cap of darkness" and made it wearer invisible.

**Narcissus.** The Greek goddesses on Olympus were crowned with its flowers. It was always moist and fragrant with the dew of heaven. A beautiful youth of Boetia was loved by the nymphs and particularly by Echo. One day he beheld his face in the waters of a spring. He lay for hours admiring it. "He worshipped so ardently that he died of sheer weakness. Where his body had lain the nymphs found the white flower narcissus. Echo grieved for him and ever called his name. Pluto, god of the infernal regions and death, used the perfume of this flower to entice Proserpine to Hades. It dulled the senses of herself and attendants.

**Peony.** One of the earliest known medicinal plants. With it Apollo (Paeon) healed the wounds of the gods in the Trojan war. A legend says that Paeonia was a blushing maiden loved by Apollo. An ancient belief is that a moonbeam gave birth to this flower. In Sussex, England strings of peony roots were placed about the necks of children to prevent disease.

**Pansy.** It had many names such as lady's flower, little step-mother, kiss me quick, gardingate, and bird's eye. The small pansy is called heartsease or Johnny jump up. An old German legend says that it once grew in the fields and had such a fine perfume that people came in large numbers to pick it. They trampled down the grass which the cattle needed. So great was the damage that the little flower prayed to God to take away its perfume. This prayer was answered and the cattle were saved from starvation. The little plant took the name of the Trinity. A very popular song of the nineties, "Only a Pansy

Blossom", was written by Eben E. Rexford, famous floriculturist and song writer. Children made pansy dolls by wrapping the blossoms with leaves or pieces of cloth.

**Petunia.** The gipsies of flower land are dedicated to the Roman folk because of their rich color display. One of this tribe, a frilled petunia of a velvety blood-red color and with a purplish-black throat, bears the name of Romany Lass. The petunias have wandered far from their native home in Mexico and South America. The elves of Titania's realm found their blossoms useful as hiding places and as trumpets.

**Poppy.** Regarded in the Old World as a plant of evil omen—it hints of blood. Its petals were used in divination. When Proserpina was stolen by Pluto, god of the underworld, her mother Ceres began a weary search for her. Unable to restore her child the gods caused poppies to spring beneath her feet. She knelt to look at them and their breath caused her to fall asleep. Thus she obtained rest for her weary limbs. Poppies were offered to the dead as symbols of sleep. The ancients found the poppy growing in their grain fields and dedicated the plant to Ceres.

**Primrose.** The primrose, an usher of spring, is a favorite of English people. Primrose Day is a feast of the calendar. Paraisos, son of Flora, died of heartbreak over the loss of his sweetheart. The gods changed him into this cheerful blossom.

**Rose.** World symbol of beauty. In the early days of Christian flower symbolism it represented the blood of the martyrs. It was also a symbol of the Virgin Mary. A rosary is used by pious Catholics to number prayers and aves. The rose had Zephyr for a lover and would open only at his caress. Cupid, having kissed the rose, was stung on the lip by a bee. His mother, Venus, angry at the hurt of the boy, removed the stings of the bees and placed them along the stem of the rose. Another Greek legend relates that the rose pricked the foot of Venus and grew red with the shame of its deed. The rose was her flower. The flower is said to have had its origin in the carelessness of Cupid. When bearing a vase of nectar to the Gods on Olympus he fell and spilled the precious nectar on the earth. There it bubbled up again as roses. Melto, a maid, made a daily offering of flowers to Venus. Her beauty was threatened by a tumor on her chin. Venus appeared to her in a dream. She was advised to apply roses from her altar to the swelling. The tumor disappeared. King Cyrus won her as his wife.

**Salvia.** Latin to keep safe or healthy. The name refers to the medicinal qualities of common sage. A Christ flower, it bloomed at the time of his crucifixion.

**Sweet Pea.** Both garden and flowering peas were formerly used in divination. A legend says that on St. Joseph's eve fires were lighted to drive away flying dragons, who dripped pestilence from their wings. The angered dragons carried up stores of peas and dropped these in the wells and springs. There they rotted and all who drank the water became ill.

**Sweet William.** A valuable and loved plant of Shakespeare's time. Also known as London tufts. One of the favored pinks of our grandmothers.

**Stocks or Gillieflower.** Also called cut and come again. A common garden flower during the reign of King James I of England.

**Sunflower.** Clytie, a sea nymph, adored Apollo (Phoebus) who drove the chariot of the sun. She watched him from the time that he left his palace at dawn. She never won favor in his eyes. The pitying gods changed her to a sunflower. She still turns her face to the sun in its daily journey across the sky.

**Tulip.** The national flower of Holland. In English fairy lore the pixies were said to place babies in its blossoms. A tale of Devon states that an old lady going into her garden at night found the tiny babies asleep in her tulips. She was so pleased that she planted more tulips. The fairies rewarded her by causing all of the tulips to take on bright colors and gave them a sweet perfume. They blessed her and her cottage. When she died a man occupied her home. He removed the tulips and planted parsley where they had stood. This angered the little people. Every night they would come out of the wood and dance on and tear up his parsley. Soon the garden was destroyed.

**Violet.** Among the flowers upon whom the shadow of the cross fell on the day of Christ's crucifixion was the little violet. It drooped with sorrow. It became the flower of the Virgin. Venus and Cupid disputed as to which was the more beautiful she or a group of lovely girls. Cupid declared for the maidens. Venus went into a great rage and beat the girls until they were blue. They became violets. Io was a priestess of Juno's temple. Jupiter flirted with her and was almost caught. Not having time to hide her he transformed her into a white heifer. The violet he created for her special food. The nymphs consecrated the flowers to Jupiter. The violet was a favorite flower of both Mahomet and the Emperor Napoleon. This plant formerly had various food uses.

**Water Lily.** In a German fable the water nymphs hid from the eyes of men by assuming the form of water lilies. When the men had passed they again became women. Beneath the round leaves of this plant is a favorite hiding place of the water sprite. In an Indian story a star woman, who was very fond of the Indian people descended to a lake and transformed herself into a water lily. This in order to be near them and help them.

## FLOWERS OF THE MONTHS

January—Snowdrop  
February—Primrose  
March—Violet  
April—Daisy  
May—Hawthorne  
June—Honeysuckle

July—Water Lily  
August—Poppy  
September—Morning Glory  
October—Hop  
November—Chrysanthemum  
December—Rose

## ASTROLOGER'S LIST

Flowers of the months and their sentiments

January—Rose—Love  
February—Lilac—  
Facetiousness  
March—Violet—Modesty  
April—Carnation—  
Fascination  
May—Mignonette—Charm  
June—Orange Blossom—  
Purity

July—Geranium—Gentility  
August—Poppy—Pleasure  
September—Bluebell—Truth  
October—Lavender—  
Devotion  
November—Jasmine—Grace  
December—Forget me not—  
Constancy

## FLOWERS OF THE MIDDLE WEST STATES

Illinois—Wood Violet  
Indiana—Tulip Tree Blossom  
Iowa—Wild Rose  
Kentucky—Goldenrod  
Ohio—Scarlet Carnation

Michigan—Apple Blossom  
Missouri—Hawthorn  
Minnesota—Moccasin Flower  
Wisconsin—Violet

## FLOWERS OF COUNTRIES

England—Rose  
Scotland—Thistle  
Ireland—Shamrock  
France—Lily

Holland—Tulip  
Switzerland—Edelweis  
Japan—Chrysanthemum  
Mexico—Cactus

## LANGUAGE OF FLOWERS

Aster—afterthought  
Bachelor's Button—single  
Bluebell—constancy  
Candytuft—indifference  
Canterbury Bell—I love thee  
still  
Carnation—pride  
Cockscomb—foppery  
Columbine—folly  
Chrysanthemum—I love  
Daisy—I share your senti-  
ments  
Dahlia—dignity, instability

Forget-me-not—true love  
Foxglove—insincerity  
Fuchsia—happy and fruitful  
love  
Geranium—melancholy, com-  
forting  
Gladiolus—ready armed  
Heliotrope—devotion  
Hollyhock—fruitfulness  
Honeysuckle—the color of my  
fate  
Hyacinth—constancy  
Iris—flame, fire, I burn

Larkspur—beware, I strike  
 Lily of the Valley—return of  
 happiness  
 Marigold—jealousy, vulgarity  
 Narcissus—egotism  
 Nasturtium—splendor  
 Peony—shame, bashfulness  
 Pansy—thoughts  
 Petunia — your presence  
 soothes  
 Phlox—unanimity  
 Pink—pure love

Poppy—sleep, forgetfulness  
 Rose—affection, love  
 Salvia—energy  
 Sunflower—haughtiness  
 Sweet Pea—sweetness  
 Sweet William—gallantry  
 Tulip—declaration of love  
 Verbena—family union  
 Violet—faithfulness  
 Water Lily—chastity  
 Zinnia—remembrance, love in  
 absence

## FLOWER BOOKS

"Life began, says the Good Book, in a garden. For some of us life begins to be rich and varied and full of wonder when we make a garden of our own. How many people are there today . . . tied down in office, factory or mill . . . tired to death of chatter and clatter and dust and noise . . . dreaming of a little place in the country and a bit of land to cultivate. The brave array of hollyhocks and rambler roses around some desolate, tumble down house in the country and the red geranium in a tin can on a city window-sill bear witness of the common hunger for beauty."—(Let's Make A Garden)

## THE FLOWER GARDEN

Garden Craft in the Bible, Eleanor Sinclair Rohde, Myths and Legends of Flowers, Trees and Fruits, Charles M. Skinner, 1911; Studies in Gardening, A. Clutton-Brock, 1916; My Garden, Louise Beebe Wilder, 1916; Old Time Gardens, Alice Morse Earle; Garden Flowers in Color, G. A. Stevens, 1934; The Garden Month by Month, Mabel Cabot Sedgwick; The Book of Hardy Flowers, H. H. Thomas; Popular Garden Flowers, Walter P. Wright; The Garden at Home, H. H. Thomas; Hardy Plants for Cottage Gardens, Helen R. Albee, 1910.



# THE TREES OF THE CAMPUS

Prepared for the Use of Students  
University of Wisconsin  
Summer Session



CHARLES E. BROWN  
State Historical Museum  
Madison, Wisconsin  
1925

## THE TREES OF THE CAMPUS

### **Their History and Folklore**

*No tree in all the grove but has its charms,  
Though each its hue peculiar.*

Cowper

There are about eighty species of trees on the Campus of the University of Wisconsin. Sixty of these are native to the United States. The others are foreign trees.

The author is indebted to Professor R. H. Denniston and Franz A. Aust for assistance in identifying the trees mentioned in this leaflet. Professor J. G. Moore has furnished the information about the Observatory Hill orchard.

## THE CONIFERS

The principal groupings of coniferous trees on the University Campus are on Muir Knoll, in the rear of the Open-air theatre, on Observatory hill, at the Indian mounds on the Lake Shore drive, on the Linden Drive lawn, and at the end of Breeze terrace.

**THE PINES.** A white pine (*Pinus strobus*) stands on the hill-side slope west of Bascom hall. A group of small Norway, red or Canadian pines (*P. resinosa*) and of white pines has been planted at the end of Breeze terrace, near the walk to the Stock pavillion. Small, recently planted, specimens of the western white pine (*P. monticola*) and the Swiss stone pine (*P. cembra*) are on the lawn near the residence of the dean of the College of Agriculture. A mugho pine (*P. montana mughus*) stands on the Linden Drive lawn opposite the Stock pavillion.

Groups of the Austrian pine (*P. laricio austhica*), a native of southern Europe, stand in the rear of North hall and the Engineering building. A sing'e pitch, torch or candlewood pine (*P. rigida*) stands among those in the rear of Engineering hall. A Scotch pine (*P. sylvestris*) is planted on the slope in the rear of Bascom hall. Two are near the drive in the rear of Barnard and Lathrop halls.

**LARCH AND SPRUCE.** Tall European larch (*Larix decidua*) stand on Muir knoll and between North and Bascom halls, others in the rear of the Biology building and at the end of Breeze terrace.

Fine Norway spruce (*Picea abies*) line the drive in the rear of the Open-air theatre and are also on Observatory hill, near the Entomology building, and elsewhere on the campus.

White or pine spruce (*Picea glauca*) and Douglas spruce (*Pseudotsuga mucronata*) are planted on the slope near the Open-air theatre. Another Douglas spruce stands west of South hall. A fine example of the blue spruce (*Picea pungens*) stands among the oaks between Music and Chadbourne halls.

Two specimens of the concolor fir (*Abies concolor*) are on the Linden Drive lawn near the Stock pavillion. A white or silver fir (*A. alba*) is near the southwest corner of South hall and another west of North hall. In a group of conifers on the Lake drive, near the Indian mounds, is a balsam fir (*A. balsamea*).

A hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*) stands in front of the Alumni headquarters building on State street, and a group of hemlock in the rear of the Open-air theatre.

CEDAR, JUNIPER AND YEW. Arbor vitae or white cedars (*Thuja occidentalis*) and red cedars (*Juniperus virginiana*) and a Japanese yew (*Taxus cuspidata*) are in a grouping on the lawn near the residence of the dean of the College of Agriculture. Arbor vitae also stand with Norway spruce near Agricultural hall, on Observatory hill, in the rear of Bascom hall, near the Indian mounds on the Lake drive, and elsewhere on the Campus. A common or erect juniper (*Juniperus communis*) grows on the eastern edge of Observatory hill, north of the walk.

### DECIDUOUS TREES

THE OAKS. Oak trees are very numerous on the Campus. Some are of very large size. The species represented are:

White Oak (*Quercus alba*)                      Pin Oak (*Q. paucustris*)  
Swamp White Oak (*Q. platanoidea*)      Black Oak (*Q. velutina*)  
Red Oak (*Q. rubra*)                      Bur Oak (*Q. macrocarpa*)  
English Oak (*Q. Robur*)

Specimens of the white, red and black oak are in the oak stand on the hillside slope extending from Music hall to the Biology building. Several large white oaks are on the lawn of the State Historical Library building. An especially fine specimen is in front of the University Extension and Home Economics building. It measures 40 inches in diameter. A large black oak stands by the side of the walk leading south from the rear of the Biology building. Its diameter is about 3½ feet. A large white oak is near it. Several large bur oaks are on the slope between this building and Lathrop hall. The so-called "Presidents Tree" is on the edge of Observatory hill, in front of the astronomer's residence, the home of former presidents of the University. This tree is 41 inches in diameter. A fine specimen stands near the end of the ski slide. A large red oak is on the edge of the drive east of the Biology building. A fine stand of this oak occurs along the trail in the University woods.

A pin oak stands on the Linden Drive lawn, a short distance northwest of the Horticulture building. The single English oak is situated in the angle between Chadbourne and Barnard halls. Both are young trees.

**THE ELMS.** The stately American elms (*Ulmus americana*) which arch over the north and south walks of the Upper Campus were planted in 1851 and 1852. Some died and were replaced by others in 1854. One of the largest, near Music hall, measures about 45 inches in diameter. Another of these elms, standing at the head of the north walk and entrance to Bascom hall bears the label of the University Class of 1872.

A specimen of the slippery or red elm (*Ulmus fulva*) is in the line of elms in front of the Engineering building. A small Scotch or Camperdown elm (*U. glabra camperdownii*) is on the lawn near the southeast corner of Barnard hall.

**THE MAPLES.** The species of maples on the Campus are:

- Sugar, rock or hard maple (*Acer saccharum*)
- Soft, white or silver maple (*A. saccharinum*)
- Red, scarlet or swamp maple (*A. rubrum*)
- Striped maple or moosewood (*A. pennsylvanicum*)
- Norway maple (*A. platanoides*)
- Box elder (*A. Negundo*)

Foreign maples on the University grounds are the Tartarian maple (*A. tartaricum*), the Japanese maple (*A. sanguineum*), and the Siberian maple.

Both the sugar maple and the soft maple are among the shade trees along University avenue. A labeled specimen of the former and of a Norway maple stand near each other on the slope west of Bascom hall. Two large soft maples are located west of North hall, and a sugar maple in front of it. Box elders are also among the University avenue shade trees. A labeled specimen stands near the head of the walk just south of Bascom hall. Two large specimens are in front of the Service building. Two striped maples stand on the eastern edge of Observatory hill. A Siberian maple is found southeast of the Stock pavillion.

**THE ASHES.** Four species of native ash, the black ash (*Fraxinus nigra*), the white ash (*F. americana*), the red ash (*F. pubescens*) and the green ash (*F. lanceolata*) are found on the Campus. -All of these are in use as shade trees along N. Charter and other streets cutting into University grounds. A labeled specimen of the white ash, 18 inches in diameter, stands in the rear of Bascom hall. A green ash stands among the Norway spruce on the eastern slope of Observatory hill.

**THE BIRCHES.** The birches on the University grounds are the canoe or paper birch (*Betula papyrifera*), the cherry, sweet or black birch (*B. lenta*), the yellow birch (*B. lutea*) and the European weeping birch (*B. pendula*). Fine specimens of the latter are found west of the Entomology building and on the lawn of the residence of the dean of the College of Agriculture. One of these trees, near the former building, is 18 inches in diameter. Labeled specimens of canoe birch and of the black birch are in the rear of Bascom hall. A young specimen of the yellow birch stands on the Linden Drive lawn, near the Stock pavillion.

*between hort  
Bldg & Stock  
pav.*  
**THE POPLARS.** The native species on the University grounds are the balsam poplar or tacamahac (*Populus balsamifera*), the American or quaking aspen (*P. tremuloides*), the large-toothed aspen (*P. grandidentata*), the cottonwood (*P. deltoides*), and the Carolina poplar (*P. carolinensis*). The Balm of Gilead (*P. candicans*), probably of Asiatic origin, is also present. A group of five large and picturesque white or silver-leaf poplars (*P. canescens*) stands on the edge of the lawn of the parsonage of the Wesley Foundation, on University avenue.

A large specimen of the cottonwood stands on the lake shore near and west of the Hydraulic laboratory. Here also are large specimens of the American aspen and of the large-toothed aspen. A specimen of the balsam poplar occurs near the drive at the western edge of University hill. A Carolina poplar occurs near the branch post office on University avenue and another near the end of the ski slide. Bolles poplar (*P. alba* var. *Bolleana*) have been planted in front of and at the northwest corner of Lathrop hall, also in Henry quadrangle, opposite the Agricultural Engineering building.

**THE WILLOWS.** The peach-leaved willow (*Salix amygdaloides*) is a common species along the Lake Mendota shore. The crack or brittle willow (*S. fragilis*) is also common there. Other native species on the Campus are the osier or basket willow (*S. viminalis*), the laurel or bay-leaved willow (*S. pentandra*) and the longleaf or riverbank willow (*S. longifolia*).

Some large and beautiful specimens of the Babylon weeping willow (*S. babylonica*), a native of Asia, stand on the edge of the University gardens. One of the largest is about 18 inches in diameter. Shading the Willow drive at the western end of Picnic Point bay is a double line of Russian golden



willows (*S. vitellina aurea*). This drive was laid out under the direction of President Bascom, Prof. John M. Olin and Prof. E. T. Owen, in 1890-91. Golden willows and royal willows (*S. alba splendens*) add greatly to the beauty of the University women's athletic field in Camp Randall Memorial park.

## OTHER TREES

Fine American linden or basswood trees (*Tilia americana*), line both sides of the Linden drive, extending from the western margin of University hill to the Stock pavillion. This drive was laid out in about the year 1880. The largest of these trees is 38 inches in diameter. A small wafer ash or hop tree (*T. trifoliata*) is in the park opposite the Stock pavillion and another near the tank.

A number of hackberry or sugarberry (*Celtis occidentalis*) are among other trees on the slope south of Bascom hall. A labeled specimen stands by the side of the hillside walk leading from the hall to the Chemistry building. A fine stand of these trees is to be seen near the end of Picnic point.

Two black or yellow locust trees (*Robinia pseudoacacia*) stand in the rear of North hall. Beneath the branches of the largest of these, on Muir knoll, John Muir, the famous American naturalist, received his first botany lesson, in June 1863. One of these interesting trees, located a few feet northwest of the hall, is 50 inches in diameter. A large honey locust or three-thorned acacia (*Gleditsia triacanthos*) stands near the east wall of the Stock pavillion. Two black locust and a number of honey locust trees are on the southern slope of Observatory hill.

A labeled specimen of the black walnut (*Juglans nigra*) stands in the rear of Bascom hall. A large butternut (*J. cinerea*) is in the University woods. Several shag-bark or shell-bark hickory trees (*Hicoria ovata*) are on the pasture slope in the rear of the astronomer's house on Observatory hill. Some are 12 inches in diameter. Here also is a single bitternut or swamp hickory tree (*Hicoria cordiformis*).

An American mountain ash (*Sorbus americana*) is on the slope in the rear of Bascom hall. A European mountain ash or Rowan tree (*S. acuparia*) is also here, near the drive. A group of both the American and the Northern or cedar-leaved mountain ash

(*S. dumosa*) have recently been planted on the eastern slope of Observatory hill. Some of the latter are also found on the edge of the lake shore trail.

Two horse-chestnuts (*Aesculus hippocastanum*) are in the rear of Bascom hall. This tree is a native of Southern Europe or Asia.

Two specimens of the mountain sycamore or London-plane (*Platanus acerifolia*) stand in the park near Hiram Smith hall. Several specimens of the American sycamore or buttonwood (*Platanus occidentalis*) are at the pasture fence in the woods near "The Willows" bathing pier. A small tulip tree or tulip poplar (*Liriodendron tulipifera*) is near these.

Many specimens of the hop hornbeam or ironwood (*Ostrya virginiana*) are found in the University woods. The American hornbeam or blue beach (*Carpinus caroliniana*) has been planted near the University hill lake drive.

A wild black cherry or rum cherry (*Prunus serotina*) is near the lake drive, near "The Willows" bathing pier. Choke cherry, (*Prunus virginiana*) occur along this drive.

Catalpa or Indian bean or candle trees (*Catalpa speciosa*) are on the slope between Bascom and Sterling halls.

A group of Kentucky coffee-trees (*Gymnocladus dioica*) stand near the Economic Entomology building. One is planted on the western slope of University hill.

At the south end of South hall there is a red mulberry tree (*Morus rubra*). Two others are in a backyard east of the Stock pavillion.

A group of Russian-olive (*Elaeagnus angustifolia*) is located on the lawn near the Stock pavillion. Here is also a group of Bechtel's crab (*Malus ioensis bechtelii*). A group of wild crab apple (*Malus coronaria*) are on the west slope of University hill. Among them is a glandular thorn (*Crataegus rotundifolia*). On the edge of the lake shore trail is a long-spined thorn (*G. macracantha*). Other species of thorn apple or hawthorn are found on the Campus.

Staghorn sumach (*Rhus hirta*) are planted on either side of the entrance to the Chemistry building. The smooth sumac (*Rhus glabra*) is found elsewhere on the campus. Hercules club or spikenard trees (*Aralia spinosa*) have been planted near the edge of the University hill drive to the lake.

## THE ORCHARD

The first plantings in the present experimental orchard on Observatory hill were made in about 1891. The original orchard was started for the purpose of trying out new varieties of apple trees in an endeavor to find some which were desirable and were sufficiently hardy for Wisconsin weather conditions. Among those originally found and which have become more or less well known were Wealthy, Wolf River, Plum Cider and Patten's Greening. Many of the present trees have been top-grafted and carry from three to four varieties of fruit.

In the northern half of this orchard there were planted in alternating rows a rural named variety and a rural seedling. The seedlings were from seed sown by Prof. E. F. Goff, the first horticulturist at the University station. When the seedling trees began to bear fruit, those which were considered undesirable were removed. This test was at its height in 1905 and 1908. Only one or two were considered of sufficient merit to warrant propagation.

The orchard just north of the Observatory was set out in about 1902 or 1903. It consisted of varieties which had been used quite extensively in various parts of the state. Some of the more common varieties in this orchard are Fameuse (Snow), McIntosh, Windsor Chief, Newell and MacMahon.

The northern half of this orchard was started in 1907. The trees are largely of eastern and southern varieties which are not considered to be especially hardy under Wisconsin conditions. Some of the more important ones are Grimes Golden, Johnathan, Rome Beauty, Gano, Yellow Transparent and Roxbury Russet. This orchard is being used primarily to furnish different varieties of fruits for the use of the students in the study of systematic pomology.

## USES OF TREES

The wood-working industries of the United States consume annually  $24\frac{1}{2}$  billion feet of wood. This is shown to be about 60 percent of the annual lumber production of approximately 40 billion feet.

Oak is chiefly used for building construction, furniture, boxes, and crates, car construction, vehicles, agricultural implements, ship and boat building and furniture.

The hard maple is considered to be the most valuable of the forest trees of America. In former years many thousands of pounds of maple sugar were made from its sap by Wisconsin Indians. It is a fine shade tree. Maple wood is used for flooring, interior finish, boat building, saddles, shoe lasts, woodenware, musical instruments, fixtures, tool handles and fuel.

The elm is our most stately shade tree. Its wood is used in the manufacture of boxes and crates, vehicles, woodenware, chairs, musical instruments, refrigerators and kitchen cabinets, trunks and toys. The bark of the slippery elm has medicinal uses.

Ash is in use for woodenware, agricultural implements, vehicles, tool handles, oars, furniture, interior finish, baskets, chair bottoms, boxes, barrel hoops, sporting and athletic goods, fencing and fuel.

Birch is employed for building construction, in the manufacture of boxes and crates, furniture, shuttles, spools and bobbins, wheel hubs, shoe lasts, sledge frames, small woodenware, wood pulp and fuel. The yellow birch is one of the best of timber trees. The Indians make use of the bark of the canoe or paper birch for the fashioning of light and graceful canoes, for wigwam covering, and for baskets and buckets.

The wood of the poplar trees, classed as cottonwood, is used to a large extent for the making of packing cases, also for vehicles, woodenware, agricultural implements, laundry appliances, planing mill products and fuel. The Balm of Gilead is widely used as an ornamental and shade tree. The cottonwood is much planted for shade and windbreaks in prairie states.

The basswood furnishes wood for the making of carriage bodies, bureaus, chair seats, shoe soles, copperage, wood carving, paper pulp, charcoal and fuel. It is a fine ornamental and shade tree. It is also planted for bee pasture.

Willow is largely used for car construction, vehicles and vehicle parts. The tough flexible twigs of the basket willows are used in making basketry and wickerware.

Ironwood is used in the making of mallets, levers and tool handles. Packing cases, fine furniture, veneering, musical instruments and tool handles are made from cherry. The bark and fruit of the wild black cherry are used in home remedies and in medicines.

Hickory is largely used for vehicles and vehicle parts and tool handles, also for agricultural implements, wheels, sled runners, baskets, chairs and for fuel. The nuts are valuable in commerce.

Wainut is valuable for interior finish of houses, furniture, gun stocks and coffins. The nut husks are occasionally used for dyeing and tanning. Butternut wood is employed in making furniture, packing cases, agricultural implements, fixtures, and in ship and boat building. The inner bark and husks yield yellow dye and medicinal substances. The nuts reach local markets. The kernels are pickled when green. Hackberry is used in building construction, packing cases, cheap furniture, woodenware and vehicles.

White pine is largely used for planing-mill products, packing cases and boxes, car construction, matches and toothpicks, shade and map rollers, tanks and silos, and patterns and flasks. Fifty years ago the natural wealth of Wisconsin lay in its great pine forests. Spruce is largely used for much the same purposes as white pine.

## THE FOLKLORE OF TREES

Many interesting beliefs and customs concerning trees formerly existed. In European folk tales a tree is a common life symbol. Trees were believed to possess souls. They were sometimes worshipped, offerings of various kinds, including the heads of animals, were made to them. Some of these trees were hollow and the offerings, coins, beads, pins and buttons were thrown into these holes. Colored rags and ribbons were tied to or suspended from the branches of some of these sacred trees. The American Indians also had sacred trees believed to be inhabited by powerful spirits.

In France oak trees were decorated with figures of saints. Trunks of oak trees were sometimes enshrined beside the altar in chapel walls. At the birth of a child a name-tree was planted. This tree was supposed to exercise a strong influence over its life. If the tree died or was cut down it was believed that the person for whom it was planted would also die. Bridal couples were sometimes married to trees before the church ceremony took place. This was to divert evil influences. Trees were supposed to be tenanted by the spirits of the dead. The rustling of their leaves was thought to be the spirits conversing with each other. They were planted on the graves of warriors in order that their souls

might pass into them. Tree burial may be a relic of this custom. The good were sometimes transformed into trees. These trees bled or cried when injured. Various orders of minor deities and spirits were believed to live in trees and in the forests. In Ireland fairy trees are still common. In Wales some trees were believed to be haunted by spirits and were feared.

Some Indian tribes believe that man reached the surface of the earth from underground regions by climbing a tree. Trees of life or immortality occur in the mythology of many peoples. Their fruit made people immortal or had healing powers. In many places in England the Jack-in-the-Green, a man entirely hidden in green foliage, dances through the streets on May Day. In Europe trees under which chiefs were inaugurated or annual games held were treated with great reverence. Trees, under whose branches Indian councils were held, formerly stood in several places in Wisconsin. Branches of trees were sometimes bent to mark the courses of trails.

The oak, the sacred tree of the Druids, was held in great veneration. Oak groves were favorite gathering places. Oak leaves were employed in their sacred rites. In England the oak was a symbol of strength. It was believed that a piece of oak wood or bark rubbed on the left hand on Midsummer Day would heal all sores. The oak leaves whispered secrets to the ancient Druids. It was thought to be dangerous to enter an oak grove at midnight. The oak, ash and walnut could not grow close together without perishing. In Wales it was a former custom of young men and maidens to dance and sing about the oldest oak in the village at Easter. The ash was next in importance to the oak. It was considered unlucky to break a branch from an ash. Its wood was charmed. It was regarded as spirit haunted and people would not remain long near an ash tree. A garter made of its green bark was a talisman against witches. Triple leaves worn on the breast caused prophetic charms.

In England it was thought lucky to have a mountain ash or rowan tree growing on the premises. Its berries brought into the house were followed by prosperity and success. The wearing of a bunch of rowan berries kept women from being bewitched. In the Highlands crosses of rowan twigs were placed under milkpans. The birch was held in high esteem.



In Wales when a girl accepted an offer of marriage she presented her lover with a wreath of birch leaves. Hats were crowned with birch. The maypole was made of the wood of this tree. Elder trees were regarded as unlucky. It was dangerous to build a house or barn near them. Elder wood was not burned for fear of bringing bad luck. The cutting down of a juniper brought death within the year. Caps made of willow twigs were presented to persons who were disappointed in love.

The hawthorn was regarded as a safeguard against lightning. The graves of warriors were planted with hawthorn. In the United States and Canada most lumberjacks will not work in a camp in the construction of whose bunk house poplar logs or wood have been used. Its use for any purpose in a logging camp was certain to bring ill-luck. The cross upon which Christ was crucified is believed by them to have been made of poplar. The aspen is supposed to be accursed and is doomed to tremble and shudder because it is believed to be the tree upon which Judas hanged himself. The blossoming of fruit trees out of season indicates trouble, sickness or death.

In parts of Russia a decorated pine bough is brought to the home of a bride. Many other tree beliefs and customs formerly existed and still exist.

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Mary Stuart Foster

## WISCONSIN INDIANS

Wisconsin Archeological Society



CHARLES E. BROWN  
Wisconsin Historical Museum  
Madison, Wisconsin

1933

## WISCONSIN INDIANS

### SIOUAN TRIBES

Of the Indian tribes of Wisconsin the Winnebago (Ho-tcan-ga-ra, "the people speaking the original language") have been known to white men since 1634, when the French explorer Jean Nicolet, found a portion of the tribe located on the east shore of Green Bay. They are the earliest known Indian inhabitants of southern Wisconsin, having come to this region in prehistoric time during the westward migration of a group of Siouan tribes from their primitive home on the Atlantic seaboard. The number and distribution of their archeological remains show them to have been long, possibly for centuries, in more or less undisturbed possession of Wisconsin soil. These are found from the Lake Michigan shore westward to the Mississippi River and from just below the Illinois state line northward to near Stevens Point. The French found them in league with the Menomini, and the two tribes gave shelter to the Potawatomi and Ottawa when these Indians were driven from their homes by the Iroquois, also to the Sauk and Fox when they were expelled from Michigan. In the early part of the seventeenth century they were engaged in a fierce struggle with the Algonkian tribes known as the Illinois. They generally kept on friendly terms with the Wisconsin Algonkians. They secretly aided the Fox in their wars with the French.

They sympathized with Tecumseh in his revolt and in 1811 took part in the battle of Tippecanoe. They were opposed to American occupation and sided with the British in the War of 1812. In 1827 only the presence of troops at the several frontier forts in Wisconsin prevented serious Winnebago troubles. By several treaties with the government, in 1825, 1832, and 1837 they ceded all their lands in the state and removed to a reservation on the Yellow River in Iowa.

In 1840 they removed to the Neutral Ground, in Iowa; in 1848 to Long Prairie reservation, Minnesota; in 1853 to Crow River; in 1856 to Blue Earth, in that state.

When the Sioux outbreak of 1862 occurred they were removed to a reservation at Crow Creek, South Dakota. Many who had taken

up farms remained. Here they suffered from sickness and other causes and they were given a new reservation on the lands of their relatives, the Omaha, in northeastern Nebraska. From this place many afterwards returned to Wisconsin.

In 1820 Morse estimated the number of the Winnebago at 5,800. In 1910 there were 1,063 in Nebraska and 1,270 in Wisconsin. In 1881, those in this state were permitted to take up lands. These live in Jackson, Juneau, Adams, Wood and Marathon Counties. At Tomah they have an agency, and schools at this place and Wittenberg. Their present number in Wisconsin is 1,283.

The Dakota ("allies"), commonly known as Sioux, probably separated from the Winnebago in this state. They occupied central and northern Wisconsin. From this region they were driven during several centuries of conflict with the invading Chippewa. By the treaty of 1837 they ceded to the United States their remaining lands in this state. Dakota raids across the Minnesota-Wisconsin border continued to as recent a time as 1855.

The Iowa (Aiuuais, Ayoos, "sleepy ones"), a Siouan tribe, during early historic times, occupied a narrow strip of land along the bank of the Mississippi in southern Wisconsin, most of their territory being, however, on the opposite side of the river. According to their tradition they were once a part of the Winnebago tribe.

### ALGONKIAN TRIBES

The Chippewa (Ojibway, "to roast 'till puckered up' "), an Algonkian people, are today one of the largest Indian tribes north of Mexico. Their number in the United States and Canada is about 32,000. Those in Wisconsin came to the state in the course of a migration from some point to the northeast shortly before the beginning of white history. They were in the state as early as 1640, or, according to their traditions, a century before that date. With the Potawatomi and Ottawa, they have always formed a kind of loose confederacy, frequently designated as the Three Fires. Their desire to possess the wild rice fields of northern Wisconsin is given as one of the chief reasons for their long-continued conflict with the resident Dakota.

Chippewa reservations are located at Red Cliff, in Bayfield County; La Pointe, in Ashland County; Lac du Flambeau, in Vilas and Iron

counties, and at La Court Oreilles, in Sawyer County. They have schools at all of these places. The number of Chippewa in Wisconsin is 3,800.

The Potawatomi (Potawatamiuk, "people of the place of the fire") are closely related to the Chippewa. From the straits of Mackinac a portion of this tribe moved southward and were encountered by the French on the islands at the head of the Green Bay peninsula in 1670. From here they spread along the shore of Lake Michigan and at the close of the seventeenth century had established themselves at Milwaukee and Chicago and points inland. They sided actively with the French down to the peace of 1763, took part in Pontiac's uprising, and during the Revolution and War of 1812 took part with the British against the United States. By the treaties of 1829 and 1835 they ceded their lands to the government and were removed to Iowa, and in 1846 to a reservation in Kansas. A part of the Prairie band resides in Forest and other northeast Wisconsin counties. They have an agency at Laona. Their number is about 400.

The Ottawa (from adawe, "to trade") were first encountered by Champlain on Georgian Bay, in 1615. They came to Wisconsin in 1650, driven westward by the Iroquois, and dwelt for a time with the Potawatomi, on the islands at the head of Green Bay. Their residence here was only temporary. A few years later a part of the tribe moved to Keweenaw Bay (1660) while others fled westward with a band of the Huron to an island near the entrance of Lake Pepin. Driven away by the Dakota they moved to the Black River, and afterwards settled on the shore of Chequamegon Bay. Harassed by the Dakota they returned under French protection (1670-71) to Manitoulin Island in Lake Huron. By 1680 most of them had returned to Mackinac.

The Menomini are nearly related in language to the Sauk and Fox. Their name is derived from meno, "good"; min, "a grain," the Chippewa name for wild rice. They probably came originally from some point south of Mackinac. They were first found at the mouth of the Menominee River, in about 1634, their settlements then or later extending as far south along the west shore of Green Bay as the Fox River. They have generally been at peace with the whites. In 1854 the government ceded to them their present reservation in Shawano County. Their number was probably never greater than 2,500, their present number being 1,928.

The Fox (Meshkwa<sup>1</sup> kihug, "red earth people"), also known as the Outagamie, were a restless and warlike tribe constantly in trouble with other tribes. From 1706 to 1745 they were at war with the French and were finally driven to the Mississippi River region in southwestern Wisconsin. They came to the state from the eastern Michigan peninsula and were first met here by the French in 1665. By 1680 they were located on the lower Fox River. Some of the Fox are now on a reservation in Iowa and others in Kansas and Oklahoma.

The Sauk (Osa<sup>1</sup> kiwug, "people of the yellow earth") are closely connected in Wisconsin history with the Fox whose troubles with the French they shared. Their original habitat was with this tribe in Michigan. They came to Wisconsin in about 1650. In 1669 they had a village at the mouth of the Fox River. Jonathan Carver visited them in their village on the site of Prairie du Sac in 1766. At the time of the Revolution they were largely settled at Rock Island, in Illinois. In 1804 they ceded a large part of their lands, a disagreement over this transaction leading to the Black Hawk War of 1832. They are located today on allotted lands in Oklahoma and Kansas.

The Kickapoo, Mascouten and Miami, Algonkian tribes of small importance in Wisconsin history, had a village (or villages) on the Fox River near Berlin, in about 1665.

The Stockbridge are Massachusetts Indians, their original home being in the Housatonic Valley. In 1785 they removed to the Oneida in New York. They came to Wisconsin with the Oneida in 1822 and settled at the location of present Kaukauna. Here the Munsee became incorporated with them. In 1834 they removed to Calumet County. In 1856 they removed to their present location in Shawano County. Their present number is 606.

The Brothertown, composed of individuals of Connecticut, Rhode Island and Long Island Algonkian tribes, in 1788 settled on land given them by the Oneida in Madison County, New York. Before 1830 they came to Wisconsin and settled on the Fox River, and later removed to the east shore of Lake Winnebago, in Calumet County. Their number is small.



## IROQUOIN TRIBES

The Oneida, an Iroquois tribe, originally lived in central New York. They purchased lands on the Fox River in Wisconsin in 1821 with the Stockbridge and Brothertown.

In 1832 they removed to a reservation in Brown and Outagamie Counties. Their present number is 3046.

The Huron (Wyandot) in 1649 and 1650 fled from Michigan to Washington Island, Wisconsin, to escape destruction from their relatives, the New York Iroquois. After moving from one point to another in the western and northern part of the state with the Ottawa, they returned in 1671 to Mackinac.

## INDIAN REMAINS

The recorded Indian history of Wisconsin has been greatly supplemented and extended by a study of its very numerous aboriginal remains. These occur on and near the shores of nearly every lake and stream. They consist of the sites of native villages, camps and workshops; plots of corn hills and garden beds; enclosures; burial places and cemeteries; refuse heaps and pits; cave shelters; shrines; pictograph rocks; boulder mortars, sources of flint, quartz, quartzite and pipestone; lead diggings; copper mining pits; stone heaps and circles; cairns; groups of conical, linear and effigy mounds; trails and other remains of great interest.

Archeological researches to determine the character, distribution and authorship of these antiquities were undertaken by Increase A. Lapham in 1836 and continued to the date of his death in 1875. In 1850 he published the results of his investigations in *The Antiquities of Wisconsin*. Since 1901, The Wisconsin Archeological Society has carried on the work begun by him, conducting surveys, researches and explorations in many counties. To date this state society has published thirty volumes of reports in *The Wisconsin Archeologist* in which the results of its investigations are given. These have made available a rich store of information concerning the religion, arts and industries, warfare, commerce and migrations of the pre-historic and early historic Indians of Wisconsin.

The total number of Indian mounds formerly existing in the state is estimated at about 15,000. The greater number of these were in

southern Wisconsin, important mound centers being at Milwaukee, Racine, Waukesha, Lake Mills, Beloit, Lake Koshkonong, Lake Winnebago, Madison, Baraboo, at different points along the upper Fox and the Wisconsin River, and at Prairie du Chien and Trempealeau. Among the earthworks in these regions the effigy or animal shaped earthworks are among the most singular aboriginal structures in the United States.

Fine groups of Indian mounds are now preserved to the public in parks and on other public properties at Madison, Baraboo, Devils Lake, Nelson Dewey State Park, Trempealeau, La Crosse, Lake Mills, Fort Atkinson, Menasha, Waupaca, Milwaukee, West Allis, Waukesha, Racine, Beloit and other places in Wisconsin. Near Baraboo the famous Man Mound is preserved in a public park. At Aztalan, near Lake Mills, eight large ceremonial and mortuary mounds connected with the celebrated prehistoric Indian stockaded village known as "Aztalan" are preserved in Aztalan Mound Park.

At Madison nearly two hundred mounds are permanently preserved in eighteen different localities about the three local lakes. In view of their present rapid destruction through various causes and their great historical and scenic interest it is desirable that many more should be permanently preserved.

In public museums at Madison, Milwaukee, Beloit, Green Bay, Oshkosh, Baraboo, New London, and in other cities in the state large and important collections of the clay, bone, horn, stone and metal implements, ceremonials and ornaments of the prehistoric and early historic redmen of Wisconsin are assembled for the use of students of the rich field of Wisconsin Indian history.

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# FRENCH PATHFINDERS OF WISCONSIN

Explorers, Traders and Missionaries  
French Regime, 1634-1763

WISCONSIN TERCENTENARY

STATE HISTORICAL MUSEUM  
Madison, Wisconsin

SUMMER SESSION  
University of Wisconsin

CHARLES E. BROWN  
State Historical Museum  
Madison, Wisconsin  
1934

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## FRENCH PATHFINDERS OF WISCONSIN

Jean Nicolet was the first white man to visit the wilds of Wisconsin. He was born in 1598 at Cherbourg, an important seaport on the Norman peninsula, in France. In his veins flowed the blood of the Vikings. He came to New France in 1618. Two years he spent among the Algonquin Indians, learning their language and customs and joining in their hunting and other excursions. He accompanied a party of four hundred Algonquins who went to make peace with the warlike Iroquois. He then spent a number of years among the Nipissing ('Little-water people'), an Algonkin tribe residing in the vicinity of Lake Nipissing, Ontario. He was delegated by Samuel de Champlain, to undertake a journey to the distant savage nation called the "People of the Sea." In 1634, he left Three Rivers with seven Indian canoemen on his 1,000 mile journey to the West, passing through parts of Lakes Huron and Michigan. Directed by some of the Indians to Green Bay, he entered the Bay, halting at a Menomini Indian village at the mouth of the Menominee River. From here he sent a message to the Winnebago to inform them of his intended visit. These tidings being well received, he set out to seek them. The place of his landfall is supposed to have been at the Red Banks, a site twelve miles northeast of the present site of Green Bay. The Winnebago, who had never seen a white man, "dispatched several young men to meet the manitou rinion, that is to say "wonderful man." They meet him, they escort him, and carry all of his baggage. He wore a robe of China damask, all strewn with flowers and birds of many colors. No sooner did they perceive him than the women and children fled at the sight of a man who carried thunder in both hands—thus they called the two pistols that he held. The news of his coming quickly spread to the places round about, and there assembled four or five thousand men. Each of the chief men made a feast for him, and at one of these banquets they serve at least six score beavers."

From Green Bay Nicolet probably ascended the Fox River for some distance but his stay was too brief for much exploration. From Green Bay he returned to the Huron country and then to Canada. Here he continued in the government employ until he was drowned, in 1642, by the overturning of his canoe while on his way from Quebec to Three Rivers. At Red Banks a tablet and

at Menasha a monument commemorate the discovery of Wisconsin by Jean Nicolet, daring explorer, in 1634. In the State Historical Museum at Madison there is an oil painting by Edwin Willard Deming illustrating "The Landfall of Jean Nicolet." Murals illustrating the same event are in the Governor's reception room in the State Capitol and in the Milwaukee Public Museum.

1654-1660. Pierre-Esprit Radisson and Medard Chouart Sieur de Grosseilliers, daring young adventurers, following in the wake of Nicolet, set forth from Three Rivers to discover the great lakes that they had heard the Indians speak of. They wintered among the Potawatomi in the Green Bay region.

In the spring of 1655, they ascended the Fox River, portaged across and entered the Wisconsin spending four months on the trip. They may have reached the Mississippi.

In 1659 the same men, with other fur traders and a band of Huron Indians, skirted the south shore of Lake Superior in their canoes and learned of the Indian copper mines. Late in the autumn they entered Chequamegon Bay and built a crude fort near the present site of Ashland. This was the first white habitation in Wisconsin. They visited the Huron village near the headwaters of the Black River. They wandered into the Mille Lac region in Minnesota, meeting the Sioux Indians. They met the Cree and Assiniboine Indians. In 1660 they built a fort at Oak Point east of Ashland. That year they returned to Three Rivers, Canada, after making four journeys to the Iroquois and to the Northwest. Later they transferred their allegiance to England and were among the founders of the Hudson Bay Company.

1660-1661. Father René Menard (Mesnard) a Jesuit missionary, came to Keweenaw Bay, Lake Superior, in 1660. In the spring of 1661, after a winter of great hardship among the Indians he was taken by traders to Chequamegon Bay. Thence he and a white companion set out to visit the Huron villages on the Chippewa and Black Rivers. These villages the zealous Menard was never destined to reach. Going ashore on a tributary (Jump River?) of the Chippewa he became lost in the forest on an obscure trail. His companion and the Indians searched for him but he was never found. He probably died from exposure.

A granite pillar on the river road north of Merrill bears the inscription: "In honor of Pere René Menard born at Paris, Sept. 7, 1605. Entered the Jesuit Order, Nov. 7, 1624. Sailed for Quebec



in March, 1640. Lost hereabouts in July 1661, while enroute to a Huron village to baptize Huron refugees."

1665-1670. Father Claude Jean Allouez, a Jesuit missionary, was sent to re-open the mission on Lake Superior. He came from Canada by the way of the lakes, into Chequamegon Bay. He erected a bark chapel (the first religious edifice in Wisconsin) on a point on the southwest shore between present Washburn and Ashland. He named it "La Pointe du Saint Esprit." He remained four years, being relieved by Father Jacques Marquette. In 1669 he was invited to Depere (Rapides des Peres, or the "Father's Rapids") where he established the Mission of St. Francis Xavier (1671-72).

In 1672, he established the Mission of St. Marc among the Foxes probably on the Little Wolf River, within present Waupaca County. He made a voyage up the Fox River, visiting the Mascoutin, Miami and other Indian villages, above Lake Winnebago. Among them he established the Mission of St. Jacques (1673).

A stone monument at Depere marks the site of his mission. A marker on the public library grounds, Marinette, marks the site of St. Michael's mission founded by him in 1670. In Menominee Park, Oshkosh, is a boulder with a tablet reading "The Holy sacrifice of mass was offered in this vicinity by Father Claude Allouez, S. J., April 20, 1670."

Father Allouez was born in France in 1620 and came to Canada in 1658. "He labored among the Indians for thirty-two years preaching to twenty different tribes. At times he had to prevent their adoring him as a god; at others they wished to sacrifice him to their manitou."

1668-1671. Father Claude Dablon was engaged in the New France missions from 1655 until his death in 1697. During 1668-71, he was among the Lake Superior tribes, and from 1686 to 1693, he was superior of all the Canadian missions.

"His sojourn in Wisconsin was brief. He was one of the outstanding figures in the missionary group that labored so incessantly in the Northwest." In 1670 he made a journey with Allouez to visit tribes in central and southern Wisconsin. In 1671 he returned to Sault Ste. Marie. He wrote of the character and customs of the Indians.

1673-1674. Louis Jolliet and Father Jacques Marquette were on December 8, 1672 commissioned by Louis de Buade, count de Frontenac, governor of New France, to attempt the discovery of the Mis-

Mississippi River. The long northern winter was spent by the two friends, both young men, in most careful preparation. On May 17, 1673, they set forth with five French voyageurs from Point St. Ignace, Lake Michigan on their epoch-making expedition. They halted at the mouth of the Menomonee River, and then proceeded up the Fox River visiting the Miami and Mascouten near Berlin. At the present site of Portage they entered the Wisconsin River, June 10, 1673. Following this stream to its mouth they beheld the broad expanse of the Mississippi, on June 17. They followed the Mississippi as far as the mouth of the Arkansas River. On their return, they came up the Mississippi and Illinois rivers, making a portage at Chicago. They paddled up the shores of Lake Michigan and in September 1673 reached St. Francis Xavier Mission, at Depere. The narrative and map of this voyage by Marquette made their names immortal.

In October 1674, Marquette with two assistants went to establish a mission at Kaskaskia among the Illinois Indians. They went by way of Green Bay, portaged eastward across the Door County peninsula at Sturgeon Bay and paddled down the Lake Michigan shore to the mouth of the Chicago River on whose bank they spent the winter. In the spring they reached Kaskaskia. Father Marquette died on the way back to Mackinac. He was buried near Ludington, on the Michigan side of the lake, May 18, 1675; in the following year his body was removed to St. Ignace.

"Marquette was one of the gentlest and most devout of the Jesuit Fathers." He arrived at Quebec from France, in 1666. In 1669, he took charge of the Mission at Chequamegon Bay remaining until 1671. From there he went to St. Ignace. He was born at Laon, France, June 1637.

Louis Jolliet was born in a little riverside hamlet at the foot of the Rock of Quebec. He was the son of a poor wagon-maker in the employ of the fur trading company. He studied for the priesthood and later became church clerk. In 1667, he went to France. On his return he adopted the calling of an explorer and entered upon the training for this work. He and Marquette became fast friends. In 1669, he was the interpreter of a party engaged in a search for copper mines in the Lake Superior region and on his return found the route around the lower Great Lakes. In 1671, he was with St. Luson when he took possession of the Northwest in the name of the King of France.

Marquette and Jolliet discovery markers are at Portage and in Dewey State Park, at the mouth of the Wisconsin. A Marquette

tablet is at Kewaunee. Marquette statues are at Prairie du Chien, in Statuary Hall in the National Capitol, at Washington, and on Mackinac Island. There is a tablet on the Michigan Avenue bridge, in Chicago, also a tablet near Marquette's wintering place in the same city.

1670-1671. Simon Francois Daumont, Sieur de St. Lusson, piloted by Nicolas Perrot, a prominent fur-trader adventurer, came to Sault Ste. Marie, in 1670, and there on June 14, 1671, in the presence of Fathers Dablon, Allouez, and other Jesuit missionaries and a large gathering of Indians took possession of the Northwest in the name of the King of France, Louis XIV. Perrot acted as interpreter. Among the party was Louis Jolliet, later to win fame with Father Marquette as discoverer of the Upper Mississippi River. St. Lusson erected a cross and a pillar with the arms of France, with which he placed a paper giving an account of his ceremony of taking possession. The Indians feared that this paper contained witchcraft, and took it out and burned it. Thereafter the French had little leaden tablets made and buried in the ground to mark their explorations. Several of these have been found in recent years.

1679-1682. Robert Cavalier de la Salle was twenty-three years old when he came to New France in 1666. He was "The pathfinder of the French Empire in America." He engaged in trade with the Indians and made several early voyages of exploration.

In 1679, he arrived at Green Bay in a schooner, "The Griffon", built at the Niagara River above the Falls. This was the first vessel to sail the Great Lakes. She was sent back to Quebec laden with a rich cargo of furs but was lost in a storm and never again heard of. La Salle with a party in canoes laden with merchandise paddled down the west shore of Lake Michigan, a voyage of great peril because of the lake gales. One of their landings was at the present site of Milwaukee (Millioke). Here they were visited by a band of Fox Indians who later stole some of their merchandise. This they were induced to return at a parley. With his lieutenant, Henry de Tonty (who had come down the east side of the lake) La Salle journeyed up the St. Joseph and across via the Kankakee and Illinois rivers to Peoria Lake, where he erected Fort Crevecoeur. He then returned to Canada (1680), leaving Tonty in charge of the fort.

La Salle was eager to explore the Mississippi River to its mouth. He went to France and obtained royal sanction for this project.

With Henry de Tonty, an Italian soldier of fortune who had lost a hand and wore an iron one, La Salle, in 1682, reached the Mississippi by way of the Illinois and descended to its mouth. He took possession of the surrounding territory for France, naming it for King Louis XIV—"Louisiana." On his return he built Fort Louis on the Illinois, leaving Tonty in command. He obtained ships and settlers for the founding of a colony in Louisiana. The mouth of the Mississippi was missed and the settlers landed on the Texas coast. At this colony <sup>dis</sup>ension arose and La Salle was murdered.

1678-79. Daniel Greysolon du Luth, a daring nobleman of France, explored Lake Superior and the Upper Mississippi. He was the first to use the Brule-St. Croix waterway as a short route to the Mississippi. Visiting the Isanti Sioux in Minnesota, his party joined them in a great buffalo hunt. Of them he obtained fifty canoe-loads of fur. From the St. Croix River he descended into the Mississippi. Near the mouth of the Chippewa he found Hennepin and Auguel, the messengers of La Salle, then prisoners of an Indian hunting party, and rescued them. They returned to Mille Lacs. In the autumn Du Luth and Hennepin drifted down the Mississippi to the Wisconsin. They ascended that stream and followed the Fox River, and continued on to Mackinac. Later Du Luth made other voyages in which by his diplomacy and daring he made the Indians obedient to the will of the French and rendered the Northwest safe for white men.

Du Luth (Lhut), an army officer in France, came to Canada in about 1676. Born in 1636, at Germain-en-Laye of a noble family, he was brought up at Lyons. He was a soldier and possessed all of the qualities of a great leader. He spent nearly ten years in explorations and fur-trading. In 1689, he returned to the St. Lawrence; he died in 1710.

1680. Father Louis Hennepin, a Recollet friar, chaplain of La Salle's party, with two voyageurs of his party, set out under orders of La Salle to explore the Upper Mississippi. Leaving the mouth of the Illinois River, March 12, they passed the mouth of the Wisconsin. Below Lake Pepin the party were taken prisoner by the Sioux and carried to the present site of St. Paul, thence to the Mille Lacs. They were kept here for two months, Hennepin and Auguel were set at liberty. They descended the river in a canoe into the Mississippi and passed the great falls which Hennepin named after St. Anthony. Nearing the mouth of the Chip-

pewa, being driven by starvation, they ascended the river and joined a party of Sioux hunters, by whom they were roughly treated but premitted to live. Here near the mouth of the Chippewa, Du Luth found and rescued them, all returned to Mille Lacs. During his adventures Hennepin carried on his back a portable altar.

Hennepin was a native of Belgium. He studied and spent his youth in Flanders. He attended the wounded on the battlefield of Seneffe (1674) and carried his begging bowl to the cities of Hainault and Artois, and even to Calais. His books on his travels in North America became very famous and were translated into most of the languages of Europe.

1680-1700. Henry de Tonty, a young Italian officer, came to Canada in 1678 with La Salle, and shared his fortunes until the latter's death. In the winter of 1679-80, during La Salle's absence from Illinois, Tonty led a retreat through Wisconsin—an heroic achievement in the cold and snow of the winter time. Nearly starved he and his companions found some food in a Potawatomi village on the Lake Michigan coast, and finally were rescued at the Sturgeon Bay portage and taken to the mission at De Pere. The next summer, La Salle was rejoiced to find Tonty at Mackinac and took him back with him to Illinois. This was after the voyage to the mouth of the Mississippi (1682).

Tonty remained at his fort on the Illinois River until 1700—striving against many hindrances, to maintain the fidelity of the Western tribes to the French, and to secure the ascendancy of France in the Mississippi region. Deprived, by a royal decree, of Fort St. Louis, Tonty went, in 1700, to join Iberville's colony at Biloxi, Mississippi. Two years later, he died at Mobile from yellow fever.

1667-1689. In the year 1685, Nicolas Perrot, who has been called "the greatest Frenchman of the West", was appointed "commandant of the West." He came to Green Bay and there met the Indians. He had unbounded influence over these tribesmen of Wisconsin. He formed a series of alliances with the warring tribes of central Wisconsin and the upper Mississippi. He discovered the lead mines in Wisconsin and Iowa. He established several forts and trading posts on the upper Mississippi. One of the forts was at Trempealeau (1685). One of his early exploits was his visit to the large Mascouten and Miami villages at the head of the Fox River.

During his early trading ventures, he traded in Wisconsin from 1667 to 1670. In the spring of the latter year, he joined a flotilla of canoes manned by no less than 900 Indians from Green Bay for Montreal. In 1684 he raised an Ottawa force to join Governor De la Barre in an expedition. In the spring of 1687, he went to Mackinac and thence eastward to join De Nonville in his memorable campaign against the Seneca. He performed other important services in the years following for which he deserves to be held in lasting remembrance.

In 1689, he was commissioned to manage the interests of commerce of the Wisconsin and Upper Mississippi River tribes. At fort St. Antoine near Stockholm, Pepin County, he took possession of their lands on the Upper Mississippi, St. Croix and St. Peter valleys in the name of France.

Perrot was born in 1644. "He was a man of great daring, enterprise and of considerable education." He died subsequent to 1718. He was a "forest diplomat, the best loved Frenchman in the northwest."

1693-1699. Pierre Charles Le Sueur came to Canada when a young man, and soon became a fur trader. He was commandant at Chequamegon as early as 1693, and for several years thereafter. In that year he erected two forts,—one on Madeline Island, and another near present Red Wing, Minnesota,—in order to keep open the Bois Brule and St. Croix trading route. Discovering lead mines on the upper Mississippi, he made strenuous efforts to secure permission to work them. Returning from France in 1699, he brought with him thirty miners. He went to Louisiana, and in the following year was sent by Iberville to search for copper mines in the Sioux country; and afterwards built a post on Blue Earth River, Minnesota, whence he sent to France a quantity of blue and green earth taken from the "mines." On his voyage up the Mississippi he found lead at the sites of Dubuque, Galena and Potosi. Little is known about his subsequent career; he died soon after his return from his Mississippi voyage, somewhere in Louisiana.

1699-1700. Father Jean Francois St. Cosme, a Sulpitian priest from Quebec, was prevented by the unruly Fox Indians from taking the Fox-Wisconsin River route to the Mississippi. He followed the Wisconsin shore of Lake Michigan stopping near the present site of Sheboygan, where Father Marest, another missionary priest, had wintered among the Indians and planted a cross. In 1700, St. Cosme



visited the site of Milwaukee, where he found Potawatomi, Fox and other Indians.

1709-1716. Louis de La Porte, Sieur de Louvigny, was a distinguished soldier of New France. He entered the service of Canada as early as 1682. He was sent to command at Mackinaw, in 1709, on the way defeating a war party of Iroquois. He remained in command for four years during which time he managed the Indians of the Northwest with great success. He engaged in several campaigns against the Iroquois.

In 1716, he marched with a force of 800 men from Mackinac against the hostile Fox Indians of Wisconsin and Illinois. He attacked their fort, which was defended with three rows of palisades and a ditch. This stronghold he attacked with two cannon and a grenade mortar to such good purpose that the Fox were obliged to surrender, they and their allies agreeing to maintain peace thereafter. They were also obliged to furnish hostages to be sent to Governor de Vandreuil. His services were rewarded by his appointment to the governorship of Three Rivers. De Louvigny lost his life in a shipwreck near Louisburg, when returning from France, August 25, 1725.

1710-1728. Sieur Marchand de Lignery was second in command to De Louvigny at the French post at Mackinac. "He proved himself, during his long and important services, a man of uncommon vigor and ability." He probably served in the expedition against the Fox Indians in 1716. These "firebrands of the West" continuing their attacks on the French and the Illinois tribes, De Lignery led a second expedition against them in 1728, with the purpose of exterminating them. His force consisted of nearly twelve hundred Indians and four hundred and fifty French. With these he marched from Mackinac to Green Bay. He continued his march but found the Fox villages deserted, the Indians having fled in their canoes and on foot four nights before the arrival of his army. He burned three Fox and a Winnebago village and destroyed their corn fields. He then returned to Mackinac. The failure to subdue the Fox caused the evacuation of the French post at La Baye (Green Bay) "and for the time being the Wisconsin wilderness was free from European domination." The Fox continued their warfare for many years afterwards, despite the best efforts of the French and their Indian allies to exterminate them. They were finally subdued by Pierre Paul de la Marque Marin, in about 1740. De Lignery died in Canada, in 1732.

1730-1753. Pierre Paul, Sieur de Marin, a French officer, was sent to assist in subduing the rebellious Fox Indians. A large force of these Indians attacked the Winnebago village on Doty Island. Marin, with a few Frenchmen and a body of Menomoni, went to their assistance and attacked the Fox fort on Little Lake Butte des Morts. After a siege that lasted a month and a half, the Fox finally abandoned their position.

In 1750, Marin succeeded in making peace among the tribes at Green Bay. He went to Lake Pepin and there built a fort. In 1753, he was sent to build a chain of forts on the Ohio River.

"Marin was an arrant trader, his operations being viewed with much distrust at the French court. He was the only officer of his day who could keep peace in the Northwest."

1729-1800. Charles Michel de Langlade was born at Mackinac in May 1729, his father being Sieur Augustin de Langlade, a trader and his mother Domitilde, the sister of King Nissowaquet, the principal chief of the Ottawa Indians. He was born to a soldier's life. He was only ten years old when he went with a war party to attack the Chickasaw towns in Tennessee. His father removed from Mackinac to Green Bay. The war exploits of Charles de Langlade were many. With a force of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians, in 1752, he attacked the Miami in Ohio, killed their chief and destroyed their village. He led the Northwest tribes to the defence of the French Fort Duquesne. Scattering his savages through the forest he assisted in the defeat of the army of General Braddock in western Pennsylvania, in 1755. He fought under Montcalm at Ticonderoga and at the capture of Fort William Henry. After the defeat of the French on the Plains of Abraham, at Quebec, he returned to Mackinac. Here he was ordered to surrender the West to the British.

He now became a British officer, leading his Indian bands in Burgoyne's invasion against the Americans. Next he led his Indians against the Spanish at St. Louis. He crossed the river to attack George Rogers Clark at Cahokia, but without success. He died in 1800 and was buried at Green Bay. His record as a soldier, serving under two flags, was a distinguished one. A large oil painting by Deming, illustrating Langlade's participation in the defeat of General Braddock, hangs in the entrance hall of the State Historical Museum, at Madison.