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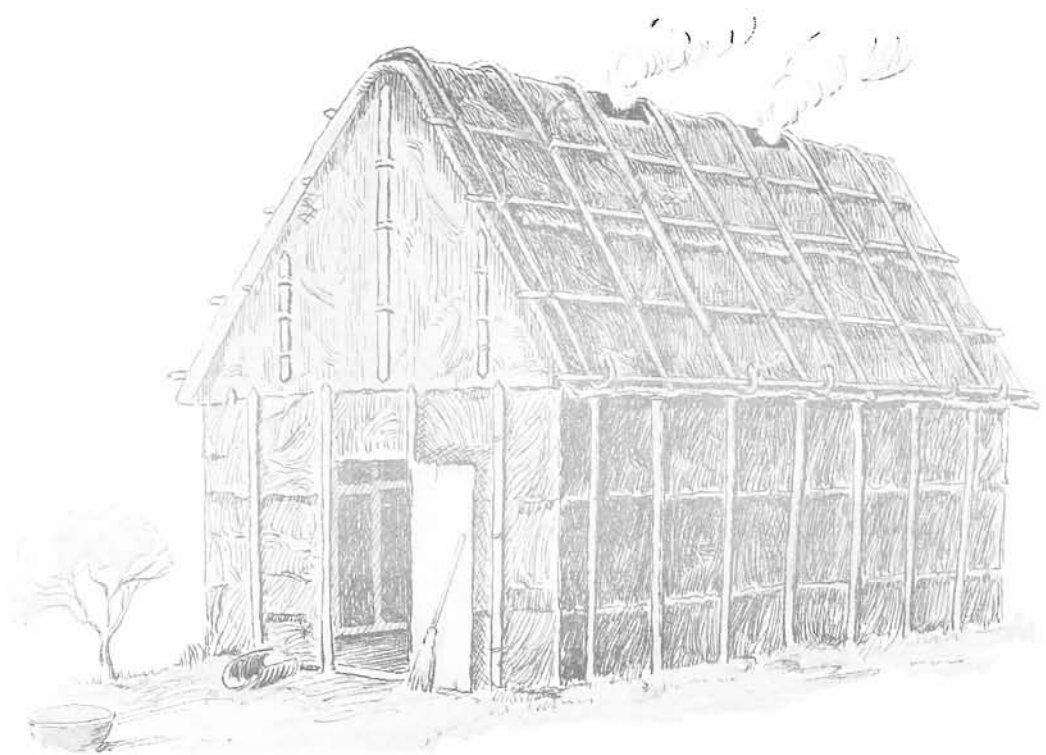
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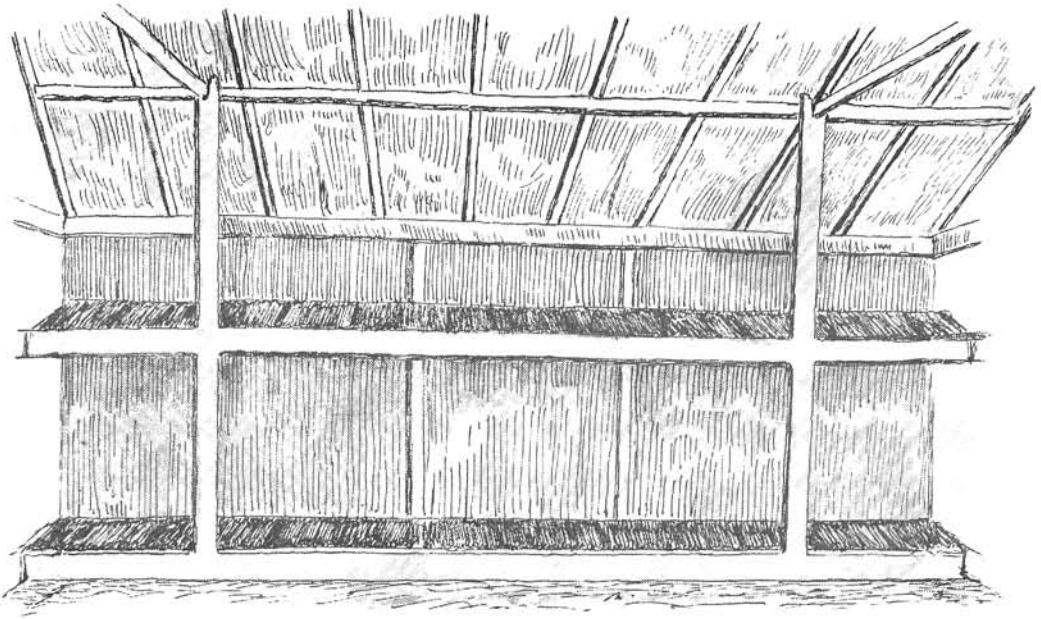
THE IROQUOIS BARK HOUSE

The characteristic bark house of the Iroquois Indians was basically small: dimensions given are 20x15, 20x24, etc. When it became desirable to enlarge an existing structure, additional length was added to the back until it sometimes became a "long house." Height varied from 10 to 20 feet.

On a self-draining site, usually five poles on a side and one less on the ends constituted the framework. To a crosspole the rafters were attached and strengthened by crosspieces placed transversely. The roof was shingled with slabs of bark, rough side out, and tied with bark rope. Arched or gabled, the roof had two holes through which smoke escaped from the firepits.

After the frame was up, the house was sided with slabs of heavy bark tied on with bark rope and supported by a cross-pole. Doors at both ends were of bark or deerskin, and over each doorway was placed the emblem of the family. Through the lengthwise center of the room were, in a house of this size, two firepits on each side of which a family had its quarters.

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The upper section pictured above illustrates arrangement of seats and bunks along each side of the building. The lower platform was about two feet from the ground and provided sitting space; the upper, sleeping quarters. Seats and bunks were covered with mats or skins and blankets. A house of comparable size afforded shelter for a family of eight adults and a dozen or so children, as well as the necessary stores. From its walls hung implements of war and chase, medicinal herbs and some foodstuffs. Children of the families usually were cousins.

The bark house withstood the vigors of weather and use for 50 years but often the site wore out before the building did. The Tutelos at the Inlet Valley village of Coreorgonel were occupying some 30 log houses when Colonel Dearborn's detachment burned the village in 1779. The British had encouraged abandonment of the chase and guided the Indians in building permanent quarters. See W. Glenn Norris' watercolor depiction of the destruction of Coreorgonel.



ROSE HIPS IN INDIAN DIETARY

One Indian explained that his people had no pockets in their clothing as a safety measure. If they had pockets, they'd carry their treasures and attract a highwayman; but without pockets, a robber would know they carried no treasures and would not molest them. Consequently, Indians resorted to many receptacles for storing personal belongings.

One of these receptacles was the handbag illustrated here. It was made of cloth and decorated with beadwork; but it could not have been made until after the Europeans brought beads, needles, threads and cloth.

Although this might be mistaken for a painting on fabric, it is beadwork on cloth, and the figure is that of a wild rose. In autumn the petals fall off and a seed pod replaces them; today, it is called a rose hip. It was too bitter to masticate until after a heavy frost or two, then the wily Indian popped rose hips into his mouth and ate them; later the pioneers imitated the Indians and ate rose hips. Neither native nor new-comer knew why the rose hips were beneficial to them, but modern scientists established the fact that rose hips are rich in Vitamin C.

O-WE-NAH

A Legend of Lake Eldridge

And 16 Other Iroquois Indian Legends

Adapted by WILLIAM HEIDT, Jr.

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Preface

O-We-Nah: A Legend of Lake Eldridge appeared in the *Elmira Gazette Illustrated Monthly Supplement*, Vol. 1, No. 6, in 1873. The author's name is not given, a fact which has led to a long, fruitless search.

This fugitive little piece appears less an Indian legend than a story about the aborigines whose village occupied lands bordering on Lake Eldridge, Elmira. It is, more than likely, an imaginative tale rather than an account of a historical event. The romance between Owenah and Newamee seems to be a transference from the white man's culture to that of the Senecas who dwelt on the lake's shore.

Found in "*Iroquois Stories*" are genuine tales that were narrated by storytellers. These legends were collected by Francis D. Bowman, narrator on the radio programs of the Carborundum Co. Known as Yo-reh-hoh-ah-weh, or He Who Gives the Message to the Air, Bowman was adopted into the Tuscaroras on the Niagara reservation as a token of appreciation for his contribution to knowledge of the Indian.

Permission has been given by the Carborundum Co. for reproduction of these legends by the DeWitt Historical Society as a contribution to local history.

When the storyteller came into the house, children gathered around him as he opened his bag of mystical trinkets. A piece of bone called up one story, a colored pebble another. Finally the session ended, and the storyteller moved to another house at which another expectant group welcomed him with shouts of joyful anticipation.

The late C. Owen Carmen, Trumansburg editor and publisher, in 1925 read to me "The Legend of the Door at Taughanock" in a poem. Intermittent search has failed to find the poem. Mrs. John Donar of Enfield Falls Road, Ithaca, remembers her grandfather, Ernest Lobdell, telling this legend.

—W. H., Jr.

O-WE-NAH

A Legend of Lake Eldridge

IT WAS MANY YEARS before General Sullivan with his intrepid army broke through the Pennsylvania hills to avenge the massacre at Wyoming, that the valley of the Chemung slept undisturbed by rumors of distant wars. Before the battle which broke the last vestiges of Iroquois power, an Indian village stood on the site of present-day Elmira.

The wide cornfields shone yellow in autumn sun which kindled the flames in the chestnuts and maples on the distant encircling hills. The river with its deep-cut banks flowed with full tide and pleasant murmur through gulfy forests of pine, while dark hemlocks leaned from the hills as if in council over its gliding waters. On the banks an orchard of wild trees spread its disordered ranks, and the apple and the crimson-sided plum ripened in plenty.

Southward along the river were curious mounds of an earlier day wrought into fantastic forms by former floods and sparsely covered by evergreens which hid the spot where the children of the forest buried their dead. These were the gates to the happy hunting grounds, to which at certain times came the women of the tribe to watch with wailing over the dead.

Overlooking this scene, on the south was the steep mountain-side which, decked with all gay colors, with the refuge of the deer and the fox, and from whose summit on moonless nights the wolf sent his dismal howl echoing over Mt. Zoar and the neighboring hills. Around the valley stretched the wooded heights that glimmered in the dreamy blue haze of autumn.

In the center of the plain, on the north side spread the Indian village of Shinedowa, with here and there a sighing pine flinging its long shadow across the open space in which the huts were situated. In the midst stood the council house, surrounded by a grassy space on which stood some spearlike poles bearing the emblems of the tribe. At the doors of the huts children played over the grass, dogs ran and frolicked, the young braves made their bows and arrows, and the girls gathered berries, while shouting boys indulged in mimic chase. At the doorways and around the council house women seated on the ground wove baskets, made moccasins or deftly braided long rushes into parti-colored mats.

Here and there along the river could be seen a gliding canoe with its dusky occupants. Occasionally there were seen on some bluff-like bank the motionless figure of a fisherman who, with poised spear, waited the movement of the silvery-sided fish in deep water, while his equally motionless rival, the kingfisher, eyed him askance from the dead top of a neighboring hemlock. The slow-sailing eagle hung in midair over the spot where the angler intently watched the water, and the crackling brush startled the deer that was unsuspecting of danger.

On such an afternoon there was a conversation in hushed tones among a half-dozen women of the tribe. They were seated on the grass near the council house.

"Owenah has felt the evil eye, I fear," said the wife of the chief. "My husband went a moon ago to Seneca, and on his return he will summon the council to see what spell is over our son."

"Yes," said another, "even the children notice that there is something wrong with him."

A third chimed in, "The girls of the village avoid him of late, for his strange conduct makes them afraid. He is under an evil spell."

"Owenah was always a strange child," said the aged wife of the chief, sighing. "He was always shy and reserved, but we had hopes that he would be a great chief, until this spell came over him. It is now six months since he laid aside the bow and spear, and neither delights in chasing the deer nor in preparing himself to be a warrior. Time was when he would sit for hours and listen to the stories of the warriors, and his eyes would shine as if he wished to rush into battle.

"Once no young brave of the tribe could cope with Owenah in the hunt, and he was known in the lodges from Seneca to Tioga as among the bravest. But he has changed. He sits as idle as the painted leaves. He listens no more to the stories of war. His bows and arrows are neglected. He sharpens not his knife, and he goes no longer to the lodge of the arrow maker for arrows. The younger braves look upon him with distrust, and the girls laugh at him or look at him askance, but he does not mind it. The old warriors have noticed his strange ways and say he will never be a warrior unless he rouses from his slumber."

"What can it mean but the evil eye," said another. "Only last night my husband saw him coming into the village from the dark swamp which surrounds the bottomless lake, and they say he goes almost daily in that direction, but brings back no game."

"He does not even take his weapons with him," said the chief's wife. "He comes as empty handed as he goes, but there is a strange look in his eyes when he comes back. He was once our pride, but now, alas! he is so changed." Her voice showed her sorrow.

The young brave who called forth this conversation was believed by the gossips to be a child brought from the white settlement far away. The lighter tint of his skin, the unusual gentleness of his manner combined with great courage seemed

to give an air of truth to the report. Nothing was openly said; the old chief and his wife called him their child, and he grew up with this otherwise childless couple as their own. He was early marked among the Senecas as destined to be a great warrior, and the hopes of the village were centered in him should the old chief die.

Within a few months, however, he had become silent and reserved, had avoided the company of his young companions, and had forgotten the chase. He would leave the village almost every day, now taking his way up the river, now downstream, and again going north toward the dark swamp called Ouwela; but always alone, and when urged by the young braves to join the chase, would plead some excuse which would but make them laugh. On most of these excursions he would be seen coming from the swamp, but empty handed, with neither game, fish nor esculent roots. He avoided questioners with rare skill.

This he had done so long that often through curiosity his steps had been followed, and he had been seen to enter the dense jungle that surrounded the swamp, and there he was lost to sight. The swamp was avoided by all the tribe as of evil. Stories were afloat of braves betrayed there by glimmering fires and calling voices, and never heard of more. Years ago the green Piasau, or bird of doom, had hidden there and its unearthly cry had sent terror far and wide on dark nights.

Some years before a party of hunters had penetrated the thicket and had come to the borders of a small lake which they had scarcely time to glance at when a fearful monster rose from its unfathomed depths and, seizing one of the bravest of the party, disappeared with him beneath the waves. The others escaped though they heard the cry of the Piasau, a bird reputed to be strong enough to carry off a man as an eagle would a fish.

This lake had no bottom, the old men said. A line had been sunk hundreds of feet, but it had found no bottom, and even the

geese that flew southward refused to light on its dark waters. Since then Ouwela had been unvisited. What could Owenah visit that dreadful place for, and alone?

A year before, in hunting on the western hill, he had been separated from his party and had wandered down to the swamp without thinking of his whereabouts. He was startled at a noise that resembled the drumming of a partridge and, on approaching the spot cautiously, he saw a beautiful girl seated on a fallen tree, arranging a garland of flowers. Never before had he seen such startling beauty.

Her slender form was dressed like the girls of his tribe, but she was of a fairer look and her dark eyes shone with a tender gleam. Her black hair fell in rich masses to her shoulders and the profusion of ornament on her dress marked her as a princess. Owenah stopped, startled by this apparition and rendered speechless by her wonderful beauty. He started back when she turned to him as if aware of his presence, and said in tone full of melody:

“Your arrows fail to find game today.”

“Yes, the deer are shy,” he replied; “my companions are over the hill yonder, and I thought I might find game here.”

“If Owenah will go to that tall pine,” and she pointed to the eastern hill, “he will find game.”

He started at the sound of his own name, pronounced by a stranger with such unutterable sorrow in the tones as filled him with awe. He turned to the spot where she had pointed and when he again looked for his fair companion, she had disappeared. He knew not whither she had fled—he had heard no noise. A feeling of awe filled his heart.

Remembering the stories of Ouwela, he hastened from the spot and, as he did so, he heard the Kalewee, the bird of evil omen. On he went in the direction of the tall pine, but he could think of nothing but that wondrous being. Wherever he went

he seemed to see her image, and he knew that his peace of mind was gone. It was night when he came near the tall pine, so much had happened that he had wandered. At its foot he saw a deer, and the first arrow that sped from his bowstring that day had killed it. When he returned, bringing the deer and wearily throwing it down at the feet of his mother, when she told him:

“My son, you have shot a white doe. I fear evil will befall you. Tell no one of it.”

From that time on Owenah's mind was full of the beautiful being he had seen. He wandered time after time to the spot where he had met her, only to return unsuccessful and dispirited. Winter came and passed. His whole life had changed. With the first coming of the wild flowers he sought the swamp again. One day he met her, as before, arranging a wreath of wild blossoms.

“Does the hunter come again to this spot? There is neither game nor fish in Ouwela.”

The hunter paused a moment. Then, with a blush mantling his cheek, he said, “I come not to Ouwela to seek the deer; I come to seek the chief's daughter who knows the name Owenah. What tribe is he chief of? Where is his village?”

She answered by pointing toward Ouwela; then rising, she beckoned toward the hidden lake, and he slowly followed. Picking his way over bogs and marshy spots and through dense thickets he went, while she seemed to glide over without touching them.

A dim path led through the woods and thicket which became every moment darker and denser, until only a subdued twilight came through the tangled masses. Occasionally a snake would dart across his steps and the cry of strange birds break the stillness. At length they reached the shore of a dark lake where, moored among the water lilies, lay a canoe as white

as snow. Into this the maiden stepped and pushed out from shore. She pointed across the lake, whose black waters reflected the encircling fringe of dark evergreen trees, and said:

“Yonder is my home. I am called Newamee. Owenah must not come with me.” And she gave a few light strokes, the canoe shot across the waters and disappeared on the opposite side.

As the moon of flowers came, he visited Ouwela almost daily, and rarely failed to find Newamee. Sometimes his heart misgave him at the thought of the neglected chase and the taunts of his companions, but as often these thoughts were driven away by the sight of his beloved. Day after day he talked with her, and night after night he dreamed of her. If by chance he wandered on the hill, she appeared to him; and he returned many times from the lake only when the moon was flooding the valley with light.

A party of young men of the village had followed him many times, but without success. Two of them had at length resolved to brave even the dangers of the haunted lake and penetrate the mystery. But just as they entered the thicket sufficiently to give them a glimpse of the lake whereon they saw a white canoe with two occupants, a black wolf came into the path ahead of them, and the spies fled, frightened at the sight of the ill-omened beast. Both of these young braves were severely wounded before midsummer.

Rapidly fled the days, and the weapons of Owenah hung untouched in the lodge of the old chief. Summer passed and the autumn came, and in the moon of the leaves Owenah one day found Newanee gone. The canoe was on the other side of the lake. He cried, “Newamee! Newamee!” but heard no answer save the mocking cry of some bird. He remembered many strange things she had told him: that she lived by the big sea water; that great huts, with pine trees rising from them, floated like canoes on the water; that Lake Ouwela had no

bottom, but that a great cave led to the big sea water; that she was the daughter of the Great Spirit, and would send for him. He thought of these as idle fancies, but now with alarm. The next day she was there, but with saddened face. She said:

“Owenah, we meet again, but you must not come here more. Did you not hear the Kelawee scream as you entered the thicket? It was a warning to you.”

“But why must I come here, Newamee? Will you not go home with me and occupy my lodge—be my wife?” and his voice trembled as he laid his hand on her arm.

“Newamee cannot go to live with Owenah’s tribe. There is a spell on her, that she may not stay longer. This lake which, as you know, has no bottom, opens into the lake at Seneca and the big sea water,” pointing to the north. Then she added, “Newamee’s home is by the big sea water. A spell is on her; she must return to her home.”

Alarm spread over the features of Owenah. He trembled; his voice faltered, and a chill seized his heart. Could it be that they were to be thus separated? He stretched out his arms with imploring words, but she stepped into the canoe and pushed it from shore.

“Owenah must not go with Newamee now,” she said with a look of tenderness. “If the Great Spirit wills, she will send her white canoe for Owenah in the next moon. Farewell!” And the canoe moved toward the middle of the lake. Just then, the loud roll of thunder was heard, and the sky was suddenly overcast. Owenah did not take his eyes off the craft but stretched his arms out and begged her to come back. She shook her head slowly. As the canoe reached the middle of the lake, a blinding glare of lightning and a terrific crash of thunder were followed by a storm that sent the treetops flying and drove the spray of the lake through the woods. In the midst of it he saw Newamee disappear. He leaped into the water, but a long search

after the storm had passed revealed no trace of his beloved.

Almost distracted, he returned to the village where the gossips saw that something strange had happened. But daily he went to the lake, daily he made its shores echo to the name of Newamee. No answer came to his weary cry. No white canoe was there.

At length there came a night when he did not return. The next day he was missing, and the next; and at last a search was made. Even the dense thicket of the lake was penetrated, and there on its bosom lay the white canoe with Owenah stretched dead in its bottom. The Great Spirit had called him home.

Loud over the village rose the wail of the dead, "Oonah! Oonah!" as they laid the chief's son to rest with his unused weapons, and the chief's wife bowed her head in deepest sorrow. They buried him in a beautiful mound seen to this day, and every year the village came to visit the grave. Lake Ouwela was thenceforth a place more dreadful than ever.

Still sleeps Owenah in his mound-like grave near the foot of the southern hills. But his tribe has passed away, leaving only here and there a broken arrowhead and a few crumbling fragments of their labors.

Indian Legends

Collected by Francis D. Bowman

When, How and by Whom the Legends of the Iroquois Were Told

Usually the story-telling hour was just after the evening meal of bear meat and venison, of corn bread dipped in hot fat, of fragrant tea brewed from roots. The setting was generally in one of the long houses, structures of bark twenty feet wide and some times as long as eighty feet—large enough to accommodate several families. At each side were the raised double platforms or sleeping bunks covered with robes of bearskins and pelts, and from cross poles of the roof hung venison, bear meat and ears of corn, drying against the lean days of winter.

The meal is finished. Suddenly a shout is heard at the doorway of the lodge and the children scamper to meet and welcome the storyteller. They take him by the hand and lead him to the central fire. He is a tall man with a kindly jovial face and, as he seats himself on a corn-husk mat, it is seen that he is gaily costumed in a white overshirt of soft deerskin, decorated here and there with clusters of tiny shells. His cap is of doeskin ornamented with quills and bits of feathers, and he carries a mysterious bag—his trophy bag—containing shells, little dolls fashioned of bark, claws of animals and teeth of the bear—each to be his reminder of a story.

First, he smokes a pipe of tobacco, then puts his lean, brown hand into the bag and out comes a trophy, and, as the modern

storyteller might, he exclaims, "Hoh—that reminds me," and away he goes with the spinning of his yarns; the bear tooth to remind him of the many stories of the Great Bear; other trophies, the dolls, perhaps, to suggest the legend of the Star Maidens or the lovely romance of the "Origin of the Violet."

And so on go the stories, one after another, till the hour grows late, and then he gathers his trophies together, replaces them in his bag, accepts the offerings of tobacco, of corn meal, bits of carved wood and other evidences of appreciation of his audience, waves a goodnight and is gone. Then to beds of soft furs go his listeners; the elders to marvel at the feats of his heroes; the children to remain wide-eyed, living over again the adventures of the great warriors.

The Legend of the Origin of All Legends

Listen to the Legend of the Origin of All Stories—a legend that comes to us from the lore of the Senecas of long, long ago.

It is told that once there was an orphan boy and when he was grown to be a tall, strong lad, his foster mother gave him a bow and arrow and said it was his duty to keep the family supplied with birds and small game. One afternoon, as he sat upon a great rock to wind an arrow shaft, he heard a voice asking if he wanted to hear the stories of the old people of other days.

The boy looked about but could see no one. Suddenly he discovered that the voice came from the rock upon which he was sitting. Then the voice directed him to leave the birds he had killed, and the boy gave his promise to do so. Whereupon the voice began telling stories of long ago—tales of heroism and of adventure—stories of battles or the stone giants and the winged heads, till finally, when the sun began to sink, the voice stopped and the boy left his birds and went home.

On his way he killed more birds for the evening meal, but there were so few his foster mother soundly scolded him. The next day he started out again and, as before, he offered his kill to the rock and again the voice told him the fascinating legends of his people. The boy confided his secret to some of his companions and they, too, offered up their game and heard the tales recounted by the mysterious voice.

Next day two grown-up braves followed the boys because they had returned each day with so little results from their hunt. Hiding behind some trees, they watched and waited. The boys laid their offerings of the game birds, and again came the voice. The older braves ventured from their hiding place and joined the listeners on the rock.

That night the chief of the tribe was told of the strange happenings, and early the next morning the whole tribe visited the place, carrying offerings of corn bread and venison. The Red People sat around the rock and heard one legend after another till the sun began to set in the west. Then the stories ceased and the voice bade them to come again tomorrow.

So the people gathered again the next day and the stories were continued, but for the last time, for when the sun went down the voice told them to remember the stories and tell them to each generation as life went on, because the Voice of the Rock would never tell them again. And so there came to the tribe the legends of the world before, and the tribal story tellers have been reciting them ever since.

Strange Beliefs and Bits of Folklore

Strange, indeed, were the beliefs of the ancient Red Men who once ran the trails here beside the Thunderer of Waters—Niagara Falls—whose roar, they said, was the voice of the Great Sirit. The Sun, the Moon, the Winds—all were regarded

as important gods wielding an all-powerful influence upon the destinies of man.

The Sun, they said, was created from the face of the Earth Mother who bore the twins Good Mind and Evil One, and who, in turn, created man, the animals, the birds, and who gave life to the trees and other growing things. Good Mind was always a disciple of good, while Evil One was responsible for the creation of the bad things in this world.

The Sun was regarded as the Messenger of the Sky Chief and as a Special God of War. He had his resting place in the branches of the great Celestial tree which grew in the Sky Land, and each morning he lifted the eastern sky and started on his daily journey and his assigned task of watching the movements of men on earth below. At night he returned to the Sky Land and his resting place, and recited to the Sky Chief all that he had seen on the earth during the day.

The moon was hailed as Grandfather and was regarded as the most mysterious of all the heavenly bodies. She was worshipped devoutly by the women of the tribes who prayed to her for health, and she was watched by the warriors for signs of luck in their hunting.

The Morning Star also was regarded as one of the important beings of the sky. Her appearance was regarded as an omen for either good or evil. Sometimes, it was said, she appeared as a siren, wooing hunters and then leaving them to wander the earth in search of her. Her better side is shown in her being regarded as the savior of starving villages in time of famine.

The Storm Wind was always pictured as a great flying head with long, streaming hair who took great delight in destroying things. Under his command he had a vast host or tribe who blew down trees and destroyed crops.

In contrast was Ga'ha, the zephyr, a soft, gentle wind with a kindly disposition. He helped the plants to grow and his warm

breath kissed the fruit trees and the crops, and caused them to ripen.

Ha'Tho was the Frost God. He lived in the North in an icy lodge. It was he who brought the frost and the snows. Often he was heard in the forests knocking at the trees with his icy hammer and pounding on the ice which covered the lakes and the streams, causing them to boom like drums. But each year he would meet his master in the Spirit of Spring, a young god who loved to wrestle. In the spring he and Ha'Tho would struggle and the Frost God was, of course, always defeated and sent raging and storming back to the North.

Hi'non was the Great Good God who killed the monster serpent which had poisoned the springs of Ongiaras who once lived beside the Niagara. The serpent lived underground and would creep out at night and spread disease. Hi'non killed him with shafts of lightning. The great serpent came writhing to the surface of the earth where he was found to be twenty arrow flights long.

The Red Men rolled his body into the river and, as it floated down, it became lodged at the brink of what is now Horseshoe Falls at Niagara. Its body, twisting and turning in death agony, bent back the massive rocks at the precipice so that there was formed the Great Horseshoe Falls as it exists today.

Then they believed that the animals, the trees and the flowers had souls: that the crops of beans, corn and squash were guarded over by the Three Sisters of the Harvest. Another belief was that the echoes heard in the valleys and on the mountainside were the messengers of the Great Spirit assigned the duty of carrying the requests of the Red People on to the Heavens.

Sometimes the Spirit of Spring was pictured as a beautiful maiden who appeared at the lodge of the Winter Spirit and with the warmth of her smile and presence drove him far

north. Then she walked through the forests, and wherever her feet touched the ground the arbutus and other spring flowers appeared.

Quarrels and differences were caused by evil spirits who flew about exciting trouble. If quarrels could not be settled, a hole was dug in the ground and the opposing parties would talk their grievances into the hole, after which the earth was put back and pounded down. The quarrel then was to remain forever buried unless one of the opponents deliberately dug up the argument again, thus liberating the bad spirits.

The Legend of the Maid of the Mist

This is the legend of the Maid of the Mist. It is told that long, long ago there lived beside the Niagara the peaceful tribe of the Ongiaras. They called the cataracts Thunderer of Waters and believed that the roar of Niagara was the voice of the Great Spirit. Each year it was their custom to offer to the waters, as a sacrifice to the Great Spirit, the fairest maiden of the tribe. She was named at a ceremonial feast, and she accepted her fate as a holy duty, as an honor, and giving thanks to the Great Spirit that she had been chosen.

It is told that the last of the maidens to be thus sacrificed was Lelawala, the daughter of Chief Eagle Eye. On the appointed day she appeared, attended by older women of the tribe, at a place on the river bank just above the Thunderer of Waters. She was robed in white doeskin and upon her head was placed a crown of woodland flowers.

Proud as any queen, she stepped into a canoe of white birch which had been laden with flowers of their fields, and with a word of farewell to her people she sent the little craft out into the river with strong strokes of her paddle. Caught in the swift currents and whirled dizzily in the eddies, her canoe was soon

in the mad expanse of the rapids, hurled swiftly on to the terrible brink—and then the plunge to death.

Her father stood watching from the river bank but no cry of anguish came from his lips, for it was his daughter who had carried out the traditions of his people. But his great heart was broken, and before anyone could prevent him, he leaped into his canoe, paddled out into the rapids where the swift, mad waters carried him to join his daughter in death.

According to the Indian belief, Lelawala and her father still live in a crystal cave behind the waterfall. Lelawala is known to us as the Maid of the Mist.

Legend of the Tree of the Silver Arrows

The ancient Iroquois legend of the Tree of the Silver Arrows came from Nickodemus Bailey of the Senecas. Despite the fact that “Nick” was graduated from the famous old Carlisle Indian School, he is still thoroughly a Seneca, and he and his wife live much in the traditions of the past. He told of The Tree of Silver Arrows, a legend that was recited to him many times by his grandmother, to whom it had been handed down by the tribal storytellers.

It seems that a father and two sons left their lodge and determined to travel to the rim of the earth and then across the crystal lake to the Spirit Land. They came to the lake and there they found three great eagles which spoke to them, saying they would carry them across the waters.

The father and two sons sat on the broad backs of the eagles and away they flew until they came to the silvery shores of the Spirit Land. Here they were greeted by the shadowy form of chiefs and braves and maidens who had been chained by the Great Spirit. Among them was one maiden far more beautiful than any of the others. The moment the younger son saw her,

he loved her, and from the adoring glances that shone from her eyes, it was evident that she returned his affections.

For three days the father and his sons remained in Spirit Land, and each day the younger one wooed the lovely spirit maiden, urging her to return to earth with him and share his lodge. But she tearfully explained that this could not be. She was of the Spirit World and never could go back to the Earth Land. The only way they could be together would be for the young brave to return to earth and await the Death Call of the Great Spirit, then join her in the Spirit World.

So at last came the hour for the departure of the father and his sons, but the younger brave was not to be found. They searched in crystal groves, in misty valleys, among the silvery trees until at last they found him. He was lying beneath the Tree of Silver Arrows, the trees that had silver shafts instead of boughs and silver arrows instead of leaves. He had plucked one of the arrows from the tree and plunged it into his love-laden heart, so that he might join his beloved in Spirit Land.

Legend of the Maid Who Fell in Love with the Morning Star

It is told that one night a lovely daughter of the Red People spread her sleeping robes in the tall grass at the entrance of her lodge. As she slept a radiant shaft from the heavens seemed to caress her face, and as she awoke she saw that the light came from the Morning Star far away in the Sky Land.

So beautiful did the star appear in its soft silvery glow that the maiden was entranced and fell so deeply in love with the heavenly jewel that she vowed she would never marry a mortal but would accept only the Morning Star as her spouse. All through the night, until the morning dawned and the star had paled in the light of the Sun, she gazed towards the heavens, completely enraptured. And every night thereafter she wor-

shipped her Sky Land lover and by day he was always on her mind.

Then one morning when she went to a nearby spring to drink she was startled to find a tall, strange young brave who smilingly addressed her. He told her that he was the Morning Star; that he had beheld her gazing at him and that he knew what was in her heart. He asked her to become his bride, and the lovely maiden consented. Morning Star took a long, yellow plume from his hair and commanded her to hold it. She obeyed and instantly she found herself being wafted to the Sky Land where she was ushered into the golden lodge of her bridegroom.

So she lived on, free to wander about at will, excepting that she was warned not to disturb a certain curious golden plant which grew close by her husband's home. One day, however, overcome by her curiosity, the bride uprooted the strange plant to see what was beneath it, and she found that it had been planted in the hole through which she had entered Sky Land. She gazed through the opening and saw the village of her people on the earth below. She could hear the voices of her women at their work, and she grew so sad and lonely that Morning Star found her weeping.

He knew immediately what had happened and to punish her for her disobedience he ordered her returned to her people. So she was gently lowered to the Earth Land on strands of a silvery web. But each night thereafter the sorrowing wife climbed a nearby hill and, stretching her arms heavenward, prayed to be reunited with her celestial husband.

One night Morning Star answered, saying that she could not be forgiven; that she could not be returned to the Sky Land. The next day the sorrowing wife was not to be found and when her people searched for her at the top of the hill, where she had stood and prayed for forgiveness, they discovered a strange

new tree growing—a tree whose branches drooped earthward as if in sadness—a tree that has since been known to the white man as the Weeping Willow.

Legend of the Star Maiden

Many moons ago a stalwart son of the Red People who once lived beside the Niagara, while walking in the woods, came to a small clearing where he found a circular pathway worn deep by the tread of many feet. He knew at once that it was a fairy ring where the Star Maidens danced when they came down to earth.

That night, when the Sister of the Sun was high in the heavens, the brave hid himself in the tall grass near the charmed circle, and soon he heard the soft strains of the sweetest music. Then high in the blue sky he saw a tiny white speck floating like a silver cloud. As it came closer to the earth, the spell-bound warrior saw that it was a dainty willow basket. In it were seated twelve beautiful Indian maidens.

Softly the basket settled into the long grass and the Star Maidens stepped to the magic circle, and there they danced with such grace and rhythm that the young brave was indeed enchanted. But he had eyes for only the youngest of the group—a lovely, delicate creature far more beautiful than her sisters. Impelled by his desire to have her for his bride, the brave rushed from his hiding place to seize her, but she was too quick for him. Eluding his grasp, she rushed to the willow basket, followed by her sisters, and in a twinkling they were soaring away to the Sky World.

The next night the warrior waited again, but before the Star Maidens came he brought his magic into play and changed himself into a tree. Soon the Sky Maidens appeared and, as they danced, the younger one came tripping towards the magic

tree. Instantly the warrior assumed his natural form and, clasping the Star Maiden in his arms, bore her away to his home where he soon won her love and she became his bride.

But she longed to return to her own people and one day she made a basket of willow and, taking her little son with her, floated upward to the Sky World. The warrior's grief was bitter. Every day for years he visited the fairy circle, hoping for her return. Finally, when the son had grown, his mother brought him back to his Earth home, and the warrior father was so overjoyed he agreed to return with them to the sky people.

And so he was instructed to take him a feather from every bird and a bone or claw from every beast he could kill in the hunt and chase. He gathered the claws and bones and feathers and with his wife and son set off in the willow basket for the Sky World. There he distributed his trophies.

Those who took bone or claw of any beast instantly changed into that beast. Those who took wing or feather became birds. The warrior, his wife and his son each took a feather from the white wood dove, and so each was changed to one of those lovely birds and flew down to earth where their descendants can be found to this day.

Legend of the Origin of the Violet

It was told long, long ago there was a valient young chief who had distinguished himself by rendering three great services to his people. Single handed he had slain the great monster bird which had preyed upon the helpless children of the clan, swooping down upon them without warning while they were at play. He had gone alone to the witches' caverns and brought back the healing magic medicine which had rid the tribe of an awful plague. He had led his warriors against their cruelest

and strongest enemy and by his bravery and leadership he had won a great victory and a lasting peace.

But on that day when he had stormed the village of the enemy he saw the beautiful daughter of their hated chief and even through the horror of warfare love touched his heart. But he knew that as long as the war clubs were raised and the battle cry resounded through the forest he could not approach her family with the offerings of a suitor, such as robes of fur and strings of wampum.

So for many days and nights he hid in the forest close by her village, waiting patiently for even a sight of her. He sang the praises of his loved one so often that the birds took up his song and carried it with them in their flight. And the bear and the fox heard him talk of the maiden's charm in his sleep and they believed he had spoken of some flower more beautiful than any they had ever seen.

Then one day the maiden wandered into the forest beyond the guarded lines of her village, and the young chief made her his prisoner of love. He caught her up in his strong arms and dashed through the woodlands towards his home. But one of the alert enemy warriors had seen what happened and gave the alarm. He and a group of his followers took up the trail and early the next morning they came upon the brave young chief and the captive maiden.

But they found that love had also come to the heart of the girl—that she was now a willing captive and, to prove her desire to become her captor's bride, she disclosed herself to the men of her tribe, standing beside him with the long braids of her hair entwined about his neck as was the custom among Indian lovers when they had agreed to marriage.

Enraged, the enemy warriors showed no mercy and struck them down, leaving them where they fell, the maiden's hair still encircling her lover's neck. But the next day the bodies had

disappeared and on the spot where they had fallen two clusters of the lovely, fragrant flower that we have come to know as the violet were found growing. Later, the birds carried the seeds to many countries where men dare and women love.

The Legend of Tonadahwa

This is the ancient Iroquois legend of the Indian maiden Tonadahwa who, many moons ago, lived beside the Niagara with her people, the Senecas.

Tonadahwa was courted by many a young warrior and chief but her heart was for only one—the warrior who had once saved her life. It is told that one morning Tonadahwa was paddling her canoe in the swift river not very far above the Thundering Waters. On the bank watching her with jealous eyes was a Seneca suitor whom she had spurned. As she neared the river bank she heard the call that her true lover always had sent out to her—and in answer she quickly paddled her canoe towards the shore.

But it was not her lover who called, for into the canoe suddenly leaped the evil rival who had imitated the lover's call. He snatched the paddle from Tonadahwa and with strong strokes sent the little craft away from shore and out into the wild waters of the upper rapids. But suddenly an arrow sang through the air and buried itself in the heart of the cowardly warrior—an arrow shot from the bow of Tonadahwa's true lover. The cowardly one with his last bit of strength leaped into the river, hurtling the paddle out of reach, and Tonadahwa's little craft was caught in the swift current and carried into the raging rapids.

"Tonadahwa, as she drifted, stood upright, singing her death song to the warrior who, running swiftly along the bank, kept pace with the doomed craft. And then with a despairing cry on

her lips, Tonadahwa plunged over the great precipice. Her stricken lover stood for a moment on the high bank overlooking the Thundering Waters and, raising his hands in prayer to the Great Spirit, he dove into the abyss to join in death his loved one.

But in the mounting clouds of spray there appeared shadowy forms—the spirits of those warriors who long before had journeyed to the Spirit World. They caught the body of Tonadahwa's lover as it hurtled through the spray clouds and tenderly carried him to the sheltered cave behind the falling waters, and there he was restored to his beloved one who, too, had been saved from harm by the Spirit Braves.

It is still the belief of many Indian people that Tonadahwa and her lover have lived on through the centuries in a crystal cave behind the great curtain of the Thundering Waters. And some of us who hear with ears and see with the eyes of lovers and who still believe in romance, seem to hear on moonlit nights the plaintive call of Tonadahwa's warrior and sometimes see her shadowy form reflected in the rays of the Lunar Bow cast on the spray by the light of the Sister of the Sun.

Legend of the Pipe of Peace

Another ancient legend tells of the origin of smoking the Pipe of Peace. It is a ceremony which has always been carried out at the councils of the Red Men where treaties were made and peace was to reign.

The old legends tell us that long, long ago there was a sachem of the tribes who was as good as he was wise. He spent most of his life in going from tribe to tribe, propounding the doctrines of peace among his people. He advocated that they should be charitable, that they should help one another. He urged that those who had plenty should share their goods with those who

had but little; that when the harvest was poor in one village, those in another who had been blessed with good crops should take food to their distressed brothers.

He sat among the councils when war and tribal disputes threatened and by his wise council he showed the way to peaceful settlements. By his wisdom, his gentleness and by example of his life he quelled disturbances and prevented war. He was truly The Peacemaker.

But old age came upon him and when he realized that soon he was to be taken to the Sky Land by his beloved Great Spirit, he called his people about and told them not to mourn him when he had gone as he would soon reappear, but in another form, to be with them forever.

And so when he passed away to the golden realms of the Great Spirit, one of his chiefs found a strange plant growing in front of the Peacemaker's lodge and he heard the well-known voice of the Peacemaker, telling him that this was the tobacco plant, the form in which he had told he would reappear. He said the new plant was to be smoked in pipes to be fashioned from stone. He urged that at each council they were to pass a Peace Pipe in commemoration of him and that they should never forget his counsel.

And so there was established the custom of smoking the Peace Pipe at all councils, and in the curling smoke the old tribal heads could see the form of their beloved Peacemaker, and they listened to his voice as he told them to keep always sacred the promises and agreements made in his presence. From then on the Red Men never broke a pledge made when the Peace Pipe had been passed.

How the World Began

Many, many years ago when the Red Men pitched their wig-

wams at Niagara beside the Thunderer of Waters, they would gather about the evening fire and listen to the queer, quaint legends as told by the storytellers of the tribes. Among the tales handed down through all these years is the Red Men's legend of How the World began.

It seems that beyond the sky there was another world and it was inhabited by a great chief and his people. The world up above floated like a great cloud and it went wherever the chief wished it to go. Its crust was not very thick. A great tree grew in its center and bore flowers and the fruits upon which the people lived; at its top was a great light. Each day the chief and his people gathered about the tree and everyone seemed happy until the chief, for some reason, became disconsolate and dissatisfied with life.

In one of his troubled dreams he heard a voice commanding him to uproot the celestial tree, so the very next day he wound his strong arms around its trunk and, with a mighty effort, uprooted and hurled it far away. There was left a great hole which penetrated the crust of this world above. Then it is told that the chief's anger turned against his wife and, as she sat looking at the place where the great tree had been, the chief in his rage pushed her into the opening.

In falling she grasped at the edge of the hole and in her fingers she gathered all manner of seeds which had fallen from the uprooted heavenly tree. She struggled but could not hold on, and down she plunged through the crust of the world above.

Now, it seemed that some of the creatures in the world below saw the descending figure and a great flock of ducks gathered upon the waters and took counsel as to how they could receive this new body coming to them. So they flocked together and huddled wing to wing and, as the woman came tumbling down, she landed on this great feathery resting place.

Then it was agreed that the turtle was to make his broad

back her home and the creatures of the water dove to the bottom of the lake, bringing up earth which they planted upon the turtle shell; thus did the earth grow and grow. As the woman lay prone upon the new soil, she released from her hands and the folds of her garments the many seeds from the magic tree which had grown on the wold above, and from these sprang the flowers and the trees and the fruits we enjoy today.

Soon a daughter was born to the Sky Woman and then two sons, one a spirit of good and the other a spirit of evil. And thus, according to the strange legends of the Red Men, did the world and its people have their beginning.

Origin of the Iroquois Confederation

It is told that long, long ago the Mohawks were constantly at war with other Indian tribes. But among them was a great and wise chief called Dekanawidah, and the warring and bloodshed caused his heart to be heavy with sadness. He implored the chiefs and warriors to live in peace. But they ridiculed him, and finally Dekanawidah left his people and traveled far to the West.

Many moons later, as he was resting beside a lake, he saw a strange warrior approach in a canoe and proceed to bring up shells from the shallow waters. Then he came ashore and began to thread his shells on ropes of reed. Dekanawidah watched the stranger, then approached him and said he was a friend and a Mohawk.

The stranger told that he was Haiowentha of the Onondagas. In answer to the questions of Dekanawidah he explained that the strings of shells were the rules of life: the white for peace and good will, the black for war and hatred; and so, combining both, Haiowentha read the principles and the laws which should govern.

They both agreed that the constant fighting and differences were draining the tribes of their lifeblood, and so they determined to go to the people and explain the laws as written in the shells of the wise Haiowentha. First they went to the Mohawks and the chiefs and warriors were so impressed that they agreed to live in peace with the others. Then the Oneidas were won over, and so were the Cayugas.

When this was done, they sought out the fierce tyrant chief, Totadaho, of the Onondagas. When he heard how the other tribes were uniting against war, his evil, poisonous thoughts took the form of writhing serpents which sprouted from his head and hissed defiance. But Dekanawidah combed away the serpents from Totadaho's head and made him leader in the league; and so the terrible chieftain lost his madness and subscribed to the laws.

Then the Senecas, too, saw the great light, and the league of the Five Nations was formed and the first Long House or council house was built near the site of Albany. Haiowentha soon after left for the land of his father, the Great Spirit, riding away on the back of a white swan. Some people today refer to him as the great founder of the laws and call him Hiawatha.

The Legend of the Gift of Trees

It is told that when the first Red people came upon the earth they were welcomed by the trees. And the trees, with the true spirit of giving in their hearts, offered up the gifts that would enable the Red People to live. Already had the Great Spirit given corn to be grown, harvested and eaten, but it was the Elm Tree that offered its bark, or skin, from which vessels could be made for storing corn and for making bowls in which the precious corn pudding could be mixed.

It was the Maple Tree that gave up its lifeblood, its sweet sap, for the Indian people to drink. And this same tree gave of its trunk wood from which bowls could be fashioned to catch the sap. From the Oak came the sturdy, durable corn pounder for crushing the yellow kernels into the cherished corn meal. The Ash Tree gave them the strong, pliable strips from which could be woven the many baskets, and it was the nut trees that filled those baskets with their nourishing fruits.

Then the Hickory presented the gift of straight boughs from which arrow shafts could be made, and the Ash contributed of itself for making bows. From the White Birch the Red People received pliable yet sturdy bark from which canoes were made. Pine gave up its blood, or pitch, to join the parts of the canoe more securely. The Pine gave also a fragrant bed upon which they slept, and bark strips from which the first lodges were built. And then one day the Fir Tree instructed a brave to rub two fir sticks together and from that tree came the first fire to warm the lodges, to give light and to cook the food.

Truly, the gifts from the trees meant much to the first of the Red People and ever since it has been understood that all the trees were helpful friends who were to be treated kindly. Ever since, it has been believed that all trees have souls, and that they can talk and understand the language of the Red People, and it was from the trees that was learned the blessing of giving.

The Legend of the Peace Queen

It is told that the tribes had wisely selected a Seneca maiden and had her set apart in a home deep in the forest, there to sit as judge in settling all disputes. She was regarded as one sacred among the women of the tribes, and her final word and decisions were the law.

One day an Oneida brave, while hunting in the woods, loosed an arrow at a deer and killed him. As he was about to remove the hide and quarter the carcass, an Onondaga warrior stepped from the underbrush and claimed the deer as spoils of his hunt, saying he had wounded the animal before the Oneida sent his arrow into the deer's heart. The quarrel grew in intensity till the two braves were locked in mortal combat. Back and forth they fought for hours but neither gained an advantage.

Finally, almost exhausted, they sheathed their knives and by mutual consent agreed to take their quarrel to the Peace Queen. Very wisely she took them to task for quarreling within her realm. She advised them to share the deer equally and go on their way. But the Onondaga brave was loath to leave. He had fallen deeply in love with the Peace Queen and asked her to be his wife and share his wigwam. The Peace Queen refused and reminded him of her sacred duty which she must not shirk. So with a heavy heart the Onondaga left her.

Then the Oneida brave spoke up, for he too had been smitten by the beauty and charm of Genetaska, the Peace Queen. But when she gave him her refusal of marriage her voice was as soft as the whispering summer winds when she bade him to go on in peace. So the two once-angry warriors departed, friends again, bound by the ties of the sorrow of unrequited love.

Genetaska, the Peace Queen, however, could not forget the gentle yet brave son of the Oneidas. Many moons came and went and the Peace Queen continued with her mission of settling disputes of the tribes and the warriors, but her heart was sad with the thoughts of the Oneida.

One day as she sat beside her fire, dreaming and yearning for him, he suddenly appeared. He was pale and worn. He explained that he could not live without her, that he no longer had any interest in the hunt or in the games of his fellows. The

light of his soul had been extinguished. And again he asked for her heart. This time, forgetting her sacred duties and pledges, she joyously gave her consent to share his life. Like two happy children they stole away, hand in hand, and the Oneida's canoe bore them swiftly to the West.

Then the warriors rose in the might of their anger because the Peace Queen had broken her vows and they chided themselves for having put their trust in a beautiful young woman. So they tore down the Peace Queen's lodge, abolished her office, and war, quarrels and differences disturbed the tribes.

Legend of the Door at Taughannock

On approaching Taughannock Falls from the park site, many visitors observe the rough outlines of a doorway high up on the righthand wall of the ravine. It is one of the mysteries of nature which could not be explained scientifically by the Indians, so their storyteller wove it into the fabric of one of their legends.

In the region about the ravine and on the delta of Taughannock Creek there dwelt a Cayuga-Seneca tribe under Chief Ganungueguch. It was at a time when the Iroquois were warring on the Delawares and long before the white man came into this section of the state. A band of Delaware warriors under Chief Taughannock staged a raid into the Cayuga country but was defeated, remnants of the band being adopted into the Cayuga village. Whether a person or a whole tribe had been captured, it was the Iroquois custom to adopt their captives, so this Delaware remnant dwelt among its captors.

A romance sprang up between a Delaware brave and White Lily, a Cayuga maiden, much to the chagrin of young Cayuga braves. The young couple was watched closely lest the Red Man's Lochinvar should carry off the damsel. But there came

a night when the lovers attempted to escape to his canoe hidden along the lake shore. By means of the canoe they hoped to continue their elopement to the safety of the Delaware country to the southward.

No matter how determined the woodland lovers were to make good their escape, an early village alarm frustrated the attempt. Whether it was the work of a jealous admirer or that of an over-zealous dog, the cry was sounded and soon the whole village was in pursuit. Shortly the dark hillside echoed to the shouting of excited Indians and the barking of aroused canines, the elopers hastening their frightened footsteps through the forest of towering pines that shielded them against detection.

It was but a matter of a few suspenseful minutes before the fleeing pair was enveloped by the din from above and below as well as from behind. In front its terror was echoed and re-echoed across the ravine, and they realized they would be overtaken before reaching the ford above the falls.

At this moment, the young lovers emerged from the darkness into the pale moonlight filling the ravine below the falls. Here on the topmost pinnacle they embraced and leaped, preferring death on the jagged rocks below to the torture their capture would visit upon them in accordance with the code of the woodland dwellers.

When the enraged pursuers reached the rock, a loud wailing was set up for the death of a village maiden. Lamentations grew in volume as more villagers came up and pursuers closed in. However, there remained little other than wailing to be done in the semidarkness, so the mob returned to the village to await coming of daylight, when a search of the ravine could be made.

But great was the mystery that was born of the darkness of the night before. When searchers reached the bottom of the ravine not only were no mangled bodies to be seen but any

trace of the lovers was likewise absent. How to explain the mystery was left to the imagination of the storytellers, and it was not long until another legend was being told in the lodges of the tribe.

According to this new legend, the Great Spirit was aware of the events of the night chosen by the frustrated lovers to seek for the brave's hidden canoe in which to escape. His sympathies were with them, and when they sprang from the ledge he opened the door that may yet be seen in outline high up on the north wall of the ravine, swept them into a secret passageway and then closed the door securely. The passage led to a realm where White Lily and her Delaware brave remain forever youthful lovers, never again to be pursued by an enraged village.

Legend of the Lost Onondaga Babe

A short distance west of Jamesville, Onondaga County, is a small body of water bearing the name Green Lake. To the original residents along its shore, the Onondaga Indians, it was known as Kai-yah-koo. Like many another word in the Indian tongue, it marks an event in the history of the tribe that is the source of an Indian legend in which is exemplified the magnanimity of the Great Spirit and his demands upon the individual.

Laque, an Onondaga woman returning home from a visit to the Oneida castle, was laden with a burden and her eight-month-old son. It was during the seventh moon of a year long since forgotten, when the sun beat down upon her fiercely as she trudged the many miles along the well-worn trail. As the sun began dipping behind the western hills, Laque reached the shore of the lake where moss-covered rocks beckoned her to rest. Loosening the tumpline across her forehead, she dropped her burden to the ground and set her papoose's cradle board against the foot of a protecting tree.

As she rested, Laque fell into a reverie induced by fatigue. A rustling in nearby bushes startled her—was it some ferocious animal of the forest or was it a woodland demon that might harm her babe? This alarm subsided when she beheld a beautiful woman, richly attired, standing close by. As she gazed upon Laque's baby, the stranger loosened her infant, turned to Laque and said:

"My friend, I have come a long and sorrowful journey from a country lying far to the south. My misfortunes have driven me hither; my strength has well nigh failed me. I am a princess, the only daughter of a great and powerful king. But I have displeased my royal father. He continuously seeks to destroy my child; its brave father in his wrath he has slain. I am an out-cast from my country."

Her voice possessed a charm and melody so sweet that Laque thought of her speaking long after she had ceased. Laque's heart seemed to melt in sympathy for the sufferings of the strange woman.

"The customs of our nation do not forbid the exchange of our children," continued the princess. Take my child and nurse it as your own. The emblem of our nation is pictured on his breast. I will take yours; it will be adopted as one of our nation. I will return and claim my own and return yours to you. Our offspring will become enobled, and we will be joyful mothers of a race of kings."

Laque drew near and beheld one of the most glittering sights upon which her wondering eyes had ever feasted. The dress of the stranger's child seemed covered with a profusion of choicest gems, and his eyes sparkled like diamonds. Bereft of reason, Laque spoke the fatal word. "It is mine, then," quickly cried the stranger.

Scarcely had the words left her lips, than she whirled Laque's babe into the air. As it fell on her shoulder, the babe

smiled a last adieu to the hapless mother. Turning from her, the stranger glided noiselessly from her presence and was soon lost to view in the dark forest.

The last cry of her own babe rang piercingly and without cessation in Laque's ears as she proceeded on her way. When she had gone but a short distance she felt an uncontrollable scratching, gnawing and tearing at her back, during which her blanket was snatched from her shoulders and her dress disarrayed. Then she carefully laid her burden on the ground only to find that all the precious ornaments had disappeared from the babe; no lovely infant smiled upon her gaze, but in its stead a young alligator appeared. Laque thrust the vile thing from her, then fell to the ground, exhausted and insensible.

Hours passed before Laque returned to reason, for bright stars now spangled the blue arch of heaven and the waning moon cast its dim light over her world. In desponding agony Laque returned to the shore of the lake, and wailing and mourning she passed the remainder of the night calling piteously for her child.

She paced the bare rock in all the gloom of settled melancholy till the rising sun gilded with its mellow rays the foliage of the somber forest around her. Then she leaned over the yawning chasm and gazed wildly into the abyss below and, as she raised her arms to make the fatal plunge, she asked forgiveness of the Indians' God. A soft voice bid her "live," and she determined to continue her cheerless way toward home.

No sooner had she entered her cabin than she burst into a flood of agonized tears. Her young husband listened to her tale and reconciled her by declaring it to be the work of a wicked spirit. No time was lost in consulting the oracle of the nation, who told them to return in three days for his judgment in the matter.

When the stricken couple returned to the oracle's presence

he told them: "It is the wicked spirit O-nee-hoo-hugh-noo, in the form of a beautiful woman who has deceived you and taken your child. But the Great Spirit has heard its cry and deprived the wicked one of her powers over your child. No harm can come to it; it is safe. Go, and up the high bank attentively listen; you will hear its cries at the center of the waters. They will faintly echo through the trees and quietly die upon your ears. Think not to get it back, for it will ever enjoy richly the favor of the Great Spirit and be happy.

"The Good Spirit Ha-wah-ne-u requires you yearly to offer a quantity of tobacco as an oblation and satisfaction for his guardian care. Stand upon the bare shelf-rock and cast the offering into the sparkling waters below. The first time you do this the serpent will retire and be seen no more."

The couple proceeded directly to the lake and beheld an enormous monster curled up in a threatening attitude, his huge spiral covering several rods. They advanced, nevertheless, and turned a listening ear to the silver-like waters. Judge of their joy as the well-known gurgles of their own child greeted their ears.

Laque suddenly urged her steps toward the precipice when the monster raised his head in anger and spat fire and smoke. A large bundle of tobacco was cast into the lake by the mourning parents, and it spread over the whole surface of the waters whose color gradually assumed a dark green appearance. Presently the horrible serpent was nowhere to be seen. The Great Spirit had broken the wicked woman's spell and banished the evil lake resident.

Many a year after this experience Laque and her husband regularly visited this spot and presented an annual gift of tobacco. It is from this ceremony that the lake derives its Indian name Kai-yah-koooh which means satisfied with tobacco. And the custom was still observed when the white people first came among the Onondagas.

This legend has been excerpted from "Indian Camp-Fires and Hunting Grounds of the Red Men, or Lights and Lines of Indian Character." It was written by Joshua V. H. Clark (1813-1896), native of Cazenovia and an Onondaga historian.

Indian Prayer

*Great Spirit,
Grant that I may not criticize
My neighbor until
I have walked a mile in his moccasins.*