

The Stories and Legends of My Grandfather

Floyd Joseph Gray

Contents

THE JEALOUS CREATOR AND THE GREAT SNAKE.....	2
THE SWEETGRASS OF LIFE	3
THE THUNDER ISLAND.....	4
THUNDERS AT BLACK STONE.....	5
THE PADDLING MAN AND THE MERMAN	6
THE MERMAN AND THE MERMAID	7
THE ELDER AND THE LOON	8
THE SIOUX OF SANDY HILL.....	9
THE SIOUX AT ROCKY CLIFF.....	9
THE SIOUX ISLAND.....	10
THE OJIBWAY INDIAN BELIEFS ABOUT WILD BUSH INDIANS	11
THE CANOE TRAVELER AND THE MENSOKANECK.....	13
THE MEDICINE MAN WITH AN AXE AND THE MENSOKANECK.....	14
THE SNOW BEAST CALLED KEEWATINIS.....	15
THE SACRED BIG TREE ON THE HILL.....	16
THE BAD MEDICINE STORY OF THE SASQUATCH	17
THE BUSH CANNIBALS CALLED GREASY LARD FAT NECKS	19
THE BUSH CANNIBALS WITH THE SHARP POINTED ELBOWS.....	21
THE GREAT SNAKE AND THE BOY	21

The Jealous Creator and the Great Snake

Once there was a time when the Creator had finished making the earth for the great Ojibway Indians to look after, respect, and honour. The earth was full of beauty, peace, and harmony. There was kindness, honesty, sharing, and strength. The earth was like heaven.

The Creator of the earth made the plants very pure and they grew very straight. The branches and roots of the trees were formed perfectly. The rocks were completely round. The lakes were round, the rivers were straight, and the streams were pure. The air and winds were fresh. The Creator who made the earth had beautiful colours like the rainbow. This rainbow was the water that gave life to everything.

It was a very easy life for the Ojibway Indians. This is why the Thunders and other spirits who were pure came to live on earth, and the mermans came to live in the lakes, rivers, and streams.

The Ojibway Indians were given a sacred pipe by the Creator because the pipe is the healer of the physical body; a sacred feather because the feather is knowledge, wisdom, medicine, spirituality, teachings of the mind, and feelings; a drum because the drum has songs and is the heart of the spirit. That is why an Indian's hair is braided into three parts. This represents the body, mind, and spirit. The Ojibway Indians followed the traditions and the ceremonies to respect and honour their Creator, the God Almighty.

This wonderful life continued until a day when the Ojibway Indians turned their ways of life into evil and no longer followed the gift they were given. The Creator became jealous because the Ojibway Indians did not respect and honour him with their loyalty. They did not respect the nature he had made for them to live spiritually. The Creator then sent a great snake to the earth to crawl all over and make things crooked. It crawled into the plants, trees, animals, rocks, hills, lakes, rivers, streams, and the grounds. Everything that was straight became crooked, wavy, and bumpy. Life was not easy any more. It became hard. That is how things that the Creator made straight became crooked.

Today the things we see around us are crooked, wavy, and bumpy. That is why the plants are twisted and wavy and branches of the trees are crooked. That is why the animals and humans are each formed differently. The lakes have formless shapes and the rivers and streams are wavy like a snake. The hills are steep, crooked, wavy, and bumpy.

The legend was told by the Ojibway Indian elders.

The Sweetgrass of Life

The sweetgrass is given to the Indian from the Gitchi Manitou, who is the Creator of the universe, the God Almighty, and the Great Spirit. The sweetgrass is used to purify the body, mind, and spirit. The prayer of respect and honour reaches Gitchi Manitou.

The sweetgrass is braided into three parts representing the body, mind and spirit. The sweetgrass symbolizes the human being with its three characteristics of body, mind, and spirit. When an Indian uses the sweetgrass to purify the body, mind and spirit, he is blessed by the great spirit of the Gitchi Manitou. When the sweetgrass fills the air with pureness, the great spirit of the Gitchi Manitou hears and answers the prayers of respect, honour, and loyalty. This is why and how the Gitchi Manitou gives an Indian the sweetgrass, so that he can communicate in this way with the man he has created.

An Indian has respect, honour, and loyalty to the four directions. This involves kindness, honesty, sharing, and strength. The four directions are respected and honoured, thereby showing loyalty to the three aspects of a human being. The four directions of the body are said through a prayer to the Great Spirit; also to the four directions of the mind, and the four directions of the spirit.

An Indian uses sweetgrass to purify the sacred pipe, the sacred feather, and the sacred drum in order for the Great Spirit of the Gitchi Manitou to give his blessing before the ceremony starts. The sacred pipe, feather and drum resemble the body, mind, and spirit. The sweetgrass is most highly respected and honoured because it is the top of four levels: tobacco, cedar, sage, and sweetgrass.

The sweetgrass is used by an Indian male at all times when a prayer is given before the ceremony. But an Indian female never uses sweetgrass during her monthly periods, because she is already purifying herself. An Indian female can use sweetgrass at other times, because the purification does not take place at these time.

The sweetgrass resembles the life of a human being. As the fire burns the sweetgrass, it resembles death. When the smoke of the sweetgrass ascends into the air, it resembles the soul or spirit leaving, and the ashes of the sweetgrass are similar to the body turning into ash. The sweetgrass is used in respect, honour, and loyalty by an Indian. That is why and how the Indian puts the ashes of the sweetgrass back into the ground of sacred Mother Earth. Life comes from sacred Mother Earth and in this way life goes back to Mother Earth.

This is why and how the sweetgrass is used by an Indian.

The Thunder Island

Once long ago, in the days when the white man was not around and when everything was pure, Thunders made their home on the island. The fourteen Thunders lived in seven great nests which they had built out of hard stones. The Ojibway Indians believed that there were seven male Thunders and seven female Thunders. The Thunders living on the island were worshipped with respect and honour by the Ojibway Indians. The Ojibway would offer tobacco and prayers to the Thunders, who were seen as the great messengers of the Creator, the God Almighty.

The Thunders on the island lived like the Indian people. They hunted, for they were great hunters, and fished, for they were great fishers. Most importantly, they worked to restore sacred Mother Earth that she might grow plants, trees, animals, humans, and everything that had life. In order to do this the Thunders gave the rain which brought the water of life. The Ojibway Indians considered them to be the gardeners of sacred Mother Earth.

In watching over and protecting sacred Mother Earth from the giant snakes, the Thunders are destroyers as well. They protect Mother Earth's children, the plants, trees, animals, and humans. To do this the Thunders made lightning, the fire of death. When the Thunders flap their wings it causes the wind to blow hard. The Thunders fly in the sky as they do their work of restoring and destroying. When the white man came, the Thunders moved away because they did not want to reveal themselves to everyone.

Today the legend of the Thunder Island is told by the elders to their Ojibway people who live all over Ontario. The Indians have great respect for this island, which is considered to be sacred. The elders have told the Indians not to go there. Once some Indians tried to visit Thunder Island, but a strong wind began to blow making it impossible to go there. It is believed that the Thunders flapped their wings to cause the wind.

Once an elder went to Thunder Island with the permission of the Great Spirit. When the elder arrived at the island, he said that the place was very beautiful; it hadn't changed. The seven great nests made of stacked round stones were perfectly bowl-shaped. Each nest was the size of a miniature Grand Canyon. The ground was smooth. It was an amazing site. The elder returned to the village to tell his story of Thunder Island.

Thunder Island is located at Lac Seul Lake. This is a few miles from Kojik Bay, a reserve situated thirty miles west of Sioux Lookout, Ontario. The Ojibway Indians will always remember the legend of Thunder Island.

Thunders at Black Stone

Once long ago, the Thunders came to live on the earth. They lived on the islands and the big hills. The white man was not around at that time. There were Ojibway Indians living on the rock, jutting out at the lake's edge.

The rock stood about fifty feet tall and was surrounded by hills. Thunders would land on the rock. For them it was a place to land and rest. The Thunders would land on the rock during the early spring and late fall because this was the time the birds would migrate North for the summer or return South for the winter. At night the Thunders would swoop down and land on the rock to rest. Every time a Thunder would land on the rock it would begin to change colour and soon the rock was black. It turned back as the Thunder's wing and tail feathers brushed against the rock. The Thunders had a supernatural power which caused this magic touch in the black tips of their wings and tail feathers. The water was also touched by their magic, as were the hills surrounding the rock. Consequently, the place where the Thunders landed was considered to be very sacred by the Ojibway Indians. Tobacco was offered near this sacred rock that turned colour so mysteriously. Prayers were offered to the Great Spirit in respect and honour.

Meanwhile, the Ojibway Indians were living in a village on the island near the rock. Often they would fish with spears near the rock. The Ojibway Indians would go to the sacred rock to offer their prayers with respect and honour to the Thunders. The Thunders watched and protected them for the tobacco being offered.

Today the place where the rock stands tall is called Black Stone Lake. It was named Black Stone because of the black and navy colour of the rock and the black coloured hill surrounding the rock. The trees on the hills are very short, especially on the shore, because they were touched by the Thunders' wings. This place at Black Stone will always stay that way, never growing old.

The Black Stone Lake is located near State Falls Reserve, between New Osnaburgh and State Falls. It is now a landing place for many eagles.

The elders told this legend of Black Stone Lake. Once an Indian fellow tried to climb on top of the rock. Suddenly, it became cloudy and the Thunders were heard overhead. The lightning struck the rock and the Indian fellow fell off the rock before reaching the top. He landed safely in the water. That is the legend of the black stone, and as long as the eagles land on the rock, the Thunders will remain.

The Thunder and the Snake.

This story was told long ago by the great Ojibway Indians, before the white man came across the land of the Indian people. This legend tells of the enemies, the Thunder and the snake. The Thunders were always preying on the snake. The snake would hide under the rock. The Ojibway Indians believed that the Thunder was a good spirit and the snake an evil spirit.

The Thunders were known to be a protector of the sacred Mother Earth, watching over her children: the plants, the trees, the animals, and the Indian. The Thunder was the restorer and the destroyer. In order for the Thunder to destroy, the lightning would flash the fire of death on whatever did not belong to the sacred Mother Earth, such as a snake. The Thunder's lightning fired flaming arrows. As a restorer the Thunder sent rain to bring life. Whatever the sacred Mother Earth had was given life. The Thunder had x-ray vision in its eyes to see, so it could destroy and restore. As long as the Thunder was around, so would the earth be.

The snake was known to be destructive to sacred Mother Earth, endangering her children: the plants, the trees, the animals, and the Indians. Whenever the sky was clear and sunny, the snake would come out from under a rock, from deep down under ground, or from deep tunnels in the land and water. Snakes always travel during hot, sunny days and retreat under the rocks before nightfall. Whenever the snake sees a cloud approaching or hears the Thunder coming in the distance, it immediately hides under a rock or under ground. The snake could go underground a distance ten times greater than the horizon. This was usually beyond the reach of the flashing arrows in the lightning, which the Thunder hurled from its eyes. However, the Thunder could see a great distance underground with its x-ray vision. Sometimes, even though the snake would hide far away, it did not survive the loud Thunder and lightning which could destroy it.

A sign was given to the Indians when a snake was destroyed or killed by the Thunder. The cloudy sky after a thunder storm is sometimes coloured bright yellow. If this happens the great Ojibway Indians believe a snake has been killed. So remains the legend of the Thunder and the snake.

The Paddling Man and the Mermaid

Once long ago nature was full of beauty, peace, and harmony. The great Ojibway Indians have a legend about the paddling man who traveled on a canoe during this time, coming from the East and going toward the West. The paddling man was a great teacher of knowledge, wisdom, medicine, and spirituality. He was a great singer and a great drummer. He was a great shaman who had supernatural powers and could work magical wonders.

The Ojibway Indians were amazed at the way he did certain things. The paddling man used a stone paddle and a stone canoe. He would travel on the waters swiftly. The

paddling man was known as the grandfather of nature who travels on the water. He came from the East, teaching all the tribes. Slowly he migrated towards the West. After living with the Ojibways for a long time he moved on, paddling his stone canoe. He left them behind for they were strong enough now to know about the sacred pipe, the great teaching of knowledge, wisdom, medicine, spirituality, and the drum with many songs. The paddling man also spoke many languages and knew many of the Indian customs. The great Ojibway Indians respected him and honoured him with loyalty.

Today, the elders of Osnaburgh House Reserve tell stories and teachings of the paddling man to the people and their young children. The Ojibway Indians believe that there are sacred grounds wherever the paddling man rested on his long canoe journey. The sacred grounds of the paddling man are always offered tobacco by the Ojibway before they pass through. In this way he is respected and honoured.

When tobacco is offered in the water near the sacred grounds of the paddling man, the water being takes the tobacco and prayers to the paddling man where he lives at the side of the cliff. The water being is called the merman (referred to as Nepi Nabay by the Ojibways, translated water human). The merman, half fish and half human, is the keeper of the tobacco being offered in the waters. The paddling man has a companion, the merman, who delivers the tobacco to him every time it is offered anywhere in the water. With the offering of the tobacco, the waters become calm and the canoe travelers can have a safe journey in the lake and rivers. The travelers are given guidance to keep them from getting lost.

The sacred ground of the paddling man was visited by the medicine men, who would enter through the crack in the side of the cliff with their canoe. Their magic enabled them to do this. Imagine a canoe going through a small crack-size opening. The Ojibway Indians believe that a person who sees a small man paddling a canoe on the side of the cliff at the sacred grounds of the paddling man will have a long prosperous life. These are the teachings about the paddling man and his companion.

The Merman and the Mermaid

There are many stories and many theories about the merman and the mermaid. The great Ojibway Indians have the legends of the merman or the mermaid. They believe that the merman is the taker of tobacco that is being offered into the lakes. He takes these prayers to the paddling man. This helps the Indian have a safe journey in the lakes when paddling his canoe. Centuries ago before the white man came, the Indians would see the mermen or mermaids swimming in the lakes and they would talk to them. The wise mermen had much knowledge about matters of the world. Of course, the mermen were the spirits of the waters and had supernatural powers with great magic and wonders beyond man's imagination. The great Ojibway Indians had given them something very valuable and in return the mermen would give back medicine of the magic powers and

wonders. That is how an Indian has great medicine to heal and do many things as the shamans do. But the greatest medicine that an Indian has comes from the Creator known as the Great Spirit.

The merman or the mermaid are believed to have come from another world, a spirit world, another dimension, a time that has another time. The mermen lived below the world. Many Ojibway have seen them going through the underwater tunnels to their world. In fact, there is a legend of an Ojibway Indian who was taken by the mermen and shown underwater tunnels going through to different lakes. He was sent back to his people to tell them about these tunnels.

Another story is told by the Ojibway Indians about an Indian who was taken by the mermaids to the world below. He passed through four levels of dimensional time before arriving where the mermen and mermaids lived. It was a beautiful place with people who were half fish and half human. As the story ends, the Indian can no longer return to his people in the world above. Instead he stays, marries a mermaid, and has many children.

The Elder and the Loon

Once long ago this legend was told to the Ojibway Indians by their ancestors. The white man had not come over the seas yet at this time. It was believed by the Ojibway Indians that at one time the loon was pitch black. This is the legend of how the loon got its white spots on its back and wings.

There was once a blind elder who was a shaman. He lived by the lake in his wigwam. Every day he would sit outside by his wigwam facing the lake, wishing he could see. Although this was not possible, he could feel the wind blowing against his face, and he could sense the fresh water nearby. One time the elder thought he heard something swimming in the lake nearby. He called out, "Who is out there?"

The loon, which was swimming safely out of reach in the lake, replied, "I am a loon". The elder told the loon that he couldn't see and the loon came closer without fear. The loon said, "I can help if you only give me something very valuable."

The elder was discouraged and said, "I am sorry, but I don't really have anything to give you, my friend. All I have is this necklace of white pearls."

At that moment the loon was swimming close to shore where the blind elder sat. The loon wasn't pleased about how its wings and body were as black as could be. At the same time, the blind elder took the white pearl necklace off and reached out in the direction of the loon. As he tossed the necklace to where he heard the loon, it fell apart. The pearls sprinkled on the loon. The white pearls landed on the loon's back and wings, and some fell around its neck. Because the elder was a shaman with great magic powers, the magic touch was also in the pearls as they fell on the loon. The loon was very pleased

and happy about the white spots on its body. In return, the loon, which had a special gift to heal, helped the blind elder to see.

This explains how the loon received the white spots on its body and looks like it has a necklace around its neck. This is the legend of the elder and the loon.

The Sioux of Sandy Hill

Once long ago, in the days when the bushland was still virgin, the Sioux Indians lived on the sandy hill. They had warriors watching from the top of the hill because they could see for many miles in all directions. When the Ojibways came near the hill they could be seen and the Sioux were alerted. Often the Ojibway hunters would be ambushed, attacked, and killed, never to be seen or found again. Ojibway women would be abducted by the Sioux and sometimes children were taken as well. The Sioux abducted the women to have children from them and increase their population. The Sioux of the sandy hill continued these attacks for quite some time.

One day the Ojibway chief and other lower ranking chiefs had a meeting to do something about the missing people who never returned. The chief knew something was wrong. The Ojibway chief sent out warriors to search for the missing persons. After discovering that Sioux Indians were living on the big hill, the scouts reported back to the chief.

That night the chief and numerous Ojibway warriors came to the sandy hill with hundreds of canoes to attack the Sioux. The battle lasted for several hours; knives, spears, tomahawks, and bow and arrows flew through the night. The chief and the warriors buried all the dead Sioux on the sandy hill and took their own home. One little Sioux girl's life was spared and she was adopted by the Ojibways.

Today the sandy hill is a legend to be remembered, especially by the Ojibways at the New Osnaburgh Reserve. The granddaughter of the adopted little girl still lives by the Osnaburgh Reserve. The sandy hill is located about twenty miles west of Lake St. Joseph. The sandy hill is believed to be cursed by the falling Sioux and is considered to be a sacred burial ground. Some Ojibways, who, when they paddled their canoes a distance away from the hill, thought they had seen people at the top of the hill or smoke rising from the campfires. The hill is presumed to be haunted. At night the noises of a battle or something struggling have been heard. Probably, these were noises from the bullfrogs or other night creatures. Nonetheless, the legend lives on.

The Sioux at Rocky Cliff

Once long ago, in the days when the Sioux were out preying on Ojibways, the Sioux lived on top of the Rocky Cliffs. The Sioux warriors would watch and guard the Rocky Cliffs. They could see someone coming from a great distance. The Sioux were the only ones who knew the single passage into the Rocky Cliffs. The entrance was very small, just big enough for a canoe to pass through. The thick bushes made it hard to find, even during the day.

Meanwhile the Ojibway warriors were scouting for Sioux. A distance from the Rocky Cliffs, they spotted Sioux paddling their canoes. The Ojibway scouts spied on them to see where they were heading. The Sioux stopped near the Rocky Cliffs and disappeared from sight. This puzzled the Ojibway scouts, but they headed back to report this to the chief. He sent them on the scouting expedition to discover what had happened to the Ojibway hunters who had disappeared in this area.

The chief and the lower ranking chiefs gathered in a circle around the campfire to smoke the pipe. The meeting began. The chief asked the warriors the location of the Rocky Cliffs. The chief decided to attack the Sioux on the cliffs. He knew there was one way in and out, an entrance off course, according to the scouts. The chief told the lower ranking chiefs, who were to be leaders of each large group of canoes, that they would attack at night. It was going to be difficult to attack the Rocky Cliffs.

The night came. It was time to attack the Rocky Cliffs towering two hundred feet above the chief and the numerous Ojibway warriors. The hundreds of canoes came paddling, sneaking around the sides of the Rocky Cliff's shore. They began to look for an entrance for it was impossible to climb the cliffs. Finally, they found the entrance that went through to the Rocky Cliffs. On the other side was a small lake and a large Sioux camp. The Ojibway warriors attacked the Sioux by surprise. The battle lasted for several hours and arrows flew through the night. The Ojibway chief and warriors buried the falling Sioux and took their own dead home.

Today the Rocky Cliffs is considered to be a sacred burial grounds. The Ojibway Indians hold respect for the Rocky Cliffs, because their ancestors have passed down the stories. Some Indian people who travel on the waters paddle their canoe here from a distance. It is experienced as a very quiet, mysterious place. The Rocky Cliffs is located about fifteen miles south of Lake St. Joseph. Not many Osnaburgh Indian people go to visit the Rocky Cliffs because the spooky legend is still remembered.

The Sioux Island

Once long ago, in the days when the Sioux and the Ojibway were at war, the Sioux lived on an island with a high hill. The island was at the edge of a large, long lake. On

this hill the Sioux warriors would be on the lookout for their enemies, the Ojibway, whom they could see coming from a distance across the lake.

One day three Ojibway warriors were casting out swiftly from the bay in their canoe. They were being chased out of the bay by a group of Sioux warriors. When the Sioux on the island saw them paddling closer in their canoe, they climbed into their own canoes and charged the three warriors. When the Ojibway warriors saw the Sioux approaching, they paddled back to the bay. This was a mistake because in the bay they were trapped. The three Ojibway warriors were outnumbered. It was impossible to win the war. The Ojibway warriors paddled to the shore of the bay to hide from the Sioux. But it was impossible to hide because the Sioux were covering every inch of the bush, slowly closing in on them. The three Ojibway warriors were soon caught and killed by the Sioux warriors. They were buried at the edge of the bay.

Today the bay is called Jackfish Narrows and the large, long lake is Lake St. Joseph. Sioux Island is located at the edge of Lake St. Joseph's west end. The three Ojibway warriors are believed to have been buried at the edge of Jackfish Narrows. Jackfish Narrows is used as a fishing camp today. Some Indian people who live on the bay at Jackfish Narrows sometimes hear running in the bushes. It is believed that the bay is haunted by the three spirits. It has been said that the three spirits of the Ojibway warriors will never stop running in the dark. The legend will always be remembered.

The Ojibway Indian Beliefs About Wild Bush Indians

Once long ago the Ojibway Indians had been having problems with the Wild Bush Indians. They were called Mensokaneck, translated, "persons who creep in the night" or "the prowlers in the night". The Mensokaneck are the Wild Bush Indians who lived in the deep forest, unseen by the Indians in the village. The village Indians would go out to look, but they would hear only the crackling of branches in the dark bushes as if someone were running away. Sometimes during the summer the Indians would camp out in the bush during the hunting and fishing season. At these times they would experience a disturbance from the Mensokaneck. People in the village would lose their things, but the Mensokaneck would never leave any tracks behind.

The Mensokaneck had canoes that were pointed both in the front and the back. Luckily, the Mensokaneck never noticed the Indians in their canoes. The Mensokaneck lived like the Indians did. They were described as having long beards and long black hair with headbands. Their dark clothing was made of animal skins covered with fur from black bears, moose, and deer. The Indians believed they were dressed like this because they lived like an animal in the bush and they were skilful at living with nature. Through their cabin windows, sometimes people saw the Mensokaneck running away as the children screamed at them. Sometimes they were heard around the log cabins, creeping up slowly from the bushes, and scratching the door. Sometimes in the cold dark night the

Indians would be terrified by a rock or a stick thrown on the roof of their cabin or tent. Some people saw the Mensokaneck standing in the dark bushes or running away with the shadows of human form. One of the Mensokaneck was sometimes seen standing on the shore with arms at his side. Another was seen standing with the same pose at the top of the hill. Later he began throwing rocks at the Indians in their canoes below. Then he ran to the bushes.

On occasion the Mensokaneck would abduct someone's wife or child. The Indians believed that the Mensokaneck either taught them to live their ways or they might torture them by cutting off their ears or tongues. The Mensokaneck were like barbarians living in the deep forest, who would attack and kill Indians in order to rob them. This continued to happen year after year to hunters traveling in their canoes. Many warriors in the village were killed by the Mensokaneck. There are many stories of Medicine men who became heroes by defeating the Mensokaneck.

Years later the Mensokaneck were no longer seen in the village. The elders continued to tell many stories. Today Indians in the village or on the reserve no longer believe that the Mensokaneck exist. Yet some Indians camping in the bush these days sometimes experience unexplainable disturbances. Maybe it is a Mensokaneck or perhaps the spirits of the dead Mensokaneck. These are the Ojibway Indian beliefs about the Wild Bush Indians called Mensokaneck.

The Shaman With a Magic Comb and the Mensokaneck

One day Isaac, a great medicine man, went out to hunt and fish with his family and relatives. They were camped out near the north road where there were large lakes and deep thick forest. The great medicine man, who had an eagle feather, smoked his pipe and sang his songs with his drums. His large family was very spiritual and close to nature.

While camping, the great medicine man and his family began to experience a strange presence at night, as if someone were creeping up from the bushes. When the dogs barked strangely, they began to feel that they were not alone in the deep forest. It felt like tree people were coming to haunt their camp at night. The great medicine man held a meeting with his family and relatives about these strange occurrences. They were hearing people sneaking up, walking around the camp, and crackling branches in the bushes. They couldn't be certain, though, whether they had seen someone running away in the dark. Some of the relatives accidentally saw strange people in the bush and they found footprints. This made everyone wonder who they were. The medicine man knew they were the wild bush Indians called the Mensokaneck. Everyone in the camp was alerted to this danger and they became fearful.

The great medicine man knew what to do and prepared to meet the Mensokaneck with his rifle. He took out a lice comb made with ribbons and a variety of other things. Everyone watching him was amazed as he made it into a magic comb. He told the people that each bristle of his lice comb was a warrior who would help him fight the Mensokaneck. His wife watched him walk into the deep forest. He walked in the direction the Mensokaneck might be. Then the family and relatives waited for the great medicine man to return.

Several hours later the family and relatives could hear guns firing for a short period of time, as if there were a big battle happening in the deep forest. Then from out of the bushes emerged the great medicine man without even a wound. The great medicine man told everybody that he had killed twenty Mensokaneck whose bodies needed to be buried. He sent his sons and male relatives to do this job. A few men stayed behind to watch over the women and children, in case more Mensokaneck were about.

The twenty Mensokaneck had a proper burial. They wore dark animal skins and had long black hair. Some had long black beards as well. No one knew who they were or where they came from. They only knew them as Wild Bush Indians, Indian Bushwhackers, or intruders.

All were amazed at how each of the two hundred bristles of the magic comb could be turned into a warrior. After the battle some of the bristles on the comb were missing. The Indian people of the village believed that these broken-off bristles represented the warriors who had been killed in the gun battle.

That night was peaceful and quiet. No one could be heard creeping close by. Suddenly, the dogs began barking, but it was nothing. So ends the story of the shaman with the magic comb and the Mensokaneck.

The Canoe Traveler and the Mensokaneck

Once there was a great medicine man, Waboose Apecone, who was a great hunter and canoe traveler. The great medicine man always smoked a sacred pipe, had a sacred eagle feather, and he sang songs with his sacred drum. He had a bow and arrow from his ancestors. He had a powerful medicine, both good and evil. He could perform a shaking tent and other kinds of fortune-telling medicines. He even built a medicine log cabin containing all kinds of fortune-telling medicines and charms. The medicine log cabin was always hidden in the deep forest from people in the village. The great medicine man was very close to nature and he was always in communication with the spirits. He was a strange person who did wonders with his medicines. He carved a wooden person and he began to sing songs with his sacred drum. The wooden man he had carved began to move in motions as if it had life of its own because the spirit entered into the wooden

man. Other times he would disappear into the spirit world and come back from another dimension. Once he chased a moose ten times the distance to the horizon. He experimented with his medicines and brought someone back to life. Once his wife followed him to the medicine log cabin and she found a living body covered in a white sheet who had been brought back to life. She ran home in terror.

One day the great medicine man Waboose Apecone went out hunting for the summer, leaving his wife and children behind for a couple of months. One early morning he was coming home after hunting a long time. He had a lot of fur and meat on his canoe. He was paddling along when suddenly there appeared four canoes with twelve Mensokaneck, three in each canoe. One of the Mensokaneck shot at him with a single-shot twelve-gauge shotgun and the great medicine man was hit on the right shoulder blade. He fell in his canoe. He used his magic medicine to stop the buckshot from penetrating deep into his flesh. As he was lying down in his canoe, he grabbed his single-shot rifle and nine shells. Using his magic medicine he shot his rifle with tremendous speed. He had four shells in his mouth and five other shells in his left hand. With his rifle in his right hand he sat up in his canoe and shouted at the Mensokaneck, who were laughing at him, "See if any of you can use your magic medicine to stop bullets like I did." He fired at them, killing all twelve. Again he used his magic medicine to bury the twelve Mensokaneck on the hill, and he hid their canoes. He paddled the rest of the way home with one arm, where his wound was attended to by another medicine man.

The secret is told of the great medicine man Waboose Apecone's ability to kill twelve Mensokaneck. The first of the five shells in the left hand was loaded and fired, the second shell came from the four shells in his mouth. Back and forth from his left hand to his mouth, until the nine shells were all gone. Because some of the Mensokaneck were almost directly behind each other, he was able to kill more than one with some shots. Today, the twelve Mensokaneck are buried on the hill near Ace Lake in New Osnaburgh Reserve, Ontario.

The Medicine Man With an Axe and the Mensokaneck

Once there was a medicine man called Ahgunayup, who had a wife, one son, and five daughters. He was a great hunter and fisherman who took long trips on his canoe. He had his axe with him all the time. He smoked a sacred pipe, carried a sacred eagle feather, and sang songs with his sacred drum. With his medicine he healed people in the village.

One day the medicine man called Ahgunayup went on a long journey to hunt and fish. He traveled many miles on his canoe to fish and to hunt animals for meat. On his way home he had a difficult portage to the next lake. He had to carry his canoe, supplies, and food. He decided to cut off some thick bushes that were in his way. He put down his gear and started cutting and chopping down bushes with his axe. Suddenly, twelve

Mensokaneck appeared and attacked the medicine man with their knives, axes, and clubs. Ahgunayup, who was a good warrior, fought back against the Mensokaneck that were trying to kill him. He used his magic medicine to stop axes of the Mensokaneck from penetrating his flesh. His flesh turned rock-hard steel and the axes of the Mensokaneck were unable to penetrate deeply. He fought hard and killed all twelve Mensokaneck and buried them on the portage. However, he was wounded by many shallow cuts. Fortunately, these wounds healed quickly as he headed home.

There are other stories told of Ahgunayup's relationship with his wife. The medicine man would complain if the tea bags in his cup or in the kettle would break. He found the loose tea leaves floating in his cup disgusting. His wife was always careful when making the tea for him.

The greatest tragedy happened to Ahgunayup when he killed his wife. He was tired of his wife teasing him every day because he had a small penis. As she teased him, she would tell him that his tiny penis was not satisfying her. He decided to trick her into going on a canoe trip. He took her somewhere on the lake, far from home. They began to argue and she retaliated by teasing him about his small penis. The medicine man became angry about her lack of respect. He raised his paddle and struck her on the head in a rage, killing her instantly. She fell into the water, her head bleeding.

He went home, a very sad man, as he paddled home the canoe which held the body of his wife. He told his children and everybody else that there had been an accident in the rapids. After that day the medicine man always mourned for his dead wife because he had loved her so much. This is the story of the medicine man with an axe and the Mensokaneck.

The Snow Beast Called Keewatinis

The Ojibway Indians have many beliefs about the snow beast called Keewatinis. This legend tells about the snow beast being defeated by a rabbit. With his arrow, the rabbit cut the snow beast in half. This caused it to be winter for half the year and summer for the other half.

The snow beast called Keewatinis always travels with the winter. When the winter comes from the North, so does Keewatinis. The snow beast goes all over the earth wherever the winter sets in. Keewatinis freezes everything: the plants, the trees, the animals, the ground, the air, the water, and even fire. It is so cold that even fire cannot start. The snow beast eats dead animals and humans that freeze. The Keewatinis is an evil spirit, a spirit of the dead coming from the spirit world.

It is taboo for an Indian to talk about many beliefs about the snow beast called Keewatinis. Even to mention its name might cause it to become cold in summer for a

few days. In winter the result might be a cold snap or a blizzard. Parents would warn their children not to eat food outside during the winter because the snow beast might try to take the food from their stomachs. If an Indian gets frostbite or freezes any part of the body, it is because Keewatinis has tried to bite. When the birds fly south after each summer, sometimes the younger, smaller birds don't listen to their parents and try to stay for the winter. Keewatinis is happy because after these birds freeze to death, he eats them. Keewatinis often tries to trick things into freezing. The snow beast might come disguised as something else. Ojibway Indians believe that the snow beast has as many children as the people have.

The snow beast has been described as resembling the Bigfoot, called Sasquatch. Keewatinis has white fur covering its entire body. Its ears, sharp teeth, tail, and eyes resemble a wolf. Its arms, legs, and face look something like a human. The hands and feet are like humans' with bear paws and sharp claws. Under the chin it resembles a moose, and its back looks like the back of a bear. It stands like a human and takes after a human form with long white hair.

These are the beliefs of the Ojibway Indians about the snow beast called Keewatinis that lurks in the bushes.

The Sacred Big Tree on the Hill

Once there was a great medicine man named Chopaukonay, who was a great healer and a great hero for his people in the village. He smoked his pipes, had eagle feathers, and he sang songs with his sacred drum. He danced with two eagle feathers, always one feather in each hand. He used his fortune-telling mediums and charm medicines. He had many supernatural powers. Chopaukonay was able to disappear into thin air.

One day as a child, Chopaukonay was lost in the deep forest for forty days and forty nights. He had not eaten nor drunk any water for a long period of time. The spirits helped Chopaukonay survive and taught him to be a great medicine man. He was given supernatural powers and many other gifts from the spirits. Meanwhile, the parents and everyone were looking for him, but they could not find him for forty days and nights. They finally found him on the shore of the lake drinking water with his hands. He was healthy as could be and everyone was happy. He had a strange medicine wrapped around his neck. Then the people knew he had medicine in him and they knew the reason he had become lost in the bush. The medicine had a special gift.

A few years later when he was about nine years old, he could sense that something terrible was going to happen to the people in the village, but he did not know when it would take place. Suddenly, things in the deep forest changed and it became too quiet. It became as cold as if winter had come early. In the distance a great giant could be heard

coming to destroy the people. Windigo, the great giant from the West was coming. The Windigo came screaming and howling and everyone fainted with fear, except Chopaukonay's mother. She tried to stop Chopaukonay from going to meet the giant. But the boy, Chopaukonay, managed to get away from his mother and walked west to meet Windigo. The Windigo from the West screamed and howled again. Before Chopaukonay's mother fainted, she saw him standing as tall as the big trees because he was growing as he walked west. By the time he met the Windigo, he had grown the same size as it. They grabbed each other and started fighting by tossing each other, knocking over big trees for many miles around. Wrestling and tugging each other made a lot of bumpy hills as the giants fought. Chopaukonay won the long battle and buried the Windigo after destroying it.

After the battle, the village was safe. On one of the hills stood the only tall tree that was not knocked down. All the other trees for miles had been flattened. After winning the battle, Chopaukonay, the great hero, said a few words, "The tall tree standing on the hill will remind everyone that I fought the Windigo. As long as the tree stands on the hill, I will be standing also". For many years Chopaukonay helped and healed people. The big tree on hill became older and weaker as Chopaukonay got older and weaker. The big old tree fell down and Chopaukonay died. Many Indian people mourn for him.

The story of the sacred big tree and Chopaukonay's heroic battle with the Windigo occurred several miles west of the Kejick Bay Reserve, Lac Seul, Ontario. The area where the battle took place has small trees for miles around.

The Bad Medicine Story of the Sasquatch

Throughout the reserves of northwestern Ontario, the Ojibway Indians have been told the story about Sasquatch, a bad medicine that once possessed a family. The story of Sasquatch is respected and honoured by smoking the sacred pipe.

Once there was a family who lived by a lake at the edge of the deep forest. From their log cabin at the top of a hill, they had a fine view overlooking the lake. On the other side of the cabin stood the tall dense forest. One peaceful night a child was sitting outside on the porch of the log cabin, staring at the sun setting over the lake. Suddenly, the child saw a big man with fur covering his entire body. The frightened child ran inside the log cabin to tell the parents about the big monster sitting beside the lake. The parents did not believe their child until they looked out the window. There sat the creature at the edge of the lake. The whole family was terrified as they watched the huge hairy man stand up. It must have stood about eight feet tall. He started running toward the bushes. They could hear the bushes rubbing against his body, the branches crackling, and the trees being knocked down. The huge hairy man's feet could be heard stomping and thumping against the ground as he ran around the lake. His eerie screams echoed through the deep forest. The frightened loons on the lake screeched. The people in the log cabin had

shivers running down their spines. It didn't take long for the huge hairy creature to run around the lake and disappear.

In the family there was a great medicine man who knew what to do to keep this furry thing away. He knew that this was a sign of bad medicine. Someone evil wanted the family dead. The great medicine man performed a small ceremony in which he smoked his sacred pipe, chanted a song, and played his sacred drum while the family stayed inside the log cabin.

The next morning found the family safe and alive. The men crept outside with their guns to see if it was safe while the mother stayed inside with the child. A horrible sight awaited them outside. The huge hairy man's footprints were all over the ground, down by the lake, around the log cabin and leading into the bushes. The walls of the cabin were scratched by his huge hands and many trees were knocked down and ripped to shreds. The whole family was terrified because they hadn't seen or heard anything the previous night. It must have happened when everyone was asleep.

Out on the lake a white man was coming to visit, paddling his canoe as usual. He was a fisherman who liked being out in the wild. The family had made friends with him earlier. He often brought them fish. Before the white man reached the shore he greeted everyone, "Hello there." The white man was surprised to see that everyone was very quiet and no one was smiling. As the white man saw the huge footprints, he grabbed for his camera and got out of his canoe. The medicine man told the white man not to take any pictures of the footprints because it would bring bad luck. The great medicine man explained what had happened the night before. The white man understood and respected his wish.

The family invited the white man to stay for breakfast and they talked to him about the huge hairy man. The white man became very interested in the Sasquatch. He asked if he could stay for a night or two because he wanted to take pictures of the Sasquatch. They decided to hunt the huge hairy man and kill it. They gathered up all their camping equipment, food, and guns. The great medicine man took what he needed from his medicine bundle. The fisherman also took his camera. Shortly before noon they left, walking through the bushes for several hours until they came to the top of a hill, a place where the great medicine man would perform ceremonies. They camped here for the evening, several miles away from their home.

After the family had eaten dinner and prepared for the night, the medicine man brought out his medicine bundle. He walked around the camp placing medicine bags in each of the four directions: east, south, west, and north. This was done to keep the evil spirits out of the circle. The great medicine man built a campfire to prepare for his ceremony that was meant to keep the evil spirits away. This evil spirit took the form of a huge hairy man called the Sasquatch. As the sunset was soon approaching, he took out his pipe, eagle feather, drum and other medicines to prepare for the approaching darkness. Meanwhile, the fisherman prepared his gun and his camera, not telling anyone he was planning to take pictures of the Sasquatch if the chance came along. The husband

was ready with his loaded gun and his wife held the child closely. Everyone at the camp was ready. The medicine man was ready for the evil spirit. He wanted to ask the huge hairy man what he wanted and why he was coming there. After some time everyone was getting tired of waiting and they fell asleep. They thought that maybe it would come the next night.

The next morning as the fisherman woke up he noticed that his gun barrel and the other guns were bent completely out of shape. However, there were no traces of large footprints anywhere on the ground. The great medicine man was sitting by the campfire with his medicine bag around his neck. The white man went to wake up the husband, wife and child and quickly became horrified at what he saw. They had all been skinned. Their bodies were only covered with gory, red flesh. The white man went into shock and just stood there like a zombie. The great medicine man took the medicine bag from around his neck and put it around the white man's neck. He took him by the hand and led him back to the log cabin. With his strong medicine the great medicine man healed the white man. Although the family had died the great medicine man hadn't died because his medicine was very powerful.

Many years later the fisherman became a priest. Sometimes, while paddling his canoe he was still sure he could see the small family at their campfire near their log cabin in the distance. He was too afraid to go near and find out. The Indians believed that the spirits of the family continued to live in the log cabin. It is presumed to be haunted. This is the story of the bad medicine of the Sasquatch.

The Bush Cannibals Called Greasy Lard Fat Necks

Once long ago in the days of good hunting and fishing, the Ojibway Indians told this story about the mysterious bush people who had lived among them. These mysterious bush people lived like anybody else did. They were good hunters and fisherman who moved around from village to village. They were appreciated because they were very kind and generous. Others called them "greasy lard fat necks" because they had greasy-looking fat necks. It was believed that their necks looked this way because they always ate human flesh.

The mysterious bush people had been eating human flesh for quite some time and killing Indian people in some of the villages for their meals. The Indian people would be lost without a trace, never to be found again. It was the well-fed, fat Indian of the village who would be clubbed by the bush cannibals for a meal.

The story is told by the Ojibway Indians that one day a family arrived in the village. Even though they were strangers, the people welcomed them to stay, not knowing they were cannibals. The new family looked very healthy and well-fed. They were kind, friendly, cheerful, and always smiling. They were appreciated most for the moose meat,

fish, ducks, and other food which they brought with them and generously gave to the Indian people.

Meanwhile there was a large family living in the village that did not accept the food from them. This surprised the bush cannibals, but they greeted this family in a friendly manner. The great medicine man, who was the grandfather of the large family, shook the cannibals' hands with a suspicious feeling, not knowing why he felt that way. The great medicine man watched the strangers very closely. For some unknown reason they always had food to feed the village and they never seemed to eat the food they hunted.

At this time there was a great deal of movement among the Indians, in and out of the village. Some Indian people never returned from hunting. As time progressed, the fat people in the village started to disappear. Meanwhile, the cannibals showed great concern offering to help form a search party. Not only did the search party come up empty-handed, but some children became lost as well.

People continued to disappear from the village. One day the great medicine man decided to go visit the bush cannibals in their house. After knocking on the door, he was invited in for tea. He smelled a strange odour as he visited with these people but he did not let on anything was wrong. There was a pot boiling rapidly causing the lid to go up and down. Once or twice he thought he noticed a child' foot bobbing in the boiling water. After he finished tea, he left the house. He went home to tell his family, who were now the only ones left in the village, what was happening.

The great medicine man and his sons returned to the bush cannibal's house. They surprised the cannibals who were in the midst of eating a child's leg and arm. The father of the bush cannibals admitted that they were called "greasy fat lard necks". The great medicine man replied that he already knew who they were and started to club him on the head. "This is how it feels," he reminded him. The bush cannibals were all clubbed to death by the great medicine man and his brave sons. Just before he died, one of the bush cannibals told the great medicine man to burn their bodies in the fire for ten days and ten nights, never letting the flames out. If the fire went out, they would return about the tenth day because they had supernatural powers.

Day after day the fire burned. The bodies of the bush cannibals slowly disappeared until only their hearts remained. As the tenth day drew near even the hearts burned. When the tenth day of burning was over, the bush cannibals did not return. The great medicine man had defeated the mysterious bush cannibals called the "greasy fat lard necks".

Today, the elders smoke their pipe whenever this story is told. In this they are showing their respect and honour to the spirits of these mysterious bush cannibals called "greasy fat lard necks".

The Bush Cannibals With the Sharp Pointed Elbows

Once long ago this story took place when the bush cannibals were craving human flesh. The bush cannibals were called “sharp pointed elbows” because that is exactly what they had: sharp, pointed elbows. Their elbows were very sharp like a razor blade, something like a blade of grass. They would use their elbows as weapons.

Now these bush cannibal lived like an Indian did, always fishing and hunting. At that time, the Indian people were disappearing from the village. Sometimes an Indian fellow would go out to visit the bush cannibal’s hut or wigwam, not knowing they were bush cannibals. They were very polite and friendly. One curious characteristic about them was that they always faced the Indian, never turning sideways nor turning their backs. This was because they did not want anyone to discover who they were by seeing their sharp, pointed elbows. The bush cannibals served the Indian fellow tea, and tossed some bannock on the table. After a long visit, the Indian fellow would get up to leave. Because the door was small, he had to bend over to get out. As he bent over the bush cannibals elbowed him, stabbing and piercing his heart, thereby killing him instantly.

This practice continued until one day a shaman spotted them in the distance. He wondered who these people were living among them. The shaman, who was a great medicine man, had a feeling that something was wrong about these people. The shaman was suspicious about them because Indian people in the village were disappearing.

This shaman knew much about fire. It was his medicine and his protector. With his great magic, he could turn himself into flames of fire. The shaman circled around their campsite seven time making a circle of fire. They had to hunt and trap animals within the circle. Soon they had eaten all the animals in this area and once again became hungry. They began eating each other. The shaman knew that they could not escape from the circle of fire he had made. If they could, he would have been killed by them. Then he waited until they were all in their hut or wigwam. He walked around the hut or wigwam seven times creating a circle of fire to keep them from getting out. Trapped inside the wigwam, the cannibals continued to eat each other. When there was only one cannibal left, the shaman lit the wigwam on fire. That was the end of the cannibals called the “sharp pointed elbows”.

The Great Snake and The Boy

Once upon a time, there was a boy who wandered off from the village. He was told not to go too far into the woods, but he did. In the woods he was abducted and taken far away by the bush man. He was brought to a small point of rock, sticking out in the

middle of a large lake and left to sit there for days. The bush man left the boy there and paddled his canoe away.

Many days and night the boy sat there without any sleep. He was very hungry. The boy shouted for help and cried for his mother. Suddenly, the great Snake with horns on its head appeared in the waters. The Great Snake asked the boy what the matter was. The boy said that he wanted to go home. The Great Snake had pity on the boy. He made a deal with the boy to take him home. The Great Snake was afraid to cross the lake because of the great Thunder. He could be killed by the Great Thunder's lightning. So the Great Snake agreed to take the chance of crossing the lake if the boy would make sure to warn him when he heard the Great Thunder coming. That way the Great Snake would have enough time to turn back and hide underwater where the tunnel was.

The Great Snake told the boy to climb on his neck and hold on to his mysterious horns. The Great Snake moved with tremendous speed across the large lake, the boy holding tightly onto his horns. He did not know that the Great Thunder saw him swimming. The boy heard the Great Thunder coming behind them, but did not warn the Great Snake. He was too anxious to go home. The Great Snake reached the shore of the large lake and let the boy off safely. The boy was very happy and very sad. After saving the boy's life, the Great Snake hurried back across the lake as fast as he could, but it was not fast enough. The Great Thunder had seen him and with his lightning he blew him into thousands of pieces. These pieces fell all over the earth and a small portion of the Great Snake's blood fell in front of the boy. That small portion of blood asked the boy why he never told him that the Great Thunder was coming. The blood crawled away like a snake. The boy went home, happy to see his mother again.

Today the Ojibway Indians tell this legend to their children as a bedtime story to make them sleep. The legend of the Great Snake and the boy is also told by the elders of the New Osnaburgh Reserve. The large lake is Lake St. Joseph and the village is probably the Osnaburgh Reserve. The rock which stuck out in the middle of the large lake cannot be seen today because it is underwater.

It is believed by the Ojibway Indians that the snake grows and becomes a giant size like the Great Snake with mysterious horns. It is destroyed by the Great Thunder for protection. The Great Thunder is doing two special things. It is destroying the large snake, but it is restoring the snake through many small snakes which multiply in numbers all over the earth. This legend of the Great Snake and the boy is a valuable lesson to know.