

Grey Owl became famous internationally. He lectured on the threat to wildlife, forests and to the native people. He believed that someday the forests would be disappearing and animals killed when it wasn't necessary. And this was in the 1930's. Grey Owl lectured in Great Britain, Canada and the United States to very large audiences. During all this fame, he claimed to be an Indian. It had been a childhood dream of his to be an Indian.

Grey Owl was born Archibald Stansfeld Belaney, in Hastings, England in 1888. His father was originally from Scotland, and his mother was from England. His father was an alcoholic, and could never hold down a job, and his mother was a teenager. So his Grandmother and his two aunts brought him up in their home. When Archie was only five, his father left for the United States to work, and he never saw him again. His father died in Mexico. His mother lived in London, and he didn't see her very often.

Archie went to school in Hastings and was a very good pupil. But he was a very lonely boy, and spent all the time he could in the woods behind his home, playing cowboys and Indians with friends. He was always the Indian. He often just went out there alone, and brought home little live things, like snakes and mice. He kept them in the attic of their home, and quite often took a snake to school in his pocket. I am sure the teachers loved this. He had a very strict home life living with three older women. His Grandmother and two aunts taught him to play the piano, his favorite music being classical.

When Archie was 17, he talked his aunts into letting him come to Canada, as it was a dream of his to see the wild of Canada in the North. In March of 1906, he arrived in Toronto and worked in Eatons store until he had saved enough money to go North.

He arrived in Timagami and lived with the Ojibway Indians on Bear Island. He was tutored by the elders and trappers, and he learned the Indian language. I think because he learned the Indian language, he eventually lost his English Accent. When I knew him he had no English accent whatever. They taught him to trap and to paddle a canoe, and was able to be a guide to tourists, mainly American that came North to trap and hunt. Archie went trapping with the Indians to help provide food for the people on the Island. He got along well with the Indians there, and met a young girl, Angele Eugenia. They were married in 1910, and had a daughter called Agnes. But Archie, at 22, was not ready to settle down with a family. He left there and went to Temiskaming for a while. He then heard that his Grandmother was ill, and he loved her very much, so went to England to visit her. They found it hard to accept the change in Archie, and he was not ready to go back to that life in Hastings. So he returned to Canada to Temiskaming and Biscotasing in the North.

When the first world war broke out Archie went to Digby, N. S. and joined the Canadian Army. He was stationed in France and was wounded in the foot. He was sent back to London to a hospital there, where they removed one toe. His Mother visited him at the hospital, and he was then sent to a convalescent hospital in Hastings. While there he met a childhood sweetheart, and they got married in 1917. When he told her he was returning to his life in Canada, she decided it wasn't for her, so they soon got a divorce. Fortunately, because he was already

married to Angele.

He returned to Canada and to Bisco and his rather wild life there, He would get on some wild drinking parties, and start shooting at things, and was also very good at throwing knives, usually into a tree. Then he started doing some writing and trapping, and met another pretty young Iroquois Indian girl who lived with her widowed father. They were married by an Indian Chief in Indian style in 1925. Legal in their eyes.

Her name was Gertrude Bernard, and he soon gave her an Indian name of Anahareo. Her father had called her Pony and Gertie, so she went by several names. Archie had her join him on Winter trapping, and when she saw animals killed in traps, or having to be killed when they were still alive and suffering, she was very upset. As the trapping was getting little money in for them, and his disability pension was not very much, he turned to his writing. He sent an article to his mother in England to give to Country Life. They liked it so much they wanted more articles or even a book. He then went by the name of Grey Owl, and also had another Indian name, Wa-Sha-Quon-Asin, meaning "He who walks by night".

Archie was still doing some trapping, and he caught a Mother Beaver that had two little babies, called MawWees. Both Archie and Gertie were sad at seeing these little beaver, so they took them home and fed them with a syringe. They called them McGinty and McGinnis. When they were grown beaver, they left them and went off to build a house somewhere. They couldn't find them again, and missed them so much, that before long Archie found another little Beaver and they took it home and fed it too. They called it Jelly Roll. Grey Owl was out near a lake and a little beaver came over to where he was, and he saw no mother around anywhere, so he took it home to be with Jelly Roll. It was called Rawhide. That definitely ended his trapping of Beaver.

They travelled with the Beaver to places nearby, and Grey Owl would give a lecture on conservation of the Forest and Wild life and show the two Beaver, and what beautiful animals they were and so friendly. They were becoming quite scarce in Quebec and Ontario, and needed to be preserved, as after all it was Canada's National Emblem. He wrote in one of his books, Pilgrims of the Wild, "They seemed to be almost like little folk from some other planet, whose language we could not yet quite understand. To kill such creatures seemed monstrous. I would do no more of it. Instead of persecuting them further, I would study them, see just what there really was to them. I perhaps could start a colony of my own; these animals could not be permitted to pass completely from the face of this wilderness."

With Grey Owl writing for months on a book, Men of the last Frontier, Anahareo couldn't stand the quiet any longer. She had been there for five months and he told her it would be another two months before he would be finished the writing. So she left and got a job driving a dog team for tourists at a very exclusive club in the Ottawa Valley, between Ottawa and Montreal.

An Editor of Canadian Forest and Outdoors was quite excited about the articles being written by an Indian, and brought it to the attention of the Parks Branch Commission, which by then

had opened quite a few National Parks. He was interested in the conservation of the Beaver. From this a film was made of Grey Owl and Rawhide. They then asked him to speak in Windsor at a Forestry Convention, this was in 1930. Anahareo went with him to give him support. By this time, the Canadian Parks Branch were so interested in Grey Owl's work, they asked him to be a Caretaker of Park Animals in Riding Mountain Park in Manitoba. They moved the two Beaver in special tanks. But they didn't stay long there, as the lake was too shallow for the beaver to live through the winter. So they transferred him to Prince Albert National Park in early summer of 1931.