

that Angele kept herself and Belaney's child from starving when he left her for a series of common-law wives.

Was he heartless, or just a restless spirit that couldn't stand to be tied? His daughter, Agnes, has one last memory of her father: when he borrowed her week's wages, all of \$15, to buy a train ticket. But the man who deserted his wife and child could tame a beaver, or write of the agony of the animal caught in a steel trap, or charm high society with his simple good manners and vibrant personality.

Grey Owl's father, George Belaney, was born in Hastings, on the south coast of England, son of a well-to-do family. George, it seems, was a handy man with the bottle and a gay blade with the girls. In the tradition of the times, he was sent to make his way as best he could in the United States.

In 1885, he married a young lady called Kitty Morris. George and Kitty returned to England shortly before the birth of their son. George was not looked upon with much favour by his relatives, looked upon with much favour by his relatives, and he and Kitty lived in poor surroundings. Her son was christened Archibald Stansfeld Belaney and in those early years Kitty told him countless stories of life on the plains, of the buffalo bones still bleaching where the vast herds had roamed, and of a life much more free and romantic than drab and Victorian Hastings could offer.

Poor Kitty wasn't to enjoy her son for long, for her husband's two sisters took a liking to the boy and took charge of him without, as far as can be determined, making any allowance for Kitty's feelings.

Archie was enrolled in Hastings grammar school, where he was a clever student. He was a keen musician and at an early age displayed the skill with pen and pencil that would later help him to illustrate his own writings.

But respectability had little attraction for Archie Belaney, and in 1905, when he was only 17, he set out for Canada. For a time he worked in a Toronto store. Then, like so many adventurers of the time, he heard of the silver boom at Cobalt,

300 miles to the north, and along with bootleggers, stock promoters and some honest miners, he boarded the train.

No record can be found of him in the mining camp, but it doesn't seem likely that working underground by the light of flickering candles would have much attraction for a lad who claimed Apache blood in his veins.

Just 25 miles south of Cobalt, around Temagami, there were sparkling lakes and deep forests that Archie Belaney must have dreamed about as he played in the shrubbery of his aunt's prim home. And it was in Temagami that Archie Belaney met Angele Egwuna, a young and beautiful girl.

He married Angele, and in those early days they were happy. The Ojibwa people took the white man to their hearts and named him Wa Sha-Quon-Asin, which means He Who Walks by Night, or Grey Owl.

In **Men of the Last Frontier**, Belaney wrote: "A blood brother proved and sworn by moose head feast, wordless chant and ancient ritual, was I named before a gaily decorated and attentive concourse when Ne-ganik-abo, Man That Stands Ahead, whom none living remembered as a young man, danced the conjurer's dance, beneath the spruce trees, by an open fire, danced the ancient steps to the throb of drums, the wailing of reed pipes, the rhythmical stirring of turtle shell rattles: danced alone before a sacred bear skull, set beneath a painted rawhide shield, whose bizarre device might have graced the tomb of some long dead Pharaoh."

That Belaney was adopted into the tribe has been accepted by most authorities, and it is generally assumed that it was at Temagami. That the Ojibwa aren't enthusiastic about the memory of their distinguished adopted son is best explained by 75-year-old Charles Potts, who knew Angele and Belaney well.

"He was never adopted by the tribe," he states flatly. And Mr. Potts derides Belaney's colorful description of the ceremony.

But blood brother or not, it wasn't long before Grey Owl tired of Angele and set out north to the little village of Biscotasing. He had inherited his father's love of drinking, but was much in