

they had raised from kittens when their mother had been caught in one of Grey Owl's traps, formed the nucleus of this first colony.

For many months Grey Owl and Anahareo devoted all their energies to protecting the two beavers, which had built a lodge on the lake by the cabin in Témiscouata. Grey Owl began to write about his beaver friends. In 1929, an article he had written was accepted for publication in the British magazine, *Country Life*.

A further series of articles published in *Forest and Outdoors* magazine attracted the attention of the National Parks Service and a film crew was sent to Témiscouata to film Grey Owl and his beavers. Five films were made in all and they were widely shown in Europe and North America.

Shortly after, the National Parks Service began a beaver conservation program. Grey Owl was offered the job of caretaker for park animals in Riding Mountain National Park. The 1937-1938 estimates for Prince Albert National Park show that provision was made to pay \$1,320 to A. Belaney (Grey Owl) for his duties as caretaker of park animals and \$200 for special feed for the beaver.

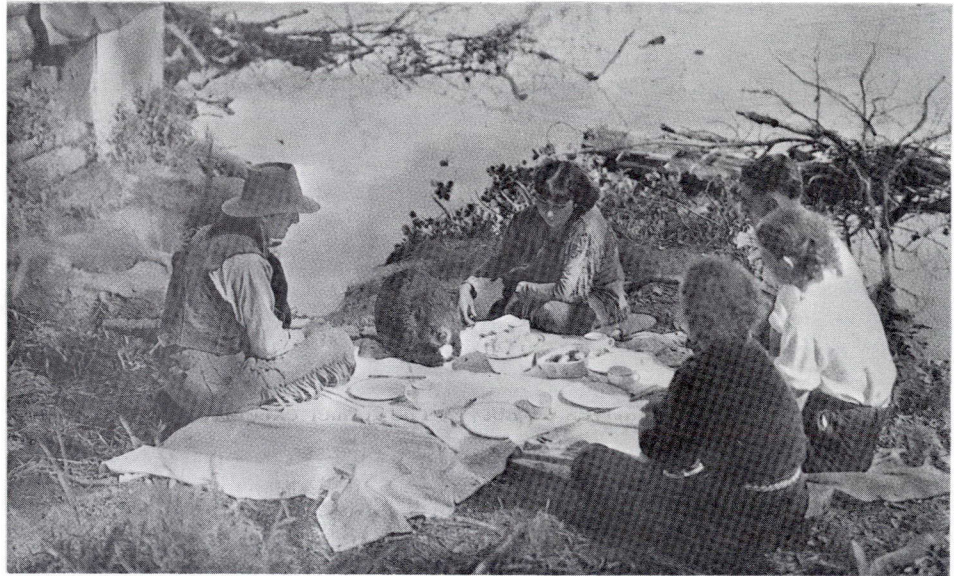
At first hesitant to relinquish his freedom, he accepted the offer to provide for the safety of the beaver....

The National Parks Service built a cabin to Grey Owl's specifications, with a hole in one side where the beaver could construct their lodge, with access both to the cabin and to the lake. In October of 1931, Grey Owl, Anahareo and beavers Jelly Roll and Rawhide, moved to their new home on the shore of Ajawaan Lake in Prince Albert National Park, Saskatchewan.

Books brought acclaim

During the next seven years, in Prince Albert National Park, Grey Owl did most of the writing which made him world famous as a conservationist.

In his four books, *Men of the Last Frontier*, *Pilgrims of the Wild*, *Tales of an Empty Cabin* and *Sajo and her Beaver People*, Grey Owl weaves a touching and often humorous tale of the antics of the beavers and of his and Anahareo's struggle to protect them. Grey Owl recalled one young beaver, "His whole short life of four months has been turned topsy-turvy, inside out,



Anahareo and Grey Owl bring their own Jelly Roll to a picnic in Prince Albert National Park, Saskatchewan.

and sideways. He had been transported hither and thither on trains and wagons, carried long distances in a box on his owner's back, and had finally spent two entire days in an empty camp stove. For a swimming pool he had a dish-pan, and for food he was fed pancakes.... And now suddenly, had come the end of a very eventful journey, and all was peace and quiet and contentment. In the creek that feeds the lake I fixed up an old beaver house, placed in it a quantity of food, and turned him loose. But he did not want to run wild. Each night before the ice came he was at the camp door at dark. And sometimes, as he regarded me gravely, sitting there at my feet, my heart went out to the little waif that did not want to be free, and I would pick him up and pass my hand over his rich fur, and he would sigh contentedly and fall immediately asleep, to dream of cool waters and mud, of poplar leaves and pancakes."

Living with beavers in the same cabin was not always easy. "They roam around the camp and, with no evil intent but apparently from just sheer joy of living take large slices out of table legs and chairs, nice long splinters out of the walls, and their progress is marked by little piles and strings of chips. This in the forepart of the evening. After 'lights out' the more serious work commences such as the removal of deerskin rugs, the transferring of firewood from behind the stove into the

middle of the floor, or the improvement of some waterproof footwear by the addition of a little openwork in the soles."

Concern for the wild

Grey Owl's concern was not just for the beaver but also for the protection of the wilderness. In an unpublished article written in 1931 he expresses his concern for the vanishing wilderness. "Why should the last of the silent places be destroyed ruthlessly whilst we stand by in listless apathy, without making an effort to save at least a few small areas of our forest in a state of nature, to be representative of the Canada that was during the most interesting period of her history...and to provide sanctuary for the spirit of the wild and for those of us, and they are not a few, who love to commune with Him and His furred and feathered people."

Lecture tour in Britain

Following the publication of *Pilgrims of the Wild* Grey Owl left for Britain on a lecture tour to "arouse public sympathy and understanding with a view to toleration of the lesser people (the animals of the world) in order that they may be better understood."

During a 1937 lecture tour Grey Owl was presented to King George VI and his young family, including the present Queen Elizabeth. Following his

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