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Nine Fox legends collected by Truman Michelson,
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1879

BUREAU OF AMERICAN ETHNOLOGY
CATALOGUE OF MANUSCRIPTS

Stock Algonquian

Language Fox

Dialect

Description: (words, vocabulary, dictionary, grammar, text, legends, notes)

Collector Dr. Michelson

Place Tama, Ia.

Date

Remarks 8 legends; listed on Card No. 2 in File.

When
We-sa-ke-fed wolves bees.

Once, a long time ago
lived we-sa-ke and his
grand mother, and one time
she said "grand ma, did
any of my uncles ever go
out and look about for
the enemies," and the
grand mother said "yes,
that's what your uncles
usually do." So he said
he was going away off,
and took along with
him a little kettle, he
started off on a war
path, seeking for the foe.
as he walked along he
became thirsty so he
stopped to get a drink of
water.

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When he looked down in
the water, he saw plums,
nice red plums down in

the water. They were red and looked so good as he was getting hungry.

Thoughtlessly he threw off his clothes and plunged down into the deep water. He grabbed a lot of small stones, put them in his mouth and swallowed them thinking they were plums he had seen. They seem to not have any taste but he was full of them so he got out of the water, just when he climbed on the banks of the river some thing picked him on the head, he looked up there was a plum tree loaded with the nicest red plums. It was the plum tree reflecting down in the water but he was foolish and dived down

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under the water. Then he discovered it was stones he swallowed instead of plums. He laughed and began to vomit out the stones, water and sand. He emptied his stomach where he had swallowed all sizes of small stones. Then he began eating the plums till he ate all the plums that were on the little plum tree.

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He - Sa - ke - finally got enough plums, so he went on his journey, he was going the direction east. It was getting late so he made a little bark hut to stop in, he stepped out a little ways there he killed a deer. It was

getting dark. He had killed
a nice fat deer, he brought
it in the bark hut and
began to dress it. He got
some long sharp poles
and cut his meat in pieces
on these poles. Then he
made a big fire, his
poles of meat all around
the fire to roast. As his
meat was roasting on
poles, it would ziss; every
once in awhile. The
wind was blowing to-
ward a camp and they
could smell roasted meat
and a ziss; sound every
time. And just as the
meat was cooked he took
one pole down and meat
off, just then it zissed
again, then he felt bad
as it would remind him of

his mother, so he put it
back down. When he was
going to pick it up again
some thing made a noise
up in the middle of his
hut. He climbed up and
here his hand got fastened
there, he just couldn't
pull it out. Just then
there were a lot of wolves
wandering around looking
for some thing to eat,
suddenly they smelled
some roasted meat, & it
smelled so good. So they
came to the barbs house.

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One wolf that was leading
tipped toed to the hut and
looked in at the door he
saw roasted meat just full
in there, he looked back
and whispered to the rest
"no one at home!" So

the rest came forward.
They filled the little hut.
Here the sa-ke was sit-
ting just above them watch-
ing them. He had a
stick in his hand red
with ashes on one end he
took from the fire, he
threw it on them, as they
rushed out in such a
hurry, frightened, they
run over one wolf who
became unconscious and
laid there. Just
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as the wolf came to and
looked up he saw the sa-
ke trying to pull his
hand out that was caught
between the limbs, his
hurt was made on. So
this wolf hollered out for
his brothers to come back,
that the sa-ke's hand

was fastened and could do nothing. So Ue-pa-ke had to give up and told this wolf he couldn't get his hand out. First I came up here to cool off for just a little while here my hand got caught he told him!

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So the wolves all came back in and had a big feast on his roasted deer meat, He told them not to eat his deer hide, but they did, they did not leave a drop nor a bite of anything. He ate also his kettle. Then they left. Here Ue-pa-ke was fastened there for two days. He was very angry just as quickly as he finally worked his hand

out, he ran back home
to his grandmother.

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When he got back home he
didn't bring one thing back
he had taken with him.

Then he told his grand
ma - about how the wolves
had eaten his deer meat
he had roasted. also his
deer hide, and kettle -
told her how he foolishly
allowed his hand to get
caught between the limbs,
for two days. So the grand
mother - just laughed at him.
So he went out for a walk
suddenly he saw a lot of
turkey's, he began singing,
"my brothers, my brothers,"
with red collars, and on
these turkeys began to
dance as hard as they could

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- 10 -

and while they were dancing he threw out a cow hide rope he had made, caught them all by their necks and killed them. There were two of these real large turkeys. He took the water bag out of these and filled them with bees. He found a bee hive so he filled these two large bags just full of bees. Just what he was expecting these wolves found out he was bringing big game home. So they ran ahead of his path.

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Here just as he expected they stopped him and beg of him, so he told them to all open their mouths at once and to stand

as close together as they could - and grab with their mouths and bite all at once that he was going to feed them with some thing awfully good. So they were too willing to be fed and done just as he said.

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"Now all at once" he said just when they were going to open their mouths he threw these bags. Just as they were swallowing it it was an awful sight they were all hurt pretty badly. Some rolled over and over on the ground, they acted awful as the bees stung them pretty bad. And they swallowed the most of them. He ran home to tell the

old lady of how he
paid the wolves back
that had eaten up his
meat one time. Now he
had killed most of them
by feeding them bees.

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He kept telling his grand
mother over and over the
story of how he paid back
the wolves who was always
stealing around, how funny
it was to see them rolling
around on the ground
after they had swallowed
so many bees. But finally
the old woman got angry,
We-sa-ke - asked her why
she said it was because
they were her brothers.
He said "you helped kill my
brother I didn't get mad,"
so she said, "well, I was
just saying that."

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He said "why did you mention it, in the first place," So after they said these words, he went away again. These snakes were always bothering him and as he was walking along there stood a tree it looked like a snake and looked right at him so he got so angry, he pulled the tree up by the roots and threw it far off, another stood close, he done the same with it. This is the way to do, he said. So he went home.

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and told his grand ma, about the trees that he pulled them up by the roots and threw them away. and again the

old lady didn't like it at all. That the grand-child scolded her for being so afraid of every thing. She taught him every trees were holy and every thing.

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He told her they look so much like snakes and as if they were going to jump on him. He said he was in charge of the earth and would do as he pleased. That he was tired of the old woman feeling bad and angry every time he killed something or had done something. So she did not say any more -

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So he made a whip. He took a raw hide and

cut it up in a stripe for
a whip, he made a
strong whip. He explained
to the old woman he was
going to start out and
kill some animals that
had done away and
killed his uncles and
aunts. As he started
out, he first saw a
stork it started after
him but he used his
whip and whipped it,
so it flew away. Every
time he saw birds or any
thing flying he would whip
them, the birds and fowls
use to be tame but it was
We-sa-ke-who scared them
with his whip - the reason
they fly away soon as a
person get close to them.
The End.



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