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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.

Feather

There lived, once
upon a time, a
long time ago, feather
and his father,
that he lived with.

This man hunted
all the time, and
this boy Feather had
to fast most of the
time. One day the
father was going out
on his usual hunt
he told the boy he
could pop corn if
he got hungry, and
his father said to
pop only two hun-

dred kernels, not
any more. But
the boy thought he
would get enough
on that many he
would pop more.

- 2 -

So he done as he
wished he popped
a lot more than
he was told, He
began popping them
as he kept putting
them in a little
dish, soon he had
a large pile but
kept on, soon it
filled there fire
place, he threw
the corn and ran
out side, he stood

a little ways and
looked on. as he
looked on they began
to come thru the
holes of the wig-wam
the smoke came
thru, (sky light).
as they popped out
there was a big
pile of pop corn
where their wig
wam stood. soon
the man came
home

- 3 -

From quite a
distance where he
was coming he
could see a large
white hill where

stood their wig-
wam, he thought,
Well, I guess that
naughty boy has
done some things.

Soon as the
man got close
he grabbed the
boy and beat
him up with his
hands. He told
him I said "just
pop a little".

So this boy took
his bow and arrows
"I am going away
where never I die
it will be alright
he tho't."

This is why boys go any where, little boys. Then the man began to look around for feather, he called and called for him till night came but feather did not come home. So the man got angry he said he would kill the little boy his son if he caught him. He started off on a chase after him

he looked all day
till night.

5 -

There was a ditch there he layed down and went to sleep. And the next morning he awakened and had eaten his lunch he started on his search just across the ditch, his boy had slept. He could see his tracks and where he had made a bed. Well, he said, "I missed him just a little."

"If I had gone a little bit further I would have got him." So he went on. Just at night again there was a large tree, he layed down to sleep again. Just on the other side the boy had slept again.

- 6 -

When morning came again just on the other side of the tree he saw where the boy had slept. "Well, this is where he slept he

said again. He went on again on his search.

The same thing happened again he slept near a brush and just the other side the boy had rested that night.

The next morning he found out he had been so close to the boy again. In the morning he went on then he saw him he started on run but

he just couldn't
hardly run. He
just nearly caught
up to the boy.

- 7 -

But he couldn't
run any more
he was tired out
so he stopped
and stood still
awhile. While he
was standing
there he turned
into a great big
tree. This man
wore green legging
s, he was dressed
mostly in green
that is why trees
are green and

limbs. and this
feather kept on
going. Until he
came to a river
there he saw some
insides of some
thing floating in
the water. It
was night then
so he layed down
to sleep again.

In the morning
he went on in
his flight again.
Soon the next
day at evening
he saw, insides of
some animal or
something floating

in the river there
he stoped and
went to sleep
over night.

- 8 -

When he got up
in the morning
in the river he
saw insides real
fresh, he went up
the river a little
ways, when he
looked up he
saw a great big
long wick-i-up.
He walked up to
it and went in-
side and sat down.
Soon as he sat in

side some one
came in. It was
a man. This
man asked him
where he came
from. He told
him about him
running away from
his father that
he got a beating
from him. He
told every thing
that had happened.
So this man
told feather to
stay there he
would be as a
father to him.
The man said
there were ten in
all.

- 9 -

So he told this boy he was going to hid him until all his brothers came. He told this little boy, when I say, "come out" then you show up. So he said "alright." Soon afterward all his brothers came back there were ten men in all. He said "what do you think I have found," "If any one of you can

guess what I
have found you
may have it." So
they all began
to name differ-
ent things. Not
one guessed. So
he said out,
Show up.

- 10 -

So the little boy
climbed out of his
hidden place.

The brothers to this
man were all glad
they all grabbed
him and put
him. The men
all spoke up and

said "we shall keep him here and have him as our little brother". So the first man said alright." So his duty was to stay home and keep up the home as they all went out on a hunt each day. So he done as he was told. If you ever get scared -

- 11 -

Here are some arrows with real

sharp arrow heads
you may use."

His brothers" said.

So from day to
day all the time
he stayed home
alone, he soon
learned how to
cook. Then he use
to prepare the
meat and cooked
it for his brothers.

One day he step
ped out for a
walk to the river
there Wick-i-up-
was near the
river. He saw
floating in the

water.

12 -

He saw a red
swan swimming
on the water,
he used his own
arrow and started
to shooting at it.

Feather used up
all his arrows,
he tho't of what
his brothers said,
he ran to the
wick-i-up-and
got the real sharp
arrows - he shot
the swan and hit
him, when he
had hit him

the second time
it fell out and
away it flew.

-13-

It just barely
flew away, so he
began to chase it.
He chased until
it was dark there
he came to a
real large village.

The people saw
him and remarked
"there comes Feather".

As he came close
some said "take
him to the Chiefs
wick-i-up - so he
was taken to the

Chief. right away
he was given a
woman who was
one of the Chiefs
daughters. The next
day he departed
he left her there
and told her he
would be back
after her later.

So he ran and
ran till he came
to another village.

- 14 -

It was evening
the people looked
and said again
O, there comes
Feather, once more

he was taken to
the chiefs wig-wam
he was given the
chiefs daughter.

The next morning
he asked about the
red swan, he was
told that it had
just flew by going
south not very
high in the air.

So he left the
woman there and
departed promising
to come back
after her.

- 15 -

The following day
he reached a village

there he was given
a chiefs daughter
the third woman
he had been given
where he was
taken to the chiefs
wick-i-up - there
he departed prom-
ising to come for
her soon. He
asked about the
red swan again
he was told that
it had just flew
by. He said it is
the one I am
chasing. He went
on until he came

to the tenth Vill-
age and the same
thing happened in
all. And he came
to a small wick-
i-up-when he
got up close to it-
He was peeping
in at the door.

- 16 -

There inside sat
an old man who
asked him why
he was looking in
He asked him
about the red
swan, the old
man said "he

had not seen any
one fly by. The
old man said "I
was int out side
any way," so he
laughed. Then the
old man spoke
up and said "My
grand child it is
my wish that you
come here. This
boy looked to the
back of the wick-
i-up- there layed
the red swan
with all his arrows.

"Now I am going
to send you on a
real dangerous
errand.

-17 -

this is why I
thought of you.
I want you to go
and get me a
scalp, it is very
hard tho'.

The old man gave
him some Indian
tobacco and told
him what to do,
as he went along
his path on each
side there would
be stirring at
him large snakes,
these would throw
Indian tobacco to.
Soon he came to
the end of his

trail there he
found a den of
awful snakes
and real large
ones too. and in
the middle he
saw the scalp
he was told about.

He remembered the
old man who called
him "grand child!"
his "grand pa," did
not have any hair
on his head.

Where these snakes
lived was very
dangerous no one
even little birds

could not fly by
that the snakes
that were guard-
ing the den would
surely kill them.
So the old man
put a lot of red
paint on his head
or red earth.

And this boy got
close and the
snakes that were
guarding all began
to crawl away.
There was a
spider's web
woven all around
clear into the den.
As these guards

were going away
frightened he
climbed the spider
web weaver into
the den. He was
just coming out
when the snakes
inside saw him.
There, he goes
with the scalp,
chase him, catch
him and bring
him, they all
cried out. But
he ran as fast
as he could, and
hollered to his
grandpa as he
was getting close

for him to put
red earth on his
head, he done it.

- 20 -

As he ran inside
of the old man's
wig worn he threw
the scalp on top
of his head and
placed it back.

The old man
was very happy
he had his hair
back and he told
Feather he could
go home, to stop
on his way and
get all the ten
women that were

given him. To give
a few red feathers
to each place. That
was given him by
the old man.

That ²¹ what was left
of the red feathers
he was to take to
his home and
place behind his
bedding the feathers
and leave them
there. So he started
home and gathered
and took all the
ten women that
were given him.

When he reached
home he told

his brothers he
had a wife for
each of them
Then the oldest
of the men.

- 22 -

said I will have
the first choice of
which shall be
my wife. So he
picked out the
prettiest one to
be his wife and
the next on down
till they all had
picked out the one
they wanted.

Peather had no
choice he took

the one that was
lifted and soon the
oldest of the
brothers hated and
thought evil of
feather and was
determined to kill
him the first
chance he got. So
not far away was
a ditch there he
planned to kill
Feather. When he
came back he said
he found a queer
looking object in
a ditch and told
where so they all
went to see but

Feather, he knew
his oldest brother
hated him so he
did not go along.

23

While all the
men went to
the ditch, Feather
stayed home with
the women as
he suspicioned
his brothers plan.
He told all these
women to go back
to their homes
right away. So
these women all
left and while
these men were

over to a ditch
looking in a
very deep hole,

- 24 -

Feather came along
as he looked in
the hole the old
est of the men
pushed him in.
There was water
in the hole he
went under the
water and became
unconscious. He
soon came to,
there he was holl-
ering, some one
spoke to him.
Who said, "What

are you doing here,
you are foolish!"
again he hollered
and some one
said "arent you
bashful to be carr-
ing on like this,"

- 25 -

When he came to
himself again, he
looked up there he
saw a woman
standing there.
and he saw a wick-
i-up there also,
He was able to get
out and walked
to the wick-i-up.
This woman was

there also, he thought
to himself, "I wish
I could marry this
woman," and
this woman spoke
up and said, "We
will." This is
what Feather done
that is why most
young men do
this very thing
which was done
by Feather.

The End.



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