

THE LEGEND OF TAHOE

By Nonette V. McColashan

The old Indian woman glanced at the distant sky line, and entered her gaze upon the deep waters of the lake. The Ong? I will tell you of the Ong? It was a huge bird, greater than the houses of the white men. Its wings were longer than the tallest man, its face was that of an Indian, but covered with hard scales, and its feet were webbed. Its nest was deep down in the bottom of the lake, in the center, and out of the water, it raised all of the waters which were in the lake. There are no rivers to the lake, only the waters flow out near the bottom. In great undercurrents, and after passing through the narrow neck of the lake, the waters flow out into the bay. Every plant and bird and animal that gets into these undercurrents, and sometimes even the great whales are swept into the meshes of the nest and are there held fast to furnish food for the Ong.

warriors around the council fire. All day long he had been sitting alone on the jutting cliffs which overhang the water, far away from the laughter and shouts of the camp, eagerly, prayerfully watching the great lake. Surely the Great Spirit would hear his prayer and give him the moment he longed for, yet he had been here for days and weeks in unavailing prayer and waiting.

The afternoon was well-nigh spent, and the heart of the young brave had grown cold as stone. In his bitter despair he sprang to his feet to defy and curse the Great Spirit to whom he had trusted, but ere he could utter the words his very soul stood still for joy. Slowly rising from the center of the lake, he saw the dreaded Ong. Circling high in the heavens like a vast shapeless thunder-cloud, black as the night the monster swept, now here, now there in search of prey. The young brave stood erect. When the Ong was nearest, he waved his arm to attract its notice. He had not long to wait. With a mighty swoop and an awful rushing noise the bird dashed to earth, and as it swept upward, the young brave was seen by all to be

as were drowned in these waters, for their bodies were carried to the Ong's nest and no mortal ever escaped him. Sometimes he would appear about the shores in quest of some victim of woman, and was never known to attack anyone in camp, or when two or more were together. No arrow could pierce his feathers, nor could the strongest spear do more than bounce from the scales on his face and neck, yet hisraven's heart made him fatal, for his toes had no claws, and a mouth no beak.

Like one fall the Washoe Indians were making their final hunt before the close of the valleys and leaving the landlocked in its winter snows. The chief's daughter was sixteen years old, and before leaving the lake he selected the greatest hero in the tribe for her husband, for such had been the custom of the Washoe chiefs ever since the tribe came out of the Sierran. Fairer than ever Indian women had been this daughter, and every unmarried brave and warrior in the tribe wished that he had performed deeds of greater prowess, that he might be certain of winning her. That last night at the lake, around the big council fire, which was burning to the pipe and recount to the tribe the noblest achievement of his life, and when all were heard, the women in the circle and the wedding feast looked forward to this event and the tribe had become famed because of the reckless daring performed by those who hoped to wed the chief's lovely daughter.

On the morning of the final day, the great game and great stores of food and trout were packed ready for the start. All were preparing for the wedding festivities, and the fact that no one knew who would be the bridegroom among all that mighty band of warriors, lent intense excitement to the event. All were joyous and happy, except the maiden and the handsome young brave to whom she had been betrothed. In spite of custom and tradition, her love had long since turned to one whose feet had been planted to press the war path when the tribe gave battle to their Sierran foes, the Plutos. He never dreamed of a deed of valor, nor could he

clasp fast in its talons. A great cry of horror arose from the camp, but it was the sweetest note the young brave had ever heard. The bird flew straight up into the sky until it became a mere speck to the unaided beholders below. When it reached a great height it would drop its prey into the lake and let the current draw it to the nest. Such was its custom, and for this the young Indian had prepared by unwinding from his waist a long buckskin cord, and tying himself firmly to the Ong's legs. The clumsy feet could not grasp him so tightly as to prevent his movements. At last the great feet of the bird opened wide, and he fell. Again they closed and opened, and the enraged bird thrust down his head to see why his victim refused to fall. In a mighty rage the Ong tried to grasp the man in its mouth, but the strong web between the set bird's toes sheltered him. Again and again the bird tried to use his horrid teeth, and each time his huge body would fall through the air in such twistings and contortions that those who watched below stared in bewilderment. But what the watchers could not see was that every time the huge mouth opened to snap at him, he poured arrow heads into the mouth, and down the big throat, the unrepentant cutting deep into the unrepentant flesh. The bird tried to dislodge him by rubbing his feet together, but the thong held firm. Now he plunged headlong into the lake, but his feet were tied so that it could not swim, and though it lashed the waters into foam with its great wings and though the man was nearly drowned and exhausted, the poison caused the great bird such agony that it suddenly arose and tried to escape by flying toward the center of the lake. The contest had lasted long,

and the darkness crept over the lake, and into the darkness the Ong vanished.

The women had been long in their huts ere the council fire was kindled, and the warriors gravely seated themselves in its circle. The loss of a young brave could not be allowed to interfere with so important an event as the marriage choice, and from most of their minds he had vanished. It was not so very unusual for the Ong to claim a victim, and besides, the youth had been many times warned by his elders that he should not go hunting alone as had been his habit of late.

But while the warriors were working themselves up to a frenzy of eloquence over their bygone deeds of daring, an Indian maiden was paddling a canoe swiftly and silently toward the middle of the lake. Nona, the Chief's daughter, understood no more than the rest why her lover had not been dropped into the lake, nor why the Ong had acted so queerly, but she knew that she could die with her lover. She took her own trail canoe because it was so light and easy to paddle, though it was made for her when a girl, and would scarcely support her weight now. It mattered nothing to her if the water splashed over the sides; it mattered nothing how she reached her lover. She kept saying his name over softly to herself, "Tahoe! My own Tahoe!"

When the council had finished, the old women went to the Chief's hut to bid his daughter come and bear the decision her father was about to render. Their consternation was great, nor did the tribe rest until the rosy dawn tinged the Washoe peaks and disclosed to the warriors the vast body of the Ong floating on the waters above its nest, and beside it a tiny, empty canoe. But gently approaching the shore was the strongest craft that ever floated on water. It was one of the Ong's great wings, and the sail was the tip of the other wing! Standing upon it clasped in each other's arms, was the young brave Tahoe and the daughter of the chief. In the shouts of the tribe, shouts in which warriors and women and children mingled their voices with that of the great Chief, Tahoe knew that he was the hero, and that Nona was his bride. The decision was rendered, but the Ong's nest still remained, and to this day the drowned man was risen in Lake Tahoe.

SIX HUNDRED DOLLAR BILLS.

How An Innocent Man was Suspected.

A little story was told at the New Willard Hotel in Washington the other day by a New Yorker who was traveling on a Pullman car between St. Louis and his home, which goes to show the danger of convicting a man on circumstantial evidence. The principal figure in this incident was not convicted, but had it not been for a fortuitous circumstance it might have gone hard with him.

"It seems that one of the occupants of the car on getting out of his berth to dress missed his vest, which was a rather serious affair, inasmuch as it contained in an inside pocket a roll of money which consisted of six brand-new \$100 bills.

"A little later he picked up the garment on the floor, but on searching, the roll of money was gone. It was a clear case of robbery, and the man naturally raised an excited outcry, which drew the attention of all his fellow-travelers. Early in the game the proposition to search everybody in that coach was made and adopted with but a single dissenting voice. One man stood out fiercely and indignantly against it, and said that he would never consent to such an indignity, but would oppose it with all the force he could employ.

"This man was at once an object of suspicion, and many whispers directed at him went around. Every other individual aboard voluntarily submitted to being searched, yet nothing was seen of the stolen bills. At this point some amateur Sherlock Holmes cornered the porter, and by adroit questions and threats made that rascally employe own up to the left, and also made him disgorge \$600 in handsome notes that appeared to be right from the Printing Bureau. The owner of the money was overjoyed and all hands congratulated him on recovering his money.

"About this time the obdurate gentleman who had resolutely declined to be searched secured the floor. 'Now, my friends,' said he, 'I will tell you why I risked your suspecting me of the theft, and what did this man do but go down in his hip pocket and fetch up a roll of money that he counted out in our presence, and, as sure as I am a living man, in this roll there were just six—no more and no less—brand-new bills, each of \$100 denomination. Positively there was no way of telling them from the bills that had been recovered. Then we all knew why he had declined to be investigated.'

Brief Thanks to the Ladies.

Jonesboro (Ark.) Evening Sun.

The members of the Citizens' Band ask the ladies who gave the supper for the benefit of the band on Wednesday night, August 8, to please accept their sincere thanks. It is the wish of every member that when these good ladies have done all the good deeds here that God would have them do, that they be gathered home to join the heavenly band, where all be joy, happiness, and good music, which all who live as these good ladies have lived shall enjoy, and may the influence of these good ladies ever guide the members of the Citizens' Band to a higher stand of morality and fame, and may we never cease striving until we have reached the topmost round of the ladder of fame, when God, in His wisdom, shall call us home, and when we have played our last tune here on earth, may we be gathered with these good ladies around God's throne, where we can play on God's instruments of gold, where our music will be sweeter, through the ceaseless ages of eternity.

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CHICKAMAUGA ANNIVERSARY.

One of the Great Battles of the Rebellion—Tragic Death of Post-Soldier General Lytle.

Forty-two years ago the latter part of September was fought and won by Rosecrans the great battle of Chickamauga.

Chattanooga, the objective point of the campaign, has been well considered the very gateway of the entire South. Bragg, in command of the Confederate force, was outwitted and outmaneuvered, and the town of Chattanooga fell into Federal hands, entirely by strategy.

Chattanooga was then but a poor, struggling village, never having been even heard of by one in a thousand of those who composed the Northern army. It is now a wealthy, prosperous city of over 60,000 inhabitants and the home of many Northern families. An electric line runs from the city to Chickamauga Park every 30 minutes.

The celebration of the anniversary of the battle, from the 19th to the 23d of September, where the tales of the campaign and the pocket line were once more recounted, has been of surprising interest to thousands of old veterans and their quondam foes.



BRIGADIER-GENERAL WM. H. LYTLE.

The battle of Chickamauga, which followed Chattanooga, was most desperately contested on both sides.

Bragg was reinforced by a veteran corps from Virginia, under Longstreet, and Buckner's Corps from East Tennessee, until his forces outnumbered Rosecrans' by over 12,000, and yet the Northern army, by wise and vigorous marching day and night over mountains and through passes, and by the concentration of widely scattered forces, inflicted such terrible losses that Bragg was incapable of any but the most cautious following when Rosecrans fell back to occupy Chattanooga, for which he had been contending.

Among the many brave officers on both sides who gave up their lives for their beloved causes there was none braver, none more mourned than the Union Brigadier-General, Wm. H. Lytle. About to give the order to charge, he was struck in the head by a bullet and fell dying in the arms of his aid.

His poem of "Anthony and Cleopatra," generally believed to have been composed the night before the battle, but which, as a matter of fact, was an earlier production, has been classed as one of the most masterly lyrics in American poetry.

I Am Dying Egypt, Dying.

I am dying Egypt, dying,
Ebbes the crimson life-tide fast,
And the dark, Plutonian shadows
Gather on the evening blast.
Let thine arm, oh! Queen, support
me.
Hush thy sobs and bow thine ear,
Harken to the great heart secrets,
Thou, and thou alone, must bear.
Though my scarred and veteran
leaves
Bear their eagles, high no more,
And my wrecked and shattered
galley
Strew dark Actium's fatal shore;
Though no glittering guards surround me,
Prompt to do their master's will,
I must perish like a Roman—
Die, the great Triumvir still.
Let not Caesar's servile minions
Mock the lion thus laid low;
'Twas no foeman's hand that slew
him,
'Twas his own that struck the blow.
Here, then, pillowed on thy bosom,
Ere his star fades quite away,
Him who, drunk with thy caresses,
Madly flung a world away!
Should the base plebeian rabble
Dare assail my fame at Rome,
Where the noble spouse, Octavia,
Weeps within her widowed home;
Seek her—say the Gods have told me,
Alas, Alas, circling wings,
That her blood with mine commingled,
Yet shall mount the throne of
kings.
And for thee, star-eyed Egyptian!
Glorious sorceress of the Nile,
Light the path to stygian honors
With the splendors of thy smile.
Give the Caesar crowns and arches,
Let his brow the laurel twine;
I can scorn the Senate's triumphs,
Triumphing in love like thine.
I am dying Egypt, dying!
Mark! insulting foeman's cry;
They are coming—quick, my falchion!
Let me frost them ere I die.
Ah! no more amid the battle
Shall my heart exulting swell;
Iris and Osiris guard thee,
—farewell!
—farewell!

Nursery Nonsense.

Two magpies sat on a garden rail
As long ago as a week;
And one little magpie wagged his tail
In the other little magpie's beak.
Then doubling like a fat his little
claw hand
Said the other "Upon my word,
This is more than flesh and blood can
stand.
'Froon magpie or other bird,"
So they picked and they scratched
each other's eyes
And all that was left on the rail
Was the beak of one of the little mag-
pies.

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