their elocution, as evidenced in any one of the orations discussed in the book; leaders were often selected according to their ability to arouse "emotion by means of telling metaphorical comparisons."

Chapters two to six are divided according to cultural events such as the arrival of missionaries between 1820 and 1850. The result of this proselytizing was a break from the oral tradition and the beginning of Canadian natives writing in English. George Copway was the first Canadian native to publish a book in English. As noted by Petrone, George Copway's book was reprinted six times, and lauded by such notable friends as Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and James Fenimore Cooper.

With the ability to use the English language also came the beginning of written dissent, particularly with the Canadian Indian policy that practices elimination through assimilation. Moreover, as Petrone acknowledges, the "literature of Canada's native peoples has always been quintessentially political, addressing their persecutions and betrayals and summoning their resources for resistance." Chapter three –1850 to 1914 – explores the coercive policy of the Canadian Indian acts. With the exception of Pauline Johnson, few natives attained wide literary exposure, even though there were many books written and many eminent native leaders expressing their points of view; "Victorian society in Canada was not ready to listen to its native peoples."

The explosion of creative writing begins during the 1970s. Chapter five discusses the turning point in the development of literature by natives. Giving a brief analysis of works by prominent native writers, Petrone attempts to illustrate the vast range of creative writing. Chapter six continues this discussion but focuses more on the specific texts of writers such as Beatrice Culleton, Jeanette Armstrong, Tompson Highway and Thomas King.

With the growing awareness and popularity of Canadian native writers comes an urgent need to provide a context in which to understand their work – not only to expose the nuances of native writing, its antecedents and history, but to recognize that it has made and is making, a significant contribution to Canadian literature. "European classifications are inadequate," Petrone suggests. As a non-native, I find *Native literature in Canada* provides a useful historical context, and "for Indian writers that context is both ritualistic and historical, contemporary and ancient."

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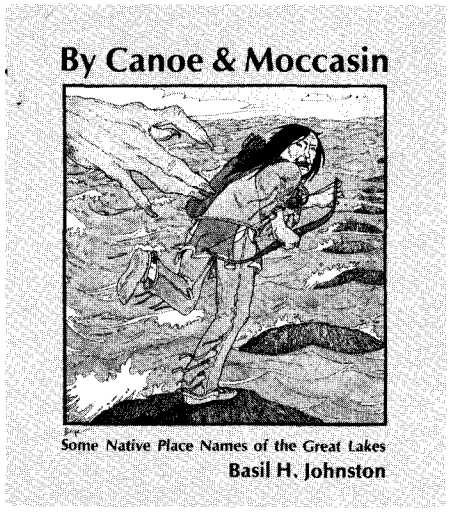
FROM THE NATIVE HERITAGE

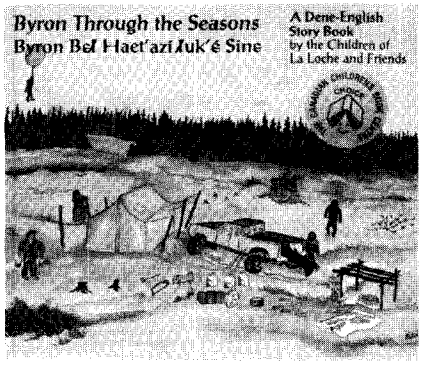
By canoe and moccasin: Some native place names of the Great Lakes. Basil H. Johnston. Illus. David Bayer. Waapone Publishing, 1988. 45 pp., $9.95 paper. ISBN 0-9692185-1-6; **Byron through the seasons: A Dene-English**

story book. The children of La Loche and friends. Fifth House, 1990. Unpag., $14.95 cloth. ISBN 0-920079-60-1; **Giving: Ojibwa stories and legends**. The children of Curve Lake. Ed., Georgia Elston. Waapone, 1985. 56 pp., $7.95 paper. ISBN 0-9692185-0-8.



Basil Johnston's not inconsiderable skills as a storyteller are tested and pass with flying colours in this didactic little collection of Ojibway legends about Nanabush and his old grandmother N'okimiss. The stories reveal the original names of various places around the Great Lakes, and although at first the integration of the native names and their meanings into the texts seems a little laborious, Johnston's control of the pace manages to save the sense of the picaresque that is inherent in the legends. Nine short stories, which include "Nanabush nearly drowns," "Nanabush flies with the geese," and "Nanabush challenges a Weendigo," explain how Lake Winnipeg came to be murky, how the islands of Georgian Bay were formed, and how the Giant Beaver flooded Wisconsin.

Regrettably, the illustrations in this book are uninspired and the map at the front is clearly inadequate, but an Ontario highway map is all that is needed to bring the stories alive. As always, Johnston aims at scholars of all ages, and the inclusion of a one-page pronunciation key can keep anyone busy for an entire afternoon. The additional editor's note and photograph of a skeleton of a prehistoric giant beaver is a delightful bonus that anchors the stories in actual fact, while providing food for the imagination. A child who has seen the teeth on this monster will never lose sleep over mere bogey-men again.



Byron through the seasons, the second in the delightful Byron picture book series, was produced by a group of Dene children with help from their teachers and elders. The English text is simple and appropriate, a brief delineation of the hunting and gathering process as it is still practiced in northern communities, and the Dene text looks intriguingly exotic. However, the real strength is in the illustrations. How the editors managed to make the

work of eight different children so complementary is a mystery, but the result is a series of bright, naïve scenes of everyday life in the settlement and bush. The trucks, skidoos, chain saws, and ATVs are drawn with loving precision, and the log cabins, canvas tents and pre-fab houses fairly shout "home" at you from every page.

Each page depicts a complex scene of activity – people carrying water, scraping moose hides, cutting ice – and floating through the top of each picture is a small, enigmatic, faceless figure, hanging from a bright red balloon. Even without having read the previous book in the series, we know this is Byron, dreaming himself out of the school library to the sound of his grandfather's voice. The supplementary information on Dene life found at the back of the book may attract older children and teachers, but it is the photographs of the children who did the artwork that is likely to mesmerize younger readers.

Giving: Ojibwa stories and legends is a much less ambitious book than *Byron through the seasons*, and a less successful one, but it still has something to offer. The stories are short, and lively, with very few false notes, and the children's illustrations are attractively simple, but the editor has been overambitious in her contribution. We get an introduction that is occasionally interesting but poorly organized, acknowledgements that run to two full pages and include such marginal figures as her son, who though "deep in his law studies, gave me heartening encouragements and sage suggestions," and an insert on the history of the Abnishinabe of Curve Lake which includes some confusing statements. The photographs are cramped and muddy, and the map inside the back cover is inadequate, but the real pity is that the children and their stories get rather lost in the flurry of information about the editor.

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NANCY DREW FRANCOPHONE

Le Corbeau. Chrystine Brouillet. Illus. Philippe Brochard. Montréal, La courte échelle, 1990. 93 pp., broché. ISBN 2-89021-132-0.

Le Corbeau est le troisième roman policier pour enfants de Chrystine Brouillet mettant en vedette le jeune détective amateur Catherine Marcoux. Cette