

Time voyagers: an annotated checklist of juvenile books involving fantastic journeys in Canadian history

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Ever since the publication of Rudyard Kipling's *Puck of Pook's Hill* in 1906, and its sequel, *Rewards and fairies*, four years later, numerous juvenile writers have utilized some form of time travel to provide children with a stronger sense of involvement with their nation's past. Presumably, if young readers could be made to identify with present day children who directly encounter the heroes of history, an otherwise dull subject would become entertaining and inspiring.

In Kipling's first time travel book, a brother and sister, Dan and Una, meet a fairy who introduces them to various figures who emerge from British history and recount stirring adventures. Not surprisingly, the first Canadian example of this fantasy sub-genre, Clifford Wilson's *Adventurers' all* (1933), is modelled closely on Kipling's work. In fact, Wilson's novel opens with two children, Peter and Joyce, reading aloud from *Puck of Pook's Hill* just before they enjoy their own encounters with great men from Canada's past. Wilson departs from Kipling's formula to some degree by dispensing with Puck, the source of magic.

However, the magician is very much present in the second such Canadian novel, John Buchan's *Lake of gold* (1941), in the person of the Cree Indian, Negog. Like Wilson, Buchan is clearly inspired by Kipling but instead of bringing his heroes from the past to the present, he allows his protagonist, Donald, to witness thrilling incidents from Canadian history just as one would watch a motion picture.

The third Canadian time fantasy, though, Julia L. Sauer's *Fog magic* (1943), represents a completely different approach. Not only is there no Puck figure evident in the novel but Sauer goes a step further than Buchan and actually sends her main character back in time. Furthermore, the intent of her work is obviously much less didactic than that of her predecessors, focussing more on individual growth and social history.

Interestingly enough, all subsequent contributors to this sub-genre who have concerned themselves with Canadian history have been women. Moreover, with the exception of Mary F. Moore, they have all chosen to transport contemporary kids back in time. What all these writers would seem to have in common is a belief that children find a special delight in experiencing the past through modern eyes.

By combining historical and fantasy fiction they have created a compelling magic, involving not journeys to fantasy realms, but rather fantastic voyages between different periods of the Canadian reality.

Bradford, Karleen. *The other Elizabeth*. Toronto: Gage, 1982, 160 pp., illustrated by Deborah Drew-Brook. — During a visit to Upper Canada Village with her Grade Seven class, 13 year-old Elizabeth Duncan travels back in time, living the life of her great-great-great-grandmother during the days preceding the Battle of Crysler's Farm on November 11, 1813.

Buchan, John. *Lake of gold*. Toronto: Musson, 1941, 189 pp., illustrated by S. Levenson. Retitled: *The long traverse*. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1941, 245 pp., illustrated by J. Morton Sale. — The magic of Negog, a Cree Indian, permits Donald, who is on vacation in Bellefleurs, Quebec, to peer into time and witness scenes from Canada's past involving Jacques Cartier, the Norsemen, coureurs de bois, the Nor'-Westers, Indian warriors, Simon Fraser, and the Toonits, first aboriginal people of the North.

Cook, Lyn. *The magical Miss Mittens*. Toronto: Macmillan, 1970, 233 pp., illustrated by Mary Davies. — While spending a winter with their grand-parents in Granville Ferry, Nova Scotia, Jimsy, Kate, and Colin meet a mysterious woman who provides them with a pair of magical mittens that transport them into the past to witness important events in Canadian and world history: the establishment of the Habitation at Port Royal, a Viking landing in Newfoundland, the signing of the Magna Carta, the childhood of Abraham Lincoln, the imprisonment of Socrates, an early slavetrading expedition, Jacques Cartier's departure for the New World, the Expulsion of the Acadians, a Shakespearean production at the Globe Theatre, and the burial of Captain Kidd's treasure.

Hearn, Emily (writer) & Mark Thurman (artist). *Mighty mites in dinosaur land*. Toronto: Greedy de Pencier Books, 1981, 48 pp. — In the course of a visit to Dinosaur Provincial Park located in the badlands of Alberta, three children — who have the ability to shrink at will, are catapulted into the age of the dinosaurs, 75 million years ago.

Kellerhals-Stewart, Heather. *Stuck fast in yesterday*. Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1983, 135 pp. — A reluctant visit to a photographic exhibition at the Royal Ontario Museum leads Jennifer Martz to travel to 1909, spending an eventful year with a farm family while being pursued by the ominous Mr. Blackwood, a mysterious photographer who seeks to trap her in time.

Laurence, Margaret. *The olden days coat*. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1979, 40 pp., illustrated by Muriel Wood. — While rummaging in a trunk of heirlooms, Sal finds an old coat which transports her back in time for a Christmas encounter with her grandmother as a ten-year-old girl.

Lunn, Janet. *The root cellar*. Toronto: Lester & Orpen Dennys, 1981, 247 pp. — Rose Larkin, an orphaned 12 year-old girl from New York City, goes to live with her aunt in Hawthorn Bay, Ontario, where she discovers a root cellar in which she shifts into the 1860s, eventually embarking on a dangerous trip to Washington in search of a Canadian boy who fought for the Union Army in the American Civil War.

Moore, Mary F. *Canadian magic*. London: Sylvan Press, 1945, 137 pp., illustrated by Biro. Canadian Edition: Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, [c1946], 155 pp., illustrated by Lloyd Scott. — Priscilla Wright, an English orphan, is visited by the Spirit of Canada, who, in various personae, entertains her with stories about Indians, explorers, and other figures from Canadian history.

Sauer, Julia L. *Fog magic*. New York: Viking Press, 1943, 107 pp. — During World War II in Nova Scotia, Greta Addington discovers Blue Cove, a nineteenth century Bay of Fundy village, when she wanders over North Mountain in the fog.

Thurman, Mark. *See* Hearn, Emily.

Walsh, Ann. *Your time my time*. Victoria: Press Porcépic, 1984, 156 pp. — While spending 1980 in Wells, B.C., near the reconstructed mining town of Barkerville, 15 year-old Elizabeth Connell not only has to cope with her parent's trial separation, but also the problems that arise after she finds a gold ring which enables her to travel to the world of 1870 where she falls in love with a boy named Steve Barker.

Wilson, Clifford. *Adventurers all; tales of forgotten heroes in New France*. Toronto: Macmillan, 1933, xvi, 244 pp., illustrated by A. Sherriff Scott, introduction by William Wood. — Peter and Joyce, two children vacationing in the Montreal area, meet six figures involved in the rise and fall of New France: the explorer, Etienne Brûle; Charles Le Moyne, Sieur de Longueuil; the Chevalier de la Vérendrye; Sergeant Maddock of the British Grenadier Guards; Colonel Morris of the British garrison at Quebec; and Captain Boyd, commander of the H.M.S. *Porcupine*.

Wuorio, Eva-Lis. *Return of the Viking*. Toronto: Clarke, Irwin, 1955, 208 pp., illustrated by William Winter. — Three children, Joan, John, and Wendy, together with various friends, have four encounters with Canada's multicultural past: a visit to modern Toronto by Leif Ericson, an adventure with Louis and Marie Hébert and Samuel de Champlain in Quebec City during the 1600s, a strange voyage to Windmill Point at the time of Nils von Shoutz's aborted attack in 1838, and a meeting at Lake Timagami with Prince Rupert.

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