

RAMA WITCHES. (No. 1.)

Told by Peter York.

One time an old witch lived in Rama on the west side of Lake Couchiching. She covered herself with the skin of an owl when she wanted to fly at night for the purpose of taking the first joints off the fingers of children, which she used to string up like old-fashioned, dried apples in her camp. These children would die at once. She had the power to take these joints off.

One day she wanted to go to near where Atherley now is, and compelled two young men to go with her in the canoe, for she had the power to compel young men to go with her, generally the best of them. She wanted to go to a man's place who had two black dogs. She wanted these dogs. When she arrived there she asked the man for the dogs, but he said "No!" She then asked him for one dog, but still he said "No." She then took a paddle and shoved the canoe off shore saying to the man, "I shove off with one of your children." (Meaning that one of his children would die.) The man said, "Maybe you will die yourself before you get home. The bees will have your meat." She sat in the middle of the canoe with one of the young men paddling at the bow and the other at the stern. When about half way home the young man at the stern heard a bee humming overhead and looking up he saw the bee enter the woman's ear into her head. In a short time her body was full of bees, eating her up, and she began to twist around and say: "Youh, youh," and died in the canoe. The young men put her overboard at what is now Ground Hog Point, which took its name from her, for she was called "Kuk-oh-chees," "The Ground Hog."

She had forgotten to take her bag (medicine bag) with her and had left it in her camp. The man's power was stronger than hers, for he killed her and nothing happened to him. He had power over the bees. Sometimes when this witch was looking for children at night she carried a light. The young men went with her because they were afraid she would kill them if they didn't go.

She said as she died, "Well, anyway I never killed any big people, just children," but the people found joints of fingers of grown-up persons on the strings as well as those of children in her camp.

Note.—Ground Hog Point is called in Ojibwa Kuk-oh-cheesh, Nây-ash-sheeng.

RAMA WITCHES. (No. 2.)

Told by Peter York.

Another old witch once lived in Rama. She disguised herself in a turkey's skin when she wished to fly. She caused many people to die. One day when all the people were having a bee to hoe corn she went to the bee, leaving her turkey skin in her bag (medicine bag) at her home. There was a little boy who lived with her and who had often watched her through a hole in his blanket when she was dressing herself in this turkey skin, and thought that he would like to try it himself, so he took the turkey skin out of the bag and put it on. The skin was very much worn by now and had lost lots of feathers and was ragged, but still preserved the power to fly. So the boy flew over to the hoeing bee, and all the