



Seneca Myths and Folk-Tales (Buffalo Historical Society Publications) Vol. 27

Arthur Caswell Parker

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"On the Cattaraugus reservation, it was part of a child's initial training to learn why the bear lost its tail, why the chipmunk has a striped back, and why meteors flash in the sky," writes Arthur C. Parker at the beginning of *Seneca Myths and Folk Tales*. His blood ties to the Senecas and early familiarity with their culture led to a distinguished career as an archaeologist and to the publication in 1923 of this pioneering work. Parker recreates the milieu in which the Seneca legends and folktales were told and discusses their basic themes and components before going on to relate more than seventy of them that he heard as a boy. Here is the magical Senecan world populated by unseen good and evil spirits, ghosts, and beings capable of transformation. Included are creation myths; folktales involving contests between mortal youths and assorted powers; tales of love and marriage; and stories about cannibals, talking animals, pygmies, giants, monsters, vampires, and witches.



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