

**Mother Goose: A Canadian Sampler.** Forward by Celia Barker Lottridge. Groundwood Books, 1994. 64 pp., \$18.95 cloth. ISBN 0-88899-213-0.

The Parent-Child Mother Goose Program was established in 1986 to provide support to parents by introducing them to the abundance of literacy and play to be found in Mother Goose rhymes. This worthy project's director is Celia Barker Lottridge, who provides the foreword to this fine book.

The book contains twenty-eight Mother Goose rhymes. Each one is illustrated by a different Canadian artist. Each artist has donated the work to the project. As a sampler, the book obviously lacks something in the unity department. This is not to claim total disunity, for the Mother Goose contents provide a tough bond. Canadian children who get to experience lots of Canadian picture books (how many such fortunate children are there, one wonders?) will recognize many of their favourites here: such strong and distinctive styles!

The nursery rhymes tend to be the most well known: "Jack Be Nimble," "Sing a Song of Sixpence," though some, "Hoddley, Poddley, Puddle and Fogs," "Fishes Swim in Water Clear," are not well known. The artists (and one would so like to name them all) are all published Canadians working in styles unique and in media of many sorts. Each has produced a fresh way of looking at a timeless rhyme. To name a favourite would be like picking a favourite child. It just wouldn't do.

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**Kaarina and the Sugar Bag Vest.** Irma McDonough Milnes. Illus. Sami Suomalainen. Annick Press, 1994. 80 pp., \$5.95 paper. ISBN 1-55037-356-0.

This is one in a series of easy-to-read, paperback books. The chapters are short — one or two pages long — the vocabulary age appropriate, and the interest level high. This is a non-threatening chapter book for the young reader, with big, bold print; most chapters are accompanied by a black-and-white pencil sketch. Milnes includes a glossary of unfamiliar words at the end of the book, an excellent way for a child to build vocabulary which eliminates the stress of trying to find unknown words in a dictionary.

*Kaarina* depicts the life of a Finnish family, living in a small North American town during the Great Depression. It covers some special Finnish traditions — like going to the sauna with the family — but also shows a side of life people during the depression took for granted — hoboese, looking for work and asking for food. *Kaarina* shows how childish innocence and the love and support of family and community helped in those troubled times.

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