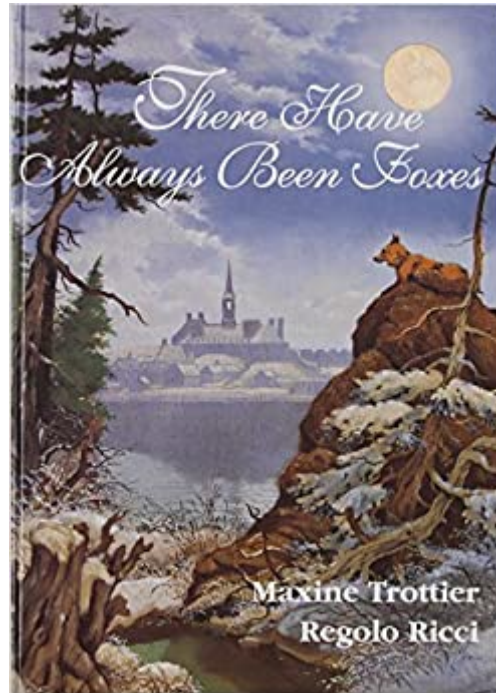




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There Have Always Been Foxes



Synopsis

When the young ones cannot sleep, we tell a story. When I first heard it I was only a kit, all warm and sleepy in the den, my belly filled with mother's milk. But I remembered, and so I pass it on. The tale of Fortress Louisbourg began in 1713 on Cape Breton Island. What was a prized French fishing settlement became one of the mightiest fortresses in the New World. Over time Native Canadians, the French, and the English have each called the place home. France and Britain have battled for it, and both have possessed it. The ravages of time and history took their toll, but Fortress Louisbourg stands today, restored to its former majesty and open to thousands of visitors each year. In such a setting, stories naturally take root and grow. But one in particular has been repeated by those who claim to have seen a fox dancing with a cat inside the fortress walls. It could well be true for, through time and change, there have always been foxes in this place.

Book Information

Lexile Measure: AD660L (What's this?)

Hardcover: 20 pages

Publisher: Fitzhenry and Whiteside; 1 edition (March 1, 2001)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0773732780

ISBN-13: 978-0773732780

Product Dimensions: 8.5 x 11.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 14.1 ounces

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Best Sellers Rank: #1,300,303 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #93 in Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > History > Canada #638 in Books > Children's Books > Animals > Foxes & Wolves #3286 in Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Family Life > Sleep

Age Range: 6 - 9 years

Grade Level: 1 - 4

Customer Reviews

Grades 2-4--Told from the perspective of the foxes who inhabit the area near Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, Trottier's story is a retelling of the legend of Fortress Louisbourg. It describes how it was built in 1713, the battles that took place there, and the accounts of a fox that can be seen dancing with a cat inside the fortress. The author's allusions to major events, such as the battle that leaves

the structure in ruins and how it became the historic site it is today, are intended to inspire young readers to develop an interest in the past. Unfortunately, the descriptive prose ("Canoes skimmed the water with the fragile grace of dragonflies") may lack the kind of context necessary to allow them to identify with the story's historical significance. However, Ricci's soft oil-paint illustrations provide subtle support and should engage children's imagination. For those interested in creating a study of the Cape Breton area, Budge Wilson's *A Fiddle for Angus* (Tundra, 2001) would serve as a nice complement to this story. Cathie E. Bashaw, Somers Library, NY Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc.

Trotter's prose is musical and evocative, bringing the fortress alive through all its transitions. And Ricci's illustrations, oils in the style of the old masters, add richness and texture to the fascinating tale. - The Hamilton Spectator

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