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right by where we were living. She used to make candles. She had molds, you know, and she used to melt tallow • it wasn't bee's wax then. They would take the candles to the church to be blessed on the second of February. We used to have a lot of confidence in them • more than the young people • when it was thundering, lightning and things like that • well we used to light the candles for God to preserve us. It was better than cursing, eh? And the holy water • we used to go around the house and make a cross on all the windows. Well, the old people had faith in that. But listen, if you have no faith in it, it's no use to do it. Well, I do have faith in it but I don't do it. I pray. Say if I was scared, I'd pray. Maybe I would light a candle if I was scared. It depends on how scared you are. Joe Delaney: And then people would go to the church in the morning to get their throats blessed. The priest at the altar had two candles • the candles of St. Blaize • and they were crossed and caught together. There would be one on each side of your throat. The candle would be straight coming at you and then it was turned up on each side of your throat. And these candles were lit. And a lot of people wouldn't miss mass that morning • to get their throat blessed. They also blessed the candles that morning and everybody was given two. It was a yearly event. The French of L'Escaouette is from Fr. Chiasson's book CHETICAMP; our thanks to Christiane Tanner for her English version of this wonderful song. . _ • _ - • . The Birch-bark Canoe

CONTINUED FROM THE BACK COVER

tered at appropriate times. "The bark of the paper birch (*Betula papyifera*) was preferred because it could be obtained in quite large sheets clear of serious blemishes; because its grain ran around the tree rather than along the line of vertical tree growth, so that sheets could be sewn together to obtain length in a canoe; and because the bark was resinous and not only did not stretch and shrink as did other barks, but also had some elasticity when green, or when kept damp....Samples of the bark of each tree were stripped from the trunk and carefully inspected and tested. If they separated into the layers when bent back and forth, the bark was poor. If the 'eyes' inside the bark were too lumpy, the bark in their vicinity would split too easily; this was also true if they were too close together • but if the eyes on the inside of the bark appeared hollow there was no objection. Bark that was dead white...would be rejected....For canoe construction, bark must be over 1/8 inch thick, tough, and from a naturally straight trunk of sufficient diameter and length to give reasonably large pieces....Preferably bark was stripped from the selected trees during a prolonged thaw in winter, particularly one accompanied by rain, or as soon as the sap in the trees had begun to flow in the spring." The Indians called bark that was hard to peel and to which the inner rind clung, "winter bark" • no matter what time of the year it was taken. "Summer bark" was considered poor grade. It is the inner rind that faces the world when the canoe is complete. The gunwales serve as the building frame for the Micmac canoe. They are split out of a length of cedar appropriate to the model under construction (17 feet 8 inches tall for a 17-foot canoe). White cedar Black spruce Wood - splitting techniques



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