

is completely free from error and several pioneer operations are omitted) and is not to be trusted after that date. These inaccuracies probably don't in themselves vitiate his argument about mergers since the major mergers can be easily identified without use of his top-heavy apparatus; the biggest hazard is to the unwary user who expects a higher standard of reliability from a government department.

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"Haida Burial Practices: Three Archaeological Examples; The Gust Island Burial Shelter; The Skungo Cave, North Island; Mass Burials from Tanu," by George F. MacDonald and "The Gust Island Burial Shelter: Physical Anthropology," by Jerome S. Cybulski. *Archaeological Survey of Canada Mercury Series*, Paper No. 9. Ottawa: National Museum of Man, 1973. 113 pp. \$2.00.

As its name indicates, the National Museum's Mercury Series, of which these two contributions comprise Paper No. 9, is specially designed to provide prompt publication of the results of Museum-sponsored research. In the light of this object, MacDonald's report is understandably preliminary in scope and Cybulski's is surprisingly complete.

MacDonald provides a useful though very brief review of Haida mortuary practices as depicted in ethnographic and ethnohistoric sources. He then presents the results of investigations at three archaeological sites where the dead had been deposited in a rock shelter (Gust Island), a cave (Skungo Cave), and plank-covered pits (Tanu). Short descriptions and some illustrations of the burials, boxes, and such associated material as cedar-bark matting, labrets, and copper ornaments constitute the bulk of the report. MacDonald feels that the Gust Island rock shelter was in use at least during the eighteenth century and probably until about the middle of the nineteenth century. The burial cave, he reasons, was used between about 1765 and 1865, and the Tanu pit burials likely represent mass interments following one or more of the 1860-1880 epidemics.

Cybulski has provided us with a very workmanlike description of the Gust Island skeletal material. Considering that MacDonald's estimates place these remains in a period of marked decline in Haida population, Cybulski's observations on early mortality and skeletal pathology are particularly interesting. Over 80 per cent of those individuals whose age could be calculated died before their thirtieth year; and close to 30 per

cent of the skeletons showed pathological disorders (including evidence of anaemia and rickets) apart from the generally common signs of arthritis.

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*B.C. Rail Guides* by Pacific Coast Branch, Canadian Railroad Historical Association. Vancouver, Canadian Railroad Historical Association (P.O. Box 1006, Station "A") 1973. 7 numbers. \$0.50 each.

Railways — and the promise of them — are an integral part of British Columbia's history. It is no wonder then that the Pacific Coast branch of the Canadian Railroad Association is thriving although it was only formed in 1970. The enthusiasm of its members has led to the publication of seven B.C. Rail Guides.

Some of these booklets are designed specifically for the railway "buff" and will be of interest primarily to such individuals. The best example is Ron H. Meyer's list of preserved locomotives and rolling stock in British Columbia and the Yukon. A companion piece is David L. Davies' collection of very brief histories of the major railways in British Columbia with emphasis on their dates of completion. This compendium makes no pretence of being comprehensive but there is at least one misleading omission. Mr. Davies implies that the third street railway in the province was that of Nelson which began service in 1899. This is not so; New Westminster had an electric street railway in 1891. Although the third pamphlet, the report of a field trip to the Mission-Abbotsford area, is a souvenir of that journey, its mixing of historical data and observations in June 1973 will be of interest to students of the historical geography of the Fraser Valley.

Members of the Association are aware of the tendency of much of their work to be of an antiquarian nature. To extend "the *dimensions* of the subject," W. Jordan has prepared a limited collection of statistics for the railway historian. The list shows the numerical correlation between railway developments in British Columbia and elsewhere in Canada. However, the introductory apology for its many inadequacies is fair warning. When the list is expanded and revised — as inevitably it must be — it would be helpful if the compiler also indicated the specific sources for each table rather than relying on a general bibliography.

In describing the controversies among the advocates of competing rail routes in the Peace River, the only purely historical booklet, Andrew J.