

states in his own journal that "Some account of the Spaniards having visited this Coast was published before I left England. . . ." But this is an insignificant blemish on a most attractive book. Readers will look forward to a second volume, now in preparation, which will continue the chronicle from 1847 to 1871, when British Columbia joined Canada.

Vancouver

W. KAYE LAMB

Whistle Up The Inlet, The Union Steamship Story, by Gerald A. Rushton. Vancouver: J. J. Douglas, 1974. 236 pp., illus., \$10.95.

The Princess Story: A Century and a Half of West Coast Shipping, by Norman R. Hacking and W. Kaye Lamb. Vancouver: Mitchell Press, 1974. 360 pp., illus., \$9.75.

Until the completion of the province's highway system, the provision of reliable and regular air service, and the arrival of the fast automobile ferry, the coastal towns and settlements of the province and the major cities of Vancouver, Victoria and Nanaimo relied entirely on the coastal steamers to provide the essential freight, mail and passenger links. Few British Columbians can recall either the night boat to Vancouver or the Union Steamship run to Ocean Falls without twinges of nostalgia. The recent decisions by the provincial government to purchase the *Princess Marguerite* and the *Prince George* reflect a willingness to keep this facet of the province's maritime character alive.

Gerald Rushton has written an engaging and generous narrative of the Union Steamship Company from its beginnings in 1889 to its disappearance in 1959 when it was taken over by Northland Navigation. During that seventy-year period the Union ships stitched together the logging camps, canneries and mills that dotted the coastline from Masset to Howe Sound. Rushton is kind to the company — which is not surprising since he was assistant manager prior to the take-over — and makes no attempt to write a dispassionate historical analysis of either the role of the company in the growth of the province or of the operation of the company itself. He is content to tell the story of the individual vessels and the trials of the men who ran them. He makes occasional reference to some of the more glaring managerial gaffes, and to the inadequacies of federal subsidy policies, but, in the main, the story is suffused with that warm glow that seems to typify recollections of ships and the sea.

The Princess Story virtually completes the picture for the two books together cover almost completely the history of the ships involved in scheduled coastal navigation in British Columbia. Norman Hacking wrote the first half of *Princess Story*, beginning with the Hudson's Bay Company services and concluding with the Klondike gold rush. Kaye Lamb picks up the narrative with the acquisition in 1901 of the Canadian Pacific Navigation Company by the CPR. Both have relied extensively on the pages of the newspapers for the period — newspapers which chronicled the comings and goings of the various ships with a wealth of detail that was entirely appropriate for communities so utterly dependent on steamship services.

To an even greater extent than in the Rushton volume, Lamb and Hacking tell the story of the individual vessels; neither investigate in any detail the companies behind the ships or attempt any careful analysis of the relationship between company policy, current politics or any of the other factors that shaped transportation policy in British Columbia. But that was clearly not their intention. Writing as steamship "buffs" for, presumably, other steamship "buffs" they follow with loving care the passage of each ship from the builder's ways to the breaker's yard. Lacking the insider's knowledge of Gerald Rushton they cannot recount some of the adventures that occurred on board, but they do provide a faithful and reliable record of the "lives" of some memorable vessels.

In both books the illustrations and the tables listing the specifications of all of the vessels complement the narrative splendidly. The illustrations alone constitute a valuable contribution to the record.

It remains now for the serious historian of transportation and communication in British Columbia to stay firmly ashore and investigate the policies of the companies involved, examine the relationship between these policies and politics, and answer many of the questions that these delightful volumes raise but, understandably, make no attempt to answer.