

of health care in Alaska and the health status of its people, both Native and non-Native. Fortuine recounts the stories of the medical pioneers in the PHS against a backdrop of major historical events in Alaska, such as the Gold Rush, the Japanese invasion of the Aleutian Islands, and the Good Friday earthquake.

This book is a useful resource and guide for anyone wishing to investigate the institutional history of the PHS and its personnel and the broader health history of the United States' only Arctic region.

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TANANA AND CHANDALAR: THE ALASKA FIELD JOURNALS OF ROBERT A. McKENNAN. Edited by CRAIG MISHLER and WILLIAM E. SIMEONE. Calgary: The Arctic Institute of North America and University of Calgary Press, 2006. ISBN 1-55238-201-X. Fairbanks: University of Alaska Press, 2006. ISBN 1-889963-77-1. xxix + 266 p., maps, b&w and colour illus., appendices, references, McKennan bibliography, index. Hardbound. Cdn\$49.95.

Bob McKennan was a significant figure in Alaska anthropology, serving as teacher, mentor, friend, and colleague to many others who did fieldwork there, including this reviewer. Beginning in 1929, and continuing over a period of nearly 50 years, he conducted extensive ethnographic fieldwork, primarily among Athapaskans, as well as some important archeological work. One of the best-known anthropologists to conduct research in Alaska, he was also among the earliest to do so.

This book includes a useful biographical sketch of McKennan by Mishler, which provides a good understanding of the sources of the various skills he brought to the field, his educational background, the course of his professional career, and his interactions with colleagues. The introduction by Mishler and Simeone provides additional information on McKennan's training, research, and associates in anthropology, and on the nature of the discipline at the time he did his early fieldwork. The editors' biographical sketch and introduction are very well done, and together they provide an excellent basis for approaching the materials in McKennan's field journals.

Traditionally, ethnographers such as McKennan recorded their observations and the results of interviews with informants as field notes. These notes normally focused on the Native culture, including observations on social organization, political structure, kinship, traditional

stories, religion, and material culture. This information was subsequently compiled into an ethnography, which put it into a structured format as a description of that society. McKennan eventually published formal studies of the two groups discussed here: *The Upper Tanana Indians* (1959) and *The Chandalar Kutchin* (1965). But he also compiled field journals written in a more personal, reflective manner, in the form of letters to his parents and his wife. In these, he gave a first-person account of the events of the day, including interactions with whites, hunting experiences, meal preparation, travels between communities, and some critical observations of Native behavior that would not be appropriate to record in an ethnography. Subsequently transcribed, these journals remained in the Dartmouth College collections after McKennan's death in 1982. They were rediscovered by McKennan's former student, John Cook, and later used by editors Mishler and Simeone as the basis for this volume.

McKennan was born in Helena, Montana, in 1903, the eldest son of a wealthy banker. Exposure to an outdoor environment helped him develop the hunting and fishing skills that are frequently displayed on the pages of his journals—skills that undoubtedly contributed to his apparent ease in establishing rapport with the subsistence-based Alaska Natives he worked among. His undergraduate studies at Dartmouth College were followed by graduate work in anthropology at Harvard University, where he received his doctorate in 1933. McKennan returned to Dartmouth as an instructor in 1930, and except for military service during World War II, spent the next 40 years there.

The majority of this book is devoted to the presentation of McKennan's field journals for his work among the Upper Tanana Natives of Alaska over the winter of 1929–30 and the Chandalar Gwich'in (Kutchin) in the summer of 1933. The journals are accompanied by numerous and often detailed annotations by the editors, which add greatly to our understanding of the natural and social environment in which McKennan worked. Also useful are maps of the region and numerous photographs, many taken by McKennan. The field journals give the reader an excellent overview of anthropological fieldwork as it was conducted in the first half of the 20th century—when there was less sensitivity to the concerns of Native informants or the ownership of ethnographic and archeological materials.

Noteworthy are two appendices that detail correspondence and an interview with informants that took place long after McKennan's fieldwork. They reflect the rapport he was able to establish with his field informants and the degree to which they respected him.

There is a great deal here for the historian, since McKennan's fieldwork in the early 1930s put him in contact not only with Native peoples not far removed from pre-contact subsistence patterns, but also with Americans and Europeans who had come to the Alaska gold fields in the late 19th century and remained there. Most travel in that period was by dog sled and boat, with only the very beginnings of airplane transport. Commercial traders

brought their goods in overland and set up small trading posts at the Native villages. The primary sources of income for the Chandalar Gwich'in and Upper Tanana at this time were the fur trade and occasional wage employment. It is also noteworthy that this period came after the widespread use of fences for hunting caribou had ended, but while caribou and mountain sheep still remained plentiful. Throughout these journals, the reader is struck by the large numbers of these animals that were killed to feed dogs and humans.

Of particular interest to students of ethnography will be the chance to look back some 75 years and see how anthropological fieldwork was conducted at that time. From his field journals, it is clear that Bob McKennan felt he was on a mission and that it was very important to collect as much information as possible. His data included a series of anthropometric measurements he took pride in completing. At times McKennan was somewhat peremptory in his dealings with the Natives, alluding to the fact the government would be grateful for their cooperation. The field journals also contain comments about Native habits and cultural traits he found objectionable. On the whole, however, he was remarkably objective and clearly enjoyed fieldwork, displaying a rich sense of humor, a dry wit, and occasional frustration with some of its more tedious aspects.

On a couple of occasions, McKennan mentions collecting human remains—in one case, a skull—from cremation and burial sites. As the editors are careful to note, this was not an unusual practice at the time, though it is condemned at present. McKennan was clearly interested in material culture items and collected them vigorously while in the field, in some cases paying to have items made. One instance I recall occurred when Bob was visiting me at a field site in interior Alaska in the early 1960s: he climbed through the window of a cabin belonging to an elderly Indian shaman in order to retrieve ceremonial items for his collections. His explanation was that they were going to waste and not serving any useful purpose where they were. This proprietary type of behavior was not uncommon among anthropologists of the early to mid 20th century, who saw themselves as salvaging the final remnants, both material and social, of Native cultures.

The objective of the editors in bringing McKennan's field journals into print was to complement his more formal publications on these two groups. In this, they are successful: the journals provide us with a more complete picture of Native life, including interactions between Natives and whites, than is found in the traditional ethnography. Mishler and Simeone are commended for presenting these materials in such readable and useful form. I found nothing to criticize in this book and consider it very well documented, edited, and produced. The numerous notes found at the end of each major section are particularly helpful and interesting.

Individuals from many disciplines will find this work useful and highly enjoyable. It touches on the early history of Alaska, the impact of white contact and the fur trade on

Native cultures, the consequences of over-hunting and trapping, and many other facets of early 20th-century Alaska. Above all, it is a vivid picture of a dedicated ethnographer endeavoring to capture the details of a way of life he felt was fast disappearing. This work is highly recommended, especially to students and practitioners of Alaskan anthropology and the history of Alaska.

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