

of Thule "is one of the most astounding myths in the whole of history." It is not a myth; it is generally regarded as something more than a hypothesis. If future work can reduce it to a myth it will be rather minor in the world of historians. At that, the idea is one of archaeology, not history and here, I think, is the author's initial error that fathered others: the common and easily made mistake of thinking archaeology entire-ly an extension of history. It is some-times and in part. In the general sense and in the context used by Oleson, however, it is a different discipline with a different intellectual heritage of concepts and methods. From that error and by his intellectual courage Oleson was led to exercise naïve ideas of the pro-cesses of culture change, ignore and misconstrue part of the prehistoric data, and overstate his case. For all that it is a meaty bone that Oleson has thrown at, if not to, northern archaeologists; it may prove a good way to nourish our think-ing. Perhaps the editors should have consulted an archaeologist. Even if wrong, the author argues as the Norse devil's advocate in an interesting and refreshingly forthright manner. Oleson wrote a lively and enlightening book recommended to the reader with the above archaeological warning.

WILLIAM E. TAYLOR, JR.*

¹Taylor, William E., Jr. 1963. Hypotheses on the origin of Canadian Thule culture. *Am. Antiquity* 28:456-64.

²Ford, James A. 1959. Eskimo prehistory in the vicinity of Point Barrow, Alaska. *Anthrop. Paps. Am. Mus. Nat. Hist.* Vol. 47, pt. 1.

*National Museum of Canada.

FAUNAL RELATIONSHIPS OF BIRDS IN THE ILIAMNA LAKE AREA, ALASKA.

By FRANCIS S. L. WILLIAMSON and LEONARD J. PEYTON. *Biological papers of the University of Alaska, No. 5.* 1962. Paper, 9 x 6 inches, ii + 73 pages, 16 figures, including maps, 10 tables. \$1.00.

As an adjunct to more extensive studies on the faunal relationships of birds in the Upper Cook Inlet area of southern Alaska, Francis Williamson and Leonard Peyton spent parts of two summers chiefly along the Newhalen River on the north side of Iliamna Lake — at the base of the Alaskan Peninsula. The lake itself, the largest body of fresh water in all Alaska, lies at the junction of three major ecological divisions or biomes. By subdividing these divisions into a dozen smaller ecological units, which are adequately described and superbly illustrated, the authors attempted to determine the faunal relationships through observation and the collecting of specimens in each of the units. In this venture they were not wholly successful. Nevertheless, they present what appears to be an accurate picture of the avifauna of the Lake Iliamna area with reference to the three major divisions.

Of the three biomes of the area, the Hudsonian (Coniferous Forest) yielded 38 bird species, the Eskimoan (Tundra) 20 species, and the Sitkan (Moist Coniferous Forest) only five species. Nineteen species were so general in habitat preference that they did not fit any particular biome. The authors conclude that the Iliamna Lake area with its mixed avifauna is not a distinct faunal district. It is similar in this respect to the upper Cook inlet area but different from other neighboring areas, namely extreme southeastern Alaska, Prince William Sound, and probably Kodiak Island.

The instability of the avifauna is further reflected in at least five intermediate races or subspecies found in the area. It would appear that these birds are influenced by both coastal and interior races. Although not presenting a strictly taxonomic paper, the authors delve rather deeply into the subject and support their ideas with a convincing series of specimens. Most interesting is the presence in the area of three races of fox sparrows, the relationships of which are discussed at some length.

The printed text consists largely of an annotated list of 103 bird species, in-

cluding 81 species observed by the authors, recorded for the Iliamna Lake area. At first glance this number is impressive. One soon realizes, however, that considerably fewer than half of these birds are known common breeders. The status of many others is at best vague.

These obvious gaps in our knowledge of the avifauna call attention to the need for more observations. The authors' inclusion of previous records for both the lake area and the adjacent areas is of particular value in this respect. Although probably not an original objective, the annotated list, comprising an up-to-date check list, is essential for any ornithologist visiting the region.

No doubt the Iliamna Lake area is extremely interesting ecologically. Why are some birds, geese for example, so scarce? Why do certain species fluctuate so greatly in number and range through the years? On the other hand, such possible breeders as the little-known surf-bird or the marbled murrelet are reason enough to whet one's appetite for conducting future studies there. To mention one more opportunity, there would seem to be no better place in North America to study the breeding behavior and ecological relationships of our *Hyalocichla* thrushes.

DAVID F. PARMELEE*

*Biology Department, Kansas State Teachers College, Emporia.

THE GREAT WHITE MANTLE. The story of the ice ages and the coming of man. By DAVID WOODBURY. *New York: The Viking Press. 1962. 5¾ x 8½ inches. viii + 214 pages. Illustrated. \$6.25 in Canada.*

This book may well become a classic in the fields of poor scientific journalism and unconscious humour. Perhaps "The Great White Mantle" was written for a juvenile audience, but nowhere is this stated in the book or on the dust jacket. Even juveniles may have trouble with this scientific syrup, and it is liable to baffle and confuse that much put upon person — the intelligent layman, for

whom it was presumably written.

Dust jacket descriptions are never reliable indicators of a book's contents, but the way the one on Mr. Woodbury's book begins — by baldly stating that "the full story of the Ice Ages has never before been told" — should put even the most unwary reader on his guard.

Mr. Woodbury adopts two techniques to tell the story of the Wisconsin Ice Age, which takes up the first half of the book. He blends the pathetic fallacy with a "you are there" approach. Never was the first device so pathetic — or so fallacious. In his first chapter, entitled "Whitey", Mr. Woodbury enters a peculiar twilight zone where stones, ice, trees, and other inanimate objects have a life of their own. Whitey is a huge erratic boulder in front of Mr. Woodbury's house in Maine; it apparently acts as a conversation starter for Mr. Woodbury's guests who want to know how it got there. Mr. Woodbury also became curious, and so he goes on to tell how he found out what had happened to Whitey. We follow the erratic up hill and down dale, over the ice and under the ice. Somewhere along the line, the boulder starts to assume human characteristics. Whitey gets "put to work", becomes a "tired, shop-worn boulder", and later "earns credit". By the end of this chapter, the reader may begin to cast uneasy glances at any nearby rock or stone.

If the reader gets past the saga of Whitey, and only duty and a strong stomach impelled this reviewer past that point, he will be whizzed through time and space by Mr. Woodbury as he describes the Wisconsin glaciation. After a look at the broad panorama of ice ages, the author, in a chapter coyly entitled "A Stitch in Time", describes how he will telescope time, and give the reader "the mobility of an angel" so that he can observe the Ice Age in action. The reader is then speeded up through time, slowed down, propelled through space, and generally baffled and confused without being enlightened.

Mr. Woodbury is the master of the inept analogy, the ludicrous metaphor, the futile question and the fatuous