



The Uchuck Years: A West Coast Shipping Saga

David Esson Young

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On the wild west coast of Vancouver Island, those days still exist, as this book reveals in vivid detail. Relating the trials and tribulations of what surely must be the last of Canada's historic coastal shipping lines, The Uchuck Years is a rare first-person account by an old salt who owned and captained his own vessels. Enduring for sixty-five years, the company that came to be known as Nootka Sound Service Limited is still in operation to this day, though David Young no longer owns it and has recently sworn off serving as skipper even in a relief capacity.

Initially serving the communities of Ucluelet and Bamfield, the company refocused its efforts when Highway 28 was punched through the mountains from Campbell River to Gold River in 1959. Logging and mining camp bosses farther up coast in the Nootka Sound and Kyuquot areas were convinced of the company's usefulness, allowing it to move its service farther north along the remote West Coast. The four company vessels--all named Uchuck--have hauled passengers and freight ranging from the more usual outpost supplies to broken aircraft, totem poles and, more recently, kayaks and camping gear for eco-touring expeditions. Every day is an adventure on the Uchuck and the ships have been called upon countless times to perform boat rescue and other emergency support. Young's gripping first-hand accounts of stormy passages through waters once known as the "Graveyard of the Pacific" are interspersed with his anecdotes about the colourful boss loggers and hermits who make this storm-tossed but incredibly scenic wilderness one of coastal BC's most fascinating places. The Uchuck Years is transportation history par excellence, a great seafaring yarn and an important history of one of BC's most charismatic regions.



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