

OBITUARIES

Lieut.-Commander R. A. B. ARDLEY, R.N.V.R., died on active service from the effects of an accidental bomb explosion in the Mediterranean on September 12, 1942. He was a valued member of the executive staff of the R.R.S. *Discovery II*, in which he served as Third Officer from 1929 to 1931 and as Second Officer from 1931 to 1933. He combined high qualities as a seaman with a real knowledge of scientific methods. Oceanographical research raises some special problems in seamanship, and as officer of the watch Ardley was unusually skilled in the difficult art of handling the ship "on station" in a high wind. He had a wide knowledge of the birds of the Southern Ocean, and he contributed to the *Discovery Reports* an account of the birds of the South Orkney Islands, as well as an able description of the *Discovery II* as a research ship. From 1933 until transferred to the Navy at the outbreak of war he held an appointment at Haifa under the Government of Palestine, but in his spare time continued to work on data relating to the distribution of oceanic birds.

N. A. M.

WILLIAM BARLAS, for many years Magistrate at South Georgia, was killed near Grytviken by an avalanche on September 2, 1941. He was an able and tactful administrator, well known to those who have visited South Georgia in the last twenty years. He was born in 1888 and his home was at Pitlochry, but he went out to the Falkland Islands in 1908. He held teaching and administrative posts at various times there and in the Dependencies, and he became Deputy Magistrate at South Georgia in 1920 and Magistrate in 1928. His keen sense of humour and interest in the affairs of the island and its whaling industry sustained him through the many years of residence in a remote and isolated community, and he could tell of many interesting incidents and adventures since the island became a whaling centre some forty years ago. Perhaps no one knew South Georgia better than Barlas. He was on excellent terms with the floating population of Norwegian whalers, and gave much assistance and advice to various expeditions which called at the harbour of Grytviken.

N. A. M.

Professor FRANZ BOAS, born at Minden, Westphalia, in 1858, died in the United States on December 21, 1942. For many years he was professor of Anthropology at Columbia University, and the leading American figure in the science, a pioneer of field research among the native peoples of the continent, a theorist of broad grasp, and an inspiration to generations of students. His first anthropological work was a study of the Central Eskimo, particularly of Baffin Island and the western shore of Hudson Bay. His personal investigations were made in 1883-84, at Crawford Noble's Whaling Station at Kekerten in Cumberland Sound. He was the first white man to visit Amadjuak Lake in the interior, and in the spring of 1884 he made a sledge journey across Cumberland Peninsula to Padle Fiord and up the east coast of Baffin Island as far as Arctic Harbour, north of Cape Kater, a remarkable journey for that date. His interests at that time were equally geographic, but the problem of human adaptation to that rigorous environment led him deep into a study of Eskimo life. His careful systematic observations of their hunting and fishing, transport and trade, social and religious institutions, songs and tales, stood as a model at that early period of anthropological science. In his later work Boas turned to the Indian tribes, in particular to those of British Columbia, but he always maintained his interest in Arctic cultures and their inter-relationships; among his contributions was the direction of the Jesup North Pacific Expedition of 1897 onwards.

R. F.

Lieut.-Commander R. G. ENGLAND, R.N.R. (retd.), was First Officer of the *Morning* on the Antarctic Relief Expeditions under Captain Colbeck in 1902-03 and 1903-04. The *Morning* had been purchased and commissioned by the Royal Geographical Society to carry fuel and replenishment stores to Captain (then Lieutenant) Scott on the *Discovery*. She picked up records at Cape Adare and at Cape Crozier and finally, in January 1903, located the ship held fast at Hut Point in McMurdo Sound. The *Discovery* failed to break out and a further relieving voyage was necessary next season, the *Morning* being accompanied on her second trip by the *Terra Nova*, bought and chartered by the British Government, who had now taken charge. England's knowledge of sail and pack-ice marked him out, and he was chosen a few years later by Shackleton to command the *Nimrod* on the National Antarctic Expedition in 1907. Illness prevented Captain England from going South again in the following season to bring Shackleton home, and he returned to this country shortly afterwards and retired from the sea. He maintained his interests in all Antarctic matters, however, and was President of the Antarctic Club in 1933-34. A characteristic act was his throwing open his house at Hildenborough during the present war to seamen friends and children of men serving at sea, and this was but one of the many ways in which he kept touch with, and won the gratitude of, seafarers and shipmates of former days.

WILLIAM GIBSON was killed in an aeroplane accident on February 22, 1942. By training and temperament "Paddy" Gibson was well suited to northern work and he was one of those closely concerned with the development of the Western Canadian Arctic District eastward as far as King William Land. In 1920 he went out from Ireland to Canada, where he enlisted with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Volunteering for northern service, he was posted to Herschell Island, and later saw service with other Western Arctic detachments. After completing five years with the R.C.M.P., he obtained his discharge, and entered the Hudson's Bay Company. He was made manager of the new post in King William Land, at Gjoa Haven, where Amundsen had wintered, and in 1934 he was appointed Inspector of the Western Arctic District, carrying out periodic inspections as far west as Herschell Island. In 1931 he searched for and found some interesting relics of the Franklin Expedition on the south coast of King William Island. His well-organised journeys, his intimate knowledge of Arctic conditions and his close understanding of Eskimo mentality earned him recognition as an exceptionally successful Arctic traveller. It will be remembered that he was one of the central figures in Vicomte de Poncin's book *Kabloona*.

ALBERT PETER LOW died at Ottawa on October 9, 1942, aged 81. He entered the geological survey department in 1881. From 1892 he was continuously employed in the exploration of Labrador and his surveys were used in the delimitation of the boundaries of northern Quebec. In 1903-04 he commanded the steamship *Neptune* during the Dominion Government Expedition to Hudson Bay and the north-eastern Arctic Islands. The *Neptune* wintered at Fullerton Harbour, north of Chesterfield Inlet, and then made a summer cruise in Davis Strait and Baffin Bay. During this expedition, Low landed at Cape Herschell, and took formal possession of Ellesmere Land for the Dominion.

L. H. McCABE was killed in action in the defence of Hong-Kong on Christmas Day 1941. He had been a member of the Colonial Survey for one year. In 1936 and 1937 he accompanied two small Cambridge expeditions to Iceland, and in 1938, at the age of twenty-two, he led an expedition to Ice Fjord in Spitsbergen. His own interests were in geomorphology and surveying and he was partly responsible for a detailed map of the Campbell range and the upper part of Gips Valley. He was strongly attracted to Polar travel, and was never happier than when at sea bound for the Arctic.

W. V. L.

RICKARD GEORGE McCONNELL, who died in Ottawa on April 1, 1942, in his eighty-fifth year, was one of the last of Canada's pioneer geologists. Between 1881 and 1914 he was engaged each summer in geological work of a reconnaissance and exploratory nature in the west and north-west of Canada. Ten of these were spent in the Yukon, where among many important contributions may be mentioned his study of the Klondike placer gold-field and his persistent recommendations for mining by dredging methods. He also explored for two seasons north of Lesser Slave Lake. His most notable journey was in 1887-88, from Wrangell via Telegraph Creek, Dease River and Liard River to the delta of the Mackenzie, returning by way of Porcupine and Yukon Rivers to Skagway. In 1914 he was appointed Deputy Minister of Mines, which position he held until his retirement in 1921.

Lieut. JOHN ASTBURY NICHOLSON, R.N.V.R., who was posted missing, presumed killed, on September 19, 1942, was a member of the scientific staff of the R.R.S. *Discovery II* during her last commission in 1937-39. The son of Engr.-Capt. J. B. Nicholson, R.N. (retd.), he was born in 1915 and took 1st Class Hons. in Zoology at Bristol University in 1937. From an early age he had been keenly interested in marine biology, and while in the *Discovery II* he rendered valuable service through his rapid mastery of technique and his ability and initiative in research. His early death ended a career of much promise.

N. A. M.