

## OBITUARY

OTTO ABS, authority on polar medicine, was born on 30 November 1891 and died on 10 May 1966. He received his education at Greifswald and, after qualifying there in 1919 and serving as an assistant in Berlin-Niederschönhausen for two years, he spent from 1921 to 1926 as doctor at the coal mine at Barentsburg, in Spitsbergen. In later years he followed a successful career in government medical service.

ALAN THOMAS BELCHER, formerly Deputy Commissioner of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and Executive Director of the Arctic Institute of North America from 1957 to 1960, died in Ottawa on 14 October 1966 at the age of 64. Son of a member of the RCMP, he joined the Force as a trumpeter at the age of sixteen and, as soon as age permitted, obtained a post in the Canadian Arctic. He served there as long as advancing rank permitted, and always retained a deep interest in the region.

RICHARD JOHN CYRIAX, the noted authority on the history of the Canadian Arctic during the mid-nineteenth century, was born in 1885 and died on 16 January 1967. He was educated at University College School, London, and St Mary's Hospital, from which he qualified in 1900 and took his DPH in 1917. Three years later he joined the public health service in which he served until he retired in 1951.

In his teens he began an interest in the course, fate and consequences of Sir John Franklin's last Arctic expedition, 1845, an interest which he sustained for the rest of his life. He studied every document, article and book on the subject, building up an encyclopaedic knowledge of the expedition, the search expeditions and all facets of the Canadian Arctic at the time. His book, *Sir John Franklin's last Arctic expedition, a chapter in the history of the Royal Navy* (London, 1939), the result of twenty-five years of study, was followed by contributions to the *Geographical Journal* and other periodicals on lesser aspects of the expeditions. He also wrote, with Sir James Wordie, the introduction to the Hudson's Bay Company Record Society's volume of Sir John Rae's correspondence, *John Rae's correspondence with the Hudson's Bay Company on Arctic exploration, 1844-1845* (1953).

JOHN KING DAVIS, Master of three great Antarctic ships—*Nimrod*, *Aurora* and *Discovery*—and one of the greatest of Antarctic seamen, died in Melbourne on 7 May 1967 in his eighty-fourth year. He was born in London in 1884 and educated at Burford Grammar School in Oxfordshire and Colet College in London. At the age of sixteen he decided to go to sea and signed on as an apprentice on the Liverpool sailing vessel *Celtic Chief*, completing his four-year articles while the ship was in Peru and being promoted to Third Mate. He returned to London and took his certificate of Second Mate in 1905. As Second Mate he served on the barque *Westland* and the training ship *Port Jackson*, gaining his Certificate of First Mate in 1906 just before making his last voyage in a sailing ship round Cape Horn and back to London. Shackleton was preparing for his British Antarctic Expedition, 1907-09, and a chance meeting with a friend who was on his way to inspect an exhibition of polar equipment for the expedition inspired Davis's imagination and led to his appointment as chief Officer of the *Nimrod*.

Sir Raymond Priestley, in his foreword to *High latitude*, describes his first meeting with the "Navigator" who greeted him on the gangway of *Nimrod* in 1907: "a tall, hard-bitten seaman who, to my untutored imagination, had all the outward appearance of the 'bucko mate' of the lurid Victorian tales of the sea. He proved to be one of the

most gentle men I have ever known, though fearsomely efficient at his own job and very determined to have his own way in all things connected with it". At Lyttelton, on the outward voyage, he took his Extra Master's Certificate, the highest qualification in his calling, and received his first command at the age of twenty-five when he succeeded Captain F. P. Evans as Master of *Nimrod* on the return voyage to London after the expedition. He helped Shackleton to wind up the affairs of the expedition, accompanied him on lecture tours and then set out for Canada in search of new opportunities; he was quickly recalled by a cable from Douglas Mawson inviting him to accompany him to the Antarctic the following year. "Here was a definite offer and there could only be one answer"; he returned to London immediately and plunged with Mawson into the organization of the Australasian Antarctic Expedition, 1911–14, of which he was Second-in-Command as well as Master of the expedition ship *Aurora*. In later years he was to look on that expedition as his main life's work.

For three successive summers he piloted *Aurora* along the storm-beaten coast of Antarctica between Cape Denison, the main base of the expedition in George V Land, and Shackleton Ice Shelf, the base of Wild's Western Party, a coastline in fact almost entirely discovered during the first season. Between the first and second Antarctic voyages, he refitted in Sydney and carried out two oceanographic and marine biological cruises in sub-Antarctic waters between Tasmania and Macquarie Island. On his return to Cape Denison in January 1913 to re-embark the expedition, he was greeted with the news that Mawson, Mertz and Ninnis had not returned from their journey to George V Land. With the knowledge that the relief of Wild's party was becoming more precarious as the summer passed, he delayed until 8 February, then, leaving a small party to await the now unlikely return of Mawson and his companions, he set sail for Shackleton Ice Shelf. A few hours later he was informed by radio of Mawson's safe return, alone, but weather conditions made it impossible to put back to Cape Denison and he was obliged to leave the party behind for another year and struggle on to the relief of the Western Party. At the end of 1913 Davis returned again to Cape Denison "breezy, bouyant, brave and true", Mawson described him. He re-embarked the main party and sailed for the last time along the 1750 km of Antarctic coastline he had discovered and explored. *Aurora* reached Adelaide late in February 1914 and Davis was met by a cable from Shackleton offering him "supreme charge of all sea organization and . . . roving commission for exploration Weddell quadrant . . ."; Davis was greatly tempted to accept but refused in favour of more permanent employment. Then the First World War, 1914–18, broke out and he became engaged in converting captured German merchant ships for use as troop carriers and commanding transports between Australia, Egypt, England and America. In 1916–17 there was an Antarctic interlude when he commanded *Aurora* again as leader of the relief expedition which rescued the Ross Sea Shore Party of Shackleton's Trans-Antarctic Expedition, 1914–17, marooned at Cape Evans—the expedition he had refused Shackleton's invitation to join. Returning to war service, he joined the Royal Australian Naval Reserve, becoming a Lieutenant-Colonel and Naval Transport Officer, London, for the repatriation of the AIF. His appointment as Commonwealth Director of Navigation, a post he held from 1920 until his retirement in 1949, did not altogether curb his more unorthodox activities. In 1921, unable to find a suitable candidate to set up a cyclone warning station on Willis Island, in the Coral Sea, he himself spent six months on the island establishing it. And finally, in 1929–30, he escaped again to return south with Mawson as captain of *Discovery* during the first summer of the British, Australian, New Zealand Antarctic Research Expedition, 1929–31. Sailing along the coast of Antarctica between longs 49° and 81° he made a reconnaissance map of the coasts of Enderby Land, Kemp Land and Mac. Robertson Land. His interest in Antarctica continued with membership of the Planning Committee set up by the Australian Government in 1947 to advise on the formulation and implementation of Antarctic policy.



JOHN KING DAVIS

(1884–1967)

*(Facing p 76)*

Davis wrote three books—*With the Aurora in the Antarctic* (London, 1919), *Willis Island, a storm warning station in the Coral Sea* (Melbourne, 1923), and *High latitude* (Melbourne, 1962)—as well as articles for various periodicals. The Davis Sea, Davis Bay, Cape Davis, Davis Peninsula and the scientific station “Davis” were all named after him.

THOMAS HAINING GILLESPIE, the Scottish Zoologist, died on 3 August 1967, in his ninety-first year. His name will always be associated with the creation of the Edinburgh Zoo. He first conceived the idea of a Scottish Zoological Park in Edinburgh more than sixty years ago, and when the Park opened in 1913 he was made Director Secretary, a post which he held until 1950. Although he had a wide interest in all the animals and birds in the collection, his undoubted preference was for the unique colony of King Penguins (*Aptenodytes patagonica*). His outstanding achievement was the first successful breeding and rearing of these penguins in captivity. They were brought to Edinburgh from South Georgia by the whaling firm of Chr Salvesen and Co of Leith. He was the author of numerous books, for both adults and children—those for young people being based chiefly on his many years of broadcasting as “Zoo Man” of the BBC’s Scottish Children’s Hour. He recorded the progress of the Edinburgh King Penguin colony in a series of articles in the *Scottish Naturalist*, and brought his observations together in *A book of King Penguins* (London, 1932).

RAYMOND GUILLOU, who was in charge of the boats at Port-aux-Français, Archipel de Kerguelen, died there on 29 September 1966 after an emergency operation. He was born on 29 October 1934, joined the navy in 1952, and, at the time of his death had attained the rank of Second Mate, 1st Class.

CHRISTOPHER HARE, a member of Scott’s *Discovery* expedition, 1901–04, was born in Invercargill, New Zealand, on 2 December 1880 and died on 31 May 1967. After schooling at East Christchurch School, he worked as a clerk in New Zealand and Fiji and, following a chance meeting with R. Ford, joined the *Discovery* expedition as steward. He was a member of one of the earliest sledging parties, during which the sailor T. Vince was drowned and he himself had an almost miraculous escape from death. After losing the rest of the party, and his way, he slept out in a blizzard for thirty hours before finding his own way back to the ship, completely unharmed. Hare was always deeply attached to music and, after a visit to England in *Discovery* at the end of the expedition, he became a piano tuner and repairer in New Zealand.

Dr RENÉ JEANNEL, the French entomologist, died on 20 February 1965, aged eighty-six. He held successively the posts of lecturer at the Faculty of Sciences at Toulouse (1919), Professor of Biology and Deputy Director at Cluj in Rumania (1920), Founder and Director of the Vivarium at the Muséum National d’Histoire Naturelle in Paris (1927), and finally, Professor and Director of the same museum (1932–50). He also planned, organized and directed the early stages of the Office de la Recherche Scientifique Coloniale, which was later reorientated as the Office de la Recherche Scientifique et Technique Outre-Mer (ORSTOM).

Throughout an active life, his chief interests were in ecology, soil biology and biogeography. From 1905 onwards he published more than 500 scientific papers, including a number of large monographs dealing with widely differing groups of insects (Hemiptera, and Coleoptera of the families *Catopidae*, *Carabidae* and *Pselaphidae*). He was also one of the founders of biospeleology, extending his cave explorations to many parts of Europe, Africa and North America. His numerous expeditions covered the whole scope of zoology in its widest sense; each brought back rich and varied collections which

he studied with great enthusiasm or distributed to his colleagues. Jeannel possessed equal facility with the detailed morphological descriptions necessary for systematic treatment, or with those broad generalizations about the phylogeny of insects or their geographical distribution which he so much enjoyed. For many years he was Secretary, later President, of the Société Entomologique de France. In 1934 he founded the *Revue Française d'Entomologie* and remained editor until the year before his death.

In 1939 he organized and led an important expedition in the *Bougainville* to the sub-Antarctic islands: Marion Island, Iles Crozet, Archipel de Kerguelen, Ile Saint Paul and Ile Amsterdam. The collections, especially of insects, included many new species. His popular narrative of this expedition, *Au seuil de l'Antarctique* (Paris, 1941), provides one of the best accounts of these islands.

Commandant JEAN LORANCHET died in Paris on 14 November 1966, aged 78. Throughout most of his life he was engaged in maritime activities—in the French Navy throughout the First World War and during his later years in the Ministère de la Marine Marchande. At the time of the evacuation from Dunkirk in 1940, he was captured by the Germans and spent the remainder of the Second World War in a prison camp. Loranchet will perhaps be remembered most for his work in Archipel de Kerguelen. In 1908–09 he joined the Franco-Norwegian expedition which established the whaling and sealing station at Port Jeanne d'Arc, an enterprise of Henri and René Bossière. There he met R. Rallier du Baty, who had sailed his ketch *J.-B. Charcot* from France to Archipel de Kerguelen in 1908. He later joined Rallier du Baty as second-in-command of the *Curieuse* in 1912–14. During this expedition Loranchet made two important contributions to knowledge of Archipel de Kerguelen: the first detailed hydrographic surveys (published in *La Géographie* 1922) and some valuable ornithological observations (published in *Revue Française d'Ornithologie*, 1915).

MORTIMER MCCARTHY, Able Seaman in the *Terra Nova* during Scott's British Antarctic Expedition, 1910–13, died on 11 August 1967 at the age of 90.

He was born in County Cork and went to sea at the age of twelve, seeing naval service during the Boer War before joining the *Terra Nova*. After the return of the expedition he spent most of the rest of his working life in New Zealand ships and waters, finally working as a night-watchman on ships in Lyttelton harbour.

ALAN JOHN MARSHALL, Professor of Zoology and Comparative Physiology, and formerly Dean of Science, at Monash University, Melbourne, died on 20 July 1967 at the age of 56.

He studied at the Universities of Sydney and Oxford, and was zoologist in the Oxford University Expedition to the New Hebrides, 1933, working on the breeding seasons of animals in a tropical climate. He spent most of 1936 with one companion carrying out a preliminary reconnaissance of Dutch New Guinea in preparation for a full-scale expedition planned for 1937–38; they made three considerable journeys into the interior and collected zoological specimens for Sydney Museum.

During the Second World War, 1939–45, he served with the AIF, first in Intelligence, and then with the 2/2 Infantry Battalion in New Guinea, when he was parachuted behind the Japanese lines to collect information. This undertaking, and the various strenuous expeditions in which he took part, was the more remarkable for his having lost his left arm as a young man in a shooting accident. After the war he returned to Oxford and was Demonstrator in Physiology from 1947 to 1949. In 1947, he led the Oxford University Expedition to Jan Mayen, serving himself as physiologist. This expedition, with one to Iceland led by F. H. Whitehead, was the first organized by the Oxford University Exploration Club following the six-year suspension of activities

caused by the war, and its object was as much to train future leaders as to carry out a scientific programme. However, during the five weeks spent on the island, some geological survey and collecting were carried out and the biologists worked on the physiology of non-breeding sea birds, bird ecology, and the distribution of plants and small soil animals.

Marshall was awarded the Back Grant by the Royal Geographical Society in 1948, and became Reader in Zoology and Comparative Anatomy at the University of London in 1949. He was Woodward lecturer at Yale University in 1958, then returned to Australia, to Monash University.

He wrote a number of books, including *The men and birds of Paradise: through equatorial New Guinea* (London, 1938), *Bower-birds, their displays and breeding cycles* (Oxford, 1954), and *The Biology and comparative physiology of birds* (London, 1960). He also edited, and largely re-wrote, the vertebrate volume of the new edition of Parker and Haswell's *Text-book of Zoology* (London, 1962).

THOR SOLBERG, who made one of the early flights over what became the north Atlantic route, died on 26 February in his seventy-fourth year.

A Norwegian by birth, he took flying lessons in Germany before coming to New York in 1928, where he completed training while operating a picture-frame factory. His first attempt at a trans-Atlantic flight, in 1932, ended in a forced landing in Newfoundland and he returned to New York to try again. Three years later, on 18 July 1935, he left New York with Paul Oscanyan as navigator, in an ex-bomber Loening Amphibian, rebuilt by himself and powered by a single Wright Cyclone engine of 615 hp. Following the route Montreal, Labrador, Greenland, Iceland and the Faroe Islands they reached Oslo after many tribulations exactly a month later. Their achievement was typical of an era when flights round the north Atlantic had emerged from the real pioneer stage but still demanded great determination, patience and no small measure of luck to overcome the lack of facilities *en route* and unreliable engines.

Solberg later developed extensive commercial interests in the aircraft industry, including the ownership of an airfield at Tonsberg, Norway.

## ERRATA

Vol 13, No 86, 1967

Plate facing page 573. The Kittiwakes are not nesting as described in the caption. No birds have yet been observed nesting on Surtsey.

Page 609, line 35. *For aufice read aufeis*

line 42. *For mc read cm*

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Page 805, line 21. *For Français read Françaises.*