

in 1939, not only was the name removed, but the island itself was all but removed; its shape, and maybe even existence, were evidently doubted. An anxious cartographer was perhaps trying to demonstrate loyalty. On later Soviet maps the island reappeared, the same shape as before but decently rechristened *Ostrov Rastorguyeva*, taking the name from the strait on which it stands. This curious little incident in cartographical history was still apparently too sensitive to be mentioned in the standard Soviet gazetteer of Arctic place-names published in 1972.

NEW SEA MAMMAL RESEARCH UNIT FORMED

We have news of a further consolidation of Cambridge's growing importance as a centre of polar research in Britain. The Natural Environment Research Council has announced that, with effect from 1 December 1977, their Seals Research Division, hitherto part of the Institute for Marine Environmental Research and based at Lowestoft, and Whale Research Unit have been combined to form a new Sea Mammal Research Unit. The unit will be housed in the same building as the British Antarctic Survey and directed by Dr R. M. Laws. Correspondence should be addressed to: Sea Mammal Research Unit, c/o British Antarctic Survey, Madingley Road, Cambridge CB3 0ET, UK.

SOVIET ICEBREAKER STAMPS

The USSR has issued two series of postage stamps showing Russian and Soviet icebreakers. The first series, which came out in 1976, depicts five: *Paylot* (the first icebreaker, used in the Gulf of Finland in 1864), *Yermak*, *F. Litke*, *Vladimir Il'ich*, and *Krasin* (at denominations of 4, 6, 10, 16, and 20 kopecks respectively); and the second, issued in 1977, seven: *A. Sibiryakov*, *G. Sedov*, *Sadko*, *Dezhnev*, *Sibir'* (formerly *Iosif Stalin*), *Lena*, and *Amguyema* (4, 6, 10, 12, 14, 16, and 20 kopecks). This selection, which includes ice-strengthened ships as well as true icebreakers, takes the story up to 1962. Recent icebreakers, such as the *Kapitan*-class, the *Moskva*-class, the new *Yermak*-class, *Lenin*, and the *Arktika*-class, are not included, perhaps because some may have been illustrated on stamps already.

OBITUARY

Captain **H. KIRKWOOD**, OBE, DSC and Bar, RN (retired) was born on 9 August 1910 in Liverpool and died in Scarborough Hospital, Yorkshire, on 25 September 1977, aged 67 years. He was educated at the Merchant Taylors' School, Liverpool, and subsequently joined the Merchant Navy as a cadet, taking his Second Mate's ticket at the conclusion of his apprenticeship. In 1932 he was accepted as a Third Officer on the RRS *Discovery II*, which was sailing to the Antarctic, and he later gained promotion to Second (*ie* Navigating) Officer, after taking his First Mate's ticket.

He served on *Discovery II* until 1938 and gained wide, and indeed unrivalled, experience in navigation in Antarctic waters and ice conditions. He took part in the rescue of the two American airmen, Lincoln Ellsworth and H. Hollick-Kenyon, whose plane had crashed during their flight across Antarctica in 1935. To carry out this rescue operation, *Discovery II* sailed further south than any previous vessel. Captain Kirkwood was one of the six-man shore party which went overland and met the two men, bringing them safely back to the ship. During his six years on *Discovery II* the ship circumnavigated the Antarctic continent three times, twice during summer and once during the long winter darkness (the first time this had been achieved). These voyages resulted in valuable discoveries by the scientists on board, and also useful work by Captain Kirkwood and his fellow officers, who surveyed many areas of the continental waters previously uncharted.

In 1938, Captain Kirkwood transferred to the Royal Navy and later, throughout World War II, he took command of destroyers and served with great distinction in various arenas. From 1948–50

he was loaned by the Royal Navy to the Falkland Islands Survey as Commanding Officer of *John Biscoe*, carrying out survey work in the Antarctic. During that period he rescued Sir Vivian Fuchs and 10 other scientists from Stonington Island and showed unrivalled navigating skill, experience, courage and determination. For this feat he was awarded the OBE in 1951. From 1955 to 1958 he commanded HMNZ *Endeavour* (formerly *John Biscoe*) and took Sir Edmund Hillary and the New Zealand party to the Antarctic to commence their part in the British Commonwealth Trans-Antarctic Expedition led by Sir Vivian Fuchs. After the successful crossing, HMNZ *Endeavour* returned the expedition to New Zealand, where Captain Kirkwood unveiled a plaque to commemorate the event, at Gisborne in the North Island. He retired from the Royal Navy in August 1960.

In 1948, Captain Kirkwood had become a member of Trinity House, enjoying great popularity among his fellow brethren. On 2 November 1977 his ashes were scattered from the Trinity House yacht *Patricia* over the North Sea, which he loved and where he had so nobly served his country during the time of need.

RALEIGH PARKIN, one of the founders of the Arctic Institute of North America in 1944–45, died in October 1977 in Montreal at the age of 81. He was a man of widely developed interests, and he made important and practical contributions in a number of areas. He became aware during the last world war that, as he would put it, ‘something was happening in the north’, meaning that the circumpolar northern regions were in rapid process of emerging from the days of the explorers and the fur traders into the modern world, and he insisted that Canada for one, and North America in general, should not be found wanting in the face of the new challenge. In the formation of the Arctic Institute, he and his few colleagues of that time were well in advance of governmental and academic organizations, and it is well to use the sad occasion of Raleigh Parkin’s death to remind ourselves of the important accomplishments of the Arctic Institute, particularly in its earlier years when it concentrated upon the support of field research in the north by young men and women.

The encouragement and support of bright and promising young people was indeed one of his most compelling interests, and the large number of scholars and others who have reason to cherish his memory with gratitude and affection will bear witness to his success. He was by his own insistence a generalist, not a specialist, and he demonstrated the value of being so. Breadth and depth of knowledge, the classical approach to modern problems, the warm acceptance of contrary opinion ably advocated, and the shrewd and immediate recognition of the plausible fake; all these qualities and abilities were his, and they will be greatly missed by his family, friends and colleagues.

M. J. Dunbar