

## OBITUARY

CDR. MANSON ("BUDDY") KREBS died at Roosevelt Road, Rhode Island, on 10 April 1963, aged 41. He played a leading part in the Antarctic work of Air Development Squadron SIX (VX-6) during Operations "Deep Freeze IV, 60, 61 and 62". For "Deep Freeze IV" he was officer-in-charge of the VX-6 detachment at "Little America V", and also served as assistant operations officer for the squadron, a duty he performed until promoted to operations officer for "Deep Freeze 61 and 62". This brief notice can best summarize Krebs's achievements by quoting part of the citation accompanying the Gold Star awarded to him by the Secretary of the Navy in February 1963: "Through his close relationship with personnel of the National Science Foundation and the United States Antarctic Research Program, his detailed knowledge... and his understanding of the Navy's role in Antarctic operations, Cdr Krebs has contributed immeasurably to the vast strides taken in Antarctic exploration."

ALFRED RITSCHER, the German naval officer and explorer, was born in Bad Lauterberg on 23 May 1879 and died in Hamburg on 30 March 1963, at the age of eighty-four.

After training in sailing ships he spent his career in the service of the Hamburg-America Steamship Line and, from 1911, in the German navy. He was connected for many years with the production of *Seehandbuchwerk*, and was a pioneer in sea-air co-operation.

During a life-long interest in the polar regions, he played a leading part in two expeditions, one Arctic and the other Antarctic—both, unfortunately, the subject of prolonged and acute controversy. He was captain of the *Hertzog Ernst* during the ill-fated expedition led by Lieut. H. Schröder-Stranz to Spitsbergen in 1912. When the ship reached Nord Kapp in August, the leader and three companions left on a sledge journey to explore the coast of Nordaustlandet. None of them had any previous experience of travel on sea ice and they were never seen again. Early in September the ship was frozen fast in Sorgfjorden. Nine of the twelve equally inexperienced survivors abandoned the safety of the ship on 21 September and attempted to retreat overland to the American coal mine at Longyearbyen. Ritscher, who was the responsible leader after Schröder-Stranz disappeared, finally managed to reach Longyearbyen on 27 December, alone and severely frost-bitten. He was thus able to bring news of the disaster and set in train a series of rescue operations.

Ritscher was selected to lead the 1938–39 *Schwabenland* expedition to the Antarctic, one of the remarkable side-lines of Nazi enterprise, mounted under the auspices of Hermann Göring. The expedition spent only three summer weeks in the Prinsesse Astrid Kyst and Kronprinsesse Märtha Kyst area of Dronning Maud Land. During this brief period, over 12000 km were flown by two aircraft and good oblique photographs were obtained of about 350000 sq km of territory between longs 14° W and 20° E. This area was named "Neu-Schwabenland" and was claimed for the German Government between 19 January and 15 February 1939 although there had been several similar Norwegian formal acts claiming sovereignty to various parts of the region during the previous eight years, based on priority of discovery. The Royal Decree which proclaimed Norwegian sovereignty over Dronning Maud Land was not issued until 14 January 1939. The German expedition was secret; comparison of these dates is therefore of special interest.

The preparation and publication of the scientific results of the *Schwabenland* expedition, as well as the difficult situation which had arisen from the conflicting

territorial claims, were overtaken by the outbreak of war. Many of the air photographs and other original records were destroyed during air raids. After the war, Ritscher was able to devote his energies to working up the results. The mapping suffered seriously from the absence of ground control, but the photographs provided valuable new information about an area which was previously unknown. It is of some interest that the fascinating details in the geomorphological photographs inspired Professor Ahlmann to initiate the Norwegian-British-Swedish Expedition which began to investigate this area ten years later. B.B.R.

**JOHN CYRIL GOULDIE SUGDEN** died in Yugoslavia on 9 May 1968 as a result of injuries received in a motor accident.

He was born in Cumberland, in 1911, and educated at St Bees, and Jesus College, Oxford, where he took a degree in geography. In 1936 and 1938 he was co-leader of two expeditions to the Strømfjord and Sukkertoppen districts of West Greenland where he first acquired a special interest in glaciology which lasted throughout his life. During the war years, while serving with the Indian Army in Burma, he made two visits to the Kanchenjunga region of the Himalayas. After the war he taught at Dartmouth College, and later took up an appointment as an H.M.I. (Inspector of Schools) with the Ministry of Education. He took a deep interest in the training and encouragement of youth in camping and exploration and in 1960 assisted Sir John Hunt in preparing and leading an expedition to East Greenland, organized as a joint venture by the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme and the National Association of Youth Clubs. It was on returning from a similar expedition to the Pindus Mountains in Greece that he met his death.

Sugden's work on glaciology, begun in Greenland and later pursued in the Himalayas, included also studies of the Cairngorms, the Lake District, and Snowdonia where he carried out research into the problems of landforms produced by ice-wasting and a study of typical cross-sections of glacial troughs.

He was an enthusiast for the scientific organization of expeditions and was responsible for many new ideas in the design of lightweight tents and polar clothing. He also devoted much time to devising a well-balanced expedition diet of high calorific value.

**ANDREW DOUGAL WATSON**, who accompanied Mawson's Australasian Antarctic Expedition, 1911-14, as geologist, was born on 27 June 1885 and died on 18 June 1968.

He was educated at Maitland High School, Sydney, Teachers Training College and Sydney University from which he graduated in 1913. During his two years in Antarctica he took part in a number of sledging journeys, notably the eastern journey of 1912-13. On his return to Australia he resumed his career as a schoolmaster, retiring in 1949.