

OBITUARIES

CHARLES GODFREY BIRD was reported missing when H.M.S. *Exeter* was sunk with most of her crew in the Battle of the Java Sea on 1 March 1942. It had been hoped that he might have landed on one of the small islands in those waters, but an announcement in *The Times* in October 1945 finally dispelled that hope. He was the second son of Captain F. G. Bird, D.S.O., and was born in 1913. Educated at Stowe and afterwards at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, he was from his boyhood a keen ornithologist. In 1934 he visited Jan Mayen with his younger brother, Edward, and R. B. Connell, spending two and a half months studying the birds of the island. In 1935 he went with E. K. Balls, the plant collector, to Asia Minor, and in the following year to Rio de Oro, North Africa, where he spent two months studying migration. No sooner had he returned than he began to prepare for a wintering expedition to East Greenland. In the early summer of 1936, again accompanied by his brother, he set out for Norway, where they joined a party of Norwegian trappers who were going to pass the winter in the Mackenzie Bay region. The following August his brother returned, but Charles remained for a second year at Peter's Bay, Hochstetters Foreland. After his return, he wrote, in collaboration with his brother, a valuable paper for the *Ibis* on the birds of that region. He presented the collections which he made during his various expeditions to the British Museum (Natural History). At the beginning of the war he repeatedly tried to join the Navy, but it was not until the invasion of Norway that he was given a commission as Sub-Lieutenant and posted as Intelligence Officer. Subsequently he served in a Norwegian destroyer until February 1942, when he was posted to the Far East to join H.M.S. *Exeter*. B.B.R.

Consul HANS BORGE, of Tønsberg, died suddenly on 8 January 1946, aged seventy-two. He went to sea at the age of fifteen, and at twenty-six became a captain. He was appointed Whaling Manager of *Polynesia* in the Antarctic in 1910, of *Hvalen* in the same regions in 1911, and of *Benguela* along the Angola Coast in 1912. In the course of his activity in the Antarctic he executed a sketch survey of the South Orkney Islands in 1913-14. In 1914 Hans Borge started his own Shipping Company, and in 1917 was appointed Manager of A/S Tønsberg Hvalfangeri. From 1925 onwards he played a prominent part in starting a number of Antarctic whaling enterprises, notably the Anglo-Norse Co. A/S (1927), the Falkland Whaling Co. Ltd. (1929), the Anglo-Norwegian Holding Ltd. (1928), and the Star Whaling Co. Ltd. (1932). He retired from whaling activities in 1937. B.B.R.

CHARLES DIGORY BROWER died on 11 February 1945, aged eighty-two. Brower was the first white man to settle permanently at Point Barrow. He went there in 1883, and readers of Stefansson's *My Life with the Eskimo* and *The Friendly Arctic* will be familiar with Brower's Whaling and Trading Company at Cape Smyth, twelve miles south-west of Point Barrow. In collaboration with Philip J. Farrelly and Lyman Anson, he described his life among the Eskimos in *Fifty Years below Zero*, New York, 1942.

Lieutenant-General SIMON BOLIVAR BUCKNER, JR., Commander of the United States Tenth Army, was killed at Okinawa on 17 June 1945, aged fifty-eight. From 1940 to 1943 he was Commanding General of the Alaska Defence Force, and was responsible for the operations which prevented the Japanese from gaining more than a temporary foothold on Attu and Kiska in the Aleutian Islands.

HARRY M. W. EDMONDS died on 4 April 1945. Much of his active life was spent in Alaska under the auspices of the United States Coast and Geodetic Survey. Among his assignments were astronomical and survey work, on the Porcupine and Yukon Rivers and in Norton Sound, in the late eighties and early nineties of the last century, astronomical work at Burroughs Bay in connection with the preliminary Alaska boundary survey, a survey of Yakutat and Lituye Bays and a determination of the heights of Mt St Elias, Mt Logan, and peaks of the Fairweather Range, a survey of the delta of the Yukon, and work at Prince William Sound. In 1901 he established a magnetic observatory at Sitka, Alaska, where he was stationed for the following eight years. In 1911 he participated as second-in-command in the magnetic survey undertaken by the *Carnegie*, a project which lasted until 1918, and during the last two years of the cruise he was commanding officer. Subsequently he turned his attentions to the Southern Hemisphere. Under the auspices of the Department of Terrestrial Magnetism he established magnetic observatories in Peru and co-operated with the New Zealand Government in organising a magnetic survey of the South Pacific Islands.

Captain ROY FITZSIMMONS was killed while on active service in Cuba on 5 May 1945, aged twenty-nine. Captain Fitzsimmons visited North-west Greenland as a geophysicist with the MacGregor Arctic Expedition in 1937. From 1939 to 1941 he was a member of the West Base (Little America) party of the United States Antarctic Service Expedition, when he carried out seismic observations in the Rockefeller Mountains, and was also occupied with magnetic and auroral investigations. On his return to the United States he worked in Washington as a magnetologist for the Department of the Interior up to the time of joining the Army Air Force in 1943.

DR VLADIMIR LEONTIEVICH KOMAROV, who died in 1945, was a botanist and member of the Supreme Soviet. He was born in 1869 and was educated at Moscow University. In his younger days he travelled extensively in Turkestan, Manchuria, Korea, Central Asia and, in 1908–09, in Kamchatka. Phytogeography and systematic botany were his particular field. His comprehensive *Flora of the Peninsula of Kamchatka* was published in 1927. He became a leader both in scientific and in state affairs. Following his election as an Academician in 1920, his vigour in many fields led him to the presidency of the Academy in 1936. His last great work was the organisation in 1941 of the commission for investigating the natural resources of the Urals.

HUGH J. LEE, Peary's companion on his 1893–95 expedition, died at Meriden, Connecticut, in September 1944, aged seventy-three. Lee was twenty-two at the time when he volunteered to join Peary. Peary was just back from his first crossing of North-west Greenland in 1892, and wished to follow up his success by a second crossing. The attempt in the spring of 1894 proved a failure, and the only members of the party who could be persuaded to remain with Peary for a second year were Lee and the negro Matt Henson. Next year, in 1895, the journey with Lee and Henson succeeded and Peary stood for a second time on Navy Cliff, but could go no farther. The return was particularly hard; Lee was badly frostbitten, all three were worn out, and it was with great difficulty that the party struggled back to the base.

Lee made two further expeditions with Peary, both in summer, first in 1896 to try and remove the great 100-ton meteorite near Cape York, and again in 1897 when the effort proved successful. Lee then took up newspaper work, but in 1902 went to Alaska as superintendent of a reindeer herd. In 1905 he was Deputy United States Marshal for Alaska. From 1917 he made his home at Meriden, Connecticut, as city editor of the *Meriden Record*.

Lieutenant-Commander ISAK LYSTAD, U.S.N.R., died at Seattle on 24 May 1945, aged forty-nine. Commander Lystad was born at Kristiansand, Norway, and went to sea at the age of fourteen. He migrated to the United States in 1922. His first visit to Alaska was in the Pacific American Fisheries Motorship *Patterson*, which called at Herschel Island. In 1925 he made a trading voyage to northern Siberia in the *Chukotsk*, owned by Olaf Svenson. Later he was master of the *Boxer*, a vessel of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, carrying supplies to schools, hospitals and reindeer stations in Alaska. Between 1939 and 1941 he was master of the *North Star*, flagship of the United States Antarctic Service Expedition.

OLIVER SELIGMAN, who was killed in France in 1944, aged twenty-eight, was a member of the Imperial College Expedition to Jan Mayen in 1938. He had been at Harrow and at Caius College, Cambridge, and later at University College, London, studying architecture. He joined the Jan Mayen expedition as ornithologist, but had botanical interests as well, and helped in the laboratory work on the effects of Arctic environment on plant metabolism. Seligman was also one of the party to explore the almost unknown north-eastern extremity of the island. He served throughout the war with the Royal Artillery, reaching the rank of Major, and died of wounds in September 1944, during the rapid advance on the Somme and Authie. J.M.W.

Squadron-Leader MICHAEL SPENDER, who was killed in an air accident in May 1945, will be remembered by all who are interested in polar and mountain exploration. His special talent lay in mapping unknown country to which he gave the best years of his very active life.

Spender first went into the field with J. A. Steers on the Great Barrier Reef Expedition of 1928–29. On his return, with the encouragement of A. R. Hinks, he went to Switzerland to work with the Swiss Federal Survey. There he travelled with the topographers in the mountains and learned their methods with the new stereo plotting instruments.

Again encouraged by Hinks, he went on to Denmark to study the new methods of photographic survey which were being developed by the Geodetic Institute under Professor Norlund for the mapping of Greenland. In 1932 he was asked to join Captain Ejnar Mikklesen's expedition to East Greenland as a surveyor. Using the latest light equipment and newly developed technique, Spender made an accurate survey of 120 miles of the Blossville coast in eleven working days. He then mapped Kangerdlugssuak, an area of 1000 square miles in a further eleven working days. In 1933 Spender returned to East Greenland with Knud Rasmussen's expedition. This time he had the assistance of air photography for the mapping of the coast between Umivik (lat. 65° N.) and Kangerdlugssuak (lat. 68° N.). By the extensive use of the short-base method and photogrammetry, the whole mountainous area was mapped as far inland as the ice-cap.

In 1935 Eric Shipton took Spender to carry out a detailed reconnaissance survey of Mount Everest. Twenty-six peaks of over 20,000 ft. were climbed. A detailed map with accurate contours was made of the north face and outstandingly good results were obtained in short intervals of fine weather. This was achieved by using a very light photo-theodolite and the same methods as had proved successful in Greenland. In 1937 he again went with Shipton; this time to the Karakoram. The problem was to fill in a blank on the Karakoram map in the region of the Shaksgam river. Splendid results were achieved including the fixing of the Aghil Pass, the tracing of the course of the Zug-Shaksgam River, the solving of the sources of five great glaciers and the mapping of 1800 square miles of unknown country.

Spender worked at the Royal Geographical Society on stereo-photography; in particular on the photographs of the Houston Mount Everest flight. After the Karakoram expedition he joined the Aircraft Operating Company to supervise the installation of a plotting machine and to carry out the work of plotting a survey of the Iraq oil fields with it. He was engaged on this when the war started. It was not long before the Services required the Company to use their resources for identifying and measuring photographs of enemy territory. Spender worked for the first part of the war at this, and his knowledge was of the greatest value in the interpretation of air photographs, a study which was then little known in the Service Departments. Later the organisation was taken over by the R.A.F., and, after a time under the new control, Spender transferred to the Naval Intelligence Department. His quick brain and wide knowledge proved of great value in the operations room. Later he went back to the R.A.F. to continue his photographic interpretation work, and he was serving with a photographic unit on the continent when he met his death.

Spender was never content to follow accepted lines of thought, but struck out on his own to achieve results by new and ingenious methods of his own devising. Whether on a mountain or in a boat he was a splendid companion. He could talk well on almost any subject. Whether it was countries, peoples, music or art, he would always bring some fresh idea and bigger enthusiasm which made his company so much worth having and his loss to all his friends so very hard.

A.C.

ALBERT LAURIS THURAS died on 7 September 1945. After graduating from the University of Minnesota and doing graduate work at Harvard he joined the International Ice Patrol to Davis Strait in 1916, serving as Scientific Observer until 1918 and then as Oceanographer from 1918 to 1920. In these years he made studies of the Gulf Stream and of the Labrador Current and the variations in their locations during the months between April and July, and his researches were published in the *Bulletin of the U.S. Coast Guard*. Latterly, he was connected with the Bureau of Standards and the Bell Telephone Laboratories.