

Obituaries

Paul-Emile Victor died in Bora-Bora, French Polynesia, 7 March 1995, aged 87. Born in Geneva in 1907, he spent his childhood in Long le Saulnier and joined the Boy Scout movement, which had a lasting influence on him; later he obtained an engineer's degree (Ecole Centrale de Lyon), and then a degree in ethnology. In the summer of 1934 Dr J.-B. Charcot agreed to transport Victor and three friends, Robert Gessain, Michel Perez, and Fred Matter, to the east coast of Greenland on board *Pourquoi Pas?*. They spent one year in Ammassalik, bringing back a harvest of notes, drawings, recordings, and artifacts on local life.

Two years later, Victor, Gessain, Perez, and Eigil Knuth crossed Greenland with dog sledges from Christianshaab to Ammassalik. This was followed by a wintering with an Esquimo family in Kangerlussuak, where Charcot left him one month before he died in the shipwreck of *Pourquoi Pas?* on the coast of Iceland. Back in France, Victor published two books, *Boréal* and *Banquise*, which made his name known to the public.

Victor spent most of the war in the United States, where he served as a US officer specializing in Arctic rescue teams. After the war he laid the foundation of Expeditions Polaires Françaises (EPF), with Gessain, Perez, R. Latarjet, and A.F. Liotard, and dedicated the rest of his active life to the promotion of expeditions in Greenland and Terre Adélie, constantly calling for government support and using public opinion to back polar expeditions. Thanks to his actions and charm he nearly became the *passage obligé* for new polar vocations. He also introduced techniques of air supply by parachute or free drop, learnt during the war (*Polar Record* 7 (47): 24–31, 1954), and developed the use of tracked vehicles to replace dog sledges.

In Greenland from 1948 to 1953, EPF resumed the programme carried out by Alfred Wegener in the 1930s, installing an ice-cap station located very near Wegener's Icemitte; the members of the programme also carried extensive glaciological, seismic, and gravimetric traverses across a large area. Among the young scientists recruited was a geographer, J.-N. Malaurie, who later founded the Centre d'Études Arctiques, was the publisher of *Inter Nord*, and, more recently, developed the Académie Polaire, a Franco-Russian venture dedicated to the training of northern Siberian executives.

For Antarctica, Victor obtained government agreement on a Terre Adélie expedition proposed by three young Frenchmen, Yves Vallette, Robert Pommier, and Jacques-André Martin, who formed the core of the first expedition in 1948–49, led by Liotard. This expedition was relieved initially by Lieutenant de Vaisseau M. Barré's team in 1951 and finally by M. Marret in 1952. During this period the French Navy agreed to crew a wooden ship bought by Victor; this sister ship to *John Biscoe* was

renamed *Commandant Charcot*. In January 1950, the ship's captain, Capitaine de Frégate M. Douguet, reasserted officially the rights of France in Terre Adélie.

During the International Geophysical Year, the Académie des Sciences formed a French committee with three members: J.Coulomb, A.Danjon, and P.Lejay, to develop a programme, raise the budget, and appoint operation managers. For the Antarctic they selected B.C. Imbert, at that time a hydrographer in the French Navy, and the deputy of Barré in 1951; Victor chaired the Sous-Comité Antarctique. The IGY coastal station, Dumont d'Urville, was built off Pointe Géologie in 1956 and three expeditions completed the three-year programme, including seismic and gravimetric traverses, by 1959; at Charcot, a small inland station close to the South Magnetic Pole, altitude 2400 m, two teams of three men successfully carried out meteorological, glaciological, and magnetic observations in 1957 and 1958.

Those same years, 1957–1958, Victor organized the Expedition Glaciologique Inter-nationale in Greenland with four other European countries: Austria, Denmark, Germany, and Switzerland; EPF provided logistics and air supplies for traverses and the establishment of a wintering station 200 miles from the east coast. Robert Guillard was appointed operational manager; the work was resumed in 1967–1968.

In 1959 Victor was instrumental in convincing the government that Antarctic research must be pursued after the IGY, and he saw to it that Terres Australes et Antarctiques Françaises (TAAF) subcontract Terre Adélie operations to EPF; scientific work was managed in a department of TAAF from 1963 onwards. This organisation lasted 30 years. Before his retirement, Victor provided EPF ground support to an ice-core project at Dôme C, altitude 3200 m, a site half way between Vostok and Dumont d'Urville. The glaciologist Claude Lorius led this project, which took three years (1974–1977) and was implemented with US support of C130 planes based in McMurdo.

In conclusion, what Victor did in government circles and in the media played an essential part in funding valuable polar research in Greenland and Antarctica. French public opinion often considered him the foremost polar explorer, although the days of polar exploration have been largely superseded by scientific research and although for the past 50 years Victor never actually ventured in the private domain of those who chose winter nights and long journeys on the ice-cap.

Victor retired in 1976, leaving EPF in the hands of the financial and administrative director, Jean Vaugelade, assisted by Gaston Rouillon, Victor's deputy, and Robert Guillard, long-time operational manager, who had led expeditions in both the north and south. Years later, in

1992, the government created a new structure taking over some of the charter from EPF and TAAF: the Institut Français de la Recherche et de la Technologie Polaire, located in Brest, and whose chairman is the glaciologist Claude Lorius, member of the Académie des Sciences.

A friend of nature, an artist, and a prolific writer, Paul-Emile Victor wrote a number of books and articles, for both the general public and children; he also gave numerous interviews and lectures. He received the highest grade in the Légion d'Honneur, as well as decorations from Denmark and Sweden; he was awarded the gold medal from the Royal Geographical Society, London; the Royal Scottish Geographical Society, Edinburgh; and the Royal Geographical Society of Sweden.

Upon his retirement in 1977, Victor moved to Bora-Bora, French Polynesia, where he co-authored a book on Ammassalik ethnography, making use of his notes taken before the war. He is survived by his wife, her son, and the three children of his former wife.

Bertrand C. Imbert

Dr Helen Wallis, OBE, FSA, well-known historian of cartography, died 7 February 1995. She was born on 17 August 1924, and was educated in London and at Oxford, where the subject of her DPhil thesis was 'The exploration of the South Sea, 1519 to 1644.' She was based in the Map Room of the British Museum (later British Library) from 1951 until 1986, latterly as Map Librarian. She was a member of many organisations and societies, including the Royal Geographical Society (Hon Vice President 1988–), the Society for Nautical Research (Chairman 1972–1989), the International Cartographic Association, and the Hakluyt Society (Council member at intervals from 1957). She edited Carteret's journal of his circumnavigation for the Hakluyt Society (published 1965). A great conference-goer and lover of travel, Wallis had a multitude of friends and colleagues in many countries. Some of these gathered at the RGS in May 1995 to pay tribute to her memory. A selection of these tributes were edited by Sarah Tyacke and Tony Campbell and privately printed under the fitting title *The globe my world*.

A few years ago Wallis made her first visit to the Scott Polar Research Institute. However, she had earlier spoken and published on aspects of polar history. In 1981 she gave a notable paper on England's search for the northern passages in Tudor and Stuart times, at the splendid conference in Rome convened by Dr Louis Rey. This was published in *Arctic* (37 (4): 453–472; 1984). The EGR Taylor lecture given in December 1992 at the RGS appeared in the *Journal of Navigation* (47 (1): 1–19; 1994). In this was reproduced the earliest chart of the Falkland Islands (1690). She was a loyal member of the Archival Research Task Force (ARTAF), which has met at the RGS since 1993 to promote research into Frobisher's Arctic voyages of 1576–1578, under the auspices of the Meta Incognita Steering Committee in Canada. She is much lamented, not only for her scholarly researches and publi-

cations, but for the inspiration and friendship she gave so generously.

Ann Savours

Air Commodore Iliffe Cozens, CB, AFC, RAF, died 21 June 1995 at the age of 91. To the polar fraternity, Cozens will best be remembered for the magnificent photographic record he made of the British Arctic Air Route Expedition to Greenland, led by Gino Watkins, in 1930–1931. Cozens had gained his wings in 1924 and then obtained a degree in Mechanical Engineering at Downing College, Cambridge, where he rowed no. 7 in the Downing boat. In early 1930 Watkins was assembling his team, and, although he had already recruited Flight Lieutenant D'Aeth as pilot and Wilfred Hampton as aircraft engineer, he was delighted when the Air Ministry seconded Cozens to the expedition for the summer as photographer. Later he was granted leave for the duration of the expedition.

Although not a member of any of the main sledging journeys, as photographer he was always on the spot during the first few days of any sledging journey when loads were at their heaviest and crevasses were at their worst. As a result of 'always being aground,' he was able to make and edit the expedition 35 mm film *Northern lights*, which later was shown commercially at the Haymarket Cinema in the West End, and now, thankfully, is housed at the Scott Polar Research Institute.

The film and Cozens' photographs included many incidents of life with the Inuit as it was in 1930–1931, and so unlike conditions today. In addition, there is an excellent sequence on kayaking, showing Inuit men displaying their skills, and nine members of the expedition doing some 'formation rolling' in their kayaks. This was probably the first time the British public was introduced to the art of kayaking.

Owing to accidents, Flight Lieutenant D'Aeth was not able to fly during the winter months, and Cozens put in many flying hours, looking unsuccessfully for the Ice Cap Station where August Courtauld was living on his own, and ferrying personnel to and from Angmassalik — some 30 miles from the base. Inevitably, at times the aircraft had to be tethered down on the sea ice, and in one blizzard one of the aircraft was badly damaged. Soon afterwards, the second aircraft was damaged, again at Angmassalik, when, on landing, Cozens hit a lump of sea ice hidden in the soft snow. Repairs were skilfully carried out by Hampton and John Rymill, and by spring all pilots and aircraft were again in action.

Apart from his photographic skill, Cozens was an enthusiastic pianist and organist, and one of the pleasures I remember of life at the base was listening to some of his excellent collection of classical records and watching him accompanying, for example, one of the Bach pieces, using the wooden table as a silent keyboard. In later life, he continued to play the organ in his village church, until failing eyesight caused him to give it up.

On returning to England, Cozens was engaged in

various RAF assignments, and in 1938 he was appointed Commanding Officer of 19 Squadron — the first squadron to fly Spitfires operationally. His role in introducing the Spitfire into Fighter Command's front line was recognised by the award of the Air Force Cross. His wartime flying with Bomber Command (he was considered too old at 38 for fighter operations!) was brought to an end when Station Commanders were forbidden to fly operationally.

Soon after returning from Greenland, Cozens had been introduced to Surgeon Commander Murray Levik, founder of the Public (later British) Schools Exploration Society, which resulted in his becoming a member of the BSES Committee, and later Vice-President. In 1982, on the occasion of the Society's fiftieth anniversary, it was decided to send the annual expedition to the east coast of Greenland and to combine its usual exploration activities

with a visit to the site of Watkins' tragic death in 1932, where they were to erect a new memorial cross. As representatives of BAARE, Cozens and I were invited to participate in this event, which was to be filmed together with the other activities by Meridien TV. The film covered the memorial service and the work of the BSES members, and some nostalgic shots of visits to some of our old haunts of 1930–1931, and was shown under the title of *Those Greenland days*. Cozens took a copy of his *Northern lights* with him and had a great evening showing it to a large crowd of Inuit, some of whom remembered us well as 'The English.'

Cozens married after the war and lived very happily in his home at Horley Manor. He is survived by his wife Gillian, a son, and two daughters.

Alfred Stephenson

In Brief

SPRI ARCHIVES. Mrs Philippa Hogg has been appointed Assistant Archivist at the Scott Polar Research Institute as of 1 October 1995. Mrs Hogg will be in charge of the day-to-day running of the Archives and of assisting scholars who wish to use the materials kept there. Requests to consult the Archives should be addressed to her at the Scott Polar Research Institute, stating in as much detail as possible what materials the researcher wishes to consult. Mrs Hogg's appointment is a step meant to encourage scholars and researchers from around the world to consult the SPRI Archives.

LAW RECEIVES AUSTRALIA DAY HONOURS. On 26 January this year, Dr Phillip Law, the Director of the Australian Antarctic Division, 1947–1966, was awarded the Companion in the Order of Australia, that country's highest civilian honour. Dr Law not only was in charge of the Antarctic Division at a time when it mapped almost 3 million km² of Antarctica's interior, he also oversaw the establishment of two Antarctic stations — Mawson and Davis — and was a key figure in the planning of a third, Casey. He was also honoured for his work in the formation of the Victorian College of Advanced Education system.