

damaged and later the port shaft failed. The vessel thus trapped in the drifting ice has been forced to wait for the summer thaw before continuing her voyage home. Time is apparently being well spent. The eight scientists left on board are conducting a number of research projects.

EXPEDITIONARY ADVICE AT THE RGS

The Royal Geographical Society and the Young Explorers' Trust have recently set up an Expedition Advisory Centre to act as a central information body and to advise any group or individual organizing an expedition both within the UK or overseas. The centre already has a library of some 800 expedition reports and it is keen to expand this collection. It also maintains a list of consultants, and registers of expeditions leaving the UK and members available for expeditions. Included in the 1981–82 (November–April) training programme are one-day seminars and workshops on various aspects of expedition planning and organization, as well as more specialized weekend residential courses. For further information write to Shane Wesley-Smith at the centre, 1 Kensington Gore, London SW7 2AR.

CAPTAIN SCOTT'S *DISCOVERY*

The Maritime Trust, owners of Captain Scott's *Discovery*, has received some good news. The National Heritage Memorial Fund has offered the trust £50 000, as a matching grant, towards the vessel's costly restoration now underway in London at St Katharine's Dock. The trust has already spent £165 000 on the ship, but it needs at least another £300 000 to complete the work.

OBITUARY

Sir **MARTIN LINDSAY OF DOWHILL**, Bt, CBE, DSO, traveller, writer and Conservative MP from 1945–64, died on 5 May 1981, aged 75.

Born on 22 August 1905 and educated at Wellington College and Sandhurst, he was commissioned in 1925 in the Royal Scots Fusiliers. Lindsay first came to notice as an explorer in 1929 when, while seconded to the Fourth Nigeria Regiment, he crossed central Africa from west to east. This adventure caused Gino Watkins to offer him a place on the British Arctic Air Route Expedition, 1930–31, to east Greenland. Here he helped establish the weather station near the centre of the ice cap where Courtauld was later to spend five solitary months. Towards the end of the expedition he sledged with Scott and Stevenson across the ice cap to Ivigtût in south-west Greenland. It was this journey that gave Lindsay the urge to return.

For countless years there had been reports of a large mountain range in the hinterland of east Greenland, and a distant sighting of these mountains had now been made from the air by Gino Watkins' 1930–31 expedition. To map them was Martin's aim. Because extreme ice conditions on the east coast limited access to about six weeks, he prepared plans in 1932 to reach the area by crossing the ice cap from west Greenland, warmed by the Gulf Stream and accessible for a considerably longer period. The route would approximately follow latitude 70°N and the survey would start near Scoresby Sund and be continued as far south as mount Forel.

Support from the Royal Geographical Society (RGS) was now necessary because without it the Foreign Office would not apply to Denmark for permission to travel. Regrettably the RGS committee to consider Martin's plans was ill-chosen, consisting of elderly men with no polar experience under an abrasive chairman. The plans were turned down since they 'did not provide a sufficient element of safety'. Martin now sought the aid of the colonel of his regiment, that powerful Marshal of the Royal Air Force, Viscount Trenchard. Such was his influence that the Foreign Office asked Denmark for approval and the then Prince of Wales became patron of the expedition.

At Martin's request I left in September 1933 to spend the winter in Jakobshavn in west Greenland. My instructions were to buy enough huskies for three large dog teams, 14 in each, and to learn how to drive them; in addition I was to make a depot of over a ton of dogfood some 20 km inland on the ice cap. That winter the Eskimos persuaded me to adopt the fan-trace method of dog driving, which is ideal for the Greenland ice cap, since it gives a direct pull on the sledge, and with traces 6 m long, a dog can jump crevasses.



British Arctic Air Route Expedition, 1930-31

Martin Lindsay.

Unusually severe ice conditions delayed the arrival of Martin's ship in Jakobshavn by a month, and it was 21 May before he and Lt Daniel Godfrey, RE, joined me. Together we set off on a record journey of 1 900 km, for 1 740 of which we were a self-supporting unit; this, incidentally, is in the *Guinness book of records*. For nearly three months we saw only two birds and the tracks of a fox; to reduce weight we carried only a long-wave wireless set for receiving time-signals, but no transmitter.

Just north of mount Forel we discovered the highest ice plateau within the Arctic Circle (3 350 m), and still farther north in Kong Christian IX Land the highest peak, Gunnbjørns. A large-scale map of the survey, drawn up by the RGS, appears in Lindsay's book *Sledge*.

Martin was a good leader and an excellent organizer; he planned to reach the east coast of Greenland between 4 and 8 September and, in spite of delays at the start, we arrived on 5 September. Throughout his life he showed courage and determination of a high order, whether as a traveller, a soldier or as a politician, speaking frequently on defence, of this country or the western world.

Regrettably his British Trans-Greenland Expedition has never been fully recognized by the RGS, nor was his journey included on the RGS 150th anniversary map. Nevertheless, as so often happens in such circumstances, distinctions came from abroad; he received the Gold Medal of the French Geographical Society, the André Plaque from the Royal Swedish Society for Geography and Anthropology, and the Bronze Medal of the Royal Belgian Geographical Society as well as honorary membership. These medals, along with his 1930–31 Polar Medal, are all now on display at the Scott Polar Research Institute; but what gave him great pleasure before he died was to learn that Fordham and Woolley, two British explorers, had christened a prominent nunatak on his expedition's route, and unofficially named it after Martin Lindsay.

Martin was a skilful writer and among his publications about his Arctic exploits are: *Those Greenland days, Sledge, Three got through* and *Memoirs of an Arctic explorer*.

Andrew Croft

Dr **OVE WILSON**, medical officer on the Norwegian-British-Swedish Antarctic Expedition, 1949–52, died on 14 March 1981. Born in 1921 while his mother was travelling through Berlin, he went to school in Italy, France, Sweden, Canada, USA and Spain. That restless life was due to his father, who was world figure-skating champion, but it suited Ove too. He made his name at Maudheim in Dronning Maud Land by operating to remove a damaged eye from the geologist Alan Reece. Without operating theatre, without trained assistants, without ever having seen an eye operation, and with instruments that he had fashioned himself out of lengths of welding wire, the operation was successful and the patient was reading with his good eye the very next day. Ove Wilson's motto was 'Never a dull moment' and, as befits an expedition doctor, he was prepared to try anything even under conditions of grotesque improvisation if he felt the circumstances demanded it. His dentistry, for which he had had three weeks' training in Sweden, even extended to root fillings, some of which have now lasted 30 years. He spent two long and hard seasons dog sledding inland as a field assistant and loved every minute of it. Idly turning over a loose rock while crouching on the summit of a nunatak, he found a colony of red mites; the species, *Maudheimia wilsoni*, was later named after him. During the winters he did physiological experiments on long-suffering companions, analysing monthly blood samples and determining basal metabolic rates. This work led to a lifelong involvement with environmental medicine which resulted in a number of published papers on haematology, basal metabolism, cold adaptation, frostbite, and nutrition. In later years he worked in aviation medicine with the Swedish air force.

Charles Swithinbank

Dr **ROGER BROWN**, the Canadian and world authority on the distribution of permafrost in Canada, died on 4 November 1980, following a courageous battle against illness for several years. He was 49.

Born on 17 January 1931 in Toronto, he was a geographer by training, receiving his bachelor's degree from the University of Toronto in 1952. Subsequently, following research leave at the Scott Polar Research Institute, he was awarded his doctorate from Clarke University in the United States in 1961. He joined the Division of Building Research of the National Research Council of Canada in 1953 and had risen to the rank of Senior Research Officer at the time of his death. During his time at the Division of Building Research, Dr Brown undertook both exploratory and detailed field studies on permafrost occurrence in all major regions of Canada. The *Permafrost map of Canada* (1967), and its subsequent revisions, together with his regional reports comprise standard reference material for all those interested in the problems of northern Canada. He was a prolific scientific writer publishing over 40 scientific and technical papers. His book, *Permafrost in Canada* (1970), is a masterly synthesis of how permafrost influences nearly all aspects of northern development.

In addition to his work in mapping the distribution of frozen ground and ground ice, and studying the properties of permafrost, Dr Brown was a magnificent example of a scientist who recognized his professional and international responsibilities. He conducted courses on permafrost at both the University of Calgary and the University of Ottawa, and gave innumerable lectures across Canada on the subject. It is probably no exaggeration to say that the majority of permafrost workers in

Canada owe part of their permafrost heritage to the research, encouragement, dedication and friendship of Dr Brown. In a similar vein, he was also extremely active in promoting international permafrost relations, particularly with the Soviet Union and more recently, The People's Republic of China, and was involved in the organization of several major Canadian conferences on permafrost, numerous specialized symposia, and three international permafrost conferences.

Those of us who knew Roger personally valued his humour, friendship and integrity. He was a warm and gentle man whom we will all miss in the years to come.

Hugh M. French

VIKTOR SEMENOVICH VAKULA, an icebreaker captain, died in March 1981 aged 60. His whole working life was spent in the Arctic, where he was successively captain of the icebreakers *Sibiryakov*, *Krasin*, *Kapitan Voronin*, and, since 1976, *Kapitan Sorokin*. The last-named is a shallow-draught vessel designed for working in river estuaries, and it played a key role, under Vakula, in lengthening the season in the Yenisey estuary to the point at which virtually year-round operation has been achieved.