

## OBITUARY

Flight Lieutenant GORDON MURRAY HASLOP, RAF, died in Singapore on 27 August 1961 as the result of a motor accident. He was born in Canada but brought up in New Zealand, attending the Te Aroha High School and the Auckland Teacher's Training College before joining the New Zealand Army in 1941. A year later he transferred to the New Zealand Air Force, in which he served until May 1951 when he again transferred, this time to the Royal Air Force Transport Command.

He was selected as second pilot of the RAF contingent of the Commonwealth Trans-Antarctic Expedition, 1955–58, and was a member of the Advance Party which set up "Shackleton" in 1956. He returned with the Main Party and took part in a number of pioneer reconnaissance flights and also in the establishment of the southern sub-station "South Ice". With Dr A. F. Rogers, he was marooned for a week between "Shackleton" and Halley Bay owing to a forced landing during a mercy flight in an Auster. He was co-pilot, with Squadron Leader J. H. Lewis, in a notable flight at the end of the expedition, when they flew the single-engine Otter non-stop from "Shackleton" to "Scott base", a journey of 1,430 miles taking 11 hr.

He returned to duty in the RAF and had been stationed at Air Base Changi from May 1959 until the time of his death.

Captain JAMES FRANCIS (FRANK) HURLEY, O.B.E., the Australian explorer, photographer and author, died in Sydney on 17 January 1962 at the age of 71. The sustained adventure of his life story recalls that of his co-patriot Sir Hubert Wilkins. Running away from school, he worked for some time in a steel mill before completing his education at Sydney University. He then joined a firm of photographers, but very soon left to accompany Douglas Mawson on his Australasian Antarctic Expedition, 1911–14, during which he was one of the party that sledged to the South Magnetic Pole. Almost immediately after the return of this expedition, he joined Shackleton's Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition, 1914–17, and brought back memorable photographs of the wreck of *Endurance* and scenes on Elephant Island, together with the documentary film *In the grip of the polar ice*. Ten days after the rescued party had returned to London, Hurley was on duty as an official war photographer to the AIF in France and served there, and in the Middle East, for the rest of the war. Then followed filming ventures in New Guinea and central Australia, and lecture tours in America until he returned once more to the Antarctic with the British, Australian, New Zealand Antarctic Research Expedition, 1929–31. In 1939 he again became a war photographer with the 2nd AIF, and served in the Middle East and other theatres of war. Among his publications are *Pearls and savages* (Sydney, 1924), *Argonauts of the south* (London, 1927), *Shackleton's Argonauts* (London, 1948) and *Glorious Queensland* (Sydney, 1950).

Captain HAROLD E. SAUNDERS died suddenly at his home in Takoma Park, Maryland, USA, on 11 November 1961. During nearly 40 years of service in the United States Navy, he was chiefly concerned with ship design, but he also made major contributions to Antarctic cartography. Born in Washington, D.C., in 1890, he graduated from the United States Naval Academy, Annapolis, in 1912 with the highest academic record achieved by any midshipman since 1885. He then attended the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where he gained a Master of Science Degree in Naval Architecture in 1917.

In 1920 Saunders was put in charge of the Submarine Design and Construction Section of the Bureau of Construction and Repair in Washington. In 1929 he was

assigned to the old Experimental Model Basin in Washington and organized the Basin's first full-scale trial section. In 1937 he was appointed liaison officer in charge of the David Taylor Model Basin at Carderock, Maryland, which he saw through its planning and construction stages and became Director from 1946 until his retirement in 1949. He then became Technical Consultant to the Chief of the Bureau of Ships, a post which he held at the time of his death. Two volumes of a three-volume work he was writing, entitled *Hydrodynamics in ship design* (New York, 1957), were published. He was working on the third volume when he died.

He is better known to readers of the *Polar Record* for his Antarctic work. A classmate and longtime friend of Admiral Richard E. Byrd, he acted as chief cartographer in elucidating the results of the Byrd Antarctic expeditions of 1928–30 and 1933–35. In this capacity he worked closely with the staff of both the National Geographic Society and the American Geographical Society. He was one of the pioneers in the development of methods for constructing reconnaissance maps from oblique air photographs with little or no ground control.

In 1943 he was appointed to serve as one of the original members of the Special Committee on Antarctic Names (now Advisory Committee on Antarctic Names) of the United States Board on Geographic Names. For the past 14 years Saunders was Chairman of this Committee. In this capacity he played an important part in formulating United States policy and solving many difficult problems. He undertook informal exchanges with foreign committees in order to bring about more international uniformity in Antarctic names. His careful and persistent attention to detail resulted in the first reconnaissance sketch maps of a number of Antarctic areas photographed from the air by American expeditions. Reference to his published works gives only a small idea of the care he lavished on these problems. Mention should be made of his contributions to the *Geographical Review*, Vol. 23, No. 2, 1933; Vol. 27, No. 4, 1937 and Vol. 38, No. 3, 1948; the *National Geographic Magazine*, Vol. 68, 1935; the *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, Vol. 82, No. 5, 1940; and the *International Hydrographic Review*, Nos. 1 and 2, 1956.

The writer of this note has had many occasions to be grateful for Saunders' patience, integrity, ability and understanding in tackling the often apparently insoluble problems of international agreement on Antarctic nomenclature. All who knew him greatly valued his friendship.

B.B.R.

JOSÉ MARIA SOBRAL was born in Guleguaychu on 14 April 1880, and died in 1961 on his 80th birthday. He entered the Argentine Navy in 1898 and, as a Lieutenant, was appointed to join Nordenskjöld's Swedish South Polar Expedition, 1901–04. His work was in the fields of meteorology, magnetism, astronomy and hydrology, and he took part, with Nordenskjöld and O. Jonassen, in a 400 mile sledge journey down the east coast of Graham Land as far as lat. 66° S., during the summer of 1902. On his return home he left the Navy to study at the universities of Buenos Aires and Uppsala. During his later career he served his country with distinction as, successively, director of the department of mines, consul in Norway, and specialist in petrography in the department of oil resources.

BORIS ANDREYEVICH VIL'KITSKIY was born in 1885 and died at Bruxelles on 6 March 1961. He made his name as an explorer while leading a hydrographic expedition to the Arctic. His father, Lieut. General A. I. Vil'kitskiy, was hydrographer of the Imperial Russian Navy from 1901 to 1913, and organized the series of hydrographic voyages to north Siberian waters in the *Taymyr* and *Vaygach*, 1910–15. For the last three years Boris Vil'kitskiy was in command of this expedition, which discovered a number of islands off the Siberian coast, notably, in 1913, the archipelago now called Severnaya Zemlya. This was the last major discovery of

land within the Arctic Circle. Vil'kitskiy gave it the name Zemlya Imperatora Nikolaya II, but it was changed after the Revolution. During 1914–15 the two ships made the first east–west traverse of the North East Passage, and Vil'kitskiy became a Rear-Admiral. After the Revolution he emigrated, but he returned to the Soviet Arctic in 1923 and 1924, when he was asked by Arkos, the Soviet-owned trading company in Britain, to take charge of convoys of freighters trading into the Kara Sea; this task he performed with success. In spite of his political disagreement with the Soviet Government, his name remains attached to the strait separating Severnaya Zemlya from the mainland (Proliv Vil'kitskogo), and to one of the islands in the De Long group in the north of the East Siberian Sea (Ostrov Vil'kitskogo).

Sir JAMES MANN WORDIE, C.B.E., was born on 26 April 1889 and died in Cambridge on 16 January 1962. He was educated at Glasgow Academy and the Universities of Glasgow and Cambridge. In 1913 he first saw the polar scene when he visited the Yukon and Alaska with an excursion after the International Geological Conference at Toronto.

As Chief of Scientific Staff of Shackleton's Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition, 1914–17, he wintered on Elephant Island after the loss of *Endurance*. On returning to England he served with the Royal Field Artillery during 1917–18.

After the end of the war came a series of Arctic journeys. In 1919, with Dr W. S. Bruce on the Scottish Spitzbergen Syndicate Expedition; in 1921 commanding a small expedition to Jan Mayen where, in company with Mercanton and Lethbridge, he climbed the Beerenberg; then a series of five Arctic expeditions between 1923 and 1937, the first three to east Greenland, the last two to west Greenland and Baffin Island. In 1947, he returned to the Antarctic when he visited Graham Land to advise on the future programme of the Falkland Islands Dependencies Survey.

His expedition work has been recognized by a number of awards and medals: the Back Award, 1920; the Bruce Medal, Royal Society of Edinburgh, 1926; the Founder's Gold Medal, Royal Geographical Society, 1933; the Royal Scottish Geographical Society's Gold Medal, 1944.

Apart from his university duties first as Tutor, then Senior Tutor, President and finally Master of St John's College, Cambridge, he was a member or Chairman of many committees. Among these were, from time to time, the Discovery Committee, the Falkland Islands Dependencies Scientific Committee and the Scott Polar Research Institute Committee of Management. He was a member of the Council of the Senate, Cambridge, President of the Royal Geographical Society, Vice-President of the British Glaciological Society, Joint Chairman of the Everest Committee, Chairman of the British National Committee for Antarctic Research and Vice-Chairman of the Commonwealth Trans-Antarctic Expedition Committee.

After retiring as Master of St John's College, he gradually divested himself of his many other responsibilities, but in spite of failing health he took continued interest in his former activities and looked forward to visits from those who could keep him informed.

His death was a sad blow to so many who had come within his sphere. Student, companion in exploration, geologist or friend, all will think back and, taking stock, recognize how much they owe to the quiet judgment and steady enthusiasm of James Wordie.

As a student one soon realized that his way was to trust the good intuition of the individual unless that trust was abused; as a younger companion in exploration one found enthusiasm and caution accompanied by ready advice and a clear understanding of each man's peculiarities and limitations.

For very many years he was sought out by those wishing to launch polar expeditions large or small. Based on practical experience and a shrewd judgment, his



SIR JAMES MANN WORDIE, CBE

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CAPTAIN HAROLD E. SAUNDERS, USN

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advice was invaluable. Always he saw to it that a man stood on his own feet and took his own decisions. Behind the quiet and unassuming manner was a strong will and an ability to divorce sentimentality from the judgment of a situation. Underdogs and lost causes were perhaps deserving of sympathy, but seldom of support, for, in the human community as in the rest of nature, there must be the failures and these should not be allowed to drag the rest down to their level.

Through the years it became customary to find James Wordie on any committee connected with polar matters. He therefore had a close insight into the complex relations of societies, special committees, sources of finance and expedition personalities. With this long standing and complex background knowledge, and a lifelong keenness to see plans translated into action, it is not surprising that in later years some considered him to be a little bit authoritarian. This criticism is an occupational hazard of those able to judge a situation in the light of information from many sources which are not necessarily available to their critics.

Many will feel his loss, particularly those young people who went to him for the advice and assistance he was so willing to pass on.

Sir James's extensive polar library was bequeathed to the National Library of Scotland.

V.E.F.