

OBITUARY

Colonel **JØRGEN V. HELK**, director of the Arktisk Institut in Denmark from 1963 to 1976, died on 26 April 1976 at the age of 70. The son of an army officer, Helk also chose a military career, becoming an infantry lieutenant in 1927. During the occupation of Denmark he escaped to England where he was trained by and served in the Special Forces of the British Army. His tasks included parachuting into Denmark to help the resistance movement there.

Helk specialized in geodesy, and from 1931 to 1966 was connected with the Geodætisk Institut under the Danish Ministry of Defence. He led several expeditions to Greenland and played a major role in the mapping of that country. In 1935, 1936, and 1938 he worked on the triangulation of Greenland, and from 1947 to 1953 he was in charge of aerial mapping. From 1954 to 1958 he headed the photogrammetrical section of the Geodætisk Institut, and from 1958 to 1966 the topographical section.

As director of the Arktisk Institut Helk was primarily concerned with its archives; he organized the institute's large collection of photographic prints and negatives and answered the many requests for information on Greenland. He also edited the monograph series *Meddelelser om Grønland* from 1968 to 1975.

Helge Larsen

JOHN EAST RAYMOND, a former member of the British Antarctic Survey (then the Falkland Islands Dependencies Survey) died on 15 April 1977 at the age of 62. Few men have had such a wide and lasting effect on the Survey and contributed so much to its general well-being. The results of his many years' labour as base builder and carpenter are still weathering the Antarctic storms—a tribute to the high standard of his workmanship. Apart from one hut (Anvers Island), which was accidentally burnt down in 1971, only one of his buildings is now unusable. This was the original Halley Bay base which he and his brother-in-law, Douglas Prior, built on the Brunt Ice Shelf for the Royal Society in 1956. It was a magnificent hut complete with a Tudor-style sitting room; unfortunately, it was slowly crushed by the weight of accumulating snow and had to be replaced by the first of a succession of new buildings in 1964. The following summer, 1956–57, he and his Halley Bay companions assisted in assembling the Trans-Antarctic Expedition's Otter aircraft and later in building Shackleton base.

After the war, in which he had served with the Royal Engineers and been in some of the worst of the fighting, Raymond went to work in the Bahamas and then, in 1950, transferred to the Public Works Department in the Falkland Islands. It was from there that he joined the Survey, first on secondment and later as a member. In the ensuing summer seasons he helped to build new base huts at Hope Bay (1951–52), the Argentine Islands (1953–54), Anvers Island (1954–55), Signy Island (1954–55) and Admiralty Bay, King George Island (1955–56), as well as numerous smaller buildings and extensions. He wintered at the Argentine Islands in 1954 and Halley Bay in 1956, and in 1957 was awarded the Polar Medal for his services.

He took a great interest and delight in everything Antarctic and in between his labours also managed to indulge his love of golf. While at Halley Bay, he and Douglas Prior flagged out a nine-hole golf course with coffee tins and holes, sastrugi providing the hazards. He will be warmly remembered by his FIDS/BAS colleagues as a conscientious and skilled craftsman, a hard worker and a good companion.

E. Todd

The sudden death of the pioneer airman **JOHN GRIERSON**, on 21 May 1977 at the age of 68, has saddened all who knew him. Born in 1909, the year in which Peary reached the North Pole and Wellman made his second attempt to fly over it in his airship, John Grierson developed an early interest in air exploration. He took his first flying lessons while still at Charterhouse before going

on to RAF Cranwell in 1929—the year Richard Byrd succeeded in flying over the North Pole. The RAF gave him ample opportunity to develop his interest in flying. In 1930 he was posted to India and flew out in his own Gypsy Moth. A year later, in the same aircraft, he made the record solo return flight to England in four-and-a-half days—a remarkable achievement in 1931.

His interests turned to the problems of polar flying at the time when Gino Watkins's first British Arctic Air Route Expedition was in Greenland exploring the possibilities of a north polar route from England to Canada, the USA and the Far East. This presented John Grierson with the kind of challenge that he loved. The problems were formidable, but he succeeded at the third attempt in making the first solo flight over the Greenland ice sheet to Ottawa in a Fox Moth seaplane in 1934.

In 1939 he joined Hawker Siddeley where he was the test pilot chiefly concerned with the flight development of Frank Whittle's jet engine in the Gloster E28 aircraft—later to become the Meteor, the world's first jet-engined fighter and forerunner of our present military and civil jet aircraft. In 1946, with two Walrus amphibian planes, he joined a Salvesen whaling factory ship to explore the use of aerial survey in the Antarctic. From 1950 to 1962 he was with the de Havilland Aircraft Company, which enabled him to continue to fly worldwide. With the US Air Force he revisited the Arctic and Antarctic, including both the South Pole and the South Magnetic Pole. He made his home in Guernsey in 1964 where he continued to enjoy flying his own twin-engined plane.

He was the author of a number of books: *Through Russia by air*, *High failure*, *Jet flight*, *Air whaler*, *Sir Hubert Wilkins*, and *Challenge to the poles*. His last, *I remember Lindbergh*, is to be published in autumn 1977.

At the time of his death he was the main speaker at a National Air and Space Museum Symposium in Washington on the 50th anniversary of Charles Lindbergh's first solo flight from New York to Paris. In his memory the National Air and Space Museum has announced the foundation of an annual John Grierson Memorial Lecture—an honour much deserved.

A Fellow and former member of the Council of the Royal Geographical Society, a Friend of the Scott Polar Research Institute, a skilled and courageous airman with an unflinching zest for life, he will be remembered as a pioneer pilot who contributed so much to the development of aviation and air travel.

W. E. Hampton

ERRATA

Polar Record, Vol 18, No 116, May 1977, p 521, line 4. Stallworthy did indeed find the first trace of the lost German Arctic Expedition led by Dr Krüger, but not the only trace. Canadian field parties subsequently found two other records, at Cape Bourne in 1954, and at the north end of Meighen Island in 1957. Line 21, for Inspector Joyce read Inspector Joy.