

OBITUARIES

LIEUTENANT-COMMANDER WALTER EDMUND FLETCHER, R.N., was seconded from the Admiralty to take part in J. M. Wordie's expedition to the Canadian Arctic from May to September 1934. It was a great disappointment to him that a bad ice year gave so little scope for fresh discoveries. Fletcher's handiness made him a general favourite and among his special qualities must be mentioned his enthusiasm as a hunter, his alertness and energy, and his good companionship. He lost his life from exhaustion and exposure on January 5, 1941, in an attempt to save an occupant of Miss Amy Johnson's aeroplane when it crashed in the Thames Estuary.

J.M.W.

SIR WILFRED GRENFELL died at Vermont on October 9, 1940, at the age of 75. After experience as a medical missionary among deep sea fishermen, he began his work in Labrador in 1892 at the Hudson's Bay Company trading posts. From a small beginning the work extended until Dr Grenfell's "parish" had a population of over 20,000, of whom about 3000 were Indian, 2000 Eskimo, and the rest white or of mixed stock. Hospitals, nursing stations, schools and orphanages were erected under his supervision, as well as saw-mills, fox farms, co-operative stores, etc., for he was almost as inspired by the economic as the human possibilities of the country, and worked extensively outside the country for their recognition. Such development of the country grew far beyond the means of the Mission, and lecture tours were started in Britain, Canada, and the United States. The International Grenfell Association was formed in 1912 with an endowment of over £200,000, and many voluntary helpers joined his permanent staff as doctors, nurses, teachers, and industrial organisers. In connection with the development of the country Grenfell had always planned an aerial survey, and Dr Alexander Forbes paid a high tribute to his co-operation and enthusiasm in the aerial mapping of Northern Labrador in 1931.

In 1927 Grenfell was created a K.C.M.G. He wrote several books, mostly autobiographical. The best known are *The Labrador Doctor*, *Forty Years in Labrador*, and *The Romance of Labrador*.

ARTHUR HEMING died in Canada during the summer of 1940. His drawings and paintings of the Canadian North are remarkable for their fascinating treatment of snow and ice, and they will be a lasting monument to his genius. Since 1930 the conception and production of some seventy canvases depicting the pioneer days and the wild life of Canada had occupied all his time and energy.

GEORGE EDWARD MARSTON, who died on November 21, 1940, at the age of 58, was Director of the Rural Industries Bureau. He was trained as an artist and in this capacity joined Shackleton's Antarctic Expedition in 1907. He was a member of Joyce's supporting party, and one of the best of the man-haulers, and at the base his ingenuity and handiness were most valuable in the erection of the hut and in the day-to-day life of the shore party at Cape Royds. With his friend James Murray he describes these experiences in *Antarctic*

Days, a book which deals with the lighter and more human sides of expedition life. He was also active with Wild and Joyce in producing the *Aurora Australis*, the only book written, printed, and published in the Antarctic; all the etchings and drawings are by Marston, and they supplement his fine water-colours which are a feature of Shackleton's *Heart of the Antarctic*. Five years later he was one of the old hands picked by Shackleton for his second expedition in 1914, and he was on the *Endurance* when she was crushed in the Weddell Sea and the party escaped to Elephant Island. Marston was a lover of the sea; expedition life attracted him as nothing else, and on board ship nobody was more adaptable and universally useful. J.M.W.

LIEUTENANT JAMES MARTIN, R.N.V.R., who has been reported lost at sea as a result of enemy action, had an unusual career compared with other polar explorers. On leaving Harrow in 1917 he obtained a commission in the Grenadier Guards, and served with them until 1919. After a short time in business, he left the city to serve before the mast in the sailing ship *Garthpool*, the last of the British windjammers in the Australian trade. In 1929 he signed on as a seaman in the *Discovery* for a summer voyage to the Antarctic under Sir Douglas Mawson, and the following year he sailed south again with Mawson; this time as boatswain. In order to improve his knowledge of navigation, he went to the White Sea in the *Quest* in the winter of 1931-32. Soon afterwards he was invited by the Oxford University Exploration Club to lead an expedition to Spitsbergen. Wishing first to gain experience in dog driving, he went to Canada. Here he was badly frostbitten while sledging near Great Slave Lake, and was unable to join the Spitsbergen expedition, although he did much to help with its organisation. Early in 1933 he began planning to lead a new Antarctic expedition. To gain further experience, he joined the Norwegian sealing ship *Isbjorn* in the winter of 1933-34 for a voyage to Jan Mayen. He generously set aside his Antarctic plans in favour of John Rymill's British Graham Land Expedition of 1934-37, and was appointed mate of the *Penola*.

Martin was an expert in all matters connected with seamanship. His remarkable qualities of courtesy, patience, and above all loyalty, were combined with an ability to adapt himself to his company, so that he was as much a part of his surroundings in the foc's'le of a sealing ship as in his London clubs. He never expected credit for anything he did, and was always willing to watch others get praise for his work. Certainly, of all the members of the Graham Land Expedition, he was the most universally respected. B.B.R.

ROBERT COCKBURN MOSSMAN, who died in Buenos Aires on July 19, 1940, was born in Edinburgh on November 7, 1870. From a business career, in which he had little interest, he took to meteorology, and though without scientific training, so impressed Alexander Buchan that he was attached to the Ben Nevis Observatory. He had completed a lengthy statistical investigation of the climate of Edinburgh when, in 1902, he joined W. S. Bruce's Scottish National Antarctic Expedition in the *Scotia*. He helped to build an observatory at Scotia Bay, South Orkneys, and remained in charge of it for the first year after the Argentine Government had assumed control. Later he joined the Meteorological service of the Argentine government and remained with that service to the end. Before that, however, he made two voyages to the Green-

land Seas, and in 1913-14 deputised for Dr H. R. Mill in charge of the British Rainfall Organisation. Mossman was a voluminous writer on the climate of South Polar and Argentine areas and may be regarded as one of the founders of Antarctic Meteorology.

R.N.R.B.

MAJOR LISLE CHARLES DUDLEY RYDER, who was reported missing on May 27, 1940, is now reported to have been killed in action while in command of his battalion. He was a member of the British Graham Land Expedition of 1934-37. Born in 1902, he received a commission in the Royal Norfolk Regiment in 1922, and from 1927 to 1931 was employed with the Royal West African Field Force. He served as adjutant from 1932 to 1934, and in the following year, in which he was promoted Captain, he went out as second mate of the *Penola*. By his knowledge of small boats, and his considerable skill as a shipwright, he contributed very considerably to the work of the expedition. Not only did he effect major alterations and repairs to the *Penola* during her long voyage, but he always willingly undertook to make in his tiny workshop all those items which were required by members of the expedition. He was one of the most generous-minded and good-humoured of men.

B.B.R.

PROFESSOR JULES SCHOKALSKY, of Leningrad University, who died on March 26, 1940, was a voluminous writer on polar hydrography. He passed the greater part of his life in the service of the Russian Admiralty, first as Librarian and later as Professor of Physical Geography, Meteorology and Oceanography in the Naval Academy. His efforts to improve the maps of the polar seas were supported by his seniors, and the charts of the Soviet Arctic owe much to his unceasing work.

F.D.

STORKER T. STORKERSON died in March 1940. He was born in Norway, and first became prominent as chief officer in the schooner *Duchess of Bedford* on Mikkelsen and Lessingwell's expedition to the north coast of Alaska in 1906-7. He remained in the north after the ship was lost and married the half-Eskimo daughter of the trader Klengenberg. Some years later he joined the Canadian Arctic Expedition and was one of Stefansson's two companions when he tried out "living on the land" on the successful sea-ice journey across the Beaufort Sea to Banks Land between April and June 1914. During the many years that the expedition lasted Storkerson was either a member of one of Stefansson's "spearhead" parties or in charge at an advanced base. Stefansson has made clear how much he depended on his subordinate and describes him as an excellent sailor, fitted for a ship's command. As a final effort Stefansson had planned to sledge north 200 to 300 miles from Alaska into the Polar Basin. The leader fell ill, and it fell to Storkerson to carry out the plan in March to November 1918. The drift to the north-west, for which they had hoped, was not fulfilled, and the large floe on which he and his party were camped zigzagged according to the wind. Finally the party returned to Alaska after 238 days on the ice; they deliberately carried provisions for three months only, and showed convincingly how a party such as theirs could "live on the land".

In 1920 Storkerson was appointed as Resident Manager at Baffin Island of the Hudson's Bay Reindeer Company. He completed arrangements for the purchase of reindeer for Baffin Island, but resigned his appointment in 1921 before the Hudson's Bay Company proceeded with the transportation of the reindeer from Norway.

J.M.W.