officer, old (47) Tom Berry, who had served as chief steward in RRS *Discovery II* before the war. In the best Antarctic tradition, Blyth adapted himself to the role of handyman, assisting in all the activities at the base, including carpentry, photographic work, and collection of scientific specimens. At the end of the year, Marr was invalided home, and Captain Andrew Taylor, RCE, took over command of the entire operation.

Blyth returned to Stanley in December 1944 and, the following month, sailed south again for a further year, bound this time for Hope Bay, Trinity Peninsula, where he was a member of Taylor's 13-man party, working hard in February–March to establish a new base, known as Eagle House. Again he found himself as Berry's assistant in the kitchen and as handyman about the base, with the chance to take part in a few short sledge journeys with the newly arrived dog teams. He later recalled that on 8 May 1945 (VE Day) he heard George VI and Churchill on the radio and drank a toast to the end of the war in Europe. He was a good man to have at base on such an occasion, and on party nights, for he played the accordion and had a good singing voice, although according to Taylor not everyone appreciate his crooning in Bing Crosby style!

A busy year at Hope Bay had passed quickly when Blythe returned to Stanley in January 1946. However, he had not finished with the Antarctic, for, towards the end of 1947, he signed on for a further year with the Falkland Islands Dependencies Survey, returning to Port Lockroy as handyman in a four-man party. His final year in the south was not without adventure. He achieved a record fast-descent of Jabet Peak, above Port Lockroy, when a slip on ice launched him down the mountain at a speed that safely carried him over a four-foot wide crevasse. On another occasion, he and two others from the base rowed over to the neighbouring Doumer Island for a one-night visit, and then found that their return had been cut off by drifting sea ice. As a precaution, they killed two seals to augment their food and fuel, but they had no radio to tell the base leader, alone at base, of their predicament. On the sixth day, a change of wind dispersed the ice, and they were able to row home, to the intense relief of the base leader.

After his return from the Antarctic in early 1949, Blyth worked until his retirement in various jobs, including lighthouse-keeping, gardening, shepherding, and security guarding, in and around Stanley and, for four years in the 1970s, in the United Kingdom. He looked back on his Antarctic years as the happiest of his working life, among some of the best friends he ever made.

Johnnie Blyth was justly proud to receive the Polar Medal (with Antarctic clasp 1944–45) in 1953, and of being later commemorated in Blyth Spur, a geographical feature on James Ross Island. He also received the Long Service Medal of the Falkland Islands Defence Force. He is survived by his second wife Paz from the Philippine Islands (which, with her, he visited for the first time in the last year of his life), and by a son and a daughter from his first marriage.

Geoffrey Hattersley-Smith

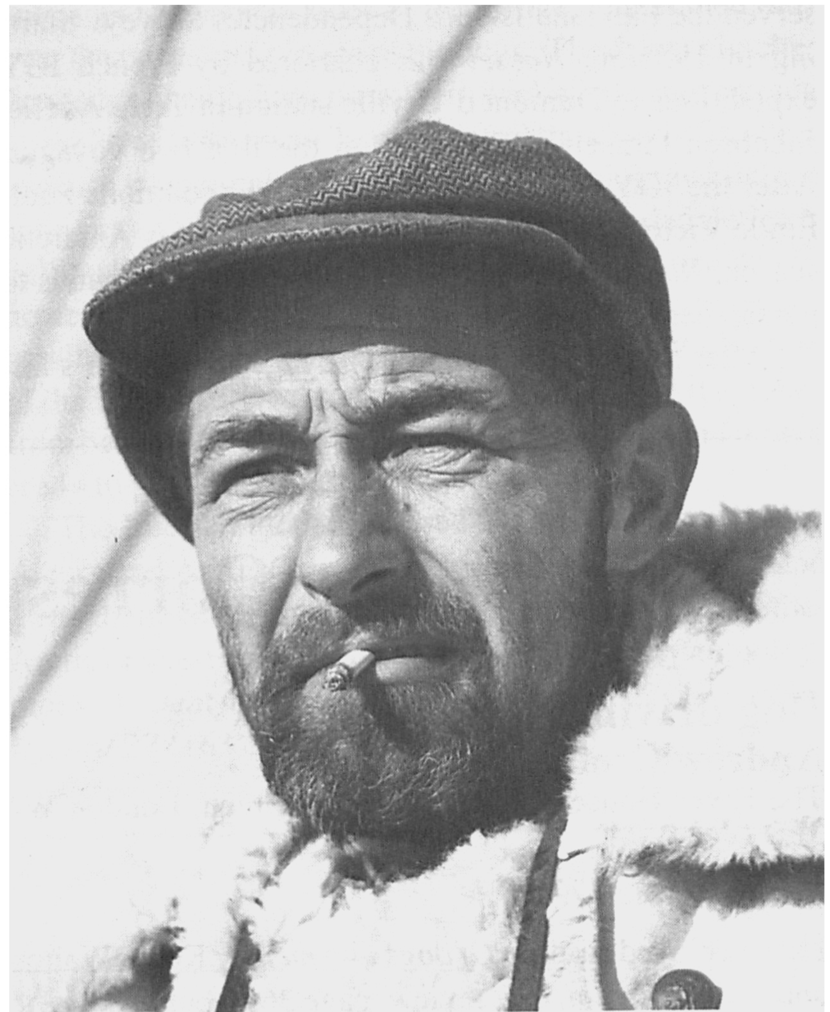

Fig. 2. Guttorm Jakobsen.

Guttorm Jakobsen, shipowner, skipper, sealer, and ice pilot, died in Tromsø, Norway, on 19 December 1995. Born in 1910 to a family of sealers, he first went to sea at the age of 15. By the time war broke out in 1939, he had years of experience on the sealing grounds and had acquired both master's and radio operator's licenses. During the war he was injured when the freighter *Vito* was bombed, but he recovered in time to help save some of the crew from the sinking ship. For part of the war he was master of a tanker. Later he survived the sinking of *Herøyfjord* while she was carrying 25,000 sealskins on a homeward voyage from Newfoundland.

Jakobsen's polar career began in 1949, when, as master of his own 600-ton sealer, *Norsel*, he carried the Norwegian–British–Swedish Antarctic Expedition to Dronning Maud Land. A U-boat diesel engine fitted into her ice-strengthened hull made *Norsel* not only powerful but versatile. Jakobsen's tenacity as an ice pilot took him — for three years in succession — through 1000 miles of pack ice to establish and then supply the expedition's base at Maudheim. Beset for weeks at a time, he was a model of patience even when others were losing theirs — or perhaps pondering the fate of *Endurance*. *Norsel* was uninsured: loaded to the gunwales with supplies for a three-year stay, everyone who saw her could understand why. Both holds were jammed and her upper decks were covered with fuel drums, three Weasel tractors, two Auster aircraft, a drilling machine, dogs, crates, and some tons of rotting whalemeat.

Jakobsen's skill as an ice pilot and willingness to take risks that no underwriter would accept set the pattern for *Norsel*'s Antarctic charters. In the 1954/55 season, she

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served the Falkland Islands Dependencies Survey. Starting in 1955/56, *Norsel* was chartered by French IGY expeditions to Dumont d'Urville station in Terre Adélie. Jakobsen himself was master on the first two voyages. After the IGY, his ship served TAAF/Expéditions Paul-Émile Victor until 1960/61. At the end of every Antarctic season, *Norsel* headed straight for the sealing grounds to pursue her principal and more lucrative calling.

After 50 Arctic or Antarctic voyages, Jakobsen's last trip south — 36 years after his first — was as ice pilot in the Norwegian Coast Guard ship *Andenes* in 1985. Meanwhile, his legendary achievements had been rewarded with an OBE, a Lloyds Medal, and high honours from Norway, Sweden, and France. The man himself was always friendly, modest, and cooperative with expedition leaders — a characteristic not universally encountered on polar voyages.

Charles Swithinbank and Bertrand Imbert

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Dog driving in the Arctic

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I have enjoyed reading *Of dogs and men* by Kevin Walton and Rick Atkinson [see review, page 367], but I am sad to note that most men in isolated stations, as in Graham Land, must now feel more lonely without the companionship of dogs, and also, without them, more in danger of falling down crevasses, due to the apparent foolishness and poor judgement of those unknown individuals who decided that dogs were a potential menace to the local habitat.

On page 70 of the book there are diagrams of the methods of dog driving used previously in the British sector of Antarctica, but there is no diagram of the true fan formation, since the snow surfaces in the area are stated to be too soft. Nevertheless, dog driving in the Arctic is still hugely important to the majority of hunters, who know the importance of relative silence, as opposed to those who love the noise and power of skidoos.

There are three principal methods of dog driving: the tandem formation in single file, much used in forest country, where there is deep snow; the centre-trace system, used in Labrador and parts of the Canadian Arctic, when the dogs are tethered in pairs behind one another by short cords or traces, on either side of a stronger central trace; and the fan formation, when the dogs are attached fan-wise by independent traces of equal length to one point in front of the sledge.

The first of my five principal Arctic expeditions, each lasting about a year, was to Greenland, where I spent the seven and a half winter months based at Jakobshaven on the west coast. My job was to learn to drive dogs — in the process I travelled some 3000 miles — and to make depots on the edge of the ice cap, preparatory to Martin Lindsay and Daniel Godfrey joining me and crossing the ice cap, in order to discover and map the 'New Mountains' on the east coast between 68° and 70°N. These mountains, in fact, proved to be the highest north of the Arctic Circle, more than 12,000 feet, and had never previously been mapped or visited.

Martin Lindsay had previously been a member of the 1930–1931 British Arctic Air Route Expedition led by Gino Watkins, who had been at school with me at Lancing. Martin insisted that I must use the centre-trace method of dog driving, since Gino knew only this technique from his experience in Labrador. In consequence, men who had been in the Arctic with Gino tended later to use in the Antarctic the centre-trace system or the modified fan.

The fan formation is infinitely superior in a country where there are no trees and where the snow is reasonably hard and windswept. The dogs are all abreast of one another, and they invariably seem to enjoy themselves; every now and then, one will lick the muzzles of those on either side and the licking will be carried along the line. The length of trace depends on the number of dogs and the type of country to be negotiated. The longer the trace, the better is the forward pull; if it is too long, the dogs will be out of the driver's control and the traces may then be caught and broken by boulders or ice en route. The usual length of trace for a team of eight over normal cross-country conditions is 14 feet, whereas for larger teams traces up to 20 feet are advisable.

As soon as I gave up the exhaustion of persevering with the centre-trace system and changed over to the fan formation, there was an immediate improvement in the *joie de vivre* and speed of my dog team, and we soon found we could outstrip any other team in the area, except for the Assistant Governor's. I learnt, too, that husky dogs respond wonderfully to affection and will rarely bite human beings except when frightened; in fact, I could even take food out of their mouths and give it to others more timid.

The use of the whip varies considerably among dog drivers. A first-class man who has trained his dogs since they were puppies may not use it at all. Instead, he will merely talk to his dogs, encouraging them over difficult country and steering by word of command. Another equally good driver may use it for steering and occasionally for punishment, but, when he does, the dog concerned is meant to remember it. On no account will a driver talk

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