

## Obituary

**Sir MILES CLIFFORD** KBE, CMG, TD, for seven years Governor and Commander-in-Chief of the Falkland Islands and Dependencies, died on 21 February aged 88. After serving in France during World War I he joined the Nigerian administration in 1921 at the age of 24. When the World War II began he was a Principle Assistant Secretary in Lagos, but was then seconded as Colonial Secretary, Gibraltar for two years, after which he returned to Nigeria as Senior Resident. In 1946 Clifford went to the Falkland Islands, and thereby entered the Antarctic scene. The Dependencies were already becoming the object of international interest, and during his seven years as Governor Clifford faced many problems and initiated many changes in the islands. He introduced radio communications between the scattered farmsteads and created the inter-island air service, both measures which greatly improved the islanders' life and created opportunities for new enterprises. He also persuaded the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund to build a mutton freezer, but this project failed owing to the inaction of the farmers themselves. His other innovations and general drive will always be remembered.

Clifford took great interest in the Antarctic Dependencies, visiting them regularly. In 1947 he was on board *MV Trepassey* when fire broke out, and the Governor was foremost in the fight to put it out. Two years later he was in *RRS John Biscoe* when great efforts were being made to relieve Stonington Island. That season the ice had not gone out, the ship became beset and was finally forced to retreat to Stanley, leaving the base members to spend an enforced extra winter. Greatly concerned by this, Clifford at once began negotiations to acquire a sea-plane, and the following spring he went back in the ship, which now carried two small crated aircraft to be assembled in the Antarctic. Fortunately ice conditions were easier, but the plane flew in to take out the five men who had by then spent three consecutive winters south, and later the ship got in too and was able to evacuate the base.

In 1948 the Hope Bay station was burnt down. When, four years later, *John Biscoe* took in a fresh party to build a new base, there was armed intervention from the neighbouring Argentine station, and the landing party was forced at gun point to withdraw to the ship. On hearing of this, Clifford ordered the Captain to remain where he was and sent a signal to the Colonial Office reporting the incident. Without waiting for a reply—perhaps even guessing what the reply might be—the Governor immediately called in *HMS Burghhead Bay* and sailed for the scene of action. Even as she dropped anchor, a boatload of Marines were on their way ashore, and suddenly the Argentines were seen hastily abandoning their base and retreating into the inhospitable hinterland! Too late, a message arrived in Stanley ordering the Governor to take no action until he received further guidance. The new station was established, and in due course the Argentine commander who had instigated the trouble was replaced. Apart from such direct involvement with Antarctic affairs, Clifford never lost sight of the need for scientific justification for the British presence in Antarctica. Although largely divorced from specialist advice in Stanley, he insisted on retaining in his own hands the final approval of scientific programmes devised in London. Certainly it was to his credit that he became increasingly supportive of the scientific programmes, particularly in the last four years of his governorship.

After his retirement in 1954 Clifford became a member of the London County Council until 1958. As a vice-president of the Royal Geographical Society he continued his polar interests by active membership of the committee of management of the Trans-Antarctic Expedition, and for a number of years he was also chairman of the Royal Society's British

National Committee for Antarctic Research. The variety of his activities was such that he will also be remembered as a director of the Leverhulme Trust, Honorary Organizer of the Mental Health Research Fund, and a member of both the Overseas Migration Board and the Conservative Commonwealth Council. It was only in his eighties that Clifford relinquished the last of his public responsibilities. He will be remembered by diverse communities as an energetic and decisive man who never spared himself in aiding many causes.

Sir Vivian Fuchs

**Sir J. HOLMES MILLER OBE** died suddenly in Los Angeles on 7 February 1986. He was deputy leader of the New Zealand contingent of the Commonwealth Trans-Antarctic Expedition 1956–58, which established Scott Base in the Ross Dependency, and supported the party led from the Weddell Sea by Sir Vivian Fuchs. In this and a later expedition 'Bob' Miller contributed notably to the exploration and mapping of the Ross Dependency, making remarkable sledging journeys 1957–58 and 1963–64.

Of Northern Ireland stock, Miller was born in 1919 in Waimate, New Zealand, and began his career as a surveyor with the Lands and Survey Department in 1936. Serving in World War II as a gunner with the 2nd New Zealand Division, he was seriously wounded in Tunisia and invalided home. He qualified as a surveyor and gained a BA at Victoria University of Wellington, in 1952 starting his own survey practice in Masterton. In 1948–49 he led a mapping team for four months in Fiordland under most trying conditions, and in 1950 he was a surveyor with Sir Robert Falla's expedition to the Antipodes and Bounty Islands.

On the Trans-Antarctic Expedition Miller was second-in-command to Sir Edmund Hillary, and senior surveyor and stores officer. His first Antarctic experience was gained in the Weddell Sea region when he, Hillary, and John Claydon, chief pilot of the RNZAF Antarctic Flight, accompanied Fuchs and the British advance party to Shackleton Base aboard the *Theron*. Returning to New Zealand he supervised the loading of 200 tonnes of cargo into the RNZN supply ship *Endeavour*. During the first winter he was concerned with planning and preparation for the expedition's support role, for the scientific programme, and for his southern survey journey with George Marsh. On 18 October 1957, Miller and Marsh flew from Scott Base to the Skelton Depot to play their part in the main southern journey. On 13 December they were the first to reach the site of Depot 700 on the polar plateau. On 19 December, having already sledged for 53 days, they began their own survey journey, pushing southeast into completely unknown country. This became one of the great polar journeys by dog sledge. When Miller and Marsh drove into Scott Base on 23 February 1958, they had been in the field for 128 days, including over 100 days as a two-man party. They had sledged 1456 nautical miles and surveyed a vast area of previously unknown mountain, glacier, and plateau country. Miller Range (83° 15'S) and Marsh Glacier (82° 52'S) commemorate their remarkable journey.

Returning from Antarctica, Miller became executive officer for Antarctic Affairs, Department of Scientific and Industrial Research 1958–59, and worked for some years in Masterton. In 1963–64 he returned to Antarctica as leader of New Zealand's last dog-sledging expedition, surveying from 73°S to the extreme north of Victoria Land. He and five companions were in the field for 101 days, sledging 1389 nautical miles, surveying some 40,000 square miles of previously unmapped country from over 50 stations, and collecting more than 500 geological specimens from 145 localities.

In 1970 Miller moved to Wellington, where until his death he was a senior partner in a firm of civil engineers and surveyors. A foundation member of the Ross Dependency

Research Committee, he was chairman 1970–83; as chairman also of the National Committee for Antarctic Research 1970–77, he represented New Zealand at meetings of SCAR in France, USA and Argentina. He became a member of the Nature Conservation Council and its deputy chairman, a trustee of the World Wildlife Fund in New Zealand, and a member of the New Zealand Geographic Board. He was a life member of the New Zealand Antarctic Society and its president 1960–62. International interests and professional skills took him to Africa and the Pacific, where he was associated with aid to developing countries and land tenure problems. He served as president of the New Zealand Institute of Surveyors, and at the time of his death was president of the Commonwealth Association of Surveying and Land Economy. Appointed OBE and awarded the Polar Medal for his services with TAE, in 1979 he was appointed Knight Bachelor for services to the Ross Dependency, conservation, and surveying. He held an honorary DSc from Victoria University, and was a Fellow of the New Zealand Institute of Surveyors, which also awarded him its Fulton Medallion for mapping in Fiordland. Those who worked closely with Bob Miller in Antarctica remember him with respect and affection, as a quiet, modest and hard-working man whose self-effacing manner gave little indication of his strong character and determination. They soon learned that everything he undertook would be done well. He was a leader and at the same time a most effective and loyal second-in-command.

James Caffin

**Capt Robert RYDER** VC RN (Ret) died suddenly at sea on 29 June 1986. Educated at Cheltenham College, he entered the Royal Navy in 1927. In 1933–34 in Hong Kong, with four other naval officers, he designed and built a ketch and sailed it to Britain. On the strength of this achievement John Rymill, who was then planning the British Graham Land Expedition, invited him to be skipper of the schooner *Penola*. Acceptance of this appointment was a challenge; not only was the schooner small and old, but it was to be manned by the expedition members, of whom only three or four had previous experience of ocean sailing. Ryder proved a strict disciplinarian, engendering a feeling among non-service member of the expedition that discipline could have been relaxed when not at sea. However, by the end of the expedition *Penola* had voyaged over 27,000 miles, more than half under sail, often at hazard from ice and under gruelling conditions. Records of the BGLE are biased toward the achievements of the sledging parties, insufficiently recognizing the part played by *Penola* under Ryder's command. Most notable were the winter voyages with restricted crews from Marguerite Bay to the Falkland Islands and South Georgia, after the wintering party had been left ashore. Though not a qualified hydrographic officer, Ryder was an enthusiastic chart maker and surveyor, responsible for charting many of the passages used today off the west coast of Antarctic Peninsula. In his spare time the chart room became his studio, for he was also a talented artist.

'Red' Ryder was a modest and very brave man, always prepared to accept a daunting challenge. His greatest challenge came during World War II, when in March 1942 he led Operation Chariot, the Combined Operations raid on the St. Nazaire docks. For his actions he was awarded the Victoria Cross. Ryder retired from the Navy in 1950 and for five years was Member of Parliament for Morden. Sailing was his great passion, extending to the last minutes of his life.

Alfred Stephenson