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FOREWORD

Our frontispiece marks the centenary of two large and important expeditions to the Antarctic, by reproducing the portraits of their leaders, Captain Dumont D'Urville of the French Navy, and Lieutenant Charles Wilkes of the United States Navy. Both discovered land in the Australian sector in January 1840, the Adélie Land of the French being straddled by the Wilkes Land of the Americans. The expeditions were alike in that both the ships were not specially equipped for Antarctic service, and that in both cases the final reports appeared in great detail with excellent illustrations. It is most fitting that honour should now be accorded to these leaders of a century ago, and no doubt they will be commemorated in other ways in the course of the year. The reproductions have been made from portraits in the possession of the Royal Geographical Society, with its kind permission.

It is a pleasure to record the award of the David Livingstone medal by the American Geographical Society to John Rymill in recognition of his work as leader of the British Graham Land Expedition of 1934-37. The members of the expedition have also been honoured by the award, by His Majesty the King, of the Polar Medal in silver.

Readers will remember that it has been our intention to include articles of some length in each number of *The Polar Record*, but the unusual length of the article in this issue calls for remark. This review of polar footgear has been planned for some time, and, thanks to the help of many correspondents, it may be regarded as fairly comprehensive. A second part, concerned mainly with accessories such as crampons, skis and snowshoes, will appear in our next issue.

The outbreak of war has naturally had its repercussions on polar work. All European nations have had to cancel plans for polar exploration and probably the leader most seriously affected is Dr G. C. L. Bertram, whose organisation for a British expedition to Graham Land was well advanced.

The United States, more happily situated, has sent off its Antarctic expedition, the third to be commanded by Admiral Byrd. Nevertheless, there will continue a certain amount of work by neutral nations, and the function of the Scott Polar Research Institute in filing and recording such work must be carried on.

It has been found necessary to close the Museum to the public, since much of the valuable material in the show cases has had to be removed. In other respects the usual activities of the Institute will be carried on as well as circumstances and funds permit. The Assistant to the Director, Mrs J. W. Wright, formerly Miss Fetherstonhaugh, is fortunately able to continue at her post, but the greater part of the voluntary help on which the Institute has flourished is being dispersed to national service.

In September there arrived at the Institute a gift notable both for its size and interest, when Mrs Jackson, widow of Major F. G. Jackson, gave practically the whole of her husband's collections from Waigatz Island in 1893-94 and from the Jackson-Harmsworth Expedition to Franz Josef Land in 1894-97. Owing to the circumstance of the war these have had to be stored for the time being, but in due course the greater part will be exhibited. The thanks of all students of polar work are due to Mrs Jackson for her generosity.

OBITUARY

We regret to announce the death of Commander Frank Wild, C.B.E., R.N.V.R. (rtd.), on August 20, 1939. An appreciation will be found on pp. 282-83.

By the death of Major Gunnar Isachsen at the age of seventy-one, at Oslo, Norway has lost one of her leading polar figures. He was a man of wide experience and interests and always ready to help those from other countries who shared his love for the polar regions. His best-known work was as cartographer on the *Second Fram Expedition*, 1898-1902, but his share in the exploration of Spitsbergen in the years before the war of 1914-18 was an equally notable achievement (*Expédition Isachsen au Spitsberg*, 1909-10. *Résultats Scientifiques*, 3 vols, Oslo, 1916-27). In 1923 he was in charge of the Norwegian expedition in the *Conrad Holmboe* to East Greenland, when the ship was beset and drifted down the east coast. Finally in 1930-31 he was in command of the *Norvegia* Expedition to the Antarctic. This last he has described in his book, *Norvegia Rundt Sydpollendet*, published in 1934. Throughout most of his life he was a