

THE POLAR RECORD

Vol. 3

July 1941

No. 22

FOREWORD

The technique of polar exploration is constantly changing with the application of new scientific discoveries and new forms of transport made available thereby.

Of recent years no one has been more apt at such applications or more steadfast in their pursuit than Rear Admiral Richard E. Byrd of the United States Navy (ret.); whose portrait figures as our frontispiece. As organiser of large expeditions, as a redoubtable aeronaut, and a leader of three major expeditions to the Antarctic, he has well deserved the many honours showered upon him by his own and other countries.

We publish herewith an account of his last expedition, the United States Antarctic Service, recalled after one year by the exigencies of the War.

The bicentenary of the death of Captain Vitus Bering deserves greater commemoration than it can receive in these days of stress. The article in this issue can do little more than remind us of that strange last expedition of the Dane who served Peter the Great and his successor so loyally and wore himself out before he came to the climax of his endeavours. There must be many, even in stricken Denmark and hard-pressed Russia, who would have liked to have shown their regard for his memory in a more fitting way than is possible at present.

Owing to the further extension of the War into the polar regions, it is impossible to give an accurate account of current events anywhere except perhaps in the Canadian Arctic. It has been thought best, therefore, to postpone discussion of the information from other regions until after the War, when the whole subject can be reviewed without bias or censorship.

The death of Sir Albert Seward, on April 11, 1941, took from us the first Chairman of the Committee of Management of the Scott Polar Research Institute. In that capacity he guided our destiny from 1925 until he retired from Cambridge in 1936, a period in our history when a wise and eminent counsellor was of especial value to us. It is hardly necessary to record that he exhibited with us that breadth of interest and sympathy which won him such universal respect, admiration and affection in all his spheres of activity. An obituary note is published on p. 458.