

IN MEMORIAM

| THE ALPINE CLUB OBITUARY: | | Year of Election |
|------------------------------------------|---|------------------|
| Longstaff, T. G. (Honorary Member, 1956) | . | 1900 |
| Travers-Jackson, G. F. | . | 1906 |
| Walker, C. W. | . | 1908 |
| Wright, Lord | . | 1910 |
| Shebbeare, E. O. | . | 1925 |
| Tipping, C. J. | . | 1929 |
| Hope, Hon. R. F. | . | 1936 |
| Forster, D. J. V. | . | 1945 |
| Densham, G. L. | . | 1957 |
| Watson, W. F. | . | 1959 |

GEORGE LEWIS DENSHAM

1912-1964

COMMANDER G. L. DENSHAM, O.B.E., D.S.C., R.N. (retired), to give him his full title, was known to all his friends as George, or at the most as George Densham, and he was indeed a most friendly individual. He died from injuries received in a road accident, and his prolonged struggle for life, even in a semi-conscious condition, typified his quiet, determined nature.

George had just retired from the Navy, and was settling down to a job which seemed to fit in well with his service experience as an engineer. He was a bachelor, but even his short spell as a civilian had started him wondering whether he would not prefer a more connubial state of life.

He served in H.M.S. *Rodney* before the war, and in H.M.S. *Vanguard* after the war, including the occasion of Her Majesty's visit to the ship, but throughout the hostilities he was in destroyers, first in the Western Mediterranean, then on the Russian Convoys to Murmansk, as well as in the Atlantic. After the war he spent some time in Ceylon and also in H.M.S. *Vernon*, the underwater establishment at Portsmouth.

George started climbing early in his naval career, and was able to enjoy whatever opportunities were at hand, from the crags of Kent and Dartmoor to the bigger mountains. As a member of the Climbers'

Club he was attached to North Wales and was one of the pre-war supporters of Helyg. He served on the committee of that Club from 1961 until the time of his death.

He was elected to the Alpine Club in 1957, having by then collected a good list of alpine expeditions. In 1962 he joined C. B. M. Warren and I. H. Ogilvie on a small expedition to Mount Kenya, but although he reached the foot of the mountain, he was not well at the time so could not take part in the attempt by the North-west ridge, which was the objective of the party. In the circumstances he did not retreat, however, but characteristically and unselfishly worked most efficiently in support of the climbing party at both Two Tarn and Top Huts.

George was broadminded in a slightly old-fashioned kind of way, and tolerant of human frailty. His unfailing courtesy endeared him to his friends, and to women in particular, despite his bachelor ways. He also had a nice sense of humour. Whilst he did not give the impression of being a particularly religious person, he was in fact a regular reader of the Bible, and privately he gave much thought to the way one ought to live. There is no doubt that this, together with his naval training, made him a model of good breeding and behaviour. His main hobbies seem to have been mountaineering, his car and photography. He was a devoted son and spent a considerable amount of time taking care of his mother.

C. B. M. WARREN.

I. M. WALLER.

DENIS JAMES VAUGHAN FORSTER

1905-1964

DENIS FORSTER died suddenly of heart failure last summer on his return from a fishing holiday in Scotland, at the early age of fifty-nine.

Most of his climbing was done in North Wales from Capel Curig, where for years he was a regular member of M. G. Bradley's climbing parties; and without actually being in the top rank he accomplished many of the more difficult ascents in the Snowdon district, some of them several times over. Later he spent a number of seasons in the Kaisergebirge, the Engelhörner and the Dolomites. In all conditions he was a cheerful and amusing companion, and no party could be dull when he was in it. He was elected to the Club in 1945.

Although he had not been a great deal to General Meetings of the Club recently, he was always to be seen at the Annual Dinners, and only last December he had the pleasure of taking his grandchildren to the Christmas lecture.

With the death of Denis Forster the Club (as well as the Stock Exchange) has lost a popular and sympathetic personality.

E. BENTLEY BEAUMAN.

LEONARD RODNEY HEWITT

1913-1964

THE sudden death of L. R. Hewitt in February, 1964, removed from the New Zealand scene one of its best known, most experienced, and certainly most consistent climbers.

Rodney Hewitt was brought up in Christchurch and educated at Christ's College. He soon became interested in mountaineering and, like so many of us, had the good fortune to be able to participate in the great resurgence of climbing activity which occurred in Canterbury in the early 1930's. There were still many virgin peaks to be climbed and virgin passes to be crossed, and for many years he served his apprenticeship in the Canterbury ranges. It was an excellent apprenticeship and laid the foundation for the subsequent climbing skills which he possessed in such full measure. He was a safe and faultless climber on rock, a brilliant exponent of snow and ice techniques and of more than average competence in bush work, boulder hopping, river crossing and other aspects of New Zealand mountain travel. Above all he displayed superb judgement in route finding, in assessing snow and ice conditions and, so important in New Zealand, in understanding the vagaries of alpine weather.

In the later 1930's he moved to more southern valleys and climbed extensively in the Mount Cook region. He served as a bomber pilot in No. 75 Squadron, R.A.F., during the war, and this together with a short post-war period was the only interruption of a long and continuous climbing career. His post-war activities, with which I was privileged to be associated, ranged far and wide and a list of his ascents would read like a gazeteer of New Zealand mountains. Amongst them were Cook, Tasman, Haast, Elie de Beaumont, Haidinger, Malte Brun, Silberhorn, Minarets, d'Archiac, Earnslaw, Whitcombe, Arrowsmith, Couloir Peak, Chudleigh, the High Thumb, Green, Walter and a host of others. Most remarkable about this list is the wide range of districts in which he climbed. He was always intensely interested in mountain scenery and mountain geography, and peak-bagging, if not entirely incidental, nevertheless still very much took a second place. This geographical interest in mountains, combined with his wide reading of New Zealand alpine literature, gave him an encyclopaedic knowledge of New Zealand mountains. He was thus a most fitting person to collaborate with Mrs. Mavis Davidson in the publications *The Mountains of New Zealand* and

A Guide Book to the Central Alps. My own small collaboration with him was on a revised edition of a New Zealand Alpine Club handbook; as on a mountain, I found that he was doing most of the work.

In 1955 he was a member of the Canterbury Mountaineering Expedition to Masherbrum in the Karakoram Himalayas. In this he fulfilled a long-standing ambition, and even although the party did not climb Masherbrum he gained great pleasure and satisfaction from the expedition. He was one of the final assault party which reached 23,300 ft. before being turned back by adverse weather conditions. With a little more luck they would certainly have made the ascent.

During his relatively short life he had two successful professional careers, in insurance and in hotel management. He could well have had a third, in Antarctic administration, for in 1960 he was leader at Scott Base and in charge of all New Zealand activities in the Antarctic for that year. The Antarctic had always fascinated him and this experience fulfilled yet another life-long ambition. He planned to return to the Antarctic and he might well have devoted the later years of his life to Antarctic affairs. Those who were with him at Scott Base testify to those qualities of his which we who have climbed with him knew so well, tolerance, calmness, good humour, infallible judgement and, when necessary, implacable firmness.

He had been a member of the Canterbury Mountaineering Club since 1931 and the New Zealand Alpine Club since 1932. He was elected a member of the Alpine Club in 1939.

One hot afternoon in February, 1964, he walked up from the Hermitage to the Hooker hut to join friends in a climb of the South peak of Mount Cook. He suffered a sudden heart attack at the Hooker hut and although he was brought out by stretcher and flown to Timaru Hospital, he died a few hours after admission. Mountains played a large part in his life and he would have wished to be close to them when he died. He was a rich and lovable character and a staunch friend to many; he will be sorely missed.

A. P. THOMPSON.

RICHARD FREDERICK HOPE

1901-1964

THE HON. RICHARD HOPE was elected to the Club in December, 1936. He had ten Alpine seasons to his credit, having climbed extensively in Austria, in the Mont Blanc group and in the Pennines. In his 1936 season, his best, one of his companions was Wilfrid Noyce. Most of his climbs were guideless. I only made one Alpine climb with him—the

Grandes Jorasses from Courmayeur (guided), but we did a number of climbs together in Wales.

Shortly after his election to the Club, in January, 1937, he met with a serious accident. We were climbing the Central Chimney on Lliwedd when he was hit on the head by a stone dislodged by a rucksack which I was pulling up to the 'Summer House'. The stone inflicted a serious wound giving him a depressed fracture of the skull and puncturing the membrane covering the brain. He was out of sight some eight feet below me, but fortunately another party led by M. G. Bradley was near at hand and Bradley gave him first aid, which probably saved his life. We did not realise at the time how serious the wound was and with remarkable courage Dick Hope climbed down the lower part of the climb and walked the two miles back to Pen-y-Pass. I immediately took him to the doctor in Llanberis, who diagnosed the serious nature of the injury and sent him to Bangor hospital, where he was operated on that night. He made a successful recovery, but never climbed again.

As a climber, Dick was a good average performer, who loved mountains for their own sake. He was a cheerful and pleasant companion, a good second on the rope and was rapidly becoming a sound leader when his climbing career was so abruptly terminated. His untimely death at the age of sixty-two is a loss which will be felt keenly by his many friends.

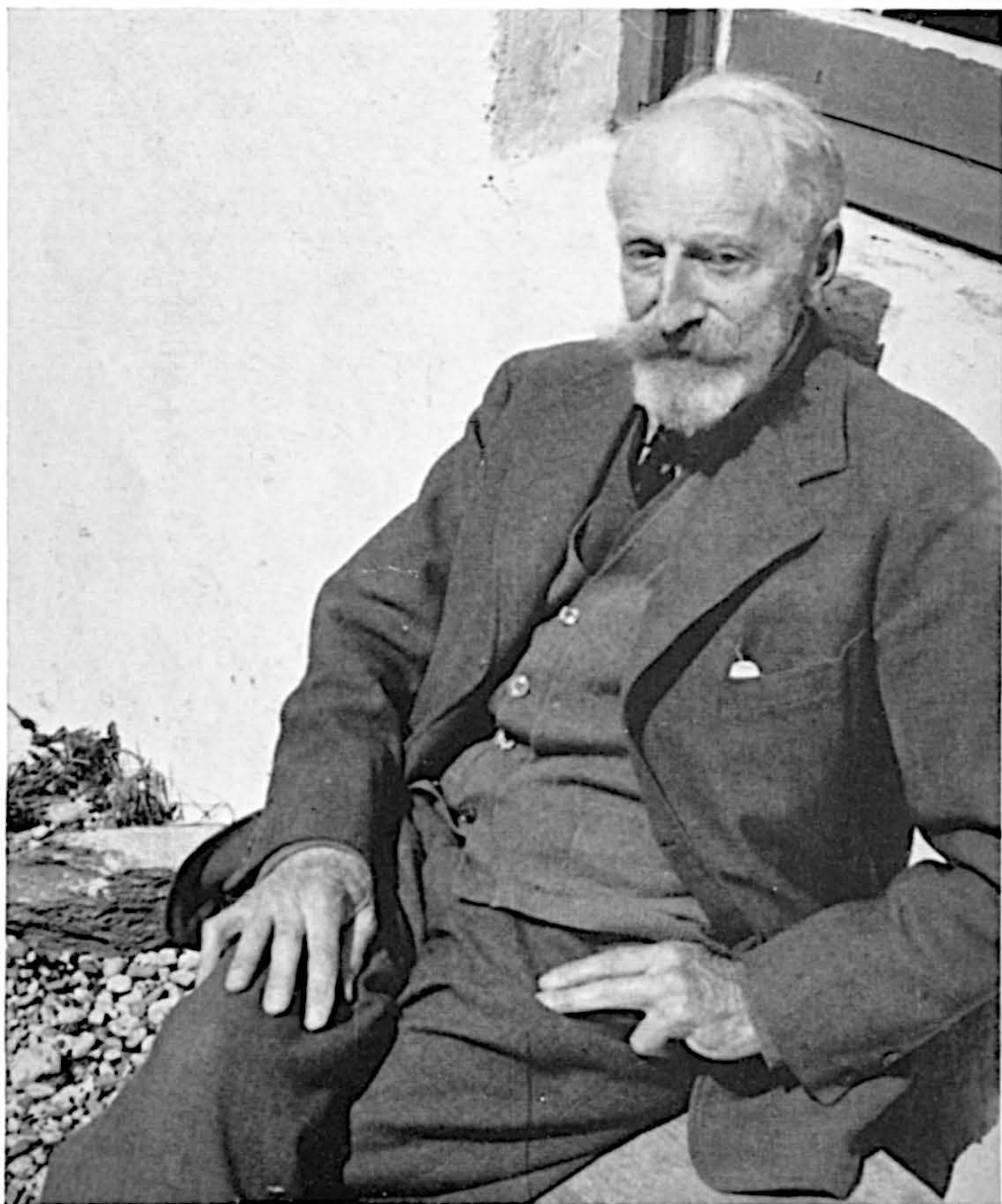
T. A. H. PEACOCKE.

TOM GEORGE LONGSTAFF

1875-1964

TOM LONGSTAFF, who died this summer in his ninetieth year, was elected to the Club in 1900, and to the Committee in 1907; he became Vice-President in 1927, President in 1947-49, and Honorary Member in 1956. He played almost as big a part in the Royal Geographical Society, which he joined in 1901 and which he served on its Council for many years, starting in 1908, and later as Honorary Secretary, receiving the Gill Memorial award in 1908 and the Founder's Medal in 1928. His achievements in mountain exploration are unique; he was indeed a great man.

Two things stand out in Longstaff's record as a traveller. The first is the sheer scope and range of his explorations: twenty visits to the Alps, six to the Himalayas, one to the Caucasus, five to the Arctic, two to the Rockies and Selkirks, many of them extending over some months and including a variety of objectives. He had the means to devote a lifetime to travel and gathered an incomparable harvest.



T. G. LONGSTAFF.

[To face page 323]

The second is the forethought and preparation that preceded his journeys. 'Qualify yourself' was the advice he constantly gave to aspiring explorers and his own qualification was comprehensive. In addition to his technical competence as an explorer he had, though he never practised, a medical degree, was a first rate naturalist, and always learnt a sufficiency of the language of the country he was visiting. Above all he thought ahead: 'Thus when in 1905 I first went to the Himalaya my objective had been determined years beforehand.'

His methods are also worthy of comment. The technique of the lightly equipped expedition, moving fast and living as far as possible off the country, which was so successfully adopted by Shipton and Tilman in the thirties, was pioneered by Longstaff in his early Himalayan journeys. His attempt on Gurla Mandhata for instance, a 25,000 ft. peak, was undertaken by a party of three, himself and the two Brocherels, the six local Bhotias having supported them only up to 18,000 ft. Some of the Garhwal journeys were done with only two Gurkhas for company. The six-month trip of 1905 from railhead and back cost only £100. Nor was he backward in taking advantage of new techniques, having used crampons in 1901 and pitons in 1907.

The period of his active exploration extends over the first thirty-five years of the century but the golden age was undoubtedly the first decade, containing the Caucasus expedition of 1903, the Himalayan journeys of 1905 and 1907, and the exploration of the Eastern Karakoram in 1909.

In the Caucasus the party was a guideless one, Longstaff and L. W. Rolleston. The early days of exploration were over but Suanetia was still a wild country and some of the big peaks were still unclimbed. They made the first ascents of Tiktingen, Latsga, Lakra, Bashil-Tau and the West peak of Shkara—'the finest climb I have ever had'.

1905 was the year of Longstaff's exploration of the eastern approaches to Nanda Devi with the two Brocherels for companions and supported by local Dhotial porters. They reached a saddle on the rim of the inner sanctuary and made unsuccessful attempts on Nanda Devi East and Nanda Kot. His programme was then interrupted by the opportunity, which he seized with enthusiasm, of accompanying Sherring, Deputy Commissioner of Almora, on a two months' journey through Tibet. A remarkable episode in the journey was the attempt, which so nearly succeeded, on Gurla Mandhata. While seeking a site for their final bivouac at about 23,000 ft. (they carried neither tent nor sleeping bags) they started a snow avalanche which carried them down to the glacier, a distance of some 1,000 ft. The guides retrieved the ice-axes and, after spending the night in the open, they continued their attempt by the Gurla glacier, spending a further night at about 23,000 ft., in an ice-cave, but being forced by cold and exhaustion to give up next morning.

In 1907 Longstaff was again in Garhwal with the Brocherels and for

the first part of the season joined forces with Bruce and Mumm, the former accompanied by nine Gurkhas. What a remarkable party it must have been. Their main objectives were Trisul (23,360 ft.) and the further exploration of the Nanda Devi basin. In the forcing of the Rishi gorge to the inner sanctuary of Nanda Devi they failed; that problem had to wait another twenty-seven years for its solution, but on Trisul they had a spectacular success, Longstaff climbing it with the Brocherels and Karbir, one of the Gurkhas, from a camp 6,000 ft. below the summit. It was to remain for twenty-one years the highest summit reached by man.

The year 1909 saw him in the Karakoram with Morris Slingsby and D. G. Oliver, when they found and crossed the Saltoro pass, discovered the tremendous Siachen glacier and surveyed the Teram Kangri group, establishing the position of the main axis of the range dividing the Indus and its tributaries from Chinese Turkestan.

After these achievements and war service, which gave further opportunity for mountain travel, as assistant commandant of the Gilgit scouts, most men would have had enough. But Longstaff, now over forty-five, was far from finished, and the Everest Expedition of 1922 was only one of the further expeditions that he took part in, often as leader, turning his attention now to the Arctic and visiting Spitsbergen, Greenland and Baffin Island, 1934, his last journey.

His book *This My Voyage* was on the classical pattern, a single volume written when his travelling days were over. It is in one way the most ambitious of all climbing books, not merely an autobiography but a contrasting record of the many ranges he explored, their natural history and their people. But it was as a talker rather than a writer that he most excelled; always sensitive to the company but delighting in the challenging, sometimes outrageous, aphorism. 'A glacier is not a marmot, it does not burrow', he insisted in his valedictory address to the Club; and on another rather different occasion, 'they couldn't put to sea, they'd pushed all the officers down the funnels'.

There are a number who knew him on expeditions between the wars, but Tom Longstaff had outlived by many years the climbing companions of his youth—Bruce, Bullock, Wollaston, Rolleston and Mumm—and the British tradition of reserve and understatement was such that none of them has left a very clear picture of him in their writings. There are only occasional glimpses: Mumm described Alexis Brocherel shaking his head when on what was meant to be an off day Tom went off after burhal: 'Monsieur Longstaff est trop vif.'

But he had the gift of making friends with all generations and of living in the present. Many climbers before the war and since have had his help and advice in planning expeditions, many have known him in the Indian summer of his life under the changing skies and among the mountains and lochs of Wester Ross. We shall remember the enquiring mind, the

forthright speech, the firmness of purpose, the ever youthful spirit, and we can see in the mind's eye the slight figure, the jutting beard, the keen eye, the strong graceful hands. It is not too difficult to imagine him as he must have been fifty or sixty years ago.

PETER LLOYD.

DR. T. H. SOMERVELL writes:

I first came across Tom Longstaff when I had been asked to go on the 1922 Everest Expedition and he, as one of the most experienced Himalayan climbers then alive, had been asked to go with us to share with us his experience. He did more than that; his intense interest in birds and beasts, and his intimate knowledge of them was shared with us too. His hatred of anything mean or shabby gave a spice of nobility to his personal charm and keen intellect. He used to rag Mallory for being a highbrow, while his own brow was anything but low! The outstanding event of the 1922 Expedition for me was one for which Tom Longstaff was entirely responsible. Norton, Mallory and I had come down from the North Col to Camp 3 feeling very unsuccessful and almost ashamed of ourselves for not going any higher than 27,000 ft., when Tom came out to meet us from his tent, and like the prodigal son's father said to us, 'You've done splendidly. Do you realise you have been 2,000 feet higher than anyone has ever climbed before? Well done', etc. Our spirits perked up, and at once we felt almost as if we had achieved some success. I have seen him many times since that expedition, and the last visit I paid to him was only three weeks before his death. He was then feeble in body and very short of breath, but keeping up his spirits and talking most intelligently about a variety of subjects ranging from Teilhard de Chardin to Douglas Freshfield—talking in many ways like a young man. (Unfortunately, his wife, Charmian, was away having her first 'holiday' after over a year's constant attention to her husband.)

It is remarkable that Tom Longstaff, who celebrated the jubilee of the Alpine Club by climbing Trisul, was present and fairly active at the Club's Centenary. Truly a remarkable man, and one whom it was a privilege to know as a friend.

DR. T. W. PATEY writes:

Some men never grow old. Age, after all, is no more than a state of mind and cannot be measured in years. My late friend, Tom Longstaff, was one of the few who proved this argument. At the age of eighty-nine he was younger at heart than many of my contemporaries in their early thirties. The climbing world will remember Longstaff as the greatest mountain explorer of his time: those of us who knew him more inti-

mately will remember him as one who had discovered the elixir of life. He enjoyed living as few men know how to.

When I first drove along the moorland road to Badentarbet Lodge a little over two years ago, I must admit that the forthcoming encounter savoured almost of a visit to the oracle at Delphi. It was rather an awe-inspiring thought that I was about to meet a man whose climbing career had started at the end of last century. However, Tom was a far more exhilarating character than the retired elder statesman I had expected to find. For him the flame of adventure burned as brightly as it had ever done. Although no longer able to tackle the great peaks, he climbed with us in spirit. Tom Longstaff was never the man to shake his head mournfully over the so called decadence of modern British mountaineers. Had he been climbing actively today, he would, I'm sure, have joined us on the Eigerwand! His only objection to the use of pitons was that 'he had lived too early to be afforded the opportunity of trying them out for himself'!

As a friend I never thought of him as one who was old enough to be my grandfather. Tom was always 'one of the boys'. As his doctor (a position I did not altogether relish), I had to accept the fact that any advice or treatment I gave him had little material effect on the outcome. It was his own vitality and zest for living that kept him going.

When eventually the end came, as it had to inevitably, even for the indefatigable Tom, he had no complaints. He would not have wished it otherwise. There were few men less suited to the role of the invalid.

MR. T. S. BLAKENEY writes:

I should be sorry not to add my own expression of gratitude to Longstaff, for it was he who secured my appointment to the A.C. as Assistant Secretary in 1948, and later it was he who proposed me for re-election to the Club. One could not have had a more congenial President to work under, nor, in matters touching the editing of the *A.J.*, could one have found anyone readier with information and advice from his immense stores of knowledge.

He was perennially young, and as L. S. Amery pointed out in his Valedictory Address to the Club in December, 1946, Longstaff's first contribution to the *A.J.* bore, characteristically, the sub-title, 'Afoot and light-hearted I take the open road'. Amery went on to observe that Longstaff remained as light-hearted 'as in the days when his pirate beard first blazed red against Himalayan snows'. The same was true of him to the end, and all who knew him, whether inside or outside the Club, will be conscious of their sympathy for his widow and family in a loss in which we all share.

EDWARD OSWALD SHEBBEARE

1884-1964

E. O. SHEBBEARE, who died on August 11 last, won a notable place for himself as a Transport Officer on Himalayan expeditions in the 1920's and 1930's. He had been a member of the Alpine Club since 1925.

Born on March 3, 1884, he was educated at Charterhouse and joined the Forest Department, Government of India, in 1906. He had become quite a legendary character by the time he retired, as Senior Conservator of Forests, Bengal, in 1938, when he went to Malaya as Chief Game Warden. He was a prisoner of war in Japanese hands from 1942-45, when he resumed his post, finally retiring in 1947.

In 1924 he was appointed as Transport Officer to the Everest Expedition and did so well that in 1929 and 1931 the German expeditions to Kangchenjunga picked him for the same role, as did Ruttledge in 1933 on Everest.

He was the author of a number of technical papers on forestry and natural history matters, as well as a book, *Soondar Mooni* (1958), being the life of an elephant.

T. S. B.

PROFESSOR N. E. ODELL writes:

I first met Shebbeare in Darjeeling early in 1924, when we were preparing to set forth on the third expedition to Mt. Everest. As our efficient Transport Officer during the long trek through Tibet, one has vivid recollections of his busying himself with the masses of stores and equipment, supervising the yak train, and checking them at each halt or camp, of which proceeding I am glad to possess a characteristic action-photograph. His experience and his chapter on 'Transport' in Norton's *The Fight for Everest* provided sound advice for the next enterprise, nine years later, when he accompanied Ruttledge's expedition in 1933, again as Transport Officer, resulting in another, and rather more discursive, report in *Everest 1933*. It was on this last expedition that he was able, though professedly no mountaineer, to fulfil a secret ambition, against his leader's orders, of reaching the North Col. This, however, was typical of his 'guts' and endurance in his fiftieth year!

His achievements as an Indian Forest Officer have been well emphasised in *The Times* obituary, and particularly in the letter in that journal dated August 19, 1964, by Sir Harry Champion. I recollect, moreover, how fascinated he was in 1924 by many of the trees and shrubs, new to him, that he found in the Rongshar valley, west of Everest, which we visited after our main operations. He was, I remember, particularly

interested in a tree from which the local natives were obtaining pulp for paper-making and export to Tibet: a species and a resulting industry of which he had been entirely ignorant.

It was always a delight to travel with him and hear his observations on trees, plants and animals; and I was privileged, on our return from Tibet, to break away from the main party and accompany him over the Sebu La into the Lachen valley of Sikkim. There we eventually ran very low in our own rations and took to the native food, with a high proportion of maize. This seemed subsequently to result in our both acquiring bad attacks of the dreaded 'hill fever', a truly surprising experience for the proverbially tough 'She Bear', 'Shebbie', or 'She', by which nicknames he was variously known to his many friends.

CHARLES JAMES TIPPING

1881-1964

C. J. TIPPING died in April last, at the age of eighty-three; he had been in failing health for the previous twelve months. He was the elder son of W. A. Tipping, of 'Mount Arthur', Gourock, who was very well known in the Insurance world, and took an active part in local affairs.

After leaving school, Tipping came to London where he joined the staff of the Royal Insurance Company, with whom he remained until he retired in 1949, except for the period of the First World War, when he saw active service in France and Mesopotamia. His brother, E. B. Tipping, who survives him, was a well-known amateur golfer in his younger days.

Tipping took up climbing soon after the 1914-18 war, and joined the Alpine Club in 1929 with a fine list of climbs. He was a regular attendant at all our meetings up to 1950, when he went to live in Ireland. Most of his climbing was done in France and Switzerland; he was a very neat performer on rock and, although he never cared for walking for the sake of walking, he always kept remarkably fit and was able to undertake major ascents immediately he got out to the Alps.

He was of a rather shy and retiring disposition, but was a delightful companion and exceedingly generous and kind-hearted. He will be sadly missed by all his friends in the Club.

M. N. CLARKE.

GEORGE FRANCIS TRAVERS-JACKSON

1880-1964.

THE death last June of George Travers-Jackson leaves another gap in our list of members of long-standing. He was elected to the Alpine Club

in December, 1906, and had, consequently, completed nearly fifty-eight years of membership. D. W. Freshfield was his proposer and Clinton Dent his seconder.

He visited the Alps on more than one occasion, doing several ascents there, and he also climbed a little in the Dolomites. But it is for his climbing in South Africa that he is noteworthy. Starting at a very early age in the 1890's, he joined the small band of South African enthusiasts who began to discover the possibilities of rock climbing on Table Mountain and on other Western Cape peaks. He soon went to the forefront and over the ensuing years discovered many first class routes. For a long time he was South Africa's leading mountaineer. He also did some climbing in the Belgian Congo and on the South African Drakensberg.

He attended the Centenary celebrations of the Alpine Club in 1957, as the representative of the Mountain Club of South Africa.

K. M. CAMERON.

CHARLES WILLIAM WALKER

1878-1964

C. W. WALKER, who died last July in his eighty-sixth year, was elected to the Alpine Club in December, 1908, his proposer being Harold Raeburn and his seconder G. A. Solly. As a boy his health had not been particularly good, and he was, accordingly, educated at Lausanne, and it seems that his interest in mountains was founded then. In addition to the Alps, he climbed in Norway quite a lot, as well as in the Lofoten Islands.

He went to Edinburgh University and later joined the jute trade in Dundee, becoming Manager of H. Walker & Sons in 1913 and taking a large part in the development of the jute industry in the nineteen twenties. He was particularly successful on Boards and at conferences; he represented the jute trade at the Ottawa Conference. He finally retired from this side of his business in 1935.

His climbing activities diminished as his family grew, but he had many other interests. He was an outstanding shot, a very keen fisherman, and devoted to ornithology. He was also a very keen flower grower, with particular interest in Alpines. From an early age he had become a skier, and took his family regularly year after year to Switzerland. In his earlier days he had taken an active part in the affairs of the Scottish Mountaineering Club, and was also a wholehearted supporter of the Scottish Ski Club. Most of his old climbing companions have predeceased him—Raeburn, Ling, MacRobert, and others. His wife,

whom he married in 1914, died in 1960, and to his son and daughters we express our sympathy in the loss of this veteran member of the Alpine Club.

T. S. BLAKENEY.

ROBERT ALDERSON WRIGHT

1869-1964

LORD WRIGHT, a former Judge of the High Court, Master of the Rolls, and Lord of Appeal in Ordinary, died on June 27 last in his ninety-fifth year. He had been a member of the Alpine Club since 1910. He was educated privately and at Trinity College, Cambridge, where he graduated in 1896 with First Class Honours in the Classical Tripos, and where he was a Fellow from 1899 to 1905.

He was called to the Bar (Inner Temple) in 1900, specialising in Commercial law, taking silk in 1917, and in 1925 being appointed to the Bench. Seven years later he was made a Lord of Appeal, but was induced to accept the Mastership of the Rolls in 1935, a position that he held at his own desire for only two years, when he was re-appointed Lord of Appeal, a position he finally resigned in 1947. Both in the House of Lords and on the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council he made his presence felt, but he was probably not widely known to the public until, in 1945, he was elected Chairman of the United Nations War Crimes Committee, which had the heavy and disagreeable task of collecting the material that was later brought forward in the charges made at the Nuremberg trials. Wright, on the invitation of the Australian Government, also attended the similar trials in Japan. It was said that he never fully got over the shocks he sustained during these war crimes investigations.

As a mountaineer Lord Wright made no pretences to distinction; he took up the pursuit rather late in life, and qualified for the A.C. on the strength of four seasons, 1907 to 1910, involving a series of standard climbs in the Valais, Dauphiné and Mont Blanc districts, his principal achievements being the Weisshorn, Matterhorn (traverse), Mont Blanc traverse from Courmayeur by the Dôme route, Meije (traverse), and Charmoz and Grépon traverses. The First World War interfered with his mountaineering career, and it was not until 1920, when over fifty, that he climbed again; he embodied his account of an attempt on Mont Blanc with an American, Howard Townsend, a dozen years his senior, in August, 1920, in a privately printed pamphlet, *A Little Known Ascent of Mont Blanc*. A storm drove them back on the Bosses ridge soon after leaving the Vallot hut.

He contributed to the *A.J.* (vol. 61, p. 371) the obituary notice of his old friend Lord Schuster, but it must be long since he visited the Club and he was probably little if at all known to the majority of its members. But over half a century of membership is an achievement for which we may remain grateful, and in the world at large his death removes a figure of decided distinction.

T. S. BLAKENEY.