

Giddings has described his work at these and many other Arctic sites in more than 50 papers and monographs, the last of which, his monumental work, *The Archeology of Cape Denbigh*, was published by Brown University only a few months before his death.

Louis Giddings is survived by his wife, the former Ruth Elizabeth Warner, and their three children, Louis Jr., Ann, and Russell. To those who cherished the friendship of this remarkably intelligent, vital and warm-hearted man, his untimely death still seems unreal. He will be sorely missed, but he has left his mark large and clear in that field of Arctic research in which he was the dominant figure.

HENRY B. COLLINS

Henry Asbjorn Larsen (1899-1964)

Henry Asbjørn Larsen, retired Superintendent of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, died in Vancouver, B.C., on 29 October 1964, after a brief illness. He was buried in the R.C.M.P. cemetery at Regina, Saskatchewan.

Superintendent Larsen was born on 30 September 1899 at Fredrikstad on the east coast of Oslo Fjord in Norway, not far from the birth place of Roald Amundsen, the first to bring a ship through the Northwest Passage, and the leader of the first expedition to reach the South Pole. It is uncertain if Larsen ever knew Amundsen personally, but when he was an adolescent the tradition of Norwegian arctic exploration was at its height and the brilliant exploits of Nansen, Sverdrup and Amundsen undoubtedly fired his imagination and inspired a strong desire to follow the sea in search of arctic adventure and exploration.

It is not surprising, therefore, that young Henry should choose to do his compulsory military service in the Norwegian Navy. Later he learnt practical seamanship in merchant ships and entered navigation school from which he graduated with a mate's certificate. After some years spent in Norwegian ships, including a stint as Chief Officer in a trans-atlantic liner, he was at last to realize his cherished ambition for arctic service when offered the berth as navigator in the veteran arctic trading schooner *Old Maid* of Seattle, bound for the Western Canadian Arctic. The arctic experience gained during two voyages in the *Old Maid* qualified Larsen for command of the R.C.M.P. patrol vessel *St. Roch*, specially designed for arctic navigation, built and commissioned in Vancouver, in 1928. In April of that year Larsen had joined the Force as a Constable; he was promoted to Corporal on April 1, 1929, six months later was made a Sergeant and on November 1, 1942 a Staff Sergeant.

Between 1928 and 1939 the *St. Roch* with Larsen in command spent 12 summers and 7 winters patrolling the Western Canadian Arctic, supplying northern detachments and, in general, serving as a floating detachment; but the two voyages for which the *St. Roch* and its captain became famous were the west to east trip through the Northwest Passage in 1940-42 and the east to west return passage, completed in one season, in 1942. On the first Larsen followed Amundsen's route in the *Gjøa*, 1903-06 but on the return voyage he sailed the *St. Roch* through Lancaster and Viscount Wellington Sounds and south through Prince of Wales Strait to Beaufort Sea, the first ship to have completed this passage.

The official report of the two historic voyages is recorded in a R.C.M.P. "Blue Book" published in 1945. To those familiar with arctic exploration and its long history of privation, hunger and cold, the terse daily entries copied from the *St. Roch's* log seem as undramatic and commonplace as if each voyage had been entirely routine.

In common with many northern *bush* pilots, Larsen had a strong sense of direction on which he often relied more than on his magnetic compass, notoriously fickle in the proximity of the Magnetic Pole. When asked how he had managed so well in the days before a gyro compass had been provided for the *St. Roch*, he is reported to have explained that, "generally, we rely on the wind, on landmarks or on the sun and stars for direction, and even when a really dense arctic fog descends, it is nearly always possible to keep a fairly straight course by back-sighting along the wake of the ship".

In his northern work, whether on the bridge of his sturdy little ship or heading a winter patrol, Henry Larsen proved himself an experienced traveller and an eminently successful navigator and leader of men. By his sympathetic understanding, patience and quiet sense of humour he completely won the confidence and lasting friendship of the Eskimo who in him have lost a staunch friend and understanding advocate.

Henry Larsen was commissioned Sub-Inspector in the Force in September 1944, promoted to Inspector in 1946, and to Superintendent in 1953. He was a Fellow of the Royal Canadian Geographical Society and a Fellow of the Arctic Institute of North America. In 1943 Larsen and his crew in the *St. Roch* were awarded the Polar Medal (Silver) in recognition of the 1940-42 voyage, and in 1946 he was awarded the Patron's Medal (Gold) of the Royal Geographical Society of London, England. In 1947 he became an Honorary Fellow of that Society and in 1948 he was presented with the Bar to the Polar Medal. He was the first to receive the Massey Medal of the Canadian Geographical Society which was presented to him by Governor-General Vincent Massey on 12 September 1959. In May 1961, he received the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws from Waterloo University College.

Superintendent Larsen was a graduate of the Canadian Police College. From 1949 until his retirement on February 7, 1961 he was stationed at Ottawa as Officer Commanding the "G" Division of the R.C.M.P. whose work deals with the Northwest Territories and Yukon. While at Ottawa Henry Larsen regularly attended the informal monthly meetings of the "Arctic Circle", the traditional meeting place of veterans and neophytes of the Arctic.

For a time following his retirement Superintendent Larsen resided at Lunenburg, N.S. and latterly at Vancouver, B.C.

In 1935 Superintendent Larsen married Mary Hargreaves of Vancouver, British Columbia. He is survived by his wife, a son and two daughters.

A. E. PORSILD