



OBITUARY

Philip Sidney Smith, 1877-1949

Philip Sidney Smith, a Governor of the Arctic Institute from September 1944, died in St. Albans, Vermont, on 10 May 1949.

Philip Smith was born in Medford, Massachusetts, on 28 July 1877 and was graduated from Harvard in 1899 with the degree of Bachelor of Arts. In 1904 he received the degree of Doctor of Philosophy from Harvard. In 1906 Dr. Smith joined the United States Geological Survey and began a long and distinguished career in the public service. After several years of geological and exploratory work in Alaska, he was appointed Administrative Geologist of the Geological Survey in 1915 and later was made Acting Director. In 1925 he succeeded Alfred H. Brooks as the head of the Alaskan Branch of the Geological Survey with the title of Chief Alaskan Geologist. This position he occupied for more than 20 years until his retirement at his own request from the federal service in 1946.

During this long interval Philip Smith guided the Alaskan work of the Survey with such notable ability that the reputation of the Survey as a factor in the economy of Alaska grew far out of proportion to the public funds expended for the investigations. In spite of his time-consuming administrative responsibilities, Dr. Smith found opportunity to travel widely in Alaska and to know personally many Alaskans, both native and white, in all parts of the Territory. In 1924 and again in 1926 he made remarkable exploratory trips into northern Alaska to investigate the potentialities of the newly established Naval Petroleum Reserve No. 4. He is the author of an imposing number of bulletins, professional papers, and other publications on the geography and geology of Alaska and he was well known as one of the outstanding Alaskan specialists of his generation.

Dr. Smith was an official delegate to the Fourth Pacific Scientific Congress, Java, 1929; he served for eight months as Supervising Engineer, Federal Emergency Administration of Public Works in Alaska, 1933-34; and was the Chairman of the United States delegation to the Seventeenth International Geological Congress, U.S.S.R., in 1937.

From the time of his retirement until his death, Dr. Smith was greatly interested in, and gave much time, to the affairs of the Arctic Institute. His wide knowledge of Alaska, especially northern Alaska, his long experience in guiding research activities in the north, and his exceptional knowledge of government procedures combined to make his services to the Institute of unusual value.

Dr. Smith is survived by his wife, a son, two daughters, and three grandchildren.

JOHN C. REED