

The University of Oslo
Inspiration Awards

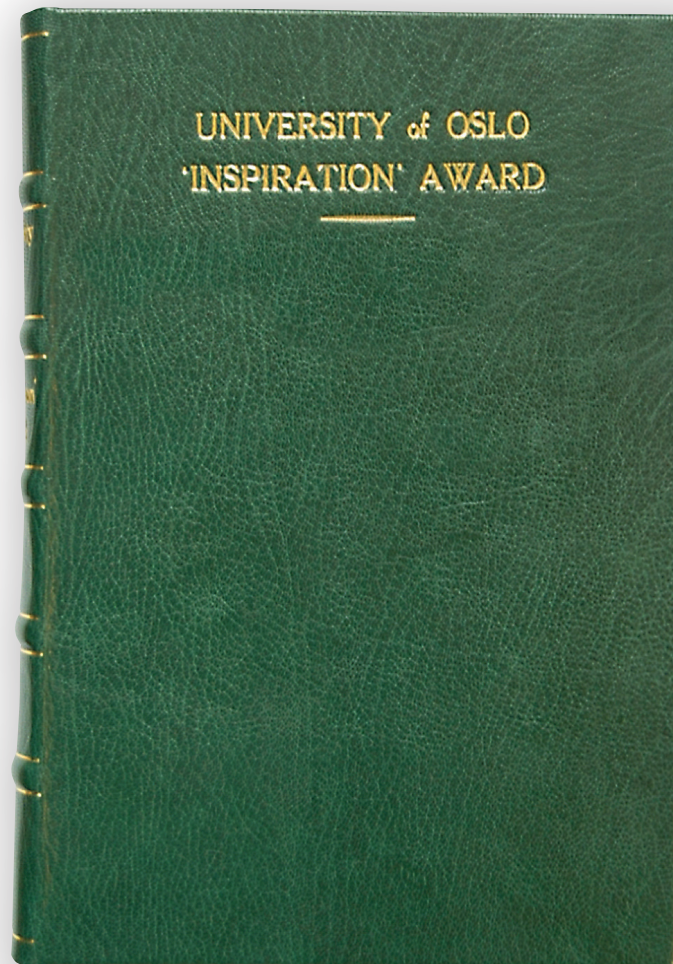
A brief explanation and notes for recipients





The University of Oslo *Inspiration Awards*

A brief explanation and notes for recipients



In 2011, a new Nordic Centre of Excellence NorMER (Nordic Centre for Research on Marine Ecosystems and Resources under Climate Change) was established to combine the expertise of internationally recognized research teams from all the Nordic countries in order to explore the biological, economic, and societal consequences of global climate change on fisheries resources in the Nordic region. The programme is administered within the Department of Biology at the University of Oslo.

As part of the new programme, a *Johan Hjort Professorship* was also instigated, with the aim of inspiring the multidisciplinary research teams of NorMER in some clear and focused way, and the 'Inspiration Awards' described here are one direct result. From this point on in this brief narrative, it will be difficult to write in anything other than a personal and subjective way. The business of being inspired and the ideas we may have about how to inspire others can only stem from personal experience. But be assured that the references to 'me', 'my' and 'I' will be kept to the minimum necessary to describe the purpose of these awards and the provenance of the volumes themselves. These awards are, after all, about *you* and are intended to recognise and reward some aspect of your scientific output or some passage in your scientific career that others have found absolutely inspirational. This short leaflet will let you know what these Inspiration Awards are all about and will explain your role as a recipient. Because you have one!

The idea stems from a rather plain volume sent to me out of the blue in the late 1980s by Henry Stommel, carrying his brief inscription on the flyleaf (award #6 below). As Jim Luyten and Nelson Hogg of Woods Hole wrote in 1992 (special Stommel issue of *Oceanus* magazine), 'For most of the past 50 years, Henry Melson Stommel was the most influential figure in oceanography. Through his simple brilliance, his personal magnetism, and his great zest for life, he inspired legions of oceanographers.' And his gift with its simple inscription certainly inspired me for decades. With this example in mind, a total of six equally-inspirational award-volumes have been brought together, roughly corresponding to



'To be able to give undivided attention to unraveling some puzzle of nature is a privilege beyond compare.'

Henry Stommel

the subjects of meteorology, marine biology, the marine ecosystem, science administration, physical oceanography and numerical climate studies, all of fundamental interest to NorMER; each of the six award volumes is as special as we could make it, having been inscribed by six of the great leaders of these subjects, namely Fridtjof Nansen, Sheina Marshall and Andrew P Orr, Sir Maurice Yonge, CTR Wilson, Henry Stommel and Lewis Fry Richardson. Each is described in a little more detail below.

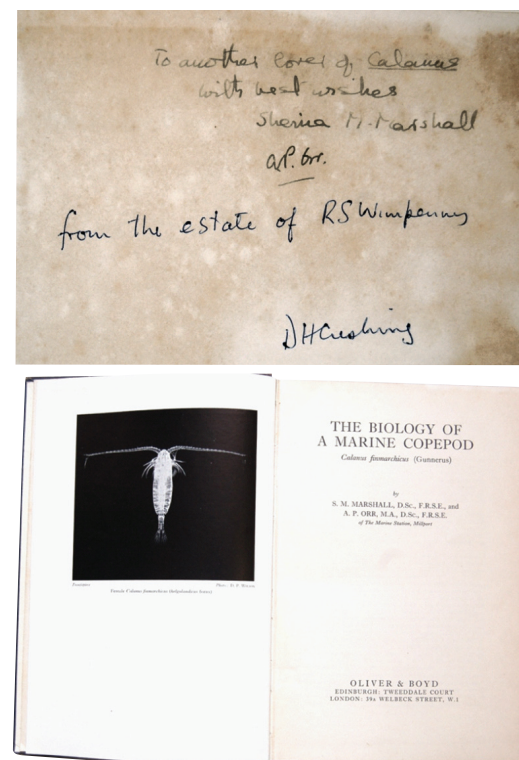
The proposal for these Inspiration Awards has been enthusiastically endorsed and adopted by the Rector of the University of Oslo, Professor Ole Petter Ottersen, the university's highest official representative, whose own duties place emphasis on '...serving as an inspirer, a cultural bridge-builder and an initiator'. While the Award is intended to confer Distinction, it does also place a couple of important obligations on the recipient. First, within a few years (say 5) of receiving an award, each recipient is asked to pass his or her award volume on to someone who has inspired *them* in their subject together with a copy of this 'explanation', and to arrange to tool the leather slip case of the volume with the year, name, and affiliation of the new recipient. At the same time, they are asked to notify the Library of the University of Oslo of the contact details of the new recipient so that they might keep track: in this simple way, the hope is that the Inspiration Awards scheme may be self-perpetuating.

In *'The Collected Works of Henry M. Stommel'* edited by Nelson Hogg and Rui Xin Huang, his unpublished autobiography includes these words: 'The freedom to work in science on one's own, with congenial colleagues, unfettered by supervision, with a scientific problem in one's mind when he goes to bed and awakes next morning, to be able to give undivided attention to unraveling some puzzle of nature is a privilege beyond compare.' If you have received one of these awards, it is because, in someone's considered opinion, a significant step in that 'unraveling' process has been down to you!

**Bob Dickson, Cefas,
NorMER, Johan Hjort Professor, 2011-12.**

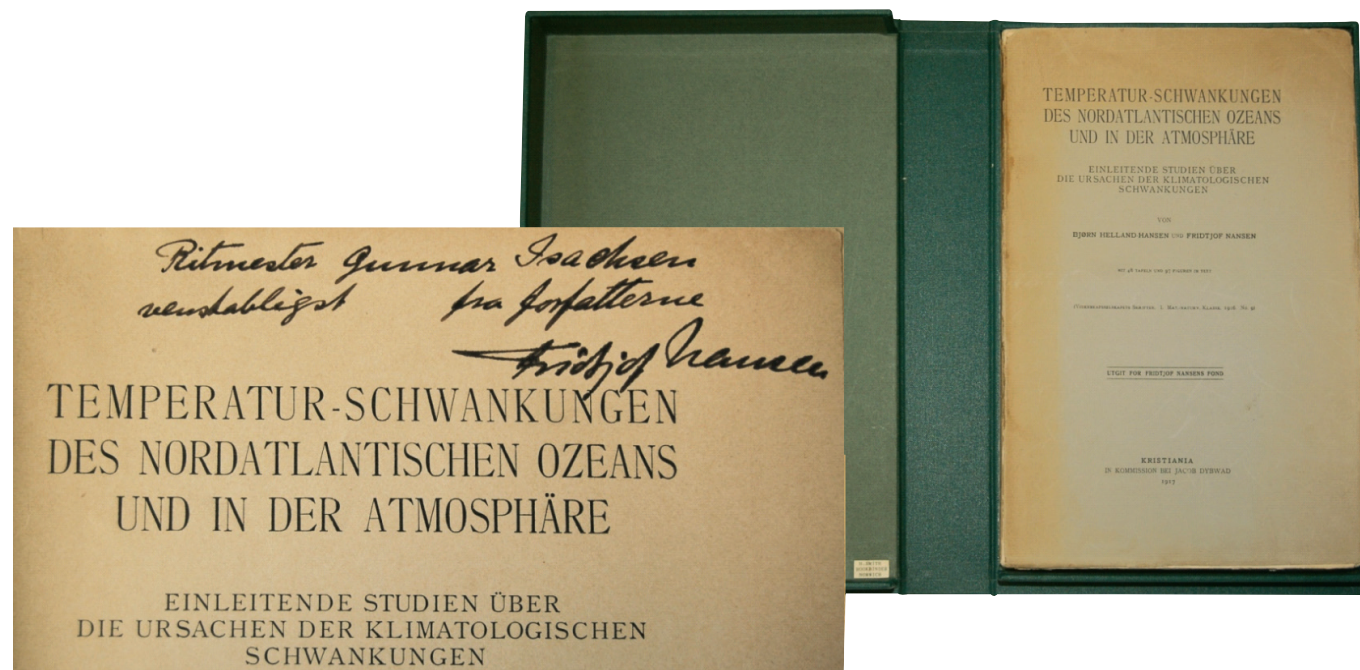
1. Award for Marine Biology

At first sight this may seem a strange choice for an Award Volume. Rather scruffy and lacking a dust jacket, it may seem an unlikely candidate for a green leather slip case and gold tooling. But quite the reverse is the case. In one of these winter evenings over a bottle of wine at the home of the great Lowestoft marine ecologist David Henry Cushing, when Cush was intent on showing me his treasures, this plain slim volume was one he returned to time and again and was plainly something special to him. The inscriptions make it so. This monograph on *The Biology of a Marine Copepod*, printed in 1955, summed up much of the life's work of two marine biologists from the Millport Marine Station on the Isle of Cumbrae, Sheina M Marshall and AP Orr, and was inscribed by them both to RS Wimpenny of the Lowestoft Laboratory '...another lover of Calanus'. David Cushing later obtained the volume from Wimpenny's estate and his ownership signature completes a flyleaf that may be slightly foxed, but which is 'charged' with portent by its direct association with these pioneers of plankton research. Though it's not the purpose of this brochure to list the award-winners, – that can come later – it was good to notice that this point was certainly not lost on Nils Christian Stenseth, the founder of NorMER, when he became its first recipient in 2011.



Flyleaf inscriptions by four pioneers of plankton research: Sheina Marshall and Andrew Orr, RS Wimpenny and David Cushing.

2. Award for Meteorology



This delicate but early and influential account of the temperature changes in the North Atlantic Ocean and atmosphere was presented to me in his usual quiet way [‘Here. I’d like you to have this. You like these things’] by Odd Henrik Saelen who

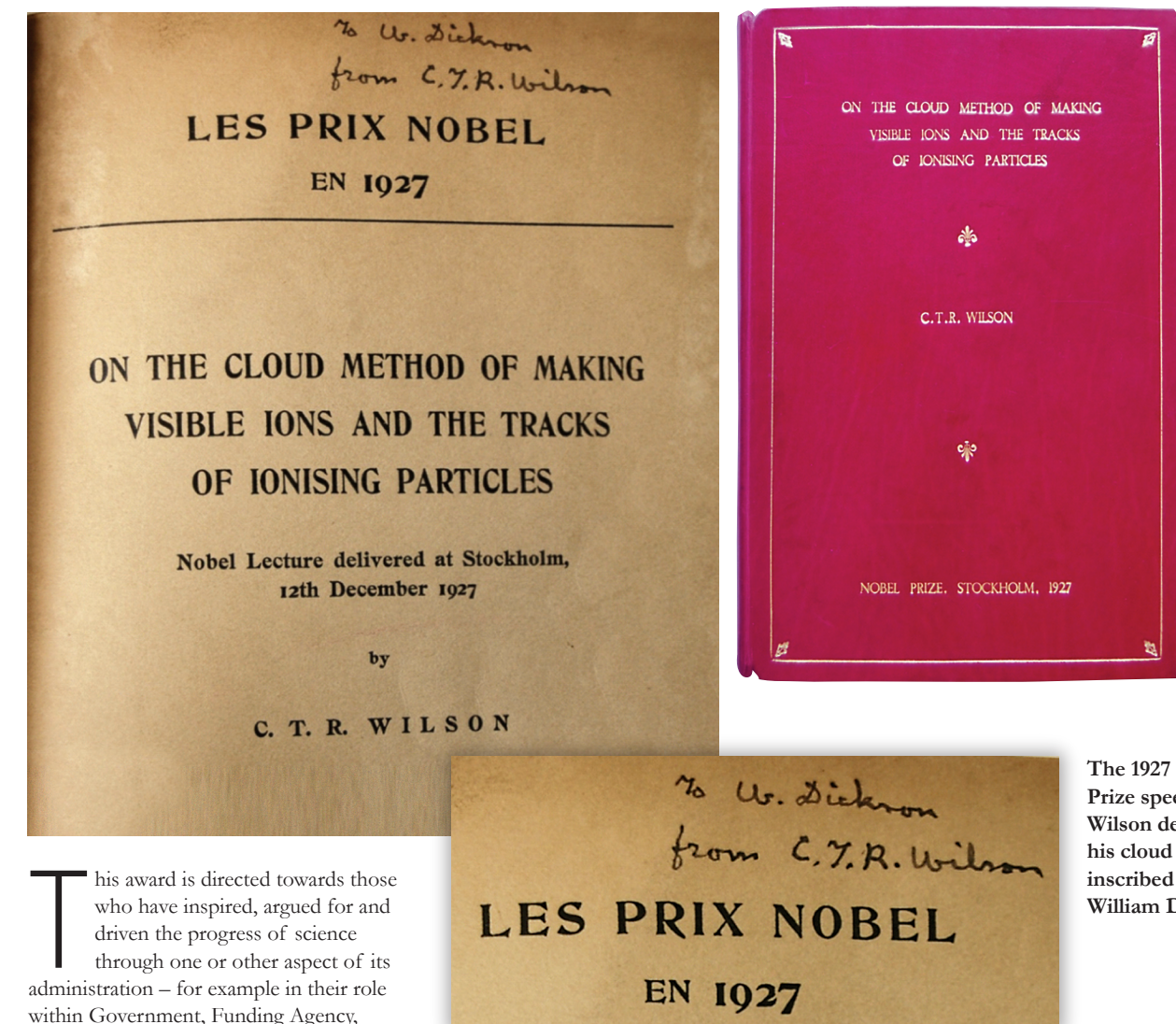
had been Professor of Physical Oceanography at both the University of Oslo (from 1965) and University of Bergen (from 1978) and whose great specialism was the hydrography of the Norwegian Sea. When Harald Sverdrup wrote his famous work *‘On conditions for the*

Inscribed by one great Polar Explorer to another: Fridtjof Nansen to Gunnar Isachsen, 1917.

vernal blooming of phytoplankton’ in 1953, it was based on the comprehensive data set collected at Ocean Weather Station Mike by Odd Saelen. Though this presentation copy was written by Bjorn Helland-Hansen and Fridtjof Nansen, its exciting feature is the inscription to ‘Captain Gunnar Isachsen from the authors, (signed) Fridtjof Nansen’. Isachsen had been topographer on Otto Sverdrup’s Fram Expedition to the Arctic Archipelago from 1898 to 1902, mapping large areas of Northern Canada

in the course of long sledge journeys. He was promoted ‘Rittmeister’ [~ Captain] in 1899 and led topographic and bathymetric expeditions to Svalbard from 1906 to 1910, funded both by Prince Albert of Monaco and by his own government. Isachsen is credited with the founding of systematic research work on Svalbard. Fittingly, the first presentation of this volume as an Inspiration Award was made in October 2011, during the celebrations in Oslo to mark the 150th Anniversary of Nansen’s birth.

3. Award for the Administration of Science



This award is directed towards those who have inspired, argued for and driven the progress of science through one or other aspect of its administration – for example in their role within Government, Funding Agency, Science Evaluation Group (an increasingly large and complex task) or as Institute Director. While we would readily accept that a sympathetic and supportive administration is crucial in advancing our science, it is a role we only rarely acknowledge, hence this award. The Award is appropriately ‘special’ too. Simply inscribed ‘To W. Dickson (my father) from CTR Wilson’, it is the Nobel Lecture that CTR delivered in Stockholm in 1927 describing his discovery of the cloud chamber, a device described by Ernest Rutherford as ‘the most original and wonderful instrument in scientific history*’, and used in many of the discoveries that led to the development of particle physics. Wilson was also deeply interested in atmospheric electricity and his ideas about thunderstorms

are at the heart of modern theories. My father and CTR developed their close friendship after finding themselves sitting together at a lecture in Edinburgh by the great Danish physicist Niels Bohr, and as Head of the Science Department at George Watsons College in Edinburgh, my father would annually insist that the Science 6th should send Birthday and Christmas greetings to the great man at his retirement home in Carlops until his death in 1959. Some of his replies are tipped in. Simple stuff maybe, but direct ‘touches’ nonetheless of what I find ‘inspirational’ about this volume.

[*source: Royal Society of Edinburgh]

The 1927 Nobel Prize speech of CTR Wilson describing his cloud chamber, inscribed to my father, William Dickson.

4. Award for Ecosystem Science

This award is a 1930 first edition of Sir Maurice Yonge's 'A Year on the Great Barrier Reef', inscribed by him on behalf of the Great Barrier Reef Expedition to Prof JH Ashworth FRS, and including The Expedition Christmas Card of 1928-29 sent from Low Isles North Queensland, signed by 'CM Yonge and Party'. The flyleaf also carries the ownership signature of David Cushing, who presented the volume to me towards the end of his life.

With the consent and enthusiastic support of the Team that operates the Continuous Plankton Recorder (CPR) Survey out of Plymouth, this Award has been designated the 'Michael Colebrook Memorial Volume', and its slipcase is labelled to this effect so that people will continue to ask who Michael was, and what he did that was so special in leading the Survey to achieve so many of Sir Alister Hardy's original scientific aims.

Michael's principal contribution – one that underpinned the work of the Survey for so many years –was bringing statistical rigour to the analysis of the large and complex CPR data set, and the methods of counting phytoplankton were changed early on to allow these more rigorous analyses to be applied (COLEBROOK, J.M., 1960). From the early 1960s, his were the three main lines of work by which the plankton became understood: – principal components analysis to describe the geographical distribution of zooplankton (COLEBROOK, J.M., 1964); parametric analysis to describe the abundance, timing and season length of phytoplankton and copepods in the north-eastern Atlantic and the North Sea (COLEBROOK, J.M. & G.A. ROBINSON, 1965); and the analysis and interpretation of long-term change in the planktonic ecosystem (COLEBROOK, J.M. & G.A. ROBINSON

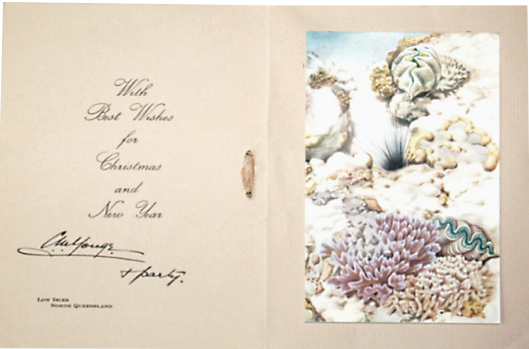
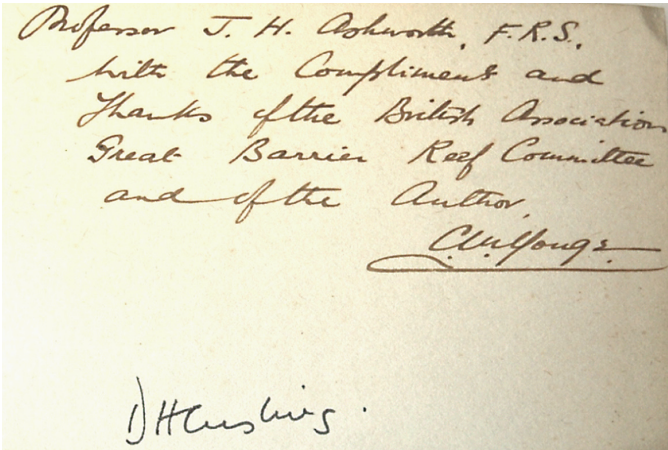
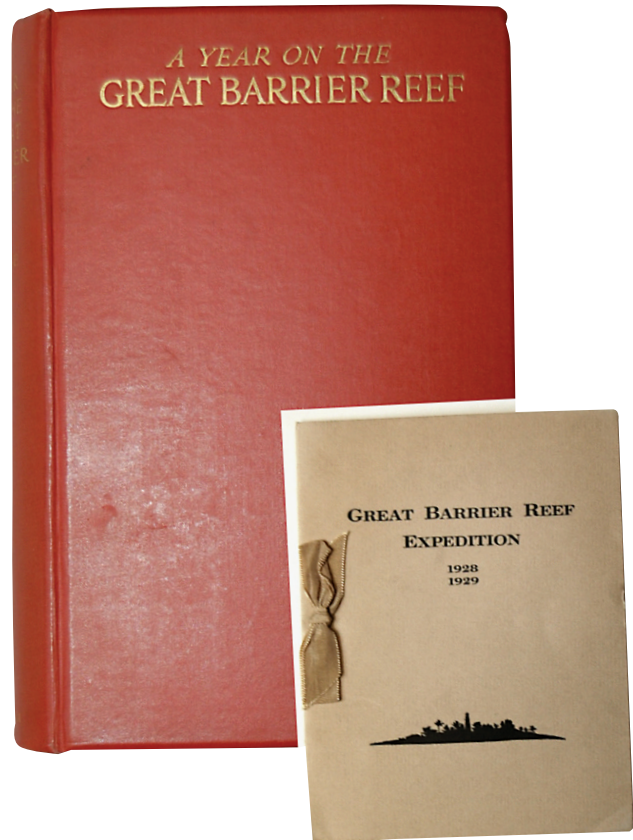
1964). These analyses of interannual variations were to become Michael's most important work. At a time (1970s) when it was fashionable to attribute planktonic changes to pollution, he identified climate as the predominant factor. Fortunately the issue of climate change was to come more and more to the fore so that in the late 1980s when the survey was threatened with closure, Michael's efforts brought sustained pressure to bear from the international scientific community and contributed directly to the survival and subsequent success of the Survey. Though determined in support of his Survey, Michael would have been too shy and private an individual to make these claims on his own behalf; but in September 2011, when 180 scientists from 21 countries came to Plymouth to celebrate 80 years of CPR operation, he would have reflected with quiet satisfaction that by then, the Recorder had been towed for a total of almost 6 million nautical miles, the CPR Team had analysed 245,000 samples from its regular monitoring routes and a new Global Alliance of CPR Surveys (GACS) had just been formed. It is appropriate too that the first award of this Volume in 2012 is to two (past and present) members of the SAHFOS Team.

References:
COLEBROOK, J.M., 1960. Continuous plankton records: methods of analysis, 1950- 59. Bull. Mar. Ecol., 5, 51-64.
COLEBROOK, J.M., 1964. A principal components analysis of the geographical distribution of zooplankton. Bull. Mar. Ecol., 6, 78-100.
COLEBROOK, J.M. & G.A. ROBINSON 1964. Continuous Plankton records: annual variations of abundance of plankton, 1948-1960. Bull. Mar. Ecol., 6, 52-59.
COLEBROOK, J.M. & G.A. ROBINSON, 1965. Continuous plankton records: seasonal cycles of phytoplankton and copepods in the north-eastern Atlantic and the North Sea. Bull. Mar. Ecol., 6, 123-139.

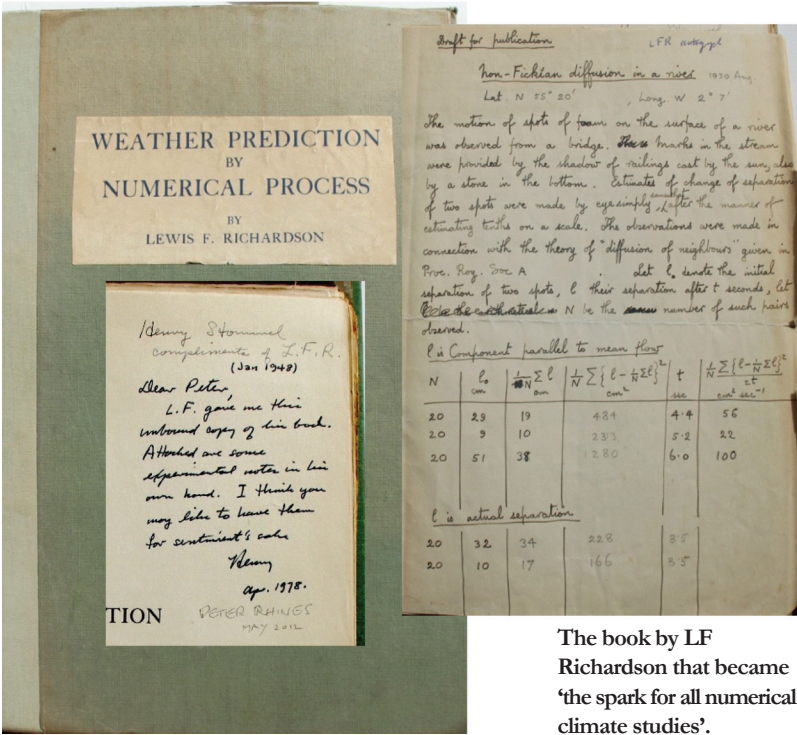


Michael Colebrook

Inscription by Sir Maurice Yonge on behalf of the Great Barrier Reef Expedition to Prof JH Ashworth FRS, and including The Expedition Christmas Card of 1928-29.



5. Award for Numerical Climate Studies

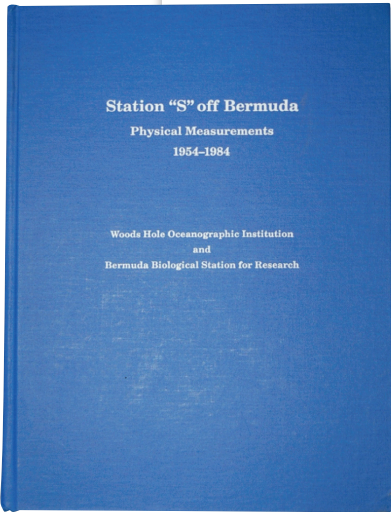
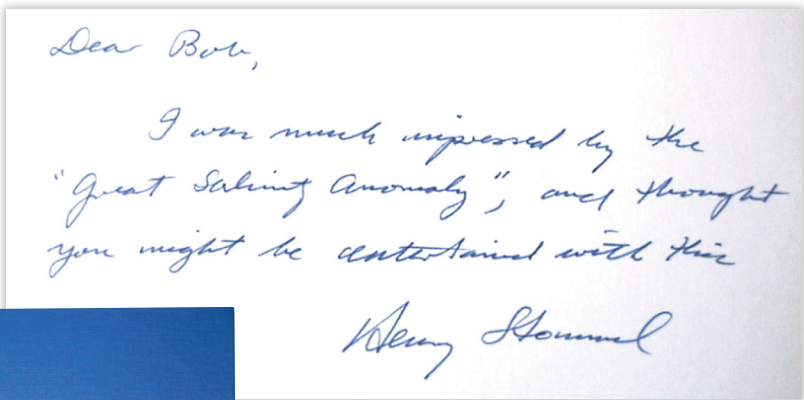


The book by LF Richardson that became 'the spark for all numerical climate studies'.

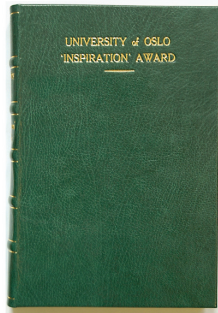
While this volume may appear at first sight to be the least prepossessing of the set, it is in fact one of the treasures of the Inspiration Awards scheme, presented to me for this purpose by Peter Rhines of the University of Washington and containing the imprint of three major figures of our science, LF Richardson, Henry Stommel and Peter Rhines himself. Lewis Fry Richardson (1881-1953) was an English mathematician, physicist, meteorologist, psychologist and pacifist whose interest in meteorology led him to propose a scheme for weather forecasting by solution of differential equations which he published in 1922 as 'Weather Prediction by Numerical Process'. This became in Peter's words 'the spark for all numerical climate studies'. The Award volume is an unbound copy of this book, together with a range of manuscript notes on a range of topics, that he presented to Henry Stommel with the simple inscription 'Henry Stommel, complements of LFR' in 1948. Thirty years later, Hank passed-on the volume to Peter with the words, 'LF gave me this unbound copy of his book. Attached are some experimental notes in his own hand. I think you may like to have them for sentiment's sake, Henry, April 1978'. And Peter Rhines' ownership signature completes the set.

6. Award for Physical Oceanography

This simple volume on the origins and data set at 'Station S off Bermuda' by Henry Stommel has already been described in the introduction to these notes, as has its inspirational impact on myself. The story of the Great Salinity Anomaly that Henry refers to was one that I published with others in 1988 telling the tale of a huge freshwater pulse that passed out of the Subarctic Seas through Denmark Strait in the late 1960s to circle the Northern Gyre over a 14-year period before returning to the northern Nordic Seas once again around 1982. It was a special event for all sorts of reasons: its spreading gave a first direct estimate of the mean circulation-speed of the Atlantic subpolar gyre (~3 cm s⁻¹) and helped us to test and improve a range of ocean-circulation and hydrobiological models; the export of this 2000 km³ of extra fresh water from the Greenland-Iceland Seas to the North Atlantic carried the potential for significant effects on global climate via its control of the changing effectiveness of deep water formation; and it "generated more variability in fisheries during the last quarter of a century than any other hydrographic event in recent years" (Jakobsson, 1992; 15 major stocks were affected). However, I like to think that Henry's kind note reflected none of these things. In those days, when one long hydrographic time-series after



The rather plain but inspirational volume by Henry Stommel that triggered the idea of these 'Inspiration Awards', carrying his brief inscription on the flyleaf. another was being shut down across the North Atlantic, the tracing of even such a large and (one might think) unmissable feature as the GSA through the gappy and fragmentary historical hydrographic record was the hard part. So I like to think that the data series that Henry helped build at 'Station S off Bermuda' was sent to reflect this. Inspirational or not, it is not an especially gripping read. So although Stommel's writings in manuscript are very hard to find – he burnt a lot of his papers and others are sequestered in the libraries of Woods Hole and MIT – I have tucked whatever m/s pages we have inside the cover for added interest; no doubt these can be supplemented with time as other papers come to light.



*‘The freedom to work in science
on one’s own, with congenial colleagues,
unfettered by supervision, with a
scientific problem in one’s mind when he
goes to bed and awakes next morning,
to be able to give undivided attention to
unraveling some puzzle of nature is a
privilege beyond compare.’*

Henry Stommel

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