OBITUARIES

Colonel John North

Signals officer who braved the Fakir of Ipi's snipers in Waziristan and survived when his parachute failed to open

North: kind heart beneath ferocious discipline

COLONEL JOHN NORTH, who has died aged 85, was a dynamic Royal Signals officer, awarded an MBE for gallantry in the Waziristan campaign of 1937.

Waziristan, an area of approximately 4,000 square miles, with mountains rising to 10,000 feet, had been stirred into raiding and rebellion by the notorious Fakir of Ipi. Re-establishing law and order meant entering highly perilous valleys and was especially dangerous for Signals, whose work necessarily exposed them to expert snipers armed with lethal modern weapons.

Vital communications were maintained with equipment which would now seem prehistoric but which was nevertheless effective in mountainous country.

North survived to complete 33 years in the Army and commanded in eight regiments. He was a firm upholder of the hypothesis that any officer worth his salt should be able to drink all night but work with unimpaired efficiency throughout the next day.

John Perrin North was born on Oct 5 1911 and was educated at Bedford and Woolwich before being commissioned into the Royal Signals in 1931.

After his service in India and on the North West Frontier he went with the British Expeditionary Force to France, where he was Assistant to a Chief Signals Officer at GHQ. He then returned to take the Staff College course at Camberley, after which he was GSO3 (Operations) in GHQ Home Forces.

North qualified as a parachutist in 1941, but on a training jump his parachute failed to open and he landed in a ploughed field breaking all the bones in both legs. After being pronounced dead he made a marvellous recovery, joined the staff at the War Office and was chosen for the British Army Staff in Washington.

He served briefly in North Africa before returning to America. In February 1944 he returned to North Africa and went on to Italy as OC 10th Air Formation Signals. In May 1945 he was posted to India, moving on to Singapore in October 1945, but returned to India in May 1946, where he held the appointment of OC Wireless Inspectorate.

Later postings were in Britain, at GHQ Middle East Land Forces, in BAOR, and then to Far East Land Forces, Singapore, where he became Chief Signals Officer. At the end of this tour he was appointed CBE.

His final appointment was commandant of the Army Apprentices' School at Harrogate, from which he retired in 1964. He stayed on, though, at Catterick as a retired officer responsible for barrack development; a familiar and popular figure, he was often to be seen out with his two black labradors.

Although John North could be a ferocious figure when dealing with a breach of discipline, he was widely regarded as a kind man who sought the efficiency and welfare of those around him. Every unit he commanded held him in high esteem, and greatly regretted his eventual departure.

A fine all-round sportsman, he boxed, played rugby and hockey, and rode with great skill and daring. A fine shot — from big game in India and Africa to grouse in Scotland — he was also an authority on butterflies, birds and fly fishing.

When commanding a trainee regiment in Catterick in the days of National Service, North found that the regiment was being unreasonably bothered by a reporter from a tabloid newspaper looking for a National Serviceman's story. After the reporter had talked his way past the sentry on two occasions, North told the Guard Commander to draw a chalk line across the road at the barrack entrance and warn the reporter he would cross it at his peril.

The reporter, sensing a promising story, chanced his luck and was promptly jailed. Outraged, he demanded to see the commanding officer, who was conveniently absent for several hours. When North arrived back he released the prisoner, was solicitous of his welfare and hospitable to the point of overkill. The reporter never bothered the regiment again, but instead became a firm supporter.

John North is survived by his wife, Nan, two sons and two daughters.

Eddie Jones

Jazz bass foundation of Basie's orchestra

EDDIE JONES, ,who has died at Hertford, Connecticut, aged 68, was the bass player with Count Basie's orchestra throughout one of its finest periods.

Jones's playing acted as the cornerstone of the band's matchless rhythm section. It was during his tenure that Basie first brought the band to this country. A generation of British jazz lovers had grown up knowing the recorded work of the great bands, but had never heard them live because of an embargo imposed by British and American musicians' unions dating from the 1930s. When a limited easing of the ban was achieved in 1956, Basie was one of the first visitors.

The sound of Jones's bass and Freddie Green's guitar, padding together lightly through the forest of brass and saxophones made a strong impression on young British fans and musicians.

Edward Jones was born on March 1 1929 at Red Bank, New Jersey, only a few doors away from Basie's own birthplace. He studied music education at Howard University where he played in the college band, The Swingmasters, with saxophonist Frank Wess and trombonist Bill Hughes, both future members of the Basie band.

After working with Sarah Vaughan's accompanying trio, Jones accepted an offer from Basie, then re-forming his band, in 1953. They were signed to Norman Granz's Clef label and recorded an album, *Count Basie Dance Session*. Jones's playing for this classic work established his reputation. All Basie's successes of the 1950s — *The Atomic Mr Basie*, *April in Paris* and many others — rested on the foundation of Jones's bass.

Jones was a worthy successor to earlier Basie players such as Walter Page, Rodney Richardson and Milt Hinton. Jones also looked the part. He was imposingly large in stature and blessed with a good-natured smile.

Jones remained with Basie until 1962. He left hoping to establish himself in the lucrative New York studio recording world, but found his progress blocked — by racism, he suspected. Instead he joined IBM, and subsequently went into insurance, where he did well. He continued to play with ex-Basie performers at reunion sessions around the world.

Jones: reliable bassist with a good-natured smile

Sydney Guilaroff

Hairdresser to the stars – Greta Garbo, Joan Crawford, Grace Kelly and Clark Gable

SYDNEY GUILAROFF, who has died aged 90, was chief hair stylist at Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer from 1934 to the later 1970s, and responsible for the hairstyles of virtually every MGM actress from Greta Garbo and Jean Harlow to Elizabeth Taylor.

Guilaroff was the first of his craft to receive screen credits. He worked on more than a thousand films, and his glamorous and devoted charges would not have dreamt of making a movie — or even a move — without his expertise.

He gave Claudette Colbert her bang, Louise Brooks her bob, and Judy Garland her "Wizard of Oz" braids. He created Vivien Leigh's hairdo for *Gone with the Wind* (1939), and Marlene Dietrich's extraordinarily elaborate curls for *Kismet* (1944), as well as her dark gypsy looks in Orson Welles's *Touch of Evil* (1958).

Guilaroff did Ava Gardner's hair for *Pandora and the Flying Dutchman* (1950) and for *Showboat* (1951). He worked for Marilyn Monroe when she first appeared on the screen and maintained the connection to her last film, *The Misfits* (1961).

Guilaroff's instinct was unfailing. He had the knack of looking at a face and seeing instantly how it might be transformed with a clip of the scissors, or by a curl, a flip, a wave or a dash of colour.

His greatest challenge, he reckoned, was the production of *Marie Antoinette* in 1938. He travelled to Paris to do his research before constructing 2,000 court wigs (some with live birds in cages), lesser wigs for 3,000 extras, and the monumental bejewelled and feathered creation which Norma Shearer wore as the doomed queen.

Guilaroff was a trusted confidant as well as a hairdresser. He was summoned to Monaco by Grace Kelly to style her hair for her marriage to Prince Rainier; he sat with the bedridden Joan Crawford the night she won an Oscar for *Mildred Pierce* (1945); he was the man to whom Elizabeth Taylor turned when her husband Mike Todd was killed in a plane crash; and the friend whom a distraught Marilyn Monroe called on the night she died in August 1962.

Guilaroff works on Dietrich's curls for Kismet

Guilaroff was not simply an elegant and witty courtier, but also, if his own account is to be believed, a lover. In his autobiography, *Crowning Glories* (1996), he told of affairs with Greta Garbo and Ava Gardner — and hinted that there was a great deal more about the private lives of his devoted clients that he knew but chose not to divulge.

Though he preferred to dress women's hair, he also worked on virtually all the male stars of the era, including Clark Gable and Tyrone Power. Yet for all his talent and celebrity, he became a hairdresser by accident.

Of Russian extraction, Sydney Guilaroff was born in London on Nov 2 1906, the sixth of seven children. He grew up in Canada, first in Winnipeg, and later in Montreal, displaying a flair for the piano and painting. At first he dreamed of becoming an architect — but the family's slender means forced him to leave home at 13.

He sought employment in New York where he was initially so poor that he sometimes slept on park benches. He held a series of menial jobs before landing a position as handyman in the hair salon at the McAlpin Hotel. He picked up his trade by instinct, proving so adept that by the time he was 16 he was already much in demand in the theatre and society.

The first star for whom he worked was Claudette Colbert, but it was Louise Brooks who truly launched "Mr Sydney's" career. He created the "shingle" for her, a boyish style that set off a fashion across America. In fact, Guilaroff did not recognise his client until, a few months later, he saw his handiwork on the silver screen.

Within a few years, he had his own salon called Antoine's, but it was not until Louis B Mayer discovered why Joan Crawford insisted on travelling to New York before a film that he was summoned to a new career in Hollywood. Mayer contracted him to the studio where, on Crawford's recommendation, he set about Greta Garbo's tresses for *Camille* (1936).

Thereafter, Guilaroff was established as Hollywood's favourite hairdresser, a position that sometimes necessitated careful diplomacy. In *The Women* (1939), for example, he was assigned Joan Crawford, Norma Shearer and Rosalind Russell. He gave Crawford a "curly permanent", Norma Shearer, her usual look of "classic simplicity" (which took two hours to fashion), and put Rosalind Russell under a hat — to her later displeasure.

In fact, Guilaroff contributed more than just the hair styles to the film. *The Women* was partly set in "Sydney's" and was based on an actual incident involving a former Guilaroff client. Later, Guilaroff himself appeared on the screen as Geraldine Page's hairdresser in *Sweet Bird of Youth* (1962).

The regard and trust in which he was held was vividly demonstrated when Elizabeth Taylor threatened to pull out of *Cleopatra* (1963) after union officials had refused to allow him to work. Eventually it was agreed that he could style her hair at her hotel but never at the studio.

Although Guilaroff remained a bachelor, he longed for family life and in 1938 made legal history when he became the first man in the United States who had never married to be allowed to adopt a child. He named the boy Jon, after Joan Crawford; three years later he adopted a second son, whom he called Eugene after his own father.

His last job was a television film, *The Two Mrs Grenvilles* (1987). This reunited him with his first star client, Claudette Colbert.

"She was the first star I styled and the last," he recalled. "I originally styled her at Antoine's when she was filming in New York. I studied her lovely face and cut her hair very short, then gave her a bang. She kept that hairdo for the rest of her life, with small variations on it."

Henri Barakat

Maker of films about murder, rape, and suicide which were popular in Egypt

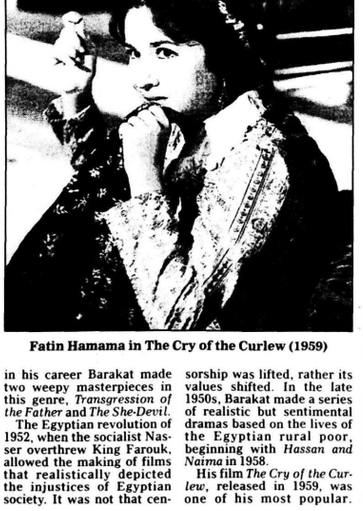
HENRI BARAKAT, who has died aged 82, was one of Egypt's most popular film directors; he made more than 100 films, ranging from silly musicals and soppy melodramas to serious works that established him as a master of realistic cinema in the Arab world.

"Certainly," Barakat commented, "some of my films are the stews of a bad cook, commercial enterprises of no interest, I don't deny it. However, I have rarely made a film that I detest, that made me blush to my very bones."

Henri Barakat was born in Cairo on June 11 1914, to Lebanese Christian parents. He studied Law but never practised; instead, aged 21, he joined his brother to work on the set of Stefan Rosti's film *Antar* (1935).

After a few months in Paris studios, he returned to Egypt in 1940 as an assistant director. He made his first film, *The Fugitive*, based on a story by Chekhov, the next year.

Melodrama was the favourite genre of the Egyptian public, a highly conventionalised form based on tales of suicide, rape, murder or madness, strict fathers, passive peasants and impossible loves, usually between a rich person and a poor person of the opposite sex. Early in his career Barakat made two weepy masterpieces in this genre, *Transgression of the Father* and *The She-Devil*.



Fatin Hamama in The Cry of the Curlew (1959)

The Egyptian revolution of 1952, when the socialist Nasser overthrew King Farouk, allowed the making of films that realistically depicted the injustices of Egyptian society. It was not that censorship was lifted, rather its values shifted. In the late 1950s, Barakat made a series of realistic but sentimental dramas based on the lives of the Egyptian rural poor, beginning with *Hassan and Naima* in 1958.

His film *The Cry of the Curlew*, released in 1959, was one of his most popular. Based on a novel by Taha Hussein, Egypt's blind minister of education, the film evoked life in rural Egypt in the 1920s. It told the story of a village girl seeking to avenge the death of her sister, who was raped by her employer and put to death in the name of family honour. It starred Fatin Hamama, one of the great beauties of the Egyptian screen.

Under Nasser, film-makers were encouraged to make films reflecting a nationalistic outlook. Barakat made two films in this genre. The first, *A Man in Our House* (1961) about the struggle against the British occupation of Egypt, starred Omar Sharif. A second, *The Open Door* (1963) dealt with the Suez crisis from a stridently anti-imperialist viewpoint.

Barakat's most artistically successful film was *The Sin*, (in Arabic, *al-Haram*), made in 1965, based on a novel by Yusuf Idris. Set in 1950 it concerns a female migrant worker who is raped, then accused of killing her baby.

In the late 1960s, Barakat moved to Lebanon, where he made a series of light musicals starring the Lebanese singer Fairuz. In the 1980s he found renewed popularity with films he made with Fatin Hamamma.

Barakat was married and had two daughters.

George Livanos

Greek shipowner and environmentalist

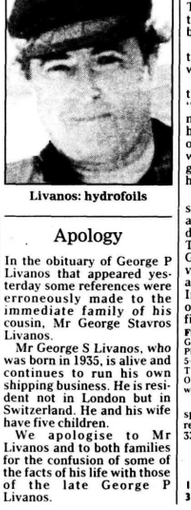
GEORGE LIVANOS, one of the world's leading shipowners, who has died aged 70, introduced a fleet of hydrofoil ferries between the Greek islands.

Livanos's company, Ceres, ran a large international commercial fleet of tankers, and shallow draft "minibulker" cargo ships of a new design. He also operated a string of Russian-built Flying Dolphin hydrofoils which ply the routes between island holiday resorts, travelling at three times the speed of conventional ferries.

George P Livanos was born in New Orleans on Aug 8 1926. His father Panayotis Livanos, a member of a shipping family, had emigrated to the United States. Young George was educated in Greece, served with the US army and then returned to his ancestral homeland to establish in the 1950s a business based in Piraeus, the port city of Athens.

In 1982 Livanos founded Helmepa, the Hellenic Association for the Protection of the Marine Environment, which has campaigned against marine pollution and helped to clean up Greek beaches.

George Livanos is survived by his wife Fotini (*née* Carras); they had a son and a daughter.



Livanos: hydrofoils

Apology

In the obituary of George P Livanos that appeared yesterday some references were erroneously made to the immediate family of his cousin, Mr George Stavros Livanos.

Mr George S Livanos, who was born in 1935, is alive and continues to run his own shipping business. He is resident not in London but in Switzerland. He and his wife have five children.

We apologise to Mr Livanos and to both families for the confusion of some of the facts of his life with those of the late George P Livanos.

Auberon Waugh

WAY OF THE WORLD

That daily aspirin

FOR MANY years now I have been running a free medical service, advising readers who wrote to me with their health problems to take an aspirin immediately and then one every day. Doctors used to be opposed to aspirin, saying that it had a baleful effect on the digestion and urging other, more expensive remedies, but under the new financing arrangements for the health service they seem to have come round to it. Many now give the same advice as I do, prescribing aspirin at great profit to the health service in the case of those unfortunates who still have to pay the prescription charge.

Drug companies, which are also big advertisers in the medical magazines, have always been bitterly opposed to such a cheap and simple remedy in an age when health has become the world's biggest industry, and it would be true to say that aspirin has had a very bad press in the past 20 years.

Now we learn of an insurance company that tried to refuse to pay a man's health insurance claim on the grounds that he had been taking half an aspirin a day to prevent heart attacks. Norwich Union also claimed that he had invalidated his policy by attending a "well man" clinic to lose weight.

The reasoning behind Norwich Union's attitude — unless it was a simple desire to save money — would appear to be that preventive action suggests the threat of an illness. The National Consumer Council took up the patient's case with the insurance ombudsman and secured a reversal of Norwich Union's decision — but only after the patient had been on an eight-month waiting list for a National Health operation. An NCC spokesman advised all policy holders to "read the small print".

No doubt that is sound advice, so far as it goes, but it is also impossible for most people to follow. Any transaction nowadays is liable to involve pages and pages of small print. Even if they are not written in incomprehensible jargon — and they nearly always are — there can be no question of reading them because if one did, one would have no time to do anything else.

My own experience of insurance claims has so far been entirely happy — usually through the National Farmers' Union — but like most professional men I seem to have dozens and dozens of pension policies, PEPs, and life assurances with dozens of companies, all of whom deluge me with incomprehensible literature, usually demanding a signature.

The sadness is that when others approach me with the same problem, I generally advise them to take an aspirin.

Hold your nose

AFTER my note complaining about the wrongheadedness of the attacks on Camelot directors for raising their salaries, I was interested to see that William Hague, the deliciously youthful former Welsh Secretary who is standing as Conservative leader, has added his little voice to the swelling chorus of outrage.

My point was partly that these accusations are unjust but chiefly that they defer to some of the nastiest elements in our national character, where meanness and envy disguise themselves as self-righteousness. Constant reference to "fat cats" might also be offensive to genuine cat lovers. I suspect that it is the presence of these "good causes" in the National Lottery mix that produces the unpleasantness. Every second year, many of the unfunniest and most deeply unpleasant people in the country put red noses on their faces to convince us they have kind hearts as well as a sense of humour. It is not a pleasant spectacle, and our poor, stupid country never looks quite so odious, wallowing in sentimental self-congratulation.

I was interested to learn that about 10,000 of the pledges given last March have not been redeemed, and quite a few of these appear to have been made by hoaxers. I have no doubt that young William Hague plans to wear a red nose in two years' time. If he makes his fiancée, Ffion Jenkins, wear one, too, I think I may make some hoax calls myself.

New challenge

THE VICAR who resigned after being exposed in bed with a parishioner by one of our fearless tabloid newspapers may yet count himself lucky. The Rev Roger Holmes has been advertising in *Private Eye* and *The Spectator* his readiness to take up employment as a bus driver: "Vicar exposed by tabloids seeks new challenge."

As President of Vespa, the Venerable Society for the Protection of Adulterers, I feel Mr Holmes is an obvious candidate for the society's help, and commend him urgently to all members at his address in Canons Garth, Helmsley, York, whether as bus driver, teacher, cook or whatever.

He is a classic victim of our vicious proletarian culture. He should comfort himself that he will enjoy greater freedom and prestige as a lorry driver or cook than as a vicar, however blameless his sexual life might have been.

This is not just because he will be comparatively free of tabloid cameras in his bedroom. This week the whole Church of England was exposed for inflating its church attendance figures by up to 40 per cent and the amiable John Papworth, another sacked vicar, repeated his famous advice about shoplifting — "morally of no more consequence than picking up sea shells from the sea shore".

Are we still permitted to pick up sea shells from the sea shore? I would not be in the least bit surprised to learn that it is punishable by a £5,000 fine or two years in prison. There is not much left for vicars to tell us.

CHESS

Shirov sinks Topalov

By Malcolm Pein

ALEXEY Shirov pulled off an unlikely tournament victory at Madrid when he won the three-game speed chess play-off against Veselin Topalov. Shirov caught Topalov, who had led throughout, in the last round by virtue of a 3/3 finish.

The players then contested two 20-minute games which were both drawn.

Topalov played white in the third and deciding "shoot-out". Topalov had six minutes to Shirov's five but had to give his opponent odds of a draw. Topalov was winning for most of the game, but somehow Shirov hung on.

Neil McDonald was far too strong for the rest of the field at the **Coulsdon** Chess Foundation 2nd International. The Grandmaster from Gravesend mercilessly prevented the opposition from achieving their aim of an International Master result of 6/9. Two untitled players finished half a point short.

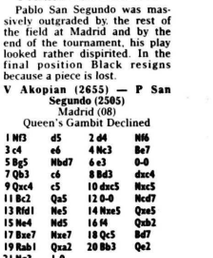
Final Scores: GM Neil McDonald 8/9, GM Colin McNab (Scotland), Andreas Plueg (Germany), John Shaw (Scotland) 5½, Tim Wall, Chris Duncan 4½, Ivo Timmermans (Holland) 4, Conor O'Shaughnessy (Ireland) 3, Chris Dunworth 2½, Michael Franklin 2.

A typical Ruy Lopez Attack, spearheaded by the knight which reaches f5. In the final position 33...Rxc4 34.Rd8+ wins

N McDonald — J Shaw
2nd Coulsdon CF (7)
Ruy Lopez

1 e4	e5	2 Nf3	Nc6
3 Bb5	a6	4 Ba4	Nf6
5 0-0	Be7	6 Re1	b5
7 Bb3	d6	8 c3	0-0
9 h3	Na5	10 Bc2	c5
11 d4	Qc7	12 Nbd2	cxd4
13 cxd4	Bd7	14 Nf1	Rac8
15 Ne3	Rfe8	16 b3	Nc6
17 Bb2	Bf8	18 Rc1	Qb7
19 dxe5	Nxe5	20 Nd2	Bc6
21 Nf5	Ned7	22 Qf3	d5
23 e5	Ne4	24 Nxe4	dxe4
25 Nh6+!	gxh6	26 Qg3+	Bg7
27 e6	Ne5	28 Bxe5	f5
29 b4	Bd5	30 Bb3	Bc4
31 Red1	Rxe6	32 Rxc4	bxc4
33 Bxc4	1-0		

Shaw



McDonald

Position after 25.Nh6+!

Pablo San Segundo was massively outgraded by the rest of the field at Madrid and by the end of the tournament, his play looked rather dispirited. In the final position Black resigns because a piece is lost.

V Akopian (2655) — P San Segundo (2505)
Madrid (08)
Queen's Gambit Declined

1 Nf3	d5	2 d4	Nf6
3 c4	e6	4 Nc3	Be7
5 Bg5	Nbd7	6 e3	0-0
7 Qb3	c6	8 Bd3	dxc4
9 Qxc4	c5	10 dxc5	Nxc5
11 Bc2	Qa5	12 0-0	Ncd7
13 Rfd1	Ne5	14 Nxe5	Qxe5
15 Ne4	Nd5	16 f4	Qxb2
17 Bxe7	Nxe7	18 Qc5	Bd7
19 Rab1	Qxa2	20 Bb3	Qe2
21 Ng3	1-0		

"Henri Barakat." Daily Telegraph, 4 June 1997, p. 29. The Telegraph Historical Archive, link.gale.com/apps/doc/IO0701804950/TGRH?u=tou&sid=bookmark-TGRH. Accessed 9 July 2024.