

WILLIAM BINNS, born on the 4th of March, 1815, was apprenticed to the late Mr. James Ramsbottom of Todmorden. Owing however, to the stoppage in 1831 of the mechanical branch of that gentleman's business, young Binns was handed over to Messrs. Hibbert and Platt of Oldham, under whom he completed his term of apprenticeship. He was then employed by Messrs. Samuda Brothers, by Messrs. Braithwaite and Ericsson, and by Mr. James Walton of Sowerby Bridge, Halifax. In 1844 he commenced business in London as a Consulting Engineer, and was for some years engaged in the erection and inspection of machinery, mainly of steam-engines. In several instances he effected alterations in engines which resulted in increased power with diminished consumption of coal.

Mr. Binns, in addition to his private practice, held from 1847 to 1853 the post of Professor of Applied Mechanics at the well-known College for Civil Engineers at Putney. On the 16th of August, 1853, he was appointed Teacher of Mechanical Drawing to the Science and Art Department, then located at Marlborough House, and to the Royal School of Mines, Jermyn Street. In 1857 he prepared and published "An Elementary Treatise on Orthographic Projection, being a new method of Teaching the Science of Mechanical and Engineering Drawing," which was for some years recognised by the Science and Art Department as a text-book on the subject. He never failed to interest his pupils, and his practical knowledge as an engineer gave him advantages which few technical teachers at that time possessed. In October, 1863, owing to an accident which rendered him a cripple for some years, he retired from the service of the department on a small pension.

From that time Mr. Binns carried out but little engineering work. In 1867 he settled at Lake, near Sandown, in the Isle of Wight, where he lived in retirement for nearly thirty years. During the earlier part of his residence there he took great interest in local affairs, but the latter years of his life were mainly devoted to the study of astronomy. In 1876 he brought out a second edition of the treatise on Orthographic Projection. Mr. Binns died on the 31st of March, 1895, after a week's illness from influenza followed by pneumonia. He was elected an Associate on the 3rd of February, 1857, and was placed in the class of Associate Member on its creation in 1878.