

OBITUARY.

WILLIAM ADAMS died at his residence, Hillrise, Putney, on the 7th August, 1904, at the advanced age of 81 years, having seen 40 years' continuous service in the locomotive departments of the North London, the Great Eastern, and the London and South Western Railways.

Born on the 15th October, 1823, he was apprenticed at the age of 17 to Messrs. Miller and Ravenhill, marine engineers in London. Subsequently he entered the service of Messrs. Philip Taylor & Co. at Marseilles, by whom he was employed for three years on the erection of marine engines and machinery, and in 1848 he joined the Sardinian Navy as an engineer, serving four years afloat. Returning to this country in 1853, he was engaged by Mr. H. Martin as an assistant on various works until 1855. It was in the latter year that his long connection with locomotive engineering commenced on his being appointed to the position of Locomotive, Carriage and Wagon Superintendent of the North London Railway. While holding that post he introduced many improvements in the rolling stock under his charge, and organized and extended the workshops at Bow. In 1873 he accepted a similar appointment with the Great Eastern Railway, with which Company he remained five years, reconstructing to a large extent the Stratford works and developing the rolling stock on the lines of his former experience, particularly in regard to the requirements of suburban traffic. In 1878 he joined the staff of the London and South Western Railway as Locomotive Engineer, and continued in this position for seventeen years, retiring in 1895. Under his superintendence the Nine Elms Works were rebuilt and enlarged, and considerable improvements were effected in the rolling stock. Modern locomotive practice is indebted to Mr. Adams for many improvements introduced or effected by him during the course of a long and useful career.

The subject of this notice was a man of quiet and unassuming character, considerate to those under him, whose respect and esteem he enjoyed. He extended a ready support to any social and philanthropic schemes which came under his notice, especially those which promised to benefit railway servants. While at Bow he was largely instrumental in founding the Bow and Bromley Institute.

He was a Member of the Institution of Mechanical Engineers and of the Society of Engineers, of which he became President in 1870. In 1895 he contributed to the Proceedings of the Institution of Civil Engineers, in collaboration with Mr. W. F. Pettigrew, a valuable description of "Trials of an Express Locomotive,"¹ carried out by them on the South Western Railway. For this Paper the Authors were each awarded a George Stephenson medal and a Telford premium.

Mr. Adams was elected a Member of the Institution on the 6th April, 1869.

WILLIAM ELSDON, who died in Melbourne, Victoria, on the 10th March, 1904, aged 74, commenced his professional career in the Colony as far back as 1855. In that year, on the recommendation of Messrs. Robert Stephenson & Co., with whom he had served his articles, he received the appointment of Chief Engineer to the Hobson's Bay Railway Company, a post which he retained for twenty-five years. During that period various extensions were built and other lines were added by purchase to the Company's system, which developed with the growth of Melbourne. In addition to the increased responsibilities of his position as Engineer, the duties of which he discharged with vigour and ability, Mr. Elsdon carried on private practice in Melbourne as an engineer and architect, in which capacity he designed and carried out various important works, including the Collingwood and Fitzroy Gasworks, the City abattoirs, and some large public buildings. In 1871, feeling the effects of overstrain, he was obliged to take a year's leave of absence, which he spent in visiting England and the Continent; and on his return he furnished to the Government, at their request, a report on railway progress in Europe.

¹ Minutes of Proceedings Inst. C.E., vol. cxxv. p. 282.