

In private life he took a keen interest in Freemasonry, and served several offices in connection with the craft. He was a Justice of the Peace for the county of Monmouthshire, and was a Member of the Institution of Mechanical Engineers. He married, in 1887, Emily Agnes, daughter of Mr. Joseph Lane, of Chippenham, Wiltshire, and leaves a son and two daughters.

Mr. Homfray was elected a Member of The Institution on the 8th January, 1895.

JOHN JOSEPH PLATTS, eldest son of the late Mr. Joseph Platts, chief consulting engineer to the Russian Imperial Admiralty at St. Petersburg, was born at Odessa in 1840. He was at school for some time in Russia, but at the outbreak of the Crimean War the family left Russia for England, where the subject of this notice completed his education and received his first lessons in engineering from his grandfather, the late Mr. John Tandy, one of Boulton and Watt's engineers.

He served his apprenticeship with Messrs. Ravenhill, Salkeld and Company, of London, after which he obtained a knowledge of railway and locomotive engineering under the late Mr. William Bouch, locomotive manager to the old Stockton and Darlington Railway, with whom he remained a number of years in charge of the erecting department. In 1866 he was appointed manager of Messrs. Hopson, Gilkes and Company's Phoenix Foundry at Shildon, Durham, and subsequently had charge of that firm's extensive outdoor work at Middlesbrough, which included the erection of ironworks plant and blast furnaces. He then accepted the management of the Bridgwater Ironworks at Bridgwater, and whilst acting in that capacity he was invited by the late General Maltzoff to undertake the management of his extensive iron and locomotive works at Briansk and Ludinovo in Russia. Here his knowledge of the Russian language was of the greatest assistance to him. He remained with General Maltzoff for a period of 7 years, after which, on his return to England, he became manager of the Avonside Engine Works at Bristol, where he remained but a short period, leaving England again to take up the duties of engineer-in-chief to the Odessa Waterworks Company. Shortly afterwards he was appointed manager to the Company, whilst still retaining engineering control. He remained at Odessa upwards of 20 years. Towards the end of that period, at the wish of the directors and greatly owing to the tact and diplomacy of Mr. Platts,

the purchase of the waterworks by the Municipality from the English Company was successfully negotiated. For a few years after this transfer he remained in the service of the Odessa Municipality and superintended the extension of the Waterworks according to plans and designs prepared by him and approved by the Municipality. After the completion of these extensions, which cost nearly £600,000, he resigned his position and retired to England.

He was much interested in sanitary progress and during his service with the Municipality of Odessa, on his advice and with his professional assistance, much was done to improve the sanitary condition of the city. He acted as consulting engineer to the Municipality in the design and erection of the new municipal hospital, the construction of the Kisheneff lunatic asylum, the Odessa municipal laundry and bakery, and other enterprises undertaken with the object of improving the health of the city.

He introduced the principle of bacterial filtration of sewage into Russia, and was the author of a number of papers which were read before the Russian Imperial Technical Society. He died at his residence near London on the 21st June, 1908, aged 68 years.

Mr. Platts was elected a Member of The Institution on the 2nd December, 1884.

GEORGE BANKS RENNIE, who died at Denford, Hungerford, on the 15th November, 1908, had been connected with The Institution upwards of 50 years. He was the grandson of the late Mr. John Rennie and son of the late Mr. George Rennie, both well-known engineers of their day, whilst his uncle was the late Sir John Rennie, Past-President of The Institution. George Banks Rennie entered the Royal Navy as a midshipman in 1844, but after a few years he left the service in order to enter the profession to which the family tradition and his native ability called him. In 1860 he designed and constructed for the Spanish Government the first iron floating dock ever built, and this type of dock is now generally known as the Rennie floating dock. His firm, known as J. and G. Rennie, also designed and built the engines for H.M.S.S. *Bacchante*, *Calliope*, *Calypso* and many other vessels, becoming well known in this class of work.

Mr. Rennie was for many years a member of the Surrey County Council, on which he did much good work, and was also a Governor of the Agricultural College at Wye. In the early years of his