

OBITUARY

PROFESSOR CHARLES HENRY LOBBAN, D.Sc., who was born on 19 January, 1881, died on 13 July, 1963.

Educated at Inverness College, he studied engineering at Glasgow Technical College and later at Glasgow University, where he took the degree of B.Sc. (Eng.) in 1903. After two years' practical training under Messrs Crouch & Hogg (MM) he was appointed Demonstrator and Lecturer at Glasgow University and Coatbridge Technical School. There followed two years as Lecturer at Manchester University, another two years as Professor of Civil Engineering, Madras, and four years in practice as partner in a firm of civil and mining engineers at Kilmarnock.

During World War I, after working with Sir John Jackson at remount depots and camps on Salisbury Plain (water supplies, drainage, etc.) he spent 3½ years on active service as Major in the Royal Engineers, building railways. After the war, from 1919-1920, he worked on the Disposals Board (railway material) as Assistant Controller.

For the next ten years Professor Lobban's expert knowledge of structural steel and reinforced concrete enabled him to combine an academic career with a large practice on his own account as consulting engineer in London. Starting as Reader in Civil Engineering at King's College, London, he became Professor of Civil Engineering there in 1934 (a position he held until his retirement in 1946), while as consulting engineer he was personally responsible for the design and execution of all structural work of many well known buildings. These included Victoria House, Southampton Row, the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, Nottingham University, and a block of flats in Smith Square, London. He also designed the structure of the Sir John Cass Technical Institute, Aldersgate, and carried out extensions to King's College, London, Jesus College, Cambridge, and alterations to the Savoy Hotel and Theatre.

Professor Lobban was a member of the Architectural Association and a Fellow of the Royal Society (Ed.). A Certificated Mine Surveyor, he was at one time Technical Officer to the Steel Structures Research Committee, and played an important part in the inception of the Building Research Station, Garston, Watford. He was the author of 'Some Deflexion Problems' (Selected Engineering Paper No. 80, 1929) and other papers.

Elected an Associate Member in 1911, Professor Lobban became a Member in 1931.

He is survived by a daughter and a grandson.

JAMES ROBERT BEARD, C.B.E., M.Sc., who was born on 19 September, 1885, died on 22 September, 1962.

Educated at Manchester Grammar School, he studied engineering at Victoria University, Manchester, where he obtained first class honours in electro-technology and in 1905 received the degree of M.Sc.

After two years' practical training with the Newcastle-upon-Tyne Electric Supply Company, he became Assistant Engineer to Merz and McLellan, the beginning of what proved to be a life-long relationship, briefly interrupted from 1909 to 1911, when he worked as Assistant Construction Engineer to the

Cleveland and Durham Electric Power Company, subsequently working as Assistant Engineer, on the design and construction of several waste heat power stations. Charles Merz, the senior partner, quickly realized Mr Beard's abilities and in 1917 he became the firm's Chief Electrical Engineer, engaged on the design and construction of large electric power supply systems for the Newcastle-upon-Tyne Electric Supply Company, the Mersey Power Company, the Victorian Railways, the Central Argentine Railway, Buenos Aires Great Western Railway, Western Australian Government and other systems at home and abroad. In 1922 he was transferred to the firm's London office, where he was particularly occupied with distribution and, following the Weir Committee Report, the standardization of frequency and voltage in Great Britain and later the planning and construction of the grid system. In 1930 he became a partner, with much administrative work added to his engineering responsibilities, which, apart from the grid, included large-scale power supply projects at home and overseas.

His greatest challenge came in October 1940, when Charles Merz and his son and daughter were killed in an air raid, leaving Mr Beard mainly responsible for the firm's continued existence. Not only did he rise to this occasion, but under his direction the firm grew to many times its 1940 size, partly owing to post-war conditions but mainly to Mr Beard's drive and initiative.

After 54 years' service with Merz and McLellan, he retired as senior partner at the end of 1961, though remaining active as a consultant to the firm until his death.

Mr Beard had many other activities. He became Vice-President of the Institution of Electrical Engineers in 1937 and President in 1940. A popular committee man, he served on the Engineering Advisory Committee of the War Cabinet from 1941 to 1945, and on the Codes of Practice Committee (Ministry of Works) from 1947 to 1949—a testing assignment. At various times he was also Chairman of the Association of Consulting Engineers, President of the British Electrical Power Convention, President both of the Electrical Research Association and of the Association of Supervising Electrical Engineers, and Chairman of the Electrical Industry Standards Committee of the British Standards Institution. He was awarded the *C.B.E.* in 1950, and Honorary Membership of the Institution of Electrical Engineers in 1955.

He wrote various papers for the Institution of Electrical Engineers, which twice brought him the award of the Institution Premium; he also wrote for the Paris E.H.T. Conference and the World Power Conference.

A deeply religious man, he published in 1943 a small booklet, 'The Vision of the Kingdom'.

Mr Beard was elected direct to the class of Member in 1941.

He died just after celebrating his golden wedding, when he and his wife were due to leave for Australia to attend the World Power Conference.

He is survived by his widow, a son who is a partner in the firm of Merz and McLellan, and a daughter.

ROBERT AUGUSTUS CUMMINGS, who was born on 28 August, 1866, died on 21 October, 1962.

Educated privately and at Gresham School, Holt, Norfolk, he received practical training from 1881-83 under Mr W. J. Brewer in London. His early experience was with H.M. Ordnance Survey as surveyor and field examiner