

OBITUARY

of Glasgow Engineering Society. He was at one time a Member of the Ministry of Technology's Building Research Board and Chairman of the Scottish Advisory Committee.

In 1948 he was appointed by King George VI to be His Majesty's Consulting Engineer in Scotland, an appointment which the Queen was graciously pleased to renew on her accession. He received the CVO in 1963.

Despite the pressure of his public service and professional duties, many of which necessitated travelling extensively throughout the world, he did not completely forsake his personal interests. Although never satisfied with his performances, he enjoyed painting in oils and watercolour, he was a member of the Royal Institute of Fine Arts (on whose Selection Committee he served), a member of Glasgow Art Club, one-time chairman of the Joint Committee of the Glasgow School of Architecture, and a recently elected Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh. But pre-eminently he was a family man deriving constant pleasure from being at home with his wife and son and daughter, or working in his garden, or pursuing his hobby of photography, or golfing at Douglas Park, of which club he was at one time captain. In the war years he devoted much of his energy to providing and arranging hospitality for service men and women from overseas. His work in that connexion was recognized by the award of the MBE in 1944 and the OBE in 1947.

It was only to those who were closest to him that he spoke of his faith or his long membership of New Kilpatrick Church of Scotland in Bearsden, but they were in no doubt about the source from which he drew his strength.

R.M.C.

Sir Malcolm McAlpine, KBE Associate

who was born on 19 June, 1877, died on 12 April, 1967.

Third son of Sir Robert McAlpine, and himself to become Chairman of the family firm, he was educated at Kelvinside Academy, Glasgow. He left school at 16 to start work for his father's firm on the Bowling railway extension, and at 17 attracted the attention of Sir John Wolfe Barry. Two years later he became Assistant to his eldest brother Robert, then in charge of production on the Fort William-Mallaig extension of the West Highland Railway. So hard was the rock



that steam-compressors were unable at times to supply enough air to keep all the drills in the tunnels working (see *The West Highland Railway*, by John Thomas, published by David & Charles, 1965). On a visit to the dentist, Malcolm McAlpine noticed that the dentist's drill was worked by water pressure and conceived an idea which was developed and proved a winner. A dam 7 ft high was built across Loch Dubh and a water turbine did four times the work of the steam compressors it supplanted.

But tragedy followed: during blasting operations in a remote area, Malcolm was seriously injured: only the determination of his father, the skill of an eminent surgeon, Sir William McEwen, and the co-operation of the men on the job saved his life. This near brush with death left its impact throughout a long career and perhaps inspired his own selflessness on many later occasions.

At 28, already a Partner in McAlpines and in sole charge of the Waterford & Rosslare Railway (some 30 miles), Sir Benjamin Baker became interested in him. In 1907 his father sent him to open an office in London, and two years later he completed his first contract, a reinforced concrete jetty for the Queensborough Cement Company.

During World War I he was for three years Chairman of the Home Ores Committee, formed to combat acute shortage of war materials. After the war McAlpines were asked to take over from the War Office construction of a huge motor transport depot at Slough—a move which saved millions of pounds. For this and other work he was created KBE in 1921.

Among the many post-war contracts supervised by Sir Malcolm, Wembley Stadium and the buildings of the British Empire Exhibition are perhaps the best-known. What he most enjoyed was probably the building of the Dorchester, and he took immense pride in being Chairman of what he considered the best-run hotel in London (1937–67).

On the outbreak of World War II Sir Malcolm moved house to South Wales to take charge of the construction of the immense Royal Naval Propellant Factory at Caerwent, completion of which was largely due to his personal drive. At this time he was also Chairman of the Committee of Engineer and Contractors which advised the Government on efficient use of manpower and plant, and until its disbandment after the war, Chairman of the Opencast Coal Technical Advisory Organization. But perhaps his most vital contribution to the war effort was his scheme for building large concrete units to form breakwaters for the Normandy landings. He advised on counter-measures to the German V1 and V2 rocket weapons and swung into action when leisurely plans for the camouflage of airfields caused concern at the time of Munich. With barrels of paint and spraying equipment McAlpine's men went into orbit, and within 48 hours the job was done: dummy fields, hedges and roofed hangars scattered the countryside around our main airfields.

Sir Malcolm became Chairman of McAlpines in 1951, but in his later years delegated much supervision of the firm (which he served in all for 74 years), though remaining in the wings as guide and counsellor to the end. Only two weeks before his death he was present at a Partners' meeting.

He was Vice-President of the Federation of Civil Engineering Contractors, an institution which with Sir Weetman Pearson (later Lord Cowdray) he helped to form in 1919. He became Chairman in 1936 and continued to attend its meetings until a few months before his death.

An Associate from the age of 30 (59 years), he commented in 1958 that he had found the Institution's papers 'an education'.

Pre-eminent as a civil engineer and leader of industry, Sir Malcolm's humanity and personal generosity were legendary: he never lost the human touch, never spoke of 'labour', but of men. He was also a sportsman and

enjoyed fishing and yachting, but racing was his great interest. In 1921, the year in which he was created KBE, one of his horses won the Grand National.

He is survived by his widow, and three sons.

Herbert Edward Steinberg

who was born on 27 June, 1881, died on 30 April, 1967.

Educated in Yorkshire at a private school at Stokesley, he studied engineering at Finsbury Technical College from 1898–1900. At first he intended to become a mechanical engineer, and after two years' practical training under Richard Moreland Sr (M), was engaged as a fitter's improver with Hewitt Brothers, of King's Cross. It was then, in 1903, that he decided to switch to civil engineering, became Assistant to William Jaffrey (M), and acted as Resident Engineer during reconstruction of the East India Graving Dock and the erection of two timber jetties for London & Thames Haven Oil Wharves Ltd. On Jaffrey's death in 1905 he joined the designing staff of Dorman Long, leaving three years later to take up an appointment with the Considered Construction Company (now Considered & Partners)—a London engineering firm specializing in reinforced concrete design. To this company—war service apart—he devoted the rest of his career.

Over the next eight years his responsibilities grew: from specifications and detailed drawings in connexion with Aberdeen Harbour (new wharves) and Hull Joint Dock (warehouses and pile foundations), he went on to design Warrington Bridge and bonded warehouses for the Distillers Company. In 1913 he visited British Guiana as expert adviser to Leonard Stokes, architect on the new reinforced concrete cathedral at Georgetown, and in 1915 was responsible for the design of Dalmarnock Power Station, Glasgow—first in the United Kingdom to be built wholly of reinforced concrete. He also designed seven jetties for the Port of London Authority at the Royal Albert Docks.

During World War I he served from 1915–18, first as Flying Officer in the Royal Flying Corps, later as Equipment Officer and Technical Instructor. In 1918 he was appointed Staff Captain to the Air Ministry (Works and Buildings) under Sir John Hunter.

On returning in 1919 to the Considered Construction Company, he was made Manager, and from then on was in control of reinforced concrete design on a large scale, the work including in 1920 new slipways on reinforced concrete foundations for Harland & Wolff, Belfast, and later new factories for Courtaulds and Carreras, the Dorchester Hotel, Sheffield City Hall, rafts, buildings and water-towers for the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company at Abadan, and many bridges: George V Bridge and Queen Margaret Bridge, both of Glasgow, Chiswick Bridge, Twickenham and Renfrew Bridges and King George VI Bridge at Aberdeen, constructed in 1940.

Herbert Steinberg succeeded T. C. J. Burgess as Chairman of the Considered Construction Company in 1943, while retaining his post as Manager. He retired in 1953.

He was a member of the Institution of Structural Engineers and of the Reinforced Concrete Association, of which he was President in 1936–37.

He was elected an Associate Member in 1908 and became a Member in 1925.

He is survived by his widow and two daughters.