

### **William John Milne Menzies,** CBE

formerly Inspector of Salmon Fisheries of Scotland and an international authority on salmon, died on 15 August 1971 at the age of 82.

Born in Walton-on-Thames on 28 July, 1889, he was brought up and educated in Stirling. After school he set out to become a stockbroker but later changed course in favour of what proved to be his life work—the care and preservation of salmon. The chance came when in 1913 he joined the staff of the Inspector of Salmon Fisheries of Scotland: although his career was interrupted by the 1914–18 war, in which he served as an officer in the Army Service Corps, he returned afterwards to the Fishery Division of the then Scot-



ish Office as assistant inspector under Mr W. L. Calderwood. Calderwood, whom he succeeded in 1930 as Inspector, was an outstanding authority on salmon, but Menzies, while always his able lieutenant, left no one in doubt that he had his own views on how salmon could survive not only natural hazards but the ever-increasing exploitation of rivers for power and water supplies.

War again interrupted his career when in 1939 he was seconded to the Ministry of Food, where he remained until 1950. Nevertheless his advice was often sought on fishery matters, and as a member of the ICE's Committee on Fish Passes he was a signatory of the Fish Pass Report published by the Institution in 1942. On leaving the Ministry he became a Fishery Consultant, serving a wide variety of water-power and electricity boards, river and water authorities, and many other public and private interests throughout Great Britain and Ireland, often giving evidence at public enquiries. Still more important was his advice to engineers on fishery problems and his guidance on works for the protection of salmon: his services were much in demand in Canada, the United States, Scandinavia and elsewhere. Frequent visits to these countries kept him in touch with current thinking abroad on salmon facilities, and such was his reputation both here and overseas that he was described as 'the Oracle on Salmon'. Quite remarkably Menzies was accepted as such both by the fishery interests themselves, despite their dislike of change, and by the developing authorities, who normally object to spending any of their resources on fish. Confidence brought success: while aware of the penalties of failure, he was not afraid to try out new ideas. His name will always be associated with the perfection of the Borland fish lock, the electric fishscreen, improvements of hatcheries, the marking and artificial rearing of smolts and the use of controlled freshnets to attract fish up rivers and past obstacles.

Menzies owed much of his success to his own personality: he was notably forthright and abhorred humbug. His own wonderful skill as an angler lent

conviction to his advice. Of distinguished stature, he could cast a line with a grace few could equal and with enviable results. Fishery friends everywhere cannot but mourn the passing of a great personality. He was also no mean performer at golf until the crippling effects of arthritis overtook him. This he did not allow to put an end to his consultancy work or his angling—only two months before his death he went to Canada to take part in discussions on the Greenland High Seas Salmon Fisheries. He took a kindly interest in all with whom he had dealings and his ideas were freely available—clearly expressed, often with characteristic humour. Many publications appeared under his name, including ‘The Salmon’, ‘Salmon Fishing’ and ‘Trout and Salmon’, together with numerous scientific papers on fishery matters. In 1966 he presented a paper to the Institution with his co-authors P. L. Aitken and L. H. Dickerson, ‘Fish passes and screens at water power works’, p. 35 (Sept.), 29. Discussion p. 37 (May), 235.

He was appointed CBE in 1960, became a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh in 1933 and an Associate (now Companion) of the Institution of Civil Engineers in 1965. Among other distinctions, he was very proud of having been awarded in 1960 the Medal of Honour of the Anglers’ Club of New York.

Menzies’ counsel will be missed by the various scientific and other bodies with which he was associated. These included the Joint Atlantic Salmon Research Trust and the International Advisory Group of the International Atlantic Salmon Foundation, the Institute of Fisheries Management (of which he was President at the time of his death), the Natural Environment Research Council’s Salmon Research Group and the Banff Moray and Nairn River Purification Board, of both of which he was Chairman. He was an honorary member of the Atlantic Salmon Association and the Salmon and Trout Association.

He is survived by his widow and a daughter.

A. F.



**George Ernest Bennett, MSc** who was born on 25 December, 1884, died on 13 August, 1971.

Educated at Stockport Grammar School, he studied engineering at the University of Manchester, taking an Honours BSc(Eng) degree in 1904. Two years later he received his MSc, by which time he had completed his practical training under J. J. Webster.

His first job was on setting out foundations for the Franco-British Exhibition, held in Shepherds Bush in 1908. There followed a year as Resident Engineer on pier repair works at Llandudno, after which he became a

partner in a structural steelworks concern in Manchester.

But his future lay in India. In 1910 he became assistant engineer (bridges) on the Great Indian Peninsular Railway—one of a team of engineers replacing