

## MEMOIRS

### DERYCK REGINALD SPACKMAN

A MEMORIAL Service was held on 30 January 1976 at St Clement's Church, Strand. Mr G. V. Bayley, President of the Institute of Actuaries, gave the following Address:

Deg Spackman was only 54 years of age when he died last November after an operation—his life cut short by an untimely misfortune. Our immediate feelings were of shock, and great sorrow, especially in thinking of his devoted family—Margaret and their three children. So it is in their presence today, we who knew him mourn their loss and ours.

All of us have our different recollections of Deg; I shall try to give voice to my own in the hope that it will bring back the memories of each one of us, and join our thoughts, one with another, in affectionate remembrance and in deep respect.

I shall speak, not foremost in lamentation for his passing, though great sadness there be, rather in thanksgiving for what he was, and for the example he set.

I will recall briefly his career. At Seaford College, where he gained a scholarship, he showed an early ability in mathematics. He went on to pass, at a high level, the entrance examination of the Civil Service, but the war intervened, and he joined the R.A.F. He became a Flight Lieutenant and served overseas, notably in Burma. He returned to the Civil Service after the war, but he did not stay there; he chose instead a commercial career—marketing printing and calculating machines.

It is told of Deg that it was that experience which kindled his enthusiasm for an actuarial career, though I believe he wanted to be an actuary at an earlier stage. At all events, he joined the Yorkshire Insurance Company at the age of 33, and lost no time in tackling the actuarial examinations. He passed them so successfully that he became the Burn Prize winner when he qualified as a Fellow of the Institute in 3½ years flat—an enviably short period to many in our assembly here.

He left the 'Yorkshire' in 1955 to join Metropolitan Pensions Association where he progressed rapidly and became a member of the board in 1963. It was then that he recognized the importance of separating professional consulting work from other business activity.

Accordingly he left M.P.A. to join Clay and Partners, consulting actuaries, where he became senior partner; the new practice flourished under Deg's guidance; and he successfully achieved exactly what he had set out to do.

His varied career had thus ranged from war service to academic study, from commercial salesmanship to professional consultancy; and it moulded and rounded the character we remember today. His capacity for work was outstanding, so too his reliability and integrity. But I think it was his modesty and humanity that turned all his business and professional colleagues into such close friends, particularly those who enjoyed the privilege, the good fortune, to gain their first experience in the actuarial profession at his side. He really listened; no problem, no worry that confronted him was ever too troublesome to tackle patiently and constructively. The strains and stresses of developing a professional practice were mastered, in their turn, with that same unflappable serenity everyone recognized and admired.

Deg became dedicated to his professional activity, once he had chosen that career—a career enriched by the practical wisdom he had gained from other walks of life. Certainly he was the product of actuarial schooling; he was matured by the unconventional route he took. He portrayed what is best in a profession that seeks not to isolate its pupils from the problems and concerns of the world, but to equip them with skills to resolve them. Francis Bacon would surely have acknowledged he was a help and ornament to his calling.

Early in his actuarial career he took an active part in the affairs of the Institute. It is where I first met him and knew him best. He was a tutor for several years, then an examiner, and twice joined the ranks of the Council which he had served for over 7 years at the time of his death. He was an Honorary Secretary of the Institute, and more recently chairman of two committees

of the Council, as well as a member of others. Yet he found time to be secretary and treasurer of one of the senior actuarial clubs.

What of his personal life? He was devoted to his family, his home and beautiful garden. A lesser known interest involved him in many charitable activities. He was a practical man, in the finest sense, especially in his desire to help the less fortunate in our community. He was the first Honorary Treasurer of the Disablement Income Group, and then for several years a trustee of their charitable trust. The Hydon Hill Cheshire Home and Gosden House School have particular cause to be grateful for his enthusiastic and practical interest. He was also a Governor of Christ's Hospital, and it is significant that his interest in others was most manifest among young people; he seemed completely at home in their company.

How then do we sum up the bare half-century of his life? Each of us has his own impression, and I have ventured to articulate those of one of us. Only God can know the complete picture, but individually we see many parts. He was a very professional person, yet he had the common touch. His qualities combined to produce a wide ranging capability and a breadth of character that set the kind of example we need among us.

It helps my task to speculate on how he would have wished us now, today, to remember him. I recall some lines written by George Russell because they come so close to my own guess:

When nine hour is come  
Let no teardrop fall  
And no darkness hover  
Round me where I lie.

I think Deg's greatness lay in his modesty. Such was the man for whose life and example we give thanks today.

## HENRY EDWARD MELVILLE

H. E. MELVILLE died on Monday, 9 February 1976 at the age of 92. He qualified as a Fellow in 1908 and prior to his death was the longest qualified survivor. His first senior appointment was as life manager of the Eagle Star.

In 1931 he was appointed Actuary and Secretary to the National Provident Institution, a mutual life office then 95 years old—very sound and reputable, but progressing slowly. Here he was very successful in bringing the office through the years of depression and initiating years of growth with a more dynamic policy.

Perhaps his greatest contribution was to start investment in ordinary shares, not an unknown practice at the time, but regarded as a broad road to disaster by many life companies. In management he was firm but human, and a good trainer of men. His clear brain and devastating criticism of ill-thought-out plans or conduct continued to impress his associates after he retired from managership in 1945; he remained a director of the National Provident for a further 18 years.

He was outstanding in the field of investment and became Deputy Chairman of the Investment Protection Committee of the British Insurance Association in 1938, and Chairman in 1940. He played an important part in protecting the rights of debenture holders and preference shareholders. He was also a member of the Council for Foreign Bondholders from 1940 to 1950, being asked to remain on the Council after his official retirement from business. He rose to high office in the Institute and, after holding all the honorary positions, was elected President in 1942–44.

He served continuously on committees of the Life Offices' Association from 1932 to 1945, being a member of eleven in all, a number of them concurrently, and was chairman in 1935–6.

Melville expected high standards from those associated with him, and though somewhat forbidding on superficial acquaintance, closer association revealed the humanity in his character that led to admiration and affection. Up to the time of his death, he continued to take an active and enquiring interest in the business world that he had adorned.

G. V. BAYLEY