

Obituaries

The Council greatly regret to record the deaths of the following members of the Society:—

MAJOR-GENERAL SIR RICHARD M. RUCK, K.B.E., C.B., C.M.G., *Fellow*,
1851-1935.

Richard Matthews Ruck was born on May 27th, 1851, and joined the R.E. in 1871. In 1881 he became Assistant Instructor at the School of Military Engineering in charge of the Submarine Mining School at Gillingham, and was promoted to Captain in 1883. In 1891 he was appointed Inspector of Submarine Defences. In 1896 Ruck was promoted to Lieutenant-Colonel and in 1902 recalled to the War Office to take up the appointment of Deputy Inspector-General of Fortifications. In 1908 Ruck became Major-General and retired at his own request in 1912.

On the outbreak of the Great War his extremely valuable experience was at once made use of. He was appointed Chief Engineer of the Central Force, an organisation of Territorial units for the defence of London and the coast from the Wash to Portsmouth, and in 1916 G.O.C. London defences.

Major-General Ruck was keenly interested in aviation and as early as 1905, when asked his opinion, made the remarkable forecast "that he was confident that in the early future the question of military supremacy would be decided by fighting in the air." He joined the Society in 1911 and became Chairman of Council in 1912, a post he held until 1919. In 1920 he became a Vice-President.

General Ruck served on the Council during some of the most difficult years of the Society and was one of the most hard working members. He rarely failed to attend either the meetings of Council or the lectures, busy though he was in many other directions, and by his advice and initiative he did much to raise the prestige of the Society. It was during his term of office as Chairman that the Society was granted the prefix of Royal. He was Vice-President of the Air Inventions Committee under the Air Ministry and a member of the first Civil Aerial Transport Committee. In 1920 he received the well-deserved rank of K.B.E. for his work on aeronautics.

His death on March 18th, 1935, was felt keenly by a very wide circle of friends. Quietly efficient it can be well said of him that he made no enemies.

ERIC STUART BRUCE, M.A. (Oxon.), F.R.Met.Soc.

Eric Stuart Bruce was the Honorary Secretary of the Society from January 1900 to January 1908, taking over the duties of Honorary Secretary from Major Baden-Powell. He was elected a member of the Society in 1886, and from the beginning took an active and practical interest in aviation. He wrote and read a number of papers before the Society, including "Portable Electric Balloon Signalling in War" (on which he also lectured before La Société Française de Aérienne in 1900); "The Meteo-Parachute," a self-acting parachute for returning to earth recording instruments carried by pilot balloons; "The Shape of Navigable Balloons"; "Registration (Pilot) Balloons in America"; "The Aeroplane Experiments of M. Santos Dumont," and many others. It was during his term of office that the first heavier-than-air flight was made, and Bruce saw the fulfilment of much of what had been speculation in the early years of his membership of the Society.

Owing to the increasing calls of business, he resigned the Honorary Secretaryship in 1908 and the following letter was written to him:—

"My dear Bruce,—I am desired by the Council of the Aeronautical Society of Great Britain to express their most sincere and deep regret that you have decided, in view of your increasing private affairs, to resign the office of Hon. Secretary to the Society, for you have during your term of office

(which practically covers seven years) brought the Society from a comparative state of penury to that of comparative affluence. On behalf of this Society, allow me to express our most grateful thanks for your great past services, and to express a hope that you will still continue to aid our work by continuing on the Committee of the Society.

Believe me,

Yours very truly,

(Signed) FRANCIS TROLLOPE, Lt.-Col., *Vice-President.*"

For some years afterwards Stuart Bruce continued to take an active interest in the Society and its work, and for all his life in aviation—in which he had seen such remarkable progress. He died on February 28th, 1935.

AIR VICE-MARSHAL SIR VYELL VYVYAN, K.C.B., *Fellow.*

Arthur Vyell Vyvyan was born on March 12th, 1875, and first went to sea as a midshipman in the *Camperdown* in 1891. The following year he joined the ill-fated *Victoria* which was sunk by his former ship. He took firsts in seamanship, pilotage and torpedo work, and was promoted lieutenant in 1896 and took part in the Benin Expedition of 1897. In 1906 he was promoted commander, and in December, 1908, he became the first commander of the new battle-cruiser *Invincible*. In January, 1913, he was appointed assistant to the Chief of the War Staff, Admiralty, and in the following June promoted Captain and given command of one of the new light cruisers allocated to the First Light Cruiser Squadron, Grand Fleet. In March, 1915, he went out to Gallipoli as Beach Master at Anzac during the landing on April 25th, 1915, for which services he was awarded the D.S.O.

On January 16th, 1916, he was appointed to the Air Department at the Admiralty, as Assistant to the Superintendent of Aircraft construction. Following the establishment of the R.A.F. in 1918, he became senior R.A.F. Officer in the Mediterranean. In 1919 he became the first Air Officer Commanding the Coastal Area, a command he held for five years. He retired the year following his relinquishing this post, on September 1st, 1925, and was appointed one of the Government Directors of Imperial Airways. In April, 1929, he flew with the first regular air mail service to India and back in 15 days, and in January, 1932, he opened the regular weekly service between Croydon and Cape Town. He was created K.C.B. in 1923 and received many foreign decorations.

For many years Sir Vyell Vyvyan was a Member of Council of the Society, in whose work he took the keenest possible interest. He was a great enthusiast for civil aviation and did a great deal by his practical example to promote its welfare. He died on September 30th, 1935, after only a few weeks' illness.

E. J. H. LYNAM, A.R.C.Sc., D.I.C., *Fellow.*

E. J. H. Lynam became a trade lad by competitive examination at Woolwich Arsenal in September, 1908. After completing his training he attended a course at the Royal College of Science, of which he became an Associate. In 1915 Lynam entered the R.A.E. as a draughtsman, and his outstanding abilities rapidly gained him promotion. In 1918 he became head of the Aircrew Design Section, a position he held until September, 1926. In the reorganisation of the Airworthiness Department he was promoted to Principal Technical Officer in Charge. In 1932 he became Chief Technical Officer of the Aeroplane and Armament Experimental Establishment, a position he held until the time of his death on June 4th, 1935, at the early age of 42.

By his death aviation lost one of its most brilliant technical men whose opinions, though often opposed, were respected by all with whom he came in contact. He became an Associate Fellow in 1918 and a full Fellow in 1932.