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MEMOIRS OF DECEASED MEMBERS

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IRVING HAWKINS, Assoc. M. Am. Soc. C. E.*

DIED MARCH 14TH, 1911.

Irving Hawkins was born on a farm in South Haven, Long Island, on December 14th, 1863. When he was fourteen years of age his father died, and he was obliged to leave school and assist on the farm. Later, he took up the trade of a brick mason. From his early youth Mr. Hawkins was a student, and though employed during the day, he spent his evenings with his books. He deeply regretted having to give up school, for it was his desire to become an engineer. A substantial dam on the old farm, built by his older brother, Mr. E. C. Hawkins, now Chief Engineer and General Manager of the Morgan-Guggenheim Copper River and Northwestern Railway, in Alaska, and himself, when he was fourteen years old, still stands to attest their bent for engineering.

It was not until 1891, however, that Mr. Hawkins really took up engineering as his life work, but from that time he constantly followed his profession with success. His first employment was as Chainman on irrigation work in Wyoming, but he soon forged ahead as Rodman, Computer, and Levelman on surveys and construction on other large irrigation works in Idaho and Colorado.

In January, 1895, he returned East and remained a year with Mr. Emmett F. Smith, a Civil Engineer, of Patchogue, L. I., who says of him: "A man of sterling worth and integrity—nothing for show or for self—pure gold."

From January, 1896, to the fall of 1898, Mr. Hawkins was employed with the New York State Corps of Engineers on canal and highway work. For the remainder of 1898 he was with the United States Deep Waterway Service, on the Champlain Division.

After spending several months in the office of J. V. Davies, M. Am. Soc. C. E., Mr. Hawkins, in the spring of 1899, took up railroad construction work in West Virginia, remaining in that section from June, 1899, to June, 1902. During this period he was entrusted with highly responsible work, and acquitted himself creditably.

In 1902 he entered the writer's service and remained with him until 1909, during which period he was constantly in responsible

* Memoir prepared by Alexander Potter, Assoc. M. Am. Soc. C. E.

charge. Among other work entrusted to him, he is entitled to the credit for the remarkably close results in line and grade in building a 3 500-ft. tunnel, 48 in. finished diameter, and driven through water-bearing drift under air pressure. The small size of the locks, shaft, and tunnel made precise work difficult, yet the headings met within $\frac{1}{2}$ in.

In whatever branch of engineering Mr. Hawkins was engaged, the same thoroughness characterized his work. He was at his best, however, on outside work.

In December, 1908, he went to Santo Domingo, in charge of a topographic survey for that country. He remained there until December, 1909, by which time revolution, disease, and flood had decimated his party, and had made living in that country so unendurable that he returned to New York.

Shortly after his return, Mr. Hawkins was married to Miss Jennie C. Overton, of Bayport, L. I.

The exposure in Santo Domingo, which had robbed him of his co-workers, tardily claimed him as a victim, for in the spring of 1910, after working for a very short time with the Astoria Light, Heat and Power Company, on Long Island, he suffered from a nervous breakdown, from which he never fully recovered. He had improved so much, however, by March, 1911, that his physicians were of the opinion that he could shortly take up his work again. On March 14th, however, while out for a walk along the railroad several miles above Kingston, N. Y., where he was stopping at the time, he stepped off the track to allow a freight train to pass and was caught by a flying express coming from the opposite direction, and almost instantly killed.

Careful, industrious, attentive to business, thoroughly trustworthy, and rigidly and ruggedly honest, Mr. Hawkins always commanded and retained the respect and confidence of those for whom he worked and of those who worked for him. His cardinal characteristics were unselfishness and rigid devotion to duty.

All through his work Mr. Hawkins felt and expressed deep gratification that it afforded opportunities to make living conditions easier, healthier, and better. Everything that tended toward the uplifting of humanity appealed to him, and because of that came his great love for his work. As an evidence of his humane interest, he was a member of the Red Cross Society, and also a member of the National Child Labor Committee.

He is survived by his widow, two brothers, E. C. Hawkins and Emmett S. Hawkins, and a sister, Mrs. D. F. Glover.

Mr. Hawkins was elected an Associate Member of the American Society of Civil Engineers on May 6th, 1908.