



THE ENGINEERING INSTITUTE OF CANADA

and its member societies

L'Institut canadien des ingénieurs

et ses sociétés membres

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“The Senior Engineering Institute Executives”

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EIC HISTORY AND ARCHIVES

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Abstract

Some 16 engineers have been senior executives of the Canadian Society of Civil Engineers/Engineering Institute of Canada during the 122 years between the founding of CSCE and the present day. All have been men. Some began their tenure in mid-career but, when it ended, moved on to other jobs or back to their old ones. For others, it was their last appointment before partial or full retirement.

In the past, most attention at the senior level within the Society and Institute has been given to the elected presidents and to committee, region and branch chairs - all of whom served on a voluntary basis. They were, however, supported and served by headquarters staffs of varying numbers, depending on the times and the circumstances. These staffs were led by senior executives. This paper provides some background information for these particular executives, on whose skills and experience the fortunes of the Society and the Institute have depended to a considerable extent over the years.

About this Series

Principally, the Cedargrove Series is intended to preserve some of the research, writings and oral presentations that the author has completed over the past half-century or so, but has not yet published. It is, therefore, a modern-day variant of the privately-published books and pamphlets written by his forebears, such as his paternal grandfather and grandmother, and his grandfather's brother John.

About the Author

He is a graduate in mechanical engineering and the liberal arts and has held technical, administrative, research and management positions in industry in the United Kingdom and the public service of Canada, from which he retired over 20 years ago.

He became actively interested in the history of engineering on his appointment to chair the first history committee of the Canadian Society for Mechanical Engineering in 1975 and served both CSME and the Engineering Institute of Canada in this capacity for varying periods of time until 2003. He has researched, written and edited historical material for both organizations, and is a past president of both.

Introduction

Between 1887 and 2009, the Canadian Society of Civil Engineers (CSCE) and its successor, the Engineering Institute of Canada (EIC) have had 16 senior executives. At first they were called 'secretaries,' then 'general secretaries,' then 'general managers' and, finally, 'executive directors.'

Meanwhile, the Institute passed through three major phases in its development. The first, the 'CSCE' phase, lasted from 1887 until 1918, when a number of significant changes were made, including a change of name - to the Engineering Institute of Canada (EIC). The second was the 'EIC' phase, which lasted from 1918 until 1970, and the third, the 'Societies' phase - which involved the establishment of constituent (later member) societies - from 1970 until the present time. These phases have been discussed in more detail in an earlier Cedargrove paper (#6/2008) by the same author.

The secretaries during the first phase served the Society on a part-time basis. However, by 1917 the position had become sufficiently onerous that a full-time general secretary was appointed. Towards the end of the second phase, the title was changed to general manager. The Institute's transition from its second to its third phase was accomplished without a change in title for the senior administrator. This came about in 1983.

This paper provides biographical material for each of the 16 senior executives, as well as information on some of the main issues they were required to deal with during their respective tenures.

The Senior Executives

Henry T. Bovey, a founder of CSCE in early 1887, became a member of its first Council on his election to the office of secretary. He served in this capacity until 1891. His principal concerns were with the business and activities of the Society, the publication of papers, the encouragement of membership, the establishment of its library and the formation of its first branch - in Toronto - in 1890. In these days, most of the CSCE's meetings were held in Montreal. Bovey was also a member of the committee that awarded the first Gzowski Medal. For most of his years as secretary, the Society's 'rooms' were at McGill. He was given the assistance of a librarian in 1888 and, in 1890, of an assistant secretary.

Dean Bovey was elected a vice-president of the Society in 1896 and 1897 and president in 1900. He had been a member of the Montreal committee associated with the founding of the Society, and with the provisional committee that considered the Society's draft constitution and the initial applications for membership.

Bovey was born in Devonshire, England in 1852 and educated at Queen's College, Cambridge. He came to Canada in 1878 as professor of civil engineering and applied mechanics at McGill University. Subsequently, he was appointed the first dean of the Faculty of Applied Science at the

University, serving until 1908, when he returned to England on his appointment as rector of the Imperial College of Science and Technology in London. He died there in 1912. Bovey received a number of honours during his lifetime, including the Fellowship of the Royal Society of London and honorary doctorates from three Canadian Universities.

Henry Bovey resigned as secretary of CSCE due to the pressure of his work for McGill. He was replaced by another McGill engineering professor - **Clement H. McLeod** - who held the office for 25 years. McLeod had been among the first engineering graduates of McGill, being a member of the class of 1873.

McLeod participated in the considerable growth in the membership and the activities of the Society during his term in office when, for example, the membership grew from 900 to around 3000 and the number of branches across the country from one to ten. He dealt with the purchase and operation of headquarters buildings in downtown Montreal, first on Dorchester Street and later on Mansfield. He dealt with the problems for engineers and engineering that arose during World War I. He was a co-author of a report on National Industrial Development in Canada submitted by CSCE to Prime Minister Borden in 1916.

The Society's Annual Report published for that year mentioned that the Council had held 20 meetings during the previous 12 months, that committees were operating for the Library and House, Finance, Meetings, Nominations and the Gzowski Medal, in addition to 11 more that were dealing with engineering subjects. There were four technical sections in operation: for mechanical, electrical, mining and general (civil) engineering. McLeod also directed the financial matters of the Society, and oversaw the production of its publications and the keeping of records.

When Clement McLeod died in 1917, the duties of the secretary had become sufficiently onerous that a new regime involving a full-time secretary became necessary. This was introduced when the Council asked Parliament to amend the original 1887 legislation to permit the Society to change its name to the Engineering Institute of Canada. The man who replaced McLeod, in February 1917, was **Fraser S. Keith**. He has been referred to variously in EIC publications as the secretary or general secretary. He was in his post when the amended EIC legislation took effect in April 1918, at which time he also became the editor and manager of the new *Engineering Journal*, established by the Institute to facilitate communication between the Council and the members and among the members.

As a participant in the transition from CSCE to EIC, Fraser Keith was involved in the fuller development of embracing all branches of engineering more fully in a single institution. As before, Keith was the executive official responsible to the president and the Council for financial and administrative matters pertaining to the Institute and its activities, the keeping of records and for the work of the employees of the Institute. He also facilitated the work of the various committees and technical sections and dealt with matters affecting the election and transfer of members.

Keith remained as secretary until his resignation in 1925. In addition to his regular responsibilities,

he had to deal with the reorganization consequent upon the changes in the legislation of 1918. He was also involved with the work of devising model legislation to enable the establishment of the provincial licensing associations, with the Dodwell Committee that carried out this work in 1919, and with the uncertainties for the Institute that arose after the enactment of legislation in the majority of the provinces. By 1925, the number of active branches had risen to 24, and the overall membership of the Institute to around 5400. An assistant secretary/editor and other staff assisted him.

Fraser Keith was born at Smiths Falls, Ontario in 1878. He graduated in electrical engineering from McGill in 1908, after which he gained both technical and editorial experience with a number of Canadian publications. He left the Institute for a position in industry and was succeeded by **Richard J. Durley**, who assumed office in May 1925.

Durley was born in England and received his technical training at the University Colleges in Bristol and London. He also served an apprenticeship as a mechanical engineer with a company in Hull, England, with whom he remained on its completion. He began his teaching career in the mid-1890s at the Hull Municipal Technical College. In 1898 he joined the staff at McGill and, in 1901, became Professor of Mechanical Engineering. He left McGill in 1911 to practice as a consulting engineer in Montreal. Commissioned in the Canadian army during World War I, Durley was placed in charge of the Division of Gauges and Standards of the Canadian Inspection Department of the Imperial Ministry of Munitions. In 1918 he was awarded Membership in the Order of the British Empire (MBE). In 1919 he was appointed secretary of the Canadian Engineering Standards Association.

In his work for the Institute in the later 1920s, Durley was concerned with the relationship between EIC and the provincial Associations, which led eventually to the establishment of the 'Consolidation' Committee in the mid-1930s, whose eventual proposals failed to carry when submitted to a membership ballot. He saw the number of branches increase to 25, and had to deal with the effectiveness of communications between them and the Institute's headquarters. He followed Fraser Keith as editor of the *Engineering Journal*. There were also more committees in operation - especially technical ones - and more staff to supervise. There were, as well, the effects of the Depression of the 1930s on engineering and Institute activities and on membership and finances to be dealt with. The number of awards made annually also increased. And, in 1937, the CSCE/EIC celebrated its Semi-centennial.

Richard Durley resigned for health reasons and was appointed secretary emeritus in April 1938 to assist **Leslie Austin Wright**, who had been appointed to succeed him as general secretary of the Institute. Durley was presented with a certificate, signed by the president and the living past presidents, that attested to "his devotion to the interests and the welfare of the Institute, and his contributions to the progress and betterment of the profession."

Austin Wright was born and educated in Toronto, graduating from the University in 1910 in mechanical engineering. During his undergraduate years, he had - in addition to his studies - participated actively in athletics and served as editor-in-chief of *The Varsity*. He gained further journalistic experience after graduation. Then followed a period of varied engineering work, from

bridge and railway construction to manufacturing and structural engineering. He also wrote many articles for publication and did some extra-curricular university lecturing. His candidacy was therefore many-sided and included the potential to edit the *Journal*, as his predecessors had done. His time in office spanned World War II and the Depression-recovery years of the late 1940s and early-1950s. This was a period of constant economic improvement, which set the stage for the most active and influential years in the Institute's history.

During World War II, Austin Wright was loaned for a time to the Wartime Bureau of Technical Personnel in Ottawa as assistant director. After the War, he participated actively in EIC's international activities that included the Commonwealth Engineers' Council, the World Federation of Engineering Organizations and UPADI. He received an honorary doctorate from Rice University in the United States in recognition of his work in fostering good relations between Canadian and American engineering societies.

As noted by President C.M. Anson in the *Engineering Journal* of June 1958:

During the twenty years that Austin Wright has held the office of general secretary, the Institute has grown from twenty-five to fifty branches and from 4,500 members to the present membership of some 18,000.

Of far greater importance is that the Institute has greatly expanded the services which it renders, not only to its members, but to the well being of our country as a whole and beyond that to the service of humanity generally....Dr Wright has initiated many of these new services....

I have been privileged to attend international gatherings and to note the high regard with which the bodies comprising those gatherings look upon Dr. Wright.. He has the distinction of being the first Canadian to become president of the Council of Engineering Society Secretaries, an organization of some sixty member societies whose overall membership exceeds 60,000.....

His contribution towards bringing the *Engineering Journal* to the high standard that it enjoys today has been extensive...He has (also) contributed largely to the other publication efforts of the Institute.

The president might have added that, during Dr. Wright's term in office, the *Journal* increased in size from an average of 80 pages to 220, income rose from \$75,000 to \$600,000 and the number of members serving on committees from 365 to 850. Understandably, the staff of the Institute was most numerous during Wright's tenure. A photograph has been appended.

Austin Wright retired to Victoria. The Institute awarded him the Julian C. Smith Medal in 1976. He was succeeded by **Garnet T. Page**, who had joined the Institute's staff as assistant general secretary in late 1957.

Born in Nova Scotia, Page graduated in chemistry from the University of Saskatchewan in 1940. He was on active military service even before graduation, serving in the Saskatchewan Light Infantry, and was involved in chemical warfare as a member of the General Staff until transferred to intelligence in 1942. Leaving the army in 1945 with the rank of captain, he maintained his military connections through the militia. For almost twelve years prior to joining EIC, he was general manager and secretary of the Chemical Institute of Canada in Ottawa and managing director of the society's publications. He himself published many papers on a variety of subjects, from chemical warfare to science and economics education. He was a member of various federal government committees, acted in a consulting capacity, represented Canada at UNESCO, and wrote and broadcast many lectures on science for that organization from European and South American centres. He also held office in organizations such as the Canadian Citizenship Council, the Canadian Film Association and the National Federation of Canadian University Students. Before joining the staff of EIC, Garnet Page had received honorary degrees from several European universities and medals and awards from European countries.

Page's term coincided with the high point in the Institute's history in terms of membership and the number of branches. It also coincided with a fresh attempt to 'confederate' the engineering profession in Canada, which was eventually unsuccessful, the rebuilding and re-equipping of the Institute's headquarters at 2050 Mansfield Street in downtown Montreal and the occupation of temporary quarters in the interval. It coincided with the beginnings of the financial problems that led, among other things, to a significant reduction in size of the *Engineering Journal*. This was caused in large measure by a drop in advertising revenue and a lack of further growth in membership, compromising the magazine's ability to carry the number of technical papers and the volume of Institute news it had previously done. Garnet Page resigned as general secretary towards the end of 1966 to join the newly-formed federal Department of Manpower and Immigration in the senior position of director of the Pilot Projects Branch and chief of its Technical Support Centre.

President Hambley wrote in an editorial message in the October issue that Page had served "with dedication and distinction" during his time in office. Page himself wrote, in part, in the same issue:

We have worked together through some extremely significant situations. The issue of 'Confederation' was critical during the first six years and, after a period of consolidation, not unmixd with a normal leavening of contentious items, the pressing need for adequate accommodation for the Institute came to the fore, and it is gratifying that the fine new 'Edifice EIC Building' will soon be completed.

Throughout this time hundreds of members were at work on these and many other problems, necessitating preparations for, and participation in, ten annual general meetings, sixty Council meetings, thirty Executive Committee meetings, forty-five Regional Information and Coordination Centre meetings, five hundred branch visits, hundreds of (other) committee meetings, dozens of regional conferences and functions of other societies, and meetings of government boards, councils and committees. Added to this were conferences in many other countries, calling for nearly a million miles of travel since 1957.

In other words, during the Page years the pace of Institute headquarters' activity established during the Austin Wright years hardly slackened..

Pierre Bournival followed Garnet Page late in 1966, although his name did not appear on the masthead of the *Journal* until March 1967. He continued to be editor of the magazine but was the first to take the title of general manager of the Institute. He was introduced to the members by the president in the previous issue, in February.

Bournival was a graduate of Laval University in both arts and engineering, the latter in 1948. From 1949 until 1965 he was employed by the Corporation of Engineers of Quebec (now the Order of Engineers), for a decade as its general secretary. From then until joining the Institute's staff, he was with the consulting engineering firm, SNC. He was the first (but not the last) completely bilingual senior executive of the Institute and one of his major objectives was to improve the bilingual appeal and capacity of the Institute and the *Journal*. This was particularly important in 1967 - Canada's Centennial Year, and for the so-called 'Quiet Revolution' in Quebec.

However, in his first editorial in the *Journal*, in March, Bournival drew attention to a serious problem being faced by the Institute, namely, the competition for members between it and the growing numbers of technical societies serving special and specific fields of engineering. Some three years later, this would lead EIC to begin forming a number of semi-autonomous societies in preference to continuing to serve all disciplines as best it could - a development in which he played an important part. During his tenure, his editorials were a regular feature of the issues of the *Engineering Journal*.

Bournival speculated that the Institute and the CCPE might well develop new plans for a 'confederation' of the two organizations, something that was discussed during the next few years but on which no action was taken. He also became responsible for moving the Institute staff from its temporary accommodation into the new EIC Building on Mansfield Street and for organizing the activities on the two floors of the high-rise that it occupied, as well as undertaking additional work in connection with the international conference in Montreal sponsored by the engineering profession as a whole in connection with EXPO 67. He was also involved in the preparation and publication of the EIC's (Quittenton) report to the federal government on R&D activities in Canada.

As President Dinsmore noted editorially in *Journal* in the Jan/Feb issue of 1972, Bournival was successful in achieving objectives he had set himself when taking on the position five years earlier, namely:

- maintenance of essential services, while ensuring that the Institute operated in the black for four of the five periods between 1967 and 1972;

- reduction in the friction, and increased cooperation, between EIC and the provincial associations;

- development of the concept of constituent societies, in order to re-orient the activities of the Institute; and

- maintained the national and international stature of the Institute in technical activities and publications, and particularly as editor of the *Journal*.

Pierre Bournival resigned effectively in March 1972 to accept a senior position with the newly-created Ministry of State for Science and Technology in Ottawa, one of his duties being to develop a network for communication and cooperation between the Ministry and the learned societies in Canada. He was succeeded by **Byron T. Kerr**.

Byron Kerr was introduced to the Institute membership by President Dinsmore in the April 1972 issue of the *Journal* as an engineering executive of widely proven administrative and financial skills and a long-term supporter of it, having served as its treasurer. His time in the general manager's chair coincided with the initial phase in the transition of the Institute into a federation of discipline-oriented learned societies, for which there were high hopes. This transition was, indeed, one of the major concerns to which he gave a great deal of his time and attention on taking up his appointment. As usual, he became editor and publisher of the *Journal*.

Kerr was born in New Brunswick, received his early education in Nova Scotia, and graduated with a civil engineering degree from Nova Scotia Technical College in 1947. His first position was as an assistant resident engineer with the Shawinigan Engineering Company. In 1950, he joined the P.N. Thomson organization in Montreal and for the next 19 years held a number of senior executive positions, including president and director of the Warnock Hershey Company and executive vice-president and director of Warnock Hershey International. During this time, he spent two years on secondment to Defence Construction Ltd. as its Quebec Regional Engineer, in charge of its projects in that province. In addition, from 1958 until 1964 Kerr served as an alderman and, later, as the mayor of St. Lambert, Quebec. He was also a member of a number of professional and industrial associations and clubs.

Kerr served as general manager for most of the 1970s. The development of the constituent societies was proceeding and situations in connection with them required his attention. New issues were raised in Council by their representatives. When he began, Kerr's staff included managers for technical services, membership and constituent society services, an office manager and a controller, but was smaller in overall size than in the days of Austin Wright. The societies had not yet begun to accumulate staffs of their own. With the passage of time and increasing financial problems for the Institute, including the inflation that plagued the country generally, Kerr's staff became smaller. Membership within the Institute as a whole was also declining, as was the number of active branches. For the most part, the Annual Congresses remained successful.

During Kerr's time in office, the *Engineering Journal* changed its format and management arrangements in several ways. One was the introduction of 'yellow pages' to carry news items from the Institute and the constituent societies. Another was a reduction in the number of annual issues,

together with a reduction in the number of purely technical articles published and an increase in those of management and general interest. A third was the contracting out, with Kerr's oversight, of the publication of the magazine to a specialist company with an editorial team - Corpus - beginning in 1975. The idea behind this last change was to expand its coverage in order to appeal to a wider audience, and especially since the societies were, themselves, making arrangements for the publication of technical material.

Byron Kerr left the Institute in mid-1979 to return to industry and was succeeded by **Robert J. Thibault**, a graduate in chemical engineering from Laval University, who had held senior positions in several Canadian and American corporations in engineering, management and sales, but had no experience with professional societies.

It was around this time that serious thought was being given to reviewing the functions and performance of EIC headquarters, now designated as the service centre, as the societies were beginning to acquire staff. They had already undertaken the production of publications and the organization of their own technical activities and annual meetings. Financing and the sharing of finances and budgeting were continuing and increasingly difficult problems. The branches of the Institute were also experiencing problems, some due to the existence of local sections of the societies, especially in the larger cities, and others in areas of the country were having difficulty sustaining an Institute branch, let alone a section of one or more societies.

In 1981, the management of the *Journal* changed again. Although Corpus was still involved, an editor was hired in Montreal - as director of communications for the Institute - while Thibault remained publisher. While the 'yellow pages' were retained, the overall content of the magazine was reduced. The new director's task included the improvement of communications generally throughout the Institute.

Robert Thibault resigned as general manager in December 1981 to take up a senior appointment in the energy field in a provincial government department and was replaced on an acting basis by **M. Saeed Mirza**, of the Department of Civil Engineering at McGill.

Mirza graduated in civil engineering from the University of Karachi in 1956 with a gold medal and pursued doctoral studies at McGill, receiving both M.Eng. and PhD degrees. A cricketer of some distinction, he participated actively in extra-curricular activities at McGill and was the first overseas student, and the first graduate student, to become president of the Students' Society. A staff member of the Department of Civil Engineering and Applied Mechanics at McGill since 1966, his specialty was structural engineering. He also served as dean of students at the University from 1972 until 1978. He had been particularly active in CSCE, had served on a number of its administrative and technical committees and had received several of its awards. In 1980 he was also part-time executive director of CSCE. He continued as general manager of the Institute through 1982-83 president's term in office. His staff during this time numbered twelve.

During the 18 months that Mirza served as general manager, the principal concerns of the Council

were the financial situation of the Institute, the role and operations of the service centre in Montreal, and relations between Institute and the branches and sections. He was also the first of the three senior executives who dealt with changing the formal relationship between the Institute and the societies - a situation that was not fully resolved until the mid-1980s when the latter became incorporated, gained autonomy and became *the members* of the Institute. It was during Mirza's time as general manager that preparations began for the celebration of the Institute's Centennial, due in 1987.

Mirza served as publisher, but not editor, of the *Engineering Journal*, this job being assigned to staff member Marta Meana following the resignation of the director of communications. Mirza was, however, responsible for devising the 'newspaper' issues of the *Journal* that appeared in early 1983 at a time of particular financial restraint.

Mirza later served as president of CSCE and, in 2003, was awarded the Institute's Stirling Medal for his long and active service to CSCE and EIC.

C. Gilles Chenier replaced Saeed Mirza in 1983. He graduated in electrical engineering from McGill in 1956 and spent most of his pre-EIC professional years in R&D project management in the avionics industry and as a consultant to industry for the National Research Council at le Centre de recherche industrielle de Quebec (CRIQ). For four years he was general director of le Centre d'organisation scientifique de l'entreprise (COSE), a private non-profit organization providing courses and seminars in industrial research and management. As a management consultant, he directed and carried out assignments in the areas of productivity improvement and professional development and, since 1978, had served as chairman of the professional development committee of l'Ordre des ingenieurs du Quebec. He was the first senior executive to be given the title of executive director, but served EIC for only a year, dealing with extensions of the problems that had occupied his predecessor. Ms. Meana continued as editor of the *Engineering Journal*, producing one final issue in its stand-alone magazine format. In January 1984, it became a multi-page insert in the privately published *Engineering Digest*, edited by Ernie Zucker, under the supervision of the Institute's Communications Board, of which he was chair.

Chenier was succeeded in September 1984 by **Eric C. Scott**, then recently retired as executive vice-president of the Federal Business Development Bank, a position to which he had been appointed in May 1978.

A native of Picton, Ontario, Scott graduated from the University of Toronto with a degree in civil engineering in 1949, having served during World War II in the Canadian army. He had also studied finance and accounting at McGill. His first professional assignment was as a design engineer with the Canadian International Paper Company in Quebec. He subsequently joined CIL and held a variety of positions involving design, construction and plant management associated with the cellophane, paint and synthetic fibre products divisions. In 1958 he joined the Federal Business Development Bank and held positions in engineering, lending, personnel administration and management services before his appointment as executive vice-president. He was known as a speaker and writer on engineering, personnel and business management and held office in the

Montreal Personnel Association, the EIC's Montreal Branch, and the Rotary Club. He was also active as a hockey coach and league executive and directed fund-raising for charitable organizations.

Scott's wide - and senior - experience was most valuable at this particular juncture in the Institute's development. In particular, he had to deal with discussions with the societies over their future status within the Institute, with day-to-day financial and service centre problems - including its closure and significant staff reductions - and the preparations for the 1987 Centennial of Engineering, which had become a joint, year-long celebration involving the Institute, the Canadian Council of Professional Engineers and the Association of Consulting Engineers of Canada. While it had a Board of Directors of its own, Scott became a member of the Board's executive committee. The Centennial celebrations included such diverse activities as an international conference in Montreal, the issuing of a commemorative postage stamp by Canada Post, a special 'Da Vinci' exhibition in Montreal, and activities in each of the provinces.

One of Scott's continuing concerns was the communication of headquarters news within the Institute and, to this end, he wrote newsletters as well as articles on the Institute's first 100 years. The publication of the much-shortened *Engineering Journal* ended in 1986, while Scott was executive director. The sole remaining issue appeared in conjunction with the Centennial but was assembled, edited and published by a private company.

Eric Scott retired as executive director halfway through the Centennial year and was succeeded by **T. Christie Arnold**, whose background included service in both the government and private sectors. A 1950 graduate in mechanical engineering from Toronto, with an MBA from Western Ontario, Arnold had held senior engineering and management positions in industry prior to joining the Institute's staff, with companies that included Canadian British Consultants Ltd., the Wilson Machine Company and Alcan. He served as a senior executive officer with the Government of Canada for eight years. He was also active in the community on school and hospital boards and service clubs and undertook part-time university teaching. His concerns as executive director included the transition within the Institute from engineer-orientation to society-orientation, as well as the financial side of it. He was also concerned with the management of the Institute's interest in the building at 2050 Mansfield Street in Montreal and with preparing for the transfer of the headquarters to Ottawa. In addition to his part-time work with the Institute, he became executive director of CSME and continued in this position when he left the Institute in 1990.

Arnold was succeeded by **Roger Blais**, a 1962 graduate in engineering physics from Ecole Polytechnique. Blais then joined the Northern Electric Company in Montreal. From 1964 to 1980 he held various positions at the Bell Northern Research Laboratories in Ottawa. From 1980 to 1987 he was president and director general of la Societe d'Amenagement de l'Outaouais, where he directed a planning team of around 200 that involved representatives of industry, business, tourism and high technology. He was also active as a member of committees and boards associated with the Outaouais Region of Quebec, and with the Chamber Orchestra of Hull. Immediately prior to joining EIC as executive director, he was in practice as a consultant. He was a member of the l'Ordre des ingenieurs du Quebec.

After joining the Institute's two-person staff (the other was his administrative assistant), in August 1990, he was particularly concerned with moving the headquarters to Ottawa and establishing its office in the downtown area, with the Institute's financial situation, which was still influenced by the lease on the Mansfield Street building in Montreal, formalizing the understandings between the Institute and the member societies, supporting its committees, participating with CCPE and ACEC (whose headquarters had always been in Ottawa) in a variety of activities, and organizing the Institute's annual meeting and awards gala in the National Capital Region.

Roger Blais remained executive director until 1994, when he was replaced by **Michael Bozozuk**, the first of two former presidents of member societies to hold the position so far. A 1952 graduate in civil engineering and an MSc in soil mechanics from the University of Manitoba, and a doctorate in geotechnical engineering from Purdue University, Bozozuk joined the Division of Building Research of the National Research Council in 1953 and remained there until his retirement in 1989. He participated in numerous research projects involving sensitive clays, landslides, tunnelling, soil testing and instrumentation. For many years, he held office in the Canadian Geotechnical Society, serving as chair of the Ottawa Geotechnical Group, associate editor of the Geotechnical Journal, and executive secretary of CGS. He served as president of CGS and vice-president of EIC from 1986 to 1988. He has been the recipient of medals awarded by CGS and EIC for his technical contributions and his service and has been elected to the Canadian Academy of Engineering.

Bozozuk began his service as executive director in the EIC's downtown location, where he continued working along similar lines to those established by Roger Blais. However, for financial reasons, EIC found it difficult to remain there and Bozozuk moved the office to the NRC Campus on Montreal Road, where it remained until it was moved to Kingston after he resigned in 1999. However, during his time in office, the Montreal Mansfield Street building problem was solved and the Institute's future became clearer and simpler. The financial situation, in particular, was improved. Bozozuk's work, although never problem-free, provided support for the Council and its committees in regard to professional development, honours and awards and the history of engineering. He assisted the Life Members' Organization (LMO), organized sustaining membership campaigns and the annual meetings, worked with non-EIC technical groups, and developed the web page. To say that Dr. Bozozuk's work was officially 'part-time,' with a single administrative assistant, was something of an understatement!

B. John Plant, the incumbent executive director, was appointed to succeed Dr. Bozozuk in July 1999. He had attended the Royal Military College, Kingston, and the Royal Naval Engineering College, Plymouth, England, and received his doctorate in electrical engineering from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. In the Royal Canadian Navy, he attained the rank of captain. He served as principal and director of studies at RMC from 1984 until June 1999.

John Plant also served as president of the Canadian Society for Electrical and Computer Engineering and of EIC. He was instrumental in bringing together CSECE and Region 7 of IEEE to form IEEE Canada in 1993. In recent years, his services to the Canadian military, to scholarship and to the

engineering profession have been recognized in a number of ways, including election to the Canadian Academy of Engineering.

Originally, Plant maintained EIC offices in Ottawa and in Kingston but, with time, Kingston became the base of operations. Basically, his activities have been similar to those of his predecessor, except that the LMO has become a society and several other professional engineering societies have now joined the Institute as members. Officially on a part-time EIC schedule, with a full-time administrative assistant, Plant has recently been serving as executive director of the mechanical engineering and engineering management societies.

Commentary

The first eight secretaries/general secretaries served the Institute for a total of 92 years, or an average of 11½ years. While recognizing that the incumbent - John Plant - is still in place, the second eight general managers/executive directors have served for only 30 years, or an average of 3 3/4 years.

The first two (Bovey and McLeod) were from academia and served on a part-time basis. The last two (Bozozuk and Plant) have had similar research-related backgrounds and have also served part time. In between were a dozen who were all engineers but, with the exception of Mirza, came to the position essentially from private sector backgrounds. While they were all experienced people, few all had direct experience in the management of a professional society. The longest-serving were McLeod (25 years) and Wright (20 years). All of them came to the position with experience of writing and publishing, although the later ones were did not edit the *Engineering Journal*.

The common thread of concern throughout the tenures of the senior executives was finance, followed by relationships within the Institute and membership. Within these, for the triumverate of Durley, Wright and Page, was the achievement - and sustaining - of the peaks of membership and activities of the late 1950s and early 1960s. For individual executives, there were also a number of significant, non-recurring events, such as the confederation debates, the Depression and the World Wars and their effects, the semi-centennial and centennial celebrations, the incorporation of the member societies, and the dismantling of the service centre.

While several may stand out as having served with special distinction and effectiveness, the most 'visible' of the 16 was Austin Wright. He travelled widely and knew an enormous number of engineers on both sides of the Canada-U.S. border and around the Commonwealth. He got things done. When the author was a new member of the Institute, he became used to hearing that the EIC had been 'Austin's Institute!' At one time, there was a full-length portrait of him hanging in the conference room at headquarters in Montreal.

Sources

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Where appropriate, reference has also been made to Minutes of the Institute's Council.

The photograph on page 15 was taken at the EIC staff's retirement party for General Secretary Leslie Austin Wright in June 1958. Dr. Wright is in the centre of the front row. His successor, Dr. Garnet Page, is in the middle of the group, surrounded by lady members of the staff.

