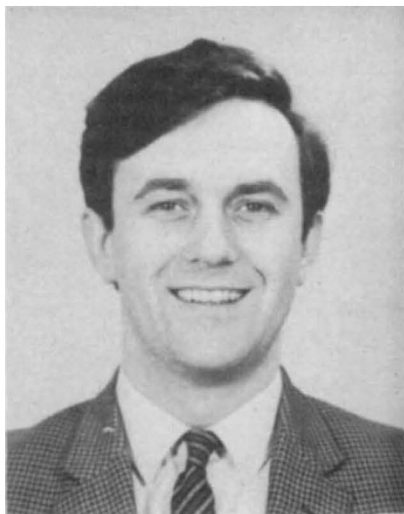


## Professor R. K. Ham



THE death of Ron Ham in a car accident on November 13 has robbed the Open University of one of its brightest talents. Ham had been appointed professor of materials science in April 1970 and his enthusiasm for teaching coupled with imagination and wide experience had already laid sound foundations on which he and others were starting to build. In particular, he had a clear vision of the role and importance of technology and had successfully emphasized the necessity of direct cooperation with the "pure" sciences within the university. Ham was also winning real support from industry to assist in preparation and presentation of relevant course material. He reached

out far beyond his professorial specialism and indeed his last manuscript is a characteristically lively "Case Study" of the Electricity Supply Industry for the 1972 technology course. Ham was also deeply concerned to create opportunities for experienced scientists and engineers to keep abreast of developments in science, technology and industry.

All this high promise was founded on considerable achievements in metallurgy and materials science. Ham, a Canadian citizen, had been trained in engineering physics in Toronto, specializing in metallurgy. An Athlone fellowship brought him in 1955 to the Department of Industrial Metallurgy, Birmingham, where he began a series of investigations on the fatigue of metals which established him as a leading authority. His initial work, published in the *Proceedings of the Royal Society*, was on pure copper, followed in later years and in other laboratories with work on age-hardening alloys, ordered alloys and composite materials. Throughout this work, Ham showed a keen awareness of the practical implications of basic research and of the appropriateness of "enlightened empiricism" in tackling some complex industrial problems. After four years at Birmingham, Ham had a brief period at the Cavendish tackling a theoretical problem on the configuration of dislocations, inevitably becoming enthusiastic about direct observations of dislocations by transmission electron microscopy. During the following three years in Australia at the Division of Tribophysics of CSIRO, Ham tackled a problem that was being

sidestepped elsewhere, namely, the extent to which dislocations rearrange themselves or disappear during preparation of thin foils from bulk metal.

Ham returned to Canada in 1962, to a staff appointment at McMaster University. There he undertook a heavy teaching load with a wide diversity of students and topics. He enlarged his research interests, with high temperature creep starting to displace fatigue as his major field. From 1966 to 1970 at CERL Leatherhead, where he eventually became head of the Materials Division, Ham developed important new insights into the creep resistance of commercial steels and nickel-based alloys, and defined a completely new principle for the design of a useful class of creep-resisting alloys. Simultaneously, there was deep involvement in the solution of immediate technical problems of the CEGB, and, in what spare time he had, the preparation of a first-class review of age-hardening mechanisms.

Only a few of Ham's publications bear his name alone: his personality was such that he attracted others to share his enthusiasms and he readily gave them credit for what often seemed minor contributions. Throughout the world, those who knew the stimulus of his agile mind with its store of well-ordered information pay tribute to Ron Ham, not only as one of the leading materials scientists of his generation, but to a friend whose warmth and charm radiated a zest for living that enriched them all. Professor Ham was 37; he leaves a widow, Jane, and two young sons.

## Announcements

### Appointments

Dr William E. Paul has been appointed chief of the Laboratory of Immunology of the US National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases.

The Governing Body of the Lister Institute of Preventive Medicine has elected Professor A. Neuberger, St Mary's Hospital, as chairman in succession to Sir Lindor Brown.

### International Meetings

March 8-12, **Biophysical Aspects of Radiation Quality**, Lucas Heights, Australia (IAEA, Kärntnerring 11, PO Box 590, A-1011 Vienna, Austria).

March 29-April 2, **Use of Radiation and Radioisotopes for Genetic Improvement of Industrial Microorganisms**, Vienna (IAEA, Kärntnerring 11, PO Box 590, A-1011 Vienna, Austria).

March 29-April 2, **Psychosomatic Medicine in Obstetrics and Gynaecology**, London (Kurt Fleischmann and Associates, Chesham House, 136 Regent Street, London W1).

March 30-April 3, **Joint Annual Meeting of the Chemical Society and the Royal Institute of Chemistry**, Brighton (Dr John F. Gibson, The Chemical Society, Burlington House, London W1V 0BN).

March 31-April 2, **Genetical Society Meeting**, Cambridge (Professor D. A. Hopwood, John Innes Institute, Colney Lane, Norwich NOR 70F).

April 13-17, **AGM of the Association of Teachers of Mathematics**, Lancaster (Executive Office, ATM, Market Street Chambers, Nelson, Lancashire).

April 14-16, **Teratology**, Cardiff (Dr J. B. Lloyd, Department of Biochemistry, University College, Cardiff, Wales).

April 19-22, **Process Instrumentation in the Metals Industry**, Swansea (The Secretary, Institute of Measurement and Control, 20 Peel Street, London W8 5BR).

April 19-23, **Magnetohydrodynamic Electrical Power Generation**, Munich (IAEA, Kärntnerring 11, PO Box 590, A-1011 Vienna, Austria).

April 21-22, **Advances in Concrete**, Birmingham (Operations Department, The Concrete Society, Terminal House, Grosvenor Gardens, London SW1).

April 26-29, **Circadian Rhythmicity**, Wageningen (International Agricultural Centre, PO Box 88, Wageningen, The Netherlands).

May 10-15, **Nuclear Ships**, Hamburg (IAEA, Kärntnerring 11, PO Box 590, A-1011 Vienna, Austria).

June 8-11, **Electrostatics**, Albany, New York (Professor A. D. Moore, Department of Electrical Engineering, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104, USA).

June 14-18, **Precambrian Metavolcanic and Plutonic Rocks of Colorado and Northern New Mexico**, New Mexico (F. Barker, US Geological Survey, Federal Center, Denver, Colorado 80225, USA).

June 17-23, **Plasma Physics and Controlled Nuclear Fusion Research**, Madison (IAEA, Kärntnerring 11, PO Box 590, A-1011 Vienna, Austria).

July 5-9, **Rapid Methods for Measuring Radioactivity in the Environment**, Munich (IAEA, Kärntnerring 11, PO Box 590, A-1011 Vienna, Austria).

July 18-22, **Wildlife Disease**, Falmer, Sussex (Dr A. McDiarmid, ARC Institute for Research on Animal Diseases, Compton, Newbury, Berkshire).