

## OBITUARIES

## Prof. C. van Riet Lowe

THE death of Prof. C. VAN RIET LOWE in Johannesburg, South Africa, on June 17 is a severe loss to archaeology not only in South Africa but also to the science as a whole.

Prof. van Riet Lowe trained as a civil engineer at the University of Cape Town, but interrupted his studies to serve with distinction in the First World War, first with the South African Artillery and later with the Royal Horse Artillery, in East Africa, Egypt, Palestine, Italy and France. In 1940 he again donned uniform to take command of the Witwatersrand University Training Corps Battery.

In 1920 he entered the Civil Service as an engineer in the Public Works Department and reached the top of his profession in 1931, when at the age of thirty-seven he became chief engineer of the Department.

During 1923-28 he was in charge of bridge construction in the Orange Free State. He was quick to seize the opportunities this presented for archaeological field-work in his spare time. He discovered a large number of Stone Age sites, began the long series of research publications which at the time of his death exceeded 130, and rose rapidly to the forefront of South African archaeologists. In 1929 he collaborated with Prof. A. J. H. Goodwin in publishing "The Stone Age Cultures of South Africa", which still is the most comprehensive account of South African prehistory.

In 1935 the Government established the Bureau of Archaeology, which later became the Archaeological Survey of the Union of South Africa, and van Riet Lowe was the obvious choice as its first director. The University of the Witwatersrand provided accommodation for the new institution and appointed the director to a chair of archaeology. At this time, too, the Commission for the Preservation of Natural and Historical Monuments, Relics and Antiques was reconstituted under a new Act of Parliament, and Prof. van Riet Lowe became a member and secretary of that body. He was thus entrusted with building up these new institutions from their beginnings and acquitted himself of all three tasks with great distinction.

Prof. van Riet Lowe's contributions to archaeology cannot be reviewed in a brief note. One of his first projects as director of the Archaeological Survey was a geological and archaeological study of the gravels of the Vaal River, undertaken jointly with the Geological Survey of the Union, which for the first time gave us a climatic sequence and cultural correlation in the south of the continent. A similar study of the Little Caledon River has just been published. He directed the important excavations at Mapungubwe undertaken by the University of Pretoria, and the excavation of the Cave of Hearths in the Makapan's Valley, which proved to contain a complete Stone Age sequence from the end of the Earlier Stone Age to modern times.

He was assiduous in recording and studying the great wealth of prehistoric art which adorns the South African rock shelters, on which he became the leading authority, and welcomed the collaboration of the Abbé Breuil, who was invited by the late General Smuts to join the staff of the Archaeological Survey during the Second World War.

Van Riet Lowe travelled widely in the pursuit of his researches. In 1931, when he represented the South African Association for the Advancement of Science at the centenary meeting of the British Association, he made a study of the important archaeological collections in England and France and visited many sites in company with such authorities as Burkitt, Henry Balfour, Breuil, Harper Kelley and Henri Martin. In 1937 he undertook a long journey of archaeological exploration through Egypt and the Sudan, East Africa, the Belgian Congo and the Rhodesias, and two years later was invited by the Government of Uganda to describe the prehistory of that important territory in collaboration with Mr. E. J. Wayland. This work was published as Part 2 of a memoir of the Geological Survey of Uganda; Part 1 on the Quaternary geology of the area, by Mr. Wayland, is in preparation. He twice paid official visits to Mozambique to advise the Government of that territory on the organization of archaeological research and the preservation of monuments.

His long service in many spheres brought him many honours. He was a past president of the South African Association for the Advancement of Science, the South African Archaeological Society and the South African Museums Association. He was awarded the South Africa Medal by the South African Association for the Advancement of Science in recognition of his distinguished research, and the medal of the Historical Monuments Commission for his work in that field. He received the degree of D.Sc. from the University of Cape Town and was a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries and the Royal Society of South Africa. He represented the Government of South Africa on the International Historical Monuments Commission of the League of Nations and later became a member of the International Commission on Monuments of Unesco. He took an active part in the Pan-African Congresses on Prehistory in Nairobi, Algiers and Livingstone and was invited by the Governments of Iraq and Spain to visit their countries.

## Dr. C. E. Eddy

CECIL ERNEST EDDY, whose death at the age of fifty-six following a heart attack has been reported from Perth, Western Australia, was one of Australia's best known and best loved scientists. Born in Albury, in New South Wales, he crossed the State border and was educated in Victoria at Colac High School and the University of Melbourne, from which ultimately he received the degree of D.Sc. However, it was to the whole of Australia that Eddy's services were rendered as director of the Commonwealth X-ray and Radium Laboratory since 1935.

Following graduation, he took the M.Sc. degree at Melbourne in 1924 and became research physicist in the Department of Natural Philosophy in 1927. In 1927, also, he was awarded a Rockefeller Fellowship, and studied in England during 1927-28. Cambridge, as was to be expected, left its mark on him, as on many great figures in the world of physics. It is worthy of note that by 1929 Eddy was reporting the use of the Geiger counter for the detection of  $\beta$ -rays transmitted by aluminium. In the next few years, in collaboration with his chief, Prof. T. Laby, he