

have given widely divergent results. The difficulty was avoided in the cavity resonator experiments by the complete evacuation of the resonators; but it cannot be avoided in the radar method or in methods now being developed in the Metrology Division of the National Physical Laboratory for the measurement of length and velocity by the interferometry of radio waves. A measurement of the dielectric constant of air at radio-frequencies is required with an accuracy comparable with that obtained at optical frequencies. The problem is being investigated by Drs. K. D. Froome and L. Essen, and, although the work is not yet complete, it is clear that the value at 24,000 Mc./s. will not differ greatly from that obtained by extrapolation from the well-established dispersion formulæ for optical frequencies.

The work described above has been carried out as part of the research programme of the National Physical Laboratory, and this article is published by permission of the Director of the Laboratory.

- <sup>1</sup> Essen, *Nature*, **165**, 582 (1950).
- <sup>2</sup> Bol, *Phys. Rev.*, **80**, 298 (1950).
- <sup>3</sup> Houstoun, *Proc. Roy. Soc. Edinburgh, A.*, **63**, 95 (1950).
- <sup>4</sup> McKinley, *J. Roy. Astro. Soc. Canada*, **44**, 89 (1950).
- <sup>5</sup> Bergstrand, *Arkiv. Fys.*, **2**, 119 (1950).

## OBITUARIES

### Prof. S. A. F. White

STUART ARTHUR FRANK WHITE, of Wadham College, Oxford, and Fellow of King's College, London, died on January 12 after a short illness at the age of eighty.

'SAF' White, as he was affectionately known by several generations of colleagues and pupils, was appointed demonstrator in natural philosophy (on the recommendation of the Engineering Committee!) at King's College, London, at the end of 1894. The head of that department was William Grylls Adams, who had held the chair since 1865. White became professor of mathematics in January 1904, in succession to W. H. H. Hudson, and when Adams retired in 1905 applied mathematics was transferred to the Department of Mathematics.

White never lost his sympathy with the science or engineering student. He was a stimulating teacher, always anxious to make contact with a class at the level they had reached before attempting to lead them on. Any newly appointed junior had to develop his pet topics in his own research rather than in classes for undergraduates.

There was a satisfying wholeness about White's college life. King's College was his first concern, but as an organism composed primarily of colleagues and students. Like W. T. Gordon (who, fourteen years his junior, predeceased him by a month) he was until his death one of the trustees of the Union Society, and both were of a small company who gave to the first college hostel ('The Platanus' on Champion Hill) its furniture and equipment in 1914. It was characteristic of him that he retired three years earlier than he need have done, so that the Department should not lose three senior members in two years.

White's voice was never strong, and in his later years trouble with his vocal cords, though painless, reduced it to a hoarse whisper and led to a seclusion which was quite against his nature. He had always been a valued member of the Senior Common Room, and was its honorary secretary at the time of his retirement and for two years afterwards. J. T. COMBRIDGE

### Mr. G. Fox Wilson

It is with much regret that we record the death, on January 9, at Weybridge Hospital, at the comparatively early age of fifty-four years, of George Fox Wilson, whose life-work in the applied aspects of economic entomology was outstanding.

Fox Wilson was born on January 26, 1896, was educated at King Edward VI School, Grantham, and went to the Royal Horticultural Society's Gardens at Wisley as a student in 1911. He won a scholarship awarded by the Worshipful Company of Gardeners, and remained at Wisley, working as assistant to the then entomologist, Prof. H. Maxwell Lefroy, until the summer of 1915. He then spent four years in the Services, in the 1st City of London Sanitary Company, passing three years in Egypt and Syria, where he devoted his time to anti-malaria work and other problems of an entomological nature. He returned to Wisley in 1919, occupying the post of head of the Entomological Department until his death.

Fox Wilson made a detailed study of the insects and allied animals associated with cultivated plants, trees and vegetables, and before long was recognized in Great Britain and abroad as the leading authority in this field.

Among many important research problems which interested him, a study leading to the control of eelworm of chrysanthemums and phlox was outstanding, and his recommendations for their eradication are followed by those concerned with these pests. Greenhouse fumigation problems, seed storage, and the testing of new insecticides also formed part of his investigations.

Fox Wilson's publications were varied, and the principal work, entitled 'The Detection and Control of Garden Pests', was published in 1947; to-day, it is regarded as the standard work on the subject. Another notable publication appeared in 1937, namely, 'The Pests of Flowers and Shrubs', of which the second revised edition recently appeared. His innumerable scientific publications in the *Journal of the Royal Horticultural Society* and the journals of other learned societies are also of a very high standard.

Fox Wilson became a member of the Royal Entomological Society in 1920, was vice-president in 1940, 1941 and 1947-48; and he served on the Council on three occasions. He joined the Association of Applied Biologists in 1920, and was made general and zoological secretary for 1935-36, and zoological secretary during 1933-34 and 1937-38, serving on the Council during 1927-29. In recognition of his services to the Association, he was elected president in 1949-50.

He leaves a widow and two very young sons, and to them we extend our deep sympathy in their bereavement. A. M. MASSEE

—

WE regret to announce the following deaths:

Sir Eustace D'Eyncourt, Bart., K.C.B., F.R.S., director of naval construction and chief technical adviser to the Admiralty during 1912-23, on February 1, aged eighty-two.

Mr. G. P. Millett, C.I.E., formerly conservator of forests, Bombay Presidency, on December 29, aged eighty-seven.

Mr. H. Stainton Tireman, C.I.E., sometime chief conservator of forests, Madras, on January 11, aged seventy-nine.