

Alalakh) in 1937 among the multitude of settlement-mounds in its area, or the divining, season after season, at Ur of the most significant quarter to unearth in the great city. There he conducted, beginning from 1926, his most famous operation, revealing the royal tombs of Sumerian rulers who had held sway over the city in a period of unequalled splendour, about 2,500 B.C. as now believed, unhappily just before writing, already in use, had learned to record history.

In this great discovery also was best exercised the next in order of Woolley's talents, namely, a fine appreciation of materials in the ground, how they should each be reached, traced, or penetrated, how objects sighted should be protected from impacts of tools or of the atmosphere, how they should be lifted, and how first-aid should be given for their protection, transport, and even their ultimate reconditioning. Many almost deceptively 'well-preserved' exhibits in museums are now substantially as they left Woolley's hands, not restored or falsified, but skilfully extricated by him and remoulded to the shapes which they had lost by decay and pressure of earth. Much of his work of this kind was brilliantly improvised in days which, although not long past, were before the very recent development of preservation laboratories and techniques in museums.

Woolley had, moreover, a notable facility of exposition, which worked in two ways: an attractive lecturer and writer for general audiences, he was also—more important for one whose discoveries could well speak for themselves—a judicious author of excavation reports, that difficult marginal literature which, always bulky, is worthless if it strives for effect, repulsive and unreadable if too painfully 'scientific'. Woolley's many publications were highly successful in these two kinds; his popular works are both interesting and well founded upon his discoveries (whereas his few attempts at more general themes are not very valuable), and his large volumes of excavation reports have the virtues of well-arranged matter, ample pictures and plans, and careful description based upon his industrious recording in the field. Such descriptive parts can nearly always be read with interest and ready understanding. Some have, indeed, criticized his observation as not being of the exactitude demanded by the most recent methods, and it is true that Woolley could be intuitive in his perception of archaeological levels and his mental reconstructions of buildings and fragments. But such criticisms seem not to make enough allowance for the character of most Near Eastern sites, and the pell-mell of dwellings and artefacts of different ages, often jumbled together, which they usually exhibit.

Woolley's lively mind and exploring intelligence, if they sometimes led him beyond his evidence, were of more service in suggesting many true and fruitful consequences of his discoveries. These, as great and varied as have fallen to any modern digger, are his principal bequest and his enduring memorial.

C. J. GADD

Dr. Eric Boehm

DR. ERIC BOEHM, who died suddenly at Cardiff on December 28, was a well-known and respected figure in industrial chemical and pharmaceutical circles. Born in Breslau, Silesia, sixty-one years ago, he served a pharmaceutical apprenticeship in the town of Schreiberhau and later studied at the University of Berlin, graduating in 1922. He

followed this with postgraduate training which, in 1925, resulted in the award of a Ph.D. He later studied bacteriology at the Robert Koch Institute in Berlin. The pre-war political situation in Berlin forced him and his family to leave Germany for Great Britain.

As a research worker he had become associated with Prof. Sabaletschka after the latter had introduced the now well-known esters of *p*-hydroxy-benzoic acid. Their association resulted in establishing these compounds under the trade names of 'Nipa Esters' as extremely useful, reliable and non-toxic preservatives for pharmaceutical and medicinal products and for foodstuffs. In 1938 these two workers showed that esters of gallic acid showed very promising anti-oxidant activities; this led to the widespread use of propyl gallate as an anti-oxidant for animal fats to prevent or retard rancidity. Its proved non-toxicity was recognized in 1948 when the United States officially approved its incorporation in fats for human consumption, to be followed by similar recognition in Britain and elsewhere.

In 1942, Boehm showed that certain mono-aryl and mono-alkyl ethers of ethylene glycol possess bactericidal activity. Interest centred chiefly around the phenyl ether of ethylene glycol ('Phenoxetol'), which was investigated bacteriologically and clinically by Berry, Gough *et al.* It showed unusual activity against *Ps. pyocyanea* and during the War, in the early days of penicillin, when topical application to wounds was, of necessity, used, a combination of 'Phenoxetol' with penicillin widened the antibacterial spectrum of the latter and also prevented its decomposition in the wound.

Dr. Boehm was that rare combination of an able scientist and capable business administrator. He also combined rare intellectual qualities with integrity, charm and kindness, as those who had the privilege of knowing him can testify.

H. BERRY

Prof. H. Stansfield

PROF. HERBERT STANSFIELD, whose death occurred on March 14, was appointed to the chair of physics and electrical engineering at University College, Southampton, in 1912. Previously he was a lecturer in physics in the Victoria University, Manchester. In 1919 he was transferred, with other Departments of the College, from the old Hartley Building to the new site at Highfield.

Research undertaken at Southampton by various members of his staff, under his direction, was started in the late 'twenties. His main interest was in optics, particularly with modifications to the Michelson interferometer experiments on the velocity of light. One summer he co-operated with the Royal Navy on sound recordings of gunfire. Setting up his apparatus in an area where no reports were expected, many yards of photographic paper recordings from an Eindhoven string galvanometer were processed and examined, and the nil report confirmed.

Past students will remember Prof. Stansfield's very characteristic action in stroking his fountain pen on his beard in order to charge some piece of electrostatic equipment in lecture demonstrations. Another characteristic was his exceptionally dry skin. He would touch 200-V. terminals with his fingers and then to be quite sure he would moisten them and repeat the action and remark, "Yes, I am sure they are alive"!