



V. T. Clow

VEN TE CHOW

1919-1981

BY WILLIAM C. ACKERMANN

DR. VEN TE CHOW, noted engineer and educator, died on July 30, 1981. Dr. Chow was widely recognized throughout the world for his contributions to the science of hydrology and to water resources development. He was Professor of Civil and Hydrosystems Engineering at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Ven Te Chow was born in Hangchow, China, on August 14, 1919. He received his B.S. degree in civil engineering from the National Chiao Tung University in 1940, his M.S. degree in engineering mechanics from Pennsylvania State University in 1948, and his Ph.D. degree in hydraulic engineering from the University of Illinois in 1950. He became a naturalized U.S. citizen in 1962 and had been on the faculty of the University of Illinois in the Department of Civil Engineering since 1948.

Some of Dr. Chow's unusual contributions include his watershed experimentation system, which produced storms in the laboratory using sophisticated electronic, pneumatic, and sonar controls. It is the only instrument of such advanced sophistication in the world and has attracted worldwide attention and interest among scientists, engineers, and the public. It was the subject of an article that appeared in *Life* magazine on June 6, 1969, and was also addressed in the 1969 March issue of *Public Works* magazine. With this unique instrumentation, he introduced a new field of technology known as watershed hydraulics. He also developed a formula for hydrologic frequency drainage design, a method of backwater curve computa-

tion, and widely used theoretical approaches in the fields of stochastic hydrology and water resources systems analysis.

Among his many activities in hydrology and water resources, Dr. Chow was a founder and first President of the International Water Resources Association and was subsequently named Honorary President of that organization. He was also President of the American Geophysical Union's Section of Hydrology and a founder of and delegate to the Universities Council on Water Resources. He was a lecturing adviser to the Central Water and Power Commission of the Government of India and to the Power Resources Administration of the Government of Turkey; a member of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Study Group on Space Application of Earth Resources; an adviser to the United Nations Secretariat on water resources development in developing countries; a UNESCO/UNDP consultant to assist the establishment of a Centre of Applied Hydrology in Brazil and to plan a National Institute of Hydrology in Peru; the Director of the First International Seminar for Hydrology Professors; a consultant to the Comision Federal de Electricidad for the Government of Mexico; the United Nations Expert Adviser to the Government of Serbia, Yugoslavia; President of the First, Second, and Third World Congress on Water Resources held in Chicago (1973), New Delhi (1975), and Mexico City (1979); a member of the United States Water Resources Delegation to the People's Republic of China; and the Water Resources Expert of the World Health Organization to advise on Danube River projects in Hungary. In 1971 Governor Preston Smith commissioned Dr. Chow an Honorary Texas Citizen in recognition of his services as an adviser on implementation of the \$10-billion Texas Water Plan. He was named an Honorary UNESCO Consultant in 1967.

He was elected to the National Academy of Engineering in 1973. Among his many activities was participation in National Research Council committees, including the U.S. National Committee for the International Hydrological Decade, the U.S. National Committee for the International Association of Hydrological Sciences, and the U.S. Committee for the International Institute of Applied Systems Analysis on Water Resources.

Dr. Chow became known throughout the world as a consultant

and lecturer to many governmental, university, and private organizations, and he will also be long remembered for his writing and editing. He is the author of several well-known books, including the widely used *Handbook of Applied Hydrology* and *Open-Channel Hydraulics*, and more than 200 other technical publications. He was the Associate Editor of *Water Resources Research*, 1965-1967; Editorial Board Member of *Remote Sensing of Environment-An International Journal*, 1967-1971, and *Geophysical Survey-An International Journal of Geophysics*, 1971-1979; Editor of the Academic Press series of *Advances in Hydrosience* and of *Journal of Hydrology*; Advisory Board Member of *Fluid Mechanics-Soviet Research*; Editorial Board Member of *Water Supply and Management*; Advising Editor of Elsevier's series on *Developments in Water Sciences*; Consulting Editor of McGraw-Hill's *Water Resources and Environmental Engineering*; and Editor-in-Chief of *Water International* until 1980.

Dr. Chow received numerous awards and honors in recognition of his considerable achievements. He was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the Academia Sinica, which is the Republic of China's highest award to a scientist or scholar. He was a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, American Academy of Mechanics, and Diplomate of the American Academy of Environmental Engineers. He received honorary doctorates from Andhra University in India, Yeungnam University in Korea, Universite Louis Pasteur de Strasbourg in France, and the University of Waterloo in Canada. His numerous awards include the Epstein Award; the American Society of Civil Engineers Research Prize; the Achievement Award of the Chinese Institute of Engineers, Inc.; the John R. Freeman Memorial Lecture Award; the Western Electric Fund Award; the Thompson-Ramo-Wooldridge Lectureship Award; the Fulbright-Hays Senior Scholarship Award; the Chinese Engineers and Scientists Association of Southern California Professional Achievement Award; the Silver Jubilee Commemorative Medal of the International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage; the Louis Pasteur Medal; the Vincent Bendix Award; and the Case Centennial Scholar Medallion. He was a National Science Foundation Distinguished Scholar and an Honorary Member of La Asociación Mexicana de Hidraulica.

Dr. Chow was most respected and loved by his close academic associates and a generation of students from throughout the world who came to study with him. It was in these associations that his warm personality, modesty, and his unfailing patience and good humor were most evident.

Ven Te Chow was certainly one of the "all-time greats" in water science and engineering.

