



Theodore L. Cairns

July 20, 1914 - September 16, 1994

Theodore L. Cairns, as a research scientist in the DuPont Company, made important contributions to the science of chemistry, applications of chemistry, and U. S. scientific policy.

Ted was born in Edmonton, Canada, in 1914. After a bachelor's degree from the University of Alberta in 1936, he earned a Ph.D. under Roger Adams at the University of Illinois in 1939. He served as an instructor in organic chemistry at the University of Rochester until 1941, when he joined the Central Research Department of DuPont in Wilmington, Delaware. There he spent the next thirty-eight years, the last eight as the Director of that department.

As a leader in the research of a major chemical company with a high reputation for innovation, his expertise and advice were sought by both scientific and governmental organizations. On the scientific side, he was a member of the National Academy of Sciences. He had an important role on several of its committees, such as those that produced the influential report "Prudent Practices for Handling Hazardous Chemicals in the Laboratory" and a useful survey of basic research in chemistry in the United States. He was active in the American Chemical Society; for example, he served a term as chairman of the Division of Organic Chemistry.

Cairns was an editor of *Organic Syntheses* from 1949 to 1956, where he gained a reputation as an exceptionally diligent checker of preparations. He was an editor of its sister publication, *Organic Reactions*, from 1959 to 1969.

Cairns served on President Nixon's Scientific Advisory Committee (1970-1973) and on the Delaware Governor's Council on Science and Technology (1969-1972).

Ted's contributions to science and technology were recognized by several awards: The American Chemical Society award for creative work in synthetic organic chemistry (1968); the Perkin medal of the British Society of Chemical Industry (1973); and the

Cresson Medal of the Franklin Institute (1974).

I worked directly under Ted for most of my career with the DuPont Company. Like many other DuPont chemists, I found him an encouraging and inspiring leader who took bad breaks, and even foolish blunders, in stride. These qualities served him well not only as a research director, but as an *Organic Syntheses* editor.

Blaine C. McKusick
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