



Dr. JULIUS BERGER
1913~1987

Obituary

JULIUS BERGER, 73, formerly Director of Microbiology, Hoffmann-La Roche Inc., Nutley, New Jersey, U.S.A., died at his home in Passaic, NJ on November 14, 1987. JULIUS joined Hoffmann-La Roche as a senior chemist in 1943 and rose to the rank of director in 1972 which was the position he held at the time of his mandatory retirement on December 1st, 1978. Dr. BERGER was born in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada on November 28, 1913. He received his B. A. in 1933 and an M. A. in Chemistry one year later at McMaster University in Hamilton. He carried out post-graduate studies in the Biochemistry Department at the University of Wisconsin in Madison where he was granted a Ph.D. in 1938. Under the supervision of Professors W. H. PETERSON and M. J. JOHNSON, JULIUS continued his studies at Madison on microbial proteolytic enzymes and the nutritive value of mold mycelia until 1940. He then became a Research Associate in Botany at Connecticut College, New London before joining Roche, where he spent the next 35 years. Amongst his many interests there were the screening and isolation of new antibiotics, including the polyether antibiotic lasalocid; antimetabolites from microorganisms; microbial transformation of organic compounds; vitamin-producing fermentations; the production of biopolymers and the pharmacological activity of microbial metabolites. These studies have been described in more than 50 papers and 20 patents.

Dr. BERGER was on the Editorial Board of The Journal of Antibiotics from 1974~1981 and was a member of the Organizing Committees for the Third Industrial Symposium on the Genetics of Industrial Microorganisms held in Madison, 1978 and the Third International Fermentation Symposium held in New Brunswick, NJ in 1968. From 1962~1967, Dr. BERGER was on the Organizing Committee of the Interscience Conference on Antimicrobial Agents and Chemotherapy of the American Society for Microbiology and a member of the Editorial Board. Since 1979, Dr. BERGER served for four years as chairman of the Technical Advisory Committee of the New Brunswick Scientific Company, Edison, NJ and as a member of its Board of Directors. During recent years, he also served as consultant to a number of companies in the biological products field in the United States and abroad.

Surviving are his wife HAZEL; one son and one daughter: GORDON of Los Angeles, CA; SUZANNE BERGER KENISTON of Boston, MA; one grandson, DANIEL of Boston and a granddaughter, SARAH of Los Angeles.

JULIUS BERGER will be remembered as one of the pioneers of the rapid postwar expansion in the application of fermentation technology to the pharmaceutical industry. His gifts of enthusiasm and communication and his considerable organizational abilities will be greatly missed by all who knew and worked with him over the years.

(J. W. WESTLEY)