

The 1996 Planté Medal Acceptance Speech

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Professor Yakimoff, Scientific Secretary General of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Professor Pavlov, Planté Medallist Dr Bullock, colleagues, friends, ladies and gentlemen.

It is indeed a great honour and pleasure for me to accept the 1996 Gaston Planté Medal, and I particularly wish to express my gratitude to the International Planté Medal Committee for selecting me to receive this prestigious award. Moreover, I am doubly delighted in that my companion electrochemist, Dr K.R. Bullock, has been equally honoured.

Invariably, awards are bestowed on individuals, but more often than not, it is the collective work of many people, as well as the support of many organizations, that is being celebrated. This is no less true in my case.

Looking back over my professional life, I see that I have been exceedingly fortunate. For example:

- my parents made great sacrifices to give me a good education in difficult times;
- my school (Portsmouth Grammar School) placed great emphasis on scholarship and the pursuit of knowledge in both the sciences and the arts;
- my university (Cambridge University) encouraged its students to be self-reliant and to broaden their horizons;

- my long-time employer (the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation) has provided me with world-class facilities and, where possible, the freedom to conduct unfettered research;
- the principal supporters of my research group — the International Lead Zinc Research Organization, Pasminco Limited and various Australian government agencies, along with numerous companies and organizations associated with the lead/acid battery industry — have assisted our work technically, commercially, and (most importantly) financially.

Finally, I have indeed been fortunate, over the years, to work with — and make friends with — so many fine scientists and technologists, both in Australia and in many other parts of the world. I appreciate their contribution and I thank them most warmly for their sustained kindness, cooperation and help.

I also wish to acknowledge the perspicacity and generosity of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences for providing a forum in which devotees of the lead/acid battery can gather together in convivial surroundings to discuss progress in the application and performance of this most important technology.

Again, thank you all very much.