verted to the chloride.<sup>7</sup> Nine grams of 4-chlorosalicylic acid was obtained, m. p. 211° after crystallization from water. No depression in m. p. was observed when this

water. No depression in m. p. was observed when this product was mixed with the substance prepared below. Anal. Calcd. for  $C_7H_6O_3Cl$ : C, 48.71; H, 2.92; Cl, 20.54. Found: C, 48.52; H, 3.04; Cl, 20.69.

A mixture of 6 g. of 2,4-dichlorobenzoic acid, 20 g. of barium hydroxide hydrate, 60 ml. of water and 0.5 g. of copper-bronze was heated in a sealed tube for six hours at  $160-170^\circ$ . The product was filtered and then suspended in water and decomposed with hydroxhloric suspended in water and decomposed with hydrochloric acid. Crystallized from hot water, the chlorosalicylic acid, 2.9 g, melted at 211-212°. 4-Chlorosalicyclic acid is reported to melt at 211°; 2-chloro-4-hydroxybenzoic acid at 159°.8

(7) The procedure described in "Org. Syn.," Coll. Vol. I, p. 163, 1st ed., was followed except that threefold volumes of acid were employed to facilitate the reaction of the insoluble acid hydrochloride and its insoluble diazonium salt. In addition, chlorobenzene was added during the decomposition of the diazonium salt, to extract the product as formed.

(8) Hodgson and Jenkinson, J. Chem. Soc., 1740 (1927).

DIVISION OF MEDICINAL CHEMISTRY THE SQUIBB INSTITUTE FOR MEDICAL RESEARCH NEW BRUNSWICK, N. J. RECEIVED FEBRUARY 16, 1948

## The Preparation of Phthalaldehyde

By S. Wawzonek and R. E. Karll<sup>1</sup>

Varying yields have been reported for the preparation of phthalaldehyde from o-xylene.2 It has been found that, by using all-glass apparatus and the procedure described below, o-xylene and omethylbenzyl bromide can be brominated in 64% yield to  $\alpha, \alpha, \alpha', \alpha'$ -tetrabromo-o-xylene. Under similar conditions o-methylbenzyl chloride gives the same yield of a mixture of  $\alpha, \alpha, \alpha', \alpha'$ -tetrabromo-o-xylene and  $\alpha, \alpha, \alpha', \alpha'$ -chlorotribromo-oxylene. o-Methylbenzyl chloride is the most suitable starting material since the best commercially available o-xylene is only 90% pure while omethylbenzyl bromide is a powerful lachrymator.

The tetrahalo-o-xylenes can be hydrolyzed to phthalaldehyde of melting point 55.5° in a 90% yield by the method of Thiele.<sup>2a</sup> The only modification made in this procedure was to saturate the aqueous solution of the aldehyde with sodium chloride instead of sodium sulfate.

#### Experimental<sup>3</sup>

α,α,α',α'-Tetrahalo-o-xylene.--o-Methylbenzyl chloride<sup>4</sup> was brominated according to the directions given in "Organic Syntheses" with the following modifications. All-glass equipment was used together with a Trubore glass stirrer. From 132.6 g. of o-methylbenzyl chloride, 245 g. of product was obtained by taking up

(1) Abstracted from a thesis by R. E. Karil presented to the Graduate College of the State University of Iowa in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the M.S. degree, June, 1947.

(3) Melting points are corrected.

(4) Smith and Spillane, THIS JOURNAL, 62, 2640 (1940).

the reaction mixture in hot chloroform (300 ml.) and cooling; m.p., 106°. Repeated recrystallizations from ethanol gave a white crystalline compound melting at 110-111°. A mixture with tetrabromo-o-xylene (m. p., 115.5°) melted at 112°.

Anal. Calcd. for  $C_8H_6ClBr_8$ : Br, 63.6. Calcd. for  $C_8H_6Br_4$ : Br, 78.20. Found: Br, 72.89, 72.97.

DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY STATE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA

IOWA CITY, IOWA RECEIVED NOVEMBER 13, 1947

# Ethyl Acetamidoacetoacetate

By Richard H. Wiley and Olin H. Borum

The reduction of oximinoacetoacetic ester over palladium catalyst in acetic anhydride gives a product, m. p. 46-47.5°, which has been characterized as acetamidoacetoacetic ester, CH<sub>3</sub>-CONHCH(COCH<sub>3</sub>)CO<sub>2</sub>C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>5</sub>. The only known previous reference1 to this compound describes a less convenient method of preparation and reports a melting point of 141°.

### Experimental

Ethyl Oximinoacetoacetate.—This compound was pre-

pared by the method of Adkins and Reeve.2

Ethyl Acetamidoacetoacetate.—Thirty-two grams of ethyl oximinoacetoacetate and 6.9 g. of palladium catalyst3 were shaken in 50 ml. of acetic anhydride at room temperature under 30 lb. hydrogen pressure for ten hours. After separating from the catalyst and removing the excess acetic anhydride, 35 g. of acetamidoacetoacetic ester b. p. 128-140° (3-4 mm.) was obtained. Refractionation gave 25.7 g. b. p. 125-132° (3-4 mm.) which solidified on standing, m. p. 46-47.5°.

Anal. Calcd. for  $C_8H_{13}O_4N$ : C, 51.33; H, 7.0; N, 7.48. Found: C, 51.13; H, 7.0; N, 7.50.

This solid gave qualitative tests for carbonyl with 2,4dinitrophenylhydrazine reagent and for enol with al-coholic ferric chloride. Reaction with phenylhydrazine in ether, according to the procedure of Michael for the preparation of the phenylhydrazone of acetoacetic ester, gave a yellow precipitate of the phenylhydrazone, m. p. 131.5-132.5°

Anal. Calcd. for  $C_{14}H_{19}O_3N_3$ : C, 60.63; H, 6.9; N. 15.15. Found: C, 60.43; H, 6.96; N, 15.10.

- (1) Cerchez and Colesiu, Compt. rend., 194, 1954 (1932).
- (2) Adkins and Reeve, This Journal, 60, 1328 (1938).
- (3) R. Mozingo, et al., ibid., 67, 2093 (1945). Washed free of chloride.
  - (4) A. Michael. Am. Chem. J., 14, 519 (1892).

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RECEIVED JANUARY 8, 1948

### The Decomposition of o-Methoxybenzene Diazonium Chloride

By H. E. WOODWARD AND A. A. EBERT, JR.

M. L. Crossley and others¹ have reported that the decomposition of o-methoxybenzene diazonium chloride can be assumed to consist of two de-

(1) THIS JOURNAL, 69, 1160 (1947).

<sup>(2) (</sup>a) Thiele and Gunther, Ann., 347, 106 (1906); Thiele and Weitz, ibid., 377, 8 (1910); (b) Sandstrom and Lillevik, Ind. Eng. Chem., Anal. Ed., 18, 781 (1941); (c) Fieser and Pechet, THIS JOURNAL, 68, 2577 (1946).

<sup>(5) &</sup>quot;Organic Syntheses," Vol. 20, John Wiley and Sons, Inc., New York, N. Y., p. 92.