

A Tribute to Porter A. Williams*

By Aaron Altschul

Porter Williams worked for and lived for the oilseed processing industry. He was one of those vanishing breed of men who were completely vertically integrated in every phase of processing from the seed to the finished product. He was equally at home in a crude oil mill, in a plant laboratory, or running a group of refineries. He joined the South Texas Cotton Oil Company in 1931 and rose to Works Superintendent in Memphis in 1955 and General Manager of Refineries for Southern Cotton Oil Company in 1956. He then became Vice President of Wesson Oil Company and later held the same post at Hunt Foods and Industries.

His rise in his own industry coincided with increase in industry-wide and public interest in research on oilseeds, oilseed processing and utilization of the products. He shared his knowledge and experience with his colleagues in industry and with scientists and engineers of the U.S. Department of Agriculture in New Orleans. For a good part of his career he was a member of the research committee of the National Cottonseed Products Association and a collaborator to the Southern Regional Laboratory in New Orleans.

We honor his memory as much for his public spirit and public service as for his devotion and skill in his own industry.

But no memorial address can be impersonal. I counted Porter as one of my longtime professional and personal

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Historic Picture Taken in Guadalajara

A Symposium entitled "Actualizacion en la Tecnologia de Aceites, Grasas y Productos Derivados" was held in Guadalajara, Mexico, April 18-21, 1971. The symposium was jointly sponsored by the Instituto Mexicano de Quimicos en Aceites y Grasas, A.C., and the Instituto Mexicano de Ingenieros Quimicos, A.C. It was held in the Auditorium of the University of Guadalajara. S.S. Chang attended the meeting as President of the American Oil Chemists' Society, and also reported a paper entitled, "Flavor and Flavor Stability of Oils."



This picture has a historic meaning. It indicates the beginning of the cooperation of the American Oil Chemists' Society and the Fats and Oils Committee of the Institute of Mexican Chemical Engineers. From left to right: I.F. Palencia, Chairman of the Fats and Oils Committee of the Instituto Mexicano de Ingenieros Quimicos, A.C.; Jose Garcia-Luna, President of the Instituto Mexicano de Ingenieros Quimicos, A.C.; S.S. Chang, AOCS President for 1970-71; Enrique Chavez Lopez, President of the Instituto Mexicano de Quimicos en Aceites y Grasas, A.C.

friends. Many a trip did we take together and many a mill-scale experiment did we do in one or another of the plants under his care. We ran several experiments on the treatment of seed to improve storage; they never worked out. I well remember one night in Victoria when Porter, the mill manager, and I stayed up all night running free fatty acids on oil samples. We killed a bottle of scotch and that helped but I can't quite vouch for the accuracy of the experiments late in the night.

Perhaps the most successful of his cooperative work with the U.S. Government was the demonstration of the effect of heat during processing on the nutritive value of cottonseed meal. This was the key experiment that led to the recognition that cottonseed can be processed to be suitable to non-ruminants, and to humans.

I mention all these because this is a professional meeting and his friends expect to hear about Porter's professional achievements which exceeded the few that I recall.

But I want to remember Porter differently.

I want to remember Porter, the man. He was a rare person. The combination of decency, honesty, humility, love of his fellow man, respect for humans, and just plain goodness were so rare that I venture that were such people to disappear entirely from the earth, that human society as we now know it would fail to survive.

I have never known him to say something bad about a person—even in confidence.

There isn't a religion in the world that couldn't point with pride to him as an example of the goal of their preaching and moralizing.

His greatest contribution to all of us is that we knew him, that we were inspired by him to be just a little better human beings, and that indeed we became a little better.

And so we honor ourselves as we honor his memory.

Final Plans Complete for Fall Meeting

It's nearly time to get your boat in the water and your sails set to catch the first breeze that will start you moving toward the Jersey shore for the Fall Meeting in Atlantic City October 3-6. You saw the complete program in last month's JAACS, with the 14 symposia, the open forum on surfactant problems, and the other exciting and informative aspects of the meeting. Now it's just about time to get going to Chalfonte-Haddon Hall.

The entertainment and ladies' committees haven't forgotten what it takes to make the meeting socially enjoyable as well as intellectually stimulating for you and your wife. As usual, we will start off with a Sunday evening mixer October 3, which will give you an opportunity to relax and enjoy cocktails, snacks and conversation while making plans for the rest of the meeting.

Monday night promises to be a real fun affair. A buffet dinner will be followed by a "Monte Carlo Night" that AOCS is sponsoring for its members. Everybody will get a good supply of "money" with which he can compete for prizes at many games of chance.

The annual fall banquet of the society will be held Tuesday night, followed by a gala floor show and dancing.

Frank Scholnick and Abner Eisner, of USDA's Eastern Lab in Philadelphia, are chairman and co-chairman of the entertainment committee, and they hope you will have a smashing time at the meeting.

The ladies' committee, co-chaired by Clare Kalustian and Marilyn Salomon, is all set to entertain the wives and other distaff guests with visits to nearby Renault's Winery and historic Smithville, a boat trip around the bay followed by a seafood luncheon, and other events. Of course, the lovely boardwalk shops await you, and there will be plenty of opportunity for sunning, swimming and cycling.

Set sail for Atlantic City!