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## Organic Preparations and Procedures International

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## HENRY GILMAN

The recent nomination of Henry Gilman, a member of the Honorary Editorial Board of OPPI, as the recipient of the American Chemical Society's Priestley Medal stimulates the dedication of this issue of *Organic Preparations and Procedures International* to him.

Henry Gilman was born in 1893 in Boston. He was graduated summa cum laude from Harvard University in 1915 and received the A. M. in 1917 and the Ph.D. in 1918 there as well. Following brief teaching experiences at Harvard and at Illinois, he went to Iowa State in 1919. He has taught and carried on his research there to this day.

The outstanding achievements of Professor Gilman have been his research contributions to the chemical literature. Primarily in the fields of heterocyclic and organometallic chemistry, he has published more than 1000 original papers, which must be an extraordinary benchmark. He has published on the organometallic chemistry of aluminum, arsenic, barium, beryllium, bismuth, cadmium, calcium, copper, gallium, germanium, gold, indium, lead, lithium, magnesium, mercury, phosphorus, platinum, potassium, selenium, silicon, silver, sodium, thallium, tin, uranium, and zinc. John Eisch has said that an organometallic chemist who does not have a Gilman reference in his bibliography might benefit from redoing his literature search! But it is not just this overwhelming fruitful production for which Gilman is known; it is the creativity and rigor paid to experimental detail, which identify his work with greatness.

His contributions to our understanding of organomagnesium compounds include a very much used analytical procedure as well as several catalysts

for their preparation. His work with organolithium compounds proved ultimately to be useful in the synthesis of polyethylene. E. J. Corey (Gilman Lecturer 1974) discussed his own outstanding elaboration of organocuprates which were discovered by Gilman and have been designated "Gilman Reagents." Gilman contributed significantly to the synthesis of high-temperature stable organogermanium compounds. His extensive fundamental contributions to organosilicon chemistry underlay the development of silicone polymers.

He has carried out important researches on phenothiazine compounds and their derivatives and on furans, particularly furfural. These contributions led to pesticides, herbicides, and medicinals.

Recognition for these intensive activities came early and, of course, is continuing. It is possible to mention only a few here. In 1945 Gilman was elected to the National Academy of Sciences. He was the first recipient of the American Chemical Society Frederick Stanley Kipping Award in Organosilicon Chemistry (1962). He is an Honorary Fellow of The Chemical Society (London). In 1973 a special session of the Sixth International Conference on Organometallic Chemistry was dedicated to him on his 80th birthday. He was elected an Honorary Member of the Royal Society. On May 6, 1974 the Iowa State University's chemistry building was dedicated as Henry Gilman Hall and on the same day E. J. Corey presented the first of the annual Gilman Lectures.

Three additional aspects of Dr. Gilman's career require mention. He was an exemplary teacher. His students were attracted to the slender, athletic gentleman who presented organic chemistry in an imaginative, yet critical and lucid way. As a research mentor he was able to impart his excitement to the students and at the same time he stimulated them to examine rigorously and impartially their own work. Among his graduates are company research directors, vice presidents, a company president, and college or university presidents.

A second fundamental aspect of Dr. Gilman is his unselfishness in contributing to the literature of science. He edited the widely-used, four-volume set, "Organic Chemistry: An Advanced Treatise." He edited the first Collective Volume of Organic Syntheses. He helped found the "Journal of Organic Chemistry" and was chairman of its editorial board. He was associate editor of the Journal of the American Chemical Society and of "Chemical Reviews." He is a member of the Honorary Advisory Board of "Organometallic Reactions and Syntheses." In this case, typically for him, the title "Honorary" is a misnomer since he has contributed handsomely to the development of the series by his wise suggestions.

The third aspect is an indomitable spirit. Some 30-odd years ago Gilman became nearly blind from glaucoma and a detached retina. Understandably, such trauma could have led to essential retirement. For Henry Gilman it led to the publication of more than 560 papers since 1947 with continued excellence!

One suspects that such an incredible career must have had unusual support. This support came from one of his undergraduate students, Ruth Shaw. Obviously, they had "struck a spark" and were married in 1929. She proved to be the equal of his vigorous personality and strong enough to keep him equal to his tasks after the unfortunate damage to his sight.

OPPI salutes Henry Gilman for his many accomplishments and the promise of more. We single out his dedication to experimentation as most in accord with the mission of OPPI.

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