

MEMORIAL RESOLUTION
PROFESSOR EMERITUS MARVIN CARMACK
(September 1, 1913 – July 6, 2010)

Professor Marvin Carmack, a cousin of the famous World War II correspondent, Ernie Pyle, was born in 1913 in Dana (Vermillion County), Indiana. After completing his secondary education in Dana, he entered the University of Illinois, where he received the A.B. degree in Chemistry with honors in 1937. After completing both M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in Organic Chemistry at the University of Michigan in 1940, where he carried on studies on carcinogenic hydrocarbons with Professor Werner E. Bachman, he became a research associate of Professor Roger Adams at the University of Illinois, working on the chemistry of Senecio and Croton alkaloids.

In 1941, he was appointed Towne Instructor in Chemistry at the University of Pennsylvania where, in 1951, he became Professor of Chemistry. During World War II, he worked on a contract with the National Defense Research Committee on high explosives and later on anti-malarial agents. Following the war, he began extensive studies in the field of organic sulfur chemistry. In 1949, he spent the year on a Guggenheim Fellowship at the Eidgenossische Technische Hochschule in Zurich, Switzerland with Professor V. Prelog, and later held a Fulbright Fellowship at the Commonwealth and Industrial Research Office in Australia where he worked with the botanist Sir Jerry Prince.

In 1951, the Department of Chemistry at Indiana University hosted the First International Conference on Organic Sulfur Chemistry. One of the invited speakers for the conference was Professor Marvin Carmack of the University of Pennsylvania, a rising star in the field. During the conference Carmack had the opportunity to meet with Professor Harry G. Day, the newly minted, young chairman of the department. That auspicious meeting led ultimately to an offer to Carmack of a professorship in the department at Indiana. He had been impressed not only with the department and its chairman but also with the higher leadership of the university, including Frank Gucker (Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and a member of the faculty of the Department of Chemistry) and President Herman B Wells. These factors, and the further fact that his acceptance of the offer would return him to his native state, led Carmack in 1953 to forsake his Ivy League appointment at Penn and move to Indiana University. He joined the faculty of Indiana University in 1953 as Professor of Chemistry and continued his work there even after his formal retirement in 1978, maintaining his residence at the Meadowood Retirement Center in Bloomington.

Carmack's major research contributions were in the areas of natural products and organosulfur chemistry. In the latter area his studies elucidated the spectral properties of sulfur compounds, the mechanism of the Willgerodt reaction, and the chemical and biological properties of a new class of heterocycles (the 1, 2, 5-thiadiazoles). In the area of natural product chemistry, he made internationally recognized contributions to the chemistry of alkaloids and to the isolation and proof of structure of the active principle of *Lithospermum Ruderale*, the agent of fertility control used by the American Indians. This latter work was done in collaboration with Professors W. R. Breneman and F. J. Zeller of the Department of Biology. Later, Carmack was involved in organizing a team effort to study pheromones — the chemical compounds used by animals for the purpose of communication.

Professor Carmack's research was recognized by grants from the National Institutes of Health and the Walter Reed Army Research Institute as well as a number of chemical companies. He was a consultant to Abbott Laboratories, the DuPont Company, and the Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory. He was a Fellow of the American Institute of Chemists and a member of the American Chemical Society, The Chemical Society (London), the Swiss Chemical Society, The National Micrographic Association, the Philadelphia Organic Chemists Club, and the New York Academy of Sciences. He was a member of Phi Beta Kappa, Alpha Chi Sigma, and the Society of Sigma Xi. At Indiana University, he supervised the research of nineteen Ph.D. and nine Master's degree candidates, and he was author or coauthor of more than 100 research articles.

Professor Carmack took great pleasure in teaching, especially one-on-one relationships. He was always willing to spend any amount of time necessary to explain complex problems of natural products or organic sulfur compounds with any student in the department. For this reason, he was well known to all the doctoral students in the department. He formed many close friendships with many students and looked on them as part of his family. He hosted gatherings at his home that were well known for their intellectual content and good fellowship.

Although Professor Carmack was known for his thoroughness in research and his unwillingness to publish research that was less than perfect, he nevertheless found time to be involved in community and professional affairs. He was a member of the Boy's Club of Monroe County and served as treasurer of that organization from 1974 to 1977. He served on the budget review panel of the United Way Drive and was a member of the board of the Friends of Music at Indiana University, serving as treasurer from 1974 to 1978. At Indiana University he served on the Committee on the Arts and was the

chairman of the funding subcommittee in 1975–76. From 1974 to 1977, he served on the National Committee on Copyrights of the American Chemical Society.

Internationally, he was an invited participant at the 1964 Conference on Chemical Control of Fertility, World Health Organization, held in Geneva, Switzerland, and he attended the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry Congresses in Zurich, Melbourne, London, Stockholm, Munich, and Hamburg, as well as the European Medicinal Chemists Meeting in Noordwijkerhout, the Netherlands.

Following his retirement in 1978, Professor Carmack continued to follow research progress in natural products and sulfur chemistry and to write essays on scientific subjects.

Marvin Carmack, 96, of Bloomington passed away July 6, 2010 at Bloomington Hospital. In recognition of Professor Emeritus Marvin Carmack's many contributions to the scientific and scholarly life of the Department of Chemistry, the University, and the community at large, be it resolved that this memorial resolution become part of the permanent records of the proceedings of the Bloomington Faculty Council.

Cathrine E. Reck
Clinical Associate Professor of Chemistry