

CHEMICAL HERITAGE FOUNDATION

ROBERT J. MANNING

BECKMAN HERITAGE PROJECT

Transcript of an Interview
Conducted by

David C. Brock and Gerald E. Gallwas

in

Fullerton, California

on

19 February 2002

(With Subsequent Corrections and Additions)

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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ROBERT J. MANNING

1920 Born in Kansas City, Kansas on 12 January

Education

1943 B.S., chemistry, St. Benedict's College
1948 M.S., chemistry, University of Missouri, Kansas City

Professional Experience

1948-1953 United States Naval Ordnance Test Station, China Lake
Research Chemist

Beckman Instruments, Inc.

1953-1960 Senior Applications Chemist
1960-1963 Regional Applications Chemist
1963-1968 Ultraviolet Product Line Manager
1968-1973 Principal Application Chemist
1973-1986 Senior Scientist, Beckman Technical Education Center

ABSTRACT

Robert J. Manning begins the interview with a brief sketch of his educational background. In 1948, after graduating with a M.S. in chemistry from the University of Missouri in Kansas City, Manning spent time in the United States Navy researching rocket fuel. From there Manning obtained a position at Beckman Instruments, Inc., where he remained until his retirement in 1986. Working in the application engineering department at Beckman, Manning gravitated toward infrared instrumentation, and eventually became the national president for the Society of Applied Spectroscopy. Having spent thirty-three years at Beckman Instruments, Manning has a valuable wealth of knowledge about nuances in development of landmark instruments from Beckman, which he details throughout the interview. In 1960, Manning moved his family to Chicago where he started an applications laboratory at Beckman's offices there. Manning moved back to California in 1963 to enjoy his new position as product line manager of ultraviolet instruments, before returning to the laboratory, where he would spend the rest of his career. Education and information sharing were paramount to Manning, and he traveled the country educating people about spectroscopy, via workshops, lecture series, and summer courses at various universities. Manning concludes the interview with reflections on his career and home life.

INTERVIEWERS

David C. Brock is Program Manager for Educational and Historical Services at the Chemical Heritage Foundation in Philadelphia. He is currently a Ph.D. candidate in the History Department, Program in the History of Science at Princeton University. In 1995, Mr. Brock received his M.A. in the History of Science from Princeton University and in 1992, he earned a M.Sc. in the Sociology of Scientific Knowledge from the University of Edinburgh.

Gerald E. Gallwas was a member of the original team in the mid-1960s that founded and managed the growth of what became the clinical diagnostic business of Beckman Instruments, Inc. As the business grew, he served in many roles from new product development to directing clinical field trials in the U.S., Europe, and Japan. This led to an extensive involvement with professional and trade organizations as well as regulatory agencies. He retired after thirty years of service as director of program management overseeing new product development programs.

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NOTES

1. Henry H. Cary, U.S. Patent # 3,022,704. Issued 27 February 1962.
2. Arnold O. Beckman, William S. Gallaway, Wilbur I. Kaye, and William F. Ulrich, "History of Spectroscopy at Beckman Instruments, Inc.," *Analytical Chemistry* 49:3, (March 1977), 280A-300A.
3. Wilbur I. Kaye, "Near-Infrared Spectroscopy: A Review," part 1, *Spectrochimica Acta* 6, (1954): 257-287.

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