Sir Derek H. R. Barton

Sir D. H. R. Barton was born on September 8, 1918 in England. He completed his B.Sc. degree (1940) and Ph.D. degree (1942) in organic chemistry at Imperial College, London, England. After service as a Research Chemist for the government of Great Britain from 1942-1944, Sir Derek began his academic career as an Assistant Lecturer in the Department of Chemistry, Imperial College. From 1946-1949 he was ICI Research Fellow at the same institution. Sir Derek was a Visiting Lecturer in the Department of Chemistry, Harvard University from 1949-1950, after which he returned to England as a Reader in Organic Chemistry at Birkbeck College from 1950-1953. In 1953 he was appointed Professor of Organic Chemistry at Birkbeck College and in 1957 Sir Derek assumed the position he presently holds as Professor of Organic Chemistry at Imperial College.

During Sir Derek's distinguished career he has received numerous honors, including the Fritzsche Medal of the American Chemical Society (1956), First Roger Adams Medal of the American Chemical Society (1959), Davy Medal of the Royal Society (1961), Nobel Prize in Chemistry (1969), First Award in Natural Product Chemistry of the Chemical Society (1971), Longstaff Medal of the Chemical Society (1972), the Order of the Rising Sun (2nd Class) by the Emperor of Japan (1972), Knight Bachelor and the Royal Medal Conferred by Queen Elizabeth II (1972), the Order of "Chevalier de la Legion d'Honneur" (1974), Priestly Chemistry Award of the American Chemical Society (1974) and the Knight of Mark Twain for his contributions to Modern Sciences (1975).

Sir Derek holds membership in professional societies in more than a dozen nations, and his honorary degrees, awards, lectureships and medals come from universities and societies in Europe, North and South America, Africa, and Asia. He has served on the Council for Scientific Policy of the United Kingdom and as President of Section B of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, the Organic Chemistry Division of the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry, the Perkin Division of the Chemical Society, and the Chemical Society.

Sir Derek's research interests include the development and application of conformational theory, for which he received the Nobel Prize in Chemistry (1969), the structural elucidation of important natural products, biosynthesis of terpenes and steroids, and the development and application of new synthetic procedures.