

CARL NIEMANN

1909 - 1964

Carl G. Niemann, one of the nation's leading organic chemists, and a member of the Caltech faculty for 27 years, died of a heart attack on April 29 in Philadelphia. He was 55.

Dr. Niemann and his wife, Mary, were en route to Europe for a vacation. He had been attending the annual meeting of the National Academy of Sciences in Washington, where he presided over a session of the Academy's chemistry section, of which he was chairman.

Born in St. Louis, Carl Niemann was graduated from the University of Wisconsin and received his PhD in biochemistry there in 1934. He was a research associate at the University of Wisconsin in 1934-35, a fellow of the General Education Board at the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research in 1936-37, an assistant in chemistry at the Rockefeller Institute in 1936-37, and a Rockefeller Foundation Fellow at the University College Hospital Medical School in London in 1937-38. He joined the Caltech faculty in 1937 and became a full professor in 1945.

Dr. Niemann made outstanding advances in the understanding of enzymes, which control the biochemical activities in living cells. Most recently, he had been working on limitations in the specificity of enzymes. He also did significant work on the chemistry of amino acids, peptides, carbohydrates, and lipids.

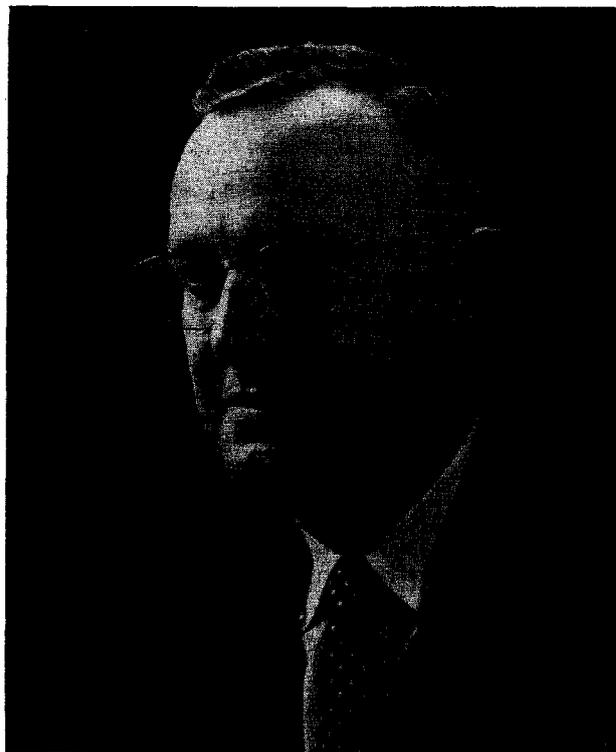
He had served as chairman of the Caltech faculty and was chairman of the graduate committee of the division of chemistry and chemical engineering.

He was also a consultant of E. I. DuPont de Nemours Co. and of the Smith, Kline and French pharmaceutical company.

He was elected to the National Academy of Sciences in 1952. He was a member of the American Chemical Society, the American Society of Biological Chemists, Sigma Xi, and the British Chemical Society. He was a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and of the New York Academy of Science.

A memorial service was held in Dabney Hall on May 12, with eulogies delivered by President DuBridge and by John D. Roberts, chairman of the division of chemistry and chemical engineering.

"Carl Niemann was in many ways the ideal academic scientist," said Dr. Roberts. "He was quietly but tenaciously independent. He knew that to be successfully independent involved being re-



sponsible and, in every commitment he took on, he was always completely responsible . . .

"The essence of the Niemann approach to science and life was scholarship and effectiveness. Clearly, one has to be effective to fulfill so many responsibilities and yet produce over 260 carefully written research papers. He conducted himself at all times with a characteristic of calm dignity; he was a tireless and never frantic worker. The less efficient and less effective of us could only marvel at how he worked day after day with his office door wide open. He always had a cheerful welcome to anyone wishing to consult with him, but as soon as the business at hand was over, one sensed he was completely politely beginning to think about the next phrase of the unfinished manuscript before him . . .

"Carl Niemann was a scholar and a scientist of the first rank. He was devoted to the principles of both academic freedom and academic responsibility. He pressed himself on no one, but he gave unstintingly to those who sought his help. His legacy is a corps of superbly trained and loyal students, a deeper understanding of the chemistry of life, and the many results of his efforts to make a better Division and a better Institute.

"He was taken from us and his family at the very height of his career, just before the start of a European vacation. We and his many other friends will not soon forget the way in which he enriched our lives and our profession."