

Anthony S. Travis (1943–



Anthony S. Travis was born in London on February 24, 1943, and from 1945 until 1985 lived in Wembley. His interest in the history of technology was motivated in the late 1950s, at first by visits to mines, quarries and industrial railways. Interest in the history of chemistry was stimulated by the British chemist Harold Egan (later Government Chemist), who introduced Travis to the story of William Henry Perkin's dye-making factory, famous for the production of mauve and synthetic alizarin, and the site of which was close to where they lived in northwest London.

From 1961 to 1980 Travis held various posts in the textile and printing industries in London. His main historical interest at that time was in electric and light railways and engineering history, leading to a monograph *The Channel Tunnel, 1802 –1967* (1967). He received his B.Sc. in chemistry with first class honors from Birkbeck College, University of London, in 1970 and his Ph.D. in chemistry with P. M. Collins from the same institution in 1978 with a thesis on the photochemistry of tetrahydropyran-3-ones derived from carbohydrates.

Travis joined the teaching profession in 1980 as a science teacher at Preston Manor High School in London and then as a teacher of technical English and chemistry at the Ort School of Chemical Technology in Ramat Gan, Israel. He was heavily involved in curriculum development and succeeded in introducing the history of industrial chemistry into the classroom. In 1986 he was appointed post-doctoral fellow at the Sidney M. Edelstein Center for the History and Philosophy of Science, Technology and Medicine at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Travis has been the Deputy Director of the Edelstein Center since 1988, and in 1992 was appointed senior researcher in the history of technology at Hebrew University (from 2003 associate professor). Since 2005 he has been a senior research fellow at the Leo Baeck Institute in London.

Travis is the author of more than 90 eclectic articles and chapters relating to the history of chemistry and technology, many of them focusing on dyestuffs and reflecting his early work in the textile industry. His books include *The Colour Chemists* (1983), *The High Pressure Chemists* (1984), *The Rainbow Makers: The Origins of the Synthetic Dyestuffs Industry in Western Europe* (1993), *From Turkey Red to Tyrian Purple: Textile Colours for the Industrial Revolution* (Exhibition Catalog, 1993), *The Chemical Industry in Europe, 1850–1914: Industrial Growth, Pollution and Professionalization* (co-editor with Ernst Homburg and Harm Schröter, 1998), *Determinants in the Evolution of the European Chemical Industry, 1900–1939: New Technologies, Political Frameworks, Markets and Companies* (co-editor with Ernest Homburg, Harm Schröter, and Peter J. T. Morris, 1998), *Heinrich Caro and the Creation of Modern Chemical Industry* (with Carsten Reinhardt, 2000), and *Dyes Made in America, 1915–1980: The Calco Chemical Company, American Cyanamid, and the Raritan River* (2004).

Travis has provided assistance to many professional societies in a variety of ways, especially in writing book reviews and notes. When he joined the Edelstein Center it was virtually unknown outside of Israel. Through his efforts he has made it known to a wide audience, and has provided invaluable assistance to the Edelstein Fellows who have come to the Center from all over the

world. He is a noted lecturer, most recently promoting in several countries the 150th anniversary of the discovery of the synthetic dye mauve by (later Sir) William Henry Perkin in 1856.

Anthony S. Travis received the Edelstein Award primarily for his work on the history of the synthetic dyestuffs industry and the history of the European chemical industry in general.

Sources

Biographical information provided by Anthony S. Travis.

Nomination documents for the 2007 Edelstein Award, American Chemical Society Division of the History of Chemistry Archives, Chemical Heritage Foundation, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Photo courtesy of Anthony S. Travis.