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COVER LEGEND

In 1933 James Wilfred Cook (b. 1900) and his associates at the Royal Cancer (now Royal Marsden) Hospital in London isolated 1:2-benzpyrene, later designated 3:4-benzpyrene (J. W. Cook, C. L. Hewett, and I. Hieger, The Isolation of a Cancer-producing Hydrocarbon from Coal Tar, Parts I, II, and III. J. Chem. Soc., Pt. I: 395–405, 1933). Concentrates of the active substance were prepared from pitch, and each fraction showed characteristic spectroscopic lines at 4000, 4180, and 4400 Å. Two unknown benzpyrenes, among other end products, were obtained from a low melting-point fraction. These were shown to be 1:2-benzpyrene and 4:5-benzpyrene, the syntheses of which were accomplished by Hewett. Unlike 1:2-benzpyrene, 4:5-benzpyrene did not produce skin tumors in mice.


The photograph of Sir James Cook was obtained through the courtesy of Sir Alexander Haddow. A schematic of the 3:4-benzpyrene structure is shown in the accompanying illustration.