

Letter to the Editor

THE KJELDAHL SAGA

Sir,

One important worker was unfortunately omitted from the Kjeldahl saga by P. Morris which appeared in a recent issue of the *Journal of the Association of Public Analysts*.

Kjeldahl's nitrogen method that was originally devised for the determination of protein material was not readily adopted in the U.K. and indeed was largely ignored by organic chemists. Towards the end of the 19th Century Bernard Dyer, one of the early Public Analysts, did much to bring it to the attention of U.K. chemists and showed how by using the Jodlbauer modification it could be applied to a wide variety of organic compounds including nitro and azo compounds.

His paper was read to the Chemical Society in 1895 and included results for the determination of nitrogen in a wide variety of organic compounds. This paper not only brought Kjeldahl's method to the attention of U.K. organic chemists but it also indicated the type of organic compound for which a modification of the original process was necessary before a full recovery of the nitrogen was obtained. He also introduced in this paper the concept of adding sucrose in order to determine nitrogen in organic compounds which had a very low carbon content.

Reference

1. Dyer, B., *Trans. Chem. Soc., Lond.* 1895, **47**, 811-817.

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