

Van Tiggelen, Adolphe (Emile Philippe)

Born: December 2, 1914 – Sint-Jans-Molenbeek

Died: November 2, 1969 – Leuven

Adolphe studies Greek and Latin during his secondary school period at the Sint-Pieters College of Jette (Brussels). He becomes an apprentice at a dying plant.

A few years later he registers at the Université Catholique de Louvain in 1932 and obtains his master's degree in 1934 (after two years!). He receives his PhD title through his research at the laboratory of Van Mond. After his obligatory national service in the Belgian air force, he obtains a grant to work at the laboratory of Michael Polanyi in Victoria. In 1939 he is called up and after the capitulation of Belgium in 1940 he returns to the laboratory of Van Mond. In 1941 he is head of the research department of the "National Mining Institute" at Pâturages (Henegouwen). His main contribution relates to the combustion of methane to prevent explosions in the coal mines.

He starts teaching at the UCL where he becomes professor of analytical chemistry, mineral chemistry, spectrochemistry and physical chemistry of combustion processes (1948).

After being selected as scientific advisor at the department of applications of the French "Institut du Pétrole", he becomes in 1963 a corresponding member of the "Académie Royale des Sciences, des Lettres et des Beaux-Arts de Belgique" 1963 and member of the committee for technology and space research, depending on the NFWO (National Fund for Scientific Research).

He is holder of a number of awards, among others the Jan Stasprize (1937), the yearly prize of the Académie Royale (1951), the Francqui-prize (1961) and the Lavoisier Medal of the Société de Chimie de France.

He writes a book "Oxidations and Combustion" which proves his everlasting interest in the chemistry of explosions and combustions, the flame itself and its temperature.