

Coy Webster Waller



Coy Webster Waller was born in Dover, NC in 1914 and moved to Wayne County in 1921. After graduation from Mt. Olive High School, he earned a B.S. in pharmacy from UNC-Chapel Hill, an M.S. from Buffalo University, and a Ph.D. in pharmaceutical chemistry from the University of Minnesota.

Dr. Waller had a distinguished career in pharmaceutical research and development. While working at Lederle Labs in the 1950s, he discovered a process for synthesizing folic acid. He and his colleagues developed the anticancer drug Methotrexate and discovered tetracycline.

While working at Mead Johnson, he and a colleague patented a decongestant later used in treating cystic fibrosis. His team also worked on beta blockers, steroids, and a birth control pill.

In 1970, Dr. Waller was named Director of the University of Mississippi's Research Institute of Pharmaceutical Sciences. At this time 50 patents in his name had been issued in 150 countries. Under his leadership, the institute began its internationally renowned marijuana research.

In 1993, the Coy Waller Laboratory Complex was dedicated at the University of Mississippi. Other honors include the University of Minnesota's Outstanding Achievement Award and the University of Buffalo's Citation for Outstanding Achievement.