

Julius Arthur Nieuwland Encyclopedia Article

Julius Arthur Nieuwland

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Julius Arthur Nieuwland

1878-1936

American chemist best known for his vinyl derivatives of acetylene. Nieuwland produced divinylacetylene, which he showed could be polymerized into a rubber-like solid (1925). In 1929 he catalytically converted acetylene into monovinylacetylene, which when treated with acid forms chloroprene. Working with DuPont chemists, Nieuwland polymerized chloroprene into the first commercially successful synthetic rubber neoprene. Neoprene is more durable and useful than natural rubber. First marketed in 1932 as Duprene, Neoprene is widely used in industry.