

In my tribute to Robert B. Woodward I tried to give a summarizing overview of Woodward's life and work, and I therefore did not treat his numerous contributions in detail. In so doing I relied on the sources cited in my article. In their excellent and meticulously documented letter Teodoro S. Kaufman and Edmundo A. Rúveda present the details of Woodward and von Eggers Doering's quinine synthesis, which, as they point out, is still a subject of polemics. They are also indeed correct that additional total syntheses of quinine have been accomplished since Woodward and von Eggers Doering's work. My statement to the contrary was based on a sentence published in 1992: "Fifty years later a synthesis that leads only to quinine and not to quinine and some of its isomers has yet to be found" (Bowden, M. E.; Benfey, T. Robert Burns Woodward and the Art of Organic Synthesis; Beckman Center for the History of Chemistry: Philadelphia, PA, 1992, p 22). I regret any confusion that my article has caused, and I thank Professors Kaufman and Rúveda for their scholarly contribution to the history of organic stereochemistry.

Thanks for the opportunity to respond to their letter.

All the best,

George Kauffman