

Supporting Information

Brønsted Acid Catalyzed Direct C6 Functionalization of 2,3-Disubstituted Indoles for Construction of Cyano-Substituted All-Carbon Quaternary Centers

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Table of Contents

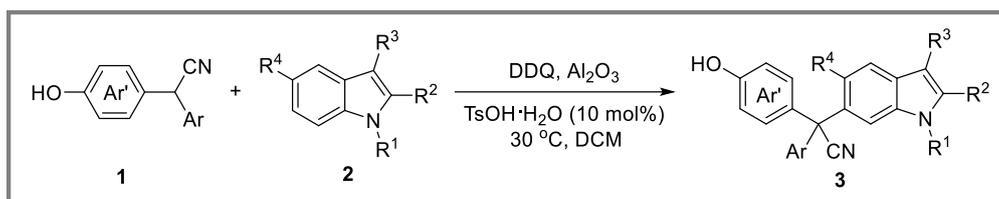
1. General and Materials.....	S1
2. General Procedure for Indole C6 Functionalization.....	S1-10
3. Experiment at Gram Scale and Synthetic Transformations.....	S10-13
4. Control Experiments.....	S14
5. Preliminary Investigation on the Catalytic Asymmetric Version.....	S15
6. References.....	S16
7. Copy of NMR Spectra.....	S17-95

1. General and Materials

General: All reactions were carried out under an atmosphere of nitrogen using the standard Schlenk techniques, unless otherwise noted. Solvents were treated prior to use according to the standard methods. Proton (^1H NMR) nuclear magnetic resonance spectra were recorded at 400 MHz. Carbon (^{13}C NMR) nuclear magnetic resonance spectra were recorded at 100 MHz. Fluorine (^{19}F NMR) nuclear magnetic resonance spectra were recorded at 376 MHz. The chemical shifts are given in parts per million (ppm) on the delta (δ) scale. The solvent peak was used as a reference value, for ^1H NMR: $\text{CDCl}_3 = 7.26$ ppm, $(\text{CD}_3)_2\text{CO} = 2.05$ ppm; for ^{13}C NMR: $\text{CDCl}_3 = 77.23$ ppm, $(\text{CD}_3)_2\text{CO} = 29.84$ and 206.26 ppm. The heat source for all heating reactions is the oil bath. High-resolution mass spectrometry (HRMS (ESI-TOF) m/z) was measured on an electro-spray ionization (ESI) apparatus using time-of-flight (TOF) mass spectrometry. Enantiomeric excess was determined by HPLC analysis using chiral column described below in detail. Optical rotations were measured by polarimeter. Flash column chromatography was performed on silica gel (200-300 mesh). All reactions were monitored by TLC analysis.

Materials: The 2,2-diarylacetonitrile **1a-v**¹ and indoles **2b-m**² were prepared according to the known methods, all of which are the known compounds. Commercially available reagents and solvents were used throughout without further purification.

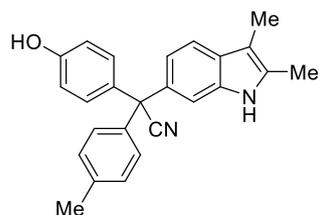
2. General Procedure for Indole C6 Functionalization



To a solution of 2,2-diarylacetonitrile **1** (0.24 mmol, 1.2 equiv) in dichloromethane (2.0 mL) was added 2,3-dichloro-5,6-dicyano-1,4-benzoquinone (0.22 mmol, 1.1 equiv) and aluminum oxide (base, 80.0 mg) at room temperature. The reaction mixture was stirred at $30\text{ }^\circ\text{C}$ for 2-5 h, followed by addition of indole derivatives **2** (0.20 mmol, 1.0 equiv) and *p*-toluenesulfonic acid monohydrate (3.8 mg, 0.02 mmol). The reaction mixture continued to stir at $30\text{ }^\circ\text{C}$ for 15 min-24 hours (TLC monitoring). Then, the crude mixture was directly purified by flash chromatography on silica gel using hexanes/ethyl acetate as eluent to afford the desirable indole C6 functionalization products **3**.

2-(2,3-Dimethyl-1H-indol-6-yl)-2-(4-hydroxyphenyl)-2-(*p*-tolyl)acetonitrile (**3aa**):

The 2,2-diarylacetylacetone **1a** was oxidized for 3 hours, then indole C6 functionalization was conducted for 1 hour. 70.1 mg, 96% yield, white foamy solid, mp $240\text{-}241\text{ }^\circ\text{C}$, new compound, $R_f = 0.40$ (hexanes/ethyl acetate 3/1).



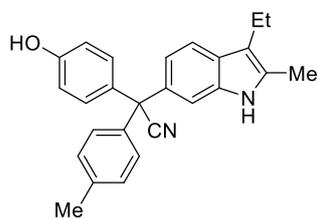
^1H NMR (400 MHz, Acetone- d_6) δ 9.66 (brs, 1H), 8.47 (s, 1H), 7.25 (d, $J = 8.3$ Hz, 1H), 7.05-7.03 (m, 2H), 6.97-6.95 (m, 2H), 6.90-6.87 (m, 2H), 6.84 (d, $J = 1.4$ Hz, 1H), 6.76 (dd, $J = 8.3, 1.8$ Hz, 1H), 6.73-6.69 (m, 2H), 2.19 (s, 3H), 2.17 (s, 3H), 2.03 (s, 3H).

^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, Acetone- d_6) δ 157.9, 139.9, 138.4, 136.1, 133.9, 133.5, 133.1, 130.8, 129.9, 129.8, 129.4, 125.1, 120.1, 118.4, 116.1, 111.5, 106.8, 57.4, 20.9, 11.4, 8.5. HRMS Calculated for

C₂₅H₂₃N₂O [M+H]⁺ 367.1805, found: 367.1807.

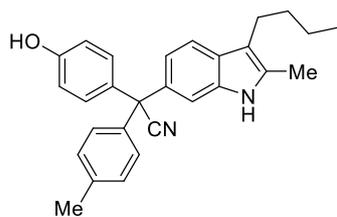
2-(3-Ethyl-2-methyl-1H-indol-6-yl)-2-(4-hydroxyphenyl)-2-(p-tolyl)acetonitrile (3ab):

The 2,2-diarylacetylacetone **1a** was oxidized for 3 hours, then indole C6 functionalization was conducted for 3.5 hours. 56.9 mg, 72% yield, white solid, mp 265-267 °C, new compound, R_f = 0.45 (hexanes/ethyl acetate 3/1). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, Acetone-*d*₆) δ 9.82 (brs, 1H), 8.61 (s, 1H), 7.47 (d, *J* = 8.3 Hz, 1H), 7.22-7.20 (m, 2H), 7.13-7.11 (m, 2H), 7.06-7.03 (m, 2H), 6.99 (d, *J* = 1.4 Hz, 1H), 6.90 (dd, *J* = 8.3, 1.8 Hz, 1H), 6.90-6.85 (m, 2H), 2.70 (q, *J* = 7.5 Hz, 2H), 2.36 (s, 3H), 2.34 (s, 3H), 1.19 (t, *J* = 7.5 Hz, 3H). ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, Acetone-*d*₆) δ 157.9, 139.8, 138.3, 136.2, 133.8, 133.1, 133.0, 130.7, 129.9, 129.4, 128.8, 125.0, 120.1, 118.5, 116.0, 113.8, 111.6, 57.4, 20.9, 17.8, 15.9, 11.4. HRMS Calculated for C₂₆H₂₆N₂O [M+H]⁺ 381.1961, found: 381.1963.



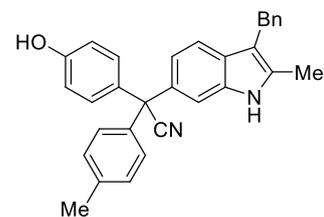
2-(3-Butyl-2-methyl-1H-indol-6-yl)-2-(4-hydroxyphenyl)-2-(p-tolyl)acetonitrile (3ac):

The 2,2-diarylacetylacetone **1a** was oxidized for 3 hours, then indole C6 functionalization was conducted for 5 hours. 49.7 mg, 61% yield, yellow solid, mp 172-173 °C, new compound, R_f = 0.45 (hexanes/ethyl acetate 3/1). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.62 (s, 1H), 7.46-7.44 (m, 1H), 7.15- 7.09 (m, 4H), 7.09-7.04 (m, 2H), 6.96-6.94 (m, 2H), 6.76-6.74 (m, 2H), 5.75 (brs, 1H), 2.66 (t, *J* = 7.4 Hz, 2H), 2.35 (s, 3H), 2.32 (s, 3H), 1.63-1.55 (m, 2H), 1.42-1.33 (m, 2H), 0.93 (t, *J* = 7.3 Hz, 3H). ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 155.5, 138.4, 137.8, 134.9, 133.2, 133.1, 132.3, 130.4, 129.3, 128.8, 128.4, 124.6, 120.1, 118.3, 115.5, 112.6, 111.0, 56.8, 33.1, 23.9, 22.8, 21.1, 14.2, 11.8. HRMS Calculated for C₂₆H₂₉N₂O [M+H]⁺ 409.2274, found: 409.2270.



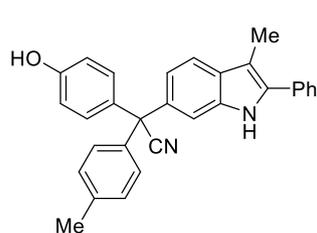
2-(3-Benzyl-2-methyl-1H-indol-6-yl)-2-(4-hydroxyphenyl)-2-(p-tolyl)acetonitrile (3ad):

The 2,2-diarylacetylacetone **1a** was oxidized for 3 hours, then indole C6 functionalization was conducted for 1 hour. 82.1 mg, 93% yield, white foamy solid, mp 136-137 °C, new compound, R_f = 0.35 (hexanes/ethyl acetate 3/1). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.65 (s, 1H), 7.34 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 7.26-7.21 (m, 4H), 7.18-7.15 (m, 1H), 7.14-7.08 (m, 4H), 7.04-7.01(m, 2H), 6.96 (d, *J* = 1.4 Hz, 1H), 6.90 (dd, *J* = 8.3, 1.7 Hz, 1H), 6.74-6.71(m, 2H), 5.99 (brs, 1H), 4.04 (s, 2H), 2.35 (s, 3H), 2.31 (s, 3H). ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 155.5, 141.5, 138.24, 137.8, 135.0, 133.3, 133.3, 133.0, 130.3, 129.3, 128.8, 128.4, 128.4, 125.9, 124.6, 120.4, 118.4, 115.5, 111.0, 110.7, 56.7, 30.2, 21.1, 11.8. HRMS Calculated for C₃₁H₂₇N₂O [M+H]⁺ 443.2118, found: 443.2118.



2-(4-Hydroxyphenyl)-2-(3-methyl-2-phenyl-1H-indol-6-yl)-2-(p-tolyl)acetonitrile (3ae):

The 2,2-diarylacetylacetone **1a** was oxidized for 3 hours, then indole C6 functionalization was conducted for 1 hour. 78.7 mg, 92% yield, white foamy solid, mp 145-146 °C, new compound, R_f = 0.30 (hexanes/ethyl acetate 3/1). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.03 (s, 1H), 7.57-7.53 (m, 3H),

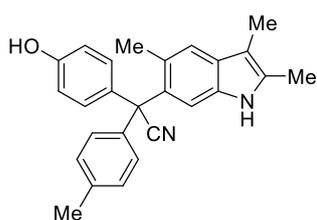


429.1965.

7.47 (t, $J = 7.6$ Hz, 2H), 7.36 (t, $J = 7.3$ Hz, 1H), 7.23-7.13 (m, 4H), 7.10-7.07 (m, 4H), 6.81-6.79 (m, 2H), 6.05 (s, 1H), 2.46 (s, 3H), 2.37 (s, 3H). ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 155.6, 138.1, 137.9, 135.5, 134.7, 133.0, 132.9, 130.3, 129.5, 129.4, 128.9, 128.8, 127.8, 127.6, 124.5, 120.7, 119.2, 115.6, 111.5, 108.6, 56.8, 21.1, 9.7. HRMS Calculated for $\text{C}_{30}\text{H}_{25}\text{N}_2\text{O}$ $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ 429.1961, found:

2-(4-Hydroxyphenyl)-2-(p-tolyl)-2-(2,3,5-trimethyl-1H-indol-6-yl)acetonitrile (3af):

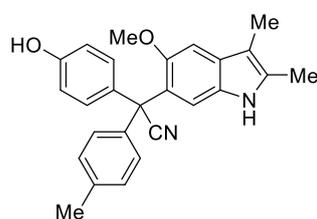
The 2,2-diarylacetylacetone **1a** was oxidized for 3 hours, then indole C6 functionalization was



conducted for 1 hour. 67.9 mg, 89% yield, white foamy solid, mp 172-173 °C, new compound, $R_f = 0.40$ (hexanes/ethyl acetate 3/1). ^1H NMR (400 MHz, Acetone- d_6) δ 9.67 (brs, 1H), 8.66 (s, 1H), 7.28 (s, 1H), 7.23-7.21 (m, 2H), 7.12-7.10 (m, 2H), 7.06-7.01 (m, 2H), 6.90-6.87 (m, 2H), 6.43 (s, 1H), 2.36 (s, 3H), 2.31 (s, 3H), 2.28 (s, 3H), 2.18 (s, 3H). ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, Acetone- d_6) δ 157.9, 139.3, 138.3, 134.7, 133.4, 132.6, 132.4, 130.7, 130.2, 130.1, 129.3, 127.5, 124.2, 121.7, 116.2, 116.1, 112.9, 106.1, 56.4, 22.0, 21.0, 11.4, 8.5. HRMS Calculated for $\text{C}_{26}\text{H}_{25}\text{N}_2\text{O}$ $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ 381.1961, found: 381.1963.

2-(4-Hydroxyphenyl)-2-(5-methoxy-2,3-dimethyl-1H-indol-6-yl)-2-(p-tolyl)acetonitrile (3ag):

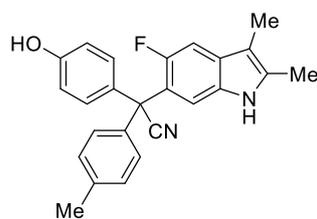
The 2,2-diarylacetylacetone **1a** was oxidized for 3 hours, then indole C6 functionalization was



conducted for 15 minutes. 74.9 mg, 95% yield, white foamy solid, mp 181-182 °C, new compound, $R_f = 0.25$ (hexanes/ethyl acetate 3/1). ^1H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 7.35 (brs, 1H), 7.11-7.06 (m, 4H), 7.00-6.98 (m, 3H), 6.74 (d, $J = 8.7$ Hz, 2H), 6.28 (s, 2H), 3.72 (s, 3H), 2.34 (s, 3H), 2.26 (s, 3H), 2.20 (s, 3H). ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 155.5, 152.0, 138.1, 137.4, 132.9, 132.6, 130.0, 129.8, 129.3, 129.2, 128.4, 124.0, 123.9, 115.5, 112.2, 106.9, 101.5, 56.8, 53.6, 21.1, 11.7, 8.6. HRMS Calculated for $\text{C}_{26}\text{H}_{25}\text{N}_2\text{O}_2$ $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ 397.1911, found: 397.1914.

2-(5-Fluoro-2,3-dimethyl-1H-indol-6-yl)-2-(4-hydroxyphenyl)-2-(p-tolyl)acetonitrile (3ah):

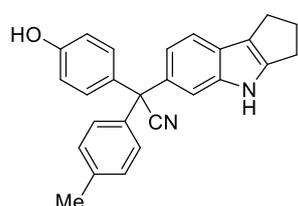
The 2,2-diarylacetylacetone **1a** was oxidized for 3 hours, then indole C6 functionalization was



conducted for 6 hours. 53.4 mg, 70% yield, white foamy solid, mp 276-277 °C, new compound, $R_f = 0.25$ (hexanes/ethyl acetate 3/1). ^1H NMR (400 MHz, Acetone- d_6) δ 9.90 (s, 1H), 8.70 (s, 1H), 7.24-7.22 (m, 2H), 7.19-7.13 (m, 3H), 7.08-7.06 (d, $J = 8.7$ Hz, 2H), 6.90-6.88 (m, 2H), 6.48 (d, $J = 6.6$ Hz, 1H), 2.35 (s, 3H), 2.34 (s, 3H), 2.18 (s, 3H). ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, Acetone- d_6) δ 158.1, 155.9 (d, $^1J_{\text{F-C}} = 237.0$ Hz), 138.5, 135.4, 132.2, 131.6, 130.6 (d, $^3J_{\text{F-C}} = 9.0$ Hz), 130.4, 130.1, 128.9, 123.4, 121.9 (d, $^2J_{\text{F-C}} = 15.0$ Hz), 116.2, 116.2 (d, $^3J_{\text{F-C}} = 9.0$ Hz), 112.6 (d, $^4J_{\text{F-C}} = 3.0$ Hz), 107.2 (d, $^4J_{\text{F-C}} = 4.0$ Hz), 104.5 (d, $^2J_{\text{F-C}} = 24.0$ Hz), 53.6, 21.0, 11.5, 8.5. ^{19}F NMR (376 MHz, Acetone- d_6) δ -120.81. HRMS Calculated for $\text{C}_{25}\text{H}_{22}\text{FN}_2\text{O}$ $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ 385.1711, found: 385.1709.

2-(4-Hydroxyphenyl)-2-(1,2,3,4-tetrahydrocyclopenta[*b*]indol-6-yl)-2-(*p*-tolyl)acetonitrile

(3ai): The 2,2-diarylacetylacetone **1a** was oxidized for 3 hours, then indole C6 functionalization

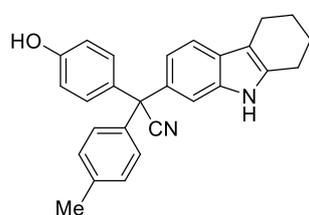


was conducted for 20 minutes. 68.0 mg, 90% yield, yellow oily liquid, new compound, $R_f = 0.40$ (hexanes/ethyl acetate 3/1). $^1\text{H NMR}$ (400 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 7.83 (brs, 1H), 7.38 (d, $J = 8.3$ Hz, 1H), 7.14-7.10 (m, 3H), 7.07-7.05 (m, 3H), 6.94 (dd, $J = 8.3, 1.7$ Hz, 1H), 6.76 (d, $J = 8.6$ Hz, 2H), 5.61 (brs, 1H), 2.85-2.8 (m, 4H), 2.56-2.49 (m, 2H), 2.35 (s, 3H). $^{13}\text{C NMR}$ (100 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 155.5, 145.5, 140.7, 138.4,

137.8, 133.3, 132.9, 130.4, 129.3, 128.8, 124.58, 124.2, 120.7, 119.7, 118.5, 115.5, 112.1, 56.8, 28.8, 26.0, 24.5, 21.1. HRMS Calculated for $\text{C}_{26}\text{H}_{23}\text{N}_2\text{O}$ $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ 379.1805, found: 379.1805.

2-(4-Hydroxyphenyl)-2-(2,3,4,9-tetrahydro-1*H*-carbazol-7-yl)-2-(*p*-tolyl)acetonitrile (3aj):

The 2,2-diarylacetylacetone **1a** was oxidized for 3 hours, then indole C6 functionalization was

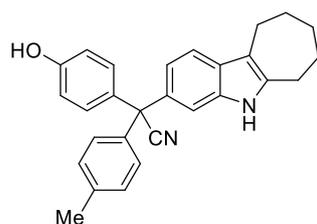


conducted for 20 minutes. 72.6 mg, 93% yield, white foamy solid, mp 143-144 °C, new compound, $R_f = 0.40$ (hexanes/ethyl acetate 3/1). $^1\text{H NMR}$ (400 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 7.65 (s, 1H), 7.41 (d, $J = 8.3$ Hz, 1H), 7.14-7.09 (m, 4H), 7.06-7.04 (m, 2H), 7.01 (d, $J = 1.1$ Hz, 1H), 6.95 (dd, $J = 8.3, 1.6$ Hz, 1H), 6.78-6.71 (m, 2H), 5.76 (brs, 1H), 2.69 (s, 4H), 2.35 (s, 3H), 1.91-1.82 (m, 4H). $^{13}\text{C NMR}$ (100 MHz,

CDCl_3) δ 155.4, 138.4, 137.8, 135.8, 135.4, 133.5, 133.4, 130.4, 129.3, 128.9, 127.4, 124.6, 120.3, 117.9, 115.4, 111.2, 110.3, 56.8, 23.4, 23.3, 23.2, 21.1, 21.0. HRMS Calculated for $\text{C}_{27}\text{H}_{25}\text{N}_2\text{O}$ $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ 393.1961, found: 393.1963.

2-(5,6,7,8,9,10-Hexahydrocyclohepta[*b*]indol-3-yl)-2-(4-hydroxyphenyl)-2-(*p*-tolyl)acetonitrile (3ak):

The 2,2-diarylacetylacetone **1a** was oxidized for 3 hours, then indole C6 functionalization

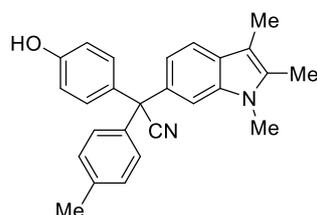


was conducted for 20 minutes. 75.6 mg, 93% yield, white foamy solid, mp 147-148 °C, new compound, $R_f = 0.40$ (hexanes/ethyl acetate 3/1). $^1\text{H NMR}$ (400 MHz, Acetone- d_6) δ 10.63 (brs, 1H), 9.42 (s, 1H), 8.21 (d, $J = 8.4$ Hz, 1H), 8.00-7.98 (m, 2H), 7.92-7.90 (m, 2H), 7.84-7.82 (m, 2H), 7.77 (s, 1H), 7.70 (dd, $J = 8.3, 1.5$ Hz, 1H), 7.66-7.64 (m, 2H), 3.66-3.55 (m, 4H), 3.12 (s, 3H), 2.67-2.61

(m, 2H), 2.54-2.51 (m, 4H). $^{13}\text{C NMR}$ (100 MHz, Acetone- d_6) δ 157.9, 140.3, 139.9, 138.3, 135.1, 133.6, 133.1, 130.8, 129.9, 129.6, 129.4, 125.1, 120.2, 118.2, 116.0, 113.7, 111.7, 57.4, 32.7, 29.8, 29.6, 28.3, 25.3, 21.0. HRMS Calculated for $\text{C}_{28}\text{H}_{27}\text{N}_2\text{O}$ $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ 407.2118, found: 407.2116.

2-(4-Hydroxyphenyl)-2-(*p*-tolyl)-2-(1,2,3-trimethyl-1*H*-indol-6-yl)acetonitrile (3al):

The 2,2-diarylacetylacetone **1a** was oxidized for 3 hours, then indole C6 functionalization was

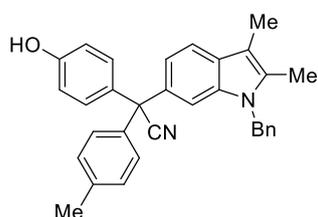


conducted for 20 minutes. 69.5 mg, 91% yield, yellow foamy solid, mp 111-112 °C, new compound, $R_f = 0.45$ (hexanes/ethyl acetate 3/1). $^1\text{H NMR}$ (400 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 7.47 (d, $J = 8.3$ Hz, 1H), 7.21-7.17 (m, 5H), 7.14-7.12 (m, 2H), 6.93 (dd, $J = 8.3, 1.6$ Hz, 1H), 6.85-6.82 (d, $J = 8.7$ Hz, 2H), 6.23 (s, 1H), 3.57 (s, 3H), 2.40 (s,

3H), 2.37 (s, 3H), 2.30 (s, 3H). ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 155.7, 138.4, 137.8, 136.2, 134.4, 133.1, 132.8, 130.3, 129.3, 128.8, 128.0, 124.7, 119.7, 118.0, 115.5, 109.0, 106.3, 57.0, 29.6, 21.1, 10.3, 8.9. HRMS Calculated for C₂₆H₂₅N₂O [M+H]⁺ 381.1961, found: 381.1964.

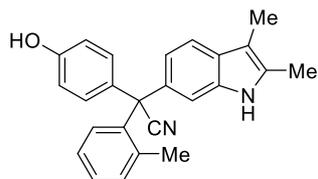
2-(1-benzyl-2,3-dimethyl-1H-indol-6-yl)-2-(4-hydroxyphenyl)-2-(p-tolyl)acetonitrile (3am):

The 2,2-diarylacetylacetone **1a** was oxidized for 3 hours, then indole C6 functionalization was conducted for 1 hours. 79.1 mg, 87% yield, yellow foamy solid, mp 101-102 °C, new compound, R_f = 0.50 (hexanes/ethyl acetate 3/1). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.48 (d, *J* = 8.2 Hz, 1H), 7.25-7.20 (m, 3H), 7.09-7.05 (m, 4H), 7.02-6.97 (m, 4H), 6.91-6.89 (m, 2H), 6.77-6.72 (m, 2H), 5.67 (brs, 1H), 5.15 (s, 2H), 2.36 (s, 3H), 2.32 (s, 3H), 2.29 (s, 3H). ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 155.6, 138.3, 137.7, 137.7, 136.0, 134.1, 133.1, 132.9, 130.2, 129.2, 128.8, 128.7, 128.3, 127.3, 126.4, 124.5, 120.0, 118.1, 115.4, 109.8, 107.2, 56.8, 46.8, 21.1, 10.5, 8.9. HRMS Calculated for C₃₂H₂₈N₂O [M+H]⁺ 457.2274, found: 457.2273.



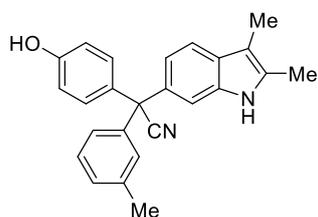
2-(2,3-Dimethyl-1H-indol-6-yl)-2-(4-hydroxyphenyl)-2-(o-tolyl)acetonitrile (3ba):

The 2,2-diarylacetylacetone **1** was oxidized for 4 hours, then indole C6 functionalization was conducted for 7 hours. 53.6 mg, 73% yield, white solid, mp 234-235 °C, new compound, R_f = 0.45 (hexanes/ethyl acetate 3/1). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, Acetone-*d*₆) δ 9.85 (s, 1H), 8.69 (s, 1H), 7.44 (d, *J* = 8.3 Hz, 1H), 7.30-7.25 (m, 2H), 7.13-7.05 (m, 1H), 7.03-7.01 (m, 3H), 6.92-6.88 (m, 3H), 6.56 (d, *J* = 7.9 Hz, 1H), 2.35 (s, 3H), 2.25 (s, 3H), 2.21 (s, 3H). ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, Acetone-*d*₆) δ 158.0, 140.7, 138.5, 136.4, 133.6, 133.2, 132.9, 132.3, 130.7, 130.4, 129.9, 129.1, 126.6, 124.1, 119.9, 118.5, 116.2, 111.3, 106.9, 56.6, 21.7, 11.4, 8.5. HRMS Calculated for C₂₅H₂₃N₂O [M+H]⁺ 367.1805, found: 367.1808.



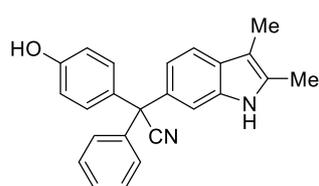
2-(2,3-Dimethyl-1H-indol-6-yl)-2-(4-hydroxyphenyl)-2-(m-tolyl)acetonitrile (3ca):

The 2,2-diarylacetylacetone **1** was oxidized for 4 hours, then indole C6 functionalization was conducted for 30 minutes. 69.5 mg, 95% yield, white foamy solid, mp 222-223 °C, new compound, R_f = 0.45 (hexanes/ethyl acetate 3/1). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.64 (s, 1H), 7.43-7.41 (m, 1H), 7.21-7.16 (m, 1H), 7.13-7.12 (m, 2H), 7.09-7.03 (m, 2H), 6.99-6.93 (m, 3H), 6.80-6.73 (m, 2H), 5.99 (brs, 1H), 2.32 (s, 3H), 2.30 (s, 3H), 2.21 (s, 3H). ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 155.6, 141.2, 138.4, 134.8, 133.1, 132.9, 132.5, 130.3, 129.5, 129.0, 128.8, 128.4, 126.1, 124.6, 120.2, 118.1, 115.5, 110.9, 107.1, 57.0, 21.6, 11.6, 8.5. HRMS Calculated for C₂₅H₂₃N₂O [M+H]⁺ 367.1805, found: 367.1806.



2-(2,3-Dimethyl-1H-indol-6-yl)-2-(4-hydroxyphenyl)-2-phenylacetonitrile (3da):

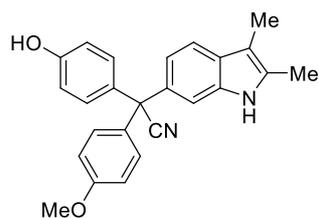
The 2,2-diarylacetylacetone **1** was oxidized for 3 hours, then indole C6 functionalization was conducted for 1 hour. 66.5 mg, 94% yield, white foamy solid, mp 106-107 °C, new compound, R_f = 0.45 (hexanes/ethyl acetate 3/1). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.64 (s, 1H), 7.42 (d, *J* = 8.8 Hz,



1H), 7.32-7.30 (m, 3H), 7.24-7.22 (m, 2H), 7.06-7.03 (m, 2H), 6.98-6.96 (m, 2H), 6.77-6.75 (m, 2H), 5.87 (brs, 1H), 2.31 (s, 3H), 2.21 (s, 3H). ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 155.6, 141.2, 134.8, 133.0, 132.8, 132.6, 130.3, 129.0, 128.9, 128.6, 128.0, 124.5, 120.1, 118.1, 115.5, 110.9, 107.1, 57.1, 11.6, 8.5. HRMS Calculated for C₂₄H₂₁N₂O [M+H]⁺ 353.1648, found: 353.1645.

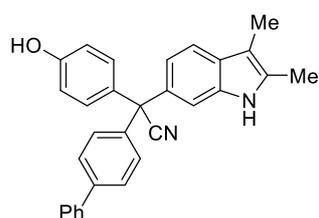
2-(2,3-Dimethyl-1H-indol-6-yl)-2-(4-hydroxyphenyl)-2-(4-methoxyphenyl)acetonitrile (3ea):

The 2,2-diarylacetylacetone **1** was oxidized for 3 hours, then indole C6 functionalization was conducted for 1.5 hours. 71.9 mg, 94% yield, white foamy solid, mp 138-139 °C, new compound, R_f = 0.45 (hexanes/ethyl acetate 3/1). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.68 (s, 1H), 7.41 (d, *J* = 8.8 Hz, 1H), 7.14-7.10 (m, 2H), 7.05-7.04 (m, 2H), 6.97-6.95 (m, 2H), 6.85-6.81 (m, 2H), 6.77-6.73 (m, 2H), 5.88 (brs, 1H), 3.80 (s, 3H), 2.31 (s, 3H), 2.21 (s, 3H). ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 159.0, 155.6, 134.8, 133.3, 133.2, 133.0, 132.5, 130.2, 130.1, 128.9, 124.7, 120.0, 118.0, 115.5, 113.9, 110.8, 107.0, 56.4, 55.4, 11.6, 8.5. HRMS Calculated for C₂₅H₂₃N₂O₂ [M+H]⁺ 383.1754, found: 383.1851.



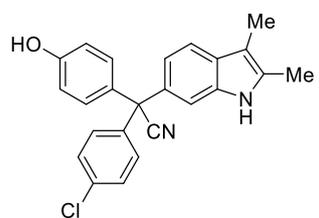
2-([1,1'-Biphenyl]-4-yl)-2-(2,3-dimethyl-1H-indol-6-yl)-2-(4-hydroxyphenyl)acetonitrile (3fa):

The 2,2-diarylacetylacetone **1** was oxidized for 4.5 hours, then indole C6 functionalization was conducted for 17 hours. 69.9 mg, 82% yield, yellow foamy solid, mp 148-149 °C, new compound, R_f = 0.45 (hexanes/ethyl acetate 3/1). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.68 (s, 1H), 7.60-7.53 (m, 4H), 7.46-7.43 (m, 3H), 7.38-7.35 (m, 1H), 7.32-7.29 (m, 2H), 7.11-7.09 (m, 2H), 7.02-7.00 (m, 2H), 6.80-7.78 (m, 2H), 5.91 (brs, 1H), 2.32 (s, 3H), 2.22 (s, 3H). ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 155.7, 140.8, 140.3, 140.3, 134.9, 133.1, 133.0, 132.5, 130.4, 129.4, 129.1, 129.0, 127.7, 127.3, 127.2, 124.5, 120.2, 118.2, 115.6, 110.9, 107.2, 56.9, 11.7, 8.5. HRMS Calculated for C₃₀H₂₅N₂O [M+H]⁺ 429.1961, found: 429.1959.



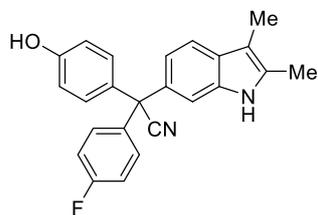
2-(4-Chlorophenyl)-2-(2,3-dimethyl-1H-indol-6-yl)-2-(4-hydroxyphenyl)acetonitrile (3ga):

The 2,2-diarylacetylacetone **1** was oxidized for 2 hours, then indole C6 functionalization was conducted for 1 hour. 70.3 mg, 91% yield, white foamy solid, mp 219-220 °C, new compound, R_f = 0.30 (hexanes/ethyl acetate 3/1). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.71 (s, 1H), 7.42 (d, *J* = 8.3 Hz, 1H), 7.31-7.27 (m, 2H), 7.19-7.15 (m, 2H), 7.06-7.04 (m, 2H), 6.99 (s, 1H), 6.92 (dd, *J* = 8.3, 1.8 Hz, 1H), 6.79-6.76 (m, 2H), 5.43 (brs, 1H), 2.34 (s, 3H), 2.21 (s, 3H). ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 155.8, 139.9, 134.9, 134.1, 132.7, 132.4, 132.4, 130.3, 130.2, 129.2, 128.8, 124.2, 119.9, 118.3, 115.7, 110.8, 107.2, 56.6, 11.6, 8.5. HRMS Calculated for C₂₄H₂₀ClN₂O [M+H]⁺ 387.1259 (³⁵Cl), 389.1239 (³⁷Cl), found: 387.1262 (³⁵Cl), 389.1248 (³⁷Cl).



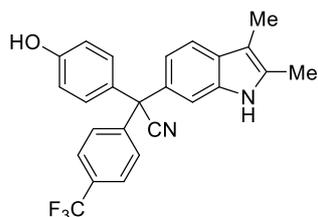
2-(2,3-Dimethyl-1H-indol-6-yl)-2-(4-fluorophenyl)-2-(4-hydroxyphenyl)acetonitrile (3ha):

The 2,2-diarylacetylacetone **1** was oxidized for 3 hours, then indole C6 functionalization was conducted for 45 minutes. 70.8 mg, 96% yield, yellow foamy solid, mp 140-141 °C, new compound, $R_f = 0.40$ (hexanes/ethyl acetate 3/1). $^1\text{H NMR}$ (400 MHz, Acetone- d_6) δ 9.85 (brs, 1H), 8.70 (s, 1H), 7.43 (d, $J = 8.3$ Hz, 1H), 7.29-7.24 (m, 2H), 7.20-7.14 (m, 2H), 7.07-7.03 (m, 2H), 7.01 (d, $J = 1.3$ Hz, 1H), 6.92-6.87 (m, 3H), 2.35 (s, 3H), 2.19 (s, 3H). $^{13}\text{C NMR}$ (100 MHz, Acetone- d_6) δ 162.9 (d, $^1J_{\text{F-C}} = 245.0$ Hz), 158.1, 138.9 (d, $^4J_{\text{F-C}} = 3.0$ Hz), 136.2, 133.7, 133.5, 132.8, 131.5 (d, $^3J_{\text{F-C}} = 9.0$ Hz), 130.7, 129.9, 124.8, 120.0, 118.6, 116.2, 116.1 (d, $^2J_{\text{F-C}} = 22.0$ Hz), 111.5, 106.9, 57.1, 11.4, 8.4. $^{19}\text{F NMR}$ (376 MHz, Acetone- d_6) δ -115.89. HRMS Calculated for $\text{C}_{24}\text{H}_{20}\text{FN}_2\text{O}$ $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ 371.1554, found: 371.1557.



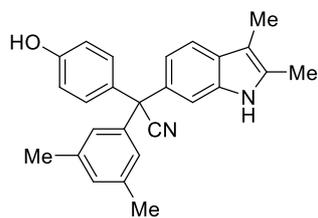
2-(2,3-Dimethyl-1H-indol-6-yl)-2-(4-hydroxyphenyl)-2-(4-(trifluoromethyl)phenyl)acetonitrile (3ia):

The 2,2-diarylacetylacetone **1** was oxidized for 2.5 hours, then indole C6 functionalization was conducted for 20 minutes. 75.9 mg, 90% yield, yellow foamy solid, mp 253-254 °C, new compound, $R_f = 0.40$ (hexanes/ethyl acetate 3/1). $^1\text{H NMR}$ (400 MHz, Acetone- d_6) δ 9.89 (brs, 1H), 8.71 (s, 1H), 7.79 (d, $J = 8.3$ Hz, 2H), 7.49 (d, $J = 8.2$ Hz, 2H), 7.44 (d, $J = 8.3$ Hz, 1H), 7.08-7.05 (m, 2H), 7.00 (s, 1H), 6.92-6.88 (m, 3H), 2.36 (s, 3H), 2.20 (s, 3H). $^{13}\text{C NMR}$ (100 MHz, Acetone- d_6) δ 158.3, 147.3, 136.2, 133.9, 132.8, 132.1, 130.8, 130.3, 130.3 (q, $^2J_{\text{F-C}} = 32.0$ Hz), 130.1 (q, $^3J_{\text{F-C}} = 8.0$ Hz), 130.1, 125.4 (q, $^1J_{\text{F-C}} = 202.0$ Hz), 120.0, 118.7, 116.4, 111.6, 107.0, 57.7, 11.4, 8.4. $^{19}\text{F NMR}$ (376 MHz, Acetone- d_6) δ -63.03. HRMS Calculated for $\text{C}_{25}\text{H}_{20}\text{F}_3\text{N}_2\text{O}$ $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ 421.1522, found: 421.1521.



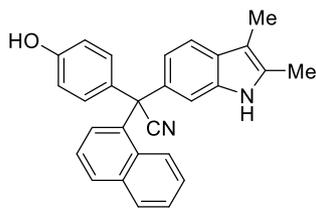
2-(2,3-Dimethyl-1H-indol-6-yl)-2-(3,5-dimethylphenyl)-2-(4-hydroxyphenyl)acetonitrile (3ja):

The 2,2-diarylacetylacetone **1** was oxidized for 2 hours, then indole C6 functionalization was conducted for 15 minutes. 72.1 mg, 95% yield, white foamy solid, mp 133-134 °C, new compound, $R_f = 0.35$ (hexanes/ethyl acetate 3/1). $^1\text{H NMR}$ (400 MHz, Acetone- d_6) δ 9.82 (brs, 1H), 8.60 (s, 1H), 7.40 (d, $J = 8.3$ Hz, 1H), 7.05-7.01 (m, 2H), 7.00 (s, 1H), 6.99 (d, $J = 1.7$ Hz, 1H), 6.90 (dd, $J = 8.3, 1.8$ Hz, 1H), 6.86-6.84 (m, 4H), 2.35 (s, 3H), 2.25 (s, 6H), 2.19 (s, 3H). $^{13}\text{C NMR}$ (100 MHz, Acetone- d_6) δ 157.9, 142.7, 138.8, 136.1, 133.9, 133.5, 133.1, 130.8, 130.1, 129.8, 127.3, 125.1, 120.2, 118.3, 116.0, 111.6, 106.8, 57.6, 21.4, 11.4, 8.5. HRMS Calculated for $\text{C}_{26}\text{H}_{25}\text{N}_2\text{O}$ $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ 381.1961, found: 381.1965.



2-(2,3-Dimethyl-1H-indol-6-yl)-2-(4-hydroxyphenyl)-2-(naphthalen-1-yl)acetonitrile (3ka):

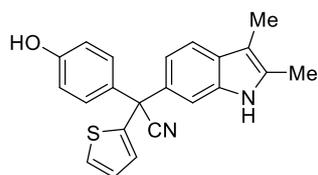
The 2,2-diarylacetylacetone **1** was oxidized for 2 h, then C6 functionalization was conducted for 1 hour. 73.2 mg, 91% yield, yellow foamy solid, mp 168-169 °C, new compound, $R_f = 0.45$



(hexanes/ethyl acetate 3/1). ^1H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 7.78 (dd, $J = 15.4, 8.3$ Hz, 2H), 7.65 (d, $J = 7.9$ Hz, 1H), 7.57-7.55 (m, 2H), 7.50-7.39 (m, 4H), 7.07 (d, $J = 8.7$ Hz, 2H), 7.01-6.98 (m, 2H), 6.76-6.73 (m, 2H), 5.62 (brs, 1H), 2.28 (s, 3H), 2.19 (s, 3H). ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 155.7, 138.6, 134.8, 132.9, 132.7, 132.7, 132.6, 132.5, 130.4, 129.0, 128.4, 128.4, 127.9, 127.6, 126.9, 126.7, 126.7, 124.5, 120.2, 118.1, 115.6, 111.0, 107.1, 57.2, 11.5, 8.5. HRMS Calculated for $\text{C}_{28}\text{H}_{23}\text{N}_2\text{O}$ $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ 403.1805, found: 403.1803.

2-(2,3-Dimethyl-1H-indol-6-yl)-2-(4-hydroxyphenyl)-2-(thiophen-2-yl)acetonitrile (3la):

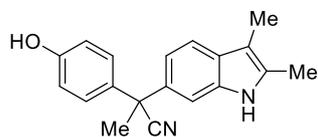
The 2,2-diarylacetylacetone **1** was oxidized for 3 hours, then indole C6 functionalization was conducted for 2 hours. 64.7 mg, 90% yield, yellow foamy solid, mp 139-140 °C, new compound, $R_f = 0.30$ (hexanes/ethyl acetate 5/1).



^1H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 7.72 (s, 1H), 7.43 (d, $J = 8.3$ Hz, 1H), 7.29 (dd, $J = 4.7, 1.6$ Hz, 1H), 7.18-7.16 (m, 2H), 7.13 (s, 1H), 7.04 (dd, $J = 8.3, 1.8$ Hz, 1H), 6.99-6.96 (m, 2H), 6.78-6.75 (m, 2H), 5.41 (brs, 1H), 2.34 (s, 3H), 2.21 (s, 3H). ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 155.8, 145.5, 134.8, 133.4, 133.4, 132.7, 129.6, 129.3, 128.4, 126.9, 126.8, 123.3, 119.4, 118.1, 115.5, 110.1, 107.2, 53.3, 11.7, 8.5. HRMS Calculated for $\text{C}_{22}\text{H}_{19}\text{N}_2\text{OS}$ $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ 359.1213, found: 359.1212.

2-(2,3-Dimethyl-1H-indol-6-yl)-2-(4-hydroxyphenyl)propanenitrile (3ma):

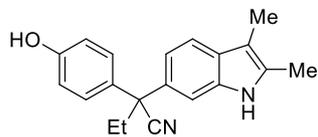
The 2,2-diarylacetylacetone **1** was oxidized for 2 hours, then indole C6 functionalization was conducted for 1 hour. 33.2 mg, 57% yield, yellow oily liquid, new compound, $R_f = 0.50$ (hexanes/ethyl acetate 3/1).



^1H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 7.75 (brs, 1H), 7.42 (d, $J = 8.3$ Hz, 1H), 7.27 (d, $J = 7.5$ Hz, 1H), 7.23-7.19 (m, 2H), 7.01 (dd, $J = 8.3, 1.7$ Hz, 1H), 6.78-6.75 (m, 2H), 5.24 (brs, 1H), 2.34 (s, 3H), 2.20 (s, 3H), 2.09 (s, 3H). ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 155.3, 135.0, 134.2, 132.2, 128.9, 128.2, 124.6, 118.3, 117.8, 115.7, 108.6, 107.2, 45.7, 28.8, 11.7, 8.5. HRMS Calculated for $\text{C}_{19}\text{H}_{19}\text{N}_2\text{O}$ $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ 291.1492, found: 291.1490.

2-(2,3-Dimethyl-1H-indol-6-yl)-2-(4-hydroxyphenyl) (3na):

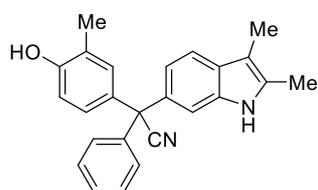
The 2,2-diarylacetylacetone **1** was oxidized for 4 hours, then indole C6 functionalization was conducted for 24 hours. 35.5 mg, 58% yield, yellow oily liquid, new compound, $R_f = 0.20$ (hexanes/ethyl acetate 3/1).



^1H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 7.83 (s, 1H), 7.42 (d, $J = 8.3$ Hz, 1H), 7.28 (d, $J = 1.4$ Hz, 1H), 7.22-7.18 (m, 2H), 7.00 (dd, $J = 8.3, 1.7$ Hz, 1H), 6.78-6.74 (m, 2H), 6.15 (brs, 1H), 2.41 (q, $J = 7.2$ Hz, 2H), 2.32 (s, 3H), 2.20 (s, 3H), 1.03 (t, $J = 7.3$ Hz, 3H). ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 155.3, 135.1, 133.1, 132.8, 132.2, 128.8, 128.5, 123.5, 118.3, 117.9, 115.7, 109.2, 107.0, 52.1, 33.2, 11.6, 10.3, 8.5. HRMS Calculated for $\text{C}_{20}\text{H}_{21}\text{N}_2\text{O}$ $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ 305.1648, found: 305.1650.

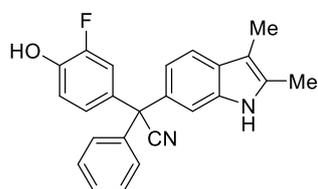
2-(2,3-Dimethyl-1H-indol-6-yl)-2-(4-hydroxy-3-methylphenyl)-2-phenylacetonitrile (3oa):

The 2,2-diarylacetylacetone **1** was oxidized for 2 hours, then indole C6 functionalization was conducted for 20 minutes. 65.3 mg, 89% yield, white foamy solid, mp 130-131 °C, new compound, $R_f = 0.45$ (hexanes/ethyl acetate 3/1). $^1\text{H NMR}$ (400 MHz, Acetone- d_6) δ 9.85 (brs, 1H), 8.55 (s, 1H), 7.44-7.37 (m, 4H), 7.28-7.25 (m, 2H), 7.03-7.01 (m, 2H), 6.92 (dd, $J = 8.3, 1.8$ Hz, 1H), 6.86-6.80 (m, 2H), 2.36 (s, 3H), 2.21 (s, 3H), 2.18 (s, 3H). $^{13}\text{C NMR}$ (100 MHz, Acetone- d_6) δ 156.0, 142.9, 136.2, 133.8, 133.6, 132.9, 131.9, 129.9, 129.5, 129.3, 128.6, 128.1, 125.3, 125.1, 120.2, 118.4, 115.3, 111.6, 106.8, 57.8, 16.4, 11.4, 8.5. HRMS Calculated for $\text{C}_{25}\text{H}_{23}\text{N}_2\text{O}$ $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ 367.1805, found: 367.1803.



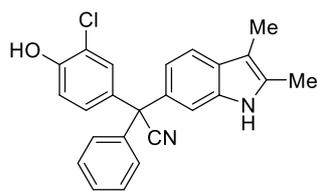
2-(2,3-Dimethyl-1H-indol-6-yl)-2-(3-fluoro-4-hydroxyphenyl)-2-phenylacetonitrile (3pa):

The 2,2-diarylacetylacetone **1** was oxidized for 3 hours, then indole C6 functionalization was conducted for 50 minutes. 70.2 mg, 95% yield, white foamy solid, mp 133-134 °C, new compound, $R_f = 0.40$ (hexanes/ethyl acetate 3/1). $^1\text{H NMR}$ (400 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 7.71 (s, 1H), 7.43 (d, $J = 8.3$ Hz, 1H), 7.36-7.31 (m, 3H), 7.26-7.22 (m, 2H), 7.02 (d, $J = 1.6$ Hz, 1H), 6.97-6.91 (m, 4H), 5.53 (brs, 1H), 2.34 (s, 3H), 2.22 (s, 3H). $^{13}\text{C NMR}$ (100 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 150.8 (d, $^1J_{\text{F-C}} = 238.0$ Hz), 143.5 (d, $^{12}J_{\text{F-C}} = 14.0$ Hz), 140.8, 134.9, 133.8 (d, $^3J_{\text{F-C}} = 5.0$ Hz), 132.7, 132.5, 129.2, 128.8, 128.7, 128.2, 125.4 (d, $^3J_{\text{F-C}} = 3.0$ Hz), 124.0, 120.0, 118.2, 117.4 (d, $^4J_{\text{F-C}} = 2.0$ Hz), 116.8, 116.6, 110.8, 107.2, 57.0 (d, $^4J_{\text{F-C}} = 1.0$ Hz), 11.6, 8.5. $^{19}\text{F NMR}$ (376 MHz, CDCl_3) δ -139.04. HRMS Calculated for $\text{C}_{24}\text{H}_{19}\text{FN}_2\text{O}$ $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ 371.1554, found: 371.1552.



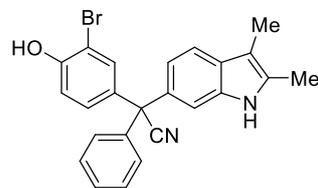
2-(3-Chloro-4-hydroxyphenyl)-2-(2,3-dimethyl-1H-indol-6-yl)-2-phenylacetonitrile (3qa):

The 2,2-diarylacetylacetone **1** was oxidized for 3 hours, then indole C6 functionalization was conducted for 50 minutes. 71.5 mg, 92% yield, white foamy solid, mp 126-127 °C, new compound, $R_f = 0.40$ (hexanes/ethyl acetate 3/1). $^1\text{H NMR}$ (400 MHz, Acetone- d_6) δ 9.87 (brs, 1H), 9.15 (s, 1H), 7.45-7.37 (m, 4H), 7.28-7.26 (m, 2H), 7.12 (s, 1H), 7.08-7.03 (m, 2H), 7.02 (s, 1H), 6.91 (d, $J = 8.3$ Hz, 1H), 2.35 (s, 3H), 2.20 (s, 3H). $^{13}\text{C NMR}$ (100 MHz, Acetone- d_6) δ 153.6, 142.0, 136.1, 134.6, 133.8, 132.9, 130.9, 130.0, 129.5, 129.4, 129.4, 128.9, 124.5, 121.2, 119.9, 118.6, 117.6, 111.5, 106.9, 57.5, 11.4, 8.4. HRMS Calculated for $\text{C}_{24}\text{H}_{20}\text{Cl N}_2\text{O}$ $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ 387.1259 (^{35}Cl), 389.1239 (^{37}Cl), found: 387.1260 (^{35}Cl), 389.1234 (^{37}Cl).



2-(3-Bromo-4-hydroxyphenyl)-2-(2,3-dimethyl-1H-indol-6-yl)-2-phenylacetonitrile (3ra):

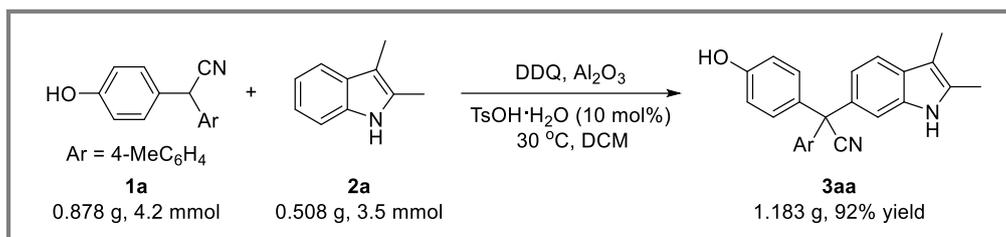
The 2,2-diarylacetylacetone **1** was oxidized for 3 hours, then indole C6 functionalization was conducted for 1 hour. 81.5 mg, 95% yield, white foamy solid, mp 115-116 °C, new compound, $R_f = 0.40$ (hexanes/ethyl acetate 3/1). $^1\text{H NMR}$ (400 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 7.72 (s, 1H), 7.44 (d, $J = 8.3$ Hz, 1H), 7.36-7.33 (m, 4H), 7.25-7.22 (m, 2H),



7.08 (dd, $J = 8.6, 2.3$ Hz, 1H), 7.02 (d, $J = 1.4$ Hz, 1H), 6.98-6.93 (m, 2H), 5.69 (brs, 1H), 2.35 (s, 3H), 2.22 (s, 3H). ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 152.2, 140.8, 134.9, 134.8, 132.6, 132.5, 132.4, 129.9, 129.2, 128.9, 128.8, 128.2, 123.9, 120.0, 118.3, 116.0, 110.8, 110.5, 107.3, 56.8, 11.7, 8.5. HRMS Calculated for $\text{C}_{24}\text{H}_{20}\text{N}_2\text{O}$ $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ 431.0754 (^{79}Br), 433.0736 (^{81}Br), found: 431.0755 (^{79}Br), 431.0736 (^{81}Br).

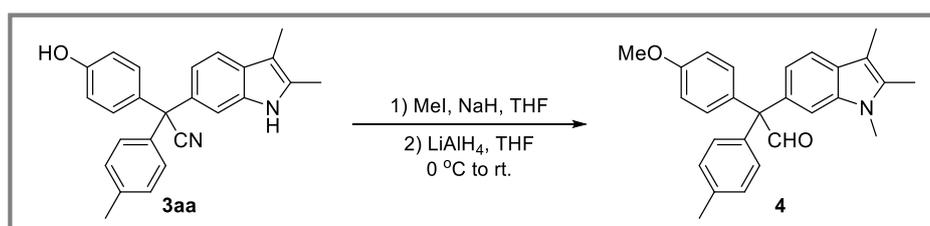
3. Experiment at Gram Scale and Synthetic Transformations

3.1 Experiment at Gram Scale



To a solution of 2,2-diarylacetonitrile **1a** (0.878 g, 4.2 mmol) in dichloromethane (20 mL) was added 2,3-dichloro-5,6-dicyano-1,4-benzoquinone (0.885 g, 3.9 mmol) and aluminum oxide (base, 1.200 g) at room temperature. The reaction was stirred at 30 °C for 3 hours, followed by 2,3-dimethylindole **2a** (0.508 g, 3.5 mmol) and *p*-toluenesulfonic acid monohydrate (0.067 g, 0.35 mmol). The reaction continued to stir at 30 °C for 1 hour (TLC monitoring). Then, the volatiles were removed under reduced pressure, and the residue was purified by column chromatography on silica gel using hexanes/dichloromethane (10:1 to 3:1) as eluent to afford the desirable products **3aa**.

3.2 Synthetic Transformations³

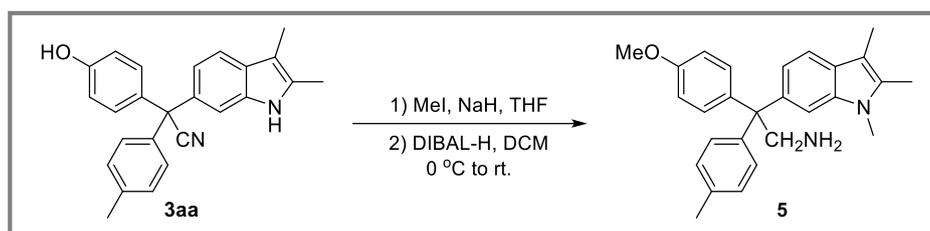


To a solution of **3aa** (36.6 mg, 0.10 mmol) in THF (5.0 mL) was added NaH (60% in mineral oil, 12.0 mg, 0.30 mmol) under nitrogen and the reaction mixture was stirred at 0 °C for 30 min. Then MeI (15 μL , 0.3 mmol) was added. The reaction was allowed to warm to room temperature. Once reaction was determined to be complete via thin layer chromatographic analysis, the reaction was quenched with saturated aqueous ammonium chloride at 0 °C. The aqueous layer was extracted with ethyl acetate (10 mL \times 3). The combined organic layers were washed with brine (10 mL), dried over anhydrous sodium sulfate, filtered, and concentrated. The residue was purified by flash chromatography on silica gel using hexanes/ethyl acetate (10:1) as eluent. Then to a solution of the product in dichloromethane (2.0 mL) was added lithium aluminum hydride (7.6 mg, 0.20 mmol) at 0 °C and degassed with nitrogen. The reaction mixture was stirred 16 hours at the room temperature. The mixture was quenched with water at 0 °C. The aqueous layer was extracted with ethyl acetate (10 mL \times 3). The combined organic layers were washed with brine (10 mL), dried

over anhydrous sodium sulfate, filtered, and concentrated. The residue was purified by flash chromatography on silica gel using hexanes/ethyl acetate (10:1) as eluent to afford the product **4**.

2-(4-Methoxyphenyl)-2-(*p*-tolyl)-2-(1,2,3-trimethyl-1*H*-indol-6-yl)acetaldehyde (4**):**

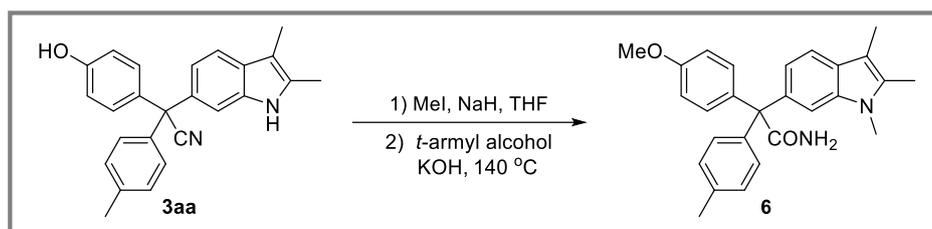
31.5 mg, 79% yield, colorless viscous liquid, new compound, $R_f = 0.80$ (hexanes/ethyl acetate 10/1). $^1\text{H NMR}$ (400 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 7.40 (d, $J = 8.1$ Hz, 1H), 7.11-7.04 (m, 6H), 6.95 (s, 1H), 6.88 (dd, $J = 8.1, 1.3$ Hz, 1H), 6.85-6.81 (m, 2H), 5.63 (s, 1H), 3.80 (s, 3H), 3.55 (s, 3H), 2.34 (s, 3H), 2.33 (s, 3H), 2.25 (s, 3H). $^{13}\text{C NMR}$ (100 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 157.9, 142.4, 137.5, 137.2, 136.7, 135.5, 132.7, 130.5, 129.5, 129.0, 126.9, 120.8, 117.7, 113.6, 109.3, 106.1, 56.1, 55.4, 29.6, 21.2, 10.3, 9.0. HRMS Calculated for $\text{C}_{27}\text{H}_{28}\text{NO}_2$ $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ 398.2115, found: 398.2116.



To a solution of **3aa** (36.6 mg, 0.10 mmol) in THF (5.0 mL) was added NaH (60% in mineral oil, 12.0 mg, 0.30 mmol) under nitrogen and the reaction mixture was stirred at 0 °C for 30 min. Then MeI (15 μL , 0.3 mmol) was added. The reaction was allowed to warm to room temperature. Once reaction was determined to be complete via thin layer chromatographic analysis, the reaction was quenched with saturated aqueous ammonium chloride at 0 °C. The aqueous layer was extracted with ethyl acetate (10 mL \times 3). The combined organic layers were washed with brine (10 mL), dried over anhydrous sodium sulfate, filtered, and concentrated. The residue was purified by flash chromatography on silica gel using hexanes/ethyl acetate (10:1) as eluent. Then to a solution of the product in dichloromethane (2.0 mL) was added diisobutylaluminum hydride (1.0 M in toluene, 0.30 mmol) at 0 °C and degassed with nitrogen. The reaction mixture was stirred at the room temperature overnight. The mixture was quenched with saturated aqueous ammonium chloride at 0 °C. The aqueous layer was extracted with ethyl acetate (10 mL \times 3). The combined organic layers were washed with brine (10 mL), dried over anhydrous sodium sulfate, filtered, and concentrated. The residue was purified by flash chromatography on silica gel using hexanes/ethyl acetate (10:1) as eluent to afford **5**.

2-(4-Methoxyphenyl)-2-(*p*-tolyl)-2-(1,2,3-trimethyl-1*H*-indol-6-yl)ethan-1-amine (5**):**

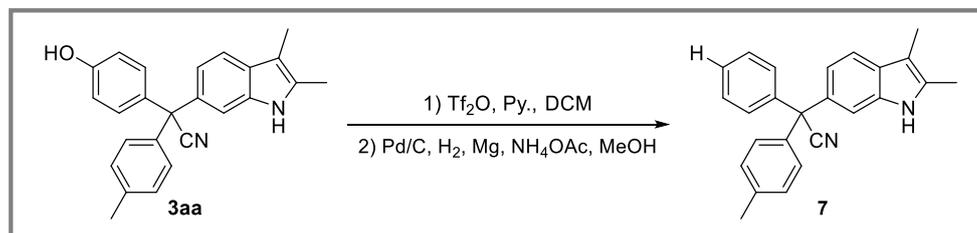
27.5 mg, 69% yield, colorless viscous liquid, new compound, $R_f = 0.40$ (hexanes/ethyl acetate 5/1). $^1\text{H NMR}$ (400 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 7.40 (d, $J = 8.3$ Hz, 1H), 7.20- 7.16 (m, 2H), 7.14-7.08 (m, 4H), 7.05 (d, $J = 1.3$ Hz, 1H), 6.87 (dd, $J = 8.3, 1.6$ Hz, 1H), 6.84-6.81 (m, 2H), 4.66 (d, $J = 4.4$ Hz, 2H), 3.80 (s, 3H), 3.53 (s, 3H), 2.34 (s, 6H), 2.25 (s, 3H). $^{13}\text{C NMR}$ (100 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 157.9, 143.5, 138.5, 137.5, 136.4, 135.8, 133.2, 130.6, 129.3, 128.8, 126.8, 120.5, 117.6, 113.3, 109.7, 106.0, 71.0, 58.2, 55.2, 29.5, 21.0, 10.2, 8.8. HRMS Calculated for $\text{C}_{27}\text{H}_{30}\text{N}_2\text{O}$ $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ 399.2431, found: 399.2465.



To a solution of **3aa** (36.6 mg, 0.10 mmol) in THF (5.0 mL) was added NaH (60% in mineral oil, 12.0 mg, 0.30 mmol) under nitrogen and the reaction mixture was stirred at 0 °C for 30 min. Then MeI (15 μ L, 0.3 mmol) was added. The reaction was allowed to warm to room temperature. Once reaction was determined to be complete via thin layer chromatographic analysis, the reaction was quenched with saturated aqueous ammonium chloride at 0 °C. The aqueous layer was extracted with ethyl acetate (10 mL \times 3). The combined organic layers were washed with brine (10 mL), dried over anhydrous sodium sulfate, filtered, and concentrated. The residue was purified by flash chromatography on silica gel using hexanes/ethyl acetate (10:1) as eluent. Then to a solution of the product in *t*-amyl alcohol (2.0 mL) was added potassium hydroxide (56.1 mg, 0.50 mmol) and the mixture was heated to 140 °C for 48 hours. After cooling to room temperature, the mixture was passed through a pad of celite. Then the filtrate was removed under vacuum and the residue was purified by flash chromatography on silica gel using hexanes/ethyl acetate (3:1) as eluent to afford the product **6**.

2-(4-Methoxyphenyl)-2-(*p*-tolyl)-2-(1,2,3-trimethyl-1*H*-indol-6-yl)acetamide (**6**):

35.0 mg, 85% yield, colorless viscous liquid, new compound, R_f = 0.20 (hexanes/ethyl acetate 3/1). ^1H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 7.37 (d, J = 8.3 Hz, 1H), 7.24-7.19 (m, 4H), 7.17 (d, J = 1.1 Hz, 1H), 7.06 (d, J = 8.1 Hz, 2H), 6.89 (dd, J = 8.3, 1.5 Hz, 1H), 6.80-6.78 (m, 2H), 6.16 (s, 1H), 5.90 (s, 1H), 3.77 (s, 3H), 3.50 (s, 3H), 2.31 (s, 6H), 2.22 (s, 3H). ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 177.2, 158.2, 141.4, 136.5, 136.3, 136.1, 133.6, 131.7, 130.4, 128.5, 127.0, 122.0, 117.2, 113.0, 110.4, 106.1, 66.9, 55.2, 29.5, 21.0, 10.2, 8.8. HRMS Calculated for $\text{C}_{27}\text{H}_{28}\text{N}_2\text{O}_2$ $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ 413.2224, found: 413.2229.

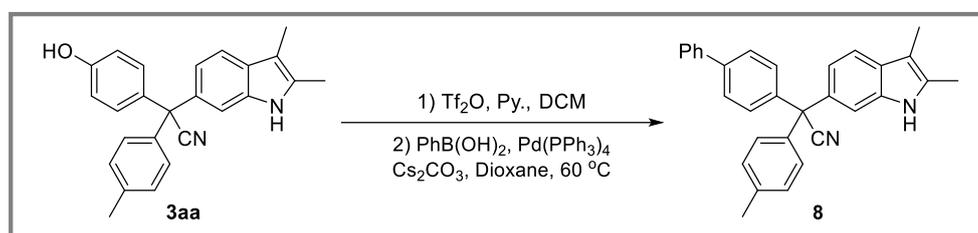


To a solution of **3aa** (36.6 mg, 0.10 mmol) in dichloromethane (2.0 mL) were added pyridine (16 μ L, 0.20 mmol) and a solution of trifluoromethanesulfonic anhydride (20 μ L, 0.12 mmol) in dichloromethane (2.0 mL) sequentially. The reaction mixture was stirred for 5 hours. Then water (10 mL) was added. The layers were separated, and the aqueous layer was extracted with ethyl acetate (10 mL \times 3). The combined organic layers were washed with brine (10 mL), dried over anhydrous sodium sulfate, filtered, and concentrated. The residue was purified by flash chromatography on silica gel using hexanes/ethyl acetate (10:1) as eluent. Then a mixture of the product, 10% Pd/C (10.6 mg, 0.01 mmol, 10 wt %), ammonium acetate (15.4 mg, 0.20 mmol), and

magnesium (12.0 mg, 0.50 mmol) in methanol (3.0 mL) was stirred at room temperature under hydrogen balloon for 12 h. Then the crude product was directly purified by flash chromatography on silica gel using hexanes/ethyl acetate (10:1) as eluent to afford the desirable product **7**.

2-(2,3-Dimethyl-1H-indol-6-yl)-2-phenyl-2-(p-tolyl)acetonitrile (7):

27.9 mg, 80% yield, colorless viscous liquid, new compound, $R_f = 0.45$ (hexanes/ethyl acetate 10/1). ^1H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 7.63 (s, 1H), 7.42 (d, $J = 8.3$ Hz, 1H), 7.34-7.30 (m, 3H), 7.26-7.23 (m, 2H), 7.15-7.11 (m, 4H), 7.00 (d, $J = 1.3$ Hz, 1H), 6.97 (dd, $J = 8.3, 1.7$ Hz, 1H), 2.36 (s, 3H), 2.33 (s, 3H), 2.21 (s, 3H). ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 141.4, 138.3, 137.9, 134.9, 133.2, 132.3, 129.3, 129.0, 128.9, 128.6, 128.0, 124.4, 120.3, 118.1, 110.9, 107.3, 57.4, 21.1, 11.7, 8.5. HRMS Calculated for $\text{C}_{25}\text{H}_{22}\text{N}_2$ $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ 351.1856, found: 351.1859.

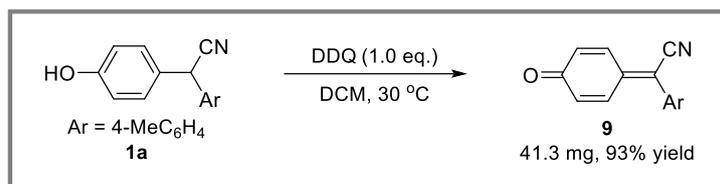


To a solution of **3aa** (36.6 mg, 0.10 mmol) in dichloromethane (2.0 mL) were added pyridine (16 μL , 0.20 mmol) and a solution of trifluoromethanesulfonic anhydride (20 μL , 0.12 mmol) in dichloromethane (2.0 mL) sequentially. The reaction mixture was stirred for 5 hours. Then water (10 mL) was added. The layers were separated, and the aqueous layer was extracted with ethyl acetate (10 mL \times 3). The combined organic layers were washed with brine (10 mL), dried over anhydrous sodium sulfate, filtered, and concentrated. The residue was purified by flash chromatography on silica gel using hexanes/ethyl acetate (10:1) as eluent. Then to a solution of the product, phenylboronic acid (18.3 mg, 0.15 mmol), cesium carbonate (97.7 mg, 0.30 mmol) in dioxane (2.0 mL) was added tetrakis(triphenylphosphine)palladium (17.3 mg, 0.015 mmol) and degassed with nitrogen. The reaction mixture was stirred at 60°C for 48 hours and then filtered through a short pad of celite, which was washed three times with dichloromethane. The filtrate was concentrated and the residue was purified by flash chromatography on silica gel using hexanes/ethyl acetate (10:1) as eluent to afford **8**.

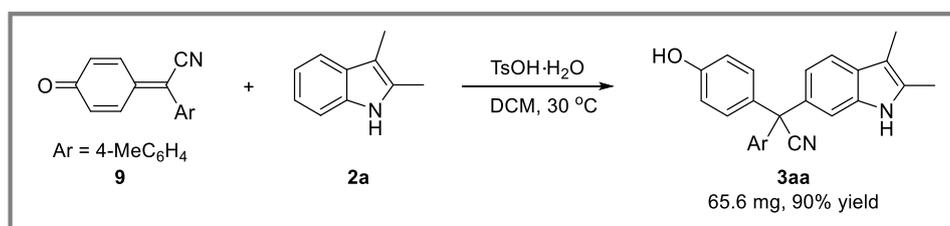
2-([1,1'-Biphenyl]-4-yl)-2-(2,3-dimethyl-1H-indol-6-yl)-2-(p-tolyl)acetonitrile (8):

39.0 mg, 91% yield, colorless viscous liquid, new compound, $R_f = 0.60$ (hexanes/ethyl acetate 5/1). ^1H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 7.67 (brs, 1H), 7.61-7.55 (m, 4H), 7.47-7.43 (m, 3H), 7.38 (d, $J = 7.3$ Hz, 1H), 7.35-7.32 (m, 2H), 7.20-7.14 (m, 4H), 7.07 (d, $J = 1.3$ Hz, 1H), 7.03 (dd, $J = 8.3, 1.7$ Hz, 1H), 2.38 (s, 3H), 2.35 (s, 3H), 2.23 (s, 3H). ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 140.8, 140.4, 140.4, 138.2, 137.9, 134.9, 133.2, 132.4, 129.5, 129.4, 129.1, 129.0, 128.9, 127.7, 127.2, 127.2, 124.3, 120.3, 118.2, 110.9, 107.3, 57.2, 21.2, 11.7, 8.6. HRMS Calculated for $\text{C}_{31}\text{H}_{26}\text{N}_2$ $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ 427.2169, found: 427.2176.

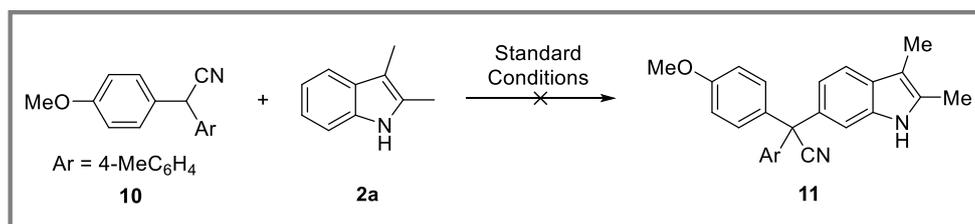
4. Control Experiments



To a solution of **1a** (44.6 mg, 0.20 mmol, 1.0 equiv) in dichloromethane (2.0 mL) was added 2,3-dichloro-5,6-dicyano-1,4-benzoquinone (45.4 mg, 0.20 mmol, 1.0 equiv) and it was stirred at rt for 1 hour. Then it was purified directly by silica gel chromatography using hexanes/ethyl acetate (10:1) as eluent to afford **9**. 41.3 mg, 93% yield, known compound⁴. ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.83 (dd, *J* = 10.0, 2.6 Hz, 1H), 7.50 (dd, *J* = 10.1, 2.6 Hz, 1H), 7.43 (d, *J* = 8.2 Hz, 2H), 7.34 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 6.60 (dd, *J* = 10.0, 1.8 Hz, 1H), 6.48 (dd, *J* = 10.1, 1.8 Hz, 1H), 2.45 (s, 3H). ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 186.6, 142.3, 139.1, 137.1, 134.7, 131.2, 130.6, 130.1, 129.3, 124.3, 117.2, 21.6.

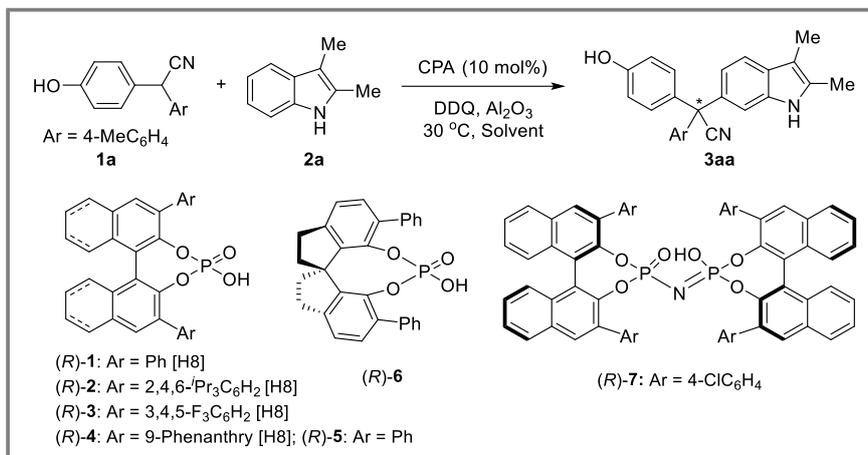


To a solution of **4** (44.2 mg, 0.20 mmol) in dichloromethane (2.0 mL) was added 2,3-dimethylindole **2a** (29.0 mg, 0.20 mmol) and *p*-toluenesulfonic acid monohydrate (3.9 mg, 0.02 mmol). The reaction mixture was stirred for 1 hour at 30 °C. Then it was purified directly by silica gel chromatography using hexanes/ethyl acetate (10:1 to 3:1) as eluent to afford **3aa** (65.6 mg, 90% yield).



To a solution of 2,2-diarylacetonitrile **10** (56.9 mg, 0.24 mmol) in dichloromethane (2.0 mL) was added 2,3-dichloro-5,6-dicyano-1,4-benzoquinone (49.9 mg, 0.22 mmol) and aluminum oxide (base, 80.0 mg) at room temperature. The reaction was stirred at 30 °C for 3 hours, followed by 2,3-dimethylindole **2a** (29.0 mg, 0.20 mmol) and *p*-toluenesulfonic acid monohydrate (3.8 mg, 0.02 mmol). The reaction continued to stir at 30 °C for 1 hour (TLC monitoring). The reaction didn't produce the target product **11**.

5. Preliminary Investigation on the Catalytic Asymmetric Version



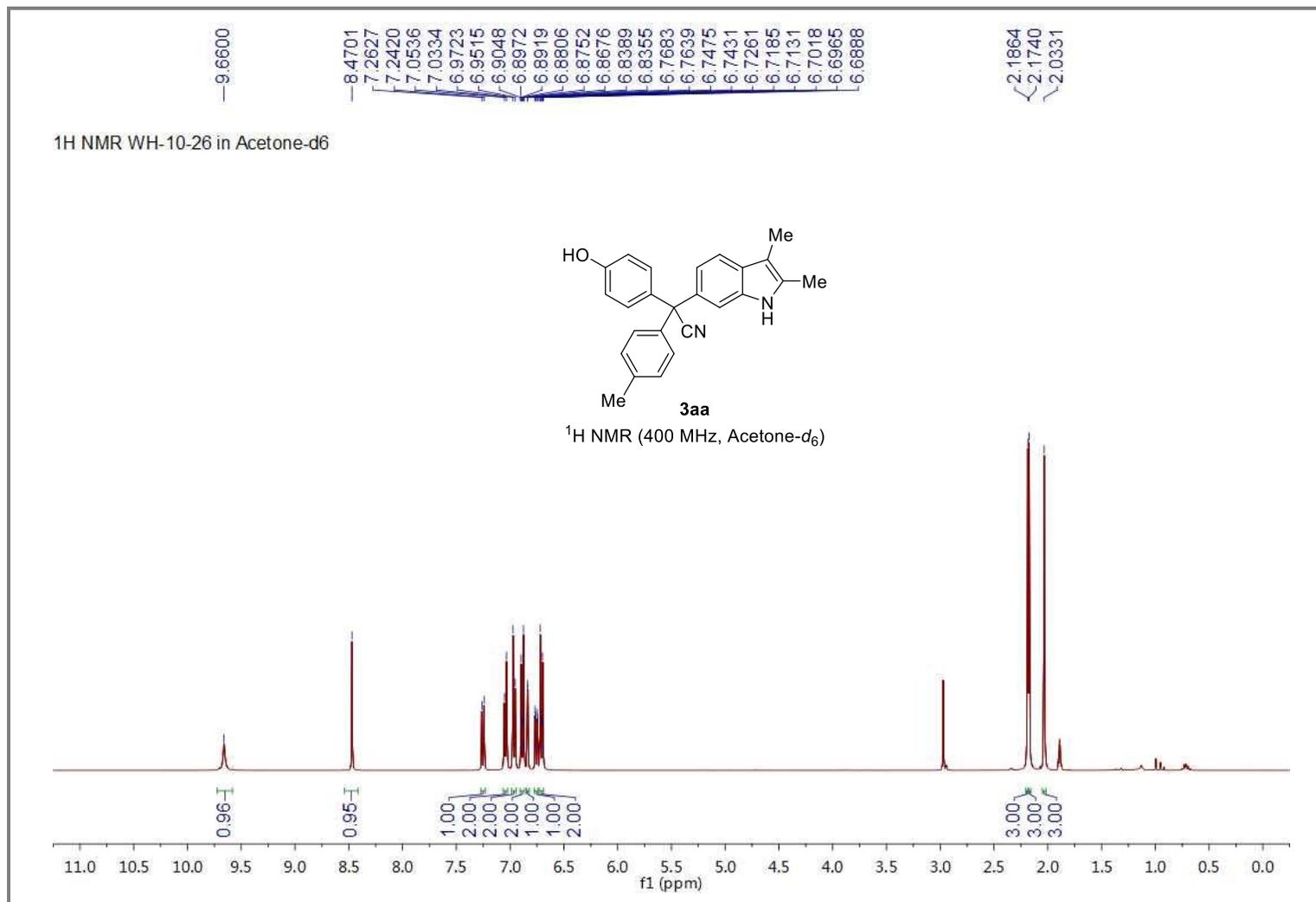
Entry ^a	CPA	Solvent	Yield ^b (%)	ee ^c (%)
1	(R)-1	DCM	84	18
2	(R)-2	DCM	62	6
3	(R)-3	DCM	94	33
4	(R)-4	DCM	90	13
5	(R)-5	DCM	88	16
6	(R)-6	DCM	73	13
7	(R)-7	DCM	91	1
8	(R)-3	THF	27	3
9	(R)-3	MeCN	70	6
10	(R)-3	Toluene	93	25

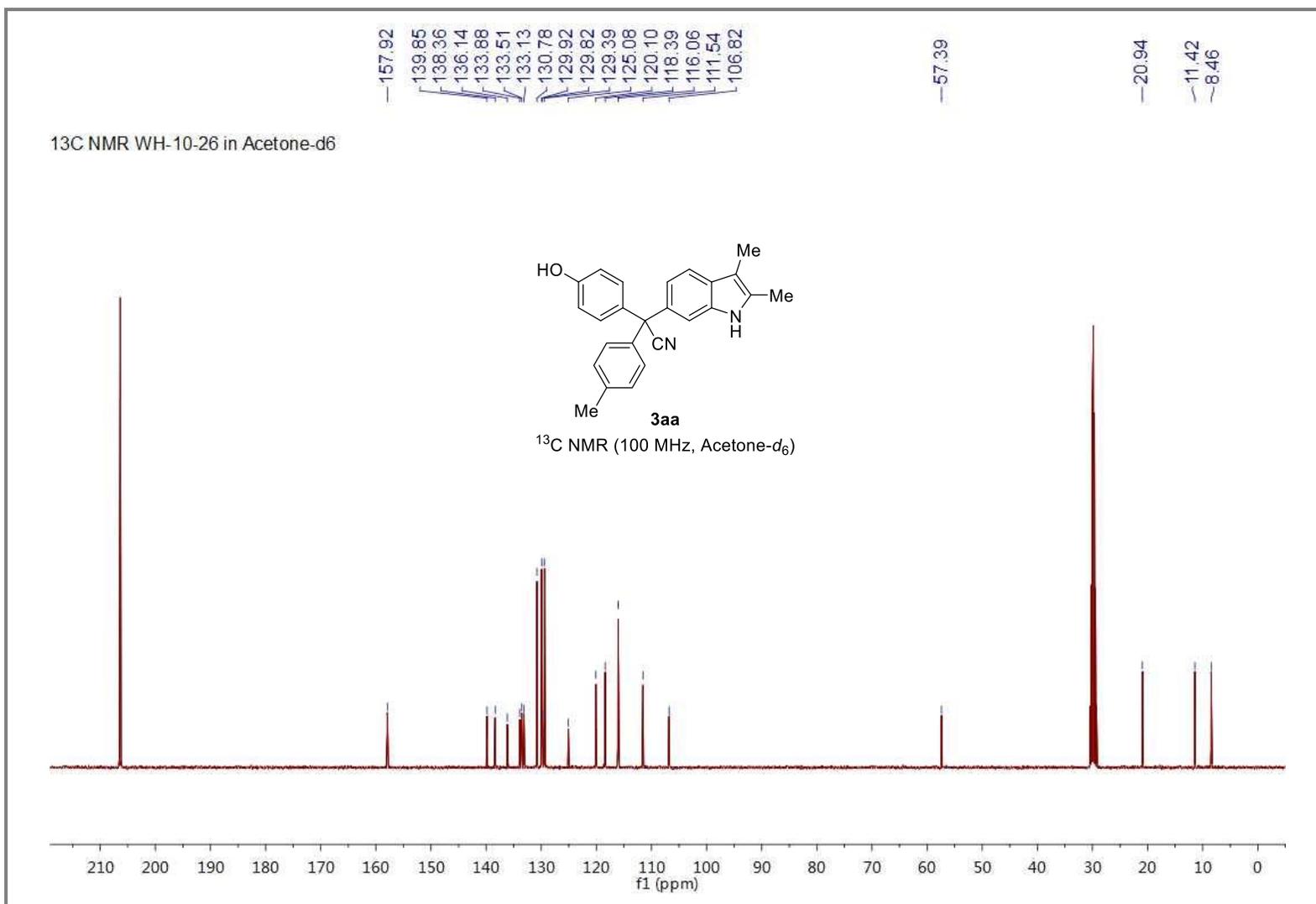
Reaction Conditions: ^a **1a** (0.24 mmol), Al₂O₃ (basic, 80.0 mg), DDQ (0.22 mmol), DCM (2.0 mL), 30 °C, 3 hours. Then **2a** (0.20 mmol), CPA (10 mol%), 2 hours. ^b Yield of isolated product. ^c Determined by HPLC (Entry 3, Chiracel OD-H, 254 nm, 30 °C, *n*-Hexane/*i*-PrOH = 80/20, flow = 0.8 mL/min, retention time 7.6 min (major) and 11.3 min, 33% ee).

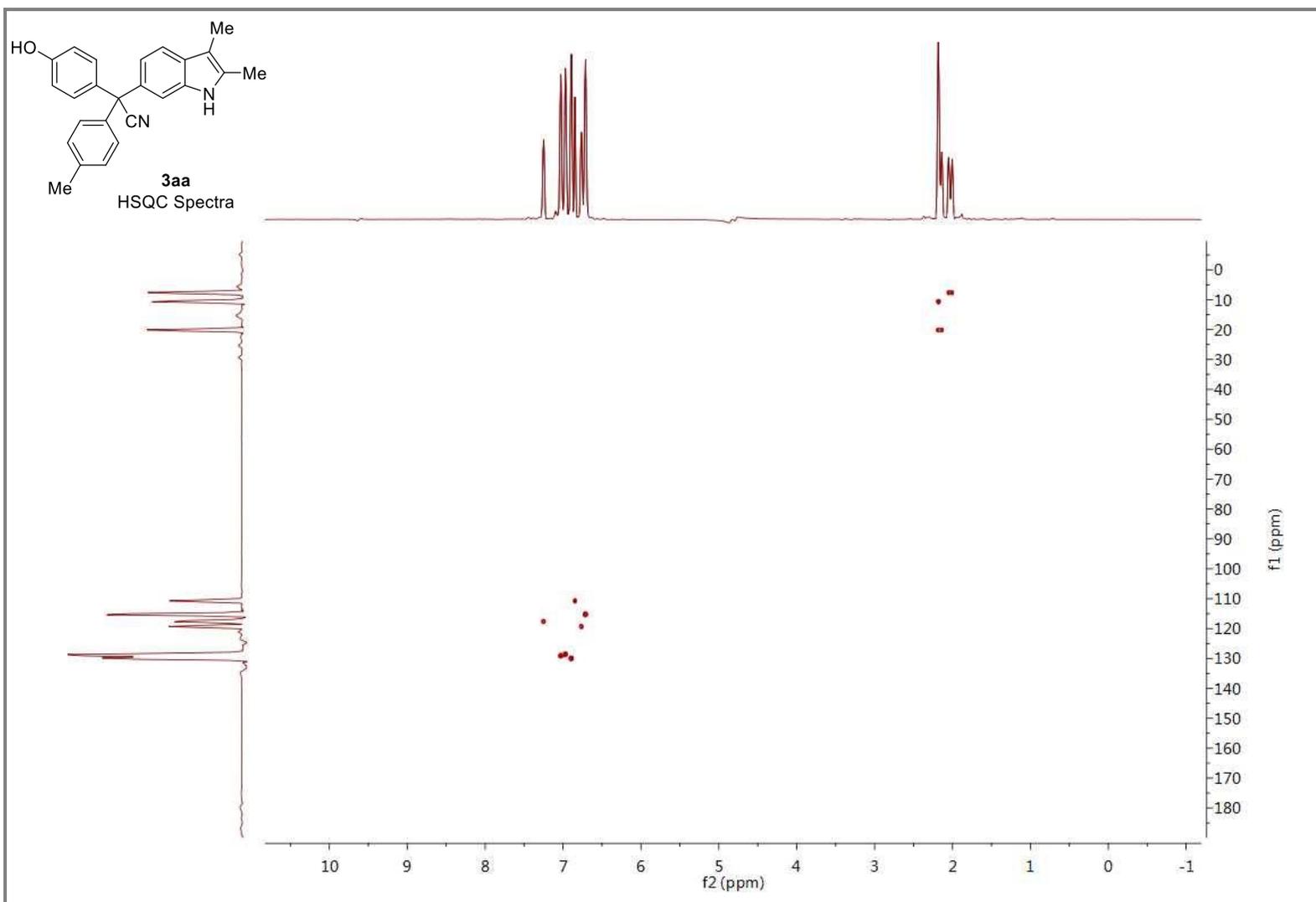
6. References

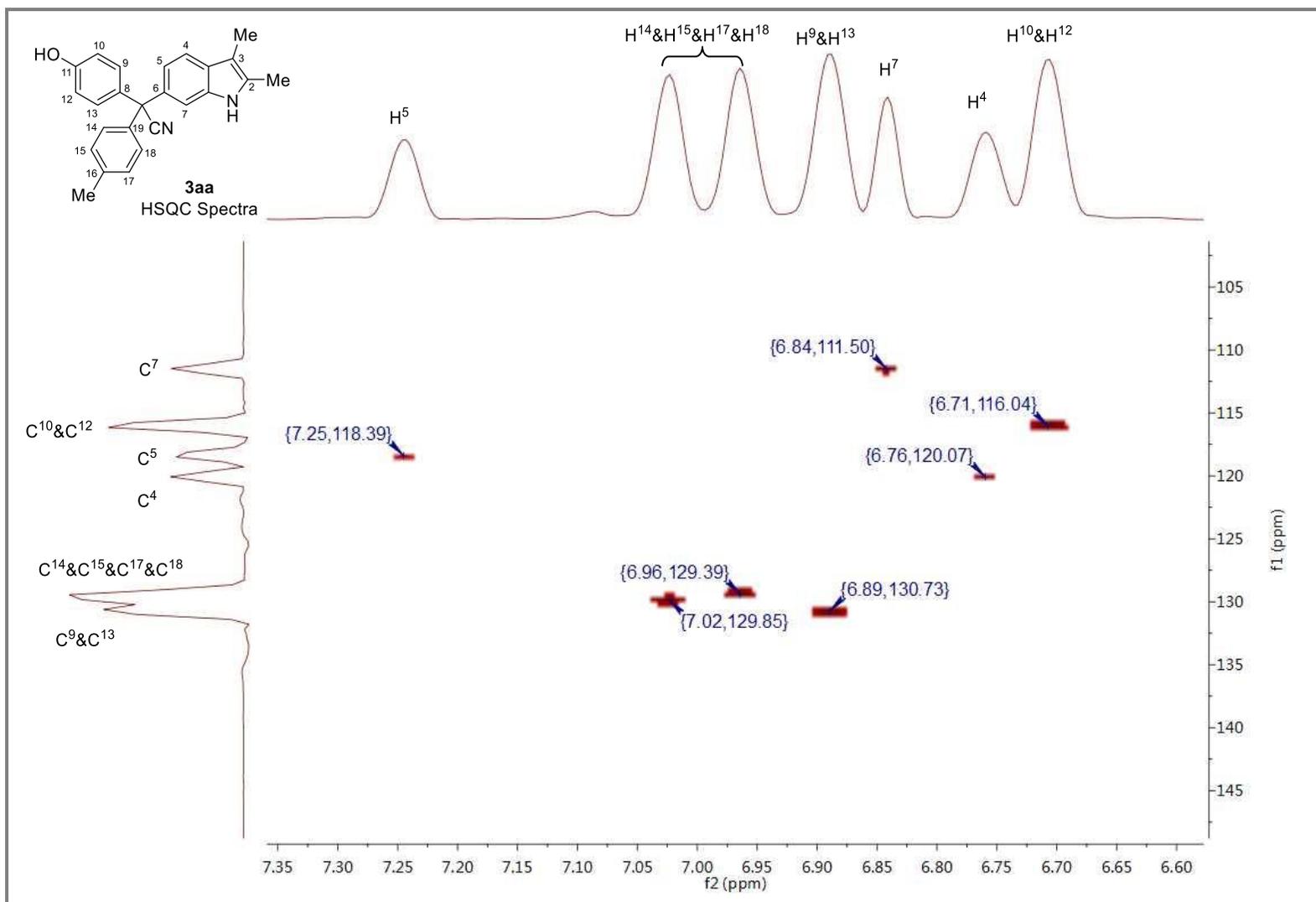
1. (a) X. Liu, C. Zhao, R. Zhu and L. Liu, Construction of Vicinal Quaternary Carbon Stereocenters Through Diastereo- and Enantioselective Oxidative 1,6-Conjugate Addition, *Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.*, 2021, **60**, 18499-18503; (b) Y. Mao, Z. Wang, G. Wang, R. Zhao, L. Kan, X. Pan and L. Liu, Redox Deracemization of Tertiary Stereocenters Adjacent to an Electron-Withdrawing Group, *ACS Catal.*, 2020, **10**, 7785-7791.
2. L. Wang, J. Zhou, T.-M. Ding, Z.-Q. Yan, S.-H. Hou, G.-D. Zhu and S.-Y. Zhang, Asymmetric *N*-Hydroxyalkylation of Indoles with Ethyl Glyoxalates Catalyzed by a Chiral Phosphoric Acid: Highly Enantioselective Synthesis of Chiral *N,O*-Aminal Indole Derivatives, *Org. Lett.*, 2019, **21**, 2795-2799.
3. (a) X. Pan, Z. Wang, L. Kan, Y. Mao, Y. Zhua and L. Liu, Cross-dehydrogenative Coupling Enables Enantioselective Access to CF₃-substituted Allcarbon Quaternary Stereocenters, *Chem. Sci.*, 2020, **11**, 2414-2419; (b) Z. Wang, Y. Zhu, X. Pan, G. Wang and L. Liu, Synthesis of Chiral Triarylmethanes Bearing All-Carbon Quaternary Stereocenters: Catalytic Asymmetric Oxidative Cross-Coupling of 2,2-Diarylacetonitriles and (Hetero)arenes, *Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.*, 2020, **59**, 3053-3057.
4. Y. Zhu, H. Wang, G. Wang, Z. Wang, Z. Liu and L. Liu, Enantioselective Construction of Single and Vicinal All-Carbon Quaternary Stereocenters through Ion-Pair-Catalyzed 1,6-Conjugate Addition, *Org. Lett.*, 2021, **23**, 7248-7253.

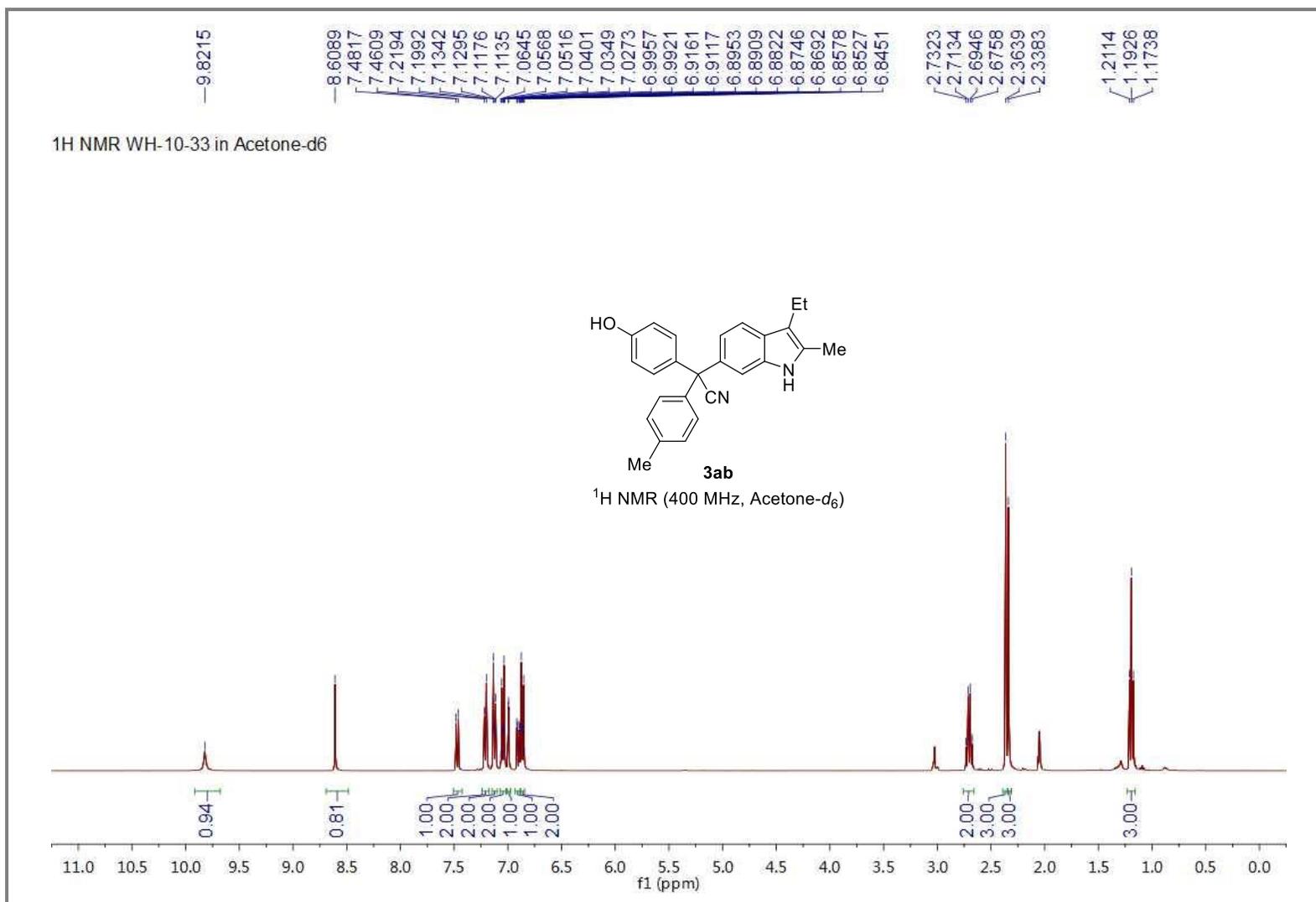
7. Copy of NMR and HPLC Spectra

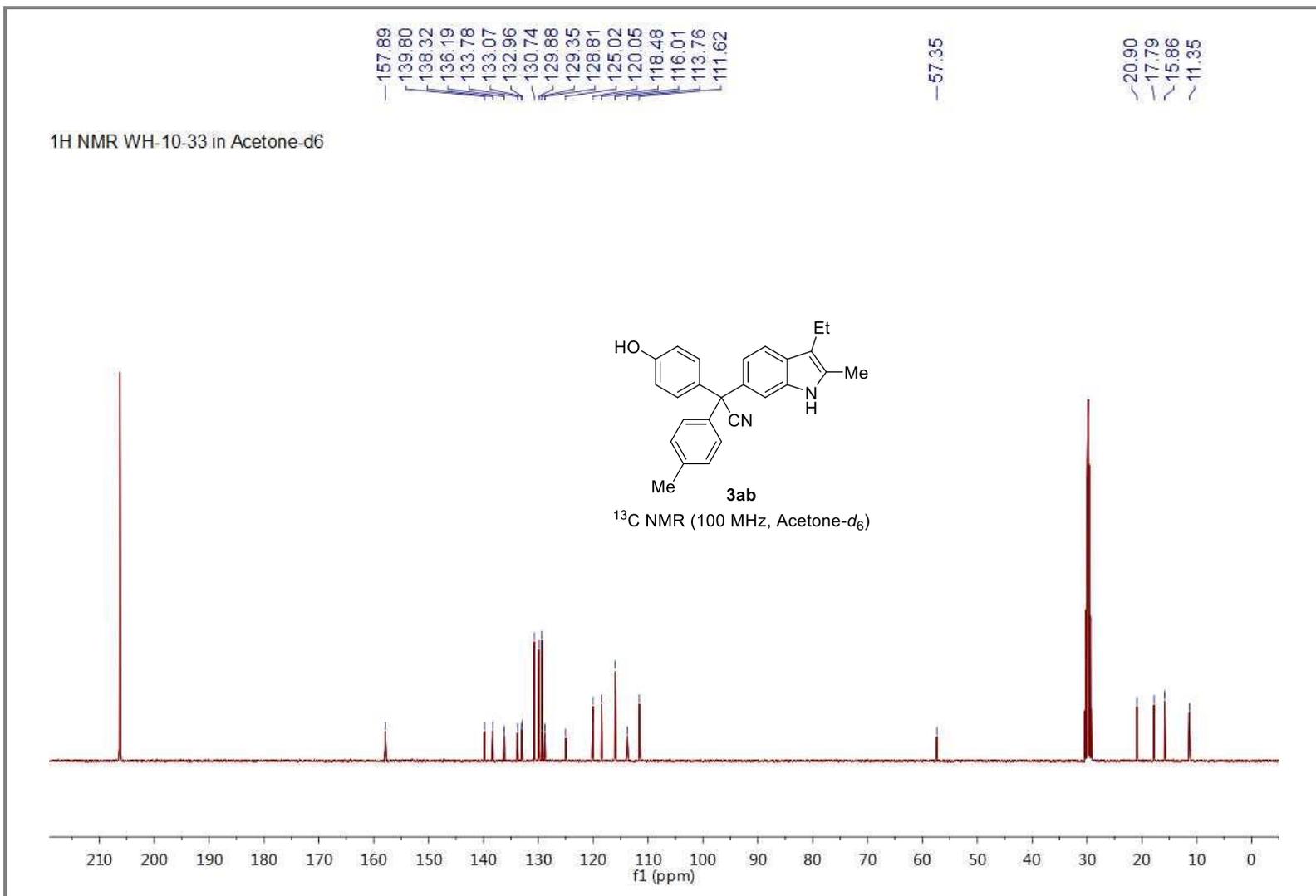


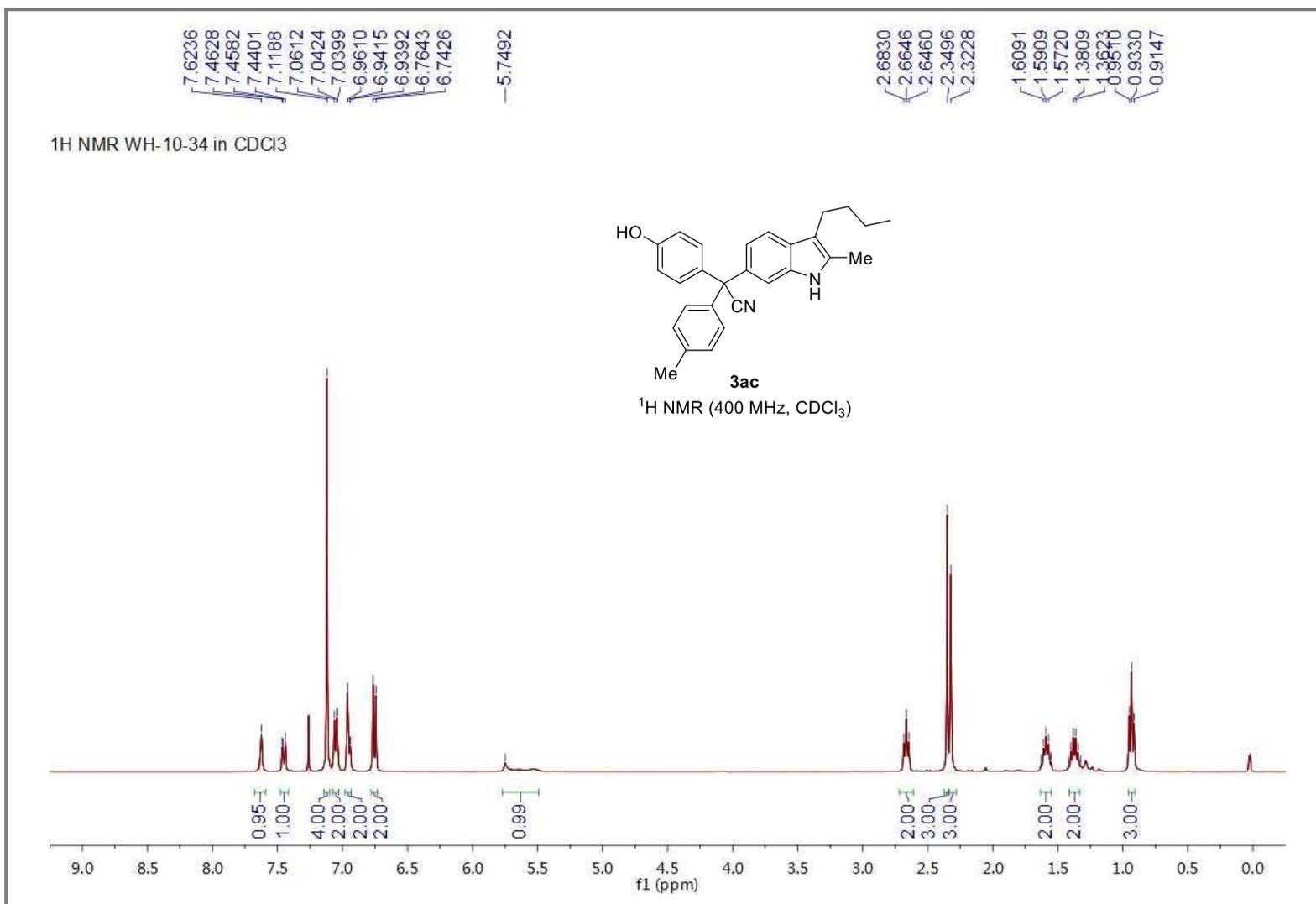


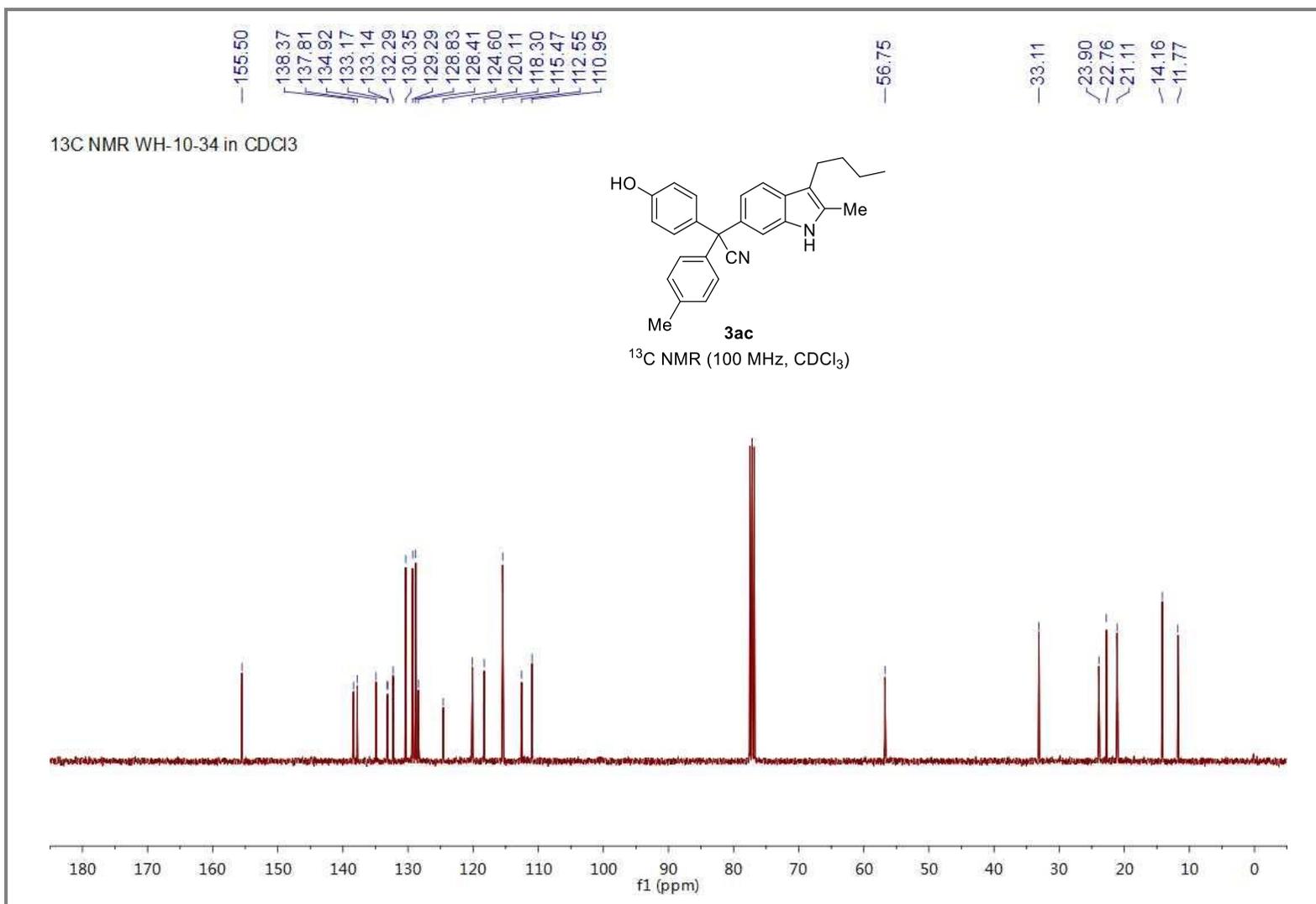


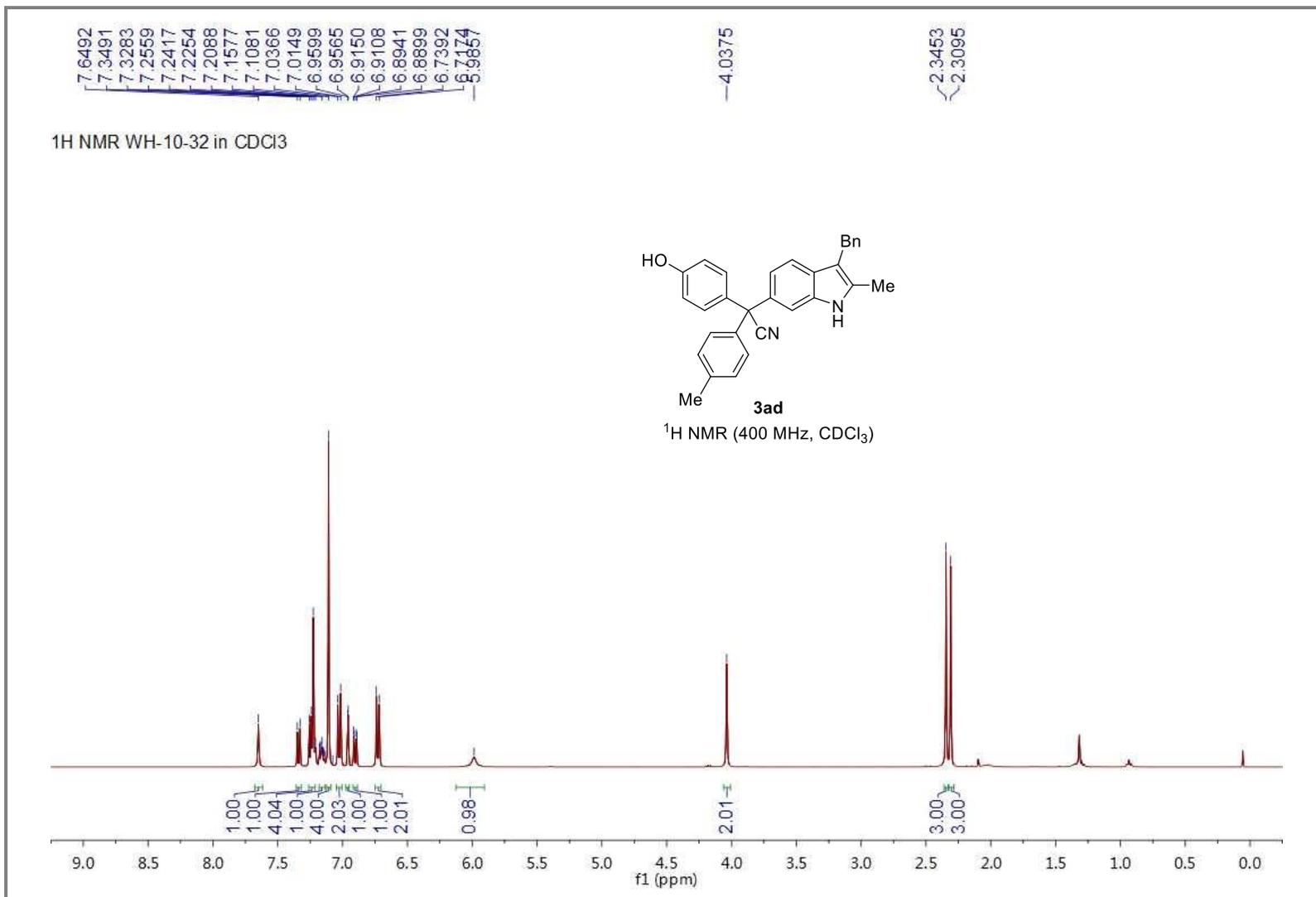


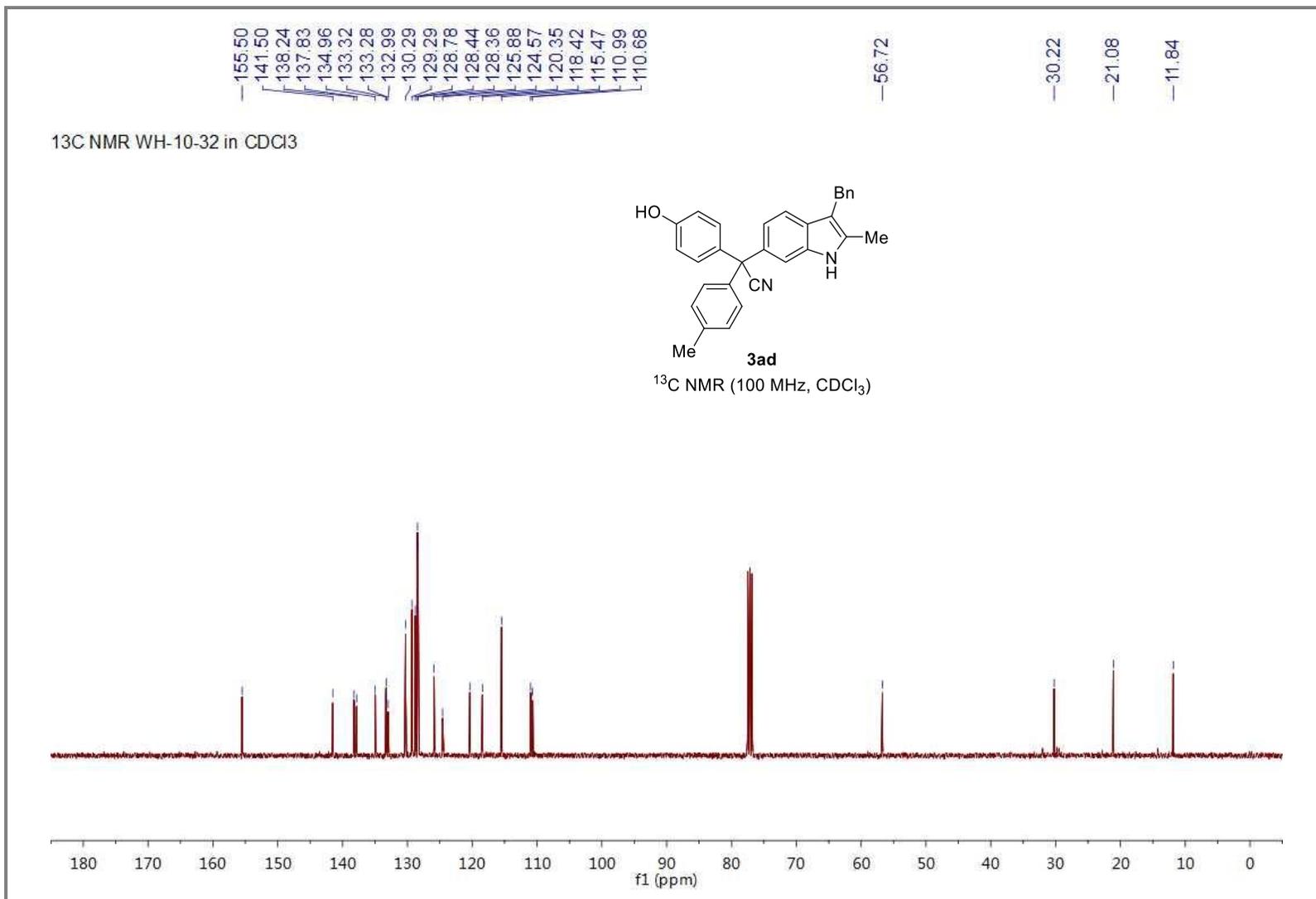


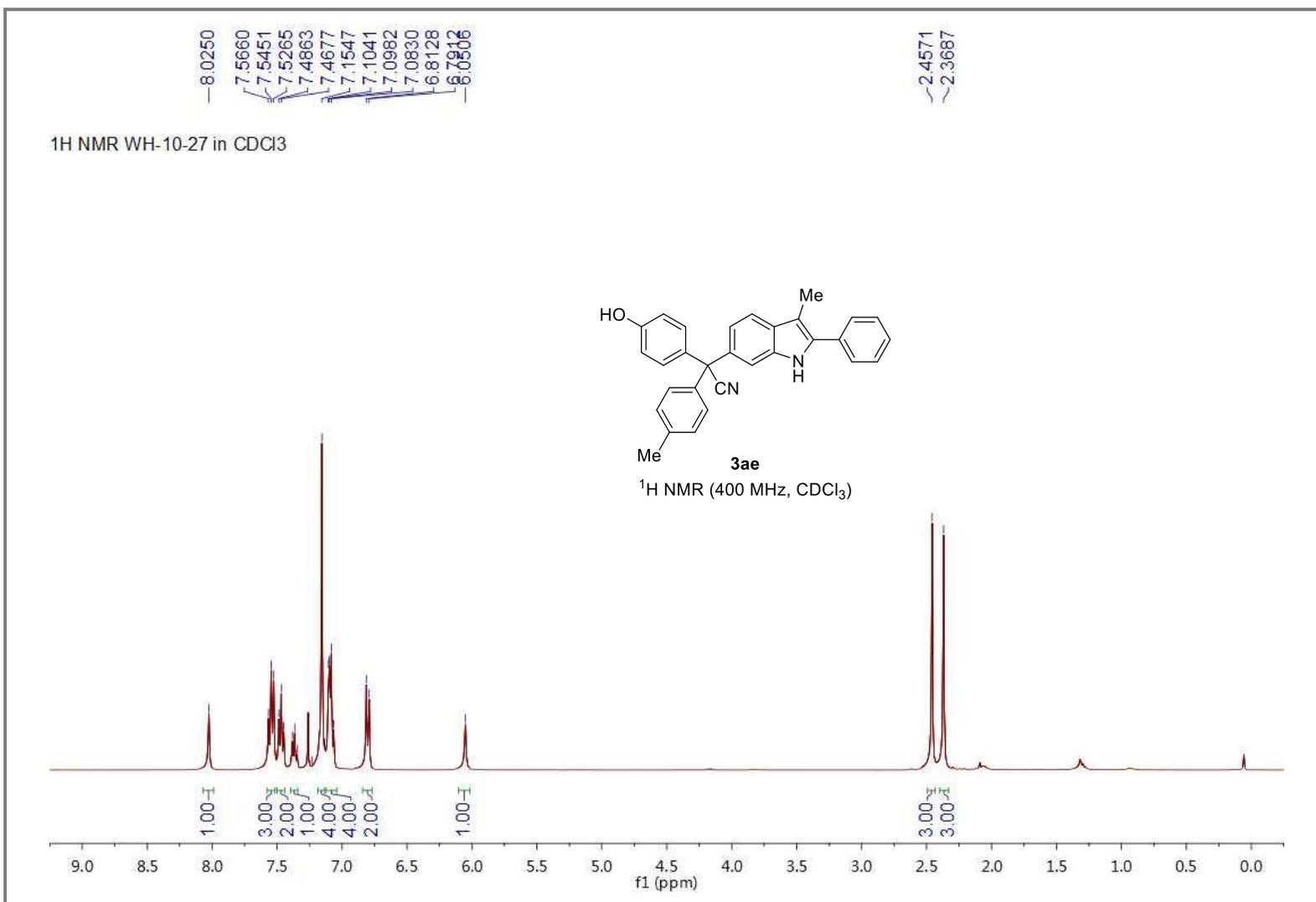


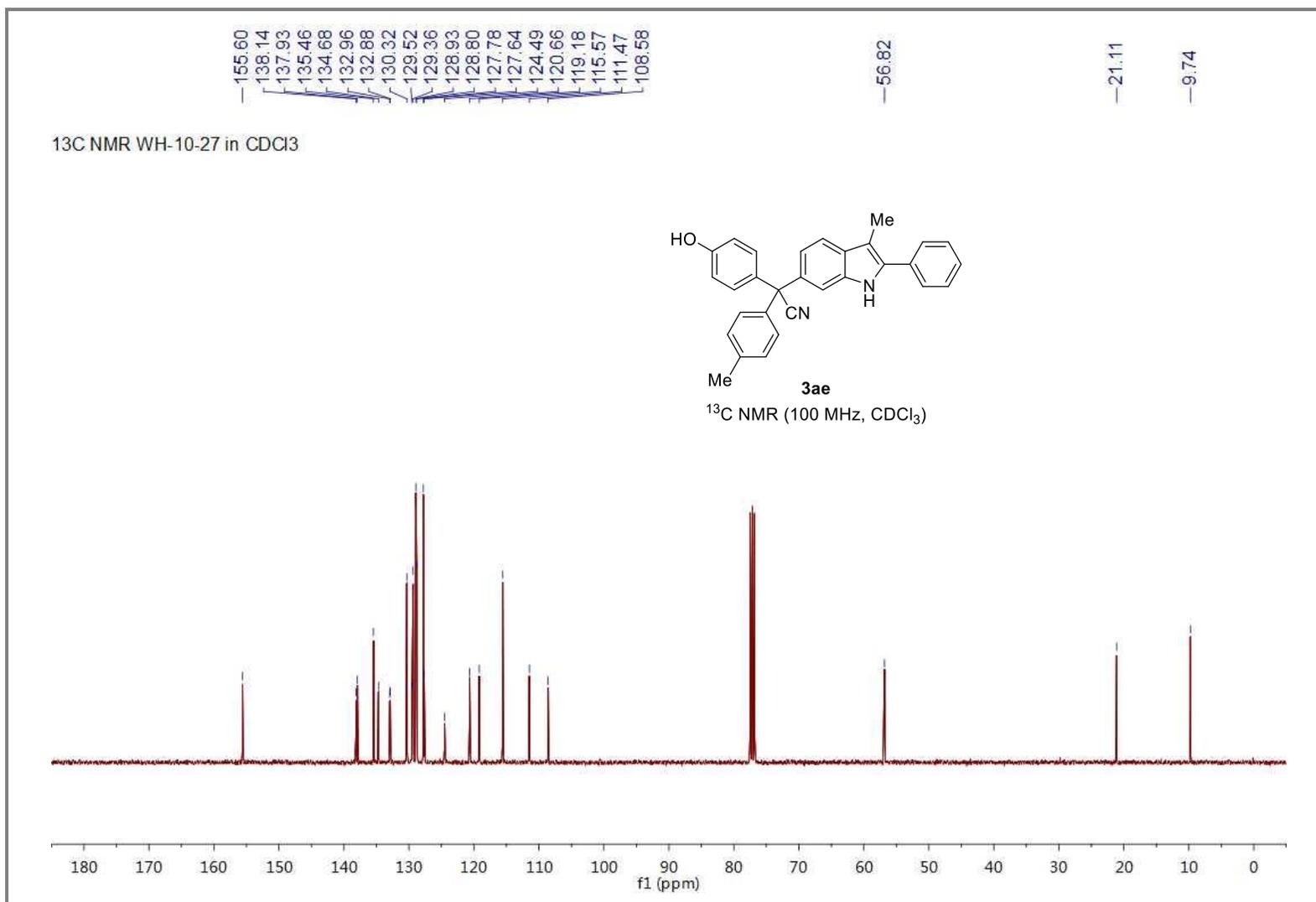


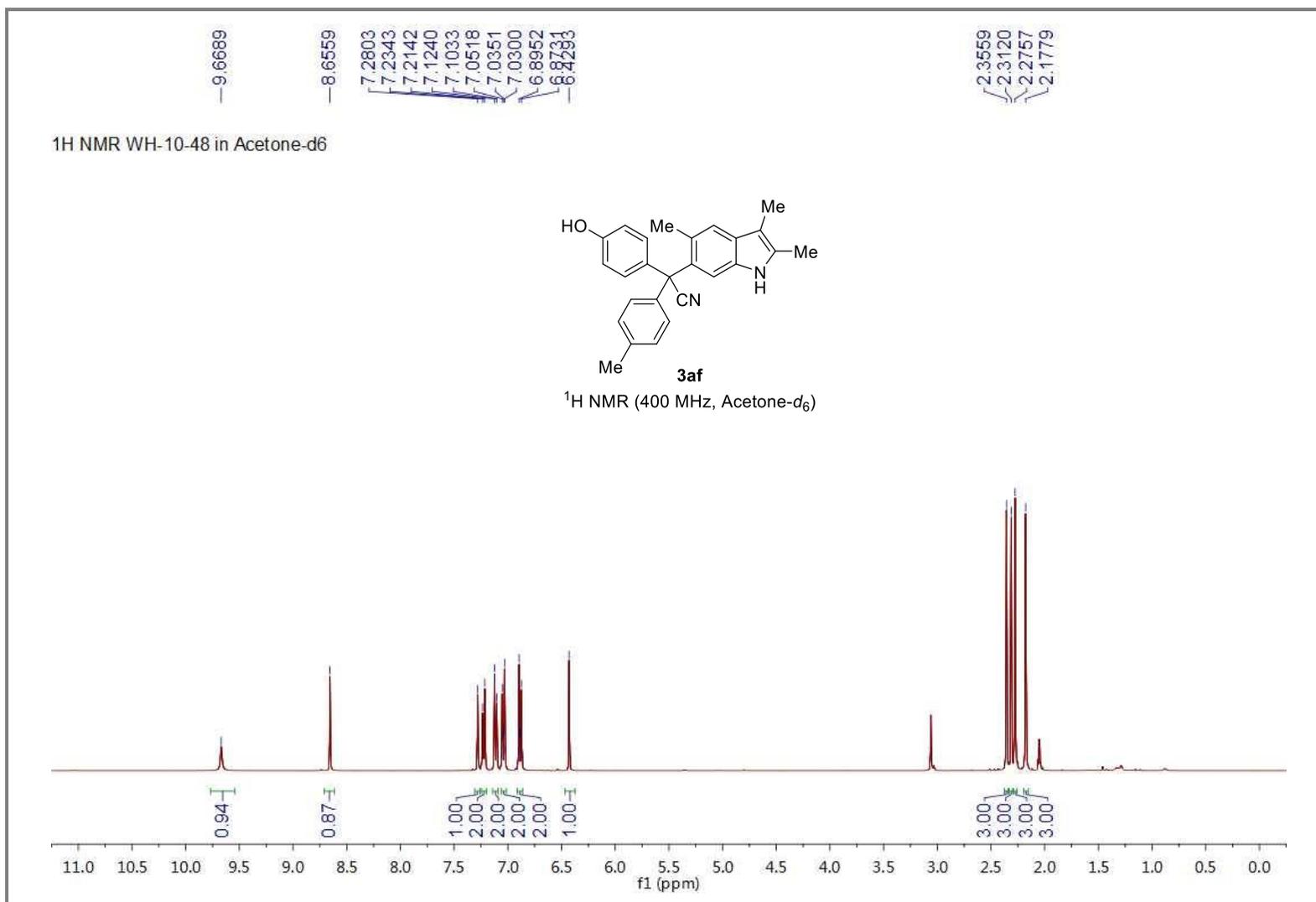


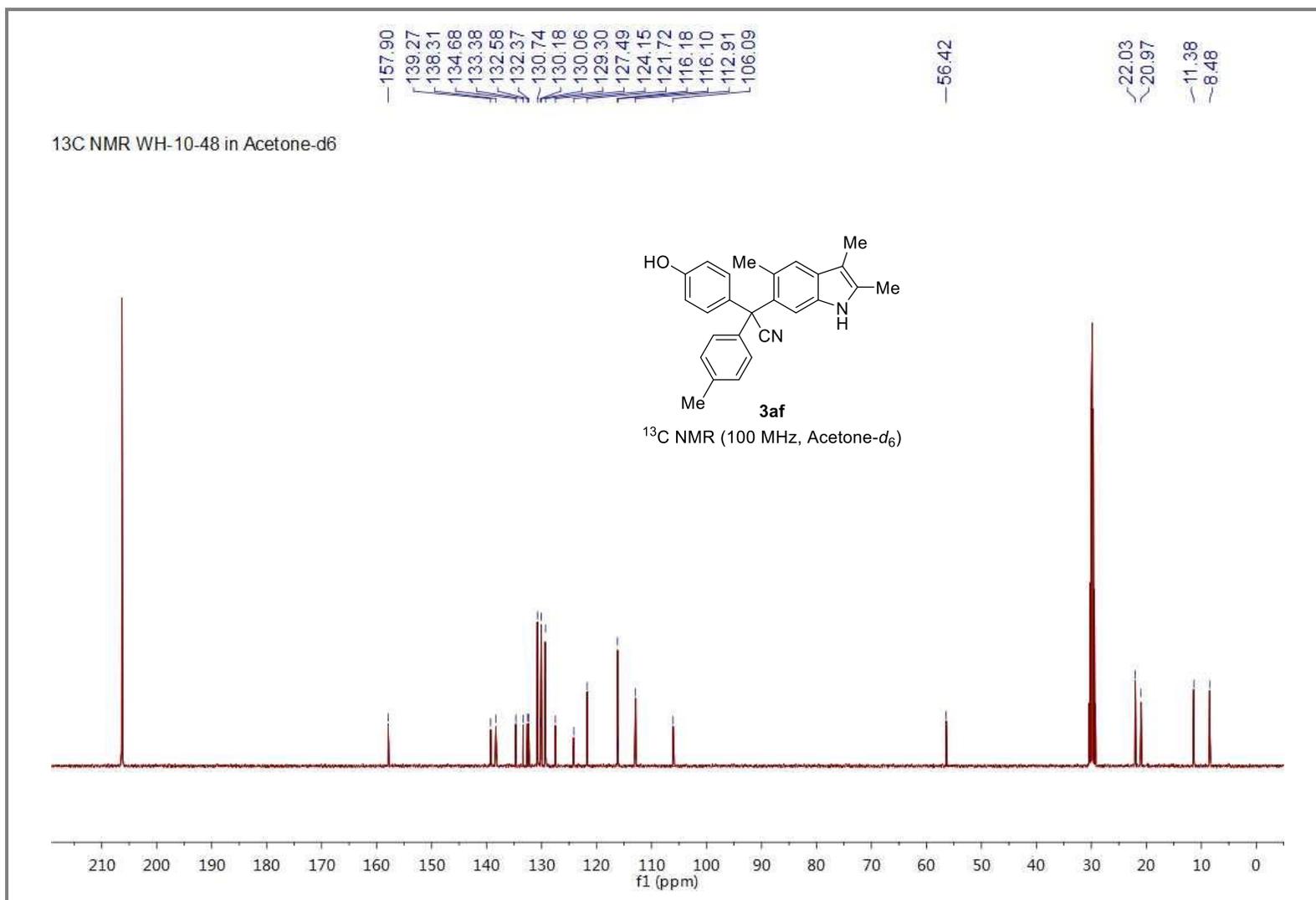


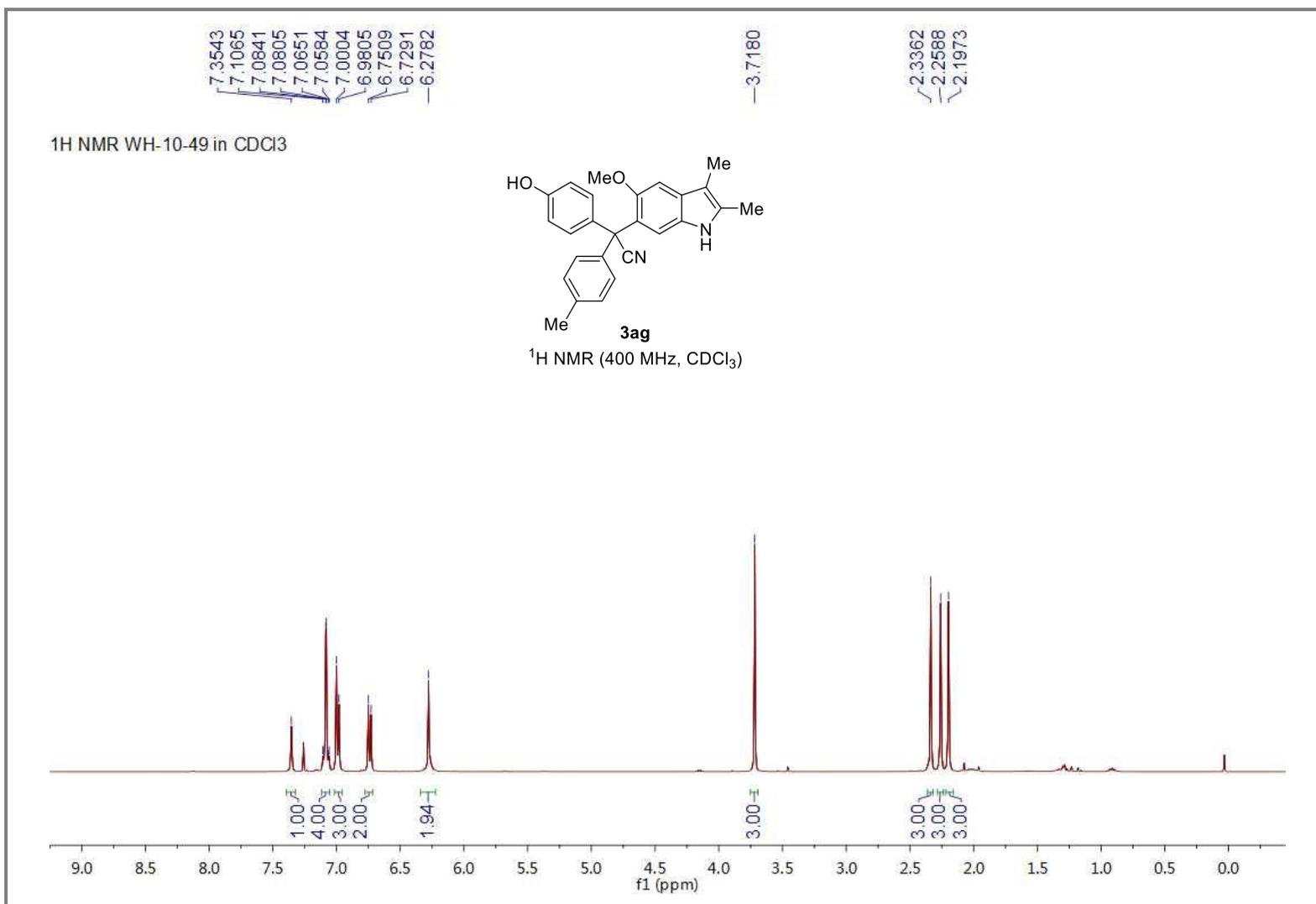


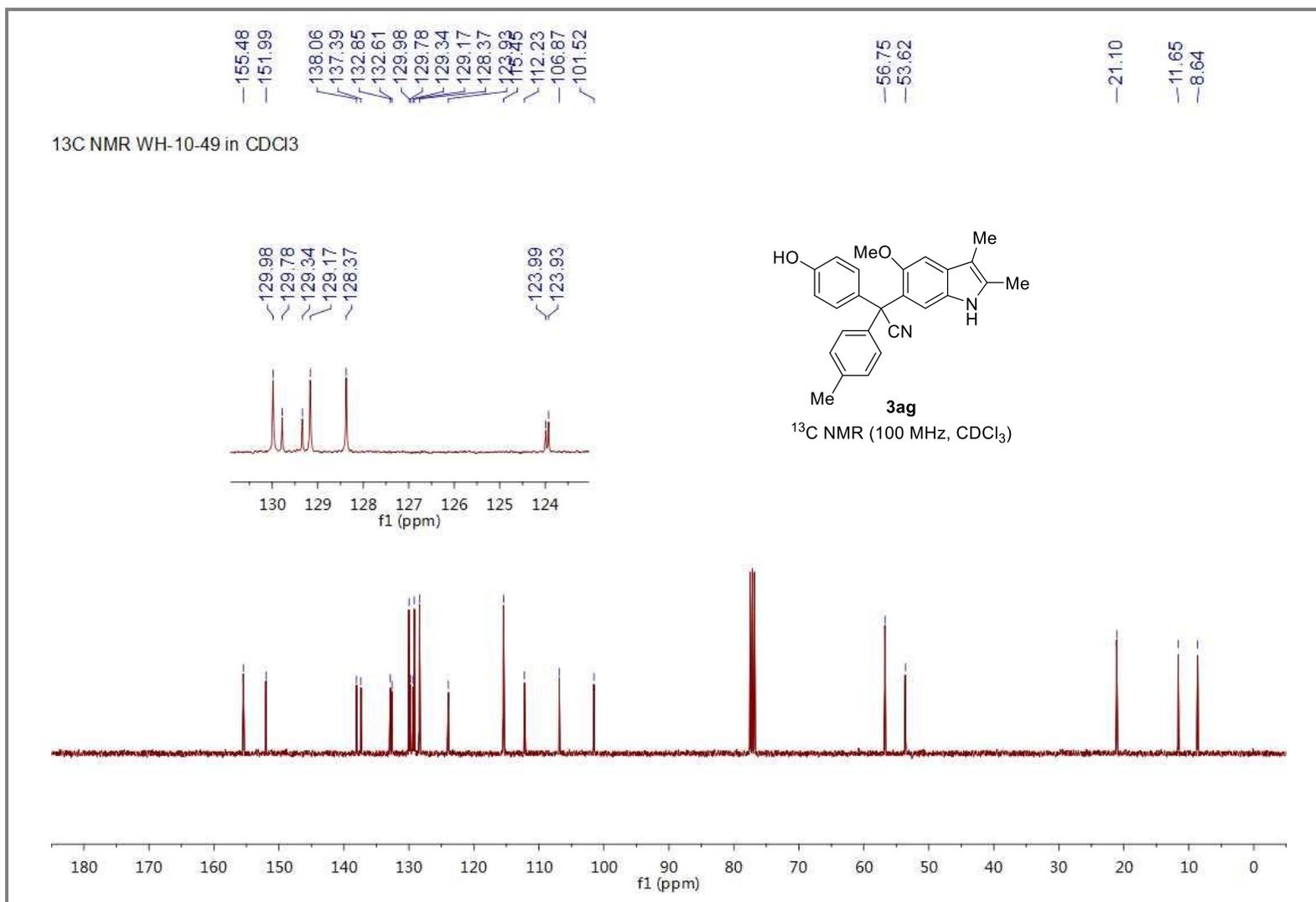


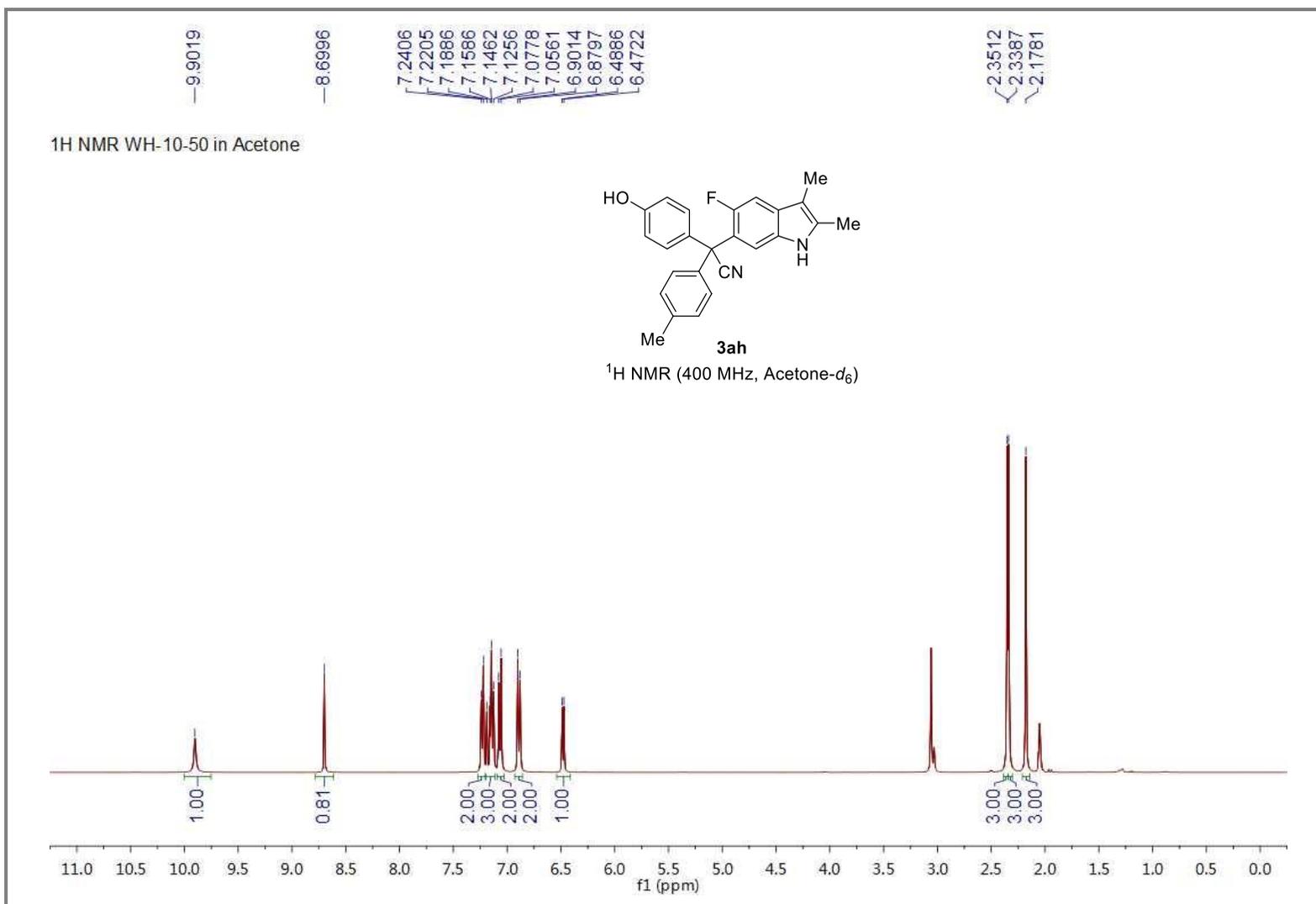


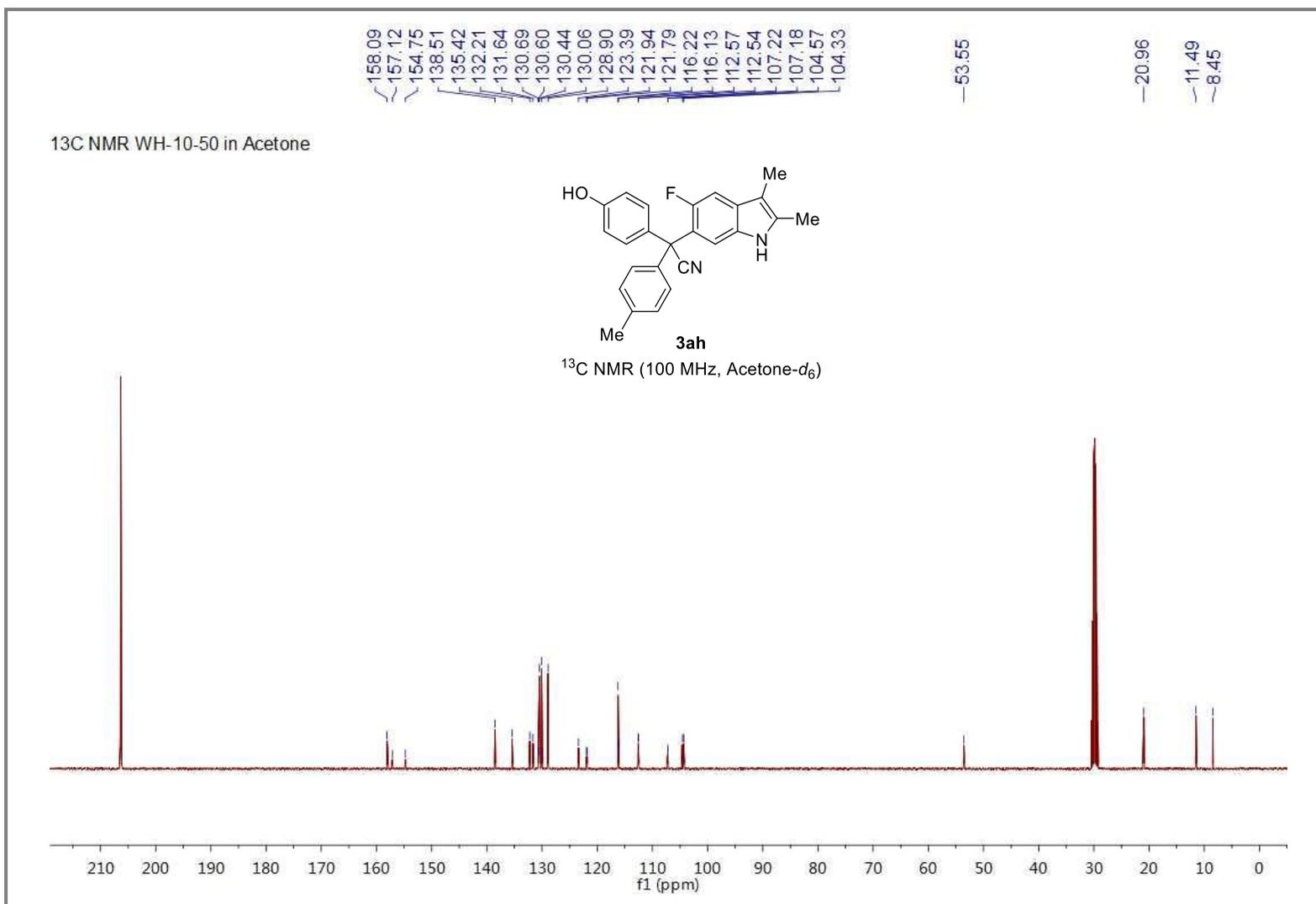




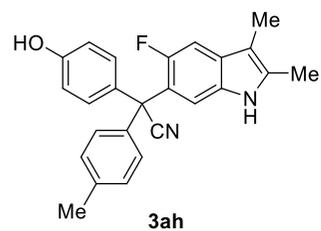






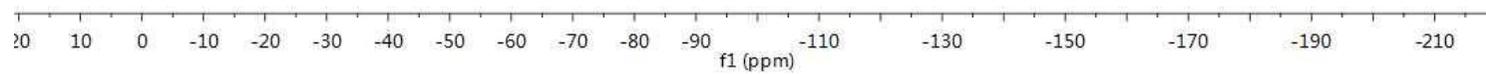


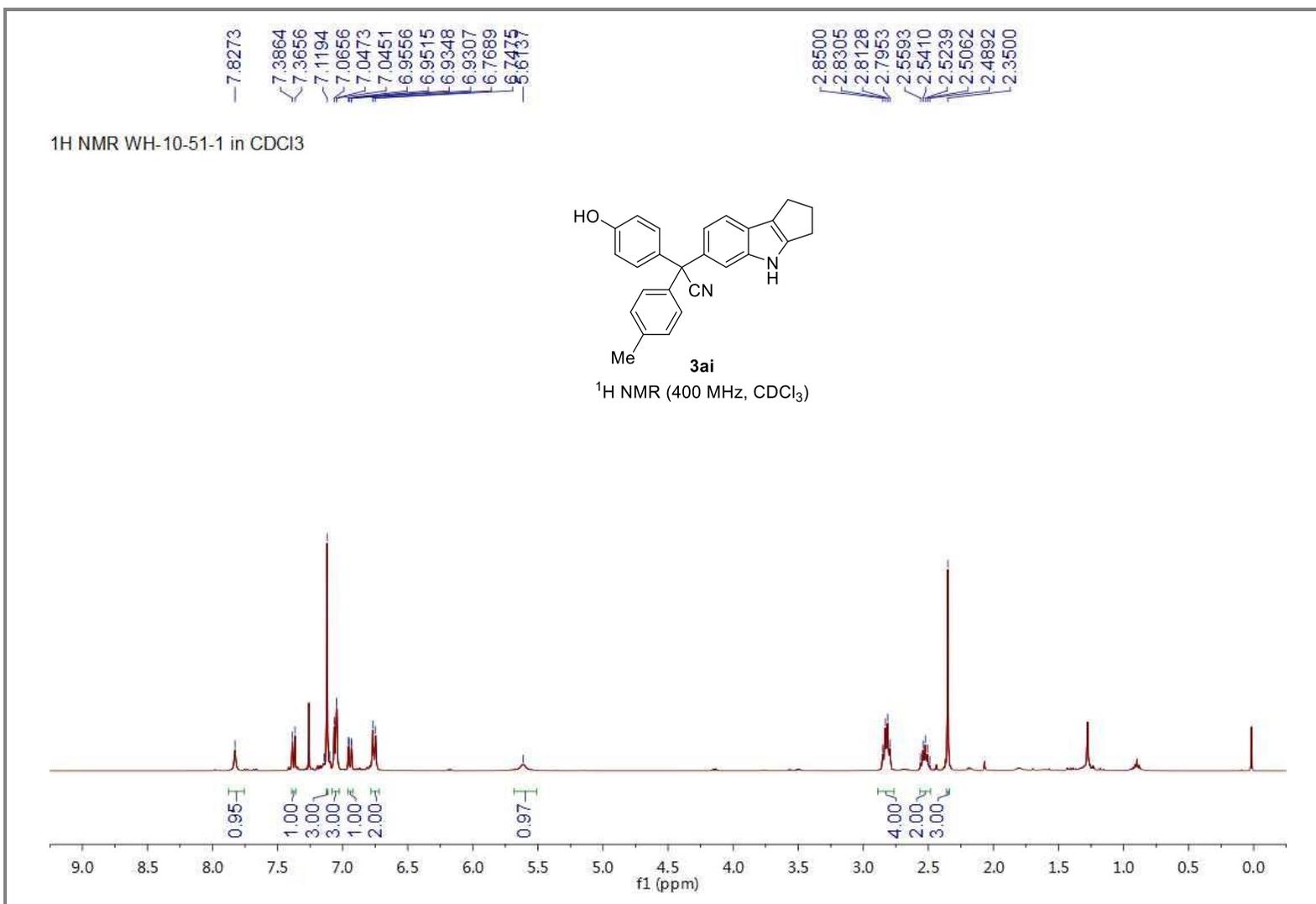
¹⁹F NMR WH-10-50 in Acetone

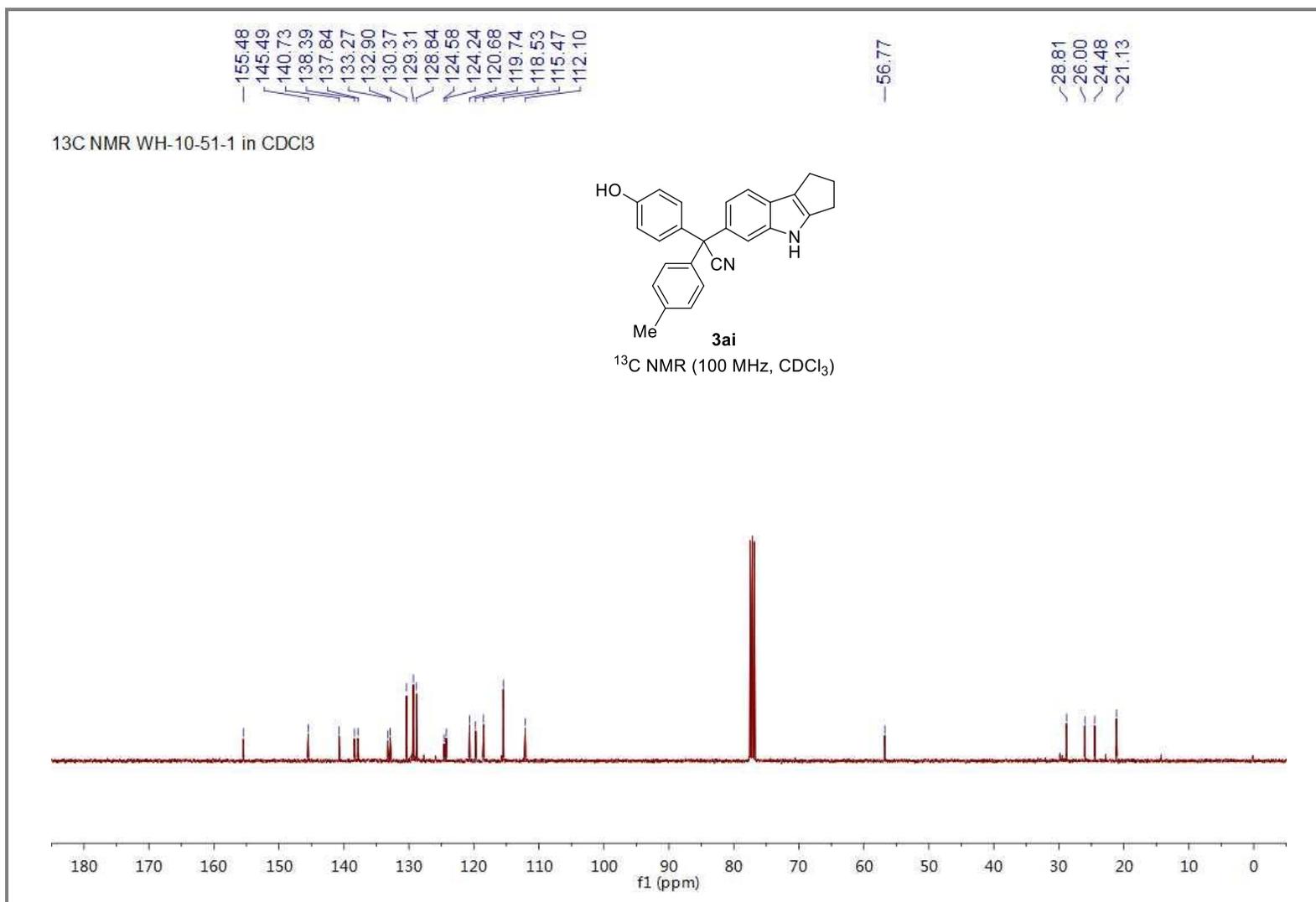


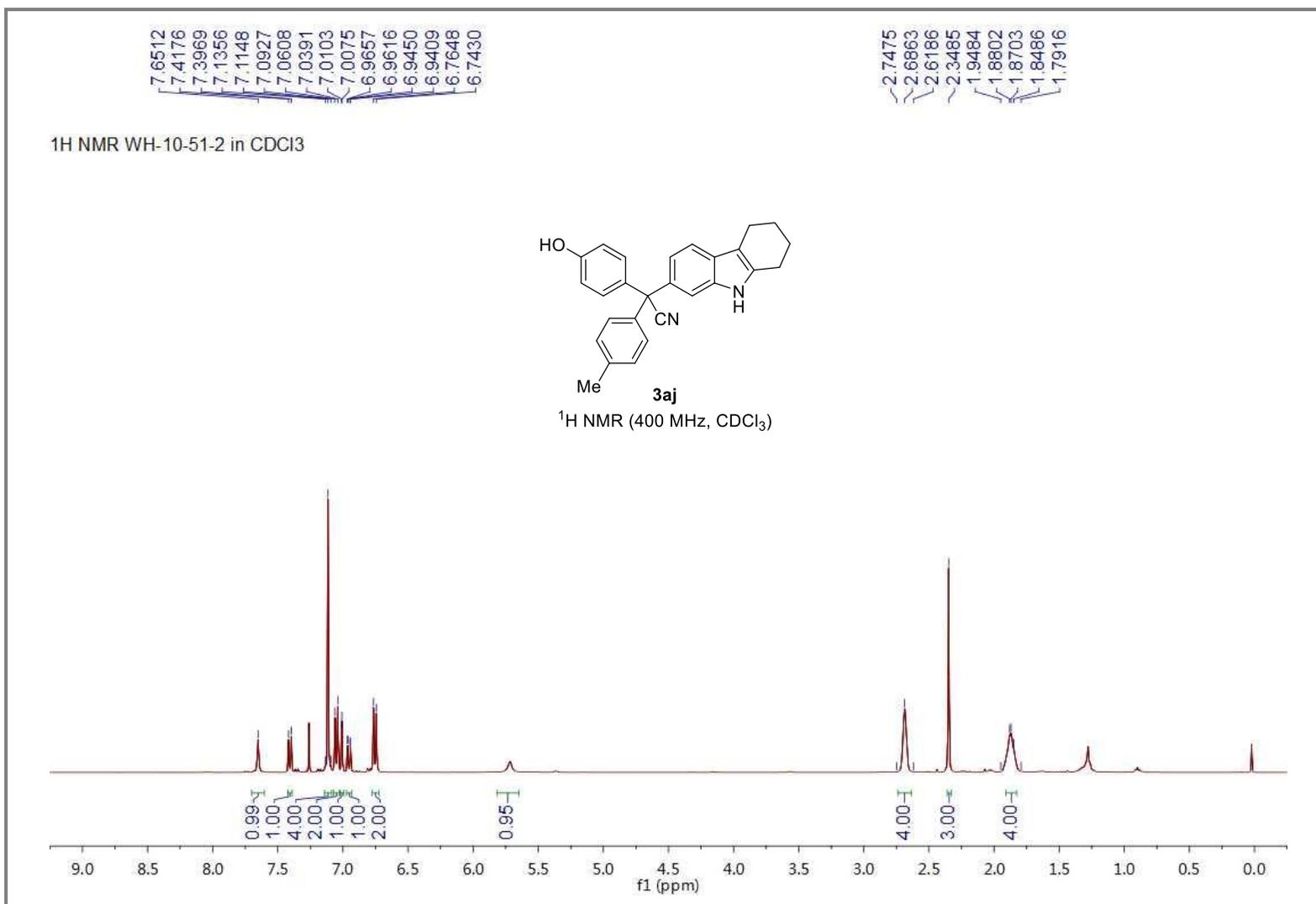
¹⁹F NMR (376 MHz, Acetone-*d*₆)

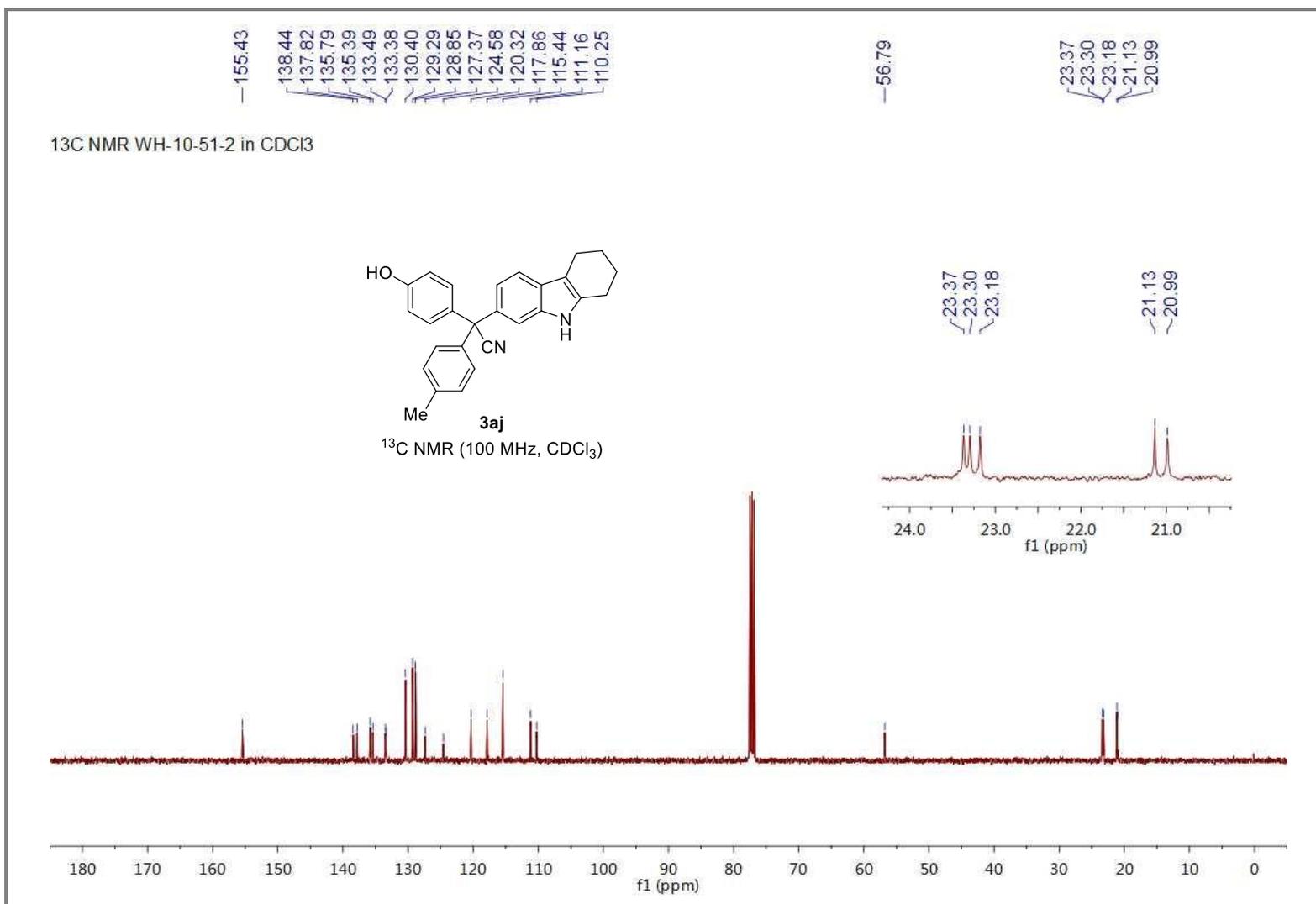
120.8092

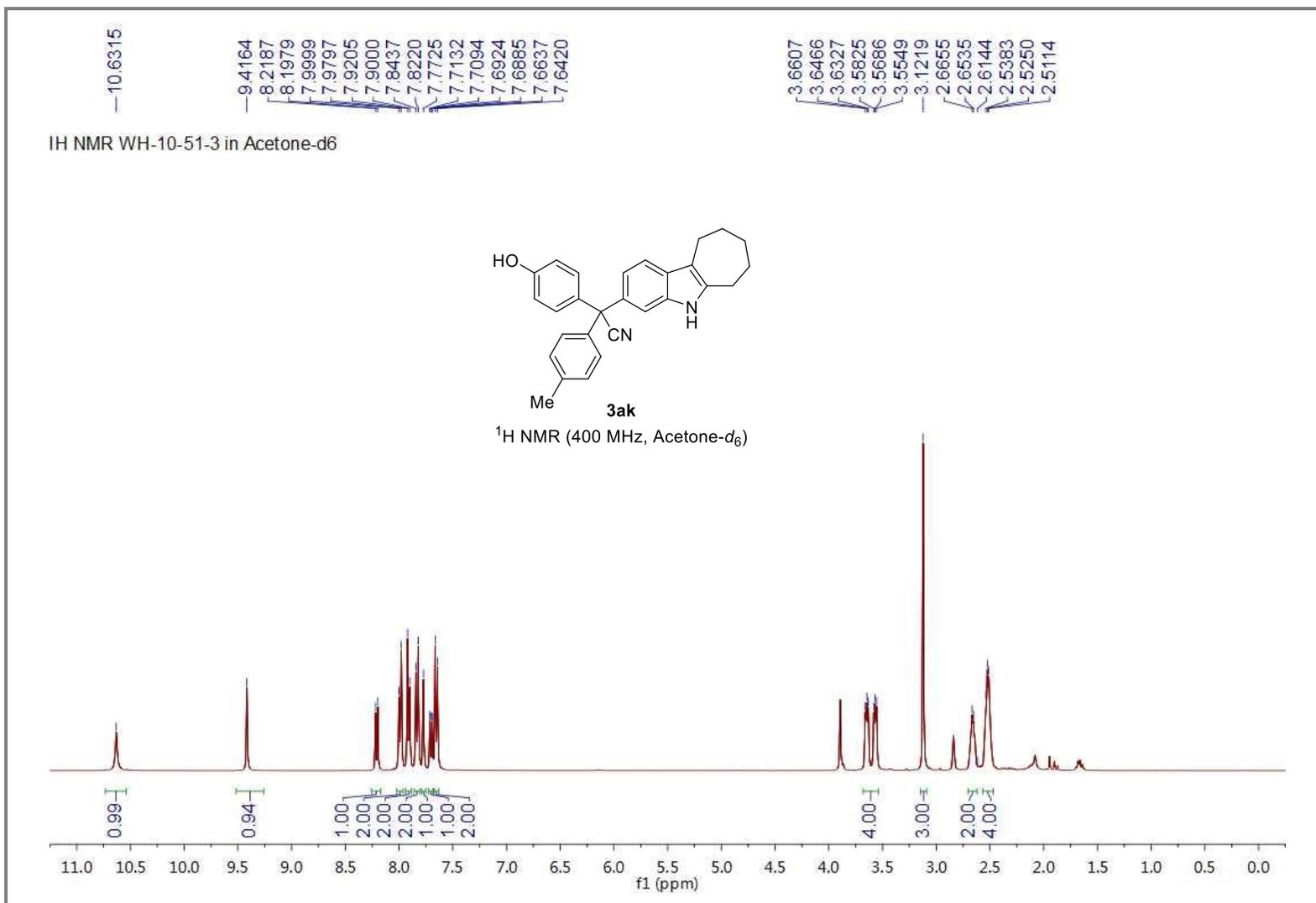


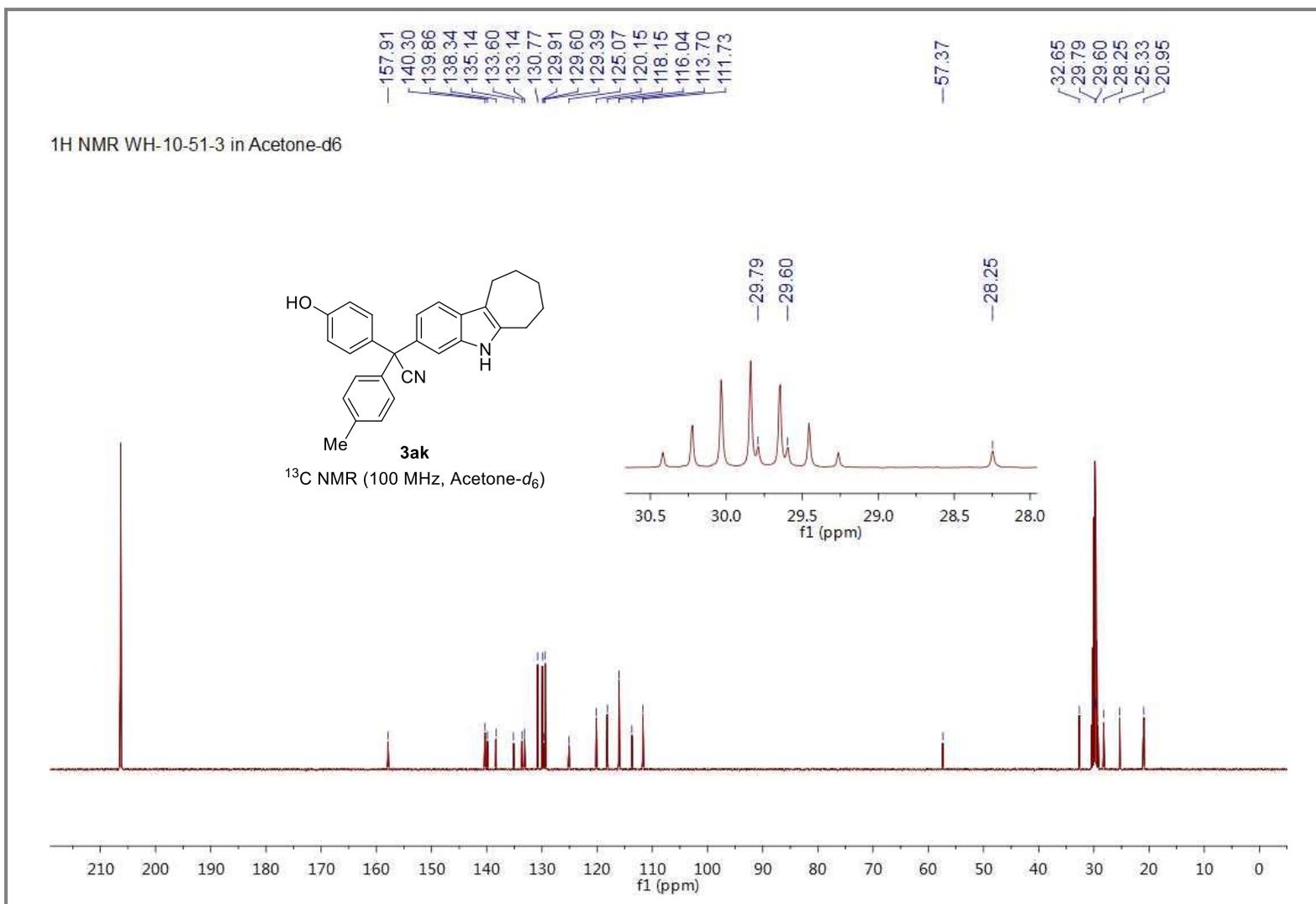


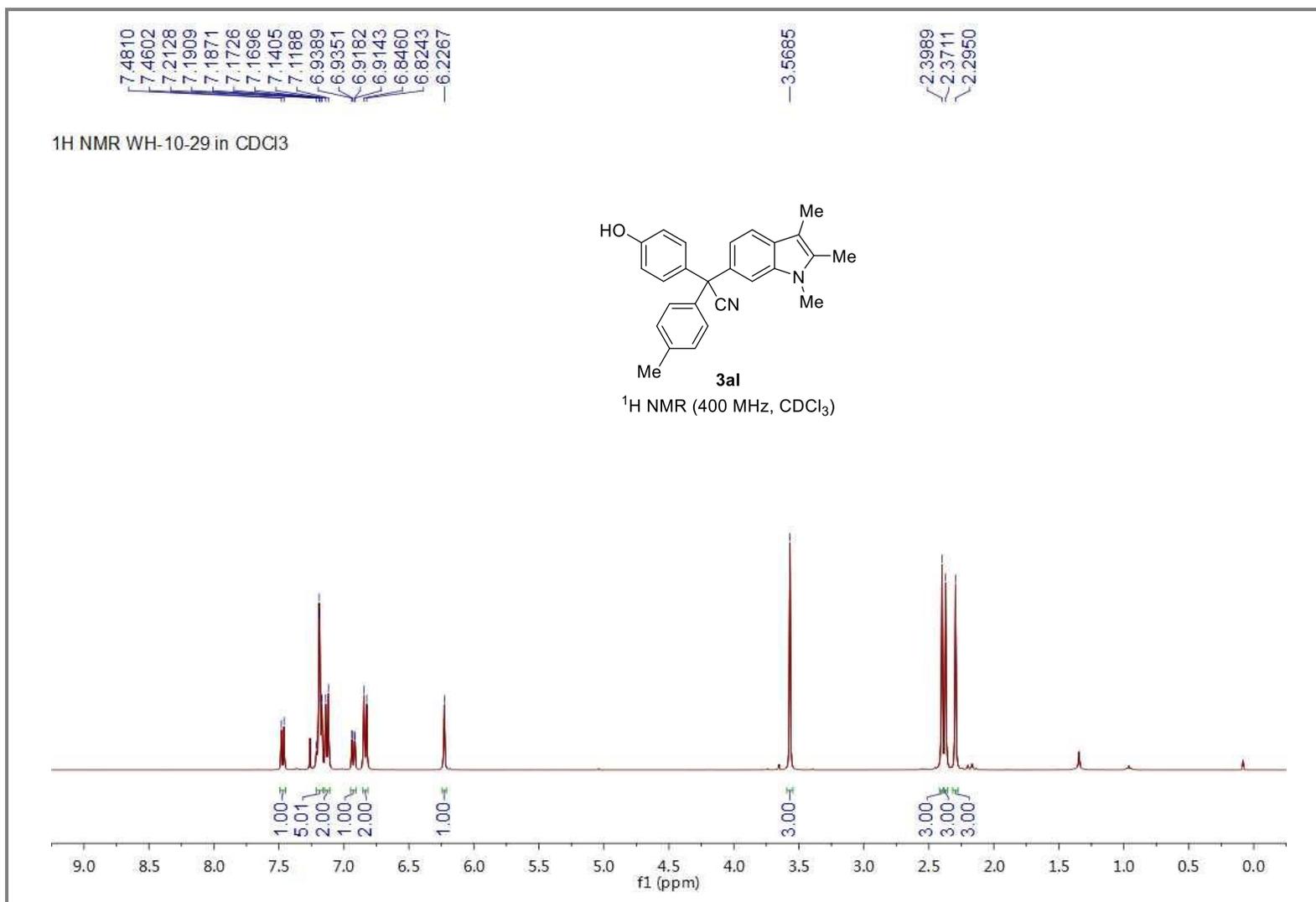


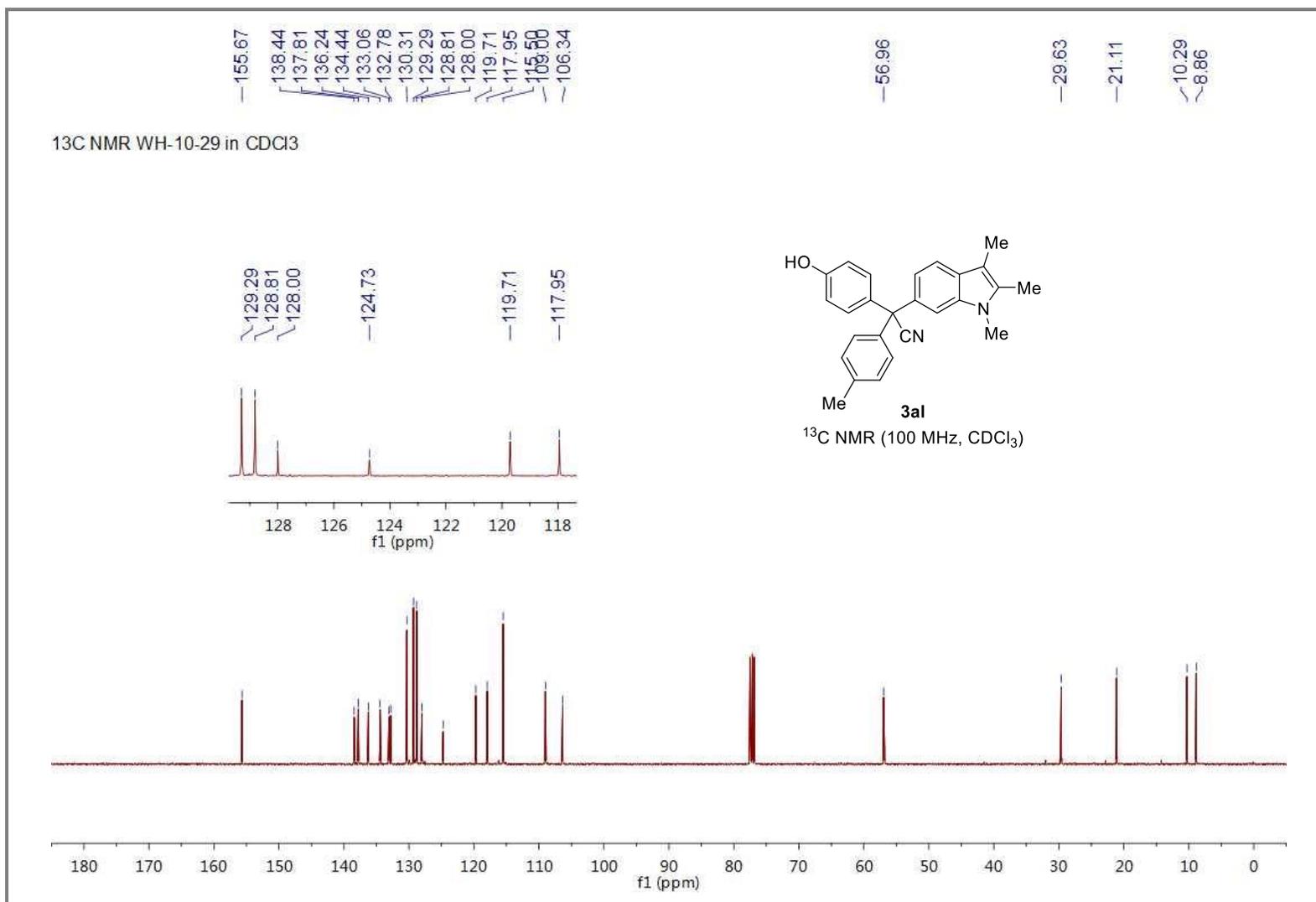


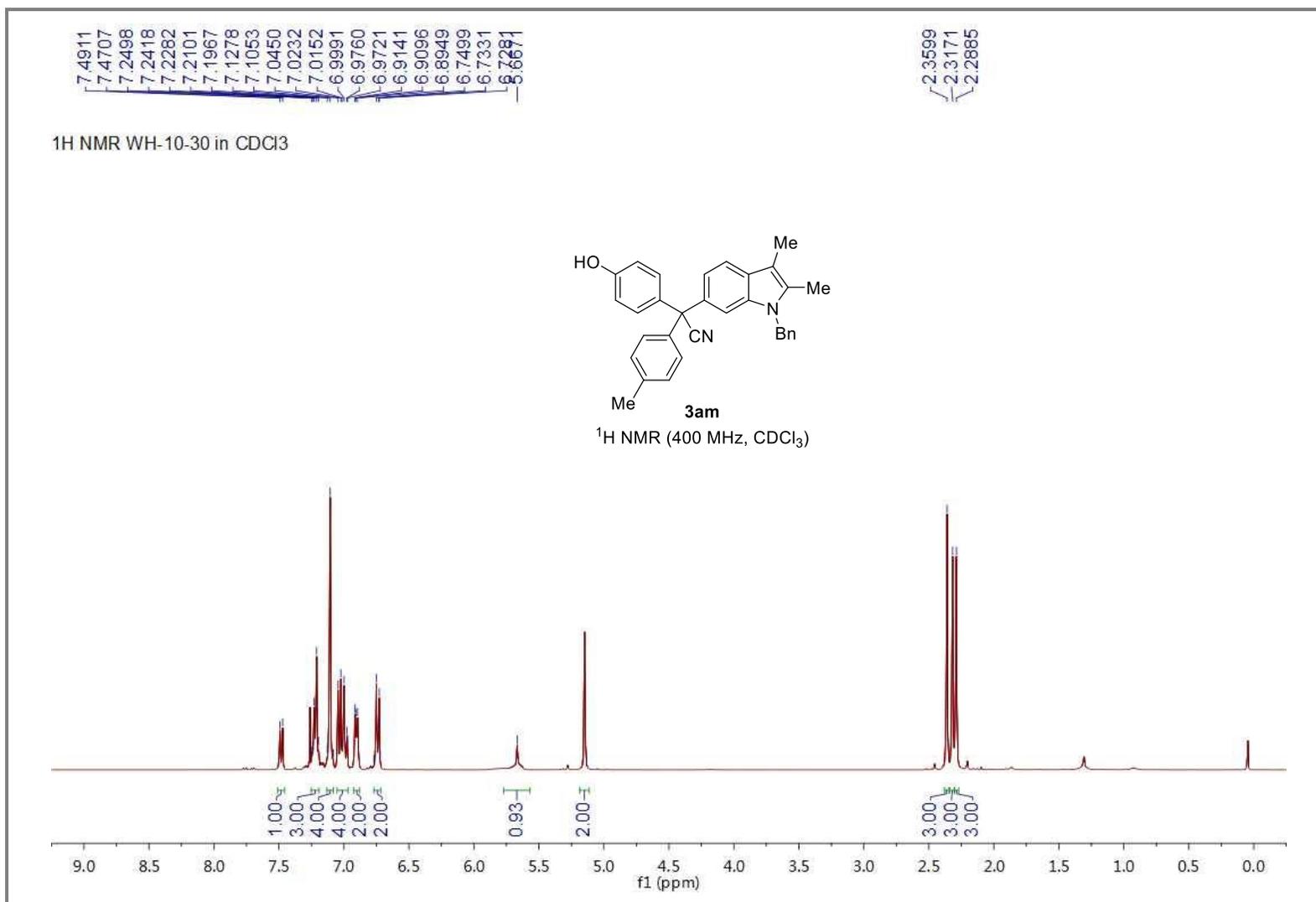


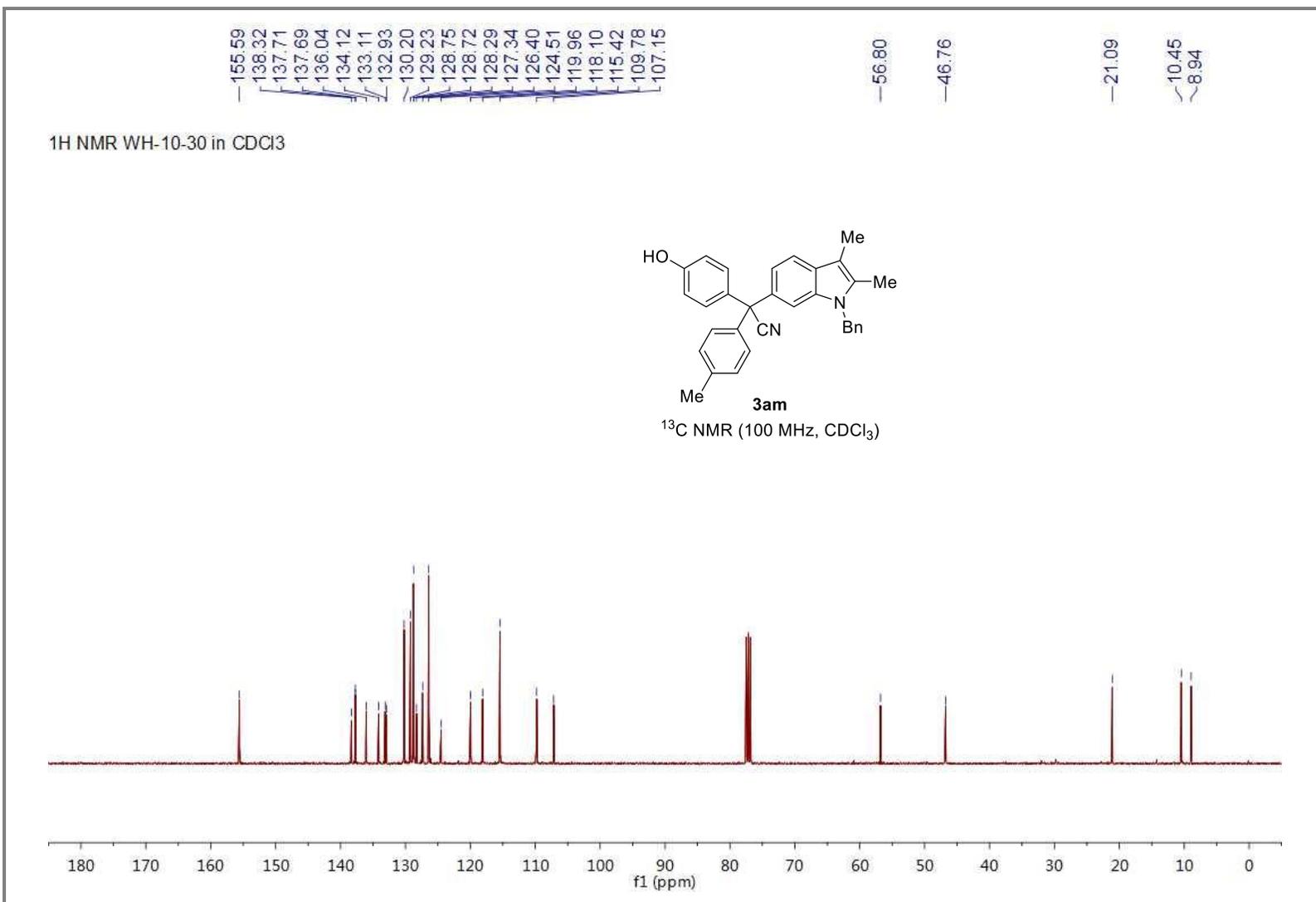


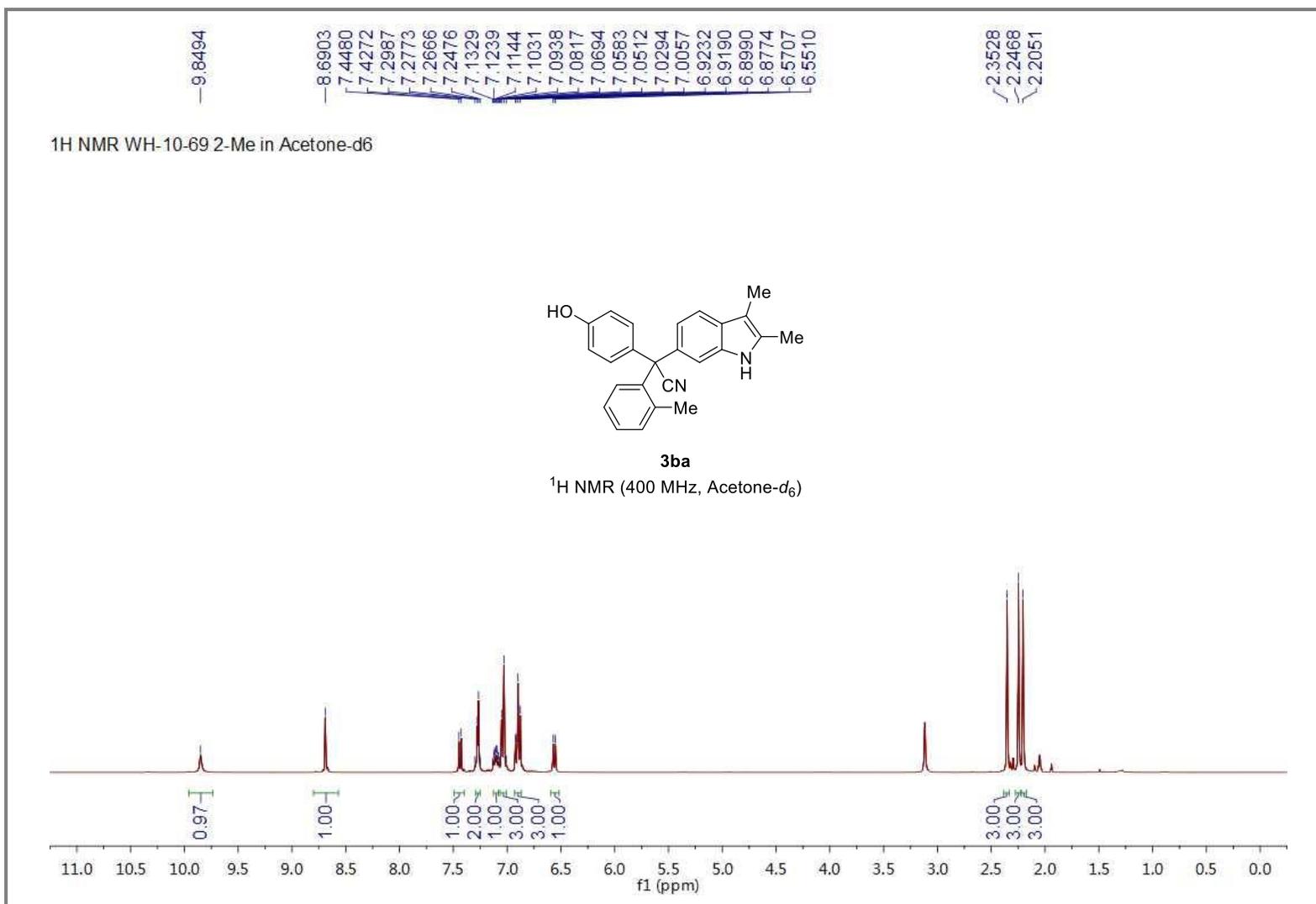


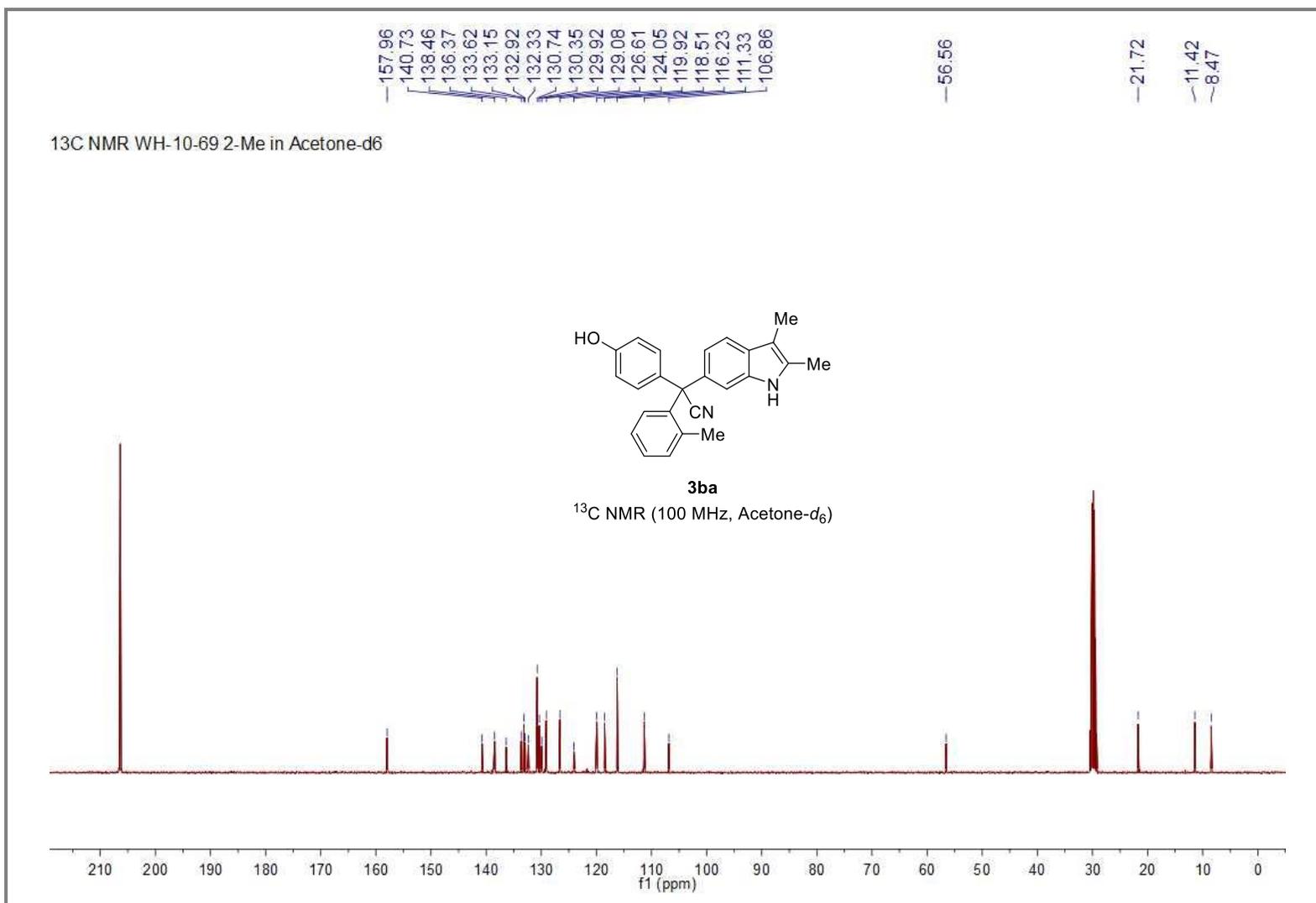


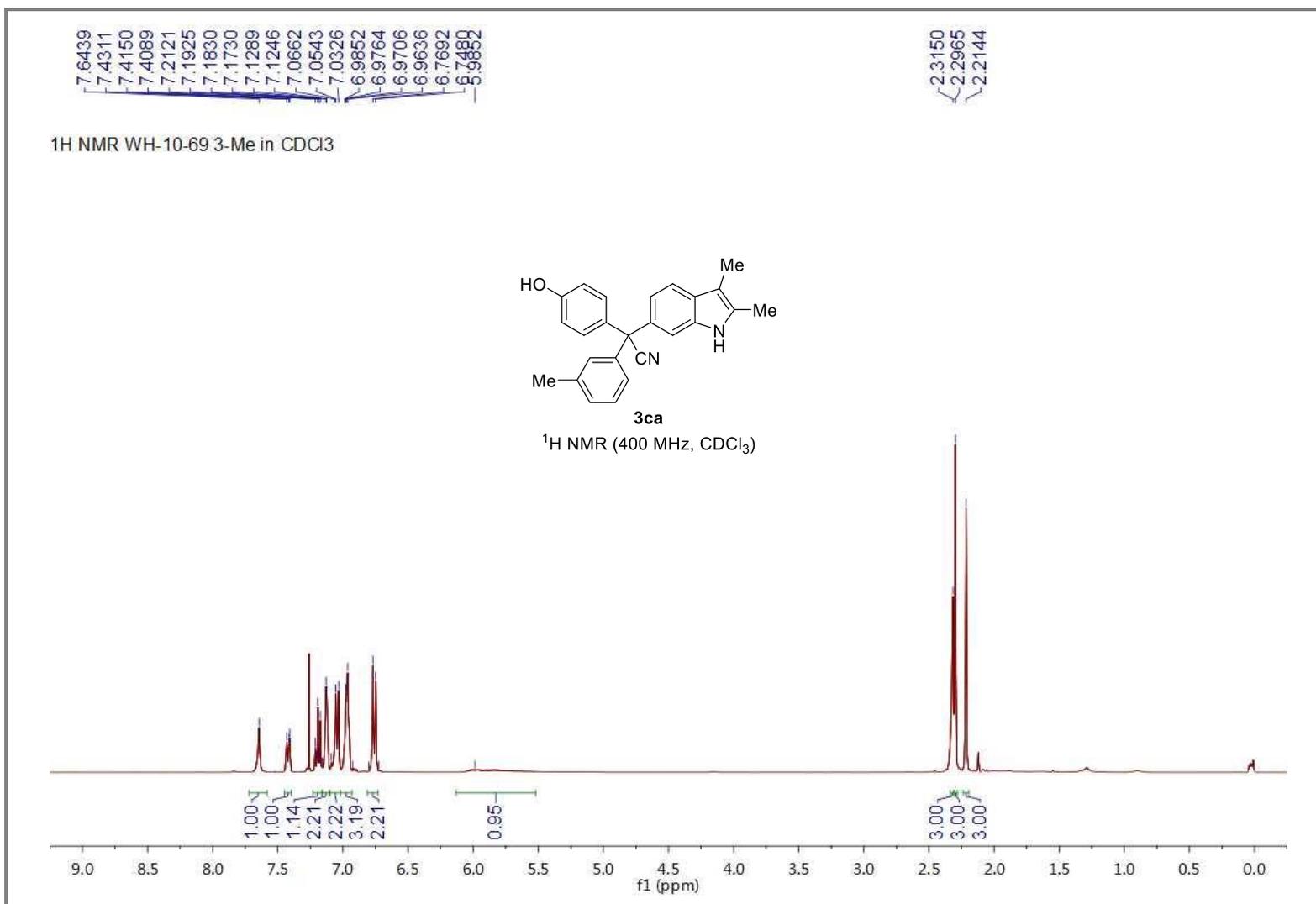


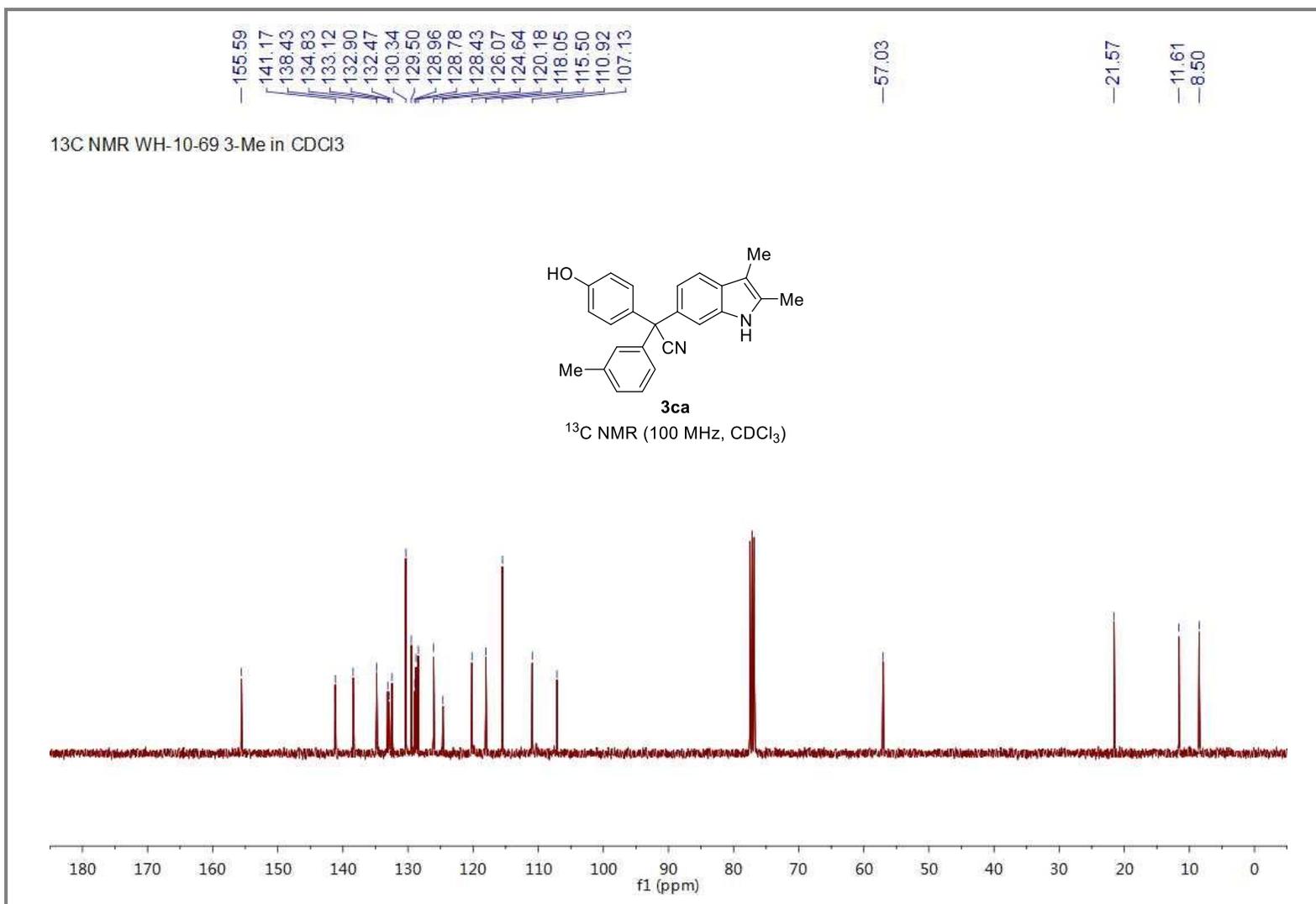


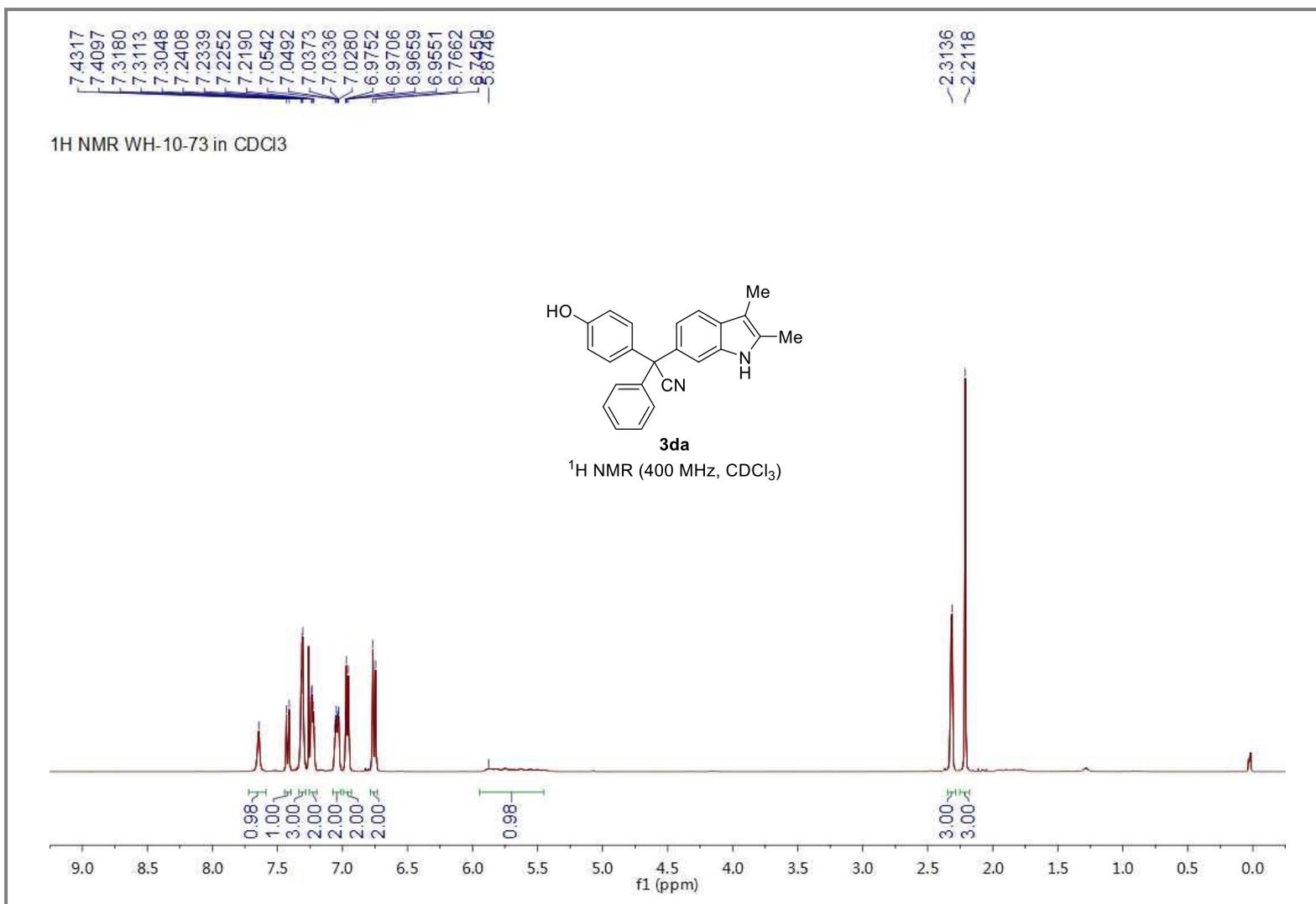


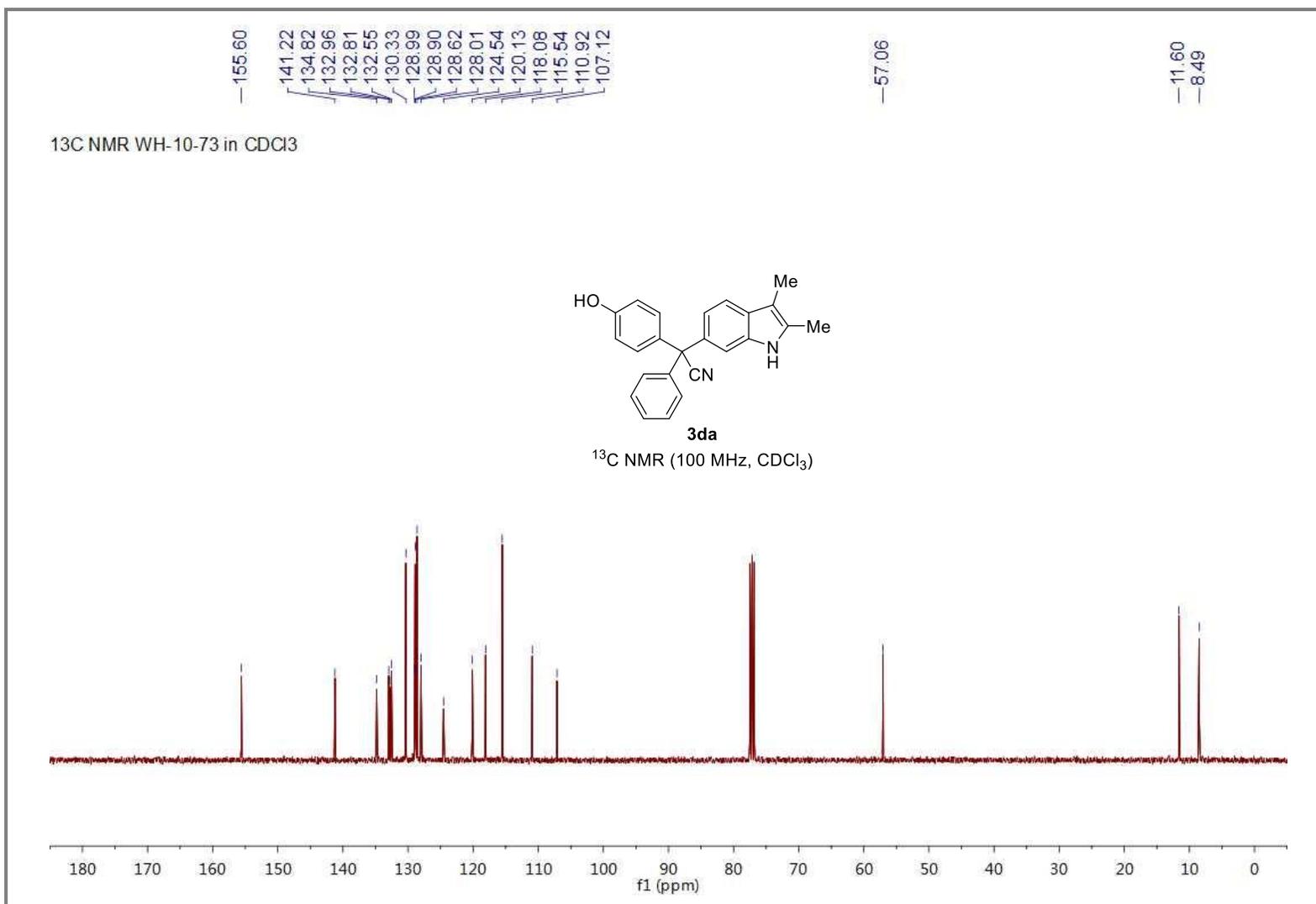


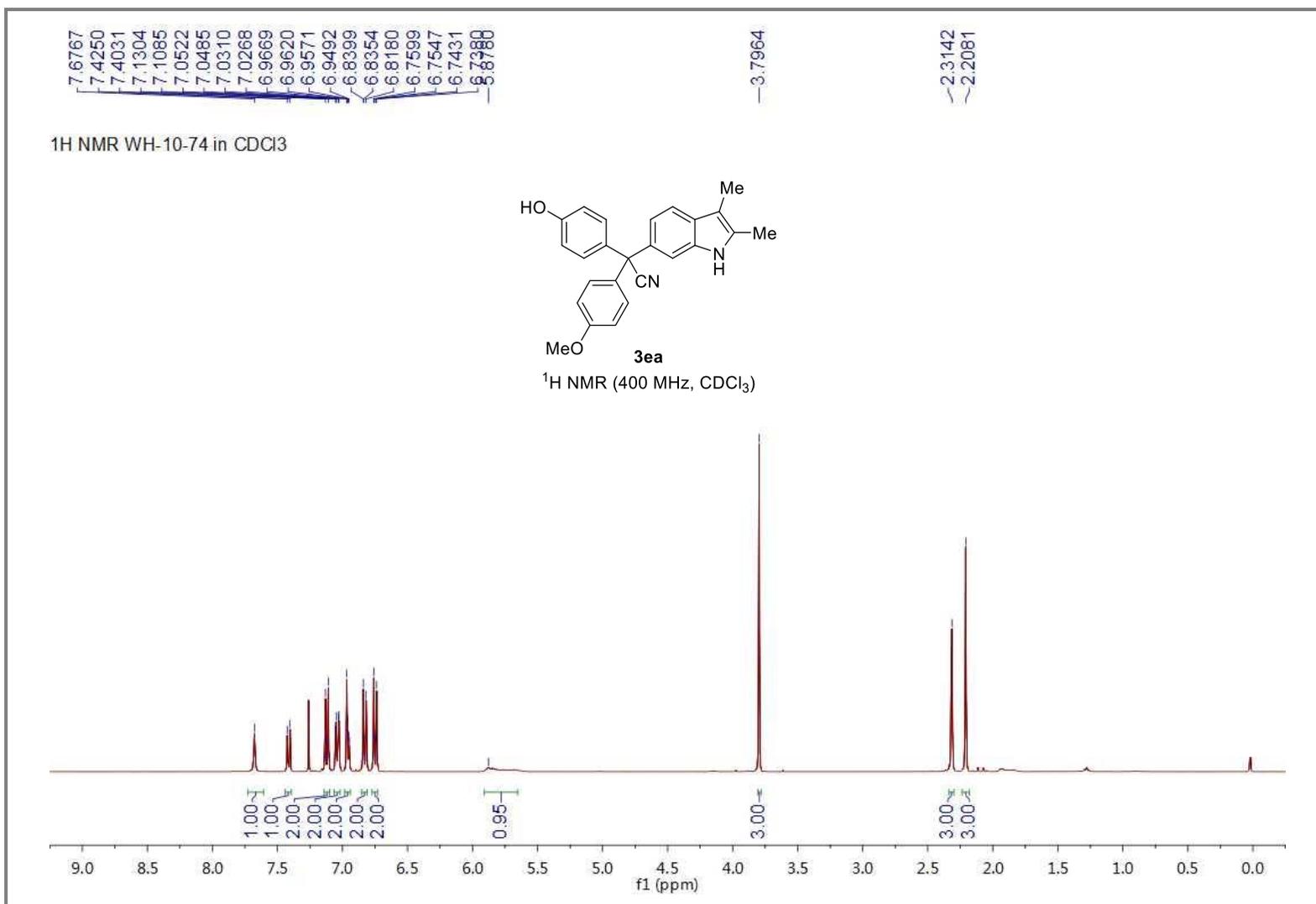


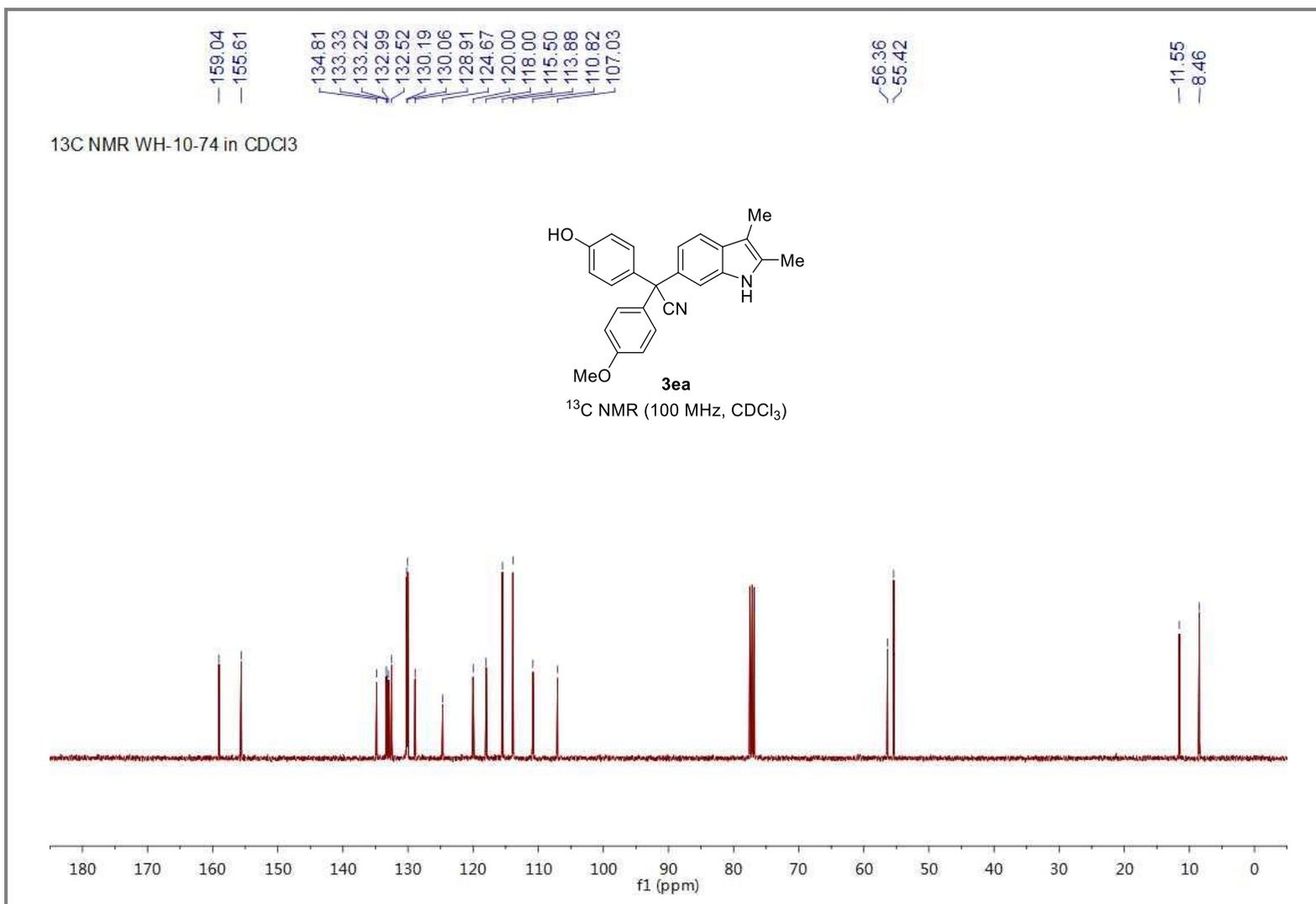


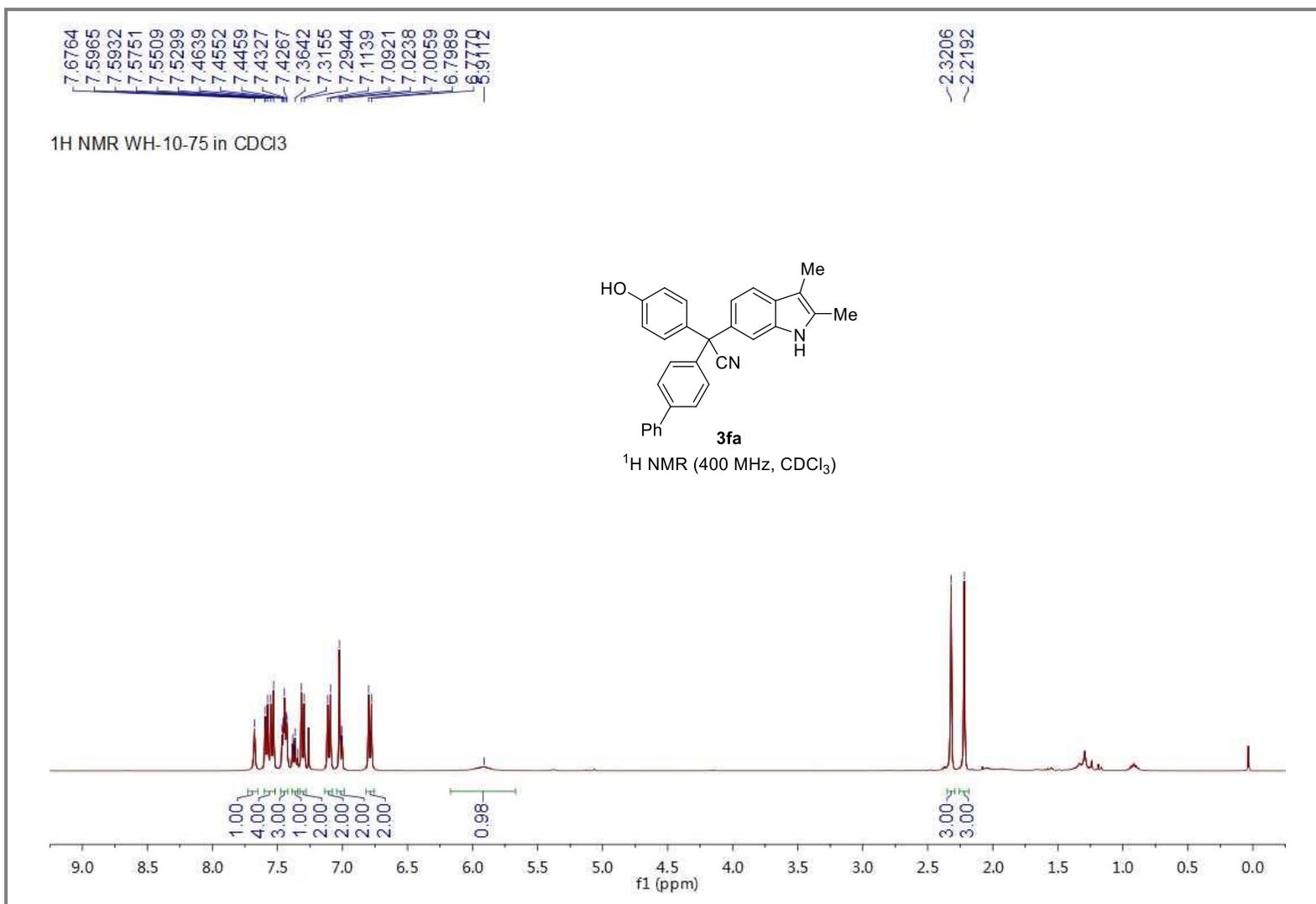


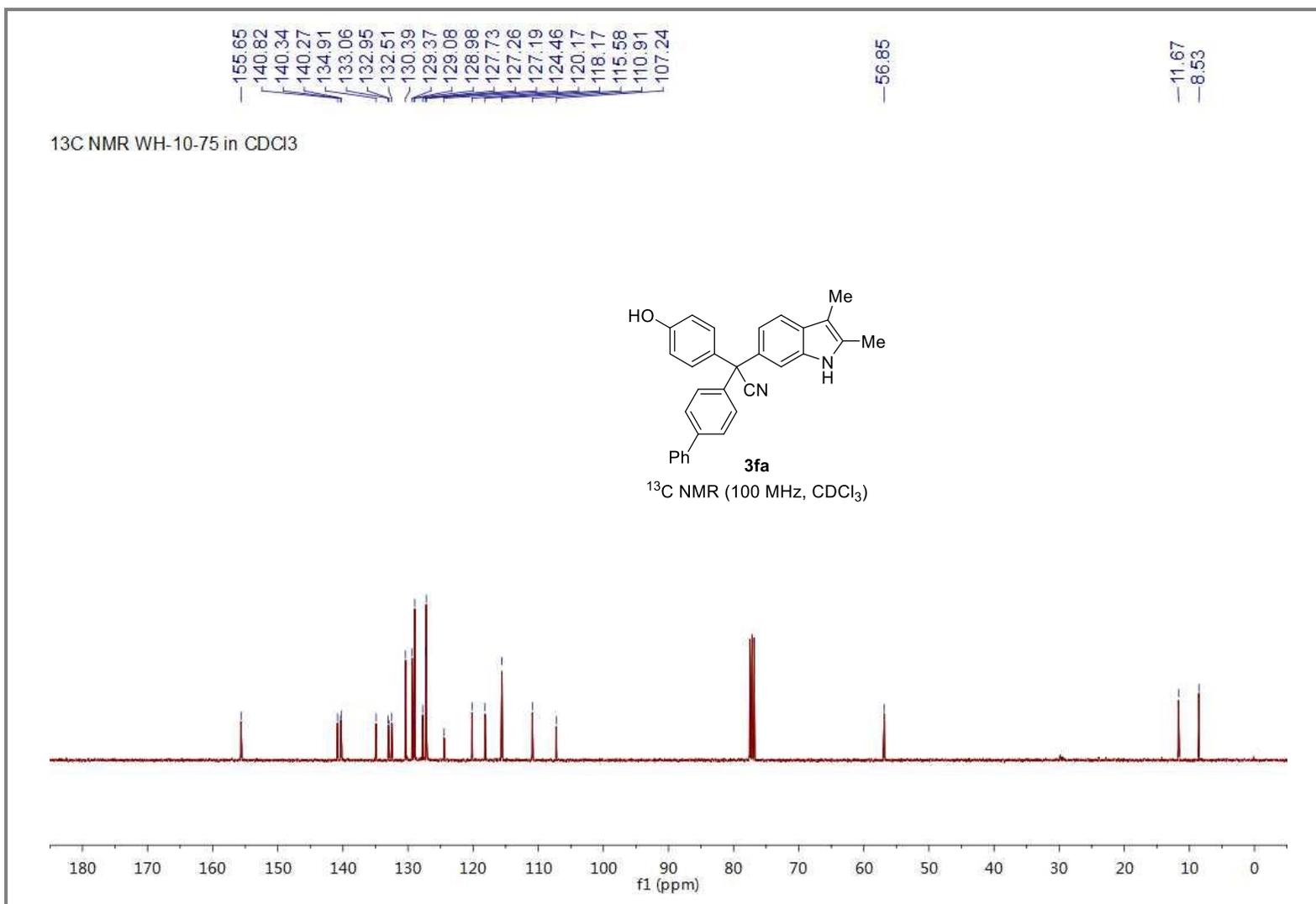


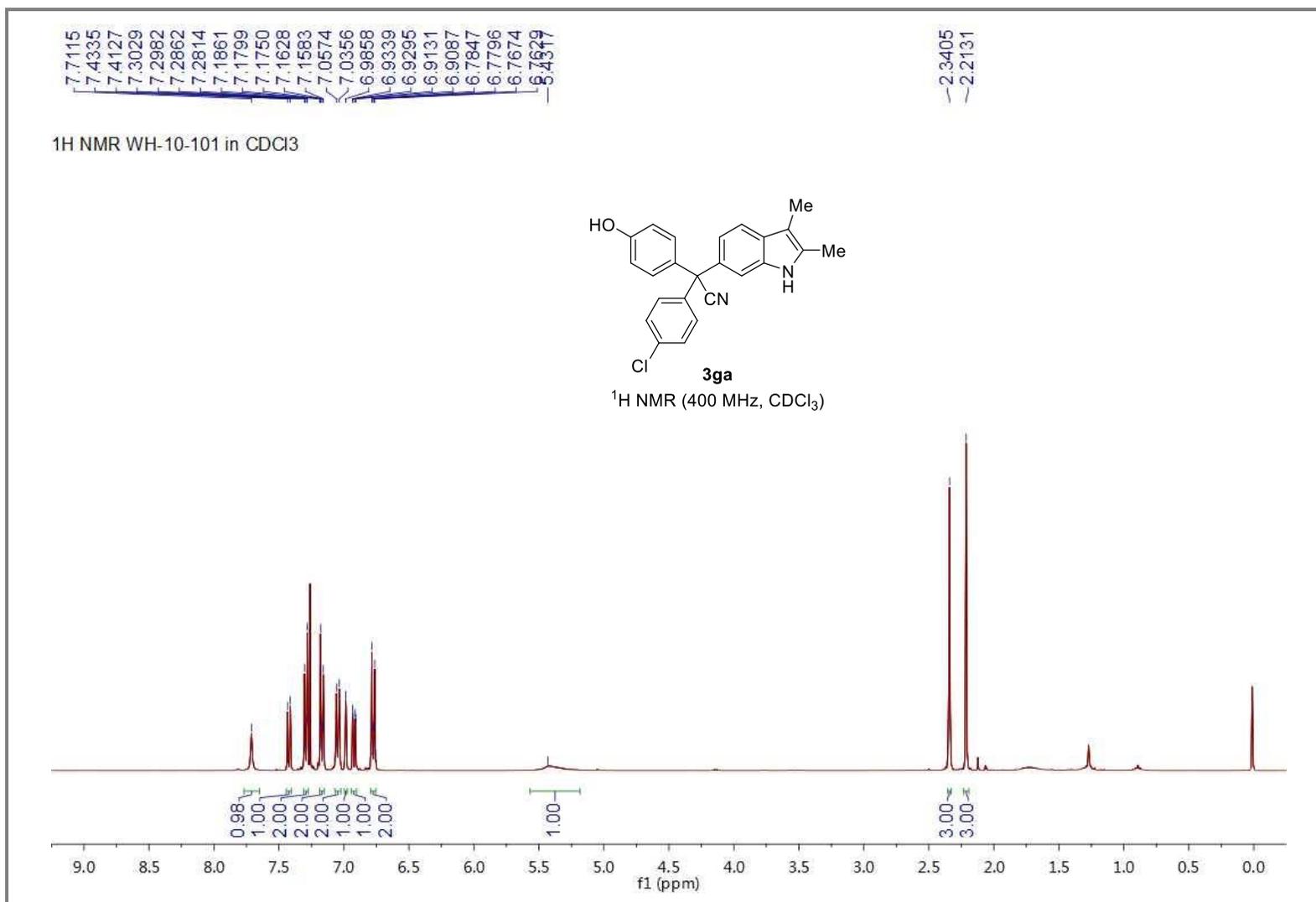


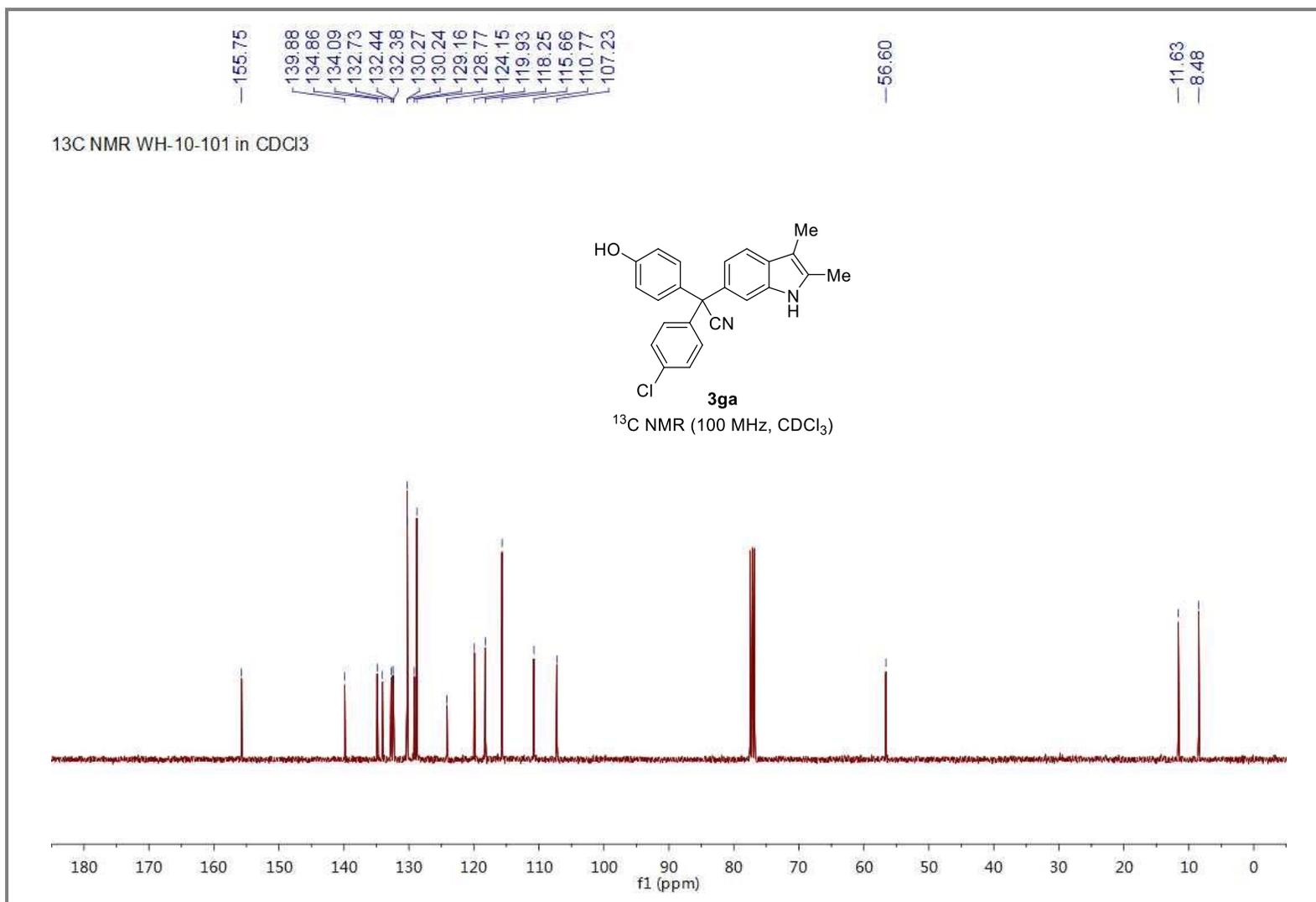


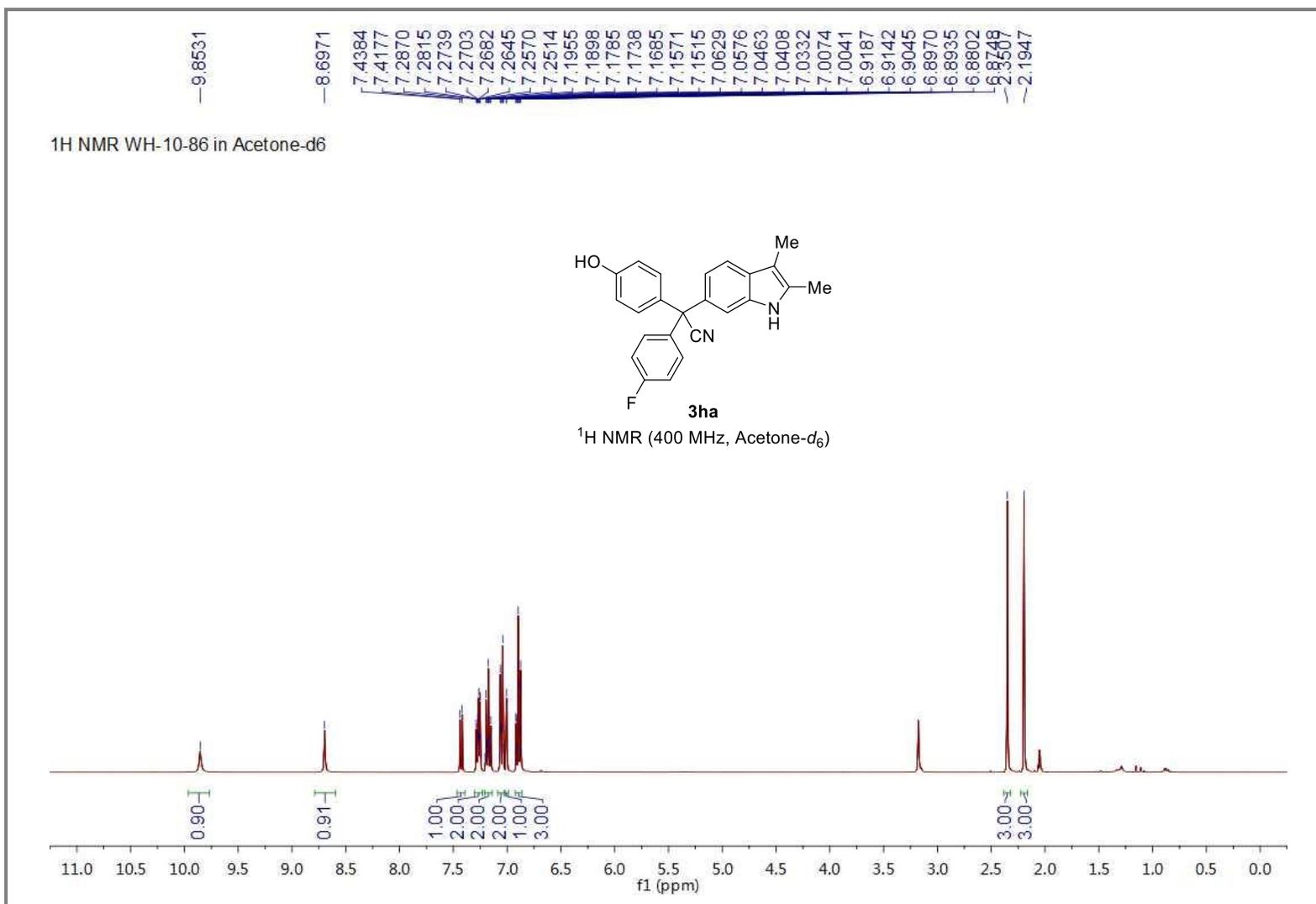


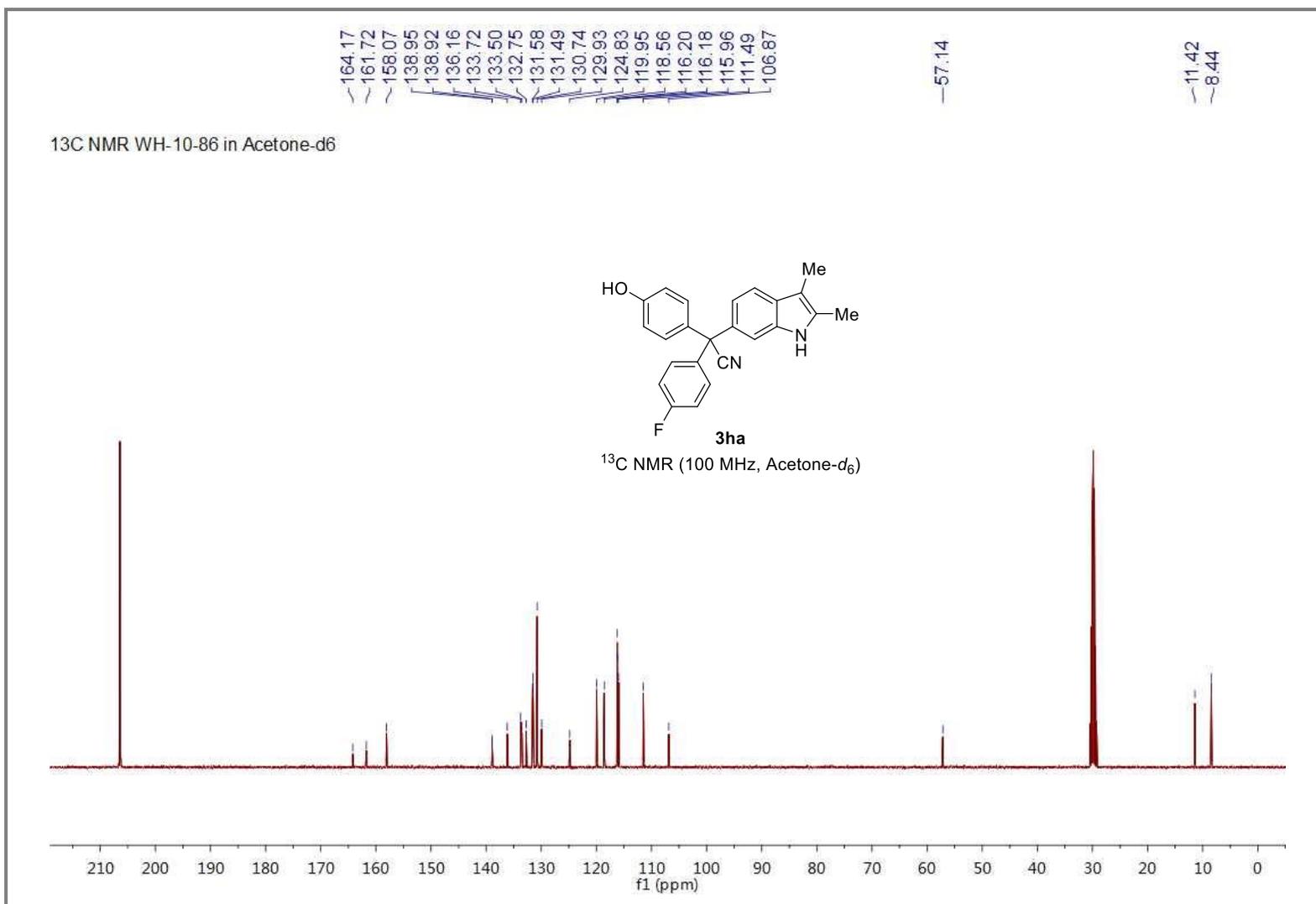






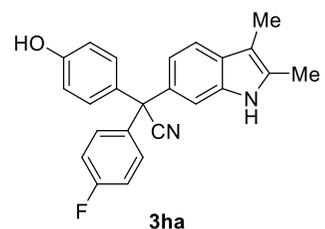




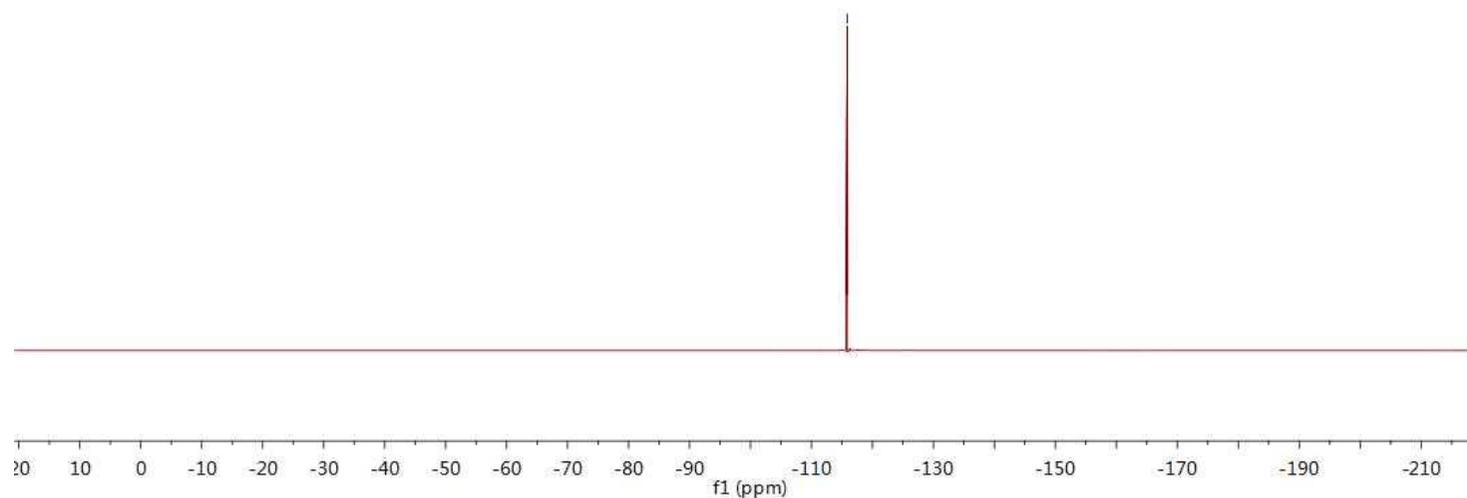


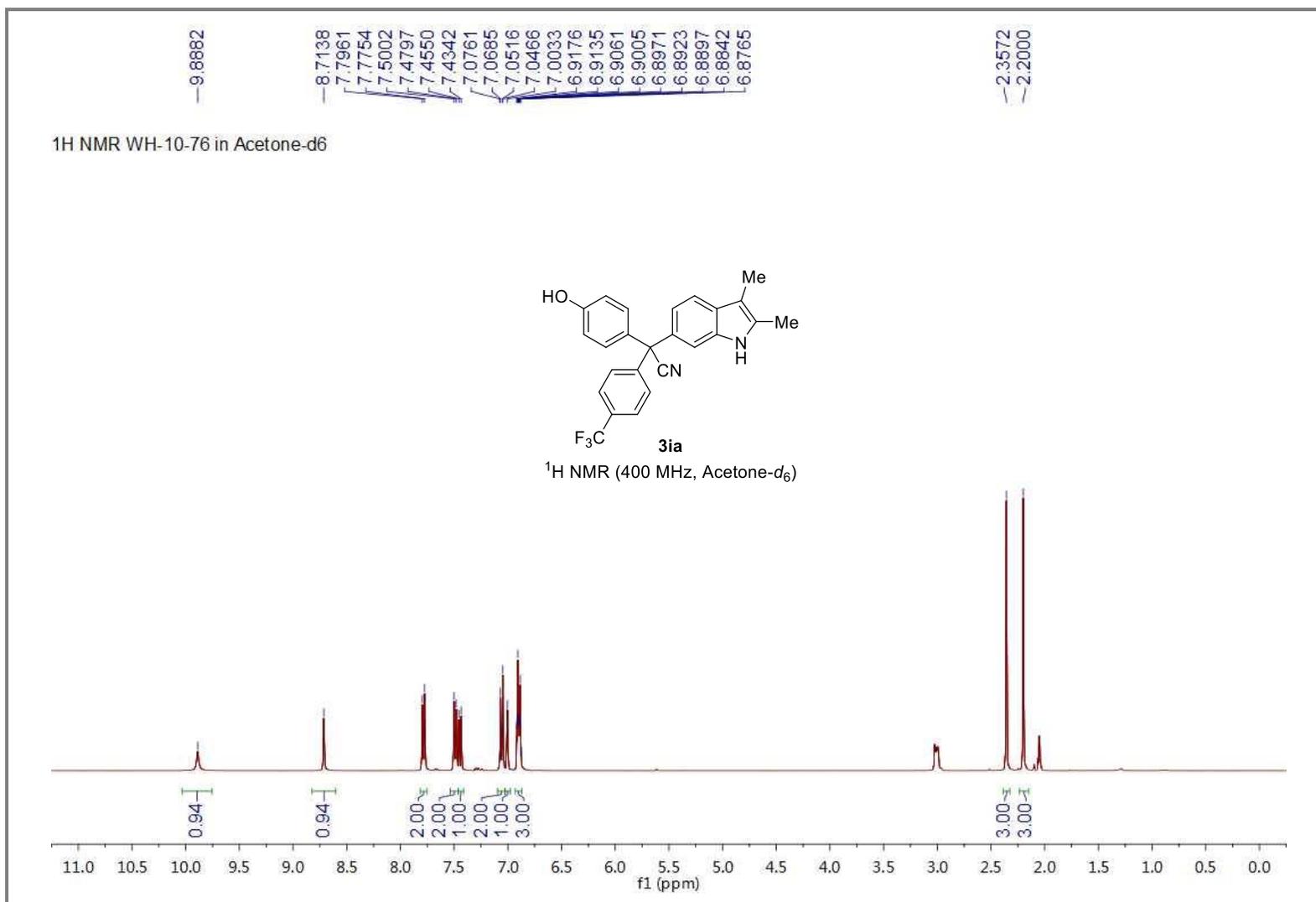
¹⁹F NMR WH-10-86 in Acetone-d₆

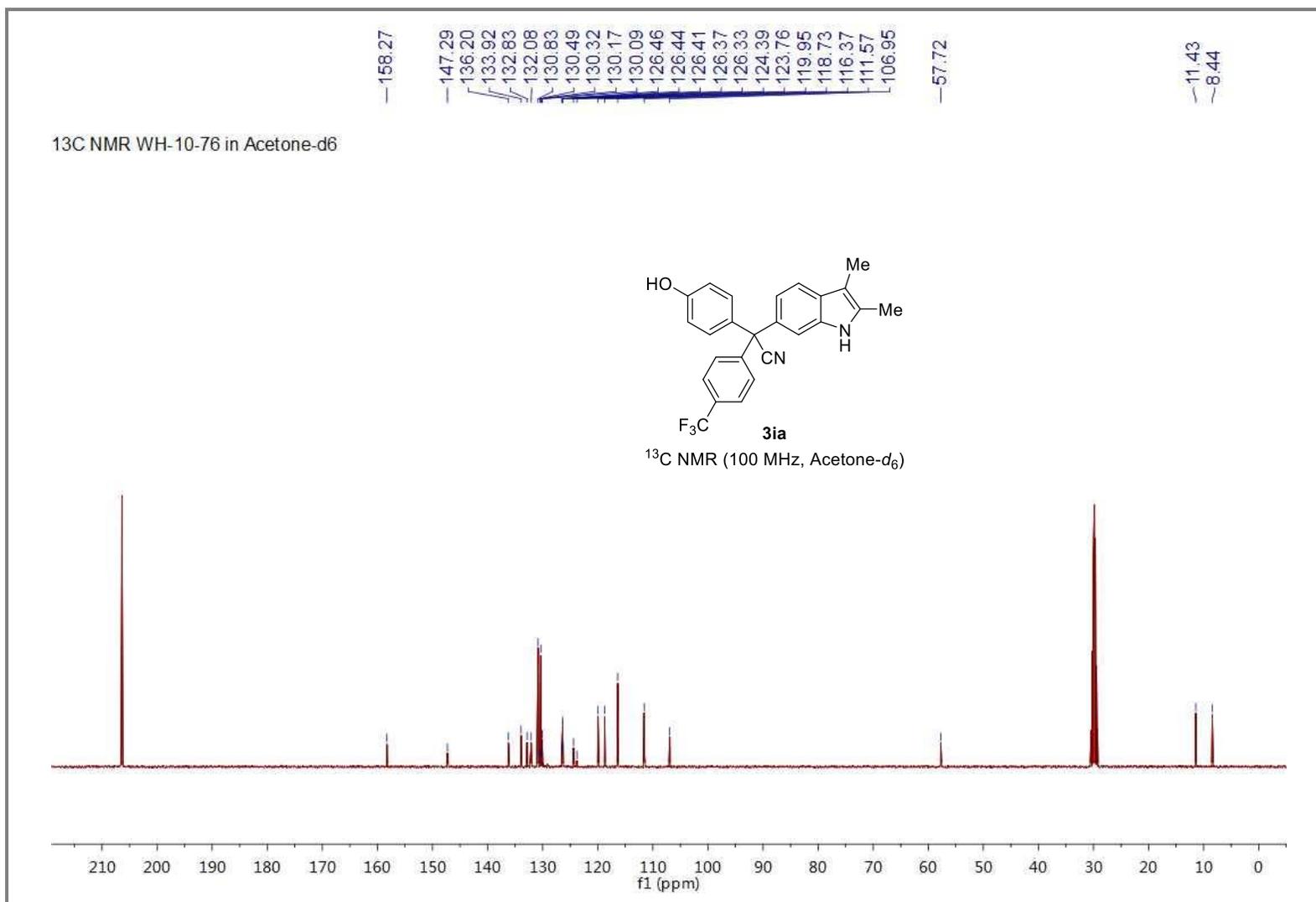
-115.8938



¹⁹F NMR (376 MHz, Acetone-d₆)

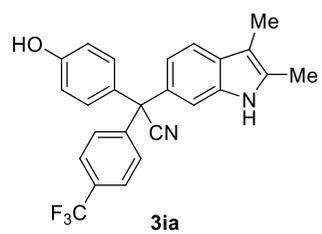




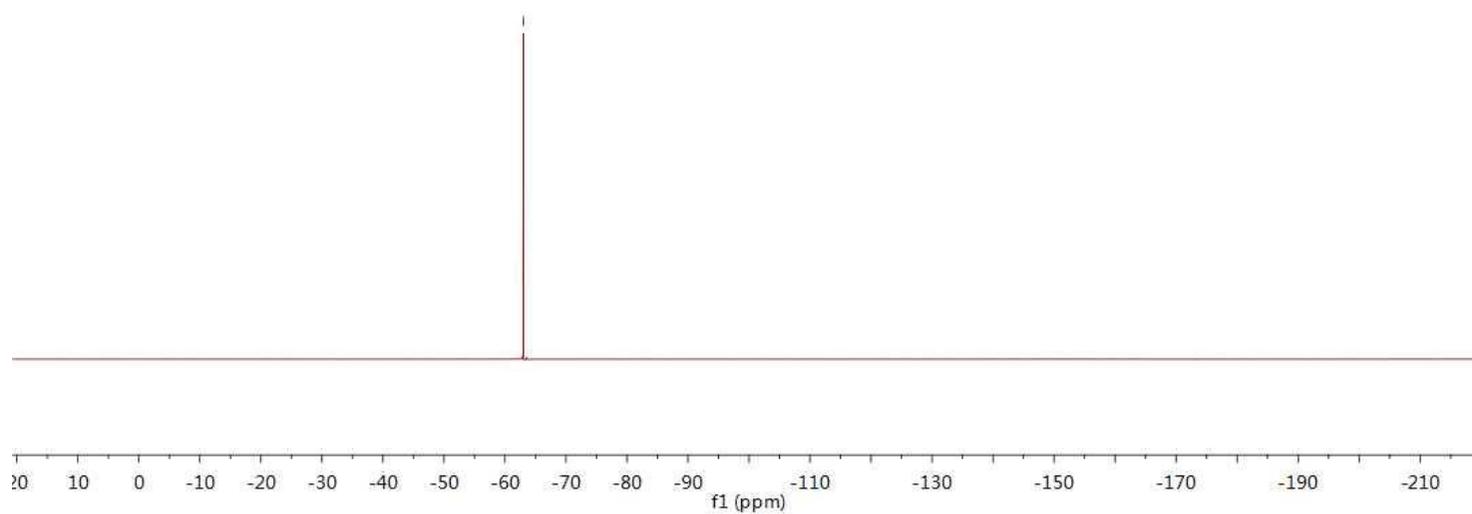


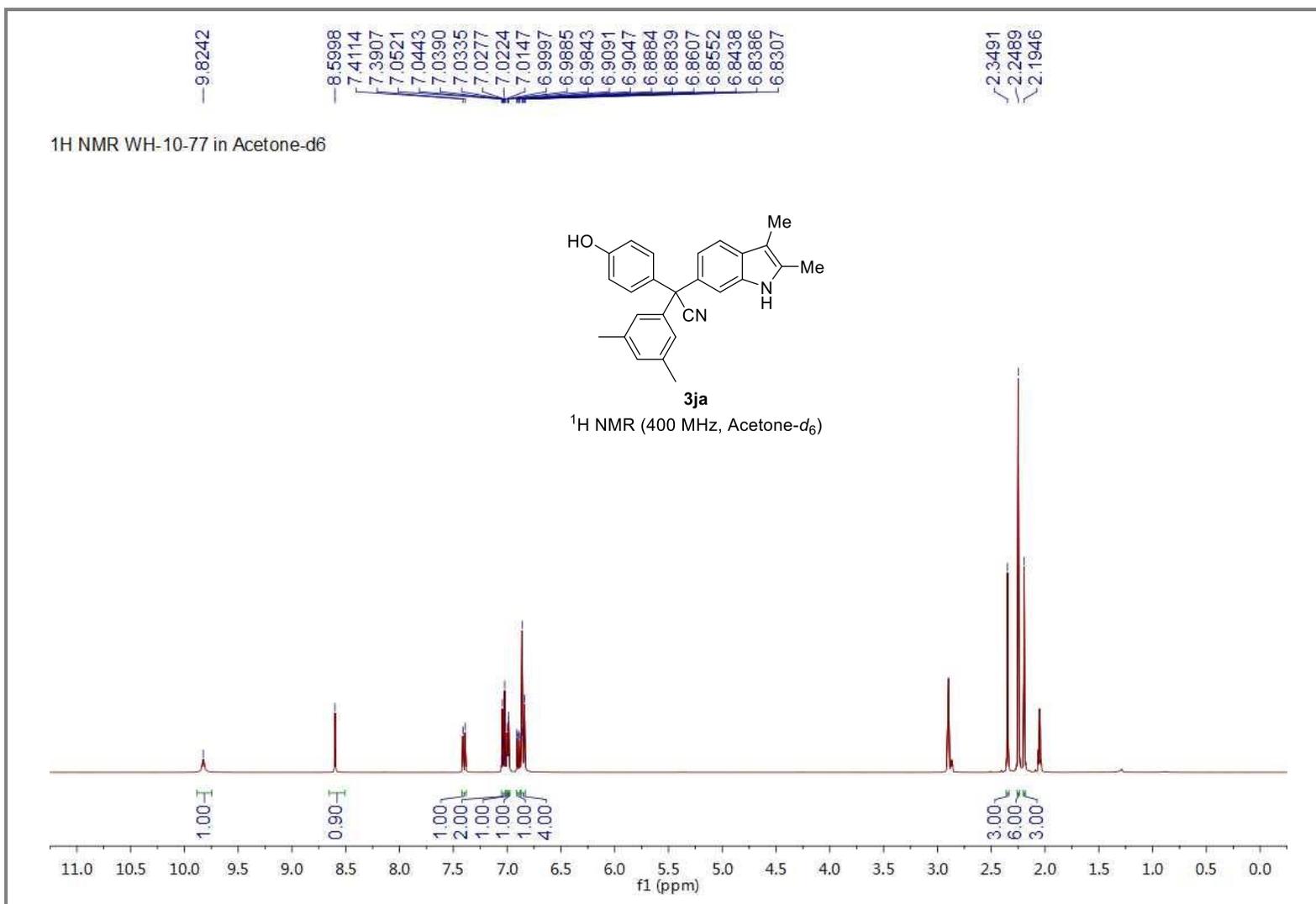
¹⁹F NMR WH-10-76 in Acetone-d₆

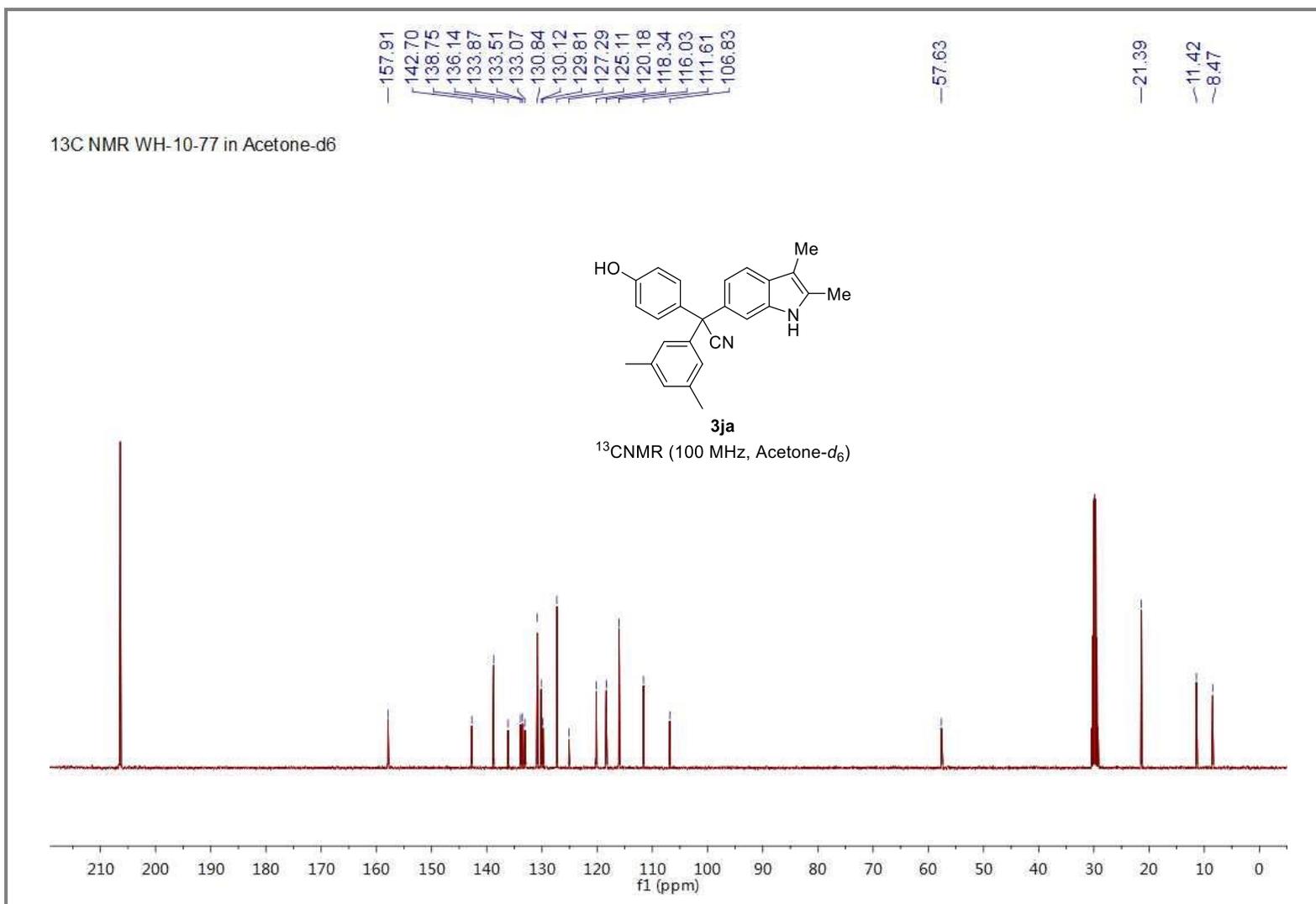
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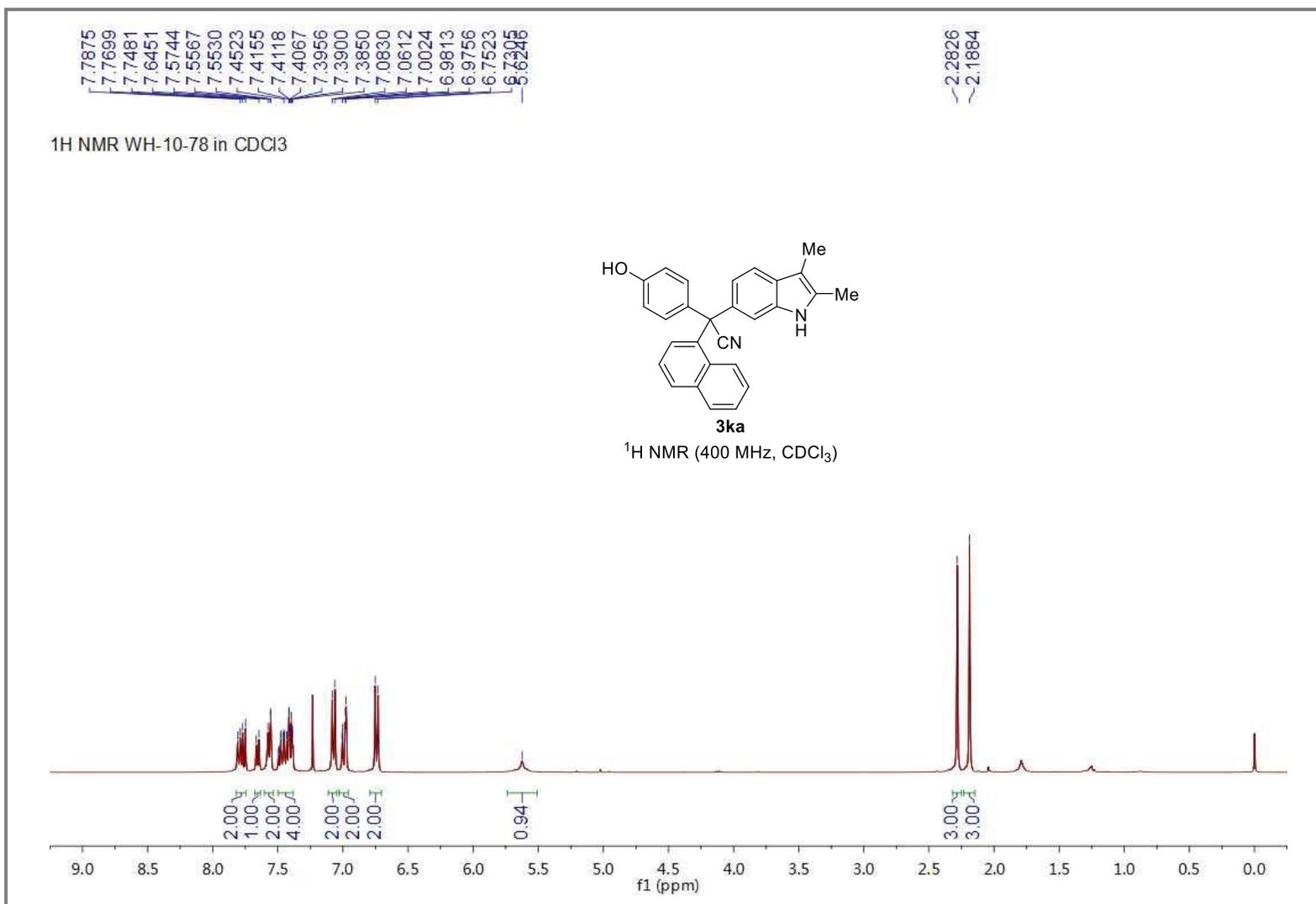


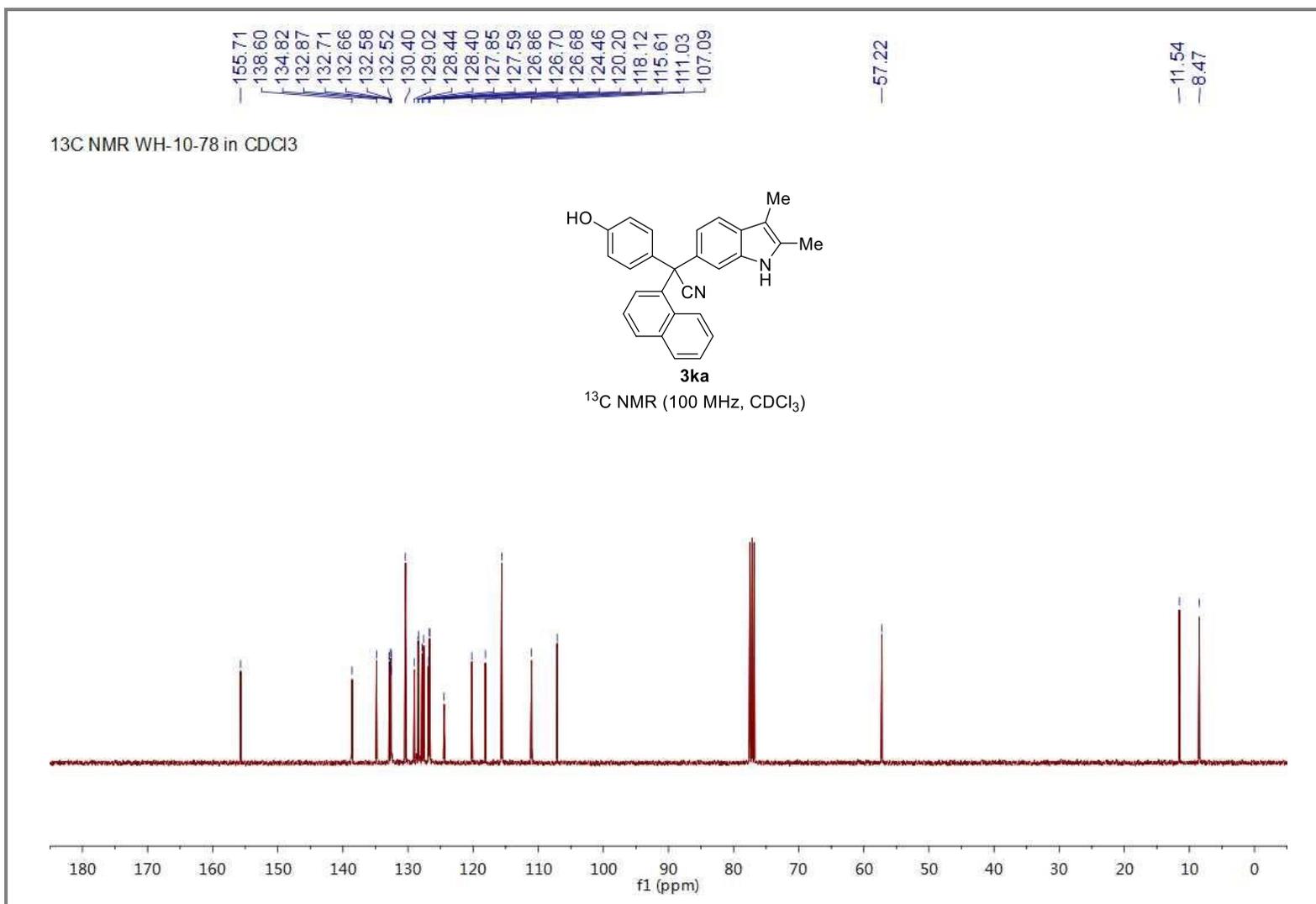
¹⁹F NMR (376 MHz, Acetone-d₆)

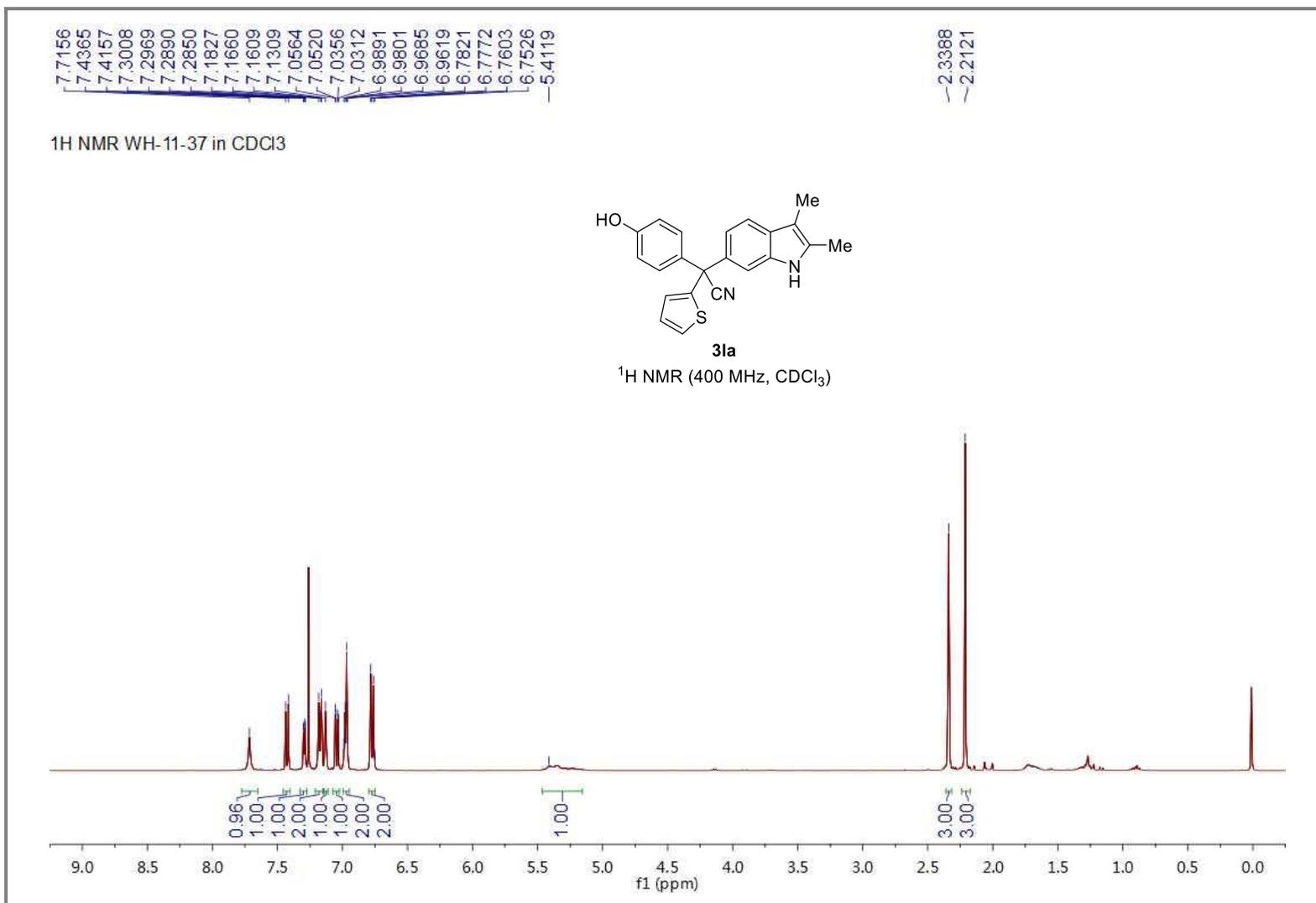


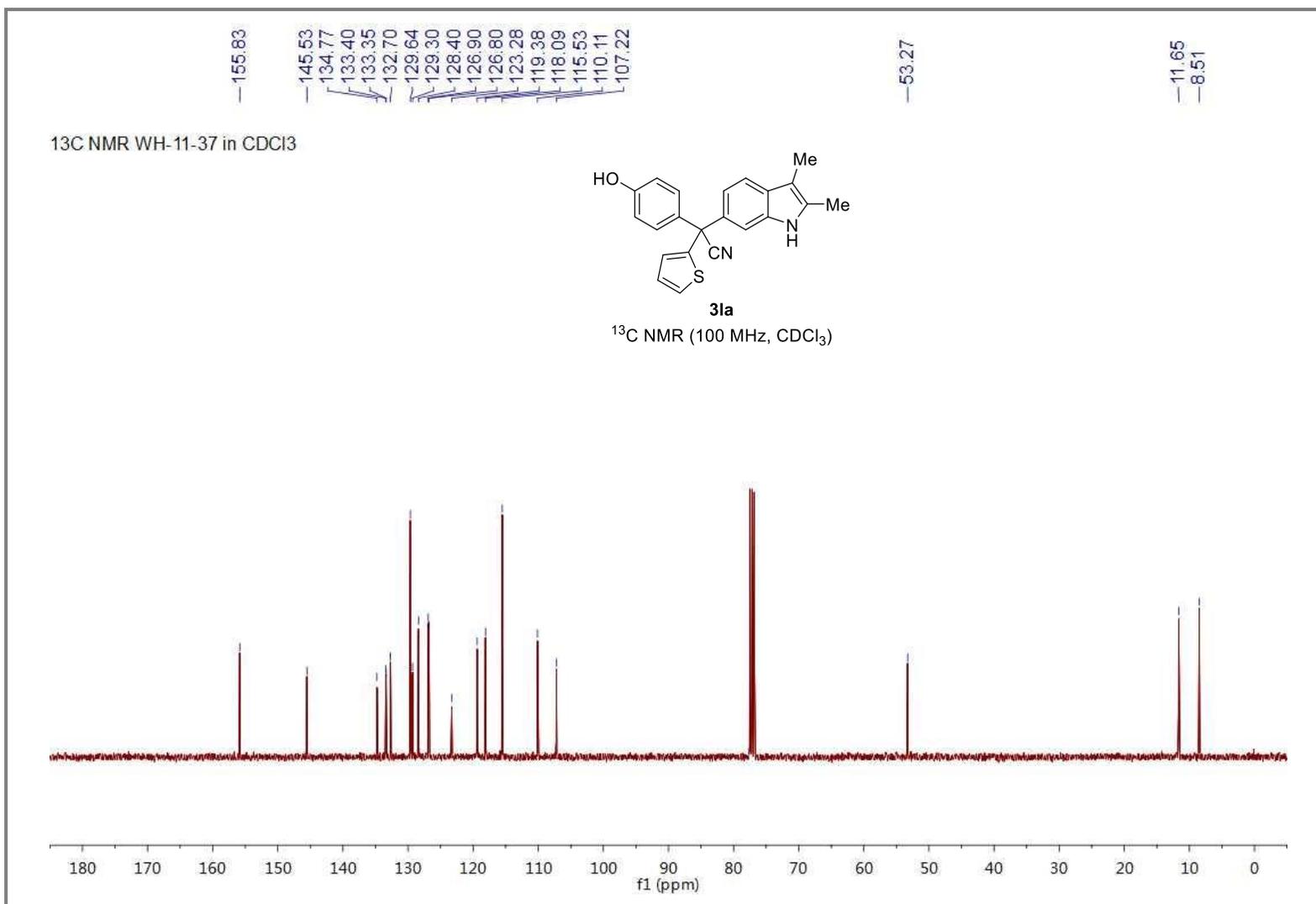


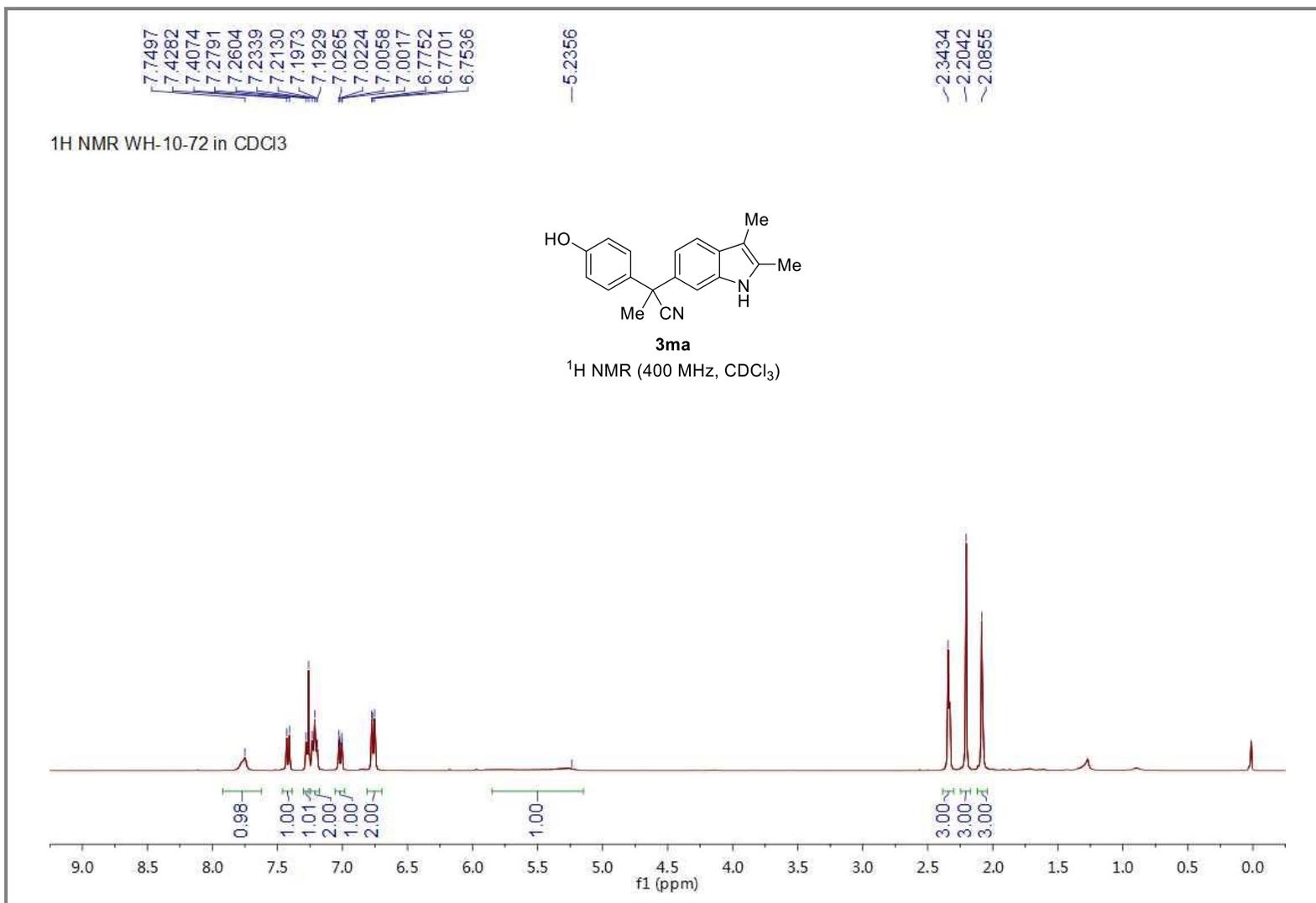


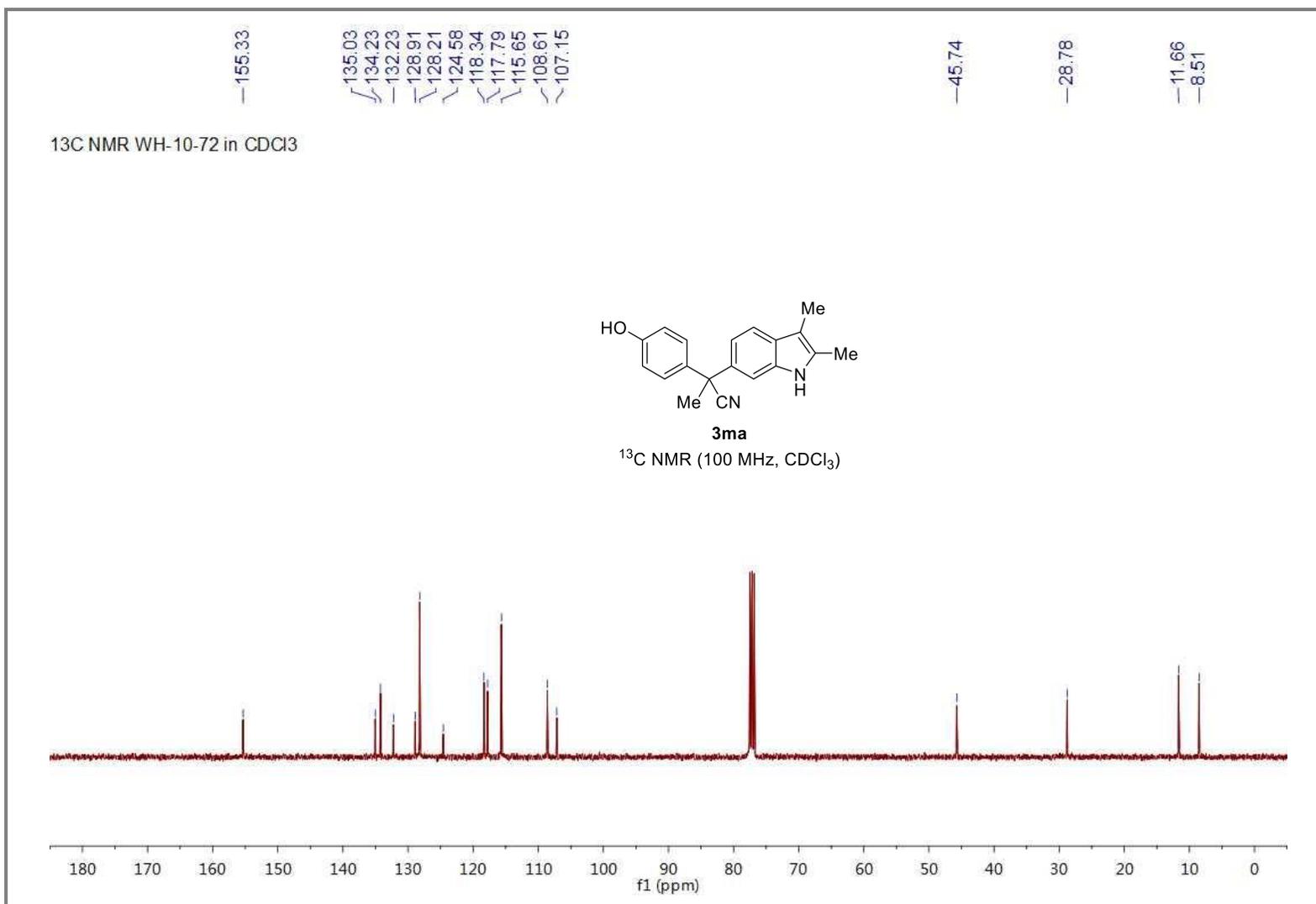


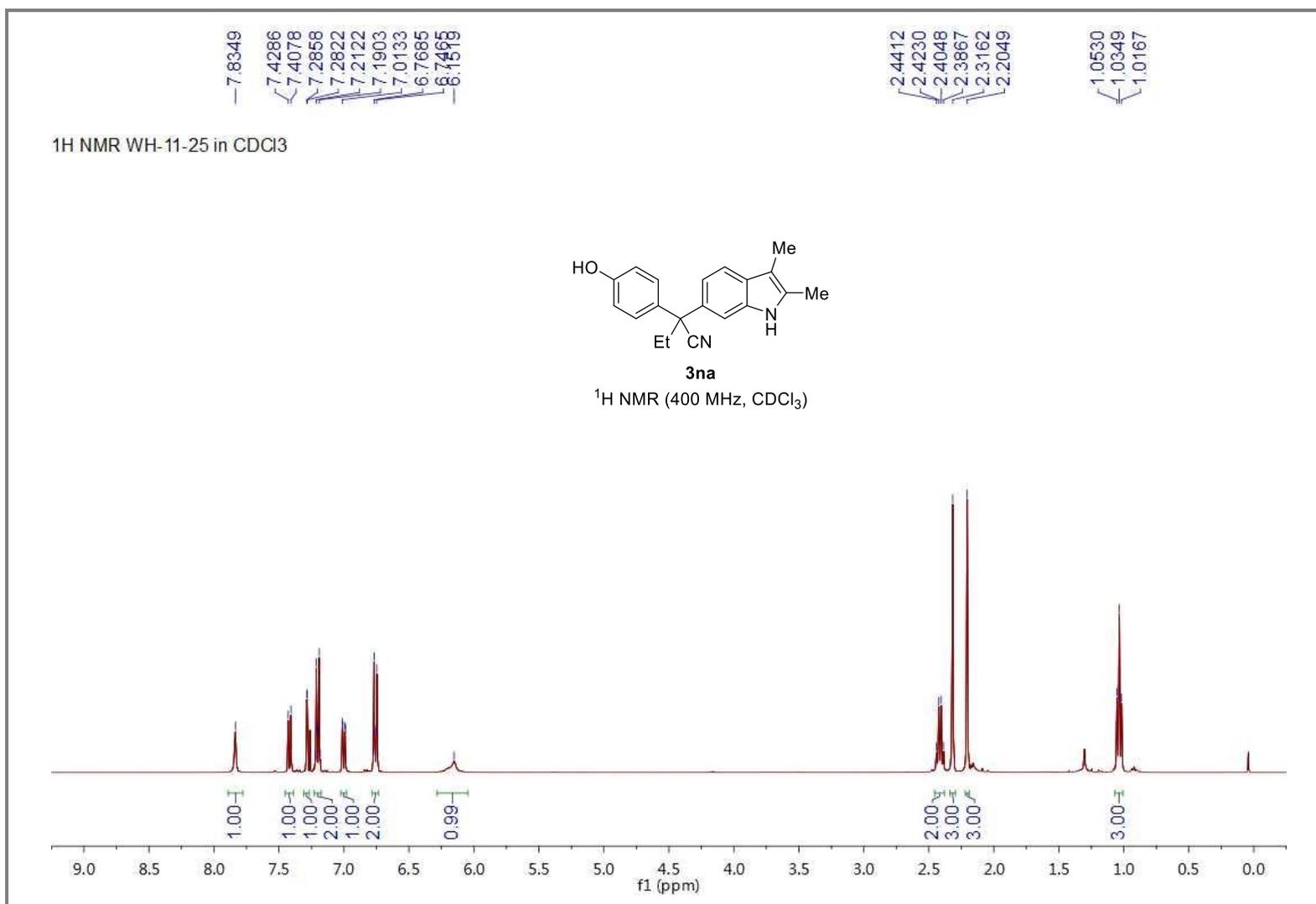


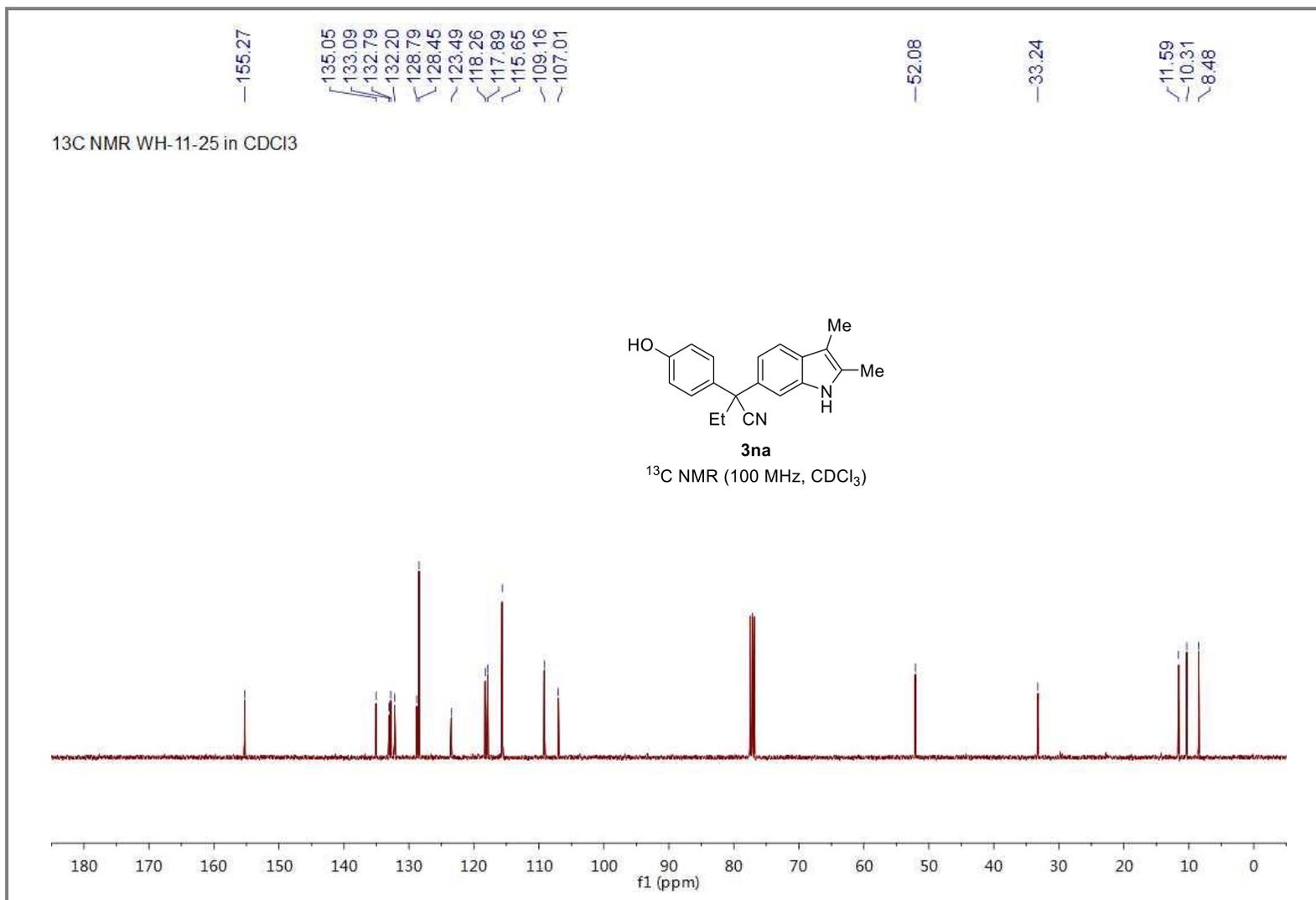


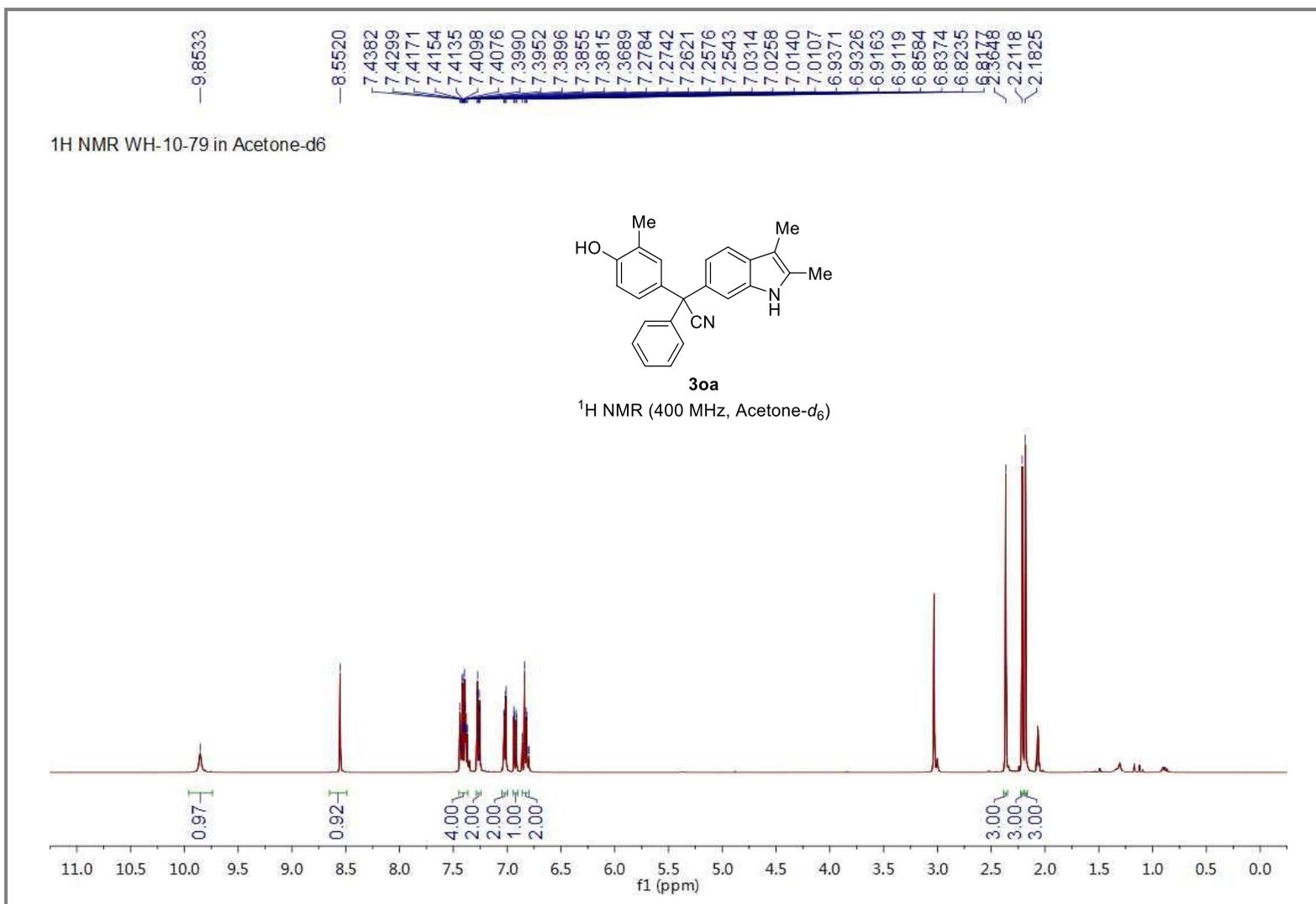


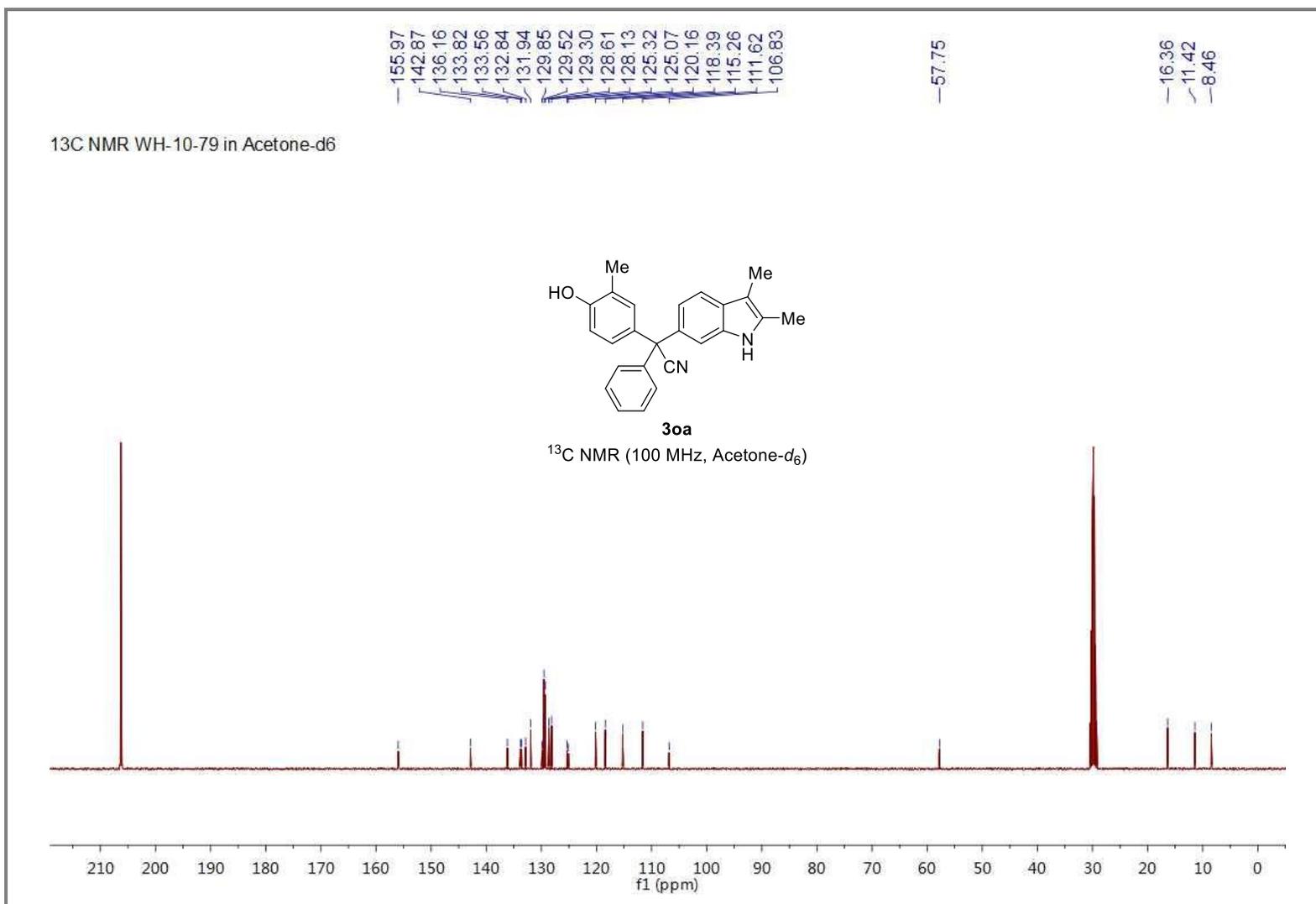


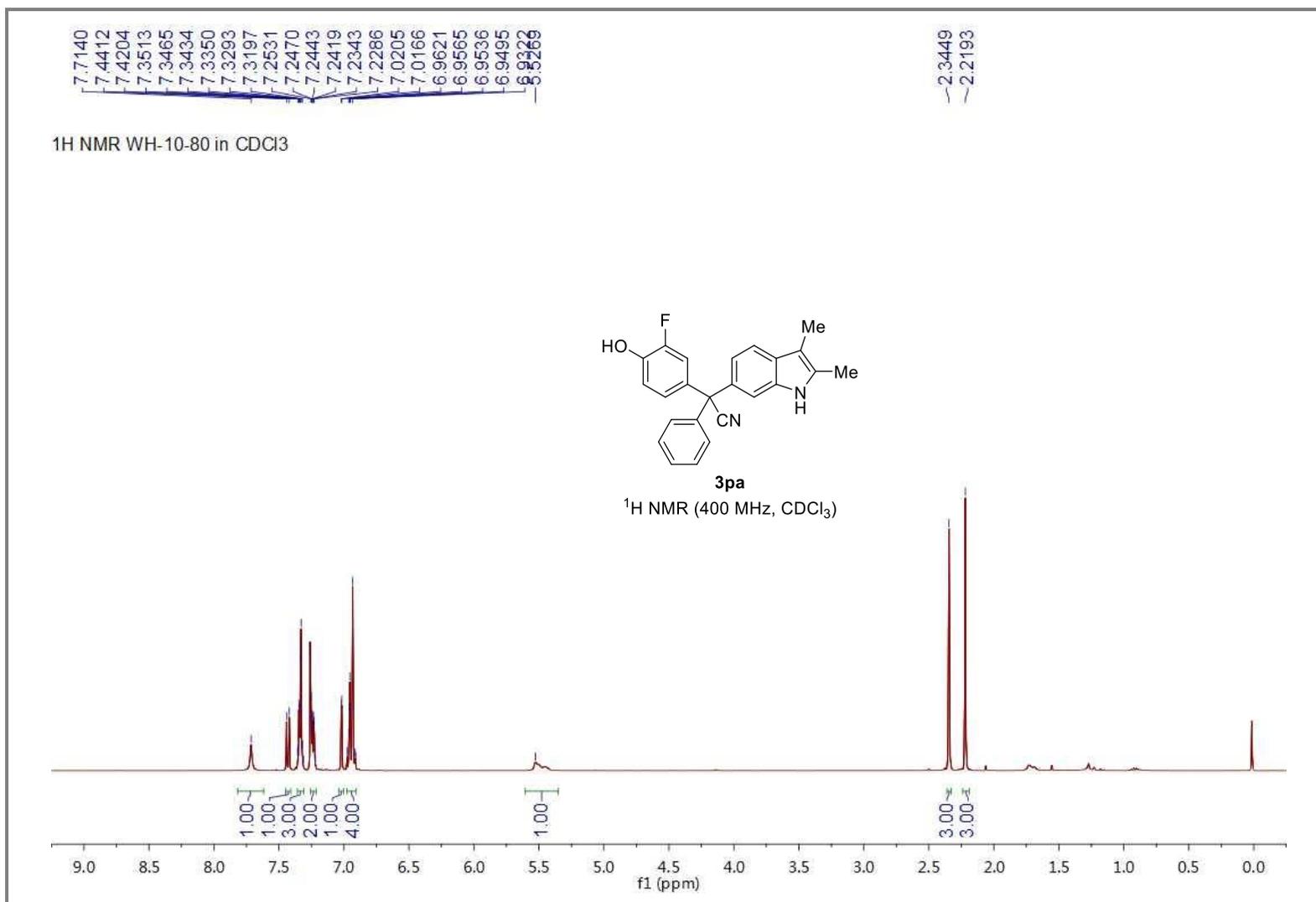


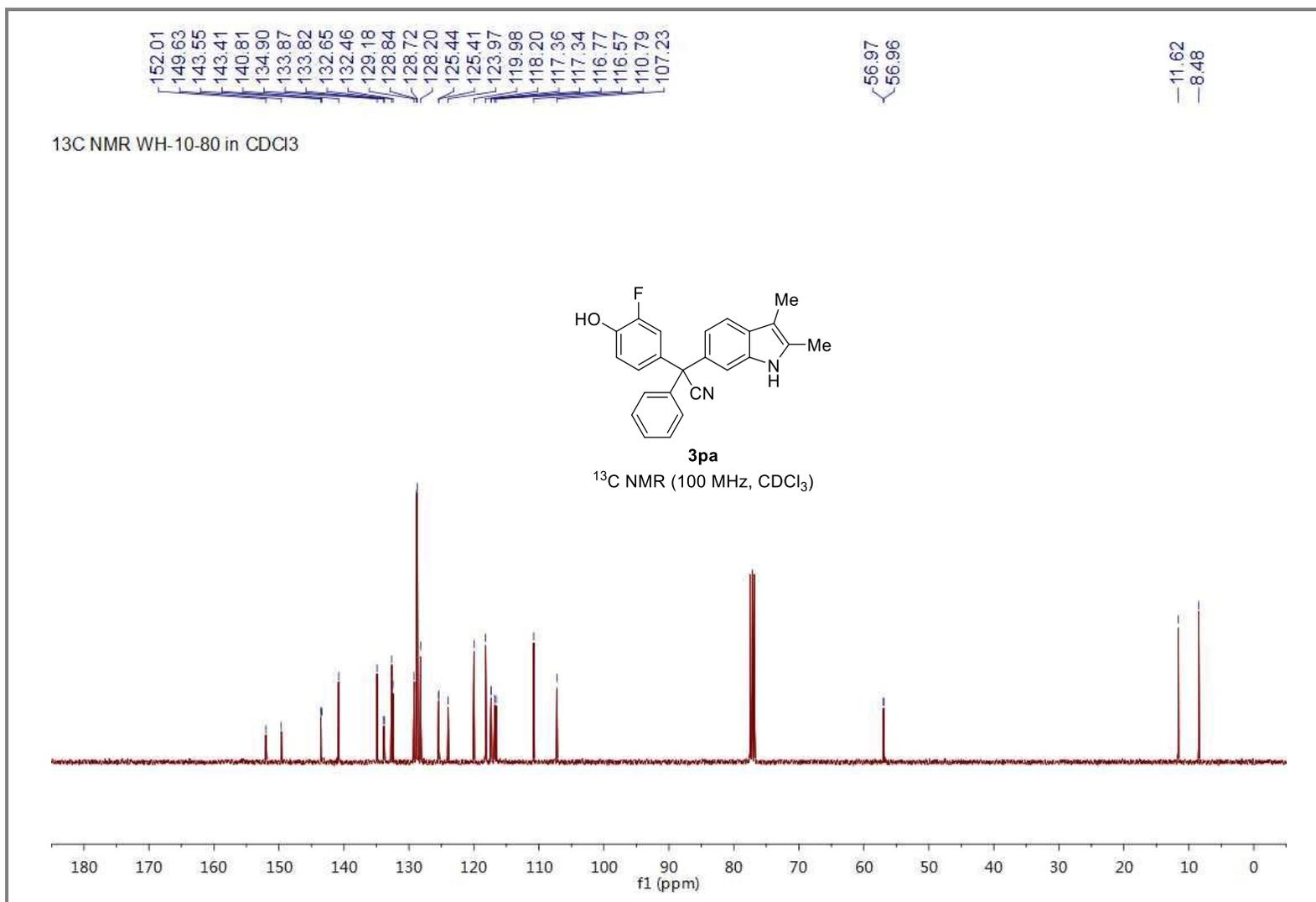






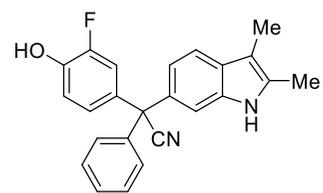




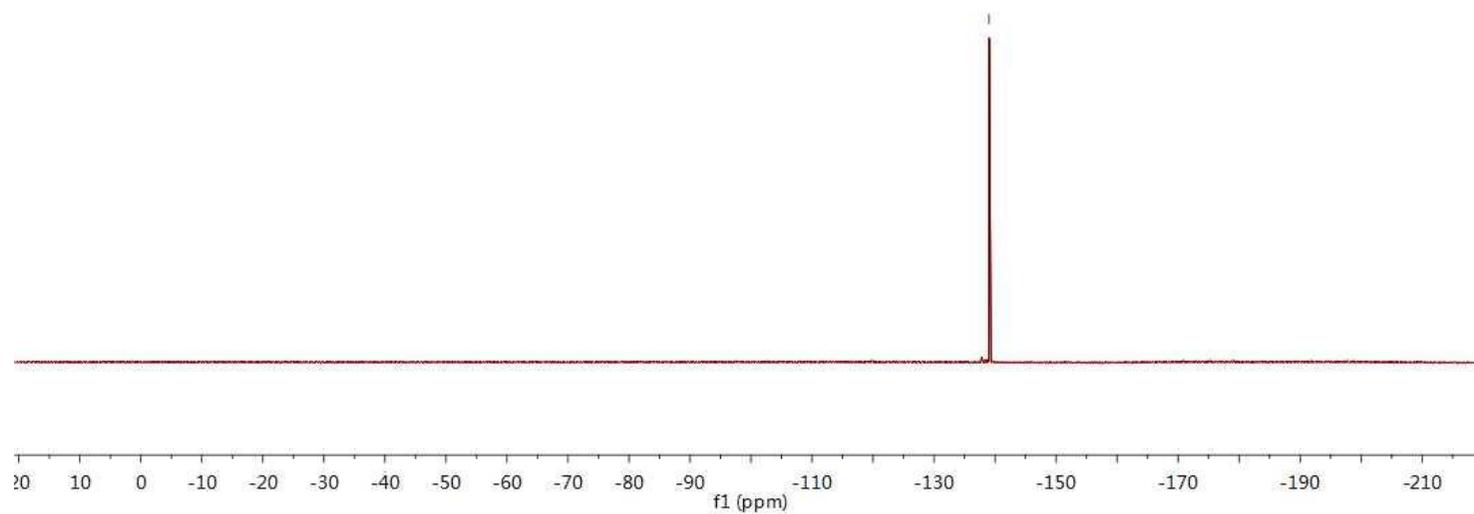


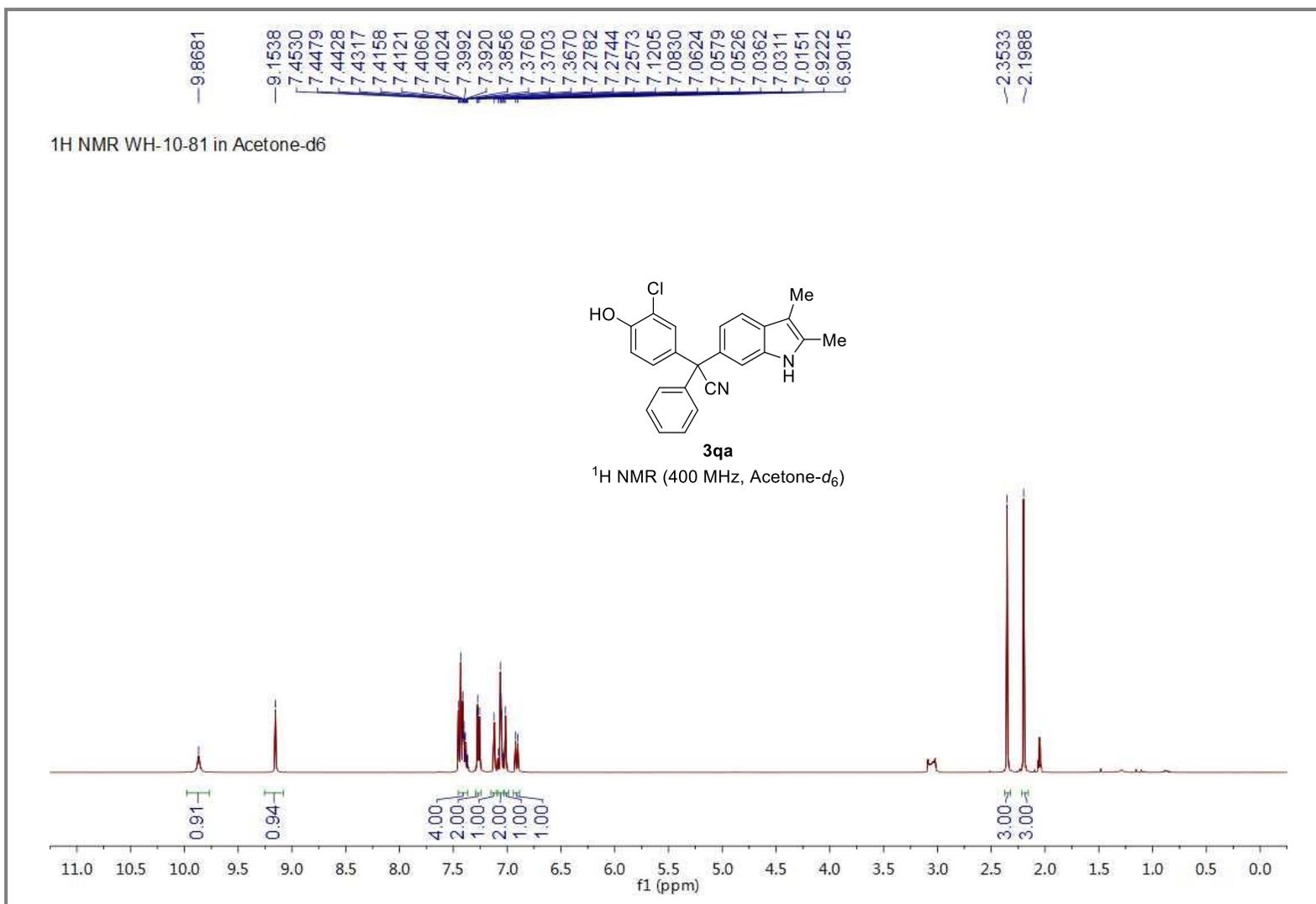
¹⁹F NMR WH-10-80 in CDCl₃

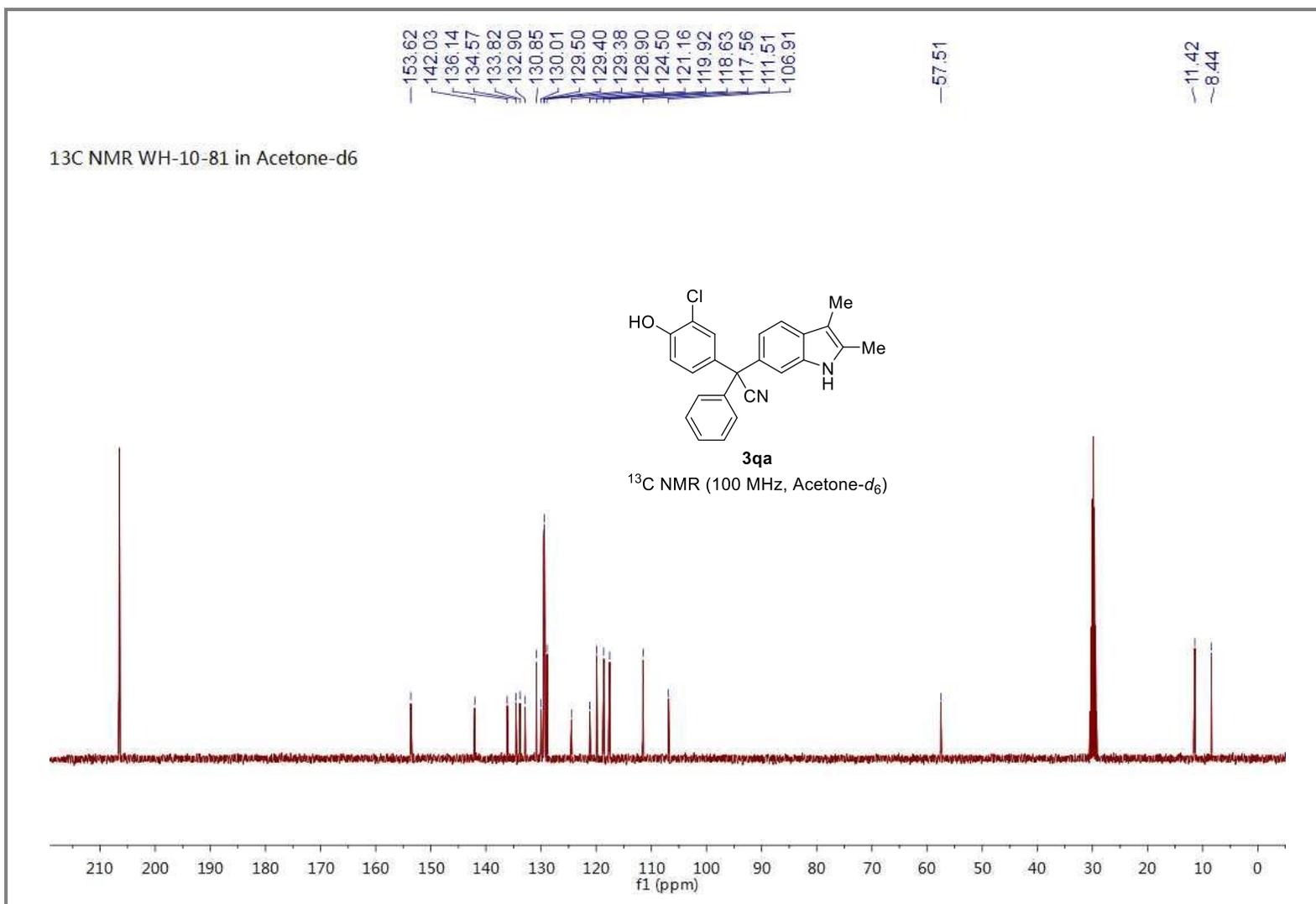
--139.0373

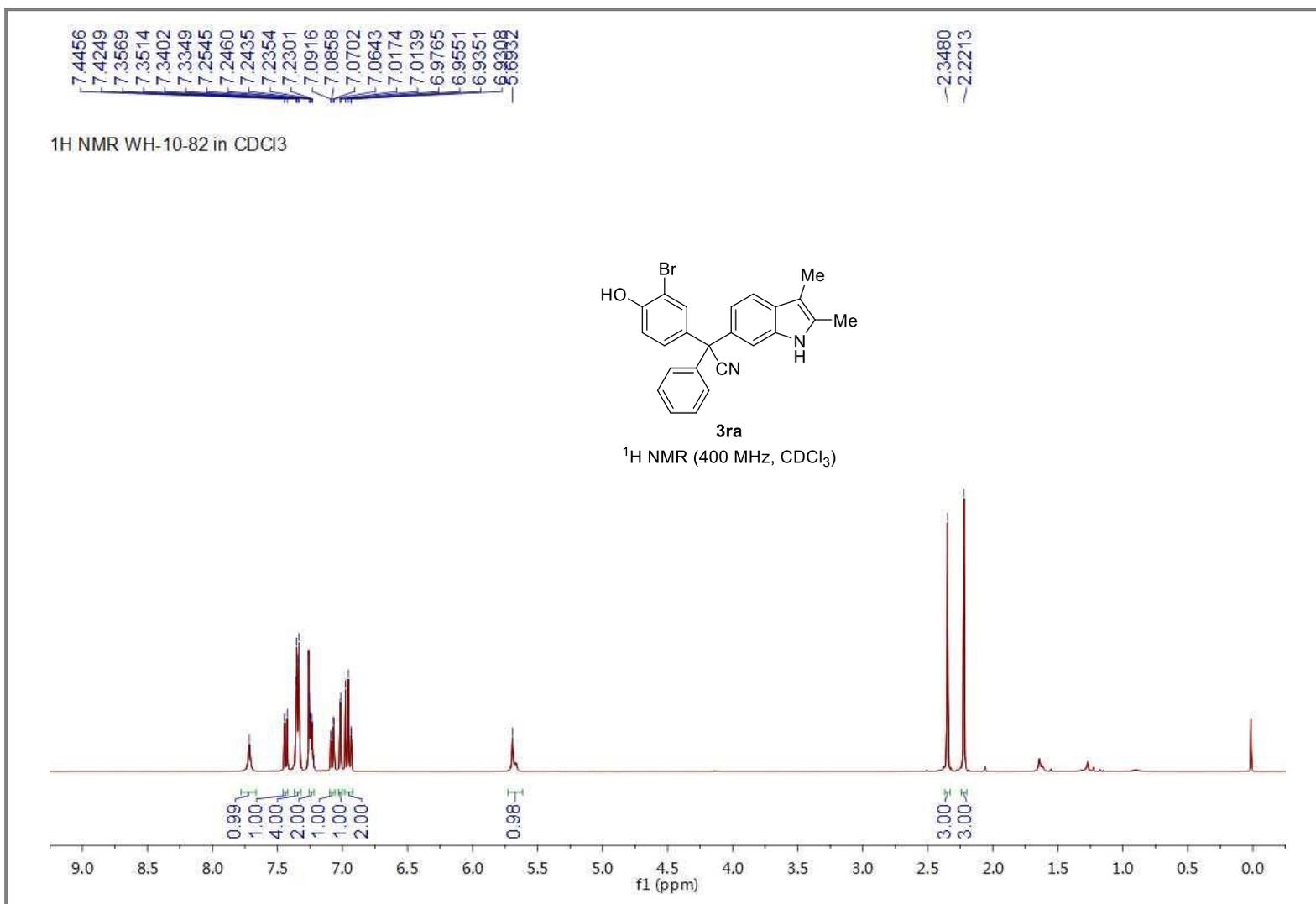


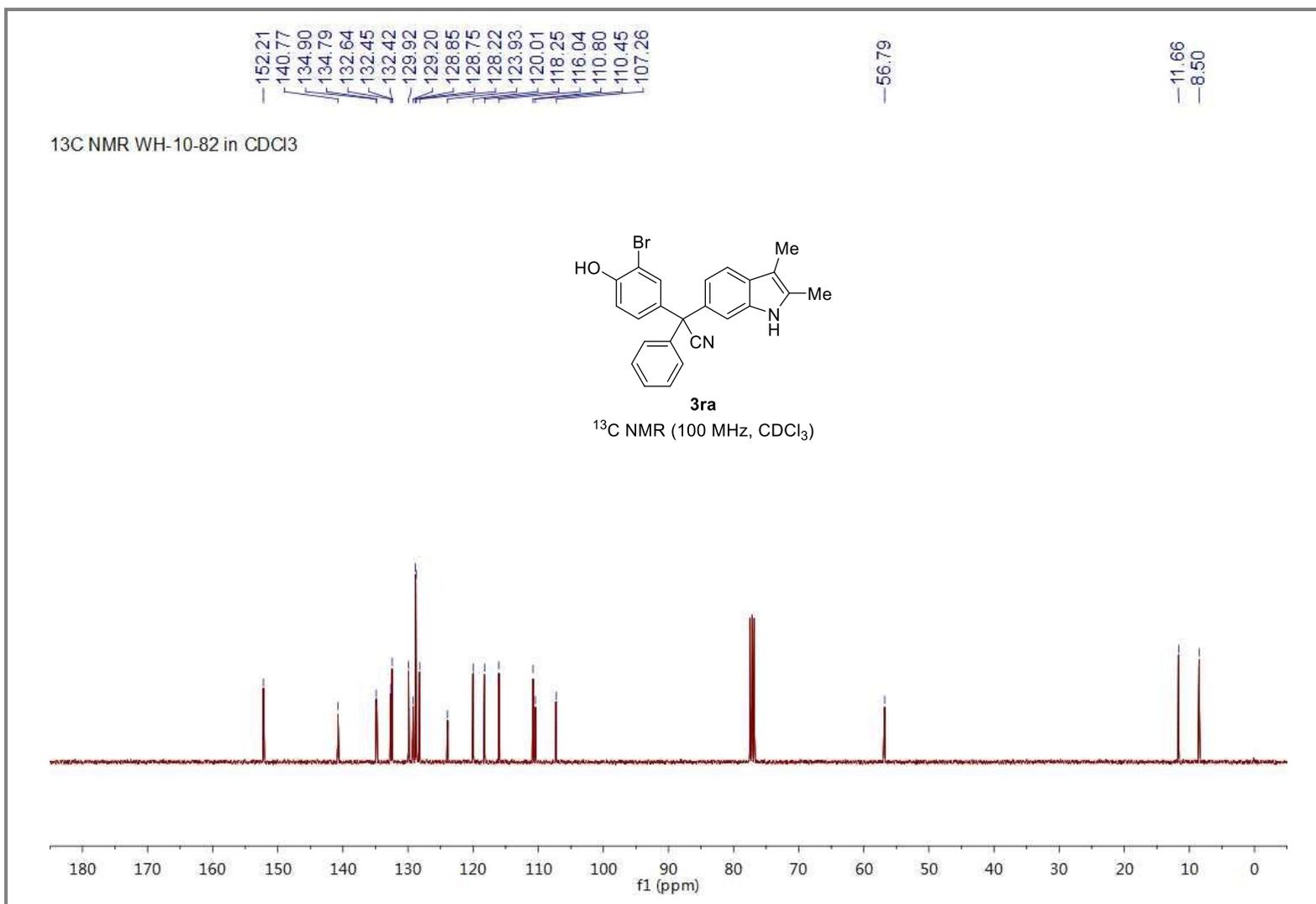
¹⁹F NMR (376 MHz, CDCl₃)

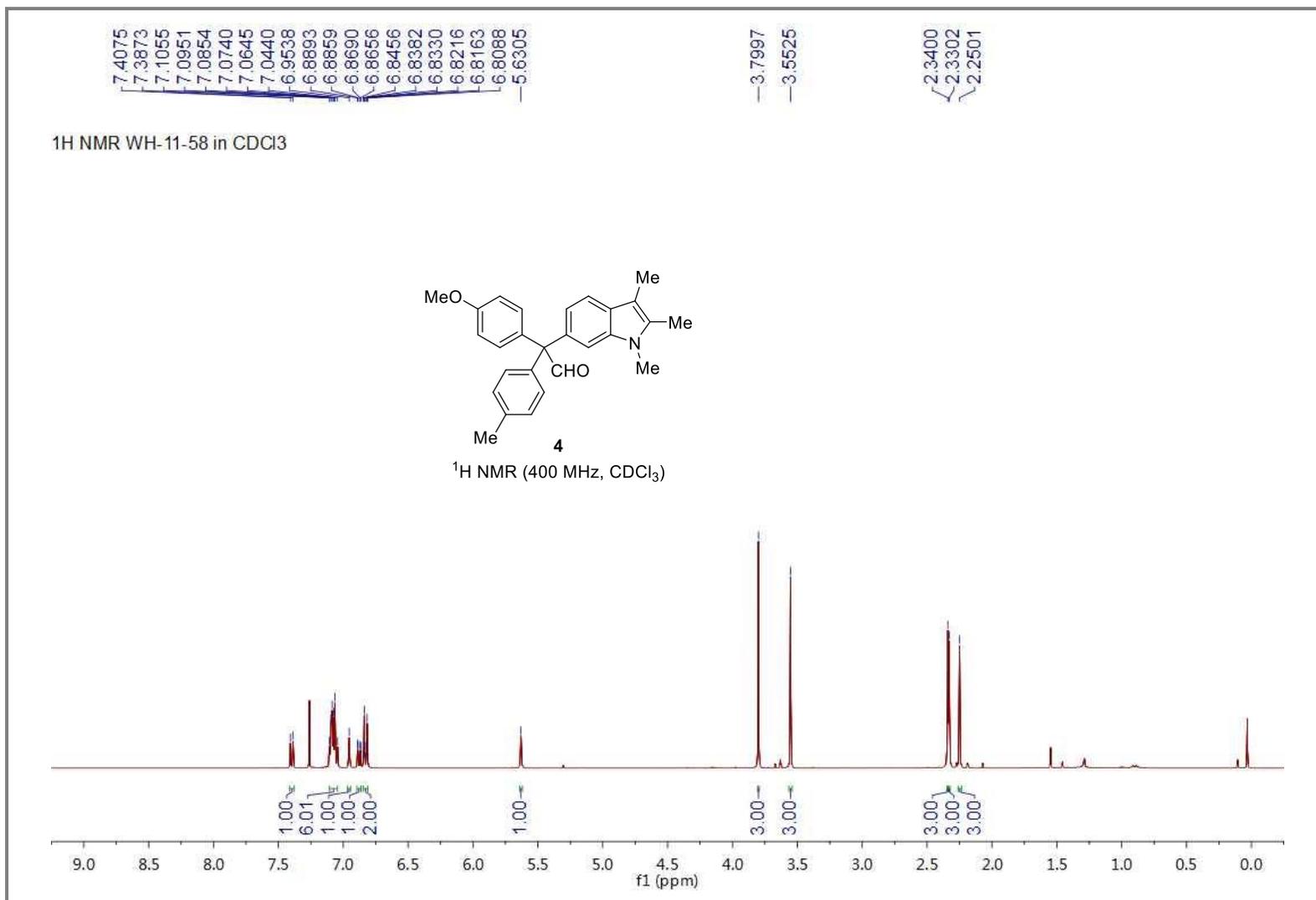


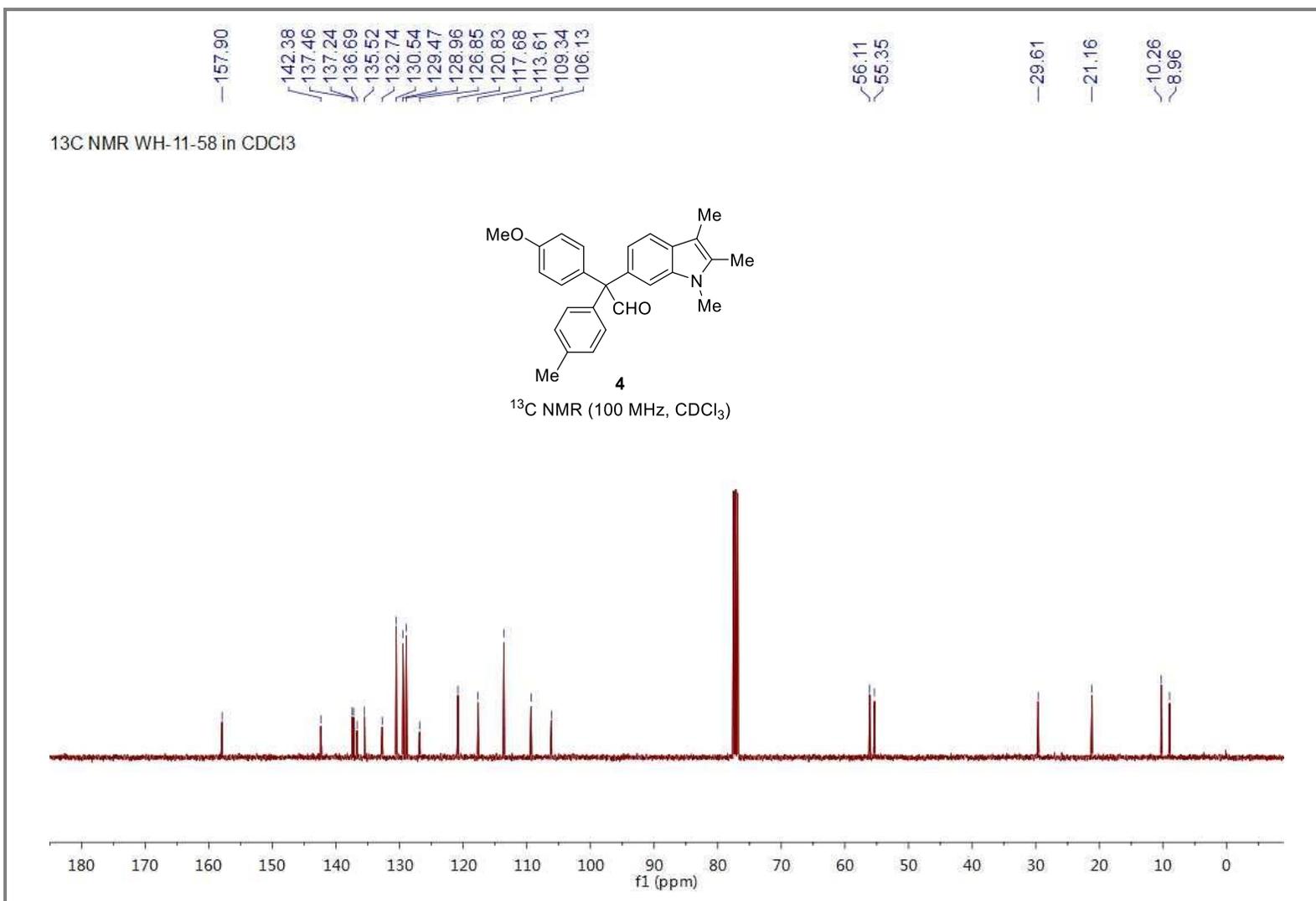


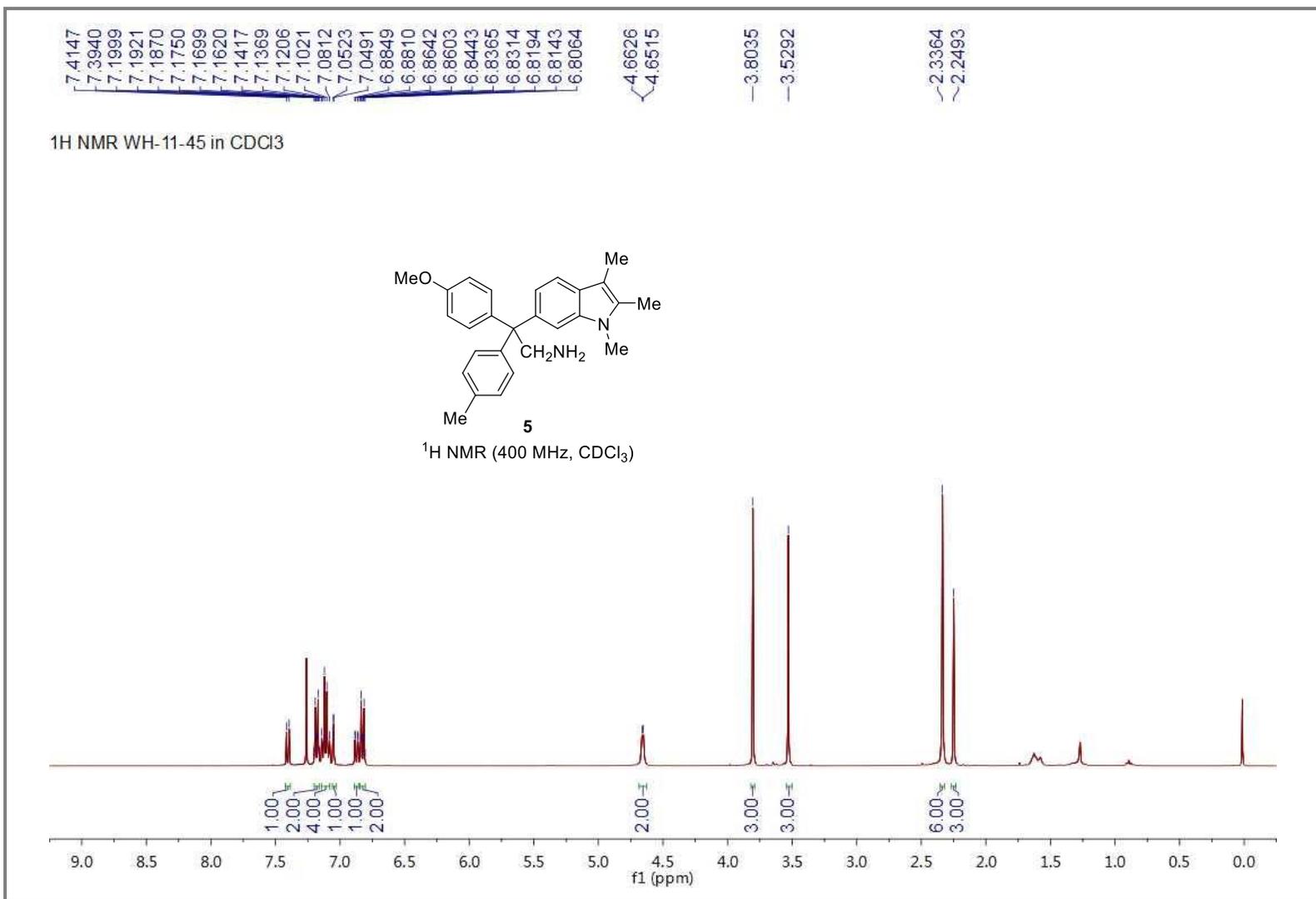


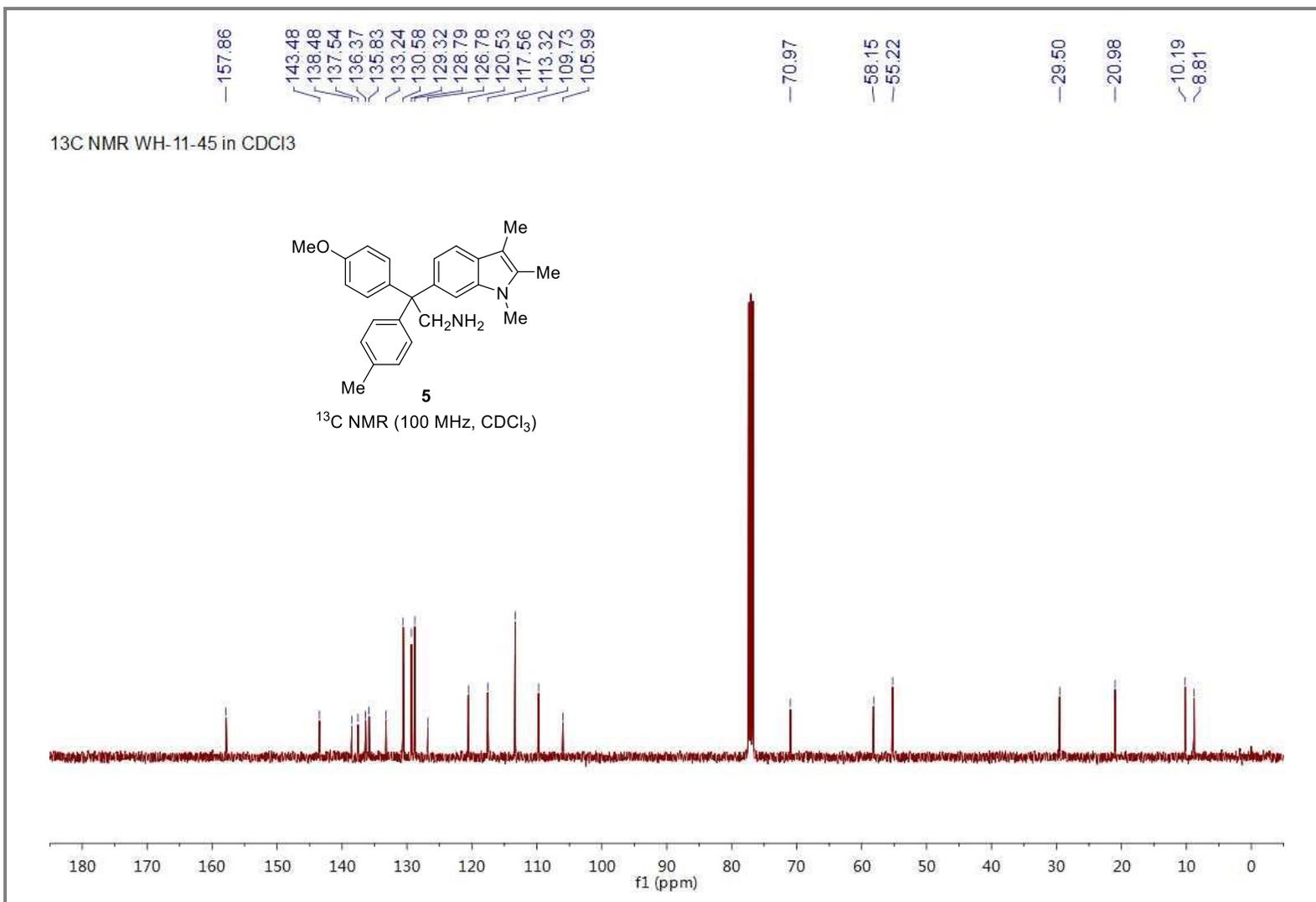


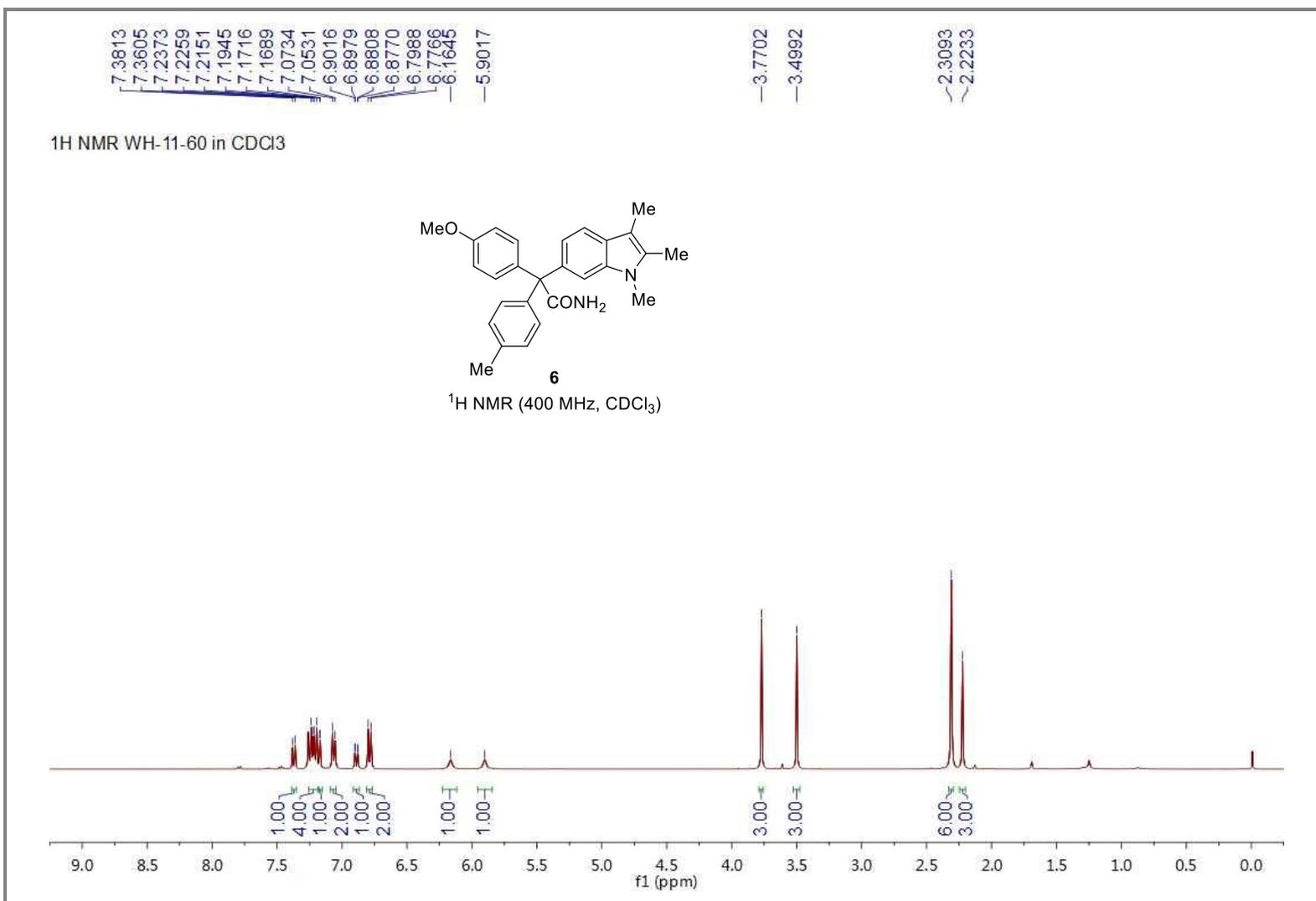


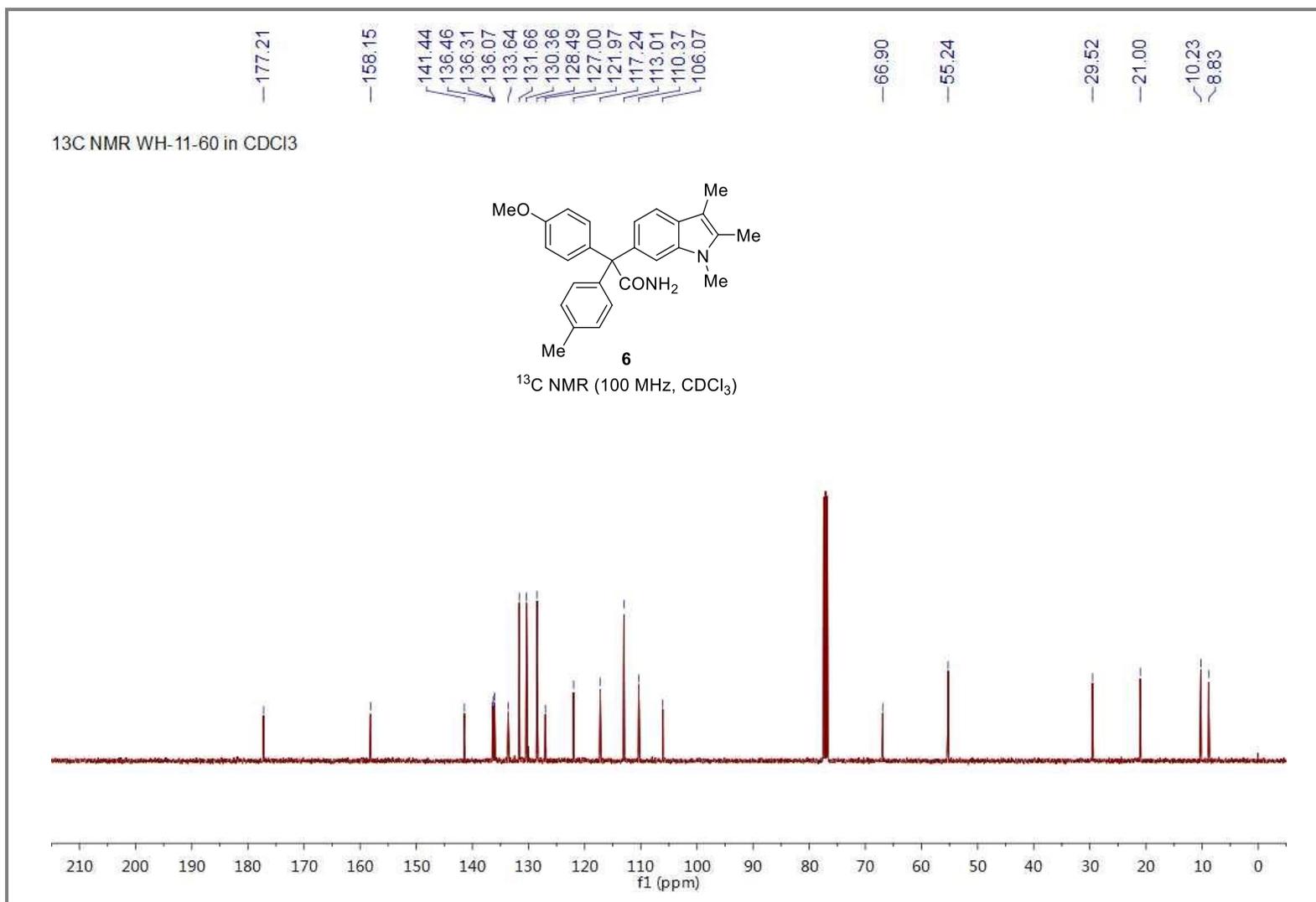


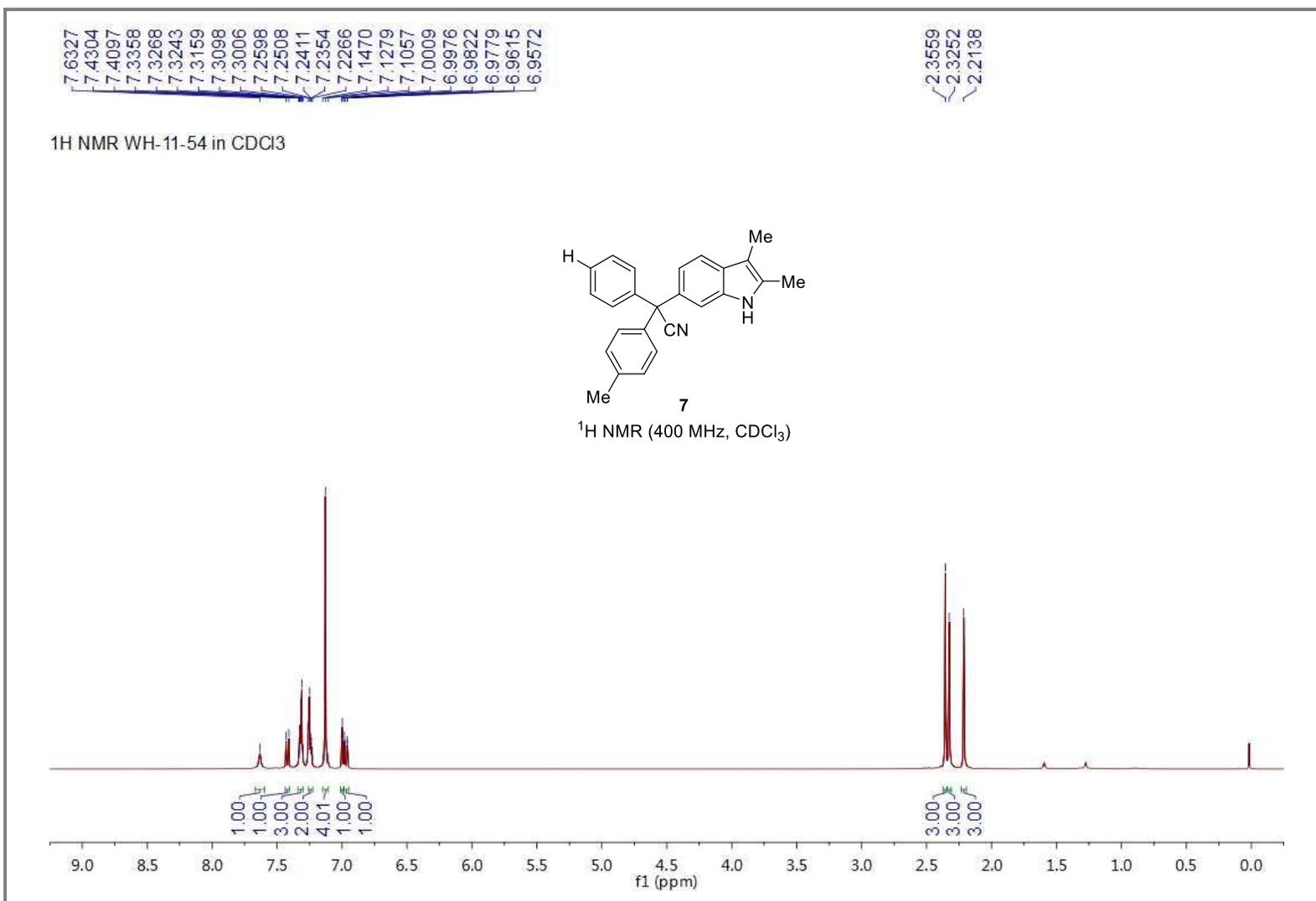


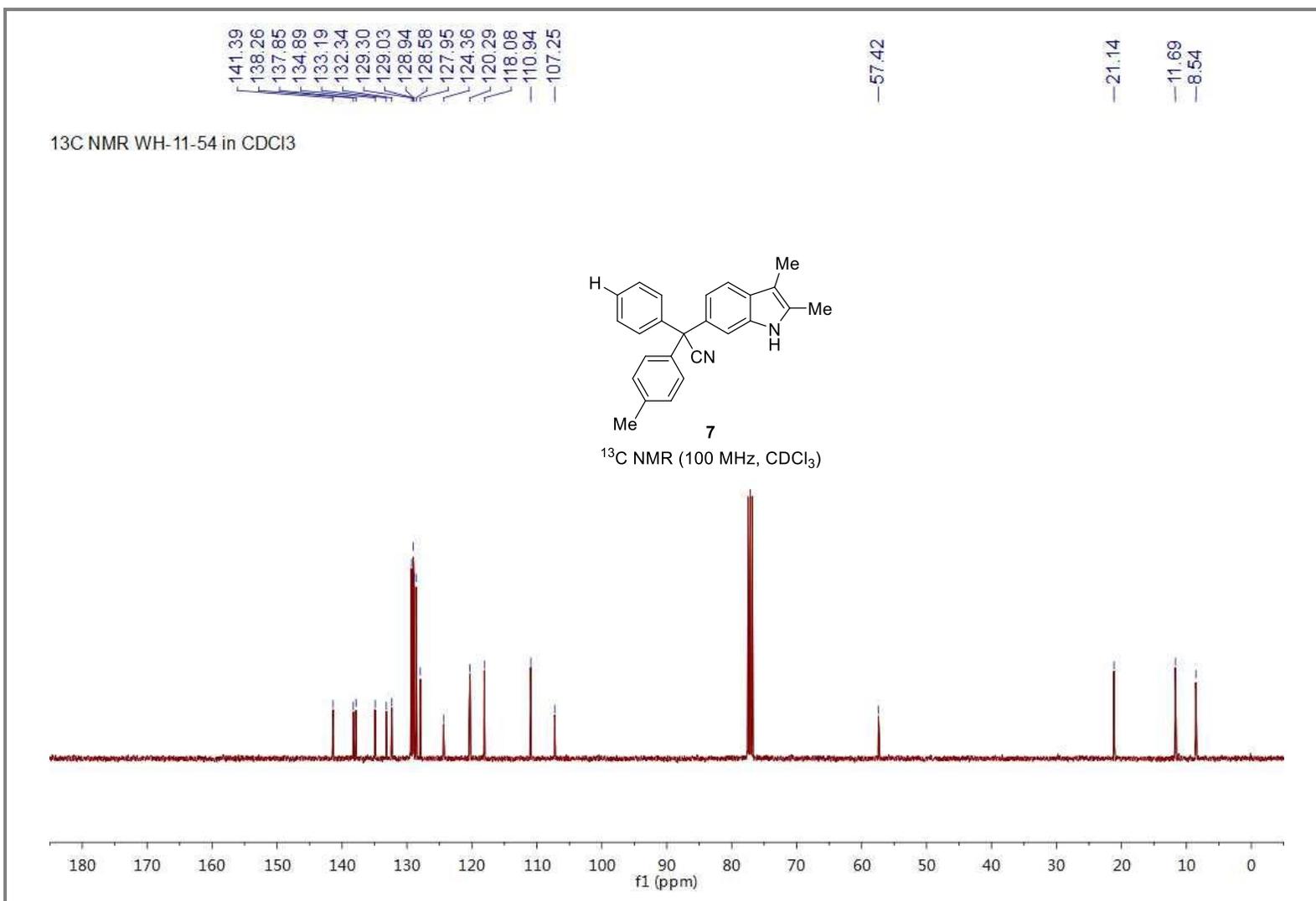


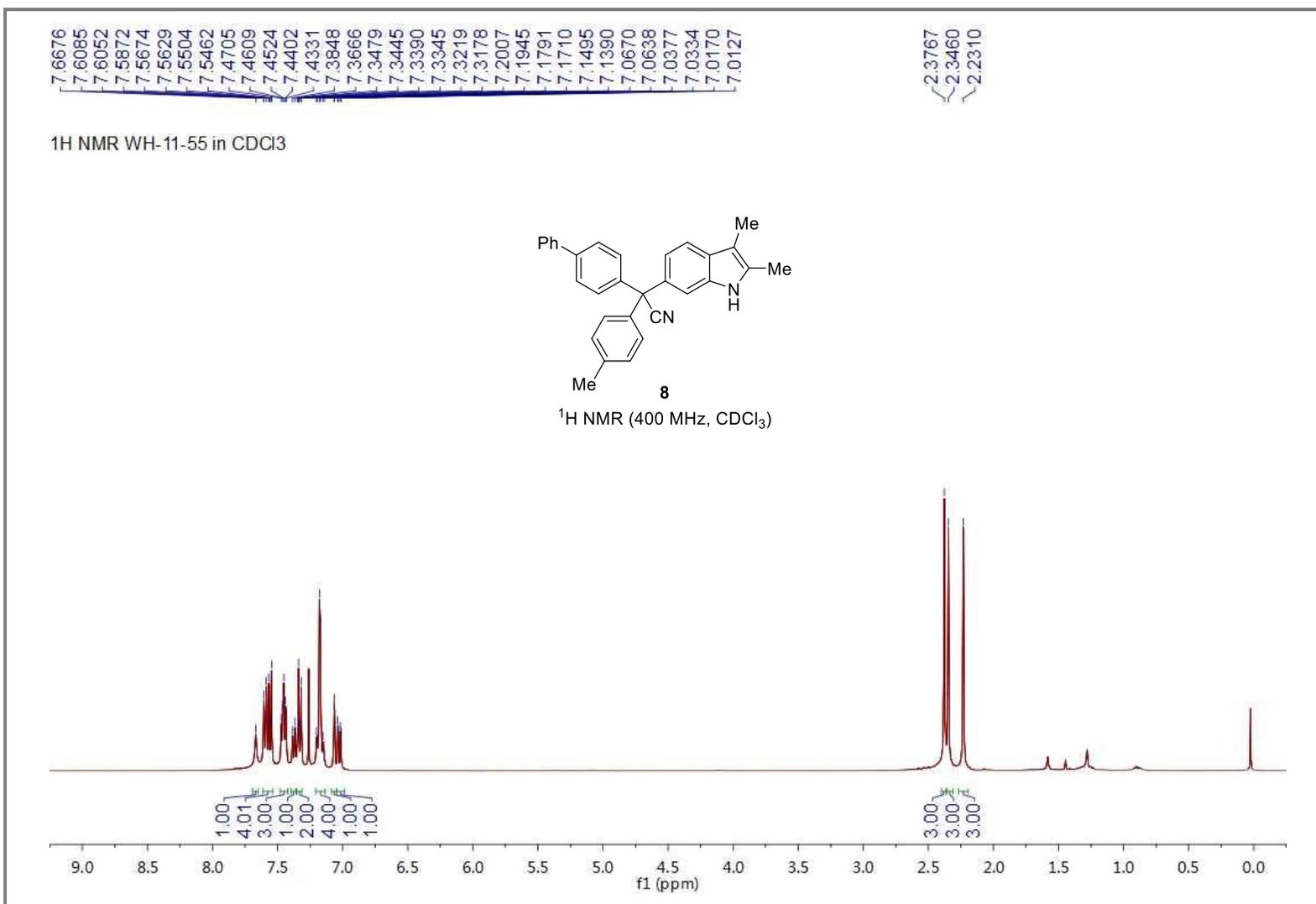


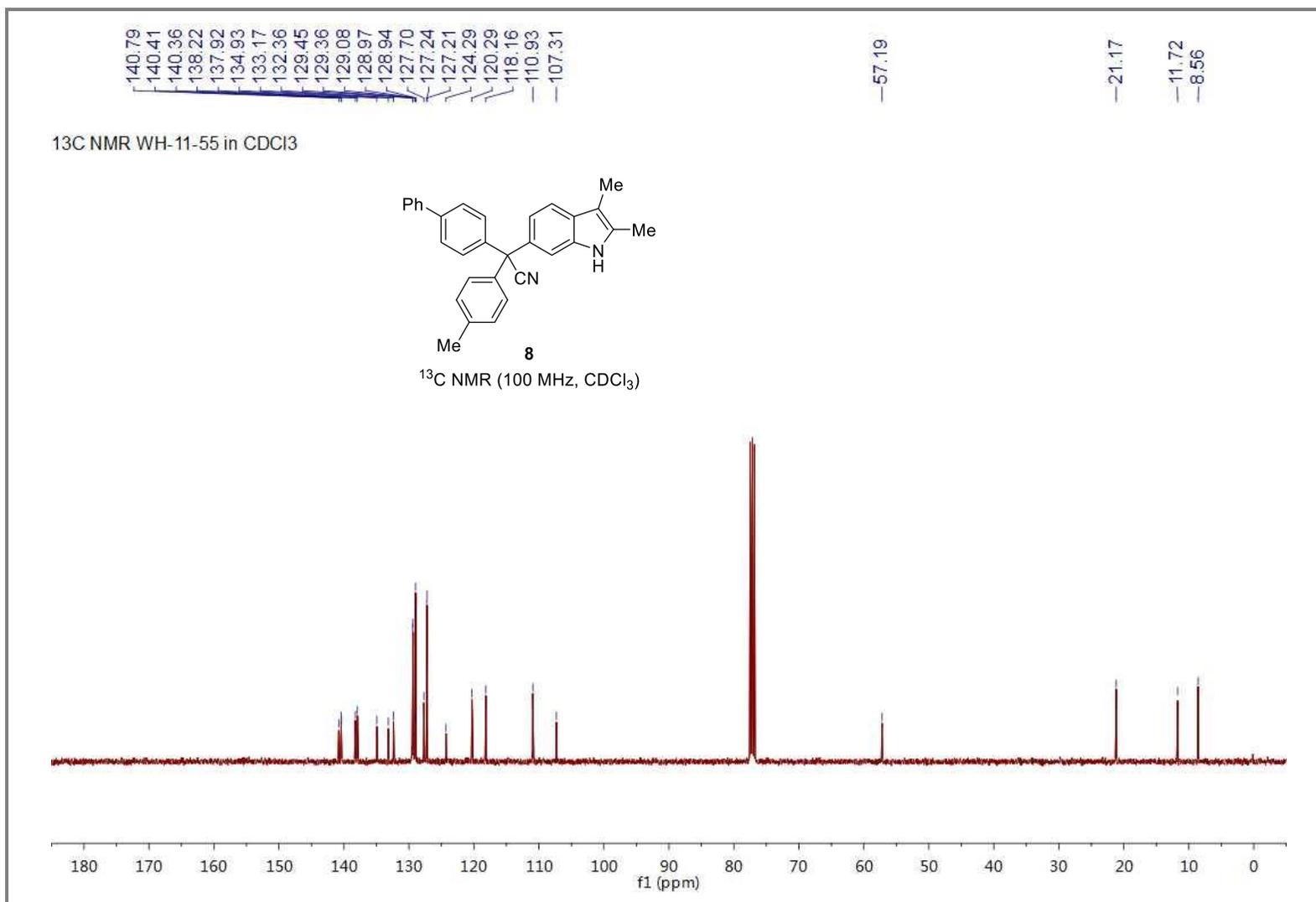


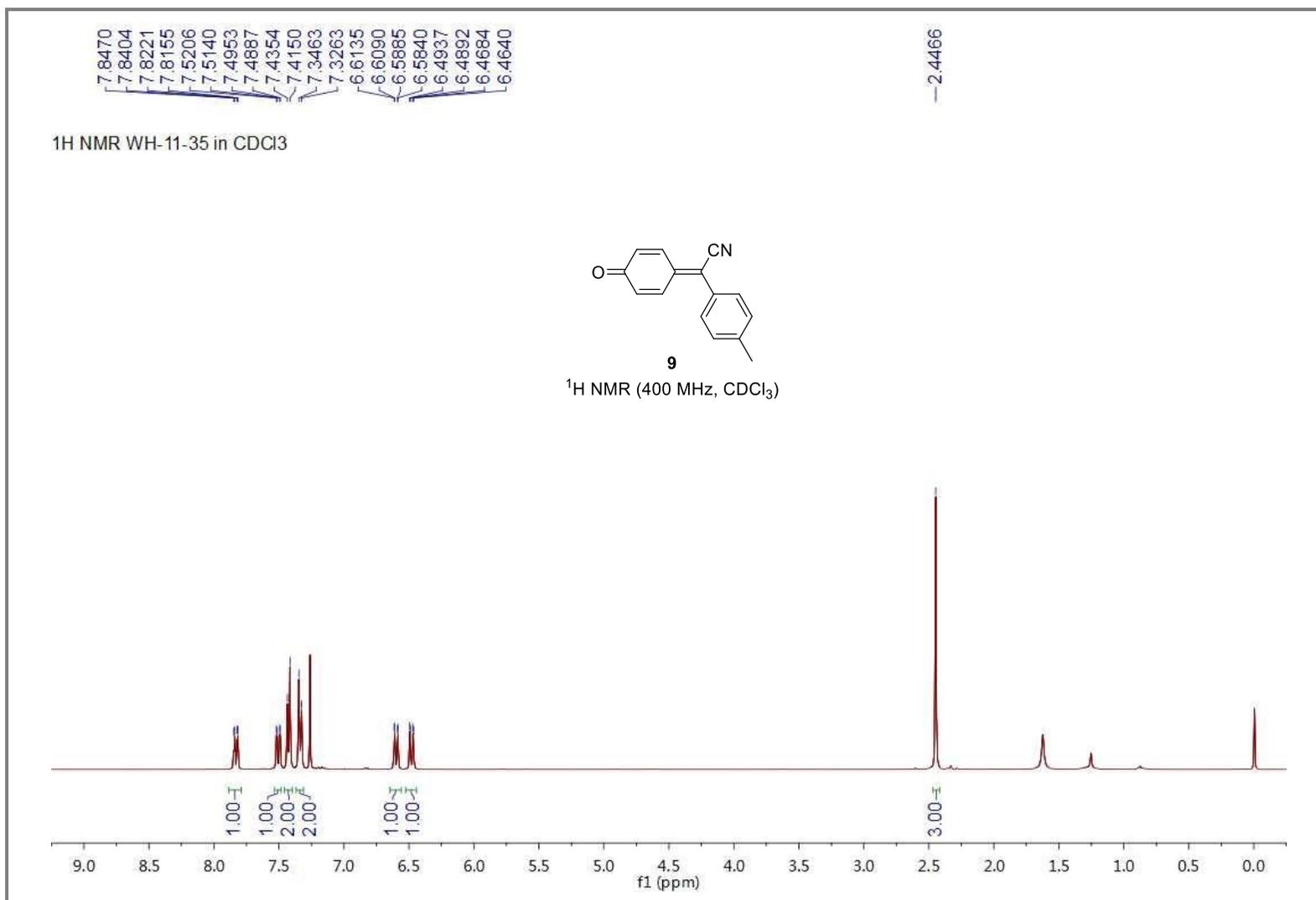


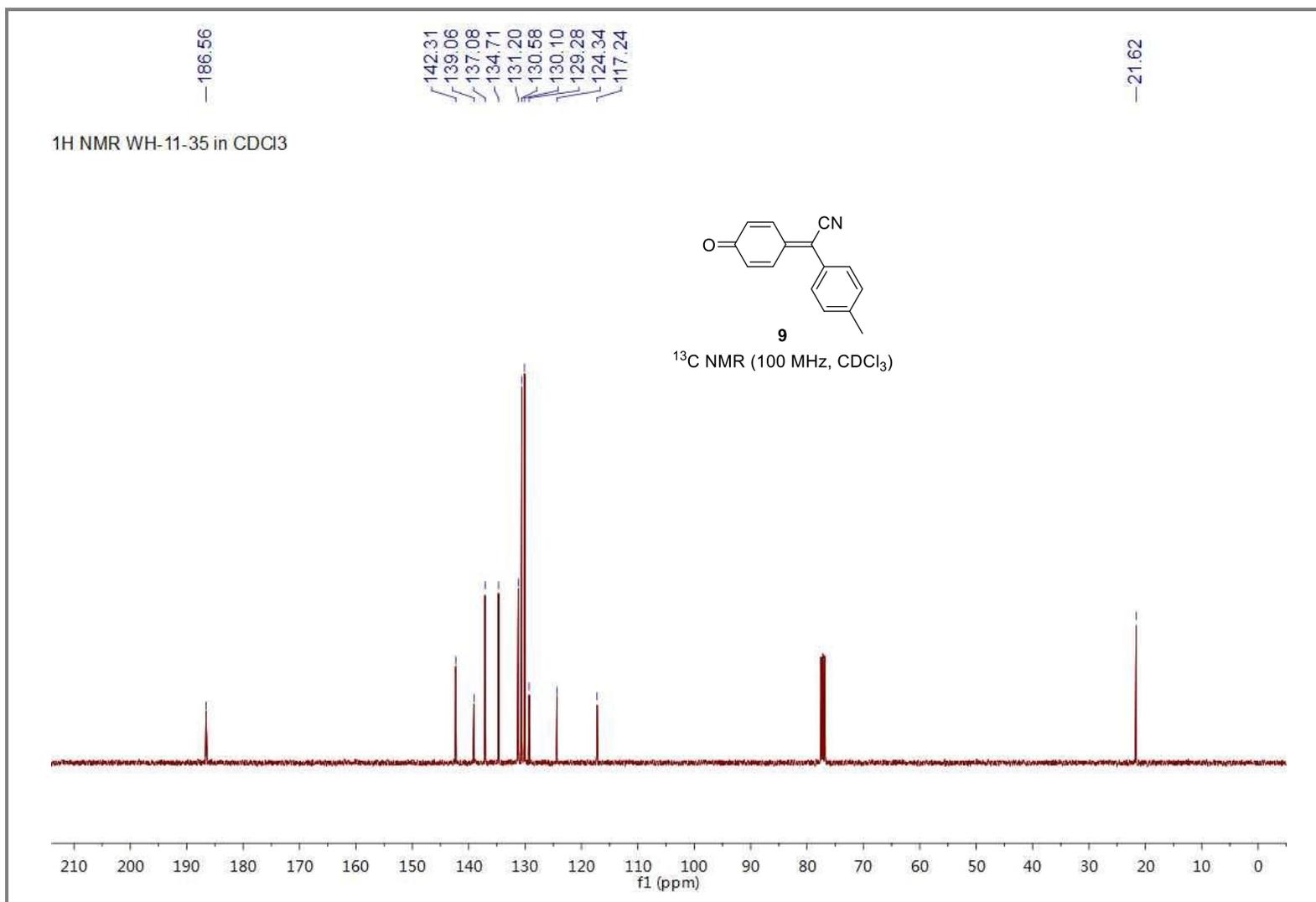






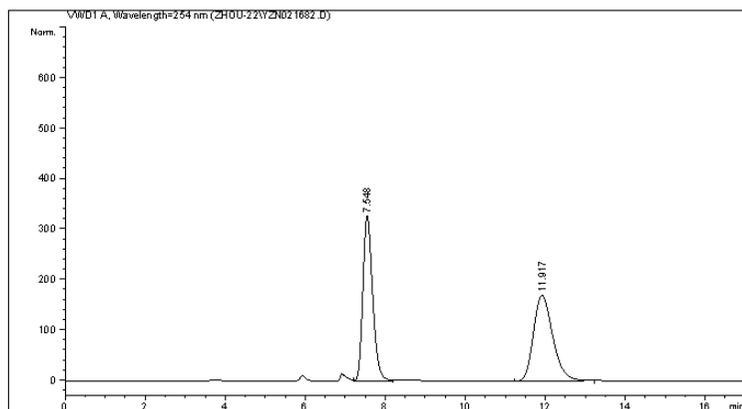






Data File C:\CHEM32\1\DATA\ZHOU-22\YZN021682.D
 Sample Name: WH-11-61 (+/-)

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 Acq. Operator :
 Acq. Instrument : Instrument 1 Location : -
 Injection Date : 9/20/2022 7:38:36 AM
 Acq. Method : C:\CHEM32\1\METHODS\DEF_LC.M
 Last changed : 9/20/2022 7:37:57 AM
 (modified after loading)
 Analysis Method : C:\CHEM32\1\METHODS\DEF_LC.M
 Last changed : 9/21/2022 7:47:18 AM
 (modified after loading)
 Sample Info : OD-H, Hexane/i-PrOH = 80/20, 0.8 mL/min, 30 oC, 254 nm



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 Area Percent Report
 =====

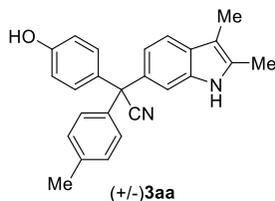
Sorted By : Signal
 Multiplier: : 1.0000
 Dilution: : 1.0000
 Use Multiplier & Dilution Factor with ISTDs

Signal 1: VWD1 A, Wavelength=254 nm

Peak #	RetTime [min]	Type	Width [min]	Area mAU *s	Height [mAU]	Area %
1	7.548	VV	0.2607	5577.19141	328.46286	49.6531
2	11.917	EB	0.5136	5655.12109	169.86157	50.3469

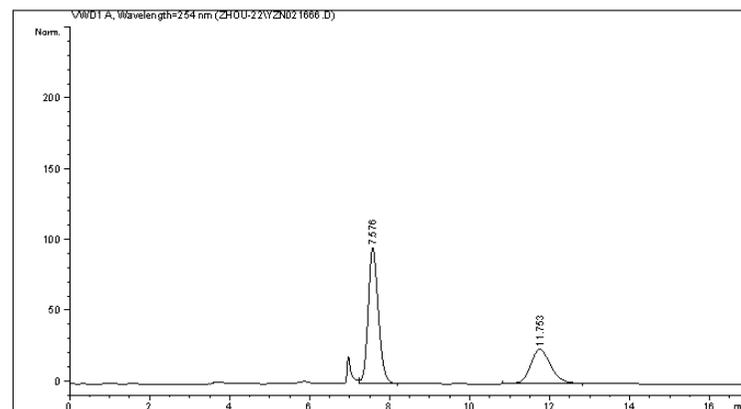
Totals : 1.12323e4 498.32443

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 *** End of Report ***



Data File C:\CHEM32\1\DATA\ZHOU-22\YZN021666.D
 Sample Name: WH-11-56-2

=====
 Acq. Operator :
 Acq. Instrument : Instrument 1 Location : -
 Injection Date : 9/1/2022 3:15:05 AM
 Acq. Method : C:\CHEM32\1\METHODS\DEF_LC.M
 Last changed : 9/1/2022 3:14:42 AM
 (modified after loading)
 Analysis Method : C:\CHEM32\1\METHODS\DEF_LC.M
 Last changed : 9/21/2022 7:43:50 AM
 (modified after loading)
 Sample Info : OD-H, Hexane/i-PrOH = 80/20, 0.8 mL/min, 30 oC, 254 nm



=====
 Area Percent Report
 =====

Sorted By : Signal
 Multiplier: : 1.0000
 Dilution: : 1.0000
 Use Multiplier & Dilution Factor with ISTDs

Signal 1: VWD1 A, Wavelength=254 nm

Peak #	RetTime [min]	Type	Width [min]	Area mAU *s	Height [mAU]	Area %
1	7.576	VB	0.2719	1695.19385	95.82535	66.5801
2	11.753	EB	0.5393	850.90210	24.22729	33.4199

Totals : 2546.09595 120.05263

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 *** End of Report ***

