

Dr. A. C. NEISH—AN APPRECIATION

ARTHUR CHARLES NEISH was born in Granville Ferry on 4 July 1916. He was married in 1944 to Dorothy Slack and they have three sons and a daughter. Art Neish's father was an Anglican priest and the family moved several times, living in the agricultural and fishing villages of the maritimes. Throughout his life, Art nurtured a desire to farm and has had a keen interest in plants. He graduated from the Nova Scotia Agricultural College in 1935, obtained his Bachelor's degree at Macdonald College in Quebec in 1938, a Master of Science degree in 1939 and a Doctorate from McGill University in 1942, studying under the supervision of Professor Hibbert. Not only did he win academic awards, but his prowess on the rugby and soccer field won him a most valuable player award.

In 1943, Art Neish joined the National Research Council and carried out a series of studies on the chemistry and fermentative production of 2,3-butanediol in co-operation with Dr Gordon Adams and Dr G. A. Ledingham. This work led to the publication of his manual 'Analytical Methods for Bacterial Fermentations', a manual that was revised and published twice by the National Research Council.

In 1948, Art moved from Ottawa to the Prairie Regional Laboratory at Saskatoon where first, as Head of the Fermentation Section (1948–1955) and later as Head of the Plant Biochemistry Section (1955–1961), he developed a radiotracer laboratory and applied ^{14}C to a study of the metabolism of hexoses and pentoses by *Aerobacter aerogenes*, to the biosynthesis of cell wall polysaccharides by plants, and to the biosynthesis of phenylpropanoid (e.g. flavonoid) and lignin constituents of plants. In 1961 the Neish's moved to Halifax where, in the following year, Art Neish succeeded Dr E. G. Young as Director of the Atlantic Regional Laboratory. He built an addition to the laboratory, increased the staff, and established a Seaweed Culture Station on the Atlantic coast near Sambro, 17 miles from Halifax. Here he studied the growth and nutrition of *Chondrus crispus* (Irish moss) and developed methods for propagating the plant vegetatively in tanks. Here also was written his masterly contribution to *Constitution and Biosynthesis of Lignin* (1968), a book in which he was co-authored by K. Freudenberg.

Art Neish's accomplishments have brought him many honors. He was elected a Fellow of the Chemical Institute of Canada and was its Merck Lecturer in 1957. He is a Fellow of the Royal Society and of the Royal Society of Canada. He received Honorary degrees from Mount Allison and McGill Universities. He was President of the Canadian Society of Plant Physiologists and the first recipient of the Society's Gold Medal. He was President of the Nova Scotian Institute of Science in 1969–1970, a member of the Society of Sigma Xi and of the Editorial Board of *Phytochemistry*, *Science Forum* and *De Naturaliste Canadien*. The National Research Council appointed him as a Distinguished Research Scientist in 1972, the second member of N.R.C. to be so honored (Dr G. Herzberg, Nobel Laureate, was the first). In December of 1972 the Governor General of Canada, with approval of the Queen, appointed Dr. Neish as an Officer of the Order of Canada.

Art Neish, a dedicated scientist whose primary interest is in doing research, has more than 100 publications to his credit. He has a strong aversion to the 'planning' of science,

maintaining that scientists doing good work should not be hindered by bureaucratic red tape, but rather encouraged to get on with the job. It is characteristic of the man that although seriously ill, he continues to participate in the planning of research programs and gives freely of advice and encouragement.

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