

**A.C. NEISH**

Arthur Charles Neish, President of the Nova Scotia Institute of Science 1969-70 and a Distinguished Research Scientist of the National Research Council of Canada, died on September 7, 1973 of cancer. Art Neish was born on July 4, 1916 in Granville Ferry, Nova Scotia. In 1935 while at the Agricultural College in Truro he won the Governor General's medal and a scholarship to MacDonald College where he subsequently specialized in chemistry and to a lesser extent in botany, obtaining the B.Sc. degree in 1938. McGill University awarded him the M.Sc. degree in 1939 for work done at MacDonald College with Professor W.D. MacFarlane on the isolation and composition of chloroplasts, and the Ph.D. degree in 1942 for work done under the direction of Professor Harold Hibbert at the Pulp and Paper Research Institute on the Chemistry and biochemistry of plant tumors. After a year as sessional lecturer at MacGill, he joined the Division of Applied National Research Council, Ottawa in 1943 as a member of a group studying the properties and production of 2, 3 butanediol by fermentation. This was a war-time project directed at production of possible precursors for rubber. When the Prairie Regional Laboratory Opened in 1948, Art was transferred to Saskatoon as head of the fermentation section. In 1957 he formed a plant biochemistry section and became its first head. He applied the radiotracer technique to the determination of pathways employed by bacteria to ferment hexoses and pentoses and later to the biosynthesis of plant polysaccharides, lignin, and phenylpropanoid compounds. These investigations established that phenylalanine is the source of carbon for the synthesis of lignin.

In 1961, he was transferred to the Atlantic Regional Laboratory where in 1962 he succeeded Dr. E. G. Young as Director. Under his stewardship the facilities of the laboratory were enlarged, a program of co-operative research and graduate student instruction with Dalhousie University organized, and a seaweed culture station established. In his last four years of active research, Art developed methods for growing Irish moss in tanks. It was his objective to bring the power of modern biology and chemistry to bear on these plants and to establish a viable seaweed industry in the Maritimes.

Art Neish's accomplishments brought him many honors. In 1972 the Queen appointed him as an Officer of the Order of Canada. He was the second person to be honored by the National Research Council as a Distinguished Research Scientist. Mount Allison and McGill Universities awarded him honorary Doctors of Science degrees. He was a fellow of the Chemical Institute of Canada, of the Royal Society of Canada, and of the Royal Society, London. In 1968-69, Art Neish was President of the Canadian Society of Plant Physiologists and in 1970, the first recipient of the Society's Gold Medal.

Art is survived by his wife, the former Dorothy Ann Ray of Montreal, a daughter, Nancy (Mrs. Allan Prowse), three sons, Iain, Gordon and Douglas, and by his mother, two sisters and a brother.