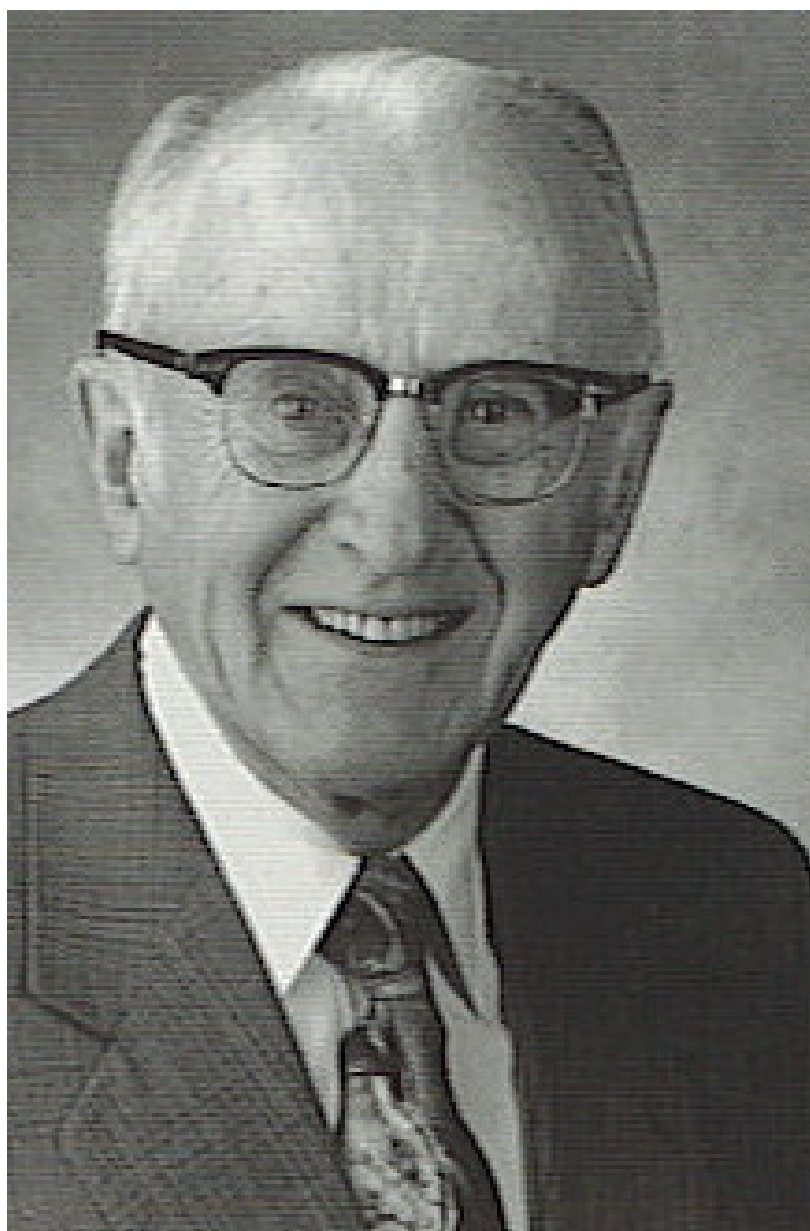


ARNIS KUKSIS, FRSC

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**Allan Godfrey Gornall**  
**1914-2006**



Dr. Allan Godfrey Gornall, eminent scientist, outstanding educator, and university professor emeritus, died March 15, 2006, in Toronto, Ontario. Dr. Gornall gained international recognition for promotion of clinical chemistry in Canada and abroad. He was a founding member of the Canadian Society of Clinical Chemists and the Canadian Academy of Clinical Biochemistry. His textbooks in the field of clinical biochemistry were used by members of medical schools and they provided the foundation of the Diploma Program in Clinical Biochemistry at the University of Toronto, where he chaired the Department of Pathological Chemistry in the Faculty of Medicine from 1966 to 1976. He received numerous national and international awards for this work and upon retirement was recognized as a “giant” of clinical biochemistry. Dr. Gornall was elected Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada in 1966.

Allan Gornall was born on August 28, 1914, in River Hebert, Nova Scotia, son of Rev. Dr. Herbert Thomas and Lucy Amy (Markham) Gornall. He attended high school in Saint John, N. B. and graduated with BA (cum laude) (Hon. Chem.) from Mount Allison University in 1936 and received a PhD in Pathological Chemistry from the University of Toronto in 1941 (Professor A. Hunter, supervisor). The next year he enlisted and served as a clinical chemist at the Royal Canadian Naval Hospital in Halifax (1942-1946) and retired as Lieutenant Commander. After the war he returned to an academic career of teaching and research at the Banting Institute in Toronto.

He served as Assistant Professor, Department of Pathological Chemistry, University of Toronto, 1946-1952; Associate Professor 1952-1963; Professor of Clinical Biochemistry, University of Toronto, 1963-1980, and Chairman of Department , 1966-1976.

Throughout his academic career Dr. Gornall was involved with raising the professional standards of clinical biochemists, which he accomplished by serving on various committees and writing reports and surveys. These results aided clinical chemists to replace outdated methods and equipment and improve reliability. His own success in developing analytical methods to measure proteins and aldosterone earned him international respect. He was the author or co-author of nearly 100 scientific papers and edited a textbook in the professional field of clinical biochemistry. This success inspired his students to become leaders in clinical chemistry within Canada and around the world. Within a decade 30 PhD and 10 MD trainees had passed through the Diploma Program in Clinical Biochemistry at the University of Toronto, which accounted for more than half the total number of qualified clinical biochemists in Canada at the time. Dr. Gornall retired in 1980, but continued an active role in the formation of the Canadian Academy of Clinical Biochemistry as a founding fellow in 1986.

Dr. Allan Gornall worked tirelessly for his profession for years. At the end of his career he was concerned about the role of clinical chemists in the rapidly changing health care environment and in an article (in CSCC News, August 1995) offered a sharp assessment of the political effects on the setting in which clinical chemists work. He saw that the restructuring of departments at the University of Toronto had resulted in the loss of identity of the Department of Clinical Biochemistry and in this article decries the fragmentation of Clinical Laboratory Sciences and services, urging clinical chemists and other non-medically qualified laboratory specialists to “assume the role of honest brokers between corporate technology and good patient care.”

Dr. Gornall was the recipient of many prizes and other honors including the Reeve Prize 1941; Nuffield Scholarship, Endinburgh, Scotland and London, England, 1949; the MDS Award

1975; the Ames Award, Cand. Soc. Clin., Chem. 1977; Samogyi-Sendroy Award, N. Y. State Clin. Chem. 1982; Awards for Outstanding Contributions in Education, Amer. Assoc. for Clin. Chem. 1984 and Can. Soc. Of Clin. Chemists 1989; and an Honorary degree from Mount Allison University, 1978.

On December 27, 1941, Dr. Gornall married Mary Elizabeth Sheila, daughter of late Dr. Herbert Leslie Stewart. The couple had four children – William Stewart, Douglas Allan, Thomas Herbert, and Catherine Anne. With his wife, Allan Gornall inspired his children to do well. Douglas Allan has followed in father's footsteps and has become a professional clinical biochemist and laboratory head.

In later years he turned to a study of the meaning of life, the nature of spiritual evolution and the destiny of the human race and published a book on the subject.

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*(Author's title given as of the time of writing)*