

Douglas Edward Cannell

1902—1979

DOUGLAS EDWARD CANNELL was born on September 25, 1902, in Gravenhurst, Ontario. When he was 2 years old his family moved to Port Carling, Ontario, where he received his elementary education. He later attended Oakwood Collegiate in Toronto and was an enthusiastic member of their football team.

In 1926, as a medical student at the University of Toronto, he was elected to the Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Medical Society. The following year he graduated with the degree of M.B.

In 1928, he obtained his B.Sc.(Med.), having spent a year in general pathology, during which time he wrote a paper on "Yellow Fever."

Following this he spent 7 years in extensive postgraduate training in Obstetrics and Gynecology at the University of Toronto and at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio.

It was here that he came under the influence of his tutor Dr. Arthur Bill. From then on he always delivered infants with the Tucker-McLean forceps with ebony handles and the Bill bar. Those of us who were lucky enough to learn from him the elegant technique of the Scanzoni rotation never thought of using any other method.

In 1938, he married Alice Susannah Colling and this formed a warm and enduring partnership for the rest of his life.

He served overseas in World War II with the 15th Canadian General Hospital becoming O.C. in Surgery and later as O.C., 2nd C.C.S., Royal Canadian Army Medical Corps, being discharged in 1943 with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel.

Returning to Toronto, Dr. Cannell was appointed to the attending staff of The Salvation Army Grace Hospital. He remained a faithful member of the hospital staff until he retired. On a personal note, he rescued me, in 1948, from the post of night admitting officer at the Toronto Western Hospital when he appointed me as a resident at The Grace Hospital. From then on he was my mentor in Obstetrics and Gynecology.

In 1939, he was appointed to the teaching staff of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology at the University of Toronto.

In 1950, he was appointed Professor and Chairman of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology at

the University of Toronto and subsequently became the first Gordon Leitch Professor of the Department.

He served as Obstetrician and Gynaecologist-in-Chief at the Toronto General Hospital and as Consultant to the Toronto Western Hospital, The Salvation Army Grace Hospital, The Wellesley Hospital, and the Hospital for Sick Children. At this time he developed the University of Toronto Postgraduate Course, familiarly known as the "Cannell Course," which has had much impact on academic Obstetrics and Gynecology in Canada. His residents reciprocated by forming the Cannell Club—and they will always remember those meetings and the evening meetings of the Journal Club when he taught and Alice entertained with homelike friendliness.

Resigning his chairmanship of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology in 1965, he served with distinction as the Medical Director of the Ontario Cancer Treatment and Research Foundation in Toronto until his retirement in 1975.

Dr. Cannell served as Vice-President of the American Gynecological Society in 1967 and was a member of The American Association of Obstetricians and Gynecologists.

He was awarded an Honorary LL.D. in 1973 by the University of Toronto. He was the recipient of the University of Toronto's Sesquicentennial Medal and the Canada Medal.

He was honored by the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada with the Duncan Graham Award in 1972 for contribution to academic medicine. He was honored by visiting professorships in the United States, Great Britain, and Australia. He was a Past-President of the Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada.

Dr. Cannell was essentially a practicing and teaching clinician and yet he published classic papers in the area of subarachnoid hemorrhage, renal failure, and bowel obstruction in pregnancy. He also published in the general field of Obstetrics and Gynecology.

With his death, a great obstetrician, a great man, and a great friend passes. At times presenting a dour shell, beneath this was a compassionate and warm-hearted man. He was revered for his complete integrity, admired for his humanitarian skepticism, and appreciated

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for his wry, dry sense of humor. His patients were intensely loyal, knowing that they were completely safe in his care.

A staunch conservative, he was proud of his Manx heritage and one of his greatest joys was a trip to the Isle of Man with his family.

Dr. Cannell is survived by his widow, Alice, his daughter, Susannah Ketchum, and his son, John, and three grandchildren.

R. A. H. KINCH