



Dr. Edward Woodall (Ted) Gault (1903 - 1982)

**Missionary, pathologist, surgeon, teacher, academic and researcher:
Dr. Gault's commitment and calling represented the best
that CMC has to offer in education**



Dr. Gault was born in Melbourne in 1903. The passing away of his mother when he was just three had a profound effect on the young boy. He joined the University of Melbourne, and graduated in Medicine in 1928. It was during his university days that he became an active member of the Student Christian Movement, and went on to become its President...He was particularly challenged by medical missionary work - the accounts of the many missionaries returning from India and the Far East inspired him, and he decided to

become a medical missionary. He was blessed to find in his wife, Dr. Edna Gault, a kindred soul, who was equally passionate about medical mission work. The Gaults decided to give up their practice in Melbourne, and go to India.

Their choice of India was mainly influenced by Dr. Gault's sister, Adelaide. When she was in her early twenties, Adelaide had gone to India to work as a doctor, and had established a hospital for women in 1927 in Azamgarh, a small town in rural Uttar Pradesh...in 1937, Dr. Gault accepted the post of Medical Superintendent of the Christian Hospital for Women, Azamgarh.

The Gaults arrived in what was then Bombay, in November 1937, with their two small children. India required much adjustment in outlook and way of living, and like all newcomers, the kaleidoscope of people and culture both shocked and surprised them. The socio-cultural milieu of rural Uttar Pradesh, particularly the custom of Purdah, was intriguing and brought with it its own challenges, especially

because Dr. Ted Gault was the first doctor there. He had to exercise medical and social diplomacy to overcome this delicate problem, and soon he was accepted by the people. The seven years in Azamgarh gave them invaluable clinical and practical insights into medicine in India.

In 1943, Dr. Gault was invited to become the [first Professor of Pathology at CMC Vellore](#). There is little doubt that his high profile and professional abilities led to this invitation, one that he accepted without any hesitation, even though it implied that Surgery would no longer be his primary area of work. It was a calling that he took seriously, and spent a year in Melbourne being trained in Pathology by, among others, [Peter MacCallum](#), while also gaining the required degrees from the Royal College.

The following year, the Gaults arrived in Vellore. These were transition times for CMC, as it was for India, and indeed the world at large: the Second World War was coming to an end, the cries for independence were getting louder in India, and Vellore was facing the Herculean task of laying the foundation of a medical college on the background of the medical school which Dr. Ida had nurtured. With the increase in the number of students, and the college opening its doors to men students as well, the expansion and upgradation brought its requirements of qualified staff, buildings and infrastructure.

When setting up the Pathology Department, Dr. Gault insisted that it be located in the Hospital Campus to maintain its link with clinical work. He set about establishing laboratories, class rooms, and the museum, one of the finest in the country. Dr. Gault not only initiated the teaching programme for undergraduate students, but also for technicians, and in the early 1950s, for postgraduates as well. He fostered a close link between the teaching of Pathology and the practice of medicine through weekly conferences with various clinical units, where, as Dr. Paul Brand, the Head of Hand Surgery later recalled, Dr. Gault had "[the enthusiasm of a young boy and the wisdom of an old man](#)". Incidentally, it was Dr. Gault's opinion on the tissues of leprosy patients that was the turning point in Dr. Brand's discovery of the [role of painlessness in the understanding of leprosy](#). Dr. Gault was a founding member of the Indian Association of Pathologists and was elected its President in 1960, a great honour for a non-national.

Dr. Gault readily participated in the community life in CMC. [According to his](#)

wife, he "blossomed with young people who were his life". It was apt, therefore, that he was appointed the Dean of men students when the college became co-educational in 1947. One of the main tasks that Dr. Gault undertook was the building of the Men's Hostel which was completed in 1953. He was closely involved in all aspects of its planning, design, landscaping and fund raising, making it the marvellous edifice that has served as home to several generations of men students. It is in his honour that the road from College to the Men's Hostel has been named the Dr. Edward Gault Drive. His commitment to students and college life is also immortalised in the College Library which is named after him. His interest in the students, their lives and careers continued long after he left Vellore, and he used to send birthday greetings until illness prevented him from doing so. He was truly a fine example of the guru-shishya relationship that is the hallmark of education in CMC. Following his retirement from Vellore in 1962, CMC was still on his mind, and he was very active with the Australia chapter of the friends of Vellore.

(Text reproduced and adapted from CMC Year Book 2010 - '11; images added)

Men's Hostel

