

GOVAERT Firmin

Born: December 18, 1902 (Ghent)

Died: November 7, 1993 (Ghent)

After his secondary studies at the Koninklijk Atheneum of Ghent, he graduates in 1927 at the University of Ghent, followed by obtaining his doctorate in 1928 in the branch of chemistry. The same year he is appointed assistant to Frederic Swarts and René Goubau.

He starts his academic career in 1931 and becomes lecturer of organic chemistry in 1936. After WWII he is appointed full professor and also lectures at the State Agricultural Institute.

He also holds a number of administrative positions. From 1949 on till his superannuation he is the administrator of the university wealth from 1955 on till he retires he is the delegate for the Faculty of Sciences in the board of directors of the University of Ghent.

The Royal Flemish Academy (Section Sciences and Arts) appoints Govaert as corresponding member in 1943, as active member in 1955 and honorary member since 1972. He is member of the Scientific Board for Chemistry (1941), member of the Scientific Committee of the Laboratory of Tervuren, member of the National Committee for Pure and Applied Sciences and member of the board of the University Foundation. He is co-founder of the Koninklijke Vlaamse Chemische Vereniging (Royal Flemish Society of Chemistry).

He is holder of a number of medals.

His work

After postgraduate work at the University of Groningen with professor H.J. Backer, he chooses definitely to specialize in organic chemistry. And contributes to a long-running research project on the synthesis of penta-erithrol derivatives.

At the Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule of Zurich he is interested in a new branch of organic chemistry: the natural products. After Frederic Swarts's retirement he develops together with the professors Beyaert and Julien Hoste the study of organic syntheses.

After the war he begins with Maurits Verzele a thorough study of the hops, which leads to an amelioration of the brewing process and the quality of beer.