James Lewis Brann, Jr.

June 24, 1913 — July 29, 1990

James Lewis Brann, Jr. was born in Norwood, Massachusetts, a small town near Boston. As a youth, he was active in the 4-H Club program and participated in the training program in gardening and woodworking. He received a state award for outstanding service as a 4-H instructor. This was a prophetic indication of his future professional role as teacher.

He attended Boston University for a short time before transferring to Massachusetts State College where he majored in entomology and graduated in 1939. He then came to Cornell to continue his studies in entomology. He was appointed assistant in research in the Department of Entomology at the New York State Agricultural Experiment Station for the summers of 1939 and 1940 working on Long Island on the biology and control of insect pests of corn. He held a research fellowship in the Department of Entomology at Cornell, 1941-42, conducting research on the control of spider mites and insects affecting florist crops. He was appointed assistant in research, New York State Agricultural Experiment Station on March 16, 1942, assigned to the Poughkeepsie Substation. Cornell awarded him the Ph.D. degree in 1944.

Dr. Brann continued his career at the Poughkeepsie Substation being appointed assistant professor April 1, 1945. The commencement of his faculty career coincided with the post World War II surge in agricultural technology.

Fruit growers were faced with serious problems in pest control because of the expanding pest complex, high labor costs, time-consuming application procedures and in some cases, inadequate water supplies. What was needed was an overhaul of traditional pesticide application technology.

Dr. Brann accepted this challenge, bringing to these problems an unusual combination of skills. He was thoroughly grounded in his own discipline, entomology. His mechanical aptitudes enabled him to incorporate principles of agricultural engineering and lastly, he could balance concepts and methodology of scientific research with technology which could be incorporated into grower practice. It was in the framework of these disparate considerations that Dr. Brann forged his fruitful career. His professional aptitudes and his personality enabled him to work comfortably at the interface between scientific colleagues and grower clientele.

He resigned his position on March 31, 1948 to move to Cornell at Ithaca as associate professor to teach and continue his research on equipment for the efficient application of pesticides. He was promoted to professor in

1954. The same year, he was awarded a U.S. patent for a very novel "Spraying Apparatus". A few prototypes of his design were built, tested and used commercially. Even though the design did not catch on with growers, in part because it was developed a little before its time, Dr. Brann's work served as a stimulus for continuing efforts to improve the efficiency of orchard sprayers. These efforts eventually resulted in smaller machines designed for low volume sprays on the smaller trees planted in recent years. He also studied the potential of electrostatically charging dust particles to make them deposit more effectively on target plants. He determined that charged dust particles deposited very unevenly due to a basic underlying problem and dismissed the concept as impractical. Years later, the same principle was tried for spray droplets. After extensive research and testing, the concept was judged to be impractical. Again, Dr. Brann was in the forefront.

In 1964 Dr. Brann assumed a new assignment, Professor of Entomology-Extension, as a specialist on fruit insect control and pesticide application. He also became Department of Entomology Extension Leader. Here his teaching and training abilities, which he demonstrated so ably as a youth, were put to excellent use. His outgoing personality, ability to communicate plus his careful conservatism with his recommendations to farmers made him very effective. He was respected and popular with growers, county agents and commercial field men. He was sensitive to the environmental and health implications of pesticide use and worked industriously to insure full compliance of Cornell's pesticide recommendations with regulation emanating from the Environmental Protection Agency. His commitment and foresight did much to reduce health, legal and publicity problems. When the concept of integrated pest management (IPM) became popular and many zealots were making exaggerated claims for what it could do, Jim endorsed its application but only for proven systems. Throughout his twelve years of service to extension, Jim maintained his devotion to Cooperative Extension and to his fruit grower clientele whose adaptability and sense of responsibility won his loyalty and respect.

Dr. Brann visited most fruit growing regions in the United States and Canada to visit colleagues and study fruit insect problems and control practices. As a consultant to the United Fruit Company while on sabbatical leave in Panama in 1954-55, he developed a much needed method for control of red rust thrips on banana. In 1959 he went to Israel and Greece to advise workers on new methods and equipment for use in fruit pest control.

Although deeply committed to the heavy demands of his professional assignment, Jim struck a happy balance between work and play. Prime time was reserved for family fellowship and the sharing of common interests. Levity and humor infused his work routine and his democratic philosophy and personal style engendered a cordial rapport with students, staff, faculty colleagues, industry representatives and grower clientele.

Jim was a skilled outdoorsman whose mobility by van and canoe placed the fresh waters of the eastern seaboard within his range. Jim combined his love for the out-of-doors with his keen sense of environmental responsibility. He was a strong advocate of the Nature Conservancy.

Dr. Brann retired in September, 1976. He and his wife, Doris (Toby), moved to Sopchoppy, Florida in 1981. They were quickly accepted in the community and around their beautiful home, Jim raised blueberries, pecans and chestnuts and maintained a fine garden. He also pursued his special hobby, fishing.

Dr. Brann died at his home on July 29, 1990. He is survived by Doris, his wife of 48 years; one daughter; one son; two brothers; five grandchildren; and one great grandchild.

E.H. Glass, E.H. Smith, L.L. Pechuman