

# Emilie Towner Hall

*December 11, 1910 — November 9, 1981*

Emilie Towner Hall brought a wealth of newspaper experience to Cornell when, in 1953, she accepted the position of editor in the New York State College of Home Economics, now the New York State College of Human Ecology.

In this position she was responsible for developing journalistic material for the extension, teaching, and research audiences interested in home economics. In 1962 she became assistant professor on the college faculty and taught a course titled Preparation of Publications to undergraduate students. Professor Hall suffered a stroke in the fall of 1967 that forced her to retire at that time.

She was born in New York City on December 11, 1910, and shortly thereafter moved with her parents to Avoca, New York, Steuben County, where her father owned and edited a weekly newspaper. She graduated from Miami High School in 1928 and subsequently attended Piedmont College, Demorest, Georgia. She later received her baccalaureate degree from Ithaca College.

Emilie Towner's marriage to A. James Hall took place in 1930 in Tampa, Florida, where the couple lived until 1933. From 1933 to 1944 she published, with her husband, the *Avoca Herald* in Avoca, New York. She was also a freelance correspondent and photographer for five Gannett newspapers in Elmira and Rochester and for two Buffalo newspapers, the Associated Press, and the United Press as well as for two photographic syndicates. Most of her feature articles were focused on agriculture and rural life.

When her husband entered the United States Navy in 1944, Mrs. Hall moved to Ithaca as associate editor of the *Cooperative Digest* and helped establish the *Co-op Power*, magazines owned and published by Roy H. Park, now President and owner of the Park Communication Group.

She then became a writing associate of the late Howard E. Babcock, former general manager of the GLF Cooperative Exchange. He was also a Cornell trustee and chairman of the Board of Trustees. She later wrote an extensive biography of Mr. Babcock, which was used in connection with the establishment in 1951 of the H. E. Babcock Professorship of Food Economics in the Graduate School of Nutrition at Cornell. Professor Hall has the distinction of being published under her own by-line in *Life*, *Time*, the *Christian Herald*, *Good Housekeeping*, *Country Gentleman*, and several other well-known professional and popular magazines. She had a special versatility in adjusting her editorial material to her audiences, and her unique background in journalism was unusual for a woman of her generation.

Professor Hall was a member of the New York State Home Economics Association, the American Home Economics Association, Epsilon Sigma Phi, American Women in Radio and Television, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the American Association of Agricultural College Editors, and the International Society of General Semantics.

One cannot conclude this memorial statement without referring to the personal characteristics that contributed to her many professional achievements. She possessed a charming, cultured manner, an ever-patient disposition, and a sincere interest in the overall objectives of the college with which she was associated. These attributes, together with her devotion as wife and mother, were reflected in her outstanding personality and in the integrity of her writing.

In 1977 Professor Hall's husband retired from his position in Ithaca as president and publisher of the *American Agriculturist* magazine, with which he had been associated for thirty-one years. The couple then moved to their condominium in Cocoa Beach, Florida. It was in the hospital there that Professor Hall died on November 9, 1981.

She is survived by her husband of fifty-one years, who will remain in Florida, and two sons: A. James Hall, Jr., vice president of a printing press manufacturer in Seattle, Washington, and Lt. Col. Michael S. Hall, Ithaca, who is air commander of the 174th Tactical Fighter Wing, New York Air National Guard, in Syracuse. Both sons are Cornell graduates. Professor Hall also leaves a sister, Mrs. Charles Palmer, of Bath; five grandchildren; and one great-grandson.

*Vera A. Caulum, Mary B. Wood, Mary K. Bloetjes*