

# James Lawrence Gregg

*August 26, 1899 — July 16, 1986*

Jim Gregg came to Cornell in 1948, after having had a distinguished career in industry. He joined the then School of Chemical and Metallurgical Engineering as a professor of metallurgy. The metallurgical engineering program later became a part of the larger Department of Materials Science and Engineering, from which he retired in 1967.

Jim was born in Belton, Missouri, on August 26, 1899. He was a direct descendant of Daniel Boone. In 1923 he graduated from the Missouri School of Mines with a degree of Bachelor of Engineering and a major in engineering metallurgy. The various companies for which he worked include Illinois Steel Company, Gary, Indiana, as a metallurgical observer (1923-24); Western Electric Company, Chicago, Illinois, as a metallurgical engineer and then department supervisor (1924-29); Battelle Memorial Institute, Columbus, Ohio, as a research metallurgist (1929-34); and Bethlehem Steel Company, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, as a research engineer (1934-44) and assistant to the vice president (1944-48).

His most important area of specialization was in the development of ferrous and nonferrous alloys. He continued to contribute in this important area by serving as a consultant to the Atomic Energy Commission (later the Department of Energy) during his Cornell days. Although technical publications were not particularly emphasized for the career of an engineer before World War II, he managed to author and coauthor five books in the area of his specialty while continuing his responsibilities in large projects. Those books are *The Alloys of Iron and Molybdenum* (McGraw-Hill); *The Alloys of Iron and Tungsten* (McGraw-Hill); *Arsenical and Argentiferrous Copper* (Chemical Catalog Company); *The Alloys of Iron and Copper*, with B. N. Daniloff (McGraw-Hill); and *Metallurgy*, with C. G. Johnson and R. S. Dean (American Technological Society). Even by today's standards the volume of his effort is impressive.

Jim came to Cornell because of his interest in teaching. At that time research was not carried out on a large scale in the College of Engineering. He was able to draw on his broad industrial experience and became a well-liked and admired teacher. His devotion to undergraduates was well known, and an undergraduate scholarship has been established in the department in his memory. The metallurgical program had only a small number of students, and before the death of his wife, Ada, it was his custom to invite the entire class to his home for dinner several times a year. One of the writers (Che-Yu Li), then a graduate student, was also invited.

The forming of the Materials Science Center at Cornell in 1960 represented the beginning of expanded research activities in the area of materials science. After several departmental reorganizations, Jim became a member of an enlarged Department of Materials Science and Engineering. During the period of reorganization much debate as to the goals and the structure of the department went on. Although Jim was not personally active in research at that time, he participated effectively in the transition process by providing a balanced perspective from both the industrial and educational viewpoints. He recognized that research and graduate education were going to be increasingly important in engineering at Cornell and other major institutions, and he provided important advice on how best to implement that transition while still maintaining a strong and dynamic undergraduate program. He was completely unselfish and worked well with all of us who were much junior to him in age. Often he had to listen to us patiently, and he always gave his full support. The success of the department today owes a great deal to his wisdom and his contribution during those formative days.

Jim loved the outdoors and was an avid fisherman and hunter. He enjoyed life and was always considerate of his colleagues and friends.

After his retirement Jim moved to Sarasota, Florida, and lived there until his death on July 16, 1986. He was active during his retirement and was a member of the board of directors of the Sarasota Harbor Condominium Association and the Sarasota Yacht Club.

*Jack Blakely, Arthur Ruoff, Che-Yu Li*