

# Hugh Cecil Hockett

*July 13, 1890 — March 22, 1989*

Hugh Hockett was born in Madagascar, the eldest of three sons of missionary parents. At the age of six, he and his brother Arnold were sent to England for their schooling. When he left school he had no specific plans for the future and drifted from farm labor to horticulture. His father then arranged for him to go to Canada to learn scientific agriculture at the Ontario Agricultural College (now University of Guelph). He arrived in Canada in 1912 and the staff at Guelph recommended research in entomology, for which he was forever grateful.

When WWI broke out, Hockett joined the Canadian Expeditionary Force and was posted to the Princess Patricia Canadian Light Infantry. With practically no training, his unit tried to defend the Salient at Ypres. The unit was overrun and Hockett's right hand was smashed by a shell fragment. The hand healed to the point where he had some muscular control. Hockett rarely spoke of his injury and most people thought it was caused by some malignant form of arthritis. Both of his brothers, Arnold and Oliver, were killed in WWI.

He returned to Guelph for a B.S.A. degree in 1919 and M.A. degree in 1921 and then went to Cornell where he received a Ph.D. degree in 1923. He was appointed assistant professor at the New York Agricultural Experiment Station, Geneva, and after the end of WW II, he went to work at the Long Island Vegetable Research Farm at Riverhead.

His work was largely in economic entomology and related mostly to insects attacking vegetables. He published many well received papers. However, his fame, which extends well beyond Cornell, is based on his taxonomic studies of the family Anthomyiidae and related groups in the Diptera. These flies are of considerable economic importance. His systematic studies began in 1924 and resulted in many long papers culminating in 1965 with his monograph on the "Muscidae of Northern Canada, Alaska and Greenland". Several years later another two papers covered the California genera. His contribution in 1987 to the *Manual of Nearctic Diptera* is outstanding although most of the work was done prior to 1987.

Most of Hockett's work was done at his home, which was located directly across the highway from the Vegetable Research Farm. He visited European museums to study type specimens and usually managed to collect specimens on these trips. He loved field work and collected specimens in various localities, but mostly in New Hampshire and Maine.

Hugh Hockett was married for many years to Grace Watkins who died in 1964. There were no children. Since 1983 he lived with a niece, Mrs. Meg McCrystal of Henrietta, New York.

*J.G. Franclemont, L.L. Pechuman*

Note: Much of the information ON the part played by Hockett in WWI is from Dr. G.E. Shewell, Ottawa, Canada.