OBITUARY

Edwin Wallace King
1918 - 1984

Dr. E. W. King was a highly respected scientist and teacher whose enthusiasm for entomology and general biology has inspired students toward excellence in our discipline for more than 30 years. On December 10, 1984, Dr. King died suddenly of complications associated with cancer.

He was born in Melrose, Massachusetts, on October 15, 1918, the son of Edwin Wallace King and Pauline Anderson King. His childhood fascination with natural history became focused on entomology by the time he was 12 years old. His education at the University of Massachusetts (1937 - 1941) was broad, including special emphases in zoology, botany, chemistry, mathematics, English, and music, in addition to entomology. Particularly under the tutelage of C. P. Alexander and G. C. Crampton, he became confirmed in his chosen profession.

Work on his M.S. degree at Virginia Polytechnic Institute was interrupted in 1942 by WW II. At Camp Edwards, Massachusetts, his innovative research on bed bug control earned him a rare direct commission. In Camp Barkley, Texas, he took a course in public speaking which completely changed his attitude about teaching. Having written his thesis during the war entitled "Species Variation in Hind Wings of Beetles," he received his M.S. degree in entomology from V.P.I. in 1946 under the direction of J. M. Grayson, with a minor in plant pathology and statistics. For the next two years he taught eight different courses at V.P.I. as an instructor in biology.

In 1948 he began work on his Ph.D. degree in entomology with a minor in invertebrate zoology at the University of Illinois under the supervision of H. H. Ross. He graduated in 1951 with a dissertation entitled, "Phylogeny of Cucujoidea."

For the next two years, Dr. King worked at the University of Wisconsin on insect vectors of oak wilt disease. From 1953 to 1957 he taught biology at Cornell College, Iowa. After the sudden death of the head and only other faculty member of the Biology Department in 1955, he undertook to teach all 12 of the department's courses. These included one seminar, 15 lectures, and eight laboratories each week and involving half the students in the College.

Dr. King conducted research and taught at Clemson University from 1957 through 1982. While at Clemson he taught 10 different courses, influencing the lives of all entomology majors and many other students. His enthusiasm for the study of insects "simply because they are interesting," his standards of excellence, and his genuine concern for students directed many into rewarding careers. He took great pride in the quality of his instruction. Through the years Dr. King taught 20 different courses to ca. 4,000 students. His effective use of simple

models to demonstrate functional principles and his delight in interjecting puns and light poetry in his lectures are legendary.

As a research scientist, he has been called "a man ahead of his time." From 1957 to 1969 he carried out investigations on the relationship of weather to insect population dynamics, anticipating current efforts to model insect populations. From 1960 to 1967 he and J. A. Payne studied insect succession on carrion, helping pioneer the modern field of forensic entomology. From 1969 to 1976 he investigated biodegradation of cattle manure, especially by face flies, and the feasibility of utilizing the protein-rich pupae as food for fish, poultry and humans. Other studies concerned such diverse subjects as control of gypsy moths and scale insects; insect fumigants; feeding mechanisms of freshwater snails; feeding behavior, feeding rates, and interspecific competition in soybean insects; and biological control of Indian meal moths. He retired June 30, 1982, as Professor Emeritus of Entomology.

During the past 10 years, he pursued a special interest in biological illustration, and his prints, commissions and notepaper are now known and enjoyed throughout the Southeast. His "Coloring Fun with Insects" book, commissioned by the Entomological Society of America, has broad appeal and will likely attract many young people to entomology.

Dr. King played a significant role in the establishment of the Clemson University Chapter of Sigma Xi, and he served as secretary and first president. Dr. King was awarded the first sabbatical leave granted in Clemson's College of Agricultural Sciences (1967 - 1968) to study some theoretical aspects of the weather/insect population problem at North Carolina State University. He was a member of the South Carolina Entomological Society (president 1966), the Entomological Society of America, the International Society of Biometeorology, and the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

Dr. King's broad knowledge, wisdom, patience for guiding students, and captivating dry humor earned him the respect of his students and endeared him to his colleagues. He will be sorely missed by all who knew him.

Dr. King is survived by his wife of nearly 33 years, the former Flora Day of Clemson, South Carolina, and two sons, Edwin, Jr., of Savannah, Georgia, and Philip, of Palo Alto, California.

J. C. Morse
T. R. Adkins, Jr.