



Parting Thoughts

Dr. I. A. Merchant, Dean of the College of Veterinary Medicine at Iowa State University, will retire this July 1. His successor will be Dr. George C. Christensen, present head of the anatomy department at Purdue University.

Dr. Merchant was born in Paonia, Colorado and attended Colorado State University where he received the degree of Doctor of Veterinary Medicine in 1924. He was granted the Master of Science degree in Veterinary Medicine at Iowa State University in 1928 and the Doctor of Philosophy degree in Bacteriology in 1933 at Iowa State University. In 1934 he was

granted the Master of Public Health degree from Yale University, College of Medicine.

From 1924 to 1925 he was with the Bureau of Animal Industry, U. S. Dept. of Agriculture. He joined the Iowa State University staff in 1925 and served as an instructor in veterinary pathology until 1928 when he was appointed assistant professor. In 1930 he was named assistant professor of veterinary hygiene and in 1934 he became associate professor. He was named professor and head of the Department of Veterinary Hygiene in 1943 and held that position until he was named

dean of the College of Veterinary Medicine in 1952.

Dr. Merchant is the author of several papers and textbooks in the field of veterinary bacteriology and infectious diseases of animals. His text, "Veterinary Bacteriology and Virology" is used in most of the Colleges of Veterinary Medicine and has been translated into Japanese and Spanish.

He is a member of Phi Zeta, veterinary medicine honorary, and served as president of that group in 1941; Phi Kappa Phi, all-university honorary; Sigma Xi, science honorary; Delta Omega, public health professional honorary. He is also a member of the American Veterinary Medical Association; Iowa Veterinary Medical Association, president in 1960, and is currently chairman of the Advisory Committee; Iowa Interprofessional Association, president in 1957; American Board of Veterinary Public Health; U. S. Livestock Sanitary Association; American Association for the Advancement of Science; and the Ames Rotary Club of which he was president in 1947.

In 1956 he was consultant to the Pan American Sanitary Bureau in South American countries, advising the Colleges of Veterinary Medicine concerning curricula and the teaching of veterinary medicine. In 1959 he was American education specialist with the Department of State, visiting Colleges of Veterinary Medicine and scientific institutions in Spain, France, the Netherlands and Germany. Currently Dr. Merchant is a member of the Training Grant Committee on Allergy and Infectious Diseases, National Institutes of Health, and makes numerous project site visits to Medical Schools and Colleges of Veterinary Medicine.

Dr. Merchant is a member of St. John's Episcopal Church. Dr. and Mrs. Merchant have three children—Nancy (Mrs. John Lysen), Mary Alice (Mrs. Gene Lamoureux), and James.

Dr. Merchant, contemplating his retirement, had these comments on the past, present, and future of veterinary medicine:

When one reaches the age of semi-retirement, it gives him the privilege of

reminiscing. In looking back, I find that a number of fortunate circumstances had a bearing on my future career. When I graduated from Paonia, Colorado High School in 1916, I received the "Emory Cup" which was given by a local owner of a clothing store to the boy who was the best student and athlete in the class. Not desiring to be a rancher the rest of my life, I took a job in the Emory store. Soon thereafter my uncle and aunt from Los Angeles visited us and persuaded me to go back with them and seek my fortunes in the Golden West. This I did and worked in Los Angeles for two years. Unfortunately, an almost fatal case of pneumonia in 1918 sent me back home to recuperate. In the meantime, Fred Emory had moved to Fort Collins, Colorado. So, after a year of ranch life I wrote to him for a job. This I obtained and went to Fort Collins. In a year's time he decided to take on a partner which left me out. It was then that a chance meeting with Dr. W. H. Feldman (whom I had known all my life) determined my future. He asked me why I didn't go to college. I said, "What would I study?" He said, "Why not study veterinary medicine?" So I decided to do this and enrolled at Colorado State in the fall of 1920. Many people, including my family, thought I was stupid because they thought veterinary medicine was a dying profession due to the advent of automotive power. This idea must have influenced many young men those days because classes were really small. There were 16 in our class. This was lucky for us because we had excellent instruction.

During college days another very fortunate thing happened. A young girl by the name of Iza Marie White transferred from the University of California to Colorado State. We were engaged during our senior year but in those days a man should have a job before he would get married. I felt happy indeed to get a job in the Meat Inspection Division of the U.S.D.A. at Omaha, Nebraska, upon graduation. All the while I wanted a job in pathology at some institution but these jobs didn't exist during the semi-depression days of 1924. In the fall of 1925 I learned that such a position was open at Iowa State. I im-

mediately applied to Dr. E. A. Benbrook for the position which I took in November, 1925. I had my job and my girl, so we were married on December 25, 1925, and we have lived in Ames ever since.

The College of Veterinary Medicine at Iowa State has always had the reputation of being one of the outstanding schools in the United States and since I have seen European schools, I would say the world. This was not by accident but due to the capabilities of Stange, Bergman, Bemis, Covault, Murray, Murphy, Benbrook, Walsh, Guard, Rice, Fowler, Foust, Runnells, Hewitt, Biester, Schwarte, Lee and Emmerson. I always felt fortunate to be associated with them during my professional years at Iowa State.

We came through the lean depression years to find that veterinary medicine was not dying, not even sick. When 125 young men enrolled the fall of 1931, it was apparent that the growth of the livestock industry and the need of veterinary medicine to take care of its health was a solid start which has been rolling along ever since.

There are a number of things which have been responsible for the growth of veterinary medicine during the past thirty years. The population growth of our country has caused a growth in our animal herds and flocks. The value of food animals has increased. Small animal practice has had a phenomenal increase. Eradication of tuberculosis and brucellosis, meat inspection and animal disease control by federal and state agencies have played significant roles in proving the value of veterinary medicine to the animal industry. The increased employment of the veterinarian in national, state and local public health departments has been a contributing factor in our development. The participation of graduates of veterinary medicine in scientific research has elevated the profession in the scientific world. The increased role of the veterinarian in agricultural extension services attests to his capabilities in this field. Industry has always needed our graduates. In recent years the professional knowledge of the veterinarian is recognized by practically all of the medical schools of

the country by placing him in charge of experimental animal colonies. The Army and the Air Force have well established veterinary services which are recognized throughout the world for their excellence. My concern is not that there will be no jobs for our graduates but that veterinary medicine can do all things which the public expects of it.

As I mentioned previously, Iowa State has made significant contributions to all of the above areas of our professional development. Outstanding men in all of these fields have had their professional education and many have had their graduate education at this institution. We are all exceedingly proud of them and are glad we have had a hand in their education.

No dean should delude himself into thinking that accomplishments during his period of office were due solely to his efforts. They are due to the department heads, the teaching staff, the research staff, the secretaries, the technicians, the animal caretakers, and the janitors. So it is with considerable pride that I can list those things which have been accomplished at Iowa State during the past eleven years, all the while recognizing that they were based upon many early endeavors and solid foundation. We were fortunate to have a good heritage. It will be impossible to describe all of the accomplishments but the following list will summarize them:

1. The high standards for selecting students have been maintained and strengthened.
2. The high standards of the staff likewise have been maintained and strengthened.
3. The moral and professional dignity of the student body and staff has been kept inviolate.
4. Those who have graduated during the past ten years have found they do not have to apologize for their lack of education in the art and science of veterinary medicine. If they do, it is their fault.
5. Our capital improvements have been well over one million dollars. It is doubtful if we could replace our pres-

ent buildings and land with eight million dollars. Here are some of the major improvements:

- a) The Veterinary Medical Laboratory Building which houses the Diagnostic Laboratory, the Hygiene Department, part of the Pathology Department, the Student Reading Room, and a room for the staff of the I.S.U. Veterinarian.
 - b) Renovation of the old Clinic Building for the Department of Anatomy.
 - c) Renovation of the basement and related corridors for the Department of Physiology.
 - d) Construction of the Biomedical Electronics Laboratory which is a research facility for the Departments of Anatomy, Physiology and Pharmacology, and Electrical Engineering.
 - e) Renovation of the old Military Stables for experimental surgery and an obstetrics laboratory.
 - f) Renovation of the Military Barracks Building for an experimental toxicology laboratory.
 - g) Converting the small animal isolation quarters for the Ambulatory Clinic.
 - h) Remodeling the small animal area to provide two examining rooms and two surgery rooms.
 - i) Construction of an x-ray study room, which has just been completed.
 - j) Acquisition of forty-eight acres of land adjoining the Research Institute and the Construction of barns and pens for the maintenance of experimental cattle.
 - k) Construction of an Isolation Building at the Research Institute, which is now being completed.
 - l) Numerous areas have been painted, remodeled, and provided with new lighting fixtures.
6. Ten years ago there were 47 members of the faculty, now there are 73. In 1952 there were 28 stenographers, technicians and caretakers, in 1962 there were 58.

7. Ten years ago our annual budget was \$510,767, now it is \$1,018,588. In addition, \$225,000 are available from a variety of research grants.

8. The average salaries for the different staff ranks were increased.

	1952	1962
Department Heads	\$8,965	\$14,660
Associate Professors	\$7,000	\$10,257
Assistant Professors	\$5,336	\$ 9,411
Instructors	\$5,013	\$ 7,825

9. In 1951-52 the annual budget for the purchase of equipment was \$6,000. In 1961-62 we spent \$46,600 for equipment.

In order for a College to maintain its high rank among the colleges of the world, it must continue to improve and long-range plans have been made. Here are a few of them:

1. Remodeling of the physiology undergraduate laboratories.
2. Remodeling of the large animal surgery area.
3. Remodeling of the clinic garage to provide more stall space.
4. Construction of a section connecting the two clinic wings to provide more stall space.
5. Remodeling of buildings at the Research Institute to provide more laboratory space.
6. Construction of pens and kennels at the Research Institute to provide facilities for production of dogs for special types of research.
7. Construction of a building across the south side of the Quadrangle to provide space for the Department of Physiology and Pharmacology as well as an Administration Suite.
8. Construction of a wing on the Clinic Building to provide space for the small animal clinic and facilities for research.

If the College of Veterinary Medicine is to remain on campus, the spaces on either side of the Administration Building must be filled with two-story buildings. Unfortunately, our space for expansion is limited. As the University grows, our buildings may be used for other purposes and a 50-acre plot of nearby land must

be procured for the construction of an entirely new College of Veterinary Medicine.

My crystal ball is not good enough to show the exact future of veterinary medicine but certain facts are self-evident. The number of people in the United States will continue to increase. This means they must have food and it is not likely they will become vegetarians. So our numbers of food animals will increase. When the number of animals raised on a given area increases, problems of disease increase. The veterinarian of the future will be called upon to provide a wide range of services for the growing animal industry, including nutritional and breeding management, preventive medicine, the control of epizootics, and the cure of individual sick animals. Increased leisure time of our people will mean more pet animals, game management, and pleasure horses. Public health needs for the veterinarian will be increased. Our graduates will be recognized more and more as important members of the medical research team. All federal and state animal disease control agencies will have more responsibilities as herds and flocks increase in size.

It is apparent that the number of men graduating from our colleges of veterinary medicine will increase. This means larger classes or more schools will be needed. Veterinary medicine has truly grown into a healthy, mature profession. We have every reason in the world to be proud of it. In my small way, I have felt privileged to contribute to its advancement.

My "stepping out" of the Dean's Office doesn't mean that I am closing the door on veterinary medicine. Many years of active service will be granted to me and I hope I can continue to contribute to the advancement of our profession. However, I do hope to work in a little more golf, fishing and travel.

To you, Dr. Merchant, we say that a university, its students, and graduates are no better than their instructors and the leadership provided for them. The quality of the graduates and the reputation of the College of Veterinary Medicine at Iowa State University are testimony enough to the fact that the name of Merchant must be added to the list of those who have

made our profession what it is today. As we now progress into the areas of specialization and diversification that our profession increasingly demands, changes will be made from time to time in our professional training. We must therefore continue to produce men like Dr. Mer-Merchant who have the vision to keep us on the road of sound progress in practice, research, education, regulatory and public health work.

The students and faculty at I.S.U. wish Dr. and Mrs. Merchant best wishes for the future. We know that you will continue to play an active role in our profession, and we hope that the future years are as good to you as they have been in the past.

State Hygienic Laboratory 1938-1961
and Iowa Veterinary Medical Diagnostic
Laboratory 1951-1961

Species	Total Examined	Negative	Positive No.	%
Coyote	1	0	1	100.0
Skunk	1552	265	1287	82.9
Civet Cat	71	23	48	67.6
Horse	93	39	54	58.0
Cow	1724	986	738	42.8
Goat	6	4	2	33.3
Hog	170	118	52	30.5
Fox	200	146	54	27.0
Unknown	4	3	1	25.0
Dog	3611	2973	638	17.6
Deer	6	5	1	16.6
Sheep	50	43	7	14.0
Monkey	8	7	1	12.5
Badger	9	8	1	11.1
Cat	3462	3122	340	9.8
Raccoon	482	458	24	4.9
Bat	177	173	4	2.2
Mink	45	44	1	2.2
Mole	54	53	1	1.8
Ground Hog	78	77	1	1.2
Squirrel	1542	1522	20	1.2
Gopher	121	120	1	0.8
Muskrat	194	193	1	0.5
Rat	399	397	2	0.5
Rabbit	441	439	2	0.4
Beaver	3	3	—	0.0
Bird	3	3	—	0.0
Chinchilla	2	2	—	0.0
Chipmunk	33	33	—	0.0
Ferret	1	1	—	0.0
Ground Squirrel	143	143	—	0.0
Guinea Pig	22	22	—	0.0
Hamster	183	183	—	0.0
Hawk	1	1	—	0.0
Man	2	2	—	0.0
Mouse	366	366	—	0.0
Mule	2	2	—	0.0
Opossum	83	83	—	0.0
Owl	4	4	—	0.0
Rodent	1	1	—	0.0
Shrew	2	2	—	0.0
Snake	1	1	—	0.0
Vole	3	3	—	0.0
Weasel	10	10	—	0.0
Wolf	1	1	—	0.0
TOTAL	15366	12084	3282	21.3

When determining the probable likelihood of exposure to rabies, it sometimes seems desirable to know the reported incidence of rabies in a certain animal species. This summary has been prepared primarily for this purpose. (Data source: I. H. Borts, M.D., Director, State Hygienic Laboratory, Iowa City and P. C. Bennett, D.V.M., Director, Iowa Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory, Ames.)