

The Iowa State College Veterinary Medical Division

1858 - 1948

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Provision for the establishment of the Veterinary Division was by act of the Legislature, signed by Governor Lowe, March 22, 1858, providing for the establishment of a State Agricultural College and Farm to include veterinary studies among other courses to be taught. It was 13 years later when President Welch reported that, "for additional instruction seniors in agriculture will need a professor of practical agriculture, who, besides other important duties, will give lectures on comparative anatomy, physiology, and veterinary science." Veterinary subjects as taught at that time were offered in the second semester of the senior year in agriculture.

The first class to graduate from Iowa State College was the one of 1872. It was also the first to receive veterinary instruction, but there were no veterinary graduates. George C. Faville was the first veterinary graduate, in 1879.

The veterinary staff of that period consisted of one man, Dr. H. J. Detmers, an eccentric but well-educated German, who came to this country from one of the veterinary schools of Germany. He transferred to Ohio State University after a short period of service here. There then ensued a lapse of 5 years with no veterinarian on the faculty.

Milliken Stalker, a graduate of Iowa State College in Agriculture in the class

of 1873, became a professor of agriculture here that same year. Sensing the need for veterinary instruction, he took leave of absence in 1876 to attend lectures in veterinary science at the New York Veterinary College and Toronto Veterinary College, and that year was appointed Professor of Agriculture and Veterinary Science. In 1878, Dr. Stalker began plans for the establishment of a veterinary school, and May 3, 1879, the Board of Trustees ordered that "the course of the Veterinary School be extended one year." A fund of \$200 was appropriated to meet the expenses for the fiscal year ending Nov. 12, 1879. That, then, is the birthday of the present Veterinary Division, and marks the establishment of the first veterinary school in the West, and makes this the oldest **state** veterinary college in existence. The veterinary catalog of 1880 lists Dr. Stalker as the first Dean of the Division.

At the time of organization of the veterinary school, no provision for housing had been made. This problem was solved by giving it quarters in President Welch's old home, which he had vacated for a new home he had just built. This building was later known as South Hall, still later, as Music Hall. It stood on the ground just south of the road in front of Memorial Union, on the east side of the road leading to the parking area east of the Union. The only laboratory was a small bedroom with one window. For

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large classes the front parlor was available when not in use by Professor Bessey's classes in botany.

The main equipment consisted of 4 student microscopes and a larger one personally owned by Dr. Fairchild, the first pathologist. Its highest power of magnification was a one-sixth objective. Material for study came from local butcher shops. With a few staining fluids and reagents, it was possible to study blood, muscles, and connective tissue.

The clinical phase of the work was conducted in a small barn located near the present site of the radio tower. It was an exceedingly poor building, only a barn at best. This barn may have been the one referred to in the proceedings of the trustees' meeting of March, 1882, when the board refused to pay Dr. Stalker \$225.61 for a barn he had purchased for the use of the Veterinary School.

Later, Dr. Stalker offered to give the College this barn, and \$40 to boot, in exchange for 40 acres of land in Boone County, which offer was accepted.

First Entrance Requirements

The pay of the first veterinary professor was small indeed, but he was permitted to charge students a moderate fee for his lectures. In 1880, this plan having proven unsatisfactory, the trustees voted him a salary of \$400 per year, beginning March 1, 1880.

In the beginning, the curriculum in veterinary science was combined with the course in agriculture, the senior year being devoted to veterinary subjects. In 1879, the curriculum was extended to 2 years of work, from March 1, to Nov. 30, with 2 weeks vacation in July. The entrance requirements were as follows: "Candidates for admission must be 16 years of age; for graduation, 18. An entrance examination in reading, spelling, geography, grammar, and arithmetic is required, and for graduation the candidate must have attained a standing of 75 in all subjects taken, and must present a thesis upon some subject approved by the faculty."

Upon admission students were classi-

fied as juniors and the prescribed curriculum was as follows:

Junior Year

First Term

Anatomy of Domestic Animals.....	5 hrs.
Dissection and Clinics	2 hrs.
Chemistry	5 hrs.
Zoology	2 hrs.
Materia Medica	2 hrs.

Second Term

Anatomy of Domestic Animals.....	3 hrs.
Dissections and Clinics	2 hrs.
Comparative Anatomy	4 hrs.
Chemistry	4 hrs.
Botany	2 hrs.
Veterinary Medicine	2 hrs.
Materia Medica	2 hrs.

Senior Year

First Term

Medicine and Surgery	3 hrs.
Medical Botany	2 hrs.
Therapeutics	2 hrs.
Organic Chemistry and Toxicology	3 hrs.
Histology and Physiology	6 hrs.

Second Term

Medicine and Surgery	3 hrs.
Pathology	6 hrs.
Therapeutics	2 hrs.
Obstetrics	2 hrs.
Pharmacy	3 hrs.
Sanitary Science	2 hrs.

Students completing only the 2 years of required veterinary work were given the degree, Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine. Those who, in addition, graduated from any of the courses in agriculture with the B. S. degree, were entitled to the D. V. M. degree.

The faculty for the year 1881 consisted of 5 members as follows: M. Stalker, B. S., V. S., Dean and Professor of anatomy, medicine, and surgery; D. S. Fairchild, M. D., Professor of histology, pathology, and therapeutics; C. E. Besey, Ph. D., Professor of botany and materia medica; F. E. L. Beal, B. S., Professor of zoology and comparative anatomy; T. E. Pope, M. A., Professor of chemistry and toxicology.

The pressing need for more commodius

housing resulted in the trustees appropriating \$5,732 for a building for veterinary, agriculture, and botany. This building was known as North Hall, located northeast of the present Beardshear Hall, near the present site of Botany Hall. Dr. Stalker reported the clinic had grown to such an extent that increased facilities were imperative for that phase of the work. He stated that the clinic for the past year was about "50 boarding cases and 300 others presented at daily clinics."

The year 1885 was the banner year for buildings. Two were constructed, one for a hospital, a brick, two-story structure, 40 x 50 ft. in size, said to be "the best infirmary in the United States," on the present site of the Memorial Union; the other, or Sanitary Building, for classrooms and laboratories situated about 15 rods northwest of the hospital. The former was used by the Veterinary Division until 1912, when the Veterinary Quadrangle was completed.

Dr. John M. McNeil, a Pennsylvania graduate who joined the faculty in 1900, became Dean in 1903. He served from April 7, 1903, until October, 1908, when he transferred to Ohio State as Professor of Surgery. Under his directorship steady progress was made. The teaching staff was enlarged, but adequate financial support for faculty and buildings was not provided. Dr. McNeil asked for an appropriation of \$150,000 for the construction of a group of buildings, but it was not until 1910, under the Deanship of Dr. C. H. Stange that legislative authorization for buildings was obtained. The sum of \$150,000 was approved, and directions issued to draw up plans for the group.

Dr. Stange Appointed

Dr. Stange had been appointed Dean in February, 1909, replacing Dr. McNeil. He served in this capacity for 27 years, until his death April 26, 1936. During his tenure the Veterinary Quadrangle was completed and occupied January, 1912. In 1913, the State Biological Laboratory for the production of anti-hog-cholera serum was established. The plant stood on the present site of the Stange Memorial Clinic.

It continued operation until 1926, when it was torn down and the suitable salvaged material was used in the construction of the Veterinary Research Laboratory on Beech Avenue, south of the campus.

During the last 2 years of his life, Dean Stange completed plans for the clinic building. Bids were taken by the Board of Education, but the cost exceeded the estimate, and the plans had to be revised. Construction was completed in 1938, and the building was put in use on Jan. 3, 1939.

Perhaps the comparison of clinical facilities and the number of clinic cases handled per annum in 1946 with those of 60 years ago best measures the growth of the institution. As stated before, Dr. Stalker's report of 60 years ago indicated a small barn in poor condition and practically no equipment, with 50 boarding cases and 300 others presented to the clinic in one year. In 1946, there was a building which cost \$180,000, with equipment valued at \$50,000, to which were presented 19,768 cases, with an additional 12,112 served by ambulatory clinic.

Facilities alone do not measure the efficacy of a school. Unless the educational policy of an institution is sound, its success is limited and its reputation suffers. The policy of the Iowa State Veterinary College has always been for high standards, and in many instances it has been first to adopt programs looking toward a higher standard of education.

Beginning with a program which involved only one year of professional work in the curriculum and with only meager entrance requirements, it was soon deemed necessary to increase the time to 2 years and make more rigid the qualifications for admission. Nine years after inauguration of the veterinary curriculum (1887), the required course was lengthened to 3 years. This was the first three-year course offered in America. In 1902, Dean McNeil asked the Board of Trustees for authorization to increase the curriculum to 4 years, and in 1903 the first four-year course to be offered in America was adopted. In 1911, Iowa State became the

first school in America to require matriculants to be graduates of accredited high schools. The increase of requirements for admission came in 1931, when again Iowa State was the first American school to require a minimum of one year of collegiate work for admission. As in all previous actions of the kind, there was considerable hesitancy on the part of other veterinary colleges to adopt the programs in effect here, but eventually such requirements were adopted by all schools. Beginning in September, 1949, 2 years of preprofessional college work will be required for admission.

As to the future of the school, there can be no doubt that further advances and improvements in its conduct will continue to be made. Several such are at present under consideration, and it is certain that as soon as normal conditions prevail, provision will be made to meet the demands of a new era.

Veterinary History

The following is an extract taken from the act establishing the Bureau of Animal Industry in connection with the Department of Agriculture, approved May 29, 1884: "Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States in Congress Assembled, that the Commission of Agriculture shall organize in his Department, a Bureau of Animal Industry, and shall appoint a Chief thereof, who shall be a competent veterinary surgeon, and whose duty it shall be to investigate and report upon the condition of the domesticated animals of the United States, their protection and use, and also inquire into and report the causes of contagious, infectious and communicable diseases among them, and the means for the cure and prevention of the same, and to collect such information on these subjects as shall be valuable to the agricultural and commercial interests of the country; and the Commissioner of Agriculture is hereby authorized to employ a force sufficient for this purpose, not to exceed 20 persons at any time. . ."

In a letter dated May 21, 1799, Andrew

Wiesenthal, professor of anatomy at Baltimore, Md., wrote as follows: "There is a disease prevalent among the gallinaceous poultry in this country, called the "gapes," which destroys 8/10 of our fowl in many parts and takes place in the greatest degree among young turkeys and chickens bred on old established farms. I know not whether the same kind of fowls in England are liable to it, and therefore shall take the liberty to give you a brief account of it.

"Chicks and poults, in a few days after they are hatched, are frequently found to open their mouths wide and gasp for breath, at the same time frequently sneezing, and attempting to swallow. At first the affection is slight, but gradually becomes more and more oppressive, until it ultimately destroys. Very few recover; they languish, grow dispirited, droop, and die. It is generally known that the symptoms are occasioned by worms in the trachea. I have seen the whole of it completely filled with these worms, and have been astonished at the animal being capable of respiration under such circumstances. . . .

"No effectual remedy is known against these most destructive animals. I have indeed seen them drawn out of the trachea, by means of a feather stripped from near its end which is passed into the larynx, and twisted around until it engages one or two of the worms, which are extracted with it."

Tuberculin Test

According to A. Liatavd, the intra-dermal tuberculin test was first applied by Dr. Mantoux, a human physician, in his practice on tuberculosis patients. After him, Professor Moussu of Albert Veterinary School experimented with the test. Mousu revealed the nature of the intra-dermal test at the 1908 International Congress on Tuberculosis. He recommended that the injections be made in the sub-caudal fold as is used at the present time.

Infesting dogs with cow pox was used as a vaccination against canine distemper in 1830.