

**A Biography of and Interview with  
John D. Murray, DVM**

**Class of 1939, College of Veterinary Medicine, Cornell University**

Author and Interviewer: Dr. Donald F. Smith, *Austin O. Hooey Dean Emeritus*

New York State Veterinary College Graduation Photograph



*John D. Murray 1939*

**Quintessentially Cornell**

*“I always wanted to be a doctor, and couldn’t, so maybe veterinary medicine would be the next best thing”<sup>1</sup>*, thought John Murray as he reflected on two prior ill-suited endeavors in higher education and the limited opportunities of his current job. Born to hardy Irish immigrant stock on a farm in southern New York on July 13<sup>th</sup>, 1912, John graduated from high school during the Depression. While lack of money narrowed his career options, Cornell’s land grant status with free tuition ultimately made a degree in veterinary medicine possible for this enterprising young man. Many years later, Dr. Murray would repay what he considered to be his debt to Cornell by bestowing upon his *alma mater* a magnificent gift; *“I would not have what I have if I had not been admitted to Cornell”<sup>2</sup>*, he explained.

John’s first educational venture was also driven by the lure of free tuition at Alfred University. Despondent following the death of his mother, he gave up on college, returning home to work as a shipping clerk in a local tannery. He soon realized this had no future:

*I worked nine hours a day, six days a week, for \$18.00. I’d look around and see men in their 70s, still working there, and their weekly check would be taken out at the company store. They had nothing, and I said, ‘Well, that’s not for me.’<sup>3</sup>*

He applied to the New York State Veterinary College in the fall of 1934, but by the following April had received no response. Taking matters into his own hands, he traveled to Ithaca on a Saturday morning and had the good fortune of meeting the dean of the veterinary college who agreed to an impromptu interview to determine his academic standing and the depth of his commitment to a career in veterinary medicine. Some weeks later, following a seemingly ill-fated silence, his father unexpectedly strode into the tannery to personally deliver a letter from Cornell. With trembling fingers, John broke open the seal and joyously read of his

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<sup>1</sup> John D. Murray, personal communication 2007

<sup>2</sup> Ibid

<sup>3</sup> Ibid

acceptance. “*That letter changed my life, forever*”<sup>4</sup>, he recalls with an emotional quiver in his voice.

John was already in his mid-20s when he entered Cornell in the fall of 1935. With his effervescent charm and inimitable wit, he was a popular student, befriending his classmates regardless of their racial, religious or ethnic background; or their gender. Friendships made during those years followed him throughout his career and classmates still speak with great affection towards him.

Following graduation, Dr. Murray gained clinical experience with an established veterinarian in southern New York, and also spent a year at Cornell in the large animal clinic honing his skills. He then started his own general practice in the rural community of Painted Post. Just 40 miles from Ithaca, he and his wife maintained personal and professional relationships with Cornell’s clinical faculty. From his former professors—now friends and colleagues—he acquired the latest clinical knowledge with which to treat challenging cases in his one-person practice that encompassed a wide variety of livestock and companion animals. As the practice grew, he recruited a partner and the two Cornell graduates shared the practice equally thereafter.

Dr. Murray became active in the local veterinary society, assuming responsibilities of ever-increasing importance until he was soon holding prominent positions at the State level. In 1970, he served as president of the New York State Veterinary Medical Society. John and his first wife, Agnes, raised three children, John, Martin (“Mickey”) and Mary Agnes, and were active in the local community until she unfortunately succumbed to Alzheimer’s.

Retiring after four decades in practice, Dr. Murray and his second wife, Marion, spent active summers in southern New York, relocating to Florida during the winter months. Murray served the quintessential ambassador for Cornell, participating on the Cornell University Council from 1984 -88, and assuming increasingly active roles in various college alumni committees. As chairman of the committee responsible for fund raising, he never asked others to contribute, either through service or monetarily, anything he was unwilling to sustain himself. His leadership and generosity was honored in 1980 when President Frank H.T. Rhodes named him a Foremost Benefactor of the university. When the College’s Veterinary Educational Center was opened in 1993, Dean Robert D. Phemister presided over the naming of the Dr. John D. Murray Lecture Suite.

Dr. Murray’s later years have been punctuated by great sadness with the loss of his second wife and, more recently, the untimely death of his dear friend, Dolores. Again living alone as he approaches his 97<sup>th</sup> birthday, the grand Cornellian remains steadfast and loyal to his academic roots, continuing to drive the 40 miles to campus on a regular basis. For each of the past several years, he has delivered an eloquent and passionate message to the new graduates during their Honor Day Banquet. He concludes his remarks with a side-splitting rendition of Petey, the Snake—that is included at the end of the accompanying interview.

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid

## Interview

[Listen to the Interview](#)

**Subject:** John D. Murray, DVM  
**Interviewer:** Dr. Donald F. Smith  
**Interview Date:** December 3, 2007  
**Location:** Dundee, NY



Photograph by Donald F. Smith

*Dr. John D. Murray June 2008*

### **Interviewer's Note:**

*John D. Murray has been close to the heart of Cornell's College of Veterinary Medicine for as long as I have known him, over three decades. What I did not realize before I was able to interview several of his classmates and other contemporaries, however, was how universally admired he is by colleagues throughout the profession. There is a legitimacy to John that goes beyond even the most incontrovertible among us, and that characteristic trait has followed—or, more accurately, gone before—him throughout his career. It was, therefore, a distinct privilege to reserve a place in this collection for the story of an exemplar alumnus and a special friend. (Dr. Donald F. Smith)*

*Dr. Smith:*

Good morning, this is Donald Smith from Cornell University. This is December 3, 2007. We are in Dundee, NY, with Dr. John Murray, Class of 1939.

Dr. Murray is a Foremost Benefactor of Cornell University<sup>1</sup> and he may want to talk about that later in the interview. To start with, Dr Murray, would you please talk to us about how your family got to the United States, and how you got to Cornell?

*Dr. Murray:*

My grandfather came over from Ireland during the early 1800s, around the time of the potato famine. He and his two brothers established three farms up on Addison Hill,<sup>2</sup> and that was where I was born and raised. I was born in 1912, and attended a little country school for three years. After the third year, my parents sent me down to Elkland, a little town about two miles from the farm, with about 2,000 people.<sup>3</sup> I started there in the fourth grade and graduated from Elkland in 1930. There were 18 who graduated in my class.

I wondered what I would do after graduation; I always wanted to be a doctor. I knew that my parents couldn't afford the cost of going to college to become a physician, so I was in limbo until the summer of my graduation. A man stopped and he turned out to be the football coach from Alfred University.<sup>4</sup> He was looking for talent. I don't know why he called on me because my school never had a football team. But, anyway, we got talking about Alfred and I decided maybe I'd like to go there.

In the course of the conversation, I found out that ceramic engineering was free tuition.<sup>5</sup> My dad didn't have enough money to send me anywhere, so I said, "Well, I'll try that." But after the first year, I found out that it wasn't my forté. I didn't do well enough. I switched over to liberal arts, which didn't amount to anything. I wasn't headed in any direction. That was my second year and, at the end of the year, my mother died. I couldn't go back—or didn't want to go back—and I went to work at the Elkland tannery. I worked nine hours a day, six days a week, for eighteen dollars [a week]. I had a pretty fair job as shipping clerk, but I'd look around and see men in their seventies still working there, and their weekly check would be taken out at the company store. They had nothing, and I said, "Well, that's not for me."

I got to thinking along the lines of veterinary medicine. I always wanted to be a doctor, and couldn't do that, so maybe veterinary medicine would be the next best thing. I told my dad that I'd like to go to the veterinary college, and he just shook his head. I think he remembered the old veterinarian in our hometown coming up and looking at the horse and the cattle once in a while, and maybe it didn't appeal to him. But, nevertheless, I pursued it and made applications to Cornell in the fall of 1934.

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<sup>1</sup> Designation of donor of the highest level at Cornell

<sup>2</sup> In Steuben County of southern N.Y., near the Pennsylvania border

<sup>3</sup> Small community in northern Pennsylvania, southwest of Corning, N.Y.

<sup>4</sup> Small university in Alfred, N.Y., south of Rochester; known for its ceramic engineering program

<sup>5</sup> Tuition subsidized by the state of New York

Time went by and I didn't hear anything. Came April—I had seen in the paper that the St. Louis Cardinals were having an exhibition ball game with the Cornell ball club. I would like to see the game and thought I could kill two birds with one stone: see the game in the afternoon and, if I could find the veterinary college in the morning, maybe talk to somebody about my chances of getting in.

Well, the day came and I took off for Ithaca, and finally located the veterinary college, on a Saturday. I walked into the back of old James Law Hall<sup>6</sup>, walked down the aisle, and finally saw a young lady sitting at one of the desks in one of the rooms. I asked her if there was someone I might talk with about admissions, and she said, "Well, nearly everyone has left for home, but I believe that Dean Hagan<sup>7</sup> is still in his office, and he might see you." I thought to myself, "Oh boy, the boss himself." Pretty soon she was back and said, "Yes, Dr. Hagan is in his office, and he will talk with you."

Well, we had a very nice conversation, he asked me a number of questions, asked me if I would be able to come back if I was asked to, for an interview with the admissions committee.<sup>8</sup> I said I would be glad to come back. So that was the end of the interview, because he was taking his young son to the ball game.

Anyway, time went on and I didn't hear anything. I had given up hope of being admitted when, along in July, I saw my Dad coming into my place at work. He was holding a letter, and I knew right then that this was it—it was either *yes* or *no*. He handed me the letter, I looked up in the left-hand corner: *New York State Veterinary College, Ithaca, N.Y.*

I'm sure my fingers were trembling when I opened the letter—and they were—and I can't tell you how I felt, when I read those opening lines,

*"We are pleased to inform you that you have been accepted."*

That letter changed my life forever. I went to Cornell that fall.

In those days they took, as I recall, only 32 or 35 [students].<sup>9</sup> We had three women—just three women—in our class. In those days, it was hard for a girl to be accepted. The thinking was that, after graduation, they would probably get married and not even conduct a practice, and therefore they denied a place to a breadwinner. So they didn't take them.

But we did have three in our class, which was more than usual.<sup>10</sup> All three graduated and went on to practice. All three are now dead, but one of them, in particular, was quite

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<sup>6</sup> Original administrative and teaching building for veterinary medicine, named after the first professor and founding dean of the college.

<sup>7</sup> William Arthur Hagan, DVM, MS, DSc, professor of bacteriology and dean of the college, 1932-59.

<sup>8</sup> Cornell's *Announcement for the New York State Veterinary College for 1935-36* stated that the Committee on Admissions "will require a personal interview, whenever this is feasible".

<sup>9</sup> The *Announcement of the New York State Veterinary College for 1936-37* lists 39 freshmen students in the Class of 1939 (including John Delaney Murray, Elkland, PA).

<sup>10</sup> Prior to the Class of 1939, only eight women had graduated from the college. Combined, the Classes of 1939 and 1940 had seven women.

interesting—Pat O’Connor—became the only zoo veterinarian at the time: Staten Island Zoo.<sup>11</sup> Pat became real adept at handling wild animals, and she also married one of our classmates.<sup>12</sup> He had a small animal practice, and I think Pat did practice there for awhile after she left the zoo, after Jack [her husband] died.

*Dr. Smith:*

Dr. Murray, you were an Irish Catholic. I’ve heard it was difficult for Catholic students to become admitted based upon religious discrimination. Is that true or not, because Middlesex College over in Massachusetts was formed for Jewish and Catholic boys, I understood?<sup>13</sup>

*Dr. Murray:*

Well, I have never heard what you just said, but I had a good friend who went to Middlesex, and he was a Catholic boy. But I have never heard of any of this discrimination. I never heard of it when I was at Cornell. If it was true, it was not mentioned, at least to my knowledge.

*Dr. Smith:*

What about the Jewish students? Did you feel there was any difference in the way they were treated.<sup>14</sup>

*Dr. Murray:*

No, not as far as the professors were concerned. I wouldn’t say that they had it in for the Jewish kids. Isidor Sprecher was a good friend of mine, and lived right across the street.<sup>15</sup> I lived at 308 Eddy St. (I lived there all four years, same room). Izzy would sometimes come over and we would study together, and talk over this and that. I remember one night I went over to his place. There were four Jewish boys living there, and as soon as I walked in, it was just dead silence. I just right away felt uncomfortable, as though they just didn’t like the idea of me being there. Of course, Izzy came over and started visiting, but the other three were rather reticent; they didn’t have much to say. There was, I guess, a little anti-Semitic feeling.

When I look back, at the time we thought we were getting a great education in small animals, but it was nothing compared to what they’re getting now. You’re doing things [at Cornell] now that I never heard of. When Dr. Leonard<sup>16</sup> came there, Olafson<sup>17</sup> said that the small animal course was a thousand percent better than it had been. And Dr. Leonard introduced sterile surgery; that is, rubber gloves. I always operated bare-handed, and I can truthfully say that I don’t recall having any serious infection, maybe none at all. We even did

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<sup>11</sup> Patricia G. O’Connor ’39, originally from Buffalo, N.Y., married John L. Halloran; she was the veterinarian at the Staten Island Zoo for many years; deceased Jul 8, 2003.

<sup>12</sup> John L. Halloran, Jr. ’39, originally from Stapleton, N.Y.; deceased 1966

<sup>13</sup> Middlesex Veterinary College, 1938-47; total of 243 graduates

<sup>14</sup> There were seven Jews in the class of 1939; see interview with Robert Ferber ’39.

<sup>15</sup> Isidor I. Sprecher ’39 (he later changed his name to Sprecker), originally from Brooklyn; deceased Jan 20, 2004.

<sup>16</sup> Ellis P. Leonard ’34, appointed in January 1948 as professor of therapeutics and small animal disease, department head and director of the Small Animal Clinic.

<sup>17</sup> Peter Olafson ’26, MS ’27, professor of pathology

intramedullary pinning with our bare hands<sup>18</sup>. We scrubbed thoroughly, and washed our hands down with a good disinfectant.

When I was in school and operating on a dog (a spay, for example), we would just cover the dog with a shroud with a hole in it, and operate through that bare-handed. Dr. Milks and Stevenson would do it that way.<sup>19</sup> When Dr. Leonard introduced sterile surgery using gloves, Dr. Stevenson made a big deal one day, showing us how to use the rubber gloves—he had never done it before either. [*laughing*]

*Dr. Smith:*

Who taught you anatomy, was that Sunderville?<sup>20</sup>

*Dr. Murray:*

Sunderville was the head man in anatomy, but Mac Miller<sup>21</sup> was the one who really showed us the ropes and, in my opinion, probably knew it better than Sunderville. He was a nice, nice guy, but unfortunately he died at an early age.<sup>22</sup>

But I liked anatomy. When I got through I can honestly say that there wasn't any part of the horse that I didn't know, the origin and insertion of every muscle, and how it worked. The horse was the main one, and the cow came second. We didn't do too much with the cow.

In the second year, was the dog. And I just felt that I knew so much about the horse that I didn't work on the dog. Mac Miller said to me one day, "You were good last year, but now you're not doing very well." And I said, "Well, I probably won't even be working on a dog, I'm going into large animal practice." I was never sorry that I didn't study the anatomy of the dog more carefully, because I got by alright with the work we had to do surgically on dogs.

The basic thing was spay, which was nothing ... intramedullary pinning, it got to be no problem; removing bladder calculi [and] a lot of dogs operated on for removal of foreign objects from the intestinal tract and the stomach. Now and then, you would get a dog with a foreign body lodged in the esophagus. On bad ones when I couldn't reach it [through the oral cavity], I'd open up the stomach and pull it out that way.

One day, I had a Bulldog come in, and the people were nuts about this Bulldog. I didn't want to take a chance, so I told them I'd like to take this dog over to Cornell, which was alright with them. Dr. Leonard was there at that time, did the surgery, and he said, "Now shall we open and go in through the esophagus?" And I said, "No, we should go in through the stomach."

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<sup>18</sup> Intramedullary pins (rods), inserted into the bone marrow canal, sometimes used in orthopedic surgery to align and stabilize the fractures of long bones, such as the femur or tibia.

<sup>19</sup> Howard Jay Milks '04, professor of therapeutics and director of the small animal clinic; Hadley Carruthers Stevenson '20, assistant professor of material medica and small animal diseases, were the principal faculty who taught small animal medicine and surgery.

<sup>20</sup> Earl Sunderville '08, professor of veterinary anatomy; his son was a member of the Class of 1939.

<sup>21</sup> Malcolm Eugene Miller '34, Instructor in Anatomy

<sup>22</sup> Dr. Miller succumbed to brain cancer.

So he did, and the students were all sitting around like it was an amphitheater, watching. He took out the foreign object, and then he and his wife, and my wife and I, went out to dinner. When we got back, he said, “Well, we’ll just go and check on the dog”, and the dog was dead. Those people always held it against me. And I was trying to do the right thing, and I know it bothered Dr. Leonard. It was kind of a bad experience.

*Dr. Smith:*

Going back to anatomy, did you know Dr. Hopkins?<sup>23</sup> Was he ever around?

*Dr. Murray:*

Once in a while he would come in probably to remember how things used to be, and he’d have on his gown, poking around in the dissection.

*Dr. Smith:*

Who were the most memorable faculty?

*Dr. Murray:*

Probably Dr. Olafson, although I never did well in his class. But I liked it. He called three of us in one time because we weren’t doing too well. For some reason or other, I just wasn’t getting it, yet I liked pathology and I liked him. He was a task master, too. Afterwards, we became very good friends. ...

Dr. Fincher,<sup>24</sup> I liked them all, but I liked Dr. Milks, and “Steve”. Dr. Stevenson and I became very good friends. He and his wife would come over to the cottage and my first wife and I would visit with them. [He lived on Cornell Street].

And of course, Dr. Danks; we became very good friends.<sup>25</sup> I visited him often. He’d come over to the cottage, he and his wife. So I had a good rapport with all of the men.

In those days, the old veterinary college was down where the Labor Relations building<sup>26</sup> is now. We used to play softball out in front of the building, in the big yard. It was big enough so you could have a regular diamond out there. It was all open.

I took my lunch down at Sheldon Court in Collegetown. I’d buy a five dollar-and-a-half meal ticket for five dollars, and that’d last eight days. Breakfast was ten or fifteen cents, and lunch maybe a quarter, and a fairly good dinner at night for forty-five cents. And room rent was

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<sup>23</sup> Grant Sherman Hopkins, DSc, DVM ’00, professor of veterinary anatomy, emeritus; one of the founding faculty of the college in 1896.

<sup>24</sup> Myron Gustin Fincher ’19, MS, assistant professor of medicine and obstetrics

<sup>25</sup> Arthur Gordon Danks ’33, PhD, instructor in surgery

<sup>26</sup> The veterinary college moved to the east end of campus in 1957, and the building complex was taken over by the School of Industrial and Labor Relations (like the veterinary college, a statutory or contract college for the New York State).



three dollars a week. And without any tuition, you just had that and your books, so it really wasn't too bad compared to what it is now.<sup>27</sup>

*Dr. Smith:*

So you graduated in '39. Then what happened?

*Dr. Murray:*

I was offered a job as instructor in large animal surgery, but I wanted to get into practice. I got a job with Dr. Paddock's uncle, Arthur, over in Bath.<sup>28</sup> I was with him about two weeks, when Dr. Stone in Penn Yan<sup>29</sup> called down and said, "Send that fellow up here. I'm going out west for six weeks and I want him to take my practice for me." Now Dr. Stone and also Dr. Reynolds, the old veterinarian we had on the farm at home, had attended some school out around Chicago.<sup>30</sup> It was just one of these private things, not an accredited veterinary college, but they got enough so that they could do something. Anyway, I'd been there at Bath for about two weeks and Stone called and wanted me to go up to Penn Yan, and I was thrown in right from the word *go*, on my own.

One of the first calls I had was a mare that had foaled, and she still had a retained placenta. I went up there that night to remove the placenta and it started to bleed like crazy. And I could just visualize the horse bleeding to death, and here I was just new on the job, and I could get arrested, so I left it. I called Dr. Paddock, told him the story, and he came up the next day and took everything out and put in antibiotics, and she came along fine. He used a long rubber sleeve-glove.<sup>31</sup> He said, "Does Stone have one of those?" and I said, "He told me he did, but the wind came along one day and blew it out the window and he never got another one."  
[*laughing*]

Another time, I got a call and a cow was trying to have a calf. It was at night, early evening. And when I got to the barn, it was just like a theater with all these bales of hay around. All of the guy's relatives, plus other farmers, came in to see what that young fellow was going to do. The cow was down, the head was [turned] back, and she was straining hard. I couldn't do much until I gave the cow an epidural. When I started to administer it, the owner said, "What are you doing?" I said, "I'm giving her a shot so she can't strain." He said, "Stone never did anything like that." I said, "Well Dr. Stone isn't handling this case; I am." And it worked fine, and I got a live calf, and I think my stock might've gone up a bit. [*laughing*]

I had enough puzzling cases that I called over to talk to Dr. Danks and asked if the job was still open. He said it was and I said, "Well, I think I'd like it." Dr. Danks checked with Dr

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<sup>27</sup> Tuition was free for New York State residents

<sup>28</sup> Arthur James Paddock '21, originally from Prattsburg, NY; his nephew is Joseph E. Paddock '52, resides now in Bath, N.Y.

<sup>29</sup> Penn Yan is a village in Yates County, N.Y., about 50 miles northwest of Ithaca.

<sup>30</sup> There had been three former proprietary veterinary colleges in Chicago. The most likely candidate referred to here was the McKillip Veterinary College (1894-1920; 1,223 graduates) or, possibly, the Chicago Veterinary College (1883-1920, 128 graduates).

<sup>31</sup> For obstetrical examinations

Frost<sup>32</sup> and called back the next day and said, “It’s yours if you want it.” So I went there for a year. And it was a good experience; I never regretted it.

*Dr. Smith:*

You stayed there for a year, then you came back into practice.

*Dr. Murray:*

I stayed there for a year and then I wondered where to go, and I decided to go down to Waverly.<sup>33</sup> I told Dr. Milks, and he said, “Oh, you don’t want to go to Waverly, you couldn’t even raise an umbrella down there.” [*laughing*] Well, he was about right, but we went. There was a veterinarian down in Smithville, which was not far from Waverly, and he had a fair control over the area, but there weren’t many farm animals there. So I could tell that that wasn’t going to be where I wanted to be.

I saw in the paper where a veterinarian had died out near Pittsburgh. So my wife and I went out, and his widow was trying to run it [with a woman who had worked for her husband]. She was not a veterinarian, but was doing operations herself because she had watched the veterinarian do them. I could see that I didn’t want to get mixed up in that at all. So, I didn’t even consider it.

And I knew a veterinarian in Westfield, Pennsylvania, which was just fourteen miles up the line from my hometown where I’d gone to high school. He had died, so we went there. The practice was good and growing. We were there for about nine months, when Dr. Olmsted in Painted Post<sup>34</sup> (with whom I had worked one summer after my junior year) called me and said he was going to move to Connecticut and go into practice with a classmate of his, Forbes Bushnell.<sup>35</sup> He wanted to know if I would be interested in buying his practice.

And I said, “Yes, I would”. My wife liked the idea because she was born and raised in Corning, and Painted Post was a suburb of Corning. We went down to talk with him, and, on the way down, I said, “Well, what do you think he’ll ask us for the practice?” My wife didn’t know. And I guessed about eight thousand. Just a year or two before, he had put up a nice little animal hospital in the back of his house, on the main drag through Painted Post. So we looked over everything, and he had a nice drug inventory, nice working place, kennels, little operating room, an examination room, a waiting room, and so forth. So after we were all through, I said, “Dick, what’s the bottom line?” And he said, “Well, I understand the way they sell these practices is what the gross was for the year. My gross this year was six thousand dollars, and that’s what you can have it for.” So I borrowed three thousand from my wife’s parents and three thousand from the bank, and we were in business.

But I decided I needed help, and Dr. Baker<sup>36</sup> came down and looked things over and he decided he’d like to come, and his wife did also. So I took on Dutch Baker as a full partner

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<sup>32</sup> James Nathan Frost ’07, professor of veterinary surgery and director of the surgical clinic

<sup>33</sup> Town in Tioga County, N.Y., near the Pennsylvania border

<sup>34</sup> Richard Calvin Olmstead ’33, originally from Catskill, NY

<sup>35</sup> Fred Forbes Bushnell ’33, originally from South Manchester, CT

<sup>36</sup> DeWitt Theodore Baker ’44, originally from Ithaca

right from the first day: half and half. We built a new animal hospital down below the country club in East Corning, which opened in the beginning of '57.

I saw a picture of Dr. Goodman's hospital on Long Island.<sup>37</sup> I liked the looks of it and I built our hospital using that design. We probably had about \$30,000 in the construction.

*Dr. Smith;*

You became a Foremost Benefactor [of Cornell].<sup>38</sup> Could you talk about why you decided to do that?

*Dr. Murray:*

Well to be honest with you, I did it because I was so appreciative of the fact that I was admitted. That's the sole reason. I wouldn't have what I've got if I had not been accepted. They gave me the opportunity to make a good living, and I'm going to pay back.

I always felt like the veterinary college was second home to me, and I always enjoyed going back. But the main reason was that I was thinking back when I was scared I wasn't going to get in, and did get in, and was able to get a good education, and the chance to make a good living.

*Dr. Smith:*

Every May you come back to the Honor Day, and we're very grateful for that, and some days you give a little talk, and some days you give some poetry, and that's very pleasing to the graduates.<sup>39</sup>

To close this interview, Dr. Murray, I would like for you—if you would be so kind—to recite the story of the little snake called Petey, just as you have in past years during the Honor Day Celebrations. This will be a touching tribute to the many recent DVM graduates to whom you have paid profound tribute as you sent them off to their chosen field of veterinary medicine, the profession that you have loved so dearly and to which you have contributed so much.

Let's hear the story of Petey once again...

*Petey was a little snake—about so big—that lived in a pit with his mother. And one day Petey was hissing in the pit when his mother said, “Petey don't hiss in the pit, go outside the pit and hiss”. So Petey went outside the pit to hiss. He was hissing all around, and suddenly leaned over and hissed in the pit. So his mother said, “Petey if you must hiss in the pit, don't hiss in our pit, go over to Mrs. Pots and hiss in her pit”. So Petey went over to Mrs. Pots to hiss in her pit, but Mrs. Pots was not at home, so Petey hissed in her pit anyway. While Petey was hissing in Mrs. Pots' pit, Mrs. Pots came home and saw Petey hissing in her pit, and said, “Petey, if you must hiss in the pit, don't hiss in my pit, go to your own pit and*

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<sup>37</sup> Lawrence W. Goodman '26

<sup>38</sup> Dr. Murray was named Foremost Benefactor in 1980.

<sup>39</sup> Dr. Murray is a periodic visitor to Cornell, and for years, has attended the annual Honor Day Banquet and awards ceremony. He is often asked to address the graduating class.

*hiss". Well, this made Petey very sad, and he cried all the way home, and when his mother saw him crying, she said, "Petey, what on earth is the matter?" "Well I went over to Mrs. Pots to hiss in her pit, but Mrs. Pots was not at home so I hissed in her pit anyway. And while I was hissing in Mrs. Pot's pit, Mrs. Pots came home and saw me hissing in her pit, and says, 'Petey if you must hiss in the pit don't hiss in my pit, go to your own pit and hiss.'" Well, this made Petey's mother very angry, and she said, "Why that mean old lady! I knew that Mrs. Pots when she did not have a pit to hiss in!"*

*Dr. Smith:*

Thank you very much. It's a pleasure to be with you as always.