

NEW YORK STATE VETERINARY COLLEGE

CORNELL UNIVERSITY ITHACA, NEW YORK



CHRISTMAS, 1955

DEAR ALUMNUS:

The first snow of the season is flying, the football season is giving way to basketball, and nearly all of the daylight hours are required for the daily stint in the office. Thanksgiving is upon us and Christmas cannot be far behind. Again it is time for the Christmas letter.

Our principal extra-curricular activity of the past year, at least for the writer and a considerable number of the faculty people, has been the watching of developing details of our new buildings, the correction of mistakes and oversights as these are recognized, and the planning of the equipment. We are provided with a weekly work progress report on construction. For the week ending November 11, which is the last I have received, it was estimated that the construction was 86% complete. All buildings, except the auditorium, are externally complete and are heated by temporary steam lines so there need be no delay in the interior finishing. There are no reasons apparent now why the work should not be finished next spring on schedule. We hope to move during the summer and be ready for business next fall in the new home. As yet we have no paved roads, sidewalks, exterior lighting, and landscaping, but all of these have been planned and it is hoped that all of that can be done in the spring before moving day arrives.

Many of you have asked what we propose to do with the old building names, Law and Moore. My answer is that we still do not know. A faculty committee was appointed last spring to study this matter and make suggestions but it has not yet reported. In our new plant we do not have a series of separate buildings as we have now. The main structure consists of a series of wings and connecting structures that will make it possible for one to go from the far corners of either small or large animal hospitals to the college business office or library without wetting his feet in the midwinter snow or sunburning his pate in the midsummer sun. The building arrangement is not well suited to carry multiple names but I am sure we will find some way to perpetuate the names of Law and Moore, so dear to all those who had any connection with the College during its earlier years. The bronze plaque which identifies the Moore Laboratory will certainly be removed from its present location to an appropriate place in the new plant. James Law Hall never had an identifying marker until recent years when we had the name

carved in the large stone lintel over the main doors. Perhaps we can obtain this stone when the building is torn down to keep as a memento of the old original building.

Fifty years from now when all of us will be gone and replaced by students and faculty members consisting of persons not yet born—persons who never knew the present site and the original buildings—it would be nice to have a bronze historical marker in the main foyer of the new College identifying the spot on the campus where the first college stood and providing a few details about the original buildings. Various groups have asked me during the last several years what they might do as a contribution to the new College. Maybe this idea will appeal to some of them.

The corner stone was laid last spring without ceremony. In it is a hermetically sealed metal box filled with appropriate materials dealing with the development of the College and its work during its first sixty years. College reports and announcements, a motion picture film of all members of the present faculty, and microfilms of many other things were included. The latter included all the class pictures, so most of you have your physiognomies preserved for posterity. Sometime in the future, after roads and sidewalks have been built and the furniture and equipment have been installed, we shall have some dedication exercises. If all goes well, this probably will be sometime during the next scholastic year. All of you will be invited.

There have been quite a few happenings among the faculty members during the past year. I am sure all of you heard of Dr. Udall's death in September. This came suddenly, during the night after he had spent a full day working in his office as usual. Since all of you knew him and his work very well, I need not enlarge on his contributions to the profession and this College during his long active life. He will long be remembered as one of the strong men of this faculty.

Many of you probably have not heard of a recent tragedy which took the lives of a young staff member and his wife. Dr. Walter Packer, 35 years old and a graduate of the Veterinary College of the University of Pennsylvania, was in charge of our poultry disease diagnostic laboratory in Oneonta. Failing to appear for work one morning, some of his staff people investigated and found both Dr. and Mrs. Packer dead of carbon monoxide poisoning, the fatal gas having been generated by a faulty house furnace. Their three-year-old daughter escaped because she was sleeping in a closed room with an open window.

Pete Olafson and his family are still in Israel but are due back about the first of February. Pete has received much attention from the newspapers and journals of that country for his good work on some of their animal disease problems. Phil Levine and family returned in September from a year's leave spent at Oak Ridge where he learned some of the newer techniques on isotopes. The Doughertys returned about the same time from Scotland where Bob spent the last three months of his leave working on rumen physiology in

the Rowett Institute in Aberdeen. Steve Roberts was on sabbatic leave, too, but only for the first term and during this time he worked in Ithaca on his new book on breeding diseases of cattle, which he hopes to send off to the printer soon.

John Bentinck-Smith left in September on a sabbatic year which will be spent in Sweden. He is working in Stockholm now. He plans to divide his time between the Royal Veterinary College and the State Veterinary Medical Institute, both of which are in Stockholm. Dorsey Bruner and Joseph Dye will be taking off on half-year leaves next February.

George Poppensiek, of the Virus Laboratory, resigned last summer to take a position on the staff of the Plum Island Laboratory of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. He now resides in Orient, New York. Martin Sevoian, of the poultry disease staff, also resigned to go to Massachusetts State University. New faces on the staff are those of John R. E. Taylor, a Canadian and a graduate of the Ontario Veterinary College, in poultry diseases; Thomas F. Benson, a graduate of the University of Georgia, in the diagnostic laboratory; and Ernst Bilberstein, one of our own graduates (D.V.M. '51, Ph.D. '55), who is filling out in clinical pathology during Bentinck-Smith's absence. Jack Geary is not a newcomer but he is now playing a new role. Instead of running the diagnostic laboratory, he is now working in clinical radiology, preparing to take over the operation of the large, powerful x-ray equipment that we will have in our new plant.

As a part of its Centennial celebration this year, Michigan State University conferred a series of citations to outstanding workers in many fields of education. One of those so honored was Hugh Dukes, to whom we now salaam.

A few months ago we were informed that all of the Veterinary R.O.T.C. units were to be discontinued. This was not unexpected since the Medical and Dental units already had gone. The boys who were already enrolled in the program are being carried through, hence the demise will not occur until next June. Ed Sunderville, who has been in charge of our unit for the last three years is continuing through this year but then he expects to be sent to survey new pastures at home or abroad. We will be sorry to see the Sundervilles go, but that is the way of the Army.

Our Professors-emeritus, now reduced to three—Sunderville, Birch, and Stephenson—are all well and making Ithaca their headquarters. Miss Julia Law and Miss Haight are both often seen at faculty social functions and both appear to be well. The rest of us appear to be reasonably hardy, too. Many of the younger members continue to supply replacements to keep the family group growing.

Last June we graduated a class of 47 men and one woman. Military service has, or soon will, occupy the attention of a number of the male members and a baby serves the same purpose for the lone female. All of the others are working to salvage what it can for our livestock industry.

A new class of 50 began work this fall. Our total registration now is about 200 in the professional curriculum, plus about 18 graduate students.

The program for our 48th Annual Conference for Veterinarians is ready for the printer and should reach those of you who live in this part of the world about the same time that this letter turns up. Gordon Danks has served as chairman of the program committee, and I am sure that it will be up to usual standards. It will be held on the 4th, 5th, and 6th of January and I hope to see many of you here then. An innovation this year is a pre-conference, one-day, symposium on the veterinary aspects of public health which will be held on the 3rd. This program is sponsored jointly by the U.S. Public Health Service, the New York State Health Department, and this College. We will have some outstanding speakers, we think it will be well worth while, and we hope to have a good attendance of New York State veterinarians.

In June we conducted two special short courses on the subject of bovine infertility. They were very well received and we are receiving requests for others. Our capacity for conducting many of these courses is distinctly limited especially during the Collegiate year, and since we expect to be in a turmoil next summer in the process of moving, it seems doubtful that we can handle any then. It may be that multiple short-time courses on a variety of subjects with limited groups of people in each may be a more effective way of serving the profession in New York than our old way of having a single, large meeting annually. I would be glad to have your opinions on this subject.

The grim reaper again has taken his toll. I am sorry to have to record the deaths of fifteen of our alumni. We try to keep an accurate record of these, but word about some of them just does not get to us until long afterwards. The following passed away more than a year ago: Ludo L. Zimmer, '03, November 11, 1951; James H. J. Harden, '23, May 10, 1953; Robert W. Simms, '11, February 19, 1954; J. Walter Treman, '05, March 3, 1954; and William H. Sumner, '14, June 8, 1954. The other ten who died during the past year are: Irwin F. Brenning, '23, January 16; David M. Hoyt, '15, February 1; Joseph M. Flannery, '18, March 9; Emory J. Gregory, '11, March 13; Fred W. Wood, '07, April 16; Clifford H. Milks, '30, August 14; Denny H. Udall, '01, September 8; Albert J. Crane, '37, September 13; Leigh T. Giltner, '06, November 17; and Charles A. Griffin '13, November 19.

For myself and for every member of the faculty of the Veterinary College, I send you greetings and best wishes. May you have a joyous Christmas and a New Year better than any that have gone before.

Cordially and sincerely yours,

