



Spring 1998

### Commentary

Paul Spears

Follow this and additional works at: <https://repository.upenn.edu/bellwether>

#### Recommended Citation

Spears, Paul (1998) "Commentary," *Bellwether Magazine*: Vol. 1 : No. 42 , Article 24.  
Available at: <https://repository.upenn.edu/bellwether/vol1/iss42/24>

This paper is posted at ScholarlyCommons. <https://repository.upenn.edu/bellwether/vol1/iss42/24>  
For more information, please contact [repository@pobox.upenn.edu](mailto:repository@pobox.upenn.edu).

**M**ark Allam was a gentleman from another era, with a graciousness, twinkling humor, and style which is rarely seen anymore. Who today could wear a straw boater with such elegance and panache? It was my supreme privilege to have been taught by him, even though he was retired when we met.

I met Mark when I was doing research at New Bolton Center in the 1970's before veterinary school. Some one I had never met appeared at my door and said he had learned I was involved with horses, and would I be interested in learning to drive a pair? As I studied the art of driving carriages from him, I also learned a lot about Mark and the world of veterinary medicine. We used to have long talks while we drove around New Bolton, with Mark telling me all the reasons that veterinary medicine was really an ideal profession for women, given its broad range of applications and its flexibility. Although I had always wanted to go to veterinary school, I had recently encountered some resistance from a different school about my intention to study equine medicine. Mark was there to tell me it wouldn't stay that way, that such prejudice was ridiculous, and of course he was absolutely right.

What I also remember well is that the goal of that first summer was for me to become proficient enough with New Bolton's team that I could take my parents (who were coming to visit at the end of August) for a tour of New Bolton Center in one of the carriages. It was with a great leap of faith that my father, who was inexperienced with horses, was persuaded by Mark's laudatory comments about my skill, to enter the carriage for my big moment. Mark then proceeded to point out to my increasingly nervous parents the important sights at New Bolton Center, such as every place he had ever turned over a carriage on a visiting VIP, or had a runaway, or a crash! To this day, I have no idea if he was just pulling our legs.

From the two summers I drove with him, my life changed profoundly, because of course, I did go to veterinary school at Penn, and at the same time, started a long term love affair with carriage driving, including showing and training, which continues to this day.

Laurie J. Landeau, V.M.D., '84

**I**n the fall of 1968 the veterinary school faculty gathered for a social evening at the home of a professor in celebration of an accomplished milestone. A caterer served delicious food, and a first year veterinary student was hired to tend bar. The faculty was accomplished, their reputations as scientists and clinicians preceded them; and the aspiring young veterinarian mixing drinks felt honored to be among them. One pro-

**I**n one way it is very sad that Mark Allam passed on so soon, but in another it shows that he and his wife were so much part of one another that he could not endure her loss. Hopefully, they are reunited in heaven.

I remember well the happy times with Mark Allam and of the pleasure of working with him and Jacques Jenny to both select the site and serve on the design committee for New Bolton Center. What a wonderful reality it is and what a good place for it.

Helen K. Groves

**M**ark Allam had a kind of homey, homespun, down-on-the-farm approach to people. There was nothing pretentious about Mark Allam.

Paul Spears

**W**hat a distinguished and inspiring couple the Allams were! As a relative newcomer to NBC, I feel very honoured to have met them.

Karin K. Ewing, D.V.M.  
*Assistant Professor of Anesthesia*

fessor spent more than an hour talking with the bartender; inspiring him to be the best that he could be and assuring him of the great opportunities lying ahead in the veterinary profession. I was the bartender and Dean Mark W. Allam was that gracious professor.

Outstanding leaders insure progress and the perpetuity of purpose. They are visionary, creative, persuasive and unassuming. Mark Allam was all of these and more. He professed and actively promoted Virchow's concept of "one medicine" in order to merge our school and ultimately the veterinary profession with the world of human medicine.

Among Mark Allam's greatest achievements was the establishment of the American College of Veterinary Surgeons (ACVS). Foremost as a practitioner, Dr. Allam was a surgeon. His strong desire for the profession to keep pace with the latest surgical advances motivated him in the late 1950's to organize a group of prominent veterinary surgeons from across the country; and by his persistent leadership the ACVS was incorporated in 1965. Dr. Allam was the first Chair of the Board of Regents, and years later served as the College's first historian. He never missed an annual meeting, actively participating, until the last few years when failing health broke the streak. As a special tribute to its founder, in 1971 the ACVS established the Mark W. Allam Lecture which continues to be a major feature of the College's annual scientific meeting.

I believe Mark Allam's greatest attribute was his unwavering faith in young people. Those of us (and there are many) who were privileged to know Mark personally were inspired, encouraged, and empowered by him to advance our ideas. He also truly enjoyed our friendship. After achieving so much and throughout his long retirement, he expressed genuine awe in the accomplishments of others. He cheered us to reach new heights. Mark Allam's legacy will forever be embedded in the prominence of the University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine and the American College of Veterinary Surgeons.

Paul C. Gambardella, V.M.D., '72  
*Past President, ACVS*