



## Bellwether Magazine

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### From the Dean

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## From the Dean

As we approach the end of the century it is time to look back and think about the significant advances that have shaped veterinary medicine in the past 100 years. This is relevant as the profession was in its infancy in 1900 and many predicted its demise with the decline of the horse. In



this column I will mention two achievements that were vital to the growth of veterinary medicine.

The first is the Bureau of Animal Industry that took origin under the direc-

tion of Dr. Daniel Salmon at the end of the 19th Century and played an enormously important role in eradicating contagious diseases of domestic animals, protecting the nation's livestock and improving the safety of foods of animal origin in the present century. Daniel Salmon, the first person to be awarded the degree of doctor of veterinary medicine in the U.S., is best known for his work in characterizing *Salmonella* bacteria, but his contributions as Director of the Bureau of Animal Industries are just as important. Under his leadership, the Bureau attracted a outstanding group of veterinarians and microbiologists and accomplished remarkable success in either controlling or eradicating bovine pleuro-pneumonia, Texas fever, foot and mouth disease, fowl plague, equine glanders, hog cholera, brucellosis, and bovine tuberculosis. The Bureau also established procedures for protecting the U.S. livestock industry from the spread of infectious diseases, especially along the Mexican border. Since their work, U.S. livestock has been remarkably free of epidemics of infectious disease.

The other great accomplishment of the Bureau was to bring public acceptance to the fledgling veterinary profession. When the Bureau was formed, detractors ridiculed the idea of Salmon "a mere horse doctor" as the head of a federal bureau. The achievements of the

Bureau changed this attitude and we owe Salmon and his colleagues an enduring debt of gratitude.

The second significant advance was the development of specialization in the profession. This advance started in the mid-fifties at a time when the nation was enjoying unprecedented prosperity. Goaded by Soviet advances in space technology and other scientific fields, the federal government increased exponentially its spending on research and higher education, including biomedical research and education. On a scale never before imagined, the National Institutes of Health and the National Science Foundation invited schools in all health professions to compete for research grants and for training grants and fellowships. As a full partner in one of the World's great biomedical research centers this School was uniquely equipped to compete for these funds to strengthen basic science faculties and research infrastructures, while developing veterinarian-scientists and clinical specialties.

Many of the first veterinary clinical specialists received rigorous training as veterinarian-scientists at the Medical School and Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, and returned to the School of Veterinary Medicine to establish scholarly sections of radiology, dermatology, cardiology, ophthalmology, neurology, internal medicine, orthopedic surgery, oncology, medical genetics, and a variety of sub-specialties.

They conveyed great strength to the Department of Clinical Studies as they brought science and medicine together and bridged the traditional divide between clinical and basic science departments. Our teaching hospitals developed a science based curriculum and were equipped with the most advanced diagnostic equipment.

Penn was in the vanguard of this initiative which has transformed the education and practice of veterinary medicine in the United States and throughout the western world much to the benefit of the animal-owning public. A direct outgrowth of this change in clinical education was the development of quality internship and residency training

programs, and the establishment of specialty colleges chartered to certify discipline specialists. As a result of this latter development, either corporate or privately owned specialty practices are becoming common in the U.S. and Board certification has become the standard of advanced clinical proficiency.

Both of these initiatives that have been so important to the development of veterinary medicine in the 20th Century, deserve close attention in the 21st. I wonder what impact corporate practices will have on the structure of veterinary medicine and, after the brilliant contributions of the Bureau of Animal Industry, worry about the lack of investment in research and training on infectious diseases of animals today. Unlike the NIH budget that is burgeoning, the USDA research budget has not increased.

Free trade means increased movement of animals and animal products and with this goes the threat of spread of infectious disease. I sometimes wonder if the veterinary profession has been put into the same position as the medical profession in 1980 just before the start of the AIDS epidemic. I hope I am wrong. 🍷

Alan M. Kelly  
*The Gilbert S. Kahn*  
Dean of Veterinary Medicine

### Marookian Scholarship Fund

Family members and friends of Dr. Marookian chose the occasion of the dedication to show their respect and admiration by making gifts toward a scholarship fund in Dr. Marookian's name. The E.R. Marookian, V.M.D. Research Scholarship Fund, established at the School through these contributions and contributions by Dr. and Mrs. Marookian, will be used to encourage and support veterinarians who wish to obtain a graduate degree (Ph.D.) in the field of basic research.