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Faces From the Past

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Faces from the Past

George A. Dick, B.S., V.M.D., became the sixth dean of the School, in July 1931. He was born in Cheapside, Ontario, Canada, of American parents and then spent his early childhood in Port Allegheny, Pennsylvania. He was able to attend only one year of high school since fire destroyed the school building. As a young man he worked in his father's shop where wagons were built and horses were shod. In 1896, at the age of 18, he joined a group of men that were enticed to Alaska by the news of the Klondike gold rush. In Alaska young Dick found it hard going. First, there was no gold, and then he was stranded by a group of older men with whom he worked. In order to obtain train fare home he worked as a blacksmith, finally arriving home in 1900. At this time he enrolled in the Ontario Veterinary College, Guelph, Canada. After one year he transferred to the Veterinary Department, University of Pennsylvania where he graduated in 1904 at the age of 27. After graduation, Dr. Dick spent twelve years in Kane, Pennsylvania, where he had a practice in which much of the work was with horses that were used in logging camps. He became interested in the breeding of Ayrshire cattle and carried out some experimental work on brucellosis and sterility in conjunction with the Pennsylvania State Livestock Sanitary Board. In 1915 he attended Iowa State College and received a B.S. degree in animal husbandry.

In 1916 Dr. Dick returned to Penn to teach animal industry, succeeding Dr. Carl W. Gay. His initial appointment was as assistant professor of animal industry; in 1919 he became a professor. In 1921 Dr. Dick introduced a course in poultry husbandry and in the same year he assumed responsibility for extension work and the publication of the *Veterinary Extension Quarterly*. He continued as Extension Veterinarian until 1931, and taught animal husbandry during his entire career at the School.

Dr. Dean was a striking physical specimen with a gentle, retiring demeanor. Like his predecessor, Dr. Klein, Dean Dick was at the helm of a school that

was in serious financial difficulties. In his annual reports Dr. Dick often had to indicate that the budget had been cut, or at best, that no new funds were available. He was obviously greatly concerned an attempted without any great success to develop plans to obtain funds. In this effort he received little help from the University.



Despite the grave situation during Dean Dick's tenure, the School made progress in its internal affairs, continued to be known for its good educational program. Departments were reorganized, new faculty was appointed, including Drs. Boucher, Allam, Detweiler, Churchhill, Demott, Wadsworth, Blumner, Crissman, Live and Coffin, and admission requirements were increased.

In 1937 Bolton Farm near Fallsington, PA was given to the University by the heirs of Effingham B. Morris. It was the hope of Dean Dick and the vice president for medical affairs, Dr. Alfred Stengel, that the site could be developed into a School of Animal Pathology. This was to be a unit in which comparative medical research would be fostered and would serve all of the biomedical components of the University. An appropriation of \$50,000 was obtained from the Commonwealth to provide for laboratories and salaries. This was a good start but no further funds were forthcoming and with the death of Dr. Stengel the dreams for the School of Animal Pathology never became a reality. The *Veterinary School Bulletin* continued to list a description of this School from 1939 to 1952 but it never became a functional entity. A small amount of money was obtained for research and a few faculty of the Veterinary School carried-out some work within the framework of the School of Animal Pathology. Dr. Evan L. Stubbs and Dr. Robert O. Biltz worked

on fowl paralysis, fowl leukosis, and brucellosis in cattle and Dr. Louis A. Klein and Dr. Albert L. Kleckner carried out some studies on catarrhal mastitis.

It was also hoped that Bolton Farm could be used for clinical training, but while groups of senior students did visit the farm, this never developed in to a full-fledged program.

The School received a small amount of money from the Federal B.A.I. and the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture for research. At the close of his term of office, Dean Dick was able to obtain funds from the Commonwealth to add a third story to the north wing of the quadrangle building.

By the early 1940's much of the budgetary machinery and important administrative decisions of the School were taken over by the office of the vice president for medical affairs in the University. It was obvious that the University administration wished to make a change and at the same time some influential alumni were clamoring for a strengthening of the School in the financial and research areas. The time had come for Dr. Dick to step down, and according to individuals close to him, he was not reluctant to do so. He had served the School well during a difficult period of time. 🏠

John E. Martin, V.M.D.

Students from Azabu University Visit

1999 marked the tenth year of cultural and educational exchange between the veterinary school of Azabu University, Azabu, Japan and the School of Veterinary Medicine. The 16 Japanese veterinary students and two faculty members arrived at VHUP on August 2 for their 11-day stay. They spent one or two days in each of the various services at VHUP, accompanying Penn veterinary students throughout the day. Some evenings were spent observing in the Emergency Service. 🏠