



Twentieth Century Veterinary Lives

by Bruce Vivash Jones MRCVS

The twentieth century was one of transformation for the veterinary profession. Against a background of both enormous social change and two major wars, veterinary medicine in Britain and Ireland moved from being a totally male, almost solely equine based art with two veterinary schools to a largely female, companion animal, hospital centred, research-based discipline with seven schools.

This new book presents the stories of one hundred and nineteen men and women, each of whom played a role, often significant and sometimes pivotal, in the twentieth-century British veterinary world.

These lives reflect the changing environment and also trace the evolution of British veterinary medicine over some one hundred and twenty significant years. The lives of practitioners illustrate the great age of urban equine practice and its decline, then compensated by the growth of canine and feline work. The struggle for control of livestock communicable disease, introduction of public health measures and preventive medicine on the farm is told as also is the entry and early experiences of women in the profession. The important role of the Army Service features around the globe from the early days of the Empire and then in two world wars. All told through the lives of the participants.

The veterinary schools – London, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Liverpool, Dublin, Bristol, Cambridge – and their leaders, are included. The evolution of the RCVS, the birth and growth of the BVA, followed by BSAVA, is revealed by the stories of their pioneers. The start of veterinary research, its successes and the record of the now gone Colonial Service veterinarians are all described.

The twentieth-century was important for the veterinary profession: it had to not only live through tumultuous times with two world wars, but it both experienced, and benefitted from enormous leaps in technical progress and innovation. These events in turn, allowed a wide variety of personalities to emerge, ranging from the great and the notable (Fitzwygram, Fleming, McFadyean); the leaders and activists (Hunting, the Steele-Bodgers, Wooldridge, Weipers, McIntyre); the scientists (including 9 FRs); the soldiers (both professional and war servicemen); the entrepreneurs of the Indian and Colonial Services; teachers in the growing numbers of veterinary schools; those who led the organizations (RCVS, BVA, BSAVA, SPVS); the notable women pioneers plus the many never-to-be-forgotten characters.

As well as the lives of Sir Frederick Fitzwygram, George Fleming, Sir John McFadyean, Reginald Wooldridge, Sir William Weipers, J T Edwards, Aleen Cust, Joan Joshua, Mary Brancker, Olga Uvarov, Jimmy McCunn, 'Woody' Woodrow, Sir Frederick Hobday, Adrian Jones, Sir Frederick Smith, William Jarrett, Ian McIntyre, Harry Steele-Bodger and John Boyd Dunlop there are one hundred more.

Twentieth-Century Veterinary Lives (hardback, 303 pages) ISBN 978-0-9566200-1-9 presents the history of the British veterinary profession from the late 1800s to the early 2000s told through the lives of one hundred and nineteen people who helped to make it, in England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland and in the then British Empire.