With this Announcement, what was to become the School of Veterinary Medicine of the University of Pennsylvania opened its doors to receive students. On hand to participate in this exciting venture were twelve faculty and twenty-nine matriculants.

The aims of the new school, as stated in the Announcement, were simple, yet they expressed what were to become some guiding principles for one-hundred years: "This department aims to give instruction, both theoretical and practical, in all branches pertaining to the scientific study of the elements of medicine, and the practical application of these elements to the domestic animals, in the preservation of their health, in their employment as useful aids to man, and in the diseases to which they are subject." Thus from the very outset the School was identified as a branch of medicine with responsibilities to agriculture and to animal owners.

The first written proposal for establishing veterinary medical education at the University of Pennsylvania is contained in an introductory address by Dr. Benjamin Rush to his class in the Medical Department, in 1807. The lecture was entitled "On the Duty and Advantages of Studying the Diseases of Domestic Animals and the Remedies Proper to Remove Them," and it was inspired by Judge Richard Peters, President of the Philadelphia Society for Promoting Agriculture. The Society was offering a gold medal for "the best plan for promoting veterinary knowledge." Dr. Rush was a member of this Society as were many learned men of his day. In addition to his eminent position in the medical world, Dr. Rush was highly regarded in matters of education and religion, was a signer of the Declaration of Independence, and was a noted speaker. In his lecture Dr. Rush spoke about the advisability of establishing a "veterinary chair" and urged physicians to become
more interested in the diseases of animals. Dr. Rush optimistically believed that the University Trustees would immediately act on the wisdom of his proposals. In 1807, however, the University was in serious financial and academic difficulties and his ideas fell upon barren ground. His reasoning was sound and his appeal eloquent, but results were not forthcoming, and in fact did not materialize for another seventy-seven years.

In the years immediately following Dr. Rush’s lecture a few members of the Philadelphia Society for Promoting Agriculture continued to show concern for improving methods of preventing and treating animal disease, but any further activity regarding the development of veterinary medical education was minimal. Dr. James Mease, secretary of the Society, gave a series of lectures on disease of domestic animals and wrote papers on rabies, Texas fever, and ergot poisoning.

In the mid-nineteenth century there were some abortive attempts to establish private veterinary schools in Philadelphia. Mr. Robert Jennings, a local veterinarian, was involved in two such ventures, once in 1852 and again in 1859. Another group of veterinarians made an attempt in 1866, but in both cases is proved impossible to attract a sufficient number of students.

The spark that eventually led to a veterinary school at the University of Pennsylvania was ignited in 1877. At that time Mr. Horace Smith, an alumnus of the University, initiated a vigorous campaign for this purpose. Mr. Smith was the manager of a large farm which extended along Lancaster Avenue from the 52nd Street Station of the Pennsylvania Railroad nearly to City Avenue. Upon graduating from the University, Horace Smith started a business importing chinaware and glass. The Civil War brought about business failure and Smith, a Quaker, entered the independent Sanitary Commission which provided nursing service in military field hospitals. The war experience destroyed his health and he had come to the farm for therapeutic reasons. The farm was involv-

Original building of the Veterinary Department, built in 1884.
ed in the care of fine carriage horses and Mr. Smith was soon distressed by the woeful lack of competent veterinary service. He began a voluminous correspondence with friends, politicians, physicians, and members of agriculture societies, urging them to support veterinary education. Mr. Smith's voice carried some weight because he was secretary of the National Agricultural Congress. One individual with whom he frequently corresponded was Dr. James Law, Professor of Veterinary Science in the Agricultural College, Cornell University, and, later, dean of the veterinary school at that institution. In much of his correspondence Mr. Smith urged that veterinary studies be included as a part of the regular course in medicine, but most of those whom he contacted viewed this idea as impractical. Finally Mr. Smith wrote to Dr. William Pepper, Professor of Clinical Medicine (and later Provost) in the Department of Medicine of the University of Pennsylvania. In this handwritten letter Mr. Smith inquired whether the Trustees and Medical Faculty "would be likely to approve of having a chair of veterinary science established in connection with the University of Pennsylvania." Although a period of seven years was to elapse before a veterinary school was opened, this letter was undoubtedly the spark that finally brought the matter to a conclusion.

Mr. Smith's correspondence was read to the Medical Faculty at a regularly scheduled meeting on the evening of November 30, 1877, and that body reacted by passing a resolution stating that it would be "desirable to establish a Professorship of Veterinary Medicine and Surgery whenever a suitable endowment can be procured for this purpose." This resolution was transmitted to the University Trustees who, on January 1, 1878, resolved "that it is expedient to establish one or more Veterinary Professorships in the University as soon as a suitable endowment can be raised for this purpose."

The die was now cast, but the problem of money remained. Mr. Smith renewed his efforts with vigor, appealing to a variety of sources for financial support. He persuaded Dr. James Tyson, secretary of the Medical Faculty, to prepare a written appeal for funds. In collaboration with Dr. James Law, Mr. Smith prepared a paper on the need for veterinary medical education which was printed in the first annual report of the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture. This body responded by stating that it had no funds to support a school. Many of Mr. Smith's correspondents commended his efforts but no money was forthcoming. The Pennsylvania Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals became interested in the venture and initiated a subscription fund similar to one that had been successful in England. For a $100 subscription, an individual would be ensured of hospital accommodations for his animals and would be charged only the cost of feeding them. This attempt was unsuccessful.

To further complicate matters, the University was in debt. The Trustees initiated a plan to increase the general endowment fund to $500,000 but there was no mention of the proposed Veterinary Department participating in this endowment.

Finally, in 1882, Mr. Joshua B. Lippincott informed the Trustees that he was contributing $10,000 to the endowment fund specifically "for the purpose of establishing a Veterinary Department under the control of the University of Pennsylvania." A member of the Board of Trustees, Mr. Lippincott was much interested in developing trained veterinarians to combat cruelty to animals. He was president of the well known publishing firm of J.B. Lippincott and he and his heirs were to support the veterinary school in a generous fashion for many years.

With this money in hand the Trustees appointed a special committee to develop plans for the school. The committee was comprised of Mr. Lippincott (as chairman), along with Mr. Eli K. Price and Mr. Fairman Rogers. Within one month the committee reported that Mr. Joseph Gillingham, a trustee and owner of a large farm near Philadelphia, had contributed $10,000. At this time the committee recommended to the Trustees that the initial faculty of the school include two professors and several instructors in special veterinary subjects along with professors and instructors common to all branches of medicine (e.g., anatomy, chemistry, and Materia medica). In all these basic subjects, veterinary students would be taught at the same
time as medical students "in the same manner as is now done in the case of Dental Students." The Trustees also indicated their willingness to appropriate ground for the school and the committee recommended "that the ground occupied by the Department should be the eastern portion of a triangular plot of ground bound by Pine Street, 36th Street and Guardian Avenue." It was estimated that the initial structure would cost between $18,700 and $20,000, including a main building, a wall enclosing a yard, box stalls for twenty horses, and a blacksmith shop. The committee now made a most important recommendation by stating that "to make the school entirely complete would require an endowment of $200,000 but it may be started on a modest basis with very little more money than is now on hand." The committee believed that a subscription campaign could be used to raise additional funds. The Trustees agreed and, on January 5, 1883, a contract was let to begin construction of the Veterinary Department building at a cost of $16,905.

It was anticipated that the Veterinary Department building would be ready by the fall of 1883, but the structure was not completed until 1884. Opened on October 2nd, 1884, the Veterinary Department joined the eight other departments in the University: the College Department (including music, the Towne Scientific School, the Wharton School, and the course in arts and the course in philosophy), the Department of Medicine, the Department of Law, the Auxiliary Department of Medicine, the Department of Dentistry, the Department of Philosophy, the Department of Biology, and the Department of Physical Culture.

The description of the building in the first descriptive pamphlet of the Veterinary Department is as follows: "The grounds at Thirty-sixth and Pine Streets occupy a space some two squares in extent, adjoining the medical and other departments of the University. They are located in one of the most beautiful parts of Philadelphia, within twenty minutes of the Broad Street railroad station and the centre of the city, from which they can be easily reached by several lines of horse cars. THE BUILDINGS at present erected occupy a street frontage of 250 feet, consisting of a commodious amphitheatre and museum, anatomic room 60 x 21 feet lighted from both sides, histological laboratory 40 x 21 feet, blacksmith shop with eight forges, pharmaceutical laboratory and four private laboratories. The floors are all laid in cement, with the most approved drainage. Ample water, both hot and cold, gas and heat are supplied in each room. Large stables for hospital purposes will be erected by the opening of the second year and dormitories, cattle stables and other buildings are in prospect." The area occupied by the initial building is the present site of the Medical Laboratories Building. Pine Street has become Hamilton Walk, 36th Street no longer extends to this area, and Guardian Avenue no longer exists.

The first structure to be completed contained the amphitheatre, and museum, a lecture room, and faculty offices. This was followed immediately by an addition extending along Guardian Avenue containing a dissecting room and blacksmith shop on the first floor and a student laboratory and two faculty laboratories on the second floor.
The original building did not contain a hospital. Mr. Lippincott offered to donate $10,000 for this purpose if it was supplemented by $15,000 raised through a subscription plan. Although it had been successful in London the subscription plan did not work in Philadelphia. Nevertheless, Mr. Lippincott did contribute $10,000 and the hospital was added in 1885.

In preparation for the completed building, the Trustees had approved, in December 1883, the expenditure of $350 for apparatus and instruments. The dormitory mentioned in the first announcement never materialized.

**Those Who Taught**

When the Trustees had given approval to create a Veterinary Department, a search began for a dean. On April 3, 1883, Dr. Rush Shippen Huidiekoper was elected as professor of internal pathology and contagious diseases and dean of the Veterinary Faculty. Dr. Huidiekoper was a graduate of the Medical Department of the University of Pennsylvania where he had trained under the famous surgeon, Dr. D. Hayes Agnew. Following medical school, Dr. Huidiekoper, an avid horseman, traveled to France where he obtained a veterinary degree at Allfort. He expanded his training by visiting other veterinary schools at Lyons, Berlin, Vienna, and Italy, and thus was well versed in European methods of education. Dr. Huidiekoper was endowed with an auspicious ancestry; he was related to Edward Shippen, first mayor of Philadelphia, and to the eminent physician, Dr. Benjamin Rush. Another member of his family was Dr. William Shippen, a signer of the Declaration of Independence and one of the founders of the Medical Department of the University of Pennsylvania.

Dean Huidiekoper was joined by eleven other instructors to make up the original faculty whose composition reflected the close association with the Medical School. The make-up of the faculty also indicated that there were few individuals with veterinary degrees who were qualified to teach. Ten of the faculty members had M.D. degrees; two individuals, Dr. Alexander Glass and Dr. W. Horace Hoskins, had V.S. degrees only.

The original faculty was as follows: Rush Shippen Huidiekoper, M.D., V.S., dean of the faculty, professor of internal pathology and *pro tempore* professor of veterinary anatomy; James Tyson, M.D., professor of general pathology and morbid anatomy; Horatio C. Wood, M.D., L.L.D., professor of materia medica, pharmacy and general therapeutics; Theodore G. Wormley, M.D., L.L.D. professor of chemistry and toxicology; Harrison Allen, M.D., professor of physiology; Joseph T. Rothrock, M.D., B.S., professor of botany; Andrew J. Parker, M.D., Ph.D., professor of comparative pathology and zoology; Robert Meade Smith, M.D., professor of comparative physiology; William L. Zuill, M.D., V.S., professor of surgical pathology and obstetrics; Henry F. Fornad, M.D., demonstrator of pathology and morbid anatomy; W. Horace Hoskins, V.S., demonstrator of anatomy; Alexander Glass, V.S., demonstrator of therapeutics, materia medica and pharmacy.
Among the twenty-nine students who began classes in October 1884, one had both Ph.D and M.D. degrees and another had an M.D. degree. Nearly all of the matriculants were from Philadelphia or its immediate environs, with one being from as far away as Fellowship, N.J.

A photograph of the original class, taken at graduation, reveals a group of young men attired in formal knee-length coats, vests, round collars, and ankle boots. Most are clean shaven, but a few sported handsome mustaches, and one exhibits a flourishing beard.

The requirements for admission to this fledging class were quite simple: "Candidates for admission are required to pass a preliminary examination. Those who have received a collegiate degree, or who have a certificate from a recognized normal school covering the required subjects may enter without examination." Interestingly, these requirements were the same as those of the Medical Department.

Large animal clinic at the University of Pennsylvania in 1885. The man in the white apron appears to be Rush Shippen Hudekopen, dean of the School of Veterinary Medicine. (Michigan State University Library)
A three year course was prescribed, with annual sessions of nine months each. Originally a V.S. (Veterinary Surgeon) degree was offered, but within one year this was changed to Veterinariae Medicinae Doctor, V.M.D., so that the first graduates received this degree. There appears to be no record of why this change was made, but one may speculate that it reflected the close association of the Veterinary Department with the Medical Department. Today the University of Pennsylvania remains the only institution to grant the V.M.D. degree.

The curriculum and the method of teaching were strongly influenced by Dean Huidekoper’s experience at European schools. The course leaned heavily to subjects on pathology and contagious diseases, although there were also courses in forging and practical farriery as well as the standard basic sciences and surgery. In their second year, students attended clinics and “served as an aid” in the hospital, while in the third year “he will be placed in charge of sick animals and be required to make clinical reports and make autopsies.”

The Situation

The Veterinary Department had little to draw upon in the way of experience in veterinary medical education in the United States. Dean Huidekoper was able to use his knowledge of education in European schools to some advantage. The curriculum was organized on the best of what could be derived from French and German schools but the systems used in these institutions did not adapt well to American needs.

In 1884 there were some private veterinary schools in this country and two schools associated with universities. The most stable private schools and their dates of origin were the Montreal Veterinary College (1866), the American Veterinary College (1875), and the Chicago Veterinary College (1883). A veterinary school had been started at Iowa State College, in 1879 and another at Harvard University, in 1882. There does not appear to be a record of any substantial exchange of information between these early schools. It may be reasonably concluded that the major force in guiding the educational program of the Veterinary Department at the University of Pennsylvania was its close association with the Medical Department.

In 1884 the United States was making great strides in developing its basic industries but it was still an agricultural economy. An urgent need for trained veterinarians existed; it was estimated that there were only 500 veterinary surgeons to care for a livestock population of over 175 million and worth some two and a half billion dollars. Many of those who practiced veterinary medicine had received only perfunctory training while others simply adopted the title without any formal education. The veterinary profession was not held in high esteem; the profession had to develop high educational standards if it was to enhance its image and cope with the serious animal disease problem. The establishment of a school at the University of Pennsylvania was a major step in strengthening the veterinary profession in the United States, but this new institution was faced with some immediate problems.

Dean Huidekoper spoke of some of these problems in his inaugural address. He
lamented the fact that the school must immediately "contend with the prejudice which ignorance has attached to veterinary surgeons as a class and with the reluctance which the aspirants for this title feel, in offering to devote a long period of work to gain that which their neighbor, the farrier, acquired the day he opened a suppurating corn in a lame horse and sent it home sound, or the cow-leech took to himself when he gave some chance herb to a cow down with milk fever and she recovered, as they sometime do by the aid of nature."

From the outset there were financial problems. Dean Huidekoper cited the fact that "we have here such a piece of ground as is unobtainable in any other large city in the United States, and if we take advantage of it before it is appropriated for other needs, we will have an establishment equal to any in Europe." However, "we depend upon your generosity and that of your neighbors to complete this department." There was a need to provide "stables for at least fifty sick horses at once, which should be built with the prospect of enlarging in the future." Despite the tight financial situation, Dr. Huidekoper was mindful of the charitable and humanitarian mission of the department. He spoke of the "many animals with diseases tedious to treat, which will be abandoned by their owners, and we need a fund for such cases." He showed empathy for the poor carter who could not afford "the expense of an animal standing idle and eating the food which its work should by paying for."

In 1884 the University of Pennsylvania was already 144 years old, having its origin in a "Charity School" established in 1740 with the help of Benjamin Franklin. The institution had survived some tumultuous times in the shaping of this country the Revolutionary War, the Declaration of Independence, the framing of the Constitution, and the disastrous war of 1812, followed by the Civil War.

It would require some years for the Veterinary Department to mature and to assume its place as an integral part of one of the great biomedical centers of the world. Its maturing would be marked by peaks and valleys, but always there would be a sense of progression towards its ultimate destiny—a world leader in veterinary and comparative medical science.