AUSTRALIAN VETERINARY HISTORY RECORD

MARCH 2001 Number 30

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Editor: Dr P.J. Mylrea, 13 Sunset Avenue, Camden NSW 2570.

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ANNUAL CONFERENCE: Melbourne May 2001

Trevor Faragher has advised that arrangements for the forthcoming meeting have been finalised. The details are as follows:

Sunday 13 May
1.30 pm J Auty. *1901 – the revoluntary year*
2.15 pm J Fisher. *Veterinary medicine at the University of Utrecht – past, present and future*
3.00 pm Afternoon tea
3.30 pm P Macwhither. *Yamerboke's dogs, a reflection on the human animal bond in a nineteenth century Aboriginal community*
4.15 pm Trevor Faragher. *Blowflies in NSW*
5 pm Annual General Meeting
6.30 pm AVA 'Welcome to Melbourne' cocktails
8.00 pm AVHS Dinner
At 4.00 pm there will be an AVA church service in St Paul's Cathedral

Monday 14 May
8.30 am I Parsonson. *Graham Mitchell – pioneer veterinarian*
9.15 am R Taylor *Herbert Robert Seddon DVSc – a great veterinarian*
10.00 am Morning Tea
10.30 am Plenary Opening Ceremony and AVA Awards Presentation with Dr peter Doherty
12.30 pm Lunch in Industry Exhibit
1.30 pm Field trip to Historical Museum in Bundoora Park

PRESIDENT REPORT: Keith Baker

To stimulate an interest in the history of the veterinary profession and veterinary science it was moved at the last AGM in Sydney that our Society conduct a national essay contest for veterinary students in some aspects of veterinary history.

This project is now ready to be launched. Novartis Animal Health have agreed to give a thousand dollars, $500 as first prize and $500 for expenses to bring the student to our annual conference in 2002 to present his /her paper.

The subject this year will be "Some Aspects of the Veterinary History of Parasitology in Australia.

The World Veterinary History Association is preparing a worldwide bibliography of prominent veterinarians. Dr. R. Taylor is at present finalising a list of fourteen Australian veterinarians who have contributed most to the advancement of veterinary science in Australia, for inclusion in this publication.

The CEO of the "Longreach Stockman's Hall of Fame" has now replied favourably to our suggestion that the veterinary contribution to the pastoral industries in Australia, be appropriately acknowledged in this "Hall of Fame". Since then Byran Woolcock has been negotiating on behalf of the AVA with the CEO and the consultant curator concerning the design of an appropriate display unit.

This is my third year as president of our Society and I will not be nominating again for this position at our coming AGM in Melbourne in May. I am therefore hoping that at this conference that somebody will be prepared to take up this office. It is not an onerous position but having been in NSW since the AVHS's inception it is now time for the executive positions be taken up by another State.

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To help the setup of our display unit in the "Longreach Stockman's Hall of Fame", the AVA is seeking assistance in locating film and video material suitable for conversion to DVD. If you think you can help in this search, you can contact Bryan Woolcock on (07) 3378 4227 or woolco@smartchat.net.au.

HISTORICAL ARTICLES

'NEW AUSTRALIAN' VETERINARIANS AND THE VETERINARY SURGEONS BOARD OF NSW 1923-1953:

P.J. Mylrea, 13 Sunset Avenue, Camden NSW 2570.

After World War II overseas veterinary graduates came to Australia. Their arrival posed questions for the registration authorities and the NSW response is discussed in this article.

The NSW Veterinary Surgeons Act of 1923 defined two classes of veterinary graduates who could be registered as veterinary surgeons. The first group consisted of graduates of Australian veterinary schools and those with Membership of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons. The second eligible group were graduates from other veterinary schools which could be prescribed if their standards were equivalent to those of Sydney.

This system was satisfactory for about the first fourteen years. Then enquiries began to be received from European veterinarians wishing to know whether they could register in New South Wales. Two such enquiries were received in 1937, two in 1938 and five in 1939. They came from Hungary, Poland, Czechoslovakia and Germany. No doubt these were from veterinarians wishing to leave Europe for political reasons and in the Board's records they are referred to as 'refugee' veterinarians.

Such enquiries began to put pressure on the boards of the different States especially, Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland. At their meeting on 12 July 1938 New South Wales defined their approach. It was based on reciprocity. This had two parts. First the country and its veterinary schools had to show that their training was equal to that at Sydney University and secondly these countries had to promise to accept Australian graduates for registration in their country. An alternative way to registration was for the graduate to obtain his MRCVS in which case he would be acceptable in New South Wales. This seemed to be a ploy to transfer responsibility to another organisation, viz., the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons. The same policy. operated in Victoria and Queensland. In New South Wales nothing happened and no refugee veterinarians were registered up to 1939.

The matter dropped from the scene during the War years but emerged as a much larger issue after 1945. All States were affected and the Victorian Board requested a meeting of all Boards to discuss the topic of the registration of 'foreign' veterinarians. (Such people were now called 'New Australians' not 'refugees'). The meeting was held in February 1947. New South Wales did not attend but advised that they adhered to their concept of reciprocity as outlined in 1938. The Board also considered that 'the wholesale registration of foreign graduates as unnecessary and unwarranted.' While over supply of veterinarians was not stated specifically as a reason for their attitude this might have been a consideration as it was mentioned twice in the Minutes. Professor Gunn from the Sydney Veterinary School was President of the Board at that time. He would have been fully aware of the postwar undergraduate population stated to number 500. The other members of the Board at that time were H.M. Armstrong, W.F. Hilder, E.H. Davis and E.N. Larkin. The same members were reappointed to the Board for the following term of office from 1 January 1948 to 31 December 1950. This continuity is of some relevance considering what was to happen in the future.

In July 1947 the New South Wales Board considered the proceedings of the February meeting of the other boards. These set out the usual conditions for registration of foreign veterinarians. However there was now a new recommendation. Foreign veterinarians who attended and passed examinations for the final three years of the veterinary course at Sydney were able to graduate with a B.V.Sc. and thus would be eligible for registration.

The conditions were further modified after a conference of all the Boards on 12 April 1948. Foreign graduates might be registered after 'they had received a certificate of competency in Veterinary Science issued after examination by the University of Sydney and equivalent to the degree of B.V.Sc. of that University' and it may be necessary for 'the applicant to undergo a course of training before submitting himself for examination.' [In all the papers reviewed it was assumed that there would be only male applicants!]This proposal was made to overcome the difficulty of foreign graduates having to spend three years at Sydney University. The University was approached but they rejected the proposal (Minutes of 28 March and 2 May 1949). This closed such an option for the NSW and other Australian Boards.

As matters stood in 1949 the path to registration for foreign veterinarians was very narrow. The only overseas university recognised was that of Michigan (to allow registration of Dr Loomis of the Pathology Department, Sydney Veterinary School). and the suggestion that the University of Sydney issue some form of certificate of competency had been rejected by the University. Thus the only path left was to attend Sydney University for three years, a very onerous commitment .

The problem of unregistered foreign veterinarians practising veterinary science emerged as a major difficulty for the Board in April 1950. The Kiama Animal Health Service was conducted by dairying organisations on the South Coast of NSW. It employed two Australian registered veterinarians N. Chittick and D. Lamond. The

Service also employed George Borys a European trained veterinarian. Chittick and Lamond raised with the Board their legal position in working with an unregistered veterinarian. This lead to the problem of defining what procedures were or were not covered by the term 'practice of veterinary science.' In the event Chittick and Lamond resigned but Borys stayed on. In May 1950 George Borys applied for registration and in the following month Theodosius Tomashek another foreign veterinarian working for the Service applied for registration. Both applications were rejected without reasons being recorded in the Minutes.

The matter then became political. In September and October 1950 the Opposition in both the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly raised the question of the registration of foreign veterinarians and cited Dr Borys as an example. The Government and more specifically the Hon E.H. Graham, Minister of Agriculture responded. The Minister stated that 'The Board has been most dogmatic in its attitude towards the registration of alien veterinary surgeons' and further on said that the Board 'is wholly unsympathetic to foreign-born veterinarians.'

In December 1950 the President of the Board, Professor Gunn, met with the Minister. At the meeting of the Board on 28 December Professor Gunn reported on the meeting but no details are recorded in the Minutes. However Professor Gunn tabled a letter he had written to the Minister. In this he reiterated the usual requirement for the recognition of overseas veterinary schools and recounted how the Board had unsuccessfully approached the University of Sydney for training and examinations. The letter did not suggest any alternatives.

This was the last meeting of this Board. It so happened that its three year term concluded on 31 December and a new Board took over from January 1951. There was a total change in the personnel of the Board. The new Board consisted of W.L. Hindmarsh (President), T.G. Hungerford, A.F. Webster, B.H. Pottie, F.J. Madden. Such a

total change of membership did not follow precedents. Because of these changes they took the unusual step, at their first meeting on 12 February 1951, of recording that the minutes of the meeting of 28 December 1950 'were accepted as a record of proceedings of the last meeting without necessarily confirming them as correct.'

The Minister's version of events was given to the Legislative Assembly on 26 September 1951

> I did everything humanly possible to persuade members of the board to examine the position of qualified foreign veterinarians who may be able to practise and assist the stock industries of this State but they flatly refused to do anything about it. I then asked what amendments the board considered would be necessary to enable foreign veterinarians to be registered, but I received no assistance. When the term of that board expired at the end of last year, I exercised my prerogative as Minister and sacked every member of it. I appointed an entirely new board of qualified men who have since examined the Act, and supplied me with the information that will enable me to bring down amending legislation for the registration of foreign veterinary surgeons.

In contrast there are no written records of the Board's interaction with the Minister in 1950 apart from Professor Gunn's letter. It seems that Professor Gunn was not accompanied by other members of the Board when he met the Minister. It would have been interesting to have been a fly on the wall when the two met because both were men with strong wills.

The new Board made recommendations for changes to the Act and in March 1952 the amending Bill was debated comprehensively in both Chambers and passed. There were four requirements set out in the new Act to allow registration of foreign veterinarians. First they had to have had adequate training but this could be in any country. Second the training was such as to allowed them to practise

veterinary science in that country. Thirdly they had to be resident in Australia for twelve months. The fourth condition was that they had passed a prescribed examination. The regulations under the Act set out the conditions for the examination. There were to be three examiners and the examination was to cover veterinary medicine, veterinary surgery, veterinary obstetrics, veterinary parasitology and legislation relating to the practice of veterinary science.

The first examination for foreign graduates was held on 15 September 1952. It was conducted by the NSW Department of Agriculture on behalf of the Board. The examiners were Dr H.R. Carne of the University of Sydney, Dr R.N. Miller from the Queensland Veterinary School and V.C. Cole a private practitioner. Seven veterinarians sat for the examination and all passed. These were J.A. Coenraad, M. Lindtner, S. Hunt, A. Medenis ,J. Grinsbergs, J. Ropert and E. Baranowsky. All seven attended the Board meeting in November 1952 and were congratulated by the President and presented with their Certificates of Registration.

The next examination for foreign graduates was held in September 1953. Prior to this a course of instruction on Australian aspects of veterinary science was given by Dr H.G. Belschner, T.G. Hungerford and N.K. Golding. Five examinees attended this course. Eleven persons sat for the exam, nine from NSW and two from Tasmania. Six were successful: G. Borys, J. Nubel, A.A. Thuillier, F.P. Szeibert, E. Teedla and K.V. Pesle. They were presented with their Certificates of Registration at a Board meeting on 30 November 1953. The last meeting of this Board was held on 21 December 1953.

It is now 50 years since these events occurred and it is of interest to review the attitudes and actions of the various parties involved. There are a number of factors which determined the course of events and especially the actions of the Board up to December 1950. Perhaps Professor Gunn and his Board did not appreciate the social changes that were taking place with the arrival of large numbers of

'New Australians'. Among these were veterinarians trained in European veterinary schools such as Hannover, Budapest and Leipzig which had long standing histories of veterinary education. The Board also failed to recognise the changes in the political climate. Judged by the Parliamentary records there was bipartisan support for changes to allow registration of overseas veterinarians in September 1950 and this support continued until the new Veterinary Surgeons Act was passed in 1952. Given that the Board was responsible to Parliament through the Minister of Agriculture the Board should have been aware of the changes in the mood of Parliament irrespective of their own thoughts.

This is a convenient date to finish reviewing the Board's activities. However the question of the registration of overseas graduates (overseas replaced foreign in the terminology) continued into the future. The recounting of subsequent developments will be left to others.

Sources

Most of the information in this paper was obtained from the 1923-1953 Minutes of the Veterinary Surgeons Board of New South Wales which are now held by State Records New South Wales, Kingswood.

John Beardwood used the same sources in his history of the Veterinary Surgeons Board, 1923-1975, copies of which are now located at the State Records of NSW and the Mitchell Library. His work covered the whole range of Board matters and touched on some of the matters discussed in this paper.

The Parliamentary information was obtained from New South Wales Parliamentary Debates Session 1950-1951-1952.

A VETERINARY ENTREPRENEUR IN LATE COLONIAL AUSTRALIA.

John Fisher and George McFarlane. Department of Economics, University of Newcastle, Callaghan NSW 2308

[This article has been subjected to peer review.]

Historical research on the veterinary profession has focused on practitioners in the public sector. Many biographical studies have appeared of veterinarians involved in the advance of the science, who contributed to the development of veterinary education and who were active in public campaigns in the area of animal health. The recognition is appropriate. The fact remains, however, that the great majority of veterinarians, in the English-speaking world at least, have been private practitioners throughout the profession's history. Such professionals may at times have played a public role, but this has usually been incidental to their private careers in the maintenance of animal health. This paper is devoted to the career of one such individual in Australia.

John Pottie played a outstanding part in public campaigns to control and eradicate animal diseases. His career, however, is most noteworthy as an entrepreneur in veterinary medicine. Pottie used his professional knowledge and expertise to launch a major enterprise, selling products that he had developed to meet the general demand for remedies for the ailments of domesticated animals. An account of his career is therefore of interest to veterinary and business historians alike. This is especially so as his training lay in what might be termed the pre-scientific era of the profession's history, while his business success, as is demonstrated below, arose out of his ability to adapt traditional veterinary remedies to a new age and a new market.

Background

John Pottie's origins and education reflect those of many nineteenth century British entrepreneurs.[i] A Lowlands Scot, a Presbyterian and the son of a tradesman, after an early education in the Scottish school system of the time, he then trained as a specialist professional in order to seek his fortune outside of Scotland. Born in the small town of Renfrew in *circa* 1832, his father was a farrier and veterinary surgeon and reared his son in the same trades. John Pottie then attended the Edinburgh Veterinary College, gaining the certificate of the Highland and Agricultural Society in 1858. A year later, he contracted to provide veterinary care to a consignment of horses bound for Australia.[ii] Once there, in a region of opportunity for Scots second only to North America, he decided to stay and seek his fortune. The next forty years saw him realise this ambition; his enterprise was a success. John Pottie founded a firm that has survived to the present day, still marketing products that originated in his own veterinary remedies.

There were further distinctive features to John Pottie's story which make his achievement the more remarkable. In the first place, he was a member of a young profession, still struggling for recognition in the face of the doubtful science on which it was based and the poor quality of the training offered at its leading institutions in Britain.[iii] Secondly, nineteenth-century Australia was not, despite the pre-eminent importance of livestock to its economy, an obvious region of opportunity for veterinary surgeons. However, a particular conjunction of events provided Pottie with the opportunity to launch a distinguished career in the Australian colonies.

John Pottie and the Onset of Contagious Bovine Pleuro-Pneumonia in Australia

Pottie arrived in Melbourne a year after the introduction of contagious bovine pleuro-pneumonia (CBPP), a contagious cattle disease attended by high mortality and then being widely disseminated around the world.[iv] In Melbourne, Pottie diagnosed the disease, recommending the immediate slaughter of affected

animals and the isolation of those properties on which they had been found. Speaking at a meeting of stockowners, Pottie also called for a system of health certificates for imported stock,[v] a measure which, if it had been in place, might have prevented the introduction of CBPP. In 1859, however, it was already too late to prevent the dissemination of the disease throughout Victoria, and Pottie was to meet it again on completing his journey in Sydney.

Having delivered his consignment of horses safely, Pottie established a veterinary practice in Sydney in 1860. The next year, he was made a member of a commission established by the New South Wales government to investigate CBPP and to recommend how it could be met after it had crossed the Murray. Pottie's actions on this commission, his reports, experiments and relationships with the other commissioners, were of major significance for his future career.

As in Victoria, by the time that Pottie met the disease on the Murray there was no hope, as his reports made clear,[vi] of stemming its advance. Even so, his work there was important, not least in developing a practical remedy that helped to mitigate its worst effects. Pottie conducted a series of experiments with what was known as `tail inoculation'.[vii] This involved taking matter from the lungs of diseased stock and injecting it into the tails of other cattle. First developed as a preventative measure against CBPP by a Professor Willems in Belgium in 1852, British attempts to replicate his work had been unsuccessful. The British veterinary establishment had therefore decided that inoculation had no value,[viii] and Pottie's willingness to ignore their dictates demonstrated qualities of intellectual curiosity and pragmatic independence that were to be salient features in his later career.[ix]

Pottie's work on CBPP demonstrated his capabilities to the general public and the government. They also enabled the forging of contacts with influential figures of great value for a new migrant. Of the latter, perhaps the most important was Alexander Bruce, who had been in charge of operations against CBPP at the Murray and who became Chief Inspector of Stock in New South Wales in 1864. Pottie himself was appointed a Cattle Inspector in 1862 and then

Sheep Inspector in 1863 in Sydney, at a salary of £200 for both posts (a useful supplement to income in a new business).[x] He resigned these positions in 1864, presumably because his growing private practice absorbed too much of his time. Nevertheless, the connection with Bruce and what became known as the Stock Branch was maintained, with Pottie acting as consulting veterinary surgeon for many years.

Pottie's chief duties were the inspection of imported stock, in which capacity he played a part in the FMD (foot-and-mouth disease) scares of 1871.[xi] His official position had a much greater significance for his career in private business, however, as will be seen below. The practice of inoculation became a valuable income source for Pottie and other veterinary surgeons, while Pottie frequently drew attention to his earlier public contribution and to his continuing official positions in his product marketing. These proved a valuable asset in the face of the major market constraints he faced in launching first his veterinary practice and then his veterinary products business.

The Australian Market for Veterinary Services

The critical importance of livestock to the colonial economies of Australia did not translate into a major field of opportunity for veterinary surgeons. The relative absence of disease threats in the distinctive Australian environment was one factor but, more importantly, the rapid growth of livestock numbers in extensive production systems meant a low unit value of livestock.[xii] The combination exacerbated the problem faced by British veterinarians in the nineteenth century – that owners were reluctant to pay for professional veterinary care for their animals, apart from their relatively valuable horses. As in Britain, the overwhelming location of veterinary practices in Australia was in the cities. Veterinary professionals serviced the needs of coaching and transport services together with those of a few affluent individuals. In fact in Australia the problem for veterinary surgeons in such a small community was much greater.

John Stewart, one of the earliest, if not the earliest qualified professional to migrate to Australia, had reported on the poor

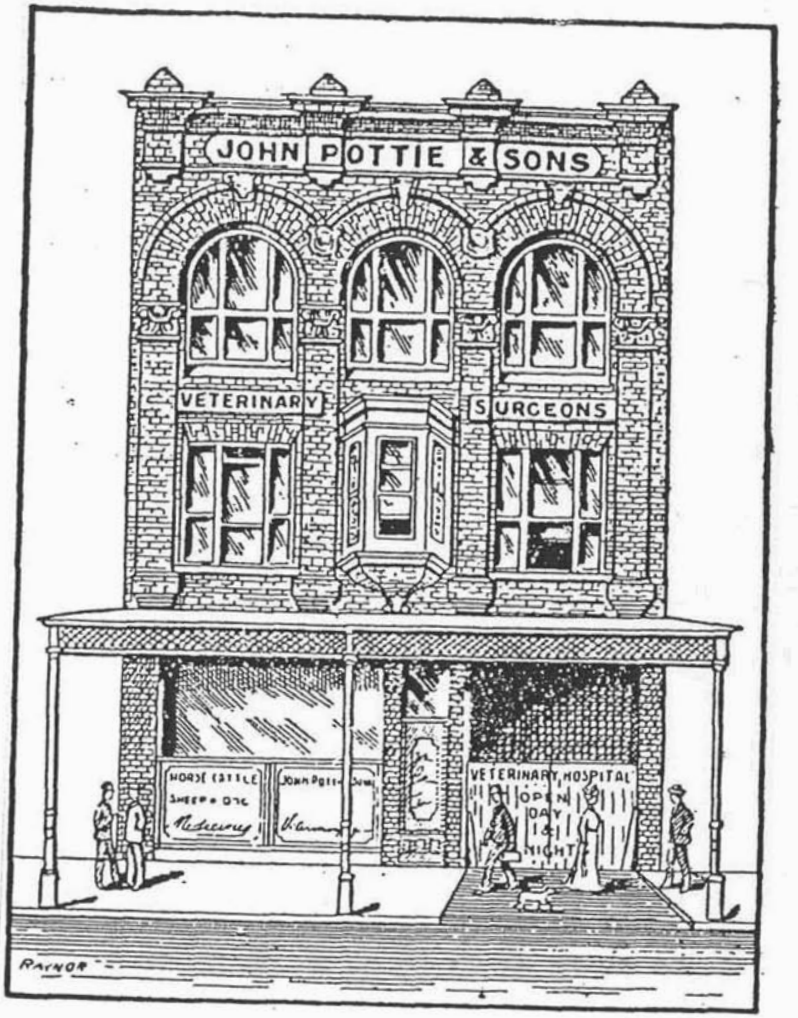
prospects in Sydney in the 1840's and had eventually given up his practice for more remunerative business.[xiii] Despite the rapid growth and prosperity of the colonies as a whole in the nineteenth century, many if not most of the qualified veterinary surgeons who migrated to Australia did the same. Personal services were not required in the pastoral areas,while in the cities there was fierce competition from unqualified veterinary surgeons and, at the lower end of the market, from farriers and blacksmiths.

This was the situation at the time that John Pottie established his veterinary practice, first at Martyn's Horse Bazaar on Pitt Street, then on the corner of Elizabeth and Bathurst Streets in 1861. His main qualified rival at the time was Joseph Armstrong, whose spate of advertisements in the *Sydney Herald* in 1862 may have been a response to the new arrival.[xiv] Pottie advertised himself as shoeing horses 'on the newest and most scientific principles' and, while the high profile he had won during the CBPP episode would have enhanced his prospects, his success must also have reflected the quality of service offered. Certainly, his practice grew, and he later moved to more spacious premises in Castlereagh Street, Redfern. This was not just because of the expansion of his normal business; the location also signified a new direction to the enterprise.

Pottie was not content merely to provide the traditional form of veterinary services; his real significance is that he used his practice as a base to move into markets beyond the urban equine sector. In fact, he sought to supply whole livestock market with a diverse range of products, some of which had traditional origins that he adapted successfully to Australian conditions.

John Pottie and the British tradition of animal health care

Stockowners, either in Britain or Australia, might not be willing or able to pay for private professional veterinary services for most of their stock but they still had an evident interest in maintaining the health of their livestock. In Britain, poor health or condition in livestock had traditionally been met by a variety of recipes and cures that evolved out of long experience. Some



Perhaps the building in Castlereagh Street, Redfern mentioned in the text.

medications were common knowledge: for example, the use of salt to combat liver fluke or various arsenic and turpentine dressings against scab. There was also an ancient tradition of secret remedies and nostrums for livestock ailments, a tradition that, as stockowners became literate, gave rise to manuals of advice on livestock care and treatment. One of the earliest, and certainly the most famous, was Gervase Markham (1568-1637), whose prolific output included such titles as *The Complete Farrier*. In this work, and in his more famous *The Complete Husbandman*, he claimed that every livestock disease could be treated by means of the twelve remedies he outlined.[xv]

Markham's work was copied, plagiarised and added to by many others over the next two centuries, the most successful follower being Francis Clater in the late eighteenth century. His most famous work, *Every Man His Own Farrier*, first published in 1783, had gone through 28 editions by 1848 and was translated into several European languages.[xvi] Clater claimed that his manual offered `receipts (*sic*) in language he (the horseowner) can understand', and, as Sir Frederick Smith disparagingly remarked, it was evidently intended to sell his extensive stock of patent medicines.[xvii] It was also evidently very popular and, from the late eighteenth century, professional veterinarians participated in and even appropriated the tradition. The 1848 edition of *Every Man His Own Farrier* was produced by William Youatt and, according to Smith[xviii] at least, bore no resemblance to Clater's original work.

Youatt was something of a hero for Smith, as his approach to animal care was both humane and scientific. Until the late nineteenth century, however, these were not always notable characteristics of the veterinary profession. Rather, its colleges and their graduates were reluctant to part with the secrets of their *materia medica*, seeing these as a key basis for any competitive advantage they possessed over unqualified practitioners.[xix] Firing, bloodletting and blistering continued to figure strongly among their remedies for horse ailments while they also made up their own specific medications for sale to stockowners.

Such a tradition of animal care and treatment continued into the onset of the age of scientifically-based medication, in Australia

as elsewhere. Joseph Armstrong, Pottie's early competitor in Sydney, advertised his 'Gripe or Colic Mixture' along with glowing testimonials in the 1860's.[xx] Pottie's own original product range certainly lay firmly within this tradition. The title of his major work on horse care, '*Every Man His Own Farrier*,'[xxi] had the most obvious of antecedents. It too, was an aid to the use and therefore the sale of his ointments and medicines, the therapeutic qualities of which were explained in a manner which 'makes things exceedingly simple for country people'. As he explained:

> I find that for all practical purposes, nearly all diseases of animals may be divided into Four Classes. That is to say, my Colic Drink will do for all Stomach, Bowel, Kidney, Bladder and Liver diseases. My Cough Medicine for all Throat, Lung and Chest diseases. My Blood Tonic for all Blood, Skin, Leg and Feet diseases. And my Fever Drink for all Inflammatory diseases.[xxii]

The echoes of Clater are evident. Pottie's product development built on an established model that had already arrived in Australia. It appears also in his advertisements for his supplementary feeds. Commercial preparations, or condiments such as malt, had become popular in Britain in the mid-nineteenth century (although the last soon fell into disrepute). Quantities of one such heavily-advertised preparation, Thorley's Food, were imported into New South Wales up to the early 1860's on a scale large enough to warrant its own entry as an import in the *Statistical Registers*. However, John Pottie can fairly be claimed to be an innovator in several important respects.

John Pottie as Innovator

The business that had become Pottie & Sons by the end of the century supplied a wide range of ointments and medicines,

ASTRINGENT EYE LOTION.
For all Affections of the Eye, Scum, &c.
Price, 3/- per bottle

IODINE LINIMENT.
For Enlarged Joints and Splints in Racehorses and Hunters.
Price, 3/- per bottle

NEWMARKET BLISTER.
The strongest and best blistering Ointment.
Price, 3/- per pot

GOLDEN BLISTER.
Especially adapted for the removal of Splints and all Bone Enlargements.
Price, 3/- per pot

FLY BLISTER.
Recommended for Swollen or Calloused Legs, Tumors, Strains, &c.
Price, 3/- per pot

CONDITION POWDERS, WORM POWDERS, URINE POWDERS, COUGH POWDERS.
Made up in Packets containing 12 Powders, being a course for one horse.
Price, 3/- per packet

ANTISEPTIC POWDER.
A wonderful Healing Powder.
Price, 4/- per packet

RACEHORSE POWDERS.
To brighten and Freshen Horses in Training, and cures Chronic Cough.
Price, 4/- per packet

STOMACH POWDER.
For Loss of Appetite in Horses and Cattle.
Price, 4/- per packet

CATTLE POWDER.
Makes the best and most efficacious Laxative Drench for Cows.
Should be always given before and after Calving.
Price, 3/- per packet

PHYSIC BALL, CONDITION BALL, URINE BALL.
Price, 1/6 each

WORM BALL.
Price, 1/6 each

A page from one of Pottie's catalogues.

supplementary feeds and pamphlets and books of advice on animal care to a market that extended well beyond that covered by any comparable veterinarian individual or firm, either in Britain or Australia. By the late 1880's, Pottie had established a network of local agents, primarily country storekeepers, that gave him a comprehensive coverage of the entire colony of New South Wales, with further contacts beyond this and even overseas in New Zealand and South America. No other veterinarian, in either Britain or Australia, had ever attempted to reach such a huge spatial market, the key to which was the growth of the rail system in New South Wales.[xxiii] Pottie's headquarters was close to the freightyards in Redfern and the combination of the railway and telegraph enabled him to supply his clients with a speed previously unattainable. But what really marks Pottie's special quality as an entrepreneur was the nature of what he supplied.

What Pottie was marketing amounted to a coherent veterinary package in which the various products complemented each other. He promoted the quality of his products through emphasis on his status as a qualified veterinarian, together with mention of the various public positions he held, and reinforced his message on the coherence of his package by offering discounts on his pamphlets according to the amount of medicine purchased. The package could be used by any stockowner and this was without prejudice to his fellow-practitioners because, in the market he was appealing to, they were hardly present. However, and although he gently mocked the manner in which 'scientific men can mystify an exceedingly simple fact', his product range was also modified over time to take account of scientific knowledge and specific Australian conditions.

The aftermath of Pottie's initial involvement in the struggle against CBPP provides an example of such themes. As he put it, 'I have claims to speak on this subject which no other man has'. The growing popularity of tail inoculation, even if only as a private measure rather than as part of a publicly-funded control programme, gave Pottie an important opening for business, one that he took

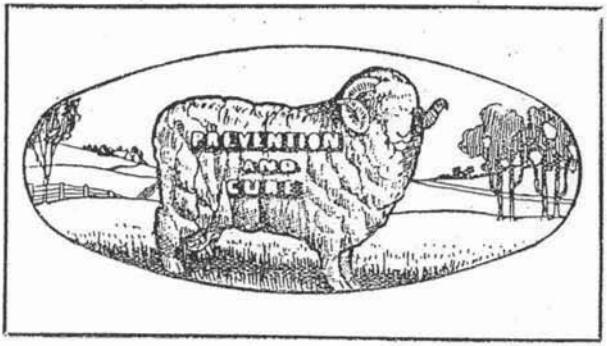
readily. At the most basic level, stockowners could inoculate their own cattle themselves with matter taken from a diseased animal. However, the process was risky with results that were worse than merely the loss of the tail. A superior mode, developed in the 1860's, was to subject such matter, which was referred to as the 'virus', to a filtration process and eliminate unwanted materials.[xxiv] The resulting liquid could then be stored for repeated use. Pottie followed the lead of other veterinary surgeons in supplying bottles or jars of the `virus'; by the 1880's he was advertising 'Pottie's Inoculating Virus' which, he claimed, was different and superior to 'the Lung Virus'. Stockowners should also use his patent needles and, while he claimed that 'there are no dangerous swellings' from the use of his virus, if these occurred, then they should employ his 'Black Oils'. As with other ailments, they could acquire a complete package of treatment and care.

Pottie's assertion that his 'Inoculating Virus' was 'valuable for any form of Germ Disease' provides a reminder that he was practicing in the era when 'germ theory' was still being developed and that the nature of infection was still imperfectly understood. However, it was also an era when the work of Pasteur and Koch was leading to a better understanding of disease pathology and of the basis for meeting these. Vaccination against anthrax and rabies was the most famous of the advances made. However, understanding of other ailments also improved. Pottie's ability to develop new products, on the basis of such advances was one element in his ability to withstand the devastating depression of the 1890's, when sheep numbers in New South Wales fell from 180 to 120 million.

Among these were remedies for the internal infestations of sheep parasites. The extent of economic loss due to the various sheep 'worms' became recognised in the latter part of the nineteenth century, and various traditional 'drenches' based on arsenic and turpentine became refined to meet the problem. Pottie could supply a set of drenches – Lung, Lung and Tape, Young Tape, Tape and Intestinal and Stomach – guaranteed to meet any variation of the problem under 'Pottie's System of Treatment'. Pottie certainly believed in his treatment, lobbying the colonial government on

Pottie's

Sheep Drenches



John Pottie & Sons

Veterinary Surgeons

Castlereagh Street :: Redfern

An example of Pottie's involvement with the sheep industry.

behalf of his drenches. According to his pamphlet on the subject, the firm had 'educated a staff of scientists', whose work 'has stemmed the deadly losses from parasitical diseases'; 'our past successes clearly demonstrate the possibility of exterminating all parasitical diseases, and probably other diseases as well'. This was, of course, hyperbole; such diseases remain a source of constant losses today. Nevertheless, it is evident that Pottie believed his products could make a difference, one that he calculated, claiming a premium for sheep sold under certification of having undergone his treatment, to the fortunes of pastoralists. An official survey of various remedies also confirmed that his were among the most useful of the remedies available.[xxv]

Conclusion

John Pottie died in 1908 but the firm he founded lived and still lives on, still offering much the same range of veterinary products that he developed. His career is of interest in part in that his products and practice derive from a British veterinary tradition stretching back centuries. His great achievement was to take the best of that tradition and adapt it to the very different conditions of the Australian continent in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in the context of the revolution in medical science then taking place. The continuing existence of the enterprise he founded is sufficient testimony to the success of his vision.

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