



CHARLES LOUIS DAVIS, D.V.M. 1897 - 1970

A BIOGRAPHY

by
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"It is not the critic who counts, not the man who points out how strong men stumbled, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena; whose face is marked by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs and comes short again and again; who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions, and spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best, knows in the end the triumph of high achievement and who, at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither victory nor defeat." Theodore Roosevelt

Charles Louis Davis was born in New York City on December 26, 1897. When he was 3 years old his family moved to Denver, Colorado, upon the recommendation of the family physician, for it was suspected that his father, Isaac, had tuberculosis. There Mr. Davis established a small grocery store. Charlie was one of 10 original children and the entire family lived in the back of the store. As a small boy, he sold newspapers on the street after school and shined shoes to help support the family, giving every penny to his mother, Ida. When 9 or 10 years old, he was run over by a milk delivery wagon while selling newspapers and his hip was broken. The hip never mended properly, leaving him with a characteristic walk.

In 1916, Charlie was graduated from West High School in Denver and entered Colorado A & M College (now Colorado State University) at Fort Collins. Initially, he studied forestry but later transferred to the School of Veterinary Medicine. He managed to serve for a brief interval during World War I in the United States Cavalry, returning to college shortly after his discharge from the army. While in college, Charlie supported himself without family assistance. He met William H. Feldman, the student director of the college band, who used him frequently as a xylophone soloist. Charlie, an excellent snare drummer, also organized his own dance band in which Feldman frequently played. In addition, he earned money by washing dishes, painting fences, and waiting on tables in the dormitory and fraternity houses. He found time to engage in social activities and became the head cheerleader at Colorado State, a charter member of Alpha Tau Omega fraternity, and president of his senior class. He also engaged in athletics and was a member of the college baseball and boxing teams. In fact, his daughter Estelle, reminisces that

his nose was broken while boxing in college and that his friends at college gave him the nickname of "Chuck".

While at college, in addition to working, engaging in student politics, and athletics, Chuck found time to pursue a romantic interest in Miss Lillian Leah Brunstein, a resident of Fort Collins. While he attended Colorado State, Lillian attended the Boston Conservatory of Music, studying the violin. Chuck received the degree of Doctor of Veterinary Medicine from Colorado State in 1921. In 1923, on June 6th, Dr. Davis and Miss Brunstein eloped.

Dr. Davis joined the United States Bureau of Animal Industry in 1922. From 1922 to 1924, he served in Wisconsin and Michigan on programs for the eradication of tuberculosis. This experience, coupled with the fact that his family had moved to Colorado because his father supposedly had tuberculosis, probably accounts for his life-long interest in the pathology of this disease.

In 1924, he returned to Denver from Michigan and served as a federal meat inspector there until 1932. It was while he was on the meat inspection detail in Denver that he became interested in neoplasms of domesticated animals, particularly animals that were being slaughtered in government-supervised establishments. During this period he forwarded several valuable specimens to his college friend, Dr. William Feldman, which the latter used to illustrate his now famous book on animal neoplasms, *Neoplasms of Domesticated Animals* (W.B. Saunders Co., Philadelphia 1932). His first journal article appeared in the *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association* while he was serving on meat-inspection duty and indicates that his active interest in veterinary pathology was stimulated by his observation of gross lesions in animals on the "killing floor" of the packing houses. I have heard him frequently remark that the packing house was an excellent place in which to learn gross pathology. In later years he, and his colleagues in the United States Department of Agriculture in Denver, shared their wealth of experience in gross pathology with the students of the Veterinary College at Colorado State University. They would collect and freeze gross pathologic specimens for a period of a year at the packing houses and then each spring they would transport these specimens to the Veterinary College at Fort Collins. The treatment facilities of the large animal clinic were converted into a museum of pathology for the day. The students were afforded the opportunity to examine and study specimens which were representative of diseases that they were unlikely to see in such quantity and diversity during their academic studies. The veterinarians of the United States Department of Agriculture demonstrated the specimens to the students in the morning; in the afternoon, Dr. Davis would present his now famous lecture on granulomatous diseases of domestic animals. His lectures were illustrated with color photographs of gross lesions and photomicrographs from the same lesions. In 1958, I had the pleasure of accompanying Dr. Davis and Dr. Wayne Anderson on what was to be one of the last of these annual affairs at Fort Collins. Dr. Davis, as a lecturer in pathology, was a spellbinder for students and faculty alike.

In 1932, Dr. Davis became the assistant to Dr. George W. Stiles in the laboratories of the Pathology Division of the United States Bureau of Animal Industry in Denver. In 1933, Dr. Davis was sent by the Bureau to the laboratory of Dr. L. Enos Day in Chicago, Illinois. There for a brief period of time with Dr. Day he received intensive training in animal pathology, and subsequently returned to the laboratory in Denver. He was associated with Dr. Stiles at the

Denver laboratory until 1950, with the exception of the time spent in the Army Veterinary Corps during World War II. At the end of the war, he returned to the Bureau's pathology laboratories in Denver, where in 1950 he became the Director of the Animal Disease and Research Laboratories, Bureau of Animal Industry, United States Department of Agriculture. He served in this capacity until 1956, when he was transferred to Beltsville, Maryland, to participate in the planning of the National Animal Disease Laboratory which was later established at Ames, Iowa.

During his long tenure with the pathology laboratories of the U.S. Bureau of Animal Industry, Dr. Davis was engaged in the diagnosis of diseases of food-producing and other domesticated animals and research in the pathology of animal diseases. He contributed frequently to the veterinary literature during this period. In addition, he developed a watch-glass museum of specimens of gross pathology which evoked admiring comment from the numerous visitors to the laboratory in Denver. Dr. Feldman reminisces, "To emphasize his interest in animal diseases, particularly in the meat-producing animals, while he was at the laboratory in West Denver, he conceived and proceeded to establish a most commendable museum collection, in which many of the ailments of animals were displayed". In August of 1963, Dr. William S. Monlux, Assistant Director for Research, National Animal Disease Laboratory, Ames, Iowa, went to Denver. He sorted and packed the pathologic collection assembled there, loaded it on trucks, and shipped the materials to the laboratory at Ames. At the present time, Dr. Davis' watch-glass collection of museum specimens is on display at the National Animal Disease Laboratory. His histopathologic collection, with its supporting records, is also stored there. Dr. Monlux has summarized the materials in this unusual collection in the form of an Atlas of Meat Inspection Pathology being published by the U.S. Government Printing Office.

Dr. Davis was an avid photographer of gross and microscopic specimens of animal pathology and took many 35mm photographs of the specimens submitted to his laboratory in Denver. These photographs were reproduced by the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology, Washington, D.C. in 1956 and are available for loan from the American Registry of Veterinary Pathology. Dr. Davis' laboratory also made copies of his photographs available at film cost to educational institutions and many of the departments of pathology at the veterinary schools in the United States have within their collection the Denver series of photographs of gross pathology.

Dr. Davis was commissioned in the Veterinary Corps, United States Army Reserve, in 1929. During the summers from 1929 until the beginning of World War II, Dr. Davis went on active duty each summer at Fort Sam Houston, Texas. He was called to active duty in World War II and was first stationed at Fort Wayne, Michigan, and then was transferred to Washington, D.C. in October 1943. In Washington, D.C. he served as Chief of Section of Veterinary Pathology, Army Institute of Pathology from October, 1943 to December, 1945. The Army Institute of Pathology was subsequently redesignated as the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology (A.F.I.P.). Major Davis had the distinction of being the first veterinary pathologist to serve at this institution. In essence, he was the first Chief of what has today developed into the Division of Veterinary Pathology at that famous institution. The Registry of Veterinary Pathology was established at the A.F.I.P. in August, 1944. Major Davis was designated as Recording Secretary, Committee on Registry of Veterinary Pathology. This position is today designated as the Registrar of the Registry of Veterinary Pathology. Dr. Davis is acknowledged as the first Registrar. (In later years Dr. Davis was succeeded in his precedent-setting position at the A.F.I.P. by: T.C. Jones,

C.A. Gleiser, J.H. Rust, F.D. Maurer, M.A. Ross, F.M. Garner, S. Jones, G. Imes, J.M. Pletcher, and R.K. Harris).

Upon his return to the U.S. Bureau of Animal Industry laboratories in Denver at the conclusion of World War II, Dr. Davis became a constant contributor of well-documented material of veterinary cases to the A.F.I.P. This is attested to by the hundreds of accessioned cases of that institution, as well as the Registry of Veterinary Pathology, which cite the Denver Federal Center Laboratories as contributor. In this fashion, he was able to share the wealth of his experience with scores of pathologists who have studied this material at the A.F.I.P. during the last 23 years. In 1956, Major Davis retired from the Veterinary Corps of the U.S. Army Reserve upon the completion of 23 years of creditable reserve and active duty service. In 1956, Dr. Davis also retired from the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture after 35 years of federal service.

In 1957, Dr. Davis joined the staff of National Jewish Hospital at Denver as a research veterinarian and consultant in pathology. He continued to serve in this capacity until the time of his death. Upon joining the staff at National Jewish Hospital, he renewed his interest in the mycobacteria and published numerous articles in collaboration with the staff of that institution on mycobacterial infections.

In November of 1958, Dr. Davis was appointed as a regular consultant of the Pathology Division of the U.S. Army Medical Research and Nutrition Laboratory, Fitzsimons General Hospital, Denver, Colorado. In this capacity he spent one day each week for the 12 year period preceding his death. He became personally involved in many of the research programs of that institution and co-authored numerous papers with staff members. He took a lively interest in the education of the residents in veterinary pathology at the laboratory, and was instrumental in obtaining much of the case materials that were unrelated to research used in their training. He spent countless hours in reviewing gross and microscopic pathology with the residents. From the U.S. Army Medical research and Nutrition Laboratory came the following Diplomates of the A.C.V.P. who can claim Dr. Davis as one of their preceptors: S.W. Thompson, R.D. Hunt, J.F. Ferrell, N.W. King, R.W. Thomassen, and D.G. Fairchild. In recognition of his many contributions to the research and training programs of the U.S. Army Medical Research and Nutrition Laboratory, the conference room of the Pathology Division was named in honor of Dr. Davis in 1967.

Since Dr. Davis' first contribution to the published literature of veterinary pathology in 1931, he was a frequent and highly significant contributor to this body of professional literature, up to the time of his death. I am certain that my bibliography of Dr. Davis' work is not complete. However, by citations of the works with which I am familiar, I am certain that the reader will gain an insight into Dr. Davis' life's work and contributions to veterinary and comparative pathology.

In addition to his own contributions to the literature, Dr. Davis was very generous to his colleagues in furnishing them with specimens for their work and publications. This generosity is well exemplified by the numerous illustrations which cite him as the contributor in such texts as the first, second, and third editions of Veterinary Pathology by Hilton Atmore Smith and Thomas

Carlyle Jones; Selected Histochemical and Histopathological Methods by Thompson, and Comparative Neuropathology by Innes and Saunders.

Dr. Davis was a member of the Society of Sigma Xi, the American Veterinary Medical Association (since 1925), and the Colorado Veterinary Medical Association. Until his retirement from the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, he was an active member of the Conference of Research Workers in Animal Diseases in North America and the United States Animal Health Association.

At the initiative of Dr. W.H. Feldman and Dr. T.C. Jones, a group of veterinary pathologists met in Dr. Feldman's hotel room at the Palmer House in Chicago, Illinois at 3:00pm on Sunday, November 28, 1948 for the purpose of taking the initial steps in the establishment of the American College of Veterinary Pathologists.

Dr. Davis, who participated in this meeting, was elected as a charter member. He served as the fifth president during 1954. During the 1950's, while the A.C.V.P. was still small enough to permit this, the annual scientific sessions consisted largely of examination and discussion of selected tissue sections. Dr. Davis was a mainstay in supplying material for these; but more than that, he supplied an infectious enthusiasm to the discussions that rubbed off on the other members. A discussion sparked by Charlie Davis was always stimulating, often edifying, and left one with the feeling that pathology was fun. On the 30th of November, 1969, at their annual meeting at the University of Chicago, the American College of Veterinary Pathologists honored Dr. Davis by designating him as a Distinguished Member.

In addition to his memberships in veterinary professional organizations, Dr. Davis had been active in several multidisciplinary and medical organizations. He was a member of the International Academy of Pathology and its predecessor the International Association of Medical Museums. He was a special associate member of the Colorado State Medical Society and had been a member of the Colorado Society of Clinical Pathologists for over 15 years. He served as president of the latter society and as past-president. Primarily through Dr. Davis' efforts, the veterinary pathologists in Colorado came to participate in the seminars of the Colorado Society of Clinical Pathologists, which served as useful training in comparative pathology. He participated in and attended the famous Penrose Cancer Seminars in Colorado Springs since the inception of that annual educational program. Through his guidance, an increasing number of veterinary pathologists and residents in veterinary pathology came to participate in the seminars. The slide sets provided to the participants in advance of the seminars and the published programs of each seminar provide excellent study material in comparative pathology. To my knowledge, Dr. Davis is the only veterinary pathologist to have case material accepted for inclusion in a Penrose Cancer Seminar.

Dr. Charles L. Davis had a coronary attack at 10:15pm on April 1, 1970 and died at 5:30am April 2, 1970 in Denver, Colorado. He was preceded in death by his wife, Lillian Leah Davis, who died of cancer of the pancreas, in the month following their thirty-eighth wedding anniversary, on the 27th of July 1961. At the time of his death he was survived by his widow, Lillian Monsky Davis, whom he married in 1962; his son Richard....his daughter Estelle (Mrs. Jerome Hyman)....8 grandchildren....3 great-grandchildren.... Of his 9 siblings, 4 survive....The

Davis families still operate their businesses on the same property where Charlie's father originally established his grocery store in 1900 in Denver, Colorado.

Through his own diligence and professional excellence, Dr. Davis had for over 40 years brought great credit to the discipline of veterinary pathology. He had gained wide acceptance in allied medical disciplines and done much to establish the creditability that certification by the American College of Veterinary Pathologists has come to mean in modern medicine. While he is reckoned as a professional giant within our discipline, he remained humble and charitable toward all men. He honored us and our profession to a far greater extent than we can honor him. Through the efforts of the Davis and Hyman families, the Charles Louis Davis, D.V.M. Foundation for Advancement of Veterinary and Comparative Pathology has been established for the purpose of supporting graduate and undergraduate research in veterinary pathology, residency training in veterinary pathology, and the teaching of veterinary pathology. This tax-exempt foundation was established in Memphis, Tennessee with the First National Bank of Memphis, Tennessee as trustees, and Mrs. Jerome Hyman, Mr. Richard S. Davis, and Dr. Samuel Wesley Thompson II as honorary trustees. The following Diplomates of the American College of Veterinary Pathologists were originally named to the Advisory Board of the Foundation, to help guide it in the evaluation and selection of worthy applicants and research programs: Charlie N. Barron, Ronald Duncan Hunt, Rue Jensen, Thomas Carlyle Jones, and Samuel Wesley Thompson II.

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