

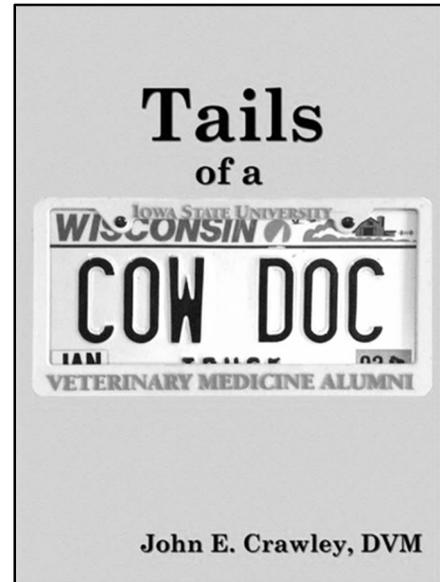
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In Their Own Words

Curated by Gina Neist, eaglehistoricalsociety.org

John (Jack) (Doc) Crawley, 1929-2010, graduated from East Troy High School and earned a Bachelor's degree from UW-Madison. He went on to receive a Doctorate in Veterinarian Medicine from Iowa State University. He served in the Air Force and the Air Force Reserve. Upon completion of active duty, Doc moved to Palmyra to begin his veterinary practice, which spanned over 50 years. His "COW DOC" license plates were a familiar and welcome site to farmers in three counties, and he cared for innumerable family pets from the clinic behind his house. These are just a few of his remembrances, but his memoir, published in 2015, is available from Amazon.



Country Vet by Jack (Doc) Crawley

Temper, temper

Milking cows and a bad temper definitely do not mix. I knew from past experience that this customer had a bad temper because I had treated one of his cows with pitchfork marks from her heels to her hips. That temper would prove to be the ruination of him.

Sometime later that very cow had her revenge. He was walking out of milking her with a full pail of milk when she kicked him and broke both bones in his leg. He suffered a great deal from that injury being in a cast for many months. He eventually returned to farming but things never went well for him after that and he ended up a bitter man.

No Snow Days for the Vet

Some days it doesn't pay to get out of bed, and I had such a day in February of 1974 when we were having a blizzard with winds about 30 miles an hour and snow blowing in from the north. It was the kind of day that Wisconsin is famous for, and I hoped that the phone would not ring that day, but unfortunately it started out about 7:30 a.m.

The farmer had a young heifer which he had been trying to get settled, and had been unsuccessful. This morning, she was in heat, meaning she would ovulate in the next few hours. She had to be inseminated within the next four to six hours or we would have to wait 21 days until she was fertile again. I tried to persuade him to wait because of the weather, but he pleaded would I please come and breed her that morning. He lived about 25 miles from Palmyra, and it was nearly 10:30 before I returned home. Three weeks later the heifer I had bred came back into season and I had to rebreed her, and so that had been a wasted call.

I had no sooner got out of my insulated coveralls and boots when the phone started ringing again. This time it was a very excited woman from Paradise Springs, who had a horse down in the snow. She told me that her regular veterinarian couldn't get there because of the weather and she needed help badly. I have often remarked I don't particularly like horses. Nevertheless, I answered the call.

The buildings were about half a mile uphill from the road. I was driving a Volkswagen truck which would go through snow up over the bumpers. I had just started treating the prostrate animal when another vet arrived on the scene. He had to leave his car at the gate because of all the snow, so any drugs we needed to use all came from me. He instructed me to give the animal cortisone, a shot of vitamin B complex, a bottle of protein IV, and another bottle of glucose intravenously. Then he asked the woman owner if she had a bottle of wine, which she did because they ran a tavern.

While she was gone to get it, I told the doctor that we should drink the wine and rub the empty bottle on the horse and at least we would feel better, but he insisted we drench the animal with the wine. We had gotten the horse onto a rug and pulled it back into the stable, but that night it got up, fell out of the door, and froze to death.

The other vet had gotten paid on the spot, but I had to wait over three months to collect. I told him the next time I had to kill a horse, I could do it without his help!