

# Dr. Carl W. Groppe



In 1932, Carl W. Groppe entered general practices of veterinary medicine in Ohio, Marshall, Brooke and Hancock Counties of West Virginia, and in counties of western Pennsylvania and eastern Ohio.

The Commissioner of Agriculture J. B. McLaughlin first envisioned a licensed veterinarian to work part-time in the elimination of brucellosis and tuberculosis and part-time in private practice. Upon his graduation from Ohio State, College of Veterinarian Medicine, Dr. Groppe was hired to launch an eradication program in the Northern Panhandle area.

As the county veterinarian in 1935, Dr. Groppe worked with dairy farmers to improve the sanitation of their dairy barns and milk houses in order to produce high-quality and safe products. The original infection of brucellosis in this area's dairy cattle was 18 percent. In the second year, the retest showed only 1 percent of the dairy cattle still infected. Dr. Groppe worked closely with general practitioner doctors and pediatricians to get Wheeling City Council to pass uniform health regulations for milk. By 1935, no raw milk could be sold in this market area. He worked tirelessly until it was mandatory that every herd from which milk was sold into the Wheeling milkshed must be tested for brucellosis. His work was exemplary in the Northern Panhandle and was adopted as a national law by the U.S. Department of Public Health in 1942.

He worked diligently to stem the terrible outbreak of rabies in 1936 in Wheeling, especially in the Wheeling Island area. He helped to establish the first dog pound in Wheeling as a holding pen for the 10-day observation of the animal after the person was bitten.

After 1946, when Dr. Groppe returned from four years service in the U.S. Army during World War II, he served on the steering committee to find out-of-state veterinary medicine colleges who would accept West Virginia college students. By the first agreement, the student upon graduation was to return to West Virginia and engage in large animal practice for five years.

From 1939-1943, and 1946-1979, he was a veterinarian and advisor to the state Racing Association. During his first tenure, there was a serious outbreak of Equine Infection Anemia. Under his initiation, West Virginia was one of the first states to require the Coggins test be given to the racing horses.

In 1944, Dr. Groppe was among the first 10 veterinarians in the United States Army to be selected for training in military government. His assignment was with the United States Army European Headquarters, during which Captain Groppe worked with the agricultural leaders of Belgium, Holland and France so that agricultural production could be restored after the end of the war. He was recognized with the Bronze Star.

He was honored as a Distinguished West Virginian by Governor Gaston Caperton in 1989.

Through the years, Dr. Groppe's ethics have been of the highest; his approach in working with others that of respect and cooperation.