

ELECTION OF HONORARY LIFE MEMBER

W. G. WHITTLESTONE

B.SC., D.SC. (OTAGO), F.R.S.N.Z., F.N.Z.I.A.S., F.N.Z.I.C.

Walter George (Wattie) Whittlestone was born in Dunedin and was educated at and was dux of the Gore High School. He graduated with First Class Honours in Chemistry from Otago University in 1936, winning the Sir George Grey Scholarship and the Duffus Lubeecki Scholarship in the process.

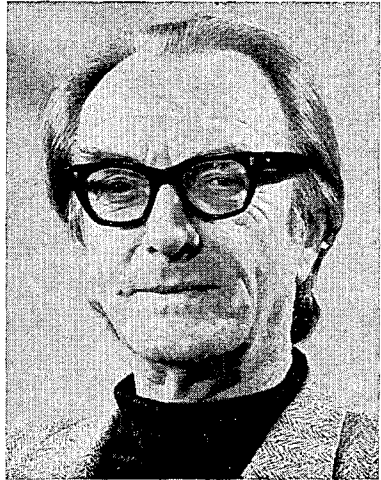
He joined the staff of the N.Z. Rennet Company as a research chemist studying some of the problems of cheese production and rennet manufacture from bobby calf vells. His research (1937-39) contributed to a doubling of the rate of rennet production. He became associated with a very well known veterinarian, Alan Leslie, who set up the first veterinary club

in New Zealand, and during this association he became interested in the processes involved in the milking of cows and the disease mastitis often linked with machine action on the cow. This interest remained throughout his research career.

In 1939 Dr Whittlestone transferred to the Wallaceville Animal Research Station of the Department of Agriculture, where he worked with Dr Hopkirk on problems associated with milking machines and mastitis, and as part of the war effort on possibilities for reducing the rubber content of milking machines.

Dr Whittlestone moved to the Ruakura Animal Research Station in 1945 and carried out a series of studies on the milk-ejection reflex in cows, sheep, goats, and pigs which helped establish the milk-ejecting action of the antidiuretic hormone of the posterior pituitary, the nature of the adrenalin inhibitory mechanism in the mammary gland, and the action of acetyl-choline and histamine on mammary myoepithelium. These physiological studies and co-operative work with D. S. M. Phillips on the testing of milking equipment and the development of improved machines led to the award of a D.Sc. in 1954, and also the award of the New Zealand Association of Scientists Research Medal.

A readership in the Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairy Husbandry Research Foundation of Sydney University, located at Camden, was Dr Whittlestone's next move in 1958. During his stay at Camden, Dr Whittlestone was very effective in introducing both new and existing technology to Australian dairy farms. In 1963 he was awarded the Gold Medal of the Australian Society of Dairy Technology



New Zealand again called, and he returned to Ruakura in 1963 to establish a research dairy for a continuation of the study of the milking machine and mastitis. He has also developed methods of detergent testing and became interested in altering the behaviour of cows with the long-term aim of reducing labour inputs. He has the secret of eternal youth, retiring from Ruakura in April 1979 and starting work at the University of Waikato the following day.

Dr Whittlestone has been notable for many things. He is a gadgeteer who was associated with the development of the Ruakura milking machine, he developed a rolling ball viscometer which is now standard laboratory equipment for measuring cell counts in milk. He produced a simulator for studying cleaning processes with particular reference to milking machines. He has invented a milking machine for use on humans, and also a windmill water pump (with the patent assigned to CORSO) which can be sited at some distance from the source of water.

He has been a prolific writer known internationally through papers given to the International Dairy Congress, American National Mastitis Council, International Stockmen's School, International Dairy Federation Mastitis Committee Seminar, World Association of Veterinary Food Hygiene, Danish Dairy Federation, and many others. He has contributed over 300 scientific and extension papers, including eight to this Society.

Dr Whittlestone has been very concerned about the provision of effective aid to developing countries, a concern given practical expression through work on Colombo Plan projects in India and Sri Lanka and his advocacy of the need for appropriate technology for developing countries. Through this concern he became Chairman of the Waikato Regional Committee of CORSO, and it was also expressed in his Presidential Address to this Society. The number of overseas trips undertaken by Dr Whittlestone is believed to have set an all-time record within the Research Division of the Ministry.

As well as through the award of scholarships and medals, his scientific contributions have been recognized through the awards of Fellowships to the New Zealand Institute of Chemistry (1966), to the New Zealand Institute of Agricultural Science (1969), and to the Royal Society of New Zealand (1974). He was on the Board of the New Zealand Dairy Research Institute for several years as well as having been elected President of the New Zealand Dairy Science Association (1952), and he was also elected President of this Society (1969).

Against this background, it is most appropriate that Wattie Whittlestone should be nominated for Honorary Life Membership of this Society.