
EDUCATION: Transvaal University College [then under the aegis of University of South Africa], 1924 (member of 1st class of students to graduate from newly created veterinary faculty at Onderstepoort): BVSc (with honours); University of South Africa, 1928: DVSc (cum laude).

CAREER: 1925 – 1936, research veterinary officer in Section of Bacteriology at Veterinary Research Institute, Onderstepoort; 1937 – 1948, senior veterinary research officer in Section of Physiology at the Veterinary Research Institute, Onderstepoort; 1934 – 1950, Professor of Physiology at Onderstepoort Faculty of Veterinary Science; December 1949 – 20 March 1950 (he died in office), Director of Veterinary Services and Dean of Veterinary Faculty at Onderstepoort.

CONTRIBUTIONS: Did pioneering research work on immunity against anthrax; studied physiological aspects of digestive disturbances of cattle under South African conditions; researched photosensitivity due to plant poisoning in sheep and goats and porphyria in cattle; studied formation and role of sex hormones in cattle. Will probably best be remembered for determining with Rimington that the photodynamic agent in hepatogenous photosensitizations (such as geeldikkop and Lantana poisoning) was phylloerythrin, a degradation product of chlorophyll. Noted for his concise and lucid style, his articles have served as examples for countless young researchers of how publications should be written.

HOMAGES AND DISTINCTIONS: Awarded the Senior Captain Scott Medal of South African Biological Society in 1944; member of South African Association for the Advancement of Science. Well regarded internationally: the distinguished New Zealand researcher, NT Clare, in 1951 dedicated his classic review ‘Photosensitization in Diseases in Domestic Animals’ to the memory of Quin, ‘pre-eminent’ in the field, a gracious acknowledgement of a colleague, today rarely seen in science.

REFERENCES: The Public Servant, May 1950: Dr J I Quin †.

R D BIGALKE