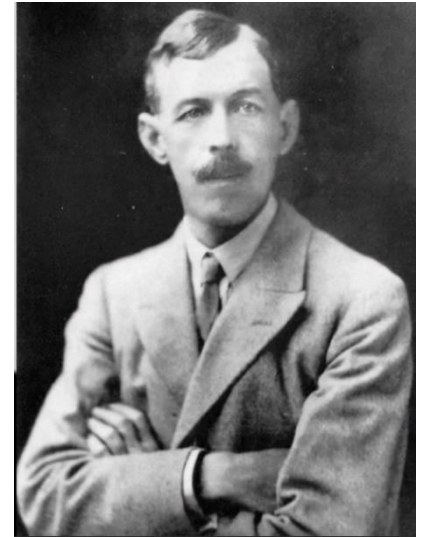


Sir Richard Stockman – Champion of Disease Prevention Elected to Roehampton Club in December 1919

Sir Stewart Stockman (1869–1926) was a 19th/20th century British veterinarian who served as Chief Veterinary Officer to the Ministry of Agriculture, President of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons in 1923-24 and President of the National Veterinary Association. He was also an expert on foot and mouth disease. He was elected to Roehampton Club in December 1919. His application form confirmed his occupation as Chief Veterinary Officer and Director of Veterinary Research at the time. In this capacity, he was intimately involved in the consideration of diseases transmissible from animals to humans.



The *Edinburgh Journal* in 1926 published an Obituary for Sir Stewart with notable references to the success of his role from which parts of this article have been taken. Born in Edinburgh, Stewart Stockman received his general education at the Royal High School and his professional training at the Royal Veterinary College. After spending some time in Paris and Brussels, where he specialised in pathology, he returned to Edinburgh as Professor of Pathology and Bacteriology in the Veterinary College. In this capacity he was the first person in Scotland to devote the whole of his time to teaching and researching in the field of animal pathology.



These seven years as a member of staff at the Veterinary College, and his frequent engagements with medical practitioners, provided an excellent background to widen his 'scientific horizon and his comprehensive view of pathology'. According to the *Journal*, it was these years that provided the solid foundations upon which his subsequent success was based. He

also spent three years in India and the Transvaal in South Africa affording an introduction to administrative methods and an invaluable preparation for the position he finally occupied. These opportunities overseas allowed him to study tropical diseases at close quarters rounding off his knowledge of animal pathology 'of a particularly intimate kind'.

In 1905, Stockman was appointed as Chief Veterinary Officer of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries building up his department over the remaining twenty-one years of his life until his passing in 1926 at the age of 57 years leaving behind an infrastructure that was the envy of other countries. Of all the transmissible diseases at the time of his appointment, it was rabies that took most of his attention. The *Edinburgh Journal* refers to the activities and vigilance of the Veterinary Department of the Ministry of Agriculture that kept this country free from the disease. It goes on to say had it not been for the acts of those breaking the Law during the First World War, the Department would have been able to lay claim to the freedom of the country from rabies since 1903.



Stockman also took a keen interest in Tuberculosis and was largely responsible for the formulation of the Tuberculosis Order that came into operation in 1925 to reduce the high incidence in dairy cattle and thus minimise the danger of infection to children. The *Journal* also makes the point that although Sir Stewart Stockman was not a member of the medical profession, he chose a particular field of pathology taking him beyond the confines of medical science reinforcing his sizeable contribution to his chosen profession. It would also seem probable that he would have taken an interest in the animal welfare at Roehampton Club with the stabling of a considerable number of polo ponies and their ongoing health. Stewart Spencer was knighted on the 1st of January 1913 by King George V for Veterinary Services to the United Kingdom

Steve Riedlinger, Club Archivist