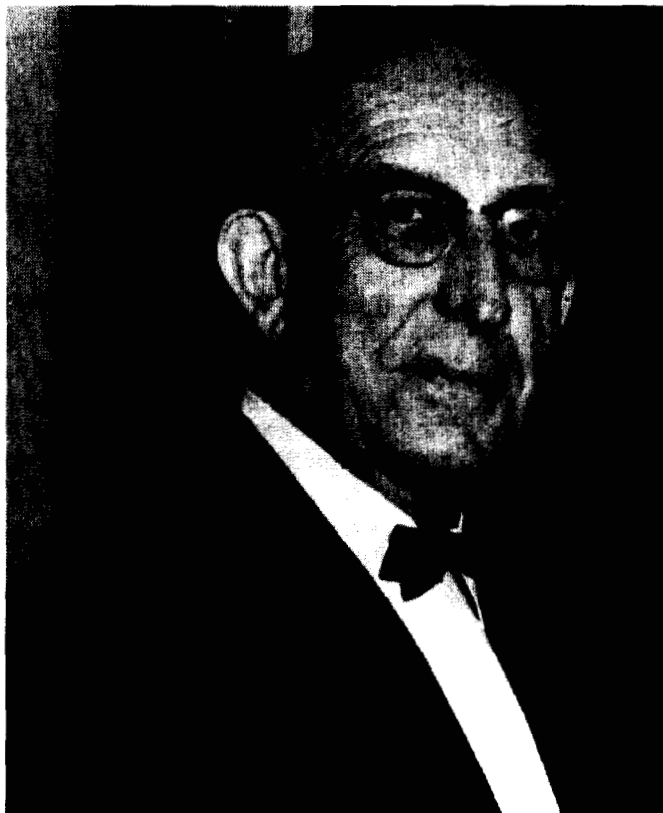


# Loring Vinson Tirrell, 1896–1975: A Brief Biography

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Raised in the livestock industry where he was born in Weymouth, Massachusetts on September 28, 1896, Loring Vinson Tirrell helped drive livestock to Brighton, the first livestock market in North America, developed to feed George Washington's Continental Army. With such an introduction to fine livestock in an area steeped in early importations of livestock and their competitive marketing, he seemed destined to pursue that profession and to share that historic background with many.

Loring Tirrell attended the Massachusetts Agricultural College, now the University of Massachusetts, in Amherst, where he earned the B. S. degree in Animal Husbandry in 1920. His education had been interrupted by service as a Second Lieutenant in the U.S. Army during 1918 and 1919. He obtained the lifelong nickname of "Cy" because of his prowess as a pitcher on the baseball team, during the era of Hall of Fame

pitcher "Cy" Young. Later, he returned to his alma mater to earn the M.S. degree in 1940–41. He married Mary Jane Holbrook of Weymouth, Massachusetts on January 8, 1921, and they had four children, Muriel, Theron, Natalie, and Jean and 11 grandchildren. Mrs. Tirrell died in 1988, 13 years after his death. Their home and farm in Durham, New Hampshire was always a welcome haven to the many livestock people and former students who passed that way. Moreover, it was the very farm on which the famous Morgan stallion "Blackhawk" had been foaled. Coincidentally, "Cy" Tirrell learned anatomy from the skeleton of "Blackhawk", which was the teaching model used at the then Massachusetts Agricultural College when he studied there. The Tirrell farmstead overlooking Oyster River in Durham was a lovely, peaceful setting, especially when stocked with their favorite Dorset sheep.

Professor Tirrell's teaching career began as an instructor at the University of New Hampshire in 1921. Five years later he was enticed to join the Animal Husbandry Department at Connecticut Agricultural College (now the University of Connecticut), where he served for five years (1926–1930) as Livestock Extension Specialist. However, the University of New Hampshire recalled him to head the Animal Husbandry Department, which position he held as Professor and Department Head for 36 years until his retirement in 1966. During World War II, from 1942 to 1946, Loring Tirrell served as Lieutenant Colonel with the U.S. Army Infantry.

During his illustrious career, Professor Tirrell taught 15 different courses in Animal Science, enrolled 4,150 students in his classes in his 40 years of teaching, was major advisor to over 500 undergraduate students at the University of New Hampshire, coached the UNH livestock judging teams for over 25 years, served as advisor to four UNH clubs or organizations, chaired the UNH athletic committee on two occasions as well as numerous other college and university committees, and judged over 500 livestock and dairy shows throughout the U.S. and several foreign countries.

Professor Tirrell was a strict and demanding teacher, a trait that his students came to appreciate all the more after graduation and in their careers. Nonetheless, he had a fine rapport with his students and devoted a great deal of time and effort toward their development. In many instances his livestock

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judging team members had never been out of New England, so he made their trip to the International Livestock Exposition in Chicago a real experience in travel and life. They were made to wear neckties, jackets, and felt hats for such occasions, which proved to be a maturing and learning exercise that served them well thereafter.

In 1962 Loring V. Tirrell received the Outstanding Alumnus Award from the University of Massachusetts. The following year he was selected for the Alpha Zeta Outstanding Teacher Award at the University of New Hampshire. In 1964 the Massachusetts Department of Agriculture conferred its State Award upon him. In 1966 he was made a Fellow of the American Society of Animal Science and the next year at its annual meeting in Reno, Nevada he was selected for its prestigious Distinguished Teacher Award.

In addition to his noteworthy teaching career, "Cy" Tirrell was widely known for his outstanding livestock extension program not only in New Hampshire but throughout New England, where he was frequently called upon to conduct or be on programs involving beef cattle, goats, horses, sheep, swine, or working dogs. He was an official Milking Shorthorn judge and served in that capacity nationally. Furthermore, his popularity as a Morgan Horse judge took him from coast to coast and to several Central American countries. He established the Morgan Horse program at the University of New Hampshire in 1947 in connection with the U.S. Morgan Horse Farm at Middlebury, Vermont. In 1970, the University of New Hampshire named its new Light Horse Center for him. Upon his retirement in 1966, the University of New Hampshire, which he had served so faithfully for 40 years and to which he attracted such a wide and forceful following, conferred upon him an honorary doctorate.

During these many years, Professor Tirrell was the leading animal husbandman in New England and the Northeast. He was the authority to whom livestock producers and fellow extension personnel in this region looked for guidance and direction. He was

instrumental in establishing the New England Livestock Conservation, Inc. in 1950 and served as its president and chairman of its executive committee for 25 years. His work with rural youth, 4-H, FFA, and the Eastern States Exposition at all levels during his entire career was a fine model for those to follow. Without question, his leadership and dedication to the agricultural youth of this region was without peer. His name is legendary in those circles.

L. V. Tirrell served the American Society of Animal Science well during his lengthy membership, attending the meetings in Chicago regularly in the early years when the Sherman Hotel was the perennial site for that gathering in conjunction with the International Livestock Show. In 1938 he was vice-president of the Northeast Section of ASAS and president in 1939.

Following his retirement in 1970, "Cy" Tirrell continued to be an active force in his community and was constantly in demand as a livestock judge and to serve on programs, field days, and agricultural committees. From 1967 to 1973 he served as a representative in the New Hampshire State Legislature, elected from the Durham district. His devotion to his constituents and to his beloved New Hampshire made him an excellent contributing legislator and a popular representative.

His death on April 29, 1975, in Hanover, New Hampshire terminated not only a great career but a rare personality dedicated to integrity, knowledge, industry, discipline, and forthrightness for the development of youth to accept the challenge of tomorrow and for the improvement of the nation's livestock industry. His former students and the roles they have played in attaining these goals stand as testimony to his high ideals.

His zest for life, his courage of conviction, his love for people and animals, his dedication to his country, region, state, and community, and his devotion to his family and those he loved have gained the admiration of all. He will live forever in the hearts and memories of all whom he touched.