ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In spite of my innumerable inadequacies, God has guided me through all difficulties in life, helped me get selected for I.C.A.R.’s S.R.F., gave me admission for Ph.D. programme, gave me an able and kind hearted guide, helped me work on a topic I was deeply interested in since my under-graduate days, guided and blessed my hands when I operated on the paraplegic dogs, and helped me finish my research and thesis writing well ahead of the deadline. He is the first I am thankful to for all the goodness and success I have enjoyed in life, yet I cannot thank him enough even if I do that in synchrony with every beat of my heart.

Dr. M.S. Vasanth, Professor and Head, Department of Surgery and Radiology, and Chairman of my Advisory Committee, has been an able guide not only in the different aspects of Ph.D. research and thesis writing, but also in strengthening my professional and academic competence. He instilled in me courage to take up spinal surgery, with its inherent risks, as the topic for research. His inspiration and blessings fetched me the ISVS’s Young Surgeon Award - 2005 and an appreciation award for a paper presented in the national symposium of the same in 2005. I will always remember with gratitude the various ways he has positively influenced my life during the two and a half years of my acquaintance with him.

Dr. L. Ranganath, Associate Professor, Dept. of Surgery and Radiology, and member of my Advisory Committee, gave appropriate directions in the conduction of the research whenever I approached him. His never-say-die attitude towards knowledge acquisition and style of functioning was a new learning experience for me. I will remember his style in the days to come.

The enthusiasm radiated by Dr. S. Yathiraj, Professor and Head, Dept. of Clinical Medicine, another member of my Advisory Committee, awes even people half as old as him. His uncompromising attitude towards quality of veterinary education and service is worth emulating
for anyone who loves the profession. His support, appreciation of the clinical results and valuable suggestions significantly boosted my morale and helped to bring this thesis to its final form.

**Dr. R.V. Prasad**, Professor and Head, Dept. of Anatomy, third member of my Advisory Committee, was always a kind teacher whose mere presence was a comforting experience. His immense interest in the subject of my research and active participation in associated discussions will be remembered in the days to come. This large hearted teacher with a kind face and willingness to extend his unbridled appreciation whenever he saw something good in his students was a great energizer for my spirit on many occasions.

**Dr. M.L. Sathyanarayana**, Professor and Head, Dept. of Pathology, and another member of my Advisory Committee, though belonging to the para-clinical fraternity, had a keen interest in the conduction and clinical outcome of this study. His benign presence, unconditional support and appreciation of efforts taken throughout the period of my acquaintance with him helped keep me in high spirits and did a lot to make my Ph.D. programme a comfortable and successful one.

**Dr. B.N. Ranganath**, who was the Head of the Dept. of Surgery for a short time in the beginning of my Ph.D. programme, played a significant role in alleviating the stress associated with getting acquainted with an academic atmosphere after a break of three years of Government service.

I am grateful to **Dr. Gert Breur** of Purdue University, USA, who gave valuable practical advices in the diagnosis and treatment of spinal cord trauma in the beginning phase of my study. I am also thankful to **Dr. Sureshkumar**, Professor and Head, Dept. of Surgery and Radiology, Madras Veterinary College, and **Dr. L. Nagarajan** and **Dr. S. Ayyappan**, teachers in the same Dept. for helping me collect valuable literature.

The firm support of **Dr. B.N. Nagaraja**, Asst. Professor in the Dept.; the encouraging friendliness of **Dr. R. Nagaraja**, Instructor in the Dept.;
the “pukka gentlemanliness” of Capt. Dr. Ravi Raidurg; and the practical knack of Dr. K.M. Srinivasamurthy, who were Teaching Associates in the Dept., will be remembered for many years to come.

Sunil, Subin, Sudheesh, Prathiush and Nelson, post-graduate students from Kerala, enriched life in the hostel. I will remember in the years to come how they, and Govindaraju, Vani, Mahendra, Murthy, Sudha, Mahesh, Senthil, Gaurav, Nagaraj and Yashwanth helped me in different ways during my stay in Bangalore, especially with respect to the research.

The efficient assistance of Sreedhar, attendant in charge of the in-patient ward, helped provide excellent post-operative care to all the paraplegic dogs. Narasimaiah, Narayan and Venkataram, attendants of the Dept., were helpful at times of need.

I remember with gratitude Dr. Purushothaman Nair, former District Animal Husbandry Officer of Pathanamthitta District, Kerala, who relieved me from duty at his own personal risk even before the Government sanction of my leave had come, taking into consideration the little time I had to join the Ph.D. programme from the time of announcement of results of the entrance examination.

I am grateful for the monetary support in the form of I.C.A.R.’s S.R.F. without which the dream of doing Ph.D. at this stage of life would have never been realized.

The prayers and blessings of my grand mother and mother, and the unrelenting support of my sisters always helped me tide over difficult situations in life. My wife, Reena, with her unconditional love, support and prayers, and my daughter, Anne, make life worth living.

(GEORGE CHANDY)