

History of the McKillip Veterinary College (1892-1920) A Significant Early Private School in Chicago

Howard H. Erickson and Susanne K. Whitaker

The McKillip Veterinary College was incorporated in Chicago in 1892 by M.H. McKillip, J.M. Wright, and L.A. Merillat. It was one of a number of private veterinary colleges established in the late 19th century to fill a need for educating and increasing the number of veterinarians in the United States and Canada. This college became the third largest in the United States, graduating a total of 1,223 veterinarians by the time it closed in 1920.^{1,2} When admitting its first class of 10 students in October, 1894, the McKillip Veterinary College offered a progressive 3-year course of study consisting of 6 months each. It was also “distinguished from other schools of its time by the tremendous private clinic conducted in connection with it.” During its 28-year existence, Dr. M.H. McKillip served as owner and head of the College.

Dr. M.H. McKillip

Matthew Harrison McKillip (Fig. 1) was born at Montreal, Quebec, Canada, on March 16, 1847.^{3,4,5} He was the son of Hugh McKillip (1816-1870), originally from Anthrow, Ireland, and Mary Jane Scarlett. In 1868 at the age of 20, Matthew moved to Chicago from La Crosse, Wisconsin, where his father had immigrated in 1853. In Chicago, McKillip first worked at the trade of horse shoeing, which he had learned in his father’s blacksmith shop. A large and busy enterprise promptly developed with blacksmith William Williams (1854-1918), who was originally from Wales and Scotland. Known by the name of Williams & McKillip at 1002 State Street,⁶ old citizens recalled that it was “one of the big horse shoeing establishments of that day.”

McKillip began studies at the Ontario Veterinary College (OVC) in Toronto, Canada, in 1875 and entered the Chicago Medical College, later known as the Northwestern University Medical School, a year later in 1876. By alternating his college work between the two institutions, he graduated with an M.D. degree from Northwestern in 1878 and earned a V.S. degree from OVC in 1879. As noted later in 1925,⁷

This undergraduate work, his good training as a horse shoer, and his inherent qualifications as a practical horseman, proved to be the foundation of an exceptional career which soon distinguished him in Chicago and later throughout the country as practitioner of unusual ability and skill, for Dr. McKillip was to say the least, a very successful practitioner, not only because he was well qualified well beyond the requirement of the time, but also because he was devoted to his

work, imbued above all with a determination to give good service, and was honest in all his dealings.

Active in professional associations throughout his career,⁸ Dr. McKillip joined the United States Veterinary Medical Association (that later became the AVMA) in 1894 and was also a founding member of the Chicago Veterinary Society (CVS) (1896). Although the CVS was based on principles of ethical veterinary medicine, Dr. McKillip had several run-ins with the Society.^{9,10} Initially in 1900, the Board of Censors displayed a poster from the McKillip Veterinary College advertising a 5-week course in surgery, medicine, diagnosis, and dentistry. Because McKillip allowed non-graduate veterinarians to take the course, the Society asked the AVMA to declare the school out of its list of recognized veterinary colleges. The matter was resolved and Dr. McKillip remained a member of the Society. Next, in 1902, the Board of Censors refused to admit for membership Dr. J.J. Miller, who had been nominated by Dr. McKillip. The matter was brought before the membership, which voted 10 nay to 7 yes. Dr. McKillip tendered his resignation, which was accepted.

McKillip was also a member of the Illinois State Veterinary Medical Association and served as president of the first Illinois State Veterinarian Examination Board. Additional participation included the Northwestern University Alumni Association and Masonic bodies.¹¹

In 1870, McKillip married Ellen Boomer (1847-1926), daughter of the prominent carriage builder George B. Boomer, whose shop was located in downtown Chicago (Fig. 2). Also of Irish descent, her father and mother Catherine Hutchinson had both been born in Belfast. Their 7 children (3 girls and 4 boys) all became prominent in the social and business life

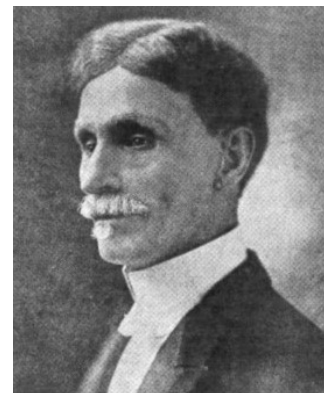


Figure 1. Matthew Harrison McKillip, MD, VS. Source: *North Am Vet.* 6(3):15, 1925 Mar.

of Chicago. Having attended the McKillip Veterinary College, 3 of them became veterinarians, Drs. George Boomer McKillip, MDV (1880-1957), Walter James McKillip, MDV (1883-1940), and Chester Arthur McKillip, MDV (1885-1944). They continued the McKillip practice “reputed to be the largest ever built up by any one man.”¹²

McKillip Veterinary Hospital Established

Upon graduation at age 31, Dr. McKillip was reported to have built the first veterinary hospital in Chicago. This facility was equipped with modern apparatus and instruments of the day, including a pharmacy, operating room, colic room, dressing room, washing room, soaking vats, box stalls, single stalls, etc.

Interestingly, although Dr. McKillip was not known to have produced and sold a line of patent medicines as part of his busy Chicago practice, one example of an embossed, clear, molded blown, rectangular 8-1/8 × 2-1/2 × 1-1/2” bottle with an applied lip was discovered in Ohio in 1996. It is labeled: “M.H. McKillip, M.D., Veterinary Surgeon, Chicago, Anodyne, Liniment.”¹³ It is not known when the McKillip bottle was produced, but the liniment may have predated the establishment of the college or been sold from the doors of his veterinary college.

McKillip Veterinary College Founded

On February 19, 1892,¹⁴ the McKillip Veterinary College was chartered in the State of Illinois. It was established on the same site as Dr. McKillip’s prosperous hospital at 1639 Wabash Avenue in Chicago.

In describing the rationale behind the college’s founding, it was stated in the 18th Annual Prospectus:¹⁵

After nearly a quarter of a century of successful practice in one of the greatest horse centers of the world Dr. McKillip came to a realization of the fact that the abundance of clinical material of his daily practice, together with his knowledge and experience gained in years of service in the profession, would be factors of inestimable value to students of veterinary science. Wishing to place these at the disposal of students of the profession, the college was established and opened its doors to students in 1894.

Dr. McKillip was aware of shortcomings at similar colleges regarding their efficient operation, amount of practical training given, and opportunities provided for students to receive broad based instruction. Consequently, “the founder’s aim was that of producing an institution, in which a thoroughly scientific and practical training in veterinary science would be obtained.” In doing so, “Dr. McKillip spared neither labor nor expense in the selection of the faculty and board of control and in the production of suitable buildings and equipment for the work of instruction.”¹⁶

In particular,¹⁷

The broad and liberal purposes of the founder are exemplified by three very important steps of advancement taken by the college at the time of its organization. The McKillip Veter-



Figure 2. Mrs. Ellen McKillip (no. 71) and Dr. M.H. McKillip (no. 76). “Prominent American veterinarians of fifty years ago gathered at Nashville, Tenn. in 1897 at the first meeting in the South of the United States Veterinary Medical Association.” Source: Merillat L.A. Historical sketches and memoirs. IV. Organized veterinary medicine. *J Am Vet Med Assoc.* CXI:481-485, 1947 Dec.

inary College was the first college in the West to take these steps, and as a result sacrificed patronage and attendance during the early years by doing so. They were—the enforcement of a standard of preliminary education; the adoption of a three-year curriculum; and the institution of a graded course.

Furthermore, “it is the aim of the institution to keep abreast of the times in all respects and to give the student the benefit of a thorough and comprehensive training in veterinary science, and fit him for work in any of the positions which the profession offers.”¹⁸

When the new school was announced, editors of the *Journal of Comparative Medicine and Veterinary Archives* extended a welcome and wished every success by stating,¹⁹

But it should be a gratification to all veterinarians, when a new school is started, to see it established upon the solid basis indicated by the announcement of the McKillip Veterinary College at Chicago, Illinois. This school seems to be the first fruit of the labors of the United States Veterinary Medical Association, in the improvement of the grade of veterinary education. Its sixteen students were required to comply with the examinations recommended by the Association of Veterinary Faculties of North America, and will be obliged to take a curriculum of three years, of six months each.

When delivering opening remarks to the first incoming class of 16 students in 1894, Dean Olaf Schwarzkopf said,²⁰

I cannot refrain at this moment to publicly express my admiration for the man who had the energy and enterprise to bring to life this new college for Dr. M.H. McKillip. With clear sight he has outmapped his plans and with the energy which is his he has pushed them to perfection. The greatest

appreciation and the thanks of the whole veterinary profession, of which you are so worthy a member, are due you, Doctor, for your undertaking. May this college become the best in the country, and so success crown your effort.

Nevertheless, soon after the new college was announced, Dr. D.A. Carmark of Brooking, South Dakota, took offense when Dean Schwarzkopf had called graduates of 2-year schools “little above the old time quack.” He said, “it seems strange that the doctor has as his colleagues on the faculty of this anti-‘diploma’ mill (the McKillip College), men who have come out of those so called ‘diploma mills.’”²¹ Nevertheless, he wished the “dean of the new anti-‘diploma mill’ success in his venture.”

Nationally, the new school did not go unnoticed.²² In particular, traveling en route to the AVMA convention in Des Moines in 1895, some Eastern veterinarians experienced a “very pleasant trip” to the McKillip Veterinary College that would “ever be remembered as a bright episode.” They remarked about finding “so completely an equipped veterinary college, the munificence of an individual veterinarian” that surpassed any of the existing schools. In wishing it a bright future, they further reported, “when this school has consummated the liberal plans on which it is based, drawn to her aid and support the strong faculty she deserves and can win, the founder, Dr. M.H. McKillip will have contributed a benefaction to the veterinary profession by his liberality that will live as a monument of honor to his name and fame long after his day and generation.” “As a successful every-day practitioner and friend among his clientele and people, he was won an honored place in his city and State, and is now destined to win equally as high a place among the profession of to-day and the future.”

Building and Facilities

On Wabash Avenue in a “very desirable location in Chicago for an institution of this particular kind,” the five-story college and hospital building had been constructed of pressed red brick. (Fig. 3) It was expanded and modified several times as attendance increased. An addition that included a large 200+ seat amphitheater for demonstrations and treatment was added in 1905 followed by another in 1908 for histology, pathology, and embryology work.

In his opening address to the first class of students, Dean Olaf Schwarzkopf remarked,²³

This college which opens its door to you to-day, young gentlemen, will strive to be one of higher veterinary education. Our facilities are grand. We are located in a world-renowned city, the heart of a great nation. We have a college building which already now in its incomplete form, is superior to any in the country. While in our infancy we open with better facilities for work, than any other college has ever done before us.

Each of the floors of the McKillip Veterinary College building were fully utilized “with all modern improvements.” The basement was exclusively allocated for hospital purposes containing a large equine treatment room, hospital ward B, and

several foot baths fitted with both hot and cold water. Administrative offices for the dean and business and consulting functions were located on the first floor along with a dispensary, hospital ward A, and carriage and harness rooms. The second floor included several bacteriological laboratories, amphitheater, operating room, instrument prep room, and hospital ward C with box stalls for contagious cases. Lecture room A, various laboratories, a drug preparation area, and the hospital for dogs and cats were up on the third floor. This small animal clinic was actually separate from the main building and featured an operating room, kennels, bath, dispensary, exercise sheds, and room for an attendant. General and private chemical laboratories with lockers and tables for 200 students took up the fourth floor while the dissecting room and associated museum were slightly separate at the rear of the building with cement walls and floor for ventilation and hygiene purposes. Finally, the fifth floor had been added to the building and was occupied by the histology and pathology laboratory with lockers, tables, and equipment for 300 students, accompanied by various preparation areas.

Interestingly, in his 1909 book on *Restraint of Domestic Animals: a book for the use of students and practitioners*, George R. White



Figure 3. McKillip Veterinary College from a postcard.
Image courtesy C. Trenton Boyd.

of Nashville, Tennessee, described the dimensions and construction accompanied by several drawings of “strong and convenient” large animal stocks used at the McKillip Veterinary College for clinical examinations and treatments of horses.²⁴ (Figs. 4a,b)

To accommodate increased student enrollment, a contract was signed for construction of a new well-lighted 35' × 50' laboratory in 1908. It was reported,²⁵ “The equipment will be so arranged that both the pathological and the bacteriological laboratory work will be done in it. Orders have been placed for new equipment for these laboratory courses. Thirty new microscopes with one twelfth objectives will be added to the supply of instruments now possessed by the college.”

Schwarzkopf as First Dean

Dr. Olaf Schwarzkopf served as the new school's first dean from 1894 to 1896. (Fig. 5) Several years before relocating to Chicago to take this position, he had successfully established a short-lived veterinary degree curriculum at the University of Minnesota. Unfortunately, he only stayed in this leadership role at McKillip a couple of years before departing for New York “on account of personal difficulties.”²⁶ An editorial in the *Journal of Comparative Medicine and Veterinary Archives* reported a much to-be-regretted change.²⁷ “The severance of Prof.

Schwarzkopf's relation with the McKillip Veterinary College will be a surprise and a great disappointment to many of our readers. His loss to that school will be felt in many ways.”

In bringing enthusiasm and earnestness to veterinary education in America at that time, “there was none so well known among the leaders of advanced education in America as Prof. Schwarzkopf, and this strength, this added force, this influence he carried with him in all its power, and placed McKillip on the high plane he occupies today.” It further stated, “we shall not attempt to pass upon the many causes that are credited with leading to this rupture, but we earnestly deplore the result that has culminated in this change.” The editorial went on to say they had not lost interest in McKillip and had warm feeling for the school but hoped this action “had been done for the promulgation of a better effort to win for McKillip a higher place among the colleges.”

Faculty Appointments

In founding the school, serious attention had been given to seeking capable instructors.²⁸ In particular,

It has been the policy of the institution to place in charge of the work of instruction men who are not only well qualified in veterinary science, but who are also endowed with exceptional teaching qualities. This is of great importance and is far reaching in its effect upon the student. It has resulted in the development of teaching methods that are not equaled by any similar school. This feature, together with that of placing before the student an abundance of clinical material for his study, have been fostered by the founder and has resulted in the realization of his aim, that of producing an institution of learning of extraordinary efficiency.

When announcements were made seeking faculty appointments,²⁹ it was hoped “the vacant chairs of the McKillip Veterinary College remain open to competition...which will record the new school as being the first among medical or veterinary institutions where professorships will mean a great deal more than that of other colleges—more than an appointment through friendship, ambitious desire or, perhaps, ‘pecuniary bargain.’”

Over the years, deans and secretaries of the McKillip Veterinary College included:³⁰

Deans:

Olaf Schwarzkopf (1894-1896)
F.S. Schoenleber (1896-1899)
E. Merillat (1899-1901)
F.S. Schoenleber (1901-1905)
Chas. Frazier (1905-1920)

Secretaries:

L.A. Merillat (1892-1900)
J.J. Miller (1901-1903)
R.E. Boomer (1904)
G.A. Scott (1905-1906)
George B. McKillip (1907-1920)

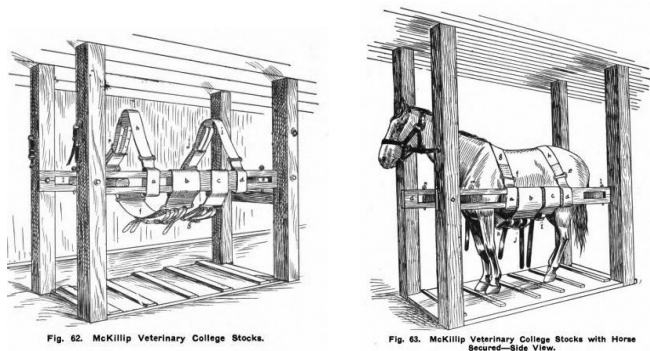


Fig. 62. McKillip Veterinary College Stocks.

Fig. 63. McKillip Veterinary College Stocks with Horse Secured—Side View.

Figures 4a and b. Views of McKillip Veterinary College stocks. Source: White GR. *Restraint of Domestic Animals: a book for the use of students and practitioners.* Nashville, TN: The Author, 1909; pp. 54-55. *HathiTrust Digital Library*, <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/wu.89047259171>

MCKILLIP VETERINARY COLLEGE,

CHICAGO.

The course of instruction commences in October and extends over three years with six months duration.

The course is based upon a broad, scientific and practical curriculum.

It affords students the advantage of work in the routine business of the largest practice in this country. Students who wish to enter the college must have the pre-education agreed upon by the ASSOCIATION OF VETERINARY FACULTIES OF NORTH AMERICA.

For catalogue and information apply to

PROF. OLAF SCHWARZKOPF, DEAN,
1639 Wabash Ave., Chicago.

Figure 5. McKillip Veterinary College advertisement with Prof. Olaf Schwarzkopf as dean, 1895. Source: *J Comp Med Vet Arch.* 16:xii, 1895. *HathiTrust Digital Library*, <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/mdp.39015070490936>

Initially, the Fundamental Faculty consisted of:^{31,32}

Olaf Schwarzkopf, V.M.D., Professor of Theory and Practice, Histology, Pathology, Helminthology, Bacteriology, and Sanitary Science

M.H. McKillip, M.D., V.S., Professor of Clinical and Operative Surgery

James M. Wright, D.V.S., Professor of Cattle Pathology, Embryology, Obstetrics, and Canine Practice

L.A. Merillat, V.S., Professor of Anatomy and Dental Surgery

W. H. Rumpf, A.M., M.D., Professor of Materia Medica and Natural History

Otto Folin, B.S., Professor of Chemistry and Physics

J.H. Honan, M.D., D.V.S., Professor of Physiology.

Due to faculty turnover, Drs. F.S. Schoenleber, J.B. Boomer, and O. Schwarzkopf were listed as Professors Emeriti in the 1900-1901 catalog.³³

By the 1911/1912 class year, the number of faculty had more than doubled to 17, including:³⁴

M.H. McKillip, M.D., V.S., Professor of Medicine and Clinical Medicine

Charles Frazier, B.S., M.D., M.D.V., Professor of Pathology and Bacteriology

L.A. Merillat, V.S., Professor of Surgery

E.M. Reading, A.M., M.D., Professor of Physiology

Duncan McKenzie, V.S., M.D., M.D.V., Professor of Medicine and Surgery

Charles Henderson Miller, Ph.G., M.D., Professor of Pharmacology

I.D. Rawlings, M.S., M.D., Professor of Bacteriology

Leo Thurlimann, M.S., Professor of Chemistry

G.B. McKillip, M.D.V., Professor of Surgery and Clinical Surgery

John L. White, M.D.V., Professor of Meat Inspection

E. Merillat, A.B., M.D.V., Professor of Anatomy and Zoology

C.A. McKillip, M.D.V., Professor of Anatomy

F.J. Leith, M.D.C., M.D.V., Associate Professor of Medicine and Surgery

William F. Reasner, M.D.V., Associate Professor of Medicine and Surgery

H. Weisberg, L.L.B., Professor of Food Inspection

Walter J. McKillip, M.D.V., Associate Professor of Medicine and Surgery

C.O. Kroener, M.D.C., Instructor in Medicine and Surgery

Three-Year Course of Study

Most of the other private schools at the time offered only a 2-year program, including the neighboring Chicago Veterinary College, until 1906. However, the course of study from inception at McKillip included 3 collegiate years of 6 months or 28 weeks each, divided into 2 terms (September to December and January to April). That complied with the “rule of 1893” approved by the US Veterinary Medical Association intended to raise standards for veterinary medicine by requiring members to have had 3 years of instruction.³⁵

---Night Course

For the 1904-1905 class year, McKillip had 34 seniors, 35 juniors, and 28 freshman, with 25 enrolled in the night class.³⁶ The college had established a night school the previous year³⁷ “Their night class students are permitted to take their first two years’ work in night classes, but the third year work must be taken and finished with the regular day class work. That night class work is to accommodate men in the city who were unable to take day work—young men working at stock yards and other places and could attend in the evening. Their report is that the average grade of educational qualification on entering is improving and they intend to put it up as rapidly as they can in competition with other colleges.”

The following year, the McKillip Veterinary College had over 200 students enrolled for the 1905-1906 session. While there were 18 in the night course, only freshman work is given at night “which is stated to be as satisfactory as the day course,” but the junior night course had been dropped.”³⁸

By 1907-1908, McKillip reported an enrollment of 340 students. It seemed “The unlimited opportunities of the veterinary profession are attracting many students.”³⁹

---Tuition and Fees

In early years, tuition was \$100 each year with matriculation and graduation fees of \$5 and \$10, respectively.⁴⁰ By 1911/12, it could cost students \$250 each for the freshman and junior years and \$275 for the senior year. That included a matriculation fee (\$5.00), tuition (\$105.00), books (\$15.00) and board (\$125.00), and a final examination fee (\$25.00).⁴¹

The first year 16 students matriculated, all of whom had passed a rigid entrance examination adopted by the Association of Veterinary Faculties of North America. It was noted that, “This is a high compliment for a new school of advanced curriculum, and speaks well for the future profession in America.”⁴²

---Courses of Study

As described in the *1911/12 Prospectus*,⁴³ in their first year of study, students took courses in osteology, myology, histology, embryology, chemistry, physics, physiology, bacteriology, locomotion, pharmacy, botany, breeding, feeding, dentistry, preliminary medicine and surgery, clinical diagnosis, and spent time in clinics once a week. (Fig. 6) “The freshman work in surgery also includes 30 lectures on preliminary surgery.” “Students were also required to assist in the treating of patients in the hospital under the direction of the surgeon.”

Second year courses included surgical anatomy, chemistry, bacteriology, special physiology, materia medica, pharmacodynamics, urinalysis, toxicology, parasitology, pathology, jurisprudence, breeding, feeding, general surgery, obstetrics, and equine and bovine medicine while students spent 2 sessions in clinics per week. (Fig. 7)

Senior or third-year students focused on applied regional anatomy, applied physiology, pharmacodynamics, pathology, histopathology, autopsy, meat inspection, and milk analysis, along with equine and bovine medicine and surgery, infectious disease, therapeutics, dog and cat medicine and surgery, operative surgery, and shoeing along with 3 sessions per week in clinics.

After completing 3 years of study and fulfilling requirements for graduation, the school conferred a doctor of veterinary medicine degree. The abbreviation was changed from M.D.V. to D.V.M. in 1911 to comply with action taken by the Federation of American Veterinary Colleges in May 10, 1911, that established a uniform veterinary degree.⁴⁴

Clinical Facilities and Case Work

One of the features that distinguished the McKillip Veterinary College from other schools of that era was the large and active private clinic associated with it even known as being “the largest practice in the world.” (Fig. 8) Among the prospective surgeries performed included neurectomy and arytenoideraphy for roaring. First advocated by Drs. M.H. McKillip, W.E.A.



Figure 6. Students in Section ‘A’ bacteriology freshman class, in the Bacteriology Laboratory, east end. Source: *McKillip Veterinary College. Bulletin*, no.304:20, 1917 Jan 31.



Figure 7. Students in Section ‘B’ junior class in the Pathologic Laboratory, microscopic department. Source: *McKillip Veterinary College. Bulletin*, no.304:21, 1917 Jan 31.

Wymau, and L.A. Merillat, “this new surgical procedure originated at the surgical clinics of the McKillip Veterinary College during the session of 1897-1898. The first operation was performed November 18, 1897.”⁴⁵

In advertisements in 1897,⁴⁶ it was stated that “the course is based on a broad, scientific and practical curriculum.” Thus, “it affords students the advantage of work in the routine business of the largest practice in this country.” In addition, as part of the class instruction, students could also work with their professors in a clinical practice outside the college.

A report of this clinic for the fiscal year ending May 1, 1899, rendered by Chief Clerk Reynold E. Boomer, gave the following figures: professional visits, 15,973; surgical operations, 3,841; hospital and dispensary patients, 8,937; dental operations, 1,320; total cases treated, 37,562⁴⁷ In 1905, it was advertised to have the largest practice in the world and offering several courses, including a 5-week practitioner’s course with advanced work in medicine, surgery, and lameness.⁴⁸

In addition to routine services, the school was on the forefront of therapeutic advancement. As reported at the USVMA convention in 1895, diphtheria antitoxin was first made in the United States by veterinarian Olaf Schwarzkopf and physician/bacteriologist Dr. George E. Krieger in the bacteriological laboratory and veterinary hospital of the McKillip Veterinary College in 1894. A large carriage horse, hyperimmunized after the method of Roux and Nocard, yielded an excellent quality of antitoxin, which was used in medical and veterinary practice. The method of production, including the bleeding of the horse, was demonstrated before the Chicago Medical Society in February, 1895, and reported in the literature.^{49,50,51,52} Dr. Krieger also gave a special third-year course of instruction on serum therapeutics.⁵³

McKILLIP VETERINARY COLLEGE
Chicago—Chartered 1892
AFFORDS UNLIMITED CLINICAL ADVANTAGES
 New college building containing every modern equipment. The new U. S. Sanitary and Pure Food laws require large and increasing number of Veterinary Inspectors. School opens about Sept. 10
 Write for Catalog and other information.
 GEORGE B. McKILLIP, Sec., Dept. E., Wabash Ave. Chicago

Figure 8. Advertisement. Source: *Am J Vet Med.* 10:58, 1915. *HathiTrust Digital Library*, <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/umn.31951d00200868b>

McKILLIP VETERINARY COLLEGE,
CHICAGO.

The course of instruction commences in October and extends over three years with six months duration.
 The course is based upon a broad, scientific and practical curriculum.
 It affords students the advantage of work in the routine business of the largest practice in this country. Students who wish to enter the college must have the pre-education agreed upon by the ASSOCIATION OF VETERINARY FACULTIES OF NORTH AMERICA. For catalogue and information apply to
L. A. MERILLAT, V.S., Sec’y,
1639 Wabash Ave., Chicago.

Figure 9. Advertisement with LA Merillat as Secretary, 1897. Source: *J Comp Med. Vet Arch.* 17:iv,168,282,440,508,576,64 8,716,752,804, 1897. *HathiTrust Digital Library*, <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/mdp.39015070490944>

AVMA Recognition and Accreditation

From its beginning, courses of study at the McKillip Veterinary College complied with requirements established by the American Veterinary Medical Association and the US Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI). (Fig. 9)

When the AVMA Committee on Education began its investigations of veterinary colleges to gather information concerning entrance requirements, faculty, curriculum, facilities and more, a site visit was made to the McKillip Veterinary College on February 28, 1908. According to their Recommendation No. 13, the McKillip Veterinary College was categorized in Class B. "Colleges whose graduates have been allowed to take the United States civil service examination subsequent to 1898, but are not recommended in this report."⁵⁴ Many private colleges were reported to lack sufficient scientific equipment.

In 1911, the McKillip Veterinary College also appeared on the list of accredited veterinary colleges associated with the Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Animal Industry Circular 150.^{55,56} That enabled their graduates to be eligible for the civil service examination for veterinary inspector positions with the BAI. "Its graduates are also fully recognized by all States and Territories of the Union and the Provinces of Canada."⁵⁷

As of 1916, McKillip continued to be included on the list of 22 recognized veterinary colleges,⁵⁸ but would be removed a few years later in 1920.

McKillip Veterinary College

CHICAGO. (Chartered 1892.)

LARGEST PRACTICE IN THE WORLD.

(Affording unlimited clinical advantages.)

Regular Graduate Course, acquiring the Degree of Doctor of Veterinary Medicine.

Post Graduate Course, acquiring the Degree of Doctor of Veterinary Medicine.

Meat Inspection Course, Preparatory to the Civil Service Examination for Government Inspectors. (Special attention is given this course in order to prepare the student for the Civil Service Examination.)

Practitioner's Course, five weeks advanced work in Medicine, Surgery and Lameness.

SESSION BEGINS OCT. 3, 1905.

Write for a catalog and other information.

G.A. SCOTT, V.S., Secretary,
No. 1639, Wabash Ave., Chicago, Ill

Post-Graduate and Continuing Education

In addition to its full D.V.M. program, the McKillip Veterinary College also offered courses for graduate veterinarians as refresher and continuing education. As advertised,⁵⁹ (Fig. 10) in addition to the "Regular Graduate Course," a "Post Graduate Course" would lead to a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree. The curriculum for the 28-week post-graduate course was largely elective for individuals already holding a degree from an accredited 2-year veterinary college, but had to be equivalent to one year of regular study. The total cost in 1911/12 was \$275 for matriculation, tuition, books and board.⁶⁰

In 1898, the McKillip Veterinary College instituted a "Meat Inspection Course."⁶¹ It was advertised as "a very complete course of meat-inspection" that provided special attention for preparing for the Civil Service Examination for government inspector positions with the BAI. The instructor was S.G. Burkholder, M.D., V.S., who was connected with the Federal Meat Inspection Service in Chicago. The course covered comparative anatomy, comparative physiology, comparative histology, gross and minute pathology, bacteriology, helminthology, antemortem inspection, postmortem inspection, and department regulations. Practical demonstrations were held at the Union Stock Yards.

There was also a "Practitioners' Course" consisting of "five weeks advanced work in Medicine, Surgery and Lameness." Held in January and February, it was "largely elective and ... designed to meet the demands of a busy practitioner" who wanted to acquaint himself with "the recent advancements in veterinary science" within a short period of time. Special lectures, clinics and laboratory work were arranged. In 1911/12, the cost of this program was \$85.00 for tuition, diploma, and board.⁶²

Students and Activities

In ranking by number of graduates, the McKillip Veterinary College had become the third largest private school, having graduated 1,223 veterinarians by the time it closed in 1920.



Figure 10. [Advertisement]. Source: *Massachusetts Ploughman and New England Journal of Agriculture*. 64:3327, 1905

Figure 11. Class of 1913 pennant from McKillip Veterinary College. Photo courtesy Dr. Michael Smith.

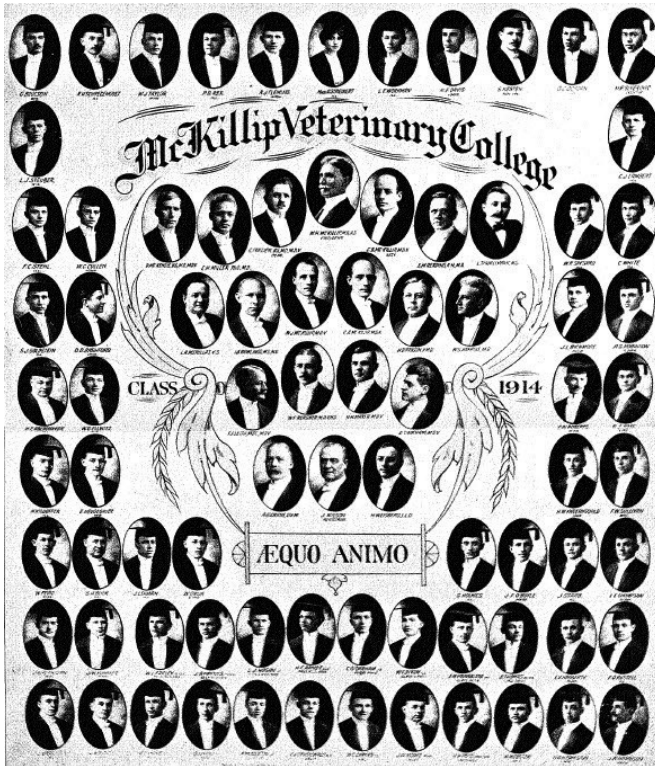


Figure 12. The class of 1914 composite, including Miss Asta Striever (upper row center). Photo courtesy Dr. Fred Born Veterinary Museum, Galloway House and Museum, Fond du Lac, WI.



Figure 14. Class of 1918, McKillip Veterinary College. Photo courtesy Dr. Howard Erickson.



Figures 13a,b. Panoramic view of the McKillip Veterinary College (exterior view), 1917. Source: *McKillip Veterinary College Bull.* No.304:16-17, 1917 Jan 31.

---Student Body

Around 1910, it was estimated that over half of the veterinarians in the United States had graduated either from McKillip or the Chicago Veterinary College, the first privately owned school in Chicago, from 1883 to 1920.⁶³

The class of 1913 had a pennant (Fig. 11) with colors that appear to be black and gold. The class of 1914 composite picture shows 20 faculty in center surrounded by 61 graduates, including one woman, Asta Striever (top row center above Dr. McKillip). (Fig. 12) The class of 1918 composite included photos of 17 faculty in the center surrounded by about 112 graduates.⁶⁴ (Figs. 13a,b) (Fig. 14)

---Student Organizations

A student medical association was organized for “reading and discussing essays on subjects of interest to the veterinarian.”⁶⁵ The McKillip Veterinary Medical Association was also “of value in obtaining a systematic and concerted action of the students in handling matters of college and social affairs, discipline, care of the sick, etc.” Each entering student became a member and attended weekly meetings throughout the year. Officers were elected annually from the senior class.

---Athletics

In 1916, the college sponsored football, baseball, basketball, and handball teams. (Figs. 15 and 16) Dr. L.A. Merillat, Jr., who had coached the West Point Army Football Team, wrote in the January 31, 1917, *Bulletin*, “The McKillip Veterinary College has adopted a policy permitting athletics to a reasonable extent, and this year the athletic association selected a football team, but the players were severely handicapped by reason of the failure to have ready proper gymnastic facilities.”⁶⁶

During the past season and just getting started in organizing sporting activities, it was remarked that the football team “did remarkably well” playing several games in Chicago and about 5 or 6 out of town in Indiana. At Valparaiso, Indiana, “the McKillip boys made an excellent showing and kept their adversaries on the defensive during the greater part of the game, but neither team succeeded in registering a score.” Moreover, “the game played against St. Ignacius College in Chicago was perhaps the most spirited contest of the season, both sides scoring six points in a fast and open contest.”... “Games against DePaul University and Gary resulted in defeat, but it is the ambition of the McKillip men to have an opportunity of meeting these teams in the fall of 1917.”

---Alumni Association

An Alumni Association was founded at the end of the 1905/1906 academic year.⁶⁷ The expectation was that the Association would “become an important factor in the future of the college.” In addition to meeting once a year in December to discuss topics of interest to the college and elect officers, the organization published a quarterly *Bulletin*. As of 1911, members numbered about 300.

Women Graduates

Before all the early private colleges had closed by 1927, they had graduated a total of 6 women veterinarians.⁶⁸ Elinor McGrath earned her veterinary degree at the Chicago Veterinary College in 1910, followed by Ida McGuire from the Grand Rapids Veterinary College in 1916 and Clara Lumpleigh from the San Francisco Veterinary College in 1917.

Three additional women were awarded veterinary degrees from the McKillip Veterinary College: Mignon Nicholson in 1903, Asta Striever of Chicago in 1914, and Grace Pearce, who had earlier attended veterinary college at Terre Haute, Indiana, in 1916. This private veterinary college probably had more female graduates than any of the other colleges.

Mignon Nicholson, M.D.V. (1876-1906)

Graduating from McKillip in 1903, Dr. Mignon Nicholson was the first woman to earn a degree from a US veterinary college. However, since she died with only limited practice



Top: Dr. L. A. Merillat, Pres. Mc. A. A., M. L. Clafin, S. S. Gibson, G. Mehren, G. E. Jacobi, H. C. Newman, Business Agent
Center: A. K. Carr, F. L. Giefer, T. T. O'Grady, H. C. Pugh, V. Kaliher
Bottom: E. Jarvis, Mascot Newman, J. H. Evans

Figure 15. McKillip Veterinary College Baseball team, 1916-1917. Source: *McKillip Veterinary College Bulletin*, no.304:13, 1917 Jan 31.



Figure 16. McKillip Veterinary College Basketball Team, 1916. Source: *McKillip Veterinary College Bulletin*, no.304:14, 1917 Jan 31.

in veterinary medicine, probably no more than 4-5 years, the honor of being the first woman veterinary practitioner in the United States has been given to Dr. Elinor McGrath, who graduated from Chicago Veterinary College several years later in 1910.

Asta Striever, M.D.V

The class of 1914 composite picture (Fig.12) shows 20 faculty and 61 graduates, including Asta Striever. She may have ranked sixth in her class if the graduates were displayed by class rank.

Grace Pearce, M.D.V

In 1916, Grace Pearce graduated from the McKillip Veterinary College. According to an early *AWV Bulletin*, Grace “had a very interesting life.” Yet, little is known except that she may have practiced at Richmond, Indiana,⁶⁹ and was a member of the five-person First Committee, chaired by Dr. Mary Dunlap, responsible for setting policies for organizing the Association for Women Veterinarians in 1947.⁷⁰ By 1948, she became in charge of the lab x-ray at Martin County Hospital in Stuart, Florida, after a 3-month vacation in Miami.⁷¹

Closing of the McKillip Veterinary College

As a consequence of World War I, private veterinary colleges experienced serious difficulties that jeopardized their continued operation. During the war, as student enrollment decreased so did tuition revenue needed to support ongoing operations, and many faculty left to enlist in the military effort. As a result, schools were unable to maintain standards for recognition by the AVMA and US Civil Service Commission for

employment positions with the BAI. They also lagged behind in upgrading facilities to support changing needs for educational instruction.⁷²

To counteract a widespread rumor in 1918 that McKillip would not continue in business after the war, Dr. M.H. McKillip published an announcement in the *American Journal of Veterinary Medicine*⁷³ to state there was no truth in the statement and to correct wrong impressions. He said the college was “on an absolutely solid financial footing” and would “increase its efforts in its work of educating veterinarians.” Furthermore, “we intend to increase and improve our facilities for teaching, feeling that such a course is justified by the conditions and feeling that the pride that we have in our institution will not permit us to do otherwise.”

However, when the AVMA Committee on Intelligence and Education met at New Orleans in November 1919, there was discussion about the 4-year high school entrance requirement.⁷⁴ It was pointed out that “McKillip, St. Joseph and Cincinnati Veterinary Colleges have not yet adopted the standard. McKillip and St. Joseph have adopted the four-year course but for the present year have not adopted the four-year high-school requirement for entrance.”

A motion was subsequently passed rejecting the recommendation to accept the McKillip Veterinary College and St. Joseph Veterinary College as “not living up to the entrance requirements provided for in the eligible list of colleges of this Association.”^{75,76} As a result, both were removed from the list of accredited schools and their graduates would thus not be eligible for membership in the AVMA.

As a result, after losing its accreditation status, the McKillip Veterinary College was one of 3 former private schools that failed to open the next fall for the 1920-21 academic year.⁷⁷

Despite the schools closing, the hospital continued operation under the direction of Dr. McKillip’s sons.

Passing of Dr. M.H. McKillip

When Dr. McKillip passed away at his home in Chicago on December 20, 1924, at age 77,^{78,79} he left an important legacy in the establishment and operation of one of the significant private veterinary colleges early in the 20th century.

At the end of his distinguished 50-year career, colleague L.A. Merillat noted,⁸⁰ “*The passing of Dr. M. H. McKillip is mourned by a large following of clients and former students who venerate his dignified personality, his professional attainments, his clean, untainted life, and his many achievements. Another pioneer who has made veterinary history has passed from the realm.*”

Epilogue

The McKillip Veterinary College may have closed more than 80 years ago, but Dr. McKillip’s practice is still in existence today as the multi-doctor, full-service McKillip Animal Hospital located at 2867 North Clark Street in the Lakeview/Wrigley area of Chicago.⁸¹ (Fig. 17)



Figure 17. McKillip Veterinary Hospital, circa 2020.

https://www.yelp.com/biz_photos/mckillip-animal-hospital-chicago?select=2g5AXPhJUkp_PoV-f_ufdQ

REFERENCES

1. Merillat LA, Campbell DM. Development of an American veterinary profession. *Veterinary Military History of the United States*. Vol. 1. Chicago: Veterinary Magazine Corp., 1935; p. 318.
2. Klein AJ, ed. Part V. Professional veterinary medicine. *Survey of Land-Grant Colleges and Universities*, vol. II. Washington, DC: Government Printing Office; 1930; p. 327. U.S. Department of the Interior. Office of Education Bulletin, No. 9. *HathiTrust Digital Library*, <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/mdp.39015003484840>
3. Merillat LA. M.H. McKillip, MD, VS [obituary]. *North Am Vet*. 6(3):15-16, 1925 Mar.
4. Merillat LA. Necrology. Matthew Harrison McKillip. *J Am Vet Med Assoc*. ns66:796-797, 1925.
5. Dr. MH M'Killip, veterinarian 50 years here, dies. *Chicago Daily Tribune*. 1924 Dec 21, p. 10.
6. *The Lakeside Annual Directory of the City of Chicago 1874/75*. Chicago: The Chicago Directory, 1874; p. 1160, 11211. *HathiTrust Digital Library*, <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/hvd.hn4gp4>
7. Merillat (Ref. 3)
8. Ibid.
9. Wise R, ed. *The Early Years, 1896-1914, Chicago Veterinary Medical Association*. Chicago: CVMA, nd.
10. McKillip veterinary bottle discovered. *Dr. Michael Smith's Veterinary Collectibles Roundtable*. 4(2):3, 1996 Jun.
11. Merillat (Ref. 3)
12. Ibid.
13. McKillip (Ref. 10)
14. Merillat (Ref. 1), p. 318.
15. Introduction. History. *Eighteenth Annual Prospectus of the McKillip Veterinary College* [1911/12]. Chicago: Mayer & Miller Company, [1911]; p. 8.
16. Ibid.
17. Ibid.
18. Ibid.
19. Editorial. McKillip Veterinary College. *J Comp Med Vet Arch*. 15:353, 1894. *HathiTrust Digital Library*, <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/mdp.39015070491058>
20. Schwarzkopf O. Address at the opening of the McKillip Veterinary College. *Am Vet Rev*. 18:517-520, 1894 Nov. *HathiTrust Digital Library*, <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/uiuo.ark:/13960/t6qz9n86c>
21. Carmack DA. Correspondence. Veterinary education. *Am Vet Rev*. 18:578-580, 1895. *HathiTrust Digital Library*, <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/uiuo.ark:/13960/t6qz9n86c>
22. McKillip Veterinary College. *J Comp Med Vet Arch*. 16:684-685, 1895. *HathiTrust Digital Library*, <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/mdp.39015070490936>
23. Schwarzkopf (Ref. 20)
24. White GR. *Restraint of Domestic Animals: a book for the use of students and practitioners*. Nashville, TN: The Author, 1909; pp. 55-59. *HathiTrust Digital Library*, <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/wu.89047259171>
25. Increased facilities at McKillip. *Am Vet Rev*. 33:309, 1908. *HathiTrust Digital Library*, <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/uc1.b2954508>
26. Editorial. Dr. O. Schwarzkopf. *Am Vet Rev*. 19:676-677, 1896 Feb. *HathiTrust Digital Library*, <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/uc1.b2954494>
27. McKillip's loss. *J Comp Med Vet Arch*. 17:136-137, 1896. *HathiTrust Digital Library*, <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/mdp.39015070490944>
28. Introduction (Ref. 15)
29. Schwarzkopf O. McKillip Veterinary College [faculty appointments]. *Am Vet Rev*. 18:242, 1894 Jul. *HathiTrust Digital Library*, <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/uc1.31175024411772>
30. Merillat (Ref. 1)
31. Ibid.
32. Veterinary colleges of North America. *Am Vet Rev*. 19:433-434, 1895 Oct. *HathiTrust Digital Library*, <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/uc1.b2954494>
33. McKillip (Ref. 22)
34. Introduction (Ref. 15), p. 1.
35. Miller EB. Private veterinary colleges in the United States, 1852-1927. *J Am Vet Med Assoc*. 178(6):583-593, 1981.
36. Society reports. Minnesota State Veterinary Medical Association. Report on colleges. *Am Vet Rev*. 29:910, 1905 Nov. *HathiTrust Digital Library*, <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/uc1.b3300632>
37. College commencements. McKillip Veterinary College. *Am Vet Rev*. 28:169-170, 1904 May. *HathiTrust Digital Library*, <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/uc1.b3300631>
38. News and Items. *Am Vet Rev*. 30: 1121, 1906 Dec. *HathiTrust Digital Library*, <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/uc1.b2954505>
39. [The unlimited...]. *Am Vet Rev*. 32:588, 1908 Feb. *HathiTrust Digital Library*, <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/uc1.b3300635>
40. Merillat (Ref. 1)
41. Expenses and fees. *Eighteenth Annual Prospectus of the McKillip Veterinary College* [1911/12]. Chicago: Mayer & Miller Company, [1911]; p. 20.
42. Items [McKillip Veterinary College]. *J Comp Med Vet Arch*. 15:364, 1894. *HathiTrust Digital Library*, <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/mdp.39015070491058>
43. Department of Instruction. *Eighteenth Annual Prospectus of the McKillip Veterinary College* [1911/12]. Chicago: Mayer & Miller Company, [1911]; p9. 23-45.
44. Introduction (Ref. 15)
45. Merillat LA. Arytenoideraphy—a new surgical treatment for roaring. *J Comp Med Vet Arch*. 19(9):632-633, 1898 Sep. *HathiTrust Digital Library*, <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/mdp.39015070490969>
46. [Advertisement]. *J Comp Med. Vet Arch*. 17:iv,94,168,282,440,508,576,648,716,752,804, 1897. *HathiTrust Digital Library*, <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/mdp.39015070490944>
47. Merillat (Ref. 1)
48. *Mass Ploughman and New England J of Agric*. 64:3327, 1905.
49. Editorial: U.S.V.M.A. [horse as producer antitoxin]. *J Comp Med Vet Arch*. 16:456, 1895. *HathiTrust Digital Library*, <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/mdp.39015070490936>
50. Schwarzkopf O. The horse as a producer of antitoxines. *Am Vet Rev*. 19:391-396, 1895-96. *HathiTrust Digital Library*, <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/uc1.31175024411830>
51. Schwarzkopf O. The horse as a producer of antitoxins. *J Comp Med Vet Arch*. 16:13-18, 1896. *HathiTrust Digital Library*, <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/mdp.39015070490944>
52. Merillat (Ref. 1), p. 301.
53. McKillip Veterinary College. *J Comp Med Vet Arch*. 16:449, 1895. *HathiTrust Digital Library*, <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/mdp.39015070490936>
54. Lyman RP, et al. Report and recommendations regarding veterinary colleges. Colleges visited. General recommendations. *Am Vet Rev*. 33: 603, 609, 1908. *HathiTrust Digital Library*, <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/uc1.b2954508>

55. List of accredited veterinary colleges U.S. Dept. Agr. B.A.I. Circular 150-A. *Am Vet Rev.* 40:137, 1911 Oct. *HathiTrust Digital Library*, <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/uc1.b2954515>
56. Marshall CJ, ed. Colleges recognized for 1909-1910. *Proceedings of the American Veterinary Medical Association*, 46th Annual Convention. Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott, 1910; p. 18. *HathiTrust Digital Library*, <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/hvd.hc4hl6>
57. Courses of instruction. *Eighteenth Annual Prospectus of the McKillip Veterinary College* [1911/12]. Chicago: Mayer & Miller Company, [1911]; p. 46.
58. List of colleges recognized by the AVMA. *J Am Vet Med Assoc.* XLVIII ns1(6):786, 1916 Mar. *HathiTrust Digital Library*, <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/hvd.32044103069357>
59. [Advertisement]. *J Comp Med Vet Arch.* 24(5):iii, 1903 May. *HathiTrust Digital Library*, <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/mdp.39015070491157>
60. The Post-Graduate Course. *Eighteenth Annual Prospectus of the McKillip Veterinary College* [1911/12]. Chicago: Mayer & Miller Company, [1911]; p. 21.
61. Among the colleges. *J Comp Med Vet Arch.* 19:704, 1898. *HathiTrust Digital Library*, <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/mdp.39015070490969>
62. The Practitioners' Course. *Eighteenth Annual Prospectus of the McKillip Veterinary College* [1911/12]. Chicago: Mayer & Miller Company, [1911]; p. 21.
63. Miller (Ref. 35)
64. McKillip Veterinary College Chicago. *Bulletin.* No. 30416-17, 1917 Jan 31. *HathiTrust Digital Library*, <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/uiug.30112115324581>
65. General information. Students' medical society. *Eighteenth Annual Prospectus of the McKillip Veterinary College* [1911/12]. Chicago: Mayer & Miller Company, [1911]; pp. 46-47.
66. Merillat LA Jr. West Point coach on college athletics. *McKillip Veterinary College Chicago. Bulletin.* N304:8-14, 1917 Jan 31. *HathiTrust Digital Library*, <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/uiug.30112115324581>
67. General information. Alumni association. *Eighteenth Annual Prospectus of the McKillip Veterinary College* [1911/12]. Chicago: Mayer & Miller Company, [1911]; p. 47.
68. Some history. Private schools. *AWV Bull.* 1(2):2, 1947 Oct. *WSU Libraries Digital Collections*, <https://content.libraries.wsu.edu/digital/collection/p16866coll6/id/10/rec/9>
69. *AWV Bull.* 1(1):3, 1947 Sep. *WSU Libraries Digital Collections*, <https://content.libraries.wsu.edu/digital/collection/p16866coll6/id/50/rec/8>
70. *AWV Bull.* 0(1):3, 1947 Mar. by 1948. *WSU Libraries Digital Collections*, <https://content.libraries.wsu.edu/digital/collection/p16866coll6/id/19/rec/1>
71. *AWV Bull.* 1(10):2, 1948 Jun. *WSU Libraries Digital Collections*, <https://content.libraries.wsu.edu/digital/collection/p16866coll6/id/29/rec/18>
72. Miller (Ref. 35)
73. McKillip MH. McKillip Veterinary College Announcement. *Am J Vet Med.* 13:40, 1918. *HathiTrust Digital Library*, <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/uc1.b2915110>
74. Committee on Intelligence and Education. Proceedings of the AVMA. *J Am Vet Med Assoc.* LVII ns10(2):205, 1920 May. *HathiTrust Digital Library*, <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/hvd.32044102835162>
75. Ibid.
76. The A.V.M.A. meeting at New Orleans. *Am J Vet Med.* 15:17, 1920. *HathiTrust Digital Library*, <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/msu.31293029797291>
77. The graduate veterinarians of 1921. *J Am Vet Med Assoc.* LIX ns14(6):679, 1921 Sep. *HathiTrust Digital Library*, <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/uc1.b3300344>
78. Merillat (Ref. 4)
79. Dr. M.H. McKillip (Ref. 5)
80. Merillat (Ref. 3)
81. History. McKillip Animal Hospital. Accessible at <https://www.mckillipvet.com/>

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



Howard H. Erickson, DVM, PhD, earned his DVM degree from Kansas State University in 1959 and his PhD degree from Iowa State University in veterinary physiology in 1966. He was engaged in private practice in Wahoo, Nebraska, from 1959-60, called to active duty in the United States Air Force

in 1960, serving from 1960-81, and retiring with the rank of Colonel. He joined the faculty of the College of Veterinary Medicine at Kansas State University in 1981 as a Professor of Physiology and retired in 2011 as Emeritus Professor of Physiology and History of Veterinary Medicine. Dr. Erickson continues to teach a course on the history of veterinary medicine at the College.



Susanne K. Whitaker, MSLS, AHIP, retired from the Flower-Sprecher Veterinary Library at Cornell University in 2013 after 37 years of service. She has been Secretary-Treasurer of the American Veterinary Medical History Society since 2004 and responsible for editorial content of *Veterinary Heritage* since 2015.

I. Prominent Deans and Faculty

Olaf Schwarzkopf, V.S. (1855-1923)

Olaf Schwarzkopf (Fig. 18) was born in Germany in 1855. After earning his veterinary degree at the Royal Veterinary College in Berlin in 1880, he practiced in Germany before immigrating to the United States in 1885. Initially, Schwarzkopf was assistant to Professor F.S. Billings in New York City, but he soon joined the US Army as a veterinarian for the 8th Cavalry Regiment in 1886.



Figure 18. Olaf Schwarzkopf from faculty composite, circa 1891. Source: University of Minnesota Archives. Arnold J. Kernkamp HCH. *One Hundred Years of Progress: The History of Veterinary Medicine in Minnesota*. Sr. Paul, MN: Minnesota Veterinary Historical Museum, 1994; p. 123.

“The horse as a producer of antitoxins,” explained the new process of diphtheria and tetanus antitoxin production. He also chaired the United States Veterinary Medical Association’s (renamed the American Veterinary Medical Association in 1898) Committee on Army Legislation from 1892-1893. That committee sought to improve the status of Army veterinarians.

Dr. Schwarzkopf returned to the Army in July 1900, assigned to the 3rd Cavalry Regiment where he served in the Philippines (1900-1902 and 1905-1907). When the US Army Veterinary Corps was established in 1916, he was commissioned Captain and then promoted to the rank of Major in 1917 before retiring in 1919. After returning to Germany, he passed away at Kappellen in 1923.

During his academic appointments, Schwarzkopf produced publications and performed research. One of his publications, “The horse as a producer of antitoxins,” explained the new process of diphtheria and tetanus antitoxin production. He also chaired the United States Veterinary Medical Association’s (renamed the American Veterinary Medical Association in 1898) Committee on Army Legislation from 1892-1893. That committee sought to improve the status of Army veterinarians.

REFERENCES:

Major Olaf Schwarzkopf, V.C., Regular Army. *Am J Vet Med*. 14(11):498-500, 1919 Oct. *HathiTrust Digital Library*, <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/uc1.b2915111>

Necrology. Olaf Schwarzkopf. *J Am Vet Med Assoc*. LXIII, n.s. 16(5): 668-670, 1923 Aug.

Francis Siegel Schoenleber, B.S.A., M.S.A., D.V.S., M.D. (1862-1936)

Born in Allen Township, La Salle County, Illinois, on August 6, 1862, Dr. Francis Siegel Schoenleber (Fig. 19) was reared on his parents’ farm and educated in the local schools. He took a course at the Morris (Illinois) Normal School and, following graduation, taught school in Grundy County for 2 years. He was principal of the Ransom (Illinois) schools and later was professor of German and Natural Science in the Norton Normal and Scientific Academy of Wilton Junction, Iowa.



Figure 19. Francis Siegel Schoenleber. Source: Elmore, Erickson. <https://www.slideserve.com/libitha/african-american-pioneers-in-veterinary-medicine>

Schoenleber then went to Ames, Iowa, and enrolled as a student in the College of Agriculture at Iowa State College. He received his B.S.A. in 1885 and his M.S.A. 2 years later. While he was taking his post-graduate work, he held the position of Assistant in Agriculture or farm foreman at Iowa State College. From 1888 to 1890, Dr. Schoenleber was associate editor of *Orange Judd Farmer* in Chicago, Illinois, and authored several books.

Simultaneously, he began the study of veterinary science at the Chicago Veterinary College, earning the D.V.S. degree in 1890. After graduation, Dr. Schoenleber located in Morris, Illinois, about 30 miles west of Chicago, where he engaged in general practice and operated a livery stable.

In 1896, Schoenleber was appointed to the chair of Anatomy and Histology in the McKillip Veterinary College in Chicago. He served as dean of McKillip Veterinary College from 1896 to 1899 and from 1901 to 1905. In 1901, Schoenleber earned M.D. degrees from the National Medical University and the Harvey Medical University in Chicago.

In 1905, Dr. Schoenleber joined the faculty of Kansas State Agricultural College, accepting the position of professor of veterinary medicine. Schoenleber was also the State Veterinarian of Kansas. During his tenure, the 4-year curriculum in veterinary medicine was established in 1905, and a Division of Veterinary Medicine was established in the School of Agriculture. Also during Dr. Schoenleber’s time there, the Veterinary Building, now known as Leasure Hall, was completed in 1908, the legislative practice act was passed in 1907, and significant progress was made in the control of blackleg and hog cholera. Dr. Schoenleber resigned from

Kansas State Agricultural College in April 1917 to become the general manager and secretary-treasurer of the Kansas Blackleg Serum Company.

REFERENCE:

Elmore RG, Erickson HH. *A Century of Excellence: Kansas State University College of Veterinary Medicine*. Virginia Beach, VA: The Donning Co., 2005.

Necrology. F.S. Schoenleber. *J Am Vet Med Assoc*. 88 ns41(2):214-215, 1936 Feb.

Edward Merillat, A.B., M.D.V. (1861-1923)

Brother of Louis Adolph Merillat, Edward Merillat (Fig. 20), affectionately known as “Doctor Ed,” was “a splendid man, a deep student, a quiet, unostentatious gentleman and one most highly esteemed by all who knew him.” Born at Wooster, Ohio, he had graduated in the first class from the McKillip Veterinary College in 1897. After serving as dean at McKillip for 2 years, he was appointed and remained chair of anatomy and physiology at the Chicago Veterinary College until 1913 when he retired due to “a breaking down of his voice.” Through the years while teaching, he was also in active practice with his brother L.A. Merillat. Additionally, he was listed as Professor of Physiology and Demonstrator of Anatomy at McKillip in the 1911-1912 *Prospectus for the McKillip Veterinary College* and Professor of Anatomy and Zoology in 1917. The College bands in Chicago were directed by Dr. E. Merillat. He passed away on July 5, 1923, at his hometown of Wooster, Ohio.



Figure 20. Edward Merillat.

Source: *Vet Med*. 18(8):758, 1923 Aug. HathiTrust Digital Library, <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/uc1.b2915115>

REFERENCES:

Eighteenth Annual Prospectus of the McKillip Veterinary College [1911/12]. Chicago: Mayer & Miller Company, [1911]; p. __.

Faculty. *McKillip Veterinary College, Chicago. Bulletin*. No. 304:1, 1917 Jan 31. HathiTrust Digital Library, <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/uiug.30112115324581>

Merillat LA, Campbell DM. Development of an American veterinary profession. *Veterinary Military History of the United States: with a brief record of the development of veterinary education, practice, organization and legislation*. Vol. 1. Chicago: Veterinary Magazine Corp., 1935; p. 331.

Quitman EL. Ed Merillat, the student's friend, passes away. *Vet Med*. 18(8):758, 1923 Aug. HathiTrust Digital Library, <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/uc1.b2915115>

Louis Adolphus Merillat, V.S. (1868-1956)

Over the years, Louis Adolphus Merillat (Fig. 21) became “an internationally known veterinary surgeon, teacher, journalist, and military leader” in the profession. Born in Wooster, Ohio, on March 22, 1868, he enrolled at the Ontario Veterinary College and earned his veterinary degree in 1888. Shortly after graduating and establishing a practice in Chicago, Merillat joined the faculty of the McKillip Veterinary College, where he did much of the equine dentistry. This experience led to his first book, *Animal Dentistry*, in 1903. In addition to teaching, Dr. Merillat served as secretary at McKillip from 1892 to 1900.



Figure 21. Dr. Louis A. Merillat. Source:

Vet Med. 51(4):601-602,606, 1956 Apr.

Upon leaving the McKillip Veterinary College in 1901, he was appointed professor of surgery at the Chicago Veterinary College until 1916. At the same time, he operated a busy practice and veterinary hospital with Dr. J.M. Wright until 1917 when he was commissioned as major in the Army Veterinary Corps. Dr. Merillat was commanding officer of the advanced veterinary hospital at Neufchateau (Vosges), France, executive officer of the Franco-American Veterinary Liaison Mission in Paris, and Chief Veterinarian of the First Army, American Expeditionary Forces until February 1919.

After the war, he returned to Chicago and became involved with publishing, first as associate editor of *Veterinary Medicine* (1913-1921) and then as managing editor (1921-1923). He joined Dr. J.V. Lacroix in publishing the *North American Veterinarian* (1924-1929).

Dr. Merillat was active in organized veterinary medicine, serving as vice-president, secretary, and ultimately as president of the American Veterinary Medical Association in 1924-1925. With Dr. D.M. Campbell, he authored the 2-volume *Veterinary Military History of the United States* in 1935.

Throughout his career, Dr. Merillat received many honors, including the French Legion of Honor (1919) and the Twelfth International Veterinary Congress Prize (1945). When he passed away on February 25, 1956, he was interred at Arlington National Cemetery with full military honors.

REFERENCES:

Dr. Louis A. Merillat, 1818-1956. *Vet Med*. 51(4):601-602,606, 1956 Apr.

Haas KB. Forgotten veterinarians 7: Louis A. Merillat. *Vet Herit*. 30(2):28-32, 2007 Nov.

Louis A. Merillat—1868-1956. *J Am Vet Med Assoc*. 128(6):319-320, 1956 Mar 15.

II. Notable Graduates

From the time the McKillip Veterinary College admitted its first class in 1894 until closing in 1920, the school produced 1,223 graduates, including Thomas Madison Doram, one of the early African-American graduates in the US in 1899 and Mignon Nicholson, the first woman to earn a veterinary degree in 1903.

Thomas Madison Doram, M.D.V. (1871-1941)



Figure 22. Thomas Madison Doram, MDV (1871-1941). Source:

Find-A-Grave, <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/90742326/thomas-madison-doram>

Thomas Madison Doram (Fig. 22) was born on March 27, 1871, in Danville, Kentucky, on the family farm. He worked with his father in carpentry to rebuild the African-American university he attended in 1892, Eckstein Norton University, after a fire gutted the building.

In 1896, Doram moved to Chicago and entered the McKillip Veterinary College, 4 years after the college was chartered. Doram advanced to the top of his class and was first in his class in materia medica in the first year, top of his class in pharmacy in the second year, and during his last or senior year he was appointed senior assistant instructor in Pharmacology.

He was one of 14 graduates from the McKillip Veterinary College auditorium on March 13, 1899, and the fourth African-American in the United States to earn a degree in veterinary medicine.

Specializing in veterinary surgery and dentistry as well as canine medicine, he practiced briefly in Evanston, Illinois (Fig. 23), where his sister was living. In 1902, he returned to Danville, Kentucky, becoming the first Black veterinarian in that state. The reason for the move may have been that Evanston was moving toward automobiles, while Kentucky still cared more for their horses.



Figure 23. Advertisement for T.M. Doram, M.D.V.

Source: *The Evanston Directory 1901*. Evanston: Evanston Press, 1901; p. 131. *Internet Archive*, <https://archive.org/details/evanstondirector1901evan/mode/2up>

Doram married Bertha James Hancock on October 21, 1901. In 1913, Bertha's younger sister, Nettie Blair Hancock, married Booker T. Washington, Jr., son of Booker T. Washington, founder of Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute. He was also part of the Central Kentucky Funeral and Embalming company and an active member of the Republican Party. He died on November 20, 1941, in Danville, Kentucky.

REFERENCES:

- Commencement exercises. M'Killip Veterinary College. *Am Vet Rev.* 23:129-130, 1899. *HathiTrust Digital Library*, <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/uiuo.ark:/13960/t7vn1td35>
- Dr. Thomas Madison Doram. *Find-A-Grave*. <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/90742326/thomas-madison-doram>
- Denis MJ, Grey CD. The Doram Family of Danville, Kentucky. African-American Genealogy Group of Kentucky, March, 2016.
- Kemper JM. Dennis and Diadamia Doram: A View of the American Dream. Kentucky Ancestors Online (Kentucky Historical Association), 2014 February 8. Accessed March 8, 2021 at: <https://kentuckyancestors.org/dennis-and-diadamia-doram-a-view-of-the-american-dream/>
- Robinson D. Thomas Madison Doram: A Veterinarian on the North Shore. 2013 July 26. *Shorefront Journal*. <https://shorefrontjournal.wordpress.com/tag/mckillip-veterinary-college/>
- T.M. Doram, M.D.V. *The Evanston Directory 1901*. Evanston: Evanston Press, 1901; p. 131. *Internet Archive*, <https://archive.org/details/evanstondirector1901evan/mode/2up>

Mignon Nicholson, M.D.V. (1876-1906)



Figure 24. Mrs. Mignon Nicholson.

Source: *Delphos Daily Herald*. 1903 Jan 15.

Mignon [or Mignonne] Marie Nicholson (Fig. 24) was born in 1876. A January 15, 1903 article published in the *Delphos Daily Herald*, Delphos, Ohio titled, "Only Woman Veterinary Surgeon in the World," provides some background about her. The article describes her as a tiny woman, graceful, slender, and attractive. Her childhood was spent in Ravenswood, Long Island, New York. She married when she was very young; be-

cause her husband traveled a lot in his work, she began to study dogs and cats and kept busy treating the sick animals of her neighbors. The article suggests she had done some informal study of human medicine and surgery. It also notes she handled horses adequately and was required to work with horses in her studies at the McKillip Veterinary College. Nicholson preferred small animals and was already well known in Chicago and planned to remain there.

A similar article, "A New Feminine Calling," was published in the *Indiana Messenger* on January 28, 1903. This article notes that Mrs. Mignonette Nicholson was preparing herself for graduation from veterinary college and had already proved successful in her treatment of dogs.

Nicholson probably enrolled in the McKillip Veterinary College in Chicago in October of 1900 because it was a 3-year program. The 1901 *Chicago City Directory* lists Mignon Nicholson as a veterinary surgeon, living at 5727 South Paulina when she was a student at McKillip. Because the academic session extended from October to March, it was common for students to practice veterinary medicine when they were not in school. On page 788 of the 1901 *Chicago Blue Book*, there is a listing for Mignon Nicholson, Boarding Kennels. It also notes Angora cats, imported mice for sale, all pets called for and returned.

Nicholson graduated from the McKillip Veterinary College in 1903 with an M.D.V. (Medical Doctor Veterinary) degree during the 7th annual commencement exercises. At the 6th commencement on March 28, 1902, there were 19 graduates in the class of 1902, so there might have been 20-30 in the class of 1903.

On September 10, 1903, about 6 months after she graduated, Nicholson married John Jackson, the owner of a restaurant, Becker and Jackson's, at Lake Street and Wabash Avenue. The marriage license indicates that Jackson was 45 years old and Nicholson 27 years old. Less than 3 years later, on June 8, 1906, the headlines on the front page of the *Chicago Daily Tribune* read as follows: "SPURNED WIFE SHOOTS SELF: Mrs. Mignon Jackson Commits Suicide in Husband's Café." The Jacksons had been separated for about 2 months. She came to his restaurant, hoping for reconciliation; however, he refused because of her use of alcohol. She then stood up, drew a revolver, pressed the muzzle of the gun to her temple and shot herself.

REFERENCES:

Commencement exercises. McKillip Veterinary College. *Journal of Comparative Medicine and Veterinary Archives*. 23:317-318, 1902. HathiTrust Digital Library, <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/mdp.39015070491157>

A new feminine calling. *Indiana Messenger*. 1903 Jan 28.

Only woman veterinary surgeon in the world. *Delphos Daily Herald*, 1903 Jan 15.

Spurned wife shoots self: Mrs. Mignon Jackson commits suicide in husband's café. *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 1906 Jun 8.

Instructions for Authors

The editors of *Veterinary Heritage* welcome the submission of manuscripts related to all aspects of veterinary and animal health-related history. Manuscripts should not exceed 5000 words and must not have been previously published; they should be based on original historical research or analysis of existing literature.

Originality of subject, general interest, sources used, interpretation, and style, among other criteria, will be considered. Articles accepted for publication become the property of *Veterinary Heritage* and may not be published elsewhere without permission. Authors are responsible for statements of fact or opinion, and for accuracy of references. At their option, the editors may elect for peer-review of the submitted manuscripts.

For general format (and matters not touched on here) see a recent issue or go to <http://avmhs.org/vetheritage.html>

BOOK – Dunlop RH, Williams DJ. *Veterinary Medicine: An Illustrated History*. St. Louis: Mosby, 1996; p. 7. For more than two authors (book or journal article) use first two authors and *et al.*

Ibid. pp. 220-221. (Used for second citation of same source, if immediately following.) If other citations intervene, use author, reference number, and paging, e.g.: Dunlop, Williams (Ref. 1) p. 104.

BOOK CHAPTER – Miller EB. Military veterinary medicine. In: Smithcors JF. *The American Veterinary Profession: Its Background and Development*. Ames: Iowa State Univ Press, 1963; p. 668.

JOURNAL ARTICLE – Steele JH. A personal history of veterinary public health. *Vet Herit*. 19: 38-44, 1996.

NOTE – Missouri farmers' actions coincided with the practice of trail driving from Texas.

Send electronic manuscripts to: *Editor, Veterinary Heritage* by email to: avmhs.info@gmail.com

Editor, *Veterinary Heritage*
c/o AVMHS Secretary-Treasurer
23 Wedgewood Drive
Ithaca, NY 14850-1064