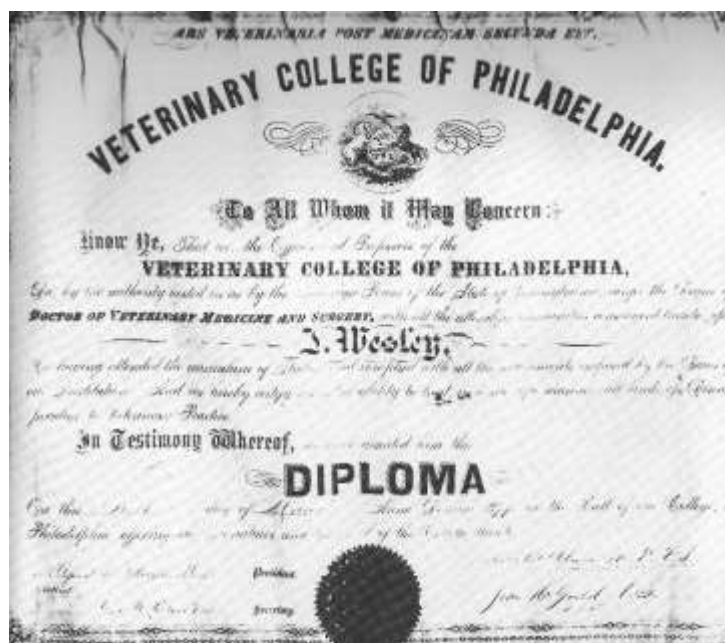


American Veterinary Medical History Society

"Devoted to the Diffusion of Veterinary History"

1852-1866

Veterinary College of Philadelphia Philadelphia, Pennsylvania



From: Smithcors, p. 119

Philadelphia native Robert Jennings (d. 1893) gave lectures on veterinary medicine to students at several medical colleges in that city from 1846 to 1850. He had matriculated from the Philadelphia Medical College in 1846. Along with two medical professors, James Bryan and William Gibson, Jennings became the principal organizer of what is considered to be the first veterinary college in the United States. He had obtained a subscription of \$40,000 from a group of Philadelphians, including a number of prominent medical men.

The Veterinary College of Philadelphia received its charter on April 15, 1852. "Announcements of a course of lectures to begin in the fall of 1853 were circulated, and a number of inquiries were apparently received, but no students materialized." "Failing to secure a class of students for its proposed sessions, of 1857-58 and also for 1858-59, it renewed efforts for the session of 1859-60; which efforts were awarded by the application of two students, namely Jacob Dilts, of Lambertsville, New Jersey, a graduate of the Boston Veterinary Institute, and W[illiam A]. Wisdom, of Wilmington, Delaware, who had been practicing Veterinary Medicine and Surgery for nearly thirty years, a portion of which time was in the City of New York. With these two students the first session of the Veterinary College of Philadelphia commenced."

“Unfortunately for the new institution the course of lectures had scarcely begun, when, from some cause not explained, W.W. Fraley, T.J. Corbyn, and Aug. Tegtmier tendered their resignation as professors in the College.” Dr. Jennings contacted Trustee Dr. G.W. Bowler. “The expenses falling heavily upon the purses of the trustees and faculty, who received no pecuniary recompense for the services, an appeal was made to the Philadelphia Society for the Promotion of Agriculture, for assistance, which appeal was referred to the executive committee.” After a favorable visit by the Committee that included the library and museum of teaching specimens, it was resolved that the College could use the Society’s facilities. Thus, “during this session the rooms of the Philadelphia Society for Promoting Agriculture were granted to the College for their lectures during this winter session. The College continued to hold its sessions in the Agricultural Hall until its suspension in 1966.”

Few students enrolled and the number of graduates is unknown. The school closed in 1866. As of that year, Dr. William A. Wisdom was listed as a Trustee of the College. Dr. Jacob Dilts was one of the charter signers from New Jersey when the United States Veterinary Medical Association (later known as the American Veterinary Medical Association) was established in 1863 in New York City.

MORE INFORMATION:

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