

Preface

We began the research that underpins this book some twenty years ago (Warwick and Macdonald 2003). Our aim then, as now, was to seek out and uncover the various stories of veterinary education in Edinburgh (Macdonald, Warwick and Johnston 2005). We have therefore published our findings in the Edinburgh Research Archive (ERA) as a series of detailed articles that focused on particular aspects of that development. The initial core of the research material lay, sometimes openly, sometimes well hidden, on the shelves of the libraries in the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies, in the archives of the Royal Highland and Agricultural Society of Scotland and within the National Library of Scotland. The unfolding evidence soon led us to the Centre for Research Collections (CRC) in the Edinburgh University Library, to the Edinburgh Room of the City Library, to the Archives of the City of Edinburgh and beyond.

It was quickly clear that the evolution of the teaching of veterinary medicine and surgery in Edinburgh was not the province of one school or college alone. It was also obvious that there had been secure anatomical and medical foundations in Edinburgh upon which to build this academic and clinical discipline. But why had it not happened sooner? What caused the delay? As the data was gathered and sorted, the various timelines of veterinary education in Edinburgh became visible. The personality and family background to the institution in 1823 of the William Dick Veterinary School, once known, were obvious. The establishment of separate Colleges of Veterinary Medicine, established in 1857 by John Gamgee and in 1873 by William Williams, were understandably distinctive entities when it was clear why they had budded off from William Dick's College. The perhaps unexpected establishment of the wartime Polish Veterinary Faculty, from its beginnings in 1943, to become another largely self-contained entity,

but associated with the Royal (Dick) Veterinary College, raised a plethora of questions and a wholly unexpected new finding. During the nineteenth century there was a curious dichotomy in the constant, sometimes ambivalent institutional arm's-length, 'veterinary presence' of the University of Edinburgh, when compared with the many critical, indeed essential, individual medical contributions of teaching, examining and research support to veterinary education provided over those decades by medical staff at Edinburgh University. This made a comprehensive and cohesive description of these contributions awkward.

The involvement of the university with the veterinary college was progressively resolved during the twentieth century. It followed the establishment of veterinary degrees in the University of Edinburgh in 1911 and the later embodiment of the Royal (Dick) Veterinary College within the University of Edinburgh in 1952. One offshoot of the veterinary college's long association with the university was the development of the postgraduate Centre for Tropical Veterinary Medicine in 1970. Thereby, yet another centre of veterinary education came into being, embedded within, yet quite distinctly different from, the Veterinary School; how did such an organisation dealing with tropical animal diseases come to be located in temperate Scotland?

We have been pragmatic in dividing the remaining time periods into largely chronological chapters. These partitions are associated with important changes in the teaching accommodation, adjustments in internal administration and finally with an all-too-brief summary of two hundred years of veterinary student life in Edinburgh. Who were these men and women and where did they come from? What was it that brought them from all over the world to the veterinary schools and colleges of Edinburgh? What did they do and how did they live when they were here? And where did they go to after they received their veterinary education? The whole student topic is clearly worthy of detailed analysis and presentation in a book on its own.

We have taken care to accurately source all the information presented in the book and have presented references to assist the reader's access to further information. We have been assisted in the compilation and analysis of information by many people in libraries, universities, museums, archives and veterinary institutions in this country and abroad, as well as by the alumni of the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies. However, we take responsibility for any errors that may have crept in.

References

- ERA. <https://era.ed.ac.uk/handle/1842/898/discover> (accessed 4 August 2022).
- Macdonald, A. A., Warwick, C. M. and Johnston, W. T. 2005. Locating veterinary education in Edinburgh in the nineteenth century. *Book of the Old Edinburgh Club*, New Series, 6, 41–71. <https://era.ed.ac.uk/handle/1842/2199> (accessed 4 August 2022).
- Warwick, C. M. and Macdonald, A. A. 2003. The New Veterinary College, Edinburgh, 1873 to 1904. *The Veterinary Record*, 153, 380–6. <https://era.ed.ac.uk/handle/1842/2198> (accessed 4 August 2022).