

Union County, Veterinary Account Book, 1878–1889

Natalie Burriss and Caroline G. Emenaker

George R. C. Wright was not native to Indiana, but he spent the latter years of his life serving the people and livestock of Union County, Indiana. Born in 1845, he lived in Preble County, Ohio, for the first several years of his life. After serving in the Union army during the Civil War and marrying Rachel Pelton in 1867, he made his home in Butler County, Ohio, where he worked as a blacksmith's assistant. By 1880, George and Rachel Wright and their daughter Susanah had moved to Indiana and settled in Cottage Grove, Union County, where George Wright continued to work as a blacksmith.¹

We do not know exactly when Wright made the transition from blacksmithing to treating animals. From his business card, which is pasted at the back of his account book, it appears that he established his Cottage Grove veterinary practice in 1887. However, a closer look at the accounts show that he had already been treating the community livestock for several years.² The connection between blacksmiths and veterinarians is much closer than it might seem today. Many blacksmiths were also known as farriers. A farrier was one who, besides crafting and attaching horseshoes, attended to the basics of livestock care in the absence of a trained veterinarian. Farrier training was minimal but desperately needed throughout the Midwest during the late 1800s as settlers moved west with their livestock and farther away from the few veterinary colleges that existed. It was not until 1879 that the U.S. government issued the first standards in veterinary practice and education, eventually replacing the amateur with the professional.³

Below is a list of names as they appear in Wright's veterinary account book. Beside some of the names are dates. There are also a few accounts that appear to have been "carried [over] from [the] Old Book."⁴

Notes

1. George R. C. Wright, Death Certificate, Indiana Archives and Records Administration, Indianapolis, IN; Year: 1919; Roll: 3; George Wright, Census Year: 1850; Place: Somers, Preble, Ohio; Record Group: 29; Series Number: M432; Roll: 723; Page: 282b; Geo Wright, Census Year: 1860; Place: Somers, Preble, Ohio; Record Group: 29; Series Number: M653; Roll: M653_1026; Page: 240; FHL microfilm: 805026; George Wright, Census Year: 1870; Place: Hamilton, Butler, Ohio; Roll: M593_1176; Page: 63B; George Wright, Census Year: 1880; Place: Center, Union, Indiana; Roll: 316; Page: 46D; Enumeration District: 49; George R. Wright, Civil War Record and Profile, American Civil War Research Database, Duxbury, MA; George R. Wright, Marriage Index, Compiled Marriage Index, 1803–1900, all from Ancestry; Account Book of G. R. C. Wright, veterinary physician and surgeon, Cottage Grove, Union County, F 0030, Indiana Historical Society, Indianapolis.
2. Account Book of G. R. C. Wright.
3. Norman F. Cheville, *Pioneer Science and the Great Plagues: How Microbes, War, and Public Health Shaped Animal Health* (West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press, 2021), 23, 32, 38–39, 275.
4. Account Book of G. R. C. Wright.

Veterinary Accounts of George R. C. Wright

Name	Year	Notes
John Coon		
J[---m?] Bell		
John Russell		
O[gg/zz]ie Gableman		Osgood, Rip[e]y Co., Indiana
Jim Paddock		
Jerr[i/y] Pritchett	1878	
Chuff Witter		
B. S. Steurt	1879–1880	
George Vanosdale	1879	
Mort Armstrong	1879	
Harrison Kebber		
[Bart Low/Bartlow]		
Artha Johnston		
Elwood Johnson	1881	
Dr. G. R. Chitwood	1880–1881	
Crist Gableman		
Pass Thomas & Williams		Sho[e]ing, Chanet Harness, Rep log wagon
Martin Witter		
Charles Wridner	1880	
D. B. Hayworth	1879	
Geo Rigsby	1879	
[Cunigum?] Haywort		
Deris Thornton	1883	
P. Brown		Carried from Old Book
Kiser		Carried from Old Book
Sam Cline		
E. Johnson	[1881– 1882]	
David Montgomery		
Uriah Vanskiver		Sedan, Chautaqud Co., Kansas
David Bromz		
Chuff Witter		
Jim [---] Matix	1880	
John Mc Vay		Carried from Old
Pass Thomas	1880	
George Barnard		
Bill Wonell		
[---] Johnson		

Geo Barnard		
Dr. Mccristy	1879–1881	
O. Kebbeer	1881	Sho[e]ing Charleys colt, shoing Black mare
O, Kebber	1882–1883	Vis Mare, Rep Carriage, tenden Horse, visit gray Horse
Ed Maxwell	1880 & 1881	
John Bell	188[---]	
[Pastur For Maud?]	1886	
D. B. Hayworth	[1881, 1884]	
Sam Ha[---]kersmith	1880	
John Coonn	1880, 1881, 1882	
Andy Morris	[1884]	Sho[e]ing
Wm Finch	1884	visit colt, medicine, visit Bay Mare
Mort Armstrong	1881 [and 1883]	
Geo Rigsby	1883	
Elwood Johnson		
Charley Clark	1881	
Dr. McCristy	1883	
John Bell		
John Thompson		
William McWhorter		
John [Coom/Coonn]	1883–1887	
Li[z/g]e Montgomery		Old Book act
Charley Bates	1884. 1885	
John McCray	1884[– 1888]	
Lewis Cline	1883	To sorrel mare
Jame Gavin	1883	Visit bay mare
John Fallen	1883	Medicine for mare B, to box salve
Bill Ramsey		Medicine
Mike Gavin	1884	[Black colt cure?]
Nickl[a/e]ss Dugan		To ring bone
Bill Montgomery		Visit cow
Carn Miller		Night visit
Geo Barnard		Night visit, obstetric
Frank [Wridner/Wridirner]	1884	Visit Horse
Isrel Freeman	1884	Bay horse Kicked, by box salve, treatment

J. Stone	1884	Black horse fistula, Bord 25 ct per Day, treatment
Mr. Deboyce		Bay mare [come?] feed 25 per Day/treatment
Geo. Beard		Case of obstetrics
Geo. Williams	[1884]	Visit bay runaway, medicine shoulder
Andy [C?]opllan		Gray horse, born B[---], visit bay mare
Chalmer Elliot		Visit gray mare
Mrs. Laland		Visit cow falling womb
Mrs. [---]ilz		Visit cow
John McDill		Visit cow night
Mr. Neoing?		
Martin Murphy		Visit bay horse
Geo. McDill		Visit bay horse
Robin [---]		Visit gray mare
Mr. Nevis	1884	Black mare [c---], one week Bo[a]rd, treatment
Warner Gardner		Visit Old Lidy
Geo. [Richeson?]		Visit Dock
D. B. Hayworth	1885	Visit colt
Warner Gardner		Visit Bess
Geo. Kelor		Visit major
Milt Maxwell		Visit cow
Dill Elliott		Visit bay horse
Elick Beard		Medicine for [---] . . .Horse
Denis [Agen?]		Bay horse [---], 4 days bo[a]rd, box salve, salve & liniment
Eanick Brown		Visit cow
John Pritchett		Eye medicine
Bill Montgomery		Visit cow
henry Pinkestor		Medicine, visit mare Night
John Pritchett		Visit horse
George Jenkins		Visit sore mare
Denis Eagen		Bay Horse Bo[a]rd, box salve, liniment & salve
[Jim?] Gard		Visit colt
Bill McCali[f/s]s		Visit cow
Geo. Williams		To visit mare
J. Elliott	1886	
Geo. Barnard	1886 &1887	
J. Smith	188[5?]	
Bob Gard	1889	
Tom [Bamer/Banner]		Sho[e]ing

F. M. Armstrong	1881	
Charley Bates		
Lewis Groves		
J. H. McCray	1889	
S. Grist	1884	Fannie Had a Colt from Snap Morgan 1881, Bred Fannie (Young Pride) A Clidesdale of [---] & Lairds
Martin Gleeson	1885	
J. D. S[e][u/a]man		
Wm. McWhorter	1881[– 1883]	
Geo. Williams	1881	
John McCray	1879, 1880, 1881, 1882, 1883	
Dan Eikenbery	188[3?]	
Daniel Russell		
Stephen Haden		
Mart Witter	1879	
Charly Danford		
Herbert Danford		
Geo. D. Newhall & Co.		Cincinnati
John Church & Co.		Cincinnati
Bill [Merl/More]		
Charles Clark		
Moline Johnson		
John Bell		
Bill [Merl/More]	[1880]	
John Pritchard		
John Armstrong		
Geo. Barnard		

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