

West Pointers of 1900

LXXI



JAMES RUFUS McVICKER, Ph.D., J.D., S.J.D.
Major, Officers' Reserve Corps

Home Address: 1117 East College Street, Iowa City, Ia.
College of Law, John B. Stetson University, Deland, Fla.

Cadet, M. A June 18, 1895
Honorably discharged January 26, 1897
Corporal, Co. "F", 51st Iowa Infantry. U. S. Volunteers, May 30, 1898
Honorably discharged March 24, 1899
Candidate, R. O. T. C. (Fort Snelling, Minn.) August 27, 1917
to October 25, 1917
Captain, Military Intelligence Section, O. R. C May 16, 1924
Major November 1, 1929
Transferred to Auxiliary Section, O. R. C August 17, 1932

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James Rufus McVicker, son of Norvel Wilson McVicker and his wife, the former Miss Margaret Emma Hill, was born at Wilton Junction, Muscatine County, Ia., July 6, 1876. He attended the public schools of his native town and at Sigourney, Ia., and was graduated from Sigourney High School on May 25, 1893. While residing with his parents at Sigourney, he received an appointment to West Point in 1896, following a competitive examination held the preceding year, which had resulted in his being placed as an alternate.

Following his graduation from high school, he clerked for about a year for his uncle, James R. Hill, in the latter's store in Crescent City, Fla., then returned home and soon after, entered the employ of the *Keokuk County News*. Upon receipt of his appointment to West Point, he resigned his position on the newspaper, in March 1896, in order to prepare for the entrance examinations, which he in June passed with satisfactory grades.

In June 1896, he reported for duty at the Military Academy, and was admitted as a Cadet and a member of the Class of 1900. Owing to deficiency in his mathematical examination at plebe January, Cadet McVicker was honorably discharged and returned to his home. He was, however, recommended by the Academic Board for reappointment, and was reappointed by his Congressman as an alternate, but declined in favor of Emory J. Pike (Class of 1901), who was appointed in his stead. Harry S. McVicker had offered to quit high school and go to work so that his brother could accept reappointment, but James R. McVicker declined to accept this sacrifice. His declination of reappointment was from a sense of duty, his parents being unable to meet debts and mortgage payments without his help.

Soon after returning to his home, Mr. McVicker received an appointment as a rural school teacher, and thus began his career in educational work.

When war was declared against Spain in April, 1898, Mr. McVicker gave up his school to re-enter the military service. On May 2nd, he enlisted in the 3rd Regiment of Iowa Infantry, then being mobilized at Des Moines, IA and on May 30th, he was mustered into Federal service as a Corporal in Company "F", the regiment being re-designated as the 51st Iowa Infantry, United States Volunteers.

His was one of the regiments selected for service in the Philippine Islands, and he served with it during the concluding phases of the Spanish-American War, and the early part of the Philippine Insurrection. He was honorably discharged on March 24, 1899. His mother died while he was in active service in the Philippines.

While in the volunteer service, Corporal McVicker acted as war correspondent for the Ottumwa, Ia., *Daily Courier*. His articles from the Philippines, which appeared at frequent intervals, were widely read in his own home county of Keokuk, and not only kept the people at home informed concerning the activities of the 51st Iowa Infantry, but gave him considerable prestige which later was of value to him when he was a local political candidate and office holder.

Upon returning to the United States, Mr. McVicker resumed his duties as a teacher, and spent the following year with the rural schools of his county. He then attended Iowa State College at Ames, Ia., and Valparaiso University at Valparaiso, Ind., receiving from the latter his baccalaureate degree in Science in 1902.

In November, 1902, he was elected Clerk of the District Court of Keokuk County, Ia., and was re-elected in 1904, leading his county ticket by several hundred votes in each election. He discharged the duties of this office for the four years, 1903 to 1907.

The first half of the year 1907, Mr. McVicker was Principal of Schools at Fremont, Ia., and from September, 1907, until June, 1910, he was Superintendent of Schools at Keota, Ia.

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He attended summer session courses at the University of Michigan Law School at Ann Arbor, Mich., followed by courses at the State University of Iowa at Iowa City, Ia., where he received his Bachelor's degree in Arts in 1911, and his Master's degree in Arts in 1912. He continued his law courses for a year's work during this time, and a full additional year in the College of Law of the State University of Iowa, earning the degree of Bachelor of Laws (LL.B) in 1913, having taken full advantage of time by attendance at University summer sessions.

For the next four years Mr. McVicker was a practicing attorney at Sigourney, Ia., individually for the first two years, and then for two years in partnership with Hon. Wilson H. Hamilton, now a Justice of the Supreme Court of Iowa.

Upon the entrance of the United States into the World War, Mr. McVicker participated as a volunteer in the course of instruction at the second Officers' Training Camp at Fort Snelling, Minn., from August 27 until October 25, 1917. He then resumed educational work, going to Hortonville, Wis., in November, where he superintended the public schools for the remainder of the school year.

During 1918 and 1919, Mr. McVicker was Superintendent of the Dow City, Ia. Consolidated Schools; and for the next four years he filled a similar office in the Belle Plaine, Ia. public Schools. He then returned to the Graduate College of the University of Iowa, where he received his Doctorate of Philosophy in 1925, specializing in Political Science. He also received the degree of Doctor of Jurisprudence (J.D.) from the College of Law at the same time. Mr. McVicker then resumed the practice of law at Cedar Rapids, Ia., in partnership with Walter R. Watsabaugh, a law school classmate, continuing through 1925 and 1926.

During these years, he gave some time to teaching, serving as a Graduate Assistant in the Department of Political Science at the University of Iowa from January to June of 1924, teaching a course in "State and Municipal Government," and during the summer sessions of 1925 to 1928, at the University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas, teaching courses in "American State Government," "Political Parties and Electoral Problems," and "National Administration".

Dr. McVicker discontinued his partnership practice of law in August, 1926, and accepted appointment on the Law School faculty of the University of Detroit, Mich., as Professor of Law. He continued there through 1926 to 1928, and in 1929-1930, was Professor of Law at Chicago-Kent College of Law, Chicago, Ill.

In September, 1930, he entered the Graduate Department of the Law School of Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass., where he earned the degrees of Master of Laws (LL.M) in 1931, and Doctor of Juridical Science (S.J.D.) in 1932. He then resumed individual practice of law at Iowa City, Ia. In 1935, Dr. McVicker accepted the office of Acting Professor of Law at the University of Kentucky College of Law, Lexington, K., during the year's leave of absence of Dean Alvin E. Evans. Having concluded this appointment, in the late summer of 1936, he returned to Iowa City, and again took up individual practice of law. Dr. McVicker is at present visiting Professor of Law at John B. Stetson University, Deland, Fla.

In all, Dr. McVicker has earned, in course, eight academic degrees: three Bachelor's, two Master's and three Doctor's, a most unusual record and one that called forth comment in the *Iowa City Press-Citizen* in its issue of December 16, 1933. In addition to his service on college and university faculties, Dr. McVicker served for twelve years in public school work, nine and a half years of which were spent in administration.

Dr. McVicker has also done a considerable amount of research and writing. From 1923 to 1925 he served as a Research Assistant on the staff of the State Historical Society of Iowa. Among his writings may be mentioned three chapters in the 716-page volume entitled "County Government and Administration in Iowa," edited by Dr. Benjamin F. Shambaugh, and published in 1925 by the State

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Historical Society of Iowa. His subjects were: Chapter VI, "The Clerk of the District Court"; Chapter VII, "The County Attorney"; and Chapter XI, "The Administration of Justice in the County."

He is the author of an historical monograph of 101 pages, entitled "The Iowa State Bar Association and Law Reform," published by the State Historical Society of Iowa in the *Iowa Journal of History and Politics* in April, 1926. He was the reviser for the 1925 edition of Aurner's "An Introduction to the History and Government of Iowa," published by Houghton-Mifflin Company.

Others of his writings deserving mention are: a brochure entitled "Representative Stipend-Holders in the Graduate College of the State University of Iowa, 1900-1920", published by the University in its series, "Aims and Progress of Research," on July 1, 1926; and a law review article entitled "Fair Comment as Defense to Libel in Illinois," published in *Chicago-Kent Review*, February, 1930. He has written a monograph entitled "The Seventeenth Century Justice of the Peace in England," which appeared in the May, 1936, issue of the *Kentucky Law Journal*.

With his educational, historical, literary, and legal interests, Dr. McVicker has found time for a further interest in national defense. Since 1924, he has held commissions as Captain and Major in the Officers' Reserve Corps, and has pursued basic and advanced courses bearing upon army organization, field service, military, administrative and international law, the Military Intelligence Service and the functions of the Judge Advocate General's Department. As a reserve officer, Major McVicker completed tours of active service in 1929 and 1930. Called for such service in 1932, he was found to be physically disabled for active duty and was thereupon transferred to the Auxiliary Reserve Section of the Reserve Corps with recommendation for his detail if called to limited duty in emergency in the Judge Advocate General's Section.

Major McVicker was married at Lone Tree, Johnson County, Ia., on March 12, 1905, to Miss Virginia Matilda Constant, daughter of Henry and Amanda Constant, nee DeMarce. Mrs. McVicker's parents were born near St. Eugene in the Province of Quebec, about fifty miles from Montreal, and both her parents' families removed to Iowa before the Civil War. During that conflict, three of her uncles served in Iowa regiments of volunteers.

Major and Mrs. McVicker have five children: Bernadine Constant McVicker, born March 1, 1906; Mildred Hill McVicker, August 10, 1908; Benjamin Franklin McVicker, August 6, 1912; Thomas Edison McVicker, June 1, 1915; and Patricia Virginia McVicker, April 27, 1921.

Bernadine was graduated from Belle Plaine, Ia., High School, in June, 1923, and from the State University of Iowa with a degree of A.B. in June, 1926. She was a high school teacher for two years, and on August 27, 1928, married Raymond E. Norman, also a graduate of the University of Iowa, and who is now an accountant for the City of Cedar Rapids, Ia.

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Benjamin was graduated from Iowa City High School in June, 1931, and having enlisted in the Navy, was graduated from the Machinists' Mates' School, Hampton Roads Va., in September 1932. In August, 1933, he married Miss Dorothy Allmond, of Philadelphia, Pa. His service in the Navy covered the period from August, 1931, to August, 1935.

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Two of Major McVicker's great-grandfathers, Duncan McVicker and Jeremiah Hill, were born in Scotland, the one in 1739 and the other about 1746. The latter lived to an advanced age of some years over a century. They both emigrated to the American colonies, the former settling in New Jersey and the latter in Pennsylvania. Captain Duncan McVicker served in the Second Regiment, New Jersey Line, of the Continental Army, and Jeremiah Hill as a private in the Third Regiment of the Pennsylvania Line.

His uncle, Ashbel F. Hill, (1842-1876), of the 8th Pennsylvania Reserves, lost a leg at the Battle of Antietam. He was afterwards an author and newspaper writer of note in Pennsylvania.

His brother, Harry S. McVicker, Superintendent of Keokuk County, Ia., Public Schools, has served in this office since January 1, 1909, and was recently re-elected for another three-year term.

Mr. McVicker was admitted to the practice of law in the State and Federal Courts in Iowa, and became a practicing member of the Bar in Keokuk, Linn and Johnson counties. He is a Mason, holding membership in Webb Lodge, No.182, A.F. & A.M., at Sigourney, Ia., where he was raised in January, 1900. He has taken the degrees of the Royal Arch Masons of Iowa. He is a Phi Delta Kappa man. He holds life membership in the State Historical Society of Iowa. He became a member of the University of Kentucky Club, Lexington, Ky. He is also a member of Harry L. Stone Camp, No.31, Department of Iowa, United Spanish War Veterans, at Oskaloosa, Ia., and the Reserve Officers' Association of the United States. He is affiliated with the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Dr. McVicker is listed in "Who's Who in American Education," with a sketch (Page xxvi) in the Seventh Edition (1935-36) of that publication. He is also listed in "Who's Who in Kentucky" (1936).

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Addendum

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Photos by Public Relations Officer, West Point, N. Y.

To the Class of 1900, United States Military Academy

As the years pass over our heads old scenes, old associations, old friends, mean more and more to all of us. Some say this is a sign of advancing old age. We say it is a sign that we still have an interest in the best things of life.

Over half of the Class are still alive—very much alive. (About 60% of the Class as a whole, about 56% of the graduates).

"The old farm," "the old oaken bucket", "the cottage by the sea", the "old home town",—memories of them are cherished by each of us. We should like to see them again as they once were. But too often the march of time has obliterated the old scenes, the old associations. The friends of our youth are no longer there—we can never bring them together again. We have only memories left.

Where else in the World than at West Point can we find the old scenes and associations of our boyhood unchanged and unspoiled? The Corps of Cadets is still the long gray line of which we once were a part. The barracks in which we lived, the academic building, the old chapel, (in a different place, to be sure), the plain, the camp, "flirtation"—they are all there as they were half a century ago.

And best of all, where else can we see at one time, a hundred friends of our youth, classmates and others, to call up familiar associations, and long dormant memories? Nowhere else in the World!

And so finally, are there any you would rather see than the classmates and friends of Cadet days? Is there any place you would rather go than West Point, the most beautiful spot on earth, every aspect of which is graven on your memory? Is there any experience in your life more delightful than a Class reunion at West Point?

Not many more such opportunities will be vouchsafed to any of us. So let us not miss this one, if it be possible to attend.

Please write at once to Paul Stanley Bond, 2205 California Street, N. W., Washington, D. C., and let us know whether you can certainly, probably, or possibly attend. This implies no obligation to do so, but we wish to make some arrangements, and these will depend in a measure on the num-



The Long Gray Line

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ber who will attend. When you write tell us something of late occurrences in your own life and that of your family, or items of interest concerning other classmates with whom you have had contact. We have not had a Class Bulletin since Arthur Hyde died, and it is time for another.

The Class Secretary will write you later concerning arrangements, where accommodations for wives and family members may possibly be obtained, transportation facilities, and other details, and will also send out a report on the probabilities or possibilities of attendance.

Meantime, please let us hear from you promptly, whatever may be the prospects that you will be with us next June week at the Academy.

Sincerely yours,

W. S. Grant

W. S. Grant,
Class President



March, 1945



1. Neely	24. Perkins	46. Grant	69. Frost	92. Graham
2. Godfrey	25. Roth	47. Frohwitter	70. Bond, P. S.	93. Amos
3. Soléllar	26. Root	48. Rhett	71. Pillsbury	94. Henry
4. Sullivan	27. Prentice	49. Gleaves	72. Lawson	95. Van Schaick
5. Read	28. Callison	50. Hunter	73. Davis, F. E.	96. Nones
6. Wright	29. Allen	51. Lee	74. Haackenberg	97. Bolton
7. Hyde	30. Haskell	52. Robinson, E. W.	75. Hurt	98. Prunty
8. Simmons	31. Baird	53. Dennis	76. Goethe	99. Wilen
9. Thompson, F. A.	32. Youngberg	54. Dixon	77. Buck	100. McVicker
10. Lane	33. Gibson	55. Ehrman	78. Baer	101. Martin
11. Morey	34. Morris	56. Davis, E. G.	79. Glynn	102. Mumma
12. Yates	35. Robinson, J. P.	57. Craighead	80. Wood	103. Westervelt
13. Joseph	36. Fenner	58. Kershaw	81. Brice	104. Thomas
14. Bowen	37. Cummings	59. Harvey	82. McManus	105. Albery
15. Whitlock	38. Benjamin	60. Doyle	83. Inery	106. McIntyre
16. Rockwell	39. Jackson	61. Gillmore, W. E.	84. Yonge	107. Comly
17. Wilson	40. Adams	62. Sunderlund	85. Harris	108. Brown
18. Glade	41. Thompson,	63. Peace	86. Lukesh	109. Carson
19. Stokey	A. C.	64. Weatherwax	87. Pope	
20. Bond, D.	42. Hopkins	65. Browning	88. Barco	<i>Absent</i>
21. Downes	43. Wesson	66. Birnie	89. Currie	Baender
22. Morrisette	44. Hillman	67. Johnson	90. Gilmore, H. F.	Conklin
23. Tidhall	45. Vanderveer	68. Slattery	91. Kay	Hall

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Barney McManus

The Class of 1900 as Plebes

Photo by Pach Bros.

109 of the original 112 men are in this picture. How many can you identify?
(See Key on back)

