
JOHN MCKESSON, FOUNDER, NEIL E. HARMON AND ALAN SEELENFREUND, CEOS, MCKESSON AND COMPANY

In Chapter 5, we covered the history of McKesson with John McKesson and Charles Olcott starting the company in 1833. In 1853, two years before the death of Charles Olcott, Daniel Robbins became John McKesson's partner and the company was renamed McKesson & Robbins. John McKesson passed away in 1893, 50 years after his founding of McKesson. Not much is known about John McKesson's life, but he did start a wholesale drug and import company that lasted 50 years and spanned the Civil War and the financial capitalist era. Little would he know that the company he started would still be in existence today (Figure 10.6).

From my research, Neil E. Harlan was not only a very smart man, but also a beloved leader of McKesson during turbulent times. He received an undergraduate degree from Arkansas and both an MBA and DBA in business from Harvard University Graduate School of Business Administration. Mr. Harlan proudly served his country in the U.S. Army during World War II. In 1951, Mr. Harlan was appointed to the faculty of the Harvard Business School where he served as full professor until 1962, when he was appointed the assistant secretary of the Air Force by President John F. Kennedy. From 1964 until 1967 he worked at Anderson, Clayton & Company, Houston, Texas, in positions including financial vice



FIGURE 10.6
John McKesson. (From McKesson. With permission.)