Doctor Magill was educated at Larne Grammar School and Queen's University Belfast. During the Great War he was medical officer to the Irish Guards on the Western Front. Saddened by the screaming and suffering of the war wounded he later said "I saw the need for improved technique in the relief of pain". It became his life's work.

He invented a tube that could take over breathing for patients undergoing operations on the head, chest and throat. He attended members of the Royal Family for over 30 years.

When Dr. Magill died at the age of ninety-eight he was credited with being the known as the "Father of Anaesthetics".