

Items of Interest, ctd.

EAGLE DOCTOR HAS JUBILEE.

"STUNT" IN 1895 HELPED YOUNG DR. FITZGERALD TO SET UP PRACTICE.

Dr. James J. Fitzgerald, 75, of Eagle, celebrated his golden jubilee in medicine last week when he completed 50 years of service to residents of Eagle and the vicinity.

One of five children, the doctor was born in Oconomowoc in February, 1870. His father was Patrick Fitzgerald, an Irish immigrant who established a cooper business there. He attended High School at Oconomowoc and later was a student at Whitewater Normal. He taught school in Jefferson Co., and then attended Valparaiso University. Then he decided upon medicine as a career.

PRACTICE SLOW.

After his graduation from Rush Medical College in 1895 he began to practice here. At that time there was no other physician in the area. but, nevertheless, patients were slow to realize the merits of the young doctor. His friends recall that when he was about to give up hope of a practice he hit upon an idea. Knowing people to follow "what the other fellow would do" he would hitch up his team of horses and, at a time that he was sure the residents would be doing their morning shopping, he would drive through the streets of Eagle, at breakneck speed. It didn't take long for the word to spread that Dr. Fitzgerald was "answering emergency calls." Before long the doctor's practice had been established.

In a copy of the Wisconsin Free Press of Feb., 1904, appeared this item: "Dr. J. J. Fitzgerald, who settled in Eagle, after fitting himself in the practice of medicine, has not only built up an exceedingly fine practice but is held in high esteem by the community with which he has become identified."

SET UP HOSPITAL.

It was in 1914 that he established his own hospital on the second floor of his home. Here there were accommodations for several patients as well as a fully equipped operating room. The nurses that helped him were the best that could be found. One of these was Hannah Connell of Darling--who was later to become Mrs. Fitzgerald.

One of his oldest patients was Col. Francis Draper, well-known throughout the State, who died four years ago at the age of 99.

When the shortage of nurses became acute the doctor was forced to close the little hospital.

Dr. Fitzgerald is a member of the staff at Memorial Hospital at Waukesha, a member of the American Medical Society and the State and County Medical Societies, and has served his community as a member of the School Board, a director of the Eagle Bank and Vice-president of the Eagle Telephone Co. He is affiliated with the Elks, Knights of Columbus, Milwaukee Council of the Woodmen of America and the Eagle Foresters.

Milwaukee Journal, June 17, 1945.