

2. Historic Documentation, Data and Analysis

2.1 Biographical Introduction to Dr. Richard Eells

Dr. Richard Eells was born on February 23, (1800) in Barkhamsted, Connecticut, the fifth child of Reverend Ozias Eells and Phoebe Ely. His mother was the daughter of Reverend Richard Ely. Ozias Eells graduated from Yale in 1776 and moved to Southhampton, Long Island where he first preached. Richard's parents moved the Barkhamsted, Connecticut where his father was ordained on August 24, 1784 and where he served the Congregational Church until his death.

Richard Eells grew up in Barkhamsted and studied medicine under Dr. Everett of Canton, Connecticut and Dr. Bestor of Simsbury, Connecticut and took a course of lectures at Yale. He married Jane Bestor, the daughter of his instructor in medicine on October 4, 1826.

Dr. Eells and his wife had two daughters Jane M. 8/22/1827 and Electa born 3/3/1829.¹ Electa Eells died March 18, 1829 age 15 days, in Simsbury, Connecticut.² Jane Matilda Eells died June 21, 1833 age 6 years in Quincy, Illinois. Dr. Eells' brother William married Eliza Bestor, sister of Jane in 1828 and remained at home in Barkhamsted until their mother died in 1829. According to the "Eells Family History", William and family moved to the Western Reserve, Ohio in 1829 but his first child, a son Dudley was born in Jefferson, Iowa. He then settled in the Quincy area where he bought a farm in Newton, Illinois.

It is possible that Richard and Jane Eells traveled west with William in 1829. In any event, they were located in Quincy, Illinois in 1833 for they were admitted as members to the Congregational Church of Quincy on November 3, 1833.³

Dr. Eells and his wife settled in Quincy, joined the Congregational Church and established his medical practice. The earliest period is sketchy but by 1834 they had purchased property and established the doctor's office on Maine Street.

A reference has been found that Dr. Eells first purchased a lot near Franklin Square in 1833 from Mr. John Wood for a saddle.^{3a} On November 7, 1834 Dr. Eells purchased part of Lot 3, block 12, 65 and 1/2 feet on Maine by 198 feet deep for \$173.00 from Rufus Brown.

A description of the south side of Maine in 1835 starting at the corner of Fourth and Maine is as follows: On the corner the log and frame "Brown Tavern", next Rufus Brown's cabin; the frame office of Dr. Eells and his partner Dr. Nichols; 2 or 3 frame one story law offices; a frame jewelry shop with a 2 story frame building in the rear . . .⁴

¹ Eells Family History in America: p124

² Simsbury Cemetery Book: p27

³ Congregational Church Records, Quincy, Illinois

^{3a} Past and Present, Adams County Illinois: p224-225.

⁴ Past and Present, of Adams County Illinois: p39-40.