



Dinner in Honor of
MR. JAMES E. FITZSIMMONS

Dean of American Trainers

June 27, 1963

*Man 'O' War
Aqueduct*

We all know of the skill of "Sonny" Jim Fitzsimmons as a trainer of the thoroughbred. There is compelling testimony to Mr. Fitz' rare way with a horse in racing's zealously logged records.

You name the feat and Mr. Fitz will supply the answer with one of the 129 stakes winners he trained in 75 years of racing. Whether it be conditioning Triple Crown winners such as Gallant Fox and Omaha or taking the tough Suburban Handicap with a mare like Busanda. Whether its taking down the Widener Handicap first out with a colt like Nashua or whether it's handling two-years-olds. Mr. Fitz, by the way, subtly reminded one and all that he was retiring as trainer for Ogden Phipps and the Wheatley Stable with all his buttons intact.

In the event you didn't notice it, 48 hours before his official retirement on June 15th, Mr. Fitz saddled a pair of two-year-old winners, Bold Sultan and High Finance. And just to finish his career off properly, Mr. Fitz also showed he had a way with the ladies at the age of 88. The last thoroughbred he saddled turned out to be a stakes winner, King's Story in the Miss Woodford at Monmouth on the day he called it a career.

Of course, everyone is here this evening in recognition of all these feats. But Mr. Fitz has a dimension within his wracked body that exceeds all the bounds of his professional skill; a dimension that throws a shadow which everyone in racing basks in. Mr. Fitz' success as a man. His warmth and good cheer in the face of adversity has enriched everyone who has had the privilege of being exposed to it.

In thinking of Mr. Fitz and something appropriate to close with, I am reminded of a passage from Homer. It says it all in regard to this man.

Ulysses had returned from the Trojan wars and had set his domestic affairs in order. He was getting on in years, his body scarred and gnarled from decades of war. A friend asked Ulysses what he would like as a eulogy when that day came that must come to all mortals.

"Let it be simply said," the old warrior answered. "That Ulysses was born and he died. But that in between, he lived like a man."

M E N U

Cilled Madrilene Au Sour Creme, Caviar

Supreme de Volaille Au Jambon
Virginie complete, with New Peas,
Pommes Parisienne, Champignons
Sautes, Sauce Au Vin

Salade Jockey Club

Sorbet with Creme De Menthe
Au Gaufrette

Cafe

