

## John O'Day Was Great Logger, City Builder

One of the outstanding men on the Wisconsin river for the past fifty years was the late John O'Day.

John O'Day was born in England, June 28, 1856. When Mr. O'Day was nine months old the family departed for America. After moving about for four years the family settled on a piece of land two miles from Wisconsin Rapids.

Farming was not a very profitable business in the ten years from 1860 to 1870. Without tools and facilities for clearing land, the making of the O'Day farm was hard work and a slow process.

In order to better help his parents in his early teens, he set out for the lumberwoods. He did not have far to go as there was a great deal of logging around Wisconsin Rapids in the time we are considering.

Mr. O'Day commenced his early business training by accepting any kind of a job from "wood-butcher" to sweeper. From sweeper he graduated to ox-teamster, then loader, and later foreman of logging camps. He came to Merrill in 1881 and that winter he drove out for the T. E. Scott Lumber Co.

From ox-teamster with the T. E. Scott Lumber Co., Mr. O'Day graduated to be foreman of logging camps, and later took charge of all the logging operations of the same company.

Mr. O'Day remained in the employ of the Scott Lumber Co. for thirteen years, when he entered into partnership with John Daly of Wisconsin Rapids. The logging firm of O'Day and Daly conducted extensive logging operations on the Wisconsin river and at Thief River Falls, Minnesota, until the accidental death of John Daly in 1898, when the company was dissolved, and Mr. O'Day continued logging alone for many years.

Mr. O'Day was considered one of the most successful loggers and log drive operators on the Wisconsin river.

It is rather as a pusher and builder, or promoter, however, that we want to speak of Mr. O'Day.

To those who lived in Merrill in 1887, when the big saw mill and planing mill of the T. E. Scott Lumber company went up in smoke, it was looked upon as the most tragic event in the history of the city. It was thought by many that the city could not recover from it.

One morning some months after the fire, workmen were seen cleaning up the debris, with John O'Day directing affairs. Mr. J. N. Cotter and John O'Day had organized the Merrill Electrical Co. Then followed the building of the electric street car line, the second street car line operated electrically in the world. Appleton had the first.

In rapid succession Mr. O'Day organized the Merrill Iron Works, and with others, notably the late L. N. Anson, he accomplished the organization of the Grandfather Falls Paper company and the building of the great dam at Grandfather Falls, which O'Day superintended.

Mr. O'Day was interested in many enterprises hereabouts, which the general public knew little or nothing about. Besides his extensive orange ranches in California, and the big farm he devel-



JOHN O'DAY

oped out on Highway 63, O'Day was a builder.

We have made a brief sketch of a fellow citizen, who started out in the world, without education and without influential friends and he gathered them in, in his life time.

There were less opportunities hereabouts, when young O'Day started out, than there are today, yet he became a builder, a doer of things, and left an honored name, as a guide to young men, who knew him in life.

## J. M. FINUCAN, OPTOMETRIST, HERE 12 YEARS

J. M. Finucan, optometrist, 811 East Main street, two doors east of the Daily Herald office, is the only graduate optometrist in the city, and has gained an enviable reputation professionally in both this city and the surrounding territory.

Mr. Finucan was a student at Marquette University previous to entering the World War. Shortly after war was declared, in April, 1917, he enlisted in the 119th Machine Gun Battalion, of the 32nd Division, and served two years with that Division, thirteen months of which time he spent in France.

Shortly after being mustered out of the service of Uncle Sam, he enrolled in the School of Optometry in Columbia University, in New York City, which University is recognized as having the leading school of Optometry in this country, second only to the University of Berlin, Germany. He was graduated from this institution in the fall of 1922, and in the fall of that year, after passing his State Board examinations, he came to this city, and began the practice of his profession, which he has continued for the past twelve years.

During the past three years, Mr. Finucan has installed an entirely new equipment, and now claims to possess the very finest and latest improved instruments for his profession in Northern Wisconsin.

In addition thereto, Mr. Finucan has his business place modernly equipped for the purpose of grinding his own lenses, which not only permits him to provide more prompt service than otherwise, but also affords the opportunity of any necessary or desired correction without loss of time or interrupted service.

## Downie Agency City's Oldest; Opened in 1890

Few people contacting "Central" with the request: "Give me number 51, please," realize that barring perchance, they are calling the same business agency that people have been calling for the past forty-odd years, when they desired to contact the Downie Insurance Agency, yet such is the fact, for the same "phone number" has been used since the telephones have been installed in Merrill.

This agency was established in or about 1890, by Joseph Downie, individually, under the title of "Joseph Downie Real Estate and Insurance Agency." In 1901, John McQuillan was admitted to partnership, and the title adjusted to fit the change of "Downie & McQuillan" as proprietors.

When John McQuillan died in August, of 1913, his interest was re-absorbed by Mr. Downie, who resumed sole ownership, which continued until his decease in 1916. At this time, Miss Mabel Downie, daughter of the deceased proprietor, assumed the management until her marriage in October, 1921, to W. E. Wittman, who entered both the matrimonial and business pact, since which time Mr. and Mrs. Wittman have conducted the business under the firm name of "Downie Agency."

The initial location of this agency was on the second floor front, of the Wenzel Hardware block, on West Main street, where it continued for 35 years, or until August 19, 1925, when it was moved to its present location, 411 West Main street.

"Insurance on anything but your life," is the business motto of this firm, and as an addenda thereto it was vividly expressed that "this agency has never represented anything but reliable, strong, stock companies."

A "steady increase," is the report of this agency as regards to business conditions, with "prospects good" for a continuance thereof.

## Teske Opens Investment Office Here

E. J. Teske, local representative of Francoeur & Company, Investment Security dealers, Board of Trade Building, Chicago, Ill., has his office with the Merrill Insurance Agency above the Citizens American Bank building.

He left the former Citizens National Bank about a year ago to set up his own office after serving in various department of the bank for a number of years. With this new connection he is able to offer complete statistical information on any issues, and to offer for sale municipal, railroad, industrial and utility bonds.

In addition to the above he has also branched out into the real estate field, making real estate loans, dealing in local real estate and farm lands.

## WIPFLI FIRM, ACCOUNTANTS, DO LOCAL WORK

Practically all of the expert outside accounting and tax report work in Merrill is done by one firm, Clarence J. Wipfli and company, certified public accountants, of the First American State Bank building in Wausau.

The firm is one of the three in Wisconsin appointed district auditors for Buick, Pontiac, and Oldsmobile dealers by General Motors Corporation. Wipfli has the entire northern district; the others have the Milwaukee and Madison districts.

Mr. Wipfli was with the state tax commission for seven years as corporation auditor and as assessor for Lincoln, Marathon, Langlade, and Shawano counties. He was located in Merrill for one year while he worked with the tax commission.

In 1931 Mr. Wipfli founded his own firm. He now has a staff of three assistants, one of whom is Merton Close, son of Mr. and Mrs. W. G. Close of Merrill.

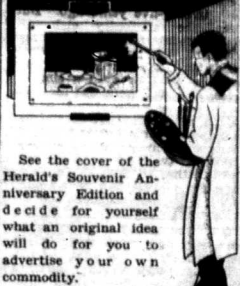
The firm makes audits, system installations, income and inheritance tax reports, and special investigations. Easily available to Merrill business firms, Mr. Wipfli spends much of his time here.

### FIRST GRAVEL

One of the first if not the first piece of gravel road in Lincoln

county, is the stretch running south of Dutch Corners. This road was graveled nearly thirty-five years ago.

## DRAWING FOR REPRODUCTION



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