

REVIEW OF FASHIONS OF EARLY DAYS

The natural waistlines, the huge sleeves, and even the skirts of today do not differ so greatly from those same articles worn back in 1909, twenty-five years ago. But there the similarity ends. A woman today may strut out her old trunk and put on the clothes which she finds there, and if she wears a skirt or even a simpler dress, she may walk out into the street and be gazed at with a modicum of gaping; but if she attempts to wear a hat or a pair of shoes or even a more "stylish" gown of twenty-five years ago, she is either thought to be going to a fancy-dress ball or assumed to be a logical candidate for the state hospital.

But the girl of a quarter-century ago was "the" thing if she ventured forth in a tight-waisted, billowing, floor-length skirt, a much-beruffled, high necked shirt-waist, and a gorgeous "merry widow" hat. The latter was considered not only if it were garnished with huge imitation garden flowers or a long willow plume flung nonchalantly across the top of the hat and trailing down the back, or in extreme cases, a life as best-dressed "if a little naughty, my dear" . . . a "merry widow" hat on which was perched one of the once-singing beauties of the forest, stuffed and in its full array of colors. A canary or even a bird was common on the last word in bird decoration on a hat.

One girl graduate of the high school class of 1908 boasted forty-two yards of lace on her graduation frock, besides numerous bands of lace insertion and scalloped ruffles and even on one side to the height of so-called "swellness" was to be found in the girl who had the greatest number of narrow bands worn on various places on her gown.

But the tortures of the styles of 1909 were brought into full effect with the imposed dress of France of the hobble-skirt, a creation of that British fashion-designer, Lady Duff Gordon, more familiarly known as "Lucile." This skirt was as silly as it was awkward. Tight at the waist, and full in the skirt, it allowed down one side the knees and legs; it was so tight that the wearer could take only tiny steps; sometimes, indeed, these skirts were so extremely tight that slits had to be taken and insertions put in to enable the lady to walk with even the minimum of comfort.

But with the exception of the hobble-skirt and possibly the hats of the time, the woman's apparel of twenty-five years ago was feminine and graceful and beautiful in appearance. But alas! wearing the lady was burdened with stiff corsets; stays in her collars and skirts, numerous petticoats with heavy lace, and lisle stockings. And the discomfort in travelling; imagine trying to take more than one of the huge hats on a trip; and the petticoats and skirts alone would take up more space than the average modern girl's entire wardrobe.

But then the girl of a quarter-century ago was probably just as grateful that she wasn't wearing the fashions of fifty years ago for they were so far different and arresting from those of today as is the cat from the canary. Those were the days of the hour-glass figure which so captivated and held the eyes of the world that the "beauties" are famous for such beauties as Lily Langtry and Anna Held. The gay ladies of that period will be remembered as long as the war, as long as prohibition, and as long as Adam and Eve are remembered. And more of the credit for this reminiscence is due to the fashion-designers of the period. The human figure was at its most voluptuous at that time. Clothes glorified the figure; exaggerated it; and even the plainest girl was not without her charms due to the sweet silk and satins, tight corsets, and swelling bosom-and-hip-dresses.

And then there were the bustles. Rather an ugly feature of the eighties, but still acclaimed. And the large hats and the tiny parasols without which no lady was seen on the street. Discomfort, maybe, but chic and charm were embodied in the fashions of 1884. Merrill's first mayor must have been truly proud of the scenic

CHRISTIAN NELSON JOHNSON

A TRIBUTE

By W. B. CHILSEN

The observation of the Herald's anniversary would be incomplete without some tribute to a man who has had much to do with Merrill newspapers and ourselves who has been an outstanding promoter of upper Wisconsin, and who in an unobtrusive way has been as influential in Merrill affairs as any man. He is Chris Johnson, Lincoln county's outstanding journalist and historian of the pinery days.

Mr. Johnson has known us since we were practically a babe in arms—we remember him since our knee pants days. Our admiration for him, as an individual, comes not only from his ability as a writer and commentator on present and past problems that have been solved by humanity or that are still being debated. We admire him for his untiring energy. Most men are energetic and hustlers up to the time that they are fifty years old and then there comes a slackening in their pace, but with Mr. Johnson, from our observation, it has been much different. His mind is more active; he takes a keener interest in world affairs and politics today than he did 25 years ago. He has often told us that a man dies like a tree (from the top down) and there is no evidence of any blight or falling leaves in him, who reminds us of a towering monarch of the primitive forest.

Those who know have told us that in the lumber camps he was the best liked and most excellent cook; then he became a newspaper man and was an early tutor of men like Hans Kaltenborn and E. S. Jorstad. He was no "slouch" as a farmer, when he operated his farm which is now owned by the O'Reilly's, and the people at the County Home think that he has reached the height of his genius as superintendent of that institution.

Mr. Johnson played the game of politics quite successfully, having made a number of men delegates, not only to the national convention, but also to suggest that the U. S. should be a good United States Senator. He made other men members of Congress. President McKinley appointed him postmaster, a position he filled for a dozen years or more, and like his other endeavors, he was extremely far and wide as one of the most courteous of public officials. He read or followed no rules, except that of serving his patrons.

beauties of his first public charge, but he must have been equally proud of the lovely ladies who had not yet begun to clamor for the vote, but contented themselves with being good housekeepers, wives, and mothers . . . and delightfully dressed companions.

The shawl was a feature of the "eighties" fashions. Very rich and luxurious, it was heavily fringed and made of silk or brocade. It was used by some as an evening wrap, by others as a street costume . . . in the latter case, the shawl was only waist length and not so elaborate.

The hats varied in size. Some were small and perched atop huge bunches of curls; others were large and adorned with plumes. Jewels were worn for evening with huge disregard for taste, but in those days jewels were to be worn and not saved and the more the better.

A woman in those days could well afford to be haughty and at the same time be sure that she was extremely charming by doing so. Her wardrobe was such that it made for extreme dignity and hauteur.

But despite all the luxury and richness and dignity-giving qualities of the fashions of both fifty years ago and a quarter-century ago, would the modern woman change back if she could?

E. O. FARBER, son of the late Dr. J. Farber, and one of Merrill's successful business men following his graduation from the Peoria, Illinois, Horological Institute, returned to his home town and entered his present business, in addition to which he has been made a director of the Grandfather Falls Paper Company, and holds like positions in both the Citizens American Bank and the Lincoln County Finance Corporation.

Next to our parents, we feel that C. N. Johnson has been one of our finest influences, and our association has broadened our viewpoint of life. A cleaner living individual, it has not been our pleasure to meet—it is a homely phrase to call Mr. Johnson one of "nature's noblemen" but it is a phrase that cannot be improved upon—he is that.

So far as formal matters of day and date are concerned, Christian Nelson Johnson was born in the central part of Norway near Drammen, on July 7, 1857. After attending Norwegian schools three or four months a year until he was fourteen years old he came alone to the United States, where his uncle, Anton Jonsen, was a lumberjack working out of Stevens Point.

Mr. Johnson spent only a few weeks at the Point before he went to Wausau to work in the Plummer sawmill there, earning his own living by day labor at the age of fourteen. For four years Mr. Johnson stayed at the Plummer boarding house. His wages were small. There was no money in this country at all in those days, and the great panic of the early '70's was in full swing. Part of the time Mr. Johnson had charge of the planing mill operated in connection with the sawmill.

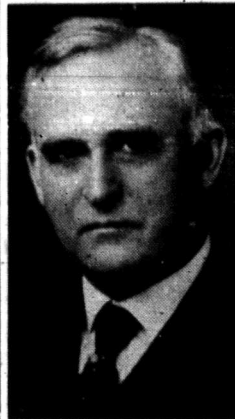
The railroad came into Wausau in 1874, and with it came crude lumbering machinery. Shortly after that Mr. Johnson went out into the woods, where he worked for various lumbermen.

In 1892 he took over the Lincoln County Advocate and remained in newspaper work until 1909, when he first went to his farm and later became superintendent of the County Home. This position he still holds.

One can hardly think of newspaper work in Merrill without considering C. N. Johnson. He on his part is to this day more than willing to offer generous help in any journalistic undertaking. He enjoys it. A born newspaper man, he will continue to be one throughout his life.

C. N. and I found our greatest pleasure in the companionship of trout fishing. It was not the fish we caught but the camp fire and feed followed by the corn cob pipes and Standard—the good old Wisconsin tobacco. We settled the problems of here and the hereafter. For twenty years we fished and visited at "The Elms," the old homestead on the Pine River.

THE ANSONS FATHER AND SON



L. N. Anson (left) and his son, George N. Anson, whose Anson Scholarship fund is one of the outstanding philanthropic donations in Merrill's history. Each year some boy, selected as outstanding in his graduating high school class, is sent for a four year course to Notre Dame University with all expenses paid, down to football tickets and spending money. The fund provides excellent quarters and enough money to enjoy the best of undergraduate life for its recipients.

The winners of the award are

selected mainly for scholarship, but the qualities of leadership, outside activities, and other opportunities for education also are considered. The fund is established and administered under a well thought out plan that provides for almost every contingency, for the self-perpetuation of the administering board, and for the safety of the investment.

Winners of the award to date are: Philip Dahlberg, Reuben Grundeman, Llyod Teske, Karl Scheuppert, Alfred Kolka, Robert Francis and Melvin Lambrecht.

Lawler Mapped Wild Country Here Long Ago

The death of Mr. Finn Lawler at his home in Eagle River recently removed from northern Wisconsin one of the earliest settlers in the northern part of Lincoln county, as the county existed in 1875. Mr. Lawler was born in Douglas Town, Northumberland County, New Brunswick, May 8, 1845.

In his youth Mr. Lawler acquired a good education and for some years was engaged as a school teacher in his home county.

But the western fever had possessed him, and at an early age, he started for the west. In 1875, in company with Charles L. Ferry, nick-named "Kentuck," he located in the wilderness, near Eagle River.

The two engaged in trading with the Indians, and surveying the northern part of the state. Being acquainted with the timber resources of the region, Mr. Lawler's services were sought by lumbermen and investors in pine timber.

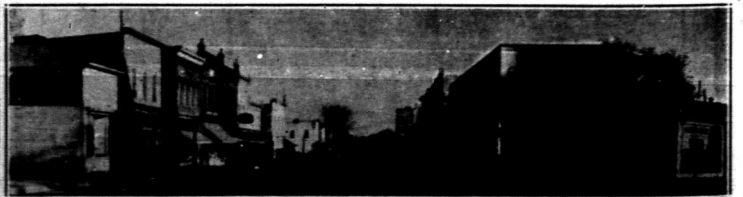
Later he engaged, in company with A. A. Denton, an early pioneer of Vilas county, in logging operations.

EAST MAIN STREET BUSINESS DISTRICT



Looking east from Arverson's garage on the corner of Scott and East Main. The courthouse, whose tower shows above the Citizen's American bank building in left center, is three blocks down, while the street for two blocks further is devoted entirely to business buildings.

LOOKING SOUTH GRAND AVENUE



A portion of the Grand Avenue business district on the West side, taken from the grounds of the West side fire station and the Franklin school.