

## Taught School In Lincoln County For Half Century

Miss Lillian Bohag, who taught school in Lincoln county until her retirement in 1935, was born in Portage in 1871 and came to Merrill with her parents, George Bohag and Fannie Leach Bohag, in 1884.

Her dad built a house a block east of Our Saviour's Lutheran church.

At that time there were few homes in that section of the village. The Merrill House was where the Badger now stands; the Stafford house, later occupied by Father Byrne of St. Francis Xavier Catholic church, was across from the present church; there was a log house at the present depot site, the Hubbard house across from the present postoffice and then nothing until she reached the present location of the Cosmos theater.

The Martin Thorpe house, a large structure, used as a boarding house and hospital, was across the street from St. Francis church.

Mr. Bohag, who was born in London, was a cook in the woods and was later a flagman on the Third street crossing for the railroad. He also ran the Merrill House.

Miss Bohag's mother, who died 11 years ago, was born in Portage. Her dad died at the age of 62. The couple were married 65 years.

Miss Bohag taught 12 years in the rural schools and 35 years in the city. She was principal of the old Fourth ward school and was at the Franklin school the rest of the time while in the city.

She taught in a school 12 miles east of Ogdens in 1888. This was the Spirit River school and she was 17 when she accepted her first assignment.

Though her school was only 30 miles from her home, she had to travel part of the way by train, then on a bumpy lumber wagon, and finally on foot, as oxen pulled her trunk the final five miles on a "go-devil" made from the crotch of a tree.

She and her eight pupils occupied a new school, with handmade seats and desks, one chair and one table, but no clock. The school clerk had drawn marks on the floor near the door, as a sort of impromptu sundial, but when it was cloudy the school day was a matter of guesswork. Equipment consisted of six primers, six slates, and a box of pencils.

In commenting on the winter

months, Miss Bohag says: "The winter terms were the hardest, when after walking a mile or two in the deep snow one had to build a fire and sometimes there was only one pupil who was brave enough to venture out in the deep snow and bitter cold."

There were six in Miss Bohag's family. One brother, George W. Bohag, a logger, was killed at White Lake when some logs fell on him off a railway.

Another brother, Charles Bohag, also a lumberjack, was killed by a falling tree at Star Lake. A third brother, William F. Bohag, lives in Detroit. A sister, Mrs. P. H. (Grace) Campbell, lives in Waukegan, Wis., and another sister, Mrs. E. P. (Susan) Chauvin, Sr., is a resident of Merrill.

Miss Bohag is the proprietress of River Terrace, 704 E. Main street.

## Civil War Veteran Came To Village Ninety Years Ago

The name of Averill is associated with the very earliest days of the community. William Averill came here ninety years ago with his family. He operated the Averill House, where the Rhode apartments are now located. In this building he ran the community's first postoffice.

His son, William, was seven years old and would now be 97 years of age, had he lived. He died in 1918. There was another son, Chilli, who moved to California many years ago; and a daughter, Mrs. Ella West Schooley, who ran a store and the postoffice at Bloominville and lived on a farm in that community.

The son, William, was a logger in business for himself and a timber cruiser later for Stange. At one time he owned a considerable portion of the land on the west side, but much of it was swamp and he traded it for a yoke of oxen.

He was married to Augusta Ollman, who was born in Germany and who came to Manitowoc when 12 years of age. A short time later she came to Merrill. She passed away in 1940.

Mr. Averill built the house at 907 East Sixth street in which his daughter and son now live. He built the house 58 years ago.

Though under age, William Averill

volunteered for service during the Civil War and was accepted. He served with Co. C, 37th Regt., Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry, 1st Brigade, 1st Division, 9th Army Corps. He was in action at the siege of Petersburg from June 16, 1864, including the general engagements of June 17, 18; July 30, August 19, 21; Sept. 30; and Oct. 27. He also saw action during Warren's Raid on Weldon R. R., Dec. 8-11, 1864. He was wounded during the war, suffering a shot thru the mouth.

Seven of the children of Civil War Veteran William Averill are living. They are Martha Averill, at the home built by her father at 907 East Sixth street; Walter Averill, at Rib Lake with the Rib Lake Lumber Co.; William, a timber cruiser at Irma; Chilli, Denver, Colorado; Chester, also at the Sixth street home; Mrs. Joe (Irene) Magnuson, Irma; and Margaret Averill, a nurse at Milwaukee. Another daughter, Mrs. John (Selena) Dilling, who was married in this city in 1907, died in Arkansas in 1940.

At one time a garcon, fenced in and tended by a chore boy, covered the block where the Citizens American bank and the old American State Bank stood.

The first frame building was erected by Cooper & Smith in 1854 where the Reinhardt building now stands. Before that, homes were made of logs.

The early Ravn hospital was a well equipped private institution containing 25 beds. Drs. W. H. Monroe and John Bergesen erected the building in 1892.



The big flood of 1912. This scene shows the water washing over First street between the Presbyterian church and the bus barn.



Miss Lillian Bohag

Religious services have been held in Merrill since the earliest settlement. As in most pioneer communities, the first services were held by the various denominations in union, and were for the most part without pastors.

James A. Devers, uncle of Mrs. J. E. Lynch of this city, was conductor on the first train to come to Jenny.



The late George Bohag

## GREETINGS

To All  
CENTENNIAL  
CELEBRATORS  
and  
GUESTS

We hope that your stay in Merrill is a pleasant one and that you enjoy every minute of it.

## STYZA'S Men's Wear

Note—We do not have the suit style shown here but we do have a selection of suits, sport clothes and every accessory needed for the man who wants the best.



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THE CENTENNIAL  
AT  
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DINING AND DANCING SPOT

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