

ped myself in a piece of bark and laid down beside a log." (Mr. Smith was born in Erie, Pennsylvania, September 10, 1819.)

"Wausau was little more than a logging camp. I struck a job with Peter Kelley at \$15.00 a month. That was in December, 1844. I worked for Kelley until next August. There were absolutely no houses here at that time. I made my headquarters at Wausau; where Merrill now stands was nothing but a wilderness.

#### Warren's Mill

"In 1847 a man by the name of Andrew Warren built a mill on the site of the present electric plant. I helped him put in the dam. Later he erected a supply store and had his goods hauled here with horse teams from Milwaukee.

"Next year, 1848, some land was cleared and perhaps a dozen families had moved in. George Strowbridge had a small house where George Schroeder's saloon now stands. There were many Indians around here; large bands passed through here in the spring and returned in the fall.

"From 1833 to 1857 quite a little village sprung up here, and it was called Jenny. A road was cut through to Wausau in 1855. After that the mail was carried here by team. Three small hotels were built about that time. Warren's small, up and down sawmill was completed in 1849."

Mr. Smith said that Z. Space built what was called the Eagle House, which stood where now is located the Commercial college. Mr. Smith continued:

"The lumber cut at the mill was rafted into 'cribs,' rapids pieces and 'rafts' and floated down the Wisconsin river and into the Mississippi river, and down to the lumber markets at Galena, Alton and St. Louis.

"A 'crib' was 16 feet on either end and sides, and '18 to 22 deep.' That means that 18 or 22 inch-boards were laid on top of each other. Seven of these square 'cribs' constituted a 'rapids piece.'

"Three of these 'rapids pieces' constituted a 'raft.' Floating down the Wisconsin river from Merrill in 'rafts' this was called 'three-abrest.' The 'rafts' had to be separated at 'Big Bull' rapids (Wausau). Little Bull rapids (Mosinee), and so on over all the rapids on the river. The last separation was at Kilbourn City.

"Arriving on the Mississippi, all the 'rafts' were tied into one big 'raft,' called a 'fleet.' This was done at the mouth of the Wisconsin river, near Prairie du Chien.

"When the 'fleet' was started down the Mississippi river, it seldom stopped until it reached its destination, whether it be Galena, Alton or St. Louis. The crew laid down near their oars, to be instantly on hand when called on by the pilot. On the Mississippi, there were always two pilots, one for day and one for night running.

"I built a house on the site of my present home, where the Hesterman home now stands, but it burned down some years later. Myron McCorl came here in 1873. Cyrus Strowbridge built a store building where M. L. Poirer's saloon now stands." (The American State Bank building stands on the site now). "That was the first store building erected in Merrill," Mr. Smith said.

#### Plover County Seat

When Smith came here, there was no railroad west of Chicago. Galena, Illinois, and Janesville, Wisconsin, as well as Beloit, Wisconsin and Sycamore, Illinois, were the supplying distributors to this section. The goods were transported by teams. A stage line operated to Gill's Landing in the summer time.

In 1844, when Smith came here, all the territory north of Columbia county, to Lake Superior, belonged to Portage county; the county seat being at Plover.

All this territory in 1850, was Indian territory. The Menominee came

up as far as Wisconsin Rapids. The Chippewas' hunting ground extended north from Wisconsin Rapids to Lake Superior.

Marathon county was set off from Portage county in 1850.

In the winter and spring of 1872, an epidemic of smallpox raged in Jenny. Nearly every family in the town fell victims to the disease, and many died. A "pest house" was built upon the Champagne hill, with William Averill in charge, but the pest house soon got too small and nearly every house in town became a pest house.

When the village of Jenny was organized in 1850, the people voted to appropriate \$1,000 to build a school, which was erected on land where now Arveson's garage stands.

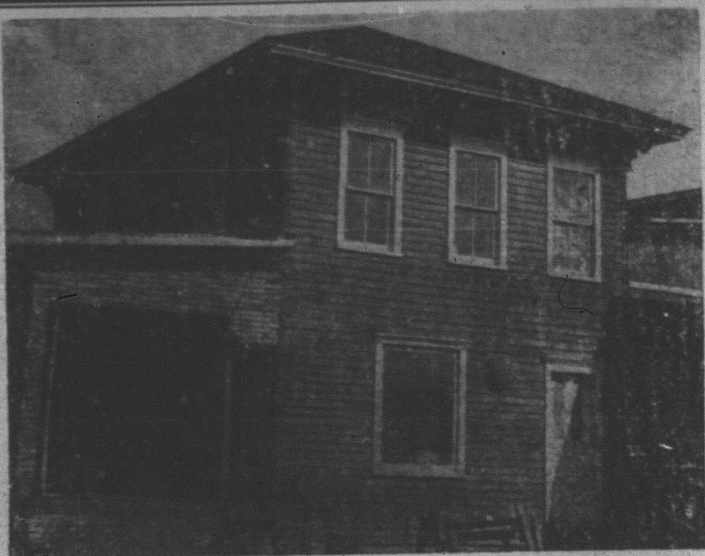
The taxpayers, O. B. Smith, George Strowbridge, Andrew Warren and Last Naway, were opposed to building the school house, as there were only two children of school age here, but the sawmill hands, who paid no taxes, voted for the school building.

The first school to start in this new school house, was in the fall of 1880, with Kate Goodrich as teacher. The following are some of the names of the children who attended that first Merrill school: William Averill, Chili Averill, Ella Averill, Albert Baldwin, Helen Combs, Allen Space, Etta Space, who became Mrs. M. H. McCord, and Miss Sarah Strowbridge, who married Walter Alexander of Wausau.

Etta Space became a mail carrier between here and Wausau, traveling on horseback. Miss Space became an expert equestrienne.

#### Early Settlers

Among the settlers in this region in the early seventies can be named John T. Adams, Wm. Averill, Fred Baguhn, August Boettcher, Herman Boettcher, Mrs. John Borne — nee Helen Combs — Ed Bonworth, Sr., Frank Chartier, Mrs. Frank Chartier, Peter Combs, Fremont Combs, Horatio Combs, J. N. Cotter, Mrs. J. N. Cotter, Dennis Owen and John Derag; Geo. Doering, Mrs. Geo. Doering, Andrew Donovan, Henry Dudley, Mrs. Henry Edgerton, Mrs. Alex. F. Empey, Lou Edgerton, Chas. Fuller, John Greene, Thos. Himes, Carl Hoffman, Mrs. A. D. Jilne, Eugene Kathon, E. M. Kaiser, W. H. Kaiser, Mrs. Geo.



This home, now a part of the Warehouse of the Semling-Mencke Co., was the first home built by T. B. Scott. In many years it was the residence of Mr. and Mrs. A. S. Chilsen.

Kollock, H. A. Kyes, Chas Kyes, Noel Kyes, Francis E. Mathews, Thos. J. Mathews, Timothy O'Connor, John Posey, Sr.;

Julie Posey, Sr., Julie Posey, Jr., Robert Posey, Orin C. Russell, Mrs. Orin C. Russell, Henry Sales, Mrs. Henry Sales, George Sales, Fred Smith, O. B. Smith, Mrs. Sara L. Styles, Aug. Schuman, Ham Streeter, Chas. Snow, Robert Truax, Mrs. Robert Truax, Jacob Weber, Mrs. William West, Frank White, Clarence White, Miss Alice White, Gideon Young, Mrs. Gideon Young, Sam. Young and Walter Young.

O. B. Smith, together with Benjamin Cooper, set up the first store in Merrill in 1854. This store, the first frame building in the community, occupied the site of the present Reinhardt building, East Main, near the foot of Mill street.

### Merrill's Cyclone

A windstorm of cyclonic proportion hit Merrill on a Sunday afternoon in the middle nineties.

Our family had dinner with Uncle Frank and Aunt Mary Nelson who were then "running" the Scandia House across the street from what is now Kloss' Radio Shop. When we took the street car home about five o'clock in the afternoon the first effect of the storm, which we saw was the Millenbach Saloon at the northwest corner of Second and Douglas street, which had been flattened to the ground.

When we arrived at our house at the foot of Nast street, we found lumber strewn all over the yard, boards blown through the windows and quite a lot of other damage. The Scott-Lumber Yard was directly across the street and the wind played havoc there.

## CONGRATULATIONS MERRILL

DURING THE CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

STOP IN AT THE

## VICTORY LUNCH

FOR LUNCH OR JUST A SNACK



Who wants to go back to the good old days?

### WHEN MOTHER WASHED BY HAND

Not today's Smart homemaker who has learned to rely on quick efficient laundry service. No longer must she scrub and scrub to give her family clothes that are clean, neat and fresh.

Today the modern housewife has all the conveniences of science to give her more leisure time. Today she can help celebrate Merrill's centennial without worry about sonny's clothes or how she will ever live through Monday's wash.

## MERRILL STEAM LAUNDRY

807 E. First St.

Phone 95