

## Matthews Led In Separation From Marathon County

One of the most conspicuous citizens of the early days of Merrill, or Jenny, was Thomas P. Matthews. Mr. Matthews was born in New York city, December 8, 1825. At six years of age he was left fatherless. At 12 years of age he went to live with relatives in Lawrence County, New York.

In 1854 he left for the west, and landed in Ripon, this state. Mr. Matthews developed leadership early in life, and liked politics. While a resident of Ripon, he helped organize the Republican party. He continued the support of the Republican party until 1872, when he joined the bolters and supported, and voted for Horace Greeley.

In 1878 he helped to organize the Greenback party and was a presidential elector on the Greenback party ticket. In 1880 he supported James B. Weaver, candidate for president on the Greenback ticket.

In 1854 he came to this city and spent the winter in a logging camp located on Lake Peschigo. He continued in the logging business. Early in 1859 Mr. Matthews married Martha A. Green of Wausau. His wife was a native of Ohio, of Puritan ancestry, being a direct descendant on her mother's side from Mary Chilton, the first white woman that ever stepped on Plymouth Rock, and on her father's side from the earliest settlers in Massachusetts. The newlyweds set up housekeeping in Mr. Matthews' logging shanty near Lake Peschigo.

As early as 1879 the people of this section commenced to agitate for separation from Marathon county. They visioined the unlimited riches of this section. But Marathon county was strong with the legislators. In 1872 a committee of three was appointed to present the matter to the legislature. This committee was composed of T. P. Matthews, Frank Andrews and H. A. Keyes.

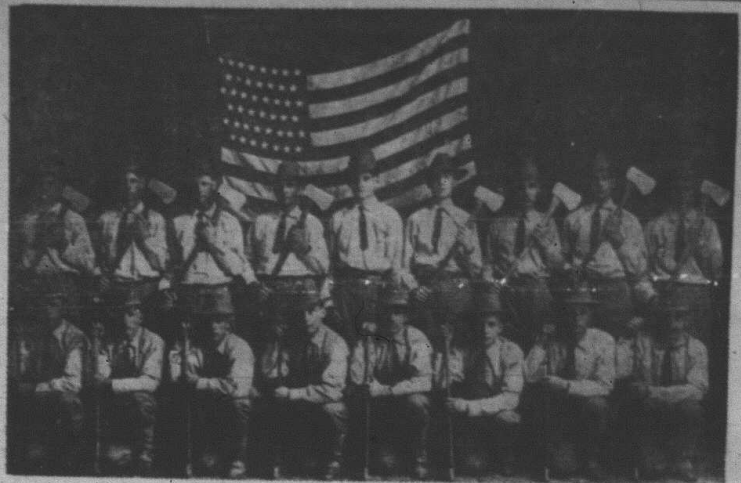
Mr. Matthews spent the winter of 1872 and '73 at Madison. But he got no action from that legislature. The winter of 1873 and '74 found Matthews in Madison again. Before the legislature adjourned in 1874, a bill was passed creating Lincoln county.

The job was not completed, the new county was still attached to Marathon county for judicial purposes. Next winter found Mr. Matthews again in Madison where he completed the job. That the people of the new county appreciated his services is shown in the fact he was elected the first county treasurer and re-elected twice. At the end of his third term he refused re-election. Mr. Matthews died at the age of 62 years and 21 days on December 27, 1887.

## Other Counties Take Portions of Lincoln

When Lincoln county was first created, the territory it comprised extended from below Pine River on the south to the state line on the north. This was in 1874 and the county was attached to Marathon county, from which it was detached, for judicial purposes. As the years went by Lincoln county lost territory successively to Price county, 1879; Ashland county, 1883; Langlade county, 1885; Oneida county, 1885; and Taylor county, 1875.

Edward Kleutz was the first Justice of the Peace in Jenny. In the early days he operated a mercantile business. He served several terms as Register of Deeds.



Drill team of the Modern Woodmen of Merrill, back about 1910, is shown above. They are: top row, left to right, Ralph Minton, Tom Haesley, Ed Hoffman, unidentified, G. B. Cotter, John Posey, Ed. Everson, Wm. Ruder, Ed. Freiberg. Bottom row, left to right, Paul Zastrow, Wm. Krueger, Fred Oppert, Matt Lesage, unidentified, Ed. Orr, Guy Empey and Frank Oldenburg.

## Gideon Young Was Mighty Walker In City's Early Days

Gideon Young came to the "pinery" in February of 1852, working the balance of the winter for J. and A. Stewart at their logging camp on Little Trappe.

In the spring of 1853 he settled in Jenny, working several years in the woods and then going into business for himself, operating logging camps in the winters and sending fleets of lumber down the Wisconsin and Mississippi rivers to St. Louis in the summers.

He was born in New Brunswick on June 21, 1831.

Mr. Young was famous as a walker, and many stories have been told of his exploits.

On one occasion he walked from Grand Rapids, now Wisconsin Rapids, to Merrill in a night and part of a day. He started at Grand Rapids in the evening and did not halt until he reached Jenny the next morning.

On the way he lost the trail and at Stevens Point had to wait a long time before he could make the ferryman and be ferried across the river. He walked up on the west side of the river to Stevens Point. The distance from Grand Rapids to Merrill, as the road ran then, was about ninety miles.

Another time he beat the stage from Knowlton to Wausau. He was on his way from Stevens Point to Wausau and reached Knowlton as the stage driver and his passengers were eating dinner. The tables were filled and Mr. Young had to wait until some one was through with his dinner.

He asked the stage driver to wait until he could get something to eat and he would take passage with him, but the driver hitched up his four horses and started, leaving Mr. Young to hike it to Wausau.

At Mosinee, Mr. Young caught up with the stage, and as it had to swing over the bridge to deliver mail, he gained a short lead which he kept

until he reached Wausau.

The passengers on the stage, knowing Mr. Young's ability to get over the ground, taunted the stage driver and told him unless he drove fast Mr. Young would beat him into Wausau.

This, however, was impossible, according to the driver. To his chagrin, however, when he drove up to the hotel in Wausau he found Mr. Young quietly chatting with some friends.

## A SMALL PLACE

Says

## Congratulations

in a big way

Fred and Cal invite you  
in for a good time  
during the Centennial

## MIDGET BAR

## Congratulations

TO A MODERN CITY

on their Centennial



## Rainbow Bar

PETER KOCHIRAS



The trolley car jumped the tracks while crossing the Prairie river bridge, going east, on August 10, 1899. Three of the passengers, Frank Gibson, Harry Allen, and A. B. Nelson were on their way to catch the train to Wausau for a rod and gun club meet. They got a ducking, but no one was hurt. The white building on the right is the old Boyer Steam laundry, which was located right on the bank of the river.