

[Merriman, Frank Giles]

Frank G. Merriman, Long Active, Passes  
RESIDENT OF CANTON SINCE 1908  
Many Years Engaged With Board of Insurance Underwriters as Inspector

Frank Giles Merriman, for thirty-eight years a resident of this village, widely known throughout Northern New York where he travelled for many years as a building inspector of the New York Board of Underwriters of the fire insurance companies, passed away at his home, 21 State Street, following upward of four years illness following a series of strokes that had rendered him practically helpless and in constant need of nursing aid.

The funeral was conducted from the late home, Sunday afternoon at 2, the Rev. Hugh S. Tigner, minister of the First Universalist Church, officiating. Burial was made at Evergreen.

Frank G. Merriman was born Dec. 5, 1861, at Little York, town of Fowler, St. Lawrence County, the son of William and Elizabeth Loomis Merriman. After concluding his schooling he learned the trade of a carpenter which he followed for several years. During his early years was the period of much mining throughout southern St. Lawrence County and he was engaged as chief mechanic in some of the iron mines in that section.

Mr. Merriman was during his whole life up to his late years of disability, quite active. As foreman on section gang on the railway between Gouverneur and DeKalb Junction during the great storm of the early eighties he gathered a fund of interesting experiences, and used to tell how while the gang was cutting through drifts ten feet high at times, there was no food in sight. A train on a siding along the line where they worked had a car of crackers and this was broken into on his suggestion and the men fed, and the blockade was broken a few hours later and trains went through. For his service at this time he was presented a gold watch by the railway, suitably inscribed, as a recognition of his services during the storm. He carried this watch and occasionally pulled it out and showed it to friends while he told of the storm of the eighties that was the great grandfather of all storms to date and tied the railways up as never before or since.

Mr. Merriman went to Carthage when the great fire swept that village in the early eighties and worked on construction. He told of working on the Ryther home in that village and a circus passing on parade. Jennie Ryther, later Mrs. Rollin E. Cleaveland, of Canton, was assisted to the roof by him, where she witnessed the parade.

Mr. Merriman removed to Antwerp about 1887 and on Nov. 28 of 1888 married Miss Jennie Marsh of that village. Mrs. Merriman passed away in 1911, three years after the family came to Canton. He followed carpentry until 1894 when he entered the insurance business, associated with M. H. McDonald of Antwerp, the firm name being M. H. McDonald & Co.

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Ten years later in December 1904 he was appointed building inspector by the New York State Board of Insurance Underwriters. The selection was an ideal one, as Mr. Merriman was a skilled mechanic and builder and knew the value of buildings and generally about their construction. This work took him up and down all Northern New York and into the millionaire camps of the Adirondacks where he gained acquaintance and the friendship of many men of importance in the legal, business and industrial world. He used to describe his visits to some of these camps, as for instance, that of Francis P. Garvan, noted New York attorney, Yale man, and director of the Bureau of Investigation of the U.S. and Alien Property Custodian during and following the World War. He had an intimate acquaintance with Mr. Garvan, and visited him at times in his palatial camp.

After the Merriman family removed to Canton in 1908, they lived for a time on the heights of upper Park street at what was later known as the Crary Place. Later on they purchased a home at 21 State Street where he closed his life.

Some time before his physical breakdown he was made fire warden of this village and acted as such for some time, introducing needed reforms in the fire zoning of the village and the condition of buildings as to their state as fire risks, or possible cause of fire origin.

Mrs. Merriman passed away in 1911. There remains a daughter, Helen E. Merriman, a graduate of St. Lawrence University, 1912, who has been a member of the St. Lawrence County National Bank staff for many years, and who has kept house since the mother's death. There is an only brother, Edgar H. Merriman of Lacona, N.Y.

Mr. Merriman belonged to the Masonic Order and was a member of St. Lawrence Lodge Free and Accepted Masons, No. 111, of Canton.

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