

A. H. STANGE, FOREMOST CITIZEN, BUILDS GREAT LUMBER INDUSTRY HERE



Mr. and Mrs. A. H. Stange

A. H. STANGE, Merrill's foremost citizen, is today nearing his seventieth year in the lumber industry.

Most of that long career was built in Merrill, which has benefited with Mr. Stange himself from the success of his enterprises.

The immigrant boy from Stettin, Germany, who came to Watertown with his parents when he was only three years old, has been one of the city's main benefactors, being directly responsible in securing two of the city's four parks and playing a large if not leading part in a score of other projects. He has served as Alderman and Mayor in the city government and contributed powerfully toward the prosperity and activity of the Trinity Lutheran church and other churches.

Although the depletion of the forests is gradually slowing down the once-booming Stange mills in Merrill, Mr. Stange still heads five important business projects and is concerned in a number of others. The employment his mills have furnished has been a decisive factor in the development of the city. Many a young man who later entered other fields got his first job working in the Stange yards.

Mr. Stange himself got his first job at a very early age when his father fell ill and he went to work for Christian Myer, at Watertown, at a yearly wage of \$100. The second year he earned \$150; and at the end of five years he was the highest-paid artisan in the Myer shop.

Even though he was forced to go to work before he had finished his schooling, he was sufficiently unlike many other youngsters to regret the loss of opportunity, and organized a night school. With several other young men he hired an instructor and carried himself six more terms while he was working.

Five years after he first entered Myer's employ he set out for Racine, where he worked for Miner and McCurg. In 1874 he was married there to Miss Emilie Miller, whom he met while staving in the choir. Later he went over to H. W. Wright, who sent him to Merrill to superintend the McCord and Wright saw mill and sash and

door plant. Eventually he was taken into the firm.

By this time Mr. Stange has accumulated some capital. The sash, door, and blind field was wide open and rich. After rejecting the opportunity to buy plants in other cities, he finally took over the bankrupt Merrill Manufacturing company for the amount necessary to satisfy the creditors.

Started Own Mill
The sawmill had a single rotary; there was a planing mill and upstairs, some sash and door equipment. For some time Mr. Stange supervised the plant, kept all the books, and ran the office himself. From then on the story

was one of progresses and victories, the elimination of red tape, of costly interruptions, of superfluous repair bills and top-heavy overhead; of juggling the moves on the chess-board of his industry until he had made his factory the most productive single institution manufacturing regular stock sashes and doors exclusively. All through this strenuous career Mrs. Stange was building a home on the Stange property on Prospect street. She did her own housework—dressmaking, cooking, caring for the children. On the grounds she brought to bloom a marvelous flower garden, which grew to contain cold frames, hot

beds, and eventually a conservatory.

Six children were born: Hattie, Charles H., Adelle, August J., Emilie, and Lydia. Four were born in Racine, two in Merrill and all are living today. The sons and sons-in-law all have found places in the huge Stange organization, so that the intimate relationship between parents and children never has been lost.

And while Mr. Stange was building up a great industry, and Mrs. Stange was providing a home to suit, they both found time to take an active and large interest in Merrill community affairs. Mrs. Stange has been active in the

Merrill Benevolent Association and for a time was its president.

The two parks that Merrill owes to Mr. Stange's generosity and activity are Cenotaph park and Stange park, the latter consisting of two twin parks. The tract known as Stange Public Park, the earliest of the two, was built up from a swampy area and laid out in its present beauty as the result of his gift of the land to the city. The area still sometimes known as Stange's Private Park, or the Refectory park, was given to the city later and made part of the other. Cenotaph park with its marble Memorial monument, confronting the Stange residence on Ellis Court, was formally given to the city in 1923, when the Cenotaph was unveiled.

The twenty-fifth wedding anniversary of the Stanges was celebrated by a trip through Mexico, and in 1910 they took a trip around the world. Still, they have always regarded Merrill as their home and have refused repeated invitations to leave here. In 1924 a banquet marked their fiftieth wedding anniversary; this year they celebrated their sixtieth quietly.

The newest Stange industrial venture is the great sawmill at LaGrande, Oregon, where August J. Stange now lives. When the Stanges visited LaGrande in 1923 the business men of that city gave them the most elaborate reception ever accorded a visitor and asked them to make their home in that city. They refused.

The Stange institutions at present are:

The Stange Lumber Company, Merrill; sawmill, planing mill. Large timber holdings in Vilas county.

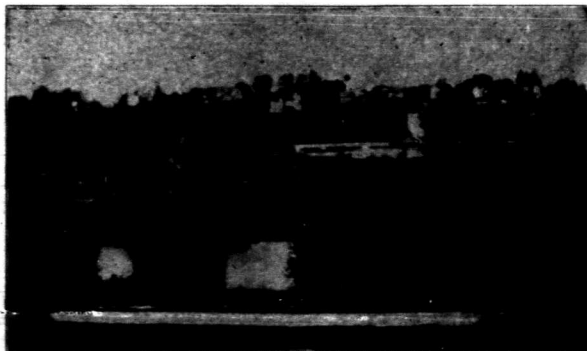
The Kinzel Lumber Company, Merrill; sawmill, planing mill and grain doors. Timber holdings in Newwood territory.

The Wisconsin-Michigan Lumber Company, Eagle River; sawmill, planing mill, and box shook plant. Timber holdings in Michigan.

The Mt. Emily Timber Company, LaGrande, Oregon; sawmill, extensive timber holdings in the Grand Ronde river valleys.

The Badger Theatre and Hotel, Merrill.

VIEW OF STANGE PUBLIC PARK



A view in the beautiful park located directly in the center of the city. Several small bridges span shaded lagoons and the whole park is wooded and landscaped. This lovely tract was once a swampy area filled with mill debris. A. H. Stange presented the ground to the city on condition that it be improved and made into a park. The work was done in 1908.

At about the same time Mr. Stange improved a piece of ground immediately across the street for a private park, but in 1920 he donated this ground also to the city, making a pair of twin parks so situated as to be most available to all the people and to fill in a beautiful way the otherwise bare space between the two sections of the city. The high school building, Legion hall, and the library also adjoin the park property.

The Stange Public park will endure through the ages as a lasting memento of a public spirited citizen.