

McCord and M. H. Wright. It later was sold to the Stange Lumber Co. and reorganized as the Kinzel Lumber Co.

C. K. Pier, R. Skinner and Charles Mihill erected the mill of the Merrill Manufacturing Co. which was later taken over by A. H. Stange.

The Chippewa Lumber company ran from about 1832 to 1896.

A mill erected on the island opposite the McCord mill by M. E. Howe, Capt. H. R. Chandler and Ed. Whitlock was operated by the latter until about 1894 when it was taken over by the Gilkey and Anson company until 1910, when it was closed down and wrecked.

The Merrill Lumber Co. erected a mill in 1882. Its founders were Harry Haywood, T. P. Matthews and E. N. Foster. It went into the hands of Foster, Bradley Collins and an associate of the latter. It was sold then to the Collar Lumber Co. and was later bought by A. H. Stange. This was the first mill on the west side of the Wisconsin river.

Fire Destroys Mill

R. C. Russell and J. D. W. Heath built the Wolf River Lumber Co. mill at the mouth of Devil's Creek. It became the property of Russell and Heath sold it to L. N. Anson, who ran it as a planing mill and later as a veneer factory. It was almost completely destroyed by fire some years later.

In the early nineties, D. F. Comstock built a sawmill where the Merrill Woodmen's new stands. He sold out to C. B. Flynn and W. W. Schultz who changed the name to the Illinois and Wisconsin Lumber company and ran until it was closed as a sawmill about 1906.

The production of lumber up to 1903 was not the only enterprise in Jenny and Merrill.

On February 6, 1875, the Lincoln County Advocate, the first newspaper in the locality, made its appearance. It was published by A. G. Gorham, with M. H. McCord as editor.

The Wisconsin Telephone company built the first telephone office in Merrill in 1881 and service was immediately started with 20 phones. The following year a toll line was built between Merrill and Wausau.

The City Water Works was established in 1887.

The First Street Car

In 1893 the Merrill Railway and Lighting Co. was organized by J. N. Casser, Harry Tarrant and others. The first street car was put in operation in Merrill in 1894.

The National Bank at Merrill was organized in 1892 and merged with the Citizens' National Bank in 1911.

In the early days it was all work and little time was given to other pursuits. Men worked 18 to 12, and sometimes more, hours per day.

As the lumber industry grew, however, the residents began to take more interest in other things, and so today we have the courthouses, Stange Public Park, Riverside Park, etc.

Industries other than those associated with lumbering and logging, began to become part of the city.

The Merrill Machinery & Supply Co. was organized in 1900 by John O'Day, John Daly and William Gehardt. Today it is the Merrill Manufacturing Co.

Jacoby and Barber built the Merrill Excelsior plant in 1900. It was destroyed by fire.

The Merrill Glove, Mitten and Tanning Co. began operations in 1900 under the ownership of Robert Kurtz.

Many New Industries

Since the beginning of the century a number of new industries have been started in this city until today there is considerable diversity in our manufactures.

To list the industries here today:

Anson and Gilkey, Page Mill, Ward Paper, Lincoln Textiles, Merrill Woolen Mills, Hansen Glove, Weinbrenner Shoe Co., Wisconsin Window Unit, Northern Specialty, Sewing & Mops, Merrill Box, Merrill Woodware, Lincoln Canning, Strassheim, Lincoln Foundry, Sat-Play, Merrill Manufacturing, Merrill Candy, Quality Wood Products, Needtreda, Mueller Manufacturing, Merrill Tanning Co. and Modern Woodwork.

Their products are such, door and blinds, evaporated milk, butter, sweaters and other knitted goods, gloves, shoes, windows, toys, candy, wooden pails and toothpicks, canned goods, wooden handles, castings, wire goods, playground equipment, farm equipment, candy, fur garments, leather goods, children's toilet sets and auto seats, cheese boxes, tavern bars, etc.

City of Parks

Today Merrill is a city of fine parks, shaded streets and fine lawns and gardens about well-kept homes.

It has fine churches and schools, theatres and hotels, and a great variety of progressive retail stores and service concerns.

Merrill is the county seat of Lincoln county. Located at the confluence of the Wisconsin and Prairie rivers, it is in the center of one of the finest farm regions of the country.

The residents of the city take an active part in the civic life of the community.

Many sons of Merrill have served their country in time of war and many paid the supreme sacrifice in following the Stars and Stripes.

Merrill is interested in things cultural. A fine library, weekly band concerts during the summer by the city band, other musical events, a county fair each year under the sponsorship of the 4-H Clubs—to name a few.

There are many fine organizations of youths and adults, civic, fraternal, clubs, athletic, labor, academic, service and others.

Fishing, hunting and other sports, indoor and outdoor, play an important part in the life of the community.

There is a spirit of friendliness on the part of the people that, added to the physical charms of the city, has made Merrill a city to be loved by visitors, as well as by its residents. And this year—1947—Merrill is 100 years old.

The railroad came into Merrill in the spring of 1880, a part of the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul system.

Barrel-Stave and Hoop Factory

Perhaps many Merrill people will remember that a barrel-stave and hoop factory was operated on the site of the Stange Public Park, near the northwest end of the Prairie river bridge, east of the Badger Hotel.

The mill was built by the late David Christensen, along with his sons, Peter and Albert G., who operated it for a number of years in the late nineties before it was removed to Dargatz, Mich.



Haribal Ackerman, one of the county's first residents.

Highly Pines

Some great pines grew around Merrill years ago. One tree was cut down by Gideon Young and hauled into the mill. The first log of the tree, sawed 1302 feet of first clear lumber. It was cut down by J. N. Cotter, then a stripling of a piny boy. Another tree, which had been left as uncut, was sawed down and produced 5,000 feet of lumber.

The city of Merrill was incorporated in March, 1881.



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