

Stange Public Park, Cenotaph, Two Of City's Beautiful Parks

The late A. H. Stange spent many of his nearly seventy years in the lumber industry in Merrill and was one of the community's main benefactors. The beautiful Stange Public Park and Cenotaph park exist because of his generosity and activity.

An immigrant boy, he came with his parents from Sletting, Germany, to Watertown, Wis., when he was three years old.

When his father fell ill, he went to work for Christian Myer at Watertown for a yearly wage of \$100. The second year he earned \$150. At the end of five years he was the highest paid artisan in the Myer shop.

Determined to make up the schooling lost because he had been forced to go to work before it was completed, he, with several other young men, hired an instructor and organized a night school. He completed 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 McClurg. On February 15, 1874, he was married there to Miss Emilie Miller, whom he met while singing in the choir. Later he went over to H. W. Wright, who sent him to Merrill to superintend the McCord and Wright sawmill and sash and door plant. Eventually he was taken into the firm.

Having accumulated some capital, he determined to get into the sash, door and blind field himself. After rejecting the opportunity to buy plants in other cities, he took over the bankrupt Merrill Manufacturing Co. for the amount necessary to satisfy the creditors.

The saw mill 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.

Through the years progress was made until the plant became the most productive single institution manufacturing regular stock, sash and doors and blinds exclusively.

The two parks which the city owes to Mr. Stange's generosity and activity are the Stange Public Park and Cenotaph Park. The former is located 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 in condition that it be improved and made into a park. The work was done in 1908. Now there is an athletic field with grandstand; bandshell where weekly concerts are given during the summer by the city band; playground equipment for children; and a swimming beach with bathhouse. At about the same time Mr. Stange improved a piece of ground directly across the street for a private park, but in 1920 he donated this ground to the city. It is known as the Kitchenette.

Cenotaph Park, with its marble memorial monument to those who died in their country's service, is located to the north of the Badger Hotel. It was given to the city in 1923 when the Cenotaph was unveiled.

Former Stange institutions in this community included the Stange Lumber Co., with sawmill, planing mill and large timber holdings in Vilas county; the Kinzel Lumber Co., with sawmill, planing mill, the manufacture of grain doors, and timber holdings in the New Wood territory; the Badger Hotel and Theater; and the Union Land Co.

There was also the Wisconsin-Michigan Lumber Co., Eagle River, with sawmill, planing mill, box shock plant, and timber holdings in Michigan; the Mt. Emily Timber Co., La Tuque, Ontario, with sawmill and extensive timber holdings in the Grande Ronde river valleys; and a big sawmill, sash and door and box plant at Grand Rapids, now Wisconsin Rapids.

Mr. Stange, with L. N. Anson, started the Lincoln County Bank as a co-partnership. The bank, then located where the Styza Bros. have their store on West Main street, opened for business on August 1, 1897.

All through this strenuous career, Mrs. Stange was building a home on the Stange property on Prospect street. She did her own housework—dresmaking, 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. She was active in the Merrill Benevolent Association and for a time was its president.

The six children born to Mr. and Mrs. A. H. Stange are still living. They are C. H. Stange of this city; Mrs. C. J. (Hattie) Kinzel and August J. Stange, La Grande, Oregon; Mrs. Roy M. (Emilie) Rogers and Mrs. Fred W. (Lydia) King, Los Angeles; and Mrs. E. W. (Adelle) Ellis, Wisconsin Rapids.

Mr. Stange was very active in civic affairs. He served his city as alderman and mayor; he contributed toward the prosperity and activity of the Trinity Lutheran church, of which he was a member, and to other churches in the city.

He was one of the first members of the city's first volunteer fire department and was attached to the West Side group.

He built the Badger Hotel and Theater in 1907 and made his residence there in his later years.

Mr. Stange died April 28, 1933, while on a visit at the home of his daughter, Mrs. King, in Los Angeles. Mrs. Stange passed away July 8, 1936, in this city.

Small Pox Scourge Strikes Jenny; Many Stricken

The small pox visited Jenny during the winter and spring of 1872, not entirely disappearing until into the summer. It left an awful trail of death and desolation in its wake; its ravages were so widespread that at one time there were scarcely enough well people in the village to look after the sick and attend the burying of the dead.

A pest house was established at the Truxal homestead on the Champagne hill, and those who could be moved were taken there, that being considered sufficiently remote to insure complete isolation of the victims.

The pest house was in charge of William Averill. It was not long, however, until almost every house was a hospital, for only a few families escaped the disease.

There was no doctor in Jenny then, but during the winter Dr. D. B. Wylie of Wausau came up and vaccinated everyone who would permit it, even working far out into the lumber camps.



Cenotaph Park, with its marble Memorial monument, is located to the north of the Badger Hotel. It was given to the city by A. H. Stange in 1923 and was unveiled on August 18 of that year as a memorial to those who gave their lives in the service of their country.



The late Mr. and Mrs. A. H. Stange

Well Supplied With Postoffices

Back in 1903 the county was well supplied with postoffices besides the two rural deliveries from the city of Merrill. The following postoffices were in existence that year: Bay Mill, Bloomville, Chat, Clifford, Dudley, Doering, Finn, Gleason, Gonda, Heaf-

ford, Heineman, Heller, Irma, Jeffries, Kitchenette, Merrill, Somo, Spirit Falls and Tomahawk. Heaford, Merrill and Tomahawk were money order offices.

The present postoffice was erected in 1915.

The first greenhouse in Merrill was erected some 55 years ago on the site of the present greenhouse.



Beautiful Stange Public Park was once a swampy area filled with mill debris. The land was given to the City of Merrill by A. H. Stange on condition that the city build a park. This was done in 1908. The land across the street, now known as the Kitchenette, was

given to the city by Mr. Stange in 1920. Shaded walks, lagoons, a swimming beach, athletic park and bandstand combine to make the Stange Public Park a beauty spot and recreational center. Adjacent to the park are the American Legion Hall, Library and High School.