

# THE STORY OF THE SUCCESSFUL CAREER OF WISCONSIN PIONEER

## LIFE STORY OF A. H. STANGE AND HIS FAMILY IS GIVEN

The following article, published in the American Lumberman a short time ago is a complete and decidedly detailed account of the history of the Stange family in the lumbering industry. August J. Stange, a resident of La Grande and a member of the second generation of the Stange family, is prominently connected with the Mount Emily Timber Company of this city which will this spring begin construction of a sawmill to be located on the old fair-ground. The photographs used in connection with this story are printed through the courtesy of the American Lumberman. Editor's note.

From a story appearing in the American Lumberman, dated June, 1920, regarding the principal of this narrative, one would conclude that A. H. Stange of Merrill, Wis., had then nicely rounded out a career on which he could rest his laurels; could soon retire from the complex problems of the manufacturer and live in ease and comfort. The story briefly told of Mr. Stange's boyhood days, how he gained his knowledge as a woodworker under hardship and privations; his early business affiliations; and the launching of his own small craft in 1885, heavily weighed down with mortgages which battled the storms until, by careful steering, it arrived in smoother waters of his ultimate success as a saw and door manufacturer. It related how he built up a business which in 1900 had attained the largest single capacity in the world for the manufacture of standard stock doors and open windows, the product being shipped to the largest jobbers in this country and to many points in Europe—this in connection with his sawmill, lumber and lumber operations. Mr. Stange's early life is told in the "from stump to finished product" and that a sawmill operator in this producing section should necessarily own his timber. It also related how through present and practice Mr. Stange concentrated on the business he had chosen for his life's work.

The story related his political affiliations as a staunch Republican; his public activities as excellent in his home town; and how his family life by remarking that Mr. and Mrs. Stange were then raising a family of six children, "two sons, Charles H., a valuable lieutenant to his father in the management of A. H. Stange Co.; August J., a student in the University of Wisconsin, preparing himself to enter business; four daughters, the eldest of whom is married." It concluded by saying, "Mr. Stange is yet a young man and, in the building up of this western country, such an institution as the A. H. Stange Co. is bound to grow and forge still further ahead."

Prediction Came True.

That was about twenty-three years ago. Many things have transpired since then and the prediction made by the American Lumberman has come true. The son predicted in that the industry has heard little of these events covering the span of nearly a quarter of a cen-

## A. H. STANGE



A. H. Stange, of Merrill, Wisconsin, the genius behind the Stange activities in Wisconsin, Michigan and Oregon.

ary, thru the columns of the lumber trade journals and the attention is due to Mr. Stange's extremely modesty in reference to his achievements and his underlying policy to establish direct, close connections with men who became his personal, true, life-long friends in passing his reliable product on to the ultimate consumer.

Mr. Stange has not rested on his laurels since 1900, when this paper reproduced a likeness of this pioneer lumberman. The very recent photo appearing in this issue reflects a man of health and vigor in fullest possession of his faculties, keen and alert, the face gleaming only by the lines of pipe, nature's expression. It portrays a man of integrity, honesty of purpose, determination to succeed, and, just meaning in the background, the smile of pleasantness, for the consideration of his fellowman, and a desire to help where assistance is needed.

### Timber Continually Acquired.

To perpetuate the saw and door business of the A. H. Stange Co., pine timber was continually acquired in Ontario and Viasa counties, Wisconsin, and it will be interesting to know that the Stange Lumber Co. to change in name only, now under the direction of C. H. Stange, vice president and general manager, is still cutting the old-fashioned Wisconsin white and Norway pine lumber and manufacturing men and doors. Popularly known by talents and associates as "Wharf" C. H. Stange truly is a chip off the old block, for his entire life span beyond days has been devoted to the lumber and saw and door business, and he stepped into the trail of his father in that the industry has heard little of these events covering the span of nearly a quarter of a cen-

tion with his father. The relative percent company is situated forward with remarkable success under his guidance. The source of supply of white pine timber to this day comes from Viasa county in Townships 42 and 43, Range 9 and 9, in the very heart of the wonderful Wisconsin inland lake territory. Last year a logging railroad was constructed out of Star Lake to lay the body of timber, practically the best large stand of Wisconsin white pine. There remains sufficient white and Norway pine, together with hemlock and hardwoods, to carry the Stange Lumber company for a period of at least fifteen years, for approximately 23,000 acres of timbered land, with close to 25,000,000 feet of stumpage, support the Stange Lumber Co.'s mill at Merrill.

Further to support the saw and door industry at H. Stange's plant, a block of lumber in 1902 from the Bradley interests of Tremont, located in Lake county, Minnesota, comprising about 200,000 feet.

Always on the alert, Mr. Stange again allowed his eyes to cross the Wisconsin boundary line and range over into Michigan. Here he saw a fine block of timber in Gogebic county, Michigan, the southern extremity of which bordered on the beautiful Lake Venz, Huron, shore Michigan and Wisconsin bore their boundary boundary. Here where the grand old Wisconsin has its corner, here a tract of Michigan timber, maple, together with hemlock, other hardwoods, and hemlock, was purchased and a total of about 25,000 acres of timbered land was controlled.

### Mill Operation Started.

It really was Mr. Stange's prime intention to acquire this block merely as an investment, but his

son-in-law, E. W. Ellis, having full faith in Mr. Stange's good judgment and his policy to manufacture from stump to pile, grasped the opportunity and asked to be placed in charge of an operation to manufacture the Michigan timber. His wish was granted. In 1920 he left Wisconsin Rapids where he had acted as mayor of the city for one year, leaving behind him a host of friends who respected his departure and decided on building a mill at Eagle River, Wis. Here the next unit of the Stange interests was organized, namely the Wisconsin-Michigan Lumber Co., incorporated under the laws of Wisconsin in May, 1920, with Mr. Ellis as president and general manager. Today the plant is in operation with complete saw-mill, planing and box shooks equipment, and Mr. Ellis and his family are living in their beautiful home at and on Eagle River, another of Wisconsin's famous summer resorts. This operation will have a net of about twenty years.

H. M. Rogers, who married "one of the Stange girls," had been conducting a retail lumber business in Adrian, Mich. He became inculcated with lumber manufacturing "bug" and moved to Wisconsin Rapids, assisting Mr. Ellis. After Mr. Ellis' departure for Eagle River, Mr. Rogers assumed complete management of the E. W. Ellis Lumber Co. at Wisconsin Rapids. In addition to the manufacture of box shooks, he conducts a sawmill to cut the class of logs purchased on the market in the Wisconsin Rapids territory.

### Western Timber To Be Manufactured.

Everything now seemed lovely and carefully arranged for setting down in the routine of cutting the timber into logs, the logs into lumber, and the lumber into the finished product. However, an element of almost came to the surface. August J. Stange, who had spent his several years residence in Oregon in blocking the Mount Emily Timber Co. tract he realized the West would soon be foremost in the nation's lumber supply. In 1921 he asked to be relieved of his duties in the Union Land Co., believing the manufacturing unit should conduct its own logging operations, so that he could advance the family's interests in the West. No obstacle was placed in his way and with his family he departed for Oregon in September, 1921, to make his Grand old home, leaving friends and associates behind. A. H. Stange also kept close tab on the trend of affairs and pointed out to the "boys" that the West was gradually coming into its own and that the time had arrived to begin operations in the timber owned in Oregon. At a directors' meeting held a few months ago it was definitely decided to manufacture the timber held under the title of the Mount Emily Timber Co. and an account of this decision was chronicled in the American Lumberman in its issue of June 23 last.

Naturally August J. is the logical manager of the new operation, and this title was promptly conferred upon him. It is to be noted that the grand old Sir, A. H. Stange, now starting three score and ten, looks the committee to determine the site, construction for the plant and general plans for the new project supported by his son August J., and the oldest boy of the sec-

ond generation, A. H. Stange's grandson, Wesley K. Kinzel. Kinzel has been right next to his father in the management of the Kinzel Lumber Co. and during the last two years has assumed supervision of the logging operations. It is a safe prediction that Wesley will within a year or two leave his dad behind in Wisconsin so that he can plunge into the western activities with "Inch August."

C. H. Stange's son, A. H. Stange, Jr., a student of Notre Dame, is preparing to enter the business field and through special effort and determination, characteristic of the sire and grandire, is forging right to the front. In addition to his studies he has developed his inclination for true athletics and sports so that A. H. Jr. is now on the Notre Dame varsity football team. Both young men have early learned to love the ring of the woodman's axe and the hum of the sawmill.

Freud W. King, who married Mr. Stange's youngest daughter, recently moved to Portland, Ore., and contemplates engaging in a branch of the lumber business. It was intended to saw this timber in Minnesota and ship the lumber to Merrill to be manufactured into the finished product. After carrying the lumber for a number of years it developed that the tract fitted in nicely with the holdings of the Virginia & Rutty Lake Co. of Virginia, Minn., and it was sold to that company in 1920.

A. H. Stange had other members of his family in mind in carrying on his business career. In 1907 the E. W. Ellis Lumber Co. of Grand Rapids, Wis., (now Wisconsin Rapids), was organized. A plant to manufacture sash and doors and box shooks, together with a sawmill, was erected at Wisconsin Rapids, the operation being placed under the direction of E. W. Ellis, son-in-law. The timber to support the plant was shipped from the holdings in Gogebic and Viasa counties, Wisconsin.

# Members of the Stange Family



The above pictures are of members of the A. H. Stange family. Reading from the left (upper line) August J. Stange, La Grande, Ore., Manager of Mount Emily Timber Co.; E. W. Ellis, Eagle River, Wis., President and General Manager of Wisconsin-Michigan Lumber Co.; Charles J. Kinzel, Merrill, Wis., in charge of Kinzel Lumber Co.; Floyd W. Long, Eagle River, Wis., Sales Manager Wisconsin-Michigan Lumber Co.; A. H. Stange, Jr., Merrill, Wis., Student at Notre Dame, and prominent in athletics; Wesley K. Kinzel, Merrill, Wis., in charge of logging operations of Kinzel Lumber Co. Reading from the left (lower line) E. M. Rogers, Wisconsin Rapids, Wis., Manager of E. W. Ellis Lumber Co.; E. J. Johnson, Merrill, Wis., Sales Manager of Kinzel Lumber Co.; W. D. Martin, Merrill, Wis., Sales Manager of Stange Lumber Co.; Charles H. Stange, Merrill, Wis., Vice-President and general manager of Stange Lumber Co. and Fred W. King, Portland, Oregon, who will soon enter the lumber business.

Co., notwithstanding his earnest protests, for he had learned to love the timbered sections of the mountainous country in Oregon. It was no small task to supply Stange Lumber Co., Kinzel Lumber Co. and the E. W. Ellis Lumber Co. with logs to keep the mills humming, but August J. was equal to the occasion, and also kept in close touch with the manufacturing end.

In 1914 A. H. Stange made all family membership equal partners with him and his plan to place each of "the boys" in charge of a separate unit is working to a successful issue.

Financed Own Operations. This briefly recounts the achievements in the lumber world of A. H. Stange since 1880, assisted by just family members. It is the grouping of four splendid blocks of timber aggregating nearly two billion feet, the last of which will soon be harvested with a sawmill. All of this was accomplished without outside financing. In fact, Mr. Stange made it an unvarying practice to assume no deferred payments which he felt he was not able to meet, but rather anticipated every obligation. All four tracts stood free and unincumbered, and, no doubt, the western project will be conveniently financed from the old established operations in Wisconsin. Mr. Stange had many flattering opportunities offered him to become associated with other lines of business, but preferred to invest his surplus funds in the purchase of timber.

Baring all this time he interest in the city of Merrill did not wane. The Lincoln County bank which he organized in 1921 had grown to the size of Northern Wisconsin's strongest banks, its assets amounting to \$1,200,000. Mr. Stange is still at the head of the institution as president, and Charles J. Kinzel, who until 1914 was cashier, and C. H. Stange are vice-presidents. In 1904 Mr. Stange erected the Luther, Hope and Grace houses, occupying a timber tract block, and the building, facilities and equipment would do credit to other many times the size of Merrill.

Some Public Benefactions. One day he secured a large tract of land lying in the center of the city and donated it for park purposes. Upon acceptance by the city of Merrill it was dedicated "Stange Public Park." Within the spacious park grounds since have been located the Merrill High school and athletic recreation, and the beautiful B. West-Carson Library, and last June the imposing new Presbyterian church was dedicated, the latter together with the pipe organ, largely a gift of Mr. and Mrs. A. H. Stange. A few years ago Mr. Stange added several acres of adjoining beautiful, wooded land to the park, then all of which the striking campus trend toward the Pacific River, which in way just before leaving into the old Wisconsin. Thus, what was once a desolate, wooded spot in the heart of the city is today a wonder spot for in mother's team and church very and further enhanced by religious and education other religious organizations have been liberally admitted, notably the Merrill Lutheran Congregation for which in 1907 Mrs. and Mr. A. H. Stange erected a church school completely a handsome memorial church edifice.

The latest of Mr. Stange's memorial gifts to the city of Merrill is the completion of the Larkin block, the city's building on the corner of First and Oregon. This block, which cost \$100,000, is a beautiful, modern structure, and it is the second to the city and at his own expense he erected and it is a granite emblem as a memorial to the soldiers and sailors who participated in the defense of our country.

One would think Mr. Stange was a slave to his business. This is not true. With the exception of last winter, Mr. Stange accompanied by his helpmate, has gone to America's winter resorts annually during the last twenty-five years for rest and recreation, or has taken trips such as to the Meditteranean or to continental Europe in connection with his foreign relations, and in 1918 with Mrs. Stange and Mr. and Mrs. Rogers circled the globe.

Aside from Mr. Stange's desire to help steer the new western project he and Mrs. Stange are happy in the success of their children and are watching with interest the development of the second generation, thirteen in number, some of whom have left their childhood and boyhood days. No doubt

many of the second generation will follow in the industry in which the grandire has been so eminently successful. God willing, Mr. and Mrs. A. H. Stange will celebrate their golden wedding February 15, 1924.

## Two Views of Plants Owned by Stange Interests



Ideally situated are the manufacturing plant and log booms of the Stange Lumber company at Merrill, Wisconsin, shown in the upper photograph. The lower photograph pictures one of the saw mills owned by the "Stange Family" interests.

## For Sale

Four-room home, large lot, 70x110. This property is located close to school and the Bowdoin-Hicks Lumber company. The price is \$1,250, which includes the furniture. \$250.00 will give you possession of this property, and the balance payable at the rate of \$25.00 a month, including interest. This price is worth more than the price asked and if you are looking for a small home it will pay you to investigate this.

Five-room home located on 7th avenue, 4 lots, city water, wired. This home is class to schools, school and the new mill. The price and terms are very reasonable.

Three-room home large lot, 120x110. Price \$1000.

Five-room modern home class to high school. Basement, new painted. Price, \$3,500. Terms \$300 down and balance at \$20 per month.

## For Sale

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