

Helgran Of Mayville Leader In Furniture

MAYVILLE — Chester E. Helgran, president and treasurer of Kling Factories, which was purchased by Baumritter Corporation, is one of the leading furniture men of the nation.

Nathan S. Ancell, president of Baumritter, immediately appointed Mr. Helgran to his new offices after Baumritter's purchase of the 50-year-old Kling firm was announced today. Previously, Helgran served Kling Factories as executive vice president and treasurer.

He was but 19 years old when he joined Kling Factories in 1912.

Helgran has served on several occasions as president of the Jamestown Area Furniture Manufacturers Association and, in 1941, he won national fame in the furniture industry when he was elected president of the National Association of Furniture Manufacturers.

During World War II days, Helgran also was nationally known in the furniture industry as a member of a 26-man advisory committee of furniture manufacturers with staff members of the Office of Price Stabilization Board. Earle O. Hultquist, president of Jamestown-Royal Upholstery Corporation, Jamestown, was also a member of that Board.

In 1960, Helgran urged the House Interstate and Foreign Commerce Commission at Washington, D.C., to require labeling of hardwood furniture as to whether it is genuine or imitation.

The Helgran-backed bill required a label on each piece of furniture revealing the material used for exposed surfaces, which the industry has followed since

It forbids retail furniture houses to remove the labels.

Despite his long daily hours of devotion to the furniture industry, Helgran has found time to be interested in community programs here, as elsewhere in Chautauqua County and in the nation.

He is a member of St. Paul's Episcopal Church here and has held several church offices, including that of warden.

For many years, Helgran has been a prime worker in the development of safe transportation on the highways through his active interest in the Jamestown Automobile Club. He has served that organization as both president and director.

When the State Bank of Mayville was merged with the First National Bank of Jamestown in 1956, Helgran was elected a director of the banking house.

He also has served as a president of the Rotary Club at Westfield.