

Jamestown Lounge Company Is Story Of Cooperation Over Many Years

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"Some local businesses," says Mrs. Fred Wilson, one of the directors of the Jamestown Lounge Company, "are the story of one man, who through his ability and diligence developed his own firm. The Jamestown Lounge Company is not. It is the story of a lot of people, whose life together, working and planning together, has made a good company. And it has been a good life together."

Mrs. Wilson is an authority. Her many friends who see her bright and early every morning at her desk often find it hard to realize that this is her 52nd active year with the company.

It was in 1888 ("the year one and three eighths" says Mrs. Wilson) when Hurley L. Phillips, who had some money saved, first met with Arthur L. Greenlund, Lynn Cornell and Theodore Hanchett, three employees of Shearman Brothers. They felt there was a growing opportunity to make good furniture in Jamestown, and they were anxious to see what they could do working for themselves.

Bought Small Factory

The four partners bought a small tub factory, on Winsor Street near Willard, where the present factory now stands.

A five-story building was constructed, and arrangements were made to have water from the Plouville Dam tunneled under Winsor Street and into the factory. This turned a water wheel in the machine room, and its shaft ran all the machinery. There were no inside stairways; it was necessary to go outside the building to get upstairs. As there was no elevator, ropes outside were used to haul supplies up and the work down.

Sixty-two years ago a lounge was a very special piece of furniture, having no back or arms, not many springs, and a hard roll at one end. Lounges were not only very popular, but easy to make without a great deal of expensive machinery, and the four partners felt this would be a good item to build. They agreed to draw \$15 a week each as wages, and the Jamestown Lounge Company began.

Arthur Greenlund's father, Chris-

topher, set out on the road selling lounges. Word came back from Youngsville, Pa., of the first sale, and the help wanted sign was hoisted outside the shop.

One of the first to offer his services was a young upholsterer, Charles Johnson, now of 115 Sampson Street, who came in 1891, three years after the partnership was first formed. Johnson grew up with the company and is active today, still handling the more difficult upholstering problems.

By this time a box couch had been added to the line, and President Phillips reported good progress. In 1895 Garfield McIntyre, now of Lakewood, a nephew of Arthur Greenlund, and the next year George Jones, now of Greenhurst, two more men still active today, started their long careers as skilled craftsmen.

New Item Added

The year of the Spanish American war, said the people of Jamestown, was a foolish time to construct a new building. But the people at the Lounge Company had just added a new item that was a real seller, a couch with a beautifully curved lyre arm at either end that you could let down with a ratchet to use as a sofa bed.

The same year the man who had

been doing the company's office work went away to war with Captain Fred Wilson's Company E. Hurley Phillips asked Captain Wilson's wife, Angie to take his place. She did so, and although her husband came back and resumed his duties as Jamestown's fire chief, she never could break away from the furniture business. Today she is the firm's secretary.

The fifth member who today has over 50 years of service, Elmer Gripepe of 32 Kinney Street, came in 1900.

Thirty-seven active 25-year men still remember the days when hand carvers joined the upholsterers as masters of superior trades, men in whose clever hands was hidden the secret of making good furniture. They have seen the changes come about year by year, and watched the trained machinist come into his own, as the hand trades die out.

Relatives of the original four partners are still in this area to day. Mrs. Arthur Greenlund widow of the founder and her daughter, Mrs. Albert Wellman, are joined by Lynn Cornell's daughters-in-law, Mrs. Robert and Mrs. Kenneth Cornell, and Theodore Hanchett's granddaughter, Mrs. Margaret Patchen, all Jamestown residents.