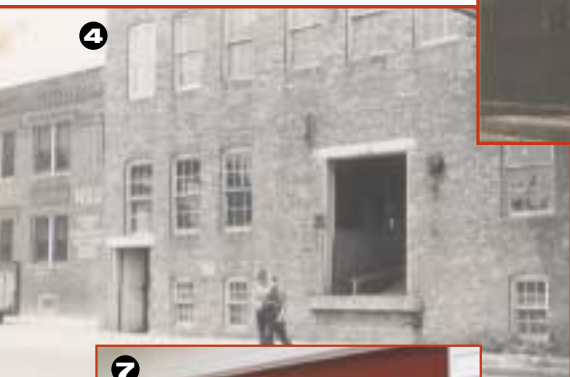


FROM THE PAGES OF
HISTORY

**Wagner
Manufacturing Company**
Cedar Falls, Iowa



Photos

- 1. Wagner sled catalog, ca. 1906.
- 2. Wagner employees demonstrate the strength of a Wagner sled, ca. 1910.
- 3. Coaster Wagon, ca. 1910 - 1920.
- 4. Wagner door factory in Cedar Falls, 1958.
- 5. Wagner factory, 1963.
- 6. Brochure, ca. 1964.
- 7. Wagner Redwood Beauty door; photo taken 2003.

Sources

- C. J. (Jim) Nelson, former plant superintendent, Wagner Mfg., Cedar Falls, Iowa
- Cedar Falls Museum Historical Files

Milestones

- 1904 ▶ Adam Wagner establishes the Wagner Mfg. Co. in Cedar Falls, Iowa. In its early years, the firm makes children's (snow) sleds, coaster wagons, hay rack fixtures, and a variety of door hardware, eventually expanding into many other products.
- 1930 ▶ Wagner consolidates with Boardman Elevator Control of Chicago, increasing annual revenues to \$1 million. Wagner continues to sell elevator equipment until about 1960. Customers include Otis Elevator and Westinghouse.
- 1934 ▶ Wagner Mfg. begins producing the Wagner Overhead Garage Door.
- 1937 ▶ Adam Wagner dies on August 10. Frank Wyth becomes president, later followed by A.A. Hobart, Harry C. Orrick, Jr., then Leslie L. Anderson.
- 1950s ▶ Wagner and Frantz are among the largest companies making garage doors in the Midwest, making wood sectional and one-piece doors. Commercial and residential steel doors are added later.
- 1955 ▶ Wagner begins producing the "Redwood Beauty" door, a wood door made of redwood.

(1955) The company buys the Stoddard Mfg. Co. of Mason City, Iowa. Stoddard is a small manufacturer of one-piece steel garage doors.
- 1956 ▶ Wagner purchases the Waterloo Wood Bearing building in nearby Waterloo, Iowa. They also begin building a 158,000-sq.-ft. facility, beginning a move from Cedar Falls to Waterloo.

(1956) The firm discontinues its small line of garage door operators and begins to purchase them from H.W. Crane of Chicago, who private-labels them for Wagner.
- 1961 ▶ The company launches the Wagner fiberglass door. Rapid growth follows, and Wagner soon begins selling this door and Wagner wood doors to Sears.
- 1964 ▶ With Leslie L. Anderson as president, Wagner is sold to Chamberlain Corporation of Waterloo. Chamberlain buys Wagner because of the quality of their products and because Wagner was an exclusive distributor of garage doors for Sears.

(1964) Chamberlain moves all Wagner facilities from Cedar Falls to Waterloo. In 1967, Chamberlain moves its corporate offices from Waterloo to Elmhurst, Ill.
- 1968 ▶ At the first organizational meeting of the National Association of Garage Door Manufacturers (NAGDM), Wagner is represented by Allan A. Gilbert, James Pace, and M.C. "Bill" Stoddard. Stoddard (formerly of Stoddard Mfg.) is elected NAGDM's first president on June 13, 1968.
- 1972 ▶ Chamberlain sells its Wagner door division to Clopay.
- 1976 ▶ At its peak, Wagner employs 186 workers in Waterloo, operating in 158,000 sq. ft. Wagner doors are sold from Florida to California.
- 1978 ▶ Clopay closes the Wagner operation in Waterloo, moving Wagner's production facilities from Waterloo to Ada, Oklahoma. Ada operations are eventually closed about five years later.