

Press Release

Glashütte, July 2024

"When Time Came Home"

An updated and expanded edition of Walter Lange's biography

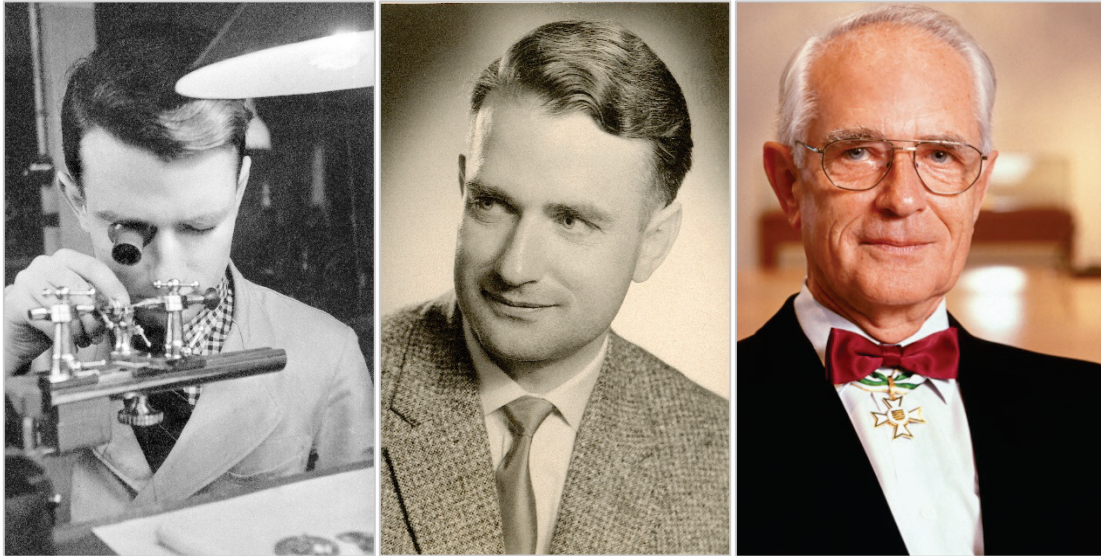
Walter Lange, founder of Lange Uhren GmbH, would have celebrated his 100th birthday on 29 July 2024. To mark his birthday, a new edition of his biography is being published by Econ-Verlag. In his memoirs, he retraces his life, which was closely connected to the history of the manufacture with which his great-grandfather Ferdinand Adolph Lange laid the foundations for Saxon precision watchmaking in Glashütte in 1845. After his family was expropriated almost a century later in 1948, Walter Lange fled to West Germany and A. Lange & Söhne was nearly forgotten. But when the fall of the Berlin Wall and the reunification of Germany presented him with the historic opportunity to bring the brand back to life in his former hometown, he did not hesitate. The 66-year-old retiree's vision at the time was to "build the best watches in the world once again", and that, according to Walter Lange, "was only possible at this historic site."



With the enthusiastic support of his business partner Günter Blümlein, the trained watchmaker, who died on 17 January 2017 at the age of 92, succeeded in reviving the legend of the historic brand after it was forced to stop business over 40 years prior.

In his memoirs, first published in 2004, Walter Lange describes the most important stages of his eventful life across three chapters: from his sheltered childhood in Glashütte and Dresden to his apprenticeship as a watchmaker in Karlstein an der Thaya in Austria, his traumatic war experiences on the Eastern Front, the expropriation of the family-owned business and his escape to West Germany. Finally, he describes the exciting new beginnings that followed in Glashütte after 1990, which brought the historic brand back to the top of international precision watchmaking.

Published by Econ-Verlag, the updated biography is based on the 2004 edition. It has been extensively enriched to include the later years of Walter Lange's career up to after his death, with accounts from his colleagues, memories and pictures.



Walter Lange never gave up hope that he would one day return to Glashütte. Here are some pictures from different phases of his life.

"When Time Came Home" depicts the life of a home-loving cosmopolitan who, despite his displacement, held on to his vision with great perseverance until it became a reality: the revival of A. Lange & Söhne. His biography also provides an impressive portrait of the character of a man who met the greats of his time in business, politics and society, yet always remained humble. He treated everyone with respect and care and as equals. As a member of the Lange dynasty, he still influences the business' corporate culture and is a powerful role model. Walter Lange's memoirs read like a gripping novel and bring modern history to life.

The new edition has been extended to include a foreword by Lange CEO Wilhelm Schmid and an extensive fourth chapter in which author Gisbert L. Brunner recounts the life of Walter Lange from 2004 onwards. This internationally respected trade journalist, industry expert and watch collector had known Walter Lange since 1976 and met with him regularly, especially from 1990 onwards. After all, the revival of A. Lange & Söhne led to many encounters over the years, during which the two watch enthusiasts passionately discussed the past, present and future of precision watchmaking.

Brunner focuses in particular on Walter Lange's entrepreneurial legacy and his commitment to watchmaking training and the town of Glashütte. Walter Lange's unwavering determination and keen optimism inspired other manufacturers to settle in the Müglitz Valley, making Glashütte the centre of German precision watchmaking once again. But Walter Lange wanted one thing above all: to bring jobs back to Glashütte. He received many honours for his development work, including honorary citizenship of the town of Glashütte in 1995, the Saxon Order of Merit in 1998 and finally, the Federal Cross of Merit; 1st Class in 2015.

In addition to the accounts of employees, the new edition of his biography also includes the memories of Lange CEO Wilhelm Schmid, who describes Walter Lange as the "beating heart of our manufacture", in which his spirit can still be felt today. Benjamin Lange, Walter Lange's son,

also talks about his father. A glossary containing technical and specialised terms and an index of persons have also been added. A new cover and an additional picture section illustrating the fourth chapter complete the new edition.

"The best way to honour Walter Lange and his life's achievements is to keep his memory alive," emphasises Schmid. "The new edition of his biography makes a valuable contribution to this, and its importance will continue to grow over time. After all, one of our key objectives is to preserve our historical heritage, to which our company founder made a significant contribution, and to carry it into the future. With this in mind, I am delighted that the last chapter of Walter Lange's life is being honoured and made accessible on his 100th birthday."

About A. Lange & Söhne

Dresden watchmaker Ferdinand Adolph Lange laid the foundations for Saxony's precision watchmaking industry when he established his manufacture in 1845. His precious pocket watches remain highly coveted among collectors all over the world. The company was expropriated after World War II, and the name A. Lange & Söhne nearly vanished. In 1990, Ferdinand Adolph Lange's great-grandson, Walter Lange, had the courage to relaunch the brand. Today, Lange crafts only a few thousand wristwatches per year, predominantly in gold or platinum. They are equipped exclusively with movements made in-house that are elaborately finished and assembled twice by hand. With 72 manufacture calibres developed since 1990, A. Lange & Söhne has secured a top-tier position in the world of watchmaking. Its greatest achievements include the LANGE 1, the first regularly produced wristwatch with an outsize date, and the ZEITWERK, with its precisely jumping numerals. Extraordinary complications such as the ZEITWERK MINUTE REPEATER, the TRIPLE SPLIT and the GRAND COMPLICATION presented in 2013, the most complicated model to date, represent what the manufacture always strives for: to drive the traditional art of watchmaking to ever-new heights. Launched in 2019, the sporty-elegant ODYSSEUS marked the beginning of a new chapter for A. Lange & Söhne.

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