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HISTORY  
OF  
WRIGHT COUNTY  
IOWA

ITS PEOPLE, INDUSTRIES AND INSTITUTIONS

HON. B. P. BIRDSALL  
Editor

With Biographical Sketches of Representative Citizens and  
Genealogical Records of Many of the Old Families

ILLUSTRATED

1915  
B. F. BOWEN & COMPANY, Inc.  
Indianapolis, Indiana

20500



**1823692**

DEDICATION.

To the dear, departed ones, whose busy hands changed the giant forests into fertile fields; whose love of home established the hearthstones, the tender ties of which yet bind together the heartstrings of the native born; whose patriotism gave the best of their lives and substance for the defense of their country; whose graves make sacred the soil their feet so often trod.



## PREFACE

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All life and achievement is evolution; present wisdom comes from past experience, and present commercial prosperity has come only from past exertion and sacrifice. The deeds and motives of the men who have gone before have been instrumental in shaping the destinies of later communities and states. The development of a new country was at once a task and a privilege. It required great courage, sacrifice and privation. Compare the present conditions of the people of Wright county, Iowa, with what they were seventy-five years ago. From a trackless wilderness and virgin land, it has come to be a center of prosperity and civilization, with millions of wealth, systems of railways, grand educational institutions, splendid industries and immense agricultural and dairy productions. Can any thinking person be insensible to the fascination of the study which discloses the aspirations and efforts of the early pioneers who so strongly laid the foundation upon which has been reared the magnificent prosperity of later days? To perpetuate the story of these people and to trace and record the social, political and industrial progress of the community from its first inception, is the function of the local historian. A sincere purpose to preserve facts and personal memoirs that are deserving of perpetuation, and which unite the present to the past, is the motive for the present publication. A specially valuable and interesting department is that one devoted to the sketches of representative citizens of these counties whose records deserve preservation because of their worth, effort and accomplishment. The publishers desire to extend their thanks to the gentlemen who have so faithfully labored to this end. Thanks are also due to the citizens of Wright county for the uniform kindness with which they have regarded this undertaking, and for their many services rendered in the gaining of necessary information.

In placing the "History of Wright County, Iowa," before the citizens, the publishers can conscientiously claim that they have carried out the plan as outlined in the prospectus. Every biographical sketch in the work has been submitted to the party interested, for correction, and therefore any error of fact, if there be any, is solely due to the person for whom the sketch was prepared. Confident that our effort to please will fully meet the approbation of the public, we are,

Respectfully,

THE PUBLISHERS.



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# HISTORICAL

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## CHAPTER I.

### RELATED STATE HISTORY.

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#### INDIAN OCCUPANCY—FIRST APPEARANCE OF WHITE MEN.

Before entering upon the history of Wright county, proper, it is well to make a brief statement as to the occupancy of this locality by various Indian tribes; also something concerning the domain including this county when it was yet a part of Iowa territory and still later, when it became a state.

#### PRE-HISTORIC AND INDIAN RACES.

Of what is termed the pre-historic race that inhabited this section of the Northwest, there is but little known, the only history of this extinct race being the mounds and the contents of the same. These mounds are found scattered here and there in many sections of this and other states, and some have been found in Wright county. Whether these Mound Builders were a distinct race from the North American Indian or not, is still an unsettled question, but the evidence so far goes to show that they sprang from some of the tribes of Asia. Those best versed in such matters claim that this settlement from the Orient came about either by ship-wrecked sailors or by true immigration from Asia, by way of Bering strait. There is evidence that the Mound Builders were people well up in art and science, as then understood in the world, and that copper was mined and worked in a fashion now unknown to the most skilled artisan. They made implements of war and had elaborate houses, practiced domestic economy and were possibly the ancestors of the North American Indian.

For more than one hundred years after Marquette and Joliet trod the



soil of Iowa, and admired its fertile plains not a single settlement was made or even attempted here; not even a trading post was established. During this time the Illinois Indians, once a powerful tribe, gave up the entire possession of this "Beautiful Land" (as its name, "Iowa," really signified) to the Sacs and Foxes. In 1803 when Louisiana was purchased by the United States, the Sac and Fox tribes, with the Iowas, possessed the entire domain within Iowa. The Sacs and Foxes occupied also most of the present state of Illinois. The four most important towns of the Sacs were along the Mississippi, two on the east side, one near the mouth of the Upper Iowa and one at the head of the Des Moines rapids near the present town of Montrose. Those of the Foxes were, one on the west side of the Mississippi, just above Davenport; one about twelve miles from the river back of the Dubuque lead mines, and one on Turkey river. The principal village of the Iowa was on the Des Moines river, in Van Buren county, where Iowaville now stands. Here the great and last battle between the Sacs and Foxes and the Iowas was fought, in which Black Hawk, then a young man, commanded the attacking forces.

#### THE NEUTRAL STRIP.

The Sioux had the northern portion of this state and southern Minnesota. They were a fierce and war-like nation who often disputed possession with their rivals in savage and bloody warfare; but, finally, a boundary line was established by a treaty between them and the government of the United States, made at Prairie Du Chien in 1825. This however, became the source of an increased number of quarrels between the tribes, as each trespassed, or was thought to trespass, upon the rights of those on the other side of the line. In 1830, therefore, the government created a forty-mile strip of neutral ground between them, which policy proved to be more successful in the interests of peace.

Soon after Louisiana was acquired from France by the United States, the latter adopted measures for the exploration of the new territory, having in view the conciliation of the numerous tribes of Indians by whom it was possessed, and also the selection of proper sites for military posts and trading stations. This was accordingly accomplished. But before the country could be opened up for settlement by the whites, it was necessary that the Indian titles should be extinguished and the red men removed. When the government assumed control of the country by virtue of the Louisiana purchase, nearly all Iowa was in possession of the Sac and Foxes, at whose head stood the rising, daring and intelligent Black Hawk. On November 3, 1804,



a treaty was completed with these tribes, by which they ceded to the United States the Illinois side of the river Mississippi in consideration of goods to the value of two thousand two hundred and thirty-four dollars and fifty cents then delivered and an annuity of one thousand dollars, to be paid in goods at cost; but Black Hawk always maintained that the chief who entered into that compact acted without authority, and that, herefore the treaty was not binding. The first fort on Iowa soil was built at Ft. Madison. A short time before, a military post was fixed at what is now Warsaw, Illinois, and named Ft. Edwards. These enterprises caused mistrust among the Indian tribes. Indeed Ft. Madison was located in violation of the treaty of 1804. The Indians sent delegations to the whites at these forts to learn what they were doing and what they intended. On being informed that those structures were merely trading posts, they were incredulous and became more and more suspicious. Black Hawk, therefore, led a party to the vicinity of Ft. Madison and attempted its destruction, but a premature attack by him caused his failure.

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In 1812, when war was declared between this country and Great Britain, Black Hawk and his band allied themselves with the British, partly because they were dazzled with specious promises, but mostly, perhaps, because they had been deceived by the Americans. Black Hawk said plainly that the latter fact was the cause. A portion of the Sacs and Foxes, however, headed by Keokuk (Watchful Fox) could not be persuaded into hostilities against the United States, they being disposed to stand by the treaty of 1804. The Indians were, therefore, divided into the "war" and the "peace" parties. On Black Hawk's return from the British army, he said he was introduced to Keokuk as the war chief of the braves then in that village. On inquiry as to how he became chief, there were given him the particulars of his having killed a Sioux in battle, which fact placed him among the warriors and of his having headed an expedition in defence of their village at Peoria. In person, Keokuk was tall and of stately bearing, and in speech he was a genuine, though uneducated orator. He never mastered the English language, hence his biographers have never been able to do his character justice. He was a friend of the United States government and ever tried to persuade the Indians that it was useless to attack a nation so powerful as that of the United States.

The treaty of 1804 was renewed in 1816, and Black Hawk himself signed it, though he afterwards held that he was deceived and that the treaty was not even yet binding. But there was no further serious trouble with



the Indians until the noted Black Hawk War of 1832, all of which took place in Illinois and Wisconsin, with the expected result—the defeat and capture of old Black Hawk and the final removal of all hostile Indians to the west of the Mississippi river. Black Hawk died on October 3, 1838, at his home in this state, and was buried there, but his remains were afterwards placed in a museum of the Historical Society at Burlington, where they were accidentally destroyed by fire.

More or less affecting the territory now included within the state of Iowa, fifteen treaties have been made, an outline of which is here given: In 1804, when the whites agreed to not settle west of the Mississippi on Indian lands; in 1815, with the Sioux, ratifying peace with Great Britain and the United States; with the Sacs, a treaty of similar nature and also ratifying that of 1804, the Indians agreeing not to join their brethren who, under Black Hawk, had aided the British; with the Foxes, ratifying the treaty of 1804, the Indians agreeing to deliver up all their prisoners; with the Iowas, a treaty of friendship; in 1816, with the Sacs of Rock River, ratifying the treaty of 1804; in 1824, with the Sacs and Foxes, the latter relinquishing all their lands in Missouri, and that portion of the southeast corner of Iowa known as the Half-Breed tract, being set off to the half-breeds; in 1825, placing a boundary line between the Sacs and Foxes on the south and the Sioux on the north; in 1830 when the line was widened to forty miles; also, in the same year, with the several tribes, who ceded the large portion of their possession in the western part of the state; in 1832, with the Winnebagoes, exchanging lands with them and providing a school, etc., for them; also, in the same year, the Black Hawk purchase was made, of about six million acres along the west side of the Mississippi from the southern line of Iowa to the mouth of the Iowa river; in 1836, with the Sacs and Foxes, ceding Keokuk's reserve to the United States; in 1837, with the same, when another slice of territory, comprising one million and a quarter acres, joining west of the foregoing tract, was obtained; also, in the same year, when these Indians gave up all their lands allowed them under former treaties; and finally, in 1842, when they relinquished their title to all their lands west of the Mississippi river.

#### IOWA TERRITORY.

In 1834 this state was incorporated into the territory of Michigan and thus became subject to the ordinance of 1787. Two years later it became a part of Wisconsin territory, and, two years thereafter, became the territory of Iowa, with sixteen counties and a population of twenty-three thousand.



The first Legislature was held at Belmont, Wisconsin, in October, 1836; the second at Burlington, Iowa, in November, 1837, and a third also at the last named place in 1838.

As early as 1837, the people of Iowa began to petition Congress for a separate territorial organization, which was granted, June 12 following. Ex-governor Lucas, of Ohio, was appointed by President Van Buren to be the first governor of the newly-created territory. About this time there occurred what is known as the

#### STATE LINE WAR.

This was a difficulty that arose between the territories of Missouri and Iowa, over the location of the line between the two. The strip in question was from eight to ten miles in width, nearly across the domain between the Mississippi and Missouri rivers. Both territories claimed this valuable land. Missouri's officers, who attempted to collect taxes within the disputed territory, were at once arrested and confined in jail by Iowa sheriffs and the respective governors called out the militia, preparing for bloodshed. About one thousand two hundred Iowa men enlisted, and five hundred were actually armed and encamped in Van Buren county, ready to defend their territory, when three prominent and able men were sent to Missouri as envoys, to effect, if possible, a peaceable adjustment of the difficulty. Upon their arrival they found that the county commissioners of Clark county, Missouri, had rescinded their orders for the collection of taxes, and that Governor Boggs had dispatched messengers to the governor of Iowa proposing to submit an agreed case to the supreme court of the United States for the settlement of the boundary line question. This proposition was declined; but afterward, upon petition of Iowa and Missouri, Congress authorized the suit to settle the controversy.

The suit was instituted, and resulted in the decision that Iowa had only asserted the "truth of history" and that she knew where the rapids of the Des Moines were located (this being the point from which the boundary line west was to take its place of beginning). Thus ended the Iowa-Missouri war. Many years later, Judge C. C. Nourse stated that if Missourians "did not know where the rapids of the river were located, that was no sufficient reason for killing them off with powder and lead; and if we did know a little more of the history and geography than they did, we ought not to be shot for our learning. We commend our mutual forbearance to older and greater people."



## IOWA MADE A STATE.

In 1844, the population of Iowa territory had reached a sufficient number to justify it being organized into a state, and the territorial Legislature passed an act on February 12, that year, submitting to the people the question of the formation of a state constitution and providing for the election of delegates to a convention to be called together for that purpose. The people voted on this proposition at their township elections in the following April, giving the measure a large majority. The elected delegates assembled in convention at Iowa City, October 7, 1844, and finished their work on November 1. Hon. Shepherd Lefler, the president of the convention, was instructed to transmit a certified copy of the proposed constitution to the President for submittal by him to Congress at the earliest day. It also provided that it should be submitted, together with any changes that might be made by Congress, to the people of the territory, for their approval or rejection, at the township elections of April, 1845. The proposed boundaries were unsatisfactory to the people and this constitution was rejected. It really abridged Iowa's territory, so that we had no land west of Kossuth county and extended thirty miles over into what is now Minnesota.

On May 4, 1846, a second convention met at Iowa City, and on the 18th of the same month and year, another constitution, prescribing the boundaries as they now are, was adopted. This was accepted by the people on August 3, by a vote of 9,492 to 9,036. The new constitution was approved by Congress and Iowa was admitted as a sovereign state in the American Union on December 28, 1846.

The act of Congress that admitted Iowa gave her the sixteenth section in every township of land in the state; or its equivalent, for the support of schools; seventy-two section of land for the purpose of a university; five sections of land for the completion of her public buildings; the salt springs within her limits, not exceeding twelve in number, with sections of land adjoining each; also, in consideration that her public lands should be exempt from taxation by the state, she gave to the state five per cent. of the net proceeds of the sale of the public lands within the state. Thus provided for, "as a bride for her marriage portion," Iowa commenced "house-keeping" upon her own account. A majority of the members of the constitutional convention were of the Democratic party, and the instrument contained some of the peculiar tenets of the party of that date. All banks of issue were prohibited within the state. The commonwealth was prohibited from becoming a stock-



holder in any corporation for pecuniary profits and the General Assembly could only provide for private corporations by general statutes. The constitution also limited the state's indebtedness to one hundred thousand dollars. It required the General Assembly to provide public schools throughout the state for at least three months in a year. Six months' previous residence of any white male citizen of the United States, constituted him an elector.

At the date of the state's organization it had a population of one hundred and sixteen thousand six hundred and fifty-one, as shown by the census of 1847. There were twenty-seven counties organized in the state, and the settlements were rapidly pushing on toward the Missouri river.

The first General Assembly was composed of nineteen senators and forty representatives. It assembled at Iowa City, November 30, 1846, about one month before the state had been admitted into the Union. The most important business transacted was the passage of a bill authorizing a loan of fifty thousand dollars for means to run the state government and pay the expenses of the constitutional convention. The most exciting feature of the session, however, was the attempt to choose the United States senators. The Whigs had a majority of two in the House and the Democrats a majority of one in the Senate. After repeated attempts to control these majorities, for caucus nominees, and frequent sessions of a joint convention, for purposes of an election, the attempt was abandoned. A law was passed at this session for the organization of public schools in the state.

At the first session, also arose the question of the re-location of the state capital. The western boundary of the state as now determined, left Iowa City too far east in the state; this was conceded. Congress had appropriated five sections of land for the erection of public buildings and toward the close of the session a bill was introduced providing for the re-location of the seat of government, involving, to some extent, the location of the state university, which had already been discussed. This bill gave rise to much discussion and parliamentary tactics. It was almost purely sectional in its character. It provided for three commissioners, who were authorized to make a location as near the geographical center of the state as a healthy and eligible site could be obtained; to select five sections of land, donated by Congress, to be surveyed and platted into town lots, not exceeding one section of the land so selected, etc. Soon after, by an "act to locate and establish a State University," approved February 25, 1847, the unfinished public buildings at Iowa City, together with ten acres of land on which they were situated, were granted for the use of the university, reserving their use, however, by the General Assembly and state officers until other provisions were made by law.



When the report of the commissioners, showing their final operation, had been read in the House of Representatives at the next session, and while it was under consideration, an indignant member, later known as the eccentric Judge McFarland, moved to refer the report to a select committee of five, with instructions to report "how much said city of Monroe (the place named for the new capital in Jasper county), was under water and how much was burned." The report was referred without the instructions, but Monroe City never became the seat of government. By an act, approved January 15, 1849, the law by which the location had been made was repealed and the new town was vacated, the money paid by the purchasers of lots being refunded to them. This, of course, retained the seat of government at Iowa City, and precluded, for the time, the occupation of the buildings for the state university. The question of a permanent seat of government was not yet settled and in 1851 bills were introduced for the removal of the capital to Pella and to Ft. Des Moines. The latter seemed to have the support of the majority, but was finally lost in the House on the question of ordering to its third reading.

At the next session, that of 1853, a bill was introduced in the senate for the removal of the seat of government to Des Moines and, on the first vote, was just barely defeated. At the next session, however, the effort was more successful and January 15, 1855, a bill, relocating the capital within two miles of the Raccoon fork of the Des Moines and for the appointment of commissioners, was approved by Governor Grimes. The site was selected in 1856, in accordance with a provision of this act, the land being donated to the state by citizens or property holders of Des Moines. An association of citizens erected a building for a temporary capital and leased it to the state at a nominal rent.

#### PROHIBITION OF SLAVERY.

The passage by Congress of the act authorizing the territories of Kansas and Nebraska and the provisions it contained, abrogating that portion of the Missouri bill that prohibited slavery and involuntary servitude north of thirty-six degrees, thirty minutes, was the beginning of a political revolution in the Northern states, and in none was it more marked than in the state of Iowa. Iowa was the "first free child born of the Missouri Compromise," and has always resented the destruction of her foster-parent.



## UNDER A SECOND CONSTITUTION.

In January, 1857, another constitutional convention assembled at Iowa City, which framed the second state constitution. One of the most pressing demands of this convention grew out of the prohibition of banks under the old constitution. The practical results of this prohibition was to flood the state with every species of "wild-cat" money. The new constitution made ample provisions for home banks, under the supervision of our own laws. The limitation of the state debt was enlarged to two hundred and fifty thousand dollars and the corporate indebtedness of the cities and counties was also limited to five per cent. of the taxable property.

On October 19, 1857, Governor Grimes issued a proclamation declaring the city of Des Moines to be capital of the state of Iowa. The removal of the archives and offices was commenced at once and continued through the fall. It was an undertaking of no small magnitude. There was not a mile of railroad to facilitate the work and the season was unusually disagreeable. Rain, snow and other unfavorable conditions increased the difficulties; and it was not until in December that the last of the effects—the safe of the state treasurer—loaded on two large "bob-sleds," drawn by ten yokes of oxen, was deposited in the new capitol. It should be added, in this connection, that during the passage over hills and prairies, across rivers, through bottom lands and timber, the safe, belonging to the several departments, contained large sums of money, mostly individual funds, however. Thus Iowa City ceased to be the capital of Iowa.



## CHAPTER II.

### WRIGHT COUNTY—INTRODUCTION.

Prior to 1854—seven years before the great Civil War—no representative of the white race (save a few hunters and United States soldiers) had ever traversed the prairies and beautiful valleys of what is now Wright county. A little over a half century ago, the scene presented in this section of Iowa was made up of the native prairie landscapes, which are ever a feast to the eye. This was then, and had been for centuries, the hunting ground of the Sioux and Sac and Fox Indians, who, later, became at times very hostile toward the first settlers in both Iowa and Minnesota. Then all was as nature had created it. The prairie flowers, on every hillside and fertile valley, bloomed in all their native sweetness, the wild rose sent forth its rare and delicate fragrance. The autumn was as beautiful then as now, but the scenes were far different, for the red man tilled no fields and the wild grass, smitten by the early frosts, made fit fuel for the endless prairie fires that annually swept over this county, consuming all in its pathway, even to the very water's edge. The wild grass has gone; the underbrush along the Iowa and Boone has long since given way to more profitable vegetation. The dusky warrior's rude cabin has given way to the large, modern farm houses, with their electric lighting systems, running hot and cold water, and other conveniences. The wild shrub has gone with the Indian, and the orchard and vineyard have come as an evidence of civilization. The trail of the deer and antelope has been exchanged for the great steel highways that cross and re-cross Wright county. Then, the wintry storm drove the frightened, suffering elk and bison to their hiding places; now the blast of winter drives the farmer's stock to a comfortable shelter. About three score years ago, not a furrow had been plowed here; where the wigwam of the savage Sioux then stood, now may be seen many prosperous towns and cities. The Indian trailed along the Iowa and Boone rivers, but now the swift-flying express and long freight trains carry the products of the soil and the descendants of a nobler, more useful race of people—the white race.

Sixty-one years ago there was often heard the question in the Eastern and Middle states, "Where are you emigrating to?" The reply was "way



out West." For Iowa was then considered very far west, and it had only been eight years since it was classed among the territories of this Union.

It will be the aim of the writer to portray in the following chapters some of the more important events which have transpired within this part of Iowa from its settlement to the present time. The "first settler" and his hardships will be treated; the virgin sod will be turned into well-tilled fields; the forest will be cut down; the log cabins built and torn down in a few years, to be replaced by brick and frame structures; mills and factories will be erected; villages, towns and cities will be built in all sections of this goodly county; school houses plentifully provided for the education of the young, and church spires will be made to point heavenward, by a hardy, frugal and enterprising class of citizens.



## CHAPTER III.

### GEOLOGY, TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL FEATURES.

The technical study of geology finds no place in a work of this character, but, before going into the topography and natural features of Wright county, it may be said that the sub-strata of this county is about the same as other parts of the Mississippi valley, though void of the lime rock found in many other sections of Iowa. What is known as the "Wisconsin drift" covers a large portion of this north-Iowa prairie country. Its geological age is not nearly as old as other parts of the state. The rock formations are lower and softer, showing that there was water covering this county long after it had receded in more eastern portions of the state, where the rock formations are harder, and, in cases in the extreme northwest, are absolutely flinty and quartzlike, as found at Garretson, above Sioux City. The average reader of local history is more interested in knowing something concerning the topography and natural features of a county than of its underground formations.

### SOILS OF THE COUNTY.

It has been said that if one knows what kind of a soil a country has, he may readily determine the character of the people of that country. The soils of Wright and Hamilton counties are nearly all of one sort, both being prairie, of the blackest, richest type. There are some alluvial benches along the course of the Boone in both counties, but these are not continuous and are of a limited area. In the vicinity of the morainic hills the soils are lighter, conspicuously so in some places. The only hindrance so far has been the imperfect drainage, characteristic of all north-central Iowa. This defect, however, is now in course of rapid correction. Great public ditches stretch from marsh to marsh and pass straight down the low valleys of natural drainage, offering to the adjoining farms outlets for tiles, which will soon, in perfect network, reach every undrained field.

Along the larger streams, notably along the Boone, the steep banks show exposures of unweathered drift. These were originally, and are still, largely covered with native forests. Such localities should be preserved as



woodland, to furnish a local supply of building material and wood for fencing, fuel, etc. Blue grass will generally follow the forest in succession and make the less steep declivities fairly good pasture lands; but, even so, the cattle treading the grass, it naturally burns out in the summer, weeds cover the face of the ground, and the whole valley becomes a waste, useless to men and unsightly in the extreme. Such lands are better for wood lots than for any other purpose.

#### CONCERNING FORESTRY.

The state department of geology has written the following on the subject of forestry for Wright and Hamilton counties:

"White men seem to have entered Wright and Hamilton counties by the rivers. The migration, like that of birds in spring, was by the way of woods and thickets. The narrow valley of the Des Moines was filled with the densest kind of forest, not less in the smaller, but no less chasmlike, valley of the Boone. While all the level ground above was marsh and prairie, these deep furrows were dark with trees, among which wound in transparent clearness, amid the boulders, not without music, the fairest perennial rivers, confined by the vegetation to a restricted, but slowly changing, channel. Among these trees and by these streams the pioneers built their cabins, cleared away a few acres where the alluvium was broadest and highest, and shaped their dwellings from logs. They never dared occupy the bare fields above them. Storm-swept in winter and fire-swept in autumntime or in spring—the prairies seemed impossible of occupation.

"It is a curious fact that the fires which year by year mowed the vast plains, seem seldom to have entered these deep and narrow valleys—probably in winter these received more than their share of snow; old residents tell how the valley of the Boone seemed sometimes in its upper channel almost filled with driven snow. The snows in such cases lingered longer here in spring and so defended from fire the vegetation of such protected strongholds. Did the fires sweep these prairies late after the frosts of autumn, still in the river canyons the vegetation remained longer green. Besides, the mists of the river perhaps dampened, at least a little, everything day by day quite up to the valley rim.

"Be all this as it may, it is still the testimony of those who know, and present conditions verify the story, that only along the streams did forests flourish. We say present conditions reveal this fact, for, although nearly all the original forests have been rigorously cut away, yet here and there,



in places less accessible, some of the old trees still stand, and these are almost invariably within the trough-like valleys of the streams. Since, by the coming of white men, and particularly by the cultivation of the prairie, especially during the last forty years, or possibly a half century, the prairie fires have ceased, the forested area has been much extended. Young trees of all native species spread out over the margin of the valleys, occupied with thrifty groves the sharp ravines or secondary tributaries, or even narrow drainage coulees, and, until within recent years, bade fair to show in these prairies a wealth of woodland greater than the past had seen. Within the last two or three decades, however, because of the great increase in the value of agricultural lands in Iowa, the ax has been applied to every wooded slope, as well as to the thickets of the more serviceable and convenient lowlands, and the forest has disappeared.

"The varieties of native trees in Wright and Hamilton counties originally found growing along the streams were as follows: Red cedar, cottonwood, aspen, quaking asp, willow, walnut, butternut, hickory, the several oaks, maples, elms, ash, basswood, sumac, cherry, hackberry, etc. The wild fruit trees include the plum, crabapple, cherry, black-haw, while berries are represented by gooseberries, black currants, strawberries, blackberries, raspberries (red and black), grapes and elderberries."

#### ECONOMIC PRODUCTS.

Wright county has no limestone quarries, nor any coal. The quarries of Hamilton and Webster counties have usually supplied these minerals until more recent years, since which time these articles have been brought in by rail from distant places. At one period, Webster City and vicinity furnished much of the lime used in Wright county, but not so now. Sand and gravel are found and utilized at various points in Wright county, including Belmond, Goldfield and Eagle Grove township. Gravel is now in great demand for road making, and nothing takes its place for such use. But it is not claimed that Wright county is a section where mineral wealth is obtained. Her wealth is in her grasses and grains.

As to fuel, let it be said that the pioneers of this county built their cabins of logs along the principal streams, and timber for both building and fencing, as well as for fuel, was plentiful for the few who had use for it at that time. The groves planted on the prairies by the pioneer hands were set there primarily for wind-breaks and shelter, but many years since have been utilized as a source of supply of good, clean fuel. Wright county has no



fuel of local origin except wood and a tract of land covered at one time with peat. The people here depend upon coal, as a general rule, which is shipped in from various mining districts east and south. Along the Boone and Iowa rivers, some wood is still available for cooking and heating stoves. A few of the early homesteaders resorted to burning hay, but this was not as common here as in the northwestern counties in Iowa.

#### ALTITUDES ABOVE SEA LEVEL.

The following are the altitudes of some of the principal localities in Wright county: Clarion, 1,168 feet; Dows, 1,142 feet; Eagle Grove, 1,119 feet; Goldfield, 1,108 feet; Woolstock, 1,119 feet; Belmond, 1,184 feet; Rowan, 1,203 feet. This shows Goldfield, on the west side of the county, to have the lowest altitude, and Rowan, on the east side of the county, to be the highest point in the county.

#### FLOWING WELLS.

The *Wright County Monitor*, in July, 1878, said concerning flowing wells in this county: "A few years ago, John Beaver dug a well in front of his house to the depth of forty feet without finding water. When at the depth of twenty-eight feet, a small stream of water broke out above his head, and he at once yelled to be drawn up. Before he was fairly drawn up, the whole side of the well was forced in and the hole filled up to the top in a minute's time. A tube was put in the hole and all was filled up with rock and dirt, and a flowing well, that ran an inch and a half stream was the result. The next spring, W. Neese bought this property, and he and J. W. Parmelee got visions of a mill power. About five rods to the north of this well, is a creek thirty feet below the top of the well, and, relying on Beaver's guess at twenty-five feet down, they concluded to create a mill-power. Two six-inch pumps failed to lower the well, so a ditch was dug to run off the water till a dam could be made across the subterranean stream and the full stream raised to the surface. The stream proved to be lower than the creek, and so nothing came of the effort, other than to spoil the well. All attempts to stop the stream were fruitless, and it is still running a volume of ice-cold water that, so far as can be discerned, is at least capable of filling a twenty-four-inch pipe under pressure. At J. J. Parmelee's place (later the J. S. Braden farm) a well had been bored into a subterranean stream and the operations at Neese's affected the well to a considerable extent, showing con-



nection. If this stream could be confined and the water forced up about forty feet, the finest mill site in Iowa could be created and one that is not to be affected by drouth or rains. Perhaps sometime the problem of damming up this underground stream may be accomplished. If close to a city, it would furnish a supply of water that is as cold as ice and as pure as though it had been run through a filter."

In November, 1882, Overbaugh Brothers, of Goldfield, completed a flowing well on the old Moore farm in Liberty township. It was eighty-five feet deep, and the water rises three feet above the surface of the ground. They also made another in the same township at about the same date, the depth of which was one hundred and eight feet.

Wright county has probably more flowing wells than any other territory of its size in the country. The number runs up into the hundreds. The west half, including Eagle Grove and Goldfield, is almost entirely supplied with water from artesian wells. In the east and northern portion is another district in which they are used in abundance, while in various other parts they are found. The average depth at which "flows" are found does not exceed one hundred feet, making a cheap, lasting and continuous supply of the purest water. Fully two-thirds of the area of Wright county is included within this "flowing-well" basin. For the stock-raiser, these flows of pure water, running day and night, winter and summer, are of an immense value.

Beginning at least as far north as Marshall, Minnesota, and extending in Iowa south and east, in a strip only a few miles in width, through Kosuth, Winnebago, Hancock, Wright, Hamilton, Hardin, Story, Marshall, Tama, Benton and Iowa counties, we have a region of flowing wells offering a geological fact of much interest. But to speak more locally, it should be stated that these flowing wells are found and universally used in districts near Renwick, Humboldt county, at Eagle Grove and Goldfield; also at Woolstock, Rowan and Popejoy. At the tile works in Eagle Grove the water is found one hundred and twenty-five feet below the surface and flows up in an inch pipe to eighteen feet above the surface. The flowing well at the Rock Island depot at Goldfield has been flowing for thirty-six years and has been admired and drank from by thousands of passengers.

#### LAKES OF WRIGHT COUNTY.

The state geologists have had much to say concerning the so-called lakes within the borders of Wright and Hamilton counties. They affirm



that these two counties are just inside the limits of the old glacier's farthest eastward spread or push. Traces of similar topography extend almost to Ackley and to Hampton, but the high hills of Dows and those about Iowa lake are the most striking evidences of the glacier's pause. It is a remarkable fact that these high hills and lakes generally go together. The deepest and widest lakes are usually not far away from hills and knobs. That is to say, the lakes hereabouts owe their existence to the same conditions which have been cited in explanation of the appearance of the hills. None of the lakes hereabouts are very deep. They are all marsh-like, only distinguished from a thousand other marshes by the courtesy of the pioneer, who called them lakes to suit his fancy. These so-called lakes, with the exception of possibly one, are all in a straight line from north to south. Twin Lakes, the most northern in Wright county, recently called "Twin Sisters," in contradistinction from the larger Twin lake in Hancock county, are small bodies of water, beautifully situated amid fine morainic hills and knolls. These latter are especially developed southward and from their tops are seen rural prospects of wonderful beauty. The lakes are much visited, but are shallow, not being deep enough to suppress the commoner types of aquatic vegetation, so that rushes appear in islets over their entire surface. Perhaps three to five hundred acres are here submerged at the ordinary stage of water.

The geologist tells us that "about three miles south, over hills so precipitous that there is as yet no road, we encounter Cornelia lake, which is at present nothing but a rectangular marsh, covering about a half section, crowded from side to side with rank aquatic vegetation. The shores, however, are sufficiently high and there is no lack of sandy beach, marked, as usual, where the water of our Iowa lakes is persistent, by a distinct ice-terrace, or bench, formed by the long continued out-thrust of the ice in winter.

"Immediately south of Cornelia lake, just half a mile away, is Elm lake, a rather handsome sheet of water, deeper; surrounded by sloping hills and margined by curving, winding shores, it deserves more attention than it really receives. Native trees still stand along its beaches, and if properly cared for and dredged a little at some points, Elm lake might be made a pleasant resort for all the people of Clarion, as now for a very few. The surface of the lake is a little more than a square mile; its greatest length, nearly two miles.

"Seven miles almost directly south of the lakelets named, is Wall lake, in a township of the same name. Here the thrust of the winter's ice, acting



through centuries, had gathered around the shores the 'boulders originally found on the lake bottom. These, discovered by the pioneers, piled thus in windrows, named not this lake only, but one in Hamilton county, as well as a third, larger and of greater renown, already described in the report on Sac county. Wall lake, in Wright county, is simply a gigantic 'kettle-hole' in the midst of the plain. The morainic hills here stand somewhat aloof, a mile or two to the east and south, and another great marsh called Wheeler creek, but with no eroded channel, lies between Wall lake and the hills. The wall of the lake seems to have long since disappeared; hauled away to make foundation stones in structures, they will doubtless again survive. Only at the southern end of the lake a few boulders appear, heaped up now to help the highway that here skirts the shore. This is, perhaps, the largest lake in the two counties, covering more than two sections, but its shallowness makes it less attractive, and the wild rice and bullrush seem to thrive almost from side to side. Low morainic swells approach its borders on the west and afford warm, sunny slopes to many beautiful farms and groves."

Horace Greeley, of the *New York Tribune*, away back in the sixties, sent a reporter to this lake to "write it up." He made much over the "wall," which was more to be seen than today, and carried the idea that it was a wall of masonry constructed by some prehistoric race of people. But Hon. Charles Aldrich and others, interested in keeping Iowa history straight, got geologists after the theory, and after they had visited and made a report, made it plain to the western people that the "wall" was in fancy only, and could be accounted for on natural principles—that of the heaving ice bringing up the stone from the lake's bed, as it usually froze to the very bottom in severe winters. Hence the poetry connected with Wall lakes—this one and the other one in Sac county—was all exploded.

#### DRAINAGE OF WRIGHT COUNTY.

Boone river, that flows through the entire western part of Wright and Hamilton counties from north to south, affords excellent drainage so far as it is developed. But one peculiarity of this country is the fact that we find sometimes the drainage of highland is actually away from the river, so that the deeply eroded channel of the river avails but little.

Several tributaries of the Boone are more or less serviceable to the drainage of Wright county. Otter creek, Eagle creek and White Fox creek all flow south in the western part of the county, and in many places afford outlet for tile draining. White Fox is an eroding stream and farms adjoin-



ing it are well drained. The same thing may be said of Eagle creek, but in both cases the service is limited almost to the channel of the stream itself. There is no valley and but few tributaries.

However, the open ditches are now seen everywhere through this county. It is possible that the unlimited tiling brought from the fields, from every direction, may afford sufficient perennial water to keep the main ditch full of a constant stream strong enough to maintain the channel thus artificially offered. There are already hundreds, if not thousands, of miles of large open ditches and field tiling, and the work of making more is annually going forward. These are destined to make this county second to none in all the great Mississippi valley.

#### STREAMS.

The East fork of Boone river, named for Daniel Boone, the noted hunter, of Kentucky, takes its rise from numerous smaller streams, springs and ponds or prairie lakes in Hancock county, and flows in a southwesterly direction. The West fork takes its rise in Kossuth county, and flows in a southeasterly direction, entering Wright county in the southwest corner, and forms a junction with the Boone proper, at or near old Luni, in Boone township, the extreme northwestern civil sub-division of Wright county. The main stream of the Boone flows southeasterly along the extreme western border of Wright county, from its point of confluence with the East and West forks at Luni, through the townships of Liberty and Eagle Grove, till it reaches that of Troy, where it takes a southeasterly course, leaving the county by flowing through the northeast corner of Troy township, entering Hamilton county in the northeast portion of Fremont township of the last named county.

On the east side of Wright county flows the beautiful Iowa river, formed almost similar to the Boone river just described. The Iowa is formed by the East and West forks, the former rising in Hancock county, and running southerly, the latter rising in the vicinity of Crystal lake, situated in the north of the same county, and flowing southeasterly, making junction with the Iowa river, proper, one and a half miles north of the town of Belmond, which place is partly in Pleasant and partly in Belmond township, Wright county. The main Iowa then flows south through Belmond township, entering Iowa township at the northwest corner, passes southeast through Blaine and Vernon townships, where it enters Franklin county, a little north of the town of Dows (formerly Otisville), but there



makes a slight curvature and re-enters Wright county for a short distance—about three miles—then runs due south, when, taking an easterly course, it again enters Franklin county.

Originally, along both the Iowa and Boone rivers there was a goodly amount of heavy timber, but the settlers have used the better part of these beautiful groves up for fuel and fencing and building purposes, leaving only here and there good-sized groves, which are now really mostly second-growth timber.



## CHAPTER IV.

### EARLY SETTLEMENT.

Prior to 1854 but few white men had traversed the prairies and valleys of what is now Wright county. A few daring hunters and trappers had viewed this portion of Iowa as early, possibly, as 1852-3, but none for the object of making any settlement. Game and fur-bearing animals were found on the vast spread of prairie land and along the timber-skirted streams, and Indians held the hunting field at their will, save their fear of some other Indian tribes other than the one to which they belonged. The first actual settlement was made the year before the county was organized. The date of the organization was August, 1855, while the first settlers located in 1854 in the following order, the dates having been attested to by the families themselves, hence there can be no doubt as to the correctness of the statements. What men claim and what others assert, in the matter of "first settlers" in any county, are two distinct statements—one of fact and the other of fancy or prejudice. By many in this county it has been claimed that Major Minter Brassfield was the first white man to locate within what is now Wright county, but the truth is that an error has been committed, for the settlement of William Stryker was several weeks prior to that made by Major Brassfield. The proof of this is in the statements made by the families themselves in a biographical record published in 1889, by the Lewis Biographical Company of Chicago, in which the sketches of these men appeared. The sketches were submitted in person, by the compilers, to the subjects or to the family, and not until each was read, corrected and approved, were the sketches printed. On page 489 of this publication we find the biography of William Stryker, of Troy township, in which the following appears at the head of the sketch:

"William Stryker.—Perhaps no name is better known among the old settlers of Wright county than that of our subject, he being the first white settler and, we might say, the father of the county. He has been a resident of the county since July 5, 1854. He is a native of New York, born near Geneseo, September 13, 1814."

Mr. Stryker was a subscriber to the work referred to and approved



every word contained in this biography—hence its authenticity. Next comes the statement made by Maj. Minter Brassfield in the same publication and under the same circumstances (see page 534 of the Biographical Record):

"Minter Brassfield, of Liberty township, arrived in Liberty township with his family on the 12th day of August, 1854. Mr. Brassfield, William Stryker, of Troy township, and William H. Montgomery, of Liberty township, were the first three settlers of the county. All came with their families within a few weeks of one another. Mr. Brassfield settled at once on the place where he still lives. He is a native of Claiborne county, Tennessee, where he was born in 1811." This makes his settlement thirty-eight days later than that of William Stryker.

But to make this statement doubly sure, the author has consulted the pamphlet edited by Mr. Elder in 1892, in which he sought the true story of pioneer settlement in Wright county, and went so far as to ask the pioneers to write what was headed as "Pioneer' Stories—Memories of Pioneer Life, Written or Related by the Early Settlers of Wright County." In this little booklet are the sketches, or "stories," of W. H. Montgomery, Maj. M. Brassfield, O. C. McIntosh, C. N. Overbaugh, R. K. Eastman, Edwin Ballou, J. M. Elder and others of the real pioneer band of Wright county settlers. In these accounts of the first settlement, Major Brassfield states (as stated in the 1889 biographical work) that he "arrived at my present home August 12, 1854." In neither of these former historic accounts of Wright county's first settlement is there any question raised as to who was first, but all concede that such honor must ever belong to William Stryker, of Troy township. However, W. H. Montgomery located land in June, 1854.

#### LIST OF EARLY SETTLERS.

Without going into so much of detail concerning the next few settlers, it should be stated that the following were among the sturdy band who came into the county with the view of making a permanent settlement, and in fact did so, and are here listed according to the year of settlement, while details concerning them will be found in the township histories in which they held residence:

1854—William Stryker, Troy township, July 5; Minter Brassfield, Liberty township, August 12; W. H. Montgomery, Liberty township, in September; Henry Luick, Belmont, autumn; Stephen Wilcox, Beach Grove, Troy township, summer; S. B. Hewett, Sr., Eagle Grove township; S. B.



(Judge) Hewett, Eagle Grove township; N. B. Paine, Eagle Grove township; Anson Gray, Belmond, summer; Anthony Overacker, Belmond, summer; David Luick, Belmond, summer; Mr. Wilse, Belmond, summer.

1855—C. H. Martin, Boone township, February; C. N. Overbaugh, Liberty township; Robert Rowen, Iowa township; J. E. Rowen, Horse Grove; Doctor Cutler, Belmond; Archer Dumond, Belmond; Edwin Bal-lou, Rowan, Iowa township, spring of year; Thomas Oliver, Belmond town-ship; Stephen and Isaac Whited, Belmond, spring; W. E. Rogers, Belmond; Warren Rankin, Belmond; Charles Sheets, Belmond; Washington Dumond, Belmond; Amos Cummings, Belmond; Joseph Dukes, Belmond; Harvey Mack, Belmond; Robert Duffy, Belmond (single man); Andrew Dumond, Belmond (single man); Aaron Dukes, Belmond (single man); Thomas Sheets, Belmond (single man); F. O. Brooks, Belmond (single man); Albert Cummings, Belmond (single man); Lewis Whited, Belmond (single man); J. W. Elder, Belmond (single man); W. B. Walters, Belmond (single man); James Gray, moved to Missouri in 1885; James Horder and others, Belmond; William Sill, moved to Minnesota in about 1890.

1856—R. K. Eastman, Horse Grove, May 3; J. B. Jenison, Pleasant township; Mr. Arnett, settled at Twin Lakes; E. P. Purcell, located at Wall Lake; Adam and John Wasem, Eagle Grove township; Edward Brown, Lake township; C. H. Griffith, Eagle Grove township; William Luick, Belmond township; Amos McIntyre, Goldfield.

1857—Fred Luick, Pleasant township; George A. McKay; O. C. McIn-tosh, Goldfield, March 3; John R. Griffin, Liberty township; George Bing-ham; Daniel Sullivan, Liberty township; Henry Frank, Boone township; William H. Gillespie, Boone township.

1858—A. Elder; Beriah Wright, Belmond; E. A. Howland, Belmond.

These, with a few others whose names have been lost track of with the rush of time, constituted the immigrants who located in Wright county during the first five years of its history as an organized county. Of these three score and more pioneers, but very few are still living.

#### PERSONAL REMINISCENCES.

One of the most interesting features of any county history is that of reminiscences, written by pioneers who braved the dangers and endured the exposures and trials of the early times. In this case the writer is indeed fortunate in possessing the personal recollections of a few of the noble sons of Wright county, the same having been prepared by them for the press in the



latter years of their eventful lives. Among those of great interest and truly historic value are the subjoined sketches:

MAJ. MINTER BRASSFIELD'S ACCOUNT.

"On August 12, 1854, I arrived at my present home, about one-half mile down the Boone river from Goldfield. I had hunted along the Boone each year since 1851, but my home was then at the mouth of the Boone in Hamilton county.

"On August 13, I cut logs for a small cabin. This cabin was only a temporary shelter for us. In a few months I had a good log house finished. This house is still standing (1891).

"The first Sunday that I was here with my family, I shot the largest doe elk I ever saw. I have killed probably one hundred and fifty elk, but I never weighed one. Buffalo were plenty. In the fall of 1854 I killed nine, and elk were so plenty that we could easily kill them whenever we wanted to. Many men have regarded me as a hunter, but I claim to be a farmer, having devoted my life to that work; but, like others who were here in early times, I occasionally spent a short time hunting. I have killed seven deer in one day, six elk in one day, three buffalo in one day and three bear in one day, but never claimed to be a real hunter.

"At first we had great difficulty in obtaining provisions. I have driven thirty miles to get grain ground, and twice one season I was obliged to drive to Ottumwa for cornmeal. I have frequently bought flour at Des Moines and Boonesboro."

An account of Maj. Minter Brassfield's settlement will be found in the township history of Liberty township.

C. N. OVERBAUGH'S RECOLLECTIONS.

The late highly esteemed pioneer, C. N. Overbaugh, early in the nineties, wrote concerning his settlement in Wright county as follows:

"In the fall of 1854 I loaded up my beds and bedding and family, consisting of a wife and four children, and started for the land of promise (Iowa). I was about five weeks on the road. I stopped in Benton county nearly four years, and, in the summer of 1858, loaded up again and started with two yoke of oxen and my family for Wright county. It was a very wet summer; the streams full, the roads soft, and no bridges. We were



two weeks getting here, sloughing down almost every day, and going out of our course to find ferries.

"My wife got the ague. We stopped near the Iowa river at a pre-emption house, remaining about three days. Here we spent the Fourth of July. The weather was cold and cloudy. On the third day I went on foot to Wall lake to ascertain if we could cross the Eagle. Mr. Purcell was living there, and he thought we could cross, so the next morning I got up early, intending to start for Boone river, but my cattle were all gone. I started on the back track and after going about four miles I found them lying in the road. I brought them back and started. We got to the lake about noon and left part of our load. That night we got to White Fox, threw our beds on the prairie and slept. We got up in good season and started again for the Boone. In due time we arrived at the Eagle, which was nearly full, and, fearing that the oxen might turn around in the stream and upset the wagon, I took the following method to get my family over: First wading in to ascertain that it was fordable, I took two of the children in the wash tub and, pushing it ahead of me, landed them safe on the other side. After the children were over, I tied two tubs together and pushed my wife across in the same manner. I then started the cattle in and came across all right. We loaded up again and started for the Boone river, arriving a little before night in a drenching shower. We were in Wright county, but our difficulties were not over. We got into a house, in what was then the town of Sheffield, on the farm where Mr. Henderson later lived, but we were allowed to stay there only about two weeks, the house being sold and moved to Goldfield.

"The next thing to be thought of was a house. Day after day I worked alone in the woods, cutting saw-logs and getting them to mill. This was in the month of July and the mosquitos so thick that they almost formed a cloud between me and the sun, and they were in no degree bashful, timid mosquitos. When my lumber was sawed, Otter creek was not fordable. I hauled it to the creek, got Mr. Montgomery to stay on the west side, while I remained on the other. After hitching my chain around a draft of timber, I started the oxen across, they swimming and taking the lumber with them, when Mr. Montgomery took it out on the other side and started the oxen across for another load. When the creek went down, we moved across and went into an old cabin that was neither chinked nor daubed. The roof, too, was very open; the mosquitos would come in so thick while we were eating supper that more than once they extinguished the candle. The only



way that we could get peace, or rest, was to build fires about the cabin, throw on green grass and make a smoke that would drive the pests away. This was life on the frontier. We had to kiln-dry our lumber. In the fall we got our house up, enclosed and lathed, but we lived in it through the winter unplastered, and the upper floor of only loose boards being laid down. I had some money due me in Benton county, so in the fall my son John and I went down there with two wagons and four yoke of oxen to bring up flour, salt, farming implements, nails and groceries. We were detained about two weeks, and when we got to the Iowa rain set in and we made our way home through much mud and great tribulations.

"The summer of 1858 had been so wet that scarcely anything had been raised on Boone river and it was necessary to hunt provisions, so, in May, 1859, I started on foot, went to Mr. Eastman's at Horse Grove and engaged some corn at one dollar a bushel. I then took my two yoke of oxen and wagon and went after it. I fell in with Amos McIntyre, Chancey Griffith and Tont Christie, who were going to the same place on the same errand; it was about night, I believe, when we got to the Iowa river. The water was so high that we could not cross. Oliver Eastman (son of R. K. Eastman) came down and, with a small boat, took us over; I do not recollect whether this was in the evening or in the morning, but as soon as practicable in the morning we got our oxen ready, hauled the corn to the river, ferried it over, loaded it and started for Boone river, expecting to get there about night. We had obtained a loaf of bread of Mr. Eastman for dinner, but we soon found we were doomed to stay on the prairie over night, so as we were passing by those little lakes north of Clarion, we gathered some sticks and McIntyre shot a crane. Night came on us about the time we got to the old Belmond road. We turned our cattle out, struck our tent and prepared for night; we skinned the crane, built a fire and prepared supper, each one being his own cook. We soon agreed on this method. Each would take a piece of crane, roast it over the fire till done or rare to his own liking; we had no salt wherewith to season. While we were broiling our crane we were toasting our corn by placing an ear on the end of a stick and holding it in the fire until sufficiently roasted, and then gnaw crane and eat corn together. The next morning I had no appetite for crane, and I have never had a hankering for it since. My breakfast was an ear of corn, roasted as above stated. We sloughed down and had to carry out a number of times, and it was four o'clock in the evening when I got home."

It should be stated that Mr. Overbaugh pulled through all such experi-



ences, improved a fine tract of land in Wright county, held public positions and reared a family, every member of which was an honor and blessing to the worthy parents. Mr. Overbaugh has long since passed on to another sphere to receive his reward for faithfulness on earth.

#### R. K. EASTMAN'S STORY OF SETTLEMENT.

Among the truly good and upright men who effected an early settlement in the Iowa valley, in Wright county, none, perhaps, is more deserving and whose words will fall with more potency upon the ears of the generation who knew of his manly, Christian virtues, than those uttered by R. K. Eastman, who, nearly a quarter of a century ago, penned the following reminiscence concerning Wright county in the fifties:

"On May 3, 1856, I arrived in Wright county and located at what was then known as Horse Grove, near the present site of Rowan. I found but little in the way of improvements along the Iowa river. There was not a rod of road and not a bridge in the county, and not a school house worthy the name. A school had been taught in a little log pen on the Boone river near the home of Charles Griffith.

"My family came to the county about one and a half years later. Perhaps I should not tell it, but it is true that I was nearly starved when I arrived at Horse Grove, and I found there but little to eat that a tenderfoot could relish. I met J. M. Elder, the county assessor, and asked him if I could find anything to eat in Belmond. He thought I could and I rode with him to that town and, after eating three meals of wheat bread, potatoes and salt pork, I felt somewhat strengthened, and returned to Horse Grove. Soon afterward my brother-in-law, McNeal, accompanied by his two sons and William and John Hurd, came with provisions. They entered about one thousand acres of land and built a steam saw-mill. This was the first steam-mill on the Iowa river in Wright county. Previous to this there had been a water-mill at Belmond, but it did but little work.

"This steam-mill sawed lumber for the early settlers on the Iowa river, but was not a financial success. After the death of McNeal, the mill was repaired by N. B. Pain, and did very good work under the management of Edwin Ballou, to whom it had been leased. A short time afterward it was burned, but the machinery was put together again and sold to R. F. Train, of Otisville (now Dows).

"I built a house on what is now the Duffy place, but, not being a practical mechanic, I got the north side of it four feet longer than the south



side, which was the subject of much mirthful criticism by pioneer mechanics. This is the only house I ever built.

"I was elected county treasurer and recorder in 1857, and about the same time the county seat controversy between the Boone and Iowa settlers waxed warm. During this controversy the county judge, who had almost absolute power, ordered the court house built at Goldfield, but I remained at Horse Grove with the county property in my possession until 1860. When I first commenced to collect taxes, we kept a hotel at Horse Grove. Agents and landowners were then in the habit of going to the treasurer's office to pay taxes, but I soon had about six hundred correspondents for whom I paid taxes. The treasurer's office was not very well furnished at that time. We had but one table, and at mealtime I placed the books on the bed. I at first knew but little about the work of the office, but did the best I could without experience or instruction, although nearly everyone in the county was willing to tell me all about the duties of the office. I had no safe the first eighteen months, but kept the county funds under lock and key in an old trunk. A small safe was then purchased at Alden, and before I left the office the safe now used by the treasurer was purchased by the county. I often thought that Wright county was an inviting field for robbers, but they never visited us. I have had from five thousand to seven thousand dollars in my care and my house full of strangers, my only weapon of defense being a revolver. While I was at Horse Grove the county judge sent armed men to take the county property in my care to Goldfield. The Iowa river was very high, but they brought with them a boat on wheels. I fastened the door of the room containing the safe and told them that they would have to break in if they got it. I then examined the law on the subject and found that the county judge had no authority for his action. I gave the parties their dinner, and while they were eating, James Riley took their boat down stream, and they were obliged to ford the river through very cold water. We went to the river and cheered them when they reached the deepest part of the stream. I have been accused of being in conspiracy with Riley, but I was not. He learned from the hired men the object of the Boone visitors and acted on his responsibility. The sheriff pleaded earnestly for the property, but I told him I had given bonds for its safekeeping and would allow no man to take it from me.

"I remember an incident connected with the raising of the first saw-mill, which was somewhat amusing at the time. We could not get much help. No one came from Belmond, and the work was a difficult undertaking



for the men who had been assembled. One of the workmen said that he had figured it up and found that it would take just twenty-four quarts of whisky to raise the mill, but that Whitcomb (another workman) had made a cast of figures and found that twenty-six quarts would be needed. The twenty-four quarts were obtained, went around, and the mill went up.

"One Saturday evening ex-Governor Cyrus C. Carpenter came to my place (long before he ever dreamed of being a governor or congressman), but said nothing about his business until Monday morning. Then he paid me one thousand dollars in taxes. Tuesday morning was very cold and blustery, but he mounted his mule and rode away, remarking that if he was lost on the prairie we need not look for him, for the Ft. Dodge people would find him, as the coat he wore belonged to Judge Pease, the gloves to Meservey, the muffler to Morgan and the cap to John F. Duncombe. 'They will find me if I am lost.' Carpenter was one of the best men I ever knew—jovial, pleasant and a perfect example of strict integrity.

"Some of the Boone river settlers have given very good accounts of their experience during the Indian scare of 1857. I will relate a little of our experience on the Iowa. I had been plowing and I was turning out my oxen when a courier from Belmont reported that fourteen hundred Indians were on their way from the Des Moines river, and were last seen coming directly toward our vicinity, and that at Clear lake there were seventy mounted Indians, well armed. I had some goods for sale, and among them ammunition, but found that I had sold out everything in that line. That evening we called a meeting at McNutt's house. Mr. McNeal and I were appointed to attend this meeting. I remarked on the way to the meeting that I had expected to be elected to office in the West, but never expected to be appointed Indian commissioner. At the meeting various plans of defense were proposed. Some wanted to flee down the river to older settlements, but a majority thought best to fortify the hewn-log house of Mr. McNutt and remain there. McNutt said we might stay, if we kept quiet so he could sleep. McNutt, we might say, did not believe in the Indian business. We finally went home and fastened all doors and windows. About fifteen men assembled at my house and two remained guard through the night. Many theories were advanced as to the cause of the Indian scare, but I believe that it was started by parties who wished to buy property at a low price. Some men sold land, corn, etc., for anything they could get and fled. One old gentleman on the Boone river never stopped until he reached his old home in New Hampshire. He did not wait to sell his land, and two or three years later his son came out and took charge of the farm.



"A second Indian scare occurred during the Civil War (about 1863). A meeting was called at Goldfield. Most of the people believed there was no danger. We told some Indian stories and broke up the meeting. The next day I took my two daughters to Webster City and returned to Goldfield. The Indians had been doing bloody work near the Minnesota line and I thought there might be danger of a raid by mounted Indians, and preferred to take my family to a place of safety, but was willing to take my own chances with the rest.

"It was a part of my duty as treasurer to carry the state revenue to Des Moines, and a description of one of my trips to the capital city will close my story. I went from Horse Grove to Goldfield on foot and, after making a settlement with the school fund commissioner, I went on horseback to Webster City, accompanied by the county judge, sheriff and clerk, who led my horse back to Goldfield. The next morning I started on foot to Homer. Morgan Everts volunteered to show me the way. I went on about one-third of a mile after he left me and there found a creek that somewhat resembled the Boone river and that was high at the time. I walked up the

"I arrived at Homer about noon and waited till the next day for a stage. When the stage came it showed signs of having been flooded, but the driver thought we could get through. When we came to Boone river the driver unhitched one horse and rode into the river. He concluded that he could ford it, and gave me the privilege of crossing on horseback or in the stage (an open wagon). I chose the latter. When we drove into the river the wagon floated down stream, but the team finally took us out on the other side. Nothing of interest occurred on the remainder of the down trip, and at the close of the second day we arrived at Des Moines. I remained at the city three days, one of which was spent in waiting for the stage. On going down I was the only passenger, but coming back there were four of us. The fare was seven dollars and two dollars for a trunk from Des Moines to Ft. Dodge.

"It rained every day I was in Des Moines, and the mud was so deep that we made very slow progress. We found, on arriving at the Boone, that we could not cross at the ford, and went down the river two miles to a ferry. The boat was barely sufficient to carry one horse at a time. Five trips were made to get the stage and passengers across.

"At the last place where we changed teams below Ft. Dodge we found a new driver for that route, who refused to start with us that night. We insisted on going ahead, and, though the driver and his mules seemed to



be of the same disposition, we finally succeeded in getting him to start with us. The mud was deep and the night very dark. When within about two miles of Ft. Dodge we drove into a slough and in the struggle to get out the mules fell. The driver told us that one mule was on top of the other and that he must have help or lose the bottom mule. Two of us waded in and rolled off the top mule. The under mule was too muddy to ride, but one passenger rode the other mule the remaining two miles, while the others walked. We got no rebate on the fare, however. We were three days on the road from Des Moines to Ft. Dodge (eighty miles). I waited here one day for a stage and then went to Webster City. The next morning I started on foot for Horse Grove, by way of Wall lake. I reached the lake about noon, inquired for dinner, but was informed that the only food on hand was hulled corn and molasses. I went to a house a short distance from the lake, hoping to find a dinner, but the house was locked. I went on, expecting to strike the Iowa at a point three miles below Horse Grove, but there was no direct track to this point and a fog, the thickest I had ever seen, settled upon me and I dared not leave the old wagon track which led to the vicinity of Horse Grove. About dark I found a house not far from the river and tried it thoroughly, as I found everything locked. I saw something through the fog, which proved to be a hay stack. I tried to pull out hay and make a hole large enough to sleep in, but gave it up and went back to the house. I finally succeeded in getting a window open and crawled in. I found some old clothing, with which I rubbed myself dry, and then went to bed in a fairly comfortable bed and had a good night's sleep.

"The next morning, after wading two streams about three feet deep, I arrived at Otisville and got a good meal, the first I had to eat for twenty-four hours. After breakfast Mr. Morgan ferried me across the river and I walked on home, fording another stream on the way, about three feet deep. About noon I arrived at home. I had been fourteen and a half days in making the trip and had expended thirty-one dollars and fifty cents stage fare and hotel bills, and the state auditor allowed me thirty dollars, so I was out of pocket one dollar and fifty cents.

"This was one of the most interesting trips I made, but a fair specimen of many made by the pioneers of Wright county."

#### STORY OF O. C. MC INTOSH.

"The first saw-mill, with grist-mill attachment, on Boone river in Wright county was a water-mill built by Maj. Minter Brassfield. As custom trade



was light, he combined that business with farming. He had often set the sash-saw going in a twelve-foot log and then plowed three long rows of corn, returning to the mill by the time the saw had worked its way through the log. The mill did not prove a paying investment on account of the difficulty experienced in controlling the waters of the Boone.

"The second mill was a steam-mill, with a circular saw, and was built by Judge Dean and sons on section 26, Eagle Grove township, in 1856. The next year it was moved to Goldfield, where it remained for fifteen years, and was then removed to the Des Moines river below Ft. Dodge. This mill did good work and sawed the greater portion of the lumber used along the Boone. Almost the first building timber sawed by the Dean mill was used in the construction of the Christy steam-mill, built by James Christy on the bank of Otter creek, in section 21 of Liberty township. The engine and all appurtenances were hauled from the Mississippi river by ox teams. It possessed forty-horse power and had a sash or upright saw. It sawed but little lumber, although it remained where first located eight or ten years. It was then moved to the Des Moines river near Ft. Dodge.

"The first store on this side of the county was built by James L. Franks and Nelson Usher in the village of Sheffield, which was then an ambitious little town located on the northwest quarter of section 28, of Liberty township, but in a few years the buildings were moved to Goldfield and the town plat abandoned. This store contained a large stock of goods, but was not very profitable as an investment on account of there being but little demand for many of the finer articles kept in stock. The first storekeeper in Goldfield was John Melrose, who located here in 1857 and opened a general store. The second store was kept by A. J. A. Nicols in the old court house. The first hotel on this side of the county was the Elk Horn hotel at Goldfield, owned by Jephtha Doty. The sign was a pair of large elk horns on a post in front of the building."

#### RECOLLECTIONS OF EDWIN BALLOU.

"I was born in Portage county, Ohio, in 1832, moved to Michigan in 1840, and to Cedar county, Iowa, in 1853. In April, 1855, myself and family, in company with Robert Rowen and family, moved to Wright county. We had a pleasant time until we reached Eldora, Hardin county, then came the sloughs. We attempted to cross one with five yoke of oxen hitched to one wagon. Down went the wagon to the axles, and the harder the oxen



pulled the deeper the wagon sank. We were obliged to wade in the water about two feet deep and carry our load out. This was my first experience with sloughs. Eldora is about forty miles from my place, but it was our nearest postoffice and blacksmith shop, and there was no mill within one hundred miles of us. We brought provisions enough with us to last till fall, then I went to Marshalltown, seventy miles distant, for flour.

"Upon our arrival at Horse Grove we selected our land, and on May 12 I started to the Ft. Dodge land office. It required about seven days to make the trip. I then began breaking and planting sod corn. I employed Horace Riley to cut logs for our first house. We moved into this house on July 4, 1855; it was a log cabin with shake roof, no floor, no door and no window. On July 6 there came one of the worst storms I have ever seen; the wind blew the water into one end of my cabin and out at the other. The cracks were too small to let my wife out, so she was obliged to remain in the cabin during the storm.

"I had two yoke of oxen with which to break prairie, but no driver, so I conceived the idea of driving them abreast. I think this was the first time oxen were ever driven in this way. Travelers often stopped their teams to watch this novel method of working cattle.

"The winter of 1855-56 was fair, but that of 1856-57 was the worst I have ever known. Snow fell in November, and on December 1 a heavy snowstorm began that lasted three days. Then the wind came from the northwest and drifted the snow fifteen feet deep. The last of December I started for Cedar county, in company with Charles Wilson and James Kent, for supplies. I came back in February, by way of Iowa City, and followed up the river. The many teams on the road had caused the snow to drift into the track until it formed a solid turnpike four feet above the ordinary level. I was two weeks in reaching Alden, where I left most of my load, and went home. A mill had been started at Marshalltown the fall before by a man named Woodbury. In the summer of 1855 a postoffice was established at Alden and in the summer of 1856 an office was established at Fryeburg, about one mile southwest of the present site of Rowan. William Hurd, from Fryeburg, Maine, was the postmaster and gave the office its name. James Riley carried the mail once each week from Alden. Robert Rowen, R. E. Train and myself represented this township on the first jury. District Judge Thompson, of Eldora, presided at the first court. We went to Liberty, the county seat, in a wagon drawn by oxen. We camped out and boarded ourselves, having brought provisions with us, knowing full well that the Boone



river settlers had none to spare. I think there were no jury trials during this term, but we had a good time."

#### J. M. ELDER'S RECOLLECTIONS.

"The first settlement in the vicinity of the present town of Belmond was made in the fall of 1854, and until the following spring comprised Henry Luick, Anson Gray, Anthony Overacker, Mr. Wilse, with their families, and David Luick. During the spring and summer that followed, the number was largely increased by the arrival of Doctor Cutler, Archer Dumond, Thomas Oliver, Stephen and Isaac Whited, W. E. Rogers, Warren Rankin, Charles Sheets, Washington Dumond, Amos Cummings, Joseph Dukes, Harvey Mack, and their families, and the young men, Andrew Dumond, Aaron Dukes, Thomas Sheets, F. O. Brooks, Albert Cummings, Levi Whited, J. M. Elder, W. B. Walters, James Horder and others. This year work was commenced on the dam at Belmond.

"The winter of 1854-55 was mild and beautiful, almost without storm or rough weather, and caused the first settlers to believe they had found a veritable paradise, but that illusion was fearfully dispelled by the two winters that followed, which have since generally been regarded as the severest in the history of the state. The hardships and sufferings consequent from these terrible winters will never be told, nor can they be adequately portrayed. Many were frozen to death, and the best protected were subjected to privations and discomforts. The hastily constructed log house or cabin, erected under favorable circumstances, was unfit for occupancy during an ordinary northern winter. The fuel was green wood obtained from the natural groves.

"Roads at this early day consisted of mere tracks, the route being decided by the first teamster who happened to pass that way. Bridges there were none, the streams being forded where encountered, and marshes avoided as best the unfortunate could. For several years the road from Belmond to Horse Grove was east of and around Franklin Grove, a distance of about fifteen miles, nearly double the length of the course pursued by a crow passing between the same points.

"The nearest supply store was that of Boriah Wright, at Hardin City, where most of the mail was received until that town went into decline, after which, for a long time, Cedar Falls became the popular trading point and postoffice. For a long time Simeon Overacker carried the mail on foot, receiving therefor five dollars per trip, which amount was donated by the



individuals of the settlement. When a trip to market was contemplated by one of the settlers, nearly all the others contributed orders for goods of some kind, the aggregate of the errands amounting to quite a load at times. Many of the old settlers, on returning from a journey of that kind, will remember the outrunners who met them before the wagon reached town, seeking to be the first to get their share of the plunder.

"The present town of Belmond originally consisted of that portion on the west of the river, and was platted by Archer Dumond and Dr. L. H. Cutler. The name was adopted by a compromise. Doctor Cutler proposed the name Dumond, but Dumond wanted it called Crown Point, his native town in Indiana; but finally Belmond was hit upon.

"The new comers the next few years succeeding 1855 were numerous and comprised in part many of the worthy, influential citizens yet residents of the community (1892). The Barkers, Jenisons, Spragues, William and Fred Luick, Adam and J. W. Elder, Warner Butts, Luther Loomis, the White brothers and others that could be named, came, not only to stay, but to contribute a lifetime to the development and wealth of the county. While the hardships were great and the comforts few in those early years, these veterans may now be proud and thankful for the sacrifice they made. It was theirs to initiate the movement that has transformed a naturally beautiful country into one of wealth and magnificence. There is no land more delightful; no people more prosperous.

"Few of the old settlers will forget the wet season of 1858. For the first time that year the Iowa river at Belmond was deemed fordable on the third day of July. The feat was accomplished though the beds floated off wagons. On the same night a tremendous rain transformed the river limits to the bluffs and not until September 1st could a team ford the stream. There was not a bridge on the Iowa river in Wright county. Necessity, and sometimes reckless men, developed results that would hardly now seem practicable. Teams as well as horses, attached to light vehicles, were daily driven across the swollen stream, where "ford there was none" nor bottom either; yet no serious accident or loss of life occurred. The small acreage seeded that year gave small returns. The steam-mill of Cutler & Elder was surrounded by water nearly all summer, and boats landed passengers in doorways of all buildings on the west and including one on the site of the Kern House.

"In 1856 a man named Arnett, his son and son-in-law, one Summerell, settled at Twin lakes. During the winter following they hauled saw logs



to Belmond. On one occasion the old man accompanied the son and son-in-law to a point near Hickory Grove, when a storm arose and the young men concluded to retrace their steps and return home that night, which they did. They stated that the old man concluded to proceed to Belmond, but seemingly changed his mind as his body was found north of the stated place of separation, frozen to death. Foul play was suspected. The remainder of the outfit sold out soon and moved to Missouri. The truth in the case will never be known in this world."

#### FIRST EVENTS IN TOWNSHIPS.

Among the first events in the county is the following list, many of which were verified by pioneers in 1874, when the state atlas was published by Captain Andrews, of Chicago, who made diligent research at that time to have only facts stated in his elaborate work of the state. We have corrected a few of his errors, and believe what he states concerning the first settlement in various townships, as then constituted (numbering eleven in all at that date), cannot be rightfully disputed.

The first settler in Wright county was William Stryker, of Troy township, arriving July 5, 1854, soon followed by Steve Wilcox and others.

The second settler was Maj. Minter Brassfield, of Liberty township, arriving August 12, 1854, to make permanent settlement, though he had been a hunter in Wright county as early as 1851, but claimed his home, and in fact did reside, at Hooks Point, Hamilton county, until the date above given.

The third settler was W. H. Montgomery, Liberty township, in September, 1854, about which date also arrived "Steve" Wilcox, who joined the Stryker settlement in Bach Grove, Troy township.

The first store opened in Wright county was that of James L. Franks and Nelson Usher in the village of Sheffield, in 1855-6. This stock was well selected for a larger town or city trade, and entirely too fancy and high-priced for pioneers in Wright county, at that date. On account of this, the business was not a success and a few years later it was sold and moved to near-by Goldfield.

The first store in Goldfield, probably the second in this county, was opened at Goldfield by John Melrose in 1857. The next was that of A. J. A. Nicols in the old court house at Goldfield.

The first hotel on the west side of the county was known as the Elk Horn, kept by Jephtha Doty, who had a pair of huge elk-horns as his sign.



The first school house in the county was built in Troy township, of logs, and its dimensions were twelve by fourteen feet.

The first religious services of a public character in the county were also held in this building.

The first newspaper in Wright county was the *Wright County Free Press*, of Liberty, established by G. D. Ingersoll, in 1861 (see Press chapter).

The earliest postoffice in Wright county was established at Fryeburg in March, 1856, with William D. Hard as postmaster.

The first election took place in 1855, during the month of August, as did all annual elections at that date. It was held in the log cabin home of S. B. Hewett, Sr., of Eagle Grove township.

The original county seat was known as "Liberty," but now Goldfield includes the territory of old Liberty.

The first birth in Wright county was that of Amanda Montgomery, daughter of H. W. Montgomery and wife, born March 21, 1855. She became the wife of B. Bjornson.

The first marriage was that of Alexander Usher and Lucy Ann Brassfield, December 27, 1855, by Judge Dean, county judge of Wright county. The same season Squire Eggleston married William Paine, aged seventy and widow Murphy, at the house of Doctor Crapper in Liberty township.

The first fire-proof safe in Wright county was the one bought at Alden by County Treasurer R. K. Eastman in the fifties.

The first settlers in Pleasant and Belmond townships were a party of three families who came early in 1854, and were scared away by reports that Indians were near this county. They never returned to locate. This colony included John Beebe, who entered the land later owned by Fred Luick, at the north end of Franklin Grove. He sold his claim to Henry Luick and Anthony Overacker, who occupied it in September, 1854. Ford, Hill and Murdock, a half-breed, also settled at Horse Grove the same year. A. Dumond, T. Oliver and Dr. L. H. Cutler came in next and located where now stands the west side at the town of Belmond.

The first to become actual settlers in what is now Iowa township were Robert Rowen, Edwin Ballou and Horace Riley, who arrived in the spring of 1855, and were soon followed by Robert Duffy and James Riley.

The first settler in Wall Lake township was E. P. Purcell, who located on the southeastern shore of Wall lake in 1855.

The original settlers in Woolstock township were Gilbert Perry, John Boring and Roll Brewer, in 1858.



## IN EARLY DAYS.

Extract from Wright County Monitor of March 23, 1875, entitled "Our County Newspapers." The Monitor was at that time owned by F. A. Gates and George, or "Deacon," Hathaway, under the firm name of Gates & Hathaway:

In the year of our Lord 1860, the census showed Wright county to be occupied by the whole sum total of 653 people. The central portion of the county was as yet an unoccupied ground that even the most sanguine hardly ever expected to see settled up. It was then less than five years since the county had been organized and Liberty (Goldfield) made the county seat.

In the month of May, 1861, two men named G. D. Ingersoll and E. P. Lovejoy appeared in the town of Liberty and announced their intention of starting a paper. As a natural consequence the people favored the idea, and the same month the first number of the Wright County Free Press was issued. Ingersoll was a young man and Lovejoy somewhat older and married, and it appears that this firm had a somewhat narrow row to hoe with their new venture, for in September of the same year we find the paper had suspended and Ingersoll had enlisted. For some cause to us unknown, the Liberty people had acquired a grudge against either the Free Press or its proprietors, and the "knuckles" of the old-fashioned hand press were spirited away in the night and never turned up until the week outfit had been removed to Fort Dodge. So ended the first attempt to establish a newspaper in Wright county.

So time dragged along until sometime in 1867, when a lazy and impetuous chap named S. A. Reed started another paper at Liberty, which he named the Wright County Register. The Register had a fitful existence, being published off and on for six months, though, from what we learn, it was published more "off" than "on." The only business talent that ever appears to have been connected with this venture, belonged to Mrs. Reed, who set type for the paper to Mother Goose melodies and rocked the cradle with one foot, while Reed sat around the stores and told the people how arduous were the labors of the editor. The Register worked up the immense circulation of twenty-five copies, and then collapsed, and started another venture in the newspaper business.

But by this time a newspaper had become almost a necessity to this county, and early in 1869 we find J. D. Hunter, then proprietor of the Webster City Freeman, buying out the office of the defunct Register and turning his attention toward Clarion, Iowa, the county seat, with a view of

obtaining possession of the county. The county offered him a room for free if he would start a paper, and on the 29th of March, 1869, the number of the Wright County Monitor was issued from the corner room of the court house, with Will Smith editor. Smith was a young man allowed himself to be led into a union broil with the officials, and about six months he left the town to take care of himself. After a vacation of a few months A. M. White bought the paper of Hunter and settled here. Under his management the Monitor continued with a considerable regularity until about the first of October, 1873, when it sold to the present proprietors. In January, 1873, a new venture was made in starting the Belmond or at Belmond. A. M. Allen, a cigar printer, started the paper, and soon won its way to quite an extensive circulation in the northern eastern part of the county. After about a half interest in the office to Hon. E. A. Howland, and was run by them until in 1874 when Allen, having become tired that there was no money to be made out of the venture, sold Howland and went away.



Eagle Grove township, as originally bounded, was first settled by William Davis, who remained only about a year, but in 1854 permanent settlements were effected by S. B. Hewett and son and N. B. Paine.

Liberty township was first settled by Maj. Minter Brassfield. The exact date of his arrival was August 12, 1854.

Boone township was first settled in 1855 by C. H. Martin a single man at the time, and he was soon followed by others, who remained permanently. C. N. Overbaugh came that year and entered land.

The first funeral in the county was that of Mrs. Aaron Dukes, at Belmond, who was buried near Judge Morse's place, about 1857.

The United Brethren organized the first church in the county at Belmond. Rev. McNutt was preacher and also an herbal doctor.

Belmond had the pioneer blacksmith in the person of Mr. Pritchard.

The first railroad completed in Wright county was the old Burlington, Cedar Rapids & Northern, now owned by the Rock Island system. It reached Clarion in 1881, and a few months later the Chicago & Northwestern road reached Goldfield, having been at Eagle Grove a few months before.

The first national Independence-day celebration we find any account of in Wright county, was that which was held at Goldfield, July 3, 1858. A poster was sent to friends in Boston, a copy of which states that the orators were Attorney Granville Berkley and C. F. Cross; reader, Josiah Davidson; S. B. Hewett, Jr., president.

#### INTERESTING LETTER REPRODUCED.

Just after Judge S. B. Hewett, Jr., had settled in this county, and after the county was organized about a month, he wrote to a friend in Boston, Massachusetts, telling him of the wonderful country he had found here, and directed him how to move. It reads like a romance to this generation:

"Wright County, Iowa, August 28, 1855.

\* \* \* "Some things will be unpleasant for a few years. There is not much society here such as you have in the East, but soon will be. Soil is deep, dark and very rich, is easy to cultivate and rapidly raising in value. Land is being taken up by speculators fast. A school section will be sold here at about government prices in a few weeks. One man has a tract of one hundred and twenty acres, with forty of wooded land, that he will sell for eight hundred dollars; ten to fifteen acres broken on it, on which you could raise all you can eat for the next year certain. He has a



poor cabin in which you can live for a while. I think he will take six hundred dollars if you show him the money. His house is eighty rods from ours—it will make a most splendid farm. If people keep dry feet and don't sleep on the ground they will be healthy as in the East. Wading in the dews is as bad as wading a brook in the East. In coming out you will have to sleep on beds on the floor, after you cross the Mississippi, but that will not hurt either of you; it did not hurt me. If you can, bring some buckhorn sets for hedges. Some use Osage orange, but they do not thrive well here. I want to set two or three miles of some kind of hedge this season. You should have a pair of stout horses and a yoke of oxen—a wagon which is strong, so you can use either horses or oxen. Buy this east of the Mississippi river; also cows of good stock as you can find.

"Ask for Ft. Dodge—it's only seventeen miles from us, southwest. As to tools—don't buy many when you come, as you can't tell what you need till here. You want something to cut wood with and that's about all for the present—say an axe and a good cross-cut saw and three log chains—short, heavy links—will cost in Dubuque nine cents a pound. Cross-cut saws are seventy-five cents a foot—get one shorter than seven feet long. If your father comes, have him bring his carpenter's tools with him. He will want them to build your house with. Only few real farmers here—only about one hundred and sixty people in this county now.

"About money—bring all you can; 'twill pay better here than in the East. Bring one thousand dollars certain. Land can be bought for one-fifth its value. Ship beds, etc., in large chests and trunks. They will not get here for two months after you arrive if you send by freight. So check them and pay the excess baggage; then they come when you do. We don't expect any hostilities from Indians, there are none near us. A thousand dollars will do to start with, but you will wish you had brought more when you are once here and see the splendid chances to double your money.

"Come to Chicago—buy through, but stop off at large places, the conductor will let you do this, and will tell you of good hotels at which to stop in Cleveland and Chicago. Keep your checks till cars have all gone out and then get your baggage to the Chicago & Galena railroad; come to Galena, get team that can pull, if they are not so fast, and get canvas wagon tops. If you hire anyone to bring you, hire them by the mile or by the job, you can say you want to come to Boone river, a few miles east of Fort Dodge. New Castle is a little town fifteen miles south of us (Web-



ster City now), where you will come to and then turn northwest from there, for New Castle is on the Boone river.

"When leaving the Mississippi river get plenty of groceries, even though you hire a team extra; you will pay about two dollars per hundred weight for hauling them, but they are much cheaper than here. We go and bring back enough supplies to last a year and save money then.

"The railroad fare to Dubuque or Rock Island is twenty-eight dollars from Boston, then you have hotel bills to pay. If you can buy good land warrants do so—they are better than gold here. You can buy any land you want at about one dollar.

"When I came via Rock Island, I shot a fawn one day in a hunt. I was one week from Rock Island to Des Moines—two hundred miles. Come soon, as the land office land is going very fast. As they say here, you will find it 'a right smart of a journey' and have a 'heap' of trouble, but it will not last long.

"We found a nice man here named Davis, further up stream from our place, and he showed me land—three hundred and twenty acres, which he bought at two hundred dollars a quarter.

"Yours,

"HEWETT."

#### AS S. B. HEWETT VIEWED THE COUNTY IN 1854.

Hon. S. B. Hewett, who was numbered among the earliest settlers of Wright county, was a man about twenty-one years of age when he emigrated from Massachusetts and he came via Rock Island, Illinois, to Des Moines, thence on to Wright county. From Rock Island after he had been out here a few months in 1854, he wrote to Josiah Davidson in the East, and the letter is still in the possession of his son at Eagle Grove. We are at liberty to extract from same: "I think a large dairy would pay very well in Wright county; butter is from thirty to forty cents per pound. If everything keeps looking up in prices, Hewett will not be sorry in three years that he left Boston, for he will be able to live without any of Shearer and Paine's help (men he had worked for in Boston). I am bound to have you all out here anyhow.

"In Iowa they turn the sod three inches thick and let it rot good before putting in crops. One horse can usually pull a plow then in many places, after the sod is once well rotted. Abby sends her respects to you and yours.

"HEWETT."

(Rock Island, Illinois, fall of 1854.)



Judge Hewett's ambitions and hopes were all fully realized with the passage of a few years, and he had a fine, well-cultivated farm and went into the fine stock and dairy business and made money; held county and state offices and laid out a part of present Eagle Grove city; retired and settled in Los Angeles, California, where he died a few years since and was buried there, as was his good wife, "Abby." But he had erected a monument in the Eagle Grove cemetery, with an inscription that they were buried in California.



## CHAPTER V.

### ORGANIZATION OF WRIGHT COUNTY.

The geographical position of Wright county is a little northwest of the center of the state of Iowa. It is bounded on the north by Hancock, south by Hamilton, east by Franklin, and west by Humboldt and Webster counties. It comprises sixteen full congressional townships, equal to five hundred and seventy-six square miles.

Prior to the organization of Wright county, it was attached for judicial purposes to Webster county, which county then took in what is now called Hamilton and Humboldt counties. But, to go still further back, it may be said that the lower tier of townships in Wright county were in Buchanan and the remainder in Fayette county. Wright county was established in 1851, and was attached to Boone county, January 22, 1853, prior to which time it had been attached to the county of Polk for election, revenue and judicial purposes. It was similarly attached to the county of Webster on July 1, 1855 (see Acts of Third General Assembly, chapter 9; Fourth General Assembly, chapter 12; Seventh General Assembly, chapter 142). The meeting for the organization of Wright county was held at the log cabin of S. B. Hewett, Sr., on the pre-emption claim of N. B. Paine, near Boone river, and Judge Meservey, then county judge of Webster county, sent A. B. Martin, then county surveyor and notary public, to attend the meeting, for the purpose of qualifying officers to hold an election to fill the county offices of the new county of Wright. This election took place in the month of August, 1855, and the first officers then elected were as follows: David Dean, county judge; C. H. Martin, clerk of the district court; Anson Brasfield, treasurer and recorder (then one office); Scott Crapper, Sheriff; S. B. Hewett, Jr., county surveyor; William Davis, coroner; H. W. Montgomery, school fund commissioner; N. B. Paine, prosecuting attorney.

As a matter of fact, there had also been called another election for county-organizing purposes, over on the Iowa river, on the east side of the proposed new county of Wright. This was held in a rather irregular manner, as it was found that there were many illegal votes cast. Pioneer Luick, of Belmond county, was the candidate for county judge over there. The



spirit of rivalry ran very high. Had it not been for an over-anxiety on the part of some of the citizens at Belmond, the county seat might have been located on the east side, for, as a matter of fact, there were more actual legal voters on the east than there were on the western border of the county; but, in order to be doubly sure, the east-siders allowed men to vote who had not become actual voters within the true meaning of the law, hence the election was declared illegal throughout and the election on the west side prevailed. Greed, possibly, blinded the east-side settlers somewhat, for, even to this day, such excellent men as Edwin Ballou, a pioneer of pioneers and the oldest living pioneer in Wright county, whose home has always been near Rowan, declares to the historian that the east side had plenty of legal voters to have carried the day over the west side, and lost all by some of their over-anxious citizens allowing questionable men to cast their votes. Another worthy pioneer of Belmond, Stephen Whited, now an honored citizen of Eldora, affirms the same thing, and he with other level-headed men of the Iowa river side so contended at the time of the election in 1855, but Doctor Cutler and others believed otherwise. Hence, Goldfield (Liberty) became the first county seat, instead of Belmond or Ontario or some other Iowa river place, of which there were a number started with county-seat interests in view.

#### LOCATING THE COUNTY SEAT.

Up to 1861, the county judge in Iowa was "a man to be looked up to," the system being later styled the "one-man power," etc. His word was law. He viewed and reviewed petitions and remonstrances and then decided as he saw fit, usually owing to the personal interest he might have or the location in which he chanced to reside.

David Dean, who was elected county judge, assumed his duties in August, 1855, immediately after his election, and, under date of October 30 of that year the following entry is found in his record book:

"State of Iowa,

"Wright County, ss:

"Now comes John Rose and Nicholas McClure with their appointments to locate the seat of justice of the county of Wright in the State of Iowa, at my office and took the oath of office and subscribed to it according to law.

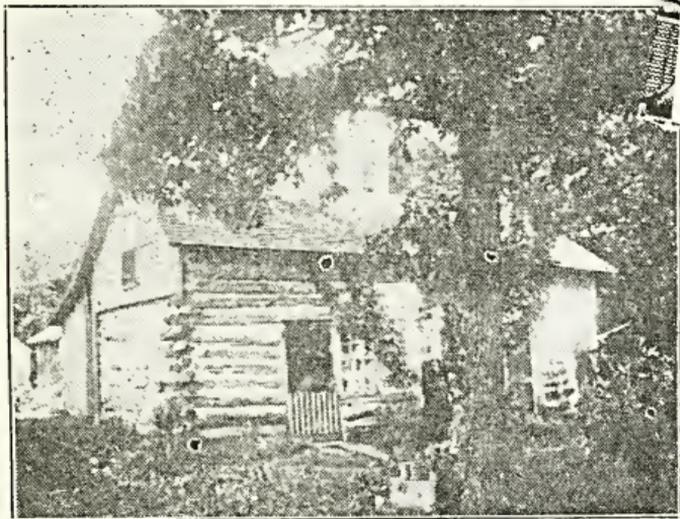
"DAVID DEAN, County Judge."

On November 20, of the same year, said commissioners, Rose and McClure, located the seat of justice on the southeast quarter of section 12,



# DAY" FEATUR

## Wright County's First Court House



Wright county was organized in the summer of 1855 in this log cabin which was then located on a site between the present James and Frank Paine farm homes, 2 miles northwest of Eagle Grove. The first legal business of the county was transacted in this pioneer cabin. Later the county seat was moved to Goldfield, and in 1866 to Clarion, which is the exact geographical center of the county.



township 91, range 26, and gave it the name of Eagleville. This town of Eagleville comprised one hundred and sixty acres and was platted by John Stockdale, who sold many lots in the Eastern states. This was a "paper town," and was, by him and his agents, represented as being on the Eagle river, which was spanned by a fine draw-bridge to permit the passage of boats, all of which, together with nicely laid-out streets, splendid business blocks and handsome residences, was shown by a cut representing a birdseye view of the town. So far as can now be learned, there never was a single house built on the plat, and in the sixties it was in the midst of a great corn-field. While this scheming was going on in Wright county, the same thing was being carried on in many western counties of this state. But the county seat did not long remain at "Eagleville," in section 12, for Anson Brasfield appeared before the court by attorney, March 5, 1856, and then and there presented a petition of the qualified electors asking that an election be called for the purpose of changing the location of the county seat to the town of Liberty—the southwest quarter of the southeast quarter of section 33, township 92, range 26. An election for that purpose was ordered to be held in the following April, but, for some unknown reason, it does not appear to have taken place. The petition was renewed by O. W. McIntosh and seventy-three other electors in July, 1857, and at the election held in April, 1858, the site was changed to Liberty, where it remained until it was removed by vote of the people to Clarion, its present location.

#### ORGANIZATION OF THE ORIGINAL TOWNSHIPS.

At the March term of the county court, presided over by the county judge, in the spring of 1856, on petition presented by N. B. Paine, Eagle Grove, Troy and Liberty townships were formed. Pleasant and Vernon townships were also formed in July of that year, while Iowa and Boone townships were organized one year later—1857. Elections were called for these various townships soon after their legal organization.

By the close of 1860—five years after the county's organization—its territory had been divided into the following eight civil townships: Troy, Eagle Grove, Liberty, Boone, Belmond, Pleasant, Iowa and Vernon.

An account of other township organizations will appear in the chapter on county government, which is made up largely from the minutes of the proceedings of the county supervisors, the first board of which met in January, 1861.

In this connection is presented a poem written by Wright county's early



poet, Hon. N. B. Paine, which throws light, in poetic form, on the work and thoughts of pioneer characters and should be preserved in the annals of this goodly county:

"I saw Wright county born alive,  
August 5 of eighteen fifty-five.  
When Webster county levied tax  
That made us hump up our backs,  
We took the legal steps to claim  
A franchise under our own name,  
And all our voters on the Boone  
Flocked to our ranch that August noon.  
A tent was raised of carpets made,  
That we might labor in the shade;  
Judge and clerks were duly sworn,  
To see no bogus votes were thrown,  
For all agreed, without debate,  
Wright county must be legitimate.  
We made a judge of David Dean,  
The poll when counted twice fourteen,  
And N. B. Paine, a crack sharpshooter,  
Was state's attorney—prosecutor.  
C. H. Martin was made a clerk  
To scribe the judge's legal work,  
And Anson Brassfield, in the order,  
Our treasurer and recorder.  
Scott Crapper neath that carpet shade  
Wright county's first high sheriff made.  
For coroner in cases 'mort,'  
A man they called Casort,  
And S. B. Hewett we all know  
Surveyed our legal bounds to show.  
Then H. W. Montgomery,  
Without red tape or flummery,  
Furnished certificates and rules,  
To school mams of our first public schools.  
Beneath that tent in dog-day heat,  
Wright county organized complete,  
And the county judge was county seat."



## THE COUNTY'S NAME.

From the best obtainable evidence, it appears that Wright county was named in honor of Silas Wright, distinguished in American statesmanship and the twelfth governor of the state of New York, as well as for Joseph A. Wright, at the time of the creation of this county governor of Indiana—there being several settlers in this county from each state, New York and Indiana.

## IN THE "NEUTRAL GROUND."

The territory of Wright county represents two Indian land concessions, both of which were made by treaties dated July 15, 1830. The southern part of the county was ceded by the Sacs and Foxes; the northern part by the Medewakanton, Wahpekuta, Wahpeton and Sisseton bands of the Santee Sioux. These two cessions comprised the well-known district called the "Neutral Ground." The southern tier of townships of Wright county came within the limits of the original county of Buchanan from 1837 to 1843. The remainder formed part of the original county of Fayette, created in 1837, and in existence until 1847.



## CHAPTER VI.

### COUNTY GOVERNMENT.

Counties, like states and nations, under their own peculiar form of government, have their own officers and systems, independent, as it were, in many ways, of other counties, but all conforming to the one great system of the state. The citizens of a county dictate the manner in which the government of the county shall be managed, and this has come to be more especially so in the last few decades. Under the old county judge system in Iowa, that "one man power" amounted almost to absolutism, the county judge's duties including nearly all the powers now possessed by the board of supervisors, with even additional powers, such as the transaction of all probate business. He it was who ordered claims paid, audited all accounts, heard and acted upon all public petitions and other public matters, even to the construction of bridges and court houses. He also issued licenses and accounted with the other county officers. The county judge's power was reduced greatly in 1861, however, by the creation of the board of county supervisors, and in 1868 the office of county judge was abandoned entirely, much of the power theretofore vested in the judge passing to the county auditor. Most of the data relating to the early history of this county, therefore, necessarily is based upon the records of the county judges who served until the beginning of the Civil War. In Wright county Judge David Dean was first to hold the office of county judge and Judge John L. Morse was the last county judge and first county auditor.

The first act of the first county judge was to assist in organizing the new county and providing it with a seat of justice, being aided, as heretofore shown, by the locating commissioners, Rose and McClure. Judge Dean changed the county seat from Eagleville to Liberty, by calling an election to settle that question. This election was held in July, 1857, and after that point had been settled the wheels of the new county machinery revolved in regular order for five years or more, without any great friction. Moneys were collected and paid out to the proper persons for services performed; roads were laid out and worked to a certain extent; peddlers' licenses were



granted, and other acts essential to the establishment of a proper civic order duly performed.

The earliest marriage license recorded in Wright county was that issued to Alexander Usher and Lucy Ann Brasfield, on December 25 (Christmas day), 1855, by order of County Judge David Dean, whose charge for the same was one dollar—the first revenue received by the new county organization. The second fee received by the county was the peddler's license fee of one Marks, permitting him to vend his goods and wares for the period of ten days, upon the payment of one dollar and forty cents.

At the March term of the county court, in 1856, order No. 1 was issued to Minter Brasfield for the sum of twenty-seven dollars for "services as commissioner in viewing and running a county road north and south through the county." During this same session of the county court N. B. Paine petitioned to have organized a civil sub-division of the county, to be known as Eagle Grove township. Troy and Liberty townships evidently were formed at the same time. The first settlement with the county officers of this county was made in proper and regular manner and was recorded as follows:

"State of Iowa,

"Wright County, July term of court.

"It appears by the accounting together of the treasurer and recorder, clerk of the district court, and county judge, that they have received as fees for term ending July 7, 1855, the sum of forty dollars and five cents, each receiving twelve dollars and fifty cents, leaving a balance in the treasury of two dollars and fifty-five cents,

"DAVID DEAN, county judge."

It would appear from the above record that the county officers at that date all received the same annual salary, but in the autumn of 1856 the salaries of most of the county officers were increased to one hundred dollars the year by a vote of the citizens of the county. At the end of the year 1856 the record shows that N. B. Paine was given county warrant No. 72, for the amount of twenty dollars for his services as prosecuting attorney for that year.

POSTMASTER "SWORN" INTO OFFICE.

On December 26, 1856, Ansel D. Brasfield was "sworn in" as postmaster at the newly created postoffice of Goldfield, Wright county, Iowa, his commission being the second one issued in this county. Goldfield was platted



on a forty-acre tract of land adjoining the town of Liberty, but ever since Civil War times the name applied to both has usually been Goldfield.

THE COUNTY'S FIRST PURCHASE.

In July, 1857, two years after the county was formed as a separate organization, it bought its first stationery and other office supplies, as will be observed by the following entry:

“(ORDER NO. 20.)

“State of Iowa,

“Wright County,

“Ordered by the court that O. W. McIntosh receive the sum of sixty and 90-100 dollars for field notes and township plats, three ink-stands, three sand boxes, sand, two rulers, one box of wafers, one blank book, 250 envelopes, one ream of Congress cap, three cakes of India rubber, one quart of ink, three calendars, two packs of envelopes, three paper-cutters, half dozen letter files, three weights for paper, one envelope box, one dozen elastic bands, one bottle of carmine ink for use of county officers.

“DAVID DEAN, county judge.”

Order No. 158 was issued in July, 1857, to O. W. McIntosh for sixty-three dollars, “for writing and posting six copies of the delinquent tax list of 1856.” This was indeed quite primitive, and no wonder the pioneers soon demanded a newspaper in which such items might be made public.

FIRST TREASURY REPORT.

The subjoined copy of the treasurer's balance sheet in 1857 contains a number of interesting points:

Received of O. W. McIntosh, county funds.....	\$322.48
Received from tax list of 1856.....	28.59
Received from tax list of 1857.....	102.79
	<hr/>
Total amount .....	\$453.86
Paid out on county warrants.....	378.36
Balance on hand .....	\$ 75.50
Received state tax from list of 1856.....	\$ 6.08
Received state tax from list of 1857.....	33.92
On hand .....	\$ 40.00



Received of school tax on list 1856-----	\$ 7.30
Received of school tax on list 1857-----	25.50
On hand -----	\$ 32.80
Received of O. W. McIntosh road money for Pleasant town- ship -----	\$177.63
Paid clerk of Pleasant township-----	75.00
Received from list of 1856-----	7.30
Received from list of 1857-----	28.18
On hand -----	\$138.11

—Recapitulation—

Balance of county funds-----	\$ 75.50
Balance of state funds-----	40.00
Balance of school funds-----	32.80
Balance of road funds-----	138.11
	-----\$286.41
Interest on delinquent taxes-----	\$ 7.05

FIRST WAGON ROADS LAID OUT.

Mention in the records of bills paid to Minter Brasfield for "running out a road north and south through the county" in the fall of 1855, at least sometime during the summer or fall of that year, apparently refers to the first highway laid out in Wright county. It is probable that this road was laid out while this section was yet within the confines of Webster county, as there is no record of its establishment in the books of Wright county. The first such record in Wright county is relative to a road asked for in the petition of Anthony Overacker in July, 1856, on which petition Henry Luick was appointed commissioner. This road commenced at the southeast corner of the southwest quarter of section 6, township 93, range 23, or in what is now Pleasant township; thence south to the southwest corner of the southeast quarter of section 31, in the same township; thence on south by the most practicable route to Horse Grove, continuing in the same direction to the county line. This was the chief highway in early times in Wright county, as over it went all the travel from the Belmont country down the Iowa valley to Alden, Iowa Falls and Webster City, and was locally known as the Belmont road. For many years this and the road laid out on the west side of the county by Major Brasfield were the only roads worked in the county, to any considerable extent, as the chief settlements were along the Boone and Iowa valleys.



It was but natural, however, that the citizens presently should demand better roads. The winter of 1857-58 was one of unusual and never-to-be-forgotten weather, intensely cold and marked by much snow, though not so much as in the previous winter. The snow drifted badly and all communication was cut off with the outside world for months. Teams could not travel, so footmen went forth on their frequent expeditions for supplies and the mail. Hand-sleds were employed by the settlers, who sometimes went in company, and at other times alone. The following summer was the noted "wet season" in all western Iowa. Settlers had to resort to every conceivable method by which to obtain food for their families. The impassable condition of the roads and the unbridged streams rendered the hauling of supplies so difficult that the people were compelled to subsist on what little corn they were fortunate enough to raise, and with what they could laboriously draw in from farther south in the state, from the Boonesboro, Fort Des Moines and even the Ottumwa districts. For many months wheat flour was not seen in Wright county, hence the people had to live on cornmeal. There was only one corn-cracker, run by horse power, in the county. Some families were forced to resort to using the household coffee-mill, while others grated new corn on a rough tin grater made by punching nail holes through a tin can. Corn was used for bread, for mush, for every dish, in fact, that meal and water and milk would produce. But be it said, and kept in remembrance by later generations, that what one had, all had; for the people here, at that day, divided up with their neighbors with great generosity, and never turned away a stranger, all being ever welcome to eat such as the house afforded.

#### EARLY OFFICIAL BUSINESS.

Minute book "A" of this county—a very small affair—does not give one the idea that officials desired to write long resolutions for the mere sake of showing their pretty penmanship on the pages of a record. They wrote only such things as were necessary, and always wrote to the point. For this reason the present-day historian has but little to draw from concerning the conditions that then obtained in the county government of Wright county:

Joseph T. Calder was elected county judge in August, 1857, and held office until the first board of county supervisors went into session the first week in January, 1861. Under the supervisor law each township in the county was entitled to one supervisor, making at that time a board of eight members. Order No. 87 was issued to John Melrose for "twenty dollars for



room rent and preparing the same for the use of the district court, May term of 1858."

The only "soft snap" there seemed to be in county governmental affairs was the publication of delinquent tax lists, which must have been quite profitable, inasmuch as at about that date Charles Aldrich and others in northwest Iowa, who were running newspapers, succeeded in getting a bill passed by which the state authorized the publication of such items, as well as the publication of the session laws, in order, it was claimed, that the people might better understand what laws they were living under.

During the summer of 1858, County Judge Calder issued twenty warrants, aggregating six hundred dollars, to D. E. Coon for publishing tax lists of 1856 and 1857. Coon was then publishing a newspaper at Mason City, being one of the pioneer printers of that place.

The record shows that on February 4, 1859, order No. 49 was issued to R. K. Eastman for the purchase of a safe in which to keep the public records, Uncle Eastman then being treasurer and recorder. He bought the safe at Alden and it was drawn over on sleds by four horses, under the direction of Edwin Ballou and others, and placed in the house of Mr. Eastman, at Horse Grove. Just before that date the treasurer's balance sheet showed the county had a balance of one thousand six hundred dollars, and order No. 50 reveals the fact that a box of Star candles had been procured for the use of the county officers, which some thought "putting on too many airs."

On August 31, 1859, orders aggregating two hundred and fifty-two dollars and sixty-six cents were issued to G. W. Rogers, the same being the first payment on a contract for the building of a bridge across the Iowa river at Belmond. This seems to have been the first bridge constructed, either over the Boone or Iowa rivers, within Wright county. About the same time warrants also were issued for a bridge over the Boone in the west part of the county. Judge Calder was not a good accountant, and it is to be regretted that he did not present more details concerning his administration, which really covered a very interesting period in the county's history.

The county judge's record for April, 1860, shows the school apportionments for Wright county, by townships, to have been as follows: Pleasant township, \$488.40; Eagle Grove township, \$138.60; Iowa township, \$60.90; Troy township, \$382.80; Boone township, \$329.43; Liberty township, \$371.50, making a total of \$1,780.33. In July, 1860, the road-tax apportionment was as follows: Vernon township, \$200.08; Pleasant township, \$437.37; Iowa township, \$167.75; Eagle Grove township, \$231.13; Troy township, \$144.38; Liberty township, \$206.43; Boone township, \$228.34.



In May, 1860, the year before the Civil War broke out, stores were few and far between in this section of Iowa, and it is found that the judge granted a peddler's license to Frank Barton, a pioneer, who ran a two-horse peddling wagon over this country, selling notions and staples of wide variety, but all useful in the household. His was the first "store on wheels" in Wright county. He found the enterprise profitable, and the settlers not only welcomed him, but, when they had money or produce to exchange for goods, dealt with him.

On August 6, 1860, on petition of Henry Luick and thirty-one other citizens, Pleasant township was divided and its western part formed into a new township called Belmond. Nothing special is recorded as having happened during the Civil War period in Wright county, further than the enlistment of soldiers, an account of which is given in the military chapter of this volume. However, there were a few incidents and official acts of the county board of supervisors, who were sworn into office on the first Tuesday in January, 1861, which will be read with no small degree of interest, though more than a half century has gone since the stirring events of those war days, when Wright county was an outpost of civilization—the real northern border.

#### THE FIRST BOARD OF SUPERVISORS.

On January 7, 1861, the first board of county supervisors for Wright county convened at the old county seat at Liberty (now Goldfield). It was made up of the following township representatives: James Barton, of Troy township; S. B. Hewett, Jr., of Eagle Grove township; C. N. Overbaugh, of Liberty township; W. H. Gillespie, of Boone township; L. S. Hazen, of Belmond township; Henry Luick, of Pleasant township; Robert Rowen, of Iowa township; E. P. Purcell, of Vernon township. Henry Luick, of Pleasant township, was chosen chairman of the first board. Under the legislative act that created the office of supervisor, it was stipulated that each township should have one member on the board and that the clerk of the court should act, ex-officio, as clerk of the board of supervisors. Isaac Whited, of Pleasant township, had been elected clerk of the court at the regular fall election in the fall of 1860, hence became clerk of the first board of supervisors. The members of the various boards of supervisors are set out in full in the list of county officials presented elsewhere in this volume.

The county judge was now shorn of the most of his power and the board of supervisors had to formulate its own rules and regulations; for this really was the beginning of a new system of county government. These men were



all excellent men for the places to which they had been elected by the voters of the various precincts of the county. They felt the responsibility resting upon them and set about in a businesslike manner to lay well the foundation stones of a good and honorable local government. Immediately they adopted a code which of itself was the essence of simplicity: First, that motions may or may not be reduced to writing before being acted upon; second, no question shall be debated upon unless properly before the house; third, there shall be no interruption while a member is occupying the floor; fourth, a two-thirds vote shall be necessary to an adjournment, and, fifth, evening sessions shall be held when necessary.

Little did the members of this, the first board in the county, realize what a great responsibility was facing them, on account of the war that was to break out before their June session; but such responsibility they met manfully and performed their every known duty, as did their successors in office, until the terrible conflict between the states ended in 1865.

#### SOME EARLY ALLOWANCES.

The first board authorized its clerk, Isaac Whited, and the chairman, Henry Luick, to contract with the editor of the *Hamilton Freeman*, Charles Aldrich, of Webster City, for the publication of the minutes of the board of supervisors, and such other printing as might be required, providing the amount did not exceed two hundred dollars a year; also, that D. D. Chase, of Webster City, be employed as counsel for the board, at a salary of seventy-five dollars a year, excepting the June session.

There were only a few persons within Wright county subject to public care, and these were provided for by a resolution of the board, by being "kept" by the lowest bidders.

At the June meeting in 1861 the board passed a resolution to take stock to the amount of five hundred dollars in the Wright County Agricultural Society, one-half to be paid in August, 1861, and one-half in August, 1862. How this all terminated is set out in the chapter on agriculture in this volume.

At the session as above mentioned the board appropriated two hundred and fifty dollars as part payment for publishing the delinquent tax list in the *Wright County Free Press*, when said publishers should have entered into contract with the county treasurer, binding themselves to publish such list according to law, and when such publication was issued such an amount was to be paid to said publishers. Other provisions were made for publishing the



county treasurer's balance sheet and minutes of the board of supervisors in the same newspaper, which was published by G. D. Ingersoll.

"UNCLE HARRY" GILLESPIE'S RESOLUTION.

An odd resolution was passed at the above-mentioned session of the board—yet one which might well be passed in some townships in Wright and adjoining counties even at this day. W. H. Gillespie, a member of the board from Boone township, had served for eleven years in succession and all knew of his ability and strict integrity. The resolution here referred to read as follows: "Resolved that ——— township be required hereafter to elect some one for assessor who is competent to fulfill the duties of the office."

On one other occasion, when a man presented a bill that had already been refused, "Uncle Harry" moved to "lay it on the table until 1900," forty years ahead.

It should not be overlooked that these were the early months of the great civil conflict, and supervisors were puzzled to know just how to proceed to manage the affairs of the county, then thinly settled, and at the same time aid the general government in carrying on the war. At a session of the board in the summer of 1861 numerous resolutions were passed by the Wright county board, among which are one exempting from taxation the lands of persons who had enlisted for the war, until its close, and the treasurer was authorized to exempt such lands from the delinquent list. It was further resolved that the board extend sympathy and supplies necessary to aid the families of soldiers during the absence of their legal supporters.

Each member of the board was constituted a committee for his own township to inquire into the needs of such families and report to the board, and in conformity with this resolution various sums were apportioned from time to time for that purpose. In September, 1862, a fixed sum was stated—two dollars per month for each wife and one dollar per month for each child under fourteen years of age. It also was resolved to submit a proposition to the electors, at the next election, to raise a fund of three thousand dollars by taxation, to be known as a "volunteer aid fund."

A BOUNTY FOR ENLISTMENT.

In August, 1862, the board offered a bounty of one hundred dollars for enlistments and a number of persons enrolled under this act. In November, 1863, the act was renewed at a special session of the board, when it was



desired to secure thirteen new enlistments to avert a draft, and later as much as three hundred dollars was offered for that purpose.

At the April session of the board in 1863 two very important petitions were presented, one by John C. Cowles, who had been appointed to fill a vacancy in the membership of the board from Belmont township, asking that the north tier of townships of Wright county be set off from Wright county and made a part of Hancock county. This petition, however, did not have a sufficient number of signers to give it much weight with the board of supervisors. The other petition was by Mr. Purcell, of Vernon township, asking that a sufficient amount of money be appropriated from the county treasury to purchase a quarter-section of land, at or near the center of the county, for the benefit of the county, and to be used as a county-seat of said county. The petition was granted, and N. B. Paine, E. P. Purcell and the clerk, George A. McKay, were appointed a committee to locate said land and make a report at the October meeting. This committee purchased the eighty acres in the southwest quarter of section 31, township 92, range 24, the present site of the city of Clarion. A resolution to have this land improved by getting ten acres of it broken up was lost at the June session in 1864, but in September of the same year a petition was granted submitting a proposition to the voters at the next election to change the county seat from its location at Liberty to the center of the county, and at the October election, 1864, the proposition was carried, the vote standing seventy for and forty-five against the measure.

#### COUNTY-SEAT CHANGED.

In January, 1865, a surveyor was employed to lay out and plat the southwest quarter of the southwest quarter of section 31, as above noted, and at the same time a resolution was passed donating a half block in the new town to each of five persons who should build a dwelling in the place not less than 18 by 20 feet. The members were divided on some of these measures, four voting in favor of moving the old court house from Liberty to the center of the county and four voting, at first, for the erection of a new court house, but finally compromised by allowing the people to settle the question at a special election on March 25 of that year. The propositions submitted were to move the old building and build additions thereto at a cost not exceeding two thousand dollars, or to erect a new building at a cost not exceeding six thousand dollars. The latter prevailed by the close vote of sixty-six to sixty-four, and at the April meeting of the board it was resolved to advertise for bids for the erection of a two-story frame building, thirty by forty feet, to contain



four office rooms on the first floor and a court room on the second floor. These bids were to have been acted upon at the June session, but again the board was evenly divided, and it was not until October that an agreement could be reached as to plans and the appointment of a supervisory committee. At that time the plans of Gilbert Perry were accepted, and Messrs. Gillespie, Rowen and Purcell were selected as a committee on building. On November 4 the committee made a contract with Perry & Nees to furnish material and erect a building according to plans and specifications then on file for five thousand six hundred dollars, one thousand six hundred dollars to be paid when the contract was closed, one thousand dollars on June 1, 1866, and the balance upon the completion of the building, which should be November 1, following. At the June meeting of the board in 1866 a committee was appointed to sell the old court house, which committee reported at the October session (the last meeting ever had at Liberty) that the old building had been sold to John Q. Hanna for four hundred and fifty dollars, two hundred dollars in hand paid and the balance when deed of conveyance was made and possession given, and when the board adjourned at that time it was to meet at "Grant" on October 21 to accept the new building; but on that date, a quorum failing to appear, the business was deferred until the regular November meeting, when Perry & Nees' work was accepted and the contractors were allowed one hundred dollars for extra work performed on the job.

#### FIRST RESIDENCE IN CLARION.

At the November session just mentioned the board ordered the building of a stable fourteen by fifty feet, the same to be roofed with hay. A deed also was given to Gilbert Perry for one-half block of land, he having complied with the requirements and built a residence in the new town. Thus it will be noted that the court house was the first building erected in Clarion, and the first residence was that erected by Gilbert Perry, who was one of the contractors in the construction of the court house.

But at the April meeting of the board of supervisors in 1867 appeared Gilbert Perry, representing that he had lost on his contract for building the new court house for the county, and as "he had done a very satisfactory job," even better than specifications had called for, it was resolved to pay him two hundred and fifty dollars additional, thus making the entire cost of the building five thousand nine hundred and fifty dollars.

In January, 1867, D. D. Miracle, an attorney of Webster City, presented a petition asking the board to equalize the bounties paid to soldiers who



enlisted from Wright county by giving each private two hundred dollars. He subsequently amended his petition by making it read one hundred dollars, but the board by a unanimous vote refused the demand.

In April, 1867, a contract was let for planting a row of cottonwood trees around the court house square, and the clerk was authorized to let a contract for breaking a strip ten rods wide on the west side of the town of Grant (now Clarion) for the purpose of planting a windbreak. Both of these contracts were faithfully fulfilled, as the stately trees standing there for many years attested.

#### TIMBER BOUNTIES.

In the June meeting of the board in 1867, the board passed the following resolution:

"Whereas, The scarcity of natural timber in this county is the greatest impediment to the speedy and permanent settlement of the same,

"Resolved, That the county offer a special inducement to the artificial growth of timber in said county, the sum of three dollars per acre for all land well and permanently planted to timber. Said amount to be shown by the census returns of the several assessors, the persons giving the same to be under oath, as when listing personal property.

"Provided, That no rows of shade trees, stockades, hedge fence, or trees planted for a windbreak around any building, or any timber now growing or planted be considered as coming under this resolution."

The following year the timber bounty was raised to five dollars the acre, and remained at that figure for three years, during which period many of the beautiful groves that now dot the landscape of this county were planted. It was, really, one of the wisest expenditures the county board ever became interested in. Whether one views and enjoys these trees in midsummer, when they afford a cooling shade, or in the dull, cold days of the winter months, when the violent winds sweep over this county, the trees are fully appreciated and add to the actual value of the farms a hundredfold what they originally cost. They are living, growing monuments to the good sense and forethought of the pioneers and the worthy board of county supervisors that offered the above-named bounties.

Other early-day bounties offered in Wright county included such as a reward of from twenty to fifty cents each for sandhill cranes killed; twenty to thirty cents on pocket gophers; as high as five dollars on wolves and foxes, and fifty to seventy-five cents on skunks. This had a double result. It not only made such pests scarce in the county, but at the same time gave employ-



ment to the idle, who, in this manner, were able to gather in the dollars at a time when they and their families most needed them to provide the necessities of life. The extra taxes levied in order to meet such bounties were never felt by the average tax-payer, and today the beautiful groves present a picture that the barren, treeless prairies could never have done without such tree planting. The county was fortunate in that its soil would produce stately timber from cuts and small trees, and even seed, whereas in the counties of North and South Dakota, where the government tree claim used so universally to predominate, the soil was too poor and the dry weather there usually thwarted the plans of the tree planter, who only by persistence and hard work succeeded in getting more than mere shrubs or brush thickets; but in Wright county it was as easy to raise a tree as a hill of corn.

#### COUNTY AIDS IN HOTEL BUILDING.

While Clarion was yet styled Grant, in September, 1868, the supervisors of the county resolved to donate to any responsible person who would erect a public house or hotel in Grant, the northwest quarter of the southwest quarter of section 31, adjoining the platted town, and also block 10 of the town of Grant, the clerk being authorized to contract on behalf of the county. One year later—1869—the offer was accepted by J. C. Young, who built a hotel on block 10, the present site of the Clarion House, which latter building was erected in 1881.

The townships of Woolstock and Clarion were both formed in 1868, and were represented on the board the next year by R. K. Eastman and Gilbert Perry, William Stryker appearing as a supervisor from Troy township.

At the June session of the board in 1869, Will F. Smith, of the *Wright County Monitor*, was allowed the sum of two hundred dollars per year, payable quarterly, for publishing the proceedings of the board. In less than one year, however, the board rescinded its action because of the irregularity of issue and other grievances enumerated. Mr. Smith sold the paper to A. M. White, with whom the contract was renewed, and ever since that day the *Monitor* has been the official county paper.

#### COUNTY EXPERIMENTS WITH PEAT.

On account of the scarcity of timber and the high prices for coal, the county board at its June session in 1869, determined to experiment, to the amount of fifty dollars, with the digging and drying of a certain quantity of



peat, which is but a decayed vegetable matter, resembling turf, cut out of the bogs, this fuel being desired for use in the stoves of the court house in Clarion. Coal had to be hauled by team over a trackless prairie from the coal banks at Lehigh and other points near Ft. Dodge, and it was almost impossible to secure sufficient fuel at the time most needed. Some counties in northern Iowa experimented on a much larger scale, but all came to the one conclusion: that while peat would produce a very intense heat, it was neither a desirable fuel nor much cheaper than ordinary fuel. For this reason the enterprise was not carried further, despite the fact that there were hundreds of acres of fine peat underlying the surface in the more swampy portions of Wright county.

#### NEW NAME FOR COUNTY SEAT.

In June 1870, five years after the county seat of Wright county had been designated as Grant, on petition of L. P. Davis and others, the name was changed to Clarion.

By the act of the Legislature in 1869 the number of county supervisors was reduced from one from each township to three for the entire county, the members being elected at large. Hence the board that met on January 1, 1870, was composed of only three members, J. W. Parmalee, who was chosen for three years; D. S. Pierce, chosen for two years, and D. M. Inman, for one year.

During that same year the people adopted the herd law, which was an act to restrain stock from running at large. A few years previously sheep and swine had been restrained, but now all live stock came under the act. A special tax levy was made that year for the purpose of building new bridges, one across the Iowa at Belmont, and one across the Boone near Middleton's place, in Troy township. The Belmont bridge had been swept away a short time before, and out of this special levy the first iron bridge used in Wright county was constructed, at a cost of \$4,870, outside of the expenses for making proper approachways.

#### FIRST RAILWAY DREAM SHATTERED.

In 1871 a five per cent. tax was ordered in the townships of Belmont, Clarion, Iowa, Pleasant, Wall Lake, and Vernon to aid in the construction of the proposed Iowa & Minnesota railroad. The tax was collected and the roadbed was graded, though the piles rotted down many years later, the road never being completed. It was styled the "Duncombe grade" and this



passed into the hands of the Mason City & Ft. Dodge Railroad, which is now within the Chicago Great Western system. This first attempt at railroad building in Wright county was a dismal failure.

In April, 1876, Lake and Dayton townships were formed, and held their first elections to choose township officers in October of that year. It was during this year that the county board made a deal with the American Emigration Company by which the county sold its swamp-land rights for four thousand dollars, or about one dollar per acre. (See account of this case on another page in this volume.)

In 1877 the county made its first start toward providing a "poor farm" on which its unfortunate poor might be cared for. The southwest quarter of section 5, township 91, range 24, was purchased by the board of supervisors for one thousand two hundred and eighty dollars. However, it was not much improved for the purpose intended until 1893, when better buildings were erected thereon. A quarter section of land was added at that date, making one-half section in all.

#### DEFAULTING COUNTY TREASURER.

In only one instance has the treasurer of Wright county been unable to make a correct settlement with the people for the moneys received and paid out by him. This case was in 1878, when J. H. Rowen, who had been elected treasurer of the county in 1873, failed to make good as an official. At the time there was much talk and considerable bitterness was engendered, but after a thorough investigation as to the facts in the whole case, it was finally believed by a majority of the people of this county that there was no intention on the part of Mr. Rowen to embezzle the funds of Wright county. The shortage seemed to have been the result of careless manner of book-keeping and over-confidence on the part of the big-hearted man, who did not know the true secret of saying "No." However, the county lost nothing, because the shortage of the unfortunate treasurer was made good by his worthy father.

#### COUNTY SEAT WAR.

The following is from the pen of N. B. Paine, who in early days was known as the "Bean Poet." All of the survivors of the earlier settlers in this county know of the talent he possessed and of the variety of subjects upon which he wrote. This poem of his treats on the removal of the county seat from Liberty to Clarion:



Wright county with its prairie lands,  
And timber sparse provided,  
Was geographically divided—  
Very much two-sided.

The timber-skirted banks of Boone  
Its western border bounded;  
Iowa near its eastern line,  
With green glad groves surrounded.

Between these timber-skirted streams,  
The sky and prairie blending;  
As far as human eyes could see,  
The prairie waves extending.

The settlers along the Boone  
Were sometimes bellicocious;  
The settlers of the Iowa  
Like badgers were ferocious.

For Boone had got the county seat,  
And county judge to judge it;  
And not a lawyer in the west,  
In district court could budge it.

And so we had a local war,  
No party fairly winning,  
Before Wright county's county seat  
Received its underpinning.

The local politicians lead  
Their squatter sovereigns, local;  
But not a drop of blood was shed,  
The fighting was all vocal.

We had some very busy scenes,  
And lawyers' tongues did rattle,  
When Boone and the Iowa clinched  
In one long law-suit battle.



And Eagleville and Liberty,  
 Ontario, and so on,  
 Were county-seated just enough  
 For paper men to blow on.

So both sides found chin-music dear,  
 With neither party winning  
 Enough to gain a county seat  
 That had an underpinning.

So both sides wore their warpaint off,  
 Both sick of local lawing;  
 While local lawyers and land-sharks  
 Were at their purses gnawing.

When both sides raised their flag of truce  
 And sent each other greeting;  
 Both pledged Wright county's county seat,  
 Should be a half-way meeting.

Peace o'er Wright county waved her wand,  
 And nothing could prevent her;  
 She placed Wright county's county seat,  
 Right in Wright county's center.

And curs'd be he whose venal soul  
 Thinks stolen wealth worth winning;  
 Or tries to move Wright's county seat  
 From off its underpinning.

#### IOWA RIVER CONVENTION AND ELECTION—1855.

The election held on the east side of this county, at the same date the Boone river election was held at the Hewett log cabin, in which the county was really organized, has been written up by a correspondent known as "Iowa." It runs thus: "Doctor Cutler was in those days the great Mogul of the upper Iowa country and concluded to consolidate his forces in the effort of organizing a county here, at the same time cursing the Boone river effort of securing the seat of justice. But when it was all over it was found that the superior talents and abilities for filling the county offices had curi-



ously enough, by the law of natural selection—or some other law—centered at Belmont (though the meeting was held at Horse Grove). Robert Rowen was nominated justice of the peace and the next important office, that of coroner, was given to the Grove settlement—the only county office with which it was honored, although the loss was small, for those terrible fellows on the Boone won the fight, leaving the Iowa nominees only their convention honors.

"In connection with the aforesaid nomination for coroner occurred an incident worth relating. Among the first settlers of Horse Grove was found the squatter, old man Ford, who, it will be remembered, had kept just on the outskirts of civilized life, and, beginning with Iowa City, by actual count, had made ten claims, selling out as fast as settlers came in and had the money. His claim in Horse Grove was purchased by Robert Rowen, and at the time of the above-named convention Ford was living in the new house later occupied by J. E. Moore, he having built the house after having settled on his claim. Of course, as a leading representative of the squatter element, his interest must needs be consulted, and so he was given the nomination of coroner, but on going home at night he was about to select him a deputy, when he was questioned by his good wife after this fashion: 'Pap, what did they give you?' He answered, 'Well, mammy, they made me coroner.' Then the fire flew. 'Crownner! crownner! to the devil with your crownner! Who is going to hang or drown themselves to give you any business?'

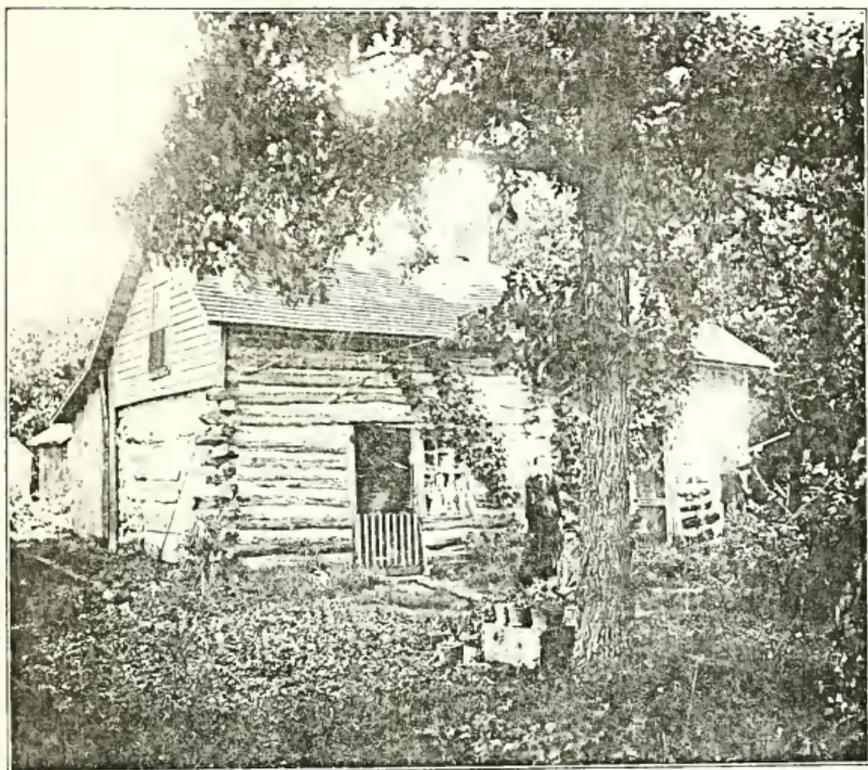
"Well, after dinner at Rowen's the 'harmonious' convention broke up and then went to war with the Boone settlers and got licked plenty!"

#### THE SEVERAL COURT HOUSES.

The first court house in Wright county was the log cabin owned by S. B. Hewett, Sr., just to the west of the present city of Eagle Grove, where the Hewett and Paine settlement had been effected. This is termed the first court house, from the fact that it was where the county was organized in August, 1855, but in reality, it was only the private property of S. B. Hewett, Sr., pioneer. Upon the organization of the county, the seat of justice was located at the village plat of Liberty (now included in Goldfield). The location of the log cabin of Mr. Hewett was at what was styled "Eagleville," a paper town in fact, and hence pioneer Paine, the poet, said:

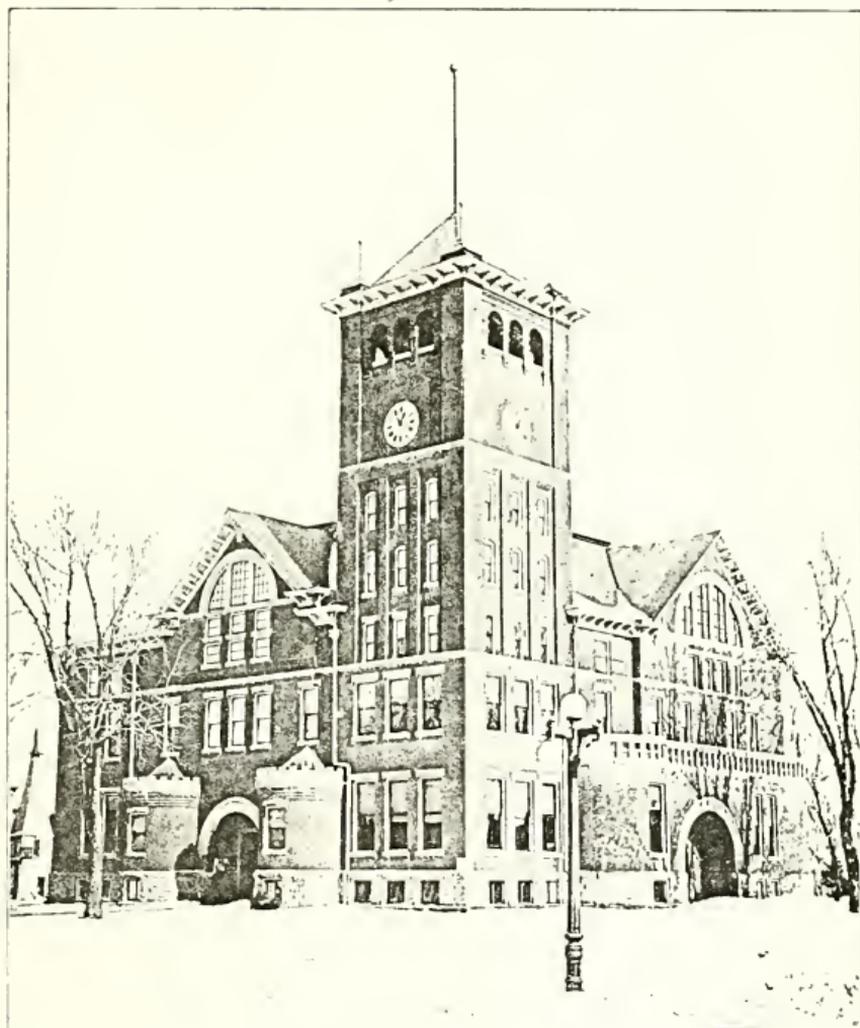
"And Eagleville and Liberty  
Ontario, and so on,  
Were county-seated just enough,  
For paper men to blow on."





THE OLD LOG CABIN, NORTHWEST OF EAGLE GROVE, WHERE THE FIRST OFFICIAL BUSINESS OF WRIGHT COUNTY WAS TRANSACTED.





WRIGHT COUNTY COURT HOUSE.



The election of April, 1858, determined that the county seat should be at Liberty, and on June 18, 1858, the county obtained a deed to its first court house site from O. W. McIntosh and the first real court house was erected that season. This was a two-story frame structure built where Mr. Braden's fine residence later stood. Subsequently, it was used as a store below and a residence above. Still later, it was used as a barn by J. S. Braden. It was finally torn down, in July, 1913, thus removing an old landmark of the county. This building served the county for its court house until 1866, when the county seat was changed to Clarion, first styled Grant. The building at Liberty was sold about 1869 to J. W. Parmelee, who converted it into a store, where he conducted a thriving and profitable business in general merchandise.

The second court house, proper, was the frame building, two stories in height, which now forms the greater part of the Avondale Hotel, formerly the Park House, which stands on the north side of the public square, at the northeast corner and across the street from the square. This is the building erected for the county by Mr. Perry, the facts concerning which have already been set out elsewhere in this chapter. Although this two-story frame structure was erected almost fifty years ago, it still bears the evidence of good workmanship and material, and is in good condition, notwithstanding the severe elements, the rains and snows of forty-nine years, that beat upon its surface. Its builders and all the county officials then at the head of the Wright county government have passed from the busy, ever-changing world. This court house served well its purpose until the present fine edifice of red brick was built in 1891-92, at a total cost of about fifty thousand dollars. The resolution passed by the board of supervisors that caused this new structure—the third court house in the county—to be erected was as follows: "At a meeting of the board of supervisors for Wright county, convened September, 1890, Resolved, that we submit to the voters of Wright county a proposition to build a new court house and jail not to exceed in cost forty thousand dollars."

#### ONLY ONE FRIEND IN EAGLE GROVE.

The election was held and the result was a majority of two hundred and ninety-five votes in favor of building. The assessed valuation of the property in the county was then three million dollars. It is a noteworthy fact that Eagle Grove township cast only one vote for this court house, and its vote against the measure was five hundred and fifty.



When it was known that the new court house measure had carried there was great glee in the central part of the county, especially at Clarion, where a jollification meeting was held, and no little excitement and merriment prevailed. The town's calaboose was saturated with oil and set on fire by the over-zealous citizens and onlookers.

It should be remembered that when the vote to remove the county seat to Clarion from Goldfield was taken, there was only a majority of twenty-five votes cast for the removal to Clarion. Both the Iowa river and Boone river portions of the county still had hopes that they might secure the county seat, but the wisdom of locating centrally is now generally acknowledged, and is placed to the credit of the early supervisors and their backers.

The old brick vault building that stood on the public square, erected in 1874, when the present court house was erected, was sold in April, 1891, to M. H. Austin, of Clarion, for the sum of forty dollars, and he was to remove the same from the grounds.

Plans for the new court house and county jail were examined at the January session of the board in 1891. The bonds that were to be issued to pay for the court house and jail were to draw five per cent. per annum, and were to run ten years, a two-mill annual tax to be levied each year until it was paid for. The contract was let to W. R. Parsons & Company, of Des Moines, on January 14, 1891, the county board then consisting of Messrs. A. Elder, S. I. Gillespie, John Wasem, H. H. Kinghorn and George Curry, A. A. Taft being the county auditor. The steel work and cells for the new jail cost the county three thousand five hundred dollars. Electric lights were installed in the new court house in November, 1893, the rate to be twelve dollars and fifty cents a month. With a few repairs, these buildings have served the county well to the present date.

#### THE COUNTY POOR FARM.

In 1877 the county bought the southwest quarter of section 5, township 91, range 24, for the purpose of establishing a county poor farm, but no use was made of the tract for some time. In 1890 the people voted, by a majority of sixty-eight, to purchase the southeast quarter of the above section, also to be used for the county farm. The last tract cost the county thirty-five dollars an acre, the same being paid for by a tax levy in 1900 of one and one-half mills on the dollar.

When the county bought the original tract of the poor farm it was improved and had a fair farm house on it; this served the county till later,



when another quarter section was added to the farm and the house materially enlarged to meet the needs of the county. In 1906 a barn was built, costing two thousand five hundred dollars. The farm is under a superintendent, who manages to make it almost self-sustaining. The average of paupers on this place is about seven—a good showing for Wright county thrift and industry. Most of these unfortunates are old people.

#### ASSESSED VALUATION OF COUNTY IN 1884.

The records of the June, 1884, board proceedings show the following valuations: Value of land in the county, \$1,471,036; value of realty in towns, \$136,209; railroads, \$117,606; cattle, \$96,645; horses, \$104,101; sheep, \$1,177; swine, \$18,034; personal, \$307,172. It should be remembered that under the rule then obtaining the "assessed" value was much lower than it is at present.

#### "CASH ON HAND."

In January, 1907, the county treasurer had on hand one hundred thousand dollars, the most the county had ever had up to that date. It may be stated, however, that a goodly portion of this amount belonged to the ditch fund and was soon to be paid out for work on such improvements in the county.

#### WOLF SCALPS WERE HIGH.

In 1913 the county auditor paid out sixty dollars for three wolf scalps under the new law providing for such a price, in order to rid the county of these pests, which made great havoc here in years gone by. These three wolves were all captured along the Boone river.

#### THE SWAMP LAND FUND.

Wright county was not so fortunate in disposing of her interests in what was known as "the swamp lands," which were apportioned by the state or general government, as was many another county in Iowa. For instance, Hamilton county, just to the south of this, after many years finally disposed of enough of such lands, or moneys derived from the sale of the same, to erect a twenty-five thousand-dollar court house, completed in 1876. In many counties speculators and county sharks, working through designing, untrue and dishonest men, squandered all such funds. These lands were originally set apart for the purpose of draining certain portions of the state of Iowa.



The lands were given the counties by the government for such purpose, and it was up to the various counties to make such disposition of them as they saw fit. In cases where there were no swamp lands the county had the right to select certain lands in other counties in the state for such purpose. Out of this, the various county judges and earlier boards of county supervisors, in some counties, used and abused this gift of the land department of the government, with fearful consequences to the honest tax-payers. For instance, they would contract with certain parties to construct a bridge and pay for the same in "swamp land" scrip. Possibly the bridge would turn out to be only a straw or prairie-hay bridge over some prairie slough, and for the same hundreds of acres of valuable land were bartered away, the several parties to the transaction dividing the spoils. The early railroads took advantage of this situation and sought to get large tracts of this land, amounting in all to thousands of acres, to aid in constructing a railroad. The lands passed into their hands at the hands of county officials, but the roads were never built. Wright county got very little, in the end, from her former swamp land apportionment, which was more than seven thousand acres. These lands were not available in Wright county when the act went into effect, and were mostly located in Kossuth county.

The first board of county supervisors for Wright county, which board went into session in the first week in January, 1861, employed Hon. D. D. Chase, of Webster City, father of State Senator D. C. Chase, to investigate the interests of the county in these lands, and contracted to give him ten per cent. of all lands or scrip obtained for his services, but before he was able to accomplish much in this direction the board sold the county's interest, in July, 1862, to the American Emigrant Company, an eastern corporation, that proved to be a gigantic swindle, almost equal to that of the well-known Des Moines River Navigation Co., which sought to obtain, and did obtain, thousands of acres of the finest land within the now prosperous Des Moines valley. This company promised to bring about navigation on that stream as far as the headwaters of the river, but, as a matter of fact, never ran a steamboat farther upstream than Des Moines City, and that one only during the high waters of June, 1857. The selling of the Wright county swamp lands to this American Emigrant Company, which had speciously promised to bring to this western Iowa country thousands of industrious settlers, was a very peculiar bargain, indeed. The county was not aware of the extent of its real interests, and although the company was required to give a consideration of five hundred dollars, it was tied up with conditions, such as making



improvements, selling to actual settlers, etc., that it was not able to fill its part of the contract; consequently, it is found, by reading over the records of that day, that in January, 1877, D. D. Miracle, of Webster City, later judge, was employed by Wright county to prosecute the claim against the American Emigrant Company to nullify its title. This terminated in a long-drawn-out lawsuit, in which the emigrant company was defeated. This suit restored the swamp lands to Wright county, but it also involved the payment of attorney fees amounting to five thousand dollars. To settle that claim the county made a new bargain with its attorney, by which he was to settle all accounts against the county in consequence of the swamp land deal and receive as compensation one-half of all the lands reclaimed or restored. This bargain required that the attorney repay certain moneys that had been advanced to him, which may have been embarrassing to him, for, in April, 1878, a new bargain was made by which he was to settle all costs as before stipulated, except the warrants obtained from Wright county, and then receive as full remuneration one thousand seven hundred acres of land from the swamp land grant, and the balance of the Kossuth lands, four thousand one hundred and twenty acres, was conveyed to the agent of the American Emigrant Company. The price was undoubtedly low, but the company still had a claim that it did not propose to relinquish. Furthermore, Wright county had, about five years before that date, given as a bonus to a couple of railroad-construction companies, which proposed to build railroads in this county, these lands, and though these contractors had forfeited their rights, they had not relinquished their claims, and trouble was liable to ensue from that source, therefore it is likely the county did the best thing it could have done at that late date. This deal, however, did not take in the lands actually within this county, but such apportionments as had been made in Kossuth—the six thousand acres. In 1892 there were still three hundred and twenty acres of swamp land in Wright county, that being situated in Wall Lake township. This in brief, is the story of swamp lands in Wright county—a story showing little revenue and less profit to the people of the county.

In June, 1912, the Wall Lake swamp lands were sold to the highest bidder. C. M. Haas, of Eldora, purchased five of the forty-acre tracts; W. H. Gade, of Iowa Falls, secured two pieces and S. W. Patterson, of Galt, one tract. The last named brought fifty-one dollars an acre, double its appraised value, all the tracts being sold for much in excess of their appraisement.



## COST OF COUNTY DRAINAGE.

Wright county has of recent years constructed hundreds of miles of open ditches and canals for the drainage of its lands. It is not practical here to enter into all the array of engineer's figures, showing the vast amount of land drained and the cost in the more than one hundred and thirty different drainage districts, together with the cost of each. However, in order to give a comprehensive view of the cost, thus far, on these great public works, which are still being pushed forward, year by year, the following figures as to the cost of many of these districts (where work is practically completed) are here presented: No. 2, \$22,611; No. 3, \$32,000; No. 4, \$29,980; No. 5, \$9,500; No. 7, \$32,500; No. 10, \$40,179; No. 11, \$12,200; No. 13, \$3,700; No. 14, \$40,000; No. 16, \$6,000; No. 18, \$6,500; No. 19, \$18,000; No. 20, \$7,500; No. 23, \$3,600; No. 27, \$14,175; No. 28, \$4,000; No. 30, \$9,000; No. 32, \$11,900; No. 33, \$2,900; No. 34, \$8,200; No. 35, \$5,299; No. 36, \$99,824; No. 55, \$10,000; No. 71, \$2,400; No. 72, \$8,500; No. 75, \$2,900; No. 76, \$10,000; No. 77, \$5,500; No. 80, \$17,200; No. 81, \$9,500; No. 84, \$8,800; No. 85, \$4,900; No. 86, \$18,295; No. 88, \$11,940; No. 89, \$3,300; No. 91, \$3,572; No. 95, \$2,450; No. 78, \$7,271; No. 93, \$15,986; No. 95, \$1,855; No. 97, \$5,739; No. 103, \$7,511; No. 38, \$2,200; No. 39, \$13,330; No. 40, \$11,000; No. 41, \$76,225; No. 42, \$3,000; No. 46, \$4,700; No. 48, \$4,116; No. 49, \$4,900; No. 50, \$3,250; No. 52, \$12,000; No. 53, \$2,500; No. 56, \$9,690; No. 57, \$4,600; No. 58, \$5,500; No. 60, \$6,660; No. 61, \$16,480; No. 62, \$13,000; No. 63, \$8,800; No. 64, \$3,400; No. 65, \$5,500; No. 67, \$6,475, making a grand total of over \$791,000.

During the year 1914 there was expended for drainage ditches in this county the sum of \$126,471. The total number of "live ditches" is now one hundred and thirty, these ditches draining thousands upon thousands of acres of low, wet land which has been increased vastly in productive quality and hence in value.

## FINANCIAL.

The county auditor, under a recent law, is required to make an annual itemized statement of all disbursements of public funds. Following is the statement made for the year 1914: Board of supervisors, \$3,143.50; county auditor's office, \$3,951.79; county treasurer's office, \$3,008.75; clerk of district court, \$2,065.49; sheriff's office, \$2,507.32; superintendent of schools \$2,472.13; county attorney, \$1,053.36; county recorder, \$2,095.90; county



engineer, \$4,873.41; printing, \$8,291.44; courthouse (including paving), \$8,039.53; jail, \$197.64; general election expenses, \$1,454.07; primary election expenses, \$1,709.30; bounties—wolf, gopher and crows, \$273.50; district court, \$2,745.17; grand jury, \$632.35; coroner's court, \$330.25; justice and police, \$329.86; miscellaneous, including assessors, school books and preliminary drainage expenses, \$15,008.39; county home, \$5,088.98; poor, outside of home, \$572.66; state insane, \$4,579.55; inebriates, \$248.08; state institutions, \$401.72; teachers institutes, \$150.18; miscellaneous funds, including roads, bridges and soldiers relief, \$67,310.40, a grand total of \$142,227.40.



## CHAPTER VII.

### COUNTY, STATE AND NATIONAL REPRESENTATION.

The following men have served, either by appointment or election, in various public offices within the county or in state or national government. This list begins with the date of organization of the county and runs to the present date (1915):

#### COUNTY JUDGES.

Up to January 1, 1861, all counties in Iowa were ruled by the "one-man power," in the person of a county judge, after which came the county supervisor system, which proved a much better plan. The Wright county judges were: David Dean, elected August 5, 1855, for two years; Joseph T. Calder, elected August 3, 1857, served four years and five months; S. B. Hewett, elected October 8, 1861, but the powers of the office were limited to probate business largely; Henry Laick, elected August 8, 1863, served four years; John L. Morse, elected in October, 1867, served one year, when the office was abolished and that of county auditor took its place.

#### COUNTY AUDITORS.

This office was the successor of that of county judge. The auditor is clerk of the board of supervisors and attends to all county business when the board is not in session. Those serving in Wright county as auditor have been: John L. Morse, seven years; N. F. ("Nick") Webber, elected in October, 1875, served four years; Z. C. Bradshaw, elected in October, 1879, served two terms, four years; John M. Overbaugh, elected in October, 1883, served six years; A. A. Taft, elected in November, 1889, served seven years; S. A. Keeler, elected in November, 1898, served six years; E. M. Callender, elected in November, 1904, served eight years; F. E. Osier, elected in November, 1912, is still serving in 1915.

#### CLERKS OF THE DISTRICT COURT.

The following men have served as clerks of the district court: C. H. Martin, elected August 5, 1855, served five years and five months; Isaac



Whited, elected November 6, 1860; George A. McKay, appointed to fill vacancy, and was afterward elected and served eight years; L. P. Davis, elected in October, 1868, served ten years; B. P. Enriken, elected in October, 1878, served eight years; Hugh Donly, elected in 1886, served two years; Lyman Moats, elected in November, 1888, served two years; W. V. Palmer, elected in November, 1890, served six years; R. C. Bras, elected in November, 1898, served six years; N. L. Nelson, elected in November, 1904, served four years; B. A. Banks, elected in November, 1908, and serving at present date (1915).

## COUNTY TREASURERS.

The offices of treasurer and recorder of the county were combined from the organization of Wright county until January 1, 1864, when, by statute, they became separate offices. The treasurers who held the combined positions and treasurer's office singly were: Anson Brasfield, elected August 5, 1855, served two years; R. K. Eastman, elected August 3, 1857, served ten years and five months; C. N. Overbaugh, elected October 3, 1867, served two years; W. W. Gates, elected in October, 1869, served four years; J. H. Rowen, elected in October, 1873, served five years and resigned; Henry Parker served by appointment in 1878; W. C. Tyrell, elected in October, 1879, served six years; S. D. Martin, elected in November, 1885, served four years; F. C. Hartshorn, elected in November, 1889, served six years; M. A. Mickelson, elected in November, 1895, served six years; W. H. Trowbridge, elected in November, 1901, served seven years; George L. Webster, elected in November, 1908, served six years; Edgar A. Allen, elected in November, 1914, is still in office.

## COUNTY RECORDERS.

The office of county recorder was coupled with that of treasurer from 1855 to 1864. The men who held this position, as well as the office of recorder singly, have been: Anson Brasfield, elected August 5, 1855; R. K. Eastman, elected August 3, 1857, served eleven years and five months; O. K. Eastman, elected in November, 1868, served one year and four months and resigned, his term being filled out by his father, R. K. Eastman; William F. Gibbs, elected in October, 1870, served four years; Ed Hartsock, elected in October, 1874, served eight years; M. H. Austin, elected in October, 1882, served six years; G. L. Cutler, elected in Novem-



ber, 1888, served nine years; Ole T. Rickansrud, elected in November, 1896, served two years; J. E. Olson, elected in November, 1898, served four years; James G. Keith, elected in November, 1902, served four years. F. F. Johnson, elected in November, 1906, served four years; Carrie Vaughn Anderson Lucas, elected in November, 1910; Miss Mildred Humphrey, elected in 1914.

#### SHERIFFS.

Scott Crapper, elected August 5, 1855, served as sheriff two years; Sullivan Calkins, elected August 3, 1857, served four years and five months; O. C. McIntosh, elected October 8, 1861, served four years; Ben Culver, elected in October, 1865, served two years; W. D. Hulse, elected in October, 1867, served four years; A. R. Nelson, elected in October, 1871, served four years; Nicholas Malvin, elected in October, 1875, served four years; H. E. A. Diehl, elected in October, 1879, served two years; R. K. Dally, elected in October, 1881, served four years; H. G. Wilson, elected in November, 1885, served four years; J. H. Howell, elected in November, 1889, served four years; C. N. Bradfield, elected in November, 1893, served six years; H. A. Duer, elected in November, 1899, served four years; W. C. Brown, elected in November, 1903, served four years; D. H. Leonard, elected in November, 1908, served six years; Bert Fisher, elected in November, 1914, serves at present.

#### COUNTY SURVEYORS.

As county surveyor, S. H. Hewett, Jr., (Judge Hewett), elected August 5, 1855, served one year; O. W. McIntosh, elected August 4, 1856, served two years and five months; George A. McKay, elected October 12, 1858, served one year; J. L. Middleton, elected October 11, 1859, served five years; O. W. McIntosh, elected October 8, 1861, served two years; William Rowen, elected in October, 1863, served one year and resigned; S. D. Pierce, elected in October, 1864, served five years; George A. McKay, elected in October, 1869, served two years; M. H. Austin, elected in October, 1871, served eleven years and four months; he resigned and C. F. Peterson was appointed and later, elected, serving until 1890; Dewitt Nelson, elected in November, 1880, served two years; J. L. Sullivan, elected in November, 1891, served two years; George L. Mecham, elected in November, 1893, served four years; A. J. Lary, elected in November, 1897; George L. Mecham, elected in November, 1899, served two years; N. Pon-



tius, elected in November, 1900, served three years; G. L. Mecham, elected in 1903, served eight years.

## COUNTY CORONERS.

As county coroner, Jephtha Doty, elected August 5, 1855, served one year; A. Overacker, elected August 4, 1856, served two years; N. B. Hollinger, elected October 12, 1858, served one year; J. L. Middleton, elected October 11, 1859, served two years; William D. Meeker, elected October 8, 1861, served two years; W. H. Gillespie, elected in October, 1863, served eight years; C. P. Sheldon, elected in October, 1871, served two years; Charles Packard, elected in October, 1873, served two years; Dr. Thomas Garth, elected in October, 1875, served sixteen years; Dr. C. H. Morse, elected in November, 1891, served two years; F. J. Will, elected in November, 1893, served six years; Dr. J. W. Garth, elected in November, 1899, served eight years; E. D. Tompkins, elected in November, 1908, served two years; Dr. J. H. Samis, elected in November, 1910, is the present incumbent (1915).

## COUNTY SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS.

The following is the roster of county school superintendents: Josiah Davidson, elected in October, 1858, the first man to hold such position in Wright county, served three years; L. S. Hazen, elected in October, 1861, served until his resignation, the same year, to enter the ranks of the Union army; William D. Meeker, appointed for one year; R. E. Train, elected in October, 1863, served four years; W. D. Van Velsor, elected in October, 1867, served two years; Gilbert Perry, appointed to fill out the unexpired term of Van Velsor; Rev. John D. Sands, elected in October, 1869, served two years; N. F. Weber, elected in October, 1871, served two years; Thomas Garth, elected in October, 1873, served two years; John Q. Hanna, elected in October, 1875, served two years; C. F. Peterson, elected in October, 1879, served two years; D. B. Paine, elected in October, 1881, served two years and three months; his term was filled out by J. R. McCullum, who was elected in November, 1887, serving one year and three months; Miss Ella Brown, elected in 1887, contested the election with Mr. McCullum, and won her case, and was re-elected in 1889; G. T. Eldridge, elected in November, 1891, served eight years; Angus McDonald, elected in November, 1899, served six years; O. H. Benson, elected in November,



1906, resigned and his place was taken by the present incumbent, M. L. Howell, who was elected in November, 1912, served until the law was changed, by which this office became elective by the school boards in 1915, and he was again elected under the new plan.

#### SCHOOL FUND COMMISSIONERS.

From the organization of Wright county until 1858 the office of school fund commissioners took the place of a county superintendent, and, on August 5, 1855 at the first county election, H. W. Montgomery was elected to such office and was the only person holding the same till the law was changed and the office abolished.

#### PROSECUTING ATTORNEY.

N. B. Paine was elected prosecuting attorney on August 5, 1855, and served one year; L. H. Cutler was elected on August 4, 1856, and it appears he held the same until the office was discontinued, that of district attorney taking its place in Iowa, until the change to county attorneyship in 1886.

#### COUNTY ATTORNEYS.

W. T. R. Humphrey was elected county attorney in November, 1886, and served two years; R. H. Whipple, elected in November, 1888, served two years; C. F. Peterson, elected in November, 1890, served six years; J. W. McGrath, elected in November, 1896, served two years; I. C. Fenninger, elected in November, 1898, served four years; S. Flynn, elected in November, 1902, served four years; Bradford Knapp, elected in November, 1906, served four years; Lester N. Archer, elected in November, 1910, served four years; A. R. Ladd, elected in November, 1914, is still serving.

#### DRAINAGE COMMISSIONER.

The office of drainage commissioner was in force from the organization of the county until 1861, when it was abolished. The men who held this position were: O. O. Kent, elected October 12, 1858; Adrian Elder, elected October 12, 1859, served two years; E. P. Purcell, elected October 8, 1861.



## COUNTY SUPERVISORS,

The county has been governed by three systems since it had its organization—first by the county judge system, then, from January 1, 1861, by a board of county supervisors, one of whom came from each township, and in 1870 this was modified and the number of supervisors was reduced to three—each representing a certain district. The law provided that it might be increased to five or seven, and the county divided into districts. Wright county has increased its number to five members. The subjoined will show a list of all supervisors, under the different townships and districts, to date of 1915, the dates given being the year in which the supervisor was elected: Henry Luick, 1860, four years, from Pleasant township; L. S. Hazen, 1860, one year, Belmond township; Robert Rowen, 1860, six years, Iowa township; E. P. Purcell, 1860, six years, Vernon township; James Barton, 1860, one year, Troy township; S. B. Hewett, Jr., 1860, one year, Eagle Grove township; C. N. Overbaugh, 1860, two years, Liberty township; W. H. Gillespie, 1860, ten years, Boone township; G. W. Dumond, 1861, a year and a half, Belmond township; James B. Dixon, 1861, one year, Eagle Grove township; J. L. Middleton, 1861, two years, Troy township; N. B. Paine, 1862, five years, Eagle Grove township; H. W. Montgomery, 1862, two years, Liberty township; John C. Cowles, 1862, six months, Belmond township (appointed); L. H. Cutler, 1863, two years, Belmond township; H. Middleton, 1863, two years, Troy township; A. L. Dean, 1864, four years, Liberty township; Beriah Wright, 1864, four years, Pleasant township; Gilbert Perry, 1865, three years, Troy township; C. Cowan, 1865, one year, Belmond township; A. Elder, 1865, one year, Belmond township; Joel Kent, 1866, two years, Iowa township; R. E. Train, 1866, two years, Vernon township; E. P. Purcell, 1866, two years, Wall Lake township; G. A. Thompson, 1867, two years, Belmond township; Edward Brown, 1867, two years, Eagle Grove township; D. M. Inman, 1868, two years, Vernon township; Wellington Nees, 1868, two years, Liberty township; Alfred Fisk, 1868, two years, Pleasant township; L. C. Dalrymple, 1868, two years, Iowa township; Robert H. Foster, 1868, two years, Wall Lake township; William Stryker, 1868, two years, Troy township; R. K. Eastman, 1868, two years, Clarion township; Gilbert Perry, 1868, two years, Woolstock township; William Rowen, 1868, four months, Belmond township; J. Q. Hanna, 1869, one year, Eagle Grove township; J. D. Sells, 1869, one year, Troy township; L. H. Cutler, 1870, eight



months, filling vacancy occasioned by the drowning of William Rowen in the Iowa river at Belmont in the spring of 1870; J. W. Parmalee, 1870, three years from 1870 to the close of that year, when the new law made supervisor districts, instead of one from each township; he still held over two years longer, however; S. D. Pierce, 1870, two years, from the district he resided in; D. M. Inman, 1870, one year; D. M. Inman, one year additional; A. Elder, 1872, three years; N. B. Paine, 1873; D. N. Inman, 1874, seven years; Henry Parker, 1875, three years; N. B. Paine, 1876, six years; A. S. Chapman, 1877; E. A. Howland, 1878; Elmore Middleton, 1879; A. S. Chapman, 1880, six years; E. A. Howland, 1881, six years; Elmore Middleton, 1882, six years; D. H. Pepper, 1883; Adrian Elder, 1884; John Wasem, 1885; J. G. Mechem, 1885, two years; S. I. Gillespie, 1885; D. H. Pepper, 1886, six years; George Curry, 1887; Adrian Elder, 1887; John Wasem, 1888, six years; S. I. Gillespie, 1888; H. H. Kinghorn, 1889, three years; A. Elder, 1890, eight years; George Curry, 1890, five years; S. I. Gillespie, 1891, seven years; John Stryker, 1891, one year; H. H. Kinghorn, 1892; J. S. Pritchard, district No. 1, 1892; J. R. Robson, district No. 5, 1892; W. H. Trowbridge, district No. 4, 1894; J. S. Pritchard, district No. 1, 1896; E. R. Lockwood, district No. 5, 1896; H. Pinkham, district No. 2, 1897; Richard France, district No. 3, 1897; W. H. Trowbridge, district No. 4, 1898; J. K. Miller, district No. 1, 1900; E. R. Lockwood, district No. 5, 1900; D. R. France, district No. 3, 1900; John K. Scheplee, district No. 2, 1900; G. H. Jameson, district No. 4, 1901; J. K. Miller, district No. 1, 1902; M. K. Uhr, district No. 5, 1902; J. K. Scheplee, district No. 2, 1903; R. France, district No. 3, 1903; G. H. Jameson, district No. 4, 1904; M. D. Sullivan, district No. 1, 1906; C. O. Lewis, district No. 2, 1906; N. W. Owens, district No. 3, 1906; G. H. Jameson, district No. 4, 1906; M. K. Uhr, district No. 5, 1906; M. D. Sullivan, district No. 1, 1908; C. O. Lewis, district No. 2, 1908; N. W. Owens, district No. 3, 1908; Charles Rotzler, district No. 5, 1908; M. D. Sullivan, district No. 1, 1910; G. H. Jameson, district No. 4, 1910; Charles Rotzler, district No. 5, 1910; W. V. Palmer, district No. 2, 1912; C. M. Spangler, district No. 3, 1912; P. A. Axen, district No. 4, 1912; D. E. Harris, district No. 1, 1914; H. C. Pinkham, district No. 2, 1914; C. M. Spangler, district No. 3, 1914; E. P. Ingraham, district No. 4, 1914; Charles Rotzler, district No. 5, 1914.



## CONGRESSMAN REPRESENTING WRIGHT COUNTY.

Thirty-fourth Congress, 1855-1857, James Torington, Davenport, second district.

Thirty-fifth Congress, 1857-1859, Timothy Davis, Dubuque, second district.

Thirty-sixth Congress, 1859-1861, William Vandever, Dubuque, second district.

Thirty-seventh Congress, 1861-1863, William Vandever, Dubuque, second district.

Thirty-eighth Congress, 1863-1865, Asahel W. Hubbard, Sioux City, sixth district.

Thirty-ninth Congress, 1865-1867, Asahel W. Hubbard, Sioux City, sixth district.

Fortieth Congress, 1867-1869, Asahel W. Hubbard, Sioux City, sixth district.

Forty-first Congress, 1869-1871, Charles Pomeroy, Fort Dodge, sixth district.

Forty-second Congress, 1871-1873, Jackson Orr, Boone, sixth district.

Forty-third Congress, 1873-1875, Henry O. Pratt, Charles City, fourth district.

Forty-fourth Congress, 1875-1877, Henry O. Pratt, Charles City, fourth district.

Forty-fifth Congress, 1877-1879, Nathaniel C. Deering, Osage, fourth district.

Forty-sixth Congress, 1879-1881, Nathaniel C. Deering, Osage, fourth district.

Forty-seventh Congress, 1881-1883, Nathaniel C. Deering, Osage, fourth district.

Forty-eighth Congress, 1883-1885, Adoniram J. Holmes, Boone, tenth district.

Forty-ninth Congress, 1885-1887, Adoniram J. Holmes, Boone, tenth district.

Fiftieth Congress, 1887-1889, David B. Henderson, Dubuque, third district.

Fifty-first Congress, 1889-1891, David B. Henderson, Dubuque, third district.

Fifty-second Congress, 1891-1893, David B. Henderson, Dubuque, third district.



Fifty-third Congress, 1893-1895, David B. Henderson, Dubuque, third district.

Fifty-fourth and Fifty-fifth Congresses, 1895-1899, David B. Henderson, Dubuque, third district.

Fifty-sixth Congress, 1899-1901, David B. Henderson, Dubuque, third district.

Fifty-seventh Congress, 1901-1903, David B. Henderson, Dubuque, third district.

Fifty-eighth Congress, 1903-1905, Benjamin P. Birdsall, Clarion, third district.

Fifty-ninth Congress, 1905-1907, Benjamin P. Birdsall, Clarion, third district.

Sixtieth Congress, 1907-1909, Benjamin P. Birdsall, Clarion, third district.

Sixty-first Congress, 1909-1911, Charles E. Picket, Waterloo, third district.

Sixty-second Congress, 1911-1913, Charles E. Picket, Waterloo, third district.

Sixty-third Congress, 1913-1915, Maurice Connolly, Dubuque, third district.

Sixty-fourth Congress, 1915-17, Burton E. Sweet, Waverly, third district.

#### STATE SENATORS.

Wright county has been in many senatorial districts and the persons representing the districts have been as follows: In the sixth General Assembly, Aaron Brown; seventh General Assembly, Aaron Brown; eighth General Assembly, J. H. Powers; ninth General Assembly, George W. Howard; tenth General Assembly, George W. Bassett; eleventh General Assembly, George W. Bassett; twelfth General Assembly, Thomas Hawley; thirteenth General Assembly, Marcus Tuttle; fourteenth General Assembly, E. A. Howland; the fifteenth General Assembly, E. A. Howland; sixteenth General Assembly, Lemuel Dwelle; seventeenth General Assembly, Lemuel Dwelle; eighteenth General Assembly, F. M. Goddykoontz; nineteenth General Assembly, H. G. Parker; twentieth General Assembly, J. L. Kainrar; twenty-first General Assembly, N. F. Weber; twenty-second General Assembly, N. F. Weber; twenty-third General Assembly, William C. Smith; twenty-fourth General Assembly, William C. Smith; twenty-fifth General Assembly,



John E. Rowen; twenty-sixth General Assembly, John E. Rowen; twenty-seventh General Assembly, J. Wallace; twenty-eighth General Assembly, J. Wallace; twenty-ninth General Assembly, F. C. Hartshorn; thirtieth General Assembly, F. C. Hartshorn; thirty-first General Assembly, F. C. Hartshorn; thirty-second General Assembly, C. F. Peterson; thirty-third General Assembly, C. F. Peterson; thirty-fourth General Assembly, D. C. Chase; thirty-fifth General Assembly, D. C. Chase; thirty-sixth General Assembly, D. C. Chase.

## STATE REPRESENTATIVES.

Wright county has been within numerous representative districts, and the following have served as representatives from this county: In the sixth General Assembly, that convened at Iowa City in the winter of 1856-7, Walter C. Wilson; seventh session, C. C. Carpenter; eighth session, C. Gillett; ninth session, Lewis H. Cutler; tenth session, Charles D. Pritchard; eleventh session, G. W. Hard; twelfth session, John D. Hunter; thirteenth session, John D. Hunter; fourteenth session, S. B. Hewett, Jr.; fifteenth session, John W. Parmelee; sixteenth session, John L. Morse; seventeenth session, A. C. Walker; eighteenth session, J. M. Hull; nineteenth session, John E. Anderson; twentieth session, William T. R. Humphrey; twenty-first session, I. L. Welch; twenty-second session, A. S. Chapman; twenty-third session, J. F. Austin; twenty-fourth session, J. F. Austin; twenty-fifth session, S. X. Hinman; twenty-sixth session, S. X. Hinman; twenty-seventh session, John Christie; twenty-eighth session, Thomas A. Way; twenty-ninth session, J. S. Pritchard; thirtieth session, J. S. Pritchard; thirty-first session, J. S. Pritchard; thirty-second session, John R. Smith; thirty-third session, John R. Smith; thirty-fourth session, W. C. Brown; thirty-fifth session, J. D. McVicker; thirty-sixth session, J. H. Reese.

## CIRCUIT JUDGES.

Wright county has been within several judicial districts, since its organization, and the following judges have served in and for this county. The judiciary has been made up of two classes of judges, the district and circuit judges. The circuit courts of Iowa existed only between the years 1868 and 1887, when the office was abolished by the Legislature. When this office and court was created in 1868, the county judge was abolished and all business pertaining to that office was transferred to the circuit court,



which was also to have concurrent jurisdiction with the district court in all civil actions at law, and exclusive jurisdiction of all appeals and writs of error from justice courts, mayor's courts and other inferior tribunals, either civil or criminal. The persons serving in the district in which Wright county was placed in the circuit court system, were as follows:

Hon. S. L. Rose, from 1868 to 1872; Hon. J. H. Bradley, 1872 to 1880; Hon. D. D. Miracle, from 1880 to 1887, when the office was abolished.

#### THE DISTRICT JUDGES.

The following have served on the district court bench in and for Wright county: Hon. Cave J. McFarland, of Polk county, was really judge over this county prior to its organization, but never held court here, though he presided over this district while Wright was still within Webster county. The next judge, really the first to hold court here, was Hon. J. D. Thompson, of Eldora, from 1857 to 1861; Hon. John L. Porter, of Eldora, from 1861 to the fall of 1865, when he resigned; Hon. D. D. Chase, Webster City, from 1865 to 1874; Hon. Isaac J. Mitchell, from 1874 to 1878; Hon. J. W. McKenzie, of Hampton, from 1878 until his death, which was soon after his taking the bench; Hon. H. C. Henderson, of Marshalltown, appointed in place of Judge McKenzie, was elected in the fall of 1882.

The judicial system of the state was subsequently changed, when additional judges had to be supplied, and the following have served for the district which includes Wright county; Hon. D. D. Miracle, formerly of the circuit court; Hon. John L. Stevens, Silas M. Weaver, D. R. Hindman, Norman B. Hyatt, B. P. Birdsall, J. R. Whitaker, W. S. Kenyon (now United States senator), J. H. Richard; George W. Dyer, of Nevada; W. D. Evans, of Hampton; C. L. Lee, of Ames; C. E. Albrook, of Eldora; J. L. Kamar, of Webster City; R. M. Wright, of Ft. Dodge; H. E. Frey, of Boone; E. M. McCall, of Nevada.

#### ELECTION CONTEST.

The first election contest for a county office in Wright county was that of J. R. McCullum and Miss Ella S. Brown, for the office of superintendent of schools. Miss Brown won out after much litigation in the district court, Judge Weaver deciding in her favor. She was seated on June 18, 1888, the year following her election.



## WRIGHT COUNTY'S SONS ABROAD.

Among Wright's county's citizens who have been honored by being made the nation's representatives in foreign lands, was Hon. John E. Rowen who served fourteen years as consul to South America—ten years in the Falkland islands and four years in Punta Arenas, Chile. He was appointed in 1889, and when too advanced in age for further service, he resigned, came home, and traveled and lectured. He died in April, 1914.



## CHAPTER VIII.

### AGRICULTURE AND STOCK RAISING.

Iowa is classed among the best agricultural sections of the Union—the great Mississippi and Missouri valley country being known the world over for its productiveness—and Wright county can show her share of big yields in grain, grasses and corn. She never fails of having a fair crop, no matter what the weather conditions are. True, there have been two, possibly three, years in its history, extending over three score years, in which the crop was not a profitable one; but, usually speaking, the climate and fertility of soil has rewarded the husbandman with a profitable harvest. Because of this, lands have gone up in value year by year, till today the farm is scarce which will not bring from one hundred and twenty-five dollars to two hundred dollars per acre. Again, it is because of these conditions that farmers have become the independent class of the county. They are out of debt; can have, if they desire, all modern conveniences and luxuries; travel South or West in winters and are enjoying the fruit of their labors. Many of the old-time "homesteaders" are now retired, with plenty of earthly goods about them, and have sons and daughters who are today reaping where they for long years sowed the seed of prosperity. As their hair is silvering and their sun is fast setting, they look back over the toilsome decades, when railroads were only a hope for the future and when crops brought them but little real money; but they kept plodding onward and in due time realized the fruition of their hopes and desires.

### FARM SPECIALTIES.

Wright county is essentially a stock-raising district. From this county, as early as 1892, there was but little grain shipped direct, it being at first fed to growing stock—cattle and hogs. The state census of 1885 gave Wright county over a half million pounds of butter produced, and sold in the open markets of the world, for one year; of that, one-fourth only was factory made. Five years later, the product had doubled and the quality very materially enhanced. When the county was first settled, the vast expanse



of wild prairie afforded an endless pasturage for large droves of cattle that roamed at will from one valley to the other—the Iowa, at the east, and the Boone, on the west. Foreign cattle men used to feed tens of thousands of steers on the rich grass lands of this county, and in this way made large fortunes. When the county became settled, they began experimenting with tame grasses, all of which have proved successful. Clover and timothy yield abundantly and the newer grass, alfalfa, has come to be almost a standard crop and may be cut from two to four times each season. Hungarian grass and millet do well, too, so that it will be seen that a stock grower can select almost any kind of feed, both in summer and in winter, for the profitable keeping of stock. At first the class of stock was none the best, but long years ago it was found poor policy to try to make money on inferior stock, hence the grades and thoroughbreds are now found almost entirely among the better class of farmers.

The number of horses in Wright county increased from 4,789, in 1885, to 7,998, in 1891, and the improvement in blood was fully as noticeable as it was in the cattle of the county. In 1885 there were but six pure-bred horses returned by the assessors, and two standard bred. But now the number runs into the thousands, including both draft horses and roadsters. At the county and district fairs, the annual exhibition of these fine animals is one of the great attractions, and their style and breeding points are scarcely outdone at the state fair at Des Moines.

#### DEVELOPMENT OF THE COUNTY.

While the construction of railroad lines greatly aided in the settlement of Wright county, there was still another cause, possibly more potent than all others, in bringing about its final development, namely: Of the territory of which Wright county is now a part, nearly the entire area was purchased at government prices by speculators. For many years the first settlers saw the tide of emigration sweep on to the west, because of the desire to gain homestead and tree-claim rights before it should be too late to secure a quarter section of government land. But it required the test of climate to indicate the best localities, and so it was that, in 1886-7, the attention of homeseekers in this section of the west was especially called to our soil and climate—our crops and possibilities in the production of immense crops. Then the southern counties in Iowa and down in Missouri were parching up under the burning heat and hot winds. Their meadows were brown and bare, stock was without feed and in many instances was sold at a loss for



fear death would overtake them. But here in Wright county, and all northern Iowa for that matter, crops were bountiful and prices good. Grain was a very large crop those years and hay was ample for all needs for home consumption and still enough for a lively export. Those years proved the staying qualities of Wright county soil. Even the oldest resident was surprised at the results they witnessed. Farmers here planted grain in the spring of 1886, on which no rain fell after it came through the ground, and yet they harvested good crops. It was then that northwest Iowa became known as the granary of the country. Thousands of unfortunates who had gone on to cheaper lands in the Dakotas, Kansas and Nebraska, were now dependent on Wright and adjoining counties for their supply of feed and supplies. Many came back here for seed grain and not a few concluded to remain as permanent settlers of the county. Then commenced the influx of colonies from Illinois and Ohio, men of means who sold their home farms at high prices and here selected good lands at a third of the price they had sold for in the East. Some of these settlers bought wild land and some preferred to pay for improved places. In 1892 there was little wild land left in Wright county, what was left open was held at fair prices and still made safe and profitable investments for the purchaser.

There is no better farming section in all this great Mississippi valley than is found in Wright county. Since the first furrow was turned in this soil, no failure of crops has occurred. Neither excessive wet nor drouth, frost nor storm, has prevented the earth from yielding her increase sufficient to keep the people of the county and also to have enough for large exports besides.

#### PRODUCTS OF THE COUNTY.

In 1880 Wright county had 785 farms, 346 of which were from 100 to 500 acres each, with one farm containing a thousand acres. These farms were mostly occupied by the owners, who worked them until a few years ago. This was a good increase from 1860, when the reports say the county had only thirty-four farms under cultivation. By 1870 they had increased to 323.

In 1905 the number of farms in Wright county was 1,688; the number of acres of improved or cultivated land was 281,879; number of renters, 710; number of resident farmers who tilled their own land, 978; number of acres unimproved, 38,149; total value of farms, \$18,760,000.

The census of Iowa in 1905 gave the following concerning the farm products of Wright county: Number acres in corn, 99,627; bushels,



3,335,000; value, \$1,020,000. Acres in wheat, 2,822; bushels, 45,000; value, \$35,175. Oats, acreage, 103,761; bushels, 2,000,000; value, \$511,000. Barley, acreage, 1,841; bushels, 40,000; value, \$14,220. Rye, acreage, 160; bushels, 4,947; value, \$1,608. Buckwheat, acreage, 153; bushels, 1,716; value, \$1,129. Clover, acreage, 2,022; tons, 4,092; value, \$17,000. Timothy, acreage, 22,850; tons, 31,900; value, \$138,148. Alfalfa, acreage, 23; tons, 43; value, \$160. Wild hay, acreage, 19,964; tons, 22,350; value, \$66,275. Flax, acreage, 344; bushels seed, 4,399; value, \$3,884. Clover seed, acreage, 188; bushels, 203; value, \$1,288. Timothy seed, acreage, 416; bushels, 1,937; value, \$2,294. Irish potatoes, bushels, 117,880; value, \$33,165. Sweet potatoes, bushels, 375; value, \$140. Sweet corn, bushels, 3,560; value, \$1,351.

In tree fruits—apples, peaches, plums and cherries—there were sold \$16,728 worth from the county. In small fruits, there were sold \$8,043 worth.

The total number of cows was 12,057; total cattle, 37,579; valued at \$701,000.

The total number of horses and mules was 10,641; swine, 44,100, valued at \$235,000; sheep, 2,140; goats, 27; pounds of wool produced, 5,190; number of Shorthorn cattle, 592; polled Durham, 46; Hereford, 41; Angus, 51; Galloways, 27; Jerseys, 43; total, 808, valued at \$32,000.

The number of chickens in 1905 was 172,000; other fowls, 14,000; number dozens of eggs produced, 514,000, valued at \$73,000; value of dairy products, \$267,859.

#### WEATHER AND CROP STATISTICS.

The Iowa weather and crop service bulletin, sent out in 1902 gave the following on Wright county:

Area, 576 square miles; area in farms, 366,371 acres; number of farms, 1,878; value of farms (in 1900), \$13,221,370; value of farm buildings, \$2,048,830; value of live stock, \$2,521,948; value of the year's products not fed to stock, \$2,584,921; acreage in cereal crops, 157,630.

The following tables contain records of the meteorological station at Dows, established in 1896. Elevation of station, 1,142 feet above sea level. The mean temperature by years was as follows: 1896, 46 degrees; 1897, 45 degrees; 1898, 45 degrees; 1899, 45 degrees; 1900, 47 degrees; 1901, 47 degrees; 1902, 45 degrees; average mean temperature, 46 degrees.

The rainfall at Dows station was: 1896, 43 inches; 1897, 26 inches;



1898, 32 inches; 1899, 27 inches; 1900, 35 inches; 1901, 27 inches; 1902, 46 inches; an average of 33 inches rainfall for the seven years.

## WRIGHT COUNTY CROPS.

The following is the official report on crops from 1890 to 1903, and of the rainfall between May and September from 1896 to 1902:

	Average per Acre.					Total Hay (tons)	Rainfall
	Corn	Wheat	Oats	Barley	Potatoes		
1890-----	29	10	29	25	39	1	----
1891-----	39	21	40	35	101	2	----
1892-----	29	12	25	24	51	1.8	----
1893-----	37	15	27	24	40	1.8	----
1894-----	13	13	22	18	23	0.8	----
1895-----	40	25	58	30	107	1.4	----
1896-----	34	12	29	26	64	1.5	20.60
1897-----	27	15	30	24	40	1.4	12.28
1898-----	35	18	35	31	60	1.8	16.08
1899-----	35	16	41	34	99	1.5	17.39
1900-----	43	18	33	34	85	1.7	18.74
1901-----	26	16	30	25	40	1.4	9.00
1902-----	25	8	38	25	57	2	33.49
-----	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Average-----	31	15	34	28	63	1.5	18.36

## AGRICULTURAL SOCIETIES.

The Wright County Agricultural Association was formed December 22, 1883, at the court house. It was formed as a joint-stock company as evidenced by the incorporate articles, as follows: "Whereas, we, T. W. Smith, C. N. Oberbaugh, William Welch, F. L. Dow, W. W. Cochrane, J. D. Demison, G. A. Waite, W. W. Courson, J. G. Mechem, E. J. Jameson, Will W. Sheplee, William F. Gibbs, John Summers, and others of lawful age, citizens of the United States and of Iowa, have associated ourselves together for the purpose of scientific investigation and comparison, with a view of promoting, and the exhibition of, agricultural, horticultural and mechanical products, do for ourselves, our associates and our successors adopt the following articles of incorporation."



Among these may here be mentioned one section that read: "The officers shall be a president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and a board of directors to consist of sixteen members, one from each township of the county, said officers to be elected annually, on the first Saturday of each year, at which time a regular annual meeting of the corporation shall be held."

Another section was: "The incorporations shall not incur an indebtedness to exceed twenty-five per cent. of the paid-up capital stock at any one time. The private property of the incorporators shall not be liable for the corporate debts. Five dollars shall be the price of shares and shall be transferrable to the owners thereof."

The officers elected at this meeting were: W. W. Wilson, who declined to serve, and J. G. Mechem was finally elected in his place; V. P. King, vice-president; G. A. Waite, treasurer. The directors were: Messrs. J. G. Mechem, of Lincoln township; F. F. Downs, of Norway township; F. L. Dow, of Lake township; John Wassen, of Eagle Grove township; C. N. Overbaugh, of Liberty township; J. R. Summers, of Dayton township; Thomas Wallace, of Wall Lake township; William Willix, of Blaine township; William Welch, of Clarion township; S. N. Hinman, of Belmont township; T. B. Kaufman, of Pleasant township; Mark Harvey, of Boone township; J. D. Brooks, of Iowa township; D. H. Pepper, of Vernon township; B. F. McDaniels, of Woodstock township.

Creditable annual fairs have been maintained ever since, and great interest has been shown in all branches of the enterprise, including stock shows, agriculture, horticulture and dairying, as well as speeding of fast horses.

Forty acres of splendid ground were purchased just to the south of the town of Clarion and a half-mile track constructed. Good buildings were erected, which served until the present ones were constructed in 1914, including the beautiful floral hall, twenty by eighty-six feet, with a stock shed two hundred feet long, with box stalls. These grounds were purchased in 1884, and today, with the improvements thereon, are estimated to be worth about twelve thousand dollars.

The present (1915) officers are: I. L. Walls, president; William Bell, vice-president; Ed Hood, secretary; G. R. Grattidge, treasurer. The board of directors is made up of one member from each township in the county. Wright county is now in the North Iowa fair circuit, which includes the counties of Wright, Cerro Gordo, Franklin, Mower county (Minnesota),



Bremer, Benton and Black Hawk. A uniform race program and premium book classification is used in all these counties.

In 1888 there was organized at Eagle Grove, a district fair society, taking in Wright, Humboldt and Webster counties, with part of Hamilton. This succeeded in holding several meetings and bid fair to continue, but, owing to various causes, it finally went down.

In the autumn of 1861 a county fair was held at Belmond, one having been held at Liberty the year previous, but neither was a great success. Those two were the first attempts at holding county fairs in Wright county.

#### BUTTER-MAKING.

The butter-making industry in Wright county has always commanded the attention of the outside world, and a good grade of butter was known as coming from this county away back in 1870 and 1880, when most of it was marketed at Webster City, in cedar and ash forty- and sixty-pound tubs. It has increased in popularity until today, when tons of excellent creamery butter are shipped from this county to far-away markets of the world. At the little town of Woolstock, in 1897, there was produced at the Fountain creamery three thousand pounds weekly, consuming seventeen thousand gallons of milk, while Goldfield, Belmond, Dows and Clarion each had large and successful creamery plants, turning out the celebrated "Iowa Valley" and "Boone Valley" brands of choice butter, which always commanded the highest prices.

#### HORTICULTURE.

Only a few of the first settlers here believed that this northern climate was suited for the orchard and vineyard, but a few had the notion that it was adapted for the more hardy varieties of fruits and so set out orchards. These included the Middletons, Paine, Haviland, and others on the Boone and as many more on the Iowa in the eastern portion of the county. It was found, by the close of the war of the Rebellion, that these orchards were thrifty and good bearing and it was then that others took heart and planted trees that have long ago many times paid for themselves, giving profit and family comfort to hundreds of the citizens of the county. Now all recognize that Wright county is none too far north to produce some of the finest apples within the commonwealth of Iowa, flavor and all points considered. It is no longer an experiment. As early as September, 1883, the editor of the *Monitor*, at Clarion, wrote as follows: "J. M. Rice, of



Vernon township, handed us samples of Duchess apples grown in his orchard this season, and finer looking or tasting fruit it would be difficult to find in any locality. Mr. Rice tells us that he will have thirty bushels of apples, about one-fourth of the crop he would have had only for the late frosts in the spring. That an abundance of apples can be successfully raised in this section is no longer an experiment, the experience of the past few years having demonstrated the fact. Every farmer should look after the future comfort and profit of this industry by giving the matter attention another year."

In 1907, Will T. Richards, of Lincoln township, raised two hundred and twenty-five bushels of fine Wolf River apples, many of which measured fourteen inches in circumference. The annual exhibits of apples grown in this county has shown that hardy fruits are a paying investment to the land-owner of Wright county.

#### STOCK RAISING.

Wright county has long been noted for good stock farms; indeed, this was true long years before the country was fenced, when the old herd law was in existence, and the non-resident lands were open to all stock men who desired to take a drove of cattle "up to Wright county for the summer." Many fortunes were made in this way by Hamilton, Franklin and Wright county stock dealers. Who, of the older men, do not recall the thousands of steers annually fed from the grasses of this county, between the Iowa and Boone rivers, their owners including L. L. Estes, A. D. Arthur, E. S. Frank Captain Tyrrell, with many others who had smaller droves upon these broad prairies.

In 1881, say the files of the *Monitor*, there were nearly six thousand head of steers feeding in Wright county. Again, another item from the same paper, dated 1875, states that there were then grazing in this county fifteen thousand head of cattle. The herd law had been passed in 1874, after which herders had to watch the droves and pay all damages they did to farmers' crops.

In September, 1883, L. L. Estes, of Webster City, delivered at Clarion for shipment seven hundred and thirty-five head of cattle (some forty car loads) that he had herded in this county, northwest of Clarion. The stock was sold to a Peoria, Illinois, firm and they corn-fed the same the following winter. For these grass-fed steers, Mr. Estes received twenty-seven thousand dollars—the largest single sale ever made in the county.

As to general farming, corn and growing of small grains and feeding,



the following statements may be made, based on items found in the local newspapers of dates named:

In 1870, William Throssell, of Troy township, had the champion corn field in Wright county. In June he had two hundred and thirty acres all plowed through once, and one hundred acres plowed the second time. J. D. Sells had two hundred and ten acres; John Kelling, of Liberty, had one hundred and twenty-five acres; H. W. Montgomery, of Boone valley, had one hundred acres and many more had eighty-acre corn fields at that early day.

In 1883, Hon. A. S. Chapman (now deceased) had three hundred acres of corn planted by May 16, and was expecting a harvest of not less than fifteen thousand bushels. Mr. Chapman, a Maine man, always had faith in Wright county and made a marked success of corn, hogs and cattle, in the southern part of this county. The same year, he reported to the *Monitor* as having had four hundred and fifty acres of corn and a yield of about twenty thousand bushels, which he was feeding to his cattle and hogs at the rate of one hundred bushels per day.

Another successful Wright county farmer was pioneer H. W. Montgomery, who settled in Boone township in the autumn of 1854. He reported, in January, 1880, on his 1879 farming operations that he made twelve and one-half per cent. on his farm investment, after paying all expenses. His farm consisted of 280 acres, valued then at \$5,000. One hundred and twenty-five acres were then under cultivation and he had 100 acres in corn, from which he realized 5,000 bushels; butter sold, \$100; forty-eight fat hogs sold at \$640; fifty stock hogs left over, valued at \$240; fifty head of cattle, etc. He paid out for help only \$75, his son J. M. and himself doing the remainder of the work on the farm. The reader will remember this occurred about thirty-six years ago, when prices were much lower than at present.

The prairies between the Boone and Iowa rivers, which were not well settled up till many years later than the river portion of this county, yielded its luxuriant grasses until about 1890 as "free plunder" to stock-men. It was in 1888 that L. L. Estes, of Webster City, above mentioned as a large feeder here, was styled the "Wright County Cattle King." That year he had more than five hundred steers in this county and herded two thousand more cattle in Minnesota and Dakota. It was stated that he realized a profit (and stock sold low) of sixteen thousand dollars that year.



## SHEEP RAISING.

The earlier experiences in raising sheep in Wright county were not encouraging to farmers, for much loss was met with in Civil-war days with sheep here, and but few flocks were afterwards kept. But of late years more are being kept by farmers, and they are of a better grade. As an example, W. T. Richards, of Lincoln township, in 1910 was keeping one thousand head of fine Shropshire sheep, and he reported them as money-makers, besides keeping the weeds in the fence corners and by-ways trimmed close to the ground. Others then followed his example with profit to themselves.

## HOG CHOLERA.

The worst epidemic of hog cholera in Wright county occurred in 1896-97, when the assessors' books show that the total loss in the county was \$550,000. Woolstock township lost 4,529 hogs; Wall Lake township lost 4,883, making a total in the entire county of about 75,000 hogs.

## SUGAR BEET CULTURE.

While Wright county is not famous for her growth of sugar beets, the industry here needs to be mentioned in the annals of the county as having been of large enough proportions to call for mention among the industries of the farm and garden.

The *Monitor*, in April, 1910, made mention of a train of five coaches and four baggage cars bearing several hundred beet-sugar workers as passing through Clarion. One car was unloaded at Clarion. They were Germans and were sent to Bode, while the balance were transferred to the Great Western road to be taken to Swaledale, Burchinal and Clear Lake. They were sent from Kansas City and Topeka, Kansas.

In July, 1912, the sugar-beet fields near Goldfield, this county, were reported to the crop bureau as being in fine condition. The growing of sugar beets began in this county, near Goldfield, about 1910, and so well were the farmers pleased with their crop that many went into their cultivation, though not at all on a large scale, as was done in other sections of Iowa. In 1912, the beets averaged ten tons per acre and were contracted for by sugar companies, who furnished Russians and other foreign help to cultivate and harvest the crop, deducting fourteen dollars per acre for such



work. Several farmers stated that this was the best paying crop, per acre, that they produced that season.

Just to the north, in Hancock county, the growing of beets for sugar-making purposes was extensively carried on a few years since, but the factory at Waverly, Iowa, has been unable to branch out and do what was contemplated, on account of the removal of the customs duty on sugar. With the duty on, it was a success; with it taken off, it is a failure in this section.



## CHAPTER IX.

### RAILROAD AND SWAMP LANDS IN WRIGHT COUNTY.

Many landowners in the south half of Wright county derived their titles from or through the Dubuque & Pacific Railroad Company and reference herein to the grants to that company and the legislation which has been passed respecting them will undoubtedly prove interesting. The act of Congress granting the lands to the state of Iowa, so far as the same is materially to be set out, was as follows:

"Section 1. Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled, that there be and is hereby granted to the state of Iowa, for the purpose of aiding in the construction of railroads from Burlington, on the Mississippi river, to a point on the Missouri river, near the mouth of Platte river; from the city of Davenport, via Iowa City and Fort Des Moines, to Council Bluffs; from Lyons City, northwesterly to a point of intersection with the main line of the Iowa Central Air Line railroad, near Maquoketa; thence on said main line, running as near as practicable to the forty-second parallel, across the said state of Iowa to the Missouri river; from the city of Dubuque to a point on the Missouri river, near Sioux City, with a branch from the mouth of the Tete Des Morts, to the nearest point on said road, to be completed as soon as the main road is completed to that point, every alternate section of land, designated by odd numbers for six sections in width on each side of said roads. But in case it shall appear that the United States have, when the lines or routes of said roads are definitely fixed, sold any sections or any parts thereof, granted as aforesaid, or the right of pre-emption has attached to the same, then it shall be lawful for any agent or agents to be appointed by the governor of said state to select, subject to the approval of the secretary of the interior, from the lands of the United States nearest to the tiers of sections above specified, so much land in alternate sections or parts of sections, as shall be equal to such lands as the United States have sold, or otherwise appropriated, or to which the rights of pre-emption have attached as aforesaid; which lands (thus selected in lieu of those sold and to which pre-emption rights have attached as aforesaid, together with the sections and



parts of sections by odd numbers as aforesaid, and appropriated as aforesaid) shall be held by the state of Iowa, for the use and purpose aforesaid; provided, that the land to be so located shall in no case be further than fifteen miles from the lines of said roads, and selected for and on account of each of said roads; provided further, that the lands hereby granted for and on account of said roads severally, shall be exclusively applied in the construction of that road for and on account of which such lands are hereby granted, and shall be disposed of only as the work progresses, and the same shall be applied to no other purpose whatsoever.

"Section 3. And be it further enacted, That the said lands hereby granted to the said state shall be subject to the disposal of the Legislature thereof for the purpose aforesaid, and no other; and the said railroads shall be and remain public highways for the use of the government of the United States, free from toll or other charge upon the transportation of any property or troops of the United States.

"Section 4. And be it further enacted, That the lands hereby granted to said state shall be disposed of by said state only in manner following: that is to say, that a quantity of land not exceeding one hundred and twenty sections for each of said roads, and included within a continuous length of twenty miles of each of said roads may be sold; and when the governor of said state shall certify to the secretary of the interior that any twenty continuous miles of any of said roads is completed, then another quantity of land hereby granted, not to exceed one hundred and twenty sections for each of said roads having twenty continuous miles completed as aforesaid, and included within a continuous length of twenty miles of each of such roads, may be sold; and so from time to time until said roads are completed; and if any of said roads are not completed within ten years, no further sale shall be made and the lands unsold shall revert to the United States."

It will be noted that the act of Congress provided that the lands were to be disposed of by the state for the purpose of aiding in the construction of railroads, but for no other purpose. The power of the state to dispose of the lands and the manner of their disposal was prescribed by the fourth section of the act, which provided that a quantity not exceeding one hundred and twenty sections within a continuous length of twenty miles of the road might be sold, and when the governor of the state certified to the secretary of the interior that any continuous twenty miles of the road was completed, then another quantity, not to exceed one hundred and twenty sections and included within a continuous length of twenty miles, might be sold, and so



on from time to time, until the road was completed. The Dubuque & Pacific Railroad Company was organized for the purpose of building a line of railway from Dubuque, on the Mississippi, to Sioux City, on the Missouri.

By an act of the fifth General Assembly of Iowa, passed July 14, 1856, in extra session called for that purpose, the Legislature of Iowa accepted the grant of Congress upon the terms, conditions and restrictions contained in the act, and by the same legislative act granted to the Dubuque & Pacific Railroad Company so much of the lands, interests, rights, powers and privileges as were granted and conferred upon the state by the act of Congress, aforesaid, to aid in the construction of a railroad from the city of Dubuque, to a point on the Missouri river at or near Sioux City, with a branch on the Tete Des Morts to the nearest point on said road, to be completed as soon as the main line was completed to that point.

Among other conditions imposed by the Legislature upon the railroad company, it was provided that it should complete seventy-five miles of the road within three years from the 1st day of December, 1856, thirty miles in addition in each year thereafter for five years and the remainder of the whole road by December 1, 1865, and if the company failed to comply with these provisions the state reserved the right to resume all rights conferred by the act and to resume all rights to the lands granted and remaining undisposed of.

By an act of the Legislature, which took effect February 17, 1857, the railroad company to whom grants had been made was authorized to secure construction bonds by mortgage or deed of trust, on the lands, subject, however, to all the conditions imposed by the grant of Congress and that of the state. Under this act, the Dubuque & Pacific Railway Company made a deed of trust, with power of sale, to Abraham S. Hewett and others as trustees, who, under the powers conferred by the trust deed, conveyed to purchasers many of the lands covered by the grant far in advance of the completion of the road, and the twenty-mile continuous limit was ignored.

The Dubuque & Pacific Railroad Company failed to comply with its grant and to complete its line of road by December, 1865. In fact, it had only completed its road to Cedar Falls by that time and by an act of the Legislature, approved March 10, 1868, the state of Iowa undertook to resume absolutely all the right, title and interest granted to the Dubuque & Pacific Railroad Company under the act of July 14, 1856, except the title of said company to one hundred and twenty sections of the land for each and every twenty miles of the road which was then completed and equipped. After



some controversy, the railroad was completed from Iowa Falls to Sioux City by John J. Blair, of New Jersey, through the Iowa Falls & Sioux City Railway Corporation, which also succeeded to the lands resumed by the state under its act of forfeiture against the Dubuque & Pacific Railroad Company.

Meantime, the Dubuque & Pacific Railroad Company never furnished a list of the lands selected and earned or claimed to have earned by it under its grant and up to the present time no such list is on file in the state land department. About thirty-two thousand acres in Wright county passed under the grant to the railroad company, selections being made as far north in the county as section 1, in Lincoln township. This situation with reference to the record title of these remained until the thirty-fifth General Assembly. Previous legislatures had undertaken to provide for the issuance of certificates by the secretary of state upon railroad lands earned under the respective grants, but the Dubuque & Pacific Railroad Company having failed to comply and the state having resumed all unearned lands by its act of March 10, 1868, and the lands to which such company was in fact entitled never having been judicially or otherwise determined, the secretary of state declined to issue certificates upon lands, the title of which had been derived through the trustees of the defaulting company. This left the title to over thirty-two thousand acres of such lands in Wright county, and large quantities in Franklin and other counties, in doubt and uncertainty.

Through the earnest efforts of Senator D. C. Chase, the thirty-fifth General Assembly passed an act known as chapter 6, acts of the thirty-fifth General Assembly, and which took effect March 13, 1913, by which it is provided:

"Section 1. That the secretary of state is hereby authorized, upon the application of any person claiming title under the trust deeds executed by the Dubuque & Pacific Railroad Company, to secure its construction bonds, to any lands included in the list of lands certified to the state of Iowa, by the commissioner of the general land office and approved by the secretary of the interior, as selected to satisfy the grant made to the state of Iowa, by act of Congress approved May 15, 1856, in aid of the construction of a railroad from Dubuque to Sioux City; to certify said land as insuring to the grantees of the said Dubuque & Pacific Railroad Company, which certificate shall be signed by the governor, and attested by the secretary of state, with the seal of the state, and deliver the same to such applicant, who is hereby authorized to have said certificate recorded in the county in which



the land so certified is situated, and when so recorded, shall be notice to all persons the same as deeds now are, and shall be evidence of the title from the state of Iowa, to any person deriving title to said land under the Dubuque & Pacific Railroad Company, to the land therein described under the grant of Congress by which the land was certified to the state so far as the certified lists made by the commissioner aforesaid, conferred title to the state; but where lands embraced in such lists are not of the character embraced by such acts of Congress or the acts of the General Assembly of the state, and are not intended to be granted thereby, the lists, so far as these lands are concerned, shall be void; nor shall the secretary include in any of the lists so certified to the state, lands which have been adjudicated by the proper courts to belong to any other grant or adjudicated to belong to any county or individual under the swamp-land grant, or any homestead or pre-emption settlement; nor shall said certificate so issued confer any right or title as against any person or company having any vested right, either legal or equitable, to any of the lands so certified."

This wise and laudable act upon the part of Senator Chase furnishes each owner of such land the means of perfecting his title of record at slight expense.



## CHAPTER X.

### RAILROADS AND TRANSPORTATION.

When the early settlers came to Wright county they were in advance of all railroads in the state of Iowa. The first settler, William Stryker, of Troy township, arrived on July 5, 1854, nearly two years before the iron horse crossed the Mississippi river at Rock Island and Davenport, the first large cities touched by the Rock Island & Pacific road, en route from Chicago to the West. Wright county did not have her first railroad until twenty-seven years after her first settlement was effected, when the Burlington, Cedar Rapids & Northern (now Rock Island system) reached Clarion from the east. About the same date, the Chicago & Northwestern Company built from Eagle Grove to Elmore, Minnesota, with a station point at Goldfield and Thrall, after first having entered Eagle Grove. A branch of the old Iowa Central road was also soon pushed through to Belmond, from Hampton on the east, and reached Clarion by survey, August 1, 1895. These great systems all crossed Wright county about the same date, and since then the territory has developed as if by magic. So, after waiting a quarter of a century and more, the people of this county secured excellent shipping facilities, though they were the last in the central Northwest to do so. But this is not all the story of railroad building in Wright county, by any means, for mention should be made of the numerous "paper roads," the schemes that seemed at the time to be feasible, but proved of no avail in solving the transportation problem of the county. Most all of the active promoters of these railroads that were projected, but, for one reason or another, were never finished, have long since been gathered to their fathers, including Hon. John F. Duncombe, of Ft. Dodge, who figured largely in many of them during the seventies and eighties. He was honest and in earnest and desired to develop this county, along with its adjoining sisters, but the fates seemed to thwart his efforts. "It is better to strive and climb and never reach the goal, than to live and die an aimless, worthless soul," the poet has said, but this could not be said of all promoters. However, the aims of Mr. Duncombe were high and praiseworthy, though capitalists did not see things in the same light that he did, for he wished to see a transportation line from



the lumber districts of the far North to the coal fields of the Des Moines river, in which he was largely interested.

Reverting to the pioneer and his hardships in transporting the necessaries of life, it will be seen that he had much to contend with, having little but a stout heart to buoy him up through two and more decades. Commencing at the Mississippi river, the market moved slowly westward to Cedar Falls; then to Iowa Falls, in 1868; then to Alden and, finally, to Webster City in the spring of 1869. In 1871, the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul line had reached the town of Garner, Hancock county, north from Wright. After having to draw dressed pork to Cedar Falls and Waterloo in Civil-war times, and there sell it, in the early part of that conflict, at as low as one dollar and fifty cents per hundred weight, and wheat at forty cents per bushel, while their corn rotted in the crib for want of market places, the pioneer farmers finally had a shipping place and market within a day's drive. The gloom that had surrounded and depressed them for so long began to disperse. Yet, with such improved conditions, all was not as it should be. The roads between Webster City and the Boone river settlements in Wright county were none too good. The roads from Clarion and other points to Garner were still worse, being impassable most of the season with even a light load of produce. But that was better than going to Cedar Falls, camping out, eating a cold luncheon, sleeping on the ground and returning with scarcely enough money to pay the annual taxes. Hence it was that railroad schemes were proposed and encouraged throughout north-western Iowa, including Wright county.

As early as 1871 a five per cent. tax was voted in aid of a railroad, that failed of construction, and later, at intervals, aid was voted to no less than four other construction companies; but, from various causes, all save one of the bonuses were forfeited. In the records of Pleasant township the following agreement, unique in its way, is inscribed:

"To the people of Pleasant township: I hereby agree to turn over the five per cent. tax of Pleasant township to any railroad company if the tax is voted, to the Iowa & Minnesota Co., if they can, and we cannot get to Belmond by November 1, 1878, and if another road can get there before we do, we will turn over said tax, and I hereby agree to give said township of Pleasant 10 per cent. of said tax to pay election expenses, etc.

"By L. C. PHILLIPS, Engineer. J. E. DUNCOMBE, Gen. Manager."

The language of the notice shows it to be the work of the engineer, rather than of the accomplished attorney whose name is affixed as "Gen. Manager." However, it was another railroad that "got there first," though



not until nearly four years after this agreement was entered into. The first line to run a train of cars into the township was a branch of the Iowa Central, extending from Hampton to Belmond. It was the design of the construction company (says a writer of Pleasant township) that built the line, to extend it to some far western terminus, making a trunk line across the state, but the scheme failed of accomplishment and perhaps never existed except in the minds of the construction company which was building the grade from the aid furnished by the people, by subscription and taxation. In February, 1882, says the record of events in those days, aid was voted the Forest City Southern, which failed to call for the money, and in June, 1884, a tax was voted to aid the Chicago, Iowa & Dakota, which also, never called for the money, its route having been occupied by the Burlington, Cedar Rapids & Northern, which in that year built its line unaided. In February, 1886, a five per cent. tax was voted to aid the Mason City & Fort Dodge company, conditional upon that company completing its line to Belmond by October of that year. It failed to complete by a couple of weeks, and lost the bonus. Once afterwards, in April, 1887, the people of Pleasant township (says Mr. Elder, who was authority on all these schemes to provide the county with a railroad) were asked to vote aid, this time to the Sioux City & Northern, but the proposition was defeated. Three separate lines now open communication in five directions, connecting with every town adjacent and giving direct routes to the markets of the east and north and to the lumber and coal fields.

The old "Duncombe grade" was bought by what was termed the Chicago, Iowa & Dakota. This was an organization headed by that wily old railroad king, John I. Blair, of New Jersey, who built so many of the Iowa early-day railroads, and was, of course, represented by local capital in Hardin, Hancock and Wright counties. It purchased the grade abandoned by Duncombe, from Belmond north, and proposed building from Eldora to Iowa Falls and thence up the Iowa river until the route struck the old grade. But the Burlington, Cedar Rapids & Northern company anticipated the move by starting a line from Dows north to Forest City, which was pushed to completion in one season. The old Duncombe grade was crossed several times on the way, and out of this grew a long litigation, in which the Chicago, Iowa & Dakota finally recovered some damages, but the other company held the line, which has been extended as far west as Estherville.

The last railroad to be constructed in Wright county was the Mason City & Fort Dodge, extending from the former city to the Lehigh coal



fields, stretching across the county in a north and south direction and having stations at Belmont, Clarion and Eagle Grove, at first, and, later, at Cornelia, Florence and Nucl. Eventually it passed into the hands of its present owners, the Chicago Great Western, which has come to be a permanent blessing to the county, as it is an excellent highway and maintains shops at Clarion. Chicago, St. Paul, Omaha and Kansas City are all on this great thoroughfare, with direct trains from Clarion.

This, in brief, is the story of railroad building in the "kingdom of Wright." The records of the county and state railroad commissioners for 1915 show the following statistics concerning the present main lines and branches of roads running through Wright county, with the names of the corporations given as stated by the records: Chicago & Northwestern, 23.80 miles; Chicago & Iowa line, 6.50 miles; Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific, 56.50 miles; Chicago Great Western, 33.48 miles. This gives a grand total of railroad mileage in Wright county of one hundred and twenty and twenty-eight hundredth miles.

The following newspaper items at various dates will tend to throw further light, in detail, on the construction of the various railroads through Wright county:

December 8, 1880—"Crossed the Line"—Today the Toledo & Northwestern track layers crossed the county line and are shoving along briskly for Eagle Grove Junction, which point they will most likely reach in about two weeks' time and there go into winter quarters. Well, Wright county has two railroads at last—the real genuine 'wax works,' no imaginary paper roads—let all the people 'rejoice and be exceedingly glad,' for the day is near at hand when they will be out of the wilderness." This referred to what is now the Chicago & Northwestern line, through Woolstock, Eagle Grove and Goldfield.

Then, on December 15, 1880, the *Monitor* referred to the coming of the Burlington, Cedar Rapids & Northern railroad (now the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific), in words as follows: "It is expected that track-laying will be completed to Clarion Thursday night, but, at the suggestion of Captain Dows, the jollification has been put off until Friday—dinner to be served at noon sharp. While speaking of the subject of eating, allow us to again suggest the propriety of farmers living near town bringing in supplies in way of turkeys, chickens, bread, etc. There will undoubtedly be a good turn-out and it is important that the provender be abundant. The affair comes off at the court house. Officers of the railroad company and many



others are expected." The jollification came off as expected, over five hundred persons participating, and all voted it the best dinner ever gotten up in Wright county.

In the fall of 1880 an item appeared in a local paper, with its correspondence from Woolstock, which said: "The Toledo & Northwestern track-layers reached Woolstock depot Saturday afternoon, and the smoke, as it issued from the mouth of the majestic 'fire-hero,' may be seen for miles around and the clang of hammers and buzzing of busy workmen show each and all to be men of business qualities."



## CHAPTER XI.

### MILITARY HISTORY OF THE COUNTY.

The only opportunities that the loyal citizens and patriots of Wright county have ever had to show their honor and bravery were in the early Indian troubles with the savage Sioux warriors, the Civil War, and the recent Spanish-American War.

When the first band of settlers came here, there were still roaming skulking bands of Indians, along the Iowa and Boone rivers. They were not permanent dwellers, for this county was partly within the neutral strip which was supposed to keep the Sioux, on the north, and the Sacs and Foxes, Pottawattamies and Omahas, on the south, from coming together in war. However, no trouble ever arose, save the scare brought about by the awful Spirit Lake massacre of April, 1857. While not a part of the history of Wright county, yet inasmuch as the massacre named frightened many settlers from this county, it may be well in this connection to mention the cause which lead up to that blood crime committed by the Sioux Indians.

The following account was written by one of Wright county's first settlers, Maj. Minter Brassfield, who was then a resident of the county. He says:

"Very few knew the cause of this terrible affair. I was acquainted with the Lott family and with the Indians he had killed. Henry Lott lived near the forks of the Boone and Des Moines rivers. He had traded with the Indians and had been in the habit of getting them drunk and then cheating them. To get even with him a band of them went to his place, probably to kill him. He saw them coming and he and one of his boys ran to a high bluff where they could see the Indians and what they were doing. They threatened to kill his wife if she did not tell them where Lott was. The boy tried to go to Boonesboro, but froze to death on the way. Lott watched the Indians till they went away and then returned to his house. His wife never recovered from the abuse and fright, but died shortly afterward.

"Lott married again and in a few years moved to Lott's creek, near present Livermore. One or two years after he had located at Lott's creek,



I was hunting about ten miles north of his place. A company of Indians came to my hunting tent and asked for whisky. I told them that they could probably get some from Lott. They went on and camped within forty or fifty rods of Lott's place. They remained there a few days, when Lott got them drunk. He then asked their leader to go with him to shoot a fine elk which he claimed he had seen. After driving some distance from the camp, he killed the old Indian with an ax. He then returned to the camp and compelled his eldest son, then living, to help him kill nine other Indians, including two squaws and one papoose. An Indian boy named Josh, about fourteen years old, and a little girl, about seven, escaped. Lott then hid all of the property of the Indians and broke for the settlements.

"The young Indian, Josh, went to another camp, about seven miles distant, and reported. The Indians went to Fort Dodge and told the soldiers what had occurred. A party of whites made an investigation and found the little squaw still alive, but very weak from hunger and exposure. The Indians then demanded Lott, and promised that if the whites would turn him over to them that no further trouble would follow; but, in the meantime, Lott had escaped to California and the Indians were obliged to go away without having their revenge. This occurred in 1854, and three years later Josh was one of the leaders of the murderous redskins at Spirit Lake. Lott was killed in California by a company of miners whom he attempted to frighten away from their claims. He disguised as an Indian and led a band of squaws in attacking the mining camp, thinking that the miners would flee and that he could obtain their gold, but they promptly returned the fire of his band, killing him and a few of his followers."

To inform the reader of the excitement the Spirit Lake massacre caused in Wright and Hamilton counties, we quote from a sketch written by the late pioneer and reliable gentleman, H. W. Montgomery, who arrived in this county in June, 1854, and went through the "Indian scare," hence he is the best of authority:

"On the night of April 7, 1857, ten or more wagons crossed the Boone just below Judge Hewett's farm. The frightened passengers in these wagons reported that the Indians were coming down the Des Moines, killing and scalping. They said they could hear them yelling and shooting. The news spread like wild-fire. I was in Boone township, laying the foundation for a pre-emption at that time. I got the word about noon, came home and, with my family, started for Webster City. At Goldfield I found about twenty men who had changed the school house (first in the county) into a



fort. I left my rifle with them and drove on toward Webster City with the women.

"As I was driving in the oak openings, one mile north from Downing's ford, on Eagle creek, I saw three mounted men with blankets drawn over their heads like Indians. They cantered toward us in single file and, as I had left my gun at Goldfield and my team was so jaded that I could not escape by flight, we thought we were all 'goners' sure.

"I could feel my hair lifting my old slouch hat, but none of us said one word. On came the wicked-looking riders until they were within a few feet of my wagon. They then suddenly halted and threw aside their blankets and we recognized three fool-hardy, reckless fellows who had taken this method of frightening others as well as our company. I felt able to whip the whole outfit when I found who they were, and told them what I thought of them and their conduct, in language that was easily understood. The next day they played the same game on James Gray and Sol Geson, who ran their horses twelve miles to Webster City and reported that they had been chased by the Indians. When Gray found that he had been deceived, he threw off his coat and would have given the white Indians the punishment they deserved, if the peace-loving people had not interfered.

"At Webster City, sentinels were kept out day and night. Word went to Boonesboro (now Boone) that Webster City was burned and the settlers killed. A party of men, about a hundred and fifty in number, marched from Boonesboro to Webster City. When the sentinels saw them coming they went into the town and reported the Indians coming. Nearly all of the settlers took refuge in the fort, but some fled to the settlements on Skunk river and a few never did return.

"In a few days the most of the settlers returned to their homes, but for weeks afterward all were heavily armed and our cabins were strengthened and doors securely fastened at night. Each man slept with weapons close at hand. I kept revolver, rifle, knife, ax and hoe near my bed each night for weeks afterward. The neighbors did no night visiting.

"All was excitement and anxiety until we learned that there were no hostile Indians in this part of the country, for at the same time that we were fleeing from the savages who had killed the Spirit Lake settlers, the redskins were fleeing just as rapidly in the opposite direction—from Minnesota to Dakota."

Another Indian scare occurred in the summer of 1863, at the date of



the New Ulm (Minnesota), massacre, but the county was better settled then and order was soon restored by a detachment of cavalry and several infantry companies sent out by the government.

It was during the Spirit Lake difficulty that the people in the neighborhood of Belmond became alarmed and a company was formed, with Doctor Cutler as captain. A hastily constructed sod fort was improvised on the heights overlooking the river from the west, for the protection of the people, as well as stock, in case of a long siege. Pickets were kept posted for a number of days, but finally the scare passed. For many years the "old mud fort" stood in mute evidence of one phase of pioneer life which was not soon forgotten by those who passed through it.

#### THE CIVIL WAR.

Wright county, when the Rebellion broke out, had but one hundred and sixty voters and three aliens, with only one hundred and fifty men subject to military duty within her borders. Yet, be it recorded, to the credit of these brave pioneers, that this county furnished fifty-three soldiers for the Union cause, men who at different times enlisted and were properly credited to the county. This was over one-third of the male population between eighteen and forty-five years of age. Besides these there were a number from Wright county who were credited to other places where they enrolled.

Along in the nineties, when an attempt was made by Mr. Elder and others, to preserve the interesting annals of Wright county, Comrade A. R. Ladd, of Clarion, still a resident attorney of that city, prepared a list of all men who served from Wright county in the Civil War, so far as he could find from military records, etc. The list is as follows:

#### THE THIRTY-SECOND REGIMENT, IOWA INFANTRY.

Linus Betts, September 6, 1862, Belmond; L. H. Cutler, October 6, 1862, Belmond; Cephas Church, September 6, 1862, Belmond; William O. Dean, September 6, 1862, Liberty; James B. Dixon, September 6, 1862, Eagle Grove; James Duffy, September 6, 1862, Fryeburg; Henry Frank, September 6, 1862, Lami; Charles H. Griffith, December 19, 1863, Eagle Grove; Mortimer Hians, September 8, 1862, Fryeburg; Oliver M. Hess, September 8, 1862, Lami; Joseph A. Kent, September 8, 1862, Fryeburg; James P. Kent, December 21, 1863, Eagle Grove; Robert T. Mack, September 6, 1862, Eagle Grove; Simeon Overacker, September 8, 1862, Belmond;



Cassius M. Overacker, September 8, 1862, Belmond; L. A. Packard, September 8, 1862, Luni; Charles Packard, September 8, 1862, Luni; Artemus C. Packard, September 8, 1862, Luni; C. H. Packard, September 8, 1862, Luni; Robert T. Rowen, September 8, 1862, Fryeburg; Adam Wasem, September 8, 1862, Eagle Grove; William Whited, January 11, 1864, Belmond.

#### SECOND REGIMENT, IOWA CAVALRY.

In this list the townships from which the men enlisted are not given in many instances, the address being simply given as Wright county: Talman Brasfield, September 9, 1861; William Beaver, December 7, 1863, Liberty; Charles C. Cutler, November, 1862; George L. Cutler, January 19, 1865, Belmond; Joseph T. Calder, January 1, 1864, Liberty; Jephtha Doty, January 1, 1864, Liberty; W. H. Dilworth, December 7, 1863, Troy; James K. Dixon, December 7, 1863, Eagle Grove; Jerome B. Gray, September 9, 1861; William W. Gates, September 9, 1861; James Gray, September 9, 1861; Van B. Gray, September 9, 1861; Job Gilpin, September 9, 1861; Nelson L. Hull, September 9, 1861; John Haight, January 19, 1865, Belmond; Daniel Okeson, November 2, 1862; Henry Overacker, September 9, 1861; A. Patterson, Jr., September 9, 1861; George F. Packard, January 24, 1865, Boone; John A. Polmateer, December 16, 1863, Belmond; William Polmateer, December 16, 1863, Belmond; J. S. Pritchard, January 4, 1864, Belmond; George P. Wilt, December 30, 1863, Liberty; Isaac Whited, September 9, 1861, Belmond.

#### NORTHERN BORDER BRIGADE.

The Northern Border Brigade was formed to protect the frontier settlements from threatened invasions by the Indians at the north, the savages having made several outbreaks during the Civil War period, including that at New Ulm, Jackson and Mankato, Minnesota, in the summer of 1862. The men serving from Wright county were as follow: George B. Brasfield, September 26, 1862, Goldfield; William H. Griffin, September 26, 1862, Goldfield; Robert C. Oliver, September 26, 1862, Belmond; John Stryker, September 26, 1862, Bach Grove; Alexander Usher, September 26, 1862, Goldfield; Leonard Sells, September 26, 1862, Bach Grove.

After the close of the war, many soldiers settled in Wright and adjoining counties. In 1890 there were still living one hundred and thirty pensioners, and there had been five Grand Army of the Republic posts organ-



ized in the county, as follows: General Lyon Post No. 133, at Clarion, organized February 25, 1883; Whited Post No. 247, at Belmond, organized December 7, 1883; Hartman Post No. 149, at Goldfield, organized March 19, 1883; William B. Griffith Post No. 465, at Eagle Grove, organized August 26, 1889; A. B. Wallace Post No. 488, at Dows, organized February 21, 1891. Of these posts, all have gone down by reason of death and removals, except those at Eagle Grove, Clarion and Goldfield. An account of these posts will be found in the chapter relating to Lodges and Secret Organizations.

#### WRIGHT COUNTY'S VETERAN ASSOCIATION.

There are few counties, if indeed any, in Iowa where the organization and perpetuation of a Veterans' Association has been carried forward with the signal success that it has in Wright county, where the comrades have for years held their annual reunions. The people generally have turned out well to enjoy the day and night with the old boys who wore the blue from '61 to '65. Campfires were lighted, good speakers were always provided, and both old and young looked forward to the meetings as among the best of the year.



## CHAPTER XII.

### NEWSPAPERS OF THE COUNTY.

The power and convenience of the local newspaper were well known to the band of hardy pioneers who settled in Wright county in the early fifties. Wherever we have free speech, we have newspapers, hence very early in the county's history an attempt was made to establish and maintain a local newspaper. Prior to that time the *Hamilton Freeman*, at Webster City, published by the late Hon. Charles Aldrich, printed the county tax list and was really the newspaper read by most of the settlers up and down the Boone valley, Eagle Creek and White Fox country. But this condition only continued until 1861, when Wright county determined to have a paper of its own. The first paper here was the *Wright County Free Press*, published at Goldfield by C. D. Ingersoll. It thrived largely on the one hundred and ninety-two dollars paid it by the county for publishing its delinquent tax list. But one year was sufficient for the newspaper and it went down for lack of other support. For a number of years Wright county had to depend upon outside counties to publish its legal notices and tax lists. However, in January, 1868, the *Wright County Register* was started at Goldfield. It was edited by Mrs. Mary Reed and was really successful as a news sheet. It was not regular in its publication, and does not seem to have been designated a "county paper" by the board of supervisors. It was discontinued after about one year, when the material with which it had been printed was sold to Will F. Smith, then an employe of the *Hamilton Freeman*, who removed it to the new county seat, "Grant," in March, 1869, and there began the publication of the *Wright County Monitor*, the oldest of all continuous publications in Wright county today.

Of the general history of the *Monitor*, it may be said that Will F. Smith conducted it from its establishment, March 31, 1869, on material owned by John D. Hunter, then owner of the *Webster City Freeman*, who, in the winter of 1869-70, sold it to A. M. White. The latter was editor and proprietor until September 30, 1873, when it was bought by Gates & Hathaway. Frank Gates sold his interest to Hathaway, his partner, in October, 1875, and he in turn sold it to J. C. Harwood, on February 1, 1879.



Mr. Harwood ably conducted the paper alone until January 1, 1892, when he took his son, Burt, into the firm, which was styled Harwood & Son. Upon the death of the father, the son became sole owner of the business, and still conducts it. In form and size, the *Monitor* is a six-column, eight-page newspaper. It is run on a power press, and folded by a power folding machine, electricity being the motive power. The office is a neat, one-story and basement brick building, erected a few years since, and which stands next to the new postoffice building. It is heated by hot water and is electric lighted throughout. Two job presses do the large amount of job work turned out from the *Monitor* office.

*The Wright County Republican* was established by B. Frank Knapp, in February, 1882, at Clarion. It was a five-column quarto, and within a few months was disposed of to C. M. White, who continued its publication until June, 1884, when it ceased to exist. Knapp went from Clarion to Eagle Grove and began the publishing of the *Eagle Grove Clipper*, the first number appearing in the spring of 1883. It was a lively sheet while it had breath, but it survived less than a year, when the material was removed to Ireton, Iowa.

*The Belmont Mirror* was founded in January, 1873, by G. G. Pritchard and A. M. Allen. This was Belmont's first newspaper. Pritchard soon sold his interest in the business to J. B. Stuart, who sold back to Pritchard again. The next year after starting the paper, Allen took the job press and a part of the type and left, when Pritchard sold the concern to E. A. Howland, then state senator from this district. Howland leased it to A. J. McDonald, who soon became an associate with Kirk Whited, who was assistant editor. Not long afterward Whited purchased the office of Howland and assumed entire control. Only a few months passed before Whited sold back to Howland, who sold to Rev. J. E. Rowen. The latter managed it for a time, then sold to that well-known and most excellent local paragrapher, Frank Gates. Up to this date the paper had always been styled the *Mirror*, but Mr. Gates changed it to its present name, the *Belmont Herald*. He made many improvements in the makeup and style of the paper and enlarged it from a five to a six-column paper. Gates was at the helm for eight years, when, on September 18, 1884, he sold to S. A. Keeler. The paper has always been Republican in its politics. It remained in the hands of Mr. Keeler until 1897, when he sold to E. A. Pierce and he to the present proprietors, the Belmont Printing Company, after which the *Iowa Valley Press* was consolidated with it, since which time it has been known as the *Herald-Press*.



Ramsay brothers really conduct the paper and have the sole management, making it one of Iowa's best local journals.

The *Iowa Valley Press* was established in 1895 by J. D. Baker, a farmer and prominent man of the locality. Two years later it was sold to S. A. Keller, then county auditor. He ran it a year and then sold to Baker, and he in turn to W. R. and W. C. Ramsay, in 1900. They ran it till June, 1914, when it was sold to the Belmont Printing Company, as above mentioned.

Another paper here was the *Democrat*, which was started in 1884, but was short lived.

The *Belmont Times* was another paper that finally merged with the *Herald*.

The *Eagle Grove Times* was the first newspaper established at that city. It was founded by J. C. Prehm, editor, and A. A. Prehm, publisher, on July 7, 1881—the same year that the railroad was completed through the town to the north and west. The first sixteen numbers of the *Times* were printed at Toledo, Tama county, Iowa, and number 17, of November 17, 1881, was the first paper printed at Eagle Grove. In September, 1883, J. C. Prehm died, and immediately the paper was sold to Reid & Best, of Des Moines. In March, 1884, Mr. Reid and wife died, after which Best became discouraged and sold to L. H. Fisk, of Manchester, Iowa, who did not meet his payments, and the paper plant was sold at auction to Mrs. J. C. Prehm. Her daughter, Miss Kate Prehm, only seventeen years of age, became its editress. The issue of June 18, 1885, contains the valedictory of Miss Prehm, also the salutatory of the Packard boys—A. M. and W. D. Packard. The last named firm sold the property to Frank A. Gates, formerly of the *Belmont Herald*, in January, 1887. Mr. Gates made it an eight-column paper and ran a most interesting, up-to-date paper. He continued to conduct it until July, 1893, when he sold to David Hoyt, who, in company with his son-in-law, Mr. Schoff, continued the publication until it became the property of Hinman & Taylor, some time between 1893 and 1896. In April, 1896, Hinman & Taylor sold to P. C. Hayes & Son, and the paper was conducted by Ralph and Milo Hayes until July, 1902, when it became the property of Pearson & Springer. In 1903 Mr. Pearson retired from the firm and the paper was run by Springer & Mattingly, and later by Mr. Springer. In September, 1898, the *Times* being under the ownership of P. C. Hayes & Son and the *Boone Valley Gazette* being under the own-



ership of Frank A. Gates, the two papers were consolidated, Mr. Gates retiring. In July, 1902, P. C. Hayes & Son sold the *Times-Gazette* to Pearson & Springer. In 1903 Mr. Pearson retired and the paper was published by Springer & Mattingly, and, later, by Mr. Springer. In February, 1909, the paper was published by H. C. Hallock, and the present owners are H. C. Hallock & Son.

The evening *Times* was established in 1895 and was discontinued in 1906. It had been published in connection with the *Times-Gazette*.

The *Eagle Grove Telephone*, established in 1881 by Mr. Crouch, was purchased in April, 1882, by C. A. Schaffter, and the name was changed to that of the *Gazette*, the paper being enlarged. It was owned by Schaffter & Son (Eugene) until 1894, when it was sold to Frank A. Gates, who continued its publication until it was consolidated with the *Times*.

It will be discovered that the first daily paper in Wright county was the *Eagle Grove Times*. Number 1, volume 1, was issued on Monday, July 1, 1895. Under the present ownership the *Times-Gazette* was changed to an all-home print. The office is equipped with all modern machinery, including a linograph, which was the first standard slug-casting machine installed in any Wright county office. Messrs. Hallock & Son contemplate the building of a fire-proof building in the near future.

The *Eagle Grove Eagle* was established, March 1, 1895, by L. J. Butterfield, and sold to A. H. Barnes on April 24, 1896. On January 1, 1900, a half interest was sold to H. B. Hallock, and on January 26, 1909, Hallock sold his interest to W. H. Barnes, since which time it has been conducted by A. H. Barnes & Son. It is a six-column, ten-page paper, and is Republican in its political faith. Its presses, all of up-to-date type, are operated by electric motors. The building is on Broadway and is the property of Barnes & Son. Since 1904 it has been one of Wright county's official papers. A complete file of every issue is sacredly preserved. Messrs. Barnes & Son are "live wire" newspaper men, who understand the details of an up-to-date newspaper office and keep apace with all movements for the advancement of the town and county. The *Eagle* works for the upbuilding of Wright county, as well as of Eagle Grove city, and for this it is highly commended by a large patronage. Job work is also one of the specialties of the *Eagle* office, and is effected in good style and with dispatch.

The *Clipper* was another Eagle Grove paper, established in April, 1883, by Hewett & Knapp, and was sold to the *Times* in January, 1884.

Woolstock has had two newspapers, the *Review* and the *Herald*. The



former was sold to the *Eagle Grove Times* six months after it was established, and the latter, started by W. H. Gifford in 1884, ceased publication.

The *Boone Valley Gazette*, of Eagle Grove, was established in January, 1882, by C. A. Schaffter. It was changed from a five-column folio in 1884 to an eight-column paper, and in 1891, on account of increased patronage, was changed to a six-column journal of the quarto form. That year a cylinder press and steam power were added to the equipment of the office. From its establishment, the office was noted for the excellent and highly artistic quality of its job work. The senior Schaffter continued alone in the management of the paper until January 1, 1886, when his son, Eugene, was admitted to the business under the firm style of Schaffter & Son. The senior Schaffter died, and since then the paper has been in other hands. Eugene Schaffter, Jr., the son of the founder, is now a practicing attorney in Eagle Grove, and an able scholar and writer on various topics. The *Times and Gazette* were consolidated under Frank A. Gates.

The *Goldfield Chronicle* was founded by Hugh R. Smith, younger brother of Will F. Smith, founder of the *Wright County Monitor*. It was established at Goldfield in September, 1890, and was conducted by him until July 1, 1892, then bought by L. J. Butterfield, who conducted an independent local newspaper. The subscription price was one dollar and fifty cents per annum. Other early owners of this paper were Messrs. Agard, Mitchell and Lyons. Mr. Agard was first to put in a power press, discarding the last hand-press of the "Washington" type used in Wright county. Along in the nineties this paper was run by Miss Keith, in a very acceptable manner. Politically, it is a Republican journal. It is run by electric power, and is located over the Citizens State Bank.

The *Dows Tribune* was established by I. C. Phifer, February 3, 1881, soon after the railroad reached the town and business started to develop in that portion of the county. It was a six-column quarto and was edited by C. C. Phifer. The first issue contained a graphic "write-up" of Dows and vicinity. It was a good paper, but, financially, it was a failure and went down in one year. Then Dows was paperless for another year, when the *Dispatch* was established by W. H. Millholland, its first issue being dated November 21, 1884. A year later the founder sold to E. E. Fisher and W. E. Fish, and two months later Fisher bought his partner out and continued the publication of the paper until February, 1890, when it was sold to F. M. Linehan. The last named gentleman added new type, improved the job department and built himself a new office in the spring of 1891. It did not run long after that, and was succeeded by the *Advocate*.



The *Dows Advocate* was established by H. J. Hayden in May, 1893. In 1894 he had a partner, the firm being known as Haydon & Wellumeyer. It was conducted by Fell & Rodgers from September, 1894, to June, 1895, when W. A. Monroe took it. The next change was that by which C. A. Zimmerman (estate) obtained the property in October, 1904, and it was leased to the Dows Printing Company in November, 1913. It is still published under this title. When established, the *Advocate* was a six-column, four-page paper, but its present size is a six-column, eight to sixteen-page paper, all home print. It circulates in Wright and Franklin counties, chiefly. Politically, it is a Republican organ. It is a live local journal, aiding to build up Dows and community. Its editor is now F. D. Fillmore.

The *Dows Register* was established in the month of August, 1891, by Andrews & Nevin, the latter having personal charge and management of the paper. It was a five-column paper of the quarto form, published at Dows every Wednesday. The subscription price was one dollar—the first dollar publication in Wright county. In time it went the way of all things earthly.

The *Wright County Democrat* was founded by Walter Elder, in December, 1884. It started as a five-column quarto sheet and remained that size for four years, when a stock company was organized, as the Wright County Printing Company, additional material, including new presses, etc., was secured, and the paper was enlarged to a six-column quarto sheet. It was published every Wednesday. It was one of the official organs of the county, and the only Democratic newspaper within Wright county.

The *Wright County Teacher* was a monthly publication devoted to educational matters. It was established in August, 1887, by J. R. McCollum, who continued its publication until the summer of 1892, when G. T. Eldridge, superintendent of schools, became its editor. During the school years 1890 and 1891 Prof. J. G. Grundy, of Eagle Grove, was associate editor. The subscription rate was fifty cents per year. It had a universal circulation among the teachers of Wright county.

The *Rowan Record* was established in February, 1899, as a six-column folio paper, and continued until about the middle of October, 1907, when it was suspended under the administration of Miss Kirkpatrick.

The *Clarion Republican* was established by C. M. White as an opposition to the *Monitor*, about 1881, and suspended in June, 1884.

The *Clarion Clipper* was formerly the *Wright County Democrat* and was sold last as the *Democrat* to Will A. Monroe, of Dows, who had worked on the *Traylor Clipper*, of Tama county, hence its present name, *Clipper*. Mr. Monroe changed the name from *Democrat* and continued its publication till



his death, after which, for several years it was conducted by his widow, who sold on June 1, 1910, to the present proprietor, H. M. Guy. The *Clipper* is an independent Republican newspaper, replete with much good local news and general information for home and fireside—a clean journal. Mr. Guy has greatly improved the paper, both editorially and mechanically. In March, 1915, he moved his plant to his new two-story brick building on the south side of Main street, near the court house. This structure is provided with office rooms on the second floor, which are leased to professional men, while the basement and first floor are occupied by the printing establishment, which includes a fine Century power printing press and modern jobbers, all run by electric motors. The building is twenty-two by seventy-four feet, ground dimensions.

#### THE STYLE OF EARLY EDITORS.

To show the character of journalism a third of a century and more ago, and the nature of the personal references sometimes indulged in by brother editors, the following, by Frank Gates, of the *Belmond Herald*, concerning "Deacon" Hathaway, of the *Wright County Monitor*, is quoted:

Under the heading of "You Fool," the *Herald* man said: "That poor miserable fool, Deacon Hathaway, makes us out a terrible coward in the last *Monitor*. Deacon, do you remember the time we helped to screen you from an outraged Belmonder, by placing you in a coal house, and putting McKay over you as guard, with a brace of revolvers and knives? Have you forgotten the time you came to Belmond and disguised yourself by appearing in an old lady's attire, for fear some of our people whom you had slandered would mob you, and, on being detected, how you got through the back door of a hotel and hid yourself in Jack Brooks' hen coop, remaining there three days and subsisting on the filth of the fowls? And if it had not been for your corpulent friend from Clarion, you would have been there yet. We are perfectly willing to admit our cowardice, but when we crawl out of anything we try to use all the honor of a coward. We don't tell a lie and then tell another bigger one to crawl out of it. You poor monkey-headed idiot, you are not responsible for what you do say."

#### PUBLISHING UNDER DIFFICULTIES.

Concerning the publication of the first newspapers in Goldfield, it has been related of Ingersoll, of the *Wright County Free Press*, that he, with a



partner, had a hard row to hoe and soon let the paper go down, and he himself enlisted in the Union army. For some reason to us unknown, the Liberty (Goldfield) people had acquired a grudge against the paper and the "knuckles" of the old-fashioned hand-press were spirited away in the darkness of night and never turned up until the whole outfit had been moved to Ft. Dodge. So ended the first attempt to establish and run a newspaper in Wright county.

On March 16, 1881, in the *Monitor*, at Clarion, appeared the following: "During fifteen years of experience publishing a paper in Wright county, last week was the first time we were caught out of supplies to issue our paper and we were compelled to issue a seven-by-nine sheet as a substitute. This week the sheet is the same size, our 'inwards' being in some snow drift between here and Webster City. It's a case in which cussin' won't reach, so we ask our patrons to grin and bear it."

#### THE "OLD LOVEJOY PRESS."

Belmond journalism was for many years noted for having connected with it the old Owen Lovejoy printing press, which was used by that radical abolitionist, at Alton, Illinois, in the days just before the Civil War, when he was a thorn in the side of all slavery advocates. It was the radical position he took editorially that caused his enemies to throw his printing office, including his hand press, into the waters of the Mississippi river at Alton, where it remained some time, but was finally fished out and set to work again. Frank Gates, former owner of the *Belmond Herald*, many years since took the trouble to look up the history and chain of owners of this press, which was then being used weekly by him at Belmond. His account states that after it was recovered from the river at Alton, Illinois, it was taken to Howard county, Iowa, by D. B. Meade, who ran the *Cresco Plain Dealer* on it. He, needing a larger press, sold it to George E. Frost, of Clear Lake, Cerro Gordo county, and he used it to print his *Mirror* on. Later it was sold to the *Clear Lake Observer*, whose owner sold it to the *Belmond Herald* in 1872. Frank Gates, of that paper, sold it to the Libby Prison commission, at Chicago, for one hundred dollars, as an anti-slavery relic. In the old prison at Chicago, which had been removed from Richmond, Virginia, this press was viewed by hundreds of thousands of people.

The reader will doubtless peruse with interest the following advertisement of the family weekly paper so well known to all early settlers in Wright county—the *Webster City Freeman*, formerly the property of Hon.



Charles Aldrich, and then styled the *Hamilton Freeman*. This advertisement appeared on the title page of Stevenson's booklet history of Wright county, in 1870, when the paper had a very large circulation in this county:

"WEBSTER CITY FREEMAN. A thirty-two-column weekly newspaper, published at Webster City, the county seat of Hamilton county, Iowa. Established in 1856, circulates generally throughout northwestern Iowa. Devoted to the dissemination of PURE REPUBLICANISM and to the advancement of the local and material interests of Hamilton and Wright counties and the Northwest generally. It is permanently established, and is one of the MOST DESIRABLE ADVERTISING MEDIUMS in all this region of the country. Terms: \$2.00 per year in advance. J. D. Hunter, editor and proprietor. Webster City, Iowa."



## CHAPTER XIII.

### WRIGHT COUNTY COURTS AND JUDGES.

When Wright county was first organized, it was under the jurisdiction of the courts of the Polk county district, with Judge Cave J. McFarland as presiding judge. However, he never attended a court here, as the county was soon placed in another district, known as the thirteenth judicial district, composed of Franklin, Butler, Grundy, Hamilton, Hardin, Marshall, Story and Wright counties, to which Webster county was added in 1858. McFarland is remembered as the odd judge who had nicknames for many of the attorneys who practiced at his courts. For example, he called James W. Wood, "Old Timber," and Lieutenant-Governor Eastman, "Old Spot," because of his smallpox-marked face. On one occasion, while "Old Timber" was addressing the court, an ass walked up near one of the windows and set up a terrible bray. The judge turned around quickly to Mr. Wood and cried out, "Sit down, Old Timber, sit down; one at a time, if you please." He was born in Knox county, Ohio, and came to Lee county, Iowa, in 1844. For many years his home was at Boone, Iowa, where he died in April, 1860.

While holding court at Homer (then in Webster county, but now in Hamilton county), it was customary for the attorneys and Judge McFarland to take frequent recesses, during which they all repaired to a shady nook, beneath a large tree, and there quenched their thirst by drinking whisky from a bright tin cup, which was filled from a tin pail provided by the court for that purpose. On one occasion, the eccentric judge had taken a little too freely and, as he started toward the log court room, someone, thinking he might adjourn court, reminded him that it was thundering and looked like a bad storm. The Judge replied, "God rules in the heavens, but Judge McFarland rules in the courts of earth—proceed with the testimony."

The first term of district court held at Liberty, in Wright county, was in May, 1858, with Judge A. D. Thompson presiding. But little business was transacted at that term. It is related that the judge was taken from the Iowa river to Liberty by means of an ox-wagon conveyance.



Judge Thompson was born near Fredonia, New York. He taught school when a young man and, during his leisure hours, read law and was admitted to the bar. He had to make his own way through life and was not possessed of a strong constitution. In May, 1854, he came to Iowa and, after stopping a while at Marietta, Marshall county, he walked up to Eldora and hung out his law shingle and commenced the practice of law. He was immediately elected prosecuting attorney, and in 1855 was elected county judge. In 1857 he was the independent candidate for district judge and was elected, though he was a Democrat and the district was largely Republican. He sought a second term, but the excitement over the famous Dred Scott slavery case defeated him for a second term. He was defeated by Hon. John Porter, of Eldora, a Republican. Judge Thompson then formed a partnership with Hon. H. L. Huff, at Eldora. In 1861, he entered the army, where he made an enviable record. After the war he supported Horace Greeley for President, being one of the Iowa delegates to the national convention and also on the committee from this state to notify Mr. Greeley of his nomination. In 1874 he closed his law office at Eldora and removed to San Francisco.

By the constitution of 1857, Franklin, Wright and other counties, were constituted the eleventh judicial district. Hon. John Porter, who succeeded Judge Thompson, was born in Pennsylvania in 1828. His youth was spent in milling and farming, while during the winters he attended school. He chose law and was admitted to the bar, locating in Indiana. In 1856 he moved to Mason City, Iowa, from which place he was elected judge in 1858, resigning from the bench in 1865. He then formed a partnership with Hon. W. J. Moir, of Eldora, which continued until about 1880. He then entered railroad building and constructed what is known as the "Slippery Elm" railroad, between Eldora Junction and Alden. He contemplated building it through to Forest City, by the way of Dows, Rowan and Belmond, and procured practically all the right of way, but the road was only completed as far as Alden and is now owned by the Chicago & Northwestern Railroad Company. About ten years ago Judge Porter, with his son, engaged in the construction of a large irrigation project in Idaho for the government. He died in 1913 and was buried at Eldora, Iowa. He was an able lawyer and a strong factor in the upbuilding of this section of Iowa.

The next judge in this district was Hon. Daniel D. Chase, of Webster City, a native of New York state. He was the father of our present state



senator, D. C. Chase, of Hamilton county. He was reared on his father's farm and remained there till seventeen years of age, then shifted for himself. He obtained an academic education and taught several years, while completing his law studies, he having determined to become a lawyer. He was admitted to the bar in January, 1856, and in August, 1858, settled in Webster City, Iowa. He came without capital, but, after a hard struggle, he finally worked up a large law business and was made prosecuting attorney. Upon the resignation of Judge Porter, he was appointed by Governor Stone to finish Porter's term, and was twice elected to the office of district judge for this district. He was a man of many virtues; was pure in character; an honest, safe counselor and made hosts of friends, both in and out of his profession. He was delegate-at-large to the convention that nominated Lincoln for President for a second term. He resumed his practice, took his only child, D. C. Chase, in as a partner and practiced until his death, in the nineties. His was a noble manhood, full of activities and good deeds. He drove over the bleak prairies of Wright county many times to attend court at Clarion, before the days of railroads here. He was quite a favorite among the members of the bar of this district; was witty, wise and ever just in his decisions in court.

In the autumn of 1874, Hon. Isaac J. Mitchell, of Boone, was elected to succeed Judge Chase, in the eleventh judicial district. He was a native of Ohio, born in 1827. He taught school in Indiana three years. While preparing to teach he worked on a farm at two dollars a week, and in this way purchased text-books. He read law, attended what was then Asbury University, but his health failed and he left for Iowa, locating in Boonsboro, Boone county, in 1855. He finished reading law in 1858, and was admitted to the bar, opened his law office and became a first-class attorney. He was a member of the state Senate and held numerous other offices. Though never a strong man physically, he had a bright mind, was pure, and true to his every conviction and ruled on the bench with great impartiality and justice, fearing nor favoring none. He has long since been numbered among the dead. Peace to his ashes.

Following Judge Mitchell, came Hon. J. W. McKenzie, of Hampton, who was elected over H. E. J. Boardman, of Marshalltown, in the fall of 1878. He was compelled to resign on account of his health, which had been seriously impaired by the hardships and wounds received while in the Union army during the Civil War, in which conflict he bore a conspicuous part, especially in the attack on Allatoona, Georgia. He was the soldier and



color-bearer who held the flag on high in the signal corps department when Sherman signaled to him, "Hold the fort, for I am coming. Where is Corse?" The message was given to Corse, who replied: "Tell Sherman I am here and we can hold the fort." From this incident came the well-known gospel song, "Hold the Fort."

It should be added, that McKenzie, who had charge of a squad of men, asked for a volunteer to take the flag up the heights for signaling purpose; but one man replied, "I will not volunteer, but if commanded to, I will go," whereupon McKenzie seized the flag and hurried to the heights among heavy shot and shell, thus endangering his life. The words of a writer from his home town (Hampton) after his death, stated, "Other citizens of Hampton may become more distinguished than he and achieve greater notoriety and even popularity, as the world goes, but no one will ever hold a stronger place in the hearts of our people and of all who know him than J. W. McKenzie." He died, after, as he remarked, "Only waiting for the end to come," in 1882.

Upon the death of Judge McKenzie, Hon. H. C. Henderson, of Marshalltown, was appointed by the governor to fill out the unexpired term, and was that fall elected as judge, serving as a splendid justice for a period of years, and then resumed his law practice at Marshalltown, from which city he removed to Boulder, Colorado, where he engaged in law practice. The Judge was a good scholar, a man of deep convictions, a radical Republican of the prohibition type, who never let any stone go unturned to punish the violators of the liquor laws. He also succeeded well as a platform orator and lecturer on religious and other topics. At one time, in his youth, he held a clerkship in Washington, D. C., where he gathered many good stories and jokes on public men. He could interest a crowd of lawyers by the hour in reciting these funny incidents, including some on the famous Webster, who was then in Congress. By birth, the Judge was a Virginian, but was reared in Kentucky.

At that time more judges were supplied the district, and D. D. Miracle, of Webster City, who had served as circuit judge until the abolishment of that office, in 1887, was elected as district court judge for this district, serving till called by death, in July, 1888. Judge Miracle was truly one of God's noblemen. He was born in Canada in 1840. In his youth, the family removed to Oshkosh, Wisconsin, where he taught school in Lawrence University. He entered the law department of the Michigan University, and finished his law studies in Oshkosh, being admitted to the practice in 1864.



The following May he located in Webster City, Iowa. He became associated with R. N. Woodworth in real estate, carrying on both branches successfully. On August 1, 1870, he took as his law partner Hon. J. L. Kamrar and this association continued till his election to the circuit bench in 1880. He was circuit judge, then district judge, and in both positions he proved to be the right man in the right place. He was in the true sense a self-made man, having, by his own energy and untiring industry, forged his way to the front rank among the barristers and judges of the Iowa courts. He was a friend to the oppressed and never turned his ear from the wants of the unfortunate and needy in his community.

It was the design to give in this chapter personal sketches of only the deceased members of the bench for this county, hence only the list of the remaining judges who have served in this judicial district will follow those already noted above.

Following Judge Miracle, came Hon. John L. Stevens, of Ames, who had been a successful prosecutor in this district for a number of years.

Hon. S. W. Weaver, of Iowa Falls, was elected in 1886 and served twelve years, when he was elevated to the supreme bench of Iowa. He is a native of New York state, born in 1845, was admitted to the bar in Buffalo, New York, in 1868, and came direct to Iowa, locating at Iowa Falls. Hon. D. R. Hindman, of Boone, was elected in 1888 and served until 1898. Hon. Norman B. Hyatt, of Webster City, was appointed by Governor Boies, to fill the unexpired term of one of the judges, serving in 1893. Hon. B. P. Birdsall, of Clarion, who was elected judge in 1893, and who served seven years, resigned in 1901 on account of ill health. In 1902, he was elected to a seat in Congress, serving three terms, when he declined to be re-nominated. Hon. J. R. Whitaker, of Boone, was elected in 1899, serving eight years. Hon. W. S. Kenyon (now United States Senator) was elected in 1899, served two years and then resigned. Hon. J. H. Richard, of Webster City, was elected in 1901, and served four years. Hon. C. G. Lee, of Ames, was elected in 1907, and served until 1914, when he resigned to become nominee for governor of Iowa, but was defeated. Hon. C. E. Albrook, of Eldora, was elected in 1908. Hon. W. D. Evans, of Hampton, was elected in 1903, and served six years. Hon. Robert M. Wright, of Ft. Dodge, was elected in 1906, and is serving at the present time (1915).



## THE CIRCUIT JUDGES.

Samuel L. Rose, of Hamilton county, was elected in the fall of 1868 as the first circuit judge. He was a native of New York state, born in 1818. In early life he taught school, having for one of his pupils the noted writer and traveler, Bayard Taylor. He then studied medicine, but left that for law and was admitted to the bar in 1841. He practiced in his native state till 1850, then moved to Beaver Dam, Wisconsin, where he soon rose to a position of eminence, giving a part of his time to railroad enterprises. He was at one time president of the Milwaukee & Western Railroad Company. In 1862 he located at Ft. Dodge, Iowa, later selecting as his home a beautiful tract of land in Rose Grove township, in eastern Hamilton county. He had served as judge in Wisconsin, hence was known to all pioneers in this district as "Judge" Rose, long before he was elected as circuit judge of this district. He was a member of the Wisconsin Legislature, serving two terms in each house. He aided in founding Wayland University, Wisconsin, and was its president for a number of years. He served as circuit judge in this district (Wright county included) for four years and was succeeded by Hon. J. H. Bradley, of Marshalltown, who had been district attorney.

Judge J. H. Bradley was elected to the circuit bench of this district in the fall of 1872, entering upon his duties in January, 1873. He was re-elected in 1876, his second term ending in January, 1881. He made an able and impartial judicial officer and was generally esteemed by both the bar and the people. For several years previous he had been prosecuting attorney for the district, and his qualifications were therefore well-known to all. After a few years he removed to Chicago, where he was engaged in his profession.

The only other judge on the circuit bench for Wright county was D. D. Miracle, of Webster City, who was elected to succeed Judge Bradley in the fall of 1880. A sketch of Judge Miracle will be found in the account of the district judges. He was a resident of Webster City, and a brother-in-law of Judge D. D. Chase. He was the third and last circuit judge.

## COUNTY COURT.

In 1851, by an act of the General Assembly, county courts were established and the office of county judge created. By the same act the office of



probate judge was abolished, as were also the offices of county commissioners, the duties of the commissioners and probate judges devolving upon the county judge. Wright county, not being organized until 1855, never had a probate judge nor any county commissioners. The first county judge was David Dean, of Liberty, who started the first county machinery going, and served two years, being succeeded by Judge Joseph T. Calder, who served four years and five months. Then followed S. B. Hewett. Harry Luic was elected in 1863 and served four years and was followed by Judge John L. Morse, who was the last of the county judges in this county.

#### AN INTERESTING CASE.

Among the interesting criminal cases tried in Wright county, and one in which none of the parties interested or accused resided in the county, was case No. 154 of the criminal docket of the December term of district court, in 1888. So much interest was attached to this case that the large newspapers, of Chicago, Des Moines and many other cities, sent a staff of reporters to give the evidence to their readers from day to day, as the trial proceeded. It was tried before Hon. D. H. Hindman, and the county attorney was W. T. R. Humphrey, who was assisted in the prosecution by Attorneys A. R. Ladd and ex-Judge J. C. Cook, while the defense employed Messrs. Nagle & Birdsall, ex-Judge D. D. Chase and U. S. G. Cherry, the latter being a young lawyer from Sioux Falls, South Dakota. The case commenced on December 17, 1888, and lasted until the 25th of that month.

In brief, it may be stated that the case was one in which a woman was charged with poisoning her husband with morphine mixed in beer and given him to drink, and from which effects he died at the boarding place where he was stopping in Clarion, on May 24th the year in which the trial was had. The accused woman was Mrs. Bertha Diggie, wife of a barber of Sioux Falls, but at the time spoken of she was traveling as an actress for the well-known Ford Dramatic Company, playing under the stage name of "Jessie Leland." She had previously been associated with the Andrews Opera Company, and up to that time had been considered a good woman, in every sense of the word. The Ford troupe were playing in Clarion for a week's stand, and the husband of Mrs. Diggie came to the town and was trying to induce the wife to go home, forsake the stage life and care for her six-months-old babe at Sioux Falls. It appears that she had about concluded to do so, or at least told him so.

On the afternoon of May 24, the man and wife were in their room at



the residence of Mrs. S. Overacker, then standing on the corner where now stands the residence of Banker Young. The two had two bottles of beer in their room and, as the evidence showed, Mrs. Diggle had purchased fifty cents' worth of morphine at the Hamilton drug store, in Clarion, and the same had been deposited in the beer which Mr. Diggle drank and which proved fatal to him. In buying the morphine, Mrs. Diggle asked Druggist Hamilton, when he was selling her the drug, if what he gave for fifty cents was sufficient to kill a man if all taken at once, adding that she was subject to headaches and took it for that purpose, but that it would not be necessary for him to divide the amount she was purchasing into eight-grain doses, as she could do that herself. Soon after returning to her room the husband drank the beer and it was not long before she made an errand to a near-by water closet, in which was later on, discovered the package in which she bought the morphine, as was proven by the druggist's label, which was marked "poison" and which he had sold her in good faith. This was sworn to by the druggist. It was not long before the husband was taken violently ill and a Doctor Marietta, a local physician, was called, and soon pronounced it a case of poisoning. About four hours after taking the beer, he died. The wife at once stated that it was a case of suicide and "took on" at a fearful rate. A coroner's inquest was had over the deceased man's remains. Their verdict was that he had come to his death from taking a morphine poison, administered by "some person unknown" to them. The coroner's jury was composed of Messrs. Hiram Simons, J. R. Lockwood and W. W. Gates. For the time being the case was dropped. The sentiment in the community of Clarion was divided, some believing it to have been a case of suicide, while others declared it was murder. The local newspaper editors took different sides, and thus excitement was at a high pitch. County Attorney Humphrey, in the clear line of his official duty, kept collecting evidence and searching for the bottle that had been purchased at Hamilton's drug store, which was discovered as above narrated. The remains of George Diggle had been sent to Sioux Falls for burial, but the contents of the stomach were officially analyzed and it was found that morphine was there in sufficient quantity to have killed the man.

Mrs. Diggle did not accompany her husband's remains to Sioux Falls, but went to Iowa Falls with the Ford troupe, and still pursued her part as an attractive, handsome actress. Later on, she was arrested at Tama City and brought back to Eagle Grove and from that city was taken to Clarion, on a change of venue, and was charged with the crime of murdering her



husband. The grand jury, which was then in session, found an indictment against her. A former grand jury had hurriedly heard the case, and dismissed it without finding a bill against her.

It was in June when she was arrested at Tama City, and the trial came off in December, commencing the 17th and continuing until the 25th of that month. As was developed later, the first grand jury had not found an indictment against her for the reason they did not believe she was guilty and did not wish to put the county to so much expense as a trial would cause. After eight days of trial in the district court, the verdict of the jury was "Not guilty." The jury was composed of the following gentlemen: A. M. Plumley, D. L. Miller, Frank Knuths, R. C. Morse, Fred Boisner, N. W. Owens, Theodore Weigand, Lewis Nelson, J. Lieuwen, C. W. Hill, James Williams and August Brandis.

In preparing for the trial of this noted case, the attorneys for the defense made a test case of the effects to be produced from mixing morphine with beer and drinking it. In so doing, it was related that ex-Judge D. D. Chase, of Webster City, drank of beer so mixed, and the result was that it produced a stupor which caused much alarm, and came near costing him his life.

Thus, in brief, was the case of the State of Iowa *vs.* Bertha Diggle. At the close of the protracted trial, and even to this day, the opinion of the citizens of this county is divided. Her character was traced from a girl of five summers, when a Sunday school scholar in Philadelphia, down to the day of her trial, and nothing would indicate that she was that type of a woman who would commit such a deed. Probably nothing this side of eternity will solve the question as to who killed George Diggle.

This made the fifth murder case (so called) that ever stained the pages of Wright county's court records, and, like all others, save the first—that of Odenheimer in the early sixties—the accused was acquitted.



## CHAPTER XIV.

### THE BAR OF WRIGHT COUNTY.

Under our system of government the good lawyer must always be prominent, for he is one of the forces which move and control society. No profession is brought so intimately in connection with the daily life of the people. Public confidence has generally been reposed in the legal profession. It has always been the defender of popular rights and the support of good government. Our laws are a reflex of the policy and manners of the age in which we live and their proper application to the wants and needs of society rests largely with the legal profession. Contrary to the generally conceived opinion, the average lawyer works hard, lives well and dies poor. His capital is his ability and individuality, neither of which he can bequeath to his successors. His work is in the present. He is a man of today and, unless he has left his impress in other fields of activity, is generally forgotten by the public, even the evidences of his work disappear and, in the end, he is remembered only by his associates at the bar.

The bar of Wright county has numbered among its members some who have acquired eminence in their profession and have been an honor to the county and to the state. For several years after the organization of the county, the principal legal business was attended to by lawyers outside of the county. Eldora, Marshalltown, Webster City and Fort Dodge furnished their quota of trial lawyers. Col. Peter Hepburn and Timothy Brown, of Marshalltown; H. L. Huff, J. D. Thompson and John Porter, of Eldora; James Skimmer, D. D. Chase, N. B. Hyatt, Col. Charles A. Clark, Miracle & Kamrar, of Webster City; J. S. Duncomb, of Fort Dodge, and others, came to Wright county to try the cases. The terms of court were short and, not unfrequently, court adjourned for a day to hunt prairie chickens. As the county increased in population and the towns grew in size and business proportions, more lawyers settled in the county and from the year 1880 the legal business has been done by local attorneys.

So far as accessible, sketches are given of the members of the local bar who have practiced before the courts of the county. The following is



a list of the attorneys who have from time to time practiced in the county: John L. Morse, A. R. Ladd, W. T. R. Humphrey, N. F. Weber, C. F. Peterson, C. M. Nagle, I. E. Nagle, C. J. Nagle, F. C. Hartshorn, H. L. Votaw, H. A. Stowe, D. T. Banman, J. D. Demison, L. N. Archerd, J. A. Rogers, G. R. Hill, M. F. Birdsall, Edward Overbaugh, Z. C. Bradshaw, E. W. Eskridge, John Jamison, W. E. Bullard, E. P. Ripley, J. M. Berry, F. M. Williams, R. H. Whipple, J. C. Fenninger, R. E. Train, R. W. Birdsall, J. W. Hillyard, W. N. Barkey, S. M. Huyek, J. C. Cook, C. O. Bailey, Lyman Moats, J. C. Moats, F. W. Pillsbury, Aaron Yearous, J. G. McCullough, D. C. Filkins, Sylvester Flynn, J. W. Henneberry, Eugene Schaffter, J. W. McGrath, Eugene Bryan, B. P. Birdsall, B. P. Entrikin.

Prominent among the early lawyers of Wright county was John L. Morse, of Belmont. He came from Michigan and located at Belmont in the spring of 1866. He was born in Cortland county, New York, May 13, 1815. At seventeen years of age he moved to Oakland county, Michigan, where he grew to manhood. Prior to coming to Iowa, Judge Morse served as a member of the Michigan State Legislature and as probate judge of Ionia county. In 1868 he was elected county judge of Wright county and served one year and in the capacity of county auditor by virtue of said office. In 1870 he was elected county auditor and held that office until January 1, 1876. He represented the district composed of Hamilton, Wright and Humboldt counties in the sixteenth General Assembly. Judge Morse commenced the practice in this county in 1869, and continued actively engaged in it for sixteen years.

N. F. Weber, of Clarion, was born in Iowa county, Wisconsin, January 15, 1849, of German parentage. When a child he had the misfortune to lose his right arm, but notwithstanding this disability, he struggled hard and bravely and acquired an education. When a boy of fifteen he served as a page in the Wisconsin Legislature. He came to Iowa in 1866 and taught school in Winneshiek and Howard counties. He read law in the office of Judge Cooley, of Decorah, and was admitted to the bar in October, 1871. Mr. Weber came to Wright county in 1871 and was thereafter elected to the office of county superintendent of schools for two years and county auditor for four years. From 1878 to 1880 he was engaged in partnership with C. F. Peterson and from 1880 to 1884 with C. M. Nagle. He also represented the thirty-seventh senatorial district, comprising the counties of Webster, Hamilton and Wright, in the Iowa Senate for the four years commencing January 1, 1886. Mr. Webster was an influential



and active member of the bar, well liked by all his associates and held the confidence of the court and of his clients. He was an important factor in the social and commercial life of Clarion and died mourned by all.

Andrew R. Ladd, the present county attorney of Wright county, is the oldest resident practitioner at the bar of the county. He located at Clarion in 1872 and has been in constant practice ever since said date. Mr. Ladd was born at Shullsburg, Wisconsin, September 8, 1846. He had barely completed his primary education when he responded to the nation's call and enlisted as a private in the Thirtieth Wisconsin Infantry, serving two years. He read law at Shullsburg and was admitted to the bar at Darlington, Wisconsin, in the year 1868. From the time of his location at Clarion Mr. Ladd has been an active and prominent member of the bar of the county and enjoys the confidence of the people, who have twice elected him to the office of county attorney. He has also served as mayor of Clarion and held other places of trust and confidence. Mr. Ladd is a member of the Grand Army of the Republic post at Clarion; a Knight Templar of Mt. Lebanon Commandery, at Clarion; a member of Iowa Consistory, Scottish Rite, at Cedar Rapids, Za-Ga-Zig Temple of the Mystic Shrine, at Des Moines. He is still actively engaged in practice, being the senior member of the firm of Ladd & Rogers, and is loved and respected by all his fellow members of the bar.

William T. R. Humphrey has been a member of the Wright county bar since 1874. He was born in Scott county, Iowa, February 5, 1845. His parents, Robert and Jane (Robinson) Humphrey, were natives, respectively, of Virginia and Ohio and settled in Scott county in 1839. Mr. Humphrey served in the Civil War in Company I, Forty-fourth Regiment, Iowa Infantry. After the war he taught school for a time, read law in the office of Cook & Cook, of Davenport, Iowa, and was admitted to the bar in 1872. He located at Clarion in 1874 and has remained here all the time since, with the exception of two years, when he resided at Des Moines. Mr. Humphrey was the first county attorney of Wright county, serving in that capacity in the years 1887 and 1888. He was also a member of the twentieth General Assembly, serving in the House as representative from the district composed of Wright and Humboldt counties, and has held other offices of a local character. Mr. Humphrey was well versed in the law and an earnest advocate. He was engaged as counsel in many important cases, among which was the Diggle murder case, tried in 1888. For the past few years he has not been actively engaged in the practice. He is a member of the Grand Army of the Republic and a Mason.



Corydon M. Nagle has been a resident member of the Wright county bar since January, 1881. He is a native of the Hawkeye state, having been born in Delaware county, October 8, 1844, and was educated in the public schools and at the Upper Iowa University at Fayette. He was admitted to the bar in the spring of 1868 at Elkader, Iowa, and in the following year located and commenced practice at Alden, Iowa. He rose rapidly in the profession and soon became a prominent member of the bar in Hardin and adjoining counties. He also became a recognized factor in the politics of Hardin county and was called by the people to serve as a member of the board of supervisors for two terms and represented the county in the eighteenth General Assembly of Iowa. In January, 1881, Mr. Nagle moved to Clarion and became associated with N. F. Weber, under the firm name of Nagle & Weber. He at once rose to the leadership of the Wright county bar, a position he has maintained and still retains. The firm of Nagle & Weber was dissolved in December, 1884, and Mr. Nagle associated himself with B. P. Birdsall, under the firm name of Nagle & Birdsall. This partnership continued until Mr. Birdsall's elevation to the district bench, January 1, 1894. Upon the retirement of Mr. Birdsall from the firm, Mr. Nagle formed a co-partnership with his son, Irvin E. Nagle, under the firm name of Nagle & Nagle, which continued until the death of the son, which occurred in March, 1909. Mr. Nagle then associated with him his son, C. J. Nagle, and the firm name continued unchanged. A history of the bar of Wright county without Mr. Nagle would be like the play of "Hamlet," with "Hamlet" left out, for he has been engaged as counsel in practically every case of importance tried in the county in the last thirty-four years. Mr. Nagle did not rise to eminence at the bar from native genius, but by unremitting labor. He was born and reared upon a farm, where were laid those habits of industry, economy and labor which have been characteristic of his life's work. Mr. Nagle has always had the confidence of the courts and secured the lasting respect of his fellow associates at the bar. His ability as a lawyer is attested by the many important cases in which his name appears as counsel in the supreme court of the state. While he made no specialty of the criminal law, the firm of Nagle & Birdsall successfully defended in three murder cases tried in Wright county between 1884 and 1894, namely the case of State vs. A. R. Harris, charged with the murder of one Koken; State vs. Bertha Diggle, charged with murdering her husband by poisoning, and State vs. S. G. Palmer, charged with the murder of William J. Mills. Of the many civil cases in which Mr. Nagle



has been engaged, the most important, perhaps, was the case of Fort vs. Colby, in which he represented the plaintiff. He was successful in the litigation and secured for his client property aggregating nearly a quarter of a million dollars in value. Mr. Nagle has declined all political preferment, but has nevertheless become a potent factor in county, congressional, district and state politics. He is a man of pure character, of rare legal ability and attainment, a gentleman and a scholar, ever faithful to his clients and to himself, and he has made and will leave an impression upon the bar of this county which years will not efface.

Benjamin P. Birdsall was born at Weyauwega, Waupaca county, Wisconsin, October 26, 1858. He moved to Iowa with his parents in the spring of 1871, was educated in the public school at Alden, Hardin county, and attended the State University at Iowa City. He read law with C. M. Nagle, at Alden, and was admitted to the bar at Hampton in March, 1878. He practiced law at Alden until December, 1884, when he moved to Clarion and entered into partnership with Hon. C. M. Nagle, which lasted until Mr. Birdsall went upon the bench, January 1, 1894. The firm of Nagle & Birdsall became prominent and was engaged in much important litigation in central and northern Iowa. Mr. Birdsall was elected one of the judges of the eleventh judicial district of Iowa in the fall of 1893 and entered upon his duties January 1, 1894. The district was then composed of Marshall, Story, Boone, Webster, Hamilton, Hardin, Franklin and Wright counties. He remained on the district bench seven years, resigning in 1901 on account of ill health. He resumed the practice of law at Clarion with his son, M. F. Birdsall, which firm is still engaged in active practice and has a large clientele. When Col. D. B. Henderson declined the nomination for Congress in the third congressional district of Iowa, in August, 1902, Judge Birdsall was selected by the Republicans of the district as their standard bearer and entered the lists against ex-Governor Horace Boies, the Democratic nominee. He defeated Boies by over five thousand majority and became a member of the fifty-eighth Congress; he was unanimously re-nominated to the fifty-ninth and sixtieth Congresses and elected by large majorities. While a member of Congress, Judge Birdsall served as a member of the committee on judiciary, elections, merchant marine and rivers and harbors. He voluntarily retired from public life in 1909 and is now devoting his time, in conjunction with his son, to the practice of his profession.

Frank W. Pillsbury was a native of Maine, born in 1845, and moved



to Livingston county, Illinois, when ten years of age. He read law at Pontiac, Illinois, with his father, Judge N. J. Pillsbury, and was admitted to the bar on October 17, 1869. He located at Union, Hardin county, in 1874; moved to Eldora in 1882, and engaged in partnership with H. L. Huff; located at Eagle Grove in 1886, and became a member of the firm of Pillsbury, Moats & Moats; moved to Sioux Falls and was mayor of that city two terms. He was an able trial lawyer.

Charles F. Peterson, of Clarion, has been a member of the Wright county bar since 1878. He was born in Jefferson county, New York, September 3, 1856, and came to Iowa with his parents, who settled on a farm in Vernon township, Wright county, in the year 1869. He attended the high school at Alden and later the State University at Iowa City. He is a graduate of the law department of that institution, of the class of 1878, which numbered among its members the present governor of Iowa, George W. Clark, and others who have since been prominent in the affairs of state. Mr. Peterson was married shortly after his graduation and came to Clarion, entering into partnership with N. F. Weber in the practice of law. This connection lasted one year, when Mr. Peterson was elected to the office of county superintendent of schools. At the expiration of his term of office, he resumed the practice with A. R. Ladd, under the firm name of Ladd & Peterson, which continued several years. Subsequently he was associated with W. T. R. Humphrey, under the firm name of Peterson & Humphrey, and he is now a member of the firm of Peterson, McGrath & Archerd. Mr. Peterson is a successful lawyer and has always been a prominent and influential member of the Wright county bar. He is known as an able counsellor and skillful advocate and has been engaged in many important cases. He served as county attorney of Wright county two terms and has for several years been the legal adviser of the board of supervisors in all drainage proceedings, on which subject he has become recognized as an authority. Mr. Peterson has also been influential in county and state politics and served with distinction in the thirty-third General Assembly as state senator from the thirty-seventh district, comprising the counties of Hamilton, Hardin and Wright. He held the office of county surveyor of Wright county two terms and has served in other positions of trust.

John W. McGrath, of Eagle Grove, recognized as one of the ablest attorneys in this section of the state, became a member of the Wright county bar in the year 1887. He was born on a farm near Round Grove, Whiteside county, Illinois, November 30, 1861, and was educated in the



common schools and the Valparaiso Normal School, Valparaiso, Indiana. He received his legal education in the law department of the State University of Iowa and was admitted to the bar at Iowa City in June, 1887. He located at Eagle Grove in the same year and has continuously resided there since. Mr. McGrath served as county attorney of Wright county for two terms, commencing January 1, 1894, and ending January 1, 1898. In this capacity he served with fidelity and marked distinction. He has applied himself assiduously to the practice of his profession and declined all other political preferment not in line with it. His splendid legal attainments and integrity of character have won for him the confidence of all the people and the respect and admiration of the courts and the bar. He is a member of the firm of Peterson, McGrath & Archerd and McGrath & Archerd, who conduct their business both at Eagle Grove and Clarion. Mr. McGrath has a large clientele also in Humboldt and Webster counties.

Sylvester Flynn, of Eagle Grove, has been a member of the Wright county bar since January 22, 1896, when he located at Eagle Grove. He was born in Stephenson county, Illinois, September 22, 1869, and, when he was a small boy, his parents removed to Butler county, Iowa. He was educated in the public school, the Iowa State Teachers' College at Cedar Falls, and the State University of Iowa City, graduating from the law department on June 12, 1895. Mr. Flynn was appointed county attorney for Wright county, October 1, 1902, to fill a vacancy created by the resignation of J. C. Fenninger; he was elected to the office in 1902 and re-elected in 1905, serving continuously in the office until January 1, 1907. Conscientious and fearless in the discharge of his duties, he became a terror to all evil-doers. Mr. Flynn enjoys a large practice in Wright and adjoining counties and in the federal and supreme courts, and is one of the strong and influential members of the bar.

James W. Henneberry, of Eagle Grove, was born at Elora, Canada, coming to Iowa with his parents, who located at Webster City, when he was a child. He was educated in the common school and admitted to the bar in 1897. Mr. Henneberry located and commenced his practice at Eagle Grove, March 1, 1890. He held the office of city clerk of Eagle Grove in 1895, and was city attorney for 1905 and 1906. He is a lawyer of excellent ability and a strong and eloquent advocate, has given much attention to the criminal practice and has been engaged in many important cases in the state. He possesses a rare faculty of marshalling the evidence and facts in a case and the power to present them forcibly to the court or jury.



Willard Norton Barkey, of Dows, located in Wright county on September 17, 1914. He was born at Iowa Falls, Iowa, March 17, 1889, educated at Iowa Falls public schools and Drake University at Des Moines, and was admitted to the bar at Des Moines, June 6, 1914.

Eugene Schaffter, of Eagle Grove, was born at Lynchburg, Virginia, September 3, 1864. When a young man, he removed with his parents to Paxton, Illinois. He was educated in the common schools and at the Collegiate Institute at Paxton, Illinois. He has been a resident of Wright county for about thirty years. He was admitted to the bar at Des Moines, October 5, 1887, but did not engage in active practice until later. He has held the office of city attorney of Eagle Grove since 1912, and is now acting in that capacity. Mr. Schaffter is a man of exceptionally fine literary taste and ability, having written several articles of merit. He has traveled extensively in Europe and enjoys a wide acquaintance. Is well known in Masonic circles throughout the state. He enjoys the fullest confidence of his brother members of the bar, of his clients and of the court, and has built up an extensive and lucrative practice.

George Raymond Hill, member of the firm of Berry & Hill, of Clarion and Belmond, was born at Woodburn, Iowa, November 7, 1888. He was educated at Drake University, Des Moines, and was admitted to the bar on June 3, 1910, at Des Moines. On January 1, 1912, he, with J. M. Berry, established a law office at Belmond and later, on March 1, 1914, opened an office at Clarion, to which place Mr. Hill removed. They now conduct their business both at Belmond and Clarion, Mr. Hill having charge at the latter place. Mr. Hill is a man of excellent legal talent and a growing member of the bar of Wright county.

John Milton Berry, a member of the firm of Berry & Hill, became a member of the Wright county bar on January 1, 1912. In connection with G. R. Hill, they established an office at Belmond, where Mr. Berry still resides. He was born in Clark county, South Dakota, educated in the public school, had one year of college education and three years in law school, and was admitted to the bar at Des Moines, Iowa, June 3, 1910. He is one of the prominent and rising young attorneys of the bar.

Corydon J. Nagle, a member of the firm of Nagle & Nagle, was born at Clarion, Iowa, December 7, 1884. He was educated in the high school at Clarion and in the law department of Drake University at Des Moines, being admitted to the bar at Des Moines, Iowa, in 1909. He became associated with his father, Hon. C. M. Nagle, in the year 1909. The firm



of Nagle & Nagle is well known throughout northern Iowa and is constantly engaged in important litigation. Mr. Nagle is a growing member of the Wright county bar and gives promise of being an important factor in its future welfare.

M. F. Birdsall, of the firm of Birdsall & Birdsall, was born at Alden, Iowa, July 10, 1880, and, with his parents, moved to Clarion in 1884. He is a graduate of the Clarion high school and of the law department of the State University at Iowa City, of the class of 1900. He commenced practice at Clarion with his father, B. P. Birdsall, in 1901 and, upon the latter's election to Congress in 1903, took sole charge of the business of the firm. He has been active in politics and is well and favorably known throughout the county. The firm of Birdsall & Birdsall, of which he is a member, has an extensive practice in Wright and adjoining counties. Mr. Birdsall is an active and efficient trial lawyer and enjoys the confidence of the people and courts. He is recognized as one of the coming lawyers of this section of the state. He is at present city attorney of the city of Clarion, which office he has now held for two successive terms.

Leslie N. Archerd is a native of Iowa and was born in Marshall county on August 11, 1884. He was educated at the Eagle Grove high school and Cornell College, Mt. Vernon, Iowa. He was admitted to the bar at Des Moines, Iowa, October 6, 1905, and located at Eagle Grove at once. Mr. Archerd served as city attorney of Eagle Grove for the years 1907 and 1908, and as county attorney for two terms, commencing January 1, 1911, and ending January 1, 1915. After his re-election to the office of county attorney, Mr. Archerd moved to Clarion, where he has since resided. The firm of McGrath & Archerd, consisting of Leslie N. Archerd and J. W. McGrath, was formed several years ago and since Mr. Archerd located at Clarion the membership of the firm has been increased by the addition of C. F. Peterson, the firm now being Peterson, McGrath & Archerd, Mr. McGrath remaining a resident of Eagle Grove and the Clarion business being under the immediate direction of Mr. Archerd. In his capacity as county attorney Mr. Archerd was an active, fearless and successful prosecutor of all public offenders and secured the confidence and approval of the people. He has risen rapidly in the profession and is now recognized as one of the ablest lawyers at the county bar.

James A. Rogers was born at Frankfort, Indiana, October 5, 1852, and removed with his parents to Iowa. He received his education at the Cedar Rapids high school and Cornell College and is a graduate of the



law department of the University of Michigan. He was admitted to the bar of Iowa at Marion, Iowa, June 6, 1876, and located at Clarion, August 1, 1880. Mr. Rogers took a leading position at once among the lawyers of the county, which he has maintained for thirty-five years. He has been associated during his practice with W. T. R. Humphrey and is at present a member of the firm of Ladd & Rogers. He is not only an able lawyer, but has been an influential citizen of his town and county. He served as mayor of the incorporated town of Clarion for several terms and is now serving as mayor of the city. Mr. Rogers also served with distinction for several years as assistant United States district attorney for the northern district of Iowa.

Lyman Moats, clerk of the district court of Wright county, who also has held several minor offices in this county, was born at Highland, Clayton county, Iowa, on August 22, 1857. He received his elementary education in the high school at West Union, Iowa, after which he attended Western College, near Cedar Rapids, and the law school at Iowa City. He was admitted to the bar in the latter city on June 20, 1883, and on September 18, of that same year, located at Eagle Grove, engaging in general practice and office work.

James C. Moats, well-known attorney of Eagle Grove, was born in Jackson county, this state, and was educated at Western College and at Iowa City. He was admitted to the bar in Iowa City in 1880 and in 1881 located at Eagle Grove, this county, where he since has been engaged in the general practice of his profession. He was engaged in the celebrated Delaney case and in several local cases of an equally important character. He has held no public offices.



## CHAPTER XV.

### CHURCHES AND RELIGIOUS SOCIETIES.

Iowa state official reports, published in 1905, disclose the fact that in the commonwealth at that time there were 3,821 congregations organized for worship, 3,610 in churches, 60 in halls and 151 in other places. At the same time there was almost \$21,000,000 invested in churches, and 1,066 parsonages were valued at \$4,000,000.

Wright county had at that date 29 congregations and 28 church buildings, the churches being valued at \$122,300 and 18 parsonages at \$32,800, a total of \$155,100.

The last church census taken by the state of Iowa was in 1905 and it showed the following for Wright county: Baptist churches (regular) 3 congregations, value of property, \$9,800; Catholic, 4 congregations, value of property, \$34,000; Christian, 4 congregations, value of property, \$14,500; Congregational, 5 congregations, value of property, \$28,200; Lutheran, 4 congregations, value of property, \$6,900; Methodist Episcopal, 7 congregations, value of property, \$52,700; United Presbyterian, 2 congregations, value of property, \$0,000; a total in the county of 29 church societies, owning property to the value of \$155,100.

### METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCHES.

The first Methodist Episcopal church in Wright county was that organized at Goldfield in June, 1856, by Rev. David Day, with the following charter members: Emery Barnes and wife, Roswell Parker and wife and Ezekiel Cheaver and wife. They met in a log school house near where the church building now stands. School houses and other rooms served as meeting places for the congregation until 1889, in which year a neat church was erected at a cost of two thousand dollars, the same being dedicated on January 26, 1890. Ten years later the building was remodeled and enlarged to its present dimensions and an addition made thereto at a cost of one thousand five hundred dollars, the re-dedication taking place on November 19, 1899. Plans were being made in 1914 to erect a fifteen thousand dollar church edifice, but were temporarily abandoned.



The following have served as pastors of the Methodist church at Goldfield: David Day, William Hestwood, Seymour Snyder, B. B. Lane, James Williams, I. Mershon, J. W. Lothian, A. S. R. Groom, F. Franklin, C. W. Clifton, H. H. York, L. B. Keeling, A. S. A. Groom (second time), J. E. Robbins, J. G. Henderson, Hugh Hay, F. H. Sanderson, Z. C. Bradshaw, A. Star Black, W. A. Richards, J. R. Fans, Joseph Jeffrey, R. A. Harwood, J. C. Harvey, E. A. Bristow, I. B. Kilborne, C. F. Johnson, J. J. Gardner, E. A. Hoelsafer, C. Artman, A. R. Cuthbert, C. B. Mitchell, N. Pye, A. Hopkinson, A. J. Tritt, present pastor.

The present (1915) membership is two hundred and thirty, and the estimated value of all church property is six thousand eight hundred dollars. A parsonage, built in 1896, and enlarged in 1907, is valued at two thousand three hundred dollars.

Since the organization of this church hundreds of men and women have confessed their Master at its altars. Scores of these have passed to their reward, while scores of others have removed from the community. In a single year more than twenty members moved to Ceylon, Minnesota, and there formed a Methodist Episcopal church. But in spite of all these losses, the Goldfield church has grown in numbers, and now has the largest congregation in its history. Several revivals have blessed the church, the last being in the spring of 1915, when a union service was held, continuing for weeks.

#### BELMOND METHODISTS.

The First Methodist Episcopal church at Belmont was organized in 1860 by a small class made up of Simeon Overacker and wife, James Jenness and wife and Elizabeth Connell. The 1915 membership is two hundred. The first building was dedicated on July 19, 1874, C. B. Winter then being the pastor, the church standing where the present building stands. Its cost was three thousand four hundred and forty-four dollars. Rev. J. W. Clinton, financial agent for Cornell College, Mt. Vernon, Iowa, had charge of the finances that day. That building was remodeled and repaired at a cost of three thousand dollars, under the pastorate of Rev. O. S. Bryan. The old parsonage, together was forty-two feet of the west end of the lot was sold in the spring of 1915, and a new parsonage was erected on Filbert street, just north of the church, at a cost of four thousand dollars, the pastor at that time being the Rev. R. N. Burress. Just prior to the beginning of his pastorate, a basement was excavated under a part of the church building, and in 1913 Reverend Burress had the excavation finished and a new



foundation laid under the remainder of the building. The same season the auditorium was frescoed and the following winter electric lights were installed, these improvements being made at a total cost of \$1,200. The church stands on the southwest corner of Washington and Filbert streets.

The following ministers have faithfully served as pastors of this church: John Connel, William Hestwood, J. S. A. Groom, J. W. Rigsby, C. B. Winter, A. A. Shesler, Rufus Fancher, A. Ball, J. W. Spangler, A. A. Wilcox, Jesse Cole, P. H. Eighmy, William Preston, H. B. Long, G. H. Kennedy, J. F. Black, William H. Montgomery, L. C. Woodford, O. S. Bryan, A. McClintock, William Whitfield, G. F. Whitfield, H. G. Pittenger, C. E. Chapler, C. H. Van Metre, John Kettle, W. B. Empey and R. N. Burress. For a period of ten years, between the pastorate of William Hestwood and J. S. A. Groom, there is no record.

#### THE METHODISTS OF DOWS.

The Methodist church at Dows was organized in 1871 by C. W. Burrows and wife. The best historical account which can be given of this church is a brief sketch furnished by one of the early members, E. C. Burrows, which reads as follows: The Methodist Episcopal church of Dows had its beginning in 1871, in what was then known as Otisville, the name having been changed to Dows when the railroad came through this part of the country in 1881. Reverend Hamilton was the pastor and Reverend Hartsough the presiding elder. At that time Dows was in the Des Moines conference and when, in 1872, the Northwest Iowa conference was organized, Dows became a part of the Alden charge in the Algona district. In 1885 Dows became a separate charge. A few years later Rowan was cut off, and in 1896 all outside points were discontinued and Dows stood alone.

This church has been served by the following pastors: Reverends Hamilton, Williams, Hobbs, Jameson, Hoswell, Beams, Todd, Warren, Drake, J. F. Black, Jeffery, Flannigan, A. S. Black, Baker, O. A. Luce, D. A. McBurney, W. W. McGuire, L. F. Troutman, E. R. Mahood, C. F. Johnson, C. E. Matteson, F. W. Ginn and D. M. Simpson, the present incumbent. The church originally sprang from the two members above mentioned, Mr. and Mrs. Burrows, and others immediately following were William Willix and wife, Stephen Sergeant and wife, William Tutin and wife, Mr. and Mrs. Northrup, Mrs. A. E. Gibson and Mrs. E. A. Parkinson. In six years it had increased to thirty-nine members and three probationers. About this time the first church building was erected and proved a comfortable house of worship until it was outgrown. Plans for a larger church were discussed



and inaugurated during the closing months of Rev. O. A. Luce's administration, and the following year (1896) the present commodious brick edifice was erected under the pastorate of Rev. D. A. McBurney, at a cost of about eight thousand dollars, the same being dedicated on September 6, 1896, by Rev. I. B. Ives, of Auburn, New York. For more than a quarter of a century the Methodist church of Dows has stood as a monument of righteousness in the community, and the high moral standard of the town and country around it is due to a great extent to the untiring efforts and Christian qualities of the membership of this congregation. There is a church membership of two hundred, a fine Sunday school of two hundred members and a good healthy Epworth League of about sixty-five members. There is a good eight-room parsonage, built in 1906, under the pastorate of Rev. E. R. Mahood, at a cost of about three thousand five hundred dollars. The church is equipped with a basement under the entire building and is fitted up with dining room, kitchen, furnace room and social room.

#### EAGLE GROVE METHODISTS.

The Methodist Episcopal church at Eagle Grove, which, before railroad days, was connected with that at Goldfield, was organized in Eagle Grove township in 1879, by Rev. J. G. Henderson, with the following charter members: J. M. Miller and wife, James Kenne and wife, Nelson Slaikue and wife, R. Hopkins and wife, George Gray and wife, B. F. Smith and wife and J. Middleton. The present membership is four hundred and twenty-five. The first church, erected in 1882, was destroyed by a cyclone in the spring of 1885, and a new one was erected that season. This has been enlarged at various times, forming the present edifice. The present value of all church property belonging to the Methodists in Eagle Grove is placed at fifteen thousand dollars.

The following is a list of pastors who have served the congregation at that place: Hugh Hay, R. C. Glass, F. H. Sanderson, Reverend Harmon, Reverend McCory, Reverend C. B. Martin, W. A. Black, P. C. Hanna, George H. Kennedy, E. M. Glasgow, A. S. Flannigan, J. W. Southwell, F. W. Ginn, George W. Southwell, H. A. Hastings, C. M. Phoenix, E. C. Chapler, W. W. Bolinger, A. M. Wilkinson and S. M. Vanclave.

#### THE METHODIST CHURCH AT CLARION.

The next church of this denomination in Wright county was that organized at Clarion, in 1880. Its articles of incorporation bear date of January,



1880, but the class had been formed some time previous to that. A building, thirty-two by fifty-five feet in size, was erected in the spring of 1881 at a cost of one thousand four hundred dollars, and was dedicated in November following, by the Rev. J. H. Rhea, D. D., of Mt. Vernon, Iowa. The bell was donated by Mr. McMurry, of New York City. The present membership is two hundred and thirty, and the present estimated value of the church and parsonage property is eighteen thousand dollars. The present church was erected in 1902, at a cost of \$10,000, the old building being turned around and worked into the new structure.

The following have served as pastors of the Methodist church at Clarion: J. E. Rowen, J. P. Cloeman, J. D. Hoover, H. J. Grace, 1879-81; J. M. McCoy, 1881-82; H. J. Grace, 1882-83; C. C. Turner, 1883-85; W. H. Flint, 1885-87; W. W. McGuire, 1887-88; J. H. Snow, 1888-90; G. E. Stump, 1890-91; W. W. Tyrell, 1891-94; I. B. Kilbourne, 1892-94; C. A. Devitt, 1894-96; C. B. Winter, 1896-97; M. O. Lambly, 1897-99; Robert Burnip, 1899-1900; C. F. Johnson, 1900-01; Frank Mathis, 1901-05; J. B. Luscombe, 1905-07; W. H. Spence, 1907-09; C. H. Van Meter, 1909.

#### THE CHURCH AT WOOLSTOCK.

The Methodist Episcopal church at Woolstock was organized in 1800 by the following charter members: William Reid and wife, William Tatham and wife, William Throssel and wife, Simon Day and wife, Mannel Wallen and wife, David Ley and wife, S. W. Terrell, S. E. Parrish and wife, Wilson Reid and a few others. The membership in 1915 was sixty-eight.

The church was built at a cost of three thousand two hundred dollars, a frame structure, with a deep basement put in during the spring of 1915, the present value of which is estimated at five thousand dollars. The list of pastors for Woolstock church is as follows: Reverends Faus, Irvin, Green, A. McClintock, E. L. Stevens, Alfred James, Henry Albertson, G. M. Pendell, E. J. Bristow, Arthur C. Culver, N. L. Hotchkiss, F. W. Witford, F. L. Schar, M. J. McCabe, Charles Sanders, T. W. Owens, W. N. Bump and W. H. Welch.

The French Lutheran church, located four miles east of Woolstock, was built in 1806 by people who had come to this county from Alsace-Lorraine. It is an independent church. There is a cemetery on the same lot as the church, where the French people bury their dead. They did have a



preacher at one time, but since 1913 the Rev. W. H. Welch, pastor of the Woolstock Methodist Episcopal church, has been preaching for this society.

There is another Methodist preaching point for the central part of Vernon township, known as Center church, the membership of which is now twenty-seven. The society owns no church, but holds meetings in the school house. The congregation is now cared for by the church at Popejoy, over the county line, and has been served from that place since 1896, but before that was connected with Dows, and possibly once connected with the work at Williams, in Hamilton county. The pastors from Popejoy have been: Lewis Baker, 1896-7; A. T. Carpenter, 1897-9; G. L. Tennant, 1899-1900; Perry Thomas, 1900-01; R. B. Tibbetts, 1901-03; W. G. Bennett, 1903-04; R. Hild, 1904-06; P. L. Smith, 1906-07; E. Dale Calkins, 1907-10; W. H. Welch, 1910-12; L. A. Dale, 1912-15.

#### LINCOLN TOWNSHIP METHODISTS.

Lincoln township has a Methodist church known as Lincoln church, situated four miles east and two miles south from Clarion, which is the outgrowth of a work of this denomination years before. A society was formed about 1878 by Rev. John E. Rowen, among the members of which were A. K. Ketchum, O. T. Nichols and wife, Mrs. Maurice Fisher, Simon Heath, A. B. Collins and wife, John Walton and wife and Harrison Thompson. The first meetings were held in a school house which stood across the road from where the A. G. Tillman home is now situated, near Lincoln No. 2, in section 10, the place of meeting later being changed to a school house which stood on the southwest corner of section 10, which was later moved to Lincoln No. 1. Subsequently, it was moved to No. 6, and there the present church was formed. The date when the present congregation was organized was about 1897, and its charter members were as follow: A. K. Ketchum, Peter Smith, George Ulrich, James Smith and A. B. Collins and wife. The pastors following Reverend Rowen were Hathaway, Stout, Snow, Flint, L. B. Kilburn and Devitt. The present church property is located near the William T. Richards home, and is valued at one thousand dollars. The first pastor was from Rowan, the second from Clarion, the third from Clarion, the fourth from Rowan, the fifth from Rowan, the sixth from Rowan, and the seventh and eighth from Clarion.

#### METHODISTS AT ROWAN.

The First Methodist Episcopal church at Rowan was organized many years ago. The records are lost and no one can establish the early history



of the society there. It is known, however, that more than twenty years ago a church building was erected by this church at Rowan. A new one was completed and dedicated on November 22, 1914. This edifice is valued at twelve thousand dollars, it being one of the best, most attractive and expensive churches within the county. The parsonage is valued at one thousand eight hundred dollars. The present membership is one hundred and fifty, among this number being many well-to-do farmers in the surrounding townships. The present pastor is Rev. Carl Hammer.

#### VARIOUS LUTHERAN CHURCHES.

The Eagle Grove Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran church was organized in 1884 by Rev. T. O. Wigdahl, now of Rutlieven, Iowa. The present membership is about six hundred souls. The charter members were: Erick Gunderson and family, Even Olson and family, Gustave Johnson and family, Daniel Nelson and family, Andrew Nelson and family, Severt Hovland and family, John Hoveland and family and Ole Gunderson. The present edifice is the original church, repaired and greatly enlarged. The pastors who have served there are: T. O. Wigdahl, H. C. Holm, O. C. Farseth, O. R. Sletton, T. O. Thorson and H. A. Oakdale, the present incumbent.

The church of this denomination at Holmes, in Lake township, is attended by the pastor of the Eagle Grove church, the parent church, which was organized in 1887 by H. C. Holm, with the following charter members: H. H. Warren, C. Tjoland, T. Tostenson, Andrew Anderson, J. G. Johnson. The congregation now numbers one hundred and fifteen, and the value of the church property is three thousand dollars. The church was built in 1804. The pastors have been H. C. Holm, Ole Sletter, L. O. Thorson and H. A. Oakdale.

#### EAGLE GROVE LUTHERANS.

Samuels Lutheran Church, at Eagle Grove, was organized in 1888. The congregation bought the old German Methodist church building on the east side and added to it and worshipped there twenty-five years, but in 1913 moved over to the west side, locating at the corner of Lincoln and State streets, where they erected a good frame structure, with a full basement, valued at five thousand dollars. A parsonage was provided in 1911, at a



cost of three thousand five hundred dollars. The present membership is one hundred and fifty souls, or thirty families. The pastors have been as follows: Reverend Eastbold, who served fifteen years; O. A. Anderson, four years; T. J. Spondae, present pastor, four years. He also has charge of a small congregation over the line in Humboldt county. The work is also extended to Holmes, Lake township, where the Lutherans rent of the Baptists. The two branches of the Lutheran church at Holmes were united until about 1900, since which time two separate churches have been kept up.

St. John's church, in Norway township, was organized in 1887 by Hans T. Asbe, A. Hovland, N. Olson, A. T. Asbe, Adolph Espe, Abel Nelson, H. P. Johnson. There are now two hundred and fifty-six souls in this congregation and the value of their church property is three thousand dollars. The pastors have been H. C. Holm, J. J. Akre, J. Hitland and H. C. Holm.

St. Olaf's church in Belmond township was organized in 1888 by N. N. Johnson, N. Sangstad, H. Jacobson, A. Furnseth, O. Furnseth, C. Furnseth and Ole Thompson. The present membership of this congregation is four hundred and ninety-three souls. The value of the church property is four thousand dollars. The pastors have been H. C. Holm, J. J. Akre, J. Hitland and H. C. Holm.

#### BELMOND LUTHERANS.

St. John's German Lutheran church at Belmond was organized in 1903 and has been under the pastoral charge of E. Schalinski, 1903-06; F. I. Duerr, October, 1906, to August, 1907, and William Meier since July, 1909. The voting membership is nineteen and the confirmed members number sixty-six. The estimated value of the church property is six thousand dollars. In 1910 the parsonage and church building were greatly improved, and in 1914 the church was rebuilt at a cost of about one thousand five hundred dollars. Following is a list of the charter members of the church: Conrad Groh, Louis Schwarz, Henry Friesleben, Gust Vestweber, Joseph Pletsch, Henry Dippel, Conrad Happel, Philip Geiz, William Gealow, Henry Wagner, John M. Allison, Christ Friesleben, William Vestweber, Conrad Vestweber, Joseph Heginger, George Rucka, August Rabe, Jacob M. Walz.

A little history was given out at the re-dedication of the newly-built church edifice on May 31, 1914, when it was stated that this Lutheran church was founded in 1903 by Germans living near Belmond, who immediately purchased the old church and parsonage of the Evangelical Associa-



tion, at the corner of Market and Main streets. Up to 1910 there was but little activity in the congregation, and people hardly knew there was a German Lutheran church in Belmond. But since that date activities have been noted on every hand. A debt of three hundred dollars was paid and a beautiful altar and pulpit were added. New members were received and a little later new seats were provided for the handsome auditorium. When all was finished the newly-appointed church and fixtures were dedicated on Whitsunday, the pastor being assisted by Rev. Prof. H. K. G. Doormann, of St. Paul. It was a day long to be remembered and referred to in the history of this faithful band of worshippers.

#### UNITED LUTHERAN CHURCH.

What is styled the United Lutheran church at Dows was formed several years ago, but no church building was available until 1914, in which year the congregation purchased the old Christian church, remodeled the same and now has a handsome place of worship on the main street, a frame structure surmounted by a spire. Rev. O. L. Thorson, of Franklin county, who is pastor of a country church a few miles to the east of Dows, also ministers to the congregation at Dows.

#### BAPTIST CHURCHES.

The Baptists have never had a strong organization in Wright county. The earliest of these churches was started at Woolstock about 1873-4, and a building was erected by the few who were of that faith, but after a number of years of ineffectual struggle the society went down, though the building is still standing there as a monument to the faith of this devoted people.

Goldfield was the next point in Wright county where the Baptists organized a church. This organization was perfected on August 23, 1882, and now enjoys a membership of one hundred and twenty-two. The charter members were J. R. Tyler, C. S. Tyler, Rossie Tyler, Menton Tyler, J. B. Gore, Addie C. Woocester, Everett Tuttle, Ella W. Tuttle, F. E. Tuttle, F. B. Plumley and W. C. Tuttle. A frame church building was erected in 1893, and the church property is now valued at four thousand four hundred dollars. The pastors who have served this congregation are: Alvin Plumley, W. K. Lane, John Pearson, J. G. Eaton, George Sneath, Benjamin McKeen, J. M. Whistler, N. H. Daily and J. S. Nicholson, the present pastor. A communion set was donated to the congregation a number of



years ago. Goldfield, Eagle Grove and Holmes are the only places in Wright county now supporting Baptist churches, where regular services are kept up and a pastor maintained.

The First Baptist church of Eagle Grove was organized on February 5, 1890, with twelve charter members. The membership is now two hundred and five. A neat frame church was erected in 1891, at the corner of East Broadway and Wright streets, and it is still serving well its purpose. The first parsonage was purchased in 1908 by Mr. and Mrs. D. J. Price. In 1915 this was sold and with the proceeds the present modern and beautiful parsonage was erected, adjoining the church edifice.

The following pastors have served there: A. C. Zellhoefer, June 1, 1890, to July 14, 1892; O. P. Somers, August 1, 1892, to October, 1892; George W. Stone, December, 1892, to September 30, 1894; R. H. Shaftoe, October, 1894, to November 20, 1898; H. C. Nash, January 12, 1899, to October 10, 1901; F. O. Bump, November 17, 1901, to January 3, 1904; J. W. Neyman, March 1, 1904, to September 7, 1905; Arthur J. Lander, November 1, 1905, to 1909; A. Fauquet, October, 1909, to September, 1911; Rev. D. P. Odell, 1911 to 1913, and Reverend Hart, 1913 to present date.

The Baptist church at Holmes was organized in 1900 by a company of traveling Baptist evangelists, who side-tracked a "gospel car" on a spur put in by the railroad company, and remained in town two months in the summer and autumn of that year. As a result of their labors the church was organized and now has a membership of thirty-five. Services are held in their own building by the pastor at Goldfield, who preaches in the afternoon or evening at Holmes.

#### CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES.

Belmond Congregational church, the pioneer of this denomination in Wright county, was organized on March 3, 1867, and incorporated on November 13, 1880. The charter members were as follow: Deacon and Mrs. S. N. Hinman, Deacon and Mrs. C. J. Boughton, Mr. and Mrs. John Christie, Mr. and Mrs. J. F. Smith, Mr. and Mrs. George Udell, Mrs. Frank Christie, Mrs. Clark and Mrs. Swan. The organization of this church was the result of a work started in the Sunday school, by Deacon Boughton and Deacon S. N. Hinman, and from special meetings held by Reverend Harrison. The following pastors have served at Belmond Congregational church: Revs. Father John D. Sands, who remained over



thirty years as pastor, beginning on January 30, 1869, and closing his labors on January 6, 1903, at which time he was made pastor emeritus. Following his pastorate came A. L. Dutton, William Ulmer Parks, P. W. Jones, B. W. Northup and E. Carnell Wilson. In 1906 the present handsome cement-brick edifice, known as Sands Memorial church, was erected at a cost of twelve thousand dollars.

#### CONGREGATIONALISTS AT CLARION.

The Congregational church at Clarion was organized by Father J. D. Sands on November 12, 1872, with three charter members, namely: Mrs. O. C. Sheplee, Mrs. Caroline Ellsworth-Thompson and N. F. Weber. The first church building was erected and dedicated in 1883, the dedication taking place in December. The building was a frame structure, thirty-two by forty-four feet, and carried a corner tower seventy feet in height, the cost of the house being about three thousand dollars. A bell weighing seven hundred and forty pounds was donated by A. W. McMurry, of New York state. The fortieth anniversary of the organization of this church was observed in November, 1912, when an interesting program was carried out. The present membership of this church is two hundred and fifty, made up of both town and country people. The present church building was erected in 1900 and is a large, well-planned frame structure, costing about fourteen thousand dollars. Among the pastors of this Congregational church are recalled J. W. Sands, Willis W. Mead, Edward Payson Childs, William R. Stewart, H. Parker Fisher, A. S. Houston, Ed. Ewell, Samuel J. Beach, Julian Hanford Olmstead, Nathan Howard Gist, and the present pastor, Rev. John T. Walker.

#### THE CHURCH AT EAGLE GROVE.

The First Congregational church of Eagle Grove was organized on October 15, 1881, by those interested in the formation of a church, who met in the parlor of Mrs. E. D. Ryder, and with Rev. J. R. Knodell, as moderator, and B. W. Hilton, as scribe, the church was organized with the following charter members: Adolph Swanson, David Hopkins, Lucy Hopkins, Andrew Wright, Mrs. Mary Wright, Mrs. Rebekah Brazelton, Mathew Armbruster, E. D. Ryder, Mrs. Florence Ryder and B. W. Hilton. The first clerk elected was B. W. Hilton, and the first deacon was E. D. Ryder. The church thus formed was reorganized by a church council that



met in Ryder's Hall on November 23, 1881. The present membership is two hundred and six. A church building was provided and dedicated on October 28, 1883, at a cost of two thousand dollars. The present church edifice was dedicated on February 9, 1896, and cost five thousand nine hundred and sixty dollars and fifty cents.

The following pastors have had charge of this church since its formation: J. D. Sands, M. Ranier, S. R. Wells, I. N. Tomes, C. R. Bruce, W. Radford, Francis E. Drake, L. B. Hix, N. L. Burton, W. W. Mead, A. F. Lyman, Franklin Elliott, G. L. Shull, Newell F. Douglas, T. O. Douglas, Jr., Fred E. York, George E. Plant, L. M. Pierce.

#### THE CHURCH AT ROWAN.

The Congregational church at Rowan was organized in 1890 by Father J. D. Sands, and the present membership is seventy-seven. Soon after organization a frame church was erected in Rowan and is now valued at four thousand five hundred dollars. A good parsonage was provided in 1893 which is still in use by the pastor. The pastors at Rowan have been Reverend Hoover, S. A. Martin, Charles Chambers, V. A. Carlton and the present incumbent, Rev. S. J. Huffman.

Harvey Congregational church, in Grant township, was formed by Rev. W. F. Harvey in 1896, and a church building was erected in 1897, the present membership at that point being fifty-one. This congregation is associated with the Rowan Congregational church in support of a pastor, and the church buildings are valued at one thousand five hundred dollars. Reverend Harvey died in November, 1889, aged seventy-one years, and was buried at Horse Grove.

The Congregational church at Galt was organized on December 3, 1883, by Rev. W. F. Harvey. In 1891 a church was built there and was dedicated on December 13 of that year. What is known as the Harvey memorial window was dedicated in the evening of the same day of the church dedication. Reverend Blanchard, of Webster City, dedicated this church, assisted by Rev. T. O. Douglass, Rev. J. B. Chase and Reverend Turk. The present membership of this church is about forty. The following is a list of the pastors since the organization of the church: W. F. Harvey, T. W. Hoover, S. A. Morlin, William T. Suley, Vinton Lee, Thomas I. James, J. D. Mason, P. B. Fisk, John W. Martin, James Davies, W. H. Gifford, Felix Ross, C. W. Davis and G. B. Deakin. Reverend Harvey died on December 1, 1889.



There is still another Congregational church in the county—that in Wall Lake township, which is under the pastoral care of the church at Galt. It is located along the south line of the township and county. The charter members of this church were: Rev. W. F. Harvey, Adam Waddell and wife, L. D. Woodley and wife, William Green and wife, George Palmer and wife, Mary Scheffler, Spencer Boynton and wife, James Parsons and wife, Mrs. Keziah Patterson, Mrs. A. B. Lynk, Mrs. Margaret Bleckett and Solomon Smith and wife.

#### EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

The only Episcopal church in Wright county is the one at Eagle Grove, known as St. John's, which was organized in 1908, and now has a membership of about sixty communicants. The congregation has a neat chapel and rectory, situated on West Broadway, valued at five thousand dollars, all the church property being valued at about six thousand dollars. The rectors have been Harry L. A. Fick, Thomas Horton and William Pence James. The church is now served from Mason City.

#### UNITED BRETHREN CHURCHES.

The United Brethren have not been particularly active in this county. The late Hon. John E. Rowen was also a minister of the gospel, at one time having been a Methodist Episcopal preacher. Mr. Rowen organized a United Brethren church at Clarion and built a church there in 1891, preaching his farewell sermon in April, 1892. This church was one of the hobbies of Senator Rowen's life. He was a most excellent Christian gentleman and was the means of awakening better thoughts and inspiring purer lives in many a man, woman and child within the radius of his ministrations. This church only existed about seven years. The building was converted into a residence, which is still standing in Clarion. Both among Methodists and United Brethren, Rev. John E. Rowen will long be remembered for his self-sacrificing work and the kindly deeds he performed in this county.

#### UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES.

The United Presbyterian church of Goldfield, Iowa, was born out of a desire for communion on the part of a number of families of that persuasion who moved to Goldfield from Traer, Iowa, in the year 1881. This desire



being communicated to the synod, ministers were sent to "spy out the land." Whether or not they were unanimous in their reports, or whether the most glowing report measured up to the Joshua and Caleb standards, is not known, but it is certain, however, these early labors resulted in the organization of the United Presbyterian church of Goldfield on March 4, 1884. Rev. D. Livingstone and Rev. H. Mitchell effecting the organization, with the following charter members: W. W. Wilson, Agnes Wilson, E. J. Weeks, Eliza Weeks, John Nicoll, Alice Nicoll, J. R. Stevenson, Jane Stevenson, William McCutcheon, Martha McCutcheon, Robert Pollock, Janet Pollock and Sarah Dewel. Of these members, only Mr. and Mrs. Stevenson, Mr. and Mrs. McCutcheon and Mr. and Mrs. Pollock are members at the present time.

It may be said of this congregation, destined to become a plant of renown, that Reverend Livingstone planted it and Doctor Duncan watered it under the favoring hand of God. Doctor Duncan served the congregation as stated supply for about three years. During the early period of this organization, this infant of the church was without a home. The people met for worship in the school house until the latter part of the year 1886, when, through the untiring efforts of Doctor Duncan, the first church building was completed and dedicated to the worship of God, the building being erected at a cost of two thousand dollars.

Rev. G. I. Findley was the first regular pastor of the Goldfield United Presbyterian church, serving from 1884 to 1905, his active ministry covering a period of almost eighteen years. He was succeeded by Rev. W. Z. Allen, who continued his labors from 1905 to 1907, and was followed by Rev. W. R. Irvine, who remained from 1908 to 1913. Following him came Rev. W. G. Comin, who commenced his pastorate in the autumn of 1913, and is still faithfully serving the congregation. The membership has increased from an original enrollment of fifteen persons, in 1884, to two hundred and forty at the present date.

It is expected that any healthy infant will outgrow its clothes. If it was the expectation of those who nursed this infant of the church during the earlier years of its life, that one day it would outgrow its home, those expectations were realized, for it came to pass in the year 1908 that the people viewed the walls of Zion, and behold! they were lacking in height and length and breadth. Result: A large, commodious and convenient place of worship, this enlargement being brought about at a cost of five thousand dollars. The parsonage was built in the year 1896, during the pastorate of Rev. G. I. Findley, at a cost of about one thousand two hun-



dred dollars. If the ground were to be purchased today and the same class of buildings erected the cost would not fall below twenty thousand dollars.

#### UNITED PRESBYTERIANS AT CLARION.

The United Presbyterian church at Clarion was organized on April 6, 1893, under the name of the First United Presbyterian church, with the following charter members: G. N. Hall, Mrs. Hanna Hall, Hattie Hall, Thomas Lyons, Mrs. Ann J. Lyons, Jennie Lyons, Elmer Lyons, William J. Soultz and wife, Emma A. Soultz, Agnes Soultz, Jennie Sturgeon, Thomas Sturgeon, Mrs. E. T. Sturgeon, Anna P. Sturgeon, Mary E. Sturgeon, Marion R. Sturgeon, Mimie M. Sturgeon. For some time after the formation of the church, services were not held regularly. The present membership is one hundred and sixty-two. A building was completed during the summer of 1896, the present value of which is seven thousand five hundred dollars. The church also owns a handsome parsonage. The Sabbath school now has a membership of two hundred.

The following ministers have served as pastors of the First United Presbyterian church at Clarion: J. H. Niblock, from June, 1895, to 1896; A. R. Paul, from July, 1896, to October, 1900; J. S. Pollock, July, 1901, to December, 1906; W. A. Condon, April, 1907, to January, 1910; Lee E. Rife, February, 1911, to March, 1914; Samuel Brown, July, 1914, to the present date, and the following have served as elders: Messrs. W. J. Soultz, James Sturgeon, G. N. Hall, J. J. Hazlett, William Bell, R. W. Breckenridge, J. H. Ramsay, A. E. Weber, S. R. Lyons, Fred F. Soultz, Joseph Bell.

#### PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES.

There is but one congregation of the regular Presbyterian denomination in Wright county, that being the church at Dows, organized on September 14, 1884, with the following charter members: William Selleck and wife, H. H. Parkhurst and wife and R. Hopkins and wife. From the organization down to 1893 there was no installed pastor, services being conducted by neighboring pastors and students from the seminary. The membership now is ninety-six.

In 1890 a frame building was dedicated, its cost being one thousand two hundred dollars. In 1899 an addition for a Sunday school room and basement was made, costing one thousand dollars. In 1914 new seats and other inside improvements were made, costing five hundred dollars, and the manse was erected in 1915 at a cost of one thousand two hundred dollars.



The following pastors have served this church to date: I. C. Tourtellot, 1893-97; J. E. Cummings, 1897-1903; D. McCloud, 1904-6; A. H. Noyes, 1907-8; James Clark, 1909-10; C. C. Brown, 1911-12; J. M. Mahaffy, 1913, still serving. A Ladies' Aid Society, formed in 1885, now has forty-five members, and a Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor, formed in 1893, now has thirty-six members. This church entertained the presbytery in 1894 and again in 1914.

#### THE CHURCH OF GOD.

There are two congregations of the Church of God in Wright county, one at Eagle Grove and the other in Lincoln township. The Eagle Grove church was organized in 1895, with the following charter members: Mrs. Cornman, Mrs. J. P. Allard, J. P. Allard, O. J. Allard, Mrs. O. J. Allard, George Vore, Mrs. L. Kethcut, Nettie Bourn, John Kimman, and the following ministers have served as pastors: O. J. Allard, John Garton, Almus Adams and G. E. Marsh. The church now has a membership of twenty. In 1895 a building was purchased for seven hundred and fifty dollars. The estimated value of the present church property is two thousand dollars.

The Lincoln township Church of God—Bethel—located in section 36, in the southeast corner of the northeast quarter, was organized in the nineties. Meetings were held in the school house for a number of years, and in 1899 a frame building was erected, the church property being valued at two thousand dollars, including parsonage, etc. The following pastors have served this church: Conrad Fatland, Joseph Kipford, David Kipford, Reverend Fatland and wife, Reverend Coleman, Reverend Huddle, Reverend Mitchell, Reverend Huddle and Reverend Hilterbridel.

#### SUNDAY SCHOOL WORK.

Perhaps the earliest regular Sabbath school in Wright county was the one organized by J. D. Sells in 1859, in Troy township, in a small log cabin. New Testaments were used instead of the modern plan of using "lesson leaves." Pioneer Sells was a Methodist and it is not unlikely that this school was more Methodist than union in its character. In 1876 there were numerous Sunday schools in the county, and Father J. D. Sands thought it high time to organize a County Sunday School Association. He carried out his notion and was elected president of the association, Rev. A. Plumley, of the



Baptist denomination, being made secretary, and N. F. Weber, of the Clarion Congregational church, treasurer.

One of the recent letter-heads of this association carries the following: Wright County Sabbath School Association. President, O. H. Benson, Goldfield; G. T. Eldridge, Clarion, first vice-president; I. A. Stroup, Holmes, second vice-president; E. C. Burrows, Dows, treasurer; Jennie G. Keith, Clarion, secretary; Mary E. Sturgeon, Clarion, assistant secretary. Executive Committee: R. M. Graham, Dows; O. H. Benson, Goldfield; Mrs. M. S. Page, Belmond; O. W. Whaley, Clarion; James Innes, Eagle Grove; A. MacEachron, Goldfield, honorary member; secretary primary department, Edith Whiting, Belmond; secretary home department, Mrs. Christie Pinkham, Goldfield; secretary normal department, Jennie Winter, Clarion.

#### THE CHRISTIAN CHURCHES.

The Church of Christ (Christian denomination) at Clarion was organized in 1886, by Rev. Dawson Brokaw, with the following charter members: J. G. Mecham and Messrs. Piatt, King and other faithful members, such as the Tillmans, the Summers and others. The contract for the erection of the first church building was let in October, 1887, and the building was dedicated on September 22, 1889, by Reverend Remear. The present membership is about two hundred. The ministers who have served as pastors are: Reverends Reamer, Walters, Halet, Pierce, Morrison, Bennett, Dennison, Babcock, Mattox, Littleton and the present pastor, the Rev. A. O. Wright. There is also a thriving church of this denomination at Goldfield.

#### REFORMED CHURCH OF AMERICA.

The Reformed Immanuel Church of America, at Belmond, in Pleasant township, was organized on September 17, 1884, by a committee of classes by Iowa R. C. A. The first minister was Rev. R. Johnson, serving from October, 1884, to October, 1894; Rev. Johannes De Beer, 1894-96; Rev. A. J. Reeverts, April, 1897, to October, 1907; J. G. Theitken, March, 1908, to August, 1909; Rev. E. H. Thormann, March, 1910, to present date—1915.

Lambert Pals donated five acres of land on which the church and parsonage were erected. The first church was built in 1888; rebuilt in 1895; its rebuilding created one of the finest churches in Wright county; its cost was about \$12,000. In 1902 a suitable parsonage was erected, costing \$1,800.



In 1915 improvements were added, costing \$700, and a barn built on the premises in 1911, costing \$600; sheds and other buildings amounting to \$1,200. The present value of these various improvements is about \$18,000.

The congregation now has a membership of about fifty-five families and seventy-six communicants.

Among the charter members were Lambert Pals, one of the founders and member of the consistory, still serving as such; the Bohnings, Harm brothers, the Frohlings, Gruis, Franke, Hinderka Pals, Schmidts, Mennenga, Dorenkamp, Frochlings, Bruns, Stieler, Booikes and others.

H. Mennenga donated a thousand-dollar pipe organ to the church. The 1915 members of the consistory are: Rev. E. H. Thormann, president; Elders, H. B. Dorenkamp, Hinderk P. Pals, Berend Bruns, and the deacons are Lambert Pals, Harm Groenlander and Hieko Bruns.

#### CATHOLIC CHURCHES.

The few churches of this denomination in Wright county are unusually strong and active in their work. Belmond was the first point in the county where this denomination commenced its work, St. Francis parish having been established there in 1870, and a building was erected the following year. The first priest to hold services in Belmond was Rev. Father O'Dowd, who went there from Ackley at intervals during a period of eight years, when the parish secured its first resident priest, Rev. Father Brennan, of Webster City, who remained until 1883 and was followed by Rev. Father Hanley, who remained about six months and was followed by Rev. Father Toohill, who remained until 1888, on December 24 of which year Rev. Father Egan was introduced as pastor. During a period of thirty years the membership of the church had increased from a very few to nearly four hundred.

Father Egan, whose zeal for the church was dauntless, and whose efforts to "found his congregation on a rock of permanency" were successful to a point of extreme satisfaction, found that the church building was not ample to accommodate his growing congregation and immediately began the erection of the present imposing edifice, which was completed in the spring of 1900 at a cost of nearly ten thousand dollars, and was dedicated in May of the same year. As is the general of an army, so was Father Egan to the local charge, and after seeing his hopes fulfilled he was obliged to give up the work of this charge owing to ill health, and while in the South in search of health he contracted that dreadful disease, smallpox, from which



he died in the spring of 1901, after a lifetime spent in the service of the Master.

Shortly after the departure of Father Egan, Rev. Cornelius Sampson succeeded as temporary pastor, and during his short stay did much in building up the interests of the parish. In January, 1902, Rev. M. F. MacInerney was appointed permanent rector. His ten years of zealous labor added wonders to the spiritual and temporal welfare of the parish. A native of Clare, Ireland, he came to this country when a young priest, and served faithfully and well in many parishes of the Dubuque archdiocese. He was a man much revered by his parishioners and his sudden death, on December 5, 1912, was the cause of deep regret in the community. Succeeding the Rev. M. F. MacInerney is the present pastor, Rev. M. F. Eardley. Born in Grand Rapids, Michigan, on January 21, 1874, he began his theological studies in Assumption College, Sandwich, Ontario, and was ordained to the priesthood on June 21, 1901. Previous to his present appointment he held charges at Marshalltown, Volga City, Van Horn and Sabula, Iowa. The church has a magnificent property at Belmond, valued at twenty thousand dollars, including church and parsonage. The present membership is over four hundred souls.

#### CLARION CATHOLIC CHURCH.

The religious experiences of the first Catholic settlers of Clarion were so closely connected with those of their neighbors of the same faith at Belmond that the history of the Catholic church at Clarion is virtually told in the history of the church at Belmond in the same period.

Coming west in May, 1866, Messrs. John Burns, Michael Goslin and Daniel Leonard, natives of Ireland, and married, were the first Catholics who located with the view of exploring the plains of the Clarion district. Having arrived at a time when the country had not yet emerged from the original undeveloped state, they were forced to contend with difficulties similar to those which confronted Belmond Catholics in the days of their early experience. Commercial drawbacks, occasional reverses of fortune and a meager attendance of the faithful were only a few of the difficulties which confronted them. For four years following 1866 they were obliged to journey over the prairie wilderness and wade through unbridged streams and ponds to assist at the holy sacrifice of the mass, and receive the sacrament of the church in Fort Dodge, Webster county. In September, 1870, Rev. P. O. Dowd, then resident pastor of Ackley, Hardin county, visited Bel-



mond and celebrated mass for the first time in Wright county in the modest residence of James Welsh, at Franklin Grove. Thither the early pioneers hastened for spiritual aid at stated intervals to enjoy the privilege of a priest's ministrations. Those living south of the town of Clarion continued to resort to Fort Dodge and later to Webster City.

In 1878, when the county became more thickly settled and Catholicity more widely diffused, a resident pastor was stationed at Webster City, in the person of Rev. Eugene O'Keefe, a native of Ireland. To afford greater facilities to the scattered Catholics of the southern part of Wright county, Father O'Keefe occasionally visited their residences to offer up the holy sacrifice of the mass, to administer the sacraments and to instruct the children. As time and human industry wrought advantageously in this part of Iowa, many of the Catholic families were gradually added to the isolated few who first sought to leave the impress of their personality on the virgin soil of Clarion. Their spiritual wants now became more urgent and of frequent demand. Rev. Eugene O'Keefe first organized a district community and rendered religious service to the Catholics of Clarion in the center of their newly acquired homes, celebrating mass from time to time in the residences then immediately south of Clarion in a district now within the town's incorporated limits. When, in 1882, Rev. J. J. Hanley became resident pastor in Belmond, the Clarion congregation was transferred from the jurisdiction of Webster City. He celebrated mass first in Clarion in the old court house.

#### GRADUAL GROWTH OF THE CHURCH.

Rev. James Brennan succeeded Father O'Keefe as pastor at Webster City and visiting pastor of Clarion, immediately following Father Hanley. In 1883, under the supervision of Father Hanley, the good people, in their zeal, energy and perseverance, assisted by the liberal sympathy and aid of the non-Catholics of Clarion, succeeded in accomplishing the, to them, cherished work of the erection of a substantial and commodious church building, which was dedicated to God's service in January, 1883.

Rev. John Toothill held the charge as successor to Father Hanley until December 25, 1887, when Rev. John Egan assumed control, Father Toothill having been removed to Dubuque county. The capacity of the church being unable to meet the growing requirements of the constantly increasing number of Catholics, the building was enlarged and otherwise improved at a cost of one thousand dollars, in the summer of 1890, under the direction of



Father Egan, and was dedicated in September of the same year. In 1893 a cemetery site, three acres in extent, was purchased at a cost of one hundred dollars an acre, and platted for the accommodation of the Catholics of Clarion.

Between 1888 and 1892 four lots were added to the Catholic church property. The Catholic community had enjoyed the blessings of holy mass on each alternate Sunday since 1887. On the evening of June 20, 1894, this happy and hopeful community experienced a severe adversity, when a tornado struck the church building, razing it to the ground and destroying the furniture. The loss, however, was mostly covered by insurance. The regular Sunday service was not interrupted, for a hall was at once engaged in the second floor of the Elliott block and mass was offered up there for the first time on July 1, and on December 16, 1894, for the last time. After mass on July 1, a building committee was selected by the entire congregation, at the suggestion of Father Egan, to manage the work of erecting a new church. At a full meeting of the committee on July 10, a general plan of structure was decided upon, and J. P. Eisendont, of Boone, Iowa, was accepted as architect to draw plans and specifications. A frame structure veneered with brick was decided upon, and the pastor made an individual canvass of the Catholic people to secure subscriptions. The contract was awarded to Matthew Goslin, of Clarion, for the superstructure, while J. Stewart was awarded the contract for foundation work, the material being supplied by the committee. This new church was dedicated on January 1, 1895, by Very Rev. T. M. Lenihan, of Ft. Dodge. W. J. Halpin, of Eldora, preached the sermon, and Rev. G. T. Nogle, of Garner, celebrated solemn high mass, while the choir of Belmond rendered the music.

#### CHURCH'S SECOND DISASTER.

Rev. M.-B. Murray succeeded Father Egan and became first resident pastor of Clarion, which charge he retained until July 1, 1913. During his pastorate the mission in Woolstock township was added to the Clarion work. While in Clarion Father Murray began the erection of a school, the cost of which was approximately estimated at between twenty and twenty-five thousand dollars, but when it was nearing completion, failing health caused the archbishop to remove him to another charge, and he was succeeded by Father Murphy, of the Dubuque apostolate, August 1, 1913. The new school building was then put in readiness and dedicated on September 7, 1913, by Rev. T. Nolan, of Eagle Grove. On this occasion the Rev. J. J.



Loomey, of Coon Rapids, delivered an eloquent address on Christian education. Sisters from Cedar Rapids, three in number, were placed in charge of the school. The school was opened on September 8, 1913, with holy mass, the enrollment being forty-four, which number has been nearly doubled since. A most successful school year was passed in 1914, a larger corps of instructors being found necessary.

On December 25, 1914, after early mass, fire was discovered to be issuing from the roof, and shortly consumed the entire church building. The contents, excepting the altars and pews, were saved, owing to the timely assistance rendered by all present, which means all Clarion. A meeting of the congregation was held soon after the fire and it was decided that a new church should be erected on the school grounds, to cost between twenty and twenty-five thousand dollars, a work that is expected to be accomplished in the near future.

#### THE SACRED HEART CHURCH.

The Catholic people are well represented and cared for at Eagle Grove by Sacred Heart church, whose building is located on East Fourth and Lincoln streets. The congregation was organized in 1882, soon after the building of the Northwestern railroad and the real beginning of the sprightly inland city which Eagle Grove has come to be. This church was organized by the following charter members, under the guidance of Father Brennan: Frank Mulligan, George Howell, John Howell, John Bowers, Edward and James Halligan, Joseph Kist, Philip Maier, James Mulligan, Martin Shaffer, Jacob Noar, Patrick Brennan and Robert Doyle. The present membership of this congregation is one hundred and twenty-five families.

The pastors who have faithfully served this congregation are: Reverends Brennan, Ireland, O'Brien and the present pastor, Father Nolan.

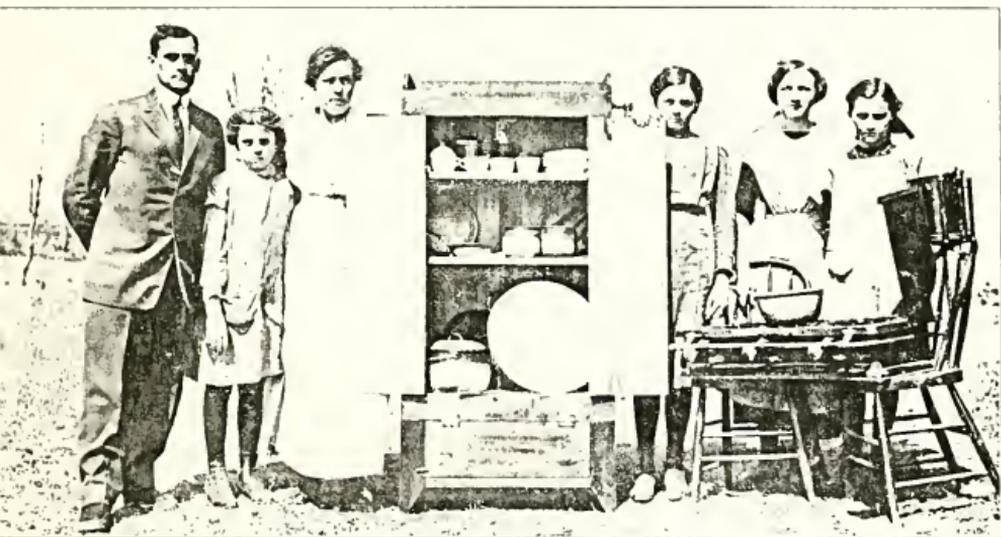
The first building used for the worshipping place of the Eagle Grove Catholics was a frame building, costing three thousand dollars, situated on Fifth and Lincoln streets, which was finished in November, 1882. In April, 1899, the present brick edifice was completed, at a cost of fifteen thousand dollars. It stands at the corner of Fourth and Lincoln streets, and the church property is now valued at fifty thousand dollars.

The Catholic people at Clarion held their first mass in the month of May, 1881, Father O'Keefe, of Webster City, celebrant. The service was held over John M. Overbaugh's furniture store, which was later burned. The congregation held their early services in the court house, but in January, 1884, Father Murphy, of Ackley, dedicated their first church.





A MODERN WRIGHT COUNTY COUNTRY SCHOOL.



DOMESTIC SCIENCE BEING TAUGHT IN WRIGHT COUNTY SCHOOL.



## CHAPTER XVI.

### EDUCATIONAL HISTORY—PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF WRIGHT COUNTY.

The first settlers of Wright county were men and women of strong characters, possessing those sturdy qualities that ever make for progress and education. All believed in educating their children, and it was not very long after the beginning of the social order hereabout that school houses began to be seen here and there, in which the best teachers that the county then afforded were laying the foundation of the present admirable county school system. Rude, but quite comfortable, school houses were provided, and these soon were replaced by better frame structures, some of which were also used at an early day by the various religious denominations in which to worship on the Sabbath.

It is to be regretted that many of the earlier school records were in possession of Father J. D. Sands, the pioneer Congregational minister, at the time his house and complete library were burned at Belmont many years ago, he being county school superintendent at that time. However, by picking up data from various sources, believed to be entirely authentic, the following has been compiled regarding the early educational institutions of Wright county. Such facts as the writer can give will here follow, after which the subject matter in this chapter will be treated by the present efficient school superintendent, who will seek to show the history and development of the public schools of the county from about 1900 to the present date.

The first school houses, as well as the residences of pioneer families, were built of logs from the nearby forests. Many of these had ground floors, but usually the old-time puncheon floor was provided. Just before the beginning of the Civil War, frame school buildings became the rule, and have continued to multiply and take on up-to-date architectural features and conveniences.

The first regular school superintendent in the county was Josiah Davidson, a man of fine ability, great energy and strength of character. Under his guidance the schools of this county flourished and were carefully handled. Josiah Davidson was a New Englander, and, besides organizing



schools, served the county well in establishing Sabbath schools, officiating at funerals and holding himself in readiness to respond at any call in behalf of the general public uplift. He was also a teacher, and while holding his office as county superintendent, to which position he had been elected in 1858, he taught the Liberty district school, which was then the largest in Wright county.

FROM EARLY RECORDS.

A receipted bill for school books sent from a Cincinnati book publisher to Josiah Davidson, first county school superintendent of Wright county, under date of January 3, 1863, carries the following items: One Ray's "Higher Arithmetic," sixty-three cents; one Ray's "Higher Arithmetic," key, sixty cents; one Ray's "Higher Arithmetic," part two, nineteen cents; postage, twenty-six cents; total, one dollar and sixty-eight cents.

In September, 1860, J. M. Elder, of Belmond, wrote to Superintendent Josiah Davidson, of Liberty, for a renewal of his certificate to teach. He stated that he had secured the Belmond school and wanted a new certificate, or the old one renewed, adding: "You know my qualifications (good and bad), so send the certificate your first opportunity, which will probably be by Doctor Cutler, on Saturday next. If you need anyone to assist you in your office duties on this side of the county, and deem me qualified, I will be pleased to act in your stead upon such notice."

An item about 1866, in the superintendent's journal, states that Miss Lauretta Eastman "is teaching the Liberty school at thirty dollars per month."

Under the pioneer school laws, there were districts which sent their school superintendents to given points, to meet the secretary of the state board of education. The following will explain itself:

"Webster City, Iowa, October, 1859.

"Josiah Davidson,

"Dear sir: By note of this day received from Thomas Benton, Jr., secretary of the board of education for the eleventh judicial district, announces that he will be in this place on Friday, November 4th, this year, to meet the superintendents.

"Yours in the interest of education,

"E. H. BLAIR,

"County superintendent of Hamilton county."



The first Webster's "Unabridged Dictionary" purchased in Wright county was the one ordered for district township of Liberty, July 27, 1861, at a meeting of the officers under A. F. Deán, president, and John Melrose, secretary.

FROM THE FIRST SUPERINTENDENT'S DIARY.

From County Superintendent Josiah Davidson's diary, in 1859, the following excerpts are taken: "Wednesday, January 5, 1859. Started out on horseback this morning at sunrise for Belmond on the Iowa river to examine the common schools, stopped at Anson Brassfield's house and at O. McIntosh. A cold morning the thermometer ten degrees above zero. Arrived at Henry Luick's house on the east side of the Iowa river about one o'clock, put up my horse and went to school. The school house is a substantial structure built of wood, plastered and beaded inside and painted outside. Levi Whecton, teacher, about seventeen scholars present. Study grammar, reading, writing, arithmetic and spelling. Good order in the school. A prayer meeting and preaching in the evening, presided over by Rev. McNutt. Put up with Mr. Luick, no charge from him for putting up.

"Left for home Thursday morning at ten o'clock, arrived home about three. James Gray, Judge Calder and W. Spence were at Belmond.

"Tuesday February 16, 1859. Struck out on the prairie by Oliver McIntosh's house and then for Belmond. Judge J. I. Calder and O. W. McIntosh went to Belmond yesterday with a load of corn on sleds and I followed their track. I arrived at Belmond at twelve o'clock and went to Mr. Oliver's house; took dinner and at one o'clock, went to the school house. The school was open when I arrived. About eighteen scholars were present when I arrived. I remained there until the school closed. At the close of the school I addressed the scholars. I took supper at Mr. Oliver's. In the evening I went to Mr. Luick's house and remained there over night. In the morning I returned to Mr. Oliver's and took breakfast and then started for Packard's, at Head Grove on the Boone river; arrived there about twelve o'clock; took dinner and in the afternoon examined the school under the charge of Miss Francis A. Fish. Nine scholars were present. Remained with Mr. Packard all night, and on Thursday morning went to Mr. Leland's house and then started for home. Arrived at home about two o'clock. Beautiful weather.

"March 8, 1859. Visited the school in Eagle Grove township; they are under the charge of Abby S. Hewett; but few scholars were present. A cloudy, dull day, looks like rain."



It will be observed that being county school superintendent in 1859 in this county was "no soft job," compared with that of the present superintendent, whose tours of inspection are made in his automobile.

#### EARLY TEACHER'S REQUIREMENTS.

The requirements of a teacher in Wright county, under Superintendent Davidson's administration, are set out in the following copy of an old "teacher's certificate." The motto on the printed form of the certificate was "*Suaviter in modo, fortiter in re.*"

"I, Josiah Davidson, County Superintendent of common schools in and for the county of Wright and State of Iowa, hereby certify, that I have this day examined the bearer, Miss Eleanor Dumond, in Orthography, Reading, Writing, Arithmetic, Geography and English Grammar, and find her competent to teach the same, and being fully satisfied that she possesses a good moral character, and the essential qualifications for the government and instruction of children and youth, she is hereby authorized to teach in the Public Schools of this County for the period of Six Months from the date of this Certificate.

"In testimony whereof, I have hereunto subscribed my name at Liberty this 23d day of March 1860.

"JOSIAH DAVIDSON,  
"County Superintendent of Common Schools."

J. M. Overbaugh, still an honored resident of the county, son of the pioneer, C. N. Overbaugh, was a teacher in the county as early as 1864, and he states that in 1865, in addition to the studies above named in Miss Dumond's certificate, there was also being taught physical geography, while prior to 1870 were added elementary algebra and higher arithmetic.

About the time of the close of the Civil War the old-fashioned desks and benches were taken out of the school buildings and patent desks and seats were introduced, together with globes, outline maps and charts and a better grade of blackboards. At that time a comprehensive system of school records was adopted by the state, the same being generally faithfully kept by the teachers of Wright county.

While the records of school buildings are by no means complete, it is believed by those who are in a position to state the facts in the matter that the first school in Wright county was conducted in a log house twelve by fourteen feet, in Troy township, in 1855, and that the first substantial frame



school house was erected in Iowa township in the summer of 1857. In 1865 the county had twenty school houses, and in 1870 this number had been increased to thirty-three, of which thirty-one were frame structures and two of brick—the pioneer log cabin school houses having all disappeared.

#### THE SCHOOLS DURING THE SIXTIES.

From 1864 to 1868, during the administration of R. E. Train as school superintendent, the condition of Wright county schools is well set out by the following paragraphs from Mr. Train's own pen:

"Then the schools were confined principally to the river valleys, and of the twenty schools all except the Purcell school on the south side of Big Wall lake, were near the Boone or Iowa. On the Boone there were ten schools, the Liberty (now Goldfield) school being the largest. In the winter of 1865-6, I taught this school. There were sixty-three pupils enrolled, and nearly everyone of them was prompt in attendance. When the bell rang in the morning they came from all directions, pattering like sheep along the various crooked paths which lead to the schoolroom door.

"We taught none of the so-called higher branches, but did solid work on the 'R's' and many an old dog's-eared speller showed that fingers as well as memory had been employed in learning the mysteries of English orthography.

"On the Iowa river there were nine schools. The largest of these was the Belmont school. William Finch, now a member of the firm of Finch & Hayward, here plied the birch with that vigor which has since characterized his energy and business career. Southeast of the town of Belmont, near the present site of the cemetery, was the Luick school, taught by Miss Alice Packard (later wife of Fred Luick), who was at that time one of the best teachers of the county. Among the other schools the more prominent were the Hickory Grove, Loomis, Kent, Horse Grove and Peterson, on the Iowa; and the Woolstock, Sells, Hewett, Middleton, Overbaugh and Martin schools on the Boone.

"The county superintendent's work then did not require all of his time. He visited the scattered schools once or twice each year, usually traveling on foot or on horseback, and examined a few applicants for certificates and conducted a teachers' institute. For his work he received three dollars per day and the salary amounted to less than one hundred dollars per year during the two terms that I served.

"The early settlers were generally interested in education and supported



the schools quite earnestly, but a few of them had fearful forebodings. They thought the schools were teaching too many subjects and that the children were in danger of becoming too highly educated and thus unfitted for useful employment and good citizenship. I recall one instance in which I was very severely criticized for advocating better school facilities and a more extended course of study. A few years, however, have wrought wonderful changes and improvements in the schools of Wright county, and now they are much better than I could then hope to see them during my lifetime."

#### SCHOOLS IN THE EARLY SEVENTIES.

When Rev. J. D. Sands, county superintendent, made his report in 1870 it was published in the *Wright County Monitor*, and from it we quote a few of the items:

"There are in this county thirty-three school houses, and thirty-nine sub-districts. Many of the school houses are of inferior order; some few schools houses in the county are passably well furnished, while others have no furniture. In some we find no blackboards and maps. There are two school houses in the county that have good inside arrangements, viz., No. 2, Clarion, and No. 1, Woolstock. The former is the best internally arranged school house in the county.

"Teachers' examinations are mostly oral, and when visiting the schools I permit the teachers to follow the same program until recess, then I take the school and go into a general review.

"One very powerful evil in our schools is the needless multiplicity of textbooks.

"Only thirty-seven teachers attended the institute this year.

"A teachers' association was organized at the close of the institute. Money was appropriated by the board of supervisors for the purchase of books and apparatus, but owing to various causes said association has not yet met."

#### DEVELOPMENT FROM 1876 TO 1891.

The county school superintendent's reports, beginning really in good form and properly kept intact since 1876, show the following development in the schools of Wright county, to and including 1891:



<i>Report of year ending October 1,</i>	1876	1882	1886	1891
Number of district townships_____	11	15	16	16
Number of independent districts_____	0	2	5	5
Number of sub-districts _____	51	73	90	110
Number of ungraded schools _____	53	82	99	117
Number of rooms in graded schools__	0	7	16	24
Teachers employed, women _____	66	112	125	179
Teachers employed, men _____	35	33	52	42
Teachers employed, total _____	101	145	177	221
Number of pupils of school age_____	1,398	2,553	3,511	4,290
Number of pupils enrolled_____	1,260	1,937	2,666	3,613
Average daily attendance _____	642	1,092	1,738	2,149
Average cost of tuition per month___	\$3.21	\$2.52	\$2.21	\$2.28
Number of school houses _____	54	74	102	123
Value of school houses _____	\$28,453	\$32,770	\$60,975	\$75,915
Value of apparatus _____	\$1,336	\$1,795	\$1,540	\$6,096

By the above table it will be observed that Wright county kept pace with her sister counties. Special mention is made, in this connection, of the high schools established in all of the independent districts of the county. The course of study adopted by the boards of education in these districts, in most cases, includes a good business training and college preparatory work, which, when completed, fits students to admission to the freshman class of first-class colleges.

The high schools open their doors to students from the country districts as well as to residents of the town in which they are located, and during the school year of 1891 and 1892 more than one hundred non-resident students were enrolled in the high schools of this county.

Comment on the advance sheets of the school report of 1892 says: "While the report is yet uncompleted, it is shown already that Wright county has grown largely in the matter of her schools in the last year. At least three towns will erect additional school buildings and the number of pupils the coming year will show great growth in the county. Wright county people, as a class, are educated, intelligent and progressive in their make-up. The common schools have been liberally supported from the earliest day to the present. Not only in the public schools in the towns, but in the country districts; also, the school buildings are neat and comfortable and furnished with the best of modern furniture. Many of them are well supplied with reference libraries, maps, charts, globes, etc. Earnest and progressive teachers, aided



by enterprising school officers and intelligent patrons, are successfully training for the duties of life a company of bright children who will make Wright county a pleasing subject for the future county historian." And thus it is.

#### TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION.

In 1870, a teachers' association was organized, as above stated in Rev. J. D. Sands' report for that year, but no general county society existed until 1876, in which year a teachers' convention held at Goldfield was formed into an association and has ever since been maintained, the same becoming the Normal Institute, which was formed and held at Clarion in 1892, when all county teachers were enrolled. This association of teachers was the means of very greatly improving the teaching force.

#### AS VIEWED BY AN "EASTERNER" IN 1869.

In a little historical account of the schools of Wright county, published in 1869-70 by J. H. Stephenson, a Canadian, who, at the time of compiling his work here, had resided in the West two years, there is presented the following concerning the interest taken in education in Wright county:

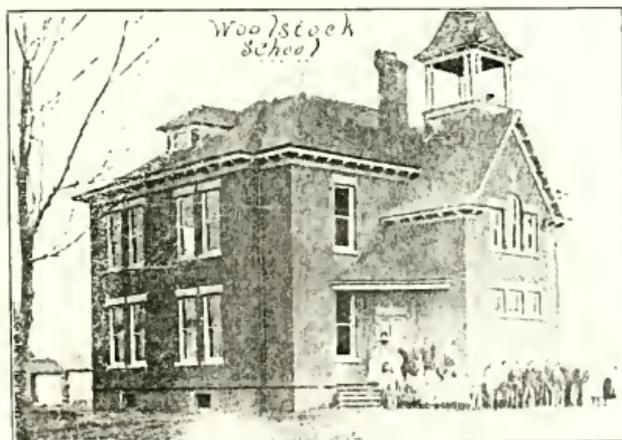
"The facilities that the county contains for education of the youth are ample and all-sufficient, and afford every opportunity for parents to have their children well educated. There are at present (1870) no less than thirty-four school houses in the county, and no teacher is employed who cannot satisfactorily pass through the most rigid examination. We know that it is a prevailing opinion with many of our Eastern friends that children 'way out West are brought up in a blessed state of ignorance and are altogether beyond the pale of civilization. Such is far from being the case, for if there is anything to which Western people pay special attention it is in having their children educated. One of the glorious features of the state of Iowa is her excellent school system of free schools, which is fully appreciated by the people.

"True, the people of the West are not so particular about having their sons and daughters taught all the 'accomplishments' which young people East think they must acquire to fit them for society, and which, in too many cases, unfit them for anything else than to lounge in ease and idleness. During our short experience in the West, we have discovered that all the knowledge and wisdom of the country is not confined to the people of the East by any means, and in no place is this more strikingly shown than in Wright county. It is really astonishing to see how readily boys and girls of ten years of age





COUNTRY SCHOOL IN WRIGHT COUNTY, BUILT THIRTY-FIVE YEARS AGO.



WOOLSTOCK SCHOOL.



will solve the most difficult problems in arithmetic; and the most complicated problem in algebra is to them as easy of solution as the simplest in addition. Nor is their learning confined to the study of arithmetic, grammar and geography alone; they are taught to guide the plow, drive the plane, shape the heated iron on the anvil and run the sewing machine and cook.

"They are also taught to experience what real life is, so that in future years, in prosperity or adversity, they will be prepared for any vicissitude that may take place, or any emergency that may come upon them.

"No, no, dear Eastern friends, the youth of the West are not raised in that half-savage state in which ye suppose they are; and by paying us a visit you will find that literature, and the arts and sciences are not ignored, while morally, religiously, and educationally the Western people rather excel those of the East. In summing up the total number of schools in Wright county, we find that they amount to thirty-four, which, in proportion to the number of inhabitants it contains, offers equal facilities for educating the youth with any other county in the state."

#### EARLY SCHOOL HOUSES.

Concerning the early school houses in Wright county the following has been discovered by careful research:

Troy township's first school house was a small cabin. The next was a frame house, twenty-four by thirty feet, built in 1859. In 1870 the township had four buildings, including one good brick building.

Liberty township, in 1870, had four school houses and good schools.

Boone township had its first school in Uncle C. H. Martin's log cabin, near the Boone river in the early fifties. In 1870 it had three buildings.

Belmond township had a fine school building in 1857.

Pleasant township had three good frame buildings in 1870.

Iowa township had, in 1870, four good school buildings.

Wall Lake township had, in 1870, three frame buildings.

Clarion township, as originally bounded, had, in 1870, two buildings, besides the splendid one at Clarion town.

Vernon township had two school houses in 1870.

#### SUMMARY OF RECENT GROWTH OF SCHOOLS.

From about 1895 to 1905 changes began to occur in the factors making up the rural schools of the county. As a result of operating industrial con-



ditions, many young men were available for teachers, and at the county teachers' institute nearly one-third of those in attendance were men teachers. During the next ten-year period, however, a marked change in the teaching force occurred.

The Iowa drainage law put the work of draining the farm lands on a permanent basis; work of this kind made a heavy draft upon the male portion of the teaching force, and the percentage of women increased rapidly until today (1915), we employ ninety-eight per cent. of women teachers in the county.

While this change was taking place, another more or less significant movement spread over the county. This had to do with a change in school-house sites. Formerly, as the county was being settled up, school houses were built in the center of population, thus accommodating the children of the settlers, whereas by 1895 to 1900 a greater portion of the land was taken up and this condition called for a removal of the school houses to the geographical centers, thus accommodating all alike.

It was no uncommon sight to see a party of neighbors out with teams and trucks, moving the school house from one site to another in the school district. These changes of location of school houses on other sites have been accompanied by more or less friction, both over location and the establishing of roads there after the site was once established.

Here it might be well to state that the unit of taxation in this county for school purposes is generally the township, city, town, or independent school district, each school township having a sub-director for each sub-district and a director-at-large where the township is composed of an even number of sub-districts. While in the town, city and consolidated school corporations a board of five directors manage the school affairs. In the rural independent school districts the board of school directors consists of three persons. Each school corporation has a secretary and treasurer.

In 1898, or thereabout, Angus MacDonald was elected to the office of county superintendent of schools. He was a man of Scottish descent, a young man of strong convictions. Mr. MacDonald grew up here in this county. He worked for his living, while a boy in the common schools. He would help with the chores on a farm during the winter months, and go to school. In the summer he worked at farm work. After he had finished the secondary schools he worked his way through the state university at Iowa City and came back here to Wright county to make his contribution to the educational factors here at work. He taught in the county schools for some



time, after which he was elected to the superintendency of the schools at Belmond, from which place he came to the county office.

Mr. MacDonald had felt and seen the need for education among the people of the rural communities, as well as among the town people, and lent himself to the service of these needs. He took a vital interest in the county schools, and urged the readjustment of teaching agencies in accordance with home-life needs.

During the spring of 1903 or 1904 Henrietta Jenison with two of her brothers, together with the school children and some of the patrons of her school, met in a grove in Pleasant township on the last day of the spring term for a school picnic. Mr. MacDonald was invited to the picnic. The day was fine; the picnic was a fine event and Mr. MacDonald brought forth the idea of promoting the picnic as a feature of the closing days of Wright county's rural schools thereafter. This picnic, started in Pleasant township, marks a new epoch in the educational history of Wright county.

In 1906 O. H. Benson succeeded Mr. MacDonald to the superintendency of the schools and took up his work in the county office. Mr. Benson was of Swedish descent and was raised on a farm until a man, when he entered the teaching profession. Mr. Benson first taught the village school at Woolstock, thence to Goldfield where he taught for four years. Mr. Benson worked his way from helper boy on the farm to government expert in the promotion of the organization of boys' and girls' clubs.

Because of the direction of the educational efforts of the schools of this county by superintendents MacDonald, Benson, and Howell, this county has been the source of many new and valuable educational principles for the state and nation. Mr. Benson sought to promote the redirected education through special adaption of the school work to the home life of the boys and girls. To do this he promoted the school picnics, increasing the territory included until the township, in special localities, was included. The idea was enlarged from year to year to instruction in games, graduation exercises and public dinners, until the township event of 1915 consisted of a township educational rally, field meet, and agricultural educational address. From ten to fifteen thousand people attended this meeting. From two hundred and fifty to three hundred boys and girls are graduated annually from the eighth grade at these picnics.

In 1811 the office was made vacant by the resignation of Mr. Benson to go to the Bureau of Agriculture at Washington, D. C., and M. L. Howell was appointed by the board of supervisors to take charge of the public education of Wright county. Mr. Howell was a farm boy and was educated at the



Iowa State Teachers' College at Cedar Falls and at the Iowa State College of Agriculture at Ames.

At present there are in Wright county one hundred and thirty rural schools, and ten high schools. Ninety-eight per cent. of the teaching force is women.

There are seven thousand two hundred and fifty-three children in the schools, and about three hundred and fifty teachers. The average wage is about fifty dollars per month for teachers in the one-room schools, and about one thousand six hundred dollars per year for the superintendents of the various schools and sixty-five dollars per month for teachers in the graded and high schools.



## CHAPTER XVII.

### SECRET AND FRATERNAL SOCIETIES.

Unlike the settlements of earlier times, the communities now possessing the highest degree of intelligence and the most progressive ideas concerning the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man, have come to be the communities where one finds the largest number of fraternal and secret societies flourishing. In this chapter will be given the facts concerning the instituting and present standing of the fraternal orders, including the Masons, Odd Fellows, Knights of Pythias, Woodmen, Workmen, Yeomen, Homesteaders and other societies calculated to promote friendship and charity among the living, and a due respect and care for the deceased members, together with their family connections.

#### THE MASONIC FRATERNITY.

Masonry was first established in Wright county by the instituting of a lodge at Belmond, where there was organized, under dispensation, King Solomon Lodge No. 210, Ancient Free and Accepted Masons, on December 28, 1866, to which a charter was granted on June 21, 1867. The first elective officers were: J. M. Elder, worshipful master; C. D. Pritchard, senior warden; L. H. Cutler, junior warden; S. D. Pierce, treasurer; J. C. Morris, secretary. The charter members constituting this lodge were as follow: J. M. Elder, C. D. Pritchard, L. H. Cutler, H. W. Hasen, B. W. Culver, G. G. Pritchard, L. S. Hasen and David Luick.

The lodge first met in Cutler's hall, near the Iowa river; next in the Don building, which was burned in 1899, since which the present lodge quarters have been used. Work is carried on in the blue lodge only. The present membership is eighty-four, and the present (1915) officers are: E. H. Goodsell, worshipful master; C. I. Williams, senior warden; C. C. Griesy, junior warden; W. W. Goetz, secretary; J. S. Pritchard, treasurer.

The following have served as masters since the date of organization: J. M. Elder, L. H. Cutler, G. H. Richardson, J. C. Morris, E. A. Howland, H. E. A. Diehl, J. P. Byers, T. M. Slight, James Reese, W. S. Pritchard,



F. O. Fitts, W. I. Rosecrans, C. N. Reese, E. W. Ely, H. E. Meyer, E. H. Goodsell.

Belmond Chapter No. 411, of the Order of Eastern Star, at Belmond, was organized on March 27, 1907, with charter members as follow: Mrs. Amy L. Meyer, Prof. S. T. Nevin, Mrs. Jessie Goetz, Mrs. Ana Ramsay, Mrs. Ella S. Nevin, Miss Minnie E. Ames, Mrs. Millie Rule, George M. Slight, Mrs. Anna M. Slight, G. H. Richardson, Mrs. Dora Richardson, Mrs. Florine Pritchard, Mrs. Laura McGregor, Walter W. Goetz, Mrs. S. F. Purdy, F. O. Fitts, Mrs. Mary Fitts, Miss Mabel Guisey, Mrs. Maud Tyrrell, Miss Nora Guisey, Harvey C. Tyrrell, E. A. Ely, Mrs. Lizzie Ely, Col. T. B. Kaufman.

The officers in 1915 are as follow: Dasy Cameron, worthy matron; Ernest Luick, worthy patron; Mrs. Frances Reese, associate matron; Thera Fitts, secretary; Mrs. Lizzie Case, treasurer; Mrs. Grace Luick, conductor; Mrs. Bernice Williams, associate conductor.

#### MASONRY AT CLARION.

Cyrene Lodge No. 325, Ancient Free and Accepted Masons, was organized in 1873 by the following charter members: L. P. Davis, A. R. Ladd, A. R. Nelson, I. Q. Milliken, Thomas Garth, A. S. R. Groom, A. M. White, Robert Foster, M. H. Austin, P. H. Bailiff, E. E. Gould. The first officers were: L. P. Davis, worshipful master; A. R. Ladd, senior warden; A. R. Nelson, junior warden; I. Q. Milliken, treasurer; Thomas Garth, secretary.

The present officers (1915) are: G. W. Young, worshipful master; F. J. McCoy, senior warden; H. Stephens, Sr., junior warden; F. W. Walker, treasurer; L. M. Hartsock, secretary.

The total membership is now one hundred and forty. The lodge first met in the Milliken building; moved twice to different places, and in 1892 moved to its own building, on the south side of the court house square. In 1909 the Clarion Masons bought the Elliott block at a cost of sixteen thousand dollars and moved into it.

Mt. Lebanon Commandery No. 61, Knights Templar, located in Clarion, was organized on August 11, 1911, with charter members as follow: B. P. Birdsall, A. R. Ladd, E. M. Callender, E. B. Roblin, W. C. Brown, H. L. Scott, G. B. Brown, W. H. Trowbridge, J. L. Landblod, L. M. Hartsock, E. A. Alexander, B. L. Oelke, E. B. White, M. W. Reid, M. McAlexander, W. W. Spaulding, J. H. Sams.

The present membership of this commandery is eighty, and its present



officers are: H. L. Scott, eminent commander; E. B. Roblin, generalissimo; L. M. Hartsock, captain general; Henry Long, senior warden; A. R. Ladd, junior warden; G. J. Mack, prelate; A. Borel, treasurer; R. P. Com, recorder; M. A. Milliken, standard bearer; B. F. Stoples, sword bearer; E. M. Callender, warder; F. W. Walker, sentinel. The past commanders are J. L. Lundblad and W. H. Trowbridge.

Adah Chapter No. 136, Order of Eastern Star, at Clarion, was organized on October 5, 1893, by Grand Worthy Matron Maria Jackson, with the following charter members: Sisters S. Brewster, E. Callender, H. Dons, Minnie Trowbridge Fairbanks, Harwood, King, E. Ladd, A. Callum, C. Simmons, A. M. White, M. White, Laura White, Ida E. White; also Brothers George Brewster, E. M. Callender, L. P. Davis, J. C. Harwood, I. C. King, Dan Leonard, J. C. McCallum, J. R. Robson, H. Simmons, Fred Taft, E. B. White, H. C. White and J. B. White. The first elective officers were: Allie C. McCullum, worthy matron; Mrs. E. M. Callender, worthy patron; Mrs. L. P. Davis, associate matron; Mrs. E. B. White, secretary; Mrs. Minnie Fairbanks, treasurer; Mrs. Harwood, conductor; E. M. Callender, associate conductor. The present membership of the chapter is one hundred and thirty, and the 1915 officers are: Ada Shackleford, worthy matron; Mrs. G. R. Grattidge, worthy patron; Mrs. Martha Leonard, associate matron; Mrs. Sadie E. Walters, secretary; Mrs. Susie Trowbridge, treasurer; Mrs. Mabel Smith, conductor; Mrs. Mayne Osier, associate conductor.

#### MASONRY AT DOWS.

Cornelian Lodge No. 425, Ancient Free and Accepted Masons, was organized at Dows on February 13, 1882, with the following charter members and officers: H. J. Miller, worshipful master; H. E. Schultz, senior warden; C. C. E. C. Emmerson, junior warden; R. E. Train, treasurer pro tem.; D. Miller, secretary pro tem.; L. J. Corbin, senior deacon pro tem.; F. A. Thayer, junior deacon pro tem.; A. Woods, senior steward pro tem.; R. H. Whipple, junior steward pro tem.; J. F. Kent, tyler pro tem.

The lodge in 1915 had a membership of seventy-six, with elective officers as follow: W. E. Schaff, worshipful master; O. A. Kellogg, senior warden; James Johnston, junior warden; R. W. Birdsall, treasurer; W. F. Wedekin, secretary; M. B. Swerson, senior deacon; O. T. Nolte, junior deacon; F. E. Schuriger, senior steward; J. W. Holmes, junior steward; N. Allen, chaplain; H. F. Klemme, tyler. The order has a hall costing



three thousand dollars, on Ellsworth street, which hall will accommodate about one hundred and twenty-five persons.

#### MASONRY AT EAGLE GROVE.

Bower Lodge No. 464, Ancient Free and Accepted Masons, at Eagle Grove, was organized on October 17, 1884, with the following charter membership: E. A. Howland, William A. Abbe, James M. Miller, Frank G. Yeoman, Charles K. Carter, W. B. Moore, D. McTavish, Charles P. Rorbach, W. C. Chapman, Joseph A. Miller, Ashael Middleton, E. H. Rogers, John G. Keller, Gideon Hutchins, Charles O. Bailey and Charles Evans, the first officers having been: E. A. Howland, worshipful master; William A. Abbe, senior warden; James M. Miller, junior warden. The present (1915) membership of this lodge is two hundred and five and its present officers are: H. Ward Barnes, worshipful master; Charles L. Dunn, senior warden; L. E. Wilson, junior warden; Eugene Schaffter, treasurer; James M. Rudy, secretary. The past presiding officers are E. A. Howland, Frank G. Yeoman, D. C. Filkins, Charles H. Morse, Eugene Schaffter, S. P. Barr, J. G. Grundy, J. W. McGrath, Charles Haukole, Porter Donly, George E. Correll, R. O. Packman and John A. Wright.

The first meeting of Eagle Grove Masons was held in the building now used by the Condon bakery; next in the old frame opera house; then in the Halsey building, over D. H. Price's store; then in the Masonic Temple building, in 1899. The charter of this lodge was granted on June 4, 1885. The lodge has been in a flourishing condition during all the passing thirty years of its existence.

Eagle Grove Chapter No. 123, Royal Arch Masons, was granted a dispensation on March 14, 1895, and a charter on October 18, 1895. The first appointed officers, under dispensation, were: S. Perry Barr, high priest; Douglas C. Filkins, king; George E. Correll, scribe. The first elective officers were: S. P. Barr, high priest; D. C. Filkins, king; G. E. Correll, scribe; Homer A. Miller, treasurer; John Buchanan, secretary. The first team to be exalted: Eugene Schaffter, Harry V. Perly, Thomas Collins, on July 25, 1895. The present membership is two hundred and seven, and the past high priests have been S. P. Barr, D. C. Filkins, Hugh Donly, L. J. Clark, Eugene Schaffter and J. H. Sterling. The officers in 1915 are: James H. Sterling, high priest; Richard M. Smallpage, king; Charles L. Dunn, scribe; M. Armbruster, treasurer; James M. Rudy, secretary.

Medina Council No. 26, Royal and Select Masters, at Eagle Grove,



was organized on May 24, 1911, dispensation having been granted on that date, the first officers being: Eugene Schaffter, thrice illustrious master; L. G. Focht, deputy thrice illustrious master; L. J. Clarke, principal conductor of work; J. D. Springer, captain of guard; Charles Haukole, conductor of council; R. O. Packman, steward; John Buchanan, recorder; M. Armbruster, treasurer. The present officers are: Lucian J. Clarke, thrice illustrious master; Charles L. Dunn, deputy thrice illustrious master; James H. Sterling, captain of the guard; M. Armbruster, treasurer; R. O. Packman, steward; John McDonald, Jr., conductor of council; James M. Rudy, recorder; W. H. A. Davidson, sentinel. The present membership is one hundred and sixty-eight, and Eugene Schaffter is the past thrice illustrious master.

Eagle Chapter No. 114, Order of Eastern Star, at Eagle Grove, was organized on April 14, 1892, with the following charter members: Messrs. D. C. Filkins, L. J. Clarke, E. A. Billings, Sol Livinson, Dan Livinson, F. J. Will, G. E. Correll, William Boyleson, L. B. Middleton, C. B. Hathaway; Mesdames E. A. Billings, Sol Livinson, F. J. Will, William Boyleson, E. B. Hathaway, L. B. Middleton, J. W. McGrath, E. M. Clark, G. E. Correll, O. A. Young, and Misses Fannie Filkins, Jessie Heckart and Hattie Heckart. The present (1915) membership of this lodge is two hundred and six, and the present elective officers are: Mrs. Blanche McGrath, worthy matron; L. J. Focht, worthy patron; Mrs. Nettie Blake, assistant; Mrs. Blanche Peterson, conductor; Miss Vinnie Johnson, assistant; L. J. Clarke, treasurer; Ethyl McDonald, secretary.

The first place of meeting of the Order of Eastern Star was over Hutchinson's billiard hall; the second place was in the Knights of Pythias hall, and in the spring of 1899 the chapter commenced occupying the Masonic temple. The past presiding officers have been Miss Fannie Filkins; Mrs. Nettie Tremain, Mrs. J. W. McGrath, Mrs. E. A. Billings, Miss Lillian Kosier, Mrs. Blanche Grundy, Mrs. Sactie Walters, Mrs. Modella Morse, Mrs. J. L. Slade, Mrs. L. J. Clark, Mrs. A. H. Barnes, Mrs. C. B. Hathaway, Miss Kate Ballard, Mrs. Blanche McGrath.

#### GOLDFIELD MASONRY.

Fountain City Lodge No. 589, Ancient Free and Accepted Masons, at Goldfield, was instituted on February 9, 1904, with the following charter members: J. M. Montgomery, T. B. Wallace, H. B. Bjornson, E. E. Gould,



G. M. Ressinger, E. Vest, Dan Shuman, Howard Crill, H. C. Pinkham, Spencer Frost, John Bartyen, W. H. Short, F. E. Short, H. J. Romph, A. O. Bjornson.

The lodge now enjoys a membership of forty-five, and has officers as follow: J. B. Attenbury, worshipful master; E. B. Beisell, senior warden; J. S. Smith, junior warden; R. P. Keith, senior deacon; Dan Shuman, junior deacon; John Cameron, senior steward; A. Kelling, junior steward; N. C. Duerst, treasurer. The past masters have been J. M. Montgomery, T. B. Wallace, Charles Troyer, J. L. Peppers, W. P. E. Eckles.

#### KNIGHTS OF PYTHIAS LODGES.

The Knights of Pythias, one of the three great and growing fraternal orders, is the youngest of the three strongest fraternities in this country, and was organized in Washington, D. C., at the close of the Civil War. It was first represented in Wright county, in Eagle Grove, June 5, 1884, as Superior Lodge No. 138, Knights of Pythias, the charter members being J. L. Neff, S. C. Hall, A. Engle, C. F. Rorback, R. C. Kirkman, M. R. Armbruster, George Wright, C. H. Rogers, R. N. Merrett, S. W. Morehead, W. C. Cadwell, W. A. Abbe, O. A. Young and J. Fitznauaee.

The present total membership of the above lodge is ninety-one, and the officers in 1915 are: W. A. McCarty, chancellor commander; Leo J. Johnson, vice-commander; Frank De Will, prelate; J. H. Cowan, master of work; J. L. Nott, keeper of records and seal; E. C. Platt, master of exchequer; Louis M. Thompson, master-at-arms; N. D. Bangs, inside guard; W. C. Van Horne, outside guard. The past chancellor commanders are M. Armbruster, J. L. Brown, J. J. Brown, J. H. Cowan, Jo Hardin, K. K. Keith, C. W. Mattingley, J. L. Nott, E. C. Platt, O. H. Peters, D. T. Stern and F. M. Whitney.

For several years after the above lodge was organized it met in the Odd Fellows' hall, until the building of the New Citizens State Bank, when it occupied the second story of that building, continuing this occupancy for ten years; then moved to the Masonic lodge rooms, remaining there a few years, and from there moved to the Yeoman hall, where it remained about two years, after which it moved to the new Odd Fellows' hall—the three-story lodge rooms on Broadway—where it still maintains lodge quarters. This lodge has had its reverses, with the passing years, but is now in a flourishing condition.

About 1895 there was organized at Eagle Grove a lodge of Pythian



Sisters, and it came to be the chief social organization of the city, and so continued many years, but, finally, on account of removals and lack of genuine interest, it went down.

Star Lodge No. 269, Knights of Pythias, was organized at Dows on September 11, 1890, by Clarion lodge. The first chancellor commander was Chris Klemme. The early history was all lost by the fire of 1894, and the lodge disbanded until the autumn of 1900, when it reorganized, and now has a membership of one hundred and twenty-five, "with one hundred per cent. true hustlers." The following are the 1915 officers: L. L. Beinhauer, chancellor commander; B. D. Bangs, vice-commander; F. H. Peterson, prelate; T. P. Watson, master of work; W. S. Brady, keeper of records and seal; Ole Hong, master of finance; George Schmidt, master of exchequer; Louis Jacobson, master-at-arms; R. W. Knuths, inside guard; Henry Oleson, outside guard. This lodge is reported to be in a fine condition.

Dows Temple No. 208, Pythian Sisters, was organized at Dows on August 14, 1907, with the following charter members: Mary McKellar, Anna Johnson, Florence Wilhelm, Isadore Isockson, Addie Rhinehardt, Carrie Shoger, Nettie Wilson, Mary Sult, Mahala Rissel, Mabel Sult, Agnes McCroken. There are now fifty members in good standing in this lodge. They meet in the Knights of Pythias hall over the Exchange Bank. The 1915 officers are: Addie Rhinehardt, Viola Brady, Martha Beinhauser, Janett Wells, Olive Brady and Ethel Neubauer. This is one of the live lodges in this fraternity in Wright county. There have been other lodges of this order in Wright county, but they have gone down, except the one at Clarion, which data was not furnished the author of this work.

#### ODD FELLOWS IN WRIGHT COUNTY.

The first lodge of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows in Wright county was organized at Belmond on October 22, 1874. The records of this lodge were burned on February 8, 1898, but, as far as can be learned, the charter members were Harry Parker, D. L. Cuppett, L. E. Metcalf, E. A. Howland, N. F. Weber, Samuel Zehrung and C. B. Winter. The past grands have been B. A. Anfinson, R. C. Bras, Jos. Bohning, I. H. Benson, R. N. Burress, G. W. Cram, L. A. Cram, A. G. Cram, T. A. Davenport, J. D. Dryden, F. C. Felton, J. H. Fetrow, C. O. Fitts, George Hake, W. F. Hembl, R. H. Klemme, E. E. Kinney, M. H. Luick, C. P. Luick, E. M. Lathrop, J. H. Libby, J. E. Middleton, William Nelson, J. H. Neal, Ole Olson, D. E. Packard, E. A. Pierce, W. R. Ramsay, A. W. Russell, J. E.



Rathbue, F. A. Stevens, F. E. Snyder, E. H. Sands, P. J. Scarbro, E. L. Tiede, W. E. Werts and R. E. Webb. The lodge now has a membership of one hundred and thirty-nine. The 1915 officers (first half year) were: T. N. Davenport, noble grand; E. E. Wilcox, vice-grand; D. E. Packard, secretary, and Joseph Bohning, treasurer. Mr. Packard has served as secretary for thirty-six years in succession.

When first organized, the Belmond lodge of Odd Fellows met at Cutler's hall; then moved to the building erected by D. L. Cuppett, where Val Griesy's hardware store now stands. Next the lodge moved to the second floor of that building, and there continued to meet till E. S. Hubbard erected a building, to which the Odd Fellows added a second story. The lodge was incorporated in that year and met in its own hall up to February 8, 1898, on which memorable date the hall and all records were burned. A new brick block was then erected on the same site and the order leased a hall of J. S. White, where it is at present located.

There is also a lodge of the Daughters of Rebekah at Belmond, having about eighty members.

#### ODD FELLOWS AT DOWS.

The Odd Fellows lodge at Dows, known as Ridgley Lodge No. 450, was formed on May 15, 1882, and now has a membership of forty. The district officer, Brother Millville, of Eldora, organized the lodge with the following members: Robert Hopkins, D. H. Pepper, John L. Wilds, and C. H. Deilman. The first officers were: Robert Hopkins, noble grand; D. H. Pepper, vice grand; John L. Wilds, secretary, and C. H. Deilman, treasurer. New members who took the work were: H. H. Williams, C. H. Ingleking, J. M. Rice, Edward Stearns, H. H. Baker, H. H. Oberton, Iowa Falls team No. 100 exemplified the work.

The elective officers of the above lodge are: Charles Kuhn, noble guard; R. H. Moyers, vice grand; W. H. Bray, secretary; G. A. Bailey, treasurer. The first past grands are: W. H. Bray, H. Bray, C. M. Flint, J. S. Williams, James Rice, T. L. Severe, A. A. Smith, W. E. Beach, Joe Rice, Charles Hughes, Ottis Ondler, Charles Kuhn.

W. S. Bray, finished the fourth degree in March, was appointed to office to fill a vacancy and was elected vice grand the following July; took noble grand, January 1st, filled the office one year, then was elected secretary and has filled the office ever since.

The lodge of the Daughters of Rebekah at Dows was organized on



October 23, 1903, as Primrose Lodge No. 179, with the following members: James Williams, Elizabeth Williams, A. A. Smith and wife, C. M. Flint, E. C. Hammond, James Frost, Amande Oleson, Etta Peterson, Clara Peterson, Fred Simptson and wife, Susie Simptson, Ede Albert, Mary Albert, Hulda Krummenaugh, Mrs. C. J. Murry, Clara Murry, Mina Hopkins, Nettie Beach, Flora Popejoy, Meria Severs, Elizabeth Oberton, Flora Thayer, F. Popejoy, Fred Ladendorf and wife, G. H. Jameson and Loreta Hoyte.

The 1915 officers of the above lodge are: Mrs. W. H. Bray, noble grand; Mrs. Nettie Hughes, vice grand; Mrs. L. R. Fobes, secretary; Mrs. Libby Corbin, treasurer. The Odd Fellows at Dows own their own hall. At first they met in Hopkins's furniture store; then had an upstairs room, which was destroyed by fire in 1893, after which they located at their present site.

#### EAGLE GROVE ODD FELLOWS.

Golden Links Lodge No. 68, Independent Order of Odd Fellows, at Eagle Grove, was organized on September 22, 1884, and received a charter on October 23, 1884. The first elective officers were: W. H. Jacobs, noble grand; George E. Correll, vice grand; A. Engle, secretary, and N. B. Paine, treasurer. On June 1, 1915, the lodge enjoyed a membership of one hundred and sixty-four, with officers as follow: Charles Ogers, noble grand; G. M. Winter, vice grand; S. H. Williamson, secretary, and C. C. Christensen, treasurer.

The following list of charter members may be read with interest by the fraternity: W. H. Jacobs, N. B. Paine, J. L. Neff, E. A. Howland, H. M. Belt, A. Walbridge, Charles Sheets, J. A. Correll, J. Sterling, J. H. Anderson, W. C. Ennis, J. McDonald, J. O. Prehm, George E. Correll, F. Bauer, E. K. Barnard, L. H. Goodall, W. Winebrenner, J. Yearouse, T. B. Cowan, C. Kitcart, F. C. Buchom, James Marshall, C. O. Bailey, John Culivan, A. Engle, S. W. Morehead, Thomas Shern, H. E. Boughton, C. A. Shafer, R. W. Merriman, J. G. Keller, M. J. Root, A. E. Bradley.

Following are the past noble grands: G. E. Correll, J. S. Fout, A. P. Johnson, E. E. Bradley, W. A. Paine, J. S. Paine, J. W. Porter, S. H. Williamson, W. A. Myers, A. L. Yearons, R. Franks, R. A. Franks, C. Christensen, G. A. Vaughn, R. I. Stultz, S. W. Kinman, G. L. Trask, O. A. Schoonover, Harry Schoonover, George E. Scott, G. L. Webster, E. C. Jewett, J. O. Johnson, J. W. Weizel, H. F. Wasem, H. R. Wasem, John Phippen, M. D. Braden, G. W. Baker, C. F. Carder, H. A. Good, Burt Magill, F. C. Wells, C. Wilde, W. J. Cunningham, C. T. Sidwell, R. J. Haviland, Sam



Middleton, Paul Flower, William Saddon, H. F. Davidson, John B. Hatch, H. B. Bobenhouse, J. R. McCurry, S. McIntyre, A. H. Waddell, G. Nelson, H. Sorenson, H. Nebergall, L. C. Nichols, John Keena, John Griswold, G. C. Hurlbutt, Henry Saner.

This lodge first met in the K. of P. hall on Fifth street; later in Opera Hall block, on Broadway, until the new hall in the second story of a frame building on Broadway was completed in the fall of 1911, and has occupied new hall, in the third story of the new brick building on the corner of Broadway and Park avenue, its present home, since the latter's completion.

Eagle Grove Lodge No. 191, Independent Order of Odd Fellows, was instituted on October 20, 1887, with twenty-four charter members, and in December, 1891, it had grown to forty-one members. The first officers were R. W. Merriman, noble grand; O. H. Brooks, vice grand; W. V. Palmer, secretary, and N. B. Paine, treasurer. The lodge met in December, 1891, on the east side of the town of Eagle Grove.

Golden Star Lodge No. 129, Daughters of Rebekah, at Eagle Grove, was organized on May 21, 1885. The first officers were: Mrs. S. M. Morehead, noble grand; Mrs. E. K. Barnard, vice grand; Miss Jennie Bowman, secretary, and Mrs. H. M. Belt, treasurer. Just how long this lodge prospered is not known to the writer, but it does not seem to exist today.

#### CLARION ODD FELLOWS.

Clarion Lodge No. 124, Independent Order of Odd Fellows, was organized on June 18, 1883, with charter members as follow: M. A. Kellogg, E. C. Middlecoff, S. Swartzendrover, S. B. Hamilton, N. F. Weber, Z. C. Bradshaw, Clem Stone, G. W. Middlecoff, J. M. Stella, H. A. Stowe, J. E. Rowen, A. N. Minor, S. Overacker, Jesse Smith, A. R. Ladd, P. K. Daily, W. C. Morton, A. G. Overacker, Thomas Shillington. The first officers were: S. B. Hamilton, noble grand; N. F. Weber, vice grand; E. C. Middlecoff, secretary, and Z. C. Bradshaw, treasurer.

The present total membership of the lodge is one hundred and forty-seven, and the 1915 elective officers are: Art Shillington, noble grand; D. R. Pondstone, vice grand; P. O. Brandon, secretary, and L. L. Kirkpatrick, treasurer. A hall and store building were purchased in 1908, at a cost of five thousand six hundred dollars. Four degrees are now worked in this lodge.

Woolstock and Goldfield both have thriving lodges of this order.



## ANCIENT ORDER OF UNITED WORKMEN.

The above excellent fraternal insurance and benevolent order—the oldest mutual benevolent society in America—is represented at this date in Wright county, at Eagle Grove and Clarion.

Anchor Lodge No. 321, of Eagle Grove, was organized in 1890, with eleven members, by William Wilson, of Washington, Iowa, and Deputy Grand Tilton, of Des Moines. It has had as high a membership as ninety, but owing to a chain of unfortunate circumstances, this membership has been reduced to twenty-four, its present officers being: A. Yearous, master workman and financier, and T. J. O'Toole, recorder. The order meets at I. O. O. F. hall. The order has lost by death six members, none of whom was in good standing at the date of death, hence the beneficiaries did not receive anything in way of insurance. This was no fault of the order, but of the men who were neglectful of keeping up their dues. This circumstance, with removals from the city, has greatly weakened the former strength and interest in the order at Eagle Grove.

At Clarion, Maple Leaf Lodge No. 361 was organized in November, 1905, the charter members being: H. G. Sadoris, P. C. Shaw, F. M. Stockwell, Thomas Nelson, E. D. Tompkins, W. S. Dean, F. McCoy, R. B. Sweet, J. D. Haut, J. W. Reeder, William Umland, A. A. Robish, J. E. Beck, J. J. Castleman, Ed Eilers, A. F. Porter, C. T. Stockwell, W. H. Chapman, C. F. Johnson, M. McAlexander, Walter Martin, S. J. Birdsall, Fred Groves, George McNeilus. Many of these men were railroad employes of the Chicago Great Western Company, and are still connected with the order there or elsewhere. The lodge at Clarion is not as strong as it was at one time.

## MODERN WOODMEN OF AMERICA.

Camp No. 2868, Modern Woodmen of America, was organized at Goldfield on April 10, 1895, and now has a membership of seventy-five, the camp using the I. O. O. F. hall for a meeting place. The charter members of this lodge were as follow: A. W. Moseley, John Keith, J. C. Foote, G. W. Rissinger, H. H. Hanna, W. C. Knight, Lem Biesell, Mike Lambert, William Hiday, A. B. Biesell, J. F. Pulver, M. Tyler, A. P. Beck, George Hawkins, William Beals. The first officers (elective) were: W. C. Knight, venerable consul; A. W. Moseley, worthy advisor; John Keith, clerk; J. C. Foster, banker, and George Hawkins, escort.



The past presiding officers are: W. C. Knight, J. A. Conger, A. B. Biesel, W. E. P. Eckles, George H. Hawkins, G. M. Ressinger, James A. \_\_\_\_\_, L. P. Stevenson, A. P. Buck, G. F. Kerster and L. B. Newton.

Camp No. 4079, Modern Woodmen of America, was organized at Dows on July 23, 1896, with the following charter membership: F. W. Tutin, T. L. Severe, F. G. Mills, Ole Houg, James Skirwing, W. A. Monroe, W. H. Peyton, L. Rood, A. L. Sloager, F. Walton, F. E. Whitney, S. A. Wright, F. H. Braden, W. H. Braden, S. P. Conoover, A. Granau, George Kirkpatrick, S. H. Mendell, F. Simpson, J. W. Smith, Dr. D. C. Young.

The present officers are: J. M. Little, venerable consul; T. W. Gankle, worthy advisor; J. E. Hungerford, banker, and C. E. Hammond, clerk. The total present membership is one hundred and fifty-four. The first two years I. O. O. F. hall was used as a meeting place, but since that date the camp has leased a hall of Mulnix Brothers. The camp is in a flourishing condition and is aided materially by the auxiliary society—the Royal Neighbors.

Maple Leaf Camp No. 1201, Royal Neighbors, at Dows, was formed on November 25, 1898, by Gertrude Pope, deputy supreme oracle, with the following charter members: Edith Birdsall, Amanda Simensen, J. C. Power, Julia Power, Carrie Shager, Estella Graynan, Mary Hemenway, Cora Rood, Bertha Reeh, Mary Kirkpatrick, Adella Butts, Maggie Braden, Mabel Walton, Florence Mills, A. L. Shager, Triphena Wedekin, Clara Peterson, Maty Barber, Mora Rummell, Vivian Lotts, Minnie Whipple, Tillie Anderson, Amanda Oleson, Mary Léntz, A. L. Ondler, Kate Ondler, Jennie Mulnix, Emma Kughn.

The present officers are: Ella Akers, oracle; Clara Peterson, vice oracle; Edna McCoy, past oracle; Clara Davis, chancellor; Mary Barber, recorder; Etta Meyer, receiver; Maggie Bradon, marshal; Blanche Baxter, inside guard; Annie Oleson, outside guard, and Dr. O. A. Kellogg, physician. The present membership is about ninety.

Boone Valley Camp No. 3651, Modern Woodmen of America, was organized at Eagle Grove on March 6, 1896, with Andy Schriber as consul and S. C. Graham, clerk. There are now one hundred and five members in the camp, the present officers being: C. J. Fuch, venerable consul; E. L. Loemiller, worthy advisor; L. Kubersheck, banker, and G. A. Jones, clerk. The past presiding officers have been: F. C. Wells, venerable consul; G. W. Shamce, worthy advisor; F. A. Kubersheck, banker, and J. K. Boker, clerk.



The charter members of this camp were as follow: W. H. Archer, R. A. Bohner, R. Bohner, Elmer Bradley, Newton Bawn, G. E. Boner, W. A. Brisbin, Chris Christensen, L. P. Everz, Samuel P. Graham, E. T. Gundersen, Emil Haase, William G. Craig, E. H. Lyons, Robert Meriman, Thomas Murphy, William A. McKeney, C. H. Porter, John Porter, S. A. Middleton, Andy Schriber, G. A. Vaun, W. A. Brisbin, E. W. Taylor, Charles Lircke. The camp is materially aided by the existence of an auxiliary society known as the Royal Neighbors, which society has a membership of fifty-seven.

At Woolstock, Camp No. 3227, Modern Woodmen of America, was organized on January 1, 1904, the first clerk being L. B. Hopling. The 1915 clerk is F. C. Kitley, with R. R. Jones as consul. The membership in May, 1915, was reported as eighty-six. This camp also has its auxiliary of the Royal Neighbors, which is of great benefit in keeping up a lively interest in the work of the camp.

Nearly every town and hamlet in Wright county has a Modern Woodmen camp, some being strong and others weak in membership. The details of some of these societies have failed to come to hand in time for insertion in this work. At Clarion, Camp No. 3705 was organized in April, 1895, with thirty-one charter members. It is still in existence, with a fair membership.

#### WOODMEN OF THE WORLD.

Camp No. 86, Woodmen of the World, was organized at Eagle Grove, in 1896, with between fifteen and twenty members. It now has a total following of two hundred and seven members, in good standing, the camp meeting at I. O. O. F. hall. At one date the camp had a membership of two hundred and twenty, including many railroad men; but on account of eighteen deaths and many removals it was reduced, somewhat. It is a strong camp and has among its membership many of the best business men of Eagle Grove. The camp now has a surplus of two thousand dollars in the treasury. The officers in 1915 are: Ray Vaughn, presiding officer; Victor Vaughn, advisor; E. C. Platt, banker; J. W. Porter, clerk; William Sadden, Andrew Christensen and Art Gode, managers. Three degrees are worked there.

A Woodmen Circle (woman's order) was organized in 1897 and has fifty-two members. There has not been a death in this circle in its whole history. Its clerk is Mrs. Nels Volding; its advisor is Mrs. Andrew Christensen, and Mrs. Joseph Smith is worthy guardian.



## YEOMEN LODGES.

The Yeomen of America is an Iowa institution having originated at Algona many years ago. The head offices were moved to Des Moines and since then it has spread to all parts of the country. A lodge of this benevolent order was established at Goldfield in 1898, its original officers being: S. H. Carse, foreman; J. W. Campbell, correspondent. There are now eight members, all confined to the initiative degree of the work.

The charter members of this Yeomen lodge were: John W. Campbell and wife, N. S. Nelson, M. Hanson, Lillian Green, Duncan McCallum, Catherine McCallum, G. W. Nelson, George A. Campbell, Emma Campbell, Sarah E. Duersi, Julia Brackett, A. J. Nelson, Ferdinand Frisbie, Grant Hill, Millie Eggleston, George E. Green, W. J. Beck, P. Frisbie, Harvey Campbell, Magnus Hanson, Jessie B. Brown, O. Edmondson, Lewis Warner, Peter Madson, Milo Madson, Cicero Marlin, J. S. McCallum, Anton Nelson and Frank Frisbie.

The charter was granted on February 12, 1901, with Ferdinand Frisbie, as foreman, and John W. Campbell, correspondent. Among the past presiding officers may be named: J. McCallum, J. S. Smith, N. S. Nelson, W. C. Knight, G. F. Keister and others whose names were not clearly indicated. On July 5, 1905, the lodge enjoyed a well-attended picnic at which J. D. Davidson was the speaker. He gave a splendid address on the fraternities of modern days. Four deaths have been recorded in this lodge and one total disability member. The number of this lodge is 123. Other lodges of this order are located at Belmond, No. 63; Clarion, No. 510; Eagle Grove, No. 178; Galt, No. 230; Rowan, No. 1382.

What is styled the "Homesteaders" is an order that is, in a manner, an offshoot of Yeomanry in Iowa. Goldfield and Clarion and Eagle Grove have lodges of Homesteaders.

Eagle Grove Homestead No. 178 was formed about 1899-1900. Unfortunately the records were all burned a few years ago, when the I. O. O. F. hall was burned, hence some of the early facts concerning this lodge cannot here be presented. The present (1915) membership is three hundred and eighty-five and the present officers are: H. B. Hallock, C. F. Wilde, J. H. Howell, Belle Lomiller and Emily Wilde. When first organized the lodge met at private houses. Then a room was rented in the second story of the Correll building and furnished for lodge purposes, the cost of furnish-



ing being about one thousand dollars. The property is now all clear of debt.

Eagle Grove Homestead was organized on November 21, 1907. The first officers were: R. O. Packman, president; A. L. Lukensmeyer, vice-president; J. H. Cowan, secretary; C. B. Hodenfield, treasurer, and Mrs. Hattie Cowan, chaplain, the charter members being as follow: William X. Wood, Cathryn Wood, R. O. Packman, Grace Bobinhouse, Henry Bobinhouse, William O. Eaton, Sophia Eaton, Nellie Hodenfield, Orum Eaton, William C. McGrath, A. L. Hukensmeyer, Verna Murry, Edna Webster, C. G. Mulinex and C. B. Hodenfield. The number of members at this date is one hundred and thirty-six. The elective officers in May, 1915, were: H. B. Bobbenhouse, president; J. K. Baker, vice-president; L. E. Wilson, secretary; Mrs. Velene Anderson, treasurer, and Mrs. T. J. Waddell, chaplain.

At first this lodge met at Masonic hall, but now it holds its meetings at the Yeomen hall. This is the only lodge of this exact character in Wright county. An "Art Club" is an auxiliary to the lodge—an organization for pleasure and afternoons devoted to fancy work.

#### KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS.

The only lodge of the Knights of Columbus in Wright county is that at Eagle Grove, known as No. 1579, which was organized on July 2, 1911, with charter members as follow: George E. Howell, J. P. Kenefich, S. P. Lator, Charles Lament, Xavier Wernet, S. M. Reider, Adolph Kubitschek, Dr. John E. Long, L. C. Mullen, Peter Monaghan, H. A. Cooke, William Wehrhein, M. J. Clark, Charles Merrill, Owen Sullivan, Dr. T. G. O'Toole, J. C. Barry, P. J. Barry, N. Johnson, J. T. Callopy, J. F. Keller, J. H. Plunket, J. W. Henneberry, T. H. Kenefick, Frank Mulligan, J. E. Whalen, James Steadman, W. H. Collins, George L. Indra, E. H. Allire, S. Flynn, John Dowd, Stephen Laughlin, W. J. Plunkett, J. H. Long, J. J. Nauert, Charles P. Smith, A. J. Shlader, F. J. Kubitschek, Jr., C. M. Fussellman, John F. Murphy, A. W. Tabert, B. J. Noonan, J. J. Kist, Jr., P. W. Keefe, George M. Dougan, W. A. Smith, J. F. Hurley, F. A. Dorr, Owen Bennett, Frank Lynch, J. H. Howell, E. T. Maloney, J. E. McDonald, M. E. Dunn, F. J. Kubitschek, Sr., M. Schumacher, W. J. McDermott, M. E. Noonan, C. F. McCausland, D. F. Donahoe, L. A. Bolan, L. D. Delaney, George R. Campbell, D. N. Donovan, P. H. Goslin, Rev. T. F. O'Brien, N. J. Focht, T. P. Garland.



The original officers were: H. A. Cooke, grand knight; Frank Mulligan, deputy grand knight; G. R. Campbell, recorder; Frank Kubitschek, Jr., financial secretary, and J. H. Howell, treasurer. The present total membership is one hundred and fifty-eight and the elective officers in 1915 are: G. R. Campbell, grand knight; T. H. Kubitschek, deputy grand knight; T. E. Shea, recorder, and J. H. Howell, treasurer. This lodge meets at Yeomen hall, where the first, second and third degrees are worked.

#### IMPROVED ORDER OF RED MEN.

The Improved Order of Red Men was represented at Clarion by a tribe organized in April, 1899, with the following charter members: D. L. Nagle, C. L. Speight, W. H. Brown, A. A. Fox, C. Marsh, M. A. Crawford, Ralph Wilkins, E. E. Thomas, G. A. Glendy, C. E. Sturgeon, Frank Yarnell, B. Mowers, George Smith, Ole Mickelson, V. H. Cushway, J. McDougall, Thomas Carpenter, M. Thompson, W. E. Baker, Charles Jackman, O. H. Soseman, Roy Mowers, Arthur Mason. After a brief existence, for several reasons, principally because of warfare between the various tribes, this lodge went down, its life having been only about that of "two moons."

#### GRAND ARMY OF THE REPUBLIC.

The Grand Army of the Republic is one of the secret orders, or fraternities, that is known in almost every town and hamlet in all the Northland, as a patriotic memorial fraternity, established in the late seventies by that gallant volunteer, Gen. John A. Logan, of Illinois. Wright county has had the following posts of this military order, which was re-organized in the early eighties: General Lyon Post No. 133, at Clarion, organized on February 25, 1883; Whited Post No. 247, organized on December 7, 1883; Hartman Post No. 149, organized on March 19, 1883, at Goldfield; William B. Griffith Post No. 465, Eagle Grove, organized on August 26, 1889, and A. B. Wallace Post No. 488, Dows, organized on February 21, 1891.

The oldest post in the county is that at Goldfield, Hartman Post No. 149, organized on March 19, 1883, which now has dwindled to a membership of ten veterans of the Civil War. At first they met at the law office of Comrade Captain S. M. Huyck; then in Brackett's hall; then in Odd Fellows hall and are now holding their meetings in the office of T. L. Knight.

The charter members of Hartman Post, as shown by the roster, were: I. S. Smith, C. E. Agard, Ed Brown, C. D. Field, S. C. Farmer, F. A.



Belknap, W. O. Dean, S. M. Huyck, W. F. Kimball, Milo Plumley, C. H. Griffith, W. V. Polmateer, J. R. Tyler, A. A. Taft, W. J. Spooner, Walt M. Sawin, F. Hartsock, J. H. McCurry, W. C. Moseley and C. E. Gould. The past commanders have been: C. D. Field, S. M. Huyck, Walt M. Sawin, I. S. Smith, L. L. Thrall, W. C. Moseley, F. Hartsock, S. C. Farmer, T. L. Knight, W. H. Hoskin, F. T. Philbrook, C. H. Frost, George W. Albee, O. B. Keister, D. N. Burnett, C. R. Pinder, A. O. Waid and W. Robinson.

The officers serving in June, 1915, were: S. C. Farmer, commander; Walt M. Sawin, senior vice commander; W. C. Moseley, junior vice commander; T. L. Knight, chaplain; O. B. Keister, adjutant and quartermaster; D. N. Burnett, officer of day; M. Duerst, inside guard; W. Robinson, outside guard.

William B. Griffith Post No. 465, Grand Army of the Republic, at Egle Grove, was organized on August 26, 1889, by L. P. Train, of Ft. Dodge, Iowa. The charter members were Civil War comrades and veterans as follow: J. C. Heckert, J. B. Dixon, E. W. Archer, S. Northrop, E. J. Davis, L. Hathaway, J. M. Miller, E. F. Griffith, S. Elliott, R. Thomas, C. H. Griffith, O. Clayton, T. R. Sidwell, J. J. Andrews, J. Brown, A. A. Walbridge, W. N. McVicker, William Dwyer, J. S. Renne, W. H. Cooper, William Card, T. E. Mathews, E. Ely, James Boole, W. S. Comstalk, S. G. Iogon, J. Fitzmaurice, N. Slakin, A. L. Davis.

The present (1915) elective officers are: R. France, commander; F. W. Flower, senior vice commander; J. Koeppler, junior vice-commander; E. F. Griffith, adjutant; F. M. Hicks, chaplain; J. T. Arcerd, officer of the day; F. Corliss, surgeon; N. V. Connor, officer of the guard. Several of the Grand Army posts of Wright county have gone down, their numbers being so reduced by death as to render further organization impossible.

General Lyon Post No. 133, at Clarion, was organized on February 16, 1883, with the following charter members: H. Alder, W. W. Gates, W. G. Gibbs, E. J. Culver, A. S. Fox, J. Pearl, J. R. Lockwood, W. G. Cole, S. Overacker, H. L. Rowe, M. C. Lester. Ninety-one veterans have belonged to this post, as shown by the muster rolls, but the present membership is but nine. The past commanders have been: W. W. Gates, Ben Entriken, A. R. Ladd, P. S. Morton, A. S. Ladd, A. S. Fox, H. H. Cory, D. N. Yarnell, H. Alder, A. S. Fox, A. R. Ladd, W. F. Gibbs, William E. Walker, from 1905 to present date—1915. The adjutants have been: H. Alder, from 1883 to 1898; J. M. Stella, from 1898 to 1914; A. R. Ladd, 1914 to 1915.



The Woman's Relief Corps has been of great service in keeping up the post at Clarion, as it has nearly everywhere else, in the last twenty years. Indeed, it is doubtful whether the post could have survived, financially, without the support rendered by these noble wives of the Civil War veterans.



## CHAPTER XVIII.

### PHYSICIANS AND MEDICAL SOCIETIES.

In all ages of the world, among both civilized and uncivilized people, the medical profession has been held in high esteem; whether it be the learned professor, who has studied the science of medicine in all of its branches, or the "great medicine man" of the untutored savages, who from actual experience has made discoveries of the healing powers of herbs and roots,—honor awaits them on every hand; while the life or death of every human being is virtually placed within their hands for safe keeping. The weary patient lying upon a bed of pain, and the no less weary watcher, wait anxiously for the coming of the "good doctor," and on his arrival, note his every movement and every expression of countenance for a ray of hope.

The science of medicine has made, perhaps, greater strides and advancement than almost any other science. Diseases that formerly were considered as incurable are now handled with almost a certainty of cure. Every civilized part of the globe has for the past half century been making research and careful experiments concerning the origin and scientific treatment of diseases. Each vies with the other and exchanges and interchanges thoughts and discoveries until now, when one country finds a suitable remedy, the discovery is proclaimed in all parts of the world at once.

In times of health and strength, there are thoughtless ones who speak lightly, and sometimes sneeringly, of the doctor; but when these persons are themselves on beds of sickness; when the fevered brow and parched tongue cause them weary sleepless days and nights, the question comes before them in altogether another light, and they welcome the physician into the sick chamber.

In the matter of surgery, the last quarter of a century has unfolded many things which have revolutionized that science. The achievements in surgery and hospital work have come to be astounding to the laymen who perceive the wondrous work of the trained surgeon and trained nurse.

The "pill doctor" and the "saddle-bag" physician had their day—did what they could, faithfully and well, but a better day has dawned for humanity.



## MEDICAL FRATERNITY OF WRIGHT COUNTY.

The medical fraternity of Wright county has, with rare exceptions, been made up of men who were, and are, an honor to the profession. They have ever been ready to respond to the call of duty. The winter's cold, the summer's heat, or the rains of spring and autumn, did not keep them back when the cry of distress reached their ears. They have been compelled to cross trackless prairies; to face blizzards, often with no hope of receiving fee or reward, but only to relieve, if possible, those who pleaded for their care. All this has been done by the physicians of Wright county without complaint. These good deeds of the profession should be remembered, and when the names of these pioneer doctors are recalled to mind, it is hoped the hearts of the old settlers will be touched, and all will respond, "May God bless them."

Perhaps the first physician to locate in Wright county was Dr. L. H. Cutler, father of G. L. Cutler, now residing at Clarion. He located at Belmont and had much to do with the upbuilding of that sprightly town. He built there the first frame house and operated a steam saw-mill as early as 1856. He was interested in all the pioneer enterprises of Wright county, and made a strong fight for the location of the county seat on the Iowa river, but fate decided that Liberty, on the west side, should be the first seat of justice. Doctor Cutler removed from Ohio to Wisconsin, and from there to Freeport, Illinois, in 1855 coming to Wright county, Iowa. When he arrived in Belmont—the site of it, for then there was no Belmont—he found all in a wilderness state, wild animals numerous and rank prairie grass covering the vast, trackless prairies. Elk and wolves roamed at will, everywhere. Doctor Cutler commenced practicing medicine and for many years was the faithful "family doctor" for many of Wright county's earliest settlers. He rode his horse over from the Iowa to the Boone river settlement, when there was not a tree or a house to be seen between the two streams. He treated the sick at Liberty (now Goldfield) before the Civil War cloud appeared, and sent a son into that awful conflict.

There was no weather too freezing cold, no snows too deep, no streams too wide and angry, and no roads too muddy to deter him from making his daily rounds to visit his patients. He wrapped himself up in heavy clothing and blankets, many a stormy winter day, settled himself down in a deep box on a sled, with straw and hay about his body, while his son, G. L.



Cutler, would drive the team against a fierce, wintry blast, for hours at a time. In not a few instances they were lost on the prairies and came near being frozen to death, as a result. With all that medical men of that day had to guide them, this pioneer physician treated skillfully.

#### AN ENGLISHMAN'S GOOD WORK.

In 1872 Dr. Thomas Garth, a native of England, born in Yorkshire in 1835, came to Wright county. He emigrated to this country with his parents in 1853; enlisted in the Civil War as a member of the Fourth Missouri Regiment, in August, 1862; was graduated from the Eclectic Medical Institute, Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1866; commenced practice in Jackson county, Iowa, and finally located in Wright county, where the remainder of his days were spent in the practice of his profession.

W. T. R. Humphrey of Clarion, where Doctor Garth had lived so long, wrote the following tribute to his memory: "I want here to pay a well-merited tribute to my departed friend, who was truly an honor to a most honorable profession. In the most inclement weather, over roads practically impassable, and often when there were no roads over the trackless prairie, he was always ready to respond to the call for aid, even to the remotest part of the county. During the first winter I was in Clarion, from January to the last of March, the ground was covered with snow several feet deep. Blizzard followed blizzard in rapid succession. Persons starting across the prairies might literally be said to have taken their lives in their own hands. Yet under such conditions as these, Doctor Garth never failed to respond to a call at any hour. It made no difference whether his pay was sure or not. It surely seems to me that the old settlers of Wright county owe a debt of gratitude to him and a respect to his memory that cannot be measured. He literally wore himself out in their service. No kinder, purer-hearted man ever lived in the limits of Wright county than Dr. Thomas Garth."

Another very early doctor was H. N. Crapper, who for a time practiced in the neighborhood of Liberty and Luni, on the west side of the county. When the Civil War came on he was made an assistant surgeon and went out with the soldiers in defense of his country's flag. Later, he located at Webster City, where he engaged in practice and also conducted a drug business for a number of years. His brother was Scott Crapper, Wright county's first sheriff.



## EARLY LIST NOT COMPLETE.

For many years there were no resident physicians in the county, aside from those already mentioned. The sick calls (when not attended by these pioneer doctors) were answered by the physicians at Webster City—Crappier, Hendricks, Sage, Baum, Curtis, and by the doctors at Ft. Dodge, Iowa Falls, Alden and Clear Lake.

Without trying to sort out the men who practiced after that date, by years, the following list will show most of the physicians of this county down to the present date. It is to be regretted that no more detail has been left by these truly worthy men; but doctors are too busy to record their own lives, hence it is only here and there that a sketch can be secured in this useful profession.

Charles H. Morse, of Eagle Grove, is the oldest physician in point of years in practice there. He commenced in that place when it was a mere railroad junction point, in May, 1881. He is a native of Iowa, born at Maquoketa, in Jackson county, January 1, 1856. He studied medicine under Dr. M. I. Powers, of Parkersburg, Iowa; attended normal school at Cedar Falls five years and was graduated from the medical department of the Iowa State University in March, 1881, immediately thereafter locating at Eagle Grove, where he has enjoyed a large practice ever since.

S. Adams, of Belmond, was born in Pennsylvania, in 1825, and spent his youth and young manhood on his father's farm and in common school. After reaching his majority he taught school and attended preparatory school in Philadelphia. He then entered Jefferson Medical College and the University of Philadelphia and was graduated in 1854. He practiced in Pennsylvania, and on account of ill health removed to Three Rivers, Michigan, where he practiced for eight years. He then came to Iowa, locating at Belmond, where he built up a large practice from among the best people of that vicinity. He owned, as early as 1889, a fine farm of two hundred and forty acres in Belmond township.

Frederick J. Will, of Eagle Grove, located on the east side in September, 1885. He was a native of Story county, Iowa, born in 1859. He was, however, reared and educated in Virginia, to which state his parents, a few years after his birth, returned. For a number of years he attended the Agricultural College at Ames, Iowa, and received an appointment as a cadet at the Naval Academy at Annapolis, where he remained three years, being graduated as a midshipman in the United States navy, at the end of



which time he returned to Iowa and took up the study of medicine at Iowa Center. In the winter of 1880-81 he attended lectures at the Iowa State University, after which he located at Jewell Junction, where he practiced until 1882, at the end of which time he returned to Iowa City and was graduated from the medical department of the Iowa State University in March, 1883. He then returned to Jewell Junction, where he remained until September, 1885, at which time he located at Eagle Grove. He is now the chairman of the examining board of the Banker's Life Insurance Company of Des Moines.

Albert A. Goldsmith, of Eagle Grove, a homeopathic physician and surgeon, located there in April, 1885. He was a native of Canada, born in 1855. He received his literary education at Albert University, Canada, where he also began the study of medicine. He was graduated from Hahnemann Medical College, Chicago, in February, 1884, and commenced his practice at Valparaiso, Indiana. Later he removed to Illinois, and still later to Michigan. He returned to Chicago and took his degree, after which he opened an office in Chicago, continuing in practice there till he moved to Wright county, Iowa. About 1909 he went to Canada and invested his money. He is in impaired health, and physically broken down. He was an excellent doctor and fine man in the community.

#### PHYSICIANS OF WRIGHT COUNTY.

Among the physicians of Wright county who have practiced, at one time or another, may be recalled the following: L. R. Cutler, of Belmond, who came here in 1855; H. N. Crapper, Luni and Liberty, early in the fifties, died at Webster City in the eighties; Thomas Garth, Clarion, 1872 (Eclectic), born in England, graduate of Cincinnati Medical College, 1886; J. W. Garth, Clarion, born in Iowa, College of Physicians and Surgeons, Chicago, registered here, 1899; S. Adams, of Belmond, 1879; Morse, of Eagle Grove, 1881; Frederick J. Will, 1885, now of the Bankers' Life Insurance Company of Des Moines; Goldsmith, 1885, now in Canada; G. A. Merrietta, Clarion, 1881, deceased; Bracket, Goldfield, prior to 1886; Rush Medical College, Chicago, died 1899; C. S. Knox, Belmond, born in Illinois, Rush Medical College, Chicago, registered 1886; Masse, before 1886; Sherman, before 1886; W. T. Gannon, before 1886, Clarion, born in New York, graduate of Bennett Medical College, Chicago, registered here in 1886; Wheeler, before 1886; G. B. Galer, before 1886, Belmond, born in Pennsylvania, Rush Medical College, registered 1887; J. A. Muhix, before 1886,



born in New York, graduate of College of Physicians, Keokuk, registered here in 1886; McTravish, before 1886; Strickler, before 1886; Joseph H. Sams, Clarion, commenced in 1892, a graduate of the University of Iowa (medical department); W. N. Gordon, succeeded Doctor Chassell, at Rowan, 1905; F. J. O'Toole, Eagle Grove; A. T. Hoyt, Dows; J. L. Chassell, once at Rowan, now in South Dakota; Field came to Clarion from Rockford, Iowa, 1899; W. W. Dean came to Clarion in 1899 from Nebraska; Travis, Eagle Grove; P. C. Shepherd, Dows, in 1881; S. W. Morehead, Eagle Grove, Keokuk College, born in Pennsylvania, registered in 1886; B. S. Adams, Belmont; J. L. Pepper, Clarion, 1909; E. D. Tompkins, Clarion; E. E. Best; J. R. Christiansen, Eagle Grove; W. C. McGrath, Eagle Grove, born in Illinois, graduate of Chicago Medical College, registered here 1891, still in Eagle Grove; L. D. McNaughton, Eagle Grove, at present; P. O. Trooien, Eagle Grove.

#### AN ADDITIONAL LIST.

The subjoined is found from records at the court house at Clarion, with sundry additions made by writer:

Alfred H. Baker (homeopathic), Clarion, born in New York, graduated from State University of Iowa, registered 1893; D. G. Barkalow, Clarion, February, 1887, Keokuk College of Physicians and Surgeons; John J. Bowes, Eagle Grove, born in Iowa, graduate of Chicago Medical College, 1898; A. S. Cunningham, Goldfield, born in Indiana, graduate of Rush Medical, Chicago, registered here in 1890, now at Goldfield; S. W. Connell, Belmont, born in Wisconsin, graduate of College of Physicians and Surgeons, Chicago, registered here 1895; N. O. Dalager, Eagle Grove, born in Minnesota, graduate of University of Illinois, registered here 1902; R. H. Fields, Clarion, born in Pennsylvania, graduate of Baltimore Homeopathic College, registered here 1897, now in Colorado; A. A. Goldsmith, Eagle Grove, born in Canada, registered here 1886, graduate of Chicago; George Given, Belmont, born in Canada, Marion Simms College, St. Louis, registered here 1893; Joseph George Dows, born in Persia, graduate of Rush Medical College, Chicago, registered 1898; J. M. Kilbourne, Clarion, born in Iowa, graduate of University of Iowa, registered here in 1894; M. C. Keith, Goldfield, born in Illinois, registered here 1896, now in Casper, Wyoming; James V. Lewis, Eagle Grove, born in Indiana, graduate of Ft. Wayne Medical College, registered here in 1895; G. A. Merrietta, Clarion, born in Ohio, graduate of Michigan University, registered in 1886; H. O. Mack, Clarion, born in Ohio, graduate of Western Reserve Medical College,



registered here in 1889, now of Walla Walla Valley, Washington; J. C. Mack, Clarion, born in Ohio, graduate of Chicago College of Physicians and Surgeons, registered here in 1890; McCall, Eagle Grove, born in Colorado, graduate of Still College of Osteopathy; S. G. Nardstrum, Dows, born in Illinois, registered here 1888, School of Medicine, Cincinnati, now at Albert Lea, Minnesota; Thomas J. O'Toole, Eagle Grove, born in Maryland, graduate of medical department, Iowa University, registered here in 1887, Grove, born in Maine, registered here in 1886, committed suicide; John C. Powers, Dows, born in Illinois, graduate of American Medical College, St. Louis, registered here in 1896; John L. Peppers, Holmes, born in Iowa, graduate of Keokuk Medical College, now in practice at Goldfield; O. E. Rodli, Eagle Grove, born in Norway, registered here in 1897, Royal University, Christiania, Norway; Bruce Riley, Goldfield, born in Illinois, graduate of medical department, Iowa State University, registered here in 1887, now farming near Goldfield; Franklin Stevens, Belmond, born in Iowa, graduate of University of Iowa, registered in 1891; J. H. Sams, Clarion, born in North Carolina, graduate of University of Iowa, registered in 1893, still in practice at Clarion; James W. Salisbury, Clarion, born in New York, graduate of Cincinnati Medical Institute; E. W. Travis, Eagle Grove, graduate of Long Island Hospital, 1892, was drowned; W. J. Thompson, Eagle Grove, born in Illinois, graduate of Northwestern University, Chicago, registered here in 1900; F. J. Will, Eagle Grove, born in Iowa, graduate of Iowa University, registered in 1885, now of Bankers' Life Association, of Des Moines; John H. Wallace, Belmond, born in Ohio, graduate of Bellevue Medical Hospital, New York, registered here in 1890; C. H. Wright, Eagle Grove, born in Kiowa, graduate of University of Iowa, registered in 1896, practiced here a year, moved to New Mexico and died of consumption; D. L. Youngs, Dows, born in Ohio, graduate of Iowa College of Physicians and Surgeons, registered 1895; G. C. Parsons (osteopathic), Still College, registered in 1902; B. I. Green, Goldfield (homeopathic), remained a year and relocated in northwestern Iowa; H. H. McCall (osteopathic), Eagle Grove, graduate of Still College in 1907; D. M. Middleton, Eagle Grove (osteopathic), Still College, 1914.

#### PRIVATE HOSPITAL.

The Eagle Grove hospital was completed for business in October, 1908. It was built by Drs. Morse and McGrath. It is situated on Lucas street,



near Broadway, and is thoroughly equipped with all that pertains to a modern hospital, and does an excellent and successful business.

#### WRIGHT COUNTY MEDICAL SOCIETY.

From early days, the physicians of Wright county were associated with those of a medical society in Webster county, at Ft. Dodge, up to 1898, when each county had organized a society of its own. The Wright County Medical Society was organized many years ago, with Doctor Brackett, of Goldfield, as its president. It met at different physicians' offices in the county. The re-organized present society meets three times a year, either at Clarion, Belmond or Eagle Grove. Open meetings are held at least once a year, when the laity are admitted and "papers" are read and discussed, much interest being manifested in these meetings. The present officers of this society are: Dr. T. J. O'Toole, president, and Dr. W. C. McGrath, secretary.



## CHAPTER XIX.

### THE BANKS OF WRIGHT COUNTY.

The pioneer had little use for banking institutions. He had but little money, as a general rule, and little security to put up for the use of money (which many times he could use to great financial advantage), hence had to go without it. Banks are not forerunners, but among the later branches of business which is necessary for early settlements.

The little banking which Wright county men had to transact prior to the seventies, was either transacted at Ft. Dodge, Webster City or Iowa Falls and Alden.

The first bank established in the county was that of R. K. Eastman & Company, at Clarion.

#### CLARION BANKING.

Early in the seventies R. K. Eastman & Company established a small private bank at Clarion. This bank was operated for a few years and in April, 1876, was sold to what was styled the Wright County Bank. Later, this latter bank went into the hands of George A. McKay (Mr. Eastman's son-in-law), who died in 1887, after which the First National Bank was organized by Messrs. G. S. Ringland, president; N. F. Weber, vice-president; Ed Hartsock, cashier; L. L. Estes, Webb Vincent, G. S. Ringland, W. T. R. Humphrey, Ed Hartsock and N. F. Weber, directors. The same year a bank building was erected. The first capital was \$50,000, which has been increased to \$60,000. Its charter was No. 3,796 of national banks.

The present capital is \$60,000 and the present deposits are \$180,000. Some of the best men and women in Clarion and vicinity are stockholders and patrons of this bank. The present officers and directors are: G. S. Ringland, president; M. A. Mickelson, vice-president; U. B. Tracy, cashier; F. W. Walker, assistant cashier; G. S. Ringland, M. A. Mickelson, T. H. Crowe, H. G. Tillinghast and U. B. Tracy, directors. U. B. Tracy has been cashier ever since 1891, and G. S. Ringland has served continuously since the bank was organized. Ed Hartsock, N. F. Weber and U. B. Tracy have held the office of cashier. The bank is now in a flourishing



condition. It has the confidence of banking circles and of the community in which it is situated. It will be seen by the above statements that the First National Bank, which purchased the George A. McKay banking concern, was built on the effects of the first bank Wright county ever had.

The Wright County National Bank was established on August 31, 1887, with Duane Young as president; C. M. Nagle, vice-president; C. D. Young, cashier; D. Young, C. N. Nagle, C. D. Young, B. P. Birdsall, S. H. Jones, directors. This bank was operated about two years, at the end of which time it surrendered its charter and became the private bank of D. Young & Son. It was followed by the Bank of Clarion.

The Clarion Savings Bank was organized in 1901 by W. J. French. The first officers were: W. W. Courson, president; O. P. Morton, vice-president; W. J. French, cashier; G. T. Eldridge, assistant cashier. The first and present capital stock was \$25,000. The same president and vice-president are still serving in their respective positions. The present cashier is A. E. Weber, and the assistant cashier is Hal E. Smith. A building was erected when the bank started in 1901, costing \$8,000. So far this bank has had no losses by fire or robbery. Its April, 1915, statement shows that the concern at that time had assets and liabilities amounting to \$501,710, of which total the following items appear: "Deposited subject to check," \$142,959; demand deposits, \$12,289; time deposits, \$15,720; savings deposits, \$146,613; total deposits, \$447,185. The profits on hand, after deducting all expenses, is \$14,524.

The Bank of Clarion was established in 1883, by Duane Young; its first officers were Duane Young, president; C. D. Young, cashier. Its present (1915) officers are: George W. Young, president; W. H. Trowbridge, assistant cashier; Charles J. Birdsall, assistant cashier. This is a private banking house, with a capital of \$50,000, doing a general banking business at Clarion. The proprietors own their own handsome bank building, worth \$10,000. At present the bank has deposits amounting to \$429,403.77.

#### EAGLE GROVE BANKS.

The first bank at Eagle Grove was established in 1881 by B. F. Miller, of Webster City, as a private bank, he having been one of the original bankers at Webster City, coming from Indiana at the close of the Civil War. His son is a well-known banker of Des Moines, Homer A. Miller, who made a good banking record in Eagle Grove in the eighties and nineties. After a number of years of successful operation, this private bank was



organized into the First National Bank, with Homer A. Miller as president and A. Odenheimer, cashier. The bank had a capital of \$50,000. In 1890 the federal charter was surrendered and the Citizens State Bank was organized with the same officers. In 1904 the State Bank of Eagle Grove was absorbed by the Citizens State Bank and the present officers are: George Wright, president; R. M. Smallpage, vice-president; E. C. Platt, cashier, and H. A. Wright, assistant cashier; capital, in 1915, \$75,000; surplus and undivided profits, \$22,000. The bank does a general and extensive banking business, and has deposits amounting to \$612,000. At first this bank was located in a frame building on the east side of town, but later on was moved to the west side. In 1894 a handsome building was erected at a cost of \$18,000, in which the bank is still doing business. The present directors are: George James, Eugene Schaffter, Charles Haukole, M. D. Braden, George Wright, R. M. Smallpage, W. C. Halsey, P. Larson, James H. Sterling, Homer A. Miller, E. C. Platt.

The April, 1915, auditor's call showed the following figures: Resources and liabilities, \$707,644.45; loans and discounts, \$515,719.08; cash due from other banks, \$171,827.77; surplus and undivided profits, \$20,015. The gentlemen connected with this institution are all first-class financiers; prudent, though enterprising, and have been a great aid toward building up the city in which their bank has been located so many years.

The Merchants National Bank, of Eagle Grove, situated at the corner of Broadway and Lucas avenue, was established in 1892 by J. Fitzmaurice and others. Mr. Fitzmaurice was the first president and J. P. Clark, cashier. The first capital was \$75,000, which has since been reduced to \$50,000. The present officers are L. G. Focht, president; L. J. Clarke, cashier. The present surplus and undivided profits are \$65,000. The deposits in May, 1915, were \$185,000. This has always been regarded as one of the safe financial institutions of Wright county and of northwest Iowa.

The Security Savings Bank, of Eagle Grove, was organized in March, 1899, by J. P. Clark, J. J. Garland, T. J. O'Toole, G. E. Howell and J. H. Howell. The first officers were: J. H. Howell, president; J. P. Clark, cashier; S. H. Williamson, vice-president. The first capital stock was \$15,000, which has been increased to \$25,000, with a surplus and undivided profits of \$17,000. A general banking business is transacted. The deposits in May, 1915, were \$250,000. This bank is situated on Broadway, near the Chicago & Northwestern Railroad depot. Contracts have been let for a new bank building, to cost \$10,000.



The present (1915) officers are: J. H. Howell, president; S. A. Barnes, cashier; T. J. O'Toole, vice-president; directors, O. K. Uhr, T. J. O'Toole, A. H. Barnes, G. H. Lewis, C. M. Spangler, George E. Howell and J. H. Howell. The last report shows this concern to have liabilities and resources amounting to \$300,294; deposits, \$262,782; bills payable, none.

#### GOLDFIELD BANKING.

The Citizens State Bank of Goldfield was established in 1888. It was at first the private bank of John Nicoll, who conducted it about two years, then sold a half interest to McElhinney Brothers, of Waterloo, Iowa. It was operated under the title of the Citizens Bank, until it was incorporated as a State Bank on October 27, 1902, since which time it has been known as the Citizens State Bank of Goldfield. It had a capital of \$50,000. The first officers of the private bank mentioned were: John Nicoll, president; F. F. McElhinney, cashier.

The present officers are: Tressa O. McElhinney, president; John Montgomery, vice-president; B. W. McElhinney, cashier; W. K. Blackwell, assistant cashier. The present (1915) capital is \$25,000; surplus and profits, \$25,000; undivided profits, \$15,000. The deposits in May, 1915, were \$394,298.76. Besides carrying on a general banking business, this concern writes life and fire insurance. The bank was robbed at one time of a considerable sum. The bank building consists of a two-story structure, of superior brick, the upper story being used as a printing office, and is heated by hot air. Preparations are being made to enlarge the building to make more room for desks for the increasing real-estate and loan department.

The following statement from one of the bank's officers will give the origin of banking in Goldfield: The first bank in Goldfield was a private bank run by O. C. McIntosh, who after running it several years over a hardware store, sold out to John Nicoll, who continued the business a number of years and sold a half interest to F. F. McElhinney, and, later on his brother, B. W. McElhinney, took over Mr. Nicoll's interest in the bank, and since that time the bank has advanced by leaps and bounds until the present bank, the Citizens State Bank of Goldfield, Iowa, is one of the oldest institutions in the county, its business reaching over the entire county as well as adjoining counties. The bank does a large farm-loan business, and deals heavily in real estate. The McElhinneys have been interested



in this bank for over twenty-two years, and are also interested in a number of other banks.

The Farmers Savings Bank, of Goldfield, was organized on December 1, 1909, and was chartered in the same year. Its first officers were: M. F. Coons, president; Frank Lynch, vice-president; M. H. Beery, cashier. This concern, which succeeded the old Bank of Goldfield, was organized with a capital of \$12,000, which has been increased to \$20,000; present surplus and profits (undivided), \$4,500; amount of deposits, in May, 1915, \$140,000. The present officers are: M. F. Coons, president; Frank Lynch, vice-president; W. M. Coons, assistant cashier. The bank does a general banking business. A bank building was erected in 1905, at a cost, including fixtures, of \$6,500. The resources and liabilities make a very creditable showing. This is a home bank, owned by home people, who take an interest in building up the town and community. The two mottoes of the bank are "Depositors' Safety," and "Service to the Public."

#### BANKING AT ROWAN.

The State Savings Bank at Rowan was established on May 1, 1909, by F. B. Sheldon, with a capital of \$15,000, same as it stands today. The first officers were D. E. Harris, president; O. E. Ballou, vice-president; F. B. Sheldon, cashier, the same officers still serving, with the addition of A. C. Reitz, assistant cashier. The undivided profits in June, 1915, were \$9,000; amount in deposits, \$197,700. A general banking business is transacted. The only building ever occupied by this bank is valued at \$2,500.

The present obliging cashier says he was born in Wright county in 1866 and has lived in the county all of his life. He has been in banking for fifteen years—nine years as a private banker at Rowan in an institution known as the Bank of Rowan. After two years the bank had deposits of \$10,000 and was then incorporated as the State Savings Bank in 1909, with deposits of \$100,000. He has seen land values in Wright county advance in value from forty dollars to two hundred dollars per acre here and believes that this county will ever be ranked among the best in Iowa.

#### BANKS AT BELMOND.

The first attempt at banking at Belmond was in 1871, when Dr. L. H. Cutler established a private banking house. He sold to McMurry & Eastman in 1873 and they continued until 1875 and sold to Clark & Eskridge.



In June, 1891, they incorporated as the State Bank of Belmond. Its first officers were: L. B. Clark, president; J. S. Pritchard, vice-president; O. G. Tracy, cashier. The bank erected its own building in 1892. The present president is A. L. Luick; cashier, John Berg. The present capital is \$50,000, but was formerly \$75,000. In the spring of 1915 the deposits were about \$281,072, the undivided profits amounting at that time to \$8,018.

This is the oldest bank in Belmond and has stockholders and officers well known throughout the county and stands for all that is strong in modern-day banking. The directors are as follow: Joseph Bolming, C. N. Reese, Simon Simerson, M. F. Christie, J. Pletch, A. L. Luick, Ray H. Klemme, J. T. Tyrrell, Ole Thompson, Geo. F. Elder and John Berg.

The Iowa Valley Bank, at Belmond, was organized in 1881 by G. H. Richardson. The proprietor was president and D. E. Packard was cashier. This was a private banking institution until 1892, when it was made the Iowa Valley State Bank with a capital of \$50,000, with G. H. Richardson, president; W. M. McGuire, vice-president, and M. H. Littell, cashier. The Iowa Valley State Bank was changed to the First National Bank about June 7, 1907, with G. H. Richardson, president; W. I. Rosecrans, cashier, and B. Mennenga, assistant cashier. The present surplus and undivided profits are \$5,000; present deposits, \$90,000; stock, \$30,000. The officers in May, 1915, were: W. I. Rosecrans, president; B. Mennenga, cashier; John Greenlander, assistant cashier. A general banking business is transacted in modern, business-like ways. The bank was chartered in 1907. In 1893 a bank building was erected at a cost of \$11,600.

No one doing business in this bank has ever regretted his action, for all connected therewith have been business men of excellent business qualifications.

The Belmond Savings Bank was organized in 1899 and was chartered the same year, its first officers being: Val Griesy, president; J. K. Miller, vice-president; D. E. Packard, cashier. The bank was really established by D. E. Packard. Its first capital stock was \$11,000, which has been increased to \$25,000, with a \$7,500 surplus and profits; present deposits, \$165,000. Its present officers are: Fred Luick, president; C. P. Luick, vice-president; D. E. Packard, cashier; C. O. Fitts, assistant cashier. A bank building was erected in 1899 at a cost of about \$2,800.

#### WOOLSTOCK BANKS.

The State Savings Bank at Woolstock was organized in 1892, the first officers being: L. L. Estes, president; L. L. Treat, vice-president; J. N.



Olmstead, cashier. The officers at this time (1915) are: J. W. Tatham, president; J. N. Olmstead, vice-president; D. L. Doolittle, cashier. The first capital stock was \$25,000, same as at present; undivided profits and surplus, \$15,000; deposits, \$145,000. The bank building is valued at \$4,700, in which is carried on a general banking business. This is the oldest bank in Woolstock and has always had the confidence of the fine farming community surrounding the town. The founders were all old Webster City financiers who knew how to handle money judiciously.

The Farmers Savings Bank at Woolstock was organized on August 20, 1910, by B. F. McDaniels, J. D. Reed, C. M. Spangler, J. B. Carpenter and M. H. Hirt, the first capital being the same as today, \$15,000. The present surplus and undivided profits are \$6,000; deposits, in June, 1915, \$135,000. A general banking business is transacted along modern lines. The first officers were: B. F. McDaniels, president; J. D. Reed, vice-president; M. H. Hirt, cashier. The officers in 1915 are: J. D. Reed, president; A. Kohler, vice-president; M. H. Hirt, cashier. The brick bank building, erected in 1910, is valued at about \$3,400. This institution operates under the banking laws of the state and is very safe and reliable in all its methods, the names of those connected therewith being sufficient to assure all depositors that their business is in safe hands.

#### BANKING AT DOWS.

The Farmers State Bank at Dows was organized as the Farmers State Exchange Bank in February, 1892, with a capital of \$45,000, by John I. Popejoy as president; L. R. Fober, vice-president; G. C. Jameson, cashier. Succeeding this came the present bank known as the Farmers State Bank, organized in March, 1912, with a capital of \$25,000, same as today. Its first officers were: G. H. Jameson, president; W. P. Mendell, vice-president; O. M. Benson, cashier. The same still serve, except that the cashier is now L. L. Beinhouer. In the month of June, 1915, the deposits of this bank were \$150,000; surplus and profits, \$5,000.

The State Bank at Dows was organized and chartered in 1892, and was reorganized in 1912. It was established and officered as follows: J. C. Carlton, president; D. W. Bowen, vice-president; H. E. Schultz, cashier; U. H. Rummel, assistant cashier. Its present officers (1915) are: J. J. Johnson, president; John W. Carlton and R. W. Birdsall, vice-presidents; U. H. Rummel, cashier; L. T. Quarsdorf, assistant cashier. The original capital was \$25,000, which has been increased to \$35,000, with surplus and



undivided profits amounting to \$6,000. The bank occupies a one-story brick building, twenty-two by sixty feet in size, erected in 1897, at a cost of \$6,000. The resources and liabilities of this banking concern on April 19, 1915, were \$704,263.81, as per the published statement. At that date it carried \$656,421.28 in deposits.

That this is a safe and sound bank in which to transact business is apparent from the following list of directors behind the management: J. J. Johnson, C. M. Nagle, H. F. Klemme, R. W. Birdsall, J. A. Mulnix, Caroline Ellsworth-Morton, John J. Carlton, A. O. Sime and U. H. Rummel.

#### GALT BANKING INTERESTS.

The State Savings Bank at Galt was organized in 1898 by J. J. McGuire, S. D. Woodley, Arthur Richards, P. A. Axen, J. N. Johnson and others, the first capital being \$12,500, same as it is today. The first officers were: A. Richards, president; J. J. McGuire, cashier. The present officers are: M. A. Mickeldon, president; C. M. Nagle, vice-president; J. J. Axen, cashier. The bank now has a surplus of \$3,300; deposits, \$82,774.19. The bank building was erected in 1889, at a cost of \$2,500 and is owned by the bank. This is the only bank Galt has ever had.

#### BANKING AT HOLMES.

At Holmes, this county, a private bank was established in 1900, with a capital of \$5,000, on which a general banking business is transacted. The surplus and undivided profits in June, 1915, were \$8,000. B. W. McElhenney, of Goldfield, is president; A. E. Weber, vice-president; I. A. Stroup, cashier. Considering the demands of the little hamlet—a station on the Rock Island road midway between Goldfield and Clarion—this institution is serving well the purpose for which it was organized, and cares well for the patrons of the town and surrounding rich farming section.

#### RECAPITULATION.

In 1910 the banks of Clarion had deposits amounting to one million dollars. The showing made by the various banks within Wright county in the early summer of 1915 was as follow:



	Capital.	Deposits.
Banks of Clarion -----	\$135,000	\$1,056,588
Banks of Eagle Grove ----	150,000	1,047,000
Banks of Goldfield -----	45,000	534,000
Banks of Rowan -----	15,000	197,700
Banks of Woolstock -----	40,000	280,000
Banks of Dows -----	60,000	816,421
Banks of Galt -----	12,500	82,774
Banks of Holmes -----	5,000	-----
Banks of Belmond -----	105,000	536,000
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Totals -----	\$567,500	\$4,550,483

Besides this, these banks have large surplus and profits not included in this reckoning.



## CHAPTER XX.

### BELMOND TOWNSHIP.

Belmond is the second township from the east and on the north line of Wright county, with Hancock county at its north, Pleasant township to the east, Grant to the south and Norway to the west of its territory, which comprises all of township 93, range 24 west. The eastern and northern portions contain the valley of the west branch of the Iowa river, which unites with the main stream on the township line at the east, just above the town of Belmond. Hickory grove, a considerable body of timber, is found in the north part of this township. Along the stream named and in sight of Belmond may be found some of the finest farms in all the far-famed Iowa valley. The scenery is ever a feast to the eye. Fine farm houses of modern type, splendid barns, silos and all that goes toward making the farmer boy contented with his lot are here seen on every hand. The western portion of Belmond township is somewhat higher land, with a clay sub-soil distinguishing it from the sandy sub-soil of the valley land near by. This higher upland is rich and will outlast the soil nearer the river. The extreme western part of the township is exceptionally rolling and contains a number of sand-bottomed lakes, those called the Twin Sisters being separated only by a narrow roadway. In the southern part, Plum Grove lake was, in the pioneer days, a pretty sheet of water, bordered by a fine grove of native timber, which has long since been cut down, with the steady march of civilization. With the cultivation of the surrounding country, this lake has virtually disappeared. To be a freeholder of land in this goodly section of the county is to be more independent than a king.

The population of Belmond township in 1910 was placed at seven hundred and seventy-five, which included that portion of the village of Belmond within its territory. The Scandinavian people largely possess the western portion of the township. They are among the best citizens in the county; are frugal, honest and fast becoming thoroughly Americanized. Their homes display much good, practical taste and they fully appreciate the land on which they live, making each acre yield its annual crop, which enriches their possessions.



## ORGANIZATION.

Belmond township was separated from Pleasant township in 1860, as will be observed from the records of the county court:

"Now, on the 6th day of August, A. D. 1860, comes Henry Luick, a citizen and freeholder of Pleasant township, and presents in open court a petition, signed by a majority of the legal voters of said township, numbering thirty-one, praying that a new township to be bonded as follows: Pleasant to comprise all of township 93, range 23 west, and the north half of township 92, range 23 (now a part of Iowa). The western division to be called Belmond and comprising township 93, range 24, and the north half of township 92, range 24 (now a part of Clarion)."

In answer to this petition, Judge Calder issued an order of court in agreement therewith and decreed that the township of Belmond be organized and that its township officers be elected at the regular October election in 1860. As first bounded, this township contained fifty-four sections, which, after various changes, was finally reduced to forty, including the four northern tiers of sections in township 92, range 24, besides its own congressional sub-division, and thus made it the largest township within Wright county at that date. The bounds of the township were changed to their present limits by order of the board of county supervisors in 1883. It now comprises simply the regulation township as per congressional survey, township 93, range 24 west.

The first officers included the following: Elias Dunond, William Whited and A. Elder, trustees; George A. McKay, clerk. The latter soon resigned and Dr. L. H. Cutler was appointed to fill the vacancy. L. S. Hazen was elected county supervisor and became a member of the first board under the county supervisor system, the county judge rule ceasing on January 1, 1861.

In early days Belmond township was the banner township in the matter of public schools. The first school directors did not meet until 1861, when L. C. Hazen was chosen president, L. H. Cutler, secretary, and Thomas Oliver, treasurer. This township seems to have been divided into four sub-districts, though provisions were only made at that time for two, one hundred dollars was appropriated for building purposes in district No. 1, and four hundred dollars to build a school house in district No. 4. One hundred dollars was also levied for contingent fund, and thirty dollars with which



to purchase wood, and seventy-five dollars for teachers fund in No. 4, which was later changed to No. 2. At least one school house had been erected while this was still a part of Pleasant township. The history of the schools will be found more in detail in the chapter on education.

#### VILLAGES.

The first village platted within what is now Belmond township was that portion of Belmond lying on the western shore of the Iowa river. It was a forty-acre plat, owned and laid out by Archer Dumond, who at first named it Crown Point, but later, when associated with Doctor Cutler in another plat on the east side of the stream, it was agreed to call both platting Belmond. See history of the town of Belmond for further historical account.

The only other village plat within Belmond township is that of Olaf, in section 7, township 93, range 23 west, platted by William Finch and J. N. Johnson and their wives, November 20, 1902. This village is a station point on the old Iowa Central branch railroad, running from Forest City to the southeast, now the Minneapolis & St. Louis line. The business here in the spring of 1915 consisted of a store, a few small shops and a grain warehouse, etc.

#### FIRST SETTLEMENT.

The first settlers in Belmond township were the same as first located at the town of Belmond, and are mentioned in detail in the history of that place and of Pleasant township, to which Belmond township then belonged. However, there are some interesting narratives which are not mentioned in the chapter on Pleasant township, hence should find a place here.

The first permanent settlers in Belmond township were A. Dumond, T. Oliver and Dr. J. L. Cutler, all of whom came in the spring of 1855. The year previous, however, there had come in three families who took claims, but owing to fears entertained as to invasion by Indians from the northwest, they had fled, making way for the coming of men who had the courage to stay by their property and protect their rights as white settlers.

This band of pioneers which arrived in the spring of 1855 set to work and erected a log cabin, in which no less than twenty-one persons lived through the summer of that year. The first frame house built in the township was that of Dr. J. L. Cutler in 1856, in which he opened a store. It appears that when the Doctor came, in 1855, he entered his land and then



went home, but returned early in the spring, bringing with him his family and six men. In partnership with a Dumond, he then set to work and built a saw-mill, on the east bank of the Iowa. A few months later it was washed away by the floods. During the autumn of 1855 and the spring of 1856, nine families settled in the township, receiving a hearty welcome from those who had preceded them. In the spring of 1857 we again find Doctor Cutler engaged in erecting a steam-mill a little south of the site of his first mill, which was washed away. The machinery of the mill was finally moved to Kansas.

#### INDIAN SCARE OF 1857.

Every present survivor who lived here in 1857 recalls the awful Spirit Lake Indian massacre, of April, that year. The following account of the effect it had on the settlement in this part of Wright county, was graphically written by an old settler in the sixties, not long after its occurrence, and is here presented:

The news of this horrible butchery spread over all the Northwest, filled the settlers with the greatest alarm, and every preparation was made by the few settlers of this township to defend their homes to the last.

In this great extremity, when people were fleeing from their homes to avoid the scalping knife or the tomahawk of the blood-thirsty Indians, the people of Belmond and Pleasant township, and a number of men from the adjoining county of Hancock, assembled at Doctor Cutler's store and organized themselves into a military company, with the Doctor as captain. Upon this organization being effected, the men immediately set to work and erected a mud fort on the west side of the river, on the top of a hill overlooking the now beautiful village of Belmond. A few families left to seek a safer abode, but by far the greater portion remained, and even the wives of the brave men who formed the military company volunteered to remain and share the fate of their husbands, cooking for them in turn and doing everything in their power to assist them as they labored.

For better security, the women were all gathered in one log cabin, while the men remained in the fort and established a regular routine of military discipline. Pickets were established and sentinels posted, who were relieved regularly, and everything began to assume a military attitude. They knew well what kind of an enemy threatened them; they knew they were cunning, crafty, shrewd and treacherous, and they knew also that nothing could move them to be merciful, and, knowing this, they were ever on the alert and always attentive to duty. After waiting several days without



hearing any word from their brother settlers on the Boone, and fearing they had all perished, they dispatched O. W. McIntosh and Thomas Sheets on a scout to the Boone river to learn how matters stood in that direction, with instruction to return within twenty-four hours. On reaching the Boone, they found all as still and silent as if death had entered every household and taken all their inmates. Moving cautiously, they turned their steps southward toward Webster City, and found every settlement deserted. What had become of the people? Where had they fled to? It was evident that the knife of the savage had not been at work here, for not a sign presented itself to lead to this belief, yet not a human face was visible in all that section of the county. They did not return, however, but continued down the river with the hope of finding some living person from whom they might receive information as to what had become of the settlers. On, and still on they went, but found nothing but a deserted country until they reached Webster City, in Hamilton county, where all was excitement and agitation and where the people were busily engaged fitting out an expedition for Spirit lake, the scene of the terrible massacre.

It was here that the scouting party from the mud fort at Belmond received the first information concerning the Boone settlers, for it was to this place they had all repaired on receiving the news of the horrible butchery that had been perpetrated on the settlers around Spirit lake. All this time the people at Belmond were in the greatest anxiety, for, from the reports that were brought to them by people from the north, they expected the Indians would be shortly upon them, though from what direction or at what time they were unable to say. The non-return of the scouts within the time stipulated in their instructions tended to increase greatly the anxiety that was felt by the whole community. Twenty-four hours passed, and they did not come; thirty hours, and no sign of them. Thirty-six hours had now passed since they started out, and still they were absent. Surely something must have happened to them or they would have returned. This became the prevailing belief and, upon consultation, it was deemed expedient to send out two more men, and thereupon, on the same afternoon, George Dimond and Abe Dukes were dispatched on a similar reconnaissance as the former two.

Darkness had set in long before they reached the Boone, and the same deathlike stillness that the preceding scouts had found still prevailed. Arriving at the Boone, they headed their horses down stream and, night having set in, the greatest precaution marked their every movement. With revolvers in hand and ready for any emergency that might arise, they pur-



sued their course down stream in hope of gaining some satisfactory information concerning what had taken place or what was then going on. No human form, however, was to be found. No human sound greeted their ears. Scarcely knowing what to make of the situation in which they found themselves placed, they concluded to push on down the river as far as Webster City. While moving cautiously along, ever on the alert, all at once a sound came to their ears, as something moving through the brush. What could it be? The night was dark and what or who it was they were unable to discover. Being true western men, and possessed of more than common courage, they were bound to ascertain whether the sound that startled them was caused by Indians, man, beast or goblin, and for this purpose, getting their horses well in hand, they charged toward the spot whence the noise came, firing their revolvers as they dashed along. Arriving at the spot, they discovered that whatever it was had fled, when, resting for a moment, the sound of something going across the prairie at great speed attracted their attention. They lost no time in idle meditation, but, striking their rowels into their horses' sides, dashed off at full speed in a regular charge. On sped the pursuers and the pursued, nothing to guide the horsemen but the sound of the hoofbeats ahead of them, till, finally overtaking it, they discovered, greatly to their mortification and chagrin, that it was nothing but a poor old cow that had been browsing among the brush, and which, at their approach, had taken to her heels at the report of their revolvers.

This little incident, however ludicrous it may appear now, had the effect of changing the monotony of the journey of the scouts, and of causing them to pass over a considerable distance of the way in much shorter time than they otherwise would have done.

Scarcely, however, had they overcome the feelings of amusement that had taken possession of them on discovering the object of their chase, than they descried a party of men coming up the river on an expedition similar to their own. Regardless of who or what their numbers were, the two scouts from Belmont set spurs to their horses, and pushed on to meet them. So sudden was their appearance that they filled the other party with surprise and alarm to such an extent that, on beholding them, they instantly wheeled and galloped off with a speed that rendered all efforts to overtake them unavailing. No other incident transpired on the way until they reached Webster City, where they found the two scouts that had preceded them and a greater portion of settlers from along the Boone. Next day, after inspiring new confidence in the hearts of those who had left their homes, the four



scouts started on their return march to the mud fort. While this reconnaissance to the Boone was being made, however, the party at the fort had been reinforced by a company from Alden, some thirty miles down the river, in Hardin county. No information had reached the garrison in the mud fort since the first scouting party was dispatched and the greatest anxiety was felt by all. They were determined, however, to remain steadfast, and, if the Indians did attack them, to defend themselves and their homes till the last. Fortunately, such an emergency did not take place, for, on the return of the scouts, they were informed that all danger from an Indian attack was over, and that, confidence being restored, the people generally were returning to their homes. On receipt of this information, the garrison was disbanded, each man returning to his own domicile to follow the peaceful routine of everyday life, and thus ended the great Indian scare of 1857.

Notwithstanding the Indian panic, during 1857 a fine school house was erected and, a little later, the Western hotel was built by O. O. Kent, and a splendid brick residence by A. Dumond. In 1858, G. A. Amesbury built a saw- and grist-mill on the old site of the Cutler mill. A good brick school-house was built in 1858, which stood until 1863, when it was burned.

Doctor Cutler was fond of relating, in after years, how he stood in his door and counted as many as forty elk feeding on the prairie a short distance from his house.



## CHAPTER XXI.

### BLAINE TOWNSHIP.

The history of Blaine township, as an organized division of this county, dates from October, 1879. It was cut out from Iowa and Vernon townships and originally composed all of township 91, range 23, and sections 1, 12 and 13 of township 91, range 24, which three sections became a part of Lincoln township when that township was formed, leaving Blaine township, named for the statesman, James G. Blaine, just six miles square. The first election was held in October, 1879. William Willix, Joseph Longley and B. F. Stockwell were appointed judges and H. H. Oberton and D. G. Patterson, clerks of election. Forty-eight votes were cast, and officers were elected as follow: Justices of the peace, William Willix, D. G. Patterson; trustees, James Rowen, A. S. Eskridge, E. W. Smith; assessor, C. D. Fenton; constables, William Myers, A. Strong; clerk, B. F. Stockwell. The township was at once divided into four road districts, and by 1883 there had been districts formed to the number of six. The first election was held, after the organization took place, in May, 1880, for the special purpose of voting on a proposition to aid the Cedar Rapids & Northern Railroad, and the forty-nine votes cast were all for the proposed road. Thus aided, the road reached Dows in the autumn of that year. The first election held in this township was at the Stearns school house, near the center of the township, but after a few years the polling place was changed to Dows, where elections are now held. The Iowa river enters Blaine township in section 4, flows diagonally across it into Franklin county, two miles northeast of the corner, and re-enters the township half a mile north of that point, so that Blaine township contains some five or six miles of the beautiful Iowa valley.

### FIRST SETTLEMENTS IN GROVES.

A goodly amount of native timber originally skirted the Iowa river, but it is fast disappearing before the rush of civilization. In these groves the first settlements were made. Otisville (present Dows) was the first section in which a settlement sprang up. Among the first settlers in what is now Blaine township must be noted A. S. Eskridge, who settled, at the close of



the Civil War, entering a part of section 36, where Dows now stands. His son, known as "Stubbs," still resides in Dows. William Tutin, another settler in the southwest of section 25, had a small shack and conducted a store, living in the same structure, where the north half of Dows now stands, the residence portion of that town. N. N. Hiams located in 1858 in section 4 of Blaine township, and started a store about 1865 at Fryburg postoffice. The west and northern portions of the township were settled largely by homesteaders and many of the tracts are still in the family names of the original settlers. Many of the first settlers in the vicinity of Dows were those who located on the Iowa river, but over the Franklin county line. Among the early settlers in the township was C. W. Burrows and family, in the northwest of section 36. Mrs. Eliza Inghram, a widow of a soldier of the War of 1812, received a pension in 1879 through the efforts of N. F. Weber, of Clarion, the same being for eight dollars per month, with two hundred dollars back pay.

In 1915 the township had a population of 1,445, including 685 in that portion of the town of Dows in Wright county. Its schools and churches have all been treated under separate, general chapters in this volume.

#### HORSE GROVE.

One of the prominent natural features in the township is Horse Grove, a beautiful body of timber, located in the northern tier of sections, originally containing seven hundred acres. According to traditions handed down from hunters, surveyors of the government and the earliest band of "squatters," it derived its name from the following incident:

Sometime in the early fifties, before real settlement was effected, a party of engineers and surveyors were employed in "sectionizing" over in Hardin county, when a horse belonging to a Mr. Shaw, one of the party, strayed away and wandered up to this grove. All that winter the horse kept wandering through the grove, solitary and alone, living as best he could until spring, when the poor animal died of starvation. Besides the wild animals, this was the only animal seen by the trappers and squatters during that winter. And thus, ever since that date, the place has been known as Horse Grove. Two creeks, heading in Franklin county, course through Blaine township and enter the Iowa river near Horse Grove.

It was at Horse Grove where Robert Rowen resided and where he conducted a country tavern which in its day had few equals, and where the traveler, weary and footsore, was ever welcome.





MAIN STREET, SOUTH SIDE, DOWS.



MAIN STREET, NORTH SIDE, DOWS.



ROCK ISLAND YARDS AND OLD TILE FACTORY SITE, DOWS.



## DOWS.

This town, one of Wright county's incorporated places, was platted by the railroad town-lot company, on September 28, 1880, in the northwest quarter of section 36, township 91, range 23, a part of the platting extending over to the east into Franklin county—all east of the railroad tracks. It was named in honor of one of the officers of the old Burlington, Cedar Rapids & Northern Railway (now owned by the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Company). Additions have been made over into section 25 of Blaine township, this county. It is situated in one of the most picturesque spots in this part of Iowa, the meanderings of the Iowa river gracing the eastern borders, while sloping hills recede to the west of the town site. Here one secures a wonderful panorama of the great Iowa Valley country, which has been ever noted for both beauty and fertility of soil. To fully appreciate the environments here one should visit the town in midsummer and then in the winter, each season giving different impressions and viewpoints.

The two railway lines at Dows are the Iowa Falls division of the Rock Island system and the Belmont branch of the same road. These lines were originally built in 1880, and were known as the Burlington, Cedar Rapids & Northern. The site of the present town was originally known as Otisville postoffice, around which still lingers many a fond memory of the brave, enduring little band of hardy, intelligent pioneers who laid well the foundation stones of the present enterprising place. Most of these pioneers have long since departed this life, but their names and good deeds will not be forgotten while men read and treasure historical facts.

The first to engage in business there were H. W. Wilson, William Weldon, John Jenkins, general merchandise. The first hotel was operated by A. I. Troth. In 1882-83 the hotel was conducted by Mrs. R. L. Kent; a newspaper, the *Dows Tribune*, was established in 1881 by I. C. Phifer; the first to handle grain were George Alexander and G. H. Richardson. Mr. Alexander built an elevator in the fall of 1880, near the county line. This elevator was thirty-two by forty feet, and had a capacity of fifteen thousand bushels. In January, 1883, a patent, portable grist-mill was put in, which did a large business. E. B. Willix established the first lumber yard in 1880, and the next year a yard was put in by Cole & Davis, but this failed, and in 1883 the trade in lumber was solely in the hands of Willix & Graham. Mr. Graham came to Dows in 1881 and engaged in the lumber and banking business. The first real general store in Dows was started in 1881 by Wilson



& Jenkins; the second was by Wild & Leekly, and soon afterward one was opened by Wilson & Bushnell. The first grocery store was opened by Williams & Barber in 1881, and it was destroyed by fire in the following January. O. R. Johnson was next in the grocery trade. H. J. Miller established the first hardware store of Dows in 1881, and in 1883 it was bought by H. J. Miller and H. L. Asemissen. H. E. Shultz started the first drug store in November, 1880. Two wagon shops were started in 1881—one by Ward & Hill, and the other by John Morgan. Wright & Collins had the first blacksmith shop, and were soon followed by E. Caldwell, O. H. Hanson and A. Quarsdorf. The harness trade was first represented by D. W. Campbell in 1881; the same season a shoe shop being opened by D. O. Wilson. Mrs. R. Hopkins started the first millinery store in 1882. John F. Kent was in the farm-implement trade in 1882, also about that date were G. C. Gibson and Palmer Brothers. Ward & Hill had the first implement house in Dows, and were followed by Hill & Barnes. A creamery was established in the spring of 1881 by Bushnell & Wilson, which creamery, in 1883, was using the milk from six hundred cows, producing four hundred pounds of butter daily. The pioneer meat shop of Dows was that opened in 1881 by C. B. Flindt, who, in 1883, sold to H. S. Cole. The first to engage in the livery business was Silas Palmer. The first physicians were Doctors Frisbee, Shepard and Muhix.

#### VARIOUS INTERESTS AT DOWS.

The commercial and other interests of Dows in 1915 are represented by the following: Attorneys, W. N. Brackley and R. W. Birdsall; auto dealers, Drury Auto Company, Jameson Auto Company, W. A. Loos; agricultural implements, A. Banwell; banks, Farmers State Bank, State Bank of Dows; barber shops, H. W. McComas, E. B. Sawdey; blacksmith shops, G. F. Quasdorf, John Heuer, S. K. Bach; creamery, Farmers Co-operative Company; cement works, Dows Tile and Cement Company; dentists, Dr. E. G. Lotts, W. E. Schaff; drugs, Muhix Brothers, G. W. Finn; dray lines, O. F. Westenburg & Son, J. Welch; elevators, Farmers Co-operative Company, grain and lumber; furniture, O. Bellman, C. Hammond; general dealers, J. J. Johnson & Co., E. G. Westerman, M. S. Gunderson, Ole Hong, Dows Mercantile Company, Dows Variety and Grocery Company; hotels, Hotel Dows, Charles Whittenburg, proprietor; European, A. E. Fryslie; harness, L. L. Hoffman & Company, Frank Broden; jewelers, Charles F.



Peterson, C. C. Hill; lumber, The Lampert Lumber Company, Dows Lumber Company; meat markets, G. W. Schmitt, O. T. Nolte; millinery stores, Miss Nellie Bernhart, Mrs. E. C. Hill, newspaper, the *Dows Advocate*, F. D. Fillmore, proprietor; photographer, A. L. Shager; physicians, Drs. J. A. Mulnix, Joseph George, O. A. Kellogg, G. E. Schung; restaurants, M. B. Severson, Chuck Cafe, R. P. Cobbles; stock dealers, George F. Meyer, H. S. Cole; shoe store, William Meister; veterinary surgeon, J. M. Rowan, F. D. Pierce.

The churches of Dows are the Methodist Episcopal, Presbyterian and United Lutheran—the Norwegian church. (See Church chapter.) The lodges are the Masonic, Odd Fellows, Knights of Pythias, Modern Woodmen of America, Woodmen of the World, and until recently the Grand Army of the Republic. These are all treated in a chapter on the lodges of the county presented elsewhere in this work.

#### WORK OF THE FIRE FIEND.

Dows has been unfortunate in having two or three very destructive fires within its limits. The first, which was on New Year's night, 1883, broke out in the rear of the Barber & Williams grocery store and consumed the same, with the business houses of Wilson & Jenkins, dry goods; Fisher & Miller, hardware, and other branches of business. Then again, on September 4, 1894, the "dry year," another fire destroyed the better part of the town. The fire departments from Clarion and Iowa Falls were called to aid in extinguishing this fire. The department from Clarion made the run by special train, covering the fifteen miles in seventeen minutes, but the engine did not work properly and water was scarce, hence the fire could not be extinguished in time to avert the heavy loss that was sustained. Thirty-five individuals and firms were crippled by the loss met with on that occasion, but, Phenix-like, Dows was rebuilt and in a better, safer manner than before the fire. Better fire protection was secured and since then only small conflagrations have visited the town. The postoffice, with part of its contents, was burned by the fire just mentioned.

In 1913 Dows commenced to oil its streets with crude oil, the Standard Oil Company sending an expert there to do the work. Nearly twenty thousand gallons of oil was put on the main streets of the town, since which there has been little dust. So far the plan has worked satisfactorily.



## DOWS TILE AND CEMENT COMPANY.

One of the biggest industries in Blaine township is that of making cement blocks and tile, by the Dows Tile and Cement Company. This plant was established in 1905 by Mr. Bangs. It now produces one hundred thousand tile of all sizes up to fourteen inch; also makes ten thousand cement blocks yearly, from two to seven men being constantly employed. The power by which the heavy machinery is propelled is steam. The gravel comes from a nearby gravel pit, and the goods are mostly sold in Wright and Franklin counties. It is a highly successful factory, managed by Nels Munson. It is the general opinion that the coming material for building and constructing drain tile, silos, road culverts, bridges, and even buildings, is cement, and the owners of this factory see a great future before them.

## FARMERS CO-OPERATIVE CREAMERY.

This is one of the leading industries of the town of Dows. It was established in 1897 and is situated in that part of the town which lies in Franklin county. The present building was erected in 1905, at a cost, together with the fixtures, of seven thousand dollars. Over a million and a quarter pounds of superior grade butter was handled in 1914, representing in value almost a half million dollars. The cream is brought in by farmers mostly within a radius of six miles, but a few customers live as far as eleven miles out from Dows. Steam power is employed to run the machinery for buttermaking. The engine is a sixteen-horse-power engine, with a twenty-five-horse-power boiler, the machinery all being modern and fully meeting the requirements of an up-to-date creamery plant. The president of the company is W. P. Mendell; vice-president, W. A. Burrows; secretary, H. J. Iverson; treasurer, C. A. Nicholson; F. L. Larson, buttermaker.

## FAIRVIEW CEMETERY.

Among the pretty cemeteries found in the famous Iowa valley, perhaps no town has a more beautiful site for its "Silent City" than has Dows. Fairview cemetery is situated on the crest of a very high elevation, overlooking the Iowa river and the town of Dows, where one may behold the country for nearly twenty miles—at least to the center of both Wright and Franklin counties. This cemetery was laid out in 1901 and was added to in 1913. Its improvements are fine and its monuments are exceptionally at-



tractive. The grounds are all nicely enclosed by a wrought-iron fence, and are kept exceptionally clean and attractive, with here and there an artificial shade and ornamental tree. A good cement walk leads the entire distance from the town to the sacred enclosure. The care shown the departed dead always is a good index to the character of the people of any given community.

#### INCORPORATION HISTORY.

Dows, now having a population of 1,300, became an incorporated town in 1891. Unfortunately, the sweeping fire of September, 1894, destroyed all municipal records, but it is known that the following is about a true list of the mayors who have served the town from its organization: Chris Klemme, D. H. Fillmore, John J. Johnson, C. Klemme, A. W. Seargent, Andrew Risse, A. A. Smith, T. P. Joslin, J. R. Huntington, C. Hughes. The present (1915) officers are: C. Hughes, mayor; W. F. Wedekin, clerk; J. H. Jameson, W. H. Meister, George Meyers, J. S. Capellen, F. L. Larson, councilmen; treasurer, B. Mulinix, and marshal and street commissioner, J. M. Little. The clerks who have served the town are as follow: I. C. Finnegan, C. O. Lewis, U. H. Rummel and W. F. Wedekin.

A waterworks plant was installed in 1895-96, after the terrible conflagration which swept the better part of the business district in the autumn of 1894. At first an eighty-foot well was drilled, and this gave sufficient water supply until four years ago, when a well was sunk to the depth of four hundred feet, which gives ample water for all purposes in the town. Direct pressure is obtained by means of an eighty-foot stand-pipe, surmounted by a twenty-two-foot tank.

Dows is nicely illuminated by electric lights furnished by a private company, the capital of which belongs in Michigan. The same company also operates a similar plant at Belmond. Lights were first turned on at Dows on Christmas Eve, 1914. The service extends over both day and night hours and gives excellent satisfaction.

The telephone cuts a large figure in all up-to-date towns in the county, including Dows, where the Jameson Telephone Company operates—all home capital. This company, organized in 1902 and operating in Wright and Franklin counties, now has about six hundred and forty patrons. Four persons are employed by the company, whose president is G. H. Jameson, with F. H. Peterson as secretary and manager. The system connects with four country lines, one of which has forty-two miles of poles. Connections



are made readily with all Bell telephone lines, and it has been said that one may talk with persons in any town in Iowa at Dows.

#### POSTOFFICE.

Dows postoffice at an early day was a country office styled Otisville. It was established in 1858 and was changed to Dows when the town was platted and had its first railway line. Through the kindness of the postoffice department at Washington, the following list of postmasters is here furnished, especially for this work: R. E. Train, December 23, 1880; J. F. Kent, September 16, 1885; John Jenkins, December 8, 1890; J. F. Kent, April 10, 1893; H. E. Smith, November 12, 1897; C. E. Hammond, September 16, 1902; T. P. Watson, February 20, 1915. The office at Dows is now a third-class office, with four rural free delivery routes extending into the surrounding country. The fire of September, 1894, totally destroyed the postoffice and its contents, including interesting early records. In 1914, the office was entered at night and the safe was "cracked," but, fortunately, only a small amount of change was taken. The thieves were never caught.

#### TOWN OF GALT.

This little town is a station on the Rock Island railway in section 18, township 91, range 23. It was platted as "Norwich" on January 4, 1881, by the railroad town-lot company. It has never had a boom, but has year by year added to its business interests, and today has the following lines represented: General store, known as the Pascoe Mercantile Company, W. A. Pascoe & Son; I. B. Sanders, general dealer; Galt Drug Company, A. H. Bosworth; James Parsons, furniture and repairs; lumber, coal and cement, Shull Brothers; general hardware, Fred Christainson; general blacksmithing, L. L. Broefile; harness maker, N. J. Poncin; meat market, F. L. Bernard; Galt hotel, A. L. Kellogg; grain, stock and seeds, the P. A. Axen Grain Company, S. C. Milnes, manager; the Burt Grain Company, George Christensen, manager; State Savings Bank, J. J. Axen, cashier; automobile garage, Burt Brothers; confectionery and toilet goods, C. J. Howard; barber shop, the "Tip-Top," by H. G. Firkins; physician and surgeon, Dr. William Potter; postmaster, C. J. Howard; hotel and restaurant, by Mrs. N. J. Poncin, known as the "Galt." The drainage engineer is John Boyington, who is also town clerk and is a very painstaking and efficient one.

Galt was incorporated on January 6, 1913, with the following town



officers: Mayor, C. J. Howard; clerk, J. E. Patterson; councilmen, J. J. Axen, P. Ackerman, F. N. Tibbits, O. E. Ogden and W. R. Burt; marshal, W. E. Bisher; treasurer, P. A. Axen; assessor, John Boyington. On July 7, 1913, J. E. Patterson tendered his resignation as clerk, which was accepted, and John Boyington was appointed to fill that vacancy, which office he holds at present (1915) in an acceptable manner. On September 7, 1914, Mayor C. J. Howard tendered his resignation to the council, which was accepted, and I. L. Cundall was appointed to fill that vacancy. The present (1915) town officers are: Mayor, I. L. Cundall; clerk, John Boyington; treasurer, P. A. Axen; assessor, John Boyington.

A postoffice was established in January, 1882, known as Galtville, with R. B. Hanlin, postmaster; succeeded by Frank Hanlin on November 16, 1885; J. H. Birdsall, March 14, 1888. The name was changed to Galt on April 18, 1888, and the postmasters have been: J. H. Birdsall, April 18, 1888; C. L. Marsh, December 26, 1890; Arthur Richards, May 5, 1892; J. H. Birdsall, December 11, 1893; C. H. Walton, August 21, 1895; C. D. Williams, January 14, 1897; Arthur Richards, July 11, 1900; J. A. Green, October 23, 1902; William R. Burt, January 23, 1908; C. J. Howard, September 2, 1914.



## CHAPTER XXII.

### BOONE TOWNSHIP.

The northwestern sub-division of Wright county, known as Boone civil township, comprises, at present date, congressional township No. 93, range 26, west. At its north is Hancock county; at the east, Norway township; at the south, Liberty township, and at the west, Humboldt county. The Boone river courses through the central western portion, entering the county and township in section 2, and leaving the township from section 31. The soil is a rich, black, very productive composition on the prairies and a sandy loam along the Boone river valley. Nature has done much in the way of supplying water, by means of flowing wells, which are to be had at a very shallow depth. The population of Boone township in 1910 was 504, being about equally divided among American and foreign people. The lands are all well improved and land values are up to the present prices in other sections of the county. There are no towns or villages within this township, Renwick, in Humboldt county, and Clarion, in Wright county, being the principal trading places for the farming communities of Boone township.

#### ORGANIC.

Boone was attached to Liberty township until about 1858, when it was set off as an independent precinct. The election for organization was held at the house of Charles H. Packard, and resulted in the election of Peter Groeshong, clerk; W. H. Gillespie and C. H. Packard, justices of the peace; C. H. Packard, school director; C. H. Packard, road supervisor, and C. H. Packard, W. H. Gillespie and Fred Zimmerman, trustees.

#### EARLY SETTLEMENT.

The author believes the following article, published in the *Belmond Herald* in "Centennial" year (1876) by Mert A. Packard, a native of the township, to be the best possible account of early-day matters in Boone township:

"Boone township, proper, is township 93, range 26, west of the 5th



principal meridian, but up to 1869 it composed this congressional township and also what is now Norway township, or congressional township 93, range 25.

"The first settlement was made by Scott Crapper (the first sheriff of the county), who built a log cabin in section 20, at the edge of the timber, in 1855. George Smith and Sylvester Brockway also built about the same time. The Brockway house is still standing [1876]. Several claims were made during the two succeeding years, and houses were built by C. H. Martin and a Mr. Brainard. At the time of the Spirit lake massacre in April, 1857, the settlers all left their homes and went down the Boone to Webster City, but finding that the Indians were not likely to penetrate into this county, they returned about June 1st, that year.

"During the same month (June, 1857), Fred Zimmerman, Henry Frank, C. H. Packard and Peter Groeshong arrived and located near where Luni now stands. Groeshong was a single man and thinking that it was not right for man to be alone, took to himself a wife in the person of Miss Malinda Miller. This was in 1858 and was the first marriage in the township, though a couple eloped previously to Webster City and were there united in marriage.

"The first birth was that of Alvah Packard, in July, 1857; he was the son of Mr. and Mrs. C. H. Packard.

"The first death in the township was that of the child of Sylvester Brockway, he having been bitten by a rattlesnake while playing about the dooryard.

"The first school in the township was taught by M. Y. Hood, in the cabin built by Scott Crapper. This was taught in the winter of 1857-58, before Boone and Liberty townships had been separated. The school house was not finished until 1860—sometime in the early autumn time.

"During these times the settlers had to procure their food, such as flour and provisions, from Cedar Falls or Clarksville, some even going as far as Clermont, Fayette county, for their flour; it being made at the famous Gov. William Larrabee mills, which made for itself a record in Civil War days when Mr. Larrabee furnished so many war widows with free flour.

"A postoffice was established in 1858, with C. H. Packard as postmaster, the name being Luni. Then the mail was carried as far as Goldfield, and the settlers took turns in carrying the mail from that place to Luni. The next year a post-road was established from Cedar Falls to Algona, after which mails came more regularly to the township.



## PLUCKY PIONEERS.

"The land did not come into the market till June, 1858. The settlers had to go to Fort Dodge to enter their lands that summer and it was so wet that roads were absolutely impassable for horses, consequently they set out on foot. After walking and swimming about twenty-six miles, they arrived at Fort Dodge, entered their lands and returned in the same manner as they went.

"At this time game was abundant and the river abounded in excellent fish. During the fall and winter the farmers busied themselves in hunting and trapping, as muskrats were very numerous, and otter and beaver by no means scarce. Foxes and wolves were also plentiful and bold and were shot in great numbers.

"If the people were so far removed from settlers, they still were not forgotten by office seekers, as we find that as early as 1857, Hon. John F. Duncombe and Cyrus C. Carpenter visited the place on an electioneering tour.

"In the spring of 1858 C. H. Packard and H. D. Houghton built a lime kiln and tried to burn lime; but the stone not being the right kind, the lime thus obtained was a very poor quality. However, as a poor excuse is acknowledged to be better than none, their lime was used by all the first settlers.

"The spring of 1859 was wet again; nothing could grow, and the settlers had to subsist on what corn they had kept over and what game they could shoot. Ducks and prairie chickens could be shot in innumerable numbers.

"A Mr. Miller, of Marble Rock, Iowa, built the first blacksmith shop in the township in 1858, and remained until 1860, then removed to Missouri. The first preaching was by a Methodist circuit rider, in 1857, at the old George Smith cabin, but no regular services were held until several years after that time.

"In 1860 the settlers were blessed with a large wheat crop. The nearest market was Cedar Falls and after they hauled the wheat to that place they sold it for forty cents a bushel. The first threshing-machine brought to the township was in 1860, by Packard and Zimmer, who also, a few years later, had the first reaping machine in the township.



## THE YEAR OF PERPETUAL FROST.

"1859 was memorable for it seeing frost every month during the entire year. Nothing was raised except some corn, by Fred Zimmerman, who divided it with other settlers as long as it lasted. When the settlers had to go to Horse Grove after more, there came on a snow storm, the day after they started (April 2), and they were gone over a week.

"The settlement was now coming to be in a prosperous condition and continued so until the Civil War came on. The township responded nobly to the President's call for volunteers and there was not a man drafted from this township. The following named settlers responded: Charles and William Griffith, Elliott Loomis, Oliver Hess, Henry Frank, and five of the Packard boys—A. C., Charles, C. H., Frank and George Packard. All except George Packard were in the Thirty-second Iowa infantry regiment, which did as much hard fighting as any regiment in the service; was in the brigade that saved Banks' army at the disastrous battle of Pleasant Hill, Louisiana, and later covered the retreat to Grand Ecore. Frank Packard and Henry Frank were captured at the battle, but soon effected their escape.

"Since the Civil War this township has continued its growth in prosperity, with only a few bad seasons. The grasshoppers first visited the township in 1873, but did not damage the crops to any great extent. The next year they came in greater numbers and did much damage, especially to the corn crop. The last year they came was in 1876, but arrived too late to do much damage.

"The season of 1875 was extremely wet, the Boone river rising and overflowing its banks three or four times during the summer, causing much damage to growing crops.

"The first apples grown in Boone township were by W. E. Young, on the farm later owned by Mr. Batterson. Sheep raising has been tried by the settlers but abandoned as a failure. W. H. Gillespie has succeeded in raising fine peaches on his farm, a mile out from the river. The township has been free from petty law-suits and there has never been a criminal prosecution in the township."

## TRYING TIMES.

In addition to what Mr. Packard has recorded, it should be added that about 1856-57 came to the township Fred Zimmerman, the Packards, Henry Frank, Dr. H. N. Crapper, R. Payne, A. McIntyre and W. Gillespie, all of



whom it can truthfully be said were among the pioneers of the township and county, as well. The "wet season" of 1858 compelled the settlers to resort to many different methods to obtain breadstuffs. The impassable conditions of the unbridged streams rendered hauling impossible, and necessity constrained them to live on what little corn they were fortunate enough to raise. For months flour was unseen, and all they had to rely on for meal was one corn-cracker, run by horse power; and some were even compelled to grind their corn in a family coffee-mill, in order to procure bread. During these trying times, a spirit of the greatest kindness ever existed among the little band of immigrants, and what little they had they willingly shared with one another.

There was one feature of these hard times that tended to lessen the real suffering of families, and that was the great abundance of wild game, which supplied them with plenty of meat, and the Boone river, which was then literally alive with good-sized fish of the best species for table use. These dull times did not deter the settlers from looking well to educational matters, for we find that about this date a school was held in the log cabin of pioneer C. H. Martin.

By 1870 the township had a population of about one hundred and fifty. It was during that year that a writer, well known in those days (J. H. Stephenson), said this of the township and its advantages:

"It contains many natural advantages, being well timbered, and having two fine streams of living water, one of which is Prairie creek and the other the Eagle, with a few lesser water courses. In keeping with other townships, Boone can boast of having some splendid farms, a number of which are worthy of note in this connection. C. H. Martin and E. Gibbons, located close to the river Boone, have their farms well improved, and under a high state of cultivation; while a mile or so from the belt of timber, out on the prairie, W. H. Gillespie has a very handsome farm. Around his house is a beautiful young grove, set out by his own hands, and which even now has attained sufficient growth as to render it quite an ornament of beauty to his place, and to afford an excellent shade from the summer's sun and a shelter from the severe winds of winter.

"In his garden, with other trees, stands a peach tree which, yielding its fruit, gives Mr. Gillespie the credit of raising the first peaches in north-western Iowa, with possibly one exception—that of Mr. Downing on Eagle creek, farther down in the county, who also raised a few peaches in Civil War days."



## MISCELLANEOUS COMMENT.

The schools and churches of this township have all been treated in special general chapters, hence are not referred to here at any great length.

The agricultural reports, mention of which is made in the chapter on agriculture, shows Boone to be fully up to the Wright county standard as a farming and stock-raising section. The same is true of public schools.

Of recent years the township has been thickly settled with a large number of Scandinavians, who make, generally speaking, the best of naturalized citizens, and take kindly and loyally to the American ideas of civil government.

Luni postoffice, in this township, was established in 1858, and was discontinued June 23, 1888. It had postmasters as follow: C. H. Packard, appointed 1858; H. D. Houghton, 1860; Frank Zimmerman, 1861; Marcellus Packard, 1875; Frank De Packard, 1876; William T. Drennen, 1880; George T. Packard, 1882, and Charles Packard, 1883.

What was known as Drew postoffice was established in this township in the summer of 1892, and was discontinued on October 31, 1901. The postmasters serving there were: Thomas Mitchell, appointed on June 7, 1892; William McMurty, June 9, 1893; H. P. Johnson, June 28, 1897, and H. C. Johnson, August 28, 1901.

The only cemetery in Boone township is the old one known as "Elmwood," located in section 19.

The matter of drainage has been agitating the minds of the people of this township for a number of years, and in 1908, through the efforts of J. M. Overbaugh and others, a large open-drainage ditch was cut in the western portion of the township. Another ditch has been contracted for to drain portions of the eastern sections of the township, and will doubtless be of great advantage to the landowners there.

## A LOST CHILD.

The *Wright County Monitor* of November 1, 1911, had the following concerning a touching incident that in a way reminds one of John Hay's "Little Breeches" story:

"On the evening of November 21st the farmers of Boone township were thoroughly aroused over an alarm sent out over the telephone lines, that the two and a half year old child of E. B. Huntley and wife, and the



grandson of Mr. and Mrs. J. M. Overbaugh, had been lost. The child was missed by his mother at about five o'clock in the evening. A searching party was out all night with no avail, and as the night was cold and somewhat stormy, it was feared the little fellow was lost; but at eight o'clock in the morning following, the faithful searching party was rewarded by finding the boy lying beside an old building which Grandfather Overbaugh had built a quarter of a century before, and this was two and a half miles from his home. How he had made this great distance and survived without food or mittens, no one can tell. When found his little hands were very cold and he was sobbing as if his heart would break. Aside from fatigue and hunger, with a numb feeling, the little one was well. When discovered he said: 'Me seeps on the ground all night.' It was a very long and anxious night for the parents, grandparents and friends in the township, and all rejoiced at so happy a termination of so peculiar a case—a child two and a half years old traveling in the night, in a storm, two and a half miles, and not being materially injured, in Wright county, Iowa, in November."



## CHAPTER XXIII.

### CLARION TOWNSHIP AND CITY.

Clarion township, one of the later townships organized in Wright county, was formed in 1868. At present its form is the most irregular of any in the county, and was so constituted in order to get school money with which to erect school buildings. When first organized it comprised forty-eight sections, being all of township 92, range 24, except four sections in the northeast corner; section 6 of Lincoln township (91-24); section 1, Dayton township (91-25), and section 36 of Lake township (92-25). A petition asking that such an organization be perfected, was presented the board of county supervisors in September, 1868, authorizing the election of township officers at the regular November election that year. The officers elected were as follow: Member of the county board of supervisors, R. K. Eastman; town clerk, George A. McKay; justices of the peace, Simeon Overacker and Lucius A. Look; assessor, O. T. Nichols; constables, Daniel Leonard and James Meeker; trustees, J. D. Oakley, John Pearl and Harrison Thompson; road supervisor, Daniel Leonard.

This township, being so closely identified with the city of Clarion, which is in its center, has not had a very eventful history, outside the regular routine of township business. Its records have been nicely kept and its affairs well managed by good and prudent citizens. The county seat having been located here, it was soon found that the nature of the soil, which is flat, precluded the ordinary good prairie highways, so the citizens early in its history commenced to plan for a system which would eventually bring good wagon roads to the town. The township was divided into road districts and all within the law was accomplished to get a better class of wagon thoroughfares through the township, into the seat of justice, which was finally reasonably well accomplished. In 1877, a Wauchope road grader was purchased at a cost of six hundred seventy-five dollars, which was used in Clarion and adjoining townships for many years. The first effort by the township to secure a railroad was in August, 1877, when a five per cent. tax was voted to aid in the construction of a narrow-gauge line through an old grade known as the "Duncombe" grade, mentioned in the general chap-



ter on railroads. The project was finally abandoned on account of various causes, chiefly the decision of the higher courts as to the unconstitutionality of such a tax. The old Burlington, Cedar Rapids & Northern railway line was the first to enter Clarion. (See railway chapter.)

But it should be remembered that the former large township, known as Clarion, has been cut down to a territory only including about twelve sections, or parts of twelve sections, of land in the geographical center of the county. Clarion city is within its center. It is now bounded by Lake, Grant, Lincoln and Dayton townships. It took on its present limits by act of the board of supervisors in 1881, in which year Clarion city was incorporated, when the civil township was made to conform to that of the territory included in the city limits.

The population of the present township in 1915, given as including the city of Clarion, was 2,065. In fact Clarion civil township and Clarion city corporate lines are one and the same for general purposes. Hence the history of the one is covered by the other. (See City of Clarion.)

#### SETTLEMENT.

Among the very earliest settlers in Clarion township, as first formed, were D. Leonard, William McCormick and S. Overacker. Then, after the establishment of the county seat at Clarion village (first known as Grant), the McKay and Eastman families were the pioneers in the town and helped swell the population of Clarion township. Mr. Eastman and family occupied the second story of the court house in the winter of 1866-67.

In 1874, on the road north from Clarion village, lived George Curry, Michael Goslin, John Burns, Philip Doctor and P. R. Henry—no others living in that section until Norway township was reached. In that township there were only two settlers at that date.

When Clarion township was first organized, in 1868, William McCormick was about the only settler, he having taken up a homestead in 1863. The first settlers to come in after the organization were R. K. Eastman and family, with his son-in-law, George A. McKay and family, who came from Goldfield at the same time.

#### THE INDIAN BATTLE GROUND.

In John H. Stephenson's pamphlet history of Wright county (1870) the author, who we think possibly had a very vivid imagination, gave the following concerning this township:



"What is known among the inhabitants as the 'Indian battle ground,' is situated on the elevated portion of the prairie, about one mile to the north of the town of Clarion, and consists of what appears to have been at some period of the world's history, some sort of defensive works. We arrive at this conclusion from the present appearance that the place exhibits, although how near we are correct we are not prepared to say. The works, if so they may be called, assume somewhat the shape of a horse shoe and consist of a number of pits about five feet deep, although when first made, they were probably deeper. At the southwest end there is an opening of much wider space than exists at any other point in the chain of pits, and which probably was used as a means of entrance and exit, to and from. That it has been used once by some people and for what purpose is very evident, for in the vicinity is a large heap of bones of various animals, of which, in all probability not a few may be human. This, however, is conjecture as we find no person who can throw any light on the mystery."

#### CITY OF CLARION.

When the voters of Wright county concluded to remove the seat of justice from Liberty (Goldfield), in 1865, the supervisors purchased one hundred and twenty acres of land as near the center of the county as it was possible, the tract being described as the southwest quarter of the southwest quarter of section 31, township 92, range 24, which was ordered surveyed and platted into a town site, to be known as Grant. The remaining forty acres of the purchase was situated in section 36 of township 92, range 25, just to the west of the platted village. This was the starting of what is now Clarion—the name having been changed when the postoffice department at Washington declined to adopt the name Grant, as Iowa already had a postoffice of that name. It was then the Eastman and McKay families, with a few interested in the welfare of the city embryo, met and after consulting a postal guide, their eyes finally struck the name "Clarion, Pennsylvania." This, to the ladies of the party, including Miss Cornelia Eastman and her sister, Mrs. McKay, seemed a proper name for the new postoffice and county seat, so it was that Clarion was decided upon. The facts concerning the change from Grant to Clarion have been kindly furnished the writer by Mrs. Cornelia (Eastman) Hancock, now residing in Los Angeles, California, who was one of those who liked the name Clarion for the new town and in which the family was first to settle, living in the court house building the first winter after it had been erected—1866-67; hence may be said to have been the first true pioneers of the present county seat.



## WHAT THE YEARS HAVE WROUGHT.

Vast have been the changes in the appearance of this locality, from a landscape viewpoint, since the town of "Grant" was surveyed, and Mr. Perry erected the frame court house out on the barren, storm-swept prairie, with not a tree in sight in any direction. Today, the eye rests upon many towering artificial groves, while Clarion has come to be so shaded by the trees set out by pioneer hands in the sixties and seventies, that many are now being removed. Hundreds of trees of the cottonwood and willow variety grew to great proportions and were cut down years ago, while the better class and younger shade trees have been beautifying the place a long time now and seem to one not acquainted with western prairie life and scenes, to have been natural timber found here; but not so—all was a treeless plain.

With the passing years, substantial improvements have been made; street paving, electric lighting, the advantage of railroad facilities in all directions, the building of handsome churches and large modern school houses, with hundreds of beautiful residences, have all combined to make Clarion a desirable place in which to live. The railway shops and division offices of the Chicago Great Western system of railway furnish employment to several hundred men and the surrounding agricultural section has come to be highly developed, the wealth of the farmers bringing prosperity to the merchants of the county seat. The United States census reports give the population as 744 in 1890; 1,475, in 1900, and 2,065 in 1910, and the Iowa state census for the present year (1915) places it at 2,552. For the most part, the inhabitants are native-born Americans. The greater part of the people of Clarion are actively engaged in some one of the useful modern occupations. There are, of course, the usual number of retired farmers, who having run well their course as hard-working tillers of the soil, and laid by a handsome competency, have moved into town to enjoy the fruits of their labors. Such families have the advantage of excellent public schools and are among the best citizens of the place.

## BEGINNINGS OF CLARION.

It was in 1869 that the historian wrote of Clarion: "It is without a store of any kind." Then no church spires towered high; no school bell was heard clanking in the belfry. Then teams hauled all supplies for the



place from distant cities over muddy roads and unbridged streams, but now all is carried over the bright steel highways of railway lines.

In 1873 the business interests of Clarion consisted of a dry-goods store owned by I. Q. Milliken; the land and loan business of R. K. Eastman & Company, and a small shop or two.

In 1874 Milliken's store was in a two-story building on the lot now occupied by Linebarger & Tabor's drug store. He remained five years and moved to Colorado. Mr. Milliken was postmaster, and the upper story of his store was used for the Masonic hall and other public purposes. Adjoining this was the *Monitor* office, the paper being then published by Gates & Hathaway; then came the bank and realty office of Eastman & Company, the building in which it was kept now being occupied by the Austin Abstract Company, on the south side of the square; P. L. Branham operated a small drug store; the attorneys were Nick Weber and A. R. Ladd, while the doctor was Thomas Garth, M.D., long since dead. A small shoe shop, kept by Charles Johnson, was situated on the corner where the McCoy & Nagle dry goods store now stands; E. E. Gould was the "village blacksmith," but there was no "spreading chestnut tree" to shade his forge, as was provided for Longfellow's smithy in his beautiful poem.

A mill—and such a mill!—was built about 1872 by Jacob Rohm, who utilized the winds for the propelling force, through the medium of an old-fashioned Dutch windmill, which stood just north of the present school grounds, in the northwest part of town. It was a failure, both mechanically and financially, but ground some grain during its existence.

The first private fireproof safe in Clarion was brought to town in June, 1874, by R. K. Eastman & Company, and in it everybody in town was invited to keep their valuables. It was a Diebold-Norris Company's safe, and weighed four thousand six hundred pounds.

During 1874 the following card, showing the time of the arrival and departure of mails, was running in the *Monitor*: "Mails from Webster City arrive each Thursday and Saturday, at one p. m. From Fort Dodge, arrive on Wednesday and Friday. From Belmond, on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. All mails depart on the next day after their arrival. (Signed) I. Q. Milliken, P. M."

In March, 1879, the land business was evidently brisk, according to an item published in the *Monitor* that week, which said: "George A. McKay is certainly doing business, as can be seen from the fact that during the past month \$10,000 has passed into the county treasurer's hands through the payment of taxes on non-resident lands. It is questionable whether



another Iowa real estate dealer can show as high a figure in land-tax payments."

Local press items in 1876 show that Clarion only had three stores, one general, one hardware and one grocery. It had one hotel, conducted by J. L. Brooks; a blacksmith shop, a shoe shop, a small bank, one doctor and three lawyers.

#### CLARION IN 1896.

Twenty years later (1896) a "writeup" of the town gave the following dealers and professional men—quite a contrast indeed: Three grocery stores, three general stores, three hardware stores, four hotels, three real estate dealers, two harness shops, three barber shops, three blacksmith shops, four grain and stock dealers, three millinery stores, three agricultural implement dealers, two banks, one shoe store, three dry goods stores, eight doctors, five real estate firms, two livery stables, one planing mill, eight carpenters, one dentist, one clothier, two lumber yards, one tailor shop, with six tailors employed, six insurance agents, four stone masons, three bricklayers, two furniture stores, two abstract offices, six lawyers, one laundry, two shoemakers, two wagon shops, two music dealers, five painters, one photograph gallery, two dressmakers, three jewelers, two express agents, two railroads, two newspapers, six churches, one school, with six departments, a Masonic lodge, an Odd Fellows lodge and a population of about one thousand five hundred.

The first large brick-kiln in Clarion was burned in the spring of 1881, when fifty thousand red brick were burned by D. A. Tower.

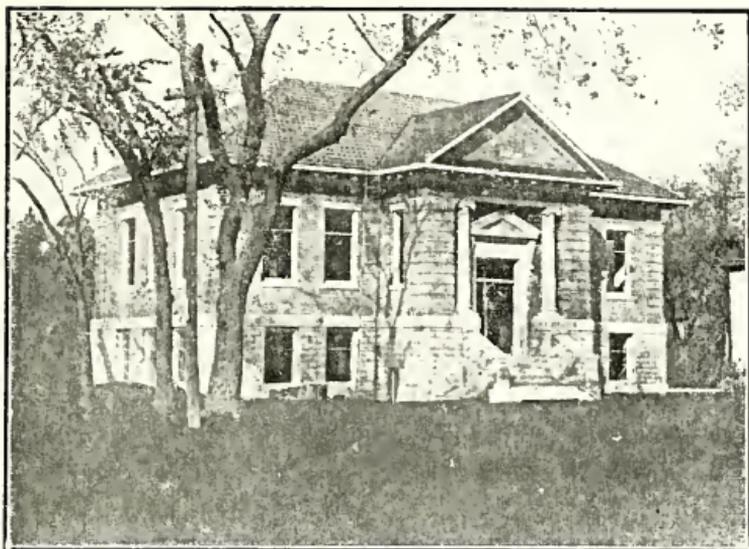
The Eldridge Poultry House, in December, 1913, in one week dressed forty thousand pounds of poultry, or ten thousand birds. Thirteen men were employed at three and one-half cents per chicken and seven cents for turkeys.

A seventy-five barrel roller flour-mill was erected in 1898.

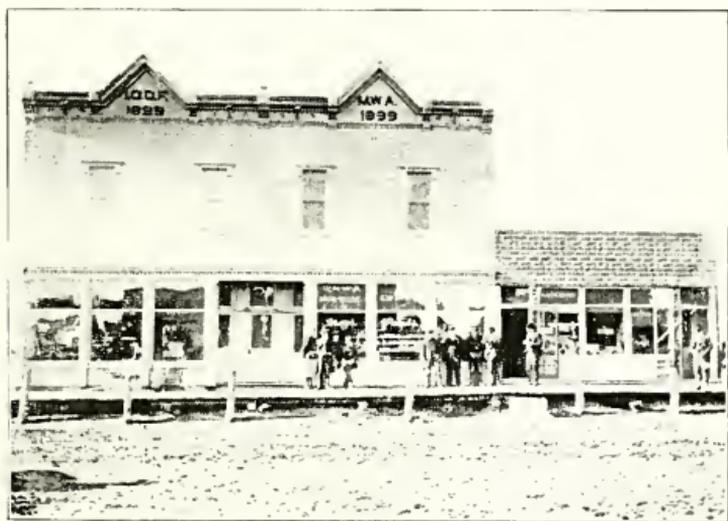
An opera house with a seating capacity of seven hundred was erected in 1899, by the Western Land Company of Chicago, at a cost of five thousand dollars. It was opened in April, 1899, and was burned in August, 1911. The Clarion House was erected in 1881, and is the only real hotel in Clarion at this date. A new one, built and conducted on modern plans, is talked of and is much needed. A creamery was established early in the eighties, and, with many changes, this industry has been operated ever since.

The first street paving in Clarion was done in 1913. A general sewer system is now being constructed—1915.





PUBLIC LIBRARY, CLARION.



SOME BUSINESS HOUSES IN GALT.



A "rest room" was established in the rear of the city building a few years ago and has been greatly appreciated by those coming in from the country.

An item appeared in the local paper at Clarion in March, 1875, reading as follows: "A snow drift that is not more than ten feet deep is not much to brag about now-a-days. But we have many now that go five to ten feet better than that in Clarion and the thermometer registers thirty-four degrees below zero, too."

In May, 1875, this appeared: "A Sabbath school was organized in Clarion last Sunday with N. F. Weber as its superintendent; R. K. Eastman, assistant superintendent, and W. T. R. Humphrey, secretary and librarian. The school will meet Sundays at 2:30 p. m., and it can be made a means of both pleasure and profit to old and young, if they will only take hold and work."

The fountain was placed in the city park in the summer of 1906, and a drinking fountain was also put in a few feet from the ornamental fountain, while on the west side of the courthouse square there was placed a drinking fountain for animals. These were all put in by private subscriptions.

#### CLARION BUSINESS DIRECTORY—1915.

The subjoined is a list of the principal business factors of Clarion in the month of July, 1915: Abstracts, Austin & Son, Humphrey & Humphrey; attorneys, Birdsall & Birdsall, C. F. Peterson, J. A. Rogers, A. R. Ladd, L. M. Archerd, Nagle & Nagle, J. M. Berry, and G. B. Hill; automobile garages, J. T. Jensen, C. L. Speight and Burr Nagle; banks, First National, Bank of Clarion, Clarion Savings Bank; bakeries, three now in operation; barber shops, Moses C. Lester, Steawart & Monnville, W. E. Eldredge, Turk & Company; blacksmith shops, Simmons Brothers, Temple & Company; clothing (exclusive), Crowe & Sons, J. L. Lamblad, Hugo Rohrbach; cigar store, "Ziegers"; cement works, White Brothers, Schumaker & Humphrey; creamery, Clarion Co-operative Company; china and jewelry, L. L. Kirkpatrick; dentists, T. T. Roosevelt, F. S. Thomas, H. B. McLain; drug stores, Hamilton & Son, Hartsock & Barr, Linebarger & Faber, Morgan & Wilson; dray lines, C. L. Summers, A. J. Jackman, Homer Sellers, E. W. Eddy, W. E. Shreves, George Coats, C. A. Conklin; elevators, Farmers Elevator Company, Gordon Garver; furniture, Jesse Smith, Ed T. Smutney; feed store, G. H. Lee (feed and groceries and seeds), Johnson, of roller mill; groceries, Tillinghast & Company, Townsend & Gardner,



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The fountain was placed in the city park in the summer of 1906, and a drinking fountain was also put in a few feet from the ornamental fountain, while on the west side of the courthouse square there was placed a drinking fountain for animals. These were all put in by private subscriptions.

#### CLARION BUSINESS DIRECTORY—1915.

The subjoined is a list of the principal business factors of Clarion in the month of July, 1915: Abstracts, Austin & Son, Humphrey & Humphrey; attorneys, Birdsall & Birdsall, C. F. Peterson, J. A. Rogers, A. R. Ladd, L. M. Archerd, Nagle & Nagle, J. M. Berry, and G. B. Hill; automobile garages, J. T. Jensen, C. L. Speight and Burr Nagle; banks, First National, Bank of Clarion, Clarion Savings Bank; bakeries, three now in operation; barber shops, Moses C. Lester, Steawart & Monnville, W. E. Eldredge, Turk & Company; blacksmith shops, Simmons Brothers, Temple & Company; clothing (exclusive), Crowe & Sons, J. L. Lunblad, Hugo Rohrbach; cigar store, "Ziegers"; cement works, White Brothers, Schumaker & Humphrey; creamery, Clarion Co-operative Company; china and jewelry, L. L. Kirkpatrick; dentists, T. T. Roosevelt, F. S. Thomas, H. B. McLain; drug stores, Hamilton & Son, Hartsock & Barr, Linebarger & Faber, Morgan & Wilson; dray lines, C. L. Summers, A. J. Jackman, Homer Sellers, E. W. Eddy, W. E. Shreves, George Coats, C. A. Conklin; elevators, Farmers Elevator Company, Gordon Garver; furniture, Jesse Smith, Ed T. Smutney; feed store, G. H. Lee (feed and groceries and seeds), Johnson, of roller mill; groceries, Tillinghast & Company, Townsend & Gardner,



Roosevelt Brothers; general stores, Stark Brothers, McCoy & Nagle, J. H. Ramsay; hardware, Shupe Brothers, Lockwood & Stewart, Staples Brothers; harness, A. A. Taft, E. B. Roblin; hotels, Clarion House; implements, C. L. Speight, J. T. Jensen; jewelry, J. D. Moseley, J. W. Morely, L. L. Kirkpatrick; lumber, Farmers Elevator Company, Keve Lumber Company, Ahmann-Bock Company; livery, Baker & Baker; moving pictures, one place, well patronized; meat markets, Duer & Son, S. B. Ferguson; mills, Clarion Roller Mills, Johnson, proprietor; millinery, Mrs. M. C. Lester, Mills Sisters, Littleton Sisters; newspapers, *Monitor* and *Clipper*; novelty store, F. P. Wilson; photographer, G. D. Cook; produce, Clarion Produce Company; restaurants, The "Whiteside," "Husted's," Corbin's "Foxy Cafe;" shoe stores, Harry Stanbury; physicians, Dr. J. H. Sams, Dr. E. D. Tompkins, Dr. E. F. Best, Dr. Q. D. Bernard; veterinary, Dr. C. G. Williams, Dr. Cline; tailors, McDonald (The City Tailor).

#### MUNICIPAL HISTORY.

Clarion has been an incorporated town since October 15, 1881, the proposition for incorporation carrying by a vote of fifty-nine to forty-two. The following have served as its mayors: Z. Morgan, 1881-83; L. P. Davis, 1883-85; W. T. R. Humphrey, 1885-87; Thomas Garth, 1887-88; A. R. Ladd, 1888-91; B. P. Birdsall, 1891-93, resigned when elected as district judge; J. A. Rogers, a part of 1893-94; E. M. Callender, 1894-95; J. A. Rogers, 1895-97; E. B. White, 1897-1902; P. H. Goslin, 1902-06; M. A. Mickelson, 1906-11; P. H. Goslin, 1911-14; J. A. Rogers, 1914.

The 1915 city officers are as follow: Mayor, J. A. Rogers; clerk, F. W. Walker; treasurer, H. J. Barr; health officer, Dr. E. D. Tompkins; street commissioner, C. M. Bunn; marshal, J. L. Fackler; assessor, D. W. Stewart, and the following city council: A. E. Weber and E. B. White, members-at-large; first ward, D. L. Nagle; second ward, J. L. Lundblad; third ward, Herman Turk; fourth ward, H. A. Duer.

The city in 1914 let contracts for the putting in of seven and one-half miles of sewer, for which the people are to pay, within the term of seven years, the sum of about forty-three thousand dollars. This improvement includes a disposal plant, and the remainder is divided into four districts, the lot owners bearing the expense of all improvements connected with their lots.

At present the city has an indebtedness of only about four thousand five hundred dollars, which is for payment on the water plant.



It may be stated, in this connection that this city, unfortunately, was laid out by none the best of surveyors and engineers, for there is only one platting or addition which is correctly surveyed, and this makes present-day improvements a difficult task; in fact many of the early-day errors can never be corrected. The original plat was surveyed into blocks and lots without a single alley running through them. Other plattings were not surveyed in parallel lines with the former plattings, hence are unsightly today. The present council is doing all in its power to remedy the irregularities in grades and street lines. Under Civil Engineer Curry, of Webster City, the council has expended almost eight hundred dollars in making the necessary grade and street surveys, which will stand as a monument for all time to those business-like men.

#### THE WATERWORKS PLANT.

In 1873 Clarion was almost destitute of water, even for drinking purposes, although it might have been found a few feet below the surface at almost any point in and around the village. This is inferred from the following from the pen of one of the *Monitor* editors, either "Deacon" Hathaway or Frank Gates, both of whom were wielding the pen on that paper in those pioneer days:

"Clarion has got a town pump that belongs to the county, but private citizens paid for it. This pump can discount any pump in the entire north-western country and we have got money that says so. When we want a pail of water we go out after dark to get it. We go over to the pump, put our pail under the spout, and then we walk around the court house to make sure no one is within hearing distance. Then we go back and take our coat off; also our vest, and hang them on the fence. After we spit on our hands and turn the pail around with the other side toward the pump, we commence operations. We again spit on our hands and take hold of the handle. For about three minutes we work that handle lively and just as we get to the point of repeating religious poetry we raise water into the pump. That encourages us to work harder and we manage to get a big stream out of a crack in the edge of the wooden pump and it squirts into our boots. We then stop and poke paper into the crack and do it all over again. This time it spurts out on the opposite side of the pump, and we get it up as high as the spout. So we take the pail around and place it under the edge of the second crack. Just as we get a good stream going the paper flies out of both cracks and our boots are baptized inside and out. By this time it is



bed time and we go to bed and send the 'devil' of the office over after a pail of water in the early morning."

In 1874, the same writer expresses his ideas of a needed stock well for the village of Clarion. "The scarcity of water in town has induced parties owning stock, etc., to act upon our advice and dig a well in a slough east of town. We hope all parties owning stock will make use of this well and leave the wells within two hundred yards of the court house, as reservoirs for drinking and cooking purposes."

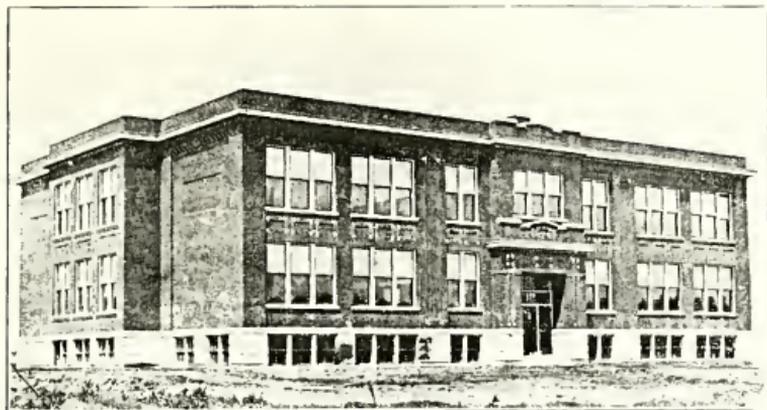
In 1887, in June, a contract was let for a five-hundred-barrel cistern at the northwest corner of the public square, in the center of the street, for fire protection. It was stoned up and cemented over and cost the town one hundred and eighty-five dollars. The same year, in August, a hand fire-engine was purchased and a volunteer fire company organized.

The first real waterworks system of Clarion was begun in 1905, when a contract was let to a Des Moines firm, for \$6,780. This included a one-hundred-foot tower, holding sixty-thousand gallons of water. The work was to be completed by October 1, 1905, but the workmanship was not good and the city did not accept the plant until after some litigation and after it had been made over according to specifications.

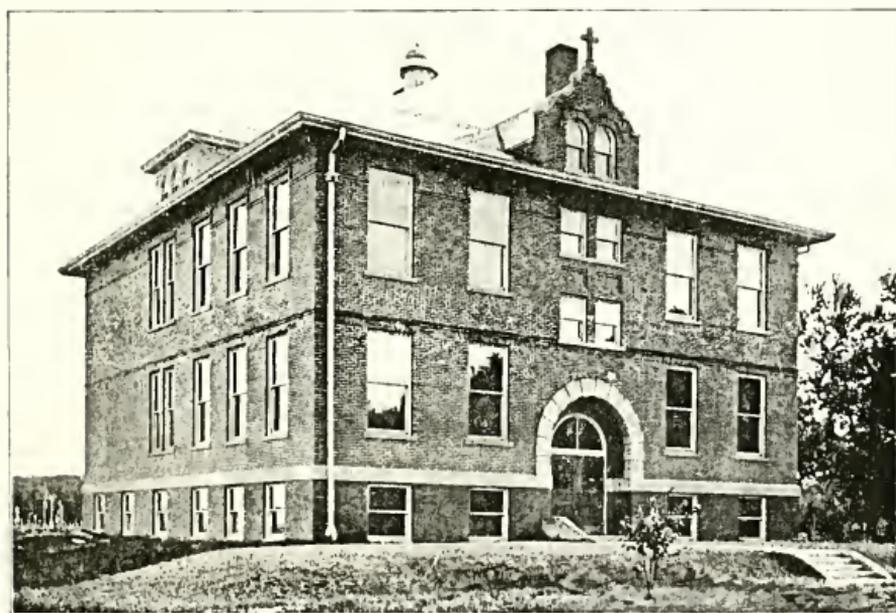
#### ELECTRIC LIGHTING.

A contract was let in May, 1892, to construct a system of electric lighting in Clarion. Bonds were floated to the amount of six thousand three hundred dollars and sold to a Chicago firm of brokers. Lights were first turned on December 1, 1892. This answered the purpose for a few years, but with the progress of the times and the growth of the city, another system had to be installed. The light from this new plant was first turned on for public use on August 1, 1904. In April, 1910, the lighting plant was sold to M. E. Mozingo for eight thousand five hundred dollars, and he added three thousand dollars worth of new machinery. This plant was destroyed by fire from an unknown cause in August, 1911; the same fire burning the Clarion opera house, after which Mr. Mozingo took in a partner, by which change the firm became known as Mozingo & Mack, who built the present plant—the fine brick building near the water tower, equipped with adequate machinery.





HIGH SCHOOL, CLARION.



ST. JOHN'S SCHOOL, CLARION.



## DISASTROUS FIRES.

At one o'clock on the morning of October 31, 1882, a twelve thousand dollar fire visited Clarion, destroying the store of Minon & Butterfield, the two-story business house of I. F. Woodman, J. M. Overbaugh's furniture store and contents, Doctor Gannon's office, S. H. Brown's two-story frame dry goods store, the residence of W. H. H. Miller, J. D. Smith's residence, a boot and shoe store, etc., making a total loss of twelve thousand dollars, only partly covered by insurance.

The second big fire that visited the town was in March, 1893. This latter blaze was supposed to have been the work of incendiaries, who sought to rob the stores of goods. In this fire there were fifteen buildings burned, the loss being only half covered by insurance.

October 10, 1899, occurred the great fire in which twenty thousand dollars worth of property was destroyed. This fire also was of incendiary origin. The loss fell heavily on the following persons and firms: Sandy Johnson, stock and fixtures, \$3,900; M. Shane, \$1,000; McCoy & Nagle, stock and fixtures, \$10,000; M. F. Laughlin, building, \$1,200; F. C. Hartshorn, building, \$600; an implement stock, \$800; Anna Chapman, building, \$2,000; Schaefer Sisters, outfitters, \$450; Young Brothers, \$550. The usual amount of insurance was collected on these losses. The city had no suitable fire protection at that time.

To enlighten the reader regarding the fear of fires felt by the early settlers, the subjoined paragraph from the *Monitor* of 1875, will make it plain what pioneers in Clarion had to contend with: "The fire-break around the willows on the north and west of town has been a good friend to the willows and the town, but it is now getting up to grass and weeds and unless 'backed' again it will hardly keep out fire the year. Let us all contribute our mite and have a good job done, then we can sleep nights in peace when frost comes."

Later in the year just referred to there was a sweeping prairie fire which burned off over forty thousand acres of prairie in the neighborhood of Clarion.

## FRATERNAL SOCIETIES.

The elements of fraternity are well represented in Clarion, even outstripping many older cities. These live and thrive and promote the feeling of benevolence, give practical proof of charity and inculcate the divine idea



of fellow feeling and brotherly love. As far back as 1899, there were the following lodges and societies: Masonic, Odd Fellows, Knights of Pythias, Red Men, Modern Woodmen, Fraternal Brotherhood of the World, Modern Brothers of America, Ancient Order of United Workmen, Grand Army of the Republic, Legion of Honor, Clarion Literary Club, Chautauqua Circles, Young Men's Christian Association, and minor societies. These societies will all be treated more or less in detail in the chapter devoted to the lodges of the county.

#### THE CEMETERIES OF CLARION.

Nothing speaks more clearly for the intelligence and civilized spirit of a community than its care for the departed dead. This is the line of demarcation between savage and civilized life. The well-kept burying places of any town or city constitute a true index to the character of its living citizens. The churches and fraternal societies of this country have been potent agencies toward keeping alive this sentiment. The pioneer band in Clarion looked well to this matter and those now on the stage of action are keeping good the establishment of proper cemeteries.

The first "city of the dead" for Clarion was in the southeast part of town, in what is King's addition today. It was not many years before it was seen that a mistake was made in platting a cemetery so near to the business and residence portion of the place, and a change was made. Perhaps the other extreme was gone to in the matter of locating the present cemetery—a mile and a half from the court house. Yet the location selected is in many ways ideal, and is well cared for at this date.

What was known as the Clarion Cemetery Association was organized in April, 1873, the articles of association being recorded the 10th of that month and year, by George A. McKay, county recorder. According to the by-laws of this association anyone who desired to purchase one or more lots could be a member of the association. Its officers were to be a president, secretary, treasurer and two trustees, the officers to be elected annually, meetings for such purpose to be held the first Saturday in May, each year. The first members were: R. K. Eastman, W. F. Gibbs, L. P. Davis, F. O. Lee, A. W. White, J. D. Oakley, N. F. Weber, W. W. Gates, E. E. Gould, George A. McKay. The first president was R. K. Eastman; secretary, F. O. Lee. It was this society that purchased the land for the first cemetery, present King's addition to Clarion.

After several years, as the town grew, it was discovered that it



was a mistake to locate the burying ground so near the place, and it was then that what is now known as Evergreen cemetery, about one and one-half miles to the east of the town, was located. The Clarion Evergreen Cemetery Association was formed and articles of association were recorded on April 4, 1887. These articles provided that there should be a president, secretary, treasurer and three additional trustees. The record shows the first officers were: Mrs. Susan Stone, president; Mrs. Edna Smith, secretary; the other trustees named being Lois Brewster, Mary Harwood and Kate Lockwood. These grounds are situated in section 5 of township 91, range 24. The grounds were enclosed and have always been kept in good condition. Fine monuments mark the resting place of many a departed pioneer, the contents of the first burying ground in Clarion having been removed, for the most part, to this silent city of the dead.

#### PUBLIC LIBRARY.

The first record of the interest taken in library work, is found in the *Monitor* in 1878, when this paragraph appears: "There are now seventy public libraries in Iowa, and Wright county has eight, containing a comparatively small number of volumes, yet this county is spending two thousand dollars a year on its libraries and we believe it is money well expended." These libraries were mostly, if not all, school-district libraries. Clarion had a small circulating library for a number of years, but it was of little magnitude or real value. The system was wrong and the interest lagged.

In February, 1907, the city voted through its council, to accept the generous offer of Morgan Everts, then of California, but for many years counted one of the pioneers of Webster City, Hamilton county, Iowa, to raise a fund of five thousand dollars, after which said Everts would donate the city ten thousand dollars more toward erecting and maintaining a public library to be known as the "Morgan Everts Library." The city voted on this question on March 2, 1907, and the measure carried. The present handsome library structure on North Main street was erected by F. F. McManus at the contract price of nine thousand nine hundred and twenty-one dollars, exclusive of heating plant, etc. It is of the same style of architecture as is noted in many Carnegie libraries in this country. It has a large basement story, in which the heating plant and store rooms are situated, as well as a spacious auditorium, for holding any public meetings desired by the people. A high flag-staff is set on the beautiful greensward in front of the building, designed to hold "Old Glory" as it floats to the



breeze; this was the gift of Captain Terrell. Mr. Everts had been long in the real estate business and had accumulated a good fortune, a part of which was made by dealing in Wright county lands, at an early day, and he naturally felt friendly towards the county and its people. It is to be regretted that he passed away before this monument to his memory was completed. His estimable widow, however, was permitted to be present at the dedication, but has since passed from earth's shining circle. The portraits of Mr. and Mrs. Everts adorn the walls of the building. The library now contains four thousand and eighty-five volumes, exclusive of many government reports. The annual tax collected for the purpose, as per agreement with the donor, is continually adding to the fund for the books.

This public library was thrown open to the public in April, 1908. The first officers of the association were as follow: C. M. Nagle, president; W. T. R. Humphrey, secretary; E. A. Alexander, A. E. Weber, Frank Walker, M. A. Mickleson, Mrs. B. P. Birdsall, Mrs. C. F. Peterson, Mrs. George Young, trustees. The same officers still hold over, except that J. H. Ramsay is secretary, and W. L. Scott is trustee, in place of Mrs. C. F. Peterson.

The association has had but two librarians—Mrs. G. T. Eldridge, from April, 1908, to January, 1913, when the present librarian, Mrs. Irving E. Nagle, was elected.

#### THE CLARION POSTOFFICE.

Clarion was established as a postoffice point in Wright county, on December 18, 1867. The following have served as postmasters: Oliver K. Eastman, appointed on December 18, 1867; R. K. Eastman, March 8, 1870; C. M. Farrar, March 7, 1871; Ivory Q. Milliken, November 15, 1872; William M. Gates, May 18, 1877; James C. Harwood, January 19, 1881; G. W. Middlecoff, September 16, 1885; S. W. Summers, September 12, 1887; Walter Elder, March 7, 1894; James C. Harwood, March 22, 1898; Robert P. Osier, July 14, 1903; Peter H. Goslin, February 13, 1915.

At first mail was received by stage lines from Webster City, Belmont and Goldfield, originally called Liberty postoffice.

The Clarion office is now a second class office, employing three office clerks and six rural carrier clerks. The business of the office in 1914-15, to the end of the fiscal year was \$9,527.32. The deposits in the savings department were \$200 in June, 1915. There are six rural free delivery routes extending to outlying districts.



In July, 1912, the government concluded to ask for a more permanent and suitable building for postal uses and asked that some one furnish a brick building, having not less than fifteen hundred square feet of floor space, to be properly heated and lighted for a term of twenty years. George L. Cutler, a pioneer resident of the county, and ex-county recorder, now residing in Clarion, provided such a building at a cost of seven thousand dollars, which is located on the corner of Main and Maple streets, about equal distance from the two depots, and leased the same to the government. It was first used in 1912.

### *Clarion's First Sunday School Was Held in Frame Court House, Program Reveals*

The local Congregational church is celebrating the sixtieth anniversary of its founding here. On Wednesday afternoon, a program given at a meeting of the sisterhood commemorated the anniversary, Mrs. H. A. Duer telling of the history of that society, Miss Minnie Lockwood relating the history of the church, Mrs. J. D. Moseley telling of the history of the missionary society and Mrs. Burt Harwood reviewing the history of the church Sunday school.

Having access to the notes of the latter, we find some information of interest to old timers in Wright county. The first Sunday school ever to be held in Clarion was a union school organized in 1875 and held in the first county court house which stood in the present court square. Preaching services were also held there by Father Sands. N. F. Weber was the first Sunday school superintendent, with R. K. Eastman, assistant, and W. T. R. Humphrey, secretary and librarian.

In 1885, two separate schools, Congregational and Methodist, were organized. Miss Alice Gibbs, whose family came to Clarion in 1870, remembers the first Christmas exercises and the first Congregational Sunday school Christmas tree. As there was no evergreen trees to be had here then, those in charge brought in a Lombardy poplar and wrapped its limbs with green paper to better represent the Christmas tree. Miss Gibbs thinks that likely

the green paper was secured from Webster City, the usual source of supplies for this neighborhood in those days.

Christmas treats were limited to molasses and stick candy and popcorn, which was also the main decoration on the tree. Parents brought a few small gifts from home to be distributed at the exercises to their own children.

The union Sunday school had a circulating library of from thirty to forty books which were secured by Father Sands second hand from a school in New Hampshire. Later this library was enlarged by a gift from Mr. Weber. Books were seized upon with great eagerness as reading matter was necessarily very scarce in those days. Miss Gibbs also recalls a circulating town library maintained in the school house.

Some of the first school's early teachers were Uncle John Rowen, Wm. C. Morton, B. P. Entriken, then county clerk; Mr. Brintnall, then town superintendent of schools; Mr. Seaman who operated a tavern here on the site opposite the present post office; and Mrs. Shepard, who lived in a house on the present library corner. She was a very charitable woman and proved very helpful to her neighbors at a time of a scarlet fever epidemic. She aided with the nursing of many other families although she had two small sons of her own.

Such was the personell of some of the early church work in Clarion.

Nov. 1932



## CHAPTER XXIV.

### DAYTON TOWNSHIP.

Dayton is the second township from both the south and western lines of the county, and comprises congressional township 91, range 25, except sections 1 and 2 and parts of 11 and 12, which are in Clarion. It is south of Lake, west of Lincoln, north of Woolstock and east of Eagle Grove townships. Eagle Creek takes its rise in this township and there are now several county drainage ditches, which, together with tile drainage put in by landowners, has fairly well dried up most of the former wet and swampy land. White Fox creek touches the southeast corner, in section 36. The Chicago Great Western railroad traverses townships 1, 2, 3, 9, 8 and 18, with a small station at Florence, in section 8. This is the only hamlet in the township and is only a small trading point and station stop.

This is a purely prairie territory and is made up of excellent land, all of which has long since been taken up and put under cultivation by a thrifty set of farmers and stockmen. Clarion is the market and chief trading center for the people of Dayton township. However, many go to Eagle Grove, at the southwest, as the township is about equidistant from Eagle Grove and Clarion.

### ORGANIZATION.

Dayton was organized in 1879, when it had a population of but one hundred and forty-nine souls, and was taken from territory of former Eagle Grove and Clarion townships. When organized in 1879, it had a population of 149, in 1890 it had 520, in 1900, 653 and in 1910, 525.

It has the regulation number of schools and the principal occupation of the people is agriculture. Here one finds many excellent farms, with all the ordinary modern farm improvements. The once dreary, treeless prairie landscape has been broken by the magnificent groves that were planted by thoughtful, painstaking pioneer people. These groves have come to be thrifty bodies of timber, and in many cases provide enough fuel and timber for fencing about the place. These groves are much appreciated when the



winter's winds roar on the level prairie—it is then that these groves shelter stock and keep the wind's violent force from the barn, outbuildings and farm residence. Lands within this part of Wright county that in the seventies might have been purchased at five dollars per acre have become worth from one hundred dollars to one hundred and fifty dollars per acre, and the owners of the same do not care to sell, not knowing where under the shining sun they could better their condition, so long as they desire to follow farming.

#### EARLY SETTLEMENT.

The earliest settlement was made in Dayton township, as now bounded, in 1868, during the fall of which year came George Savage, locating in the east half of the southeast quarter and the northeast quarter of the southwest quarter of section 14. Andrew Swanger came in next, locating on Eagle creek, in the east half of school section 16; he was killed by lightning near a school house, whither he had gone to get his little son. James Gray was an old pioneer of the Boone river country and located subsequently in this township, in the west half of the southeast quarter of section 14. Later he sold and moved to Missouri. Alex Beck settled in section 17, where he died a number of years later. Dan Blocksom bought land in this township on the Eagle creek, but many years later sold and moved to Clarion, where he still resides. Jesse Moore, of whom it is related no better man ever lived in Wright county, settled along the south line of this township. He was a minister in the Campbellite church, who formed the Rocky Ford church in Hamilton county and died many years ago. His son, Rev. Hugh Moore, is now pastor of the First Baptist church at Webster City. Widow McDonald also was among the early settlers in this township, she having located in section 14, on land which had been owned by one Wiggins. Section 10 was improved by a man who was a non-resident, but leased it to a Mr. Loveless. George Chapman settled along the west side of Eagle creek, remained ten years and removed. Another Chapman, who was always called "Old Man" Chapman (no relative of the above), and his sons, located, as did "Old Man" Sheriff and family, in the southwest part of the township. Two Swedes named Pengtson located a quarter section in the north part of the township, in section 9. Frank Slight purchased land south of the present village of Florence, in section 17, but soon sold and returned to Chickasaw county, Iowa. Summer Wiggins settled in section 34, and E. S. Cleveland located as a renter for a few years, then located in Lake township, settling



in section 30, where he lived thirty-two years, then removed and retired at Clarion, where he still lives.

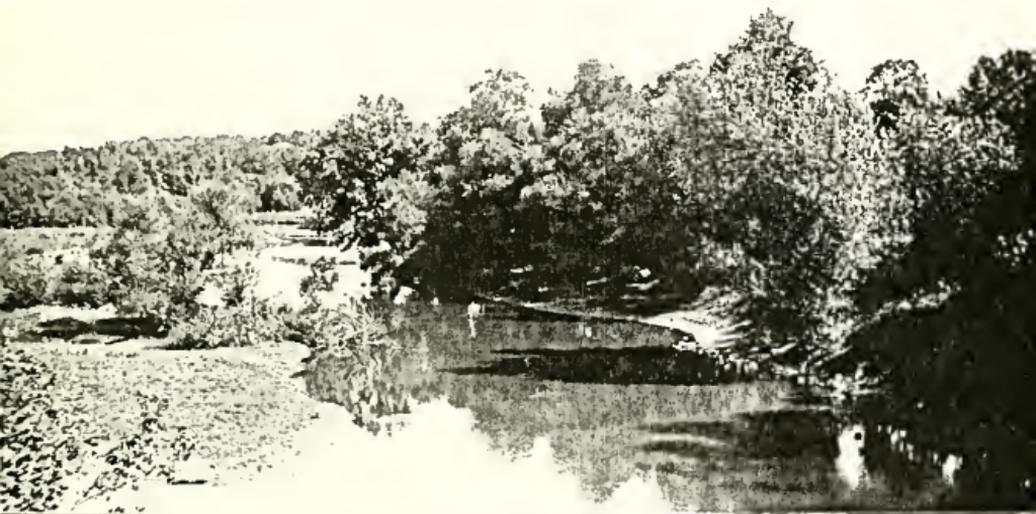
The early settlers all went to work and planted out trees—maple, willow and cottonwood—which have now come to be immense trees, forming groves of value and beauty. These were the pioneers in Dayton township.

Florence postoffice was established in section 10 in the autumn of 1897, with C. W. Thorup as postmaster. He was succeeded by C. T. Sidwell, August 29, 1900, and on February 14, 1903, the office was discontinued.





CITY HALL AND ARMORY, EAGLE GROVE.



IOWA RIVER, NEAR DOWS.



## CHAPTER XXV.

### EAGLE GROVE TOWNSHIP AND CITY.

Eagle Grove township is situated on the west line of Wright county and is the second from the southern boundary, and as now constituted comprises congressional township 91, range 26, west; hence is six miles square and contains twenty-three thousand and forty acres. It was named for Eagle creek, which stream flows through its borders and the grove of the same name. The Boone river meanders along the western tier of sections, and originally there were several good-sized groves along the stream, where were seen numerous eagles—first by Pioneer Brassfield, a hunter of the early fifties, who finally located, in 1854, in what is now Liberty township. These various circumstances gave rise to the name of the civil township when it was organized, it being one of Wright county's first civil subdivisions. There it was that the county was organized and set off from Webster county in August, 1855, at the cabin home of S. B. Hewett, Sr.

The township is now among the very best in the county, with the city of Eagle Grove within its borders. The Chicago & Northwestern railroad, en route from Ames and Tama City, divides there, one line running to St. Paul, the other, west through Harwarden and on into Dakota. The other rail highway of Eagle Grove township is the Chicago Great Western, originally the Fort Dodge & Mason City road, which enters the township in section 13, passes through the city of Eagle Grove and on southwest, leaving the township and county from section 7, where the village of Nuel has recently been established. The township claims the distinction of being the scene of county organization, the scene of the first legal election and now has the largest town within the county.

Eagle Grove township is bounded on the north by Liberty township, on the east by Dayton township, on the south by Troy township, and on the west by Humboldt county. Its population in 1890 was 2,355, including the town of Eagle Grove and a portion of Goldfield; in 1900 it had reached 4,129 and the United States census for 1910 gave it 3,923 population. The state census of 1915 gives the population of the township, outside of Eagle Grove city, 513, while that of the city is about 4,000.



## ORGANIC.

At the March term of county court, April 7, 1856, presided over by Judge Dean, on petition of N. B. Paine, Eagle Grove, Troy and Liberty townships were organized—Pleasant and Vernon not being formed until sometime later in the same year. Hence, Eagle Grove township was one of the first three townships organized in Wright county. Elections were ordered held soon after the organizations of these townships had been perfected. Originally Eagle Grove township included all of township 91, range 25, double its present size. Another change was made prior to 1875 when nine sections in the northeast corner were taken off and went toward forming Clarion township, and in 1883 when Lincoln township was created, the board of supervisors divided the county into sixteen civil townships to conform to the congressional township lines, after which Eagle Grove took on its present size and form.

It was named from the fact that not far from the present site of the present city of Eagle Grove, an old eagle had built her nest in a large tree which was known to all pioneer settlers as the "Eagle Tree," but the name Eagle Grove was given to the first postoffice in the township, and later to the city.

The first township election meeting was held at the house of S. B. Hewett, Sr., and the following persons were duly elected: Ira B. Dean, William C. Davis and E. C. Cheever, trustees; S. B. Hewett, Jr., clerk; S. B. Hewett, Jr., and William Sill, justices of the peace; Jephtha Doty and John Hayns, constables; James Gray, assessor; R. Parker, road supervisor. Number of votes polled, thirteen. The party elected as road supervisor refused to serve and Solomon Holder served in his place. The party elected as assessor refused to serve and in his place was placed Alva L. Dean.

At the 1856 presidential election there were eighteen votes cast. At the August, 1857, election on the adoption of the new state constitution, there were twenty-four votes cast, and the question of striking out the word "white" was voted on, but the results are not now to be obtained. At the June, 1858, election the question of banking was voted on, seven ballots being cast for a state bank in Iowa and seven against it.

When Eagle Grove was incorporated, January 8, 1895, all that part of Eagle Grove township within the corporate limits of the town of Eagle Grove, was set off as an independent civil township; but the board of supervisors which passed that act forgot to give said civil township a name, as



they should have done in creating a new township, hence this precinct has no name, but is kept in the accounts of the county as "Independent Eagle Grove."

#### EARLY SETTLEMENT.

The first man to settle in the township, as now defined, was William Davis, who came in 1854, but being unable, or unwilling, to undergo the hardships of those times, he removed after about a year's residence. The next to enter the township, as actual settlers, were N. B. Paine and the Hewetts—S. B., Sr., and S. B., Jr.—who on arriving set to work to build a log cabin close to the banks of Boone river, in which they all lived. In this cabin the county was organized in 1855. This party brought with them four heavily-loaded, well-filled wagons of provisions, knowing full well what pioneering here would likely mean. These loads were hauled from Davenport, before Iowa had a mile of railroad within its borders, and the distance was three hundred miles. The nearest postoffice to this settlement was Homer, Webster county (now Hamilton), then the seat of justice for the first named county, a distance of thirty miles.

Soon after his arrival, N. B. Paine built a log house on the prairie where he settled. There was neither tree nor bush near to him—the Boone river timber being the nearest. But by 1870 this rugged, unique pioneer who had faith, as but few others did at that time, in prairie soil, had come to be a prosperous, well-to-do farmer, living in a splendid farm house, with beautiful shade trees growing about it, all planted by his own hands. His residence was surrounded by fine shrubbery and he had gravel walks, flower beds and grape vines with not a few bearing apple trees.

Other early comers were James Gray and William Sills, who made a success from the time of their first advent into the township. Also the Hewetts, by dint of hard toil and good management, soon were classed among the prosperous men of Wright county. Later settlers included John Wassem and J. Q. Hanna. In 1870 the township had a population of about two hundred and fifty, which soon doubled. It then contained three good school houses—two frame and one brick.

#### THE "INDIAN VILLAGE."

N. B. Paine was the authority for the statement that there was at the time the government surveyors were running the section lines in this county, an Indian village within what is now Eagle Grove township. It is claimed



that near the Paine place there were five hundred Indian wigwams, but the march of civilization soon drove the red men to other hunting grounds, and doubtless this was wisdom; at least the fair, fertile fields of corn, grain and grasses of today would lead one to think so.

#### PERISHED IN THE PRAIRIE FIRE.

About 1869, there occurred a sad event in Eagle Grove township. There was then living there a family named Dersheit. The husband was out burning prairie, as was the early-day custom, and the fire extending to the fence, he told his wife to go and guard the same from being burned. Having her child with her at the time, a little infant some fifteen months old, she sat it down in a place she deemed secure, and hastened to the spot where the fence was in danger. While she was at work trying to save the fence, the high wind had swept the fire in the direction of the child, and in a very short time the poor little innocent perished in the flames. The fence was saved, but when the mother returned for her child, all she found was its lifeless form blackened and burned to a crisp, and thus in saving the fence the mother's first-born was lost.

#### OTHER HISTORY.

The special general chapters on education, church life and lodges, as related to this township, will be found elsewhere in this volume.

The township now is all thickly settled by thrifty, well-to-do farmers and stock raisers, nearly all of whom own the land on which they live, and many have retired to some one of the nearby towns, where they have shares in the various banking institutions. Three score years have made wonderful changes along the Boone valley, in this goodly township. Nearly all of the pioneer band have been gathered to their fathers. N. B. Paine and his associate, S. B. Hewett, Jr., passed away not many years since. The latter left no heirs, but Mr. Paine left sons living at Eagle Grove, who are well-known business factors of the place.

What was styled Rosedale postoffice, in this township, was established in September, 1857, with the pioneer Daniel Okerson as its postmaster. The office was discontinued in October, 1860; was re-established on March 30, 1877, with Celia L. Hulse as postmistress, and was finally discontinued on November 19, 1885.



## CITY OF EAGLE GROVE.

The city of Eagle Grove, in Eagle Grove township, is a junction point of the great Chicago & North Western system of railways, one line leading west to Dakota, through Hawarden, while the other line extends to Elmore, Minnesota, and on over its connecting lines into St. Paul and Minneapolis. The other railroad of the city is the old Mason City & Ft. Dodge line, now owned by the Chicago Great Western Company, which runs from Council Bluffs to Mason City, through Clarion.

Eagle Grove was platted by S. B. Hewett, Jr., and the railroad land company of the Chicago & Northwestern Railroad Company. (See "Village Plats" in miscellaneous chapter.)

This town was built out on the prairie and there was not a tree on the plot in 1881, but the hands of pioneer settlers set out thousands of beautiful shade trees, such as grow best in this section, and today the broad branches of these trees tower up many feet, giving the residence portion of the city a handsome appearance. A visitor unacquainted with this fact might think the town originally was platted within a large grove, and that possibly that was why it was named Eagle Grove; but not so, as is set out in the history of the township in which it was platted.

The well-paved streets, the numerous electroliers lighting the streets at night; the flowing wells, and other improvements made by the railroad company and the citizens, has made the city a place of attractiveness seldom found in a pure prairie land. The city was the actual result of the railroad making a new division at that point. It derives its support mainly from the rich soil and wealthy farming community found on every side, and from the extensive railway operations, including the roundhouse and machine shops, division offices, etc. Its business men are all of that true, enterprising type so essential to the proper upbuilding of a modern city.

The population of Eagle Grove in 1890 was 1,881; in 1900, 3,557; in 1910, 3,887; at present, upwards of 4,000. The churches, schools and lodges of the city are all treated in detail in general chapters on such topics presented elsewhere in this volume.

Many of the first business men of the city formerly were in trade in Webster City, and a goodly number have long since either removed or died. The place is largely of American population—loyal and true citizens.



## MUNICIPAL HISTORY.

The first account of the history of the incorporation of Eagle Grove was the order of the district court, October 16, 1882, which authorized the town to become incorporated under the laws of the state. The first election was held on December 22, 1882, at which time the following officers were elected: Mayor, E. M. Scott; recorder, C. A. Schaffter; assessor, A. H. Wassemer; trustees, J. S. Baker, H. C. Mahanna, J. J. Andrews, W. C. Chapman, G. Hutchings, John Bowes. These officers served until the next spring, when, in March, a new set were elected at the usual spring election, as provided by law.

In the main, the municipal affairs of Eagle Grove have been well administered by wise city officials. The matter of incorporation was one taken up early in the town's history, and for a number of years met with some opposition, but the better, more enterprising, progressive citizens insisted on good government, and it was not long before all freeholders agreed to the plans proposed for the general public good.

A magnificent city building was completed in 1914, at a cost of eighteen thousand dollars, situated on the east side of the Chicago & North Western railway tracks, close to the armory. It is constructed of vitrified brick, fireproof, and is two stories in height. The building contains spacious rooms for all city officers, including a good council chamber, fire department, clerk's and treasurer's offices. The city jail is contained within the building.

## THE WATERWORKS PLANT.

The first waterworks plant was put in during the year 1894, at a cost of ten thousand dollars. The same system is still used, many additions and extensions having been made, at a total cost of forty-two thousand two hundred dollars, for which bonds were floated. The stand-pipe is one hundred feet high and sixteen feet in diameter. There are fifty-four fire-plugs, or street hydrants.

Nine miles of sewer pipe were laid a few years ago and five miles additional are being laid during the present season—1915.

The city owes eighteen thousand seven hundred and forty-two dollars in waterworks bonds, and eighteen thousand dollars for the city hall.



## CITY PUBLIC PARKS.

Eagle Grove is indeed fortunate in having had men at the helm when the place was first laid out, including the founders, who looked far ahead and knew that, in a prairie country, a city would need shaded places for rest and pleasure. They knew no better method to provide such places than to secure for the city tracts of land, while prices were within their reach, and set out hundreds of native trees and evergreens, which trees have now reached many feet in height and afford a cooling shade in the heated summer months. The principal parks are "Hewett's" and "Greenwood" parks. The former is at the southwestern portion of the city, while the latter is at the end of North Broadway. Hewett's park has good shade, plenty of picnic tables and rustic seats. In the center of this park is that which will be a joy forever—the flowing well, which sends forth its cooling waters, day and night, year in and year out. To date the city has not been able financially to carry on the other necessary park improvements, such as paving, sewerage, etc., but this will come in time, and meanwhile all rejoice at the good beginning offered by pioneer hands in setting out the trees that now adorn the places. Hewett's park, a charming centrally-located place, was the gift of one of the city's founders—Summer B. Hewett, Jr. The Chicago & North Western Railway Company donated what is known as Park Avenue park. The city purchased the old fair grounds, comprising forty acres, known as Greenwood park, at the east of the city, where the ball grounds and the race track are located. The latter park is well covered with fine shade trees and has a good supply of excellent water. There are private walks, rustic seats and tables for picnic parties.

## CITY OFFICIAL ROSTER.

The following is a list of officers for the municipality of Eagle Grove since its incorporation:

1882-83—Mayor, E. M. Scott; recorder, C. A. Schaffter; trustees, J. J. Andrews, J. S. Baker, John Bowes, W. C. Chapman, G. Hutchings, H. C. Mahanna.

1883-84—Mayor and council, same as above mentioned.

1884-85—Mayor, S. T. Chase, H. Hodge; trustees, J. J. Andrews, John Bowes, R. C. Wright, George Wright, C. F. Lindley, W. C. Chapman.

1885-86—Mayor, C. O. Bailey; recorder, M. T. Heath; trustees, W. C.



Chapman, J. J. Andres, G. F. Lindley, George Wright, John Bowes, Luke Flynn.

1886-87—Mayor, G. E. Boynton; recorder, C. A. Schaffter; trustees, W. C. Chapman, George Wright, L. Flynn, G. F. Lindley, Thomas Keefe, J. S. Keith.

1887-88—Mayor, E. A. Howland; recorder, C. A. Schaffter; trustees, W. C. Chapman, Luke Flynn, George Wright, H. A. Miller, J. S. Keith, W. H. Jacobs.

1888-89—Mayor, D. C. Filkin; recorder, C. A. Schaffter; trustees, H. A. Miller, J. S. Keith, L. Flynn, O. A. Young, George Wright, W. H. Jacobs.

1890-91—Mayor, D. C. Filkin; recorder, C. A. Schaffter; trustees, L. Flynn, A. G. Brennecke, O. A. Young, George Wright, R. O. Packman, James Mulligan.

1891-92—Mayor, F. W. Pillsbury; recorder, C. A. Schaffter; trustees, R. O. Packman, George Hutchings, James Mulligan, M. Arnbruster, George Wright, A. G. Brenneck.

1892-93—Mayor, F. W. Pillsbury; recorder, C. A. Schaffter; trustees, M. Arnbruster, James Mulligan, George L. Webster, G. Hutchings, G. H. Carlton, George Wright.

1893-94—F. W. Pillsbury; recorder, C. A. Schaffter; trustees, George Wright, John K. Uhr, James Mulligan, G. F. Lindley, A. N. Odenheimer, R. O. Packman, J. S. Fort, J. C. Heckart.

1894-95—Mayor, F. W. Pillsbury; recorder, C. A. Schaffter and Eugene Schaffter; trustees, John K. Uhr, Godfrey Nelson, A. N. Odenheimer, T. B. Cowan, R. O. Packman, G. F. Lindley, J. S. Fort, S. C. Graham.

1895-96 (Changed to higher class of city)—Mayor, G. Hutchings; clerk, J. W. Henneberry; councilmen, A. Yearous, G. Nelson, James Mulligan, T. B. Cowan, H. A. Miller, G. F. Lindley, G. E. Howell, S. C. Graham.

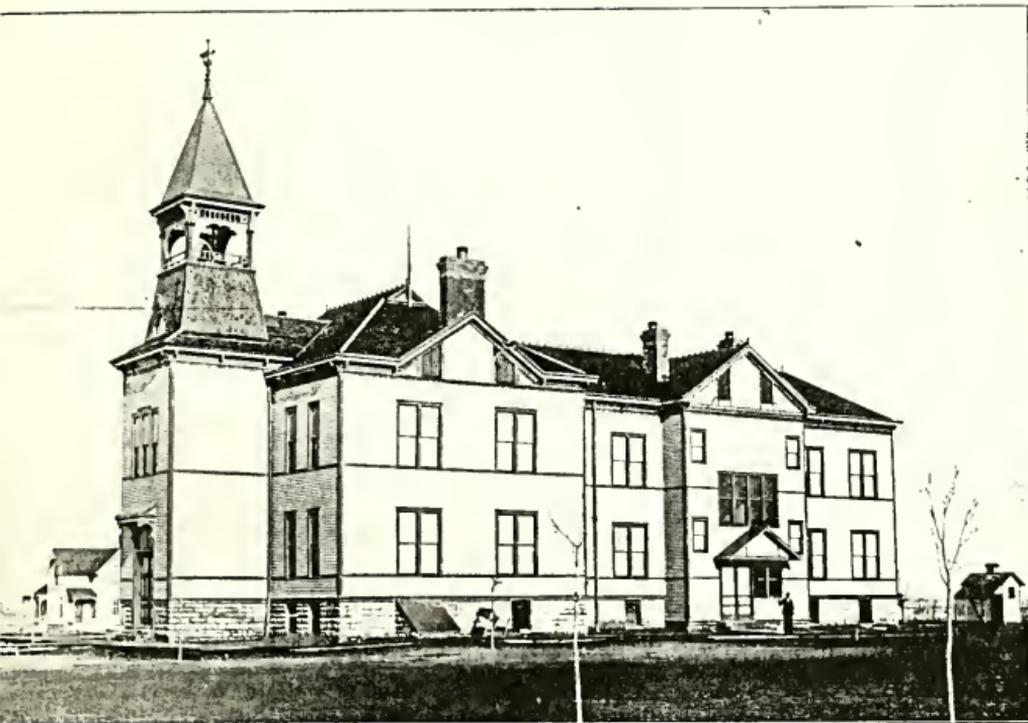
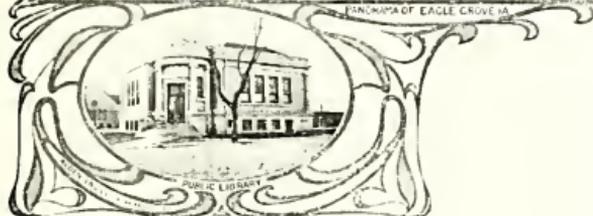
1896-97—Mayor, G. Hutchings; clerk, William Southwell, Porter Donley; council, A. Yearous, G. Nelson, James Mulligan, T. B. Cowan, S. G. Graham, Bert Doran (resigned), W. F. Insel (took Doran's seat), H. A. Miller, G. E. Howell.

1897-98—Mayor, J. S. Fort; clerk, Porter Donley; council, A. Yearous, G. Nelson, James Mulligan, T. B. Cowan, W. F. Insel, H. A. Miller, G. E. Howell, S. C. Graham.

1898-99—Mayor, J. S. Fort; clerk, Porter Donley; council, A. Yearous, G. Nelson, James Mulligan, T. B. Cowan, Gny Carlton, H. A. Miller, G. E. Howell, Charles Hanchole.



# EAGLE GROVE IOWA



WEST SIDE GRADED SCHOOL, EAGLE GROVE.



1900-01—Mayor, J. S. Fort; clerk, Porter Donley; council, A. Yearous, K. A. Ersland, James Mulligan, T. B. Cowan, G. Carlton, W. C. Halsey, J. M. Rudy, Charles Hankole.

1901-02—Mayor, Eugene Schaffter; clerk, Porter Donley; council, A. Yearous, R. Richardson, M. K. Donovan, A. H. Barnes, J. W. McGrath, J. W. Porter, J. M. Rudy, M. Arnbruster.

1902-3—Mayor, Eugene Schaffter; clerk, Porter Donley; council, A. Yearous, R. Richardson, M. K. Donovan, A. H. Barnes, J. W. McGrath, J. W. Porter, J. M. Rudy, M. Arnbruster.

1903-04—Mayor, M. K. Donovan; clerk, L. J. Clarke; council, A. Yearous, R. Richardson, A. H. Barnes, C. F. Hayor, J. W. McGrath, J. W. Porter, J. M. Rudy, M. Arnbruster.

1904-05—Mayor, M. K. Donovan; clerk, L. J. Clarke; council, J. M. Rudy, A. Yearous, R. Richardson, J. W. Porter, M. Arnbruster, C. F. Hoyer.

1905-06—Mayor, M. K. Donovan; clerk, H. B. Hallock; council, W. R. Blake, M. Arnbruster, J. M. Rudy, R. Richardson, A. H. Barnes, J. K. Baker, Atwood.

1907—Mayor, M. K. Donovan; clerk, H. B. Hallock; council, J. K. Baker, A. H. Barnes, J. M. Rudy, B. Williamson, O. F. Gunderson, ——— Mulligan.

1908—Mayor, A. Yearous; clerk, Samuel Middleton; council, S. Lalor, J. K. Baker, B. Williamson, Peters, McVicker, Garlock.

1909—Mayor, W. R. Blake; clerk, Samuel Middleton; council, J. H. Martin, H. Schoonover, W. W. Waddell, H. E. Boughton, S. Lalor, O. F. Gunderson.

1910—Mayor, W. R. Blake; clerk, Samuel Middleton; council, S. Lalor, H. E. Boughton, H. Schoonover, W. W. Waddell, J. H. Martin, O. F. Gunderson.

1911—Mayor, W. R. Blake; clerk, Samuel Middleton; council, G. W. Baker, H. E. Boughton, S. Lalor, M. D. Braden, W. W. Waddell, C. F. Gunderson.

1912—Mayor, W. R. Blake; clerk, Samuel Middleton; council, S. Lalor, C. F. Gunderson, G. W. Baker, M. D. Braden, H. E. Broughton, W. W. Waddell.

1913—Mayor, W. R. Blake; clerk, Samuel Middleton; council, M. D. Braden, G. W. Baker, J. K. Baker, R. Comstock, A. A. Smith, F. G. Brisbin.



1914—Mayor, W. R. Blake; clerk, Samuel Middleton; council, G. W. Baker, F. G. Brisbin, R. W. Comstock, M. D. Braden, A. A. Smith, J. K. Baker.

1915—Mayor, J. S. Fort; clerk, Samuel Middleton; council, J. K. Baker, J. L. Nott, Ole Hobbett, R. W. Comstock, A. Banks, Frank Mulligan; C. Christensen, treasurer; J. W. McGrath, solicitor; P. F. Bates, engineer; Luther H. Gray, superintendent of the waterworks; Frank Fisher, chief of police; Henry Warren, night watchman; George Schoonover, chief of the fire department.

#### POSTOFFICE HISTORY.

A postoffice known as "Eagle Grove, Wright county, Iowa," was established in Eagle Grove township, near the present city of Eagle Grove, long before railroad days—in the summer of 1861—and when the town started the postoffice was moved to the new hamlet. The following have served as postmasters: S. B. Hewett, appointed on June 18, 1861; Abbie S. Hewett, wife of Judge Hewett, April 28, 1875; George Wright, March 4, 1884; J. S. Howell, October 6, 1885; O. H. Brooks, February 11, 1890; J. H. Howell, November 4, 1895; F. J. Will, November 5, 1897; John Buchanan, August 17, 1900; Henry A. Cooke, July 15, 1913.

Eagle Grove is now a second-class office, with five rural free delivery routes, with carriers as follow: James McCurry, James M. Rose, Charles H. Warren, Peter Hoveland, Carl W. Thorpe, rural carriers; Zola B. Stewart, Benjamin Bowung, E. F. Maloney (extra), city carriers.

The office force consists of Postmaster Cooke, L. E. Wilson, assistant postmaster, R. W. Vaughn and H. Roseland, clerks.

The amount of savings deposits on hand on July 1, 1915, was five hundred and eighty-eight dollars and two cents. Amount of business transacted last year, aside from all money order business, approximately twelve thousand dollars.

The Citizens State Bank erected a brick postoffice building in 1901, on Lucas avenue, and leased it to the government. A bill is now before Congress for a new, large, modern postoffice building. There are now twenty-six mail trains (thirteen each way) daily. The office became of the second class in 1909.

#### PUBLIC LIBRARY.

Eagle Grove is fortunate in having a fine public library, toward which Andrew Carnegie donated ten thousand dollars. It was opened to the pub-



lic in 1903. It is situated on Broadway and Iowa avenue, and has on its shelves two thousand six hundred and seventy-two volumes. The spacious library basement is partly occupied by one of the clubs of the city.

Following is a list of the first officers of the library board: John R. Smith, president; Eugene Schaffter, secretary; J. H. Howell, A. H. Barnes, George H. Carlton, Mrs. Doctor Morse, Mrs. O. A. Young, Mrs. E. D. Mineah, Mrs. C. E. Hanson, trustees.

The present (1915) board is composed of: A. H. Barnes, president; Eugene Schaffter, secretary; J. H. Howell, Mrs. J. W. Henneberry, Mrs. J. S. Keith, Mrs. R. M. Smallpage, Mrs. Ida Holman, Mrs. Ida Fisher, E. C. Platt, trustees. The first librarian was Mrs. B. Y. Miller, and the present librarian is Elsie B. Donn.

#### PIONEER MERCHANTS.

The following were among the pioneer dealers in Eagle Grove: Packman Brothers, Robert and Joe; F. E. Edwards & Company, a year later, also Andrew Wright & Son. Cox & Ingalls were first in the hardware and implement business; B. F. Miller started the first banking house in March, 1882, the dealers above all having located prior to that year. Homer A. Miller, now of Des Moines, succeeded his father and created a large banking house within a few years. Miller & Packard started a drug store, a branch of their store at Webster City, from which place most of the first dealers came following the building of the railroad. Three lumber dealers hurried to this location in 1882-83, Cross & Company, Worthington & Fitzmaurice and Nelson & Company. The first physician was Doctor Morse, still in practice. The first attorney of the town was D. C. Filkins, who located there in 1882.

#### COMMERCIAL INTERESTS IN 1915.

In the summer of 1915 the following persons and firms constituted the business interests of Eagle Grove—the largest town in Wright county:

Attorneys, S. Flynn, Eugene Schaffter, A. Yearous, James W. Henneberry, J. W. McGrath; automobile dealers, Weeks-Larson Auto Company, Middleton Auto Company, Porter Auto Company, William Fletcher, Shreulesir Brothers; aviator, Elling O. Weeks, licensed pilot and manufacturer of German taube biplane; banks, Citizens State, Security Savings, Merchants National; bakeries, City bakery, Eagle bakery; barber shops, J. L. Nott, Anderson Brothers, D. T. Steen, Harry Meade, William Orr; black-



smith shops, Andrew Christensen, Roy Comstock; confectionery, Bostonia, J. J. Kist, proprietor, Eagle Grove candy kitchen; clothing, Gilder Brothers & McCarty, Leuthold & Hinkley; cement-block works, Eagle Grove Cement Product Company, V. P. McIntyre; creamery, Fountain creamery, W. E. Mann, proprietor; drugs, Smallpage & Indra, O'Toole & Parker, Wasem & Morse, T. H. Kenefick; dray lines, A. H. Waddell, None Thorne, Chester McVicker, B. H. Clarke; dentists, H. V. MacGregor, C. H. McConaughy, J. E. Long, H. R. Norris, R. L. Martin; dry goods, R. A. Baker & Sons, C. H. Deur; elevators, Farmers Co-operative, Independent Grain and Lumber Company, F. M. Joyce, manager; electric shop, Foll & Gubderson; furniture, Eagle Grove Furniture Company, F. & A. Kubitschek; groceries, Schoonover Brothers, J. H. Martin, F. A. Maier & Company, Christensen & Jensen, Peoples Co-operative Store; hardware, Roper Hardware Company, Waddell hardware store, Hull's hardware, W. W. Frakes, A. L. Yearous, R. W. Merriam; harness shop, R. W. Merriam; hotels, Occidental, Grove House, Morgan House; hospitals, Eagle Grove Hospital, Drs. W. C. McGrath and C. H. Morse; implement dealers, Mulligan & Miller, W. W. Frakes; jewelers, K. K. Keith, H. E. Boughton; light, heat and power, Citizens Light, Heat and Power Company; livery, J. W. Rose, B. H. Clarke, W. A. Brisbin (feed barn); lumber, W. R. Blake, Fruden Lumber Company, Chapman Lumber Company; millinery, Mrs. Mary Keith, Mrs. Mary Quint; meat markets, F. E. Cole, Olson & Fisher, Smith Brothers; marble works, Dodge & Baker; music, Middleton Music House; newspapers, the *Eagle* and the *Times-Gazette*; physicians, C. H. Morse, W. McGrath, T. J. O'Toole, L. D. McNaughton, J. R. Christensen, P. O. Trooien, R. J. Thisen, C. F. Kuchne, Middleton & Reinertson; plumbing, Charles Odgers, Roper Hardware Company; produce buyers, W. E. Mann, Frank Shoenhair; photographers, C. P. Myklebust, Baldwin Studio; "pantatorium," Lee Parker, C. Elliott; restaurants, Eagle cafe, Boston lunch, Princess cafe, W. J. Cotton, R. L. Prehm; stock buyers, Cowan Brothers, M. D. Braden, F. G. Brisben; sporting goods and pawnshop, A. L. Yearous; second-hand goods, A. L. Yearous, H. W. Waddell; shoe repairing, Watne; shoe store (exclusive), C. Christensen, L. D. Fothergill; theaters, Princess, Eagle; tailors, F. De Witt, C. Elliott; veterinary, B. E. McCulloch; five and ten-cent store, The Fair, D. H. Price.

#### HEAT, LIGHT AND POWER.

The Eagle Grove Electric, Gas and Power Company was organized in 1894, by J. A. and George Innes, and was reorganized in 1903. The first



officers were J. A. and George Innes, Sr., and the present officers are R. M. Smallpage, George Wright, J. A. Innes and Charles Honkole, the present stockholders being R. France, R. M. Smallpage, Melbourne Smallpage, M. Armbruster, C. E. Platt, George Wright, Charlotte Wright, Eugene Schaffter, Charles Honkole and J. A. Innes.

Gas was first installed in 1905, but the electric system had been installed years before, in 1894. The meter system is employed. For the last seven years this plant has pumped the water for the city waterworks. There are now forty-six electroliers on the streets, the same having been in operation since 1914. The plant is run by a five-hundred-horse-power engine. Goldfield also receives its illumination from this plant. The gas plant has a capacity of eighteen thousand cubic feet of gas. There are eleven men employed about these works. All in all, this is a very successful plant, suits the people and is a paying proposition for the stockholders.

#### MILITARY COMPANIES.

This will treat of the national guard and the recently organized machine-gun company, whose headquarters are at Eagle Grove.

The accomplishment of any great public enterprise or improvement must be backed by worthy, enterprising citizens; hence in the beginning of this article it should be stated that had it not been for the zealous efforts put forth by such vigorous men as J. H. Henneberry, Doctor McConaughy and Dr. F. J. Will, especially the first two mentioned, Eagle Grove would not have been selected as the headquarters of a military company of which the Northwest is justly proud today.

In the nineties the Eagle Grove opera house, a frame building to be used for an opera house and public hall combined, was erected on West Broadway. It was built by a stock company and, as is usually the case, had not been profitable as an investment. While a new opera house was needed, it was difficult to engage capital. Finally this building burned. It was then seen that the city must provide a public hall. Several plans were suggested and numerous mass meetings of the citizens were called, but nothing resulted; finally, however, Mr. Henneberry and Doctor McConaughy conceived the idea of trying to secure a company of the Iowa national guard for the city, the thought being that since the state paid a reasonable rental for an armory, if there was a vacancy in the national guard, and if a company could be organized in Eagle Grove, the rental would form a basis of income and this income, together with the earnings of an opera house, would assure



a reasonable interest on the necessary investment. Mr. Heneberry originally conceived of this plan, and a letter of inquiry to Col. W. T. Chantland, at Ft. Dodge, brought the information that there was a vacancy in the Fifty-third Regiment, together with the suggestion that the matter be taken up with Adjutant-General Thrift, at Des Moines. At that time Frederick J. Will, a former physician and resident of Eagle Grove, was located at Des Moines and was surgeon-general of the Iowa national guard. Colonel Will was interviewed, and he immediately joined hands with citizens of Eagle Grove in their efforts to secure a company.

Shortly before the matter was taken up, Dr. C. H. McCaughy, who had had considerable experience as a guardsman, and who was an enthusiast in military affairs, had located at Eagle Grove, and he heartily gave his time and influence to the enterprise. There was much to be overcome; there was no home for the company, if one should be assigned to the city; there was no assurance that one could be maintained if it were organized. In fact, so many objections were raised that the project at times seemed impossible. Doctor McCaughy and Colonel Will were, however, quite equal to the emergency which presented itself; every objection advanced by those in authority at Des Moines was met and overcome, and finally a pledge was secured that a company might be organized on condition that a suitable home was provided within a given time. When this news was brought to Eagle Grove, a meeting of interested citizens was called, committees were appointed to investigate and take action in the matter and in a remarkably short time the necessary funds were raised and plans perfected. A splendid brick building, fifty by one hundred and forty feet, rose out of the ashes of the ruins of the old frame opera house, and across the front, in letters of gold, the words "Armory-Opera House" proclaimed to the world the birth of a military company in the city of Eagle Grove. But, alas, the first work had all to be done over again. On the afternoon of April 30, 1913, fire destroyed the handsome armory-opera house building, and the entire equipment of Company K, Iowa National Guard, was burned. Eagle Grove was again without an opera house—Company K without a home, and the city was again confronted with the armory-opera house proposition, but under vastly different conditions.

During the years since the installation of the national guard, Eagle Grove had enjoyed a rapid, prosperous and consistent growth. Company K had become an indispensable factor in social and civic life—it had become a permanent institution. The beautiful Princess theater—a modern, up-to-date opera house—devoted exclusively to theatrical and amusement enter-



prises, was erected on the site of the armory-opera house, and two enterprising citizens, Thomas H. Waddell and William F. Insel, gladly furnished the money for the splendid armory which now graces Broadway and which is devoted exclusively to armory purposes under control of Company K. Its cost was \$12,000.

#### ORGANIZATION OF MILITARY COMPANIES.

Company K, above referred to, was organized on April 8, 1908, as one of the companies of the Fifty-third Regiment, Iowa National Guard. The following is the original roster of men and officers of Company K: C. H. McConaughy, captain; M. E. Sargent, first lieutenant; William F. Bellman, second lieutenant; P. J. Miller, first sergeant; Howard Schoonover, quartermaster sergeant; Charles Warren, sergeant; George Shaunce, sergeant; Henry Sauer, sergeant; J. D. Springer, sergeant; R. E. Ensey, corporal; C. B. Cotton, corporal; Roy Comstock, corporal; Charles Merrill, corporal; Milton Jones, musician; Louis Orr, musician; privates, Carl Baker, J. E. Breggs, Frank Brown, Martin Cleveland, Clarence Ennis, Thomas B. Gardner, J. H. Humphrey, W. S. Inman, Carl Jensen, Elmer Johnson, Ed B. Kirk, J. J. Kist, A. G. Lukensmeyer, Dwight Mathews, Owen McGrann, H. D. Nelson, Clarence Nichols, Frank H. Ohlsen, Morris Packman, Walter Porter, James Renne, Lysle Renne, A. Shillinger, H. Shrigley, Dora D. Steen, William Tuetle, Roscoe Vaughn, Carl Veile, O. L. Weeks, Lewis E. Wilson and Milo Yearous.

The company has been served by the following captains: C. H. McConaughy, M. E. Sargent, J. D. Springer, Charles Merrell and H. L. Tait. The present (1915) officers are: Major, C. H. McConaughy, quartermaster corps, First Brigade, Iowa National Guard; captain, H. L. Tait; second lieutenant, George Shaunce.

Under the reorganization of the Iowa National Guard, to comply with the orders from the war department, Company K was transferred to the Second Regiment (formerly the Fifty-sixth), under Colonel Hiatt, and was reorganized as a machine gun company, being equipped with four machine guns of the latest patterns of the United States army. In such a company there are only two officers, captain and second lieutenant. The regulation number of men for such a company is fifty.

Upon the dedication of the first armory in Eagle Grove, Attorney J. W. Henneberry and wife were accorded third place in the parade and at the banquet given on that occasion, on account of his having originated the



idea of organizing a company. Every since that time Mr. Henneberry has been known as "The Father of Company K." At the opening he was presented with a magnificent gold-headed cane, which he truly appreciates.

#### FIRE OF APRIL 30, 1913.

At two-thirty o'clock on April 30, 1913, fire was seen issuing from the old armory building, and as a result there was the greatest conflagration Eagle Grove has ever had. Among the buildings lost were the Wells-Hord grain elevator and coal sheds; A. D. Waddell's hay barns; Frank Pohlman's barn and F. H. Zeh's barn; F. B. Andrews' real estate office and M. D. Whitney's "smoke parlors." W. F. Insel lost heavily and the Princess theater lost all, amounting to about two thousand five hundred dollars; but heavier still was the loss of the military company, the loss of the armory building and equipments amounting to ten thousand dollars. The Odd Fellows lost all, but they were well covered by insurance. The Quaker Oats mill lost ten thousand dollars, and the "candy kitchen" was a heavy loser.

The tornado of June, 1884, destroyed more than ten thousand dollars' worth of property, including the wrecking of twenty-seven buildings, including churches.

#### ICE-SKATING RINK.

In the winter of 1892-93, Eagle Grove had an ice-skating rink. It was provided by J. Yearous & Son, and was sixty by one hundred and forty feet in size. It was open to the public both afternoon and evening. The prices charged were ten cents for spectators and twenty-five cents when skates were used.



## CHAPTER XXVI.

### GRANT TOWNSHIP.

This township, one of the central townships in Wright county, is second from both the north and east part of the county, with Iowa township on the east, Lincoln on the south, Dayton on the west and Belmond on the north. It comprises all of congressional township 92, range 24 west, except sections 30, 31, 32 and a part of section 29, which odd tracts belong to present Clarion township. The Iowa river flows in a semicircle through its eastern sections, bowing to the west, while immense drainage ditches have been excavated here and there throughout its borders. Its railroads are the two lines of the Chicago Great Western system—one from Clarion to Mason City and the other from Clarion, east, to Hampton, the Chicago line. The one running to Mason City, by way of Belmond, enters the township in section 1, and runs diagonally to section 31, with a station siding at Lake Cornelia. The east and west line has a station known as Solburg, in section 36.

The only native timber is that found growing along the Iowa river.

The population in 1900 was 474; in 1910, 484, while the state census of 1915 gives it as 456.

#### ORGANIC.

Grant township was made a separate sub-division of Wright county in April, 1898, at the spring session of the board of county supervisors. It was organized so as to include all of congressional township 92, range 24, except that part included in the town corporation of Clarion, a few fractional sections in the extreme southwestern corner. Its territory was at one time within parts of Iowa and Clarion civil townships. It was named for Gen. U. S. Grant, probably suggested by the fact that Clarion (city) was at first named "Grant" and changed by the early officers, including the Eastman family, who preferred the name Clarion, as there was already a Grant City in Iowa.

#### EARLY SETTLEMENT.

C. W. Hill, who now, in his old age, is living retired at Clarion, located in what is now Grant township in 1861. He rented the Rev. W. F. Harvey



farm for a dozen or more years, then moved to his own selection in section 26, where he farmed in a successful manner until the time of his retirement to Clarion. He saw many early-day hardships in Wright county. About the time he came, possibly a few months before, came in Pioneer Meeker, who has been numbered among the deceased pioneers for many years. E. C. Blackburn settled, as did all who will here be named, prior to the organization of the township—when most of the territory was included in Iowa township. Blackburn later removed to Nebraska. Others of the pioneer band were the families of John D. Brooks, James Berry, William Dawson, A. C. Sheplee, the Goslins, John Burns and the Jemisons. Mr. Jemison came in as a stock buyer and also farmed in Grant township. He was a first-class business man and had much to do with the early-day business of this part of Wright county. Very few of the first settlers of Grant township are now living. The first school meeting was held at the house of John Burns. Mr. Hill was among the first township assessors.

The territory of this part of Wright county has been cut up into different civil precincts, having been at one time included in Clarion township, and the settlement, other than that here given, is intermixed with that, hence will not be traced in detail in this connection. Until the establishment of Clarion as the county seat, there were no settlers, to speak of, in this or any nearby townships. Beyond Pioneer McCormick's place, at the south of the present city of Clarion, no one resided in the north part of the county—all was wild, untouched prairie lands, roamed over by herds of cattle. After Clarion (or Grant, as first styled) sprang into existence, settlers flocked in quite rapidly and it was not many years until the wild lands were taken up by actual settlers and wrought into well-tilled farms.

The only hamlets within Grant township are Solburg, in the southeastern part, and Cornelia, at the little lakelet of the same name, which is about in the center of the township, on the railroad line from Clarion to Mason City. There is one church in the southeastern part of the township, the history of which is set out in the chapter on churches.

Cornelia postoffice was established in Grant township, near the lake, on December 1, 1893, with J. C. Butterfield as postmaster, and following him came Peter Nelson, February 5, 1895; T. C. Johnson, April 29, 1896; Charles Thompson, March 26, 1904; Andrew Fryslie, November 24, 1905; Antony Wagner, September 16, 1909; A. M. Axen, January 28, 1910. This office was discontinued on November 30, 1912.



## THE LAKES OF GRANT.

Within the township are two lakes—Little Wall lake and Elm lake. The former is one of the famed "walled" lakes about which so much of poetry and slush has been written by those unacquainted with the facts connected therewith. Even Horace Greeley, in the sixties, carried a description of these walled lakes in his *New York Tribune*, which would lead one to think that some prehistoric race of men had, with hammers and trowels, laid up a fairly well-constructed wall. Such a description was based only on fancy and long-range imagination. The supposed "wall" of this, and the lake in the southern part of Wright county, known sometimes as Big Wall lake, are simply the result of "nigger-head" granite boulders having been conveyed thither by the ice in the long-ago glacial age. At the close of the Civil War, a fine natural grove adorned the east shore of this lake and the wall at that time extended around the south and east sides. In severe winters these lakes were frozen in many places to the bottom, the ice inclosing the rocks at the bottom, and the spring floods carried the ice-packed rocks to the shore, under the influence of heavy winds. Only in lakes of sandy bottoms did these peculiarities exist. In mud-bottomed lakes the ice drift of remote periods failed to drop the usual amount of these prairie boulders, hence these strange "walls" were not seen.

Since the pioneer eye first rested on these broad and fertile prairies and on this little prairie lake, known as Little Wall lake, the fine grove then present has disappeared; the "wall" has been hauled away to make foundations for buildings in the vicinity. The cultivation of the soil nearby has cut off the water supply, and the water line has receded farther, year by year, from the wall that once marked its limit. Rushes have sprung up in the lake, and what was once a clear body of pure water is rapidly becoming an unsightly pond. Ere long, unless conditions change materially, this lake will not be in existence.

Elm lake lies about a half mile to the south of Little Wall lake, and was formerly connected with the latter. This lake has changed more materially than the other one. Originally it was much the larger of the two, but little of its former area is now covered, at any season, with water. It received its name from a stately elm tree that stood on its southeast shore, and which for many years was a landmark to the weary traveler. This tree was blown down during a high windstorm, about 1890. The only natural timber in the township is that skirting the Iowa river in places.



## CHAPTER XXVII.

### IOWA TOWNSHIP.

Iowa civil township, comprising all of congressional township 92, range 23 west, was originally a part of Pleasant township. It is south of Pleasant, bounded on the east by Franklin county, on the south by Blaine township, Wright county, and on the west by Grant township. The general topography of this township is similar to those at the north. The western half comprises the valley of the Iowa river, and all land long ago was "taken up" and developed into farms that now range in value from one hundred to one hundred and seventy-five dollars per acre—though few are offered for sale. The east portion of Iowa township is high land, with a strong clay subsoil, not so quick and warm as the lower land, but of great fertility and possessing enduring qualities surpassing all other lands in the township. Every part of the township is well adapted to agriculture, which is the chief industry of its thrifty, contented people. The population of the township in 1910, according to the United States census returns, was 878, including the town of Rowan, which at that date had a population of 256. In 1875 the entire township possessed only 288 people.

### ORGANIZATION.

Iowa township was organized by an act of the board of county judges in 1856, as noted in the records of that year; but further action was not taken toward perfecting such township organization until in 1858, when there were thirteen voters within its borders. Robert Rowen, however, held the office of justice of the peace before 1858, having been elected while that section of the county was yet in Pleasant township, and continued to hold such office for many years afterward. He also served the township as supervisor. Following is the notation regarding the township organization taken from the county records:

"Now comes W. E. Rogers, V. A. Overacker and asks for a new township to be formed according to the following boundaries: commencing at the southeast corner of section 13, in township 92, range 23; thence running south to the southeast corner of section 13, township 91, range 23; thence



west to the west line of township 91, range 24; thence north to the northwest corner of section 19, township 92, range 24; thence east to the place of beginning, said township to be called Iowa township.

"July term, 1857. (Signed) DAVID DEAN, Court Judge."

#### THE FLOWING WELL BELT.

Iowa township is fortunate, indeed, in being within the celebrated flowing or artesian well belt of Iowa. In its eastern half especially, flowing wells were reported in 1890 as numerous and to be secured at the depth of from sixty to one hundred feet, and at a cost not exceeding the common well. The flow of water is of the most excellent quality, free from all disagreeable odor or taste. On account of this natural advantage, there are many large, profitable and attractive stock farms in the township.

#### PIONEER SETTLEMENT.

The first settlements in Iowa township were made along the Iowa river, the pioneer buildings generally being erected in the shelter of the groves. Most of the old buildings that did duty in those early times have been replaced by more spacious and modern structures, and the farms are the pride of this section of Iowa.

The first persons to become really permanent settlers in Iowa township were Robert Rowen, Edwin Ballou and Horace Riley, who came in the spring of 1855, and soon following them came in Robert Duffy and James Riley. Mr. Rowen bought the claim of one of the first who entered the township, a squatter. It appears that here, as in other parts of this county, the first settlers, so called, were simply hunters and trappers and not in any true sense actual farmers or real settlers. Some of them had been attracted by the fine locations to be had and had entered what was styled "claims," under the pre-emption and other settlement laws. Soon they wanted to move on to better hunting fields and hence sold their claims for mere songs to persons of wider vision, who could see the great future that awaited the man who held lands in this beautiful garden spot of the Iowa Valley. Of this "squatter" or "claim" class, without doubt Messrs. Ford, Hill and Murdock had filed such claims in the summer or fall of 1854, but were frightened away by reports of trouble soon to come from an Indian invasion, which, in fact, never did materialize. The only thing they left was a poor old horse, left by government surveyors, which sought shelter in the timber of the



township during the winter after their departure. Rowen, Ballou and Duffy built houses in the grove and their places became well known as excellent points at which to stop, for at least twenty years afterward. It was in the autumn of 1857, that A. D. Hiams arrived with his brother, Mortimer, and they opened the era of frame buildings in this section of the country. They were carpenters and the year after they came, they erected houses for Robert Rowen and George Bingham at the grove, and a Miss Wheeler, later Mrs. Hill, at Ontario, north of the grove, which at that time was a platted town, whose inhabitants once hoped to have made the seat of justice of Wright county. Miss Cornelia Eastman, daughter of R. K. Eastman and sister of Oliver K. Eastman, who became Mrs. Hancock and now resides in California, taught the first school in what is now Iowa township in the summer of 1859. The first death was that of John Meeker, who died in the fall of 1858. A little later in that same autumn, Mrs. R. K. Eastman died, and in the spring of 1859 Mrs. Eastman's brother, a Mr. McNeal, died. All three pioneers were buried in the Horse Grove cemetery.

#### BEGINNINGS OF THE SOCIAL ORDER.

A postoffice was established at Horse Grove in 1856, under the name of Fryeburg, and Doctor Hurd, one of the first settlers, was appointed postmaster. Horse Grove probably derived its name from the fact that one of the squatters (or possibly a surveyor), who fled from the grove on account of the Indian scare, had left a horse to roam at will in the timber—and pick its living from the leaves, brush and dry grass it chanced to find.

There was a saw-mill at Horse Grove, probably the first in the county, and it did considerable work, but evidently was not a financial success. The owner was from Maine and his name was Warren. He laid out a town plat at the head of the grove, giving it his name, and that was all there was to his town—it never materialized. At Fryeburg there was a store at the postoffice for many years, but there was no town, proper, until the building of the old Burlington, Cedar Rapids & Northern railroad and the laying out of Rowan, which place was started in 1883, at which time Fryeburg postoffice was moved to Rowan.

The religious society in the township was that of the Baptists, of which Joel Kent was one of the leaders. It was organized in 1861, with Reverend Stilson as pastor. Later other denominations formed societies and held meetings in accordance with their own creed and faith, but no church buildings were erected until 1890, in which year the first church edifice in Iowa



township was erected. That year the Methodists and the Congregationalists each erected good, roomy frame churches at the village of Rowan.

Four miles north of Rowan there was platted the town known as "Ontario," also wanting to be counted in as the county seat, when it should be finally settled where the local center of government should be located. Lumber was sawed and a building erected for county purposes. An election was held on the east side of the county, at the same date on which an election was held on the Boone river side, for county organization purposes, but on account of some illegal voting the election was decided illegal throughout, and hence the westsiders won out and located the county seat at Liberty (now Goldfield).

It should be stated that the man, Ford, mentioned as being one of the three original "squatters" in this township, was a professional townsite and claim-selling character. It was he who first located at Iowa City, took a claim and sawed lumber from which Iowa's first state house was erected; then sold out and moved on up the Iowa river to Hardin county, where he again "squatted," improved his claim a little and sold out to others. He made his next stand in Wright county as above mentioned, and finally sold his claim, mostly all timber, to Robert Rowen for three hundred dollars, moving to Minnesota, where he again engaged in the same business. It was he who first settled at Horse Grove.

The first frame house in the township was the one erected for a court house, about 1858. But the seat of justice went to Liberty, instead. The first person born in the township was O. E. Ballou, in 1856. The first school was taught by Miss Cornelia Eastman in about 1859. The machinery for the first saw-mill built by Hurd & McNeal, in 1856, was brought from Dubuque by teams and Edwin Ballou was the sawyer.

At the time Robert Rowen came to the county, in May, 1855, he was accompanied by Edwin Ballou and Horace Riley, so well known in more ways than one, in the upbuilding of Wright county.

It was in 1886, that E. S. Ellsworth opened up his eight-hundred-acre ranch, to which he later added much more, making it one of the largest stock farms in this section of the state.

What was known at an early date as Fryeburg postoffice, in this township, was established in 1856, and was the first postoffice in Wright county. Its first postmaster was William C. Hard, appointed on March 14, 1856. He was succeeded by D. F. Ellsworth, July 14, 1857; R. K. Eastman, August 19, 1858; William Rowen, April 16, 1860; J. H. Rowen, March 26,



1868; N. N. Hainis, March 14, 1871, and A. D. Hainis, March 2, 1882. The office was discontinued on June 22, 1886.

#### THE TOWN OF ROWAN.

Rowan, the only town within Iowa township, is situated in section 34, township 92, range 23 west, and is a station point on the Rock Island and the Chicago Great Western railways. It is just to the east of the Iowa river, where the Rowen family settled at an early day. A postoffice was established there, as the Rowen settlement, long before railway days, and the petition sent to Washington for a postoffice asked that it be called Rowen, but on account of a postoffice in Iowa named Bowen, the department changed the e to an a and named the postoffice "Rowan." This will explain why the name is not spelled like that of Senator John Rowen.

The old Burlington, Cedar Rapids & Northern railroad, constructed through the Rowan town site in 1884-5, is now known as the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific railroad. A few years later, in 1902, the old Dubuque & Dakota railroad was extended west from Hampton through Rowan to Clarion, and is now a branch of the great Chicago Great Western system.

The first man to commence business at Rowan was the present worthy postmaster, R. R. Duffy, a Connecticut Yankee, who at the time, lived on his homestead nearby, and was induced by the grain and coal firms of Finch & Hayward, to manage their business for them at Rowan. He built the first house on the plat, which was recorded on August 26, 1885. The first general store was opened by Fred Smalley. Mr. Duffy continued in the employ of Finch & Hayward for more than eight years, during which time, though almost a total stranger to the men, he was entrusted with the handling of thousands of dollars of their money, in the buying and shipping of grain and coal at that point. The Hayward here mentioned afterward served the state of Iowa as its secretary of state for a number of years.

One of the oldest settlers in the Rowan vicinity, now living at an advanced age, is the pioneer "Uncle" Edwin Ballou, who settled near the present town about 1854, and has thus witnessed the county's wonderful development from the very earliest days thereof.

#### ROWAN'S BUSINESS INTERESTS.

The present (1915) business interests in Rowan are as follow: Agricultural implements, S. A. Ferguson, who also handles automobiles; black-





OLD SCHOOL BUILDING AT ROWAN.



STREET SCENE IN ROWAN.



smith shop, R. H. Keith; barber shop, L. W. McCullum; bank, the State Savings Bank; the creamery is not operated now, but was once a successful industry of the town; drugs, J. J. Guernsey; dray line, Fletcher & Vennom; elevators, Viridon & Pritchett, Azeltine Brothers; furniture, D. A. French; general dealers, Thomas Hensen, Emerson & Whitten; harness and buggies, J. A. Whitten; hardware, Whitten & Huber; lumber, Viridon & Pritchett; livery, S. B. Heath; meat market, L. W. Stevenson; mills, the Rowan roller mills, L. A. McCullum; physician, Dr. W. E. Gordon; restaurant, Mrs. E. I. Kinkaid; stock dealers, Utz & Drury; veterinary surgeon, Thomas Thompson.

The history of the churches, lodges and schools is set out in chapters devoted to such topics presented elsewhere in this volume, but it may be added here that the Methodist Episcopal and Congregational denominations have good churches at Rowan, while the lodge interest is confined solely to that of the Modern Woodmen of America.

The present population of Rowan is about three hundred. The town is surrounded by a wonderfully rich agricultural section and has a promising future. The original postoffice for this part of the township was named Fryeburg, and will be recalled only by the very oldest settlers of the county. The following served as postmasters at Rowan: H. H. Barker, appointed in 1884; L. C. Dalrymple, 1884; F. A. Schmale, 1886; D. R. Pierce, 1887; William Wessenburg, 1888; A. B. Hiams, 1890; W. M. Brooks, 1894; C. A. Emerson, 1896; A. E. Emerson, 1898; J. S. Farran, 1905; R. R. Duffy, 1907.

In 1907 the office was robbed of three hundred dollars in stamps and sixty dollars in cash. The safe that was blown up was the personal property of Postmaster Duffy.

#### INCORPORATION HISTORY.

Rowan was incorporated in 1901, and was finally legally counted a corporate place in Iowa, by action of the courts, on February 25, 1902. The first officers of the town were: J. D. Pritchett, mayor; S. B. Heath, C. W. Fowler, F. M. Utter, C. L. Bingham, J. B. McKinstry, councilmen; R. R. Duffy, clerk.

The following have served as mayors and clerks to date: Mayors, J. D. Pritchett, Edgar Bingham, F. B. Sheldon and \* \* \* J. R. Braden, —Sheldon, having served three terms at different periods; Clerks, R. R.



Duffy, 1901-02; F. E. Whitney, 1902-04; J. S. Farran and E. V. Campbell, 1904-06; W. H. Whitten, 1906-12; O. H. Polley, 1912 to 1916.

The town is provided with a privately-owned electric light system, by a special election granting a franchise in December, 1912, to J. L. Sinclair, who established the plant, and operated the same for about one year, at the end of which time he sold his franchise to L. A. McCallum, who now operates it. The town purchases street lights at two dollars per month per kilowatt, or its equivalent in smaller lights. Residences are furnished lights at fifteen cents per kilowatt hour, with a minimum of one dollar per month.

#### ROWAN'S "LIBERTY BELL."

From the *Rowan Record* (1905).—"One of the features of the Fourth of July celebration here this year will be the float carrying the old Liberty bell that Belmond gave as a reward for the largest township delegation attending the celebration at Belmond some forty years ago. At that time Edwin Ballou headed the delegation which captured the prize. Outside of this fact there are other reasons why the old bell is of more than passing interest. It was placed on the old school house and for more than a quarter of a century it called the little children, now men and women grown, and having families of their own, to the daily tasks; sometimes beneath the old bell there were gathered sorrowing ones to bid a long farewell to departed friends; then too, on Sundays it called the people together to worship, regardless of creed or sect, race or color; again it rang forth at "early candle light" while old and young alike answered its summons to attend some form of recreation or entertainment. Such in brief is the history of the old cracked bell. Had it a voice what a tale it could unfold."



## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### LAKE TOWNSHIP.

Lake township is the second civil division from the north and west lines of Wright county, and comprises congressional township 92, range 25, except some fractional sections at the southeastern corner, which were made a part of Clarion township a few years ago. These include all of sections 35, 36, 25, and the southeast quarter of section 26. It was organized in 1879, and was originally a part of Liberty township. In 1880 its population was 144; in 1905 the state census gave it 230 population, while the United States census for 1910 gave it 556. Its largest population was in 1900, when it had reached 646.

Lake township is to the south of Norway township, to the west of Grant township, to the north of Dayton township, and to the east of Liberty township.

The only natural water courses in the township are Otter creek, which runs through the extreme northwestern section of the township, and the headwaters of Eagle creek. There are two large drainage ditches, or canals, crossing the territory from north to south. The only town or village in the township is Holmes, situated in section 31, on either side of the track of the Chicago & Rock Island railroad.

The several schools of this township are fully up to the Wright county standard. These have been considered in the chapter on education presented elsewhere in this work.

Lake township is a prairie with a very rich soil, and while its general surface is somewhat flat, it is fast being drained by a fine system of large open ditches, and many miles of under-ground tiling. Here one sees many beautiful farm homes and a happy, contented people.

The Rock Island system of railroad runs through parts of sections 31, 32, 33 and 34, with Holmes as the station point.

### EARLY SETTLERS.

Among the first to locate in Lake township were P. R. Henry, Philip Doctor and Thomas Ellison. One account given the writer by E. S. Cleve-



land, a former resident of both Liberty and Lake townships, runs as follows: "When this township was organized, having been set off from Liberty in 1879, the settlers then living within what is now Lake township were: A Mr. Hinton, the first actual settler, but who did not remain long—he located in the northwest quarter of section 32, on land where now stands the Holmes school house. John Mowers and Louis Goodsell, located in the south half of section 31, and remained till sometime after the building of the railroad. Thomas Ellison came to the township in 1870. He died many years ago and his wife survived him till about 1915. Mr. Ellison settled in the northwest of section 28, and had a one-hundred and twenty-acre tract, also four acres of timber on the Boone river, from which he cut timber and had sawed black walnut and oak lumber with which to erect his buildings. His house was sided with pure black walnut lumber, and the frame was of oak, all sawed at the Goldfield steam saw-mill."

Other settlers in the township were: Ed Nichols, in section 1; Philip Doctor settled in section 13, where he remained some years, at the end of which time he sold and moved to Clarion, where he died about 1912, and his son John now owns the farm he first located on. Pembleton Henry located in the north half of section 13 and owns it yet. Frank L. Dow settled in section 1, sold and moved to Clarion; his wife died and he removed to California. Marvin Fox, now a resident of Des Moines, was a pioneer here, coming in 1872, settling in the southeast quarter of section 14. He traded his land for other land in Dayton township. M. N. Vanhorn settled in section 29 and L. E. Hullburd in section 20.

The first officers of the township included the following: Clerk, F. L. Dows; assessor, E. S. Cleveland; trustees, Philip Doctor, P. Henry and Will Dawson.

#### VILLAGE OF HOLMES.

Holmes, the only hamlet within Lake township, was platted on March 11, 1895, in the northeast quarter of section 31, township 92, range 25, west, by J. Fraser and wife. Here one finds a small trading point on the Rock Island railroad. In the spring of 1915 the commercial interests of the place are about as follow: General dealer, Antin Weeks, who purchased the business of Oscar Ulstad, prior to whom the dealer in general merchandise was M. W. Jones, who succeeded John Langseth, who succeeded Andrew McLeish, who purchased the stock of Spangler & Stroup, before which time the dealer was L. C. Spangler, the pioneer dealer of Holmes, whose business was established about 1889. The first business of the town



was established by Charles Councilmen & Company, of Chicago, who erected the first elevator. The grain and lumber business is now conducted by the Farmers Elevator Company. The hardware trade is in the hands of Andrew Anderson, who also handles harness goods. The village blacksmith is E. E. Wolf, and Martin Bronleewe is the village barber. The postmaster is Anfin Weeks. The Bank of Holmes was established in 1900. (See chapter on banking.) Arthur Wampler is proprietor of a restaurant established in the autumn of 1914. The town also supports a small garage for automobile business. There are two churches in Holmes—the Baptist and Lutheran denominations. (See chapter on churches for particulars.) There was a camp of the Modern Woodmen of America at Holmes a few years ago, but it was removed to Goldfield. For many years Holmes only had a store and postoffice.

The Holmes postoffice, established in January, 1885, has had the following postmasters: Isadore Gooder, appointed on January 26, 1885; David Mowers, May 24, 1887; L. C. Spangler, May 2, 1891; I. A. Stroup, March 3, 1896; Oscar Ulstad, May 27, 1897; A. O. Weeks, December 1, 1914. Mr. Weeks conducts the office in his large general store.

#### LAKE TOWNSHIP FAIR.

In order to demonstrate that the people of this part of Wright county are of the sturdy, enterprising character that blesses any community, it only need be said that five years ago the citizens of Lake township carried to a successful end a township agricultural fair of their own. The *Monitor's* account of this novel affair was as follows: "One of the most novel and significant events ever held in a rural community was the Lake Fair, held in District No. 6, of Lake township, Friday, October 14, 1910. The committees in charge of the several departments did their work well in every division of the big exhibit, which was complete and well cared for and very interesting to all.

"R. W. Breckenridge and family won the C. L. Speight buggy, which was awarded as the grand champion sweepstakes premium of the fair. The winners made forty-six entries to the fair and won sixteen first premiums, eleven seconds and contributed \$16 toward the cash donations for expenses of the fair. Five other families in the district were close seconds. The Lake Agricultural club, together with Miss Elfson and the school children, deserved special credit for the eminent success of this event."



## LAKE TOWNSHIP'S AVIATOR.

One of the distinctions granted to Lake township is the fact that it was the home of Elling Weeks, one of America's most successful aviators. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. O. A. Weeks, and is among the youngest airship men in the country. At the age of twenty-one years he made, in 1912, during sixty days, seventy flights, without a mishap. In 1911-12, he made flights in Chicago, in New York, and in other large eastern cities. His first flight was made in a machine which he constructed himself.



## CHAPTER XXIX.

### LIBERTY TOWNSHIP.

Liberty township is now comprised in congressional township No. 92, range 26, west, and lies south of Boone township, west of Lake township, north of Eagle Grove township and east of Humboldt county. It is traversed by the waters of Boone river, in the western part, and Otter creek, diagonally from northeast to southwest, making a junction with Boone river near Thrall, a station point on the Chicago & Northwestern railway. In 1910 Liberty township had a population of 1,230, including a part of the town of Goldfield. It is an excellent agricultural district and land has gone to high prices during the last decade. The towns of Goldfield and Thrall are situated in Liberty township. The railroads of the township are the Chicago & North Western and the Chicago & Rock Island lines. For accounts of the churches, lodges and schools, see separate chapters on these subjects. It was in this township that the first seat of justice of Wright county was located—Liberty, now Goldfield, being the site until the county seat was removed to Clarion after the Civil War period.

An old settler, who was too modest to sign his name, wrote an early-day history of this township in 1877 for the *Belmond Herald*, that article being reproduced in full below. It will be observed that this article was written while Liberty yet contained the present territory of Lake township, which was detached in 1879:

"Liberty comprised of township 92, range 26, and all of township 92, range 25, except sections 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 34, 35 and 36, the nine southeastern sections. It was watered in the eastern part by Eagle creek and in the west by Boone river and Otter creek. The Boone river is timbered throughout its course in this township; and Otter creek for the last three miles of its course has a good supply of timber on its banks. Eagle creek is without timber where it passes through this township. With the exceptions of the land near the streams this township is better adapted to grazing than grain growing—a fact which the inhabitants are beginning to learn, hence they are availing themselves, with profit, as witness the droves of cattle which went from here last week, and the large amount of stock



owned in the township—a greater number than are found in any other township in Wright county. The low prairie being a natural pasture or meadow, hay is abundant and easily procured, while the pasture land is almost unlimited.

#### FIRST SETTLEMENT.

"On the 11th day of August, 1854, Major Minter Brassfield, accompanied by his family, arrived where he now lives in section 32, township 92, range 26, and at once built him a log house which had puncheon floors and doors made from the same style of lumber. It had shake roofing. Into this rude house he moved his family, he being the first settler in the township and among the very first in Wright county—the Stryker, Wilcox, Middleton settlement in Troy township, with possibly two others on the east side along the Iowa river, only preceding him. However he had lived as a hunter and trapper here as early as 1853. Major Brassfield lived in this cabin home until late in the fall, when he changed his location to a point some fifty rods further up the river, on account of a fine spring he had discovered; and to save time and trouble in moving his house, he built another of the same kind, except that it had hewed logs. The house is still standing [1877] as a monument of pioneer days.

"H. W. Montgomery arrived with his family, October 4, 1854, and about the same time John Boyles. The former settled four miles up the river in section 17, township 92, range 26, where he still resides. The latter built a cabin in section 28, about a mile northeast of Brassfield's farm, on what was later known as the Barnes farm. All the log houses built that fall were of the very primitive construction, as was Major Brassfield's, and were entirely innocent of windows. It was inconvenient to have the doors open, so light was admitted through the roof by moving a 'shake,' thus making a real 'sky light.' An ample fire-place, built of sticks and plastered with clay, furnished the heating apparatus—rude but comfortable, as the writer knows from experience.

"At that time, Homer, forty-five miles distant, was the nearest post-office. The nearest mill was at the mouth of the Boone, five miles beyond Homer; and Boonesboro, distanced sixty-five miles, was the nearest market town. Luckily the winter was a mild one and, as the woods fairly swarmed with game,—elk, deer and buffalo—these three families got through the winter without suffering any great hardships.



## FIRST CHILD BORN IN COUNTY.

"March 21, 1855, a new stranger came to reside with Mr. and Mrs. H. W. Montgomery—a daughter, Amanda by name, who was the first child born in Wright county.

"Later in the season the little settlement was reinforced by the arrival of several families, among them being Nelson Usher, James Franks, Emery Barnes and others.

"The village of Liberty, comprising the southwest quarter of the southeast quarter of section 33, township 92, range 26, was laid out during the summer of 1855, by Major Brassfield; and the same year the pioneer store of Wright county was opened in section 28, township 92, range 26, by Nelson Usher and James Franks, who soon afterward laid out a rival town on that section, calling it 'Sheffield,' which however, died a natural death and the town plat was afterward vacated.

"1855 was indeed an eventful year for Liberty. The organization of the county was effected in August and Liberty was the place selected for the county seat. Anson Brassfield was chosen county treasurer and recorder; Scott Crapper, sheriff; David Dean, county judge; N. B. Paine, prosecuting attorney, and C. H. Martin, clerk of the court. H. W. Montgomery was also elected school fund commissioner.

"The same year, Major Brassfield built a saw- and grist-mill which did not prove to be a paying investment on account of the uncertain stage of the water in Boone river.

"The first marriage in the township was solemnized on December 27, 1855, by Judge Dean, Alexander Usher and Louisa Brassfield being the high contracting parties.

"In 1856 a log school house was built in the village of Liberty, and in it was taught the first school in the township, in the summer of 1856, by Mrs. Doctor Skinner. The first frame building in the new village was erected by Doctor Skinner that year. During that season quite a number of settlers found their way into the township, among the number being William Melrose and O. C. McIntosh.

"In 1857, among others who settled there, was C. N. Overbaugh. It was during that year that the village of Goldfield was laid out by O. W. McIntosh, G. W. Hanna and William Melrose. The village comprised a hundred and forty acres and was laid out on the northeast and west sides of the present town.



## SETTLERS IN NEEDLESS PANIC.

"In 1857 occurred the great Spirit Lake massacre, when the women and children were hustled down the river to Webster City, the most of the men remaining in the school house, which they converted into a fort. No Indians appearing—indeed there were no hostile Indians within the limits of the state at that time—the settlers returned in a few days and resumed their occupations. During this year was sown the first wheat in the township. The next year, 1858, is known as the 'wet year' and not much was raised.

"About this time a steam saw-mill was out in operation at Liberty, which materially assisted the settlers in procuring lumber.

"J. J. Moore kept the first hotel in a farm house adjoining Goldfield, on the west, and Wellington Neese the first regular hotel in the village.

"In June, 1857, John Melrose came from Black Hawk county, Iowa, with a stock of goods and opened a store in the new village of Goldfield. This gentleman has erroneously had the credit of being the 'pioneer merchant' of Wright county, though he himself laid no claim to such honor. The village of Liberty continued to increase in size and importance till the transfer of the county seat to Clarion, which occurred in 1866, since which time it has been at a standstill, but being backed up by a good farming country, it is a place of considerable trade. It had in 1877 three stores, a hotel, second to none in the county, shops of the ordinary kind, the largest school house in the county, while the residences of William Melrose, O. C. McIntosh, Dr. A. B. Brackett and C. E. Agard would be a credit to any village.

"One word in regard to fruit and I am through. Experience, the sweet guide, has demonstrated that apples can be grown in this township at least, and their culture be made profitable. Besides the orchard of C. N. Overbaugh, we wish to mention that of O. C. McIntosh, in the village of Goldfield, who last season gathered over twenty-five bushels from trees of his own planting; and he informs us that he has raised for a number of years enough to supply his family. If anyone desires knowing his methods, wrought with such success, Mr. McIntosh will take pleasure in answering their questions and imparting any information he can to them."

Other pioneers were H. B. Martin, Nelson Usher, M. Barnes, W. Neese and Fred Kelling.



## FARM CREAMERIES.

In the late seventies and early eighties, many well-to-do farmers who had not been receiving a sufficient price for their home-made butter, owing to the system that prevailed at that date of allowing as high a price for poor butter as for good (and paid for, usually, in trade, at that), the better class of farmers purchased their own butter-making machinery and made their own butter and shipped it themselves. Among such enterprising farmers may be recalled Messrs. H. W. Montgomery, J. H. McCurry, Wellington Neese, and the Overbaughs, all of whom operated small creameries of their own. By this method they obtained from twenty to thirty cents for butter, instead of from eight to fourteen cents of the dealers at Webster City and Fort Dodge. But it was not many years before the butter-making system was all changed and now the cream is sold to regular cream gatherers, who take it to large, well-planned creameries.

## PIONEER POINTERS.

Stephenson's pamphlet history of Wright county, written in 1870, gives the following facts concerning some of the farms in Liberty township in 1869-70:

"We beg to be excused if we become a little personal and say that the farm of N. Barnes constitutes one of the beauties of the Boone, and the number of fruit trees he has set out, while budding, blossoming and bearing, constitutes one of its finest features.

"Adjoining this, is that of Nelson Usher, which presents an appearance of great comfort, and shows that the hand of industry has not been idle.

"A little farther up the river is that of C. N. Overbaugh, containing some three hundred acres of as beautiful land as lies beneath the sun, all well improved. We found this gentleman engaged in making preparation to build a large and splendid residence, which, when completed, will add greatly to the beauty of his place, and be quite an ornament to the township.

"Next is that of W. H. Montgomery and the state of perfection to which he has brought his place, indicates years of hard toil and labor.

"Like other settlers making for themselves homes on the frontier, the early settlers of this township had to haul their supplies a distance of from sixty to one hundred miles, but a few years of industry and prosperity rendered this no longer necessary, and instead of depending on others to be supplied, they are in a condition to supply. There are four school



houses in the township, which shows the facilities the youth have for acquiring knowledge and education. Its present population numbers about three hundred."

The population of Liberty township in 1910 was 1,230, including that part of Goldfield within the township. The census of 1890 gave it only 828. (For a history of the schools and churches of this township, see special general chapters on these topics elsewhere in this volume.)

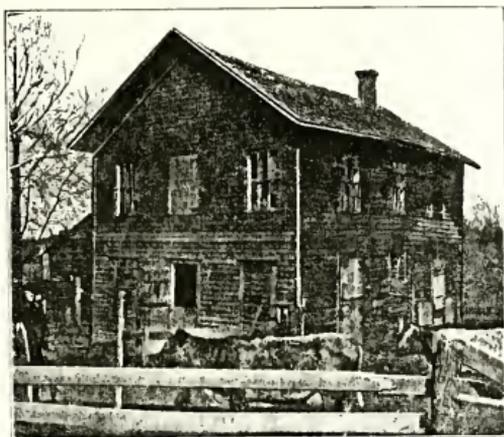
#### THE CITY OF GOLDFIELD.

Goldfield, the chief town in Liberty township, was platted in sections 33 and 34 of township 92, range 26, February 5, 1858, by William Melrose and wife, George W. Hanna and wife, and O. W. McIntosh. It is beautifully situated on the banks of the gently-winding Boone river, and is the crossing point of the Chicago & North Western and the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific railways. The corporation runs to within two miles of the western line of Wright county, the river making a horseshoe bend at that point. The county seat was first located at Goldfield, and was kept there until about 1866, when it was changed to Clarion, in the exact center of the county. Just to the north of Goldfield was old "Liberty" postoffice and store, mention of which is made elsewhere. Goldfield is within the famous "flowing-well belt" of Iowa, and one of the faithful "gushers" has been running, at the depot, in Goldfield many years. Thousands of railway passengers and citizens of the county have quenched their thirst from this clear, pure water, the flow of which, like Tennyson's brook, "goes on forever." Annually, in September, the Old Settlers Picnic Association assembles at the beautiful public park, where thousands of pioneers and their children and grandchildren gather to recount the days of long ago, when hardships were the rule rather than the exception. The population of Goldfield in 1905 was placed by the state census compiler as being 594, and the United States census for 1910 gave 618, these figures including the parts of the plat in both Eagle Grove and Liberty townships.

Situated in a real natural garden spot, surrounded by thrift and contentment, sustained by the best soil in the country, this town has come to be thoroughly modern in its make-up, and is steadily forging its way to the front among other towns of the "Kingdom of Wright," of which it used to be the capital.

As to the beginning of things at Goldfield, the article on the early settlement of Liberty township has covered almost every point connected





FIRST WRIGHT COUNTY COURT HOUSE AT GOLDFIELD.



OLD SETTLERS' MEETING AT GOLDFIELD.



with the first events in the place. It may be stated, however, in brief, that the first hotel on the platting proper was conducted by Wellington Neese. John Melrose, so well known to all early settlers, opened his store in June, 1857. Goldfield held the county seat from 1855 to 1866, and secured her first railroad in 1880-81. It was made a postoffice point in May, 1856, and its postmasters have been: John B. Skimmer, appointed on May 27, 1856; A. D. Brassfield, November, 1856; H. N. Crapper, May, 1859; John Melrose, April, 1861; J. W. Parmelee, March 22, 1871; J. S. Braden, January 13, 1876; P. K. McMurty, January 11, 1886; S. M. Huyek, August 26, 1889; S. C. Farmer, December 24, 1890; John Sill, June 15, 1893; George B. McMurty, March 10, 1894; S. T. Campbell, February 11, 1898; Eva Keith, January 4, 1900.

#### GOLDFIELD'S BUSINESS INTERESTS.

The business interests in sprightly Goldfield, in the spring of 1915, were as follow: Agricultural implement dealers, Whyte & Son, Moseley Brothers and James Campbell; banking, the Citizens Savings bank and the Farmers Savings Bank; brick and tile factory, Conger & Whyte; barber shop, John Atteberry; blacksmith shop, Matherson Brothers; cement workers, E. O. Shoen; creamery, once a successful plant, is now idle; drugs, Dr. A. S. Cunningham and A. E. Elliott; dentist, C. C. Baldus; dray line, Donaldson Brothers; elevators, Farmers Co-operative Company, Goldfield Lehman & Company; garages, Whyte Auto Company, Blewett Auto Company; furniture dealers, Whyte Brothers and Braden Hardware Company; general dealers, Harry Moore & Company, C. B. Jones, J. D. pany, A. W. Moseley & Company; hotel, Hawkins & Son; harness, James Smith; hardware, Whyte & Son, Braden Hardware Company; jeweler, F. G. Taylor; lumber, Farmers Co-operative Company, Jones Lumber Company; livery, Barney Jones; meat market, Stephenson & Eckles; millinery, Agatha Cameron; moving picture show, "The Cosmos," by R. A. Hawkins; newspaper, the *Chronicle*; "pantatorium," Charles Pinkham; phone company, L. A. McIntyre, secretary and manager; physicians, A. S. Cunningham, E. N. Zimm, J. L. Pepper; produce dealers, A. W. Moseley & Company, butter, eggs and poultry; restaurants, Hawkins & Son, E. N. Newton; stock dealers, Stephenson & Eckles; shoe store, James Smith; veterinary surgeon, Dr. T. S. Leith; wagon and tub factory, Walter Sawin.



## BRICK AND TILE FACTORY.

The leading industry of Goldfield, a brick and tile factory, is one of great value to the town and surrounding counties, and produces a large quantity of superior drain tile and building brick. The plant was established in 1891 by J. A. Conger, and is now the property of Conger & Whyte. This firm owns twenty acres of land, beneath the surface of which is found an excellent quality of clay for brick and tile purposes, and the annual output of this plant is about ten thousand dollars' worth of clay products, ten men being employed in the manufacture of brick and tile in these works. The product is largely consumed by local farmers, but some is shipped to other counties. Both steam and gasoline are used for power purposes. Of the twenty-acre tract of land mentioned, two and one-half acres are used for the factory, proper, while the remainder is used for yard and piling facilities, large stocks being carried for fall and winter trade. The factory is two hundred feet long and two stories high, with a tile elevator. The machinery includes tile mill, boiler, engines, clay elevator, automatic tile and brick cutter, etc. Carts are used for drawing the clay from the clay-pit and for drawing coal from the railroad tracks, there being a spur from the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific line. The upper Boone valley farmer may feel elated over the fact that he can procure good drain tile and building brick so near his home, thus saving much on freights. The tile product is about ninety-five per cent. of the total product of this factory.

## GOLDFIELD TELEPHONE COMPANY.

This enterprise was established in 1903 by a few stockholders. At present there are four hundred and fifty instruments in active daily use in the system. The line reaches Owl Lake, the Crill ranch, Thor and Hardy villages. The line is grounded. Two families operate the plant. The number of poles in use is two thousand, and seventy-five miles of wire are strung. The original capital stock has been doubled and twenty-one dividends have been declared, mostly all of which have been ten per cent. The first officers were: D. M. Stevens, president; Charles Bowers, vice-president; B. W. McIlhaney, treasurer; W. V. Palmer, secretary. The directors, aside from the officers given, were H. Crill, J. M. Montgomery, L. A. McIntyre.

The present (1915) officers are: C. Troyer, president; J. M. Montgomery, vice-president; B. W. McIlhaney, treasurer; L. A. McIntyre, secretary.



## TOWN INCORPORATION.

Goldfield was incorporated on March 24, 1885. Its mayors have been in about the following order of administration: O. C. McIntosh, J. R. Griffin, Brue Riley, O. C. McIntosh, George Blenett, J. M. Montgomery. The town recorders, or clerks, have been as follow: John Sill, George Whyte, D. G. Keith, B. W. Agard, T. R. Beveridge, B. W. Agard, Robert Keith.

The town officials in 1915 were: John M. Montgomery, mayor; councilman, George H. Whyte, John Matheson, Eli Axon, H. C. Wisser, N. W. Freeman; treasurer, W. K. Blackwell; clerk, Robert P. Keith.

The town is supplied with electric lights from the Eagle Grove plant, which also extends out into the farming district adjoining Goldfield. The corporation of Goldfield bonded itself in the spring of 1915 for twelve thousand dollars for the purpose of constructing a system of modern water-works.

## THRALL.

This is a station point on the Chicago & Northwestern railway, situated just north from Goldfield, in section 28, Liberty township. It was platted by the company and Alex Owens, and a station was kept up there until recently. A postoffice was established in 1882, soon after the railroad was built through. The first postmaster was D. B. Myers, appointed on January 30, 1882, who was succeeded by Alex Owen on December 22, 1884. The office was discontinued on November 30, 1907. Mr. Owen at one time conducted a large general store and bought both stock and grain at Thrall, but today the business has gone down.

A Centennial celebration was held at Belmond on July 4, 1876, at which J. Q. Hanna delivered an oration and J. M. Overbaugh read the Declaration of Independence. Pioneer N. B. Paine read an original poem, of his own unique production, and C. N. Overbaugh spoke on the "Patriots of 1776."

The local press of April 23, 1883, mentioned the fact that "most of the town's people here turned out to fight prairie fire last night."

Goldfield, having struck a number of fine flowing wells in the early eighties, was styled "Flowing-Well City," by which it is sometimes still known. In 1883 mention was made, in the *Clarion Monitor*, of Charles Arthur's extensive creamery at Goldfield. His churns and other butter-making machinery were all run by water power obtained from a flowing well. That year the fifty by fifty-four-foot, two-story school house was erected—



one of the largest in Wright county. Also a ten-thousand-dollar flour-mill was constructed that year.

In 1890 it was stated that the Fountain Creamery, owned by Charles Arthur, was producing two thousand pounds of fancy butter daily at Goldfield.



## CHAPTER XXX.

### LINCOLN TOWNSHIP.

Lincoln township was one of the last sub-divisions in the county to be organized, not being made a separate township for civil purposes until in 1883. It comprises congressional township 91, range 24 west, except sections 5 and 6 and parts of sections 7 and 8, which are a part of the present irregular township of Clarion. The record (board session of April, 1883) says concerning the formation and boundary lines of the township: "It is hereby ordered that the following shall constitute the civil townships of Wright county (including the new township of Lincoln):

- Township 90, range 23, shall constitute Vernon civil township.
- Township 90, range 24, shall constitute Wall Lake civil township.
- Township 90, range 25, shall constitute Woolstock civil township.
- Township 93, range 23, shall constitute Pleasant civil township.
- Township 90, range 26, shall constitute Troy civil township.
- Township 93, range 24, shall constitute Belmont township.
- Township 91, range 26, shall constitute Eagle Grove civil township.
- Township 93, range 25, shall constitute Norway civil township.
- Township 91, range 25, shall constitute Dayton civil township.
- Township 91, range 24, shall constitute Lincoln civil township.
- Township 91, range 23, shall constitute Blaine civil township.
- Township 92, range 23, shall constitute Iowa civil township.
- Township 92, range 24, shall constitute Clarion civil township.
- Township 92, range 25, shall constitute Lake civil township.
- Township 92, range 26, shall constitute Liberty civil township.
- Township 93, range 26, shall constitute Boone civil township."

Lincoln township now has a population of five hundred and sixty-one. The history of its schools and churches is set out under the general chapter heads of these subjects, presented elsewhere in this volume, hence will not be referred to in this connection. Lincoln township is, in many parts, flat and was originally very wet and lacked natural drainage outlets. Regarding this feature, another section of this chapter will treat in detail, but it may be here stated that there are now many drainage ditches cut here and there through-



out the township. The White Fox creek courses through the western portion, into which falls a system of artificial drainage ditches. Galt and Clarion both being near, there are no towns or villages within the township. It is bounded on the east by Blaine township, on the south by Wall Lake township, on the west by Dayton township and on the north by Clarion and Grant townships. The Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific railroad traverses the northeastern part of the territory, with a station point, over the township line, in Blaine township. This is purely a prairie township, except for the artificial groves planted by the thoughtful early settlers. These groves have come to be thrifty and full of large trees which give the landscape a charming appearance, and afford shelter in winter and cooling shade in summertime. These groves are located, usually, on the north and west sides of the farm houses and barnyards. Maple, willow, ash and elm, with some box elder, are the common trees. The prices of land have rapidly advanced in the last decade, owing to a general advance of prices in the county, as well as to the fine improvements and drainage of the soil in the lower tracts of land. There are many extensive, highly-developed places within the township, including the farms of O. P. Morton and W. T. Richards. It is generally conceded that the Morton place, where W. C. Morton, the father of O. P. Morton, first settled in 1875, is now one of the best places, counting the character of land and its modern improvements, within the township.

#### EARLY SETTLEMENT.

Aside from lands belonging in the land grant for railroads, mentioned in a special chapter, the first lands were taken as homesteads under the 1864 United States homestead act. For the most part, these were not proved up on until about 1876. In what was originally Lincoln township, the pioneer settlers included D. D. Leonard, John Pearl, A. S. and William Fox, William McCormick, Charles Miller, Stephen Parker, J. D. Denison, Peter and Michael Burke, Michael Russell, A. K. Ketchum, Edward Malbott, Aaron Ellsworth, Joshua Meeker, the Lords, Fosters, Benningtons, Nicholsons and Manns, nearly all of whom came prior to 1875. It is impossible to go further into detail concerning the many who arrived at later dates and at once set about building homes for themselves on the bleak prairies of this township, now so fair to look upon. The Richards family, who came in from Webster City about 1883, have battled hard and have finally won out, now owning one of the valuable places in the township. Scores of others have beautiful, valuable



farm homes, and seem, one and all, to believe their lines were really cast in pleasant places, and their surroundings at this date convince the stranger that they made no mistake in the selection of their homesteads. The farmers are becoming wealthy; they enjoy life and purchase the best of all that tends to make home and social life what it should be. There are numerous modern farm houses, the occupants of which enjoy the advantages of fine, blooded stock, spacious barns, excellent water systems, electric-lighted barns and houses, and magnificent groves, with their trees towering high and branches spreading broad. Many have their houses heated by modern systems—steam and hot water—and baths, with running hot and cold water, just such as one sees in city places.

As an example of these well improved places, the Morton home may be cited. There the elder Morton, pioneer from Iowa Falls in 1875, started without means and battled on for long years. He was among the first to pay special attention to planting out trees and shrubs, and everlastingly kept at it, until, before the death of the head of the family and his estimable wife, they enjoyed the luxuries of a thoroughly-equipped farm home. The father and son, O. P. Morton, working in conjunction, cared well, and in a scientific and progressive manner, for the tilling of their half section of land, now among the most valuable properties in the township. The planted trees about the premises make up a grove of greater variety than any other grove in the neighborhood. The township has raised its own timber, to the extent that saw-mills were established and have cut considerable cottonwood lumber from trees planted from the seeds, or set from slips and mere saplings, thirty or forty years ago. These fine groves afford an excellent wind-break against the severe storms of winter, such as the original settlers contended with in the old prairie days, when the township had not a tree growing on its surface. The barn on the Morton place is modern throughout, being about one hundred and twenty feet long. Its first story is of cement blocks, and has cement floors from end to end. It is provided with a complete system of water-works, and has electric lights in every section, including the topmost parts of the spacious hay-mow. Cattle, both stock cattle and milch cows, and horses all have clean, suitable stalls and apartments, while ample space is allowed for storage of grain and machinery. Even the feeding troughs are constructed of cement, as well as the hay mangers for horses. The contrast of this barn with the old time "straw sheds," which had to be used in the seventies and eighties, is indeed striking.



## A BANNER TOWNSHIP.

In 1912 Lincoln township was counted the banner township in the county for improvements made during that year. On a score and more farms there were effected improvements amounting all the way from three hundred dollars to four thousand dollars each. Many farms were fenced in and crossed by sub-dividing fences of wire-woven fencing. The township used one hundred and twenty-five carloads of tiling. There were then six drainage districts in the township. Tens of thousands of dollars have been expended in placing these ditches and tiling there. In parts of Lincoln township the fall for these tile drains is but little and in cases none at all, and a rather novel scheme was resorted to in order to get the surplus water from the lands. Many of the ingenious farmers conceived the idea that the ponds and "sink-holes" might be dried out by sinking seven-inch wells down to a distance of about two hundred feet—some going more than three hundred feet. The plan proved successful, in that the surface water on these lands was carried off through these tubular wells, probably by an underground stream. The late Senator J. P. Dolliver, it is stated, drained out parts of Owl lake, Humboldt county, in a like manner many years ago. Around these wells in Lincoln township large cement basins were built and into these the eight and ten-inch drain-tile empty their waters. The appearance of the township has materially changed in the last decade. Where once nothing but muddy waters stood almost the year round, now one sees growing luxuriant crops. No richer or more lasting soil can be found in the world than this soil, when once it is drained. To reclaim these lands, once thought to be worthless, required capital and courage on the part of land owners, but the wisdom of the method is now plain to be seen.



## CHAPTER XXXI.

### NORWAY TOWNSHIP.

Norway township, named on account of the large Scandinavian population within its boundaries, is the second township from the western line of Wright county and is immediately south of Hancock county. At its east is Belmont township, at its south is Lake township and on its west is Boone township. It comprises all of congressional township 93, range 25 west.

The headwaters of Eagle creek rise in this township, as do also those of Otter creek. The county drainage districts extend into this region, and within the last few years the low, swampy lands have been materially improved by these canals and the numerous tile drains with which the county is now being gridironed. The Scandinavian people are frugal and enterprising, and take more kindly to becoming Americanized than the people of any other nationality that come from over the big seas to become citizens. These people have largely occupied Norway township. They are believers in and supporters of good schools and churches, of which an extended account is given in the chapters on these special topics, presented elsewhere in this work. The township is without a town or village, and the only railroad line that crosses its territory is about a mile and a half of the old Chicago & Iowa line, from Belmont to Forest City, which crosses section 1.

The population of Norway township, at various enumerations, has been as follows: In 1880, it was only 77; in 1890 it was 452; in 1900, 756, and in 1910 it had decreased to 744. The 1905 Iowa state census book gave this township as having 190 males of the age of twenty-one years and over, and 144 from eighteen to forty-four years.

The land is of an excellent quality and is being well cared for by the present landowners and their renters. A third of a century ago, the vast scope of prairie there was one great pasture land, where were herded thousands of head of fattening cattle, brought in from other locations to take advantage of the free grass found growing so luxuriantly on the land of non-residents, but today the scene is changed, and all land is fenced and improved, the owner plowing what he can and pasturing the remainder.



## ORGANIZATION AND SETTLEMENT.

In September, 1879, Norway township was taken from Boone township and made a separate civil township, its population then being about seventy-seven. The township has had a good local government, and its people moved early in the matter of good roads. The people have set out their share of groves, and today the settlers have come to be an enterprising, well-to-do class of citizens, who make farming pay as perhaps few of the farmers of other townships in the county make it pay.

There is no class of foreigners within the borders of Wright county which appreciates more highly what has been made by exchanging the land of the north of Europe (whence nearly all came, poor people, not many decades since) than does the Scandinavian population of Norway township.

Probably the first settler there was James Johnson, who located in the northwest of section 24, prior to 1874, and his daughter Malinda was the first child born in the township. The first school house was built in 1876. The Schovland brothers came in among the first; also the Sigstad family, in section 18; Mr. Downs located in the northwest of section 9, and U. I. Bruns in the southeast of section 17. It has been claimed by some that Ole Thompson was the first to bring his family to this township—he was very near the first, at any rate. The first church was erected in 1888.

Bruce postoffice was at one time the postoffice of this township, and there was a country store supplying some of the more common articles needed by the community, but the rural free delivery system discontinued this office several years ago. Clarion, Renwick and Garner are now usually resorted to as market towns and trading places by the citizens of Norway township. The country store and the creamery of Norway township have always been of much benefit to the farming community.

There is but one cemetery within the township, the Norway cemetery, situated on a part of the Robert Lucus farm, west from the creamery and near the school house.

The first township election was held at the house of L. T. Ligstad, on the general election day of 1879. The judges of election were John C. Smith, James Johnson and Andrew Korlin; clerks, Henry Crist and Emmel Ligstad. At that date the county supervisors were A. S. Chapman, N. B. Paine and E. A. Howland.



## CHAPTER XXXII.

### PLEASANT TOWNSHIP.

Pleasant township is the extreme northeastern sub-division of Wright county, as now divided into civil townships. It was ordered set off on March 5, 1856, and its boundaries were defined by the county authorities as "the east half of the county." Judge Dean was then county judge and he ordered an election in Pleasant township to be held in April of that year, which resulted in the election of the following township officials: Justices of the peace, J. M. Elder and Robert Rowen; constables, William Clifford and James G. Riley; township clerk, William E. Rogers; trustees, William B. Walters, Edwin Ballou and Henry Laick; assessor, Washington Dumond; road supervisor, Anthony Overacker. The bond of the road supervisor was fixed at fifty dollars; the assessor, who also collected taxes at times, gave a bond in the sum of three hundred dollars. Dumond resigned within a month of his election and J. M. Elder was appointed in his place, thus really becoming the first man to assess the township, which was half of the entire county.

The report of the first road supervisor shows there were twenty-one persons who labored on the highways during that year, to the amount of forty-one dollars; that the supervisor labored to the amount of six dollars, and that there was expended for bridge material the sum of four dollars and fifteen cents, which amount would not build a three-plank culvert nowadays.

With the formation of Vernon township, Pleasant township was reduced one-half in size, and still comprised the northeast quarter of the county. Subsequently, Iowa and Belmont townships were taken from Pleasant, and still later, changes were made that reduced it to its present dimensions, a six-mile-square territory, conforming to the lines of township 93, range 24 west, with Hancock county at its north boundary, Franklin county at its east, Iowa township at its south and Belmont township at its west.

The earliest settlers in the county dropped in there, early in the spring of 1854—several months in advance of the settlement on the Boone by William Stryker, July 5, and by Major Brassfield, in Liberty township, August 12, 1854. This east-side "settlement" spoken of by some was made



by John Beebe, who entered the land later owned by Fred Luick, at the north end of Franklin grove, where he built a bark shanty. However, becoming alarmed at the report of Indians on the northern borders, he fled the scene and never returned. Messrs. Ford, Hill and a half-breed Indian, named Murdock, settled at Horse grove at the same time Beebe came in, but, after a few months' sojourn, also left without making any improvements.

The first, therefore, to become regular settlers within what is now Pleasant township were those who located in and near Belmont and Rowan, as before stated in the early settlement chapter in this work, including Messrs. Henry Luick, Gray, the Overackers and Mr. Wilse.

In 1855 a saw-mill was constructed in this township, on the banks of the Iowa, but was washed away by the floods of the following spring.

The first merchandise probably ever sold over a counter in Wright county was from the stock put in by J. W. Cowles, in July, 1855. About that date a small stock was opened at Sheffield, in the vicinity of present Goldfield—just which was the first, no one can now determine. This stock on the east side was at Belmont, and there has never been a day since that summer day in July, 1855, when there has not been a fair general store at Belmont. The first frame dwelling was erected by Martin and S. G. Pritchard in August 1855. Martin Pritchard had a blacksmith shop at that early day—probably the first in Wright county. The first sermon was preached there by Rev. McNutt, and the first religious society formed in the county, the United Brethren church, was organized there.

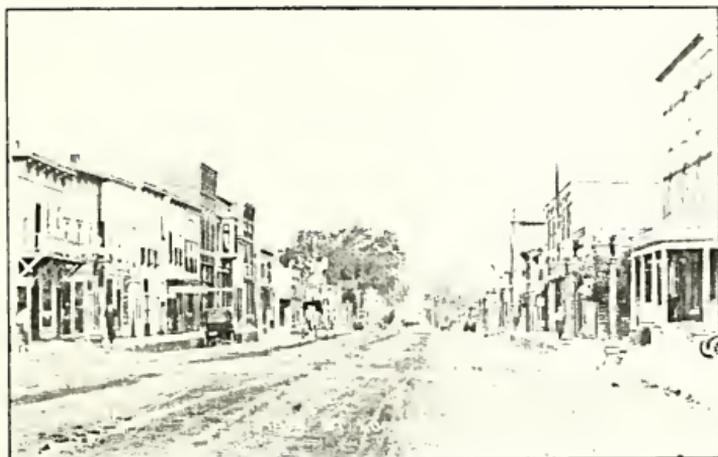
Pleasant township is within the famous Iowa valley district, a locality which ever affords an abundant harvest of paying crops. Two groves are old-time landmarks—Buroak in the north and Franklin in the south part of the township. These afforded the largest supply of native timber found in any township in the county, save, possibly, Troy township, with its three-thousand-acre Bach grove. On account of this fine Iowa river timber, the first settlement naturally drew itself together there, fencing and fuel being two things always sought for by pioneers. It was many years before groves began to be planted by the settlers, but now beautiful groves are seen here and there and almost everywhere in the limits of the township and county.

The population of Pleasant township, according to the United States census report of 1910, was seven hundred and seventy-five, including a portion of Belmont town. The present enumeration will add somewhat to that given above.





BELMOND IN 1867.



BELMOND IN 1915.



The schools and churches of the township are mentioned elsewhere in this work, in a general chapter covering the topic for the entire county.

#### BREASTWORKS.

It is related that in 1852-3 the Winnebago Indians constructed a mud or sod fort a little to the northeast of Franklin grove, as a protection against the savage Sioux tribes, with which they were ever at war. Many arrow heads and Indian bones have been discovered there.

An account of this "fort," as given by an old United States soldier, is probably correct. J. P. Myers, who in 1879 resided at Perry, Iowa, recalled his early travels over this county and all the north Iowa country while attached to the United States Dragoons, in 1843 and at a later date, but a few years prior to the white settlements. He speaks of the "Neutral strip" between the savage, warring Sioux and the more friendly Winnebago tribes. This strip was thirty miles in width and covered a portion of what is now Wright county. He says the Winnebagoes were the weaker of the two tribes, hence needed the protection of the government. Acting upon this, the military authorities had built a "fort," or really an earthwork, for the Winnebagoes, on land owned later by pioneer Fred Luick, which land he broke up for farming purposes in 1855. This was near Belmond, and is doubtless the same "fort" above named.

The same authority says that on one occasion the "wily Sioux, in numbers of about one thousand, managed to steal down and secrete themselves, as is supposed, in Burroak grove, and while the dragoons were camped on the Boone on the west side of this county, the Winnebagoes were scattered in small bands; they came down on the little fort and captured it, killing most of the inmates and taking the remainder prisoners. Rumors soon reached the dragoons, who saddled and mounted their horses in haste, and overtook the Sioux, defeating them, killing many and returning the prisoners. In all there were about six hundred killed."

The ruins of this fort were still to be seen when Fred Luick came to Wright county, the walls then being about three feet high.

#### THE TOWN OF BELMOND.

There are only two towns, or villages, within the borders of Pleasant township—Belmond and Palsville. Belmond is situated on both the west and east sides of the Iowa river, but in recent years the most of the place



is confined to the east side, hence is within Pleasant township, while that portion on the west side is within Belmont township. Belmont town is situated in sections 19, 20, 29 and 30 of township 93, range 23 and 24. It was platted on October 20, 1856, by William E. Rogers, James M. Elder and Archer Dumond. Mr. Dumond desired to have it called after the town of his home in Indiana—Crown Point—but the others talked him out of it, and while they wanted it named Dumond, he prevailed, and, as a compromise, Belmont was substituted. Had he not been a very modest man, we might have had a "Dumond," instead of Belmont in Wright county today. Belmont is the only town of that name in the United States.

The town at first was all on the west bank of the Iowa, but soon Doctor Cutler became associated with others and platted on the east side of the stream and agreed that all should be known as Belmont, although up to that date the place had gone by the name of Crown Point. The store and frame building mentioned before as having been located there were both on the west side. In fact, there was but little to be seen on the east side until after the Civil War period.

Cutler & Elder built a saw-mill and flouring-mill in 1856, which was washed away, and then a steam mill was erected, which did service a number of years and was finally moved to Kansas. Doctor Cutler also built a house on the west side in 1856—the first there. The first brick house in Belmont, and possibly the first in Wright county, was the structure erected by Archer Dumond, one of the town's founders, on the hill in West Belmont about 1856-7; it is still standing and is occupied. In 1875 there were at Belmont three churches—Methodist, Congregation and Catholic; a bank, two hotels, a newspaper, and the usual number of stores and shops. It had a population of three hundred, which has increased now to about fourteen hundred.

For lodges and churches, also public schools, see special chapters on these topics, elsewhere in this volume.

#### EARLY DAYS IN BELMONT.

The first attorney to practice at Belmont was Omer Kent; J. L. Morse was the second and Z. C. Bradshaw (later a Methodist minister), was the third, after which came W. Eskridge, who was later killed by the Indians in a massacre in Colorado.

Early physicians in Belmont were, Doctors Cutler, Morris, Woodley, P. C. Jones and Galer. Early stage drivers from that point were Luther



Loomis, M. Lord, Solon Jones, Kirk Malvin, William Wertz and Fred Fulton.

The first marriage was that of J. E. Rowen and Catherine McNutt, in 1856, the ceremony having been performed by J. M. Elder.

The first (wooden) bridge over the Iowa at Belmond, was carried away by the flood and ice in 1867. The old mill was washed out in 1870, in which year, five men were drowned in one week about the town, while attempting to cross and re-cross the angry waters of the Iowa.

The first school in Belmond was taught in a granary on the hill on the west side of the river, the teacher being Jane Oliver. A school house was not built until 1857, and the teacher's certificate was issued by H. W. Montgomery, school-fund commissioner, the teacher receiving eighteen dollars per month.

G. N. Thompson has a pocket account-book, once his father's, from which the following "hard-times" figures for wages and goods are quoted. "Belmond, Iowa, June 3, 1857—George Wilson began work today at \$5.50 per month and his board. One month later he purchased a pair of boots, paying \$5.50 for the same, but in October that season he had coming to him \$30.00."

The Belmond Hotel was built in 1858 by Patterson & Prindle. Doctor Cutler opened his store at Belmond the same year.

A beautiful monument was unveiled at Belmond on Memorial Day, 1911, erected to the memory of that grand old Christian worker and Congregationalist minister, Reverend Sands. It was the gift of "Loving Friends" and has inscribed on its surface, among other items, the words, "Preacher, Patriot, Pioneer."

#### MUNICIPAL.

On October 21, 1881, by a vote of fifty-one to forty-seven, Belmond became an incorporated town and has had the following mayors and clerks: J. L. Morse, first mayor, was followed by R. M. Cameron, S. D. Pierce, R. M. Cameron, L. B. Clark, N. Reese, J. B. Brewsaugh, J. L. Klemme, Col. T. B. Kaufman, M. S. Paige, W. A. Bartholomew, R. M. Cameron, J. H. Reese, Val Griesy, R. M. Cameron, Theodore Wright and W. C. Ramsey. The recorders and clerks have been E. S. Hubbard, U. B. Tracy, J. W. Seeber, Frank Dunlap, G. N. Thompson, M. H. Littell, W. H. Pierce, E. H. Hubbard, J. C. Brown, J. B. Steeber, Ed H. Sands, J. B. Steeber,



E. A. Pierce, and G. J. Byers, present efficient clerk, who holds the office by appointment of the board, under the newly enacted laws.

The original town officers were: J. L. Morse, mayor; E. S. Hubbard, recorder; David Luick, G. G. Pritchard, R. M. Cameron, G. H. Richardson, J. B. Brewsaugh and D. L. Cuppett, trustees.

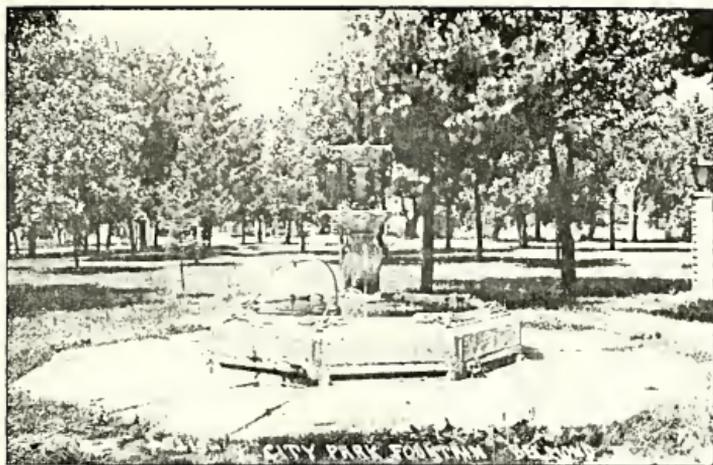
The present (1915) officers of Belmond incorporation are: Walter Ramsay, mayor; G. J. Byers, clerk; M. Hanson, treasurer; W. E. ("Bert") McAlpine, marshal; G. F. McBirney, health officer. The council is composed of Messrs. E. E. Kinney, J. N. Johnson, John Berg, C. P. Luick and H. E. Enger, and the assessor is E. W. Luick.

Belmond has a fine system of municipal waterworks, installed in 1896. Water, purest of the pure, is obtained at a depth of five hundred feet and is pumped to a water tower by steam power, giving from forty to eighty feet pressure, as the demand may be. There are about five miles of water mains; a good street-sewer system, constructed in 1913. At this date there are water bonds floating to the amount of nineteen thousand five hundred dollars, sold to Davenport capitalists, which draw five and one-half per cent. The town has a handsome park, a full square in size, covered with a fine growth of planted trees including evergreens and common forest trees. Its center is beautified by a handsome fountain, flowing through all the summer months. Rustic seats and other improvements have been wisely made, so that it has become a delightful spot in midsummer. The streets are lighted with thirty-six modern electroliers with a cluster of five brilliant lights attached to each post. Outside these lights on the main street, are sixty other electric lights. The town hall is a frame building, really not in keeping with the remainder of the town's improvements. The light plant is owned by a Michigan company and is a private corporation, put in a few years since, but highly satisfactory to the people. The multiplied miles of cement-paved walks is a noticeable feature of Belmond.

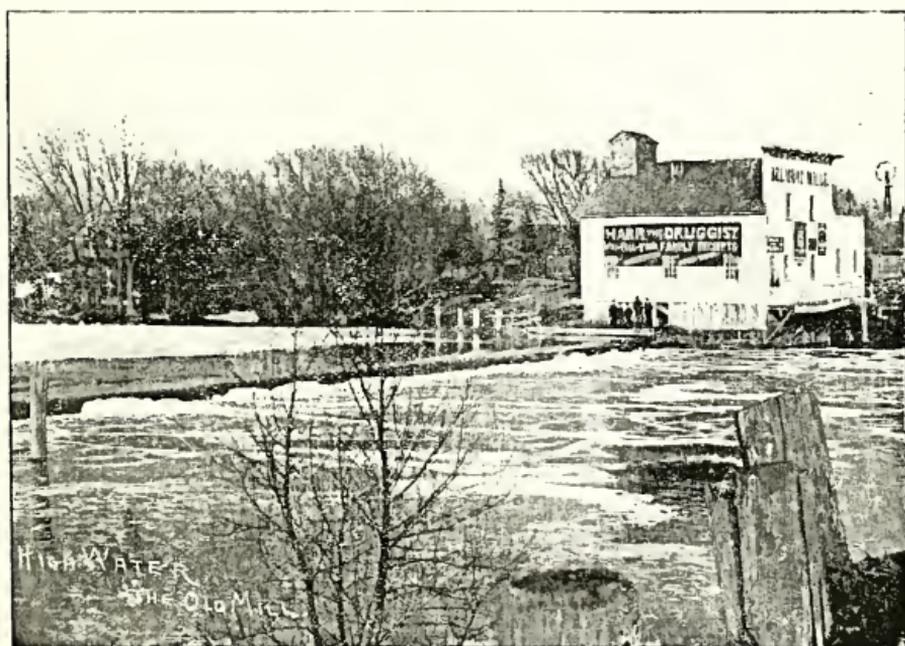
#### POSTOFFICE HISTORY.

A postoffice was established in Belmond in 1856 with Archer Dumond as its postmaster. It is now a third-class office, yet has the distinction of being one of the one hundred and twenty "village-carrier" departments in towns of its small size in the entire United States. This is the only such office in Iowa. It was established in June, 1913, and now serves three hundred and twenty families twice each day. There are also four rural free-delivery routes extending out from the postoffice to various country points.





CITY PARK, BELMOND.



OLD MILL, AT BELMOND, DURING FLOOD.



The money-order and savings-deposit business of Belmond is quite extensive, especially in the foreign money-order department. The following have served as postmasters in this office from the time of its establishment, fifty-nine years ago: Archer Dumond, appointed on June 18, 1856; J. M. Elder, December 18, 1857; William E. Rogers, April 30, 1859; George A. McKay, May 15, 1860; L. H. Cutler, April 6, 1861; George W. Dumond, January 12, 1863; J. C. Cowles, November 18, 1863; L. H. Cutler, September 9, 1864; William H. Mitchell, January 27, 1873; John W. Adams, September 25, 1885; Samuel Adams, July 5, 1887; Lyna Whited, May 9, 1889; Robert M. Cameron, February 18, 1897; E. S. Hubbard, March 21, 1901; W. C. Ramsay, January 23, 1906; John L. McAlpine, February 2, 1914.

#### PRESENT COMMERCIAL INTERESTS.

In the month of May, 1915, the following had charge of the various lines of business and profession in Belmond: Attorneys, Berry & Hill, Will E. Bullard; agricultural implements, Val Griesy, Johnson & Johnson; automobile dealers, Martin Lewis, Martin Thoe, G. E. Menzie, A. W. Hill; brick, tile and cement, H. J. Klemme, manager of company owning it; banks, First National, Belmond Savings Bank, State Bank of Belmond; barber shops, William Galligher, Brady & Dietz, W. Sands; bottling works, shops, Peter Stacy, Jess Underkolfer, R. Thompson; creamery, Farmers Co-operative Company; cement blocks, Belmond Lumber Company; clothing, exclusive, Charles McGuire; drug stores, Schultz Drug Company, James Adams; dentists, Doctor Goudy, Doctor Goodsell; dray lines, Kimbles, Bishops, Ike Earhart and Smith's transfer lines; elevators, The Great-Western elevator, Johnson-Rosencrans Company, Farmers Co-operative Company; furniture, Belmond Furniture Company, H. J. Klemme Furniture Company; feed barn, William Reese; general merchandise, C. B. Johnson, Joseph Boning, W. A. Shaffer, Oscar Jacobs, W. W. Goetz; grocery, exclusive, Benjamin Fetrow; hotels, The Case and the Home; harness shops, Cecil Jones, E. E. Scales; hardware, Val Greisy, Charles Reese, Johnson & Johnson; jewelry, L. Mallery, H. M. Hill, Harry Scholtz; lumber, Ahmann-Bock Lumber Company, H. J. Klemme Lumber Company, Belmond Lumber Company; livery, M. R. Case; laundry, Elmer Pierce; meat markets, Andrew Bullis, A. E. Hass; millinery, Berry Sisters, Ide Tyrell; mills, Steam Roller Mills; newspaper, *The Herald-Press*, by the Herald-Press Printing Company, Ramsay & Ramsay; physicians, Doctors Steele, Frank Stevens, McBurney, Myers; produce houses, Morse Brothers, Ed Lathrop; photograph-



er, Martin Thoe; "pantatorium," J. A. Jones; plumbers, M. A. Holtzbauer, Thomas Finn; racket store, Mr. Niering; restaurants, Cy Packard, E. E. Kinney, Jack Neal, John Campbellwell, J. A. Jones; stock dealers, Col. T. D. Rankin, Thomas Tyrell, L. Collins; shoemakers, August Foss, John Brodell; telephone exchange, Belmond Mutual Telephone Company; theater, Belmond opera house; "Velvet" ice-cream factory, George Goelz; veterinary surgeons, R. G. Brown, Russell; wagon shop, Richard Thompson.

#### SPECIAL INDUSTRIES.

While Belmond depends largely on her rich farming country for its support, it also has a large transient railway trade and the following industries which bring in much money during the year: The brick and tile Company, established in 1905, does an extensive trade in the making of brick, tile and cement products, which find ready sale near at home, for this country is fast being tiled and drained. These extensive works run summer and winter, the product being sold in central Iowa. The majority of the product of the plant consist of the larger grades of tile and building blocks and from fifteen to twenty men are constantly employed. The sand comes from the company's own sand-pit and the company also owns its own electric light and water plants. Since 1907 the entire output has been all sold in advance of producing the same. These works are owned solely by H. J. Klemme. June, 1908, Mr. Klemme patented what is known as the "miracle hollow block," a wonderful machine that makes three thousand tile daily--running from four inches to one foot in diameter. Window caps, columns, sidewalk blocks, cement brick and a score or more similar articles are there produced from cement.

The creamery, established in 1911, by the Farmers Co-Operative Company, is doing an excellent business. The Belmond roller flouring-mill is doing a thriving business as a merchant mill, where the best of modern machinery is in motion the year around, in the production of an excellent grade of family flour. The "Velvet" ice-cream plant is rapidly forging to the front, as are also the two produce houses. It goes without saying that the country surrounding Belmond is rich, for three banking houses are required to care for the business.



## DROWNING OF FIVE MEN AT BELMOND.

The drowning of five men at Belmond and the violent death in the mill of another, all in one week, in 1870, was described by a graphic writer at the time of its occurrence, in the following language:

"At Belmond a bridge used to span the Iowa river, but on the ice going out in the spring of 1870, it was carried away, from which sprung up a lamentable occurrence, which causes now to be written the saddest page in all the history of Wright county.

"At the east end of the bridge, or rather where it stood, is the Belmond mills, consequently the mill dam was a very short distance above the bridge.

"Shortly after the bridge was carried away by the ice, a party of five men undertook to cross from the west to the east side of the river in a boat in the vicinity of the dam, but who, when once embarked were destined to never set foot on land again. The particulars of this most sad event so far as we could learn, were about as follow: On the afternoon of Saturday the 9th of April, 1870, William Rowen, George W. Royce and Dudley Gillman, of Belmond, in company with R. P. Rowley, of Horse Grove, and S. F. Ainsley, of Clarion, ventured to take passage across the river in a boat that had been used for the same purpose by other parties. If we are correctly informed they made the venture with no other propelling power than a pole and to this may be attributed the sad results that followed. As already intimated, the point of embarkation was but a short distance from the dam, and much nearer the dangerous eddy than they had thought of. Before they had reached half way across the river, they discovered to their great dismay that the boat was fast being drawn into the whirlpool, or chasm, caused by the great rush of water flowing over the dam, and which seethed and frothed in all its fury when it came in contact with the water below. Every effort was put forth to avoid the threatening danger, every nerve was strained to keep the boat clear of the yawning gulf. But all was in vain. Out on the deep water they discovered that the pole on which they depended to guide themselves across is too short to reach the bottom and each moment draws them nearer and nearer the fearful doom that awaited them. Terror stricken, the people on shore behold their terrible situation, and every effort that human effort could invent, whereby they might be saved, was put forth, but all to no purpose. The surging and turbulent water roared loud its defiance and seemed to claim them as its victims. Finding effort fruitless to avoid the impending gloom that too surely awaited them,



one of the five, William Rowen, jumped from the boat, as a last resort. Fatal leap! For no sooner had he touched the water than he was drawn beneath the surface and borne away beneath the waves out of sight. On seeing him take the leap, one wild cry arose from the spectators, who, however willing, were unable to extend any aid to avert his lamentable fate.

"Scarcely had the form of Mr. Rowen disappeared beneath the waves, than the treacherous boat capsized and the other four occupants were precipitated in the boiling, seething flood. One wild and heart-rending shriek from the lookers-on, burst upon the air which terminated in one long-continued wail of grief. Gloom sat depicted on every countenance and the women gave way to paroxysms of utter and wild despair.

"All was now bustle and confusion. Men ran to and fro in quest of something to go in search of the bodies, while the women gathered in groups and, mid wringing of hands and lamentations of woe, mingled their tears of grief together, as they gushed forth in an irresistible stream of sorrow. On the necessary preparation being made, search was immediately instituted to recover the bodies, and that same evening those of Mr. Rowen and Mr. Gillman were found, about a quarter of a mile below the scene of the disaster.

"A few days after, two more were recovered, but notwithstanding search being made day and night, a week nearly elapsed before the body of the fifth was found. This sad catastrophe threw the whole community into the deepest state of gloom, and in fact on the painful news being sent abroad, the entire people of Wright and adjoining counties received a severe shock; for the victims of the agonizing calamity were well known far from home as being industrious, energetic and enterprising men.

"To add still more to this deplorable accident, each of the five left families behind to mourn their untimely end. It was a long time before the people of Belmond recovered from the terrible shock received by this disastrous event; and while yet in the depth of grief over the loss of five of their neighbors, a sixth was added to the list, in the person of Mr. Fulton, who a week or so after, was caught in the machinery of the mill and was crushed and mangled to death.

"These two sad calamities following each other so closely, brought sadness and sorrow around every hearth throughout the whole community. Death—however gently and silently it comes to claim its victim, when it steals over the form of the innocent child, sleeping in its cradle to waft it away to mingle its sweet, plaintive voice with those sweet little cherubs around the throne of grace; or when it sweeps slowly but surely on, sum-



moning the aged and wayworn pilgrim to that longed-for abode of rest: the grave, where all earthly toils and troubles cease; or it matters not in what form it comes, however mild—is sure to cast a shadow over the soul and cause a shudder to creep through the heart. But when it comes shrouded in a terrible cloud of wrath, either in the surging flood or the devouring flame, sweeping with one fell stroke six of our immediate friends and neighbors from our very midst, who but an hour ago commingled with us, full of life, strength, youth and vigor, then indeed death is terrible and gives rise to serious contemplation. But, consoling thought—sweet meditation—blissful hope! We shall meet again beyond the grave.”

## PALSVILLE.

Palsville is a small station on the Fort Dodge & Mason City branch of the Chicago Great Western railroad, in the extreme northeastern part of Pleasant township and of the county. A postoffice was established there on February 11, 1898, with A. W. Finch as first postmaster; he was succeeded by John Jacobs on April 27, 1900, and the office was discontinued on July 31, 1902. The hamlet has a store and a few business interests, quite limited, however.



## CHAPTER XXXIII.

### TROY TOWNSHIP.

Troy township was one of the first two organized in this county—Liberty and Troy having been organized in the spring of 1856, while Pleasant and Vernon were formed in the following July. Troy township comprised, principally, a large portion of the southern territory of Wright county, but it is now confined to congressional township 90, range 26, west; bounded on the west by Webster county, on the north by Eagle Grove township, on the east by Woodstock township and on the south by Hamilton county. The Chicago North Western railway traverses the northeastern portion and in the extreme northwestern part is found the line of the Chicago & Great Western railroad. Nuel, in section 7, is the only hamlet in the township. The Boone river courses from section 5, on the northern line of the township, to section 34, from which it flows into Hamilton county. Bach grove, formerly a body of three thousand acres of excellent timber, is within Troy township, and while much of the larger timber has been cut up and sawed into lumber, there still remains a goodly amount of second growth. The Boone valley affords a fine farming section and the community there is in a prosperous, contented condition, the inhabitants having seen their full share of pioneer day hardships. The first settlers are nearly all gone from the scenes of earthly toil—the Strykers (first to settle in the county), the Middletons, Sells, Wilcoxes, Allens and many others, having long since died, their sons and daughters now owning many of the old, first-settled places by the township. The population of Troy township in 1910 was placed by the United States census report as 554. Bach Grove postoffice was established on June 19, 1858, with J. D. Sells as the first postmaster. He was followed by W. R. Middleton, in July, 1861; I. R. Middleton, September, 1861; J. L. Middleton, April, 1865, and Elmore Middleton, April, 1875. The office was discontinued on August 22, 1881.

#### “CENTENNIAL” HISTORY.

Perhaps no better account of the earlier years of the history of Troy township can be given than that found in the *Belmond Herald*, in 1876—



Centennial year,—when President Grant asked that the history of all townships be written up to that date. That vigorous pioneer, Elmore Middleton, one of the early settlers of Troy township, did his part faithfully and well, as will be seen by the following historical account:

"Before the year 1854 the only white men who had ever been in the territory now known as Troy township were the surveying parties sent out by the government, and perhaps a few hunters and trappers who chanced to pass there, seeking pleasure or profit in the capture of the wild game that then inhabited the vast prairies and beautiful groves.

"On the 5th day of July, 1854, William Stryker drove his team into the township on the northwest quarter of section 35, township 90, range 26, thus becoming the first settler in the territory now known as Wright county, then attached to Webster county for judicial and revenue purposes. In the evening of the same day, Stephen Wilcox, Spencer Stryker and Thomas Stryker and families came to the township and settled near William Stryker. Later in the same year their number was increased by the arrival of Jose R. Middleton, David Cosort and Hardy Williams. These settlers did but little more the first season than to erect their cabins and sheds before winter set in. Stephen Wilcox did some breaking during that season, it being the first virgin soil turned in the township. Fortunately for the settlers, the winter following was unusually mild. During the fall of this year the Reverend Mr. Clegg, of the Methodist Episcopal church, came and preached the first sermon in a log cabin in section 35, belonging to William Stryker.

"During the summer of 1855, six additional families came into the township. O. C. (Ozias) Allen settled in section 36; John Adams, in section 32; William Dewell, in section 31; N. A. Bixby, in section 14; Fred Odenheimer, in section 16, and J. L. Middleton, in section 21.

"During the summer as much breaking was done as the limited means of the settlers would permit and 'sod corn' was planted by a majority of the settlers. Stephen Wilcox raised the first corn this year on old cultivated land—one year old.

#### TOWNSHIP ORGANIZATION.

"Their number now being sufficient to meet the requirements of the law, the settlers proceeded to organize a township for political purposes. Their first efforts were a failure, owing to some defect in the papers issued by the frontier judge and the organization of the township was not effected until March, 1856. The name Troy was derived from a town plat of that



name laid out in an early day by O. C. McIntosh and others a half mile northwest of the center of the township, on the west side of Boone river.

"The first election was held in an old log cabin that stood where Elmore Middleton's house now stands, in section 21. The first officers elected were: J. L. Middleton, clerk; Alfred Games, justice of the peace; Samuel Poor, constable; William Stryker, Jose R. Middleton, and Stephen Wilcox, trustees; Jose R. Middleton, assessor; William Stryker, road supervisor.

"On May 14, 1855, Charlotte Stryker was born, she being the first white child born in Troy township. During that year J. L. Middleton erected the first blacksmith shop, which proved a great convenience to the settlers. The winter of 1855-56 was very severe. Snow fell to the depth of eighteen inches and it was carried by the winds unto drifts of immense size. Stables and sheds were rudely constructed and would not properly protect stock. Cattle, hogs and other stock were frozen to death and some of the settlers lost all of their poultry. Reports were frequently brought to the settlement of persons having been frozen to death on the prairies in other locations near by. The winter was so severe that the deer and elk were either frozen to death or driven out of the country, thus depriving the settlers of their usual supply of meat.

"The following spring opened out about the middle of April, being cold and very wet. A circumstance occurred this spring which caused much suffering in the settlement. The seed corn that was planted proved worthless. Not one grain in fifty germinated. This seed corn was brought from one of the southern counties in Iowa and was sold at \$2.50 per bushel. The season was late for re-planting and frost came about September 1 and cut all that had grown. Corn being the principal crop at that time the destitution consequent to the loss was indeed very great.

"William Stryker raised the first wheat that year that was ever produced in Troy township and Stephen Wilcox raised the first oats.

"To meet the demand of the settlement, J. L. Middleton erected a shingle mill or "machine," as 'twas called, and for a time supplied the settlers with shingles.

#### HARDSHIPS OF PIONEERS.

"During the winter of 1856-57 the snow fell to the depth of two feet on the level and was in many places badly drifted. The settlers were compelled to haul provisions and feed a distance of one hundred miles. Supplies were largely procured at Iowa City, one hundred and eighty miles distant,



some going as far as Muscatine for their supplies, a distance of two hundred miles.

"In April of 1857 the settlement was thrown into great excitement by the arrival of the panic-stricken company of about one hundred and fifty settlers from the east side of the De Moines river and the upper Boone country, fleeing, as they supposed, from a tribe of hostile Indians. All but two or three families of the settlement joined this company and fled southeast to Webster City. It was afterward found that the excitement was caused by a very trivial circumstance.

"On February 14, 1857, death for the first time entered the settlement. Abishai Middleton, son of Hutchinson and Achsah Middleton, died at the age of nineteen years of consumption.

"On the 15th day of October, 1857, a church composed of eleven members, was organized by David Day, a Methodist preacher, with J. R. Middleton as leader. It was organized in an old log cabin in section 21, belonging to Jose R. Middleton.

"During the season of this year, H. Middleton sowed the first timothy and clover seed. The crops that season, though not sufficient for the demand of home consumption, were the best raised by the settlers up to that time. But they were not permitted to enjoy the fruits of their labors. The fall and winter proved to be very wet. The corn all rotted in the cribs. Much of the wheat being kept in pens and boxes spoiled, the rains going through the straw and hay coverings. The first threshing-machine and hand-rake reaping-machine were used in this settlement that year.

"The season of 1858 is known to all old settlers as the 'wet season.' The streams were full and overflowing the greater part of the year. There being no bridges at that time, communication was cut off between this and older settlements. The nearest mill was about twenty-one miles distant, south of Webster City. Many of the settlers were compelled frequently to subsist for weeks at a time upon hominy and corn meal, grated or ground in a hand coffee-mill. It was during that season that the first sorghum was grown by James Barton. During that year the first Sunday school was organized, with William Middleton as superintendent.

"The crops bid fair during the season of 1859, but the first of August a hail storm passed over the central part of the township, utterly destroying the crops on some farms and injuring a greater part of all in the township. It was that season that O. C. Allen sheared the first wool from sheep in the county.



## DISCOURAGED SETTLERS LEAVE.

"In 1860 the first school house in the township was erected in section 33. Up to that time the settlers had seen little but adversity. The soil was different from that which they had been used to in other places and required different cultivation in some respects. And their plows were inferior in quality, and as a consequence, crops were not successfully raised. The people were poor and discontented.

"During the year 1861 nine families left the township, seeking older settlements. Some of them had sold their all and had to be assisted in removing by their more fortunate neighbors, who had teams.

"Troy furnished her quota of soldiers during the War of the Rebellion. We deem it a just tribute to their memory to record the names of those, who, in the time of their country's need, promptly responded to the call and went forth, a part of them never to return. Those who returned were John Stryker, R. Brewer and Hudson Barton, but George Merrill and Sol. Orcutt laid their lives on the altar of their country. Both were far from home and friends and all who knew and loved them; alone in a southern hospital, they died. Let their names never be forgotten.

"About this time the settlers began to enjoy more prosperous times. 1861-62 were fruitful seasons. Prices of farm produce increased and improvements steadily went forward. In 1862, the first marriage was solemnized by William Stryker, Esq. The parties were John Downing and Martha J. Boring.

"From 1863 to 1866, the settlement was gradual but not rapid. Improvements were made of all kinds, as fast as the resources of the country would permit. In 1866, J. R. Middleton burned the first brick kiln, which met a very urgent demand for building material.

"In October, 1867, the county was visited with grasshoppers, the first time since the settlement of the country. They partially destroyed the oat crop as far east as Eagle creek and the wheat was also injured and the gardens pretty badly eaten up. They departed in July, 1868. The county was again visited by grasshoppers in 1873, but the number was not so great and little damage was done.

"The first apples grown in the township were by O. A. Allen and J. R. Middleton, in 1865.

"The township was divided in 1868, township 90, range 25, becoming an independent township, being named Woodstock.



"The experiment in sheep raising was made by the citizens of this (Troy) township between 1864 and 1868. Large numbers of sheep were brought into the township. The experiment was a failure, however. Large numbers of the sheep died or were destroyed by wolves and the few remaining ones disposed of at reduced rates.

"About the year, 1870, a railroad was projected to pass through the township. The citizens were urged to vote a five-per-cent. tax upon all the taxable property to aid the company in building the road. A majority of the voters favored the project. The road was graded, bridges built during 1872, but owing to the failure of the company to procure necessary means to finish the road it is rapidly washing down and becoming useless. [December, 1876.]

#### A HOPEFUL VIEW.

"The more recent history of this township has been a scene of constant prosperity and development. The cabins and shanties of early days are passing away and are being supplemented with comfortable frame and brick buildings. School houses have been erected, there being five in the township now. As we look out over these prairies where but a few years ago the wind carried the snow furiously and unhindered, we now see farm houses nestling amid groves that furnish ample protection from heat and cold. And where we behold our growing fields yielding abundant harvests, the result of a better knowledge of the needs of the soil and better improved machinery with which to work; and as our numbers increase, thus affording better social privileges, brethren we are glad to say that we believe the hard times of Troy township are over. \* \* \*

"Peace and good will have ever been the ruling temper of the people. There have been but three, or four at the most, criminal prosecutions during the twenty-two years of the township's history.

"The people have been remarkably free from those vexations that so paralyze all, on account of action, and hinder every public enterprise intended for the public good.

"The greatest quantity of grain raised any one season in this township was raised by J. D. Sells, a settler of 1856. O. C. Allen, a settler of 1855, raised thirty-six bushels of wheat per acre. H. Middleton raised ninety bushels of corn and B. S. Haviland ninety bushels of oats per acre."



## THE VILLAGE OF NUEL.

Nuel is the only village within Troy township. It is in section 7, and was platted as a railroad station a few years since. There is now a grain warehouse and lumber and coal are kept for sale there. It is near the county line.



## CHAPTER XXXIV.

### VERNON TOWNSHIP.

Vernon township is the extreme southeastern township in Wright county, and as now constituted, comprises congressional township 90, range 23, west. It is bounded on the east by Franklin county, on the south by Hamilton county, on the west by Wall Lake township, Wright county, on the north by Blaine township and contains thirty-six full sections. The Iowa river touches the eastern part of sections 1, 12 and 13, a small tributary running from the central and western portion of the township. Vernon township was at one time embraced in what is now Wall Lake township, and was one of the original precincts of this county. Its soil is, without question, among the most fertile in all this section of Iowa. Nature has dealt with this township very bountifully and adorned it with great beauty. The banks of the Iowa river were originally, and to quite an extent at the present day, covered with fine groves of excellent timber. According to the statements made by the state geologist a half century ago, this township contained about fifty acres of the most superior peat in the world, averaging from six to eight feet in depth, which, at one time, was considered a veritable mine of wealth for fuel purposes, but of later years, with better transportation facilities, and the growth of timber, here and there over the prairies, is not considered in reckoning the value of the resources of the township, as it once was.

### SETTLEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT.

Vernon township was not settled until after the Civil War, to speak in a true "first settlement" sense. From interviews with that rugged pioneer, David H. Pepper, and others, it is learned that the settlement was made about as follows: When Mr. Pepper entered the township to become a permanent resident, in the spring of 1860, he found that others had preceded him. D. N. Inman, who was a member of the board of county supervisors for seven years, had large tracts of land in Vernon township. His first wife sickened and died and he remarried, but fortune seemed not to continue to smile upon his efforts, in a business sense, and he lost much



of his landed estate. Later, he removed to one of the Southern states, where he was living at last accounts.

C. P. Sheldon was another very early settler who cast his lot with the pioneer band, about the close of the Civil War. He died in 1912. He was an influential citizen and was well liked by all. Others who came in about that date were William and T. H. Smith, J. M. Rice, now living retired at Dows, who came in 1869, he being one of the early homesteaders. Through some oversight in the numbers of his land at the land office, he settled on the wrong piece and had, after building and making his improvements, to remove the buildings to the proper location in the section, all of which caused him considerable loss of time and money. But with a true, stout heart he went to work and commenced all over, finally gaining for himself and family a desirable home. About the period last mentioned, H. B. Peterson also located in Vernon township. With the passage of years he came to be a highly successful farmer.

David H. Pepper first came to Vernon township from Wisconsin, in 1867, and purchased some land—the southwest quarter of section 13, as well as the southeast quarter of section 14, which he still holds; also a quarter-section in section 27. He paid five dollars per acre for one "quarter" and six dollars for one of his eighties. He became a potent factor in the upbuilding of his township and the county generally. In 1884 he was elected by many hundred majority, to the office of county supervisor, in which office he proved the right man in the right place. He was ever true to his convictions, and could not and would not be turned aside from honor and integrity, by bribery or other inducements. He preferred to be honorable with his fellow taxpayers rather than to continue in office. He served the county well as an official and was one of the township officers more than ten years. In going to Fort Dodge to secure some of his land he went from near Otisville (Dows) to Grant (now Clarion) and only discovered three houses on the way. While at Clarion he met two county officers, R. K. Eastman and George A. McKay, who told him of the proper man, or firm, to see in Fort Dodge from whom to procure his land, and he was started out on the way, which was but a mere trail or trace, over the prairie grass, in a diagonal direction toward where the city of Eagle Grove now stands. The way was marked here and there on the ridges by a white cloth attached high up on poles, as a landmark for the weary traveler, as he wended his way southeastward. No trees were to be seen on all this lonely journey to the Boone river. It is not cause for wonder that Mr.



Pepper, in relating this instance not long since, said: "There has been a vast change in this country since I first called it home."

#### TOWNSHIP SETTLED SLOWLY.

In 1869 there were two school houses within this township, showing that there must have been about two dozen families with school-age children. Immigration was then coming in slowly, year by year. In 1868, it was predicted that it would not be many years before the vacant land of this township would all be taken by actual settlers, and thus it was. From 1869 on, additional settlers included A. M. Peterson, John Rech, Paul and Ole Anderson, A. C. Fuller, Luther Hammond, A. B. Wallace, Fred Beisner and Fred Gode. Another early settler, who should not be forgotten in making this record, was John Rech, who reached Iowa Falls, where he remained two years, on account of his wife's illness, then located in Vernon township, in 1869, taking eighty acres of land in section 13. He died many years ago. When Mr. Pepper, above referred to, located there only three houses were between his place and Dows. Many more early settlers of this township naturally find a place in the biographical section of this work.

The southwestern portion of the township was the last to be settled. It was looked upon by the Yankee immigrants as being almost worthless as a farming district, on account of its being more swampy and low in its character, although all admitted that it was a rich soil, if only the water could be drained from its surface. But the German people saw it in a different light, and purchased, for a very low price, many sections of this wet, flat prairie, and as soon as they were able, commenced to tile-drain and ditch it out, and in a few years had practically reclaimed that part of the township, making it today a territory noted for its great fertility and value. It took the sturdy German folk to bring this all about, by toil and self-denial. He who travels through this section of the county today, viewing the well-tilled farms, the large modern barns, and handsome farm houses, would scarce believe that fewer than thirty years ago this was the "wet wilderness" of Wright county.

The names and locations of these frugal Germans, who first invaded the locality are not at hand for the historian. These people made history, but were too busy to preserve it, and now nearly all of them have died or removed from the county, and their farms are occupied by later comers, who are now enjoying the fruits of the early toils and labors of these peo-



ple. In general terms it may be stated that the Germans commenced to come into this township about 1875, and continued until all available land was taken by actual settlers. Among the first of these German pioneers was Fred Schroeder, who arrived about 1870, and who now lives at Germania, in northern Iowa.

#### WITHOUT RAILROADS.

Unfortunately, Vernon township is without railroads or market points. Away back in the eighties and later there were plans for constructing railroads through this portion of Wright county, one of which lines was proposed to be constructed from Webster City to Hampton. The enterprise needed to be aided by local contributions and in some instances by a tax upon the various townships through the territory which it was to cover. The Germans would not consent to such aid, and bitterly opposed the measures, one by one, as fast as they came up for agitation. They, with some of the Americans, looked upon it as a sharp Yankee trick. They argued that the company would certainly build without local aid. This railroad question made many bitter enemies, for the time being, and those who favored the tax were boycotted by others at the polls, when up for any county or township office. The result has been that no railroad was ever built through the township, and farmers in that section of Wright county have been compelled to draw the products of their farms for miles to market towns on railroad lines. Yet, notwithstanding this fact, the citizens of the community—German and American alike—have prospered, and today are among the most independent citizens of the county.

Though there are no towns or villages in Vernon township, the enterprising towns of Dows, at the north, and Popejoy and Alden at the south and east, make the matter of markets and trading one of but little consequence to the farmers and stock-raisers, who, as a general rule, have for many years fed the products of their fields.

For an account of the township's educational interests the reader is referred to the educational chapter in this volume. Suffice to remark here that none but the best of public schools has ever satisfied the people of Vernon township. The highways have been cared for and improved, with the march of time, until there is today a good road on almost every section line within the township.

The population of Vernon township in 1860 was 28; in 1865 it was



36; in 1870, 175; in 1875, 237; in 1880, 328; in 1890, 541; in 1900, 612; in 1910 it was reduced to 517. In 1874 there were forty-six voters.

#### ORGANIZATION OF THE TOWNSHIP.

In January, 1861, Vernon was made a separate township, and it included that territory now embraced in Wall Lake township, and extended as far north as the center of congressional township 91, ranges 23 and 24, taking in old Otisville (now Dows). In 1865 Wall Lake township was cut off into a separate precinct, and in 1883, when the townships of the county were made to conform to the congressional townships, that portion within township 91, range 23, was cut off and attached to what is now Blaine township. So the present township limits are confined to congressional township 90, range 23, west—six miles square.

Dry Lake postoffice, in Vernon township, was established in June, 1871. The first postmaster, D. N. Inman, was appointed on June 8, that year, and he was succeeded by M. L. Stuart, June 2, 1881; George F. Trowbridge, December 12, 1881, and A. B. Wallace, May 29, 1882. The office was discontinued on July 12, 1882.



## CHAPTER XXXV.

### WALL LAKE TOWNSHIP.

Wall Lake township was one of the original sub-divisions of Wright county, and until it was cut down to its present territory, was for years known in common parlance as "the state of Wall Lake." It was named for the lake within its borders, of which there has been so much written, read and talked about, and over which the state and citizens of the township are now having so much litigation, on account of it being drained and cultivated. The township was originally a part of Vernon township, but in 1868 it was made a separate township and extended three miles to the north of its present limits, giving it eighteen more sections of land than it now contains. It lies to the south of Lincoln township, to the west of Vernon township, to the north of Hamilton county and to the east of Woolstock township. It is really all of township 90, range 24 west. That singular lake which gave to the township its name, is in the northeastern part of the township, and is included in sections 2, 3, 10, 11, 14 and 15. Buck creek, which is better known as a good-sized stream over in Hamilton county, takes its source from Wall lake. White Fox creek courses through the northwestern portion. The population of the township in 1867 was 72; in 1869 it was 111; in 1870, 190; in 1873, 203; in 1875, 230; in 1880, 422; in 1890, 418; in 1900, 512; in 1910, 517; in 1915 it had fallen off to 443.

Aside from about twenty acres of timber on the south shore of Wall lake the township was originally all prairie.

#### FIRST SETTLERS.

The first to become an actual settler in this part of Wright county was Ely P. Purcell, who as early as 1856, settled on the southeast border of the lake. But few, if indeed any others, arrived until midway in the Civil War period, about 1863, when a few more found their way into the township, to deprive the rugged pioneer settler of claiming the right to be "monarch of all he surveyed." In 1869-70 R. H. Foster, J. Mann and A. R. Nelson had made substantial improvement, each of these gentlemen then having



splendid houses, for that day, and were in a fair way of soon becoming prosperous. No newcomer thought of going into the interior or central part of Wright county, so long as land could be had at low figures nearer the Iowa or Boone rivers, where there was an abundance of timber; and the consequence was that so long as land could be obtained on the rivers named, or near to the valleys, the central portion of this county remained in its original state. It might be expected, however, that land so desirable as that lying along the banks of the Boone and Iowa rivers would not remain long uninhabited, and consequently we find that about 1862-63 land in the center of the county, hitherto unsought, began to attract considerable attention from parties looking up locations in the West. Wall Lake township began to receive its due proportion of newcomers and by about 1870, within three or five miles in each direction from the lake, was quite heavily settled. Nine families arrived in 1870, coming in the spring time.

There was one feature that was observable among the settlers on the prairie, and that was, that a great deal of time and attention was given to setting out groves of young trees, which in the course of a very few years, added greatly to the beauty of the county and no little to the comfort of those who set them out. During the years 1868-69-70, immigration to this township increased at a rapid rate. The nature of the soil was rich and fertile, and was well adapted to farming purposes of all kinds. The land, especially along the White Fox creek, was unexcelled in this or any other county in the state. There were three school houses in the township by 1870 and forty-five voters, which, according to the general average proportion of the population to each voter, would have given it a population of something over two hundred.

From the last named date, settlement increased very rapidly and here and there all over the township, which was then much larger than at present, might have been seen new farm operations, breaking up the virgin soil, planting out groves and building fairly comfortable houses. But it took many years to develop the township to the point where the hardships of living were reduced to the minimum; as, for a number of years, the pioneers were far from markets and farther from any railroad lines. But perseverance finally accomplished the task and today one views hundreds of beautiful farm homes, with neat buildings, good fences and fruit trees and shade trees innumerable. Wall Lake township today is possessed of few of the characteristics that it presented forty years ago.

The old Purcell place, where the first settler located, was sold in 1871



to Benjamin Birdsall, who removed from Alden, Hardin county, in 1874, permanently locating there. From time to time, he added to his landed estate until he possessed one thousand six hundred acres, constituting one of the finest stock farms in Wright county. Mr. Birdsall passed from earth on July 25, 1888, dying at his home at Wall Lake, at the age of seventy-eight years. (See biography.)

#### THE RUSH AFTER THE WAR.

Toward the close of the Civil War immigration began to pour in, attracted no doubt by the land still held by the government and which was open for homesteaders. R. H. Foster came in the spring of 1864 and made for himself one of the best farms in the county. Connected with his farm he conducted a dairy and kept more than thirty cows. In 1874 he raised nine hundred bushels of mangold-wurtzels for his stock. A man named James Monroe entered this township in the spring of 1864, built a small house and remained till the next spring. His daughter and himself herded a drove of cattle for Knight & Company, and one day when the father was absent the cattle stampeded and the daughter followed them ten miles on foot, then secured a horse and chased them to Clear lake and brought them back. In the spring of 1865 Monroe sold to John Gilbert. The same season came the Lords, T. J. Mann, Spencer Boynton, Ed Nichols and others. In 1866 came in A. R. Nelson, D. L. Mann and others.

In 1870 the settlement commenced in the southwest part of the township, and soon Waterman postoffice was established, with B. F. Waterman as postmaster. L. B. Grout, A. Knapper and A. J. Chapman all had well-improved places early in the seventies.

#### FUEL A SERIOUS PROBLEM.

There has never been a town or village within the limits of Wall Lake township. The winter problem in that section of Wright county for many years was that of fuel. There being no timber in the township and the settlers being far distant from the Boone river coal fields, the task of procuring fuel was one not easily performed. In many cases the early homesteaders resorted to burning prairie grass, twisted from stacks of slough grass for that purpose, while still others found cheap and nearby fuel in the peat beds about the lake. But such conditions did not long continue. The planted groves have for years supplied much of the fire wood, while there, as every-



where in the country, fencing has been done by the use of barbed wire, which came into general use about 1873.

Drainage has been going on in Wall Lake township until today the land is as available for general farm purposes, as any in the county. Large droves of cattle grazed over the prairies there every summer during the earlier years of settlement, while a large tonnage of hay was put in stacks for winter use. Among the most extensive stockmen of the township, at that early date, was Mr. Birdsall, already mentioned as having purchased the old Purcell farm. As a general rule, the farmers there, own their own lands and are a prosperous, contented people; many of them owning and enjoying automobiles. The various educational and religious interests of the township are touched on in a general chapter on these topics presented elsewhere in this volume.

#### POSTOFFICES.

As constituted in 1875, Wall Lake township had a postoffice known as Empire, situated in section 26, township 91, range 23, in what is now Blaine township; also another postoffice, styled Waterman, in section 29, township 24 of the same range, and in the territory still within Wall Lake. A stage line ran from Webster City, for many years supplying this township with mail. The postmasters who served at what was known as Empire postoffice, then within Wall Lake township, were: R. H. Foster, appointed on June 11, 1868; John Delano, January 10, 1877, and A. R. Nelson, February 2, 1880. This office was discontinued on January 2, 1883.

Those serving at Waterman postoffice were: L. B. Grout, appointed on August 2, 1871; P. H. Morris, December 9, 1878; J. A. Robb, May 24, 1881; L. B. Grout, July 14, 1884; L. W. Hockman, December 29, 1884, and L. B. Grout, July 9, 1890. The office was discontinued on August 9, 1890.

#### WALL LAKE SUMMER RESORT.

A summer resort was opened at Wall lake, in June, 1910, at the celebration of which event it was estimated that from three to four thousand people were present. "From early in the morning," said the *Monitor*, "strings of vehicles could be seen coming from all directions, and on some of the roads long lines of teams might have been seen and taken for a long funeral procession. Some came on foot, others on horseback, but for the most part in buggies or automobiles. A careful count placed the teams on



the ground at one thousand two hundred, while there were forty or more automobiles. There was plenty of music and plenty to eat, with a varied program of amusement concluding with a bowery dance." The celebration was on the occasion of County Supervisor Jamison, of Dows, having advertised the "opening" of his summer resort at the lake. Mr. Jamison lived at Dows and had recently erected a summer cottage on the south shore of the lake, and wished to celebrate the event. Everybody was welcome and everything was free, Mr. Jamison paying all bills of expenses for the day.

In speaking of this event, the *Webster City Freeman* referred to another celebration which took place at Wall lake forty years before—a union Sunday school picnic gotten up by the Sunday schools of Webster City and Cass township, Hamilton county—June 11, 1870. Then everybody went in lumber wagons, there not being a buggy in the party that wended its way over the vast prairie from Webster City to Wall lake. There were only three houses on the road, after leaving the old Bickford school house in Cass township, until the lake was reached. Neither were there any fences, so travel went "cross-country" fashion. Great has been the transformation since that little Sunday school picnic came from the sister county to spend the day on the shores of Wall lake. With the return of the spring and fall seasons, for many years, this was the camping ground for numerous hunters and trappers and as high as one thousand dollars annually was paid into the county treasury for hunting licenses by parties wishing to enjoy the sport in Wright county.

#### KILLING MUSKRATS.

As late as the autumn and winter of 1910-11, as many as twenty men and boys were engaged in trapping muskrats about Wall lake, some of them being camped on the bank devoting their entire time to this work. There were over two thousand rat houses in the lake at that time, and as the bed of the lake covered over nine hundred acres it will be seen that there were more than two rat houses to every acre of the lake's surface. One man killed in one day eighty-five rats, and a number of his traps had not been visited when he thus reported. At that time muskrat hides sold at from twenty to thirty cents each. In earlier years, back in the sixties and seventies, many of the farmers in the vicinity of this lake, used to go there annually and trap and hunt, for the purpose of obtaining sufficient cash with which to pay their taxes.



## PROPOSED DRAINAGE.

Of late years there has been going on a spirited controversy, between the state of Iowa, Wright county, the sportsmen and the landowners around Wall lake, some of the people desiring the lake left as nature designed it, and to be controlled and protected by the state authorities, as a hunting place and water resort, while another faction has asked that the lake be drained and the land sold (such as belongs to the county or state) and utilized for farming purposes. Some of the landowners about the shores of the lake want it drained, while still others do not want it lost to the county as one of its few natural features. In 1913 the state executive council, at Des Moines, leased to Fred Austin, of Clarion, about nine hundred acres of this lake bed, for a period of twenty years, for the consideration of two hundred dollars per year, which action created a protest on the part of the sportsmen of northern Iowa, and after an investigation, Attorney-General Crosson gave out the opinion that the executive council had no authority to so lease such lands, and the question is still unsettled. It has been argued that it will be advisable to drain the land and cultivate such parts as belong to Iowa, by employing prison labor, to which rejoinder has been made, "We prefer to have black-birds (which have always been a pest at this lake) than to have 'jail-birds' hanging around." It remains for some future historian to record the final outcome of this matter. The fact is, that the lake has come to be little more than a marsh wherein grow rushes, wild rice and cat-tails, with a small acreage where fairly deep water is found at all seasons of the year.



## CHAPTER XXXVI.

### WOOLSTOCK TOWNSHIP.

Woolstock township, as at present constituted, is a congressional township 90, range 25, west, and is situated on the south line of the county, with Wall Lake township at the east, Dayton township at the north and Troy township at the west. Its streams are the Boone river, running down along its western tier of townships, and White Fox creek, coursing through the eastern sections. Buck creek merely touches the territory in section 36. The only village in the township is Woolstock, in the extreme southwestern section. The history of the usual number of district schools in the township and the church at Woolstock, with a country church in the southeastern portion of the township, is set out in general chapters elsewhere in this volume. The population of the township in 1868 was 434; in 1900 (after it had been greatly reduced in size), 923; in 1910, 864; in 1915, according to the state reports, 945, inclusive of the village of Woolstock, which has a population of 387.

#### FIRST SETTLEMENT.

Along the banks of Eagle creek, as far north as the old Gilbert Perry farm, fourteen miles above Webster City, were originally found heavy bodies of native timber, which besides the groves along the Boone were of sufficient size to supply fencing and fuel for many years. The first to invade the Woolstock section of Wright county were Gilbert Perry, J. Boring and Roll Brewer, who came in 1858, and were followed a little later by B. F. McDaniels and L. P. Metz. It was not many years before the settlement was increased by the coming of Edward Allen, B. F. Watterman and Louis Bernard, a Frenchman. It is generally conceded that the land in this portion of the county is fully equal, if not superior, to that found in any portion of the county or state.

Historian Stephenson wrote of Woolstock township in 1869: "All the people of this township appear to be in a flourishing condition, and wherever one may go he will find the hand of industry plainly visible. Nor have they been negligent in regard to fruit trees, for we discover these have been planted very extensively. There are school houses in the township which



afford ample facilities for the education of the youth, to which, above all things else, western people pay particular attention. Mr. Demming's farm on which Mr. Watterman lives, is one of the finest in the county, containing in all six hundred and forty acres, one-third of which is under the plow, and one-half well fenced in. Mr. Demming, who lives in Connecticut, paid for substantial improvements on this large farm.

"There is a splendid house on the farm, a good granary, a large stable with stalls for fifty head of cattle, of which at present Watterman has sixty head of as fine stock as can be seen anywhere. To his other buildings he has recently added a cheese house, where he has commenced the manufacture of cheese. He has also set out twenty thousand young maple trees and a large quantity of Lombardy poplars, with a number of young pine and larch trees. All the building, fencing, breaking and tree planting has been done within the last three years. A few such settlers would soon render Woolstock township a perfect Eden of loveliness.

"The farm of Mr. Demming, with that of Louis Bernard, which adjoins it, and which in the line of improvement may be placed among the best in the county, constitute the most beautiful tract of land the eyes ever rested upon. Both farms are watered by the White Fox, an excellent and ever-living stream, the proper source of which may justly be attributed to a cluster of large springs located on its banks about two miles north of Waterman's. Some of the waters, however, which feed this source rise much farther up in Wright county among the lakes."

To be the possessor of a farm within this goodly township today, is but to be a wealthy and independent man, lands here ranging in value from one hundred and twenty-five to two hundred dollars per acre, owing to location and distance from railroads. Prior to the building of the North Western railroad from Webster City to Eagle Grove junction, the people of Woolstock township mostly traded in the first-named place, but after the completion of the road, and the establishment of the station known as Woolstock, a number of Webster City men established branch houses, and some started new business enterprises at the new railroad station, which has since come to be a good trading place.

#### ORGANIZATION.

This township was organized in 1868, when it had only four hundred and thirty-four inhabitants. It was taken from Troy township, one of the original precincts of the county.



## TOWN OF WOOLSTOCK.

Woolstock was platted in January, 1881, by the land department of the Chicago & North Western Railway Company, and was re-platted on June 15, the same year, in the southeast quarter of the northwest quarter of section 31, township 90, range 25. Four blocks were vacated on January 17, 1885.

The first to engage in business was L. W. Tyrrell, followed by general dealers, Lewis & Sivey. The first to engage in the grain and live-stock business were Olmstead & Tatham. The first hotel was conducted by Alexander Beshey. Jose Middleton was the first postmaster. L. W. Tyrrell was the first mayor of the town. (See incorporation history.)

Being within a splendid farming and stock-growing section, Woolstock soon took on a sprightly trade, especially in live stock and grain. It was for years, and is today, one of the best shipping points in the county.

Its lodge history and that of the churches, is given in special chapters on these topics presented elsewhere in this volume.

In 1910 the population of Woolstock was given by the United States census report as 264, but the town has grown considerably since that date.

## BUSINESS INTERESTS OF WOOLSTOCK.

The business of Woolstock in the spring of 1915 was in the hands of the following live dealers and professional men: Automobile garages, Jones & Son, J. A. Robinson; agricultural implements, Jones & Son, P. C. Bump; banks, Farmers Savings Bank, State Savings Bank of Woolstock; barber shop, L. N. Brindamour, Joseph Uregel; blacksmiths, J. A. Robinson, I. C. Crose; cement blocks, Paul Loux; creamery, not now operated but there is a good plant; drugs, Reed & Brewer; dray line, J. W. Weedman; elevator, Farmers Co-Operative Company, Independent Grain and Lumber Company; furniture, Reed & Malaisie; general dealers, Reed & Malaisie, R. L. Frank; hotel, The "Woolstock," by L. N. Brindamour; harness, Jones & Son, P. C. Bump; hardware, Jones & Son, P. C. Bump; livery, A. D. Murlane; lumber, Clifton & Sons, Independent Grain and Lumber Company; meat markets, Schmidt & McDaniels; moving pictures, Hirt & Pool; physicians, Dr. C. J. Reed, Dr. J. C. Smith; restaurants, Joseph Robinson, N. J. Zimmer; shoe store and repairs, Jones & Son; veterinary, Dr. Frank Baughton; wagon shop, same as blacksmithing.



## TOWN MUNICIPAL HISTORY.

Woolstock was incorporated in 1895, with L. W. Tyrrell as its first mayor. Mayor Tyrrell held the office until he would not, on account of age, have the honors any longer—there being nothing but "honors," the old pioneer said. In all, he held the position eighteen and one-half years, serving continuously, except for four and one-half months, when A. H. Meier served. The present mayor is W. C. Halvorson, who was elected in the spring of 1914. The first clerk was C. H. Clifton. Other clerks have been D. H. Huff and G. L. Jones. The 1915 officers are: W. C. Halvorson, mayor; D. H. Huff, clerk; Frank Smalley, treasurer; Dr. C. J. Reed, health officer; Henry Bohy, marshal; George L. Jones; F. C. Kitley, B. F. Hirt, E. H. Malaisie and J. A. Robinson, councilmen.

The little town is nicely lighted by electric lights, the current being secured from Webster City. It has five street cisterns for fire protection and a volunteer fire department, hand pumps being used. The town uses the public hall for council purposes.

The only justice of the peace Woolstock has ever had is the venerable L. W. Tyrrell, who has held the office in Woolstock township and town ever since he became a resident, in the early eighties.

The town was suffered great losses by fires, at one time nearly the entire business portion having been swept away.

## THE POSTOFFICE.

Woolstock postoffice was established in 1868, and the following have served as its postmasters, the list having been compiled for this work especially by the postoffice department at Washington: B. F. McDaniels, appointed on April 16, 1868; Davis Hart, March 7, 1872; David Letts, December 7, 1874; F. G. Yoeman, November 5, 1875; Isaac McDonald, May 8, 1877; Ellen Evans, October 21, 1879; Elza E. Middleton, October 24, 1881; William Thompson, January 19, 1887; Elza E. Middleton, May 14, 1889; L. W. Tyrrell, April 10, 1891; S. C. Gardner, August 21, 1893; Eliza H. Parrish, August 5, 1897; Sarah Parrish, June 15, 1898; Ada Lee, May 12, 1902; Nancy Pringle, June 23, 1903; Gertrude Risch, September 22, 1911, and Letha Doughton, June 25, 1913.



## CHAPTER XXXVII.

### MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS OF UNUSUAL INTEREST.

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#### ORIGINAL VILLAGE PLATS.

The following is a list and description of all the village or town plats within Wright county, Iowa, as taken from the plat records now on file in the county recorder's office at Clarion:

Belmond was platted in the north half of the northwest quarter of section 30, township 93, range 23 and in the northeast quarter of the northeast quarter of section 25, township 93, range 24, the plat having been filed for record on October 20, 1856, the proprietors then being William E. Rogers, James M. Elder and Archer Dumond. The instrument was recorded by O. W. McIntosh, county recorder.

Clarion (first known as Grant), was platted by the board of county supervisors on November 1, 1865, and consisted of sixteen full blocks, including the present court house square. The survey was made in April, 1865, and it was recorded by County Recorder R. K. Eastman. The location is in parts of the southwest quarter of the southwest quarter of section 31, township 92, range 24.

Dows was platted on September 28, 1880, by the Iowa Falls & Northwestern Land and Town Lot Company, in the northwest quarter of section 36, township 91, range 23.

Eagle Grove was platted as "Eagle Grove Junction," the plat having been filed for record on April 5, 1881, by Ed Hartsock, county recorder, on land owned by Phineas Cadwell, of Logan, Harrison county, Iowa, and by Andrew Wright, of Wright county. The former tract was in the west half of the southeast quarter and the east half of the southwest quarter of section 27, township 91, range 26, and the latter tract in the southwest quarter of the northeast quarter of the same section, township and range.

Goldfield was platted in the south half of section 33 and the west half of the southwest quarter of section 34, township 92, range 26; date of filing February 5, 1858; proprietors, William Melrose and wife, George W. Hanna and wife and O. W. McIntosh.



Galt was platted first under the name of "Norwich," January 4, 1881, by the Cedar Rapids, Iowa Falls & Northwestern Land and Town Lot Company, in section 18, township 91, range 23.

Holmes was platted on March 11, 1895, in the northeast quarter of the southeast quarter of section 31, township 92, range 25, by J. Fraser and wife.

Liberty was platted on August 13, 1855, by Henry B. Martin county surveyor, while Wright county was yet attached to Webster county for judicial and revenue purposes. The proprietors were Nanny B. Martin, J. B. Skinner and Minter Brassfield. The location was in the southwest quarter of the southeast quarter of section 33, township 92, range 26. It had streets named Wright, Humboldt, Boone, Main, Washington and Water.

Otsego was platted by Curtis Bates and Daniel B. Finch on June 18, 1855, in sections 2 and 3 of township 91, range 26, and its streets were named Walnut, Elm, Dubuque, Crocker, Locust, Maple, Iowa, Bates, Finch, Eagle and Wright.

Rowan was platted in the west half of the southeast quarter and the east half of the southwest quarter of the northwest quarter of section 34, township 92, range 23, by the Cedar Rapids, Iowa Falls & Western Town Lot Company on August 26, 1884.

Thrall was platted on December 22, 1880, in the southwest quarter of the northeast quarter of section 28, township 92, range 26, by Alexander Owen. The same has been partly vacated in recent years.

Woolstock was platted first in January, 1881, by the land department of the Chicago & North Western Railway Company, and was re-platted on June 15, 1881, in the southeast quarter of the northwest quarter of section 31, township 90, range 25. Four blocks were vacated on January 17, 1885.

Olaf was platted on November 20, 1902, in the northwest quarter of section 7, township 93, range 24, by William Finch and wife and J. N. Johnson and wife.

Other village grounds, though not legally platted, are railway stations, recently located, such as Palsville, section 10, pleasant township; Florence, section 8, Dayton township; Nuel, section 7, Troy township; Solburg, section 36, Grant township, and Cornelia, in Grant township, at the lake of that name.

#### HORSE THIEVES IN WAR TIMES.

At the June session of the board of supervisors in 1864, when many of the able-bodied men of Wright county were in the field trying to suppress the rebellion, a reward was offered of one hundred and fifty dollars "for



the capture of each of three men who participated in the shooting of R. A. Donaldson and John Melrose at the house of William McCormick, May 29, 1864, when the men shall have been delivered to the proper authorities."

On the evening of May 28, 1864, three suspicious-looking characters, heavily armed, came to the house of William McCormick, who was the first settler in that part of the county, and whose place at the time was many miles from a neighbor, and demanded a night's lodging, according to the story told by Mr. McCormick. Their animals, two for each man, they picketed a short distance from the house. McCormick, not having much choice in the matter, allowed them to stay; but a man happening along on horseback, on his way from the river settlement to Liberty, he managed to get an opportunity, unnoticed by the guests, to disclose his suspicions and send word to the sheriff, O. C. McIntosh, that he believed the men stopping with him were horse thieves. The messenger did his part promptly and the sheriff collected a posse of men, six in all, himself included, and by hard driving reached McCormick's place early in the morning, while the horse thieves were at breakfast. The thieves were summoned to surrender, but resisted arrest, and, getting their guns, opened fire on the sheriff's party. In the fight that ensued, Donaldson was shot through the body, by a rifle bullet, and Melrose was injured with buckshot. The thieves reached their horses, mounted one each and made good their escape, leaving two horses and a mule which in due time and process of law enriched the school fund of Wright county from the proceeds of their sale. The bounty offered by the board of county supervisors was never called for. Both of the wounded men—pioneers of this county—recovered, but Donaldson never regained full strength and manly vigor, and died a few years later, no doubt as a result of the wounds he had received at the hands of the thieves. After the sad death of Mr. Donaldson, the county board manfully voted a pension to the widow, which was to be perpetual. The chief facts narrated in the above should be credited to Mr. Elder who wove this incident into a "write up" he gave of this county, published in 1892.

#### LIST OF WRIGHT COUNTY POSTMASTERS.

The following is a true list of all postoffices and the postmasters who have served since the establishment of the offices, as furnished through the kindness of the postmaster-general at Washington, especially for this historical work:



Aldrich—Nelson Aldrich, appointed postmaster on November 15, 1882; William L. Austin, September 21, 1883. Discontinued on May 20, 1891.

Bach Grove—J. D. Sells, appointed on June 10, 1858; W. R. Middleton, July 27, 1861; J. R. Middleton, September 12, 1861; J. L. Middleton, April 7, 1865; Elmore Middleton, April 14, 1875. Discontinued on August 22, 1881.

Belmond—Archer Dumond, appointed on June 18, 1856; J. M. Elder, December, 1857; William E. Rogers, April 30, 1859; George A. McKay, May 15, 1860; L. H. Cutler, April 6, 1861; George W. Dumond, January 12, 1863; J. C. Cowles, November, 1863; L. H. Cutler, September 9, 1864; William H. Mitchell, January 27, 1873; John W. Adams, September 25, 1885; Samuel Adams, July 5, 1887; Lyna Whited, May 9, 1889; Robert M. Cameron, February 18, 1897; E. S. Hubbard, March 21, 1901; W. C. Ramsay, January 23, 1906; John L. McAlpine, February 2, 1914.

Bruce—U. I. Bruns, appointed on August 17, 1883. Discontinued on August 30, 1893. Re-established on October 20, 1897, and H. H. Rierson appointed on October 20, 1897; John Rierson, September 8, 1898. Discontinued on October 31, 1901.

Clarion—O. K. Eastman, appointed on December 18, 1867; R. K. Eastman, March 8, 1870; C. M. Farrar, March 7, 1871; Ivory O. Milliken, November 15, 1872; William W. Gates, May 18, 1877; James C. Harwood, January 19, 1881; G. W. Middlecoff, September 16, 1885; S. W. Summers, September 12, 1887; Walter Elder, March 7, 1894; James C. Harwood, March 22, 1898; Robert P. Osier, July 14, 1903; Peter H. Goslin, February 13, 1915.

Cornelia—J. C. Butterfield, appointed on December 1, 1893; Peter Nelson, February 5, 1895; T. C. Johnson, April 29, 1896; Charles Thompson, March 26, 1904; Andrew Fryslie, November 24, 1906; Antony Wagner, September 16, 1909; A. M. Axen, January 28, 1910. Discontinued on November 30, 1912.

Dows, late Otisville, in Franklin County—R. E. Train, appointed on December 23, 1880; J. F. Kent, September 16, 1885; John Jenkins, December 8, 1890; J. F. Kent, April 10, 1893; H. E. Smith, November 12, 1897; C. E. Hammond, September 16, 1902; Thomas P. Watson, February 20, 1915.

Drew—Thomas Mitchell, appointed June 7, 1892; William McMurty, June 9, 1893; H. P. Johnson, June 28, 1897; H. C. Johnson, August 28, 1901. Discontinued on October 31, 1901.



Dry Lake—D. N. Inman, appointed on June 18, 1871; M. L. Stuart, June 2, 1881; George F. Trowbridge, December 12, 1881; George Trowbridge, January 10, 1882; A. B. Wallace, May 29, 1882. Discontinued on July 12, 1882.

Eagle Grove—S. B. Hewett, Jr., appointed on June 18, 1861; Abbie S. Hewett, April 28, 1875; George Wright, March 4, 1884; J. H. Howell, October 6, 1885; O. H. Brooks, February 11, 1890; J. H. Howell, November 4, 1895; F. J. Will, November 5, 1897; John Buchanan, August 17, 1900; Harry A. Cooke, July 15, 1913.

Empire—R. H. Foster, appointed June 11, 1868; John Delano, January 10, 1877; A. R. Nelson, February 2, 1880. Discontinued on January 2, 1883.

Florence—C. W. Thorup, appointed November 3, 1897; C. T. Sidwell, August 29, 1900. Discontinued on February 14, 1903.

Fryeburgh—William C. Hard, appointed March 14, 1856; D. F. Ellsworth, July 14, 1857; R. K. Eastman, August 19, 1858; William Rowen, April 16, 1860; J. H. Rowen, March 26, 1868; N. N. Hainis, March 14, 1871; A. D. Hainis, March 2, 1882. Discontinued on June 22, 1886.

Galtville—R. B. Hanlin, appointed on January 30, 1832; Frank Hanlin, November 16, 1885; J. H. Birdsall, March 14, 1888. Name changed on April 18, 1888.

Galt—J. H. Birdsall, April 18, 1888; C. L. Marsh, December 26, 1890; Arthur Richards, May 5, 1892; J. H. Birdsall, December 11, 1893; C. H. Walton, August 21, 1895; C. D. Williams, January 14, 1897; Arthur Richards, July 11, 1900; J. A. Green, October 23, 1902; William R. Burt, January 23, 1908; C. J. Howard, September 2, 1914.

Goldfield—John B. Skinner, appointed May 27, 1856; A. D. Brasfield, November 12, 1856; H. N. Crapper, May 6, 1859; John Melrose, April 21, 1861; J. W. Parmalee, March 22, 1871; J. S. Braden, January 13, 1876; P. K. McMurtry, January 11, 1886; S. M. Huyck, August 26, 1889; S. C. Farmer, December 24, 1890; John Sill, June 15, 1893; George B. McMurtry, March 10, 1894; S. T. Campbell, February 11, 1898; Eva Keith, January 4, 1900.

Holmes—Isadore Gooder, appointed on January 26, 1885; David Mowers, May 24, 1887; L. C. Spangler, May 2, 1891; J. A. Stroup, March 3, 1896; Oscar Ulstad, May 28, 1897; A. O. Weeks, December 1, 1914.

Lena—William L. Kent, appointed on March 27, 1882. Discontinued on June 7, 1886.

Luni—C. H. Packard, appointed March 9, 1858; H. D. Houghton,



August 17, 1860; Frank Zimmerman, September 12, 1861; Marcellus Packard, July 26, 1875; Frank De Packard, October 26, 1876; William T. Drennen, February 9, 1880; George T. Packard, April 19, 1882; Charles Packard, January 31, 1883. Discontinued on June 23, 1888.

Montgomery—Hamilton W. Montgomery, appointed on May 4, 1864. Discontinued on December 12, 1864.

Morhain—Michael Morhain, appointed on June 26, 1897; E. F. Zoph, November 23, 1899. Discontinued on January 31, 1902.

Olaf—James Johnson, appointed on August 17, 1883; D. S. Lister, June 9, 1893; William F. Culver, March 23, 1896; Michael Neimeyer, April 13, 1903; A. E. Martin, November 3, 1903; T. H. Benson, July 28, 1906; George Thompson, December 30, 1908. Discontinued on May 15, 1911.

Palsville—A. W. Finch, appointed February 11, 1898; John Jacobs, April 27, 1900. Discontinued on July 31, 1902.

Rosedale—Daniel Okerson, appointed on September 26, 1857. Discontinued on October 16, 1860; re-established on March 30, 1877. Celia L. Hulse, appointed March 30, 1877. Discontinued on November 19, 1885.

Rowan—H. H. Barker, appointed on November 24, 1884; L. C. Dalrymple, December 15, 1884; F. A. Schmale, December 21, 1886; D. R. Pierce, September 5, 1887; William Wesenburg, April 17, 1888; A. B. Hiams, April 16, 1890; Will M. Brooks, March 20, 1894; C. A. Emerson, July 20, 1896; A. E. Emerson, August 4, 1898; J. S. Farran, March 24, 1905; R. R. Duffy, April 26, 1907.

Thrall—D. B. Myers, appointed on January 30, 1882; Alexander Owen, December 22, 1884. Discontinued on November 30, 1907.

Waterman—L. B. Grout, appointed on August 2, 1871; P. H. Morris, December 9, 1878; J. A. Robb, May 24, 1881; L. B. Grout, July 14, 1884; L. W. Hockman, December 29, 1884; L. B. Grout, July 9, 1890. Discontinued on August 9, 1900.

Woolstock—B. F. McDaniels, appointed on April 16, 1868; Davis Hart, March 7, 1872; David Letts, December 7, 1874; F. G. Yeoman, November 5, 1875; Isaac McDonald, May 8, 1877; Ellen Evans, October 21, 1879; Elza E. Middleton, October 24, 1881; William Thompson, January 19, 1887; Elza E. Middleton, May 14, 1889; L. W. Tyrrell, April 10, 1891; S. C. Gardner, August 21, 1893; Eliza H. Parrish, August 5, 1897; Sarah Parrish, June 15, 1898; Ada Lee, May 12, 1902; Nancy Pringle, June 23, 1903; Gertrude Risch, September 22, 1911; Letha Dough-ten, June 25, 1913.



The above shows that there have been established within this county twenty-eight postoffices, with a total of one hundred and seventy-five different postmasters, serving since the establishment of the first postoffice on March 14, 1856, at Fryeburg, near the present town of Rowan. The rural delivery of mail has caused many of these offices to be discontinued, leaving only the following postoffices at present: Belmond, Clarion, Dows, Eagle Grove, Galt, Goldfield, Holmes, Rowan, Woolstock.

A map of the county in 1875 shows Wright county's postoffices to have been at that date: Otisville, in section 25, Blaine township; Dry Lake, in section 16, Vernon township; Empire, in section 26, Lincoln township; Fryeburg, in section 33, Iowa township; Waterman, in section 29, Wall Lake township; Woolstock, in section 28, Woolstock township; Bach Grove, in section 10, Troy township; Luni, in section 7, Boone township; also Belmond and Goldfield (then Liberty).

#### PRAIRIE FIRES.

On October 26, 1877, the *Belmond Herald*, then edited by Frank Gates, carried the following concerning prairie fires in Wright county: "A terrible prairie fire swept east and west of town this week. At the Brandis farm six miles northeast, the fire had to be fought all night to protect property; and at Mr. Brauwer's it came up within a few rods of the house and was only stayed by hard fighting. Six stacks of hay went up in smoke; we did not learn the owner's name. The blaze swept over a large territory and was fully fifteen miles in length."

#### FARM NAMES.

Under a recent state enactment in Iowa, the county recorder is provided with a record-book in which the farm names of landowners may be recorded, for the nominal fee of one dollar per tract. Over forty farm owners have already named their farms in Wright county, no two being allowed to be the same. Those who have thus registered, giving owner's name, name of farm, location as to section, township and range, appear below—the owner and farm name only being given in this connection: "Ash Grove," B. M. Frybarger, 1914; "Ashton Place," O. P. Morton, 1914; "Boone Center," J. M. Overbaugh, 1913; "Edgewood," J. L. Brown, 1911; "Cedar View," C. M. Spangler, 1911; "Clover Crest Stock Farm," Joseph Fromm; "Cloverdale," Charles M. Overbaugh, 1914; "Sunnyside,"



W. E. Chapman, 1911; "Meadowbrook," W. E. Chapman, 1911; "Grand View," W. E. Chapman, 1911; "Maple Grove," W. E. Chapman, 1911; "Ever Green," C. W. Cooler, 1911; "Elm Crest," Rogers H. Paine, 1911; "Walnut Hill Farm," Walter G. Claude, 1912; "Edgewood," J. L. Brown, 1911; "Edenwold," R. W. Franks, 1911; "Ever Green," S. H. Williams, 1911; "Eagle Farm," J. P. Sherman, 1911; "Eagle Valley," John C. Peterson, 1911; "Fairview," J. F. Wareham, 1912; "Hillside," F. D. Fillmore, 1911; "Lilac Lodge," W. D. Schleiffortle, 1912; "Lake View," L. G. Hill, 1912; "Morning Side," J. C. Miller, 1912; "Maple View," Charles D. Nelson, 1912; "Oakdale," Helmke Bros., 1915; "Pine Grove," John Kierstein, 1911; "Pleasant Hill," John Kierstein, 1911; "Pleasant Hill Stock Farm," E. J. Palmer, 1911; "Plain View Farm," J. T. Yow, 1911; "Plainview Stock Farm," E. G. Reed, 1913; "Riverside Farm," D. D. Paine, 1911; "River View Farm," Hans A. Hanson, 1911; "Riverside Dairy," France Warner, 1914; "South View Stock Farm," J. E. Johnson, 1911; "Shady Grove," Stephen Wilcox, 1912; "Strawn Farm," Zetta and Nellie Strawn, 1914; "Sunnybrook Stock Farm," Raymond Paine, 1914; "Walnut View," J. D. McComber, 1911; "Walnut Hill Farm," W. G. Claude, 1912; "Wall Lake Stock Farm," C. M. Haas, 1914; "Walnut Brook," F. L. Paine, 1915.

#### BOONE VALLEY OLD SETTLERS' ASSOCIATION.

This society of pioneers of Wright county, which also takes in some of Humboldt county, was organized at Goldfield in September, 1904, when two hundred persons signed as having been residents of the county twenty years or more. The first officers were: O. C. McIntosh, president; H. W. McIntyre, secretary; J. M. Overbaugh, J. M. Montgomery and L. H. Nelson, vice-presidents; J. M. Overbaugh, historian. A number of speeches were made at the first meeting of the society, which met at Riverside park in Goldfield, where the association holds its annual meetings.

As early as September, 1886, what was styled the "Wright and Adjoining Counties Old Settlers Association" was organized, with G. G. Pritchard, of Belmond, as president; T. A. Davenport, secretary. All paying fifty cents and stating that they had come to these counties prior to 1875 were eligible to membership. Several meetings of this society were held and greatly enjoyed by those participating.

The Boone Valley Old Settlers Association was presided over by its original president, O. C. McIntosh, until his death, when George Whyte succeeded him in office until 1913, when John H. Montgomery was elected,



and is still holding that honorable position. Walter Palmer, who was the first secretary of the association, is still serving. J. M. Overbaugh has always held the important position of historian, and has been a valuable man in that important office, having been reared in the county from a mere youth, the son of the pioneer, C. N. Overbaugh, and having held county and township offices, he is preeminently fitted for this place.

At the annual gatherings of the association, always held at Riverside park, Goldfield, all present register their names and pay in a small amount to defray incidental expenses, such as advertising, purchasing roast beef and coffee, etc., while the ladies bring a picnic dinner, sufficient for all who may be present. It is always held on Saturday, but no fixed part of the month, that being settled a few weeks before the reunion each season. These gatherings have been full of interest. Among the speakers on such occasions there have appeared Hon. William Squire Kenyon, United States senator from Iowa; Hon. P. B. Birdsall, ex-congressman and judge; and lawyers and ministers of note, all filled with the fire of old-time friendship and who spoke feelingly of pioneer days in Wright county. Besides these have appeared local men, including C. N. Overbaugh, now deceased. These annual gatherings are befitting and full of general interest to the citizens of this county and eastern Humboldt county.

#### THE FARMERS INSURANCE COMPANY.

As the outgrowth of the old Farmers Alliance, which organization existed many years ago in Wright county, as well as all over Iowa, there was formed, at the suggestion of O. P. Morton and a few more, what is known as the Farmers Mutual Insurance Company of Wright and Adjoining Counties. This organization, for the sole purpose of insuring farm buildings and live stock from fire, lightning, etc., in this territory, was perfected in 1890. J. G. Mechem was president from the time the company was formed until its reorganization a few years ago and never missed a meeting of the directors and officers in all the twenty years of his service. The members of the company presented him with a beautiful gold-headed cane not long since, which he highly prizes. The first secretary was T. W. Smith. In 1892, when two years old, the company was carrying 531 policies and \$400,000 in risks. In 1906 its officers reported \$1,726,113 in risks and all losses paid and the treasurer had on hand \$2,428. The losses that year amounted to twenty-three.

There is a board of trustees, or directors, one from each township in



this county, each of whom acts as an agent for his township, and usually attends to the matter of adjusting losses that may occur. The company's statement for January 1, 1915, shows the following: Risks in force, \$2,616,660; risks written in 1914, \$760,964; risks cancelled in the year, \$86,321; net gain for 1914, \$349,610. Total losses paid since organization, \$55,589; losses in 1914 (forty), \$9,504; assessment for last five years (per year), two mills on the dollar; assessment for the last twenty-five years (per year), two and eight-tenths mills on a dollar. The rates charged do not cost the policy-holder more than one-third the amount charged by the "old line companies".

When the company was reorganized under its present charter, in 1910, G. T. Mack was elected successor to President Meham, and is its present president. The three secretaries have been T. W. Smith, W. W. Sheplee and E. B. Whyte, who commenced his term on January 1, 1908. The 1915 officers are: G. J. Mack, president; S. D. Kennedy, vice-president; E. B. Whyte, secretary; Thomas Wallace, treasurer. The directors are as follows: G. J. Mack, Lake township; M. Dawson, Grant township; Harry Summers, Dayton township; O. P. Morton, Lincoln township; G. G. Rankin, Vernon and Iowa townships; E. P. Inghram, Blaine township; Thomas Wallace, Wall Lake township; M. D. Sullivan, Pleasant township; A. C. Hinman, Belmond township; Wiert Johnson, Norway township; R. W. Frank, Boone township; W. C. Moseley, Liberty township; S. D. Kennedy, Eagle Grove, Troy and Woolstock townships.

#### POPULATION OF THE COUNTY.

In 1856 the population of Wright county was 427; 1860, 653; 1863, 693; 1865, 908; 1867, 1,332; 1870, 2,392; 1875, 3,234; 1880, 5,662; 1885, 9,380; 1890, 12,057; 1895, 16,024; 1900, 18,227; 1905, 17,629; 1910, 17,951; 1915, 19,500.

Given by townships and precincts, the county's population for the last three United States census periods is as follows:

	1910	1900	1890
Belmond township, including part of Belmond city	775	785	625
Belmond city (part of) -----	160	158	81
Total for Belmond city in Belmond and Pleasant township -----	1,224	1,224	803
Blaine township, including part of Dows town-----	1,440	1,413	865



Dows town (part of), balance in Franklin county	685	626	
Boone township -----	504	554	348
Clarion township, coextensive with Clarion city--	2,065	1,475	1,071
Clarion City -----	2,065	1,475	744
Dayton township -----	525	653	520
Eagle Grove township, including Eagle Grove city and part of Goldfield city -----	3,923	4,129	2,355
Eagle Grove city -----	3,387	3,557	1,881
Total for Goldfield City in Eagle Grove and Liberty townships -----	618	628	343
Grant township -----	484	474	
Iowa township (including Rowan town)-----	878	787	537
Rowan, town of -----	256		
Lake township -----	586	646	376
Liberty township, including part of Goldfield-----	1,230	1,335	828
Goldfield city (part of) -----	612	620	520
Lincoln township -----	590	679	520
Norway township -----	774	756	452
Pleasant township, including part of Belmont-----	1,716	1,807	1,240
Belmond City (part of) -----	1,064	1,076	722
Troy township -----	544	687	603
Vernon township -----	556	612	541
Wall Lake township -----	517	512	418
Woolstock township, including Woolstock city-----	864	923	758
Woolstock city -----	264	274	
Totals -----	17,951	18,227	12,057

## POPULATION BY NATIONALITY.

The 1905 Iowa state census book gave Wright county the following paragraph concerning the nationality of its people: Total number of native born of native parents, 8,864; total number of persons native born of foreign parents, 6,212; total number of persons foreign born, 2,545.

The number of colored people in Wright county in 1905 was 8.

The number born in Iowa was 9,904; born in Illinois, 2,180; born in Ohio, 396; born in New York, 468; born in California, 10. The remainder represented almost every state in the Union and every country in the world.



## THE 1915 STATE CENSUS.

Iowa takes a census every ten years (alternating with the United States census). The last United States census was in 1910, while the last state census is being taken the present year—1915. This enumeration shows the population of Wright county to be, by townships and incorporations, as follows:

Townships—Troy, 529; Eagle Grove, 513; Liberty, 600; Boone, 562; Norway, 730; Pleasant, 680; Iowa, 603; Blaine, 573; Vernon, 558; Wall Lake, 443; Woolstock, 587; Dayton, 558; Grant, 478; Lake, 656; Lincoln, 561.

Towns and Villages—Clarion, 2,552; Belmond, 1,418; Eagle Grove, 3,940; Dows, 998, including portion in Franklin county; Woolstock, 387; Rowan, 284.

## DAYS OF MOURNING.

Following the death of President William McKinley, in September, 1901, there were memorial services held in Belmond and Clarion and other points in Wright county. At Belmond the places of business, stores and offices, were closed the entire day of the services. The town was draped in mourning and a speech was delivered in eulogy of the deceased President by Rev. Frank L. Loveland, of Vinton, Iowa, whose words will never be forgotten by those who were present. The bells in Belmond rang from 2:30 to 2:45 in the afternoon.

In Clarion great preparations were made for the services, which were held in the opera house. The building was heavily draped and decorated with befitting emblems of mourning. Many flowers were in evidence. On one side of the stage was a picture of Lincoln and on the opposite, one of Garfield; while a large portrait of McKinley, displayed in the center, was surrounded by beautiful flowers, which in color were in keeping with Mr. McKinley's favorite colors. The music was very impressive and included "Lead, Kindly Light," McKinley's favorite, and his death-chamber hymn, "Nearer, My God, to Thee." Mayor White presided over the memorial meeting, and introduced the speaker of the occasion—Hon. B. P. Birdsall, of Clarion. Other addresses were made by Reverends Beach and Johnson. The address of Mr. Birdsall was published in the *Monitor* in full, and contained many fine sentences, touching the memory of the lamented President. Among these the following paragraphs are here quoted:



"January 29, 1843, September 14, 1910. Between these dates lies the record of a human life; a birth and death, a promise and its fulfillment; a baby's smile, a mother's joy; youth's ambition and manhood's achievements, labor and its reward, to close with a tragedy so dark and deep that it shook the world. Only a few days since from that beautiful city by the inland sea whence has been gathered all that was best in science, art and mechanics, was flashed the intelligence that our beloved President had been assassinated. With the wings of lightning it flew from city to town and hamlet, even to the remote parts of earth. A few days elapsed, days of alternate fear or expectation, responding to favorable or unfavorable reports from his bedside. Hope grew strong as day after day we received assurance that he would live; when, of a sudden, as hope had grown almost to a conviction, comes the news flashed on the wings of speed, that the President is dying. Vain our hopes, vain our tears, vain our prayers, as the President is dead! William McKinley is no more; the dates are complete, the kind husband, the valiant soldier, the superb representative of American citizenship has gone to his reward. The nation mourns, the public are in tears; while the world's pulse, beating in mournful unison, pays reverential homage to our illustrious dead.

"In a time of peace and prosperity, the hand of the assassin, in the name of liberty, is raised against the constitutional head of the republic; against the very embodiment of liberty itself, and the President's life is sacrificed. But why question? Life is a mystery deeply woven in the warp of fate. That gentle soul, breathing the very spirit of our divine Master, could say, while yet the red blood was oozing from his breast, "God forgive him." That faithful, trusting Christian, when about to undergo the surgeon's knife, found strength in the whispered words, 'Our Father, who art in Heaven,' when the mists of death were falling fast, saw then, with even brighter vision, he answered us, 'God's will, not ours, be done.' In life and in death the same sweet, loving soul, whose private life was stainless as a star; whose public work illumined the whole world. President William McKinley crossed the great river made wider by our affection and deepened by our tears. He was tenderly borne on the wings of hope to life's goal, gently laid in the arms of his fellow martyrs, Lincoln and Garfield. Bid an affectionate farewell and goodbye. The world is poorer by his going and Heaven has a new attraction for us all."



## GRANT MEMORIAL SERVICES.

Upon the death of President U. S. Grant, in July, 1885, the Clarion post, Grand Army of the Republic, held memorial services at the opera house. The services were of a very impressive character. Short speeches were made by Ben Entrikin and Messrs. Nagle, Ladd, Birdsall and Gibbs, all uniting in paying the deceased general and President tributes of praise, from various viewpoints, some stating that his deeds and character as an American citizen would make a more lasting impression than those of any man excepting possibly Washington and Lincoln.

## EAGLES DESTROYED.

For twenty-two years prior to May, 1877, a pair of eagles had made their nest with each recurring season, near Horse grove, this county. But during that month they made their last nest, the hand of man having been raised against them. A man living in Belmont killed the old eagles and captured a pair of young ones. The young and greedy little creatures did not mature. This was a very wicked act upon the part of the man who killed the eagles, when it is considered how rare these "emblems of liberty" have come to be in this country.

## RELIEF FOR RUSSIANS IN 1892.

During the awful famine in Russia, in 1892, the farmers of Iowa were called upon to aid the sufferers in that far-away country. Wright county was canvassed hurriedly and her people sent corn, or its value in money, with much liberality. The banner township was what is sometimes, or was at an early date, known as "the state of Wall Lake." Through the efforts of Messrs. John Fagan and Charley Birdsall three car loads of corn were collected, which was sent from Clarion to Miss Clara Barton, of the American Red Cross Society. The county was represented by township work as follows: Vernon, \$38; Blaine, \$54; Eagle Grove, \$61; Lincoln, \$35; Wall Lake, \$60; Clarion, \$55. In all, \$470 was raised and sent to aid the unfortunate Russians.

## THE 1882 PROHIBITORY AMENDMENT VOTE.

June 27, 1882, there was held a special election throughout the several counties of Iowa to determine whether the state should have a constitutional



amendment to forbid the sale of alcoholic liquors, including ale, wine and beer. It carried in the state by thirty thousand majority, but was subsequently declared unconstitutional, on technical grounds, and hence was not made a part of our constitution. The vote in Wright county gave the following majorities for such amendment: Clarion township, 85; Belmond, 50; Pleasant, 65; Blaine, 58; Vernon, 19; Woolstock, 4; Dayton, 3; Liberty, 52; Eagle Grove, 68; Lake, 9; Wall Lake, 1; Norway, 19; Iowa, 11; Troy, 39; Boone, 15; making 494 majority for the measure in this county.

#### AIDING SAN FRANCISCO SUFFERERS.

In the spring of 1906 Clarion raised two hundred and forty-seven dollars for the earthquake sufferers in San Francisco.

#### AUTOMOBILES IN WRIGHT COUNTY, 1914.

In 1914 there were listed for taxation in this county seven hundred and fifty-six automobiles. These were distributed over all parts of the county, and many were owned in the rural sections of the county. The "Ford" was perhaps the leading machine in use.

#### A LATE SNOW STORM.

On April 13, 1892, occurred the commencement of one of the latest snow storms ever seen by Wright county residents. It continued for thirty hours and there were fully ten inches of snow on the level when the storm ceased. It was the making, however, of a large small-grain crop. After a day or two the snow rapidly disappeared and spring came in earnest. Again, on May 22, the same year, there came an eight-inch fall of snow to the north and west of this county.

#### ANCIENT RELICS.

The August 12, 1882, issue of the *Webster City Freeman* had the following account of a Wright county curiosity: "At Head Grove (the Jim Anderson farm), Wright county, on Eagle creek, there has been found by a plowman many curious pieces of old-time relics, among which are parts of two gun barrels and an English make of hatchet, both too badly rusted to give any intelligent idea as to their age or manufacture, except their size and general form. They were found about fifteen inches below



the surface, and have every evidence of having been there long years. If their true history were known it would doubtless be of great interest. In the same field have been found several strangely fashioned stone hammers of exceptionally large size and of a peculiar shape. Friend Anderson supposes that Head grove was at one time a camping ground and perhaps burial place of some of the pre-historic race. These implements would denote another race than the Indian, but here must be drawn the curtain, leaving all to only conjecture."

#### WONDERFUL MIRAGE.

Editor Hathaway, of the *Monitor* of February 9, 1874, wrote of this pleasing and strange phenomenon as follows: "The people of this section were treated to one of nature's rare and free exhibitions yesterday morning in the shape of a mirage which showed miles of prairie and timber that was in reality far below the horizon. We could count the houses in Liberty, ten miles to the west, follow the windings of the Boone as far as Rock creek and to far below Webster City; look way over into Humboldt county and see the farm homes, stock sheds and tall columns of smoke arising from hundreds of chimneys on the prairies for miles southwest and northwest. We gained a more thorough knowledge of the course of rivers and creeks, the location of the groves and timber and the direction of towns and villages than by studying the map of Iowa. This delusion appeared about two hours. The cause of the phenomenon is the unequal refraction of the light in the atmosphere."

#### INTERESTING PARAGRAPHS.

In 1880: "John McAlpin of Belmond had on hand ten thousand muskrat hides, and is counted the 'boss ratist' in Wright county."

March, 1875: "Prairie chickens have been decidedly familiar of late, hundreds having been driven into the settlements yards and into town on account of the ordinary feed being all covered with deep snows. They are seen each morning about the houses and yards in Clarion."

#### PRAIRIE FIRES.

An item in the *Wright County Monitor* in the month of October, 1873, read as follows: "The present fall has been one of unusual dryness and as an inevitable consequence prairie fires have been disastrous. The grass



was very heavy and the hard frosts of two weeks ago made the prairie a huge tinder-box, that once started with fire no power could stop till the prairie was all burned over. Hi Lane of Hancock county had \$4,000 worth of property destroyed. Cerro Gordo, Franklin, Hamilton, Humboldt and Wright counties, with parts of Webster county, have all been greatly damaged. Hay, grain, sheds, machinery, houses and household goods have been destroyed in all of these counties. Wright county has had a very severe season of fires. Reports of loss and damage are coming in every day, and scarcely an acre of prairie remains unburned between this place and the Boone river. The cattle must now be taken up to feed and, as much hay is burned, a hard winter will be a rough thing on the cattle in many sections. We are unable to make an estimate at present of the loss, but it will be way up in the thousands of dollars."

In January, 1880, during the hard snowy winter, a dozen or fifteen Indians had quarters on the Iowa river near Fryeburg. Four of the squaws hired out to settlers to cut wood for them, while the "braves" busied themselves at begging, and hunting rabbits and trapping. These were from the Tama county Indian reservation.

#### MARKET QUOTATIONS AT VARIOUS PERIODS.

The earliest quotations accessible at this date, for articles used among the pioneers of Wright and Hamilton counties, are the following, which constituted a bill filled at Webster City, in 1856, for Josiah Davidson, of Goldfield postoffice, Wright county, Iowa:

Webster City Iowa		November 24, 1856	
Bot. of W. H. & D. O. Laughlin			
3½ Yds. White Flannel	@ 40c	-----	\$1.40
1 " Red "	@ 50	-----	50
6 " Denims	@ 16	-----	96
24 Lbs. Nails	@ 09	-----	2.16
Coffee		-----	1.00
3½ Lbs. Tallow	@ 16	-----	56
8 " " Candles	@ 25	-----	2.00
12 lights, glass 8x10	@ 06	-----	72
2 Lbs Crackers	@ 15	-----	30
2 " Tobacco	@ 20	-----	40
1 " Tea	@ 75	-----	75
2 " Soda	@ 12½	-----	25



5 Box Cinnamon	@ 05 -----	25
1 Fine Comb	-----	10
1 Broom	-----	25
1 Wash Bowl	-----	25

The quotations in Wright county in 1864 (Civil-War days) were as follow: Crushed sugar, 29 cents; Cuba sugar, 21 cents; New Orleans molasses, \$1.15 per gallon; coffee, 48 cents per pound; cotton, per pound, \$1.50; pork, per barrel, \$42.00; gold (Wall street, New York), \$2.50; prints, 35 cents per yard; Delaines, 40 cents; gingham, 40 cents; checks, 48 cents; bed ticking, 75 cents; brown drilling, 45 cents; canton flannel, 50 cents; bleached muslin, 40 cents; brown muslin, 40 cents; balmoral skirts, \$3.00.

Quotations in 1878, at Clarion, were: Sugar, 10 cents; New Orleans molasses, 28 cents per gallon; coffee, per pound, 15 cents; cotton, per pound, 10 cents; pork, per barrel, \$9.00; gold, \$1.01; prints, 6 cents per yard; delaines, 10 cents; gingham, 6 cents; checks, 18 cents; bed ticking, 25 cents; brown drills, 10 cents; canton flannel, 8 cents; bleached muslin, 5 cents; brown muslin, 4 cents; balmoral skirts, 50.

Quotations in Clarion in 1894—sundry articles of domestic use: Wheat, 40 cents; corn, 21 cents; oats, 20 cents; barley, 25 cents; flax seed, \$1.00; timothy seed, \$1.00; shipping beef, \$3.00 to \$4.00 per hundred weight; old cows, \$1.75 per hundred weight; prime hogs, \$4.40 per hundred weight; hay (wild), \$4.00 per ton; soft coal, \$3.00 to \$4.00 per ton; hard coal, \$10.00 per ton; flour, per sack, 90 cents to \$1.15; salt, per barrel, \$1.25; butter, 15 cents; eggs, 15 cents per dozen; onions, 80 cents per bushel; buckwheat, per sack, 45 cents.

Quotations in 1913—Hogs, \$8.10; corn, 53 cents; oats, 34 cents; old potatoes, 35 cents; new potatoes, per peck, 50 cents; eggs, per dozen, 15 cents; creamery butter, 29 cents; dairy butter, 27 cents; sugar, 6 cents; coffee, 18 to 35 cents; tea, 30 to 70 cents; flour, \$1.50 to \$2.00; nails, \$2.60 per keg; iron, 3 cents per pound.

The quotations for furs, trapped or otherwise captured in Wright county in 1886 were as follows: (E. D. Robbin, Clarion, dealer) Muskrats, 3 to 6 cents each; mink, \$4.00 to \$5.00; skunks, 15 to 50 cents; wolf, 20 to 75 cents; fox, 15 to 40 cents; badger, 20 to 30 cents; coon, 20 to 30 cents; beaver, \$1.25 to \$2.25 each.

The Webster City markets for December, 1873, included the following: Wheat, 84; corn, 40; oats, 35; barley, 50; cattle, \$2.50 to \$2.75 per



hundred weight; hogs, \$4.00 to \$4.25 per hundred; turkeys, 5 cents per pound; chickens, 4 cents per pound; beef steak, 10 to 12 cents; roasts, 8 cents; fresh pork, 5 cents; prairie chickens, \$2.25 to \$2.50 per dozen; flour, \$3.00 per hundred; butter, 13 cents; lard, 7 cents; salt, per barrel, \$3.25; wood, per cord, \$4.00; siding, \$28.00 per thousand; joist and timbers, \$23.00; sheeting, \$23.00; shingles, \$5.00 per thousand; nails (cut), 7 cents per pound.

#### A CIVIL-WAR DAY LETTER.

The subjoined letter was written by Uncle C. H. Martin to Josiah Davidson, of Goldfield postoffice, and bears date of March, 1865. It refers to a new wig he had made for him; also to many interesting things concerning war days and war prices—hence is here given in full:

“Josiah Davidson, Esq.

“Dear Sir, it is with pleasure I write to you in answer to yours of the 9th of this month, the wig I received on the evening of the 20th, too late to send you an answer by return mail, but now after wearing the wig all day it feels so good on my head that out of gratitude to you for your trouble I give you my sincere thanks. It is a good article I think and like it very much, it keeps my head warm and looks well, am much pleased with it. I think Mrs. Davidson done well as any one could.

“Mr. S. B. Hewett gave a dinner to his friends about the 13 of this month Mr. Montgomery, Melrose and others were there to participate in the festivities. It is said that Mr. Hewett has found indications of oil on his farm, and on the Okeson? farm it is said that they have found specimens of oil & have sent some to be tested.

“Land is selling fast here now Peter Rily, Caldwell & others have sold out & going west. There seems to be considerable moving west at present.

“I was married on the 2nd of March to Mary Odenheimer and we are now keeping house, same like other folks. We expect to sow wheat this week, cattle & horses are very high for this part of the country. Hogs are scarce & demand great prices. The Government contractors are paying it is said \$30.00 per cwt. for drawing Quartermaster's supplies from Nevada to Denver City, and \$25.00 from Omaha to Denver City. There are a great many teams both oxen and mule teams so that the plains will be alive this spring.

“There were a great number of U. S. horses brought to Webster City for keeping this winter, it raised the price of corn & hay. Corn 75 cents per bushel & hay from \$7 to \$10 per ton both in Webster City and Fort



Dodge. In Fort Desmoines flour is selling at \$11.00 per barrel but in Davenport at \$7.00 only.

"You speak in your letter of the change you would send next time. You will confer a favor by giving it to your boys and say nothing more about it.

"Most truly yours,

"C. H. Martin.

"Mr. Barton has sold out & going to California and there appears to be almost a general move for some place."

#### THE HERD LAW.

The following legal notice is self-explanatory:

"State of Iowa, Wright County, ss:

"Auditor's office, October 31, 1874. Notice is hereby given to the people of said county that the board of canvassers of said county, on the 19th of October, A. D., 1874, met for the purpose of canvassing the votes cast at the last general election, on October 13, 1874, found that the whole number of votes for the proposition 'Restraining stock from running at large,' was four hundred and seventy-four votes, of which two hundred and seventy-two were for the proposition and two hundred and two votes were given against the proposition.

"Whereupon it was declared by the board that the regulation 'restraining stock from running at large' is adopted, to take effect and be in force as provided by the Code of Iowa.

"JOHN L. MORSE,

"County Auditor."

#### TELEPHONE COMPANIES.

The Wright County Telephone Company was organized and a franchise granted in the spring of 1899, holding a twenty-five year charter. Its line was completed in October, 1899, after which people could talk with parties at Belmond, Bruce, Kanawha, Merservy, Swaledale, Mason City, Clear Lake, Alexander, Latimer and Hampton.

The subjoined are the telephone companies doing business in Wright county in 1915: The Belmond Mutual Telephone Company, at Belmond; Blaine Farmers Mutual Telephone Company; Clarion Northwestern Telephone Company; Goldfield Telephone Company; Iowa Telephone Com-



pany; Jameson Telephone Company, Dows; Norway Rural Telephone Company; People Mutual Telephone Company; Rowan Rural Telephone Company, Rowan; Rural Home Telephone Company, Vernon township; Rural Union Telephone Company, Renwick, Humboldt county; Vincent Telephone Company, Vincent, Webster county; Vernon Farmers Mutual Telephone Company; Western Electric Telephone Company, Mason City; Woolstock Township Telephone Company; Williams and Blairsburg Telephone Company, Williams.

#### EARLY-DAY GAME OF THE COUNTY.

While in a reminiscent mood the pioneer, W. T. R. Humphrey, of Clarion, in 1910, wrote of his first visit to the county seat of Wright county, as follows:

"On my trip from Webster City to Clarion, what pleased me more than anything else was the amount of feathered game we saw. Although it was late in the season, every pond was filled with ducks and toward evening every one of the few corn fields we saw, there were flying over them large numbers of wild geese, brant and prairie chickens. This was indeed a game paradise in those early days. What made shooting satisfactory, we did not have to hunt for the game, but it was right at our very door. The first prairie chicken I shot was where our city park is now located. I have shot prairie chickens and quails in my own door yard and once shot a large wild goose from a flock flying over, while standing in my door. The pond north of town and west of the Great Western depot of today, would always furnish shooting in duck season. Fishing was just as good as shooting. Four of us caught one hundred pounds of fine pickerel in Little Wall lake one forenoon. The Iowa river was also full of the finest fishes and were easily taken. Remember this was during the seventies, and there was much game here until within a few years."

The earlier settlers—those of the fifties and sixties—saw the great numbers of elk, deer and other animals that have long since become almost extinct on the continent. They grazed and roamed at will here and there and were killed along Boone and Iowa rivers and along Buck and White Fox and Eagle creeks in large numbers.

#### THE PEATBOGS ON FIRE.

In the vicinity of Big Wall lake in 1897, the large marshes at the north end of the lake in the month of November, were on fire for many weeks,



covering many hundreds of acres of land that was underlaid with peat beds. The season had been unusually dry and the substance caught fire from some careless farmer while he was burning off his stubble. It burned till the heavy rains and freezing weather set in. Much damage was done to land adjoining the lake and as a result there was some litigation over the fire thus lawlessly set.

#### WRIGHT COUNTY'S AVIATOR.

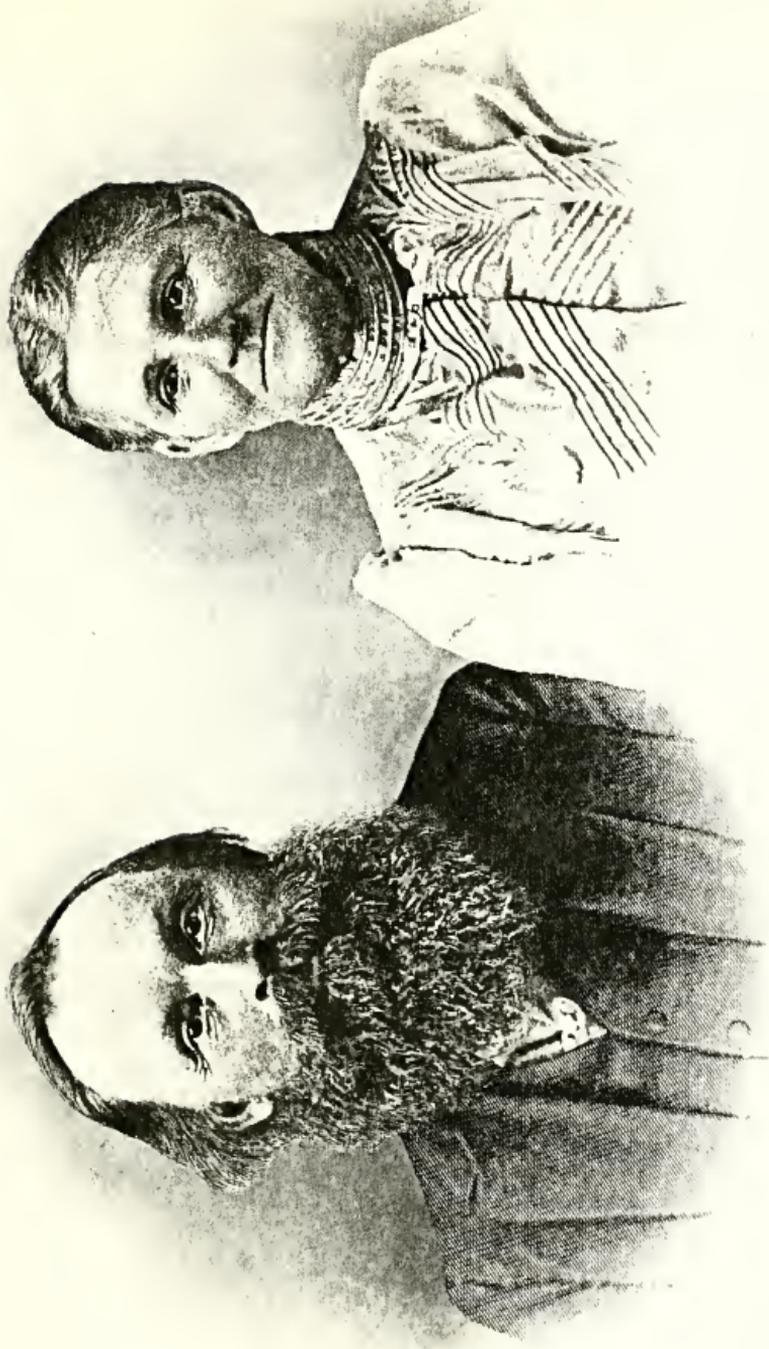
Young Weeks, of Holmes, Lake township, this county, known as the "wizard of the air," has made an enviable record as an inventor, constructor and operator of "flying machines," originally so called, but which, since the science of aerial navigation has advanced to its present dignity, are known under different names, according to the type of machine used. The operator is known as an aviator. Elling C. Weeks, was born in Story county, Iowa (as was evangelist Billy Sunday), and Iowa may well be proud of the young aeronaut who has made more than a thousand successful flights in the seven machines he has built since the spring of 1910. He is the son of Oliver Weeks and wife, of Holmes, this county, born on August 23, 1890. About 1909 he chanced to be a room mate of a nephew of "Steve" Brody, the daring man who successfully leaped from the Brooklyn suspension bridge. The boys were room mates in Chicago and it was there that young Weeks, in talking with his mate, who was studying aerial navigation, caught the "flying machine fever," as he states it, and within a few months he was making his first biplane in Chicago. When completed he made flights there and having been backed by a Chicago man, shipped his outfit to Florida and, at St. Augustine, opened a school of instruction for aviators. He soon left for the East and made flights in New York City, Bath, New York, Scranton, Pennsylvania; in New Jersey, Michigan, Chicago, Terre Haute, also in Huntington and Clarksburg, West Virginia; Denver and Ft. Collins, Colorado. This was from 1910 to 1913, after which he was little heard of, being busy perfecting his own style of machine, until June 5, 1915, when he returned from an air trip from his present home, Eagle Grove, to Boone, Iowa, making fifteen flights with his last made biplane. On his return trip, from Slater to Eagle Grove, a distance of seventy-five miles by wagon road, he made the air trip in sixty-eight minutes. Between Webster City and Eagle Grove, he made his highest flight—being eight thousand feet above the railroad tracks, which he said looked to him like a narrow furrow. His latest machine weighs twelve hundred pounds and carries a one-hundred-and-ten-horse-power engine. He



has made fifteen flights with his last machine and in all he has made close to eleven hundred flights, with but a few minor accidents, one of which occurred near Scranton, Pennsylvania, where his machine became disabled and he fell one thousand feet, lighting on top of a large wild cherry tree, which saved his life, as it acted as a buffer when he struck it.

Young Weeks is now advertising as a licensed pilot and will take passengers on aerial flights; also make biplanes to order. His latest machine is of the "tractor biplane" type. It is to be hoped that no accident may ever befall this young Wright county aerial navigator.





MR AND MRS E. S. CLEVELAND



# BIOGRAPHICAL

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## E. S. CLEVELAND.

E. S. Cleveland, former township clerk and justice of the peace, is practically a self-made man. While the conditions of his youth and early manhood were such as to call out his physical, mental and moral strength, he overcame the difficulties and now has the right to be called a leading citizen. Mr. Cleveland, a retired farmer of this county, is a native of Maine, having been born in Somerset county, January 18, 1849. His parents were both natives of Maine.

Benjamin Cleveland, father of E. S. Cleveland, was a farmer and lumberman during all of his residence in that New England state. Moving to Wisconsin in 1854, he purchased a farm in Green county, having made the journey with his little family as far as Freeport, Illinois, by rail. The rest of the journey to Wisconsin was made overland. Farming in Wisconsin until 1870, he then took up his residence in Iowa Falls, Iowa, on eighty acres of land which he purchased at twenty-eight dollars an acre. In 1890 he retired from active duties and subsequently lived with his son, the subject of this sketch, until his death, which occurred on May 7, 1904. His faithful wife, who had shared all his hardships as well as his joys, was before her marriage, Octavia Wentworth. She passed away on March 1, 1899. Of their nine children, five are still living, E. S. being the fourth in order of their birth.

After finishing his education in the common schools of Green county, Wisconsin, E. S. Cleveland taught school for three terms. But the hereditary leaning was toward agricultural activities, and in 1869 he became the owner of eighty acres of land in this county, which he purchased at two dollars and a half an acre. Moving here in 1877, he located in Dayton township, and after living on rented property for three years he moved to his own farm, built a substantial home and cultivated the land, to which he added other tracts until he had accumulated a farm of four hundred and forty acres in



Lake township, where he and his family lived until 1910. He then was able to drop the burden of active grinding toil, and moving to Clarion has lived the rest of his time in comparative ease. During his farming career he fed all of his grain to his hogs and cattle. Mr. Cleveland has varied his occupational pursuits by terms in public office, having been both township clerk of Lake township and justice of the peace.

On March 14, 1869, Adaline Adams became the wife of E. S. Cleveland. The daughter of G. W. and Sarah (Squires) Adams, she was born in Green county, Wisconsin, although her father was a native of Pennsylvania, and her mother of New York state. Mr. Adams was a successful farmer during all of his life. In 1867, selling out his holdings in Wisconsin, he moved to Kansas, but soon returned to Wisconsin, where he continued farming until 1898, moving then to this county, where he retired from active work and located in Goldfield. His death took place there in the fall of 1898, his wife having died ten years previous to that time. Of their ten children four are now living, one of whom is the wife of E. S. Cleveland.

Mr. Cleveland is recognized as one of the most progressive farmers of the county and is a prominent member of the Grangers Association. He is also a member of the Good Templars. In political matters he is an independent voter.

A large and interesting family blessed the life of Mr. and Mrs. Cleveland. One of their ten children passed away in infancy. The others are George, Charles S., Wilmer, Arthur, Walter, Allen, Evelyn, Harry and Ellen. George, who married Frances Fox, became the father of three children, Garth, Joe and Nina. Charles became the husband of Inez Crall, and to them were born four children, Ralph, Sydney, Ruth and Marjorie. Wilmer married Bertha Walker, and their only son is named Morris. Emma became the wife of Arthur Clapp, and two children, Winifred and Blanche were born. Walter married Mae Fletcher, and their three children are Myrtle, Edna and Russell. Allen became the husband of Laura Martena, and they are the parents of Marie, Ceverne, Benjamin, and Evelyn, who died in infancy. Harry, whose wife is Lucy Martena, is the father of three children, Viola, Elden and Harold. To Ellen Cleveland, who married Charles Kronk, one child, Edith Mary, was born.

Mr. Cleveland, in all of life's relationships, has measured up to the standard of excellence which he early set for himself. He can now look back upon a well-spent life, a life guided by the desire to be not only successful but useful, and such opportunities he has never neglected.



## CHARLES N. OVERBAUGH.

The name Overbaugh is one familiar to nearly all Hollanders. It was probably originally written "Overbach" and is said to mean "over the creek," or "the man across the creek." In eastern New York the name is met with very often. Sixty to seventy years ago Greene county, New York, contained as many or more people by the name Overbaugh than any other name. According to the best information obtainable the Overbaughs in this country had their origin from two brothers who settled on the Hudson river, in Greene county, New York, in the seventeenth century, probably 1665 or 1670. When Charles N. Overbaugh was a boy the descendants of these two brothers had diverged so widely that they did not recognize any immediate relationship. The following biography is written by John M. Overbaugh, a son of the subject of this sketch.

"Charles N. Overbaugh was born in Greene county, New York, on the 14th of May, 1820. The place where his parents lived and where he was born was at Kiskatom, at the foot of the Catskill mountains, and six miles from the city of Catskill. His father was John Overbaugh, and his mother Helen Manning. Charles N. was the fourth child in a family of nine children. The names in order of birth were about as follow: Jane, Sally, William, Charles, Elizabeth, John, Cornelia, Theodore and Charlotte. The father of this family was for several years before he died an invalid, his death occurring at the age of fifty years. The farm, if it was worthy of the name of farm, on which the family were born and reared consisted of thirty acres of land, at the foot of the Catskill mountains, and was as poor a tract of land as can be found in the state of New York, and that is saying a good deal. It was little more than a stone pile. It was fenced all round with stone taken from off the land and I have heard my father say that each time the land was plowed, large quantities of stone were hauled off, with but little appearance of diminution of the amount left. My readers who live in this land of fertility can imagine what is meant to rear a large family on such a farm as I have described.

"The family did not depend entirely upon the proceeds of the farm for their support. If they had they could not have lived. The mother was a tailoress and in addition to doing the work for her family, she made coats and vests, etc., for others and would frequently sit up till twelve o'clock at night, stitching and sewing on some garment for which she received a mere pittance, compared with what tailors receive at the present. The labor and



struggle of this noble woman are readily pathetic and I have often heard my father tell with husky voice and with tears in his eyes, of the heroic struggles of his mother to provide for her family, so they might have sufficient food and clothing. On the mountain sides there were many huckleberry bushes and, in the bearing season, I have heard father say his mother and all of the children who were old enough would spend the day gathering huckleberries and the next morning the mother would start off early with half a bushel of berries which she carried to Catskill, a distance of six miles, returning in the evening. As soon as the girls were old enough they went out to work and the boys worked at home until old enough to make a farm hand when they went out to work. I have heard my father say he and his brother, William, cut cord wood in the winter for some of the neighbors when it took both of them to cut a cord of wood in a day and for which they received the sum of thirty-seven and one-half cents. The house in which the family lived was small, poor and open, and the snow would drift in so that the beds in the loft or chamber would frequently be covered with snow in the morning.

"The mother, notwithstanding the fact that she sewed for others, made all the clothes for her numerous family in addition to doing her housework and knit long woolen stockings for her boys, so long as they remained at home. I have heard father say that after he went to work for himself he bought short socks and was chided by his mother for doing so, saying that as long as she provided for him he had good long stockings. When we consider that all this occurred before the invention of the sewing machine and had to be done all by hand, we can form some idea of the Herculean work of this noble woman.

"As I said before, the boys, as soon as they could make a hand, went out to work and I have heard him say he made a full hand in the hay field doing his share of mowing and pitching when he was sixteen years of age. When he was nineteen, he gave his father seventy dollars for his time and started out in the world for himself. His opportunities for receiving an education had been but meager, though I am of the opinion that he made good use of the advantages he had. He was brought up in the Reformed Dutch church, that being the leading church in that part of the country. When he was about twenty-one years of age he made up his mind to secure a better education and with that end in view, went out to Ohio and entered a small but excellent institution of learning called Grand River Institute, at Austinburg, in the Western Reserve. He remained there two years study-



ing in addition to the common branches, Latin, algebra, philosophy, chemistry, logic, and to a certain extent theology. He was of a religious turn of mind and had when he went west serious thoughts of entering the ministry. He was, however, in addition to being of a religious turn of mind, also of a philosophical and investigating turn of mind, and his reasoning and investigating so disturbed his former faith—the faith he had been taught in his boyhood days, that he gave up the idea of becoming a minister and directed his mind into other channels. At the end of two years in school at Austinburg, he went down to Guernsey county, Ohio. There he met and fell in love with Eliza J. Dwigans whom he married, after a courtship lasting one or two years, in the month of October, 1845. After his marriage he taught school for a short time when he conceived the design of studying law and commercial work in earnest. He read quite a number of books, such as lawyers used in those times, including Blackstone's "Commentaries," Kent, "Chilty on Pleadings," etc., and I have heard him say not many years before his death that the position of Blackstone on almost any question of common law which arose was fresh in his mind at that time. About this time his favorite brother, William, died which was a great shock to him. They were bound closely together, by the memories of common struggles and hardships endured in boyhood, by intimate association and by all of those ties of endearment which cluster around two brothers of nearly one age.

"The study of law did not continue for a very long time. Children soon began to arrive and with no means at hand for support, Mr. Overbaugh was compelled to go to work to provide for his family. He taught school at first for very low wages, but later he taught in Cadiz, Cambridge and other places where wages were better. During the time he taught in Ohio, and after he came to Iowa, he would each year raise a patch of broom corn and at night after having taught all day; make a half dozen brooms and on Saturday he would make two dozen. This was a great help to him and really furnished a living for himself and family.

"About 1850 he moved to the village of Birmingham, Guernsey county, Ohio, where he taught school and continued to make brooms. He remained there until 1853, when he moved to Knox county, Ohio, where his brother-in-law, Joseph Hill, resided. Here he took up the business of farming which he continued for two seasons and in the fall of 1854 moved to Iowa. Of this trip I remember a good deal, although but six years of age at the time. I remember when we were all loaded in our covered wagon, with old "Lydia" and "Dart" hitched proudly to it; of the tearful good-byes, of



the last embrace between my mother and her sister Mary, and finally of the reluctant start to the land of promise—our own beloved Iowa.

“We were about five weeks making the journey of seven hundred miles to Benton county, Iowa. The weather was generally nice on the trip—the roads were fair until we reached Indiana. There they would have been impassable for miles at a stretch had it not been for the corduroy roads which consisted of round logs laid side by side in the mud, and over which the wagon jolted with one continuous thud for hour after hour. We camped out nearly every night, sleeping in the wagons, and on the whole, we did not consider it a bad experience. We crossed the Mississippi river at Muscatine, on an old ferry-boat which we did not consider very safe. I remember this was on Saturday evening. We camped just at the edge of town at the farm of a Mr. Horton. At night our best mare “Lydia” was taken sick and though all was done that could be done at the time to save her, she died before morning. This was a sad loss to father and mother and I well remember the tears mother shed over the death of our favorite mare. Mother had an uncle Calahan Dwigans, living near Tipton, Cedar county. Father borrowed a saddle of Mr. Horton and rode the other mare up to Mr. Dwigans and there borrowed a horse to take us to his place, where we visited a week. While we were there mother’s brother, B. R. Dwigans and his wife came down there with a two-horse team to visit at Calahan Dwigans who was the father of B. R. Dwigan’s wife. When we were all ready to continue our journey we hitched three horses to our “Concord” covered wagon and hitched uncle’s wagon behind and so made the balance of the trip to Benton county. The first year spent in Iowa we lived with my uncle, B. R. Dwigans, in a small one-room log house with a loft or attic overhead in which we three children slept.

“In the spring of 1855 father planted a crop of corn on some land which he rented from a David Kirkpatrick, who had been in the county several years and had acquired a large amount of land and was considered the wealthiest man in the community. One would think Benton county was new enough for anyone at that time and so it was, but timber land was in great demand as this was before the enactment of the herd law, and the farm land had to be fenced to protect the crops. Timber accordingly was quite high in price and as father had but little money and desired to enter some government land and also some timber near to his prairie land, he therefore mounted old “Dart” and in June, 1855 started out to find such a place as suited his ideal and also one that would conform to the dimensions of his meager pocket-book. He went northwest and the first night he



was out camped in Fifteen Mile Grove, Tama county, with a couple of other men who were also looking for government land. They were going up to Ft. Dodge, the government land office then being located there. They persuaded father to go along with them. While at Ft. Dodge he accidentally met a man by the name of James L. Franks, who lived over on the Boone river in Wright county. He told him what a fine country there was over on the Boone, and as father had told him of his desire to enter some land and get some timber near by, he said he had come over to Ft. Dodge to enter an extra nice quarter section of land of which he had the numbers with him and if father wanted to go with him he would let him have the said tract of land and would also sell him some timber within one mile of the land, at ten dollars per acre. Father went with him, entered the tract of land, bought the timber and got back to Benton county about the first of July. It will be seen from the foregoing statements that father's locating in Wright county and on the Boone river, was owing to a couple of accidental circumstances. Had he not met those two men at Fifteen Mile Grove he might not have gone to Ft. Dodge at that particular time, at least, and had he not met the man Franks he would not have come to the Boone river or to Wright county.

"We remained in Benton county for three years after father entered his land in Wright county. During the summer of 1856 father built a house in Shellsburg, and the winter of 1856-57 he taught school at Shellsburg. This house was a small one-story affair, built of hewed logs and was situated about one-half mile east of the village. That winter was one of the most severe ones that has ever been known in the state of Iowa. The snow was very deep—about two and one-half feet on the level—and was drifted clear over the tops of high stake-and-rider fences. The next spring (spring of 1857) father sold his house in Shellsburg and bought forty acres of land one mile west of the town and farmed it during the summer. The next spring he sold the little farm and in the month of June, 1858, we started for Wright county. We came with two yoke of oxen hitched to a covered wagon. We camped out and slept in and under the wagon. The summer of 1858 was one of the wettest on record. There were no bridges over the sloughs or streams and our trip was one continuous wallow most of the way from Benton county to Wright. It was no uncommon experience to mire down two or three times—sometimes three and four times—a day and have to unload the wagon and carry the contents over the sloughs, pull the wagon out of the mud backwards and go over the slough empty at some other place. Finally, after about two



weeks we arrived safely at our destination. The last day of our travel we came to Eagle creek, on the road or track running from Wall lake to Goldfield, the creek was high and wide, and the question was how to cross it with the family. Father went into the creek and found he could just wade it. So the thought occurred to him to ferry the family across in a large wash tub. There were five of us children and the three eldest he took across one at a time in the tub, and the two youngest who were only about three and five years of age, he took across at one trip. When it came to mother he tied a small tub beside the larger one and she was taken across sitting in the big tub but resting part of her weight on her hands in the small tub. When the family were all safely over, he swam the oxen and wagon across and we proceeded on our way rejoicing.

"Well, we were finally in Wright county and on the Boone river at the place father had visited and bought his land three years before. The mosquitoes were a perfect fright and we suffered greatly from them night and day. There were no such things as screens in those days and we lived in a log shanty about a mile from our place; it was so open that one could throw a cat through it most any place. Father had to go into the timber, cut logs and haul them to the saw-mill and have the lumber sawed to build the house. Luckily, there was a good steam saw-mill within one-half mile of father's timber. He hired a man by the name of Alexander Usher to help him and they soon cut and hauled to the mill enough logs to build a small frame house. He hired two or three carpenters at one dollar and fifty cents a day and they soon had the house inclosed and the roof on and we moved in. The house was built in the most primitive way—the siding being nailed directly on the studding, without sheeting or paper between the siding—being sawed out of our native timber. It is easily seen that it would not make a very tight or close job. With the house in this condition we spent our first winter in Wright county. Luckily, the winter was an open one and we did not suffer greatly with the cold even though we had no means of heating the house but a cook stove and wood.

"That winter father taught the school in Goldfield, three miles away and my sister Mary, aged twelve, brother Will, aged eight and myself went to his school walking all the time, sometimes through quite a deep snow. We were not warmly clothed like children are at the present time. We had no overcoats and did not know of such a thing as underclothes, but we were young and tough and were as well clothed as the other children of the neighborhood and so we were contented. Father continued to teach school in the winter for quite a number of years and just as soon as he got some



land under cultivation he raised a patch of broom corn each year and in the winters made his quota of half a dozen brooms each night and two dozen on Saturdays. He also acted, at times, as neighborhood cobbler for which he took in a little money and on the whole got along pretty well for those times. He gave a good deal of attention to the business of cattle raising, and as there was an unlimited range as well as hay privileges, the only limit to the number of cattle one could keep was his capacity to put up hay for them. Cattle brought good prices, too, considering the cost of raising them—a three-year-old steer bringing from thirty to forty dollars. And so the years rolled on—the family was growing up—working on the farm in summer and going to the district school in the winter—thereby getting a fair education, as well as learning the essential lesson of industry. Mary and I began teaching when we were sixteen years of age and I taught each winter but one, for seventeen years.

“The fall of 1867 father was elected county treasurer. The county seat had then been located at Clarion and a court house was built. Father, in fulfilling his duties of the office, would walk to Clarion on Monday morning and back Saturday evenings—doing all the work of the office himself. He slept in the court room at night and was sometimes a little uneasy on account of the responsibility he was under as custodian and guardian of the public funds. There was then in the treasurer’s office an old safe which locked with a key and which would have been just a plaything for any safe-cracker who knew anything about his business at all. In this safe the funds of the county were kept. There was not at that time a bank in Wright county and he had to keep an account at one of the banks at Webster City, in order to float the drafts which he continually received in payments of taxes. Most of the land was then owned by non-residents and most all of the taxes were paid in drafts. After leaving the treasurer’s office, which he did in 1870, he built a new house on his farm and settled down to enjoy the comforts of a good home and the peaceful employment of agriculture and stock raising. The eldest daughter, Mary, was now married, the two eldest boys were gone for themselves and only the two youngest boys Lon and Ed remained at home to assist father with his farm work.

“About this time a lyceum or debating club was organized at Goldfield, in which father took a prominent part. That society continued to exist for a good many years, through the winter seasons and there were no questions of politics, finance, ethics or religion that was too big for them to tackle. These were ably debated, too. Some of the ablest discussions to which I have ever listened were held by that debating club. Among those who were



prominent in the society were C. N. Overbaugh, S. M. Huyck, John Hanna, George W. Hanna, Dr. A. B. Brackett and J. W. Parmalee, while among the lesser lights were J. M. Overbaugh, M. Hoover, George Melrose and a few others. I wish here and now to bear testimony to the great benefits of the old-fashioned debating clubs. I do not know of anything that has started so many young men on the road to effective public speaking and shown them the powers that were within them. A good many of those who took part in that lyceum are now in their graves, but those who survive, as well as large numbers of citizens of those times, both old and young, remember the good times they had at the lyceum in that old school house in Goldfield and speak of them with pleasure to this day.

"In his early manhood, Mr. Overbaugh affiliated with the Democratic party. He voted for Franklin Pierce for President, which he regretted later on account of Pierce's disposition to truckle to the institution of slavery. He became a Republican with the organization of that party and voted for Fremont in 1856, and he voted for every nominee of that party for President as long as he lived. But while he was a Republican he was a very independent one and did his own thinking and frequently disagreed with the policies and acts of the Republican party.

"In his religious opinions he was very independent. He refused to be governed or restricted by dogmas or any so-called authority which did not appeal to his reason and his own best judgment. He was an extensive reader; was well informed in the matter of religious history; was a good thinker; a close and exact reasoner and was always ready and able to give a reason for the faith within him.

"Few men were his equal in the discussion of religious questions. Being of an argumentative turn of mind, and also thoroughly posted in the field of religious thought and religious literature, he was no mean antagonist. He was, however, a man of a broadly religious nature. He believed fully in the great and noble doctrine of doing good and no man in the community was more ready than he to give of his means or his time, to minister to the wants of the needy or distressed. When the grasshoppers devoured the whole crop of the people of northwestern Iowa and when the drouth and heat burned up the crop of South Dakota and Kansas, he was the first man in the community to make a move to raise means for their relief. He was a man of great integrity of character, strictly honest and honorable in all his dealings as well as in his thoughts and purposes. He never contended or stood for anything in which he did not fully believe, nor take or hold to any position just for the sake of argument. In July, 1889, his third son,



Alonzo, died, and the next spring his daughter, Hattie, wife of Ed Hartsock, also went to her grave, and from this time on he seemed, in a measure, to lose his interest in business and also to some extent his hold on life. He soon after had a slight stroke of paralysis, from which he soon recovered. In the fall of 1892, he sold the old farm where so much of his life had been spent and which had been his joy and pride, to D. D. Wood, who had come out from Illinois on a visit to his brother-in-law, a Mr. Green, who resided west of Goldfield. He got forty dollars per acre for the farm of two hundred and eighty acres and this was the top price any farm on the Boone river had brought up to that time.

"The next spring (1893) he moved with his wife to Clarion and built a house during the summer. His health was poor during the time he was building and he also missed and mourned for his old home and farm. He was not contented in town and did not see much comfort after leaving the farm. He got his house finished and moved in but lived only five weeks afterward—dying on the 9th of November, 1893. His remains were buried in the beautiful cemetery at Goldfield in the lot where his son, Alonzo, had been laid. The Rev. Mr. Findlay of the United Presbyterian church gave a short discourse at the grave and Hon. J. E. Rowen paid a beautiful tribute to his life and character.

"In conclusion I will say that I regard C. N. Overbaugh, my dear father, as one of the best, noblest and truest men I ever knew. His influence was potent for good in his family and in the community, and I am glad to have derived my origin from such a good, true and able man."

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#### HON. E. A. HOWLAND.

This biography relates to one of the pioneers who laid well the foundation stones of the government in Wright county and the state of Iowa, as well. E. A. Howland was born in Watertown, New York, in 1832. This family traces back to John Howland who came to America on the "Mayflower." He was reared to farm labor on his father's farm, receiving his education at the common schools. In 1855 he went to Joliet, Illinois, and in April, 1856, to Ft. Dodge, Iowa. On reaching Iowa Falls on his journey, the stages were unable to go through and Mr. Howland and others started on foot, but finding the streams badly swollen only Mr. Howland and George Crosby went through. He did not locate at Ft. Dodge, however, but



returned to Webster City, where he purchased an interest in the old Willson House, later the Hamilton House.

In January, 1858, E. A. Howland was married to a lady of Ohio. They then went to Ft. Dodge, and conducted the old St. Charles hotel. In the spring of 1859 he turned his attention to farming and stock raising at Otisville, Wright county. Here he made a specialty of dairying and his products became widely known for the excellence of their quality. He bought a farm containing three hundred acres, was very successful as a farmer and drifted into the real-estate business.

Mrs. Howland died in 1870 and the following December E. A. Howland married S. Lou Myatt, of Ohio. In the fall of 1871 he was elected to a seat in the Iowa Legislature, being senator from the Forty-ninth senatorial district, serving through two sessions of the General Assembly. In October, 1873, Mr. Howland sold his farm and removed to Belmond and engaged in merchandising, following that until December, 1882, when he engaged in the hotel business at the new town of Eagle Grove, operating the Caldwell House, commencing in August, 1884. Senator Howland was a Republican and in church connections a Congregationalist.

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#### HON. SUMNER BARSTOW HEWETT.

The name which introduces this sketch is familiar to all citizens of Wright county. Sumner Barstow Hewett was born on June 22, 1833, at Northbridge, Massachusetts, son of S. B. Hewett, Sr. The father and son were among the first settlers in what is now Eagle Grove township, and in their log cabin the county was organized. His brother-in-law, N. B. Paine, came in at the same date and is mentioned in a biography in this work. The old Hewett farm was known throughout northwestern Iowa at an early date. It contained six hundred acres and was well improved. It was stocked with Shorthorn and Jersey cattle.

S. B. Hewett was appointed county judge in 1861, hence always went by the name of Judge Hewett, and was elected as county judge in October, following his appointment. In 1862 he was appointed revenue collector for the sixth district of Iowa, and held the office until he was turned out by President Andrew Johnson. He served as engrossing clerk in the state Senate in the session of 1862-63, and was also assistant secretary in the Senate. In 1871 he was elected as a member to the General Assembly,



where he did excellent service, being chairman of numerous committees. He was also one of the directors of the Iowa State Fair. He was a shrewd party worker and held many public offices to his credit and for the upbuilding of the state.

Mr. Hewett was made a Mason in 1862. Much of the credit for locating Eagle Grove city is due to his untiring energy and influence with officers of the Chicago & Northwestern Railroad Company. The place was finally platted about one mile from his pioneer farm home. He worked for the town's uplift and spent much money in building and beautifying the place and its environments. For all this Judge Hewett was finally amply rewarded, financially. After making a fortune he and his good wife, Abbie (Parker) Hewett, removed to California, where he enjoyed the land of sunshine and fruit until called by death, June 12, 1906. Perhaps the best public work he ever accomplished in Iowa was his zealous efforts in trying to secure railroads through the Northwest. He was one of the first men to suggest the construction of the Iowa & Pacific railway, now a part of the Chicago Great Western system. Judge Hewett was not without his enemies, but all men who accomplish anything in life have enemies as well as friends. He was a man of fine appearance, a true gentleman and had many virtues worthy of emulation.

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### HON. JOHN E. ROWEN.

The following sketch of the life of John E. Rowen, a distinguished citizen of Wright county, was written by J. M. Overbaugh, of Goldfield, Iowa, who made one of the two addresses at his funeral at Rowen, where he died on May 1, 1914, aged seventy-seven years:

John E. Rowen was born on the 26th of July, 1837, at the town of Thompsonville, Connecticut. He came of good old Irish stock, his parents having emigrated from Ireland and settled in Thompsonville a short time before the boy, J. E. Rowen, was born. His father, Robert Rowen, and his mother, Elizabeth, were substantial, industrious people, and during their lives raised quite a numerous family and also accumulated quite a nice fortune.

They came to Wright county, Iowa, in an early day and remained here during the rest of their lives. They remained in Thompsonville, Connecticut, however, until John E. Rowen was fifteen years old. During the childhood of John he had had but little schooling, attending the public school for



only about two years up to the time he was fifteen, so his education was almost all acquired by his own efforts outside of school. At the age of nine years he commenced to work in the woolen and carpet-mills and continued to so work until he came to Iowa with his parents in 1852, and settled in Cedar county, about four miles from Tipton, at Red Oak Grove.

Here he worked on a farm to help support the family. His parents were poor, bringing with them to Cedar county only fifty dollars in money. When a child he had a great thirst for reading and read everything within his reach, including Neal's "History of the Puritans," Shakespeare, Allison's "General History of Europe," "History of the Indian," "New England Wars," etc. Before he was twelve years old he had read the histories of Assyria, Babylonia, Persia, Greece, Egypt, Rome and Carthage. He also read "History of the Crusaders" and works on natural history. This same penchant for reading continued all through his life. He made himself familiar with the great works of fiction, including Dickens, Thackeray, George Elliot, Charles Lever and many others, but for the 'trashy and superficial class of fiction he had no use. The writer heard Mr. Rowen deliver a lecture many years ago on the subject of literature, in which he showed a fine judgment and discrimination.

Mr. Rowen always had a religious cast of mind, commencing with the little prayers at his mother's knee. He was converted at a camp meeting in Benton county, Iowa, when he was twenty-one years old, and united with the United Brethren church at Belmond almost immediately afterward. He was licensed to preach at Iowa Falls and given work in Butler and Franklin counties. During the early part of his ministry he was known as the "Boy Preacher." For fourteen years he labored in the ministry with success—holding many important revivals, in which about one thousand two hundred people were converted. During this time he organized and started twelve churches, several of which are still in a flourishing condition. In trend of thought Mr. Rowen's mind was liberal and tolerant of the opinions and views of others. He was at one time owner and editor of the *Belmond Herald*, in which field he was quite successful—doubling the circulation and largely increasing the advertising patronage in a short time. It was, perhaps, in the field of fire insurance where he made his greatest success in a business way.

For twenty-two years Mr. Rowen was agent for the Hawkeye Insurance Company, and during that time he did business for that company to the extent of a quarter of a million dollars, and in all of this time there was no friction between him and the company, nor was his integrity called



in question. Mr. Rowen served four years as state Senator from the Wright, Hamilton and Hardin county district, during which time in one session of the Legislature he succeeded in getting nine bills enacted into laws, being surpassed in number by only one senator. He has also served fourteen years as United States consul—ten years at the Falkland Islands and nearly four years at Punta Arenas, Chile. As consul, Mr. Rowen attained eminent success, giving perfect satisfaction to the people among whom he labored, as well as to the government which he served.

When Mr. Rowen finally gave up his position at Punta Arenas on account of old age, and that he might spend his declining years in quiet and retirement, he received a letter from the state department expressing the fullest satisfaction with his entire work and greatly regretting that he felt compelled to give up the position. Everyone who was acquainted with John E. Rowen knew of his great liberality, his unbounded hospitality and his readiness to help the needy and distressed. His home was always open to anyone in want and many are those who have been fed and cheered on their way in his hospitable home. He bore in mind the saying of Jesus, "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, ye did it unto Me."

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#### HON. WILLIAM C. SMITH.

The history of this county would not be complete without a record of the life and work of the Hon. William C. Smith. His ability as an agricultural expert has added to the material wealth of the locality and his generous benefactions have been a power for good. In private citizenship, it is comparatively easy to live upright and honorable, but the real test comes when a man is placed in such a position that by making concession to principle he will gain in power or in financial resources. When Mr. Smith became a state senator he stood this test. Elected by the people, he served the people, remaining true to the same principles that had actuated his conduct as a private citizen. William C. Smith, banker, and retired farmer of Eagle Grove, was born in Roxbury, Delaware county, New York, on December 22, 1842, his parents being Robert and Jeannette (Lyle) Smith, both of Forres, Scotland. Mr. Smith's grandfather was Alexander Smith, whose wife was a Miss Calum, and their entire lives were devoted to farming in their native country, Scotland. Their children were John, James, Robert, Christiana and Jesse. Robert Smith, a Scotch farmer also, was born in



1796, and after his marriage came to America, in 1836, traveling in a sailing vessel called the "Crockston Castle," it requiring six weeks to complete the then hazardous journey. Attracted by the scenery and rich soil of Roxbury, New York, he and his good wife located there, where he continued farming until his death, in 1867. His wife died in 1884. W. C. Smith is the fifth of a family of eight children, the others being Alexander, David L. (deceased), Mary, John R., Robert S., Thomas and Jenette. W. C. Smith and his brother, John R., are the only members of the family living in this county. Alexander lives in Jasper county, this state, and is eighty-five years old.

W. C. Smith was educated in the Roxbury Academy and the Delphi Academy, where he was a classmate of Jay Gould, the famous railroad magnate, and of John Burroughs, the New England naturalist and author, and also of Margaret Walker, who afterwards became the wife of George Westinghouse, the great inventor and manufacturer. In spite of his academic training, Mr. Smith retained his love for the freedom and independence of country life, and at the close of his school days he returned to the cultivation of the soil near Roxbury. In 1869, surrendering to the adventurous spirit which attracted so many to the West, he rented a farm north of Des Moines, Iowa, and lived there for a short time, when he tried making his home in Jasper county. This he soon gave up to become a cattle herder in Wright county, Iowa, his work taking him from one end of the county to the other as well as to the larger portion of northwestern Iowa. For twenty years he bought and sold cattle and herded cattle on the land which Eagle Grove now occupies. In this connection it is interesting to note that the man who is the owner of five thousand six hundred and forty acres of land, received during the first session of his work in Iowa the munificent salary of twenty dollars a month. Having to begin with little more of this world's goods than brawn and brain, he was content to convert this into wealth by his own hard work.

As soon as Mr. Smith was able he began to acquire land, which, while inexpensive then, later become valuable. In 1880 he bought three hundred and twenty acres of farm land in this county at six dollars and twenty-five cents per acre, which now is worth two hundred dollars, and immediately converted wild prairie into fields yielding rich harvest. It was not long before, by reason of his extensive improvements and his success in agriculture and stock raising, Mr. Smith's farm was considered one of the finest in the county. He later added two hundred acres to his holdings and began



to acquire property in other states. He now has three hundred and twenty acres in the state of Minnesota, sixteen hundred acres in North Dakota, and three thousand two hundred acres in Canada. So successful had Mr. Smith become that by 1892 he was able to retire, and he then moved to Eagle Grove, where he soon became prominent in its financial enterprises. For fourteen years he was president of the State Bank of Eagle Grove. In 1902 he sold this interest in the bank and gave his entire time to land speculation.

It was while he was state senator that Mr. Smith endeared himself to his constituents, and justified by his conduct in office their faith in him. It was here that he showed those traits of character which proved him to be truly loyal to the best interests of the common people. He sought always to encourage by his vote, and otherwise, those measures which stood for the good of the people, as distinguished from the good of what is now known as "the interests." In no way can a man better show his patriotism than in this.

The marriage of W. S. Smith and Dora Fisher was solemnized on December 24, 1890. Mrs. Smith is the daughter of Albert and Catherine (Crowne) Fisher, formerly of Eagle Grove. Mr. Fisher is living now in Montana, his wife having passed away. Mrs. Smith is a sister of Lon Fisher, a prominent citizen of Eagle Grove, whose biography is presented elsewhere in this volume. Mr. Fisher is manager of the Farmers Elevator Company, and is also manager of three other elevators in this county. He is well and favorably known in local business circles. The home life of Mr. and Mrs. Smith has been ideal, and the latter has been a wife well fitted for the public career of her husband. They have been the parents of three children, William, Leslie and Russell. The eldest son, William, died when sixteen years old; Leslie died in infancy; Russell is the only one living, and is attending Ames College.

Notwithstanding his very active career, Mr. Smith has never neglected his religious life, and for many years, both he and his estimable wife have been helpful in their church membership. The former is a trustee and the latter is a steward of the Methodist Episcopal church, and to its work they have made frequent and large contributions. Mr. Smith has always been affiliated with the Republican party, to which he has given both financial and moral support.

Mr. Smith is one of the citizens of Eagle Grove who can always be depended upon to give time, energy and means for the betterment of the



financial and moral conditions of the county, and thus is he loyal in the truest sense of that term. As a man he has the courage of his convictions, and broad-minded and tolerant in his views. His wholesome private life, as well as his honest administration of his public duties, is a fine example of what can be done by the American boy possessing common sense, ambition, intellectual capacity, and a heart beating with humanitarian impulses.

Mr. Smith is related to the late Donald Day Smith (Lord Strathcona), who was one of the most prominent men of Canada, was high commissioner and one of the wealthiest men of Canada.

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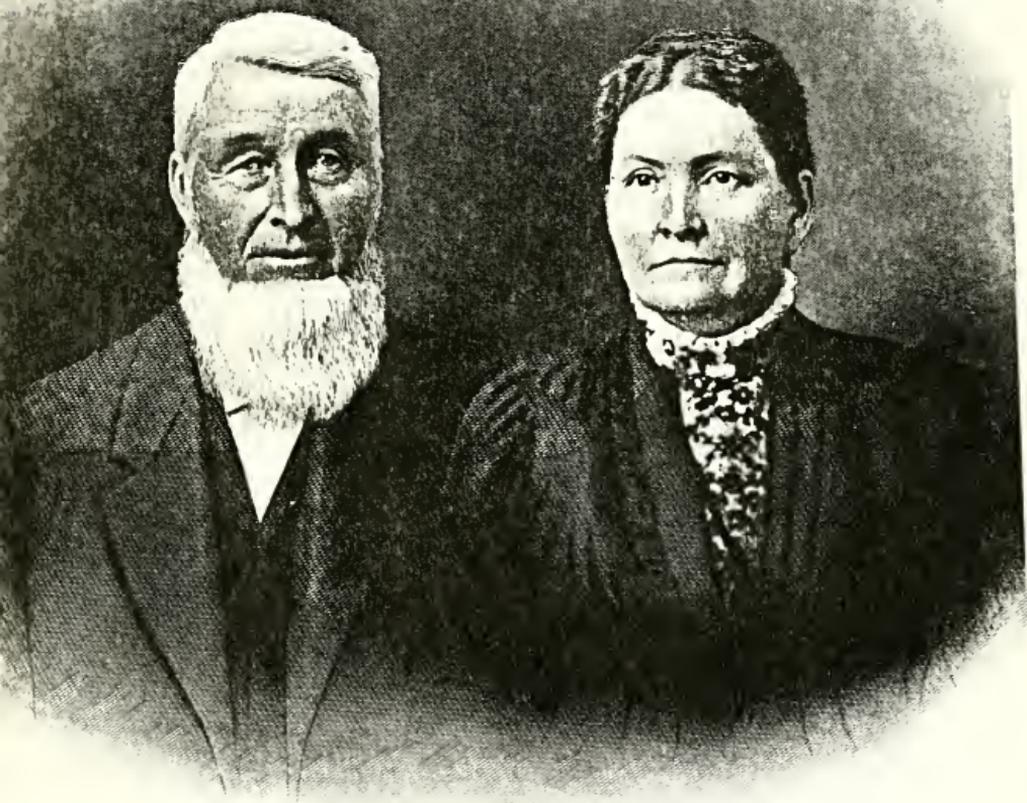
### EDWIN BALLOU.

It is well to hold in grateful remembrance those sturdy ones of other years who sowed and planted and builded for future generations, for upon their work and sacrifice has modern civilization grown. One of this goodly company who helped convert the waste places of this country into beauty and usefulness is Edwin Ballou, a man of great force of character and far-sighted patriotism. Edwin Ballou was born on February 10, 1832, in Portage county, Ohio. He is the son of Barnabas and Rachel (Bowen) Ballou.

The parents of Mr. Ballou were natives of New Hampshire, having moved from there to Ohio. The Ballous, who are of French descent, belong to a very old and famous family in the United States. President Garfield's mother was a Ballou, and a direct descendant of Edwin Ballou's ancestry. Barnabas Ballou, who was a farmer, was the father of eight children, namely: Nathan, Silas, Mrs. Lavina Clark, William, Nathaniel, Mrs. Sarah Tibbits; Edwin, the subject of this sketch; and Andrew, who died while in the army.

At the time of his childhood Edwin Ballou was able to acquire only a meager education in the common schools. From his seventh until his twenty-first year he lived with his family in McComb county, Michigan, but his father died when the lad was only thirteen years of age. From that time until he reached his majority he worked in the lumber woods in Michigan. In 1853 he migrated to Cedar county, Iowa, traveling as far as Chicago by rail, and from there he drove to Iowa with his brother, Silas. He had made a previous trip to Chicago before any railroad was there. After spending two years in Cedar county he settled in Wright county, to which





MR. AND MRS. EDWIN BALLOU



he was driven by a team of oxen, on May 10, 1855. Here he purchased one hundred and sixty acres of land in sections 28 and 33, of Iowa township, for which he paid one dollar and twenty-five cents an acre. He received the deed for this land from President Pierce.

An interesting side-light on the financial condition of the country at that time is shown by a circumstance connected with the purchase of this land. He was required to pay for it in gold and as he had only paper currency he had to pay a premium of two per cent. on the purchase price in order to get the gold. In those days even the merchants discounted paper money. It was necessary for him to go to Des Moines, Iowa, to get the deed for his property, the nearest postoffice being at that time at Eldora, a distance of forty miles. About two years later an office was built at Allen, which was twenty miles away, and two years after that the government established an office in the grove located about one-half mile southwest of the present site of Rowan, and this office was called Fryberg. As the government would not have the mail sent there, the people had to meet the expense of the carrier out of their own pockets. Only six families at first received their mail there. Fryberg continued to be the postoffice until the railroad was built and the office was moved to Rowan.

Mr. Ballou placed improvements upon his lands immediately after its purchase. He cut logs from the banks of the Iowa river with which to build his one-room log cabin the dimensions of which were sixteen by eighteen feet, the chimney made of mud and sticks being one of its distinctive features. He and his family arrived in the county on May 10, 1855, but it was the 4th of July of the same year when they moved into their new pioneer home. Many modern improvements were placed on the farm which he increased until he at one time owned over one section of land. He has disposed of all this with the exception of four hundred and forty acres which includes the one hundred and sixty acres that he purchased from the government sixty years ago, which has never changed hands. In 1893, Mr. Ballou retired from active farm work and moved with his family to Rowan, where he has continued to live. His farm is rented at present.

In 1853 Edwin Ballou was united in marriage to Emily Kent, the ceremony taking place in Cedar county, Iowa. Mrs. Ballou was a native of Butler county, Ohio, and a sister of John and William Kent, whose histories appear elsewhere in this publication. To this union ten children were born, namely: George, Ovel, Viola, Carrie, Nathan, Emily, Edwin, Laura, Flora and Frank. George married Susan Brown, and their home was in Iowa



township. His wife passed away, leaving two children, Nellie and Raymond, of whom Nellie married William Stout and became the mother of three children, Darrell, Velma and James. Ovel became the husband of Ester J. Lynk, who is the Rowan agent of the Rock Island railroad. He was the first agent of Rowan, and with the exception of about five years, when he owned and operated a hardware store, has continued as such ever since. He and his wife are the parents of three children, LeRoy, Glenn and Lavonne, of whom the first-named is married, and lives in California. Viola, the third child of Mr. and Mrs. Ballou, is Mrs. Franklin N. Tibbitts, of Gault. They have no living children. Carrie married Edwin J. Lynk, to which union were born two children, Anna and Ester. Carrie subsequently became the wife of Charles Wright, now deceased, by whom she became the mother of a daughter, Mamie. The two daughters by the first marriage are married, Anna being the wife of Herbert Aldrich, and the mother of three children, and Ester being Mrs. Orval L. Sanders and the mother of two children, Clyde and Florence Anna. Nathan married Mrs. Mary (Tibbets) McClintock, and lives in Rowan. They are parents of three children, Otho, Emily R., and Clifford M., of whom Emily R. married Claude Chipman. Emily became Mrs. Frank Utter, and her death occurred in 1896, leaving a son, Ralph. Edwin, Jr., married Nellie Barnes and resides in Belmont, their only son being named Kenneth. Laura, who lives in California, is Mrs. Wallace Hunt. Flora and Frank Ballou both died in infancy.

Mr. Ballou was married, secondly, on February 22, 1888, to Mrs. Hattie (Gildersleeve) Hoag, widow of Benjamin D. Hoag. The ceremony took place in Gault, Wright county. Mrs. Ballou was born on May 22, 1853, in Macedon, Wayne county, New York, and is the daughter of John and Catherine (DeLong) Gildersleeve, natives of Washington, Dutchess county, New York. They moved to Wayne county in 1840. It is believed that the Gildersleeves are of English descent but there is no definite information on this point other than that Thomas Gildersleeve, the first member of the family of whom there is any record, was born about the year 1700. John Gildersleeve was the son of Philip Gildersleeve, whose father was Benjamin Gildersleeve, of Long Island. It is possible that the last named is the son of Thomas Gildersleeve. The DeLongs are of French descent. The second Mrs. Ballou is the mother of a daughter, Eva Lavina, who was born on June 29, 1890, and was married on October 7, 1908, to Carl Hadley, while traveling in California with her mother and father. Mrs. Hadley died on March 19, 1910.

Since 1901, Mr. and Mrs. Ballou have spent most of their winters in



Pacific Grove on Monterey bay, California. They have spent altogether ten winters in that delightful place, occupying their own beautiful cottage, where Mr. Ballou intends to spend the remaining winters of his life.

Mr. Ballou was at one time a member of the Odd Fellow lodge of Belmond, but has discontinued his membership. He was a Republican until about the year 1900, when he became interested in the cause of Prohibition. Abraham Lincoln was the first President for whom Mr. Ballou voted, although he cast his first vote for Gen. Winfield Scott who ran in opposition to Franklin Pierce. Mr. and Mrs. Ballou are stanch members of the Methodist Episcopal church, the former having been a charter member of the first congregation, to whom a circuit rider preached, this preacher covering a territory extending from Upper Grove to Cedar Falls, Iowa. The first church was built in 1890, Mr. Ballou being elected a trustee and continuing to act in that capacity until about 1910. He resigned, giving as his reason his frequent absence from home.

Mr. Ballou has had the honor of filling all of the township offices and was associated with the initial organization of the township government. It has been his pleasure to watch the growth of Wright county from a barren prairie to a land of plenty, and in this development he has had no small share. Mr. Ballou is a peace-loving man, and has dwelt for many years in harmony with his many friends and neighbors whose good will and respect he has retained.

Mr. Ballou is the type of man whose active mind and energetic life could inspire a much longer biography than the present one. His strength of character has set a high standard. His effort through life has been to observe the golden rule, and his motto has always been, "With malice toward none and charity for all."

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#### AARON YEAROUS.

Aaron Yearous, the pioneer attorney of this county, a former mayor, city attorney and councilman of Eagle Grove and its veteran justice of the peace, has spent many years in the service of the county. Fortunate in having the educational opportunities to prepare himself for a life of more than ordinary usefulness, he early learned that "knowledge is power," and, therefore, set himself to work to acquire it. His later years, which have been full of conspicuous achievement both in private legal practice and in public life, have proven his early wisdom and have rewarded him for the



labor then expended in faith. "A stalwart" might be a fitting title to apply to such a gentleman as the one whose life history in brief follows. Mr. Yearous is a native of Jefferson township, Knox county, Ohio, having been born there on January 10, 1852.

Charles Yearous, father of the subject of this sketch, was a child of only two years when he was brought to this country by his German parents, who made their first home in Knox county, Ohio. The grandfather of Aaron Yearous started his farming career on property consisting of one hundred acres purchased from the government through a land warrant. In 1864 he left this farm to become a weaver in Clayton county, Iowa, a trade which he had followed in Germany. There he died, and his son, Charles Yearous, grew to manhood on the farm. A few years after his marriage, he took up his residence in Clayton county, living there from 1854 until his death, in 1903. His original eighty acres were subsequently increased to three hundred and sixty acres. The devoted wife of this sturdy pioneer, formerly Catherine Peters, still lives on the Clayton county farm. In all of the hardships of early country life, she was an able second to her husband. One of the exciting adventures associated with their early travels was the crossing of the Mississippi river at Dubuque, this incident being fraught with real danger. Their first Clayton county home consisted of a quaint old log cabin of one room. Like all historical events, the life of this period may be more picturesque as a memory than it was in reality. To this worthy couple were born nine children, Aaron being the only one now living in this county.

Mr. Yearous, though brought up amidst the hardships incident to pioneer existence, not only survived them all, but used them as stepping stones to a worthy career. He received his early education in Clayton county, attending high school in Fayette county, where he was graduated in 1874. He then attended the Iowa University, at Iowa City, being a member of the graduates of the law class of 1878, and immediately began the practice of law. In June, 1879, he located at Holdridge, Nebraska, also teaching and farming for a period of two years. He then removed to Eagle Grove, at a time when the town was just beginning to be built up on the east side. He and J. C. Moats formed a legal partnership, which lasted for one year. As law cases were at that time comparatively few and uncertain, it was necessary to acquire more income than could be obtained solely in the profession, and during the winter months Mr. Yearous added to his income by teaching school.

Besides being one of the city's most reliable legal practitioners as well



as its pioneer attorney, Mr. Yearous has been honored with public office, having filled his functions so creditably as to justify his fellow citizens in retaining him for many years. He was the city's mayor in the years 1907-8 and was for ten years a councilman. For two years he was the city attorney. He has the honor of having held the office of justice of the peace for a longer period of time than any man in the county, this being for twenty-four years.

Aaron Yearous and Elizabeth Shepard, daughter of John and Elizabeth (Hanks) Shepard, were united in the holy bond of matrimony on February 15, 1882, and to them have been born five children, Roscoe, Milo, Esther, Glynn and Howard. Roscoe and his wife, Ethel Hull, are the parents of three children, Hazel, Gladys and Lester. Esther became the wife of Ralph Walster; no children have been born to this union.

Mr. Yearous has been financier of the Ancient Order of United Workmen for eleven years. Politics has played an important part in the life of Mr. Yearous. It furnished a congenial field for the exercise of his mental faculties and was of sufficient interest to engage those elements of the fighter which predominate in the makeup of every attorney. The political fortunes of the Republican party in this part of the state owe much to the labors of Mr. Yearous, whose faith in the old party has never been shaken by modern unrest and who still regards himself as a "standpatter."

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### GEORGE W. YOUNG.

For the edification of all who may peruse this brief record of the life of George W. Young, be it said, justly, that his life has been one of unselfish interest for the betterment of his community, and of incessant application to the great principles of life. The earnest endeavor to acquire an honorable competency and to discharge, conscientiously, all duties assigned him, has resulted in the unprejudiced approval and unmistakable admiration of his fellow men.

George W. Young was born on October 27, 1864, and is the son of Duane and Mary Ann (Chadwick) Young, both natives of the state of New York. His birth occurred in Hardin county, Iowa, where his early education was received. Duane Young was born on February 18, 1832, in Johnson county, New York, and was the son of Richard and Maria (Smicer) Young. Duane Young attended common school until eleven years of age,



and at that time began work in the woolen-mills of his native town, where he was taught the trade of dyer. Remaining at that vocation until twenty years of age, he then became enthused with the stories of wealth to be had for the mere finding in California soil and in 1852 removed to that state, where he labored as a miner for three years. He then returned to New York by the way of Panama. After spending one year in his native state, he removed to Iowa, and engaged in the merchandise business, during the year of 1856. Transportation service was very poor and he was compelled to convey his entire stock of goods overland from Iowa City, a distance of more than one hundred miles, until such time as the Illinois Central railroad was constructed as far as Cedar Falls, Iowa. That city then became his nearest trading and shipping point until 1867. Duane Young was one of the earliest settlers on the Boone and Iowa rivers, and his patronage was drawn from twenty-five square miles of surrounding country. During his residence in Alden, Iowa, he was engaged in the grain industry and banking, opening a private bank in 1881 known as the Bank of Clarion, with which institution he was connected until within a few years of his death.

In 1857 Duane Young was united in marriage to Mary Ann Chadwick, of Utica, New York, and they became the parents of seven children, as follow: Charles D., George W., William F.; Mabel, wife of E. A. Alexander; Maud, who married J. L. Fellows; and Maynard and Clarence, who died in infancy. Mary Ann (Chadwick) Young passed away in 1889, and five years later Duane Young married Mrs. Jenny Parker, of Pasadena, California, to whom he was united in marriage in 1894. Mr. Young's death occurred on August 23, 1906.

George W. Young is indebted to the schools of Alden, Iowa, for his earliest training, having graduated from the high school at that place. He then became a student in Ames College, at Ames, Iowa, to which institution he took a two-year course. At the completion of his college career, he was fully equipped to enter the commercial world, and he engaged in the general merchandise business in Clarion, Iowa, where he made his location permanent. His brother, William F. Young, became his partner in this enterprise and together they conducted the business for a period of fifteen years. Business relations between the two were brought to a termination when George W. Young purchased the interest of his brother and continued the business alone, until November 1, 1907, at which time the stock of goods was sold and he accepted the office as president of the Bank of Clarion, being the oldest bank in the town. The last statement shows its total resources as \$390,000.



In 1890 George W. Young was united in marriage to Elma Yarnell, daughter of David Yarnell. To this union five children have been born: June, Margaret, Mabel, George W. and Duane. June Young was married to Doctor Christianson, of Eagle Grove, Iowa. Margaret, Mabel, George W. and Duane are at home.

George W. Young is a member of the Masonic order and is now worshipful master of his lodge. Politically, he is a staunch Republican and vitally interested in all matters pertaining to the party. His high efficiency in all matters concerning commercial or civil endeavor has won for him the respect and esteem of an admiring public, and the secret of his large patronage is revealed in his ability to make and retain friendships and in his affability of manner and willingness to lend assistance to all enterprises worthy of his aid.

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### JOHN WASEM.

This is an account of one of Wright county's well-known early-day citizen pioneers. He and his father settled in Eagle Grove township in 1856, the son locating in section 29. The father, Adam Wasem, was born in Hesse-Darmstadt, Germany, in 1800. He was a man of much note in the Fatherland. He was an officer in his home town during the revolution of 1848. John Wasem also took part in the revolution, but not liking the trend of matters in Germany he embarked for America and landed in New York city in the spring of 1850. In 1856 the remainder of the family arrived in America, and soon found their way west and located as above mentioned.

John Wasem was born on March 5, 1829, and was reared to the cultivation of grapes. He was married, in New York, to Anna Cass, a native of Philadelphia, by whom twelve children were born. Mr. Wasem had three hundred acres of choice land in this county in 1889, and was one of the best stock farmers in the county many years ago. His farm was commonly styled "Mineral Spring Farm," owing to numerous fine springs on the tract. He served this county as member of the board of supervisors from 1884 to 1889; was a director in the First National Bank at Eagle Grove; also president of the Eagle Grove District Agricultural Society. Mr. Wasem was a Republican. He died in 1906, respected by all who knew him.



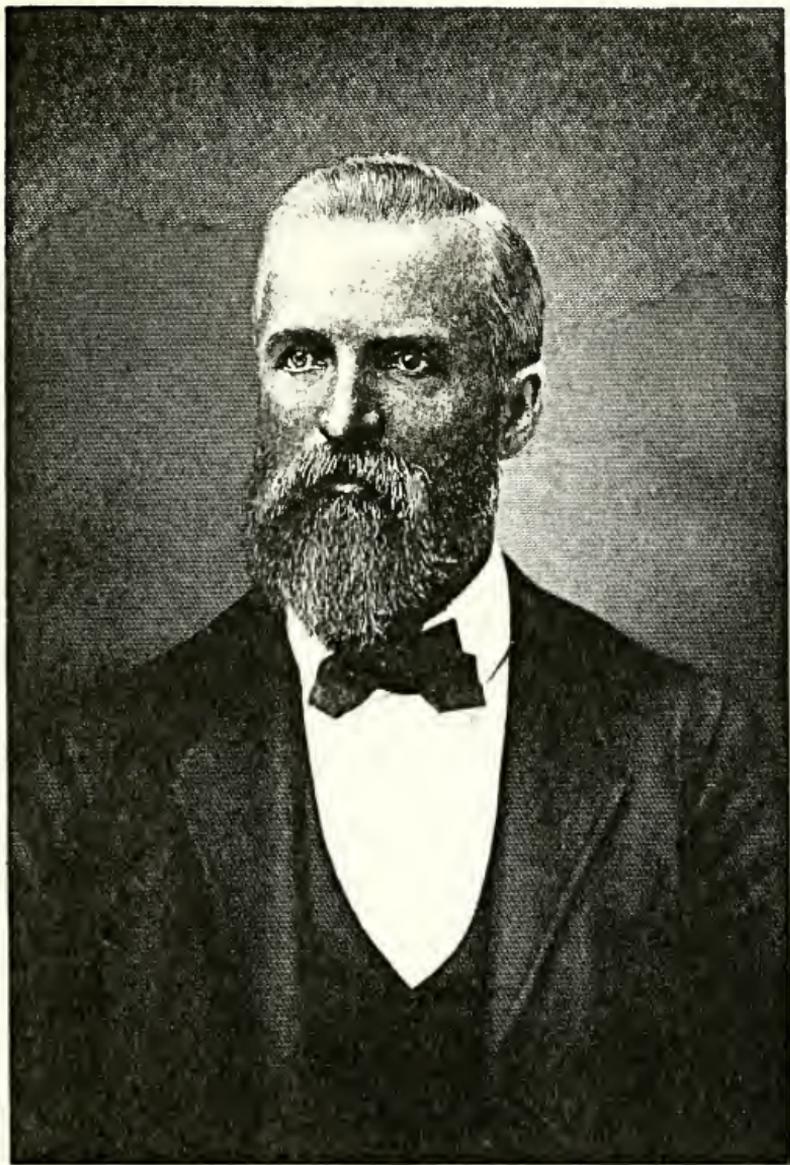
## OLIVER C. McINTOSH.

There are individuals in nearly every community who, by reason of their ability and force of character, have risen above the heads of the masses of the people. Such individuals are characterized by perseverance, initiative, good judgment and sterling integrity. Men of this character always make their presence felt in a community and this presence serves as a stimulant and an incentive to the young and rising generation. Oliver C. McIntosh, who during his life was well known in Wright county, Iowa, was a merchant, banker and public official, having served two terms as sheriff of Wright county and about fifteen years in all as mayor of Goldfield.

The late Oliver C. McIntosh was born in Albany county, New York, April 9, 1832, and was the son of Alexander and Betsey (Wood) McIntosh. Mr. McIntosh's father was reared on a farm and, subsequently, when he grew to manhood, came to own a farm in New York state, where he lived his entire life. The McIntosh family is of Scotch descent. Alexander and Betsey (Wood) McIntosh had eight children, Millis, Lewis, Reuben, Clarke, Omer, Oliver, Julia and Adeline.

Oliver C. McIntosh received a limited education in the public schools of Albany county, New York, and after finishing his education operated his father's farm for a time. In 1857 he came west to Wright county, Iowa, and rented a farm near Belmond, where he lived for one year. He then purchased land in sections 34 and 35, of Liberty township, and lived upon this farm for two years. In the spring of 1860 he was impelled by the opportunity of the gold mines of the west to visit Colorado. The journey westward was made with an ox team. Mr. McIntosh remained in the west one season and then came back to Wright county and established a saw-mill at Goldfield in partnership with A. L. Dean. Although his family moved to Goldfield, Mr. McIntosh continued to operate his farm for a number of years, eventually purchasing land in Eagle Grove township. After having been engaged in the mercantile business in Goldfield in partnership with J. S. Braden for three years, Mr. McIntosh, in 1888, established the first bank in Goldfield. Many years previously, in 1861, he had been elected sheriff of Wright county and had served two terms. During his life he also held most all of the offices within the gift of the people of his township, and besides having served as mayor of Goldfield for a great many years he served as school director. The late Oliver C. McIntosh died on April 7, 1910, honored and respected by the people of Wright county for the many





O. C. M<sup>o</sup> INTOSH



things he had achieved during his life in behalf of the development of this great county.

On September 25, 1856, Oliver C. McIntosh was married to Selina Dietz, a daughter of Joseph and Eliza (Oliver) Dietz. Mrs. McIntosh's father and mother were natives of New York state. Her father was a farmer in New York and there reared a family of six children, Selina, Catherine, Harriet, Emily, Ophelia and Myron. Mrs. McIntosh was educated in the country schools of New York. To Mr. and Mrs. McIntosh was born one child, Ophelia K., who was born in Wright county in 1857 and married G. W. Hanna, of Lavern, Iowa, where they now live. Mr. Hanna is a banker at Lavern. They have four children, three daughters and one son, Eugenia, W. Scott, Geneva, Consuelo.

The late Oliver C. McIntosh was an active worker in the Christian church, and was one of the founders and builders of this church. He was a charter member in Goldfield Lodge, Independent Order of Odd Fellows, and passed through all of the chairs. Mrs. McIntosh is now living in a comfortable and modern home in Goldfield. Her husband, during his life, was identified with the Republican party and was prominent in the local organization of the party.

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### GEORGE A. MCKAY.

A man so well known in the history-building of Wright county, though now passed from earth's busy throng, is entitled to a place in this volume. George A. McKay was born in Montgomery county, New York, of Scotch ancestry. He attended the common schools and when nineteen years of age attended school at Kingston, New York, for about two years. When about twenty-three years of age, he came west and engaged in surveying in one of the northeast counties of Iowa and in Minnesota. In 1857 he came to Wright county and made his home at Belmont about three years, and during this time was engaged at surveying and speculating in lands and town lots. In 1860 he moved to Goldfield and there followed the same business. In 1858 he was elected county surveyor which position he held several years. In 1862 he was elected to the office of county clerk, and held this office six years.

During all these years Mr. McKay was gradually increasing his real-estate business and was always ready for a trade, and being a good judge of property his trades usually resulted to his benefit. He was not only a dis-



tinguished worker, but an intense thinker. He frequently would look upon a tract of land where the title was defective or where there were adverse claims, study how the matter could be reconciled, correspond with the party, get each of their prices, save them litigation—and get a good title for the property. He was a lover of a good horse and at the time of his death had over thirty, some of them high-bred and very valuable animals.

In 1866 George A. McKay was married to Helen L. Eastman, of Goldfield. They had two children: Eugene, who died aged four years; and Jessie, now living in Los Angeles, California, the wife of a Mr. Horn.

In 1872, R. K. Eastman, G. A. McKay and William W. Gates, entered into partnership under the firm name of R. K. Eastman & Company, for the purpose of transacting a realty, loan and banking business. This continued for about three years when Mr. McKay bought the entire interest of his partners, and up to his death had continued in the above line and made a handsome fortune. He was an ardent Republican. He enjoyed life and was considered "the picture of health" until about two years before his death, which occurred on July 15, 1887.

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#### R. K. EASTMAN.

The subject of this sketch was one of the pioneers of Wright county, and became the first settler in Clarion, in 1866, when that town was surveyed out in the center of the county as the seat of justice. He lived and died an honor to mankind and his family.

R. K. Eastman was born in Piermont, New Hampshire, July 31, 1808, a son of Henry and Sarah (Kimball) Eastman, natives of New Hampshire, and of English ancestry. The father was killed during the War of 1812, being wounded at the battle of French Mills, and died at Halifax, leaving his widow and four children, of whom R. K. was the youngest. He remained with his mother until he was sixteen years of age, when he went to learn the trade of carding and cloth-dressing, serving an apprenticeship of three years and teaching school in the winters, following this vocation for five years.

In the years 1832-33-34 Mr. Eastman traveled for the celebrated firm of Fairbanks in the scale business. He then went to Havana, New York, and there engaged in the mercantile business, which he followed about twenty years. In 1856 he emigrated to Iowa, and located in what was then



known as Horse Grove, arriving there on May 3, 1856, and engaged in farming for two years. In the fall of 1857 he was elected treasurer and recorder of Wright county. The county seat was then in contest and he held his office at Horse Grove, now Iowa township. The county judge being located at Goldfield, in the spring of 1860 he removed his office to Goldfield, where he remained till the county seat was removed to Clarion. The first building was the court house and Mr. Eastman, with the county property, was for three days the only resident of Clarion, soon removing his family to this town.

Mr. Eastman served as treasurer and recorder of this county for a period of ten years, and afterward engaged in the real-estate business with his son, O. K. Eastman, which he followed until he became associated with George A. McKay, his son-in-law, and a Mr. Gates, in the realty and banking business. In 1875 he moved to Webster City, and there embarked in the mercantile business, which he followed for nine years, then removed to Arkansas and engaged in the fruit business, which he pursued until the autumn of 1886, when he returned to Wright county, where he died. Other reference is made to this noble man in various chapters of this volume, especially in the Early Settlement chapter.

R. K. Eastman was twice married, first to Elizabeth McNeal, by whom three children were born: Cornelia, widow of G. N. Hancock, now of Los Angeles, California; Helen Lauretta, wife of George A. McKay, both of whom are now deceased; Oliver K., who was a banker in Iowa and a merchant in Nebraska, where he died in October, 1913. Mr. Eastman was a devoted Christian and a member of the Congregational church. He was an abolitionist and a Republican.

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#### WILLIAM F. GIBBS.

William F. Gibbs was identified with the best interests of Wright county from 1868 till the time of his death, in November, 1905. He was born in 1828, in Otsego county, New York. He was a pioneer both in Wisconsin and Iowa, receiving his schooling in an old-time log school house. He remained with his parents until he reached his majority, then engaged in the manufacture of wagons and farm implements, until the date of the Civil War, when he raised a company in the Sixteenth Regiment, Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry, serving under Sherman, and participated in the



march to the sea. After the war closed he moved to Iowa, purchasing fifty acres of land in Troy township, Wright county. In 1869 he was elected county recorder and moved to Clarion. He served as recorder for four years, after which he embarked in the real-estate business. He was a member of the Grand Army of the Republic; was identified with the Congregational church, and was a staunch Republican.

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### GEORGE H. HARDY.

Professor Roberts, of Cornell University, in discussing the advantages of farming as an occupation, says: "A young man who chooses farming as his vocation should be prepared to be content with moderate financial returns from his labors; yet if independence, a comfortable and adequate livelihood, and an assurance against want in old age are the things desired, farming pays in the broadest and most satisfying way." The successful farmer, as every-day observation will indicate, must be resourceful, and he must have executive ability. The subject of this sketch has both requirements, as his success and prominence in the county prove. George H. Hardy, a retired farmer of Woolstock township, was born in Oneida county, the state of New York, June 27, 1841, his parents being Robert and Sarah (Laclair) Hardy.

Robert Hardy accompanied his parents to America when he was only ten years of age, and grew to manhood in Oneida county, New York, attending the local schools. His education, which was as good as the average at that time, did not extend beyond his early youth, for he was needed on his father's farm, where he worked until 1848. In that year his father sold out his real estate holdings and moved to Lee Center, New York, and Robert Hardy purchased a farm in Oneida county. He lived there, however, only a short time, when he returned to Lee Center, and after farming there for a year went to live at Elmer Hill, where he farmed for two years. He then established a small grocery store near Westernville, on the Black River canal, and remained there a short time. Later he moved west to engage in railroading and contracting, finally locating in Wisconsin, where he remained until the time of his death. His wife passed away on October 6, 1860. The children born of this marriage were George H., William R., Francis and Sarah, besides a child that died in infancy. After the death of his first wife, Mr. Hardy married, secondly, Harriett (Green) Lamphyer.



One son was born of this union, James. This family, on the paternal side, is descended from English ancestry, for the grandfather was born near Market Wheaton, England. He was a farmer and a veterinary surgeon, and was the father of nine children.

Owing to the conditions which surrounded his early life the schooling of George H. Hardy was necessarily limited. A part of his education he received in the states of New York and Wisconsin, and during his service in the army during the Civil War. In the same regiment in which he was enlisted Prof. E. M. Gurley was also a soldier, and the latter for nearly two years conducted a night school for the boys whom he gathered together in the camp, in which the time was devoted to spelling and arithmetic principally. One cannot but admire the ambition thus displayed by this youth, for many a time he sat up late in the night to study after a hard day's work in the trenches. He enlisted at first for three months, on April 8, 1861, at Berlin, Wisconsin. When orders came to discharge all men enlisted for the three-months service, Mr. Hardy was mustered out. In spite of his father's opposition, however, and in spite of this mustering out, his determination to go to war remained unchanged. He first went to Madison, Wisconsin, expecting to re-enlist, but the captain of the company there was a friend of his father's, and knowing that the father was opposed to his son joining the army, refused to enlist the lad. Undaunted by this chilling experience, the young man then sought out another company, and finding that his family troubles were not known, he enrolled with the Beaver Dam Rifles, Company D, Fifth Regiment, Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry, under Captain Catlin. This enlistment occurred on June 27, 1861, and he served four years lacking six days. He was in all of the battles on the Peninsula; his first battle being at Lees Mills, this being followed by the battle of Williamsburg. With General McClelland he returned to Alexandria, Virginia, and later went to Centerville, which is near Bull Run, and was engaged in a number of skirmishes. He was also in the battle of Antietam. After this battle he returned to Virginia, and the last two years of his service was assigned to the commissariat department, his time expiring on June 21, 1865. He soon re-enlisted at Brandies Station and was promoted from assistant commissary sergeant to regimental commissary sergeant. In the famous Army of the Potomac he was a member of the First Brigade under General Hancock, at Camp Griffin, being mustered out at Balls Bluff, Virginia.

Mr. Hardy then returned to Berlin, Wisconsin, and after assisting his father for a short time, he went to Pleasant Grove, Minnesota, where he



purchased a farm of one hundred and sixty acres and worked for himself for about a year. He then divided his time between his farm and the farm of his father, and after his marriage, in 1868, to Margaret J. Hanson, he remained there a short time, locating finally at Pleasant Grove, Minnesota, where he remained for one year. His wife is the daughter of Robert and Martha (Wetherill) Hanson. Mr. and Mrs. Hardy then located in Butler county, Iowa, on a rented farm, where they resided for three years and then took up residence in Wisconsin for a brief time with Mr. Hardy's family.

While living in Butler county, Mr. Hardy purchased a farm of eighty-six acres in Woolstock township and became so successful as a general farmer that he increased his property to two hundred and forty acres. He and his wife grew accustomed to the privation and dangers of pioneer life, for they frequently had to fight prairie fires in order to protect their humble dwelling, a shack of twelve by fourteen feet. They never lost any property by reason of fires, however. Included in their early adventures was the killing of rattle-snakes, perhaps the record being the killing of five at one time within one rod of ground. It was Mr. Hardy's practice to feed all his grain to hogs and cattle. In 1908 he retired from active work and moved to Clarion, having by this time placed upon his property several thousand dollars' worth of improvements.

Mr. and Mrs. Hardy are the parents of five children, one of whom died when an infant. The others are George A., Wesley W., Frank H. and Eva M. George A. Hardy married Alma Dahlgren, and to them two children, Mabel M. and Dale, were born. Wesley W. Hardy became the husband of Lottie Rumford, and their children are: Lila, Kenneth and Etta. Frank H. Hardy married Nina Jordon, and they have one child, Margaret Jane. Eva M. Hardy became Mrs. Carl Dahlgren, and her children are Verna M. and Viola.

Mrs. Margaret (Hanson) Hardy was born in Oneida county, New York, but her parents were natives of England, the father having been born in Scarborough, the mother in Pickering. Mr. Hanson was a farmer all of his life. He was married in New York state and later moved to Wisconsin, where he engaged in farming until the time of his death. The nine children born to Mr. and Mrs. Hanson are Thomas, Elizabeth, Mary, William, John, Margaret, Frank, George and Albert.

Mr. Hardy and his estimable wife have not only had their names on church books but have been sincerely and actively interested in the welfare of the church. Mr. Hardy has been the treasurer for eight years, was



steward and class leader for seven years, and was Sunday school superintendent of Woolstock township for a number of years. His war experience, in which he made a record for bravery and fidelity, would naturally make him an enthusiastic member of the Grand Army of the Republic. He has been junior commander of General Lyons Post No. 133 for seven years. Mr. Hardy is a staunch Republican.

The gentleman whose biography has been briefly indicated here is a conspicuous figure in local history, for he possesses that type of personality which must find expression in activity. As a soldier, he never flinched from duty no matter how dangerous; as a citizen, he is honest, upright and trustworthy; as a man, he is sincere and altruistic. He has those traits of character which make him a man of influence wherever his lot may be cast.

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### MAJOR MINTER BRASSFIELD.

This is the way this pioneer of Wright county usually wrote his name—either M. or Minter Brassfield—but his daughter informs us that his true name in full was Othnal Minter Brassfield. The title "Major" is a misnomer, he never having served in any military capacity, other than accompanying a detachment of soldiers over the prairies of Wright county to Ft. Dodge, in the early fifties; after that he was dubbed "Major."

Minter Brassfield, of Liberty township, who died many years ago, arrived in that township on August 12, 1854. Mr. Brassfield, William Stryker, of Troy township, and William S. Montgomery, of Liberty township, were the first of the pioneer band who located in what is now Wright county. All came with families within a few weeks of one another. Mr. Brassfield settled on the farm, where he spent the remainder of his days. He was a native of Claiborne county, Tennessee, where he was born in 1811. His father, George Brassfield, and his wife, Mary, removed from Tennessee to Randolph county, Missouri, where the father died. His wife, Mary, later came to Iowa, whither her children had moved and lived with them for a time, but finally returned to Missouri, where she died. George Brassfield and wife had nine children, who grew to manhood and womanhood. Minter Brassfield was the oldest of the family. He had lived in Wright county from its earliest settlement and saw it wonderfully transformed into a rich, well-developed farming section before his death.



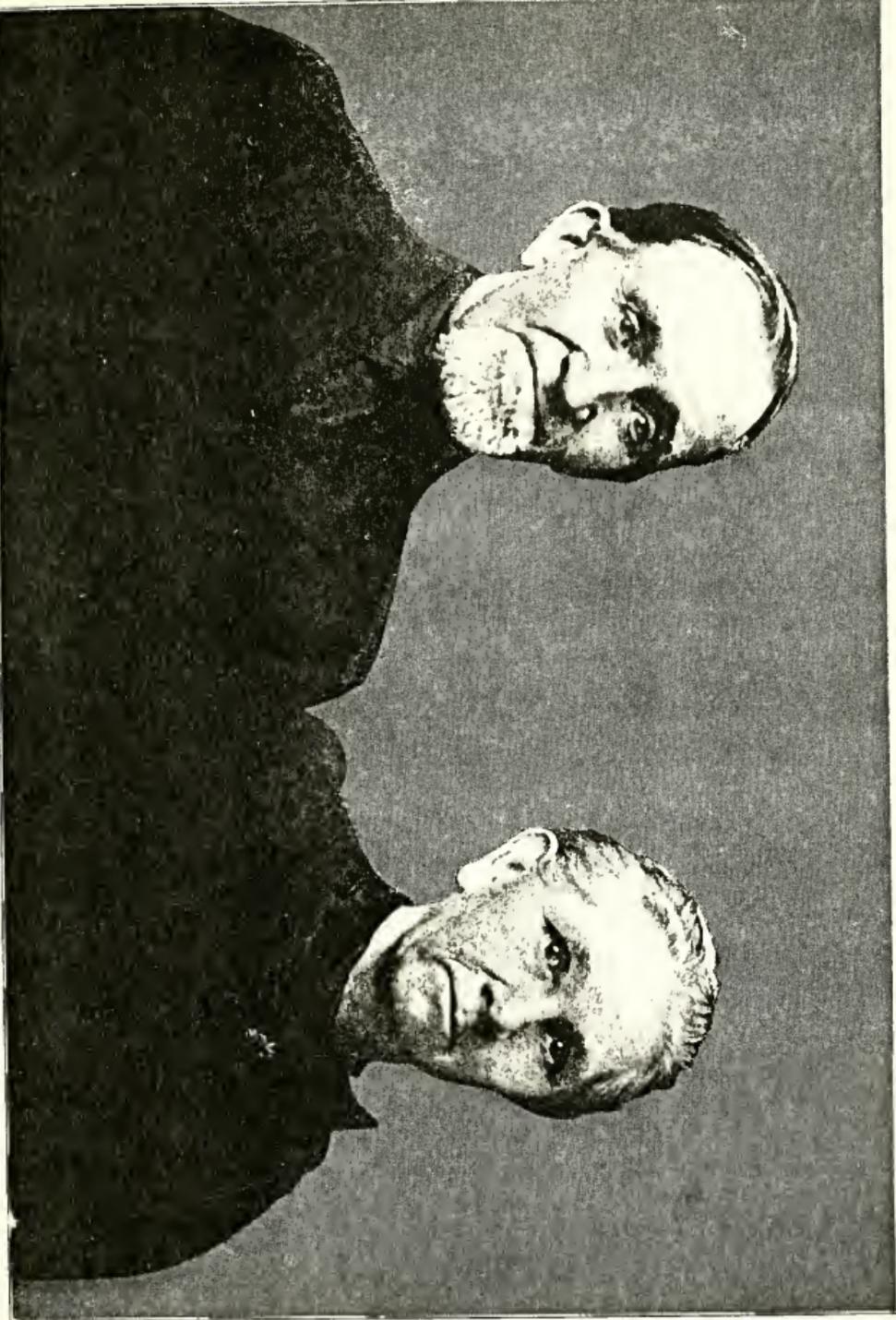
## JELSKE CRAMER.

Success is of so many varieties that the word itself is capable of many interpretations. But speaking purely from a commercial and utilitarian viewpoint, the man who can come to a strange country, and with seventy-five cents in his pocket can assert his right to live, and who, by his own solitary efforts can acquire fourteen hundred acres of land, surely may be accredited with some degree of success. Such a man is Jelske Cramer, a native of Hanover, Germany, who is now a well-known retired farmer, formerly of Wall Lake township. He was born on June 7, 1843, his parents being Herman and Anna Cramer.

Herman Cramer, who was educated in his native land, was a farmer during his entire lifetime, having a farm of forty acres. He died in Germany, where his wife also passed away in 1847. Of their eleven children, Jelska is the only one living in this country.

Mr. Cramer's early environment and education were not different from that of many other farmers' boys of that time and locality. His school days were varied by work on the farm. However, when the war between Prussia and Austria broke out, he, with true patriotic ardor, hastened to enlist and served all through that dreadful war. All this happened before he was twenty-four years of age, and at that time he ceased to be a soldier. Coming to this country he located in Freeport, Illinois, obtaining employment on the railroad for a short time. When he landed here he had just seventy-five cents as his capital stock. Leaving Freeport he went to Dubuque, Iowa, where he obtained temporary work of various kinds and then went to Ackley, Iowa, where he remained for one year. At the end of that time he obtained employment as a farm hand, an occupation which he followed two years, until he was able to rent a farm. This farm he cultivated for a period of five years, when he was attracted to this county, buying one hundred and sixty acres in Vernon township, where, after farming for one year, he bought a similar amount of land in Wall Lake township, where he moved. In Wall Lake township he added various tracts of land until he became the owner of fourteen hundred acres in this county. He has always fed most of his grain to hogs and cattle, feeding out about two or three carloads of cattle and three or four hundred head of hogs annually. In April, 1912, Mr. Cramer retired from active farm duties and became a resident of Clarion, where his splendid modern home is considered one of the finest in the county. He is also owner of the Cramer Apartments.





MIR AND MRS. JESSIE CHAMBER.



Jelske Cramer and Hattie Eggers were married on November 13, 1873. Mrs. Cramer is a daughter of Herman and Taulga (Steinblock) Eggers. To Mr. and Mrs. Cramer have been born eleven children, namely: Anna, Thresia, Minnie, Margaret, Herman, Ernest, Elsie, John, Jelske, Dalla and Ray. Anna, the eldest daughter, has remained single; Thresia married J. G. Groenenwold, and is the mother of two children, Gertrude and Nettie; Minnie married Fred Pahlman, and to them four children were born, these being Jelske, Clara, Nettie and Edna; Margaret married J. Groenenwold, and their children are Etta and George; Herman became the husband of Sophia Schmidt; Earnest married Cleo Chapman; Elsie married William Meyer; the other children are single.

Mr. Cramer, since his residence here, has become identified with various public interests, one of which is the school system, of which he has been a director. His political affiliations have been with the Democratic party, of which he has been a prominent member. Such has been Mr. Cramer's fitness for public service that he has been one of Clarion's most popular school directors. He has given much time and study to the question of education, and is keenly interested in all that pertains to the welfare of the town in which he lives. Both he and Mrs. Cramer are active members of the German Lutheran church.

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#### HON. A. S. CHAPMAN.

One of Wright county's best-known citizens was A. S. Chapman, who came to this county in 1869. He was born in Penobscot county, Maine, May 27, 1846, son of Winthrop Chapman, a native of the same county and a son of Winthrop Chapman, Sr., who was a pioneer in Exeter, Maine. He was a man of much wealth. He was of Scotch ancestry. The mother of A. S. Chapman was Caroline (Eastman) Chapman. A. S. Chapman's father died on April 4, 1881.

A. S. Chapman was reared in his native county, educated at Exeter Academy and later engaged in teaching in several towns. In 1869 he came to Wright county and located in the southern part of this county, and kept "bachelor's hall." There he lived and became one of the county's wealthiest men and spent the rest of his life, dying in October, 1889. He owned over one thousand acres of valuable Wright county land, and was an extensive stock raiser and feeder. He was a staunch Republican and represented this



county in the Iowa Legislature, being elected in 1887 and served in the Twenty-second General Assembly. He was a most excellent lawmaker. Mr. Chapman was twice married, first to Emma W. Clark, by whom he had three children. His wife died in October, 1884, and for his second wife he married, in November, 1887, Anna E. Napper, daughter of Abel Napper, of Wall Lake township.

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#### EDGAR A. ALLEN.

The highest respect and regard of a community is usually shown by the election to office of trust of those men who are worthy the confidence thus reposed in their ability and efficiency to produce results. In the review of every life, either of high or low degree, there is much of value and interest to be gained, and a resume of the life of Edgar A. Allen, treasurer of Wright county, Iowa, is not wanting in either.

Edgar A. Allen is one of ten children born to Eugene A. and Melvina (Clapp) Allen. His birth occurred on February 14, 1868, in Sharon, Wisconsin. Eugene A. Allen was born in the state of New York and removed to Wisconsin with his parents when a child of two years. He is indebted to the schools of that state for his early education and training. After leaving the class room he assisted his father in the duties on the home farm until 1872, at which time he became interested in the opportunities of Iowa and removed to Story county, this state. In the spring of 1874 he removed to Wright county, Iowa, and purchased one hundred and sixty acres in Troy township. This property was increased to three hundred and twenty acres, which he cultivated until 1910, his retirement taking place at that time. After forty-three years of general farming, he retired to the town of Eagle Grove, Iowa, where he held several township offices. Of the ten children born to Mr. and Mrs. Eugene A. Allen, eight are now living in Wright county, Iowa. Melvin (Clapp) Allen was a native of Wisconsin and was married in that state.

Edgar A. Allen received his education in the common schols of Wright county, Iowa, and after finishing the necessary branches he taught for several years, or until he was twenty-two years of age. At that time he purchased one hundred and sixty acres of land, with the intention of operating for himself, which he did for eleven years. Mr. Allen removed, in 1901, to Eagle Grove, Iowa, where he engaged in the hardware and implement business for a period of eighteen months. He again became interested in



agricultural pursuits until 1911, when he engaged in the automobile business, following this until 1914. On November 3, 1914, he was elected to the office of county treasurer and his duties in that capacity began on January 2, 1915. While engaged in farming Mr. Allen served his township by acting as township clerk and trustee of Troy township, and the dispatch with which he discharged all duties demonstrated his ability as a leader in the more important offices of trust to which he was later elected.

In the month of November, 1892, Edgar A. Allen was united in marriage to Mary E. Lewis, daughter of Richard and Jane (Pugh) Lewis, and to them have been born three children: Elva M., Vernice J. and Eugene R., all of whom are at home.

Edgar A. Allen is a member of the Methodist Episcopal church, in which he acted as trustee for some time during his residence in Eagle Grove. Fraternally, he is a member of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows. In politics, he is a staunch Republican and is indebted to this party for the offices of trust which he has held.

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#### DAVID L. CUPPETT.

The Union soldier, during the great war between the states, builded wiser than he knew. During four years of suffering and wasting hardships, through the horrors of prison pens and amid the shadows of death, he erected the superstructure of the greatest temple ever erected and dedicated to human freedom. It was the power of these valiant soldiers to reach out the mighty arm of power and strike the chains from off the slave, preserve the country from dissolution and to keep unfurled the stars and stripes, our country's flag. For the unmeasured deeds and valiant heroism of these soldiers, the living present can never repay. It remains to the children of generations yet unborn to accord a full measure of appreciation for the immortal characters carved out by the American soldier, among whom was the venerable David L. Cuppett, formerly a farmer, merchant, banker and public-spirited man of affairs.

Born on December 25, 1841, in Bedford county, Pennsylvania, David L. Cuppett, is the son of David A. and Elizabeth (Mickles) Cuppett, who were natives of Pennsylvania and who married in Bedford county. David A. Cuppett was the son of Isaac Cuppett, who, it is believed, emigrated from Holland to America. David A. Cuppett had enlisted for service in the



Black Hawk War, but his company was not called into service. He was a blacksmith by trade, and was the father of twelve children, six of whom lived to maturity and all of whom went west. In 1852 the family settled in Iowa, locating in Delaware county, where the father followed his trade. He took an active part in the politics of Colesburg and served there as justice of the peace for eleven years.

David L. Cuppett received a good common-school education, and when old enough, obtained work in a pottery, where he was employed for four years, until September 10, 1861, when he enlisted at Dubuque, Iowa, in Company G, Ninth Regiment, Iowa Volunteer Infantry. His first service was under General Curtis at the battle of Pea Ridge, Missouri, on March 6, 7 and 8, 1862. This regiment bore the brunt of that battle, and his brigade lost more men than all of the other regiments combined.

On March 7, 1862, Mr. Cuppett received a wound in the right shoulder and was sent home on a furlough for two months. He then started back to join his old company, but had proceeded only as far as St. Louis, when he was again sent home. He remained at home until July 8, 1862, when he joined his company at Helena, Phillips county, Arkansas. In July, 1862, the western campaign had become extremely bitter, and following Mr. Cuppett's return the regiment took part in the engagements of Chickasaw Bayou, which was the only defeat the regiment ever suffered: Arkansas Post; the siege of Vicksburg; Jackson, Mississippi; Brandon, Mississippi; Cherokee, Mississippi; Lookout Mountain, Tennessee; Missionary Ridge, Tennessee; and Ringgold, Georgia.

Mr. Cuppett was sent home on a thirty-day furlough in 1863, and was honorably discharged on January 1, 1864, at Woodville, Alabama. He again re-enlisted on the same day, in the same company and regiment. Afterward he took part in the battles of Reseca, Georgia; Dallas, Big Shanty and Kenesaw Mountain. At Kenesaw Mountain he was wounded by a piece of a shell, which struck him in the shoulder. He served with General Sherman in his campaign from Atlanta to the sea, and was in the following battles: Nickajack Creek, Atlanta, Ezra Church, Jonesboro, Lovejoy Station, Little River, siege of Savannah, Wateree River; Columbia, South Carolina; Bentonville and Raleigh, North Carolina. Mr. Cuppett took part in the Grand Review, at Washington, D. C., and was honorably discharged at Louisville, Kentucky, July 18, 1865.

In May, 1864, Mr. Cuppett was promoted to the rank of corporal, but held this rank only two days, when he was promoted to orderly sergeant.



He was later promoted to second lieutenant and served for a short time in this capacity, but never received his commission.

After Mr. Cuppett's discharge he returned to his home but did not remain long until he removed to Dubuque, Iowa, where he was taken in as a partner by his former employer in the pottery business. Mr. Cuppett continued in this business for two and one-half years and then returned to Colesburg, where, in partnership with Trueman P. Wells, purchased H. P. Wright's general store. They operated this store in partnership for two and one-half years and Mr. Cuppett then came to Wright county, in the fall of 1871, and located in Belmont, where he engaged in the hardware business in partnership with E. S. Hubbard. This partnership continued for several years, when finally Mr. Cuppett purchased Mr. Hubbard's interest and operated the store alone, in the meantime having added a stock of implements.

In 1891 Mr. Cuppett sold the hardware store to Val Greessey, and devoted his attention to the implement business until 1906, when he sold the implement business to Harry Tyrrell. Mr. Cuppett also owns several farms, among them one hundred and sixty acres in South Dakota, one hundred and sixty acres in Belmont township, Wright county, and has owned other farms at other times. He has also owned several town properties, but has sold most of his real estate except his home and one other house and lot and five acres of land in the north part of Belmont. Mr. Cuppett is a stockholder in both the First National and the Belmont State Bank.

On September 29, 1866, David L. Cuppett was married in Colesburg, Iowa, to Lucretia K. Hubbard, who was born on May 23, 1848, in Colesburg, Iowa, and whose parents were Hezekiah and Sarah (Burgess) Hubbard, natives of Connecticut, who removed to Pennsylvania and later to Iowa in the early forties. Mr. and Mrs. Cuppett were married by the Rev. George Larkin. To their marriage there have been born six children, four of whom are living. Arthur B., born on September 19, 1868, married Jennie Rolbeck, and they have three children, Hazel, Blanche and David L. Hazel is married. Lorenza E., born on March 1, 1871, married George Brewsaugh, and they have two children, Vera and Geraldine. Lorena E. later married E. R. Bailey, and they have one child, Beatrice. Mary A., born on March 25, 1873, married Ed Christie, and they have four children, Iva, Frank, Mae and Arthur. Sarah E., born on May 23, 1877, married Albert Englet, and they have three children, Edwin, Ruth L. and an infant. Lee H., born on November 4, 1879, died on September 10, 1914. Harold S., born on August 18, 1884, died on November 7, 1884.



Mr. Cuppett is a member of the Masonic fraternity and the Grand Army of the Republic. He has held all of the important offices in the Grand Army of the Republic and for the last eight years has served as commander of the post. He was also a charter member of Belmond Lodge, Independent Order of Odd Fellows, having been initiated into the order while in the army. Later he helped organize the Belmond lodge, but has since dropped out. He was a charter member of Whited Post No. 247, of Belmond, Grand Army of the Republic. Mr. Cuppett is a Republican in politics and has served in many positions of trust and responsibility. He has been township trustee, school treasurer and assessor of Pleasant township. Since removing to Belmond, he has filled an unexpired term as mayor, has served in the council, as city treasurer, as school treasurer, and in other capacities. Mrs. Cuppett is a member of the Congregational church.

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#### MICHAEL ANGELO MICKELSON.

Michael Angelo Mickelson is a man so widely known and so beloved that a record of his life will find welcome in many hearts, this in itself constituting an enviable tribute. While much of his time has been given to agricultural pursuits, in which he has taken a deep interest, his mental horizon is broad enough to include subjects of the public good and public service, and in these perhaps Mr. Mickelson found his greatest source of pleasure. Michael Angelo Mickelson was born on December 30, 1845, in Norway, and is the son of Ola and Angeline Mickelson, both natives of that country. Ola Mickelson was a farmer in Norway, and came to this country in 1850, locating in Green county, Wisconsin, where he had engaged in farming only a year when both he and his wife died from the effects of cholera, passing away within twelve hours of each other. One of their children, an infant, died at the same time. Lara, Michael and Newton are the remaining members of the family, the last named son now residing at Eagle Grove, Iowa.

Michael, after the death of his parents, made his home with a Norwegian family and attended the local public schools. After one year's residence with this family, according to the custom of that day, he was bound out to a man by the name of Stewart. The boy engaged to work for Stewart with the understanding that at the age of twenty-one he was to receive a horse, saddle and bridle from his employer.



Michael A. Mickelson enlisted for regular service in the Civil War on February 22, 1865, at Albany, Wisconsin, serving until November, 1865, in Company G, Forty-ninth Regiment, Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry. He joined the regiment at Madison, Wisconsin, then did guard duty at Rolla, Missouri, and in the latter part of September, 1865, was sent with his comrades to do guard duty in St. Louis.

At the age of twenty-one Michael A. Mickelson rented a farm of forty acres which he cultivated for the period of one year. He then increased his rented property to two hundred acres which he farmed during the summer, teaching school in the winter. This arrangement continued until he had taught eight terms. He then took up his residence on one hundred and sixty acres of land in Woolstock township, this county, for which property he paid twenty-five hundred dollars, which he had saved by the combined occupation of farming and teaching in Wisconsin.

On October 31, 1877, Michael A. Mickelson was married to Fannie Fern Fleek, a daughter of Edmond Thomas and Sarah (Bowen) Fleek. Mr. Mickelson's wife was born in Wisconsin, her father being a native of Virginia, and her mother was born in Pennsylvania. These worthy people were married in Wisconsin, to which state Mr. Fleek came when a young man and began farming in Green county, where he lived the remainder of his life. This couple were the parents of eleven children of whom Mrs. Mickelson was the third born. She has five brothers and sisters living.

The morning following the wedding of Mr. and Mrs. Mickelson these two enthusiastic young people began their journey to this county with three horses and a well filled wagon, arriving in Woolstock township on November 9, 1877. They were guests of Mr. Mickelson's brother, Newton, until arrangements could be made for them to move on their own land. One of the first things which Mr. Mickelson did was to plant a number of beautiful trees which have made their home farm one of the most attractive in this section of the state. By hard work and perseverance Mr. and Mrs. Mickelson have acquired four hundred and eighty acres of splendid farm land, and one of the owner's greatest interests has been the raising of fine stock. In 1892, Mr. and Mrs. Mickelson moved to Eagle Grove, where Mr. Mickelson became assistant cashier of the Citizen's State Bank, remaining there for four years. Being elected county treasurer he served in that capacity until 1902, this period of time covering three terms. To Mr. and Mrs. Mickelson was born only one child, a daughter named Fernelle. This daughter married Maurice Frederick Birdsell and to them one child, Maurice Frederick, Jr., has been born.



The confidence in which Mr. Mickelson is held in this community is evidenced by the fact that he has held a number of public offices. He was for some time township trustee, again was appointed road supervisor, and later president of the school board of Woolstock township. He was also treasurer of the district school of Eagle Grove for two years; he served ten years as councilman and for four years of this time was mayor of Clarion.

Mr. and Mrs. Mickelson have a beautiful home, modern in every respect, located near the court house in Clarion. This is the scene of many pleasant social gatherings, for the owners are among the fortunate type of people who have friends because they are friendly. Mrs. Mickelson is a woman of culture and refinement.

Mr. Mickelson, who is a Republican, is an enthusiastic member of the Grand Army of the Republic. He is a member of the Masonic lodge, the chapter, council and commandery, and also is a member of the Mystic Shrine.

In even this incomplete study of the life of Michael A. Mickelson, one discovers the elements which go to make up what in more conspicuous lives is called greatness. Here is a man who was willing to die for his country if need be; in peace, he has lived for his country, and by his personality and his genial nature has been a true friend and real inspiration to all with whom he has come in contact.

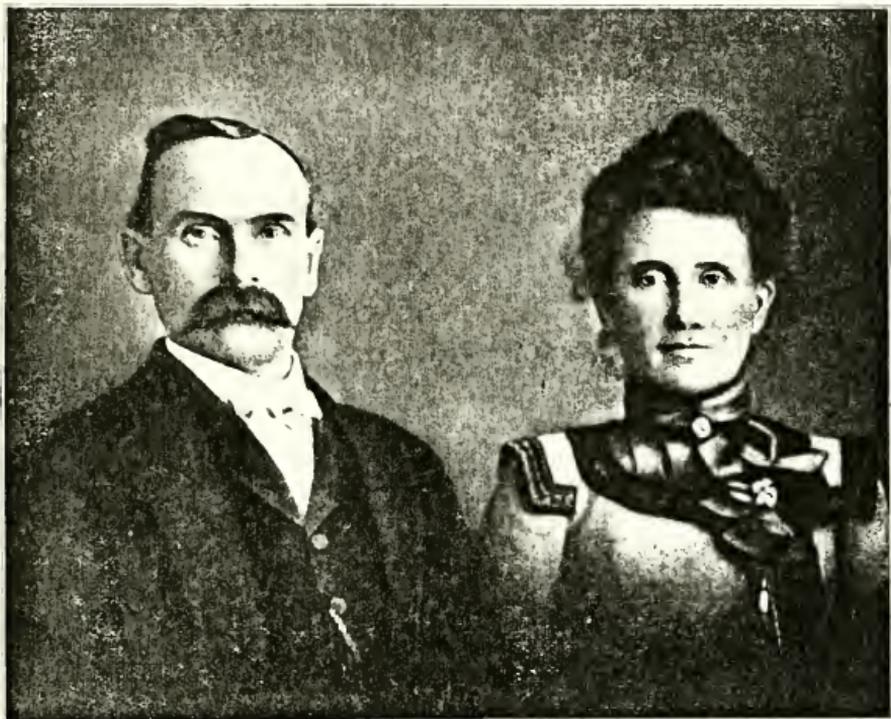
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### JOHN CAMPBELL.

A native of Canada, John Campbell, like his worthy parents, has been content to follow a well-directed course throughout life. Born and reared on the farm, he has devoted his entire time and attention to agricultural pursuits, and has made a record which it will be an honor to hand down to his children. Although encountering obstacles and disappointments, he has refused to become disheartened, and has pressed forward until he has become one of the leading farmers in this county and has had the honor of having held all of the township offices. John Campbell was born on March 23, 1845, in Ontario, Canada.

David Campbell, father of John Campbell, was born in the state of New York. When he was a small child his parents moved to Ottawa, Canada, and there he received his education and helped his father on the farm until his sixteenth year. He was then employed as a farm laborer for a number of years and by the time he was twenty-five years of age was able





MR. AND MRS. JOHN CAMPBELL.



to purchase farm land in Ontario with money he had earned and saved. There he farmed until 1850, when he removed to the United States. He rented a farm in Lapeer county, Michigan, where he lived until 1865. He then came to Wright county, this state, locating in Pleasant township, where he farmed for a year or two and later bought a farm of eighty acres in Iowa township. After five years of residence there he and his family moved to a farm which he rented in Belmont township, where he lived until his death, which occurred in 1887. His wife, who before her marriage was Margaret McMartin, was born in Osgood, Canada. She died in 1850, leaving four children, who are now living. A fifth child is deceased. Her brother, Thomas, served in the Civil War and was killed. Her three remaining brothers are still living in Canada.

John Campbell went to school in the state of Michigan and afterward was employed in farm work until he came to this county. After his marriage, January 14th, he bought a farm of eighty acres, which he has subsequently increased to an estate of three hundred and sixty acres, where he has become a general farmer and stock raiser.

On January 14, 1871, John Campbell was united in marriage to Angeline Morris, daughter of Dr. J. C. and Phoebe L. (Babcock) Morris. John L. Babcock was born in Almont, Michigan, although her parents were natives of other states, the father of Pennsylvania and the mother of New York, where Doctor Morris was educated. When about twenty-five years of age, Mr. Morris started a store in Almont, Michigan, and after three years in that business he took a ten-year contract for cutting and delivering logs. He then took up the practice of medicine, and in 1864 came to Wright county, where, after a year's residence near Belmont, he started a medical practice, which subsequently became extensive. In 1880 he and his family moved to Scranton, Iowa, where they lived until the time of his death, in 1888. His wife died in January, 1915. Eleven of their thirteen children are still living. To Mr. and Mrs. John Campbell have been born three children, namely: William T. is the husband of Alma Sougstadt; John D. married Gertrude Dice, who is the mother of two children, Rhea and Ilene; Cora Eveline, the youngest child, died when five years old.

Mr. and Mrs. Campbell are prominent members of the Methodist Episcopal church. Mr. Campbell is a man who is well read and has been for many years active in public affairs. He has held nearly all the offices which this township has to offer. Mr. and Mrs. Campbell fill an important place in the community in which they have lived so many years and have shown



practical interest in its welfare by supporting its worthy enterprises. Mr. Campbell is a man whom to know is to admire. He attracts friends by his genial nature, and his high moral standards have given him the respect of all who know him.

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E. E. BEST, M. D.

Dr. E. E. Best, of Clarion, Wright county, Iowa, is the personification of courtesy and kindness and his concentration has made him a master in the art of healing; his practical Christianity has brought him in close touch with the hearts of men and his toleration for their weaknesses has made of him a true friend to those in need.

E. E. Best is one of six children born to the union of W. C. and Ann Eliza (Clingman) Best, he a native of Pennsylvania and she of Ohio. The birth of E. E. Best occurred on March 4, 1858, in Freeport, Illinois. W. C. Best remained in his native state until seventeen years of age, removing at that time with his parents to a farm near Freeport, Illinois. He engaged in agricultural pursuits independently, at the same time assisting his father in the cultivation of the home place until 1864, at which time he located in the town of Freeport, Illinois, and engaged in the tannery business for a period of four years. Making the wise decision that the business of agriculture gave broader scope to a man's energy and education than did that of any one commercial line, he removed to Wisconsin where he again resumed the cultivation of the soil. For four years he operated a rented farm, finally purchasing a place near Tama, Iowa, where he remained until 1895. He then sold the Iowa farm and removed to a farm located near Mobile, Alabama, where he farmed until his death in 1900. Two years later, in 1902, his wife passed to her eternal rest, leaving their three remaining children to mourn her loss. The names of these children are: Mrs. Edna Mann, Harlan H. and E. E.

E. E. Best received his initial education in the public school of Freeport, Illinois. Following this preliminary schooling he became a student for three years in the Normal College at Cedar Falls, Iowa. He then entered the collegiate department at Iowa City, and later entered the Medical College at Iowa City, Iowa, where he took a two-year course. His medical studies were completed in the Homeopathic Medical College, in Chicago, where he attended for one year, graduating and receiving his Doctor of Medicine degree in 1896. During the six years of practice in which he



was engaged in Chicago, Illinois, he completed the course in the College of Physicians and Surgeons, graduating from the same in 1899. Becoming interested in Iowa as a future field for his medical practice, he removed to Clarion in 1901, and has since received a large patronage from the citizens of that town.

In 1897 E. E. Best was united in marriage to Laura Wheeler, daughter of Norman and Mariah Wheeler. E. E. Best is a member and trustee of the Methodist Episcopal church and has served that denomination to the best of his ability since his arrival in Clarion. He is an honored member of the Masonic order, while his political faith is with the Republican party. His reputation for honesty and sincere interest in those around him is only exceeded by his character, which is of the highest type.

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#### PETER H. GOSLIN.

Peter H. Goslin is the son of Michael and Catherine (Carroll) Goslin, and is one of six children born of their union. His birth occurred on January 15, 1863 in County Kildare, Ireland. Michael Goslin, previous to his arrival in America from Ireland, was an employe of a railroad company in his native land. In 1863 he immigrated to the United States and located near Hazel Green, Wisconsin, where he was employed in the capacity of farm hand for a period of three years. In May, 1866, he removed to Wright county, Iowa, where he homesteaded perhaps the last tract of land in Wright county subject to homestead, near Clarion, and engaged in general farming until his retirement. This farm consisted of one hundred and twenty acres. While engaged in agricultural pursuits he was appointed to serve in several township offices and discharged all duties, connected therewith, with efficiency and dispatch. He now lives in the town of Clarion where he is resting from a life of arduous toil. Of the six children born to the union of Michael Goslin and Catherine (Carroll) Goslin, four are living: Matthew, Peter H., Michael and Mary.

Peter H. Goslin is indebted to the district schools of Wright county, Iowa, for his education, following which he taught for nine winters. At the age of twenty-three years he removed to Clarion where he was employed as a clerk in the postoffice for a short time. He then was appointed to serve as deputy county clerk and was engaged in that capacity for a period of two years. Desirous of obtaining an honorable competency through his



independent efforts in commercial pursuits, he engaged in the grain brokerage business, but in 1891, after meeting with unusual success for others, he began buying for himself, and in 1900 included stock buying in his other interests. He buys, on an average, one hundred carloads of stock each year. That he has won a place of no mean mention, is evidenced by the fact that he was elected and served as the mayor of Clarion covering a period of eight years, and also served as city assessor for four years.

In 1886 Peter H. Goslin was united in marriage to Clara Lynch, daughter of Edmund and Jane Lynch, and they are the parents of two children, Leroy P. and Edmond Clare. Politically, Peter H. Goslin is an ardent Democrat, and his religious inspiration is received from the creeds of the Catholic church, which denomination receives his earnest and active support. He is a member of the Knights of Columbus and is held in high regard by the members of that order. On February 25, 1915, he was appointed postmaster of Clarion, Wright county, Iowa.

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#### C. H. MARTIN.

One of the first men to locate in Boone township, this county, and who became a wealthy, enterprising farmer and lived a good and upright life, was "Uncle Henry" Martin, as he was usually called. C. H. Martin was born in Gloucester, England, in January, 1818, and died in Boone township, this county, in 1893. He made his own way through life unaided by wealthy relatives or friends. He was the son of a woolen manufacturer, who having faith in America brought his family hither and located in Ohio, the wife and mother dying in England. The father had married the second wife before emigrating from England.

Young C. H. Martin worked at farm labor in Ohio, saved his money and determined to invest in western lands. He came to Wright county in February, 1855, settling on the banks of Boone river, in Wright county, where he ever after resided and there died. In 1890 he owned six hundred acres of valuable Wright county land. In 1865 he married the widow of William Odenheimer, her maiden name being Kelling. Mr. and Mrs. Martin had ten children, many of whom died when young. The daughters all died of diphtheria. With the passing of C. H. Martin Wright county lost an estimable citizen.



## WILLIAM I. ROSECRANS.

An active life is conducive to a long one and sincere interest in public affairs engenders the confidence and trust of one's fellow citizens. Positions of trust may be gained, but never held for any length of time, by those unworthy of them, so the life of William I. Rosecrans affords much food for reflection, for his career is strewn with evidence of public confidence and trust, and the record of his many achievements contains many examples of civic pride and betterment.

William I. Rosecrans is one of seven children born to Judge Marmaduke P. and Lucy (Green) Rosecrans, and his birth occurred on August 18, 1862, on a farm in Hancock county, Iowa. Judge Marmaduke P. Rosecrans, with his family, came to Iowa during the forties and settled in Sigourney, Iowa, a town located in the southern part of the state. The names of the brothers and sisters of William I. Rosecrans follow: Charles, who served in the Union army and met his death at Memphis, Tennessee, while fighting for his country; Julia, wife of Gurley G. Pritchard and now living in Los Angeles, California; Edgar J., who married Jennie Speers, of Clear Lake, Iowa, and is now living in Seattle, Washington; Alice C., wife of Dr. G. F. McDowell, resides at Clear Lake, Iowa; Flora E., wife of Dr. Z. C. Green, of Garner, Iowa, where her death occurred in 1888; Harry M., who married Ida Wood, of Clear Lake, Iowa, and now resides in Dubuque, Iowa.

William I. Rosecrans removed with his parents to Clear Lake, Iowa, in 1866, and received his education in the public schools of that place, finishing with a course in Bailey's Business College, at Dubuque, Iowa. After this theoretical training, he received his practical training in the business house of his brother-in-law, G. G. Pritchard, his service beginning in 1878 and rounding to completion in 1885, at which time he purchased the business from his employer and formed a partnership with C. G. Pritchard, for the sale of general merchandise. In 1898 the partnership was dissolved and William I. Rosecrans entered the shoe business, which was conducted for seven years, in Belmond, Iowa. During these years he was also interested in the Johnson & Rosecrans Grain Company, of which he was a member. This company operated a chain of elevators throughout the state of Iowa. In 1905 the shoe business was disposed of and Mr. Rosecrans devoted his entire time to the successful operation of the grain business, which he has conducted to the present time.



In 1886 William I. Rosecrans was united in marriage to Catherine G. Finch, daughter of William and Gittie (Dummond) Finch and of this union two children were born: Leo M., who resides in Los Angeles, was married in July, 1914, to Margaret Brennan, of Los Angeles, California, who died five months later; G. Gladys, the second child, is at home with her parents.

In 1906 William I. Rosecrans was elected cashier of the Iowa Valley State Bank, which became the First National Bank of Belmond, Iowa, in 1907. For two years he served in this capacity and in January, 1914, he was chosen president of the bank, a position he still holds. Besides these many interests that have occupied his time and attention, he was, for nineteen years, agent of the United States Express Company, at Belmond, Iowa. He has also been interested in the great development of the West and is the owner of valuable land holdings in Iowa and Dakota, consisting of two hundred and eighty acres in the counties of Wright, near Cornelia, Hancock, near Garner, in Iowa, and four farms consisting of six hundred and forty acres, in Richland county, North Dakota.

William I. Rosecrans has found ample time to pursue the pleasant things of life and is a much traveled and widely read man but above all, he is just and humane, sociable and kind, and is the kind of man one loves to meet. He is a member of King Solomon Lodge No. 210, Ancient Free and Accepted Masons, also a Knights Templar and a noble of the Mystic Shrine.

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#### F. B. SHELDON.

The career of F. B. Sheldon, a native son of this county, is one of individual and unaided effort, and indicates the success to which the American boy can climb when he possesses within himself the necessary qualifications. Mr. Sheldon descends from a family whose members have inspired admiration and respect for several generations, and his father set for his children an example which they have followed, an example of bravery and loyalty, for he was a Civil War veteran.

F. B. Sheldon, who has occupied a conspicuous place in local banking circles, was born on December 16, 1866 in Vernon township, of this county, and is the son of Charles P. and Isabel (Stevenson) Sheldon. They were natives of Essex county, New York, where they were married. The father, a farmer, came to this state in 1854, and when the life of the nation was



threatened, he enlisted in the Second Kansas Cavalry, from Clayton county, Iowa, remaining in service from the fall of 1861 until the close of the war. In order for him to enlist from Kansas, it was necessary for him to go there from Clayton county.

Charles P. Sheldon was married in New York, and came from there to Iowa about 1854. In the spring of the year following the close of the war Mr. Sheldon came to Wright county and soon began improving the eighty acres of land which he obtained as a homestead. Here he lived until 1876, when he sold the property and bought an adjoining farm, where he lived until about four years before the time of his death, which occurred on February 26, 1912. He was a resident of Dows the last four years of his life. His devoted wife passed away in February, 1913. They were the parents of five children as follow: Frank R., of Williams, Iowa; Mrs. Menzill Engle King, of Winnepeg, Canada; Charles A., who lives in Wisconsin; F. B., the subject of this sketch; and Mrs. Hattie McCoy, of Spooner, Wisconsin.

After his schooling was completed—this consisting of a thorough public-school training—F. B. Sheldon taught for nineteen terms and followed the plow during summer vacations. Until his marriage he lived at home, and after his marriage moved to a farm in Vernon township where he lived until his removal to Rowan in 1901. Here he succeeded L. E. Powers, who was at that time cashier of the Bank of Rowan, which was a privately owned banking institution. Eight years later the institution was incorporated as the State Savings Bank, and Mr. Sheldon continued as its cashier. The bank was incorporated with a capital of fifteen thousand dollars.

The marriage ceremony which united in holy matrimony F. B. Sheldon and his wife occurred on December 24, 1890, in this county, Mrs. Sheldon being before this event, Blanche Coulter, and was born in February, 1872, in Coshocton county, Ohio. She was the daughter of J. R. and Jennie Coulter, natives of Ohio, they having come to Wright county about the year of 1885. One child has blessed this union, he being Guy R. Sheldon who was born on June 3, 1892. Having graduated from the local high school he later graduated from the Belmond school. He married Edna Schroeder. Their only child, Maxine, was born in March, 1915.

Mr. Sheldon is affiliated with the Republican party and although not an office seeker, has held a number of minor offices. He is a trustee of the Methodist Episcopal church, of which his family also are members. He is also trustee of the telephone company and of the school board. As cashier of the bank he acts as agent for several insurance companies.



Banking, or for that matter, any business interests, would look far for a better representative of clean, honest business methods than is F. B. Sheldon. The principles which have been the guide of a strong, admirable character, have also been his guide in the commercial world in which so much of his time and thought have been spent. And, too, he has never failed to lend his influence where it would effect the general good, and has supported those civic movements which every public-spirited citizen endorses, thus attesting to his good citizenship.

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### HENRY BURT.

From England have come to America many of her best and most useful men, if we may judge of the character and life of Henry Burt, the subject of this sketch. A man of industrious ways, intelligent in the use of his abilities, true to his determination to succeed and one who made himself a worthy part of the nation of his adoption, he is now one of the leading and most successful farmers of the county.

Henry Burt was born in England, thirty miles from the city of Bristol, the son of William and Betsie Burt, both of whom were natives of England. William Burt was a farmer of his native country, a pursuit which he followed until his death in the year 1894. Betsie Burt survived her husband and lives on the old Burt home place in England. William and Betsie Burt were the parents of thirteen children, seven of whom are living, only two of whom live in the United States, Henry and a brother, James, who lives in Omaha, Nebraska.

Henry Burt, after receiving his education in the schools of England, worked until he was twenty years of age as a farmer. He then came to America and located in Trumbull county, Ohio, where he lived for one year and then moved to Ashtabula county, Ohio, and lived there for two years, following which he was married and then went to Jamestown, Pennsylvania, where he lived for a short time and then went to the state of Illinois, where he located near Galesburg. There Henry Burt rented a farm of fifty acres, where he lived for one year, during which time he took out his first citizenship papers, and then he moved to Franklin county, Iowa, where he rented a farm for one year and then came to Wright county, Iowa, and rented a farm for seven years, following which he bought eighty acres of land at six dollars and twenty-five cents per acre. This land being prairie land and unimproved,



Henry Burt set out to bring it under cultivation, spending the sum of six thousand dollars for improvements in addition to the breaking up of the sod and the draining of the land. From time to time Mr. Burt added to his land holdings until now he is the owner of more than four hundred acres of land in Wright county, land all well cared for and highly cultivated. Henry Burt, as a farmer, has devoted considerable of his efforts to the raising and the feeding of stock, he at times feeding two carloads of cattle and one carload of hogs in a season. He has also had extensive dealings as a buyer and seller of cattle. The principal crops produced by this progressive farmer are corn and small grain, the corn averaging about fifty bushels to the acre and the small grain yielding about forty bushels to the acre. The greater part of the grain produced is fed to the stock on the place.

Henry Burt was married to Mary Ann Franklin, daughter of John Franklin and wife, and to this union were born the following children: William, John, Edward, Harry, Charles, Elmer, Eugene, Jesse, and Hattie, who is the wife of Charles Snyder, of Clarion. Of these children six are married.

Henry Burt, as a citizen, has proved himself of value to the community and is a man who at all times finds interest in those things which serve to make a greater town and better county. In politics, Mr. Burt is a Republican, one who takes an intelligent and progressive view of the principles for which the party stands. Mr. and Mrs. Burt are members of the Congregational church, and are highly esteemed by a large circle of friends in Wright county.

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### J. S. PRITCHARD.

In the sketch which follows are found evidences of a character which is truly great, having as its basic elements self-reliance, energy, patriotism, moral courage and a sincere desire to serve well his fellow men. Not content merely to hold public office, he, as a representative to the state Legislature, became the author and sponsor for such measures as meant permanent good to the commonwealth which formed his constituency. He is a fearless advocate of right principles in action and judged by the amount of service he has rendered may always be considered one of the county's great men. Beginning to earn money while he was still in short trousers, without a father's help, he was first a soldier, then a legislator, and later, one



of the large stock dealers in northern Iowa. J. S. Pritchard, a native of Washtenaw county, Michigan, was born on May 6, 1847, his father being Philo A. Pritchard. His mother was before her marriage, Eliza Woodard.

The parents of Mr. Pritchard were born in Connecticut and Batavia, New York, respectively. The Pritchards are of Welsh descent and belong to one of the old families of this country. The grandmother of the present subject was a Sherman, and a descendant of Roger Sherman, who was one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence. Philo Pritchard was a blacksmith, and followed his trade from early manhood until the time of his death, which occurred in Michigan. He and his wife were the parents of ten children, namely: Charles O., Mrs. Helen Whited, Mrs. Lucy J. Hanning, Martin, Mrs. Lucina Christian, Gurley G., Mrs. Susan Treat, J. S., Mrs. Edna Willis and Philo A., Jr.

The father of J. S. Pritchard died when his son was a child of six, and the boy began his brave struggle for existence at the tender age of eleven years, having attended school until that time. At that age he began supporting himself. The years of his youth and young manhood were spent in such various kinds of employment as he was able to find, and at the time of his marriage he began the serious work of farming. While his family came to Belmond in 1856, it was 1877 before he purchased land, having rented property up to that time. He purchased a tract of uncultivated land where he lived until the year 1891. This was during the pioneer period when there were no railroads in the state of Iowa. In order to reach Belmond these early settlers traveled on the Illinois Central railroad as far as Dunleith, Illinois, now called East Dubuque, and were ferried across the Mississippi river and from there drove through rough, uncultivated territory to Wright county. In 1856, the ancestors of Mr. Pritchard built the first frame house in Wright county and in order to do so, cut the timber themselves and hauled it to be sawed at the old water-power mill in Belmond. Before his purchase of farm property, Mr. Pritchard had been engaged in the buying and selling of stock, an enterprise which he continued even after he made his residence in the town.

The next chapter of Mr. Pritchard's life has to do with his war experiences, for imbued with the spirit of patriotism he became a soldier, enlisting on January 1, 1864, in Company E, Second Regiment, Iowa Cavalry. He was then just sixteen years of age, and served until the close of the war. He was engaged in scout and skirmish duty which led up to the battle of Nashville, duties which extended over a period of seventeen days. He also was a participant in the battles of Franklin, Nashville, Duck River, and a



great many other lesser engagements. He was mustered out on October 25, 1865, in Selma, Alabama. Immediately after the close of the war he engaged in the selling of insurance in the South.

After his return home Mr. Pritchard became active in public affairs as well as in private life and in 1893 was elected to the board of county supervisors, a position which he held for six years, during three of which he was chairman of the board. It was during his term of office that the present drainage system was established, this involving a lawsuit which Mr. Pritchard carried through the supreme court, which established the validity of the law supporting and authorizing the system. Mr. Pritchard's public service brought him before the people in such a way that he was chosen to represent them in the state Legislature at the election in 1901. His term of service lasted for six years, during which time he was chairman of the committee on agriculture for four years. He was instrumental in securing the passage of the new drainage law which was enacted in 1906, and was also an important factor in securing the Lake drainage law. He was author of the bill establishing the practice of allowing passes to stock men who were engaged in shipping stock to or from market. He himself was a leader among stock dealers. He handled several thousand head of stock for a number of years.

J. S. Pritchard and Florine Bloom were married in Wright county on December 7, 1869, the bride being a native of Clearfield county, Pennsylvania, and a daughter of Isaac and Leah (Hoover) Bloom. They were natives of Pennsylvania, both being descendants of German ancestors. Mrs. Pritchard came to Iowa and located in Wright county. At that time she had a sister living in Hancock county. To Mr. and Mrs. Pritchard were born four children, three of whom are living. Robert H. is the husband of Laura Gravatt, and they live in Chicago. Their only son is named Shuber. Walter Sherman married Jennie Finch, and they with their eight children live in Garner, Iowa. Their children are named Catharine, Paul, John, Elizabeth, Marion, Walter, Harry and Robert. Irving, who died in 1890, had married Emma Pollick. No children were born to this union. Laura A. became Mrs. Alexander McGregor and lives in Belmond. She is the mother of two children, Bloom and Mary. Mrs. Pritchard passed away on April 9, 1914. She was a faithful wife and mother, and was devoted to her family, her church and the clubs which she felt were worth while. She was a very active member of the Congregational church as well as of the Woman's Relief Corps, in whose activities she was deeply



interested. A charter member of the Progress Club, which was the first woman's club of Belmond, she was at different times its president and secretary.

Mr. Pritchard is a charter member of Whited Post No. 247, Grand Army of the Republic, of Belmond. Mr. Pritchard is also a member of the Ancient Free and Accepted Masons, having joined Radiant Lodge No. 366, in 1875, while in Alden, Iowa. He is a member of the Royal Arch Masons in Garner; the council degrees in Eagle Grove; Knights Templar in Iowa Falls; Scottish Rite in Des Moines, Iowa, and the Za Ga Jig Shrine temple in Des Moines. Mr. Pritchard's political interests have been always with the Republican party and he is proud of the fact that he voted for Abraham Lincoln when seventeen years old, his being a soldier permitting him to vote at that youthful period of his life.

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#### E. D. TOMPKINS, M. D.

Endowed with unusual foresight and ability in his chosen profession, Dr. E. D. Tompkins, of Clarion, Wright county, Iowa, has won his way to the heart of an admiring public. In the present commercial age it becomes a source of deep pleasure to review the life of one who, by his achievements and example of integrity, is worthy to act as an incentive to those who contemplate making the medical profession their life work. That E. D. Tompkins has raised his ideals far above the sordid things of life is evidenced in the liberal patronage which he enjoys and in the fact that since the beginning of his practice he has become one of the leaders in the life of Wright county.

E. D. Tompkins is one of two children born to the union of W. C. and Jean (Duncan) Tompkins, and his birth occurred on March 10, 1875, in Clear Lake, Iowa. W. C. Tompkins is a native of New York state, and the meager education which he received was gained in the schools of his native state. At the tender age of thirteen years he was compelled by force of circumstances to become the arbiter of his own destiny, and with the undaunted courage of his time accepted employment on a farm. Longing for the free life of the West he removed to Illinois when a young man, and was engaged as driver of a stage coach in that state. Later, his location was changed to Iowa Falls, Iowa, where he was employed for the purpose



of transporting freight from Iowa City, Iowa, to Iowa Falls, this service being conducted with the aid of an ox team.

Shortly after the beginning of the Civil War, W. C. Tompkins responded to his country's call and enlisted in the Twelfth United States Infantry of the Fifth Army Corps, and served as a Union soldier for more than three years. Among the numerous battles in which he was engaged were the ones at Rappahannock station, Mine run, Spottsylvania court house, the Wilderness (three days), Cold Harbor, Petersburg, Laurel Hill, North Anne, Bethesda church, and Weldon railroad. He was taken prisoner and was incarcerated in Libby prison, Belle Island, Salisbury and Pemberton and was exchanged on March 9, 1865, at Big Bend, on the James river. His entire captivity covered a period of eighteen months.

After the close of this struggle W. C. Tompkins removed to Clear Lake, Iowa, where he was employed by a lumber company, of which he became the manager some few years later, and in 1880 was elected to the responsible position of county treasurer of Cerro Gordo county, Iowa, which position he filled in an able manner covering a period of four years. During this service he was located in Mason City, Iowa. At the close of his term as county treasurer he engaged in the wholesale grocery business for some years, but finally returned to Clear Lake, Iowa, where he purchased the lumber company of which he was formerly manager. He continued in the lumber business until 1905, at which time he retired, and is now living in Clear Lake. Jean (Duncan) Tompkins, wife of W. C. Tompkins, was a native of Canada, and the mother of two children, Bertha and E. D. Bertha died in infancy.

E. D. Tompkins received his education in various schools and colleges of his native state, having been a student in the public schools of Mason City, Iowa, and a graduate of the high school at Clear Lake, Iowa. Some time after his graduation he became a student in the Iowa State University for a period of four years. The degree of Bachelor of Science was received at the University of Iowa, while his degree of Doctor of Medicine was received at the University of Pennsylvania with the class of 1899. After completing his medical education he served one year as hospital interne, later establishing his practice in Clarion, Iowa, in which town he has continued to make his home, and is one of the popular physicians in this community.

In September, 1900, E. D. Tompkins was united in marriage to May Thompson, daughter of Jasper and Clara (King) Thompson, and to them



his been born one child, Winslow. In connection with his private practice, Doctor Tompkins has served in the capacity of county coroner, and at present is employed as surgeon for the Chicago & Great Western railway, at Clarion, Iowa. He is a Mason and a member of the commandery, and is president of the Clarion school board. Politically, he is an enthusiastic adherent of the Republican party, and his influence is keenly felt in all campaigns and elections of all nominees of that political organization. In the pursuit of his duties as a physician he has not forgotten his obligation as a citizen and keeps fully abreast of the times on all issues. The fine discrimination which he uses in everything pertaining to important decisions makes his opinion much sought for, and his deep sympathy and wisdom in dealing with all forms of human suffering has made his patronage both large and appreciative.

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### JOHN D. DENNISON.

Few men of Wright county and vicinity were as generally honored and respected as was John D. Dennison, the subject of this sketch. A man of unselfish nature, genial in manner, hospitable and cordial in his dealings with men, his memory is today revered by the community at large, among whom he lived for so long a period.

John D. Dennison was born in the state of New York, on August 26, 1848, the son of John D. and Abagol (Love) Dennison, both of whom were natives of New York state. John D. Dennison, Sr., was a farmer and a shoemaker, a trade which he followed for some years in the Empire state, and then went to the state of Wisconsin, where he lived for fourteen years, after which he went to Dallas county, Iowa, living there for one year and then came to Wright county, bought three hundred and sixty acres of land in Lake township, where he lived for one year and died in 1872. John D. and Abagol Dennison were the parents of five boys and one girl, Mary, John D., Alonzo, Samuel, Edwin and George, all of whom are dead with the exception of John D. and Edwin, who lives in the state of Kansas.

John D. Dennison, the subject of this sketch, received his education in the state of Wisconsin, where he attended classes until eighteen years of age, after which he helped his father on the farm until he was twenty-one years of age, at which time he was married, during the year of 1868, to Junia Gorton, daughter of Joseph and Margretta (Casperus) Gorton. Jos-



eph Gorton was born in the state of Pennsylvania, where he farmed, and then went to the state of Wisconsin, engaged as a farmer for a few years, and then went to Fayette county, Iowa, and bought one hundred and sixty acres of land, afterwards moving to Wright county, where he lived for seven years. Margretta Casporus was born in Holland and came to America at an early age, where she was married to Joseph Gorton. Junia (Gorton) Dennison was born in New York state, where she lived until going to Wisconsin with her parents, in which state she received her education, leaving school at the age of fifteen years and living at home until her marriage, when seventeen years of age. Joseph and Margretta Gorton were the parents of the following children: William, Arsonay, Anna, Amastachia, Junia, Eugene, Hugh, Mary and Israel.

After his marriage, John D. Dennison bought a farm of eighty acres in the state of Wisconsin, where he farmed for one year and then sold his land and went to Dallas county, Iowa, where he purchased three hundred and twenty acres of land twelve miles south of the town of Perry, Iowa. He lived at this place for one year and then came to Wright county, during the year of 1871, and bought one hundred and sixty acres of land in Lincoln township, a place without improvement and with only five acres of broken ground. This land John D. Dennison improved and cultivated and after five years sold it and bought the heirs' part of his father's farm of three hundred and twenty acres, which was located four miles from Clarion, now known as the John Meecham farm. For this land Mr. Dennison paid the sum of five dollars per acre, land which he proceeded to improve, eventually expending the sum of twelve thousand dollars for necessary farm buildings, the lumber for which was hauled from the town of Webster City, thirty-two miles distant. On this farm four hundred apple trees were set out, and a large grove planted, making a comfortable and convenient farm, a place where John D. Dennison lived for nine years.

Mr. Dennison bought one hundred and sixty acres of land in Clarion, where he farmed until the Great Western railroad came to Clarion, when he sold his land to that corporation. Following this sale Mr. Dennison bought one hundred and sixty acres of land three miles south of Clarion and from there went to the state of Idaho, where he took up a claim and where he lived for fifteen months, after which time he returned to Clarion, where, on April 12, 1912, he died. John D. Dennison, during the year of 1861, enlisted with the Forty-eighth Regiment, Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry, for one hundred days' service; but while engaged in his duties contracted typhoid



fever, as a result of which he was mustered out of the service eighty days from the time of his enlistment.

To John D. and Junia Dennison were born the following children: Laura, who married E. J. Cameron, foreman of the factory of the Moline Plow Company, at Moline, Illinois, at which city they live; John, an attorney at Des Moines, Iowa, who married Lula Clark, to whom have been born two children, John and one who died in infancy. Joseph, a physician, who is deceased; Daisy, who married J. F. Auner, a physician of Waverly, Iowa, to whom have been born one child, Joseph. Louisa, who married Robert O'Connor, and lives at Fargo, North Dakota; and Robert E., who married Elizabeth Burns, to whom have been born one child, June.

John D. Dennison was probably best known as a public man, one who was willing to give some of the best years of his life to the alleviation of hardship and suffering among those less fortunate than he, and a man who amid his busy affairs did not neglect his duty to the community in matters of public interest. For a number of years this commendable citizen served as commissioner for the poor and as a result of his tenderness and sympathy he won the hearts of those whom he served, as well as the admiration of his co-workers. As school director, Mr. Dennison displayed his ability in another field of endeavor and showed his kindly interest in those things which aid in the betterment of living conditions. In politics, John D. Dennison was a Republican, one who as a good citizen aligned himself with the party which he thought would serve best and one who did his part in bringing about those things most desired. Mrs. Dennison is a member of the Congregational church.

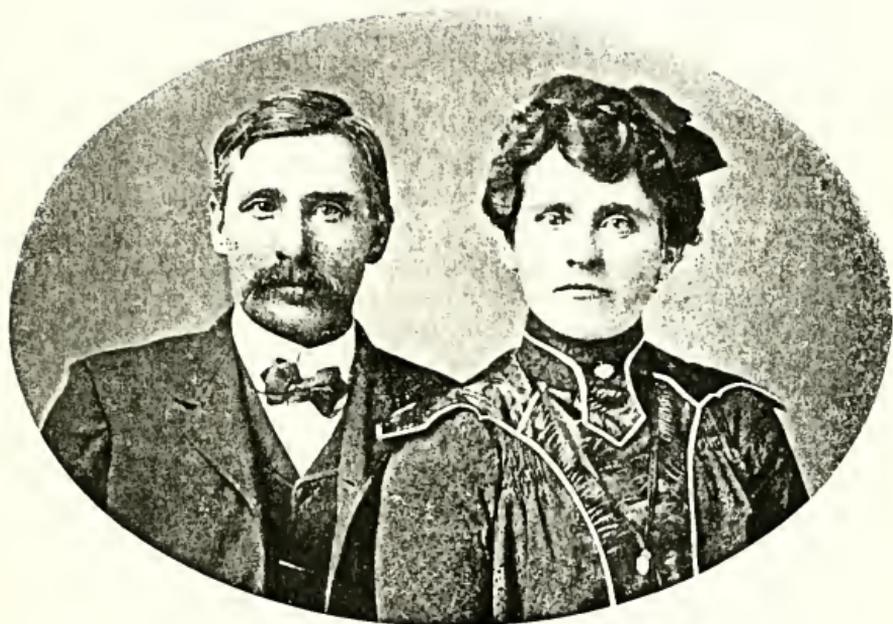
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### OSMAN J. LEWIS.

Among the well-known and successful farmers of Wright county, one who has taken an important part in the affairs of the township, both in public office and as a private citizen, is Osman J. Lewis, the subject of this sketch. One who from a busy life has found time to devote to the interests of others and one who has demonstrated himself to be a man of no ordinary ability in the management of those things to which he has been entrusted, he is entitled to a place among the records of leading citizens of this county.

Osman J. Lewis was born in Story county, Iowa, June 25, 1869, the son of Jonas and Caroline (Sheldale) Lewis, the father a native of Norway





MR. AND MRS. OSMAN J. LEWIS.



and the mother a native of Illinois. Jonas Lewis received his early education in Norway, was trained as a farmer, and when twenty years of age came to America. After landing in New York, he went to the state of Ohio, and worked as a day laborer on a farm for a few years and then went to Story county, Iowa, about the year 1860, and worked for a few years as a farm hand. Later he purchased eighty acres of land in Story county and from time to time added to his holdings until he now has three hundred and thirty-three acres of land, where he makes his home. To Jonas and Caroline Lewis were born eight children, Levy, Osman, Anna, Carrie, Maggie, Oscar, John and David. Of these children, Osman Lewis, the subject of this sketch, is the only one living in Wright county.

Osman Lewis received his early education in the country schools of Story county, where he attended classes until eighteen years of age and then until he was twenty years of age he aided his father on the farm, after which he rented a part of the home place for three years. In the fall of 1892 he bought one hundred and sixty acres of land in Wright county, and in the spring of the year 1893 moved to his farm. For his land Mr. Lewis had paid twenty dollars an acre, the land having no improvements. He immediately proceeded to improve his place, in all expending about seven thousand dollars for such things as were necessary to make the farm modern and convenient for agricultural purposes.

Mr. Lewis has his land well tilled, has set out a two-acre grove and has made his land among the most productive of the county. Each year this progressive farmer plants large quantities of corn and small grain, the corn averaging fifty bushels to the acre and the small grain averaging some forty bushels to the acre. From his crops, Osman J. Lewis sells some of his produce and some he feeds to his live stock, about forty head of hogs each year being sent to the market at Clarion from this farm.

On December 15, 1892, Osman J. Lewis was married to Mary Shefvland, the daughter of O. O. and Lizzie Shefvland, and one of a family of seven children. To Osman and Mary Lewis were born no children, but at the home are two adopted children, Edward and Regina.

Osman J. Lewis, in politics, is a Republican, and as a member of the party he has represented his fellow citizens as the occupant of the office of school director, an office which he filled with efficiency for three years. Mr. Lewis and his family are members of St. Olaf Norwegian Lutheran church and have taken a conscientious part in the work of that congregation.



## JOHN L. McALPINE.

Citizens of the present generation living in Wright county, Iowa, can never repay its pioneers for the hardships they suffered and the sacrifices they made in the early history of the county when there were no railroads, no improved highways and the land was practically all uncultivated. John L. McAlpine, postmaster at Belmont, and a retired farmer of Wright county, has seen this portion of the state transformed from a wild and desolate prairie into beautiful and fertile farms. Coming here with his parents at an early date, he has had a large part not only in the development of the agricultural resources of the county but in the public life as well, having served in many important positions of trust and responsibility.

John L. McAlpine is a native of Winchester Center, Connecticut, born on January 19, 1861. He is the son of John J. and Hulda L. (Evans) McAlpine, the former of whom was the son of Samuel A. and Katie (Lukes) McAlpine. They were natives of Scotland and Germany, respectively. Hulda L. Evans was the daughter of John and Hulda (DeWolf) Evans, who were natives of Wales, and France, respectively.

John J. McAlpine was born in Boiling Springs, Pennsylvania, and his mother in Litchfield county, Connecticut. John J. McAlpine, the great-grandfather of John L., was one of the first members of the McAlpine family to come to America. He settled with his brothers, Samuel and Herbert, and his sister, Xenia, in Connecticut, some time before the Revolutionary War. There the family has lived for many generations, John L. McAlpine's father being the first member of the family who is not buried in the family cemetery in Connecticut.

During the War of the Rebellion, John J. McAlpine, father of John L., organized a company which was a part of the Third Regiment, Connecticut Volunteer Infantry. After being in the field for six months, he was taken ill and returned home. He was relieved temporarily and while away his company was engaged in the battle of Bull Run. All the members of the company except three were killed. John J. McAlpine was retired after the battle and never returned to the service. In September, 1869, the family came west to Iowa, shipping a stock of merchandise to Alden, which was then the end of the Illinois Central railroad. From Alden the merchandise was hauled by teams to Belmont. The family first rented an old building and the father bought out the only grocery and drug-store in the county, combining the stock with the stock which he had shipped



through from the East. For a brief period the McAlpine store was the only one of its kind in Wright county.

In 1870 Mr. McAlpine built a business block on what is now known as Main street, in Belmond, and there he continued in business for thirteen years. The building was one square east of the river, on the south side of the street and on the northwest corner of the block. John J. McAlpine then sold out and engaged in farming with his son, John L., the subject of this sketch. He died on the farm four miles south of Belmond, after having reared a family of three boys and one daughter, who had died in infancy. All of the sons are still living, namely: W. E. McAlpine, who is the present marshal of Belmond; George, who is the agent for the Chicago Great Western railroad at Council Bluffs; and John L., the subject of this sketch.

John L. McAlpine lived at home until he attained his majority. He attended school in the winter and worked at home on the farm during the summer months. He also hunted and trapped during his spare hours. In 1881 Mr. McAlpine purchased one hundred and sixty acres of land from Captain Terrell. Before purchasing the farm, however, he had operated a slaughter house and a meat market. This was before there were any railroads in Clarion. Mr. McAlpine made four trips every week to supply the settlers with meat. The farm comprised one hundred and sixty acres of wild prairie land, for which he paid eight dollars an acre. He set to work to improve the farm and it is now considered one of the most highly improved farms in Wright county. In the meantime he has added ninety acres to the original one hundred and sixty acres. All the land lies in sections 12 and 13, of Grant township. Mr. McAlpine lived on the farm until 1912, when he removed to Belmont. On February 2, 1914, he was appointed postmaster of Belmond, which at the time was a third-class post office.

On August 15, 1886, John L. McAlpine was married, in Wright county, Iowa, to Catherine Quigley, a native of County Monaghan, Ireland, the daughter of Frank and Mary (Sherry) Quigley, both of whom were also born in County Monaghan, Ireland. Mrs. McAlpine accompanied her brother, Patrick Quigley, to America in 1880 and located with him first at Decorah, Iowa, but they had relatives living in Wright county and it was here that Mr. McAlpine met his future wife. Mrs. McAlpine's father died in Ireland and after his death the mother came to America with four of her children in 1893. The children were Mary, Peter, James and Mrs. Bridget Gaffaney.



Mr. and Mrs. John L. McAlpine have had four children, two sons and two daughters. John J. was born on July 16, 1887, and married Anna Olsen, of Iowa township. They have two children, Francis and Malvin. Llewellyn, born on March 17, 1888, married Barbara Sagger, of Waverly. They have two children. Ina, born on January 5, 1890, married Sylvester Cota, of Mason City, where they now live. She was a student at the St. Francis Academy at Mason City at the time it burned and it was she who discovered the fire and aroused the Sisters and the students, probably saving the lives of a great number of people. Ava, born on November 6, 1893, is the deputy postmaster. She was a clerk in the office before her father was appointed. Mr. McAlpine's two sons cultivate the home farm.

A staunch Democrat, John L. McAlpine served as school director for three years and was president of the school board for twelve years in both Belmond and Grant townships. He also served as township trustee for nine years in Grant township. Mr. McAlpine and family are members of the Catholic church. He is a member of the Knights of Columbus and the Catholic Order of Foresters and was one of the organizers of the latter lodge.

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#### U. B. TRACY.

Prominent among the respected citizens of Wright county, Iowa, is U. B. Tracy, who has for thirty-five years been identified with the business and political circles of this locality, and has in every way established himself as a man of high ideals and honest purpose. No community can thrive for long without its men of high moral and intellectual standards, for they are the very foundation of a solid, social or commercial structure.

U. B. Tracy is the eldest of five children born to the union of Albert Tracy and Lucretia Jewett, and his birth occurred on October 22, 1860, in Warren county, Pennsylvania. Albert Tracy was a native of New York, but removed to Pennsylvania, where he received his education, after which he became an employee in the local saw-mills and followed this occupation until he became head sawyer in one of the first steam saw-mills erected in that part of the country. Tiring of the routine connected with the manufacture of lumber, he purchased a farm, which he cultivated for a short time, finally selling it to the oil interests of that locality and returned to New York, where he purchased a farm and engaged in agricultural pursuits until 1885. Enthused with the reports of prosperity to be gained in



the pursuit of agriculture in the state of Iowa, he removed there and located near Belmond, Wright county, Iowa, where he became the owner of one hundred and sixty acres of land. He was engaged in general farming and was so successful that his holdings were increased until he became the owner of land in Minnesota and South Dakota as well as in Iowa. After a successful career in his chosen vocation he retired to Belmond, Iowa, where his death occurred in 1910. Lucretia (Jewett) Tracy was a native of Pennsylvania, and after a long life of service to her family she passed away in 1887. Of the five children born to their union all are living except one.

U. B. Tracy is indebted to the schools of New York state for his education and for his experience received while teaching school in that state. In 1880, at the age of twenty years, he removed to Iowa and located at Belmond, where he became engaged in the operation of a private bank known as the Bank of Belmond, in which capacity he served for five years. In 1885 he removed to Clarion, Iowa, where he was appointed deputy county treasurer and served in that office for five years. Owing to his ability and knowledge he was induced, in 1891, to serve in the capacity of assistant cashier in the First National Bank of Clarion, and after two years of service he was promoted to the position of cashier.

U. B. Tracy was united in marriage to Alida Simmons, daughter of Hiram Simmons, in April, 1890. They are the parents of one child, Albert H. Politically, his interest is for the Republican party. Religiously, U. B. Tracy follows the dictates of no creed, but is deeply impressed with all manifestations of practical Christianity and applies in his own life the creed of justice, tolerance and morality.

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### JESSE SMITH.

His life o'ershadowed by the tragic death of his father, which occurred when he was but a child of nine years, Jesse Smith, furniture dealer and undertaker of Clarion, Wright county, Iowa, has overcome many obstacles in life and has achieved a most unusual success in his chosen line of endeavor. Life has been kind to him in many ways, and his ability to take cognizance of his blessings, instead of his trials, has been the means of establishing a comfortable competency and an independent business.

Jesse Smith was born on April 26, 1856, in Pennsylvania, and is the son of John and Caroline (Rummel) Smith, both natives of Germany.



John Smith received his education in his native land and emigrated to America when a young man, locating in Pennsylvania, where he engaged in the grist-mill business, which vocation he followed until his death. In 1864 he removed to Iowa, traveling as far as Boone by rail and thence to Ft. Dodge by stage. For two years he operated a mill at Ft. Dodge, Iowa, where his death occurred by drowning. While trying to cross the Iowa river at Ft. Dodge, near the mill dam, his row boat was overturned by the swiftness of the current, and before help could be obtained he was drowned. Jesse Smith was then a child of nine years and was playing on the bank where he was a helpless witness to this tragic occurrence. Of the seven children born to John and Caroline (Rummel) Smith, Jesse Smith is the only remaining child. Caroline (Rummel) Smith passed away on May 15, 1890.

Jesse Smith is indebted to the schools of Pennsylvania and Ft. Dodge, Iowa, for his education, following which he became engaged in the cabinet-making trade for a number of years. Later he removed to Marshalltown, where he continued as cabinet-maker until his removal to Ackley, Iowa, where he worked at his trade until 1883. He then removed to the town of Clarion, Wright county, Iowa, and engaged in the furniture and undertaking business in a very limited way, but has continued to increase his stock until at the present time he has one of the largest and finest lines in the county and his patronage is a large and appreciative one.

Jesse Smith was united in marriage to Lula Abrams, daughter of John Abrams, and to this union five children have been born, Granville, Minnie, Maude, and two children who died in infancy. Granville married Mildred Sturgeon, and they are the parents of one child. Maude became the wife of J. C. Carman, and they became the parents of two children, Jesse W. and Lenna. Maude (Smith) Carman is deceased. Lula (Abrams) Smith, the first wife of Jesse Smith, passed to her eternal rest, and he then married Lena Leininger, daughter of John Leininger.

Jesse Smith is very active in fraternal circles and is a member of the Ancient Free and Accepted Masons and of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows. He is also a member of the Knights of Pythias and of the Modern Woodmen of America. He is independent in his political faith, believing that the best man should be elected to office regardless of party affiliations.

To be successful in any business venture, one must please the public, and Jesse Smith has surely devoted his time and attention to satisfying the



demands of his many patrons. His prosperity can easily be measured by the regard in which he is held. He has built for himself treasures of friendship that are both loyal and lasting, and one and all speak of him in terms of highest praise.

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### JAMES M. JONES.

Among the prominent farmers and citizens of Wright county, Iowa, who became well-to-do during a past generation in this county, was the late James M. Jones, who was born in Ohio, October 2, 1835, and who was the son of James and Barbara Jones. Mr. Jones' parents were of Welsh descent. The father was married in Ohio and lived in that state the greater part of his life. He was a school teacher by occupation. In 1855 he immigrated to Benton county, Iowa, and taught school for a number of years in Benton county. He was also county superintendent for some time. There were fourteen children in the family of James and Barbara Jones, besides one adopted child. The family consisted of ten daughters and four sons.

James M. Jones was educated in Ohio, and when he was twenty-one years old he purchased a farm of eighty acres, which he cultivated until the breaking out of the Civil War.

Early in the Civil War, Mr. Jones enlisted in Company A, Twenty-eighth Regiment, Iowa Volunteer Infantry, and served in the Union army three years and ten months. He took part in thirteen important battles, among which were Fort Gibson, Raymond, Champion Hill, Black River and the siege of Vicksburg. At the siege of Vicksburg he was under fire for fifty days, but in the latter part of this siege was detached as a hospital steward on account of sickness. After having been detailed as a hospital steward for ten months, he rejoined his regiment at New Orleans, which proceeded from New Orleans to Washington, D. C., by water. After marching through the Shenandoah valley, the regiment joined Sherman at Bolivar Heights and Cedar Creek. Mr. Jones remained with his regiment until mustered out of service.

Upon the close of the Civil War, Mr. Jones returned to Iowa and settled in Benton county, where he purchased another eighty-acre farm. He added to this farm until he had one hundred and sixty acres of prairie land and two hundred acres of timber land. He was a successful stockman while a resident of Benton county, and upon selling his holdings in



that county moved to Wright county in 1893. Upon coming to Wright county, in partnership with his children, he purchased eleven hundred acres of land and moved to a two-hundred-acre farm in Lincoln township. He lived on this farm continuously until 1903, when he moved to Clarion and retired from active life. He died in Clarion on January 10, 1905.

After moving to Benton county, Iowa, Mr. Jones was married to Mary Irving, and to them were born five children, three sons and two daughters, Florence, Harry, Clarence, Jennie and Elmer. Florence, Jennie and Elmer are deceased. Harry married Esther Barnell, and lives near Austin, Minnesota. They have seven children. Clarence married Nettie McBeth and lives in Cedar Rapids. They have two children.

Mr. Jones' first wife died, and after her death he was married, secondly, in 1888, to Emma B. Metzger, the daughter of John and Elizabeth (Germar) Metzgar, who were farmers in the state of Ohio. Mrs. Jones was born in Illinois and there received her education. She was one of a family of six children born to her parents. No children were born to James M. and Emma B. (Metzger) Jones.

The late James M. Jones was a devout member of the Presbyterian church at Clarion. He was a member of the local post of the Grand Army of the Republic, and is politically identified with the Democratic party. James M. Jones was a good man and a good citizen, who worthily performed all of the duties of life, both public and private. At the time of his death he left, besides the members of his immediate family, a host of friends to mourn his loss.

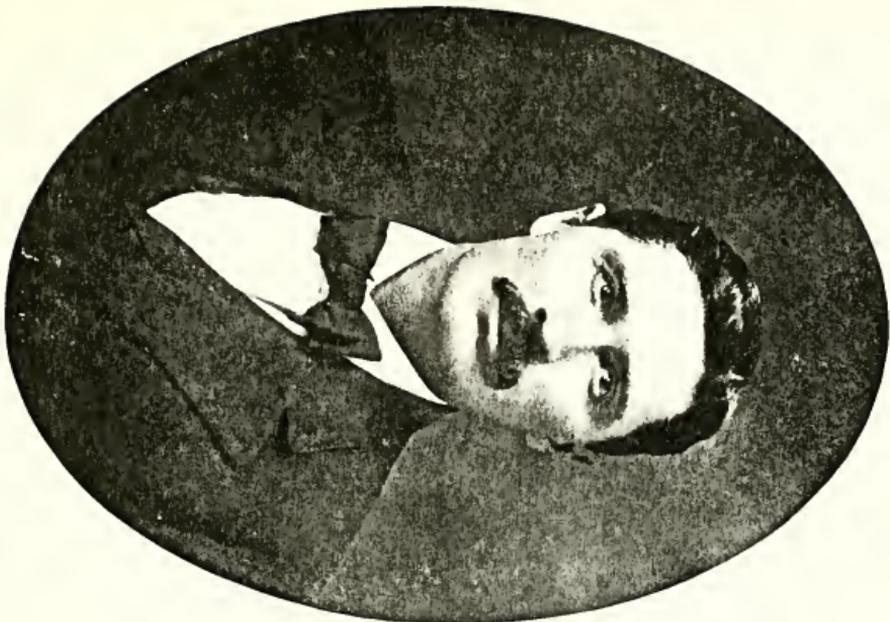
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### JOHN K. SHEPLEE.

One of the most substantial farmers of Wright county is John K. Sheplee who, because of his years of labor, is able now to live a life of comparative ease. Combining the occupations of farming and selling real estate, his success in both speaks well for his good management and steady application to the task he set himself to accomplish. John K. Sheplee, who has lived in this county since he was eight years old, was born in Burlington, Iowa, in September, 1863.

John K. Sheplee is a son of O. C. and Cordelia (Ware) Sheplee, both natives of Vermont, where the former engaged in agriculture until 1856 when he moved west and settled for a short time in Ohio. He engaged in mercantile business for several years in Burlington, Iowa, and later became





MR. AND MRS. JOHN K. SHEPHERD.





a traveling man, his merchandise being boots and shoes which he sold for twelve years. In 1871 he purchased a farm of one hundred and sixty acres in Grant township, this county, and having broken the sod erected an unpretentious house and a barn of the old-fashioned type and there he farmed until 1895. He then retired from active work and moved to Clarion where he died at the age of eighty-seven, having been born on January 14, 1828. Of the four children of Mr. and Mrs. O. C. Sheplee, three are living, these being W. W., George B. and John K. Henry, the youngest son, is deceased.

The boyhood life of John Sheplee was not unlike that of other farmers' boys at that time. He went to school near his home and worked with his father on the farm until he became of age. He and his elder brother then bought a farm of three hundred and twenty acres in Norway township and for eight years farmed in partnership. They then sold out, divided the profits and each took up farming independently. John Sheplee bought a farm of two hundred and eighty acres in Norway township and has increased his holdings until he now owns seven hundred and fifty acres in this county. The entire tract is drained with tile. While engaged in farming and stock raising, he disposed of from six to eight carloads of hogs and cattle each year, until his removal to Clarion, which occurred in 1911. He then took up the real-estate business.

In 1886 John K. Sheplee was married to Viola Waite, a daughter of George B. and Lucinda (Babcock) Waite. A family of six children grew up, two of whom are married. Edith, the eldest daughter, is now Mrs. E. E. Evans and her sister Winifred, born next, married Morrill King. The remaining children, John, Ruth, Esther and Kenneth, are at home. Mrs. Sheplee was born in Wisconsin, although her parents were natives of Maine. G. B. Waite engaged in the lumber business in his native state until his thirtieth year when he moved to Wisconsin, bought a farm and there pursued agricultural work for forty years. Moving then to this county, he farmed here for a few years, and on retiring moved to Clarion where he died in 1898, his wife passing away six years later. Of their eight children, four are now living.

Mr. and Mrs. John K. Sheplee are active members in the Congregational church, in whose work and worship they have been interested for many years. Mr. Sheplee votes with the Republican party. He was for six years county supervisor, an office which he filled with credit both to himself and to the commonwealth which he served.



## JOHN SPAVIN.

A native of England who in America demonstrated his loyalty to the country of his adoption as a soldier fighting for the preservation of the Union in the Civil War, and a man who in various ways had lived a life of interest and event, John Spavin is entitled to mention of his life and activities in a work of this kind.

John Spavin was born in Yorkshire, England, on April 29, 1838, the son of William and Anna (Green) Spavin, both of whom were born and lived in Yorkshire during their entire life. William Spavin was land overseer for Lord Longsbury, a position that William Spavin inherited from his father and a position that he retained until his death in England. William and Anna Spavin were the parents of seven children, two of whom are now living, and of these two, John Spavin is the only one living in America.

John Spavin was educated in his native land of England and after leaving school he became a shepherd boy, and had the care of about five thousand sheep for some time. He then took up the trade of a machinist, as an apprentice, for six months and then came to America and located at Rochester, New York, during the year 1857. Shortly following John Spavin went to Canada, north of the city of Toronto, where he assisted in the surveying of government land for the English government, for about two years, and then returned to the United States and located at Utica, New York, where he worked in a machine shop and learned the trade of a machinist. Three years later the War of the Rebellion broke out and John Spavin enlisted with a New York volunteer regiment, serving in this command for three years, during which time he was engaged in the battle of the Wilderness and the battle of Shiloh. When mustered out of the service, at the end of the war, John Spavin returned to New York, and located at Elmira, where he remained for a short time and then went to Rockford, Illinois, and worked at his trade for five years, at the end of which time he found himself in failing health and consequently he went to the Indian Territory, where, for three years, he lived among the Indians. Later he went to Ft. Scott, Kansas, and followed his trade in railroad shops at that place for four years and then, during the year 1881, he went to Iowa and located at Clarion, where for some years he engaged in general work, and for some time followed the business of tree planting. Afterwards John Spavin served as caretaker and janitor of school buildings for four years and then for the term of fourteen years he was janitor and custodian of the Wright county court house.



During the year 1861 John Spavin was married to Mary Haydock, the daughter of Thomas and Sarah Haydock, and to this union were born four children, two of whom died in infancy. Of those living, A. W. now lives at Minneapolis, Minnesota; Charles H. lives in Sioux county, Iowa.

After an active and industrious life, John Spavin has retired from activity and lives alone at Clarion, his wife, Mary, having died in the month of September, 1912. The life of John Spavin has been a life of use and value to his country and to the various localities to which his affairs and his business have taken him. He is today one of the respected and honored men among that colony of retired citizens who are the pride of Wright county and of the town of Clarion. The political affiliation of John Spavin is with the Republican party, which he has served long and well. Mr. Spavin is a communicant of the Church of England.

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#### RICHARD FRANCE.

A glance at the life history of those men in any given locality who have acquired competency will indicate that such has been gained in the majority of cases by hard, grinding toil and concentration upon their tasks. Their good fortune has not been handed down by wealthy ancestors nor has it been presented as a gift. It has been earned. When these men have been farmers, their accumulation of wealth has been the result of "mixing brains with soil." It has not been the result of accident. Richard France belongs to this type of men, and a war record for bravery and loyalty is evidence that, in time of stress, he can be depended upon to do his part, and this at whatever personal sacrifice. Richard France, a retired farmer of Woolstock township, Wright county, Iowa, was born on November 19, 1841, near Huddersfield, England, of which country his parents, Charles and Elizabeth (Day) France, also were natives.

Charles France left his looms, for he was a weaver, in 1842, to locate in Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio, bringing with him his young wife and son, then a year old. He here resumed his trade for a short time, but believing a better opportunity awaited him in woolen-mills, entered a factory in Akron, Ohio, remaining there until 1848, when he continued this line of work in Menasha, Wisconsin. He became weary of the long hours and indoor work, however, and finally went to the farm, which he purchased with money accumulated by his hard work, and there spent the remainder of his life, his death



occurring on February 22, 1865. His widow lived until 1890. Richard and a sister named Mary Jane, who afterwards became Mrs. Jones, were the only children.

About the time young Richard finished a meager schooling his country's existence was threatened, and he hastened to stand under the flag of Company C, Tenth Regiment, Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry, enlisting under Capt. A. J. Richardson, September 15, 1861. It was three years and two months later when this lad was mustered out, the date being November 2, 1864. These years were years of strenuous action, for he saw many battles under the leadership of four famous generals, these being Generals Mitchell, Buell, Rosecrans and Sherman. His first skirmish was at Flint Rock bridge. Later followed the battles of Stone's River and Chickamauga and Sherman's historic campaign to Atlanta. He was a member of the famous Army of the Cumberland. After the battle of Stone's River, he served as a member of the commissary department until his time expired, and returned home, where he found that his assistance was needed on the farm.

Mr. France helped his father until the latter's death, after which he operated the farm for his mother until he moved to this county, in the spring of 1876. Attracted to Woolstock township, he purchased eighty acres in the northeast quarter of section 23, for which he paid eleven dollars an acre. Forty acres had already been plowed, and the rest he cultivated and improved and added to until he had acquired two hundred and forty acres, on which three thousand dollars was spent for improvements. He fed all of his grain to hogs and cattle. In 1897 Mr. France retired from active agricultural pursuits and took up his residence in Eagle Grove, where he and his family soon became identified with the local religious and social life.

Richard France and Laura Brown were united in marriage in 1867, the bride being the daughter of Chester F. and Mary Brown. To Mr. and Mrs. Brown have been born seven children, these being Alma, Hattie, Elenora, Franke, Richard, Edith and Jesse. Alma became the wife of George Klass, and to this couple were born eight children, Harry, Lana, Verna, Fred, Mildred, Grace, Marjorie and Roy. Hattie married Andrew Baldner, and to them one child, Roy, was born. Elenora is Mrs. Frank Pringle, and is the mother of three children, Inda, Carlisle and Boneta. Franke married Bert Fisher, and to this couple were born four children, Harold, Zola, Donald and Robert. Edith became Mrs. Henry Donnelly, and to her and her husband were born two children, Irma and Ardith. Richard became the husband of Mildred Thomas, and to them one child, Russell, was born.



After the death of Mrs. Mildred (Thomas) France, Richard France married Mary Stanton, and to them a daughter, Mildred, was born. Jesse and her husband, Roy Frasier, are the parents of two children, Nadine and Harold. Mrs. Laura (Brown) France was born on April 9, 1850, in the state of New York, of which state her parents were also natives. Her father was a farmer in that state until he moved to Wisconsin, in 1854, and located in Winnebago county, continuing his vocation until he retired, and moved to Meenah, Wisconsin, where he died in 1897. His widow lived until 1913. Of their seven children six are still living, these being Mary, Laura, Frank, Inez, Elenora and Mertie.

Mr. and Mrs. France are prominent in the activities of the Methodist Episcopal church, of which the former is now a trustee. Mr. France is a Mason and an Odd Fellow. Besides his own vocation, Mr. France has taken a deep interest in public affairs and has given liberally of his time and thought to matters concerning civic welfare. During the entire period of his residence in Woolstock township, he was a member of the school board, and for a number of years was its secretary. For fifteen years he was township assessor, and for many years justice of the peace. From the years 1897 until 1907 he was county supervisor. Mr. France has for many years been a staunch Republican, believing strongly in the principles of the Republican party. But of all the organizations to which he belongs, perhaps that which touches his heart most deeply is the organization which keeps fresh in his memory the strife and victory which preserved this country a united nation. Of the membership constituting the local post of the Grand Army of the Republic none is more enthusiastic nor more loyal than the gentleman here mentioned. Mr. France is a member of William B. Griffith Post No. 465, of Eagle Grove, and is now its commander, having filled the same position a number of times previously. He has also been its adjutant or quartermaster and chaplain, and has filled all of these positions not as a matter of duty, but as a matter of heartfelt interest and personal pleasure.

If it is true that the organizer of a great business which gives employment to many men or women is a useful citizen, may it not be said with equal truth that he who creates wealth by making the soil fruitful is also a benefactor? And it is likewise gratifying that Mr. France, who has been an industrious worker, is reaping the results of his toil in years of comparative freedom from care. His useful life is a striking example of what energy and perseverance will do, but like many of his comrades who fought



for their country's flag, he no doubt regards the years of his military services the most important and the most fruitful of his life, for the reason that they were devoted to the cause of freedom.

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### FREDERICK J. LUICK.

Character of the highest class has been developed in the life and career of Frederick J. Luick, a noted farmer and cattleman, now retired, and banker of Belmond, Wright county, Iowa, who, from the small beginning of forty acres of land, has acquired three thousand acres, all located in Wright county, Iowa, besides a charming town home in Belmond. Frederick J. Luick is the son of Henry and Catherine Luick, and his birth occurred on August 20, 1839, on his father's farm, in Washtenaw county, Michigan. Henry Luick was a native of Germany, where he was married and where three of his children were born. With his wife and three sons, he immigrated to America and settled in Washtenaw county, Michigan, where he operated his farm, and in the time not occupied by the cultivation of the crops worked at his trade of carpenter and joiner. His wife died in 1845 and two years later he remarried. From the time of purchase he resided on his farm until his death, in 1860. He was a member of the German Lutheran church and a Democrat in his political faith.

Henry Luick, with his family, and David Luick, who was then single, removed to Iowa in 1853 and settled on the north side of Franklin grove, being among the first settlers of Wright county. In August, 1856, their sister, Catherine, joined them in Iowa, coming from the old home in Washtenaw county, Michigan, and in the late fifties she was married to Adrin Elder, whom she survived for many years, her death occurring in March, 1915, at the age of seventy-eight years. In the year following Catherine's arrival in Iowa, the brother, William Luick, joined them, his arrival being on January 1, 1857. Transportation facilities were very poor, there being no way of reaching his destination other than by walking, this brave young man traveled afoot, from Dubuque, Iowa, to the home of his brother, Henry, and arrived with toes, ears and nose frozen. This experience, never to be forgotten, took place during the most severe winter Iowa had ever known.

Wonderful tales of the fertility of the soil and of future opportunities must have been sent back to Michigan by the first members of the Luick



family who came to Iowa, for one by one the remaining members migrated to this state until they were all united once more and became neighbors in the state of their adoption. Frederick J. Luick was the last child to leave his home in Michigan and seek his fortunes in Iowa, having arrived in 1857, the year of the Spirit Lake massacre, and amid the scenes of consequential excitement began his residence among new people and customs. He was at the impressionable age of seventeen at the time of this experience and was accompanied on the journey by Simeon Overacker and his family. For several years Frederick J. Luick made his home with his brother, Henry Luick, but after David Luick was married, resided at his home.

In 1858, at the age of nineteen years, Frederick J. Luick purchased his first land, consisting of forty acres, in section 30, which he later traded for eighty acres farther north and located on the Pleasant township main road, and this, in turn, he traded into the old homestead of his brother, Henry Luick, on which stood the original log cabin, one of the first homes erected in the county of Wright. Through all of his agricultural operations, Frederick J. Luick has been interested in general farming and stock raising, and in this line has met with success. D  
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In 1865 Frederick J. Luick was united in marriage to Alice Packard, daughter of Edwin C. and Caroline (Bailey) Packard, and to this union four children were born: Albert, who died when four years of age; Edith, Chester P. and Harold Frederick. Edith was married to Samuel Linbaugh, and to them were born these children: Beatrice, Frederick H., Elizabeth, Samuel, Rogers and Louise, also Alice, who died when about the age of two years. Chester P. is single and lives at home with his parents on their place, which is located at West Bend, Iowa. Harold F. was married to Ella Furuseth, daughter of Christian L. and Minnie (Nelson) Furuseth, and is residing on the original farm, just southeast of Belmond, Iowa. They have one child, Muriel A.

The "father and son movement," though not a formal organization as it is today, had its inception among the fathers and sons of yesterday, and the ties were just as strong and true as in the present day. Frederick J. Luick formed the business partnership between himself and his son, Chester P., and their relations have remained firm through all these years. The active work and management of the farm and stock interests have been assumed by Chester P. and Harold, the father now resting from his long life of well-concerted effort and arduous toil. Chester P. specializes in Polled Angus, Hereford and Durham cattle, while Harold specializes in Holstein



cattle. Together they feed out annually about twelve carloads of cattle and five carloads of hogs.

Frederick J. Luick is president of the Belmond Savings Bank and was for twenty years a member of the board of directors of the State Bank of Belmond. In his political faith, he is an earnest supporter of the Democratic party, but his zeal has never carried him beyond his convictions and he has always claimed the inalienable right to vote for the best candidate, regardless of party machinery. Frederick J. Luick, through diligent seeking, has found and gathered many of life's beautiful flowers, and in the seventy-fifth year of his career he can look back over a well-spent life.

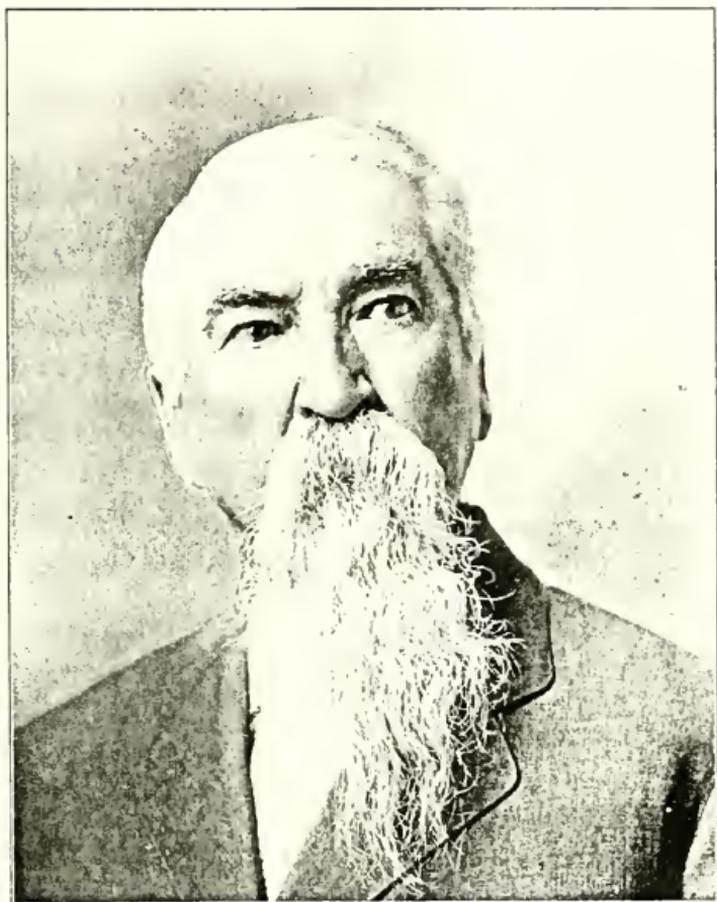
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### HON. W. T. R. HUMPHREY.

Time in its flight is fast claiming those faithful sons who fought so well and bravely for the Union during the Civil War, and an honest tribute to one of the survivors of that great struggle is but fitting and just in the face of past service and present influence, wielded for the advancement of the coming generation. True patriotism lies not in the mere willingness to bear arms but in the sincere desire and active execution of everything for the furtherance of human advancement. These are the requirements necessary for a true soldier and such a man is Hon. W. T. R. Humphrey, of Clarion, Wright county, Iowa, veteran of the Civil War, now county abstractor. His services to the locality in which he lived, to his county which he has represented and to the nation for which he has fought, have been of the highest order.

W. T. R. Humphrey is the youngest and only surviving child born to the union of Robert Humphrey and Jane Robison, and his birth occurred on February 5, 1845, in Scott county, Iowa. Robert Humphrey was born in 1798 in Wheeling, Virginia, and removed, with his parents, when a small boy to Jefferson county, Ohio, where he received his education. His father was a farmer and Robert Humphrey followed this vocation until his retirement. With his wife he removed to Parke county, Indiana, where he became interested in agricultural pursuits and continued to cultivate his land for twelve years. He then removed to Scott county, Iowa, where he purchased two hundred and forty-nine acres, also buying land in Louisa county, and these two places were cultivated until his removal to Davenport, Iowa, in 1871, at which time he retired and disposed of the farm. Later the par-





W. T. R. HUMPHREY.



ents joined their son, James, in Poweshiek county, where they remained until the death of Jane (Robison) Humphrey, the wife and mother. After the death of his wife, Robert Humphrey made his home with his children until his death which occurred in 1891. To their union were born seven children.

The paternal grandfather of W. T. R. Humphrey was John Humphrey a farmer and a soldier of the Revolutionary War, who served under General Wayne during his service, and after the war received a large grant of land in payment for service rendered. He was of English descent but a native of Pennsylvania and after the war he removed to Ohio county, Virginia. He was in the battle of Stony Point. In 1799 he began his residence in Jefferson county, Ohio, near the town of Warrenton, where he lived until his death. His wife, Elizabeth McKee, died when forty years of age.

The maternal grandfather of W. T. R. Humphrey was James H. Robison, a native of Mecklenburg county, North Carolina, and was of Scotch-Irish descent. He remained in Mecklenburg county until after his marriage and then removed to Warren county, Ohio, in 1797, where he purchased government land. He cultivated this farm until his death in 1814. He served his country in the War of 1812 and while in service contracted disease that eventually caused his demise. He and his wife were the parents of eight children, his daughter, Jane, being the fourth child, and the mother of W. T. R. Humphrey.

W. T. R. Humphrey is indebted to the schools of Scott county, Iowa, for his early education, finishing at Griswold College, Davenport, Iowa. Following his college days he assisted his father on the farm, having entire charge of the place for two years. Upon reaching his majority, he removed to Poweshiek county, Iowa, and purchased one hundred and sixty acres of land which he cultivated for three years, teaching school during the winter months. Ever ambitious to achieve, this experience became only a stepping stone to higher things, and in 1871 he began to read law in Davenport, Iowa, and was there admitted to the bar after studying for two years. He practiced law in Davenport, Iowa, until 1874, and at that time changed his location to Clarion, Iowa.

Besides practicing law, after his removal to Clarion, Mr. Humphrey also made a set of abstract books of the county. In 1889 he sold the business and located in Des Moines, Iowa, where he became connected with the Des Moines Loan and Trust Company. For one year he served in this capacity and then sold his interest and engaged in the real-estate and insurance business. In 1894 he returned to Clarion, Iowa, and formed a part-



nership with C. F. Peterson in the law and abstract profession and continued together until 1905 at which time the partnership was dissolved, C. F. Peterson retaining the law practice and W. T. R. Humphrey the abstract books, which business he has continued to the present time. While he was practicing law at Clarion, Iowa, he was elected to serve the district as its representative, and in 1884 began his duties in that office and served for one term. In 1887 he was elected to act as county attorney, in which office he made many friends. Mr. Humphrey enlisted in the Civil War at Davenport, Iowa, and served in Company I, Forty-fourth Regiment, Iowa Volunteer Infantry.

On October 6, 1878, W. T. R. Humphrey was united in marriage to Emma Simmons, daughter of Hiram and Charlotte (Bradt) Simmons, and they became the parents of two children, Mildred and Robert L. Mildred is now county recorder, Robert L. married Mae Priestly. Emma (Simmons) Humphrey was born in 1850, in Montgomery county, New York, but removed from there with her parents in 1876 to Clarion, Iowa. Hiram and Charlotte Simmons located in Clarion after their removal from New York. Hiram Simmons was a blacksmith by trade and during his residence in New York followed that vocation, but after his arrival in Iowa he engaged in the hotel business which he conducted for some time, finally returning to his trade as blacksmith. His death occurred in 1900, and was followed one year later by his wife.

W. T. R. Humphrey is a member of the Masonic order and also of the Grand Army of the Republic. He is a Republican and a staunch supporter of the party principles.

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#### MARVIN G. FOBES.

As a man whose entire life has been given to agricultural work, and this successfully, and also as one whose life and character are such as to command respect, Marvin G. Fobes merits a place among those whose lives are worthy of recording in the present publication. The family name became identified with the annals of this vicinity twenty-three years ago and from that time there has been nothing to mar its honor. Mr. Fobes, a retired farmer of Lake township, was born in Washington county, Iowa, on September 17, 1861.

The father of Marvin G. Fobes, Elisha T. Fobes, was born in Ohio, where he was educated and grew to manhood and from there he moved to



Wisconsin, where he combined the blacksmith's trade with farming until about 1858, when he moved to Washington county, Iowa, and bought a farm, upon which he worked until 1868, the year that he moved to the eastern part of Keokuk county, where he lived for three years, until the time of his death, which occurred in 1870. His wife, who before her marriage, was Julia Eggleston, a native of England, died six years previously. Of their four children, Marvin G. is the only one living.

The early educational advantages of Marvin G. Fobes were only such as were then afforded by the pioneer schools. He attended school and worked on the farm until he became of age and then inheriting his father's farm and continued to cultivate it until 1892. Moving to this county in that year, he located in Lake township on one hundred and sixty acres of land which he bought and on which he worked until 1912, the year which marked his retirement from active farm work. In that year he moved to Clarion, where he is now enjoying the fruits of his industry during early and middle life.

Emma Crawford, daughter of Matthew and Margaret E. Crawford, became the wife of Marvin G. Fobes, August 27, 1890. Although born in Washington county, Iowa, her parents were natives of other states, the father coming from Pennsylvania and the mother from Ohio. Her father migrated to Iowa when still a young man, coming west from Pennsylvania with a drove of sheep. Being attracted to the West he decided to remain and obtained a position as school teacher, which position he filled in winters and farmed during the summer vacations. After his marriage, however, he gave up teaching and devoted his entire time and attention to the business of farming, and later engaged in the furniture business for several years. He passed away in 1909, leaving his widow, who is still living in Clarion. Of their five children, four are living. Mr. and Mrs. Fobes have adopted twin girls.

Mr. Fobes is a strong organization man. He is a member of the Modern Woodmen of America and of the Republican party. His interest in church work has been deep and sincere and both he and his wife are members of the Congregational church. He was honored with the offices of township trustee and clerk of the school board and filled both positions with satisfaction. By his determination to be considerate in all of his dealings with his fellow men, Mr. Fobes has endeared himself to the community which has been his home for so many years. In all of life's relationships he has been honorable and upright and has won the esteem of all who know him because he has merited it.



## JAMES O. SHAW.

James O. Shaw, farmer and stockman of Norway township, Wright county, Iowa, is a striking example of the progressive type of agriculturist seen throughout the state, and his having risen from a lowly birth to a position of trust and affluence demonstrates what can be accomplished by diligent effort and a desire to achieve.

James O. Shaw was born on April 26, 1851, in Norway, near the town of Bergen, and is the son of Ole and Marie Landel; the name having been changed by James O. Shaw upon his arrival in America. Ole Landel was a laborer in Norway, in which country he lived and died, his death occurring when James was a mere baby, and his wife later remarried.

James O. Shaw received his education in the common schools of his native land, until his confirmation, at the age of fifteen years. In 1882 he immigrated to the United States, locating in Story county, Iowa, near the home of H. C. Holm, the minister. He was married in Norway and three of his children were born there, ten having been born in America. In 1892 James O. Shaw removed to Wright county, Iowa, where he purchased one hundred and sixty acres of practically unimproved land in section 3, of Norway township, later purchasing one hundred and twenty acres more in section 10, of the same township. Having learned the trade of carpenter while in his native land and having followed the same for some time, it became comparatively easy to plan and construct a house, barn and other necessary buildings, which were begun almost immediately. Today the farm is well drained with proper tiling, has adequate fencing and is one of the best improved farms in Wright county, Iowa.

James O. Shaw was united in marriage to Carrie Tweten, daughter of Thorgor and Martha E. Tweten, both natives of Norway, and it was in that country that their daughter, Carrie, first saw the light of day. Mr. and Mrs. Tweten came to America with James O. Shaw, and also settled in Story county, Iowa, where they lived until their deaths.

Twelve of the thirteen children born to James O. and Carrie (Tweten) Shaw are living, namely: Mary, born on July 30, 1878, in Norway, now the wife of Anfin Skatte, lives in Story county, Iowa, and they are the parents of seven children, Mabel, James, Henrietta, Alma, Orie, Opal and Sanford; Thomas, January 7, 1880, in Norway; Ole, January 28, 1882, married Belle Hillstead, and they are the parents of three children, Lyra, Jerome and Eugene, and are living in North Dakota; Henry, June 5, 1884, is



deceased; Martin, August 7, 1886, married Lena Anderson, lives in North Dakota, and they are the parents of two children, Leola and Sybil; Anna H., September 17, 1888, and now the wife of J. Oliver Fosen, living at Kanawha, Iowa; James, November 4, 1890; Abraham, August 23, 1892; Joseph, June 23, 1894; Hilda, June 24, 1896; Clara, December 27, 1897; Elida, August 23, 1899; and Martha, January 17, 1901. Abraham and Elida were born on August 23, Abraham being seven years, to the day, the eldest. The mother of these children died on July 13, 1906.

James O. Shaw has been a Republican ever since his arrival in the United States. His entire family, himself included, are members of St. John's Lutheran church, of Norway township.

James O. Shaw is a man who finds much pleasure and profit in traveling, and his habit of reading is fostered by his desire to keep abreast of the great issues of the day. He has a broad vision and his clear perceptions and clean moral life have made him a host of warm friendships, which are lasting and sincere.

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#### ALFRED PINION.

Among the successful farmers of other days in Wright county is Alfred Pinion, who has now retired to Clarion, in which place he is leading a quiet life. A man who as a farmer saw his land grow in value as a result of his efforts and become in productiveness second to none and a man who has been of use to his community in many ways, never shirking but applying his principle of an industrious and resourceful life to the conduct of every-day affair, he has won a prominent and honorable place among his neighbors and his fellow citizens.

Alfred Pinion was born in Bureau county, Illinois, March 16, 1860, the son of Peter and Elizabeth Pinion, both of whom were natives of England. Peter Pinion lived in his native land until he was twenty-six years of age and then came, with his wife, to America, and after landing at New York, he went to the state of Indiana and settled in the southern part of that commonwealth, where he remained in the pursuit of his vocation as a farmer for some few years and then moved to Bureau county, in the state of Illinois, at which place he invested in a farm consisting of one hundred and sixty acres of land. On this land Peter Pinion engaged as a general farmer for forty years and then removed to Iowa, where he invested in six



hundred and forty acres of land in Wall Lake township, for which land he paid the sum of five dollars per acre, in the year 1880. Following this deal, Peter Pinion lived for two years at Webster City, Iowa, and then moved to Des Moines, Iowa, and remained there until his death, in the year 1903, his wife having died during the year 1901. Peter and Elizabeth Pinion were the parents of four children, of whom Alfred Pinion, the subject of this sketch, is the only child living in Wright county.

Alfred Pinion received his early education in the country schools of Bureau county, Illinois, and after leaving his classes he farmed with his father until he was twenty-one years of age, and then moved to Wright county, Iowa, and located in Wall Lake township, where he purchased one hundred and sixty acres of land and engaged, in the pursuit of general farming. When he took possession of his farm, Alfred Pinion found few improvements, but with a determination that his land and its buildings and conveniences should be modern and of a nature to insure the greatest of productiveness, he proceeded to erect new structures, tile his soil and to add grove land and fruit trees, in all expending the sum of five thousand dollars, until today the farm is among the best equipped and supplied of the county. The principal crops of this farm are corn and small grain, the corn averaging fifty bushels to the acre and the small grain about forty bushels to the acre. Much of the grain produced on his farm, Alfred Pinion fed to his stock, of which he had a good supply, and the remainder of his produce he sold at the market. Alfred Pinion followed the life of a successful farmer until the year 1903, when he retired and moved to Clarion, where he now lives.

During the year of 1891 Alfred Pinion was married to Emma Christina, daughter of Peter and Julia Christina. To this union one child, Viola, a student at the Clarion high school, was born.

Alfred Pinion is one of the respected and honored citizens of Clarion. He is a man who has taken no small part in the development of Wright county, from the days when the land was prairie and partly cultivated, until the present time, when some of the best farms of the state are found in this section, due to the efforts of the early citizens whose hard work and the application of intelligence resulted in such satisfactory returns. In public life, Mr. Pinion has served well, and while the occupant of the important office of school director the work of this board was never better or more splendidly handled. In politics, Alfred Pinion is a Republican, one who maintains the respect and esteem of his fellow workers. In church circles



the name of Alfred Pinion takes important rank, and as a worker for the advancement of good in the community he is at all times interested and active.

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### HAROLD F. LUICK.

It is a conceded fact, that, if every farm in the United States were under scientific cultivation, the wealth of this nation would be increased many fold. Comparatively few American farms produce what they might in the way of foodstuff and the great majority fail to conserve, advantageously, the resources at hand.

Harold F. Luick, of Belmond, Wright county, Iowa, is a scientific farmer, and has ably demonstrated what returns can be obtained by a deep study of agricultural problems. He is the son of Frederick J. Luick, who has made a specialty of agriculture and met with wonderful success in that line. Frederick J. and Alice (Packard) Luick were the parents of four children: Albert, deceased; Edith, wife of Samuel Linbaugh, of West Bend, Iowa, and the mother of six children; Chester P. and Harold F., now in charge of the home farm, where he resides.

Harold F. Luick obtained his early education in the Belmond public schools, graduating from the high school at Belmond, with the class of 1904. For one year he worked on the home farm, where he was inspired with a desire to attend the Iowa College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts, at Ames, Iowa, and in September, 1905, he became a student in that great school, where he specialized in animal husbandry, graduating with the class of 1909. After graduating he was engaged in the work of the college extension department until the spring of 1911, during which time he visited practically every county in Iowa, spreading the gospel of scientific agriculture among the farmers of the state. He then returned to Belmond, Iowa, and assumed charge of the home place, where he specializes in the raising of Holstein cattle.

Harold F. Luick was united in marriage to Ella Furuseth, daughter of Christian and Minnie (Nelson) Furuseth, of Belmond, Iowa, on October 20, 1909, and they are the parents of one child, Muriel A.

Harold F. Luick and his wife are members of the Methodist Episcopal church of Belmond, in which church he is superintendent of the Sunday school. He was one of the first organizers of the Wright County Farm Improvement Association, which employs a county agent or advisor, whose



duty it is to assist the farmers of the county in the solution of their many farm problems, regardless of whether they are members of the association or not. He was the first secretary of this association and an active worker for its advancement. While the bulk of this organization is borne by the farmers, it is now aided, to a limited extent, by the government.

Harold F. Luick is a very enterprising young man and bids fair to become one of the leading men of the county in which he resides. He is of exemplary character, and his many lovable traits have endeared him to his fellow citizens. He has chosen wisely in his vocation and his present successes augur well for his future.

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### JAMES R. THAYER.

A pioneer of the township, a successful farmer, a good citizen with the interest of the community at heart, and one who has served his district well in public office, James R. Thayer is entitled to a place in the records of prominent men in this county.

James R. Thayer was born on August 29, 1851, in Jefferson county, New York. He is the son of Zurial C. and Lucy (Baker) Thayer, the father being a farmer, and who was born in Otsego county, New York, October 15, 1822. The grandfather was James Thayer, his wife being Fannie (Main) Thayer, both natives of New York.

Zurial Thayer with his family moved to Belmont township, this county, in 1865, arriving with but five dollars in his pocket and with four children to support. Securing eighty acres of land in section 11, he immediately proceeded to improve his purchase, adding thereto from time to time until he was the owner of more than two hundred acres of land. James Thayer then purchased from his father all but forty acres of the farm, that acreage being the home of the elder Thayer, where he lived until his death, at which time the remainder of the land was acquired by the son.

To Zurial and Lucy Thayer were born four children, all but one of whom are living: Helen, who married Jeremiah Dack and lives in the state of New York; James, the subject of this sketch; and Lavina, of Hancock county, the widow of George Christe.

James R. Thayer received the greater part of his education in the schools of New York state, but attended classes for a time after reaching Belmont township. He lived at home until the time of his marriage, February 11, 1888, to Mary E. Frederick, who was the daughter of John and Dora (Staga)





MR. AND MRS. JAMES R. THAYER.



Frederick, natives of Germany, who came to this country in 1866, later coming to Wright county.

Having previously purchased some land, after his marriage, James R. Thayer added thereto until he now owns two hundred and forty acres of well-improved land.

To Mr. and Mrs. Thayer have been born seven children, six boys and one girl, namely: John, who married Lida Mason, and they have one child; Ralph who married Ardilla Dippell and they have one child; Claude, Amy Floyd, Oscar and Harley, all of whom live at home.

Mr. Thayer is a leading member of Belmond Lodge No. 265, Independent Order of Odd Fellows, and Mrs. Thayer takes an active part in the affairs of the Rebekahs. The three eldest sons are also prominent members of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows.

James R. Thayer is a Democrat in politics and has represented his party and constituents well in the office of school director, but he does not aspire to the holding of public office, preferring to serve in the ranks, a thing which he has done conscientiously and intelligently. Mr. and Mrs. Thayer are not members of any church, but they lend their active support to all Christian denominations.

During February of 1915, Mr. Thayer retired from his farm and is now living in Belmond.

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### JOHN L. NICKLES.

Modern agriculture, no less than other fields of interest, is demanding a superior type of men in order to keep step with the modern march of civilization. Progressive methods are as necessary to scientific farming as they are in business or in professional life. Therefore it is not surprising that John L. Nickles, who has always kept abreast with the times, is in the vanguard of the farming industry as pursued in this county. He is the possessor of a well-equipped and splendidly-improved farm located seven miles east of Woolstock. John L. Nickles, who was born on June 27, 1870, is the son of John L., Sr., and Mary (Didio) Nickles.

The senior Nickles, as well as his son, was born in Vosges, France, the birth date of the former being 1846. He died at the home of his son, John, in 1896, being fifty years of age. He was one of a large family consisting of nine children, of whom three were boys and six girls. Of these, two, John L., Sr., and a sister came to America. John L., Sr., was a sawyer by



trade, and this he followed during all of his life in France. There he was educated, grew up and was married, and died at his home in Wall Lake township in 1896. Their only child was John L., who was named for his father.

It was in the year 1875 when Mr. and Mrs. Nickles left their home in France for America, and their boy was then four years of age. They first settled on a rented farm in La Salle county, Illinois, and after three years' residence there removed to this county, renting one hundred and sixty acres in Wall Lake township, this land belonging to Mrs. Nickles's father. With courage and hope these good people made their home in the wilderness, a place of beauty and profit. Mr. Nickles, later, purchased forty acres of this farm and John L., Jr., has since bought the other one hundred and twenty acres. One hundred and sixty acres north of this land is also owned by John L. Nickles, Jr.

When his parents brought him to this county, John L. Nickles was a lad of seven summers. He attended the old Waterman district school and later took a business course at Highland Park and Shenandoah. Until his twenty-second year he was a valuable assistant to his father. He was at that time married to Sadie Frakes, a native of Woolstock, being born there in 1875. The wedding took place on March 19, 1892. The bride is the daughter of John and Ida (Doolittle) Frakes, who were among the early settlers who came to this county. Sadie was the second born of this family. Her elder sister, whose name was Elizabeth, is deceased, as is also her next younger sister, Lottie, the youngest being Ilo. Since their marriage they have resided on the old homestead, which now consists of three hundred and twenty acres of well-improved land in sections 20 and 29, of Wall Lake township.

An attractive eight-room house, well situated, a large and commodious barn, forty-eight by sixty-four feet, a double corn-crib, granary and other buildings, complete the structural equipment of this estate. Mr. Nickles raises from one hundred and twenty-five to one hundred and fifty acres of corn, averaging fifty bushels to the acre, and from one hundred to one hundred and twenty-five acres of small grain. He feeds about one hundred and twenty-five head of hogs and keeps about fifty head of dairy and beef stock.

To Mr. and Mrs. Nickles have been born a family of seven children, these being Rayner, Lula (now Mrs. Alfred Mourlan and residing on a part of the parental farm), Ilo, Mary, Myrtle, Louis and Lottie.

Mr. Nickles is a member of Camp No. 9, and Canton No. 23, Independent Order of Odd Fellows, at Webster City; he is also a member of Woolstock Camp, Modern Woodmen of America, and the Modern Brother-



hood of America. He votes with the Republican party and has been a trustee for the past ten years, and previous to that time was for six years township assessor. The long time of office with which Mr. Nickles was honored, both as trustee and assessor, speaks volumes regarding his trustworthiness as a public official and as a man. Public duty is to him a sacred obligation, and in payment for the confidence of his fellow men he has rendered efficient and honorable service. His geniality and ability to keep the friends he has made has given him a large acquaintance in the county which is proud to claim him as one of its representative agriculturists.

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### WILBUR H. TALLMAN.

Daniel Webster once said that "farmers are the founders of civilization." Certain it is that the higher forms of civilization can be built up only upon a solid material basis. In supplying this basis, the farmer is the greatest factor, and it is for this reason that his vocation should be considered one of honor. In the life of Wilbur Tallman is found those conditions calculated to develop the strongest traits of manhood, nor is the student surprised to find that in conquering the difficulties, the man whose name appears above has become one of the representative farmers of the district. Wilbur H. Tallman was born in Belmont county, Ohio, April 6, 1853, his parents being Peter and Anna Tallman, both natives of Belmont county, Ohio.

The father of Mr. Tallman farmed in his native county until his twenty-fifth or thirtieth year, when he moved to Pontiac, Illinois, and continued in his vocation until his death, in 1865. His wife died in 1901, while she was living in Valparaiso, Indiana. Three children were born to Mr. and Mrs. Tallman, all of whom are deceased except Wilbur H.

Wilbur H. Tallman attended the public schools of Pontiac, and upon leaving school became a wagon maker, a trade which he followed until his thirtieth year, when he began railroading. For about twelve years had charge of the Lake Erie and Western railroad shops at Dixon, Illinois. He then located at McKeesport, Pennsylvania, where he followed the trade of carpenter and contractor for three years. In 1901 he came to this county, locating in Dayton township, where he bought two hundred and eighty acres of land, which he improved and upon which he built a modern home and barn, placing altogether about ten thousand dollars' worth of improvements on the property. Since that time he has devoted his life to general farming and stock raising, having only the best grade of stock on his well-equipped, modern farm. In 1911 Mr. Tallman moved to Clarion, Iowa, built the



largest garage in the town and continued in the garage business for two years. He retired from active business at that time, and now gives a little of his attention to contracting in the cement business. It is said that he placed the best cement sidewalks in the city of Clarion.

In March, 1878, Wilbur H. Tallman was married to Emeline Schlosser, a daughter of Samuel Schlosser, and to this union six children have been born. These are Joseph S., John A., Mary E., Wilbur H., Charles C. and Ora A. Joseph S. married Lydia Hamer, and the couple became the parents of Alice and Joseph H. Mary is Mrs. Harry Stephens. Wilbur H., Jr., married Lottie Sterritt. Charles is the husband of Bessie Beach.

Mr. Tallman is a Republican. He is a member in good standing of the Masonic lodge. True to his early ideals, strenuous and persistent in his work, faithful to every trust imposed upon him, he deserves the place in the community which he now occupies.

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#### FRANK C. PARDUN.

Among the representative farmers and citizens of Wright county, one whose history is worthy of a place in a work of this character, is the man whose name heads this sketch. A citizen who amid his busy affairs has found time to devote his talents to the interests of the community and a man who in public life and as an individual has served and lived well, he is conceded to be one of the leading forces for good in the county.

Frank C. Pardun was born in Washington county, Iowa, on April 8, 1875, the son of W. F. and Esther (Crawford) Pardun, the former born in Indiana and the latter born in Washington county, Iowa. W. F. Pardun received his education in the schools of Indiana and was married in that state to his first wife, and after a short residence there on a farm, he moved to the state of Illinois, where he rented a farm for a time and then went to Washington county, Iowa, where he bought a farm. During the year 1892 he came to Wright county and bought two hundred and forty acres of land in Lake township. He rented out the farm and lived in Clarion. W. F. Pardun was married a second time, and to this union were born five children, William, Walter, Earl, Nettie and Frank, the subject of this sketch.

Frank C. Pardun received his education at Keota, Iowa, where he attended school until his parents moved to Wright county and then he pursued his studies at the Clarion high school, until he was eighteen years of



age, when he took up work on a farm for one year. On September 26, 1894, Frank C. Pardun was married to Emma Soultz, who was born in Mahaska county, Iowa, the daughter of W. J. and Sarah Soultz. Emma (Soultz) Pardun was educated in the public schools and the high school at Clarion, Iowa. She was one of a family of seven children.

After his marriage Frank C. Pardun rented the two hundred and forty acre farm of his father, where he lived five years and then he rented a farm in Grant township for one year and one in Norway township one year, following which he returned to his father's farm and then bought eighty acres of his father's land in Lake township, all of which he cultivated, as well as improved with two acres of grove, fifty apple trees and fourteen cherry trees. In addition to his father's farm and his own land, Mr. Pardun rents thirty-six acres of land, in order to carry on his extensive farming pursuits. Frank C. Pardun produces chiefly, corn and small grain, his corn averaging fifty bushels to the acre and his small grain averaging about forty bushels to the acre. Mr. Pardun feeds and deals extensively in hogs, sending to market, each year, about two hundred head of Duroc-Jersey hogs.

Frank C. and Emma Pardun are the parents of seven children: Ross, Paul, Homer, Mae, Pearl, Elsie and Walter, all of whom live at home.

Frank C. Pardun, in his useful life, has served his township in the office of school director for two years, and during that time has shown his ability and efficiency in such lines of endeavor. In politics Mr. Pardun is a Republican. Frank C. Pardun and his wife are members of the United Presbyterian church at Clarion, Iowa, a congregation in which they take an active and appreciated part in the work.

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### JOHN W. ULRICH.

In nearly every community are men who because of their unusual ability and force of character are able to succeed and command the respect of their fellow men. By intelligent living and perseverance in their efforts they have been given a high place in the locality and one that is an indication of a life well lived. Of this class is John W. Ulrich, the subject of this sketch.

John W. Ulrich was born in Clayton county, Iowa, on January 22, 1859, the son of John and Catherine Ulrich, both of whom were born in Germany. When ten years of age, John Ulrich, Sr., with his parents, left



their home in Germany and came to America. After landing at New York they went to the state of Indiana and located in Dearborn county, in which county John, Sr., received his education and afterwards moved to Clayton county, Iowa, where he farmed with his parents until his marriage, a few years after which he went to Hancock county, Iowa. During the year 1895 John Ulrich, Sr., moved to the town of Garner, Iowa, where he retired from active life, giving his attention only to the care of his land holdings throughout the county. Following his retirement Mr. Ulrich lived but ten years, his death occurring during the year of 1905. John Ulrich, Sr., is survived by his wife, Catherine, who now lives in Hancock county. To John and Catherine Ulrich were born five children, four of whom are now living.

John W. Ulrich, the subject of this sketch, received his education in the schools of Clayton county, Iowa, and after completing his studies went to the state of Nebraska, where he took up a homestead claim of one hundred and sixty acres of land, on which he lived for two years and then he returned to Clayton county, Iowa, where he was married to Mary Christina, daughter of Peter and Julia Christina. To John and Mary Ulrich no children were born.

Following his marriage, John W. Ulrich moved to the state of Kansas, where he lived for two years and then went back to Clayton county, Iowa, and farmed in that county for three years and in 1889 came to Wright county, Iowa, where he purchased two hundred acres of farm land, in Wall Lake township, for which he paid the sum of twenty-two dollars per acre. John Ulrich, on taking possession of his Wright county farm, immediately entered into a course of improvement for his place, repairing and rebuilding such structures as were necessary and adding modern conveniences, which has resulted in his farm today being among the most productive of the community. As a farmer, Mr. Ulrich directed his energies along the line of general agricultural pursuits, together with the feeding of considerable live stock, including one hundred to one hundred and fifty head of hogs marketed each year. John W. Ulrich planted the greater part of his land to corn and small grain, from which he gained excellent crops, his corn averaging fifty bushels to the acre and his small grain yielding about forty-five bushels to the acre.

During the year of 1911 John W. Ulrich retired from active life and moved to Clarion, Iowa, where he now lives, as one of the valued and esteemed citizens of the town and county. Mr. Ulrich can look upon a good



## Local Connoisseur of Violins Got His First Fiddle From A Pioneer Outlaw

We often hear that there is a tale of romance behind every violin and maybe that is why F. W. Umbreit has such an interesting hobby. Since Mr. Umbreit was a boy of ten he has had a violin in his possession and after moving to Clarion he has increased this number to seven, each one having some distinguishing quality or value.

Mr. Umbreit's father came over years ago from Germany in a sailboat bringing with him several violins, horns and even a bass viol. In this country he played in numerous bands, orchestras and for dances but soon after a religious wave struck the country and music became rather outlawed because of its connection with dancing. Disregarding Mr. Umbreit's great desire to learn the art of violin playing, the father would not give him much instruction.

### An Outlaw's Violin

Quite a history lies behind the acquisition of his first fiddle. Wall Lake, where the family lived at the time, was known for its hide-outs for outlaws and horse thieves, and one man in particular, a Jim Cadwell, frequented the place. On his last trip before returning to Minnesota Cadwell left his violin with one of the families there. The law took its course and Cadwell was caught, executed and forgotten but Mr. Umbreit remembered the violin incident and the outlaw's fiddle came into new hands. However, it was in bad condition and could not even be played upon until after it had been repaired in 1915. At the age of 24 Mr. Umbreit bought his first useable violin at Webster City.

Perhaps the most valued one among the seven violins is the one that has been in the family since 1820 and is regarded as a real heirloom. This violin has an appear-

ance of great age and is peculiar for its odd shaped pegs, seldom seen on violins of today. Mr. Umbreit's favorite, bearing the label of manufacture 1700, is the most worn of the lot but its tonal quality is excellent.

### Had But Few Lessons

In all his life of violin and music appreciation Mr. Umbreit has had only a few actual lessons and these were from Mr. Mollerker, who will be remembered as a remarkable fiddler. Mr. Umbreit's first public appearance was made eight years ago at a fiddlers' contest sponsored by an organization here. As an authority on violin history, Mr. Umbreit explains in detail the origin of the first such instrument. It is surprising to learn that a bow and arrow prompted the creation of the first violin. The early cave people used twisted hide for a bow string and they found that drawing or hitting the bowstring with the arrow produced a musical sound. The next step was made when these early people took a stick three feet long, stringing this with two strings using another stick for the bow. Further experimentation gave them the idea of attaching a box-like arrangement to give the tones resonance and gradually this was perfected to the graceful result of today.

### Enters Many Contests

Mr. Umbreit has been an entrant in the Old Fiddlers' contests held at the state fair for several years. The passing years haven't made much difference with Mr. Umbreit's activities. He does considerable work about his home, maintains a large garden and every day finds time to devote to his violins. "Yes," he confesses, "I do know a little about violins, but there's too much to learn about them in one lifetime."



life well used in the unselfish interests of others, as well as a life in which he has been able to accomplish much for his own material welfare. John W. Ulrich, though retired from the more active duties of life, is yet most active in his duties as a good citizen and as a worker for progress and advancement of the local interests. As a public man he has served his county and his township as a trustee and also as justice of the peace, offices which he filled and which he served with honor and with dignity. In politics, John W. Ulrich is a Republican. Mr. and Mrs. Ulrich are members of the Methodist Episcopal church at Clarion, a congregation in which they take an important and appreciated part.

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### FREDERICK WILLIAM UMBREIT.

A representative farmer and stock raiser is Frederick William Umbreit. In his life-long application to his calling he has become one of the leading farmers of this section of the state. By ambition, foresight and hard work he has acquired a large estate. Frederick William Umbreit was born in Germany, April 19, 1851, and is the son of John and Rosena (Wagner) Umbreit, both natives of Germany.

The father was somewhat versatile in his tastes for he was both an expert shoemaker and a violinist, following his trade until his removal to America when he located in Columbia county, Wisconsin, on a farm of his own. Being a man of unusual industry and business ability, he was able to retire in the year 1870, and to live in comparative ease in the old homestead until his death in 1898, his wife having passed away ten years previously. Of the ten children born to them, six are now living, the subject of this review being the only one residing in this state.

Frederick W. Umbreit was educated in Wisconsin, and after his schooling assisted his father on the farm until he reached his majority. He then rented a farm which he operated for two years, when he removed to Franklin county and farmed for one year. It was 1875 when he came to Wall Lake township, Wright county, and purchased a farm of two hundred and forty acres at five dollars an acre. The place at the time of his arrival was wild and unimproved, and it was necessary for him to haul the lumber with which he built his first home, the lumber being obtained in Blairsburg, Iowa. Continuing to increase his holdings, he finally accumulated four hundred and eighty acres of land upon which he carried on successfully the



industries of farming and stock raising. He fed out about two carloads of hogs a year and raised about one hundred acres of corn annually. His property in this county now amounts to three hundred and twenty acres, upon which he has put about five thousand dollars worth of improvements.

Frederick W. Umbreit was married in 1872 to Mary Kaufman, daughter of August and Christena (Butzer) Kaufman and to this union seven children were born, Lydia, Lucy, Benjamin, Fred, Rosa, Cecil and Walter, the latter being deceased. Lydia became the wife of Robert Hanson and to them one child, Arline, was born. The rest of the children have never married. Mrs. Umbreit was a native of Wisconsin, but her parents were both born in Germany. They came to America in the early fifties and located in Canada. Remaining there a year, they moved to Columbia county, Wisconsin, where they pursued farming until 1885. They then moved to Kansas, where they lived until the father died. The widow took her children to California, where she lived until her death in 1912. The wife of Mr. Umbreit passed away on April 6, 1912.

Mr. Umbreit and his family are members of the Congregational church. Mr. Umbreit was justice of the peace in Wall Lake township, for nine years. He is a prominent Mason and Democrat. In preparing for life, Mr. Umbreit has not forgotten to live. He is optimistic in his views, strong in character, helpful in his attitude towards his fellow men and altogether an inspiring personality.

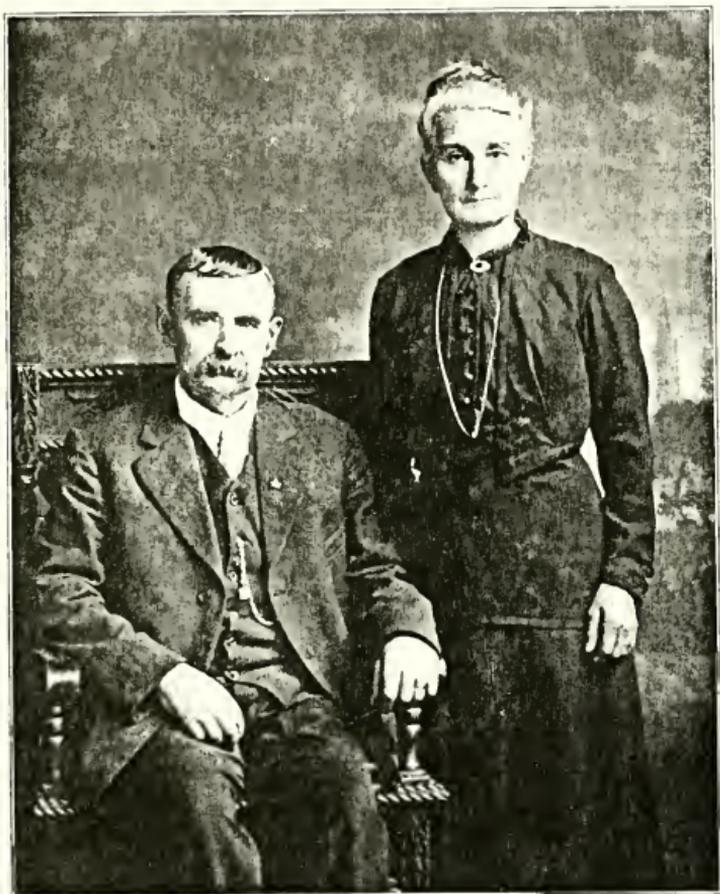
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#### CHARLES M. SPANGLER.

Among the prominent agriculturists and self-made men of Wright county, Iowa, Charles M. Spangler is held in high esteem by his political constituents, business associates and friends. Unassuming and sincere, yet keen in commercial foresight, he has risen from a life of toil to one of affluence, and his power for good in his community has been a decided benefit to town and people. His habit of honest fellowship has caused him to be known as "Mads" Spangler and his warm hospitality has made for him a host of friends.

Charles M. Spangler was born on October 19, 1852, in the town of Decatur, Green county, Wisconsin, and is the son of Elias and Frances (Smith) Spangler, both natives of Center county, Pennsylvania. Elias Spangler was educated and grew to manhood in his native county and was also married there. He was engaged in the pursuit of agriculture in Center





MR. AND MRS. CHARLES M. SPANGLER.



county, until 1852, removing, during the year, to Green county, Wisconsin, where the birth of Charles M. occurred. With his wife, Elias Spangler traveled overland with horses and wagon and was more than a month making the trip. Each stream and river had to be forded and many other inconveniences endured, making the journey a true pioneer experience. Arriving in Wisconsin, he purchased one hundred and sixty acres of government land for one dollar and twenty-five cents per acre, at a place called "Burrock Opening," on the banks of the Sugar river. He immediately set about clearing the farm of timber and preparing it for cultivation. A log cabin was erected and in this they lived until the Civil War.

Patriotic as well as industrious, Elias Spangler enlisted in the One Hundred and Forty-sixth Regiment, Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry and served his country nobly and well until near the close of the conflict. Returning to his home physically broken, his death occurred four days later from an illness contracted during service. Among the many interesting experiences of his life was one which occurred at Freeport, Illinois, when he had the privilege of hearing Abraham Lincoln deliver his famous address at that place. Frances (Smith) Spangler, his wife, lived the remainder of her life at Broadhead, Wisconsin, her death occurring in 1891. They were the parents of eight children: William A., Bery F., Joseph I., Charles M., Martha, Susan, Abraham Lincoln and Eli.

Charles M. Spangler attended school for six months in the county schools of Green county, his father's untimely death forcing him to assist his mother with the farm work until seventeen years of age. The responsibility thus thrust upon him was instrumental in the shaping of his destiny. The only class of employment open to uneducated men in those days, was that of agriculture, and compelled to earn his living he accepted a position as farm hand, first in Illinois and then in Iowa. In 1874 his location was shifted to Wright county, Iowa, where he labored as a farm hand for two years, receiving his pay by the month. He then rented a farm which he cultivated until 1889, purchasing, in the meantime, eighty acres of land. From time to time, other farms were added to his original holdings until the entire acreage amounted to six hundred and thirty-five acres of well-improved farms.

Charles M. Spangler has made more than twenty thousand dollars worth of improvements on the home place. The yearly acreage planted to corn is one hundred and twenty-five acres, with eighty acres planted to small grain. One carload of cattle was fed out each year and from one



hundred and fifty to two hundred head of hogs. The breeding and raising of Poland China hogs was a specialty on this farm. At present Charles M. Spangler is county supervisor and is serving the second term in that office. Retired from the active duties of farming he now lives in a beautiful, modern home, located in the town of Eagle Grove, Iowa.

On December 9, 1876, Charles M. Spangler was united in marriage to Emma Stryker, daughter of William and Roxena (Wilcox) Stryker, and they are the parents of four children: William Homer, Alfred Elias, Nora Frances and Arthur Marion. William Homer married Julia Larson and they have two children, Bernice and Emery. Alfred Elias married Martha Larson and they have two children, Marvin and Bernard. Nora Frances became the wife of Oscar Olson and they are the parents of two children, Malvern and Leona.

Emma (Stryker) Spangler was born in Bureau county, Illinois, but her parents were natives of New York and Pennsylvania. William Stryker was the son of John and Fanny (Eastlick) Stryker, who were also natives of New York state. John Stryker served for seven years in the War of the Revolution. When William Stryker was a lad of eight years, his parents, John and Fanny Stryker, removed to Trumbull county, Ohio, where he grew to manhood. His father was a shoemaker but he decided to become a farmer and at twenty-one years of age removed to Lagrange county, Indiana, where he married Roxena Wilcox, daughter of Job and Mary (Gage) Wilcox. For five years he followed farming and then removed to Bureau county, Illinois, where he continued in the agricultural line until 1854. At that time he traveled overland with an ox team to Wright county, Iowa, arriving on July 4, 1854, and was the first permanent settler of that county. They were six weeks making the trip. Webster City had only a few houses and the first log home was built by William Stryker, and the first money that he earned, after coming to the county, was from the making of shingles by hand. Through trial and honest effort he became one of the most prominent men in the county. William Stryker and his wife were the parents of seven children: John, Levina, Jeremiah, Emma W., Effie, Lillian May and Marietta. William Stryker was county supervisor and justice of the peace for several years. He was a devout member of the Methodist Episcopal church.

Charles M. Spangler is a member of the blue lodge and council of the Masonic Order. He is a Republican and stands pat for the old party principles. His unblemished integrity and courageous loyalty to his convictions have won him friendships that are lasting.



## H. H. OBERTON.

Considering the farm the great recruiting ground for the population of cities, there is a sense in which civilization is dependent upon the rural district. As one writer puts it: "If it were not for the fresh and healthy blood, muscle and brain from the farms, our large cities would degenerate." In this sense, he who contributes to the healthy, wholesome life of the country, helps to develop the conditions upon which the cities may draw for their best type of citizens. H. H. Oberton belongs to that army of men who, by useful living, contribute something to the general good. The gentleman above mentioned, a prominent farmer and merchant of Clarion, was born in Lewis county, New York, on June 25, 1840, his parents being Alexander and Catherine (Adams) Oberton, both of Canada.

The father of Mr. Oberton was a shoemaker by trade, and after his marriage in Canada, removed to the state of New York, in 1835, and located in Lowsville, Lewis county, where he followed his trade until 1850. He then retired, and taking his family to Dainsville, New York, lived there the remainder of his life. The date of his birth was January 9, 1812, and he died on January 16, 1879. His wife who was born in 1808, passed away on November 1, 1848. Of their seven children, five are now living.

H. H. Oberton attended the schools of Lowsville, New York, and at the close of his school course he was employed on a farm at four dollars a month, where he worked until his seventeenth year. Removing to Cook county, Illinois, he engaged in the same kind of labor for four years, and gave up his work to answer the call of his country at the opening of the Civil War. Enlisting on August 9, 1862, in Company C, One Hundred and Thirteenth Regiment, Illinois Volunteer Infantry, he served seven and one-half months, when he was mustered out and returned home because of illness.

In 1866 Mr. Oberton located in Blaine township, Wright county, Iowa, on a farm of eighty acres which he bought for one dollar and twenty-five cents an acre, purchasing it from the government. To this he added other land until he had acquired two hundred and forty acres. He engaged in general farming until the year 1890, when he moved to Dows, Iowa, where for fourteen years he was engaged in the furniture and undertaking business. This he sold out and retired from business for the period of one year when he moved to Clarion, which has been his home ever since.

Mrs. Oberton was formerly Elizabeth Nobles, of Cook county, Illinois, and the wedding ceremony was performed on November 4, 1860. The



seven children born in this home were Harriet, Everette, Mortimer, Byron, William, Catherine and Lester. Harriet is the wife of William Mitchell, Mortimer, of Waterloo, Iowa. Everette is the wife of Arthur Loucock. Byron is living at Clarion. William is a resident of Mechanicsville, Iowa. Catherine, Mrs. Edward Shreves, of Clarion. Lester is living in Waterloo, Iowa.

H. H. Oberton is a member of the Christian church in which he has held many important offices. Mrs. Oberton is a member of the Presbyterian church. As an evidence of his standing in the community it is of interest to note that Mr. Oberton has held the offices of school director, constable, and road supervisor of Blaine township. His political affiliations have always been with the Republican party. He is a member of the Grand Army of the Republic at Dows, Iowa. Both in agricultural and in mercantile circles, Mr. Oberton has made his influence felt as a business man of high standards, and as a man of exemplary character. He, therefore, has earned the regard of a large circle of friends and acquaintances.

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#### ROBERT R. DUFFY.

Robert R. Duffy, former postmaster of Rowan, has, with the assistance of his wife, played a large part in the religious and social life of the town to which they came when theirs was the first house on Main street. Mr. Duffy's life and accomplishments have been characterized by a zeal and ability which prove strength of purpose, as well as power of concentration and an interest in local affairs which is not limited to the present generation. Mr. Duffy claims as his birthplace, Thompsonville, Connecticut, where he was born on May 1, 1851, his parents being Robert and Nancy (Rowen) Duffy, natives of Ireland and Scotland, respectively. The father left his home at the age of eighteen and emigrated to Canada. After a brief residence there he moved to Connecticut. He did not have any particular trade or profession. His wife came to the United States with her parents.

In 1858 the senior Robert Duffy located in Iowa township, Wright county, where he purchased between three hundred and four hundred acres of land, which he immediately began to improve. Two years later his wife and children joined him, traveling by railroad as far as Independence, Iowa, and from there they journey by wagon. At first they owned only one horse and a yoke of oxen. The subject of this sketch was one of five children,



three of whom were boys. James lives at Cherokee, Iowa; Fannie is deceased; William and Robert R. are residents of Rowan; Mary Jane is the wife of D. H. Peper, of Dows.

Robert R. Duffy, was able to acquire only a limited education, living and working at home until he was married. After his marriage his father contracted for a farm northwest of Rowan, making the first payment, and turned over the property to his son who continued the payments until he became its owner. To this farm he later added forty acres making one hundred and twenty acres in all. At that time a log house stood on the property and between fifteen and twenty acres of the land had been cultivated. The owner then planted one hundred and sixty rods of maple and cottonwood trees, and built a good, substantial barn, adding other improvements. There the family lived for nine years, then moved to Rowan where they built a small home, the dimensions of which were fourteen by twenty-two feet. This was in 1885, and this house was the first one built on what is now known as Main street. There the family lived for eleven years, and during that time, one of the events in the memory of Mr. Duffy is the fact that he unloaded the first car load of coal and handled the first load of grain on the Rock Island railroad out of Rowan.

For eight years Mr. Duffy handled grain for the firm of Finch & Hayward, and then went into business for himself. For a period of one year he was in partnership with H. J. C. Box. For six years he dealt in hogs, transporting in that time only one carload of cattle. But his business enterprises were not limited to the above, for he also owned a general store to which he gave all of his attention after he discontinued the grain business until he sold out in 1896. He then returned to his farm and remained there until 1902 when he returned to Rowan for the winter, and later moved to Knox, North Dakota, purchasing there one hundred and sixty acres of land, which was a homestead relinquishment. Living there for six months, he returned to Rowan in May, 1903, and ran the switchboard to the local telephone company, which he operated for two years and three months. This business undertaking on his part was partially due to the fact that before going to Dakota he had been injured in a runaway accident and was unable to engage in the strenuous work that he was accustomed to. In the year 1907 he was appointed postmaster of Rowan, a position which he held until July 16, 1913.

Addie Emerson became Mrs. Duffy on February 21, 1876, the marriage taking place in Wright county. Mrs. Duffy was born in Cedar county, Iowa, on January 28, 1858, and is a daughter of Charles C. and Mary Ann



(Wohrer) Emerson. The parents of Mrs. Duffy were natives of New Hampshire and Pennsylvania, respectively, and came to this county in 1863.

Mr. and Mrs. Duffy have only one child, Dolly, who was born on January 18, 1878. For one term, the latter took a course in the school at Iowa Falls, her studies being in music. She then studied at home and taught music for about three years. On February 3, 1897, she became the wife of Walter H. Whitten, of Rowan, where Mr. Whitten is a hardware merchant. They have two children, namely: Ellfreida, who was born on November 28, 1897; and Berneda, born on June 20, 1899. Both children live at home.

Mr. and Mrs. Duffy are members of the Methodist Episcopal church in which they have been active since the time when services were held in an old school house in the woods, near what is the present site of Rowan—what was then known as Horse Grove. Mr. Duffy was secretary and trustee of the first church built in Rowan. He was also township assessor for three years, having been appointed under a Republican administration, as he has always been a member of that party.

Mr. Duffy has wielded no little influence in connection with the industrial, commercial and religious interests of Rowan, and he is now numbered among its truly influential men. His life has been one of successful but unselfish accomplishment.

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#### C. W. MEYER.

One of the progressive farmers of this county is C. W. Meyer. Not content with the results of old methods he has sought by scientific treatment to increase the productivity of his land. By experiment and observation and good common sense, he has become a man whose advice is sought and whose opinion is respected. A retired farmer of Wall Lake township, Mr. Meyer was born in Dupage county, Illinois on September 14, 1855. His parents, Frederick and Gertrude (Engstler) Meyer, both being natives of Germany.

Frederick Meyer was a cloth dresser by trade in Germany, and came to America when he was between thirty and thirty-five years of age. Locating in Chicago, he followed the cigar maker's trade for three years, then purchasing a farm of one hundred and sixty acres near that city he engaged in agricultural work until he took his family to Wheaton, Illinois, and there they lived until his death in 1905. His wife passed away four years later leaving their seven children.



C. W. Meyer is the only son of his parents who is living in this county. After leaving school in Dupage county, Illinois, he helped his father on the farm until his twenty-fifth year, when he bought a farm of his own of eighty acres in that county and there for five years he worked. Selling out he moved to Iowa where he and his family spent their first winter in Woolstock. Purchasing one hundred and twenty acres of land in Hamilton county, four and one-half miles from Webster City, Mr. Meyer engaged in general farming and stock raising, feeding out about two carloads of cattle a year. He farmed in that county for twenty years, until March, 1908, when he sold out and settled on a farm which he bought in Wall Lake township, this county. Here he engaged in general farming, feeding out three or four carloads of cattle and hogs a year until 1914. He then retired from business and moved to Clarion where he built a fine modern residence. He still owns his farm of three hundred and twenty acres in Wall Lake township.

Mr. Meyer's marriage occurred in December, 1880, the bride being Barbara Grobner, daughter of Joseph and Barbara (Wagner) Grobner. Mrs. Meyer and her parents were born in Austria. When she was four years old her father came to the United States, but died from the effect of a sun-stroke three months after his arrival. A year later she and her mother moved to Illinois. Her father served in the Austrian army and was in some of the fiercest battles of the Austrian-German War. Mrs. Meyer and her mother located in Dupage county, Illinois, and here she met and married Mr. Meyer. The mother remained in that county until 1900 when she came to Iowa and since that time has made her home with Mr. and Mrs. Meyer. Mrs. Grobner is the mother of three children, all of whom are living. The home life of Mr. and Mrs. Meyer has been blessed by the birth of four children. These are William E., Martha, Thresia and Mabel. The latter became the wife of George Clam and to them two children, Marie and John, were born. William became the husband of Elsie Craner. Thresia is living in Webster City, Iowa. Martha is living in Des Moines, Iowa.

Mr. and Mrs. Meyer are devout members of the Roman Catholic church and in politics he is a Republican. At Webster City, Mr. Meyer was for two years road commissioner. The career of the man whose history is here briefly described, is one which exemplifies the power of the will. Determined from early manhood that he would succeed, he bent all his energies to that end, and in doing so, has sacrificed nothing of the respect due to true worth. He and his good wife have formed lasting friendships among those whose esteem they have won.



## DANIEL SHERMAN.

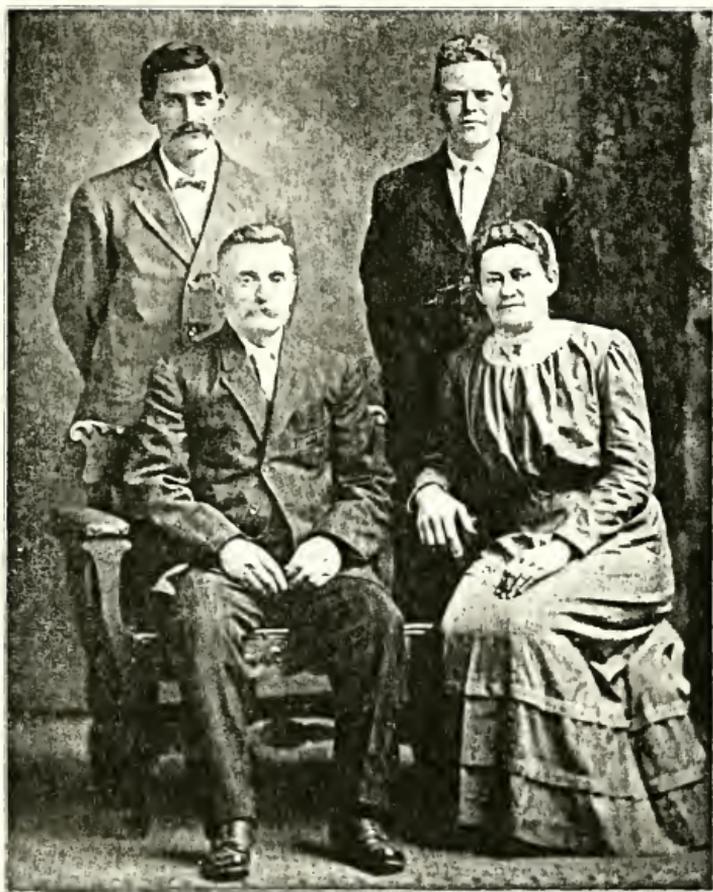
The unusual and interesting career of Daniel Sherman may well be recorded for the benefit and inspiration of others. A résumé of such a life is valuable alike for the lesson it teaches of perseverance against the odds of adversity and the inheritance of misfortune, as well as for the lesson of honorable ambition. Having lost his mother at the age of three months, his life became a round of difficulties and tribulations, but he has achieved, in spite of such handicaps, and today is one of the prosperous citizens of Goldfield, Wright county, Iowa.

Daniel Sherman was born on September 15, 1856, in New York City and what little education he received was acquired in that place, previous to the ninth anniversary of his birth. At that time, he was placed in an orphan asylum where he remained for six months, later being shipped with a number of other children to Illinois for the purpose of being "bound out" to the farmers of that state. The father of Daniel Sherman was a native of England and learned and followed the trade of carpenter and ship builder in that country, previous to his immigration to America. He was also employed as a carpenter in the navy yards at New York City, after his arrival, until his death in 1885. His first wife was a native of New York City and they became the parents of two children, Mary and Daniel. After the death of his first wife, he was married a second time and became the father of two children, David and Harriet.

Daniel Sherman, upon his arrival in Illinois, was "bound out" to a farmer by the name of Robert Mullin and remained with him for six long, weary years, awaiting the opportunity to develop into something more than a mere automaton at hard labor. The opportunity never came, and with a grim determination to mold his destiny to his own liking, he ran away, finally locating in, or near, Sandwich, Illinois, on a farm where he remained for a period of eleven years. During this time he married and shortly settled on a place which was rented, and here began the initial operations which terminated in success. This first independent venture covered a period of sixteen years and in 1900, with his little family, he removed to Iowa, where he purchased one hundred and fifty-four acres of land, at forty-five dollars per acre, located one and one-half miles east of Goldfield, Wright county, Iowa.

In 1910, after cultivating this farm for a period of ten years, he sold the place and retired to the town of Goldfield, Iowa. Four thousand dol-





DANIEL SHERMAN AND FAMILY.



lars worth of improvements were made on the land while it was being operated under the careful management of Daniel Sherman and the principal products were corn and small grain. The home in town is modern and is kept in the best of order and adds to the beauty of the town.

Daniel Sherman was united in marriage to Clara Shoemaker, daughter of Obadiah and Martha Shoemaker, in 1884, and to them have been born three children, Obadiah, William and one child who died in infancy. Clara Shoemaker received her education in the country schools of Illinois, discontinuing her studies at the age of fourteen years. Her father was the owner and operator of one hundred and forty acres of land in Illinois. He and his wife were the parents of ten children. His death occurred in 1898.

The children of Mr. and Mrs. Sherman, Obadiah and William, both did fair to follow their father's example of thrift and perseverance. Obadiah married Kittie Bissel and they are the parents of two children, Helen and Robert. William is at home.

Daniel Sherman held the office of school director for a period of twelve years. His religious inspiration is received through his attendance at the Methodist Episcopal church, of which he is a member. Politically, he is a Democrat and has the courage of his convictions as regards all party questions. In the declining years of his life, he can review his career with satisfaction and the knowledge of duty done and the goal of his ambition reached, with the knowledge that his good fortune is the result of honorable endeavor and the consideration of the rights of others.

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#### CHARLES W. HILL.

The gentleman whose name appears at the head of this biography, and who is a well-known agriculturist of Grant township, Wright county, Iowa, was born in New York state, August 21, 1831, and is the son of William and Sarah (Herrick) Hill, the former being a native of Connecticut and the latter a native of New York. William Hill was married in the state of New York when a young farmer and in that state he resided all his life. The four of their ten children now living are Sarah, Dianthy, Washington and Charles W., the subject of this sketch.

Charles W. Hill attended the schools of New York, and at the age of thirteen years he left school and was employed by various farmers of the



vicinity until his twenty-fifth year when he married and rented a farm in Steuben county, New York. There he remained for five years, at the end of which time he began a twenty-years residence on a rented farm in Iowa township, Wright county. Buying a tract of two hundred and forty acres at three and five dollars per acre he moved on his newly acquired land in 1881, and began placing thereon many improvements which have made this one of the best farms of the section. It is modern in every respect, the expense being in the neighborhood of five thousand dollars. Hardship was not unknown to Mr. and Mrs. Hill, who were pioneers in this section of the country, and who started life together without means, encouraged only by their ambition for future success and their willingness to earn it by strenuous work. It is because no obstacle seemed insurmountable that these stout hearts were among the strong ones to give this county its early virility and hope for the future. With a wife and two children to support all the strength of his courageous young manhood was needed. When he began his life as an independent farmer Mr. Hill did not even possess that first essential of every rural estate, namely, the cow. Many times he and his neighbors were called from their sleep in the night to fight prairie fires, and it was his custom in order to protect his property, to plow around his quarter of a section.

In 1856 the marriage of Mr. and Mrs. Hill was solemnized, the bride being Adelia Riley, daughter of Simeon Riley. Of this union three children were born, these being George, William and Adella, the last two being deceased. Mrs. Hill passed away in 1888. Adella became the wife of James Lindsay and to them one child, Edward, was born. George married Jessie Stockwell and they became the parents of eight children, namely: Benjamin, Harlan, Myron, Ruby, Adelia and Gerald; two children died in infancy, Nellie and Grace.

The subject of this sketch was honored by being made a director on the school board of Grant township, a position which he filled with honor for a number of years. His political affiliations have been with the Republican party. He is also a member of the Odd Fellows lodge.

By arduous labor, by thrift and by faith in themselves Mr. and Mrs. Hill have been able to attain for themselves a competency which is the more valued because it is the result of their unaided efforts. His success is a striking example of what can be accomplished by the man or woman who has the above commendable qualities of character. In converting the soil into wealth, Mr. Hill has thus not only added to his personal riches, but he has contributed to the wealth of the county and state.



## FREDERICK NELSON.

Frederick Nelson, retired farmer and stockman, formerly of Eagle Grove township, but now of Goldfield, Iowa, is a native son of Denmark who chose American soil as the means of deriving a competency for himself and family and American freedom for the practical application of innate ideals of character that could best be developed in the free, open life of the West. He wisely chose agriculture as the means to an end and his every effort has been fraught with success.

Frederick Nelson is one of six children born to Nels F. Fredricksen, a native of Denmark, and his birth occurred on February 25, 1847, in that country. Nels F. Fredricksen followed the trade of blacksmith while a resident of Denmark but upon his arrival in America, he purchased two hundred acres of land in Wright county, Iowa, and engaged in agriculture. He immigrated to the United States in 1873 and came directly to Wright county where he settled permanently. His death occurred in 1902. The names of his six children follow: Marion, Lena, Fred, Louis, Annie and Patrina.

Frederick Nelson attended school in his native land until he was fourteen years of age and followed the trade of blacksmith, as well as that of day laborer in the agricultural line, until the age of twenty-seven, at which time he immigrated to America. Upon his arrival in this country, he went directly to Chicago, Illinois, remaining there for two days and then continuing on his journey to Goldfield, Wright county, Iowa. He was employed as a farm hand by the month for a period of three years and at that time purchased a farm in Eagle Grove township which he operated for himself. This piece of property consisted of forty acres and the venture was so successful that, in a few years, he invested in eighty acres more adjoining the original purchase. The farm has been improved to the extent of eight thousand dollars, is well tiled and all under cultivation. The principal products of the farm were, during his management, corn, grain, cattle and hogs. In the spring of 1914 he retired to the town of Goldfield, Iowa.

In 1876 Frederick Nelson was united in marriage to Caroline Madsen, and they became the parents of six children: Nels, Albert, Carl, Lars, George and Margaret. Margaret, Albert and Carl are deceased. Nels married Nellie Hanson and they are the parents of four children. They are living on a farm in Liberty township, Wright county, Iowa. Lars married Myrtle Halverson and they are living on the home place. George married



Agnes Hansen and they have a farm in Eagle Grove township, Wright county, Iowa. The first wife of Frederick Nelson, Caroline (Madsen) Nelson, died and in 1885, he was married, secondly, to Mrs. Mary Hansen, a native of Denmark, and daughter of Lars Godredsen, a day laborer of Denmark. She was a widow of Mr. Hansen and was the mother of four children: Anna, John, Tillie and Augusta. Anna lives at home. John is deceased. Tillie married August Larsen. They live on a farm in Liberty township and have three children. Augusta married Archie Blewit and they are the parents of one child. They reside in Goldfield, Iowa. The mother of these children came to America when thirty-six years of age. By her marriage to Frederick Nelson she is the mother of one child, Arvig, who is employed in a garage at Goldfield.

Mr. Nelson is a member of the Danish Lutheran church and holds the office of secretary in the Danish Brotherhood lodge. Politically, he is a Republican and very earnest in his support of the same. Secure in the hearts of his fellow citizens, he is enjoying the well earned rest from a life of toil and honorable endeavor, and the declining years of his life mirror the reflection of duty done and service rendered to the best of his ability.

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### ROBERT M. CAMERON.

By a perusal of a man's life record an index of his true character is revealed to the reader, and only a man of integrity and honor is capable of retaining the continued confidence and esteem of his fellow men. The influence for good is wielded by the uprightness of the citizens of any community, and this virtue has been part and parcel of the life of Robert M. Cameron, of Belmond, Wright county, Iowa, who, for years, has been a leader of wisdom and strength of character, and now in his eighty-sixth year, still holds the love and respect of his many friends.

Robert M. Cameron was born on July 2, 1830, near Canton, Ohio, and is the son of Samuel and Eleanor (McCall) Cameron, who were the parents of these children: Miranda, deceased; John R., who married and was the father of four daughters and three sons, and died in 1911; Robert M.; Alexander, who married and had three daughters and one son, died in 1905 and was buried at Deadwood, North Dakota; Cyrus S., who married and is now residing in New Mexico; Charles W., who is married and has three daughters and now living in Chico, California; and Mary E., wife of E. A.



Snyder, who is the mother of one daughter and whose home is in Cedar Falls, Iowa. In 1852 the father of these children removed from Canton, Ohio, to Cedar Rapids, Iowa, leaving part of the family behind, but two years later took up his residence in Cedar Falls, Iowa, where he remained until his death in 1893, at the age of nearly ninety-four years. His wife passed away in 1891, and both husband and wife are sleeping at Cedar Falls, Iowa.

Robert M. Cameron joined the family at Cedar Rapids, Iowa, during the winter of 1853, but began business operations in Cedar Falls, Iowa, where he purchased a farm and also dealt in real estate. He purchased the first land sold in Grundy county, Iowa, February 15, 1853. Twelve years later he transferred his business to the town of Belmond, Wright county, Iowa, but continued to follow his initial operations. His arrival in Belmond occurred on March 12, 1875. In May, 1867, Robert M. Cameron had married Laura E. Beeson, daughter of Jesse Beeson, a one-time member of the Michigan state Senate.

To Robert M. and Laura (Beeson) Cameron have been born two children: Ernest B., who is married and has two children, lives at Cedar Rapids and holds the treasurership of the J. G. Cherry Manufacturing Company of that city; and Daisy, who resides with her parents at Belmond, Iowa.

Robert M. Cameron has always taken an active interest in the community affairs, and the citizens have shown their appreciation in electing him to serve as mayor of Belmond for four terms. He has also acted as justice of the peace for a period of fifteen years. His response to the citizens for their display of confidence in his ability to serve them faithfully and well is displayed in the city park, which was established during his administration, also the road leading north to the town of Goodell, and a public well, five hundred feet deep, was driven and has since given an adequate supply of the very best water. This well has a complete piping system connected, which furnishes water to all parts of the town.

To say that Robert M. Cameron held the office of mayor for four terms may convey to the reader some idea of the esteem in which he is held by his fellow citizens, but when it is understood that he is a Democrat and that the town of Belmond, Iowa, is overwhelmingly Republican, then it is that he is raised from the class of an ordinary citizen and placed in a distinctive position. During President Cleveland's last term of office, he appointed Robert M. Cameron as postmaster of Belmond, Iowa, in which capacity he served for four years.



Robert M. Cameron is a member of King Solomon Lodge No. 210, Ancient Free and Accepted Masons, of Belmond. His handsome home in Belmond, is one of the beauty spots of the town and beside his property in Iowa, he has extensive land holdings in Minnesota. His life has been interesting and varied in experience and a recitation of the two years spent in the California mines fills the listener with a desire to live those pioneer days for himself. On his trip to the mines, in 1858, the isthmus of Panama was crossed and again on July 4, in 1860, on his return trip. His embarkation was at New York and from there he sailed to San Francisco. The mines, in which he labored were in the counties of Butte and Nevada, California. In spite of his many years, Robert M. Cameron is hale and hearty and impresses everyone as being a much younger man than he is, for his heart is young and his life has been filled with good works.

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#### OLE THOMPSON.

Unusual achievement and progress in the financial world has been the result of indefatigable labor and the study of material at hand on the part of Ole Thompson, a retired farmer and business man of Belmond, Wright county, Iowa, whose untiring efforts have given him an enviable place among his fellow men. A native of Norway and one of eight children born to his parents, he has overcome all obstacles and is entitled to the greatest praise.

Ole Thompson was born on December 27, 1854, and came to America when eleven years of age, with his parents and seven sisters whose names are: Annie, wife of Hans Jacobson, of Belmond, Iowa; Agnetta, wife of C. B. Johnson, of Belmond, Iowa; Pernele, wife of James Johnson, of North Dakota; Carrie, wife of Nels Sagustad, of North Dakota; Antinetta, who married Gus Nelson, of Mason City, Iowa, but is now deceased, her death having occurred some twenty years ago; Mattie, wife of M. J. Newgard, of Belmond, Iowa; and Gurner, who died when nearly three years of age. The family came from Brumendalen, Norway, to La Crosse county, Wisconsin, where they resided for three years, at which time they removed to Wright county, Iowa, traveling overland by ox team. Soon after their arrival, Ole Thompson purchased a quarter section of land in section 10, in Belmond township, and the family at once settled on it and began farming. The father died in 1872, as the result of injuries received in a fall



from his horse, which crushed him so badly that he never recovered. The mother continued to live with her son until her death in 1909.

Ole Thompson added to his original purchase by investing in another quarter section joining the first and continuing to cultivate the two, until his purchase of two hundred and forty acres in section 22, in Belmond township. Still retaining the old farm, he removed to the new location, which he made the permanent home. In 1876 he was united in marriage to Carrie Kluge, daughter of Andrew and Margaret (Knutsen) Kluge, of Humbolt county, Iowa.

The following children have been born to Ole Thompson and his wife, Carrie (Kluge) Thompson: Jessie G., wife of A. A. Olsen, of Belmond township, Iowa; Adolph E., who is married and living in Belmond township; Amanda A., wife of Edward Carlson, of Des Moines, Iowa; Tolford A., married and residing in Belmond township, Iowa; Clara A., wife of Joseph Olson, of Belmond township; Oscar C., married and living in North Dakota; Melvin L., living in Belmond township; Pearl H., wife of Alvin Erickson, of Belmond township; Adelaide J., who resides with her parents in Belmond; Harley M., at home and attending high school in Belmond; Lester, who died when two years of age, and another named Tolford, who also died when an infant.

Ole Thompson continued to follow agricultural lines until the spring of 1910, at which time he purchased his present handsome home in Belmond and has resided there from that time until now. While actively engaged in agricultural pursuits Ole Thompson bought and raised much high grade stock, principally Durham cattle and Poland China and Duroc-Jersey hogs. He fed all the corn he raised and purchased much of the surplus raised by his neighbors. His land holdings now consist of two thousand acres in Wright and Hancock counties and one thousand acres in Minnesota and the Dakotas.

Ole Thompson is vice-president of the State Bank of Belmond, Iowa, and is president of the Olaf Elevator Company. That he has a clear judgment and an honesty of purpose, far above the average, is evidenced by the number of offices of trust which he holds, being treasurer of the Belmond Creamery Company and a director of the Belmond Lumber Company. He is also a director of the Belmond Telephone Company. His religious affiliations are in the St. Olaf Lutheran church, of which he and his wife are devout members. His political faith is with the Republican party and he has always taken a great interest in all questions for its advancement.



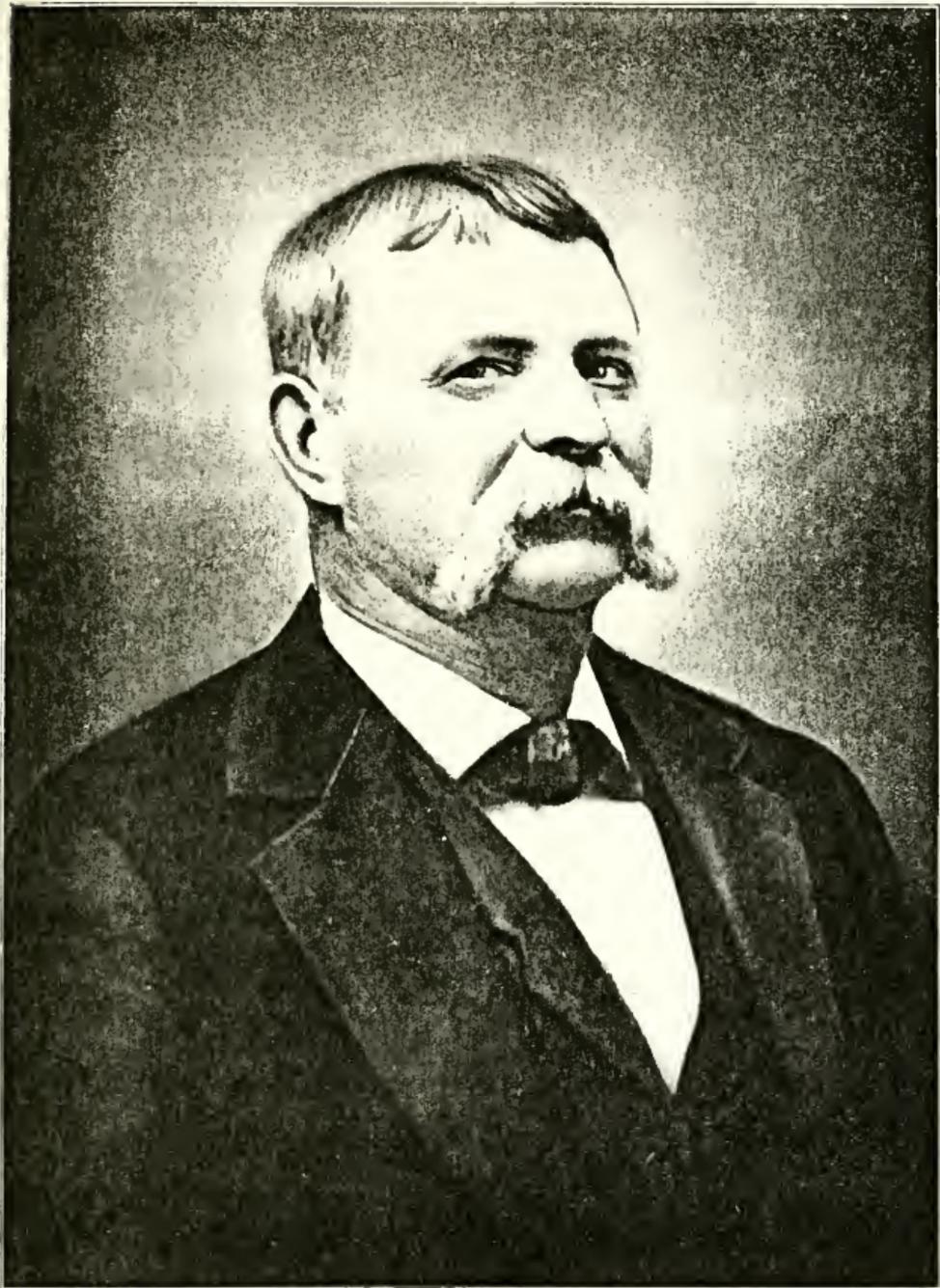
## JAMES L. BROOKS.

One of the active farmers and business men of Wright county was James L. Brooks who was born on June 4, 1841, the son of Daniel and Mary (Brook) Brooks, both of whom were natives of Homefirth, Yorkshire, England. They were of a manufacturing class of people and on coming to America they established woolen and textile mills in Pike county, Pennsylvania, owing to the plentiful supply of water power in that section. They remained there but a short time and retired from the business when James L. was but a boy and moved to Sparta, New Jersey, where the son received his education in a subscription school. The family remained there until 1861, where the father conducted a hoop factory, making wooden hoops for barrels and boxes; they then removed to Jo Daviess county, Illinois, where they lived until the death of the parents.

In 1869 James L. Brooks came to Iowa, having brought his household goods by wagon, while the family came by train to Iowa Falls, from where it was necessary to complete the journey with a team and sled, there being no railroad to their new home. His brother, John, had at an earlier date settled in Straw Valley and to this locality the rest of the family came some time later. Mr. Brooks and his wife purchased eighty-nine acres of land, giving eight dollars per acre for it. The land was broken and a log house, sixteen by eighteen feet, with one room and a loft was erected. The loft was reached by a ladder and with these primitive conditions the family boarded the school teacher during the winter months. After five years they built a more modern and convenient frame house.

In 1876 Mr. and Mrs. Brooks sold the farm and moved to Clarion where they purchased the Clarion House which they conducted for one year after which they sold the property to Mr. Simmons and moved to Belmond where they conducted the Belmond House for five years. In 1881 they retired from the hotel business and purchased one hundred and twenty acres of land in section 12, Grant township. The land was undeveloped and unimproved, costing but ten dollars per acre. A house and other buildings were erected, the land cultivated and developed, and there the family made their home until 1899 when they came to Cornelia. In 1887 the family had spent one year in California where they conducted a hotel at San Luis Obispo. Mrs. Brooks had previously gone to the coast to visit her parents and was so enthused with the country and the climate that she prevailed upon her husband to join her there. Mr. Brooks died in Cornelia on February 9, 1914, and there the widow still resides.





JAMES L. BROOKS.



On March 20, 1867, James L. Brooks and Mary Brown were married in Jo Daviess county, Illinois. Mary Brown was the daughter of John D. and Lonisa M. (Gillett) Brown and was born on February 7, 1849, in Jo Daviess county. Her father was a native of Windsor county, Vermont, and the mother was born in Erie county, Pennsylvania. The Browns are of old Puritan stock and it is thought that some of the family came over in the "Mayflower," at least the family was represented in America about that time. William Brown was major in the United States army during the War of 1812 and was later elected to the Legislature as a representative of his county in Vermont. His father, Tom Brown, was a sailor during the Revolutionary War, having enlisted at Boston. He was later taken prisoner by the British and detained in their camp in Nova Scotia until the close of the war, when he walked to Boston in the winter. He was a sailor during most of his life and followed whaling for years.

Mr. Brown, the father of Mrs. Brooks, moved from his home in Illinois to Missouri and from there to California, where he lived until his death. He was one of the early pioneers of Jo Daviess county, Illinois, and was a county commissioner at the time the townships were organized.

Mr. and Mrs. Brooks were the parents of five children, four of whom are living, namely: Dick, born on September 15, 1860; Harry, July 1, 1871; Thomas, October 16, 1872; and Cys, June 9, 1874. Dick Brooks was born in the old Ontario court house, of Wright county, and is married to Maud Christie. They live in Alberta, Canada, and have the following children: Marie, Ada, Bessie, Bruce, Camelia, David and Hazel. Harry Brooks married Ella Bamford and they live on the old homestead, in Grant township. They are the parents of the following children: Joseph, Esther, Ruth, Selah, James (deceased) and Laura. Thomas Brooks lives in Belmont township; he married Nellie Anderson and they are the parents of four children, Orlee, Merle, Eloise and Shirley. Cys Brooks married John Hogan, who died in 1912, leaving two children, Brooks and Lucy. The mother married John Ottinger and they live in Des Moines. Brooks lives with his mother while Lucy makes her home with her grandmother, Mrs. James L. Brooks.

James L. Brooks as a young man was a Republican in politics, but later advocated the principles of the Democratic party, and though he took an active interest in the work of his party he would never accept office. He was a member of the Ancient Free and Accepted Masons, a charter member of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows at Belmont, but later withdrew



his membership. He also belonged to the Oriental Order of the Palm and Shell. Mrs. Brooks was at one time a member of the Eastern Star.

Mr. Brooks, while not an active church worker, was all his life affiliated with the Methodist Episcopal church. He was always a great reader and devoted much time to study. Some time before his death he and his wife bought three hundred and sixty acres of land in sections 11, 12, 14 and 23, Grant township, and fifty acres in section 9, of the same township. Mr. Brooks was a man of broad and generous views, a hard worker and a successful business man.

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### THOMAS L. KNIGHT.

Thomas L. Knight, a well-known retired farmer of Goldfield, Wright county, Iowa, is a native of New Jersey, where he was born on June 20, 1842, the son of Thomas and Margaret Knight, natives of England and New Jersey, respectively.

Thomas Knight, Sr., was educated in the schools of England, and after having worked at the gunmaker's trade for fourteen or fifteen years, came to America. Upon landing in New York City he followed the gunmaker's trade in New York for some time, when he moved to a farm in New Jersey. After a number of years he moved to Ohio and farmed nine years and from there went to Dixon, Illinois, where he rented a farm and where he lived until seventy-five years old. Subsequently he retired and moved to Traer, Iowa, and it was there that he passed away. To Thomas, Sr., and Margaret Knight were born the following children: Anna, Isabella, Abbie, Thomas, Charles, Robert, Dimick and Becks.

Thomas L. Knight was educated in the public schools of Ohio, but received only an elementary education, having been compelled to quit school at the age of nine years. Mr. Knight worked for his father on the farm until twenty years old, when the Civil War broke out and he enlisted in the Seventy-fifth Regiment, Illinois Volunteer Infantry, being a private in Company A. He enlisted at Dixon, Illinois, in 1862. From Dixon the Seventy-fifth Illinois proceeded to Prairieville, Kentucky, where, in an engagement, the regiment lost four hundred and sixty-four men and it was Mr. Knight's part to assist in the burial of the soldiers killed in this battle. From Prairieville, the Seventy-fifth Illinois moved to Murfreesboro, Tennessee, where the regiment was victorious, but at great cost of life. After the battle of Murfreesboro, the regiment participated in the battle of Buzzard Roost and



then proceeded to Nashville, Tennessee, where it engaged in two battles. From Nashville the regiment marched to Chattanooga and from there to Lookout Mountain. Mr. Knight's regiment participated in the siege of Atlanta and it was there that the army was divided, a part going with Sherman to the sea. Mr. Knight's part of the army marched west to Franklin and there met the Rebel army. From Franklin the regiment returned to Nashville and participated in the last battle of the western campaign. Mr. Knight was discharged at this time and had participated in twenty-eight engagements during the eight months he was under fire.

Upon his return to Dixon, Illinois, Thomas L. Knight remained with his father until the fall and then rented a farm for two years. He was married in 1867 to Hannah E. Shore, the daughter of Benjamin Shore, a farmer of Ogle county, Illinois, who reared a family of six children. Mrs. Knight was educated in the public schools of Ogle county. To Mr. and Mrs. Knight have been born nine children, W. C., F. F., Thomas A., Jay, Margaret, Charlotte, Celestia, Lottie, and one child who died in infancy. W. C. married a Miss Duer and has three children. They reside in Goldfield. F. F. married a Miss Typer and has two children. They also reside in Goldfield. Thomas married a Miss Rowley and has two children. Jay married a Miss Killing. They are residents of Liberty township. Margaret married Daniel Robinson, of Liberty township and has eight children. Charlotte married Frank Miller, of Minnesota, and has five children. Celestia is the wife of Roscoe Samuels, of Liberty township, and has two children. Nettie is the wife of James J. Leach, of Illinois, and has one child.

Shortly after their marriage, Mr. and Mrs. Knight came to Iowa and settled near Grinnell, where they purchased a farm of eighty acres. After living on this farm for two years, they sold out and moved to Tama county, settling near Traer, where they purchased one hundred and sixty acres of land. After farming this land for twenty-two years, Mr. and Mrs. Knight moved to Traer and lived there for two years, after which they came to Wright county, Iowa. In 1890 the Knight family settled near Goldfield, purchasing a half section of land in Liberty township. Mr. Knight improved this farm and owned it two years, after which he sold out and purchased one hundred and twenty acres of land one mile north of Goldfield, on the Boone river. He continued to add to the acreage of the farm until he had five hundred acres where the town of Thrall now stands. The Knights lived upon the farm for nineteen years, and then for eighteen months operated a store at Thrall. Finally, Mr. and Mrs. Knight moved to Goldfield, where



they now have a modern home and enjoy all of the comforts and many of the luxuries of life.

Mr. and Mrs. Thomas L. Knight have belonged to the Methodist Episcopal church for fifty-five years. Mr. Knight has served as township trustee, as school director and as constable. He is now serving as justice of the peace in Goldfield. Mr. Knight is a member of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows and belongs to the lodge at Goldfield. He has passed all of the chairs in the Odd Fellows lodge. Nominally, Mr. Knight is identified with the Republican party in politics. He is a worthy citizen of this great county and state and has well performed all of the duties which fall to him as a man and citizen. Primarily, his interests have always centered in his home and family and to them he has given a full measure of devotion.

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### THOMAS S. WALLACE.

It has been the good fortune of Thomas S. Wallace to attract a large and appreciative patronage as a miller who has made himself an expert in his line of work. Personally, the gentleman whose name appears at the head of this biography possesses many of the excellent traits of character for which the Scotch are noted. His lineage is traced back to stanch old Scotch origin. Thomas S. Wallace was born on July 12, 1849, in Chester county, Pennsylvania. He is the son of William and Elizabeth (Robinson) Wallace, natives of the above county.

While the Wallace family came from Scotland, they are also one of the oldest families in the United States. William Wallace, a farmer by occupation, was the father of six children, five of whom are living. R. Bruce Wallace, a historic old name worthy of pride, was a Civil War soldier and died about 1903. Mrs. Anna Martin, a daughter, lives in Pennsylvania, and her sister, Mrs. Lucretia Pratt, resides in Baltimore, Maryland. The subject of this biography was the fourth child, the youngest being C. Wesley Wallace, of Westchester, Pennsylvania. The remaining child born in this home died in childhood.

Thomas Wallace, who had only such educational advantages as were afforded by the country schools, remained under the parental roof until his eighteenth year, when he traveled to Pomeroy, Pennsylvania, in order to learn the miller's trade, selecting for his purpose, an old water-power mill. After three years, during which time he became versed in all that pertained



to his chosen trade, he worked for a year in Sedalia, Missouri, and from there, journeyed to Ackley, Hardin county, Iowa, where he worked for a period of eight years. In 1881 he returned to Pomeroy, to engage in business for himself, choosing for his work a new mill, and there he remained for the following three years. The next seven years were spent in Kimbenton where he became a well-known miller.

In 1893, Mr. Wallace located in Belmont to establish himself in the furniture business, which he followed for eight years. But he was happiest when superintending the work of a busy mill, and in 1900, answered the call to return to the occupation of his early choice, and erected a mill on the same site on which the old one had been located. And here he has labored ever since, becoming one of the best-known figures in the town. He manufactures the "Peacock" and "Lily of the Valley" brands of flour, buckwheat flour, corn meal, graham flour and feed, the mill having a working capacity of sixty barrels of flour a day.

The marriage of Thomas S. Wallace and Elizabeth Butterfield was celebrated in 1874, in Hampton, Franklin county, Iowa, Mrs. Wallace being a daughter of parents who died when she was small, so little is known of them. Her birthplace was in Illinois. Mrs. Wallace died in 1883, leaving to mourn her loss, her husband and four children. Their subsequent history is as follows: Elizabeth became the wife of Earnest W. Russell, of Minneapolis, Minnesota; May and Rose, who are twins, are teaching school; Anna, who became Mrs. Art W. Fissch, passed away in 1907, and was the mother of three children, Cecelia, Gale and Hellen. Mr. Wallace was married, secondly, to Mary Whalon, of Chester county, Pennsylvania, and to her he was united on January 1, 1885. Mrs. Wallace was the daughter of John and Catherine Whalon, native citizens of Pennsylvania. One child has been born in the Wallace home since this marriage, she being a daughter, Mary. She is now living at home with her parents, although she was at one time, a successful instructor in the Wright county schools.

Mr. Wallace has always been keenly interested in matters pertaining to education and has served his fellow citizens by giving much time and thought to the school question as a member of the school board for six years. He was its president for one year. In political affiliations Mr. Wallace is a Republican. He is a well-known member of the Ancient Free and Accepted Masons. Mrs. Wallace and her youngest daughter are members of the Catholic church.

It is a pleasure to record, if only briefly, the chief events in the life of



a man who is clean and wholesome both in ideals and conduct. Mr. Wallace is a man honest and fair in business; strong and loyal in friendship; and is worthy of the high regard in which he is held. No shadow of wrong or injustice mars the record of such a life, a life of a man respected and esteemed by all who know him.

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### THOMAS McNULTY, SR.

One of the enterprising and successful farmers of Wright county, Iowa, who has been living retired for several years, is Thomas McNulty, Sr. While he has personally enjoyed a large success in agriculture he has not failed to take a worthy interest in public movements, and is one of the best citizens of Belmond. Mr. McNulty is a native of Comty Leitrim, Ireland, born on January 12, 1844. He is the son of Francis and Bridget (McDermitt) McNulty, the former of whom was a farmer and the second of nine children born to his parents.

Thomas McNulty, Sr., lived at home with his parents until he came to America, in the spring of 1860. After landing at New York City, where he remained for four years working as a laborer, he traveled to St. Louis, Missouri, in 1864, and there he worked in a packing house for nine months. Afterwards he removed to Macoupin county, Illinois, where he worked on a railroad for three years. He then went to Dubuque, Iowa, and worked for a lumber company for nine months and then worked near to Independence, Iowa, as a laborer for various railroads for sixteen years. About 1885 Mr. McNulty came to Wright county, Iowa, purchasing one hundred and twenty acres of land in section 6, of Pleasant township. The farm had been improved to some extent and cost Mr. McNulty twenty-three dollars an acre. He improved the place in various other ways and added one hundred and twenty acres to the farm, living there for about nineteen years, when he retired and removed to Belmond. There Mr. McNulty purchased a lot and built a house, in which he has lived ever since.

In 1863 Thomas McNulty, Sr., was married in New York state to Mary Sharkey, a native of County Roscommon, Ireland, and the daughter of Michael and Catherine (Burn) Sharkey. By this marriage there were born five children, namely: Mary married Owen Sullivan, and they have nine children, Mary, Agnes, Hazel, Nellie, John, Martin, Jose, Francis and Thomas; John is the father of three children, Francis, Charles and Will-



iam; Francis married Kate Dougans, and they have three children, Mary, Florence and Frank; Delia married Malachi Norton, and they have no children; Thomas, Jr., married Julia McLaughlin, and they have five children, Mary, Donald, Paul, Madonia and Edward. Mrs. Thomas McNulty, Sr., died on April 23, 1904.

On November 13, 1907, Thomas McNulty was married, secondly, in Wright county, Iowa, to Mrs. Mary (Kelley) Kelley, who was born on January 12, 1854, in Milwaukee county, Wisconsin, and who is the daughter of John and Ellen (White) Kelley, natives of County Galway and County Cork, Ireland, respectively. Mr. and Mrs. McNulty were married in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Mrs. McNulty was first married in March, 1883, to John Kelley, a native of County Galway, Ireland, and they removed from Milwaukee to Hancock county, Iowa, in 1884. In 1900 they removed to Wright county, where Mr. Kelley died on September 13, 1901. They had no children.

Mr. McNulty is a Democrat. He and his good wife are members of the Catholic church. Mr. McNulty is a member of the Roman Catholic Benefit Society.

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#### HON. JOHN R. SMITH.

The Hon. John R. Smith, farmer, extensive landowner, business man, financier and representative of the people in public office, was born in Roxbury, New York, on January 27, 1838, the son of Robert and Jeanette (Lyle) Smith, both of whom were natives of Forest, Scotland. Robert Smith was a farmer of his native country until he came to America, on July 4, 1836, and located at Roxbury, New York, near where he bought a farm, on which he lived for the remainder of his days. Robert Smith died in the year 1867; his widow, Jeanette, died in the year 1884. Robert Smith was descended from a well-known and prominent family, he being a cousin of Donald Smith, the great Canadian financier and railway man, who later became Lord Strathcona. Jeanette Smith was related to the Duke of Sullivan, of England and Scotland. Robert and Jeanette Smith were the parents of the following children: Mary, David L., John, Robert S., William C., Thomas and Jeanette, who is now Mrs. Mitchell.

John R. Smith received his early education in the schools of Roxbury, New York, where he was associated with Jay Gould and John Burroughs, after which Mr. Smith attended the Delaware Literary Institute, at Dela-



ware, Franklin county, New York, and then he taught school for some years. Following his career as a school teacher, John R. Smith became a cattle buyer, a business which he conducted in New York, Pennsylvania and Ohio, until the year 1881, when he moved to Wright county, Iowa, and continued as a cattle buyer, doing business in the northern part of Iowa and in the state of Minnesota. After eight years as a cattle dealer, John R. Smith bought three hundred and sixty acres of land in Wright county, and has since added to his land until he now owns five thousand, three hundred and sixty acres; one thousand, two hundred and eighty acres of which is located in North Dakota; three thousand, two hundred acres of which is in Canada and five hundred and fifteen acres of which is located in the state of Mississippi. Mr. Smith now gives his entire time to the care of his land.

In the year 1890 John R. Smith became interested in the State Bank of Eagle Grove. On July 1, of that year, he took up the duties of cashier, an office which he held until 1905, when he disposed of his interest to the Citizens State Bank of Eagle Grove, and retired from active business life.

John R. Smith has taken an important part in the political and public life of Wright county and of the town of Eagle Grove. Mr. Smith was elected to the thirty-second and to the thirty-third sessions of the Iowa General Assembly, where he made an enviable record. He has served his town as treasurer for six terms and for a number of years was a valued member of the Eagle Grove school board. John R. Smith, in political affiliation, is a Republican, he having cast his first vote for Abraham Lincoln in 1860. Mr. Smith has never married.

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#### HENRY ANDERSON.

Henry Anderson, a farmer and one of the leading citizens of Norway township, Wright county, Iowa, has the distinction of being an authority, in Wright county, on the culture of sugar beets, in which industry he was a pioneer. He is a man of big ideas and broad experience, being a student of agricultural and political science and a great reader, keeping abreast of the times on all national and civil issues.

Henry Anderson is one of six children born to Ole and Melinda Anderson, natives of Norway, and his birth occurred on April 27, 1860, in Kendall county, Illinois, the home of his parents, who immigrated to America in 1855 and settled in Kendall county, Illinois, where they resided until





MR. AND MRS. HENRY ANDERSON





their deaths. Ole Anderson was a farmer, before and after his residence in the United States, and much of his knowledge was assimilated by his sons, who increased their natural perceptions, by a practical application of inherited ability. The names of his children follow: Mrs. Hannah Hexstall, of Kendall county, Illinois; Andrew, also of Kendall county, Illinois; Oliver, of Kendall county; Mrs. Bessie Nelson, of LaSalle county, Illinois; Mrs. Melinda Larson, of Kendall county, Illinois, and Henry, of Wright county, Iowa.

Henry Anderson received his education in the common schools of his native county and assisted his father with the farm work on the home place until twenty-one years of age, at which time he rented land and began operations for himself. For two years his efforts in the agricultural line were made in Kendall county, Illinois, but in 1886 he removed to Hancock county, Iowa, where he rented land and continued in his initial vocation for six years. In 1802 he purchased one hundred and sixty acres of land in section 12, of Norway township, Wright county, Iowa, and on this property he has continued to live for twenty-three years.

At the time Henry Anderson purchased his present home, it was practically unimproved, while now it is one of the best country homes in the township, with a modern house and other buildings of the best construction. In 1887 Henry Anderson returned to Kendall county, Illinois, and was joined in wedlock to Julia Osman, daughter of Osman Osman, and a native of Kendall county, Illinois. Osman Osman and his wife were natives of Norway and the United States, respectively, though Mrs. Osman was of Norwegian descent.

Of the five children born to Henry and Julia (Osman) Anderson, three are deceased, two dying in infancy, and Melvin died when five years of age. Those living are: Orplie, born on June 28, 1894, and Frances, who was born on January 3, 1900. Orplie is a graduate of the common schools and has been a student of the college at Forest City, Iowa, having taken a commercial course at that institution of learning. Frances is a student of music in the college at Forest City, Iowa.

Religiously, Henry Anderson finds his inspiration in the creed of the St. Olaf Norwegian Lutheran church, of which he and his family are members. Among the offices of trust which have been bestowed upon him by his many admirers and fellow citizens, those of township trustee and school board member have been filled with a sincerity of purpose that has endeared him to those who know him best. His affiliations are with the Republican



party, and this organization receives his enthusiastic support. A visit to the farm of this progressive man is an inspiration and a help, for his method of cultivating and caring for the principal crops, beets, corn and oats, is productive of the best results.

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### CHARLES E. LONGLEY.

The Longley family is one of the oldest in America, ancestors of the present generation having come to this country on the "Mayflower." One of the descendants of the original Longleys who came over in the "Mayflower" is Charles E. Longley, a prominent citizen of Belmond, Wright county, Iowa, who is now living retired. He has been prominent in the agricultural, industrial and political life of Wright county for a generation, and is highly respected in the community where he lives and where he is so well known.

Mr. Longley is a native of Kane county, Illinois, where he was born on May 21, 1859. He is the son of Joseph L. and Ann (Wedge) Longley, who were both born near Malden, Massachusetts. The late Joseph L. Longley was a butcher by trade in his early life, but later took up farming and when his son, Charles E., was only four years old the family sold their farm in Illinois and removed to Delaware county, Iowa, where they lived for a couple of years. From Delaware county the family moved to Burlington, in Coffee county, Kansas, but remained there only about one year and one-half when they removed back to Iowa, settling at Belle Plaine, Benton county. There they lived for six months and on May 27, 1867, removed to Wright county, where Mr. and Mrs. Joseph L. Longley lived until their death. The family located one mile and one-half north of Dows, where they purchased land. It was there that Charles E. Longley spent the greater part of his boyhood and where he grew to manhood. At the time the family came to Wright county the nearest railroad was at Iowa Falls, Hardin county. Very soon afterward, however, the road was extended to Webster City, Hamilton county, and then to Alden, in Hardin county, which became their nearest market. Alden was fifteen miles distant.

Charles E. Longley received a good common-school education and lived at home with his parents until twenty-six years old, having in the meantime purchased eighty acres of land in Iowa township. After passing his twenty-sixth birthday he removed to his farm, which was slightly improved with a shanty and twelve acres of land which had been cultivated. After living on



the farm for seven years, Mr. Longley moved to Belmond, where he has lived ever since with the exception of three years spent on a farm of one hundred and sixty acres in section 24, which for a time he owned. Mr. Longley removed to the second farm and erected new buildings, and then sold it and moved back to Belmond where he had purchased property. Mr. Longley followed the carpenter's trade for some years after removing to Belmond. He is also proficient as a horseshoer and even yet does a little horseshoeing, masonry and plastering. He still owns the original farm in Iowa township and has since added eighty acres to the farm. It is well improved, Mr. Longley having spent about three thousand dollars in installing drainage on the farm. It also has good buildings and good fences. Among his other interests Mr. Longley is interested in the Wright County Furniture Store Company.

On December 15, 1884, Charles E. Longley was married at Hampton, Franklin county, to Emma L. Grout, who was born in Michigan, near Armeda, in Macomb county, and who is the daughter of Aldrich and Eliza (Ballou) Grout, natives of Michigan and New York, respectively. Mr. and Mrs. Longley were the parents of one child, Mildred Electa, who died on February 13, 1890, when not quite five years old.

Mr. Longley supports the Republican party. He has served as township trustee of Pleasant township, as president of the board of health, as road supervisor and as constable of the town of Dows. He was trustee of Pleasant township for nine years, president of the board of health for six years and road supervisor for two years. Mr. and Mrs. Longley are active members of and support the Spiritualist church.

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#### FRANK O. FITTS.

The subject of this sketch made his entrance into the business world at ten years of age. No further evidence of a child's ambition can be desired. This boy knew what he wanted to be when he should grow up to be a man. He wished to be what his father was, and with a wise understanding of his child, the father encouraged the desire, thus adding to the force of heredity the power of early environment, and so strong was this combined influence upon the vocational life of the child, that he never cared to change it. Frank O. Fitts, at one time the youngest telegraph operator in the United States, was born on May 21, 1863, in Caledonia county, Ver-



mont. His father was Orvis Fitts, and his mother, before her marriage, was Mary Nourse, the former being a native of Braintree, Vermont, and the latter of Bethlehem, New Hampshire. This is an old and well-known family in the East, and it is probable that they are of English origin.

Orvis Pitts, who was for many years a railroader, was the early inspiration of his son who while still a school boy, was determined to begin his lessons in telegraphy. His first lesson under his father occurred when he was in his tenth year, and it is said that he was the youngest telegraph operator in the United States at that time, that being the year 1873. The family was then living in Walden, Vermont, where he subsequently worked for four and one-half years as a substitute.

Frank O. Fitts came to Iowa in 1881 and worked for several years as an extra man at Ft. Dodge, Livermore and Humboldt, and then went to South Dakota where he took his first regular position at Busnell, in 1883. After three years, he went to White, South Dakota, for three years, leaving there for a position in Elkton, South Dakota, where he remained for four years, and in June, 1894, came to Belmond, Iowa, where he has been agent for the Rock Island railroad ever since.

His interest in his work has not prevented Mr. Fitts from taking part in movements which have to do with the social welfare of the community. For some time he has been interested in manual training and domestic science as a part of the regular work, and it is due largely to the efforts of Mr. Fitts that these studies have been placed in the local public schools.

On June 29, 1888, Frank O. Fitts and Mary Stoutenburg were married in White, South Dakota. Mrs. Fitts was born on March 12, 1871, near Brampton, Ontario, Canada. She is the daughter of Jacob and Rachael Stoutenburg. Her parents having died when she was quite small, very little is known of them, other than that they are of German descent. Mr. and Mrs. Fitts are the parents of three children. Corri Orvis, assistant cashier of the Belmond Savings Bank, was born on June 25, 1889. Thera G., a teacher in the local schools, was born on March 10, 1892. F. Onnalee, a student at the Oberlin Musical College, Oberlin, Ohio, was born on March 14, 1895.

Mr. Fitts' knowledge of and interest in educational subjects has made him a valuable member of the Belmond school board and his official work in that capacity has been along the line of progressive ideas and methods. He has also been a member of the city council. Mr. Fitts belongs also to the Ancient Free and Accepted Masons, and he and his family have been loyal and helpful supporters of the Methodist Episcopal church.



An unusual singleness of purpose characterizes the life of Frank Fitts. The future men and women of Belmond will owe to him a debt of gratitude for the foresight which led him to advise the introduction of manual training and domestic science in the public schools. In so doing, he has made practical vocational training possible to future generations as well as to the present. Such are the men who leave valuable monuments to their memory, monuments which mean the enhancement of life.

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### JAMES R. COULTER.

Coming to Wright county in 1886 with but three dollars to his name and in debt for the team of horses with which he began his career as an Iowa farmer, James R. Coulter, an honored veteran of the Civil War, has done well and now, in the evening of his life, is living in comfortable retirement in his pleasant home at Rowan, this county, surrounded by comforts that scarcely were dreamed of in his boyhood.

James R. Coulter was born in Coshocton county, Ohio, on October 10, 1841, son of Josephus M. and Anna (Pigman) Coulter, natives, respectively, of Pennsylvania and Virginia, residents of Ohio from the time they arrived there as children with their parents, who immigrated to that state early in the settlement of the Coshocton region. Mr. Coulter's grandfather, William Coulter, was a surveyor and helped survey the entire county of Coshocton, receiving from the government a grant of land there in payment of his services. On this land, his son, Josephus M. Coulter, spent his entire life and there James R. Coulter was reared, receiving his schooling in a little pioneer log school house. He was twenty years of age when the Civil War broke out, and on October 20, 1861, he enlisted in Company A, Seventy-sixth Regiment, Ohio Volunteer Infantry, in which he served with Sherman's army for two years and six months, being discharged in February, 1864, on account of disability. Mr. Coulter participated in numerous important engagements of the war, notable among which were the battles of Ft. Donelson, Shiloh, Corinth, Island No. 10, Arkansas Post and the siege of Vicksburg.

Upon receiving his discharge Mr. Coulter returned to his father's home and presently bought a portion of the old home farm, which he sold in 1873, after which he moved to Fulton county, Indiana, where he lived for twelve years. His wife dying at the end of that time, he decided to come West. For two years he lived at Iowa Falls, this state, where he married



a second time, after which, in 1886, he came to this county, locating south of the village of Gault, where for three years he rented a farm.

When he came to Wright county Mr. Coulter had but three dollars and was in debt for his team of horses, but he prospered and at the end of five years was able to buy a farm of one hundred and twenty acres south of Dows, this county, for which he paid twelve dollars an acre—land that today is worth one hundred and seventy-five dollars an acre. Six years after buying that farm he sold it for forty dollars an acre and bought a farm of one hundred and eighty-five acres near Esterville, Emmett county, this state, for which he paid nineteen dollars an acre, and on which he lived for one year, at the end of which time he sold it for thirty-seven dollars and fifty cents an acre and bought a nearby farm for thirty dollars an acre which he sold a year later for forty-five.

In 1901 Mr. Coulter went to South Dakota, where he entered a homestead claim, on which he lived until he had it "proved up," in the meantime buying more land near there, which he since has sold. In 1907 he returned to Wright county, locating in Gault, from which place, after three years residence, he moved to Rowan, where he now lives.

On February 29, 1868, James R. Coulter was united in marriage to Belle DeHuff, also a native of Coshocton county, Ohio, daughter of Henry and Mary (McCarty) DeHuff, to which union two children were born, Blanche, who married F. B. Sheldon, of Rowan, this county, a biographical sketch of whom is presented elsewhere in this volume; and Bertha, who married David Hartness, to which union three children were born, Riley, Lyle and Rex. David Hartness was killed by a train at Belmont and his widow later married Earl Hadley and now lives at Carleton, Washington. On December 5, 1885, at Iowa Falls, James R. Coulter married, secondly, Janet Parland, who was born in Montreal, Canada, daughter of Thomas and Mary (Mather) Parland, natives of Scotland, which second union has been without issue. Mr. and Mrs. Coulter are members of the Methodist Episcopal church at Rowan and take an active part in church work, rarely missing a service. They are concerned in all good works thereabout and are held in the highest esteem by their many friends, their pleasant home being the scene of much genial hospitality.

Mr. Coulter is a Republican and takes a good citizen's interest in the political affairs of the county. He is a member of the Knights of Pythias lodge and formerly was an active member of the Grand Army of the Republic, but with advancing years has dropped his active connection with that patriotic order. He is a substantial citizen and is held in high regard throughout that entire section of the county.



## PETER CHRISTENA.

By the exercise of his own resourcefulness, even from youth, Peter Christena has largely attained the object of his early ambition, namely, a competency and a place of respect and esteem among his fellow men. He has kept in view the final good, and by tenacious activity and faith in himself, he has sought to exemplify in his life and conduct the principles and high ideals which he inherited from his ancestors who were known to be people of sterling worth. But in doing this, he has not been unmindful of the claims of others upon his time and generosity.

Peter Christena, a retired farmer of Lincoln township, is a native of Germany, having been born in Bavaria, on May 27, 1834, and is the son of Michael and Margaret (Gardner) Christena, both of whom were also born in Bavaria, Germany.

In 1843 the father of Mr. Christena, perhaps influenced by the migratory habits of his friends, joined some of them and journeyed to the United States, making his first home in the new country in Dearborn county, Indiana. Here he began life on eighty acres of land which he cultivated until 1854, when, with his family he removed to Clayton county, Iowa, where, with his son Peter, he purchased two hundred and fourteen acres of land at seven dollars an acre. These enterprising pioneers traveled overland on horseback and in wagons in which their household goods were stored, and en route, they passed through Indianapolis, and South Chicago, making the trip in the fall of the year. The journey required twenty-three days, and it was necessary to traverse forests and to ford many a dangerous stream. The father of the subject of this sketch made his home with his son, Peter, until his death which occurred in 1861, his wife dying ten years later. Of the seven children born to Mr. and Mrs. Christena, only two remain, these being Peter and his sister, Barbara.

Peter Christena attended school in Dearborn county, Indiana, his course, however, consisting of a very limited term of six months. He then assisted his father on the farm until the two journeyed to Clayton county, where he farmed until 1891, taking entire charge of the enterprise. In that year he located in Lincoln township on one hundred and sixty acres of land which he purchased and which became the scene of his general farming operations and stock raising. Among his assets as an agriculturist are a large number of Poland China hogs.

Mrs. Christena was formerly Julia Goeller, and to her the subject of



this sketch was married in 1865 in Claton county, Iowa. Mrs. Christena is the daughter of William and Mary Katherine (Funke) Goeller. Eight children formed the household of Mrs. Christena's early home, and of these only three, August, William and Mrs. Christena, are living. Mrs. Christena was born in Prussia, Germany, of which country her parents were natives. Her father was a miller in Germany until the time when he came to America and located on a farm in Clayton county, Iowa, which he cultivated until a few years previous to his death, when he made his home with a daughter in Yankton, South Dakota.

To Mr. and Mrs. Christena have been born the following children: Mary, now Mrs. John Ulrich; Emma, who married Alfred Pinion and became the mother of a daughter named Viola, and who is now deceased; Carolina and Amelia who are at home.

Mr. and Mrs. Christena are devout members of the Methodist Episcopal church, of which Mr. Christena has held all the prominent offices, including that of trustee. Politically, he is a Republican.

Although living more than the biblical allotment of three score and ten, the gentleman whose life history is here considered, is unusually active and alert both mentally and physically. He takes an interest in the life about him and in affairs concerning the county, and enjoys a large share of popularity. His has been a most useful and helpful career and the many friends his geniality have won attest to the fact that he is a man worthy of friendship.

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### CHRISTIAN B. JOHNSON.

The history of a county, as well as that of a state or nation, is chiefly a chronicle of the lives and deeds of those who have emerged triumphant in the battles for success. The world determines the character of a community by the success of its representative citizens and yields its tribute of admiration and respect to those whose works and actions constitute the record of the community's prosperity and pride. Among the prominent farmers and merchants of Wright county, Iowa, who are well known because of their success in the larger commercial affairs of life, is Christian B. Johnson, a merchant of Belmond, Iowa, who owns three hundred and twenty acres of land in Ransom county, North Dakota, as well as the home farm of three hundred and twenty acres in section 15, of Belmond township. The home farm is well improved. Mr. Johnson's first quarter section



of land cost three dollars and twenty-five cents an acre, the second quarter section cost sixteen dollars an acre. When he came to Wright county, Iowa Falls was the nearest market, but two years later the railroad was extended to Garner, a distance of twenty-three miles.

Christian B. Johnson was born on January 13, 1848, at Ringsocket, Norway. He is the son of Barr and Agnetta (Thompson) Johnson, who were farmers in Norway. They were the parents of seven children. In August, 1850, the family arrived in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, having come to America by the way of Quebec and from Quebec to Milwaukee by the way of the lakes. On the latter part of the trip from Quebec to Milwaukee, the father died of the fever. The mother proceeded to Dane county, near Stoughton, and lived there for one year. Afterward the family moved to La Crosse county, Wisconsin, where they purchased a small farm and lived in what is known as the Bostwick valley. After Christian B. Johnson's eldest brother died, his mother sold the farm and they moved to the La Crosse valley, in the same county, where she made her home with her eldest daughter and lived until her death.

Christian B. Johnson received a good education for his day and generation. In 1860 he immigrated to Wright county, Iowa, having been married in the previous spring and having purchased land in Wright county in the spring of 1868. He made the trip from Wisconsin to Iowa overland by driving three yoke of oxen. The journey required eight days, the family landing at Hickory Grove on May 24, 1869. Mr. Johnson's farm at that time was all wild prairie and had no improvements. His first house was built of hickory logs and consisted of one room, twelve by sixteen feet. Mr. Johnson was fortunate enough to own a stove and soon was comfortably settled in his log home. After a few years he built a better house. He also added more land until the home farm now consists of three hundred and twenty acres. This farm is now rented out. During these initial years in Wright county, Iowa, the Johnson family experienced all of the trials and hardships of pioneer life.

The family lived on the home farm until the fall of 1892, when Mr. Johnson moved to Belmond, purchasing an interest in the store owned by J. S. White. After continuing in partnership with Mr. White for six years, Mr. Johnson bought out his interest in the store and has operated it ever since. In the early years of Mr. Johnson's business experience, the store had a large stock of clothing, but it was soon discovered that clothing was unprofitable, since most of the business at that time was done on credit,



collections were slow and the investment too large for a satisfactory profit. Consequently, this department was abandoned.

On May 1, 1869, Christian B. Johnson was married in La Crosse county, Wisconsin, to Agnita Anderson, the daughter of Thomas and Johanna Anderson, of Norway, and herself a native of Norway. Mrs. Johnson's parents came to America in the spring of 1866 and first located in La Crosse county, Wisconsin, but later immigrated to Wright county, Iowa.

Mr. and Mrs. Christian B. Johnson have been the parents of nine children, seven of whom are living, as follow: Anna J., who married H. C. Enger, and has three children, Agnes, Olga and Helen; Theodore, who is in the mercantile business at Latimer, Iowa, married Mollie Johnson, and has five daughters, Ruth, Alma, Gladys, Loretta and Theodora; Benton Joel, who attended college at Decorah, Iowa, and later took a course in bookkeeping at Albert Lea, now in the hardware and implement business in Belmond, married Hamah Olson, and has two sons, Gerhard and Clifford; Albert, who also attended school at Albert Lea, married Marie Schennaman, and has two children, Eleanor and Viola, and is engaged in the mercantile business at Huxley, Iowa; Gena Amanda and Julia Metta are unmarried; Chester Gerhard married Edith Marsh and is employed in his father's store.

Christian B. Johnson is a Republican in politics, but has held no office of consequence. The Johnson family are all members of the Lutheran church and take an active interest in religious matters. Mr. Johnson is a liberal contributor to the support of the church and, in fact, to the support of all worthy enterprises.

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### J. N. JOHNSON.

It is the progressive, wide-awake man of affairs who determines the real history of a community. His influence as a potential factor in a community is difficult to estimate. The examples which progressive, wide-awake men furnish of patience, purpose and steadfast integrity illustrate strongly what every man may accomplish. There is always a measure of satisfaction in referring even in a casual way to their achievements in promoting the development of a community and in giving strength and solidity to the institutions which determine the prosperity of a community. Such a man is J. N. Johnson, a prominent grain dealer of Wright county, Iowa,



who lives at Belmond. Mr. Johnson is one of the most prominent business men, financiers and citizens of Wright county. Born on November 18, 1859, in New York City, J. N. Johnson is the son of Nicholas and Hannorah (Finn) Johnson, who were natives of Norway and of Ireland, respectively. Nicholas Johnson emigrated to America from Christiana, Norway, and his wife, Hannorah Finn, from County Cork, Ireland.

The late Nicholas Johnson emigrated to America when he was still a lad. His father, Nicholas Johnson, Sr., having died when he was a small boy. Nicholas Johnson, Jr., was a sailor for twenty years, having begun as a cabin boy and worked up to the position of captain and still later owner of a vessel. During the Civil War, he was appointed by the Federal authorities to take charge of all government supplies and ammunition in New York City, and held this position until some time after the close of the war. He then became a stevedore and worked at this trade until 1870, when he emigrated to Wright county, Iowa, purchasing land in Pleasant township, where he lived until a few years before his death, when he moved to Belmond and retired. He was a Republican in politics, but took no active part in political affairs.

Seven children were born to Nicholas, Jr., and Hannorah (Finn) Johnson, as follow: Thomas A., Mrs. Carrie Jones, Mrs. Nora Undercooper, Mrs. O. G. Tracy, Mrs. Cora Needmeyer, Mrs. Anna Kenefick and J. N., the subject of this sketch, who was the eldest child. The mother of these children, Hannorah (Finn) Johnson, had come to America with her parents, John and Hannorah Finn, who spent their entire life along the Atlantic coast. They died in New York City and there their remains are buried.

J. N. Johnson lived at home with his parents until reaching his majority. He received a good common-school education, and after he had grown to manhood he operated a steamboat on the Missouri river from Sioux City to Bismarck, North Dakota. After two years he engaged in the cattle business, west and north of Pierre, South Dakota, and one year later, in 1895, he returned to Wright county and associated himself with William Finch in the grain business. While engaged in the cattle business in South Dakota, he had been associated with Colonel Bullard. Since coming to Wright county, in 1885, Mr. Johnson has been continuously engaged in the grain business. After Mr. Finch's death, W. I. Rosecrans, Mr. Finch's son-in-law, assumed Mr. Finch's share of the business. The firm is now known as Johnson & Rosecrans Grain Company.



Mr. Johnson has also purchased and sold many farms. He is a director in the First National Bank of Belmond and was one of the organizers of that institution. He is at present a heavy stockholder in the bank.

Mr. Johnson's wife, before her marriage, was Mary E. Clark, a native of Woodstock, McHenry county, Illinois, and the daughter of John and Mary (Leonard) Clark, who were born natives of Ireland. They settled in Winneshiek county, Iowa, and spent the remainder of their lives in that county.

Mr. and Mrs. Johnson have had four children who survive and one child who is deceased. Frank J., a graduate of the Belmond high school and for some time a student at Ames College, lives at home; Genevieve is a graduate of the Belmond high school and the wife of Ray W. Hill, of Clarion; Marie, a graduate of the Belmond high school, is at present a student at the State Normal School, at Cedar Falls, Iowa; Marguerite is a student in the Belmond high school.

Mr. and Mrs. J. N. Johnson and family are members of the Catholic church. Mr. Johnson is a member of the Knights of Columbus, the Modern Woodmen of America, the Knights of Pythias, and the Catholic Order of Foresters. He was a charter member in the Foresters lodge. Mr. Johnson is a Democrat, but has held only minor offices. Few men living in Belmond have contributed more to religious work in this community than J. N. Johnson. He had a prominent part in the building of both the old and the new church at Belmond.

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### NICHOLAS REESE.

In the commercial life of Belmond township, Wright county, Iowa, the name of Nicholas Reese occupies a conspicuous place, since he is one of the representative business men of Belmond and Pleasant townships. Progressive, enterprising and persevering—such qualities always bring success sooner or later, and to Mr. Reese they have brought a large reward for his well-directed and careful efforts. While he has prospered in the hardware business at Belmond he has also benefited the community where he lives in a material way and has been an influential factor in the moral, educational and social progress of the community.

Mr. Reese is a native of Schenectady county, New York, born on September 12, 1841. He is the son of Jacob and Eliza (Cantley) Reese, who are also natives of New York state. They had nine children, of whom Nicholas was the fourth.



Mr Reese lived at home on the farm until he had attained his majority, receiving in the meantime a common-school education. When about sixteen years old, the family removed to Dekalb county, Illinois, where Nicholas lived until 1865, when he emigrated to Hardin county, Iowa. There he obtained work as a farm hand, but later purchased land in Franklin county and improved it. The farm was located on the county line between Hardin and Franklin counties. He lived in Franklin county until the fall of 1881, when he sold the farm and removed to Belmond, Wright county, where he has lived ever since.

In the fall of 1881, upon his arrival at Belmond, Mr. Reese engaged in the hardware business with J. C. Butterfield as a partner. The firm was known as Butterfield & Reese for three years and then Mr. Reese purchased Mr. Butterfield's interests in the store and operated it himself until 1908, when he turned the store over to his son, Charles N., who now operates the business.

On October 9, 1869, Nicholas Reese was married in Franklin county, Iowa, to Edwina C. Butterfield, a native of Cook county, Illinois, whose parents were very early settlers in Illinois. Mr. and Mrs. Reese have had four children, namely: Charles N. married Frances Wiggins, and they have one child, Edna; Ella married Charles Townsend, and they have two children, Clarence and Ted; Carrie married George Pabst, and they have one daughter, Eleanor; Frank married Bessie Boyd, and they have one child, Frank, Jr. Mrs. Reese died in March, 1907, leaving a husband, four children and several grandchildren to mourn her loss.

In addition to his hardware business, Mr. Reese is also a heavy real-estate owner, owning considerable land in Wright county, Iowa, and in North Dakota. When he first established the hardware store in Belmond the stock was valued at about two thousand dollars and was housed in a room twenty-two by twenty-eight feet. The present stock is valued at six or eight thousand dollars and is housed in two rooms, each twenty-two by sixty-eight feet. The shops are located back of the store-room proper.

All of the members of the Reese family are identified with the Methodist Episcopal church. Mrs. Reese was an active member of the church during her entire life. Mr. Reese is a member of the Masonic fraternity and the Order of the Eastern Star. Mrs. Reese was also a member of the Eastern Star. Nicholas Reese is prominent in the Republican councils of Wright county and has been called upon frequently to fill public office. He has served as mayor, member of the town council and as school director.



## CHARLES SCHIPULL.

Charles Schipull, the subject of this sketch, shows a type of man who reaching a strange land without capital and unaccustomed to its ways and customs, has, regardless of these things, risen to a rank of one of the foremost citizens of this county, as well as a successful farmer and stock raiser.

Charles Schipull was born in Germany, March 22, 1866, being the son of Carl and Willhelmena (Lehnert) Schipull, both of whom were natives of that country. His father was a day laborer on a farm and came to this country in 1884 with his family. After landing at New York, the elder Schipull went directly to Davenport, Iowa, where he worked in a grain house for three years, after which he rented a farm in Scott county for two years, and then went to Humboldt county, where he rented another farm for five years. Later he purchased a farm of two hundred and forty acres and lived on that land for a number of years, when he retired to Luverne, Iowa, living there until his death, in 1909. Carl and Willhelmena Schipull were the parents of six children, Willhelmena, Charles, August, Godfred, Ferdinand and Bertha.

Charles Schipull received his education in Germany, leaving school at the age of fifteen years to work on a farm, where he was employed for more than a year and then, at the age of sixteen, came to the United States, and reached Davenport, Iowa, with about two dollars in his pocket. From New York he went to Chicago and from there to Davenport, where he worked on a farm for five and one-half years. In the year 1888 he came to Wright county and worked on a farm for three years and then bought two hundred and forty acres, in Norway township. Having married, about this time, Mr. Schipull moved on a farm, where he lived for ten years, selling his land to the end of that time and buying two hundred and ninety-six acres in Liberty township, in section 8. For this land he paid thirty-eight dollars per acre, and nine years later purchased one hundred and sixty acres adjoining, for which he paid ninety dollars per acre. On his farm Mr. Schipull has placed several thousand dollars in improvements, the place being well tiled, a half-acre orchard having been set out, sixteen acres set in timber land and the remainder under cultivation. A modern home, with electric light and with a hot-water heating plant, adorns the farm, together with an electric-lighted barn and many well-painted, nicely-cared-for outbuildings.

The principal crops of this farm are corn and small grain. About one hundred and fifty acres of corn is planted each year, averaging about fifty



bushels to the acre, and one hundred and twenty acres of oats, bringing nearly forty bushels per acre. All grain of the farm is fed to stock, about one carload of cattle and two carloads of hogs being fed each year. A convenient trading point is found at Renwicke, a town three and one-half miles distance.

Charles Schipull was married in 1890 to Sadie Kelling, daughter of John and Mary (Tank) Kelling, who were old settlers of Wright county, having come to America in the fifties, and settled along the Boone river, in Liberty township. John and Mary Kelling were natives of Germany.

Mrs Charles Schipull was born in Liberty township and received her education in the country schools of the district. At the age of fifteen years she left school and lived at home until she was twenty-four years of age, when she was married to Charles Schipull. To this union were born eight children, five boys and three girls: Rudolph, Carl, John, Albert, Elma, Walter, Clara and Olga, all of whom live with their parents at the home farm.

Mr. Schipull has taken his place in the affairs of Liberty township and Wright county.

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### JESSE C. MIDDLETON.

Among the prominent farmers and stockmen of Troy township, Wright county, Iowa, is Jesse C. Middleton, who was born on September 3, 1863, the son of Elmore and Lucinda (Lee) Middleton, natives of Ohio.

Jesse C. Middleton received his early education in the public schools of his native county, after which he attended the Webster City high school and then he became a student at the Iowa State Agricultural College, at Ames, Iowa. Following his school days, Mr. Middleton became a school teacher, and while thus engaged, he also worked part of the home farm. Subsequently he became the owner of the Middleton homestead which has been his home since the day of his birth. To this he has added land until now Jesse C. Middleton is the owner of four hundred acres of the choicest land in the county.

On his farm Mr. Middleton has about thirty-five miles of tile, and has two sets of buildings, one occupied by a son, who cultivates one hundred and sixty acres of the home place. As a farmer, Jesse C. Middleton raises about one hundred and fifty acres of corn, one hundred and fifty acres of small grain and about eighteen acres of alfalfa. Mr. Middleton makes a



specialty of breeding Shorthorn cattle and Poland China hogs, feeding, annually, one hundred head of hogs and about one carload of cattle for the market.

On November 18, 1885, Jesse C. Middleton was married to Frances Allen, the daughter of Eugene Allen and wife, and to this marriage have been born the following children: Bessie, who married Glynn McVicker and to whom have been born two children, Helen and Clifford; Florence, who married Roy McVicker; Guy, who married Hettie Warmes and to whom has been born one child, David; and Homer, Paul, Lee, Francis and Lysle, who are unmarried. Jesse C. Middleton and his family are members of the Methodist Episcopal church, a congregation which Mr. Middleton has served as a class leader for twenty-five years, as a trustee for many years and now as Sunday school superintendent.

Jesse C. Middleton has served his township as assessor for twelve years, has been township trustee for twelve years and has been secretary of the school board for fifteen years. Mr. Middleton has been president of the Troy Township Agricultural Improvement Society, since the organization of the association and in Masonry he has attained the Royal Arch degrees. In politics he is a Republican.

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#### HENRY H. FRITZE.

That heredity plays an important part in the molding of character and of destinies, is an acknowledged fact, and to the man or woman blessed with parents whose sterling qualities raised them to a place of distinctive position, have much to be thankful for. Henry H. Fritze, of Norway township, Wright county, was blessed with parentage of high order and has responded, with appreciation, to those qualities bestowed upon him, by a good father and a faithful, devoted mother.

Henry H. Fritze is the son of Bernard J. and Hermina (Anderson) Fritze, both natives of Germany. Bernard J. Fritze, son of a mother who was widowed when he was a small boy, found himself, at fourteen years of age, the arbiter of his own destiny and wisely chose America as the most likely field for future operations. He emigrated to Chicago, where he followed the joiner's trade. He enlisted in the Union army at the beginning of the Civil War and served his adopted country with such zeal that he was promoted from private soldier to an officer before the close of service. At the close of the great struggle he joined his brother, who had preceded him



to America by a year or two, in the grain and live stock business, which he followed until his death. Hermina (Anderson) Fritze emigrated to America with his parents from Weiner, Germany, when a small child.

Henry E. Fritze was born on September 23, 1870, in Forreston, Ogle county, Illinois, at which place his father married and settled. He is the eldest of four children born to his parents and received his education in the public schools of Forreston, graduating from the high school at that place. Shortly after graduating he accepted a clerical position in a stock buyer's office, which position he filled for three years. A partnership with A. M. Wilson was then formed for the selling of grain, the partnership being dissolved at the close of three successful years.

In 1891, at the age of twenty-one years, this young man removed to Iowa with the intention of re-engaging in the grain business, but later decided to operate five hundred and sixty acres of land, unimproved, which his father had purchased in 1881, located in sections 33 and 34, in Norway township. On this virgin soil Henry H. Fritze began making improvements and eventually erected several houses, with the necessary outbuildings for each, one division of the land, with its accompanying buildings, being reserved for himself, and the rest for tenants. In 1908 new buildings complete, with house, barn, granaries and silo, were erected on the home place.

On March 3, 1897, Henry H. Fritze was married to Minnie S. Lucas, daughter of Robert and Mary (Kelso) Lucas. She was born in Bremer county, Iowa, but her parents were natives of County Tyrone, Ireland. They emigrated to America at different times and were married at Jacksonville, Illinois, on February 2, 1875. Robert Lucas was a farmer and removed to Wright county about 1880, where he purchased land in section 15, of Norway township. The family resided on this place until 1901, when they removed to Kanawha, Iowa. Robert Lucas and his wife were the parents of seven children, two sons and five daughters. The father of this family was a man of excellent character and held the office of township trustee and was secretary of the school board for many years.

Henry H. Fritze and Minnie S. (Lucas) Fritze are the parents of three children: Geneva, born on January 4, 1898; Winnefred, December 26, 1899; and Hazel, June 25, 1902. Winnefred and Hazel are high school students at Clarion, Iowa, while Geneva is a student in the Iowa State School for the Deaf, at Council Bluffs, Iowa.

Henry H. Fritze is a Republican, lending aid to the party at such times as his influence is needed. He is also township clerk of Norway township.



Beside clearing and operating his father's farm, he has invested in much land for himself, being the owner of farms in Wright and Hancock counties, Iowa. The raising and breeding of pure-blood Aberdeen-Angus cattle has been a specialty on this farm, which is known as "Glennwild Stock Farm." Mr. Fritze is a member of the Aberdeen-Angus Breeder's Association, and the results of scientific breeding and management are very evident on his large, well-improved farm.

While not members of any church, the family of Henry H. Fritze are attendants of both the Methodist Episcopal and the Friends churches. Henry H. Fritze is a member of the Modern Woodmen of America.

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### WILLIAM L. KENT.

Few citizens of Belmond, Wright county, Iowa, have had a larger part in the development of this splendid county than William L. Kent, a retired citizen of Belmond.

William L. Kent is a native of Illinois, having been born near Peoria on March 1, 1851. He is the son of Joel and Mary A. (Pierce) Kent, who were natives of Virginia, removing from the Old Dominion state first to Ohio and later to Illinois. Joel Kent was a cooper by trade and worked at his trade continuously until his removal to Iowa, in 1852. The family first located in Cedar county, Iowa, where they lived until April, 1862, when they removed to Wright county. After purchasing land in Iowa township, they lived on the farm until their deaths. Joel Kent was a member of the county board of supervisors for several years. He personally supervised the planting of the maple trees now standing in the court house yard at Clarion. By his marriage to Mary A. Pierce, there were born seven children, as follow: Mrs. Emily Blue, James, Joseph, John, William L., the subject of this sketch; Mrs. Flora Yoeman and Mrs. Laura Thom, of Colorado. The last two named are twins.

William L. Kent received a good common-school education, having attended school until he was about twenty years old. He made his home with his father until about thirty years of age, cultivating his father's farm after all the other children had left home. In the meantime he had purchased a farm in the north edge of Iowa township while living at home, and after leaving the home farm moved to his own farm. In a year or two his father died and he returned to the home place and lived with his mother



for five years. Mr. Kent then bought another farm in the northeast corner of Iowa township, where he lived for ten or twelve years. In 1886 he removed to Belmond, purchasing the furniture store owned by Clark & Slight. After a year and one-half he took a partner into the business, a Mr. E. S. Hubbard, who remained with him until 1900, when Mr. Kent sold out his interests to H. J. Klemme, who now owns the store. Mr. Kent retired from business at that time, having in the meantime built a large home on River street, in Belmond. Later he sold this home and purchased his present property.

On December 31, 1875, William L. Kent was married, in Belmond, to Jeanette M. Loomis, who was born on May 11, 1850, in Okisco, Ionia county, Michigan, and who is the daughter of Luther A. and Sarah A. (Morse) Loomis, natives of New York state, who removed to Wright county in 1857. They drove overland from Michigan and settled in Hickory Grove, Belmond township, arriving there on April 11, 1857. After farming in Belmond township for one summer, the family removed to Belmond, where Mrs. Kent's father purchased the only store. He owned this store for a short time and then sold out and purchased the Kern hotel, which he owned for about two years. He then sold the hotel and purchased sixty acres of land about one mile south of the hotel, where he and his wife lived until their deaths. Mrs. Kent's father died in 1891, and her mother on July 18, 1907, at the age of eighty-two years. Mr. Kent's father passed away on March 10, 1877, at the age of sixty-seven years, but his mother lived to be ninety-three years old, passing away on December 22, 1909.

Shortly after 1868 Mrs. Kent's father carried the mail from Belmond to Aken, Garner and Webster, in fact, he carried the mail until the railroad was extended to Clarion and Dows. Mrs. Kent attended school in Chicago, Illinois, from 1869 to 1871. In the latter year she returned to Wright county and thereafter taught school for ten terms.

Mr. and Mrs. Kent have had five children, four of whom are living: Sarah A., born on August 5, 1878, married Clint Younker, and they live at Indianola, Iowa. They have three children, Roberta L., Harold and Grace. Guy R., born on October 17, 1881, married Bena Johnson, and they reside in Tripp county, South Dakota. They have no children. Addie M., who was born on April 5, 1883, married Peter J. Lieuwen. They live in Belmond, and have two children, June and Kendall. Inez L., born on May 6, 1887, lives at home with her parents.

In 1901 Mr. and Mrs. Kent spent a few months in Denver, Colorado, and in September, 1902, they returned to Colorado and spent a short time



there. Altogether they have spent about three years in the state of Colorado. Although not members of any church, Mr. and Mrs. Kent believe thoroughly in the Christian religion and support all churches. Mrs. Kent is a member of the Daughters of Rebekah. Mr. Kent is a Democrat in politics and has served as a member of the town council of Belmond for several years. He also served as trustee of Iowa township and has held other important offices in Wright county.

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### JACOB W. BAKER.

While commerce and industry occupy a large share of the world's thought even they are built upon the products of the soil which form in reality the foundations of our national life. For this reason, every man or woman who follows this worthy vocation is a benefactor of society, whether or not he realizes the fact. Jacob Baker belongs to the type of men who do their work well, whether the task be seen of men or performed in obscurity. Mr. Baker, a retired farmer and well-known man in Dayton township, this county, was born of German parentage in the Rhine province, Germany, they being John and Opolona Baker. The date was November 1, 1835. The father of Mr. Baker, a farmer, crossed the ocean in 1842, and securing eighty acres of land from the government in Stevenson county, Illinois, devoted his attention to agriculture until he retired and moved to Freeport, Illinois, where he afterwards died. His wife passed away in 1853. Only two of their six children are living, these being John and Jacob.

Jacob Baker was educated in the common schools of Stevenson county, Illinois, and followed the occupation of his father as an employee of other farmers until his twenty-third year, when he married and lived on a rented farm in Illinois until 1867. He then moved to Black Hawk county, Iowa, purchasing one hundred and sixty acres of farm land at fifteen dollars an acre. At the time of the purchase the only object which made this farm appear any different from the surrounding woods was the existence of a log cabin. But the owner spent both time and money in improvements which he immediately set about to make. In 1894 he left this place to take up his residence in Wright county, where he bought two hundred and fifty-six acres in Dayton township at thirty-five dollars an acre. Adding three thousand dollars' worth of improvements to those already there, he "tiled out"



the place and set out a splendid orchard. He raised eighty acres of corn, fifty bushels to an acre, and eighty acres of small grain, selling one-half of the grain, and feeding the other half. At the time he moved to Black Hawk county he was worth about fifteen hundred dollars.

Jacob W. Baker and Virtue Reynolds were married in 1858, the bride being the daughter of Nels and Elizabeth (Pells) Reynolds. Mrs. Baker was a native of Franklin county, Vermont, having been born there on August 13, 1836. Her father was born in Canada, where his wife lived after the birth of Mrs. Baker. Mrs. Baker's parents moved to Canada, where her father farmed until his death. The mother afterward married Madison Miller, the marriage taking place in Vermont, to which state the widow had returned after the death of her husband. After her second marriage, they moved to Stevenson county, Illinois, in 1854, farming there until the husband retired from active work and they returned to Vermont, in which state both subsequently died. The mother of Mr. Baker had five children, four by her first husband and one by her second.

The children born to Mr. and Mrs. Baker are five in number, George, Edson, Heber, Sarah and Nora. George became the husband of Sarah Lealand, and after his first wife's death, married Mand Lealand, to whom one child, Hazel, was born. Edson has never married. Heber married Sadie Lesure, and they became the parents of one child, named Vera. Sarah is Mrs. George Gilley and the mother of one child, named Herbert. Nora married Roy Comstock, and in this home two children were born, Kenneth and Winfield.

The subject of this biography is much interested in subjects relating to military training, and was for five years a member of the "home guards" of Illinois. He holds his membership in the Methodist Episcopal church, of which denomination he was trustee while a resident of Black Hawk county, holding this position for a number of years. He is a "stand-pat" Republican.

It may be seen from the above that Mr. Baker possesses many fine characteristics. One is that he refused to be content with conditions as he found them, but had a strong desire always to improve them. No piece of land remained what it was when he bought it. By the expenditure of money, time and work, all of his property increased in value. Nor in matters of patriotic or civic welfare is he wanting, as is evidenced by his membership in the national guard and his interest in the movements for better local conditions.



## JOHN W. McGRATH.

Perhaps no greater tribute can be paid to a lawyer than that his own code of ethics is higher than any written law. In a profession in which one's moral and ethical standards are so frequently and so severely tested, a man of whom this can be said is strong indeed, and deserving of the highest praise. To such there is but one ideal of right and justice, and to this he must hold himself as rigidly as he would hold others. The bench and bar of Iowa has been honored by having as one of its members John W. McGrath, who was born in Whiteside county, Illinois, on October 30, 1861. His parents are James and Ellen (McIlmoil) McGrath.

The father of John McGrath was a native of Ireland, where he grew to manhood. He left his native country when a young man, and sought a new field for his activities in America. He was first attracted to Chicago, and soon after his arrival in its vicinity became an employee of the railroad now called the Chicago & Northwestern. He was employed at the time when the road was being built from Chicago to Cedar Rapids, Iowa. He afterwards bought two hundred acres of land in Whiteside county, and there engaged in general farming until his retirement in 1880. From that time until his death, in 1903, he lived in Morrison, Illinois. His wife, who was born in Swanton Falls, Vermont, shared all of his early hardships, sorrows and joys. Mr. and Mrs. McGrath are the parents of six children, all of whom except one are still alive. Of these, John W. and Dr. W. C. both live in this county, and both are prominent in its life.

John McGrath was ambitious from his early boyhood, his early school days in the Whiteside county schools preparing him for his later course in the Valparaiso Normal College, at Valparaiso, Indiana. He then attended the Iowa State University, receiving his LL. B. degree from that institution in 1887. He then came to Eagle Grove to live, practicing law the first eight years by himself. He then formed a partnership, which proved to be successful, with Enegen Brown, the partnership existing for another eight years. In 1909 Mr. McGrath was associated in the law business with L. Archard, the firm name becoming McGrath & Archard. This firm also has an office in Clarion, where the firm name is Petersen, McGrath & Archard.

It is interesting to compare Mr. McGrath's spacious office and its well-selected books with the handful of books with which he started his library soon after he left college. And he delights to tell his friends of his joy in acquiring the latter when his means were so limited that it was necessary to purchase them on the installment plan.



John W. McGrath was married to Mary Treadgold in 1886, his wife being the daughter of Anthony T. and Elizabeth Treadgold. Their home has been blessed by four children, three of whom are living. These are Edith, Earl and Everett. Earl is married to Blanch Smith. Edna, the eldest daughter, is deceased. Mr. and Mrs. McGrath are devout members of the Methodist Episcopal church. Mr. McGrath is a Mason, a Yeoman and a staunch Republican "stand-patter." Mrs. McGrath is an active member of the Eastern Star.

Mr. McGrath is a man of sturdy moral character. Because of his high principles, and his honest methods in the practice of his profession, he has become one of the most successful attorneys in the county. He has been a member of the city council and has been city attorney for two terms. Whether in private life or public office, Mr. McGrath can be depended upon to exemplify those traits of character which always caused their possessor to forge to the front ranks of citizenship. He has never been untrue to a trust imposed upon him, nor to a duty with which he was charged, and it may be said that he holds the respect, the confidence and the admiration of the people whom he has served.

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#### J. H. TANCK.

A record of progress and achievement in our country would be less one of its greatest elements without the effort of those citizens who have come from Germany. Men who are industrious, thorough and who have keen insight for business, they have been of real value in the affairs of American life. J. H. Tanck is a fair example, one whose efforts have brought results, not only in his own material welfare, but in the aid that he has offered for general good.

J. H. Tanck was born in Germany, September 12, 1862, being the son of John and Christina (Letjue) Tanck, natives of Germany. His father was a gardener who came to the United States, with his family, in the year 1866, landing in New York with twenty-five dollars in his pocket, after a voyage of nine weeks across the Atlantic ocean in a sail-boat. He immediately went to Davenport, Iowa, where he secured a position as a gardener, which position he held for five years, subsequently conducting a dairy for nine years and then coming to Wright county in the year 1881, where he



purchased two hundred acres of land in Liberty township, section 6, paying for it the sum of nine dollars per acre. The next year he acquired one hundred and forty more acres of land paying seven dollars per acre. The land purchased was prairie and John Tanck set out to break up the sod and add those things necessary to make it productive. An orchard was planted, three flowing wells were started and a home was established where the elder Tanck lived for fourteen years, retiring then to Renwick, at which place he lived until his death. To John and Christina Tanck were born three children, Emma, Mary and J. H., the subject of this sketch.

J. H. Tanck received his early education at Davenport, Iowa, attending school until he was seventeen years of age, at which time he left his classes to aid his father on the farm and with whom he remained until the father's death on March 5, 1907. J. H. Tanck inherited the land holdings of his father, provision being made that the sisters should be paid their share in cash. As a progressive farmer Mr. Tanck proceeded to place on his farm about eight thousand dollars in improvements. Five acres of grove was set out, one acre of orchard was planted, one thousand dollars worth of tile was laid and a section of a large county ditch was put through his farm. Today the principal crops raised on the farm of Mr. Tanck are corn and small grain, his corn averaging about fifty bushels to the acre and his oats about forty bushels to the acre. Most of the grain produced is fed to stock, about two carloads of Shorthorn cattle and one hundred and fifty Poland China hogs going to market at Renwick, about one mile away, each year.

During the year 1895, J. H. Tanck moved from his farm to the town of Renwick where he became a butcher, in which business he remained for four years, after which he took up a position as a stock buyer for the next twelve years, later returning to the butcher business.

Mr. Tanck has a beautiful modern home in Renwick, the building costing about seven thousand dollars; in size is thirty-two by thirty and is equipped with electric lights, bath and hot-water heating plant.

On February 24, 1880, J. H. Tanck was married to Netta Callesen, daughter of Calla Callesen, a farmer of Humboldt county. Mrs. Tanck was born in Germany, in which country she received the greater part of her education. To Mr. and Mrs. Tanck were born the following children: Laura, who married Irwine Peer, a school teacher of Renwick; Calla, who was graduated from the Renwick high school and who was a student at the State College of Agriculture, at Ames; Lilian, who is a graduate of the Ren-



wick high school, is pursuing a course in home economics at Ames; Metta and Norma.

Mr. Tanck has been honored in his county. For a term he served the important office of township trustee and as an evidence of the esteem in which he is held, he has occupied all the chairs in the Modern Woodmen of America, at Renwick. He is also an appreciated member of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows of his home town. Mr. and Mrs. Tanck are well-known members of the Lutheran church of Renwick.

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### WILLIAM CYRUS McGRATH, M. D.

One of the most successful physicians in this section of the state is William Cyrus McGrath. Doctor McGrath owes his popularity to the fact that besides possessing a natural fitness for his profession, he has received the most careful and thorough scientific training, and has a genuinely sympathetic nature. Not content with past achievements, Doctor McGrath has been progressive, both in study and practice, with the result that he has attained great professional success. Both in his general practice and in the management of his hospital he has applied modern methods, with a pleasing degree of success. Doctor McGrath was born on a farm near Morrison, Illinois, December 26, 1862. He is the son of James and Ellen (McElmoyl) McGrath, the former being a native of Ireland, the latter a native of Vermont.

William C. McGrath was educated in the graded schools and high school of Morrison, Illinois, and later had a one-year course in the Dixon Business College, Dixon, Illinois. At the end of that time he came west and was employed on his father's farm in Sioux county, Iowa, for three years. He was ambitious, however, for a broader career than that afforded the average farmer, and began laying foundations for his future profession by matriculating in the medical college of the Iowa State University, at Iowa City. There he remained for one year and then went to the Chicago Medical College, where he received his doctor's degree in 1891. Thirty days later he opened an office in Eagle Grove, and has practiced here ever since. In addition he has occupied the position of division surgeon of the Northwestern railroad for the past fifteen years. In 1908 he and Dr. C. H.



Morse built the Eagle Grove hospital, and so complete is its equipment that it is considered the most modern hospital in this section of the state.

Doctor McGrath has always kept abreast of the times. In late years he has taken several post-graduate courses, these including a course along general lines of study in the Chicago Polyclinic, in the year 1900. Seven years later he became a student at the New York Post-Graduate Medical School, and in 1915 studied under Dr. R. C. Cabot, the famous physician, at the Massachusetts General Hospital, at Boston, Massachusetts.

As might be expected of one so progressive, Doctor McGrath has allied himself with the various societies of his profession. He is a member of the County, State and American Medical Societies, also of the American Association of Railway Surgeons. He is a Mason, a member of the blue lodge, and in politics is a Republican.

Dr. W. C. McGrath was married to Blanche Fort, a daughter of J. S. Fort, the ceremony having taken place on July 1, 1896. One child, Robert, has been born to Doctor and Mrs. McGrath, born on February 19, 1903.

As is the case with all prominent physicians, this doctor has combined professional training with a natural aptitude. It has been his custom to keep "the open mind," a necessity especially in the medical profession in modern times, when the science of medicine is continually changing through the application of modern methods. Doctor McGrath has thus become a leader among his colleagues, and has built up one of the most extensive practices in the state.

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#### NICHOLAS C. DUERST.

As a retired farmer, who after a successful business life, has laid down his active duties for the more quiet walks of life, Nicholas C. Duerst is one of the respected and honored men of the county. With a modest start and the application of keen judgment, he has illustrated well the results of fair dealing and business integrity and is now able to live a life of quiet satisfaction, with the knowledge that his days have been of service, resulting not only for his own welfare, but that in public office and in the little duties of life his efforts have been of true value.

Nicholas C. Duerst was born in the state of Wisconsin, July 5, 1856, the son of Mathias and Rosena (Kundort) Duerst, who were natives of Switzerland, but who were married in Wisconsin. The father was a factory worker in his native land, where he worked until twenty years of age, when



he came to this country, reaching New York in 1854, and going to Wisconsin, where he worked on a farm for a number of years. He purchased a farm of one hundred and sixty acres in that state, where he remained until the year of 1861, and then, at the outbreak of the Civil War, enlisted in the Ninth Regiment, Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry, with which command he did not see active service in battle but was able to appreciate the hardships of service as the result of contracting a fever, from the effects of which he never fully recovered. With his regiment Mathias Duerst served until 1865, when he was mustered out.

Mathias Duerst then returned to Wisconsin and worked on his farm until the year 1872, at that time leaving and coming to Wright county. On arriving in Boone township he rented a farm of one hundred and twenty acres, where he lived for a term of four years, and then took up a homestead in South Dakota, at which place he lived for the next twenty years, returning then for a life of retirement with his son, his wife having died during the year 1898. To Mathias and Rosena Duerst were born twelve children: Nicholas C., Sarah, Mary, Rosa (deceased), Rosa, Dora, Abraham, Ella, Mathias, Fannie, Katy and Henry.

Of these children, Nicholas C., who is the only one residing in this county, received his education in the country schools of Wisconsin and of Wright county. At the age of eighteen years he left school and farmed with his father until the age of twenty, when he came, in the year 1876, to Wright county, where he worked for one year and a half on a farm and then rented one hundred and sixty acres. He then purchased forty acres of land, paying for this the sum of six dollars per acre. After three months' time he sold this land and bought eighty acres of prairie land in Humboldt county, which he broke up and on which he placed about seven thousand dollars' worth of improvements. This farm he cultivated for five years and then purchased eighty acres more adjoining, living there until the year 1900, when he secured a small farm on the outskirts of Goldfield and moved to that place, renting his farm in Humboldt county.

The farm of Mr. Duerst, near Goldfield, produces mostly corn and small grain, the corn averaging about fifty bushels to the acre and the small grain about thirty-five bushels to the acre. Most of this grain is fed to stock, Mr. Duerst marketing each year about one-half carload of cattle and about seventy head of hogs. This progressive farmer has placed about three thousand dollars' worth of improvements on his farm near Goldfield, and among other conveniences has supplied himself with an automobile.



During the year of 1878, Nicholas C. Duerst and Sarah E. Griffith were married. She is the daughter of Chamcey and Polly (Davis) Griffith, her father being a farmer of Liberty township. Mrs. Duerst was born in Wright county and received her education in the Goldfield public schools. She was the only girl in a family of five children.

To Mr. and Mrs. Duerst were born four children, as follow: Henry married Florence Reister, and lives on his father's farm in Humboldt county, with two children, Ethel and Alta; Jessie is the widow of John Hanson, and has three children, Leland, Ruth and Kenneth, the latter dying in infancy; Ansel and Ima are deceased.

Nicholas C. Duerst has served his township well and conscientiously as township school director during eight years, and by his counsel and efforts as a private citizen has shown himself to be of no small value in the affairs of Wright county and Liberty township. He has been a prominent man in the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, having generously served through all the chairs of that organization. He is a Mason and has been an active member. Mr. Duerst is a Democrat in politics.

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#### WILLIAM W. McCURRY.

From a modest beginning to the position of a successful farmer, extensive stock raiser and large landowner, William W. McCurry has demonstrated himself to be a man of unusual ability, entitled to the high esteem in which he is held in this county. Never too busy to devote a portion of his time to the public welfare and an office-holder who served his constituents well, he is worthy of a place in a record of the foremost citizens of the community.

William W. McCurry is a native of New York state, having been born there on November 24, 1861. He is the son of James and Ruth (Duell) McCurry, both of whom were born in the state of New York. His father was a farmer until the year of 1861 when he left his home and enlisted in the army for the defense of the Union, as a member of the One Hundred and Twenty-first Regiment, New York Volunteer Infantry, in the commissary department. Many an interesting tale was told by the elder McCurry as to the narrow escapes with his life and as to the times when his lantern was shot out while serving at his duties. James McCurry served until the end of the war and then returned to New York state, where he remained



until the autumn of 1865, at that time going to Wisconsin. Early in the spring of 1866 he moved to Winneshiek county, Iowa, later coming to Wright county, where he bought eighty acres of land for ten dollars per acre, without the necessity of paying down the consideration. On this land he set up, near the Boone river, a log cabin, and prepared a home for his family whom he brought out in July of the same year. He continued to buy land in the vicinity until he had four hundred and eighty acres in Liberty township, in sections 7 and 8. He lived on the farm until his death, January 27, 1892.

The family of James and Ruth McCurry consisted of six children, Henry, James, William W., Sarah, John and Albert.

William McCurry received his education in the country schools of Liberty township. At the age of nineteen years he decided to leave school and for six years taught school in the winter and farmed in the summer. Until he was twenty-two years of age he remained on his father's farm. At that time he purchased eighty acres of land and rented one hundred and sixty acres more for a period of one year. At the end of that time he purchased forty acres more and farmed it together with his one hundred and twenty acres. Upon the death of his father he received forty acres of land from the father's estate.

Later, desiring to enter business, he invested in a lumber yard at Luverne, Iowa, but the attraction of farm life was too strong and after six months he sold his business interests and returning to his farm bought, for seventy-five dollars per acre, one hundred and sixty additional acres. Here he has remained to the present time.

Mr. McCurry has one of the best-improved farms to be found in the county. Improvements to the amount of eight thousand dollars have been placed in a modern home, with electric light, etc., and in a spacious barn which also has electric lights. A beautiful two-acre grove, set out by Mr. McCurry, is a desirable feature of his farm. Many fruit-bearing trees are to be found on this attractive place, which is located about two miles from Renwick, Iowa.

The principal crops of his farm are corn and small grain. Mr. McCurry realizes about sixty bushels of corn per acre and about forty bushels of oats from one hundred acres planted to that grain. Most of his grain he feeds to his stock, feeding each year about two carloads of hogs and about one carload of cattle.

In 1884 William McCurry married Fannie McQuade, daughter of Silas



and Amanda (Bishop) McQuade. Her parents were born in Ohio but she was born and educated in Iowa county, Iowa, where her father was a farmer. She was one of a family of nine children, five boys and four girls. She attended school until eighteen years of age.

To Mr. and Mrs. McCurry were born three children, Roy H., Pearl E. and J. Howard. Roy married Helen Packard and lives on a farm in Liberty township. Pearl married Andrew Martin and lives at Renwick, Iowa. Howard is a student of agriculture at the State College of Agriculture, Ames, Iowa.

Mr. McCurry has served his township as school director for a term of four years, was justice of the peace for one year and for two years served as township trustee. He is a Mason, a member of the Modern Woodmen of America, and in politics is a Republican.

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#### EDWARD A. SIMPSON.

A figure of dominating force in the agricultural life of Wright county, Iowa, is Edward A. Simpson, who, as a man of unusual attainments, has long held precedence as one of the authorities on farm life in his community. A member of one of the pioneer families of Iowa, he has contributed in no small way to the prosperity of that state as a thriving center of industry. His life has been marked with large and definite accomplishment and by reason of his strong attributes of character he is held in high regard by those in his profession. The success which has come to him has been well deserved.

Edward A. Simpson was born in Hamilton county, Iowa, on the 22nd of December, 1879, and is the son of Adam and Hattie (Farrell) Simpson, natives of Ireland. Adam Simpson before his emigration, was a farmer in the Emerald Isle where he owned forty acres of land. A landowner in Ireland in his day was considered a man of no little distinction but this fact alone was not strong enough to hold Mr. Simpson to his native soil, and during the great exodus of Irishmen to this country he left the scenes of his boyhood and came to the United States. He arrived in New York in 1867 and from there went directly to Webster City, Iowa, where he bought a farm and continued to work in his chosen field of endeavor until 1900. After selling the farm near Webster City, he retired to Duncan, Iowa, where he



remained until his death, which occurred in 1907. Mr. and Mrs. Simpson reared a family of fourteen children: Myra, Jennie, Adam, George, Meady, Emma, John, Maud, Bertha, Edith, Charles, Edward, Walter and Hattie.

The common schools of Hamilton county, Iowa, furnished the early educational advantages for Edward Simpson, who was a pupil there until he was seventeen years old when he quit school to begin to work for his father. Two years before his marriage he worked on the farm and then at the age of twenty-three, rented a farm in Wright county, Iowa, where he continued in the occupation of farming for seven years. At the end of that time he was able to purchase a farm of his own, and chose Boone township, in the same county, as a favorable place for investment. In that locality he bought one hundred and sixty acres at sixty-eight dollars an acre. The farm has proved to be one of agricultural wealth and Mr. Simpson has been able to make all the improvements necessary for the success of its management. The land is well tiled and over seven thousand dollars have been spent in modern improvements. Corn and small grain are the principal crops the corn averaging forty bushels to the acre and the grain, thirty-five. Most of the grain is used for feeding the large number of hogs, of which a carload is sold annually. Throughout his residence in Wright county, Mr. Simpson has given evidence of his ability and love of industry and has fully proved that he understands his vocation.

In 1902 Edward A. Simpson was united in marriage to Lucy Martin, the daughter of Henry and Ella Martin, residents of Boone township. Her education included the course at the Renwick high school, and after completing her studies in that school she made her home with her parents on the farm. There were five children in the Martin family. To Mr. and Mrs. Simpson the following children have been born: Arnold, Rex, Cleon, Edward, Norma and Ruby. The children are all living at home.

Mr. Simpson has always expressed a deep interest in the affairs of education in his community and his ability to solve problems pertaining to school administration was proved when he served in the office of president of the school board in his township for a period of two years. At the present time he holds the position of township clerk. In his religious views he gives his support to the Methodist church of which he is a member. The political interests of Mr. Simpson have always centered around the Republican party and he continues to work untiringly for its cause. His efforts along political lines have been amply rewarded with offices of public trust which he has held with honor.



## E. N. ERICKSON.

Among those who have sought to carve their fortunes from American soil and have surpassed all expectations, the name of E. N. Erickson deserves a large measure of praise, alike for the powers of endurance and systematic and earnest perseverance he has shown.

E. N. Erickson was born on January 11, 1857, near Stavenger, Norway, and is the son of Nels and Bertha Erickson, both of whom were natives of that land of hardy Norsemen. Nels Erickson was a carpenter by trade, although he followed farming as well. In 1874 he decided to take advantage of the many opportunities in America for the man of thrift and courage, and with his family came to this country, settling in Kendall county, Illinois, where they resided for several years. Nels and Bertha Erickson were the parents of seven children, five of whom are living in Illinois, one in North Dakota, and E. N., who is living in Iowa. At the age of eighty-eight years Nels Erickson is still enjoying the best of health and finds life a place of pleasant memories and earnest efforts, and in his home, in Ford county, Illinois, he finds many things yet to do.

E. N. Erickson arrived in Clarion, Wright county, Iowa, on March 4, 1891, and immediately began the examination of the surrounding country, as a permanent place of residence, finally renting a farm of Ole H. Benson, in section 12, of Norway township, Wright county, Iowa, which place he cultivated for one year, thence removing to his present location, in section 1, of Norway township. This farm he rented of N. B. Tracy, of Clarion, for a period of seven years and then became its purchaser. At the time he first rented it it stood in the midst of wild and unimproved land, without roads or fences and had little resemblance to the present beauty, which is exhibited over the entire farm. It is now well fenced and tiled and a new house, barn, granaries and wind-mill have taken the place of the old buildings. The fencing is of hog-tight wire and the shade is from large maple trees, which have been set out and add to the comfort and beauty of this well-appointed farm.

On February 15, 1883, E. N. Erickson was united in marriage to Anna J. Nelson, daughter of John and Anna Nelson, both natives of Norway, and the parents of ten children, three of whom were born in America, namely: Mrs. Bertha Tegland, J. J. and S. O., now deceased. The children born in Norway are also deceased, with the exception of Anna, whose parents came to the United States when she was only a few weeks of age. They settled



E. N. ERIKSSON AND FAMILY





in Kendall county, Illinois, where they lived until their deaths. One of their children lies sleeping in their native country, while the rest are sleeping beneath American soil. Anna Nelson was born on December 3, 1858.

E. N. Erickson and his wife, Anna (Nelson) Erickson, are the parents of five children: Nettie, born on February 7, 1884, is now the wife of Cryder Wicks, and they are the parents of two children, Orval Jennings and Arnold Everitt; Alvin B., February 15, 1888, married Pearl Thompson; Joseph S., August 11, 1891; Arthur M., July 27, 1894; and Alma E., March 7, 1897. Joseph and Arthur have each attended one term in college; Joseph in Forest City, and Arthur in Humboldt, Iowa.

E. N. Erickson has been very systematic in his management of the two hundred and thirty-nine-acre farm which he owns and cultivates, and the principal crops of beets, corn and oats, are among the best products of the county. An engine is used for pumping and other purposes, removing much of the drudgery of necessary labor. All buildings are well painted, giving an air of neatness and prosperity to the entire place. E. N. Erickson and his family are members of the St. Olaf Norwegian Lutheran church, and are regular in their attendance as well as in the support of the same. His political influence is used for the benefit of the Republican party, but he is far too busy a man to hold office and lends his energies to the selection of men whom he considers able to fill such offices.

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### S. I. GILLESPIE.

S. I. Gillespie is one of the highly-respected citizens of Boone township, Wright county, Iowa, who has devoted his time and energies toward the accumulation of an honorable competency, and has accomplished the desired result by diligent effort and a courageous perseverance deserving of the highest praise. With little schooling to his credit, but with a fund of ambition, he has conquered many difficulties and is now reaping the benefit.

S. I. Gillespie is one of eleven children born to the union of James Gillespie and Hannah McDowell, and his birth occurred on November 5, 1842, in Mercer county, Pennsylvania. James Gillespie was a native of Pennsylvania and received his education in that state. He followed the vocation of farming in his native state and continued in that line after removing to Illinois, in 1854, where he purchased one hundred and sixty



acres of land which he cultivated until 1869. He then located in Boone township, Wright county, Iowa, where he purchased one hundred and sixty acres of land, which he cultivated until the failure of his health, when he removed to California, dying there a short time afterward. Hannah (McDowell) Gillespie was also a native of Pennsylvania. Of their eleven children, the only survivor is the subject of this sketch.

S. I. Gillespie received his education in the country schools of his native state, discontinuing at the age of eighteen for the purpose of becoming a soldier in the Civil War. He served in the Eighty-third Regiment, Illinois Volunteer Infantry, and was in the battle of Ft. Donelson and many other battles. During the entire war he was under General Thomas in active service and missed only three weeks because of sickness, at which time he was confined to the field hospital. He was discharged with his company at the close of the war and went to the home of his parents in Illinois, where they had removed just previous to his enlistment. After having charge of the home place for four years, he removed, in 1869, to Boone township, Wright county, Iowa, where he purchased three hundred and twenty acres of land, on time, sharing the ownership with his father. A few years later, one hundred and sixty acres more was added to the original property and was then equally divided between father and son.

Some time later S. I. Gillespie purchased the property belonging to the other heirs and has increased his holdings until he now owns an entire section of land, all adjoining with the exception of forty acres. About twenty thousand dollars worth of improvements have been made on the property, which contains three houses with the other necessary buildings. Much of the land is tilled and the home is equipped with hot-water heating system, electric lights and water to every part of the house. There is one-half acre of grove and one acre of orchard, both receiving the best of attention. This large farm is tenanted by his own sons, making a family community. The location of the farm is four miles from the town of Renwick and is on the main road. The principal products of the farm are grain, cattle and hogs. Most of the grain is fed to their own stock of which two and one-half carloads each year are shipped, one being of cattle and the balance of hogs.

On October 4, 1871, S. I. Gillespie was united in marriage to Alice Martin, a daughter of Ellis and Lorenda (Irish) Martin, the former of whom was a farmer of Humboldt county, Iowa. She was born in the state of New York and removed with her parents to Iowa in 1855. She was



one of seven children born to her parents. To the union of S. I. Gillespie and his wife four children were born: Gay, Archie, Roy and Ray. Gay died when a child of seven years and Archie at the age of three. Ray married Myrtle Haas, and they are the parents of four children. Roy married Edna Long, and they are the parents of three children.

S. I. Gillespie was county supervisor at the time the Clarion court house was constructed and he held this office for nine years. He was also school director and was instrumental in establishing the first school house in Norway township, Wright county, Iowa. He held the office of township trustee for six years. He is a member of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows and has held the offices of commander and senior vice-commander in the Grand Army of the Republic. Politically, he is a member of the Republican party. Always firm in the belief that a good education is the first requisite in one's struggle for financial success and commercial responsibility, Mr. Gillespie has been active in his efforts for better methods of education for the children. He is respected by all and his fine qualities as a man and a citizen have won him a host of friends.

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#### HENRY W. SHOEN.

A record of prominent and successful men of Liberty township and Wright county would not be complete without reference to the life and works of Henry W. Shoen, the subject of this sketch. A man well and favorably known as one of achievement and one whose esteem and high standing has been proven by his election to important office, he takes rank today as a man without whom the locality would be poorer.

Henry W. Shoen was born in New York state, January 11, 1860. He is the son of William and Martha (Osmer) Shoen, who were also born in the Empire state, living there until, at the outbreak of the Civil War, in 1861, William Shoen felt it his duty to enlist with the Federal forces, which he did, being assigned to the One Hundred and Fifty-sixth Regiment, New York Volunteer Infantry. With this regiment he served as an officer until he contracted a fever which caused his death, after a term of service covering about two years. To William and Martha Shoen were born seven children: Submit, deceased; Jennie, Dulcy, Henry, the subject of this sketch; Minnie, Richard and one baby who died in infancy.

Mr. Shoen received his early education in the country schools of New



York. At the age of fifteen years he determined to leave school, and until his twenty-first year worked as a farm hand. About that time he went to Wisconsin where he was employed as a teamster in the woods for two years, from that place coming to Wright county and with his brother-in-law, I. G. Dewel, working as a carpenter, for the next two years, at Goldfield. He then rented a farm of eighty acres in Liberty township for two years, afterwards one hundred and sixty acres of land in Boone township for two years and then a farm in Liberty township for a period of four years. Mr. Shoen then purchased a farm of eighty acres, in Liberty township, in section 8, for twenty-seven dollars per acre. The farm when taken was raw prairie but with the efforts of Mr. Shoen the land was greatly improved and at the end of two years an adjoining forty acres purchased brought the price of thirty-five dollars per acre. One year later eighty additional acres adjoining were purchased for fifty dollars per acre. Today this farm is well tiled and under cultivation with the exception of six acres of timber land. The principal crops are corn and small grain, corn being on seventy-five acres and bringing an average of fifty bushels to the acre, and about seventy-five acres of oats bringing about forty bushels to the acre. These grain products are both marketed and fed to stock, each year there being sold from this farm about one carload of hogs. Being a progressive farmer, Mr. Shoen has placed on his farm nearly ten thousand dollars worth of improvements. Two acres of grove which he has planted makes an attractive spot on the farm, and a small orchard is an appreciated convenience. This modern place is located about five miles from Goldfield on the main traveled road.

Henry W. Shoen, in the year 1882, married Nellie McCurry, daughter of James and Ruth (Dewel) McCurry, prominent and highly respected people of the county. Mrs. Shoen was born in Wright county, where she received her education. She was the only girl in the family, marrying at the age of nineteen. To this marriage were born four children, only one of whom is living. Ernest, the eldest child, is at home farming with his father. He married Gussie Pinder, of Wright county. Of the other children, two died in infancy and William was drowned at the age of twenty, by falling into the Boone river, while fishing.

Mr. Shoen has been honored by election to the office of school director for two years and is a man of recognized ability, one who at all times has been willing to give a portion of his time to affairs for the good of the community. In politics he is a Republican.



## CHARLES H. GRIFFITH.

The late Charles H. Griffith, who was a well-known farmer and stock raiser of Eagle Grove township, Wright county, Iowa, was born in New York state on February 3, 1833, the son of Samuel and Hannah Griffith, both of whom were natives of New York. Samuel Griffith was a farmer of his native state, where he lived until he came to the state of Iowa and located on a farm, a place which was his home for some time, after which he moved to the town of Goldfield and retired.

Charles H. Griffith was educated and grew to maturity in New York state, and then learned the carpenter's trade, which he followed in his native state until 1860, when he came to Wright county, Iowa, locating in Liberty township. Here, in partnership with Amos McIntyre, Charles Griffith bought a farm, which he helped cultivate, at the same time following his trade as a carpenter, until, at the outbreak of the Civil War, he enlisted in Company H, Thirty-second Regiment, Iowa Volunteer Infantry, with which command he served nearly three years and then was discharged on account of disabilities. After his military service, Charles H. Griffith returned to Wright county and followed his trade until 1870, when he moved to his farm in Eagle Grove township and became a farmer, a vocation which he pursued until 1903, and he then retired to Eagle Grove, where he died on May 4, 1908.

On August 21, 1870, Charles H. Griffith was married to Sallie Clarkson Entrikin, daughter of Dr. Smith and Hannah (Parker) Entrikin, and to this marriage were born two children: Ethelyn, who married Grant L. Trask, and to whom have been born six children, Pearl, Grace, Marion, Charles, Lorenzo and Wayne; and Eugene C., who died in infancy.

Charles H. Griffith was a prominent man in public and official life of Eagle Grove township, taking a great interest in the development of the community and its resources, as well as being a citizen who served with notable efficiency for some years as school director.

Sallie Griffith, widow of the subject of this sketch, was born in Chester county, Pennsylvania, on February 9, 1845, the daughter of Dr. Smith and Hannah (Parker) Entrikin, who were natives of Chester county, Pennsylvania. Dr. Smith Entrikin grew to manhood in his native county, after which he was graduated from the University of Pennsylvania, as a Doctor of Medicine, and then returned to Chester county, where he practiced his profession until the year 1850, at that time going to Green county, Wisconsin.



sin, practicing there for a number of years and then moved to Argyle, Wisconsin. At Argyle, Dr. Entrikin was not only successfully engaged as a practicing physician, but he served as postmaster, receiving his appointment from President Buchanan, who was a personal friend of Dr. Smith Entrikin. While a resident of Argyle, Elizabeth (Dyer) Entrikin, the second wife of Doctor Entrikin, died, and then the doctor moved to Webster county, Iowa, where he made his home with a son. Dr. Smith and Hannah Entrikin were the parents of five children, four of whom are now living.

Hannah Griffith, mother of Charles H. Griffith, was one of the early school teachers of Wright county, and came to Iowa with her brother, who afterwards became principal of the Goldfield schools, and aided in the establishment of and the conducting of classes in the first schools of the community.

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#### WILLIAM H. PASKIN.

A man experienced in the various activities of life, one who from the ranks of common industry has risen to the position of a successful farmer, an extensive dealer in live stock and a man who is respected and esteemed among his own people, William H. Paskin has a rightful place in the record of representative citizens of Wright county. Industrious by nature, thorough in his duties and resourceful in his efforts to realize his ambitions, his position today is an evidence of the rewards and possibilities of earnest endeavor.

William H. Paskin is a native of England, born on September 9, 1851. He is the son of William and Jane (Whittingham) Paskin, both of whom were born in England. The father was an errand boy, in his early life, for a watch manufacturing company at Birmingham, which position he held until engaging in the iron industry, which work he followed for thirty years. He came to America in 1867 on the "City of Antwerp," a boat which, on its initial journey was afire three times during its voyage across the Atlantic. After he landed in New York, William Paskin went to Cleveland, Ohio, where for one year and a half, he was employed in the iron works of that place. Later he went to Boone county, Iowa, where he worked in the coal mines for fifteen years and then came to Wright county, where he retired. He died on January 20, 1897. William and Jane Paskin were the parents of five children: Thomas, who was killed in a coal mine at Boone, Iowa; William, the subject of this sketch; Sarah, who is the wife of John Cameron,



of Goldfield; Jane, now Mrs. Urbino; and Benjamin, a farmer of Boone township.

William H. Paskin received his education in England, leaving school at the age of nine years and coming with his father and family to America. Until he was twenty-one years of age he worked with his father in the coal mines of Boone, Iowa, and then with a brother came to Wright county, in 1881, where he bought one hundred and sixty acres of land in Boone township, a partner with his brother; paying for his investment the sum of eight dollars per acre. During the year of 1884 Mr. Paskin moved to his farm and proceeded to improve it, expending in the course of time, about seven thousand dollars in order that the farm might be modern and productive. The land has all been well tilled, a grove of two acres has been set out and the land cultivated in the production of corn and oats. In the year 1894, Mr. Paskin added to his land forty acres adjoining and continued to add to his holdings until he and his brother each have one hundred and eighty acres. This farm is now cultivated with eighty acres of corn, averaging forty bushels to the acre, and forty acres of oats, averaging thirty bushels to the acre, most of which is fed to hogs and cattle, about two carloads of cattle and one hundred head of hogs being sent to the trading point, at Renwick, each year. Mr. Paskin is located about four and one-half miles from Renwick, on the main traveled road.

During the year of 1889, William H. Paskin married Anna Day, a daughter of Robert and Anna (Bruce) Day, the father and mother being natives of Scotland. Mrs. Day was born in Scotland, on August 15, 1860, and after spending her early years in her native land, at the age of twenty-eight came to America, landed at New York and went directly to Minnesota where she lived for six months with a brother, and then came to Wright county in 1888. After about one years residence in Wright county she was married to Mr. Paskin. To William H. and Anna Paskin have been born the following children, all of whom live at home: Robert, William, Ethel, who graduated from the Renwick high school and is now teaching school; Susan, who attended Humboldt College for nine months and who was a student at Cedar Falls for three months; Lilian, Ruth and Virgil.

William H. Paskin has taken an important part in the public life of Boone township. He has been elected to the office of justice of the peace, in which he served for two or three years. For a number of years he was constable in the township. Mr. Paskin is a veteran member of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows of Renwick, he having been an honored member



of this organization for a quarter of a century. As a voter, William I Paskin is independent of party affiliation. Whether in public office or private life Mr. Paskin has been a citizen interested in the general welfare and ready at all times to do his part.

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### WILLIE BELL.

The office of biography is not to give voice to a man's modest opinion of himself, but rather to leave upon the public record the opinion of his neighbors and his fellow citizens. Fulsome encomium may be avoided altogether in setting forth the life career of Willie Bell, a retired farmer of Dayton township, Wright county, Iowa. He has performed well his part as a man and a citizen and is entitled to honorable mention in a work of this character.

Mr. Bell, who owns one hundred and thirty-two acres of land in Dayton township, was born in Mahaska county, Iowa, January 26, 1866, and is the son of James and Eliza (Lester) Bell. Mr. Bell's father and mother were both natives of Ireland, the former of whom was educated in Ireland and who came to America after he had reached young manhood with his parents. They located in Michigan and after remaining with his father until thirty-one years old, James Bell moved to Mahaska county, Iowa, and purchased eighty acres. Later he purchased two hundred acres and lived on the second farm until 1894, when he moved to Wright county, purchasing seventy-two acres in Grant township. Subsequently, he retired from active farming and moved to Clarion, where he died in 1905. There were eleven children in the family of James and Eliza Bell, namely: Jennie, Betty I., Betty II., Carrie, Susa, Willie, James, David, Bella, Joe and Lillie.

Willie Bell was educated principally in Mahaska county, Iowa. He quit school when he was eighteen years old, and from the time he was eighteen until he was twenty-one, worked on his father's farm. After reaching his majority, Mr. Bell purchased eighty acres of land in Mahaska county and owned it for one year, when he sold out and engaged in the mercantile business at Gibson, Iowa, for three years. Afterward he moved to Osceola county, Iowa, and purchased one hundred and sixty acres of land, where he farmed for four years. From Osceola, he removed to Wright county, in 1895, and purchased seventy-two acres of land on the outskirts of Clarion. A little later he purchased thirty-seven acres, and in 1906 added



### Early History Wright County

Belmond Herald-Press: Probably the first person to make a temporary settlement in what is now Wright county was Mr. Beebe, who with his sons, began the erection of a large log house in the west end of Franklin Grove. It was intended to be used as a hotel, the main building was to be 18x24 feet in size, and two stories high, while there was to be a one story kitchen 12x14 in size, all to be hewn, square logs and it had a puncheon floor. A puncheon was log split in the center and laid with the flat surface up. This house had been built about breast high when fear of the Indians caused Mr. Beebe and his family to leave it. He met Anthony Overacker, brother-in-law of Henry Luick, told him of the partly completed house, of the beautiful location, and sold him the claim for \$50. Mr. Overacker, Henry Luick, V. R. Gray, with their families and David Luick, came to this section in the summer of 1854 and were the first permanent settlers. They had been in the northern part of what is now Wright county in 1853, having made claims there, which were later abandoned. Mr. Overacker and his sons finally completed the log house begun by Mr. Beebe, and lived there many years. Later this house was bought by Fred Luick, who, with his family, lived there prior to 1876. This was the first house built in what is now Wright county.



twenty acres. Mr. Bell has made all of the improvements upon his farm at an expenditure of approximately eight thousand dollars. His farm is all well tiled and is highly productive. Mr. Bell feeds a carload and a half of hogs every year and most of the grain raised on the farm is fed to live stock.

In 1888 Willie Bell was married to Ella Lewis, the daughter of Albert and Mary (Hatcher) Lewis, who came to Iowa from the state of Ohio. Mrs. Bell was born in Mahaska county and received her education in the country schools of that county. To Mr. and Mrs. Bell have been born nine children, Blanche, Louis, Lydia, Daisy, Alice, William, Margaret, Lavonne and one who died in infancy. Blanche married S. Bjland, of Dayton township. Louis married Mabel Thompson, of Lake township, and they have one child, Max. The remainder of the family live at home with their parents.

Mr. Bell has long been prominent in the agricultural life of Wright county. He is vice-president of the Wright County Fair Association and a director of the Farmer's Elevator Company, of Clarion, and also a director of the Mutual Insurance Agency, at Clarion. The Bell family all belong to the Presbyterian church. Mr. Bell is identified in local, state and national politics with the Republican party and is especially prominent in its local councils.

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#### PETER THIELEN.

Peter Thielen, a well-known retired farmer of Woolstock township, Wright county, Iowa, was born in Germany, January 10, 1834, the son of Anthony and Katherine Thielen, both of whom were natives of Germany. Anthony Thielen was a general worker and a man who cultivated his small farm in his native country until 1857, when he came to America and located in the state of Illinois, where he lived with a daughter until 1876, when he died. Anthony and Katherine Thielen were the parents of four children, John, Peter, Theodore and Susan.

Peter Thielen received his education in the public schools of Germany, after which he worked as a farm helper until he was eighteen years of age and then he learned the shoemaker's trade, which he followed for five years. In 1867 Peter Thielen came to America and located at Chicago, Illinois, where he engaged in general work for two years and then secured employment on the farms of Cook county, until the year 1881, when he moved to Iowa, and made his home at Webster City, for three years. About 1885

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