

America in 1882 and they were married in 1884 and settled on the farm in section 20. Mrs. Gunderson is still living. Gunder B. Gunderson and wife were the parents of the following children: Bennie J., the subject of this sketch; Allen D., Agnes G., George C., Andrew H., William E., Henry J., Dora J. and Mabel E., all of whom are still living. Mr. and Mrs. Gunderson were members of the Norwegian Lutheran church and always took a proper interest in the affairs of the same, as well as in the general social activities of the district in which they lived, helpful factors in the promotion of all causes having for their object the common good of the community.

Bennie J. Gunderson was educated in the public schools of Moland township and was reared on his father's farm. From boyhood he was an able assistant in the labors of developing and improving the home place. Mr. Gunderson sold, in the spring of 1917, the old homestead place, which his grandfather had entered in 1871, to Torgus Langley. Mr. Gunderson is now the owner of two hundred and seventy-eight acres of prime land, about sixty-five acres of which is given over to the cultivation of potatoes, and he is doing very well in his farming operations. The value of the machinery on the farm is about two thousand dollars.

In 1913, Bennie J. Gunderson was united in marriage to Lenora Filland, who was born March 26, 1885, in Oakport, Minnesota. To that union was born one child, a daughter, Lenora Carolina. Mrs. Gunderson died in 1914. She was a member of the Norwegian Lutheran church at Concordia, as is Mr. Gunderson, and in which he served as trustee and was treasurer to the congregation for six years. Mr. Gunderson takes a good citizen's interest in the public affairs of his township and district and has served as town clerk for the past six years, and in many other ways has shown an active desire to further the civic affairs of the community.

B. M. OIEN.

One of the substantial and prosperous pioneer farmers of Shelly township, Norman county, where he is the proprietor of two hundred acres of fertile and well-improved farming land, is B. M. Oien, who is a native of Norway, born on January 10, 1852, a son of P. A. and Gertrude Oien, both of whom were natives of Norway, and fitting mention of whom is made elsewhere in this work.

Born and reared in the kingdom of Norway, where he received his early education, B. M. Oien accompanied his parents to America in 1869 when he was seventeen years of age, an energetic young man in a new and bustling country. He did not directly come to Norman county, Minnesota, where he has lived for forty-three years, but moved from place to place, all the while keeping his face toward the west where lay the opportunity to acquire a substantial holding of fertile land. In 1874, when he had reached the age of twenty-two years, Mr. Oien decided to come to the newly opened Red River country, and to reach this section, he had to take a roundabout route, going by train from Minneapolis to Duluth and thence by train to Moorhead. Upon his arrival in these parts he did not immediately take a homestead, but worked on farms in Norman (then Polk) county, until he decided upon a tract of land to homestead. It was in 1876 that he took a piece of land in this way, a quarter-section in Shelly township, a portion of the vast expanse of the prairie, on which he has continued to make his home. When he first took his homestead, the land was all wild and raw, and the task of putting it under cultivation was no easy one, but, nothing daunted by the extent of his difficulties, he planted a grove and erected the rude temporary buildings which were so characteristic of the homesteader's claim. Later, he replaced these buildings by larger, more substantial and comfortable ones, and now has one of the best-equipped and most highly improved farms in his neighborhood. Since he has been very successful in his agricultural pursuits, Mr. Oien has been enabled to extend his holdings by purchasing a tract of forty acres of railroad land just across the road from his homestead. He now carries on, with the help of his children, a general type of diversified farming and raises graded Shorthorn cattle.

In June, 1879, just three years after he located on his homestead, Mr. Oien was united in marriage to Paulina M. Nelson, a native of Norway, born on January 7, 1859, a daughter of Alexander and Thale Nelson, the former of whom brought his family to America and settled in Norman county in 1879. To this union three children were born, all of whom are at home: Julia P., John and Marie. The death of Mrs. Oien occurred on July 17, 1916, at Bethesda Hospital, Crookston, Minnesota. She was a consistent and conscientious member of the Norwegian Lutheran church as is Mr. Oien, and in the faith of this denomination they reared their children.

In politics, Mr. Oien has part of the time been a Republican and is a strong advocate of the principles and policies which he thinks are right and according to his oath of allegiance. He has frequently been called to serve his community in official capacity, having been for two or

three years township clerk; from 1880 to 1882 township assessor, and for some time a school officer. In addition to his activity in the local official life of the community, Mr. Oien has been interested in one of the co-operative marketing concerns of Shelly, the Farmers Elevator Company, which he helped to organize, and in other ways has done well his part in the general affairs of the community whose development he has aided in all good ways ever since his arrival here back in the days of the pioneers.

MARTIN O. SOLUM.

Martin O. Solum, farmer, of Tansem township, Clay county, was born on the home place, the farm he now lives on, July 8, 1874. He has been contented to spend his life in his native community, never desiring to seek uncertain fortune in other and distant fields of endeavor. He is a son of Ole H. and Kari (Stadum) Solum, both natives of Norway, where they grew up and married, later immigrating to the United States and locating among the pioneers of Tansem township, Clay county, Minnesota, where they developed a good farm through hard work and perseverance. A complete sketch of these parents will be found on another page of this volume, to which the reader is respectfully referred.

Martin O. Solum grew to manhood on the home farm and assisted his father with the general work on the same; attending the district schools in the winter time, and later studied at Park Region College at Fergus Falls. With the exception of working in a store in Barnesville a few years he has always lived on the home farm in Tansem township. He has operated it entirely on his own account for the past sixteen years and has been very successful as a general farmer and stock raiser. He owns two hundred acres of well-improved, productive and well-cultivated land. He raises much grain, the major portion of which he feeds to live stock. He makes a specialty of raising full-blooded Shorthorn cattle, which, owing to their superior quality, always find a very ready market. He has a good home and numerous substantial outbuildings. He helped organize the Farmers Elevator Company at Barnesville, of which he is a stockholder, and he has been treasurer of the company since its organization.

Mr. Solum was married in 1901 to Sanna Solum, who was born in Tansem township, this county, where she grew to womanhood and attended school. She is a daughter of P. P. and Bergetta Solum, who came to Clay