

built in this township. He worked on the home farm when a young man, assisting to develop the virgin soil of the prairies into productive fields. On February 23, 1897, he married Mary Fahlender, a daughter of Leonard and Augusta (Gulde) Fahlender, who were early pioneers of Cass county, North Dakota, where they established their future home on a farm, and the following children were born to them: Joseph P., John A., Philip L., Frank X., Catherine, Elizabeth and Mary, wife of the subject of this sketch.

In March, 1897, shortly after their marriage, Mr. and Mrs. Marquart moved to their present farm of forty-seven and forty-two one-hundredths acres, in section 23, Georgetown township, on which their dwelling and farm buildings stand. They also own one hundred and twenty acres in section 29, just across the road. Their home is near the townsite. Mr. Marquart has been successful as a general farmer and stock raiser and is paying more attention each year to stock raising and the dairy business. He has served thirteen years as township clerk and about seven years on the local school board. He has seven children, Leonard, Joseph, Eugene, Walter, Albina, Magdalen and Frances.

NELS THOMPSON.

Nels Thomson, of Spring Prairie township, one of the scientific farmers of Clay county, was born in Sweden, September 27, 1857. He is a son of Thomas and Asrena (Swanson) Parson, natives of Sweden, where they grew up, were married and established their home; in fact, spent all of their lives there. The mother died in early womanhood, but the father survived to an advanced age, dying about the year 1915. To these parents seven children were born, all of whom are living at this writing, namely: Pehr, Elizabeth, Nels, Lena, Tilda, Nellie and Axel.

Nels Thompson spent his boyhood in Sweden, where he attended the public schools and where he made his home until 1882, when he crossed the Atlantic to the great western republic, locating first in North Dakota, where he worked at different places, in railroad service. During this period, while not actively at work, he made his headquarters in Moorhead, Minnesota. He followed railroading for about ten years for the Northern Pacific and the Great Northern and was section foreman at different places, mostly between Moorhead and various points in different directions. He saved his wages and in 1894 began farming, but still continued to maintain his home



MIR. AND MIRS. NEIS THOMPSON.



in Moorhead; but in 1896 moved to his farm, the place he now occupies in Spring Prairie township. Although he owns but eighty acres he usually farms four hundred and eighty acres. He has erected substantial buildings and made other improvements on his land, including the planting of a large grove. The land was only a bare prairie when he came. He has worked hard and managed well and has been very successful as a general farmer and stock raiser. He purchased the land from a railroad company. Besides his large farming operations he is interested financially in the local telephone company and in the Glyndon creamery, also in the Northwestern Hospital at Fargo.

In the fall of 1889 Mr. Thompson was married to Christina Lindahl, a daughter of John Lindahl, a sketch of whom appears elsewhere in this volume. Mrs. Thompson passed away in 1909, leaving four children, Emma, Oscar, Lilie and Thomas, who have received their schooling in the common schools of Spring Prairie township.

Mr. Thompson is a Republican in politics and takes an active interest in local public affairs. He has been elected a member of the local school board four different times and is still serving, making twelve years in all when his present term is completed. He has served five terms on the town board and is now serving as a member of the board and is treasurer of the same. He is a member of the Lutheran church.

GUST BACKMAN.

A properly managed farmers' organization can be used to secure the farmers the benefits that "big business" secures from doing things on a large scale. Many have the idea that nothing can be done in this line unless there is a powerful organization, but this is a mistake—the successful co-operative enterprises have come from small beginnings. An advocate of such organizations is Gust Backman, a farmer of Highland Grove township, Clay county.

Mr. Backman was born in Sweden, December 21, 1858. He is a son of Andrew and Cajsa (Svenson) Berg, both natives of Sweden, where they grew up, married and made their home until 1881, when they immigrated to America, locating in Clay county, Minnesota, the father buying forty acres of school land near the present farm of his son, Gust. He