

ship and lived there until 1874, when he sold out and went back to Norway, remaining in his native land five years. At the end of that period he returned to America and spent a few months in Wisconsin, then came on to Clay county, Minnesota, and rented land for about six years, after which time he bought one hundred and sixty acres in Moland township, where he has since made his home, making all the present improvements, including the erection of the buildings. He carries on general and mixed farming.

Mr. Midgarden was married in 1882 to Jorand Thortvedt, who was born in Norway, from which country she came to Houston county, Minnesota. When young, and when her people moved from that county to Clay county, she walked most of the way, helping drive the sheep and cattle. Three children, all living, were born to Mr. and Mrs. Midgarden, namely: Thorberg Gundella, Theckla Linda Josephine and Gottfred Otto Leander.

Politically, Mr. Midgarden is a Republican. He has been treasurer of school district No. 6 nearly all the time since he has lived in the district, with the exception of the period of his absence in Norway. He is the treasurer at this writing. He was the third man to hold this office. He belongs to the Lutheran church.

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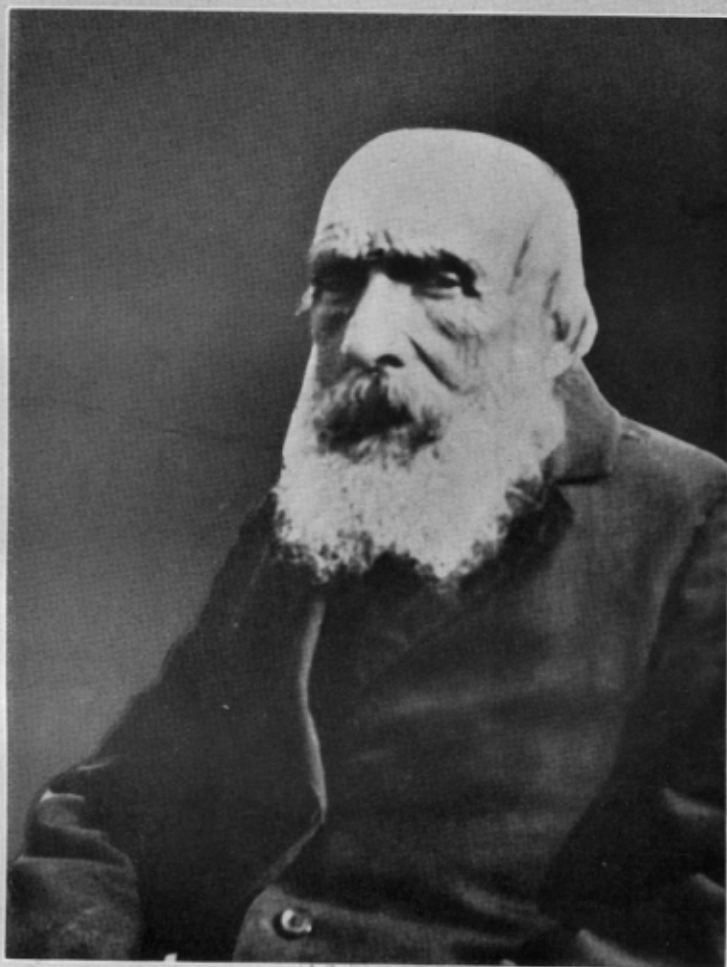
### WILLIAM THOMPSON.

William Thompson, one of the real pioneers of Clay county, first clerk of Elkton township, a position he held for many years, or until his removal across the line into Elmwood township, and the proprietor of a fine farm of four hundred acres lying in Elmwood and Elkton townships, his home now being in the former township, is a native of Scotland, but has been a resident of this country since 1870 and of this part of Minnesota since 1878, and has therefore been a witness to and a participant in the development of this region since pioneer days. He was born in the city of Montrose, an important seaport town in Forfarshire, thirty-four miles southwest of Aberdeen, March 14, 1842, son of Dougal and Mary (Shand) Thompson, also natives of Scotland, the latter of whom spent her last days in her native land; the former later coming to this country, his last days being spent in Minnesota. Of the three children born to his parents, the subject of this sketch is the only survivor, his brother John having died at the age of fourteen years, and his sister Mary, at the age of ten months.

Dougal Thompson was a laborer in Montrose and was not in extra good



MRS. ANN THOMPSON.



WILLIAM THOMPSON.

circumstances financially, hence his son William was given small opportunities for acquiring much more than the rudiments of an education in his native land, never attending school at all until he came to this country long after he was grown. Before he was eight years of age William Thompson was set to work in a factory and worked there until he was sixteen years of age, when he learned the stone-cutter's trade, including general masonry, and the early years of his manhood were spent in that form of labor. He married in 1866 and four years later, in 1870, determining that there was small opportunity for making much headway toward financial independence in his native land, decided to come to the United States. He left his wife behind until such time as he could see his way clear to the making of a home in this country, and after his arrival in New York City began working there at his trade. Two years later he was joined by his wife and his father and about six years after their arrival left there and came out to Minnesota with a view to finding a home on the free lands of the Northwest. At Idaborn, this state, his father died and he remained there a short time before proceeding on to this part of the state. It was there that, together with a party of other Scotchmen, he became interested in the homestead proposition here in the Red River valley and about 1878 he and his companions drove up here seeking a location. One of the party had been here for a short time previously and had left a few old tires on the open prairie, which was the landmark toward which the party journeyed. They arrived there about dark and their first night on the prairie was spent under the friendly shelter of the stars. Mr. Thompson and his three companions staked out four quarter sections and drew lots for the respective possession of the same. When the survey later was made and the township lines run, it was found that Mr. Thompson's claim was just on the west edge of Elkton township. Without delay he erected a temporary house there and entered upon the task of developing and improving the place. When settlers gradually began to fill up the region round about and Elkton township came to be organized Mr. Thompson was elected first clerk of the township and by successive elections was retained in that position until his removal in 1896 across the line into Elmwood township, he meanwhile having acquired additional land to the west of his homestead place and built a new and up-to-date set of buildings on the same. Upon his removal from Elkton township a public township meeting was called in Elkton township and appreciative resolutions were adopted expressing the sincere appreciation of the people of that township for the valuable services which Mr.

Thompson had so long rendered as clerk, and a handsomely printed copy of the same was presented to him, a testimonial which, it is needless to say, is valued very highly by him. Mr. Thompson now has a well-improved farm of four hundred acres and has never regretted the decision that prompted him to come up into the Red River country back in the days of the beginning of the settlement here.

Mr. Thompson's wife died at her new home in Elmwood township in 1899. She also was born in Scotland, and before her marriage was Ann Lamb. Her father, also a native of Scotland, spent all his days in his native land, but the mother came to America in 1872 and died at the home which she homesteaded in Elkton township. To Mr. and Mrs. Thompson two children were born, Mary, who died in 1902, and John Dougal, who died in 1901. Mr. Thompson is a member of the Presbyterian church and was one of the organizers of the local congregation of that church back in the early days. During the activities of the Good Templar societies many years ago, he was an active Good Templar and his influence in the community in which he has resided from the very beginning of its settlement has ever been exerted in behalf of better conditions.

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### WRIGHT WORKS.

It will always be a mark of distinction to have served the Union during the great Civil War. The old soldier will receive attention no matter where he goes, if he will but make himself known, and when he passes away, friends will pay him a fitting eulogy for the sacrifices he made over a half century ago on the sanguinary fields of battle in the Southland or in the no less dreaded prison, fever camp or hospital. One of these honored veterans in Clay county is Wright Works, who is now living in retirement at Hawley after an active life as a farmer.

Mr. Works was born in February, 1844, in St. Lawrence county, New York. He is a son of Joseph T. W. and Susan (Thornton) Works. Her father settled in New York state in the year 1807. Her death occurred in 1849 at the age of thirty-six years. Joseph T. W. Works was born in Cuyahoga county, New York, in October, 1803. He devoted his life to school teaching for the most part, and farmed some. He finally left his native state and located in Hardin county, Ohio, where his death occurred in 1866 at the age of sixty-two years. His family consisted of four children.