

member of the school board. He belongs to the Swedish Grove Lutheran church. Politically, he is independent. He has always been a helpful man in his township, doing much for its general development.

ALONZO WILSON, M. D.

Among the real old settlers of Clay county there are few who have a wider acquaintance throughout this section of the Red River valley than has Dr. Alonzo Wilson, a well-to-do retired physician, of Moorhead, and an honored veteran of the Civil War, who has been a resident of Moorhead since the year 1876 and who has consequently been a witness to and a participant in the development of this region since pioneer days. Doctor Wilson is a native of the kingdom of Sweden, but has been a resident of this country since he was twenty years of age. He was born in the year 1834, a son of O. L. Wilson and wife, the latter of whom died on board vessel on the way to this country in 1854 and the former of whom later became a resident of Clay county and here spent his last days, his death occurring in 1901.

O. L. Wilson was a small landowner in his native Sweden and he and his wife were the parents of five children. In 1854 he sold his farm and with his family sailed for the United States. During the voyage an epidemic of disease broke out among the passengers and Mrs. Wilson and one of the sons and two of the daughters died and were buried at sea. Mr. Wilson and his two remaining sons, the subject of this sketch and the latter's younger brother, Peter Wilson, proceeded to Chicago upon their arrival at port and during the first winter of their residence in this country were engaged working in a wood yard in that city. The father and his younger son remained in that city for a year or two, but the elder son left in the spring following his arrival for the Northwest and has ever since been a resident of Minnesota. After his son, Doctor Wilson, had become established at Moorhead, O. L. Wilson joined him here and his last days were spent on one of the Doctor's farms, his death occurring sixteen years ago.

Peter Wilson, who died some years ago, was one of the pioneers of Clay county and was for years one of the best-known and most influential residents of this county. Upon leaving Chicago he came up into the Northwest and was a resident of the Red River valley when Clay county was organized



Alonzo Wilson M.D.

in 1872 and, with Andrew Holes, was appointed by Governor Austin as one of the two commissioners to set in motion the wheels of government in the new county, as set out in the historical volume of this work. Before coming up here Peter Wilson had served as a soldier of the Union, a member of the Fourth Wisconsin Cavalry, and with that gallant command served for two years and six months, at the end of which time he was honorably discharged on a certificate of disability, he having suffered severe injuries when a horse fell on him. In addition to having been one of the earliest settlers of Clay county and one of the original commissioners of this county, Peter Wilson also served for some time as justice of the peace, also as register of deeds and for three terms was auditor of the county, in all of his public service rendering a faithful account of his duty to the people. For years he was engaged in the hardware business at Moorhead, but later moved across the river to Fargo. He left four daughters, Mrs. William B. Bartlett, wife of an attorney at Minneapolis; Mrs. Ross, a widow, living at Los Angeles, California, and two living at Cannon Falls, this state, these nieces being the only kinsfolk Doctor Wilson has in this country.

As noted above, Doctor Wilson was about twenty years of age when he came to this country in 1854. He had received an excellent education in his native land, completing his studies in the University of Lund, and had been engaged for a time there in teaching school. The first winter of his residence in this country was spent in Chicago and then, in the spring of 1855, he struck out for the Northwest and found employment in a lumber camp on the St. Croix river. In the spring of 1856 he went from Taylors Falls to Superior City and there became employed as an agent to help retain land claims, at the same time locating something more than a quarter of a section of land in his own behalf. During the winter of 1856-57 he and three others formed a partnership in the lumber business and from the fall of 1857 to the fall of 1861 he was engaged in contract work, building wagon roads through the timber. In the fall of 1861 he enlisted for service in the Union army, going out from Ft. Snelling with Company K, Fifth Iowa Cavalry, and was in active service for three years, the last year of his service being spent in the Red River country fighting Indians.

Upon the completion of his military service Doctor Wilson went to Wisconsin and seriously entered upon a design he long had cherished, that of the study of medicine, and after some preliminary study under the preceptorship of local physicians entered the Medical College at Keokuk and was graduated from that institution in 1870. Upon receiving his diploma, Doctor Wilson opened an office for the practice of his profession at Keokuk

and remained there until 1876, in which year he rejoined his brother Peter at Moorhead and opened an office for the practice of his profession in that city, continuing actively engaged in practice until his retirement. Upon coming up here in 1876 Doctor Wilson homesteaded a quarter of a section of land in Oakport township, Clay county, at the same time taking a tree claim to an adjoining quarter section. He later added to his land holdings and at one time was the owner of no less than a thousand acres of land, all of which, however, he has closed out and is not now a landowner. Doctor Wilson is quite comfortably situated at Moorhead. Though now past eighty-three years of age, he retains much of his former physical vigor and continues to take a hearty interest in current affairs. As one of the pioneers of Clay county, the Doctor has seen the development of this region from its primitive state to its present state of substantial development. His memory of the early days hereabout is clear and distinct and he has long been regarded as one of the ablest and most accurate authorities on the history of this section of the famed Red River valley.

Some time after locating at Moorhead Doctor Wilson married Ida Broberg, who died at the age of forty years. The Doctor has no children.

STEN HANSON.

It is scarcely probable that in the future of the American republic another such period can occur when such a solid phalanx of strong-armed men and self-sacrificing women will take possession of a new country, displaying the courage and perseverance of the pioneer element that invaded the plains of Minnesota some four or five decades ago. One of this number is Sten Hanson, a venerable farmer of Highland Grove township, Clay county.

Mr. Hanson was born in Sweden, February 7, 1838, and is, therefore, now in his seventy-eighth year. He is a son of Hans and Sigrid (Pehrsdatter) Stenson, both natives of Sweden, where they grew up and married and where the father's death occurred, after which the widow brought her children to America in 1868. After spending two years in Winneshiek county, Iowa, they all came to Clay county, Minnesota, driving an ox-team to a covered wagon, in 1870, the trip requiring over a month in the early summer of that year. The family located in Highland Grove township. The country was but a wild prairie and had not yet been surveyed. The