

cultural activities he added to his land holdings, finally getting together twelve hundred and forty acres, which he still retains. On the original homestead he planted a grove, erected substantial buildings and carried out other improvements on modern lines and he is generally regarded as one of the most progressive and well-to-do farmers of the community. Mr. Merkins retired from the active labors of the farm in 1901 and has since, with his wife, been living at Ada. They are the parents of the following children: Henry, John A., Anna, Lewis, Benjamin, Clara, Martha, Walter and Arthur, all of whom are living. John Merkins, his wife and the members of his family are affiliated with the Lutheran church and the elder Merkins helped to organize the first church of that congregation in his community.

John A. Merkins was educated in the schools of Norman county and was reared on his father's farm, where he became an able assistant in the work of improving and developing the homestead. He now resides in McDonaldsville township and is actively engaged in general farming on his holding, which consists of three hundred and twenty acres of prime land, which is operated with a view to the best obtainable results, and he is recognized, as was his father before him, as a progressive agriculturist.

On August 5, 1909, John A. Merkins was united in marriage to Amanda Trickel, who was born at Lockhart, Norman county, a daughter of Albert Trickel and wife. Mr. and Mrs. Merkins are the parents of four children, Myrtle, Esther, Annie and Minnie, all of whom are living. Mr. Merkins and family are members of the Lutheran church and are ardent supporters of all its works and of all neighborhood good works.

PETER LARSON.

Crop management is a scheme, not a lot of practices. An important part of it is the rotating or alternating of crops on given areas. In other words, prearranged, permanent plans must be carried out in order to obtain the best possible results. One of the farmers of Hawley township, Clay county, who understands and practices rotation of crops with gratifying results is Peter Larson.

Mr. Larson was born in Norway in 1869. He is a son of Seviert and Anne Larson, both natives of Norway, where they grew up, married and established their permanent home, and where the mother still lives. The father died about thirteen years ago, at the age of seventy-two. They never

came to America. He devoted his active life to farming and to commercial fishing; in fact, he was known as a great fisherman in his locality. To these parents four children were born, namely: Dora, deceased; Lena, a widow, who lives in Norway; Bertenia, who has also remained in the old country, and Peter, the subject of this sketch.

Peter Larson spent his boyhood in Norway, assisting his father with farming and fishing, and in the winter time he attended the common schools. When nineteen years old he immigrated to America, first locating in Polk county, Minnesota, where he spent ten months, then came to Fargo and Moorhead and worked on farms in the vicinity of those cities for two years. He then accepted a position with the B. & R. Lumber Company in Fargo and remained with that concern for eight years, his long retention indicating that he gave entire satisfaction. He saved his wages and upon leaving the firm rented a farm, operating rented land until 1910, when he bought his present excellent farm of one hundred and sixty acres in section 35, in Hawley township, Clay county. He has made some improvements on the place, although it was already fairly well improved when he took possession. He is carrying on general farming and stock raising, specializing in potato growing, having had a fine field of twelve acres in the summer of 1917.

In 1897, twenty miles southwest of Fargo, North Dakota, Mr. Larson was married to Vine Engen, who was born in Norway in 1871 and who came to America when twelve years old. To this union five children have been born, namely: Alma, Sophia, Victor, Henry and Banhard, all of whom live at home. Mr. Larson belongs to the Sons of Norway.

HENRY O. SKAURUD.

Henry O. Skaurud, one of Norman county's substantial farmers and the proprietor of a fine farm of four hundred acres in Lake Ida township, where he and his family are very comfortably situated, is a native son of Iowa, but has lived here in the Red River country since 1881, the year in which Norman county became formally organized as a county. He was born on a farm in Winneshiek county, Iowa, not far from Decorah, March 2, 1874, son of John O. and Martha (Monson) Skaurud, both natives of the kingdom of Norway, who were married in Iowa and whose last days were spent on their pioneer farm in Norman county.