

home until the autumn of 1894. His excellent farm in Strand township, which was entirely unimproved at the time of its purchase, comprises one hundred and sixty acres. He has erected all the good, substantial buildings which make up his admirable farm plant and around the comfortable and convenient farm home he has set out a beautiful grove. Here he carries on general diversified farming and is highly successful in his operations.

On October 10, 1890, Mr. Stephenson married Augusta Groberg, a native of Sweden, born October 31, 1870, a daughter of A. C. and Margareta Elizabeth Groberg. To this union six children have been born, one of whom died in infancy; the others being: Arthur, Clarence, Elsie, Lewis and Hazel. Mr. and Mrs. Stephenson are members of the Norwegian Lutheran church and in the affairs of which they take a deep interest. In politics, Mr. Stephenson is a Republican, and he is quite active in the local affairs of his party. For ten or eleven years he has served the people of the township in the capacity of assessor, and he is now and always has discharged his duties with impartiality and precision. The educational interests of the community have always been a source of interest to him and he has served on the school board for the last fifteen or sixteen years. In addition to these activities, Mr. Stephenson is connected with the co-operative enterprises at Gary, having helped to organize the Peoples Supply Company at that place and has been a member of the board of directors since its organization. He was also formerly interested in the Farmers Elevator at Gary.

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#### B. O. LEE.

The Lee family has been one of the best known and most influential in Norman county since the early pioneer days here, and one of the creditable representatives of the same of the present generation is B. O. Lee, one of the leading agriculturists and stockmen of western Minnesota. He was born in Rice county, this state, December 6, 1869, and is a son of Ole J. and Anne Johanne (Aslakstrom) Lee, natives of Norway.

Ole J. Lee grew to manhood in his native land, where he attended school and was married. He sailed for American shores in 1867, locating with his family, in Rice county, Minnesota, where he remained until 1871, in which year he moved to Fargo, North Dakota, and settled on a homestead one mile south of that city, in Cass township. He lived there until 1878, at which time he came to Lee township, Norman county, and was one of the

organizers of the township, the township being named for him. The first township election was held at his home. He continued to make his home in that township until December 4, 1884, when he went back to Norway, taking his family, and there he spent the remainder of his days, his death occurring at an advanced age in 1904. His wife had died in Fargo, North Dakota, in 1878. He had been very successful as a general farmer and stockman, forging to the front through his own efforts from an humble beginning. When he landed at Fargo the first time he had only twelve dollars and fifty cents, after paying his stage fare. The terminus of the nearest railroad was at Alexandria, one hundred and thirty miles away. He endured the usual hardships and privations incident to life in those primitive times on the wild western prairies. It took him two years to accumulate enough money with which to buy a heifer which he desired to grow into a milch cow. But he persevered, worked hard and managed well and consequently success attended his efforts. When he arrived in what is now Lee township, Norman county, in 1878, he had enough means to buy a section of land, one-half of section 15 and one-half of section 16. He was a booster and leader among the pioneers and did much to help start the local schools, churches and other evidences of modern civilization. He helped organize the first Norwegian Lutheran church in that township and was an active member of the same as long as he lived there. He was a man of unswerving honesty and he was highly respected by all who knew him. His family consisted of five children, named as follow: Jens O., Hans O., Christine is the wife of C. E. Olson and they live in Fargo, and B. O. and Edward.

B. O. Lee, the immediate subject of this sketch, grew to manhood on the home farm and worked hard assisting his father to break the virgin sod and put it in cultivation. He attended the public schools in Fargo, North Dakota, and later those of Lee township, Norman county, and after the father returned with his children to Norway, he attended the parochial schools there. Returning to the United States in 1888, after spending three and one-half years in the old country, he operated his father's farm in Lee township, Norman county, for three years, then bought one hundred and sixty acres, a part of the home farm, and continued farming there one year, then rented out his land for three years. During that period he at first ran a livery barn in Perley one year, then sold farming machinery for two years, representing the Deering Harvester Company of Chicago, his territory embracing this section of Minnesota. He gave his firm satisfaction in this capacity. He then resumed active farming on his land and has since followed general farming and stock raising on an extensive scale, with most gratifying results.

He is owner of four hundred and forty acres in sections 16 and 21, Lee township, which he has brought up to a high state of improvement and cultivation. He put on all the improvements now on his land, which are modern and substantial. He has a large and attractive home, with modern conveniences. He raises large quantities of grain, much of which he feeds to cattle and hogs, shipping several carloads of fat live stock to the markets. He is not only a close observer, but a diligent student of twentieth-century methods of agriculture and stock raising. Mr. Lee is a stockholder in the Farmers and Merchants Bank at Perley and is president of the same. Its popularity and rapid growth have been due to his able and judicious management.

Mr. Lee was married in 1897 to Maria Larson, a native of Minnesota. She received a common-school education, and she is a daughter of Iver and Sissel Larson, natives of Norway. Three children have been born to Mr and Mrs. Lee, namely. Stella, Oliver Lawrence, and Clara. Mr. Lee has long been influential in local public affairs. He served as assessor of Lee township from 1897 to 1908. He was elected commissioner of Norman county in 1908 and he served in this capacity until 1917. For three years he was chairman of the board of county commissioners. As a public servant he discharged his duties in an able, faithful and creditable manner and to the satisfaction of all concerned. He is an active member of the Norwegian Lutheran church and was formerly secretary of the church.

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### JOHN HOVLAND.

The late John Hovland, for many years one of the best-known and most progressive farmers in Bear Park township, Norman county, was a native of the kingdom of Norway, but had been a resident of this country since he was nineteen years old, having come to America with his brother Andrew in 1869. John Hovland was born in Norway on November 22, 1850, one of seven children born to his parents, Amund and Ingeborg Hovland, the others being Amund, deceased; Christina, deceased; Renald; Ella, deceased; Andrew, mention of whom is made in another part of this volume, and Johanas, deceased. Amund and Ingeborg Hovland were farmers in their native land.

John Hovland, the subject of this memorial sketch, was educated in the schools of his native Norway and helped on the labors of the home farm.