

be found in the township. In the early stages of his farming operations he used oxen to carry on the work, but as he progressed in his labors he gradually employed modern methods and has now one of the best farm plants in the district in which he resides. Mr. Thomas carried out many substantial improvements and erected several good buildings, and is now engaged in general farming and has been very successful.

Peter Thomas was united in marriage to Regina House, who was born in Canada in 1862. Her father owned a farm of three hundred and twenty acres north of Mary township and sold it in 1886, then going to Michigan, where he died in 1895. Her mother died in Missouri in 1878 at the age of sixty-one years. She has two brothers and one sister living. To Mr. and Mrs. Thomas the following children were born: Harry, married and living in Delavan, Wisconsin; Mrs. Annie Sorsen, married and living in Mary township; Emma, married, living in Racine, Wisconsin, and Elizabeth and Edna, who live in Mary township. The family are members of the Catholic church and are earnestly interested in all its good works, as well as in the good works of the community at large. Mr. Thomas served on the school board for about twenty years and he helped to organize school district No. 36. He is a shareholder in the Telephone Company of Perley and also holds shares in a potato warehouse at Borup, and in many other directions gives of his services to advance the general welfare of the district and township.

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### JOHN A. MERKINS.

John A. Merkins, a substantial and well-known farmer of McDondalville township, Norman county, renter of three hundred and twenty acres of his father's choice land, and who has lived in this county all of his life, was born on his father's homestead in Pleasant View township, Norman county, January 1, 1879, son of John and Mary (Ackaff) Merkins, well-known farming people, who are now living retired at Ada.

John and Mary Merkins were both natives of Germany, where they were educated and reared. They immigrated to the United States in 1887 and spent a short time in Red Wing, Minnesota, and then moved to Pleasant View township, Norman county, where John Merkins homesteaded one hundred and sixty acres of land. He immediately commenced the task of preparing the land for crops and in time was well under way, success attending his efforts from the very beginning. As he prospered in his agri-

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.

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#### 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