

parochial school. The development of the church has been along similar lines, improvements being constantly made in the church property, which in 1914 was entirely cleared of debt. The work of the church has been splendidly organized under Father Forkenbrock and has long been a potent force for good in the community.

Rev. Forkenbrock is a genial, companionable man in social life, a thorough business man in the administration of the business affairs of his church, a liberal, tolerant man on religious and political questions and a conscientious Christian. Since coming here he has demonstrated his fitness and ability and his rapidly growing congregation stands as an evidence of the fact.

L. J. HILDMAN.

L. J. Hildman is a leading merchant and representative business man of Ionia, where he has successfully conducted a general store for the past eighteen years. He was born in Germany on the 22d of September, 1869, a son of Cristoph and Catherine (Grose) Hildman, who spent their entire lives in that country. His education was acquired in the public schools of his native land and there he spent the period of his minority. In 1890, when twenty-one years of age, he determined to try his fortune in America, having heard many favorable reports concerning the advantages and opportunities to be enjoyed on this side of the Atlantic. After reaching the United States he spent one month in Albany, New York, and thence made his way into the interior of the country to Iowa, locating at North Buena Vista in Clayton county, where he secured employment as a farm hand. In 1891 he removed to Dubuque county and went to work as clerk in a general store at Holy Cross, where he remained for eleven years and laid the foundation for his later business success. In the fall of 1901, feeling that his capital and experience justified him in embarking in business on his own account, he came to Ionia and established his present mercantile interests. He had previously made a trip to Ionia in search of a business location, had purchased a building and made other preparations for his later removal. During the eighteen years of his connection with the town he has built up an extensive and gratifying patronage as a general merchant, for he has gained a well merited reputation for thorough reliability and spares no effort in meeting the needs and wishes of his customers. His store is neat and attractive in arrangement and he carries a large and well selected line of general merchandise at reasonable prices.

In 1897 Mr. Hildman was united in marriage to Miss Angela Gotto, of Holy Cross, Iowa, by whom he has nine children, as follows; Emma; Raymond, who is acting as assistant cashier of the First State Bank of Ionia; Leo; Mathilda; Olivaria; Florence; Clair; Matona; and John Louis. All are still under the parental roof.

In his political views Mr. Hildman is a democrat, loyally supporting the men and measures of that party at the polls. He is a devout communicant of the Catholic church and also belongs to the Roman Catholic Protective Society. He has never had occasion to regret his determination to come to the new world, for here he has found the opportunities which he sought and through their wise utilization has won a place among the substantial and respected citizens of his community.

W. O. DAVIS.

W. O. Davis, of the firm of Jones & Davis, dealers in farm machinery and hardware in Lime Springs, is a most alert and energetic business man who is ready for any emergency or for any opportunity. Working steadily upward along the legitimate lines of trade, he now occupies an enviable position in commercial circles. Howard county numbers him among her native sons, his birth having here occurred September 7, 1888. His parents were John W. and Ann J. (Thomas) Davis, the former a native of Columbus county, Wisconsin, and a son of William P. and Catherine (Davis) Davis, both of whom were