

work in the pineries of Wisconsin, where he was employed for five years, and on the expiration of that period he was married and in connection with his brother took up carpentering, which he followed until 1889. In that year he returned to farm life and about 1894 bought his father's old homestead place and lived thereon to the time of his death. His first purchase made him the owner of one hundred and sixty acres of land north of Riceville and at the time of his demise he was the owner of three hundred and sixty acres of excellent farm land in Mitchell and Howard counties, including the thirty acres in Riceville, upon which the old homestead of the family still stands. After removing to the old home farm in 1894 he devoted his attention largely to the buying and selling of stock and became one of the prominent live stock dealers of this section of the state. He won very substantial success in the conduct of that business and was thus able to leave his family in comfortable financial circumstances.

On the 3d of June, 1884, Mr. Wilkes was united in marriage to Miss Carrie Smith and they became the parents of eight children: Mrs. Gertrude Mae Sivalia, Mrs. Florence Genevieve Herdman, Mrs. Blanche Aileen Blandin, Robert John, Mrs. Amy Violet Mahaffey, Joseph Adelbert, Frederick Mason and Caroline Mary.

The family are adherents of the Methodist Episcopal church. Mr. Wilkes' political endorsement was given to the democratic party and for nine years he served as a member of the school board of Riceville and was always deeply interested in everything that tended to uplift the individual and upbuild the community. His support was always given on the side of progress and improvement, and his labors were far-reaching and resultant. In addition to developing his farm he was a stockholder in the electric plant of Riceville and at all times was recognized as a man of good business judgment whose labors were an element in the material development of his section of the state. To his family he was a devoted husband and father, and to those who knew him a faithful friend. He had many excellent traits of character, and his life was filled with the "many little unremembered acts of kindness and of love."

#### WILLIAM. J. MERRICK.

William J. Merrick is engaged in the development and improvement of a farm of two hundred acres situated on section 29, Howard township, and has gained recognition as one of the representative agriculturists of northern Iowa. He was born in Deerfield township, Chickasaw county, July 26, 1874, and is a son of Barney and Catherine Merrick, who were natives of Germany. The father came to the United States when but seven years of age and both of his parents died while they were on the voyage to the new world. The little son made his way to Burlington, Wisconsin, and thrown upon his own resources at this tender age, worked as best he could to provide for his own support. When about twenty-five years of age he joined the Union army and participated in the Civil war, acting as a teamster in hauling provisions. While various difficulties and obstacles beset his path, he nevertheless made progress in a business way and when about thirty years of age bought a farm in connection with three other men. They drew straws for their shares of the land and cleared the place and built their log houses thereon. Mr. Merrick became owner of eighty acres of the tract and to his original possessions he added as his financial resources increased until he had acquired two hundred and forty acres. He placed all of the improvements upon the property and resided thereon until about sixty years of age, when he retired from active business life and removed to Alta Vista, renting his farm to his sons. At one time he filled the office of road supervisor. He deserved much credit for what he accomplished, as he started out in life with a great handicap. Such a record should serve to encourage and inspire others, showing what may be accomplished when there is a will to dare and to do.

William J. Merrick was reared upon the old homestead farm and was early trained to the practical work of the fields. He was thus well acquainted with the best methods of tilling the soil and caring for the crops when his father left the old homestead and gave the farm over to the management of his sons. For a time he rented land