

ing and brought grief not only to his family but to the many who called him friend.

Edward Thorson was born near Namsos, Norway, on October 10, 1835, a son of Thor and Karan Selness, who spent their entire lives in their native country on the family farm. They were the parents of five children: Nicolai, who resides in Hesper township; Johanna Flach, of Norway; Otto, of Highland township; Edward, of this review; and John. Edward Thorson came to the United States in 1861. He had always used this name and as such enlisted from Wisconsin, where he had located, for service in the Civil war on November 10, 1861, taking the colors with Company I of the Fifteenth Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry. In later years the family adopted the name of Selness, which had been in use in Norway. Mr. Thorson valiantly fought for the Union cause until the close of the war, participating in all the engagements in which his regiment took part. He located in Highland township, Winneshiek county, in 1865, and here spent the remainder of his life on his farm. At the time of his death, which occurred on April 4, 1913, he owned one of the most valuable farm properties in the county, comprising five hundred and sixty acres of land in one body and located on sections 9, 10 and 16, Highland township. His long years of labor, close attention to matters at hand and his systematic methods enabled him to make his farm one of the best cultivated and most profitable in the section. He built a substantial brick house in 1886 and made all the other improvements, including barns, sheds and outhouses, there being nothing on the land when he came in possession of it. He began his agricultural pursuits with a quarter section and subsequently increased his holdings as his resources permitted. On June 6, 1906, a cyclone devastated about ten thousand dollars worth of property on his place, including two barns and a part of the brick house, besides doing damage to other buildings and to his trees and stock. At the time there were three men in the house—Mr. Thorson, his son Albert and N. P. Thorson, all of whom were injured but none of them seriously. The son Albert was taken care of by neighbors and suffered for about two weeks before he recovered from his injuries. The rest of the family were fortunately away on that day. Hundreds of people for miles around came afterwards to view the destruction. A beautiful example of neighborly feeling was exhibited on that occasion, for over a hundred of the people living in the neighborhood came to his place and donated their labor in helping him to repair the damages. On one day there were as many as fifty who helped him to build up what was destroyed by the elements, and among them were many who themselves had suffered, even if not so severely as our subject, who was the heaviest loser in that catastrophe.

On July 25, 1872, Mr. Thorson was united in marriage to Miss Anna Thorson, who was born in Norway on July 14, 1849. She was brought to this county by her parents in 1853, at the age of four years, and has resided here ever since. She is a daughter of Paul and Thorber Thorson, both of whom passed away in Winneshiek county. They were the parents of four sons and three daughters, of whom five children are still living. Mr. and Mrs. Thorson had seven children: Thomas, of Highland township; Petra, the wife of J. S. Quandahl, of Allamakee county; Albert, who now owns and operates the homestead; Julia, who married H. E. Burtness, of Houston county, Minnesota;