

B. I. Weiser, remaining with that firm for about four years and a half. Having decided to engage in the drug trade on his own account he entered Northwestern University, taking a course in pharmacy, and that his work was thorough and that he made himself complete master of all the scientific aspects of the profession is evident from the fact that he received the first gold medal as the highest award of merit ever issued by that university in the pharmaceutical course of study, Mr. Engbertson completing his three-year course in 1888, in which year he was graduated with honors, and returned to Decorah, again entering the employ of Mr. Weiser, with whom he remained for five months. The enterprise which characterized all his later transactions came to the fore when favoring opportunity offered in the form of a bankrupt stock of drugs which could be readily purchased and of which he took possession. He demonstrated his ability by taking over this run-down business and gradually developed therefrom a large and profitable trade. Today his store is one of the leading ones in Decorah and in the completeness of its lines, its modern appointments and its general impression easily rivals any metropolitan store. Drugs of only the best manufacture are handled and are always fresh on hand and the prescription department is safeguarded in such a manner as to practically preclude errors. In the store are also carried sundries such as usually can be found in establishments of this kind. The success of its founder is entirely due to his own efforts, his able management, his enterprise and his accurate knowledge of the professional side of the business. That prosperity has been the reward of his labors is but natural and that he should have reached out to other lines of business endeavor is quite in conformity with his enterprise and character. For a number of years he was prominently connected with the lumber industry in Minnesota but later sold out his interests. It was in the year 1906 that he became the prime mover in the organization of an establishment which has since proved of great benefit to the community and has grown to be one of the foremost of this kind in the city. It is the Decorah State Bank, one of the solid financial houses of Decorah and this part of the state today. Largely through his aid it was organized on November 11, 1906, with a capital stock of fifty thousand dollars, and its first board of directors consisted of R. A. Engbertson, E. P. Johnson, A. L. Haakanson, T. O. Storla and T. Stabo. The first board then elected the following officers: R. A. Engbertson, president; E. P. Johnson, vice president; A. L. Haakanson, cashier; and J. M. Thorson, assistant cashier. Facts being more convincing than words, it need but be mentioned in addition that at the meeting held January 7, 1913, the bank reported a surplus of seventy-five hundred dollars and enjoys a steady and wholesome growth.

On June 2, 1894, Mr. Engbertson married Miss Lottie Morton, a daughter of Peter and Hattie (Cooley) Morton, the former a native of Scotland and the latter of Massachusetts. They made removal to Decorah during Civil war days, locating on a farm in Orleans township where the father is still living, the mother having since passed away.

Mr. Engbertson is a member of the Norwegian Lutheran church, his wife giving her allegiance to the local organization of the Methodist Episcopal denomination. For many years he voted the republican ticket but is now connected with the progressive party, being convinced of the righteousness of the