

The store is located in the building which was used by the father, and the structure, which is a two-story brick building, is also the property of our subject. He has the only exclusive grocery store in town and carries a large and complete stock of fancy and staple groceries, enjoying a large patronage which insures him of a gratifying income. He conducted the enterprise alone until April, 1912, when he took Herman J. Busch into partnership, the latter now being manager of the store. Since that time the concern has operated under the firm name of The H. J. Giesen Company. Mr. Giesen is also engaged in the real-estate and insurance business, to which he now devotes most of his time. He owns considerable real estate in Calmar and vicinity, including his fine residence.

On September 10, 1895, Mr. Giesen married Nellie Bernatz, a daughter of George and Elizabeth Bernatz, of whom more extended mention is made in connection with the sketch of George Bernatz on another page of this work. Mr. and Mrs. Giesen had eight children: George, who died August 25, 1897; Ethel, who passed away April 3, 1899; and Willis, Donald, Phillip, Mary, Helen and Dolores, aged twelve, nine, seven, five, three and two years, respectively.

Public-spirited and progressive, Mr. Giesen has become closely connected with the public life of his locality, having served as city treasurer. At present he is clerk of Calmar township, having held this office for twelve years and also served for two years as deputy sheriff. His faith is that of the Catholic church and his political allegiance is given to the republican party, in whose principles and platform he steadfastly believes. Fraternally he is a member of the Knights of Columbus, of the Modern Woodmen of America, the Woodmen of the World and the Decorah lodge of the Benevolent Protective Order of Elks. While he has attained commendable material success, Mr. Giesen has been a serviceable factor in the upbuilding and development of his locality and stands always ready to support any movement undertaken in the interest of the people. A man of; strong character, he enjoys the high regard and confidence of all who know him.

HELGE H. AAKER.

Among the men who have promoted agricultural progress in Winneshiek county is Helge H. Aaker, who holds title to three hundred and fifty acres, comprising the old home farm, which he acquired from the other heirs by purchase, his father having originally bought the property from the government. One hundred and sixty acres of it is located on section 1, Sumner township, eighty acres in Lincoln township and one hundred and twenty acres in Calmar township. Mr. Aaker was born on this farm on December 21, 1859, a son of Hans O. and Rachel (Juve) Aaker, both natives of Norway. The parents came to" America in 1848, locating in Wisconsin, but in 1851 they removed to Winneshiek county, where the father took up land on section 1 in Sumner township. There he passed his life, gradually bringing his land under cultivation until in the place of wild prairie land he owned a productive farm. The old log house which served as the first family home, and which the father himself built shortly after he had taken up the land with the government, still stands. At his death he left three hundred and fifty acres. He passed away in September, 1900, his wife