

was killed in the battle of Centralia, Missouri, in 1864, as has been noted. His widow is still living and resides in Clarence, Missouri. She and her husband were the parents of five children, two of whom are living, William and his brother G. W.

William Stalcup attended the country school near his home and through its ministrations secured a limited education. His opportunities for scholastic training were limited, owing to the conditions of the country and the circumstances of the family, which forced him to look out for himself in the struggle for advancement at an early age. Since leaving school he has been engaged in farming, working under great difficulties and with very slow approaches toward his desired goal at first, but with increasing speed and greater prosperity after a few years as the harvest from his persistent industry and self-denying frugality began to ripen and be gathered in. He now owns a valuable farm of more than 130 acres, which is well improved, fully equipped with the necessary appliances for its vigorous and profitable cultivation and provided with all the requirements of an attractive and comfortable country home.

On this farm he has for many years carried on general farming operations on a high plane of skill and enterprise, and also conducted a thriving live stock industry of good proportions and elevated character. In 1897 he embarked in a general mercantile enterprise at Maud in this county, but this was not to his taste, and after hanging to it three years he sold the business and returned to his farm. He was married in 1883 to Miss

Jennie Phillips, a native of Monroe county, Missouri. They have had four children, three of whom are living, Georgianna, James Thomas and Ethel. In political affiliation the father is a Republican, and although he has never sought or desired a political office, he has always been active in the service of his party. For the good of the community he served on the school board about six years, but he prefers at all times the honorable post of private citizenship. He is a member of the Northern Methodist church.

W. J. KESNER.

During the last eighteen years this prosperous farmer and stock man of Jefferson township has been one of the useful factors in promoting the industrial and civil life of Shelby county, adding to its wealth in agricultural products and live stock, helping to advance it in public improvements and aiding in sustaining and strengthening all its moral, educational and material interests. He has been faithful to the duties of citizenship and while pushing forward his own interests has always lent a willing hand to the advancement of those of the township and county in which he lives.

Mr. Kesner was born on September 30, 1867, in Lewis county, Missouri. He is a son of G. W. and Mary J. (Allison) Kesner, the former a native of Indiana and the latter of Virginia. The father came to Missouri in 1840 and located in Lewis county. There for a period of forty-two years he was actively engaged in farming and raising stock, with steadily increasing prosperity in a worldly way and a strengthening hold on the con-

fidence and esteem of the people. In 1882 he moved his family to Monroe county, where he followed the same pursuits. He died on October 4, 1899.

His marriage with Miss Mary J. Allison occurred in 1856 and by this marriage became the father of six children, all of whom are living. They are Louisa, George W., Lina, Maggie, W. J. and Sarah. The mother is still living and makes her home in Clarence, Shelby county. Although advanced in years, she bears the burden of age well, being vigorous and energetic, and meeting the daily duties of life now with the same spirit of devotion and determination that characterized her in the earlier period of her residence in this state, when her experiences were largely those of a pioneer.

Her son, W. J. Kesner, who is the immediate subject of this brief memoir, began his education in the district schools of Lewis county and completed it in those of Monroe county, to which he removed with his parents in 1882. After leaving school he had the usual experience of country boys in Missouri at that time, working on his father's farm and assisting the family, learning in practical labor the art of farming and acquiring a knowledge of human nature by mingling freely in the social life of the neighborhood, thus gaining all the while additional strength and equipment for the battle of life in whatever phase it might present itself.

In 1890 he moved to Macon county and entered the contest for himself as a farmer and raiser of stock. Two years later he came to Shelby county and took up his residence in Clarence, and in the

vicinity of that town he has ever since been actively and prosperously engaged in farming and raising stock. He now owns and cultivates eighty acres of land and has his farm brought to a high state of development in its productive capacity and well improved with good buildings and all the other appurtenances of a comfortable country home of the present day requirements.

On February 12, 1891, Mr. Kesner was united in marriage with Miss Lily B. Craig, of Monroe county, in this state. They have one child, their daughter Nora Belle. In politics the father is a Republican, in fraternal life he is an Odd Fellow and a Modern Woodman, and in religious affiliation a member of Missionary Baptist church.

REUBEN LEE TAYLOR.

Reuben Lee Taylor, one of the prosperous, progressive and successful farmers of Jefferson township, in this county, has passed the whole of his life to this time (1910) in the county, and has been, for many years, one of the leading forces in its progress and development. He has helped to expand and augment its industrial and commercial power, the moral, social and educational agencies at work among its people have had the benefit of his services in counsel and active support and its advancement in the way of public improvements has always been aided by him to the full extent of his ability and influence.

Mr. Taylor is a native of Clay township, Shelby county, where he was born in 1863. His parents, F. P. and Mary H. (Henniger) Taylor, have registered