

BANK OF LENTNER.

There is no one factor that so well determines and designates the status and stability of a community as the extent and character of its banking institutions, and in this regard the financial and commercial prestige of Shelby county has been maintained by means of ample capital, reinforced by duly conservative management. The wise policy that has dominated the management of the Bank of Lentner from the time of its founding to the present has made it one of the substantial and essentially representative financial institutions of the county, and as such it is consonant that brief record concerning it be entered in this publication.

The Bank of Lentner, incorporated under the laws of the state, received its charter on the 24th of September, 1906, and on the 22d of the following month it began practical operations by opening the doors of its well equipped banking rooms and inviting public patronage. The bank is incorporated with a capital stock of twelve thousand dollars, and said stock is represented in one hundred and twenty shares of a par value of one hundred dollars each. The original board of directors of the bank was as follows: Dr. Adolphus G. Wood, William Kraft, Henry Arnold, James H. Melsor, Hugo Boling, Robert T. Jackson, and Judge John Byrum. At the meeting of the stockholders the following executive officers were chosen: President, Dr. Adolphus G. Wood; Judge John T. Perry, cashier; and James H. Melsor, secretary of the board of directors.

Dr. Wood has continued incumbent of the presidency of the institution from its initiation, and the other officers at the time of this writing, at the opening of the year 1910, are as here noted: Henry M. Eaton, vice-president; Thomas W. Noel, cashier; and James H. Melsor, secretary of the board of directors. The directorate is composed of the following well known and honored citizens: James H. Melsor, Henry M. Eaton, George W. Stalays, Dr. A. G. Wood, Theodore Hinze, Harmon Van Thun, and Henry Arnold. The bank has met with most gratifying popular support, based upon public confidence in those who have its affairs in charge, and it is today one of the substantial and ably conducted financial institutions of Shelby county, with a support of essentially representative order.

JAMES H. MELSON.

Mr. Melsor is one of the representative citizens of his native county, with whose business interests he has been long and prominently identified, and he served for a term of fully fifteen years as postmaster in Lentner, where he still maintains his home and where he is now engaged in the buying and shipping of live stock, with which line of enterprise he has been concerned for a decade and a half.

James H. Melsor was born on a farm in Shelby county, Missouri, on the 6th of February, 1860, and is a son of Benjamin N. and Mary J. (Carman) Melsor, the former of whom was born in the state of Maryland, on the 6th of January, 1823, and the latter of whom was

born and reared in Marion county, Missouri, where her parents took up their abode in the pioneer days. The Melson family was founded in America in the colonial era and Elijah Melson, grandfather of the subject of this sketch, was a native of Maryland, when he came to Missouri in 1837, settling in Shelby county, where he passed the remainder of his life, the major portion of his active career having been one of close identification with the great basic industry of agriculture.

Benjamin N. Melson passed his boyhood and early youth in his native state and was about fourteen years of age at the time of the family removal to Missouri. He was reared to manhood in Shelby county, this state, and he eventually became the owner of a well improved farm near the village of Clarence, this county. Much of the land was reclaimed by him and he became one of the substantial farmers and honored citizens of the county, where he continued to be actively engaged in diversified farming and stock-growing until his death, which occurred in August, 1905. His widow still resides in the old homestead, and of their eight children five are living. Concerning them the following brief data are entered: Emily A. is the wife of William Taylor, a prosperous farmer of Shelby county; James H. is the immediate subject of this sketch; Mollie J. is the wife of David R. Gray, who is engaged in farming in this county; Charles B. is a resident of Butte, Montana; and George A. is engaged in farming in Shelby county. In politics the father was a staunch Republican.

James H. Melson was reared on the

home farm and early began to contribute his quota to its work. His early educational training was secured in the public schools of Clarence and Shelbina, and in 1880 he went to Colorado, where he was identified with mining operations for two years, at the expiration of which he returned to his native county and took up his residence in the village of Lentner, where he purchased a general store, which he successfully conducted for the ensuing seven years, building up a substantial trade and gaining a strong hold upon the confidence and esteem of the community. After his retirement from this line of enterprise he passed one year as traveling representative for a wholesale commission house in the city of St. Louis, and he then returned to Lentner, where, in 1886, he was appointed postmaster, of which office he continued incumbent until October 1, of 1908. In the meanwhile he had built up a large and prosperous business as a buyer and shipper of live stock, with which important line of industrial enterprise he has been actively concerned for the past fifteen years, and through his operations he has done much to further the commercial prosperity of the county and village in which he has maintained his home during practically his entire life thus far. He was one of the organizers and incorporators of the Bank of Lentner, of which popular and substantial institution he continued a stockholder and director, and he is the owner of thirty-five acres of land in his home village, besides a number of buildings of substantial order. He takes a deep interest in all that tends to enhance the civic and material prosperity of the community, is

essentially progressive and liberal as a citizen, and, though he has never desired the honors or emoluments of political office, he is a stalwart advocate of the principles and policies of the Republican party. He is affiliated with the local organizations of the Knights of Pythias and Modern Woodmen of America.

On the 6th of January, 1887, Mr. Melson was united in marriage to Miss Amanda J. Livingston, who was born and reared in Shelby county, and who is a daughter of James D. Livingston, a representative farmer of this favored section of the state. Mr. and Mrs. Melson became the parents of ten children, of whom eight are living, namely: May Pearl, who is now serving as postmistress at Lentner, in which office she succeeded her father; and Raymond Shelby, Claude M., Beulah, Lew, Pauline, Theodore Eldon, and Mark.

HARRISON EATON.

One of the venerable and highly honored native sons of Shelby county, with whose history the family name has been identified since the early pioneer days, before the organization of the county, is now living virtually retired in the attractive little city of Shelbina. He has contributed his quota to the civic and industrial development and progress of the county, as did also his honored father, and here he was long and prominently identified with farming and stock-growing, in connection with which lines of industry he gained distinctive success, so that he is today able to enjoy the generous comforts and the gracious environment which are the just recompense

for former years of earnest toil and endeavor. Mr. Eaton is one of the well known citizens of the county and to him is given the unreserved confidence and esteem of the community in which he has passed his entire life thus far. He is a representative of the third generation of the family in America, as his grandfather, Jacob Eaton, was a native of England, whence he came to America when a young man, becoming an early settler of Kentucky, and later coming to Missouri, where he passed the closing years of his life.

Harrison Eaton was born on the homestead farm, in what is now Salt River township, Shelby county, Missouri, on the 4th of April, 1838, and is a son of George and Rebecca (Anderson) Eaton, both of whom were born and reared in Kentucky, where their marriage was solemnized in the year 1829. The father was born on the 3d of May, 1803, and his death occurred in February, 1871. His wife survived him by several years. They became the parents of ten children, of whom five are living, all being residents of Shelby county. Of the number the subject of this review is the eldest; George W. is a successful farmer in Salt River township; Martha A. is the wife of Ernest Harding; Sarah E. is the wife of William Cochran; and Nancy E. is the wife of James R. Baker. In politics the father was a staunch Democrat and both he and his wife were consistent members of the Baptist church.

George Eaton was reared and educated in Kentucky and upon coming to Missouri he numbered himself among the pioneers of Shelby county, where he settled before the county had been or-