

of which he laid the foundation. His skill was employed also on other structures with histories, for he was an early arrival in the county and helped blaze the way for the civilization and development that was soon to follow in his wake.

He was married in 1845 to Miss Elizabeth Lasley, who also came to this country from Ireland, as has been stated, and they became the parents of twelve children, eight of whom are living: Margaret, the wife of William Stone, of Tama county, Iowa; Mary, the wife of George Sickle, of Shelby county, Missouri; Robert, whose home is in Shelbyville; Eliza, the wife of W. G. Chick, also a resident of Shelbyville; Alice, the wife of J. W. Ray, of this county; Andrew, a prosperous Shelby county farmer; Celestia, the wife of William West, of Kansas; and George E. In politics the father was a Republican, in fraternal life an Odd Fellow and in religion a Presbyterian.

George E. Stewart was educated in the district schools of this county and started his career as a farmer and stock man very early in life. His first venture was the purchase of 131 acres of land on which he went to work for himself, and from the start he has been successful and enjoyed increasing prosperity as the years have passed. He farms well and wisely and his farm responds generously to his skillful husbandry. His stock industry is extensive, and it, also, is active and profitable. Both are managed with intelligence and the most careful attention to every detail of the work connected with them from start to finish.

On September 3, 1890, Mr. Stewart was united in marriage with Miss Arminda Hirrlinger, a daughter of Jacob F. and

Martha (McCroskey) Hirrlinger, esteemed residents of this county. Three children have been born in the Stewart household, and all of them are living and still at home with their parents. They are two daughters, Geraldine E. and Elsie L., and a son, Kenneth W. In politics the father is a Prohibitionist and in religion a member of Holiness church, to which his wife belongs also. They are active and zealous workers in the church and take an earnest and serviceable interest in everything pertaining to the advancement and improvement of the township and county in which they live. Everybody that knows them respects them for their worth and the estimable quality of their citizenship.

HARMAN RATHJEN.

Beginning his career as a farmer on his own account at the dawn of his manhood, and continuing it without interruption through all the subsequent years of his busy life, Harman Rathjen, one of the wideawake and enterprising farmers and stock men of Black Creek township in this county, has given a fine example of what steadfastness of purpose and the use of every opportunity for advancement can accomplish even in the unobtrusive and often unnoted life of a husbandman in the rural districts of this state, far from the seaboard and aside from the highways of the world's great activities.

Mr. Rathjen is a native of Shelby county and was born in 1871. He was educated in the district schools of the county, attending for the most part the Red Star school in the township of his

present residence. He is a brother of Henry Rathjen, a sketch of whom appears in this work in which the history of the parents will be found. After leaving school, and while attending, he worked on the home farm with his father, remaining at home and assisting the family until 1893. He then bought the farm on which he now resides and to the development, improvement and cultivation of which he has ever since devoted the greater part of his time and energies. This farm comprises 129 acres and is one of the best of its size in the township. It is well improved, vigorously and skilfully cultivated and has been brought by his labors and good management to a high state of productiveness. The live stock industry carried on in connection with the farming operations is extensive and active, and sedulous care to every requirement of the business, with a view to securing the best results, has made it highly profitable. The specialties of this industry are cattle and hogs of superior breeds.

Mr. Rathjen was married on February 17, 1896, to Miss Elizabeth Neuschafer, a daughter of the late John and Catherine (Reinheimer) Neuschafer, of this county. Four children were born of the union, three of whom are living, and all still at home with their parents. They are Amelia, the daughter of the house, and Edward and Alfred, the sons. In politics the father is a Democrat of the reliable and constant kind, and in religion he and his wife are Lutherans, devotedly loyal to their church and serviceable to the congregation to which they belong.

Mr. Rathjen has been successful in his

business, building it to good proportions and conducting it with vigor, enterprise and progressiveness. He has also been attentive to the wants of his township and county, and given his energetic and helpful aid to every worthy undertaking for their advancement. While not an office seeker in any sense, he has been of great service to his political party in all the campaigns it has conducted since his youth, and by the spirit and effectiveness of his work in its behalf has won the appreciative regard of both its leaders and its rank and file. He is considered one of the best and most representative citizens of his township, and is correspondingly esteemed by all its inhabitants.

VALENTINE KRAUTER.

With filial devotion to his parents that is altogether commendable, this esteemed farmer and stock man of Clay township, Shelby county, has passed with them the years of his maturity as he did those of his childhood and youth, assisting in providing for the wants of the family and helping in every way available to him in bettering the condition of its members. Since the death of his father in 1908, at the age of seventy-seven years, he has stood loyally by his nearer parent and looked after her comfort with constant and considerate attention.

He was born on March 13, 1870, in Grossherzogthum Hessen, Germany, and is a son of Peter and Margareta (Borok) Krauter, also natives of that place. The father was born there in 1831 and came to the United States in 1881, settling among the German Lutherans in Shelby