

young manhood he was a valuable assistant to his father in the labors of developing and improving the home place. The other members of the family are: Ingeborg (Emma in English), who is married; Ida, married; Christine, married, and Martin, married and living in Morken township.

Iver Klokseth bought his present farm, which now consists of two hundred and thirty-seven acres, about 1893. The land, which is of choice quality and well improved, is situated in section 7, Moland township, and thirty acres are set out to the planting and cultivation of potatoes. Mr. Klokseth is regarded as one of the progressive and energetic farmers of the township and he and his family are pleasantly housed in a comfortable dwelling.

Mr. Klokseth was married on January 27, 1892, to Hannah Holte, who was born on October 13th, 1871, in Houston county, Minnesota, and who died on May 28th, 1913. Three children were born to this union, namely: Corinne, who is married, and Marie and Julia, who live at home with their father. Mr. Klokseth and his family are earnest members of the Lutheran church at Concordia, and he has served the congregation as trustee for several years. He was clerk of the township school board for six years and in other ways he has given of his time and energy to the public in behalf of all projects having for their purpose the common good of the community.

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### LEVI THORTVEDT.

To a visitor from the East one of the most impressive features of life here in the Red River valley is the sense of the amazing newness of things. When it is considered that men still in the very prime of life were witnesses to and participants in the very beginning of a social order hereabout this sense of newness is accounted for. That all the wonderful development of this region has been accomplished within the life-time of persons still active in affairs is one of the wonders of the great work of "empire building" that has been carried on in the Northwest during the past generation, and it is difficult for the Easterner to reconcile himself to the thought that all this has been accomplished during a single lifetime.

One of the men who has been a resident of Clay county since the days of the early settlement of the same is Levi Thortvedt, a substantial farmer and landowner on the banks of Buffalo river in Moland township, who has been a resident of the place on which he is now living, in sections 28 and 29, since the summer of 1870, when his father pre-empted the place and



MR. AND MRS. OLE G. THORVEDT.



LEVI THORTVEDT AND FAMILY.

there established his home, thus being one of the earliest settlers of Clay county. Levi Thortvedt was born in the kingdom of Norway on January 31, 1860, son of Ole G. and Thone (Songedahl) Thortvedt, natives of that same country, who shortly afterward came to the United States with their family and proceeded on out to Minnesota, locating in Houston county, where Ole G. Thortvedt bought a tract of forty acres of land and established his home, remaining there until he came up here into the Red River country, leader of what came to be known as the Buffalo River settlement.

Ole G. Thortvedt was a good farmer and a man of push and energy and had, besides, the true pioneer instinct. In the spring of 1870 he became attracted to the good reports that then were being heard regarding the possibilities awaiting settlers in the Red River country, which at that time was little known to white men save the Hudson Bay trappers and a few adventurous souls that had pushed on out beyond the frontier. He interested two or three other families in his design, disposed of his interests in Houston county, equipped a fleet of "prairie schooners" in company with the Skrei family, H. Fendalstveit, O. G. Midgarden and George G. Muhle. O. G. Midgarden later married Jorand Thortvedt, sister of the subject of this sketch. This party started out by ox-team in quest of a new home in the unsettled lands to the north, taking its departure on May 14, 1870. When they reached Alexandria, where the land office then was located, they fell in with Ole Stronval, who had previously visited the Red River country, and he consented to accompany them on their trip north and to act as guide. By the 4th of July they were in the vicinity of the Hudson Bay post at Georgetown and they spent the Fourth on the Dakota side—Dakota was then a territory. Pitching camp there, Ole G. Thortvedt left the teams and most of the party and with two of the other men struck south on foot, "spying out the land." Reaching a point five miles south of the present site of Fargo they decided that the land was too low and that they also were getting into somewhat too close proximity to what might prove to be hostile Indians, as they heard they were on the "war-path." Returning to their camp, which had been pitched on the Dakota side of the Red, they having come up the west trail, they took up the journey, crossing the river at Hutchinson's ferry, and set out south on the Minnesota side. Presently they encountered Propfield, who had been employed here by the Hudson Bay Company since 1858 and when he found that their chief difficulty was the belief that the land was too low for profitable settlement he advised them to seek lands on the banks of the Buffalo and volunteered to guide them thence and if this proved not to be just the kind of land they wanted, they had better go back home as it was the best in the

to St. Cloud and took supplies back again for that company. Ole G. Thortvedt and his wife spent the remainder of their lives in the home they had established on the banks of the Buffalo river, honored and influential pioneers of Clay county. They were members of the Lutheran church and were among the organizers of the local congregation of that faith in the community which they went through many hardships to help establish. They were the parents of four children, of whom the subject of this sketch was the third in order of birth, the others being Jorand, Thone and Signe.

About 1905, at a grain growers' convention in Fargo, James Hill, the late great railroad magnate, was present and made a speech and at that time said in April, 1871, he had stopped at a homesteader's cabin on Buffalo river. Our subject was present and there was recalled to his mind the incident of two pilgrims stopping at his father's home. One of them was the justly-famous great railroad financier.

Levi Thortvedt was but a babe in arms when his parents came to Minnesota from their native Norway and he was ten years of age when they left Houston county and came up into the Red River country. He therefore has been a resident of this region since the days before Clay county was organized as a civic unit and has been a witness to and a participant in the development of the county since pioneer days, a continuous resident of the place his father pre-empted here in 1870 and which was the social center of that community in the days of the beginning of the Buffalo River settlement, the date of the settlement of the Thortvedt family there having been July 9, 1870. Though his formal schooling necessarily was neglected by reason of the lack of properly organized schools during pioneer days, Mr. Thortvedt has made up for that lack by wide and comprehensive reading and has long been regarded as one of the best-informed men in his community, as well as one of the most progressive and substantial farmers.. He is the owner of a fine farm of three hundred and forty-two acres and the new set of buildings he has erected on his place are electrically lighted, the first buildings on the Buffalo river thus to be lighted, Mr. Thortvedt securing his current from a water-power plant of his own invention erected some years ago on his farm. Mr. Thortvedt carries on his farming in accordance with up-to-date methods and is doing very well. As one of the first settlers in that community, Mr. Thortvedt has always taken an earnest interest in the development of the same and has done his share in promoting public improvements, ever taking an interested part in such movements as have been designed to advance the common welfare.

Northwest. In due time they pitched their camp on the banks of the river and beheld before them a fine prospect of good high ground covered with a rank growth of prairie grass, and there they decided to settle. And this was the beginning of the Buffalo River settlement.

At first the land was not surveyed. One day our subject and his sister were attending their muskrat traps at the river. All of a sudden they heard voices and saw men with red, blue and yellow coats plunging into the river. The frightened boy and girl left the traps and ran screaming to the house—"Indians are coming." The father came from the woods and on investigation he found it was the surveyors who had come to survey the land.

Ole G. Thortvedt pre-empted a quarter of a section in what presently, when the county was surveyed, was found to lie in sections 28 and 29, the site of the original camp of the Thortvedt party, and there put up a log shack and established his home, determined to give the new country a try-out for ten years; with the reservation that if in that time other settlers were not attracted to the scene he would return to Houston county. But it was not long until the excellence of the location began to attract others and presently a thriving settlement was established in that part of the county, although the first crops were destroyed by grasshoppers. From the beginning Mr. Thortvedt was regarded as a leader in the community and when the township was organized he was given the privilege of naming the same, which he did by giving to it the name of his old home parish, Moland, in Norway. As he developed his quarter section, all of which was prairie land save for a fringe of trees along the river bank, he erected new and more commodious buildings and it was not long before he and his family had a comfortable home. He later bought an adjoining "forty" of railroad land at one dollar and twenty-five cents an acre, and still later, when settlers began to come in and land values began to advance, bought an "eighty," paying for the latter tract seven dollars and fifty cents an acre. When the Buffalo River settlement was started the nearest real trading point was at Alexandria, one hundred and forty miles away, and thence the settlers were compelled to drive for their necessities, the nearer trading point at the Hudson Bay Company's post at Georgetown charging such exorbitant prices for goods as to make trading there practically prohibitive save on emergency. At that time there was a vehicle known as the Red River cart, a two-wheel rig, very clumsy, drawn by oxen and driven by half-breed Indians. This was the only means of transportation at that time. The creak and noise of the wooden cart wheels could be heard for miles. Sometimes as many as ninety carts would be seen in a train hauling furs for the Hudson Bay Company from Ft. Gary

In 1882 Levi Thortvedt was united in marriage to Ingeborg Midgaarden Weum, who also was born in the kingdom of Norway and who came alone to this country in 1880. To this union ten children have been born, Ole, Goodwin, Elpha, Dora, Stella, Adela, Orrabel, Eva, Florence and Norman, all of whom are living. The Thortvedts have a very pleasant home and have ever taken an interested part in the general social activities of the community in which they live. They are members of the Lutheran church and take a proper interest in church work as well as in other neighborhood good works.

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### JOSEPH GAARE.

Joseph Gaare, cashier of the First State Bank of Perley, is one of the wideawake young business men of Norman county. He was born in Lee township, this county, May 4, 1884, on the old home farm, a son of John O. and Anna (Kroshus) Gaare. The father was born in Norway, October 13, 1858, and the mother was born in Winneshiek county, Iowa. Ole Gaare, the grandfather, was a native of Norway, as was also his wife, Sigrid. They came to America in 1866, locating in Allamakee county, Iowa, remaining there until about 1880, when they came to Minnesota, accompanied by their son, John O. Gaare, father of the subject of this sketch, and settled in Norman county, where the grandfather spent the rest of his life. He was a farmer. His family consisted of the following children: John O., Peter O., Carrie, the wife of Ferdinand Baker, and Peder, who died when thirty years of age.

John O. Gaare was eight years of age when his parents brought him to the New World, and he grew to manhood on the farm in Allamakee county, Iowa, where he attended the public schools. About 1880 he came to Minnesota and homesteaded one hundred and sixty acres in Clay county. Later he bought a farm in Lee township, Norman county, and operated both places for many years, farming on an extensive scale and meeting with much success, now being the owner of three hundred and sixty acres of good farm land. For the past thirty years Mr. Gaare has lived in Lee township, Norman county. His wife died in 1908. He has been in some official position in his school district for the past twenty-five years, and is treasurer at present. He is a member of the Norwegian Lutheran church, of which he is secretary at this writing. His family consists of the following children: Clara, Joseph, Oscar, Selmer, Peter, Josephine, Hilda, Alice, Alberta and Emil.