

business. In the conduct of the store he has been very successful and he now carries a large line of carefully selected general merchandise, meeting all of the requirements of the purchasing public. His business methods are thoroughly enterprising and reliable and his success is the merited reward of persistent and earnest labor. In addition to winning for himself a place among the substantial merchants of the county he has made an excellent record as an office holder, having served for fifteen years as postmaster of Jerico, or until the postoffice was abandoned. Mr. Commerford has also served as treasurer of the Jerico Creamery Association for the past fifteen years.

In 1901 Mr. Commerford was joined in wedlock to Miss Mary Welch, of Jacksonville township, Chickasaw county. They have become the parents of four children: Genevieve, who died of influenza while attending Mount St. Clare Academy at Clinton, Iowa; and John, Mildred and Eugene, all at home.

In his political views Mr. Commerford has always been a democrat and has given staunch support to the party since age conferred upon him the right of franchise. He and his family are members of the Catholic church and he is identified also with the Knights of Columbus, a fraternity which draws its membership only from people of the Catholic faith. He ranks with the well known citizens of Chickasaw county, his personal worth, his progressiveness in business and his loyalty in citizenship winning for him an enviable position in public regard.

#### BYRON P. NORTON.

The life record of Byron P. Norton indicates most clearly the possibilities for successful achievement on the part of the individual, for by well directed efforts he has worked his way steadily upward, becoming one of the prosperous business men of Howard county. At all times he has been ruled by a progressive spirit that has been manifest in everything which he has undertaken. He is now living retired, for his possessions are such as bring to him a most substantial annual income, relieving him from further necessity for labor and from all financial care.

Mr. Norton was born in Homer, Cortland county, New York, November 9, 1844, a son of Solomon G. and Margaret Jane (Arnold) Norton. The father's birth occurred at Scott, Cort'and county, New York, on the 26th of January, 1815, and the mother was born in the same locality April 4, 1821. They were married in that county and Mr. Norton gave his attention to general agricultural pursuits and also carried on a livery business at Scott until about 1855, when he removed with his family to the west, settling first at Whitewater, Wisconsin, where they remained for a year. They next took up their abode at what is now London, Jefferson county, Wisconsin, where the father continued to operate a farm for several years. He next went with his family to Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin, where he engaged in farming, and in the fall of 1863 arrived in Howard county, Iowa, purchasing a farm three miles from Vernon Springs. He afterward sold that property and bought land south of Cresco, upon which he lived for four years. His next purchase made him the owner of the old farm of Byron P. Norton east of Cresco, comprising one hundred and sixty acres of rich and productive land. Solomon Norton passed away upon that farm June 24, 1893. He had for two decades survived his wife, who died in 1873 on the same farm. His political allegiance was given to the republican party; his religious faith was that of the Congregational church and it constituted a guiding force throughout his entire life.

Byron P. Norton spent his boyhood with his father on the various farms mentioned and continued his education in the public schools of Howard county, where he arrived with the family when a youth of eighteen years. Throughout the period of his minority he assisted his father in the development of the farm lands and early became familiar with the best methods of tilling the soil and caring for the crops. He afterward became a salesman and collector for the McCormick Machinery Company, which position he acceptably filled for four years. In 1871 he was appointed deputy sheriff and occupied that position for four years. He next took up his abode upon the old farm near Cresco, purchasing the interests of the other heirs in the property and