

not only large dealers in farm lands but they operate all of their holdings and are among the largest known raisers of cattle and hogs in Iowa.

In November, 1912, Mr. Elwood was elected on the republican ticket to the Iowa state legislature, although but twenty-three years of age, becoming one of the youngest members ever chosen to that body. He served through three sessions of the legislature as a member of the upper house and gave thoughtful and earnest attention and consideration to many vital questions which came up for settlement. He is also a member of Maple Leaf Lodge, No. 528, A. F. & A. M., and is identified with the Modern Woodmen of America. During the period of the war no one questioned his position. He was an untiring worker in behalf of every agency or avenue through which the interests of the country and her representatives on foreign soil might be furthered. Elma was the only town outside the county seat in Howard county and in fact the only small town in the state that had a Red Cross Chapter, other small towns working under the county seat town and larger city chapters. Mr. Elwood, however, organized the Elma Chapter and was chairman of the organization for the first year. He was also a member of the township organization of the Liberty Loan committee and he did much to promote the loans and advance government interests here.

In June, 1916, Mr. Elwood was married to Miss Alice Church, of Elma, and they have become the parents of a son, Fred. They occupy an enviable social position and their home is the abode of warm-hearted hospitality which is greatly enjoyed by many friends. Mr. Elwood has exerted marked influence over public thought and opinion and his activities have been most wisely directed not only in the upbuilding of his own fortunes but in the development of interests and affairs of public concern.

JOSEPH JIRAK.

The Pleasant Valley Stock Farm, situated on section 25, Utica township, Chickasaw county, is the property of Joseph Jirak, who is classed with the leading and prominent farmers of northern Iowa. He was born in Winneshiek county, May 20, 1862, and is a son of Wenzel and Mary (Dvorak) Jirak who were natives of Bohemia, where they were reared and married. In 1859 they bade adieu to friends and native land and came to the new world, crossing the Atlantic on one of the old-time sailing vessels to New Orleans, where they arrived after a voyage of seventy-seven days. They then proceeded up the Mississippi river to St. Louis, where they arrived on the 24th of December. They were obliged to pause in that city on account of the river being frozen over and they remained in St. Louis until the following spring, when they continued up the Mississippi to McGregor. There Mr. Jirak hired a man to haul his goods to Calmar and he and his wife made the journey on foot, walking behind the wagon. The father first purchased forty acres of land near Calmar, on which the family lived for four years, at the end of which time he sold that property and purchased one hundred acres near Spillville in Sumner township. Upon this farm he resided until about four years prior to his death, when he retired from active business and established his home in Spillville, where he passed away on the 24th of July, 1901, when he had reached the age of seventy-six years, eleven months and nine days. The mother's death occurred May 17, 1910, at the age of seventy-six years, nine months and three days.

Joseph Jirak was reared upon the old home farm in Winneshiek county and through the period of his youth attended the district schools and worked in the fields on the old home place. In 1884, desirous of engaging in business on his own account, he bought a farm of one hundred and sixty acres in Jacksonville township, Winneshiek county, and the following year he made further arrangements for having a home of his own by his marriage to Miss Frances Novak, a daughter of Martin Novak, who came to the United States in 1851. He worked on the Mississippi river steamboats for several years and about 1860 settled permanently in Winneshiek county, where he is still living at the advanced age of eighty-six years.

Following his marriage Mr. Jirak took up his abode upon his Winneshiek county farm and subsequently he extended its boundaries by additional purchases until he be-