

Aside from his farming interests Mr. Merrill is a stockholder in the Farmers Cooperative Creamery of Saratoga. In the midst of a busy life he has yet found time for public service and for two terms or four years has filled the position of township clerk. His political allegiance is given to the republican party. He is interested in the church and all agencies for the benefit and welfare of the community and his sterling worth is attested by many who know him.

#### A. J. PIERSON.

A. J. Pierson, leading jeweler and a prominent business man of New Hampton, is the proprietor of one of the most up-to-date jewelry establishments in northern Iowa, which he has conducted for the past seven years. His birth occurred in Bremer county, this state, on the 21st of November, 1869, his parents being Charles A. and Eliza J. (Rickel) Pierson, the former a native of Sweden and the latter of Ohio. The father emigrated to the United States as a lad of twelve years in company with his parents, who settled in Kenosha, Wisconsin, where he grew to manhood. He then accompanied his parents on their removal to Bremer county, Iowa, the family taking up their abode among the pioneer settlers of that section of the state. The Rickel family established their home in that county about the same time and it was there that Charles A. Pierson wedded Eliza J. Rickel, with whom he then located on a farm in Bremer county.

A. J. Pierson obtained his education in the district schools of his native county and on reaching young manhood took up the trade of watchmaking. In 1893 he was graduated from W. F. A. Woodcock's horological school at Winona, Minnesota, and the following year established himself in the jewelry and watch repairing business at Wesley, Iowa, where he continued for four years. On the expiration of that period in 1898, he came to New Hampton, where he worked as a watchmaker for the firm of Wilkins Brothers through the succeeding fourteen years. In 1899 he was graduated from the Omaha Optical Institute in engraving and optics. When he felt that his capital and experience justified him in again embarking upon an independent business venture he engaged in the jewelry business on his own account at New Hampton in 1912 and has since developed his interests until he is now at the head of one of the most modern and successful jewelry establishments in this part of the state.

In 1893 Mr. Pierson was united in marriage to Miss Flora M. Castor, of Nashua, Chickasaw county. In politics he is a republican, loyally supporting the men and measures of that party at the polls. Fraternally he is identified with the Masons, belonging to Arcana Lodge, while both he and his wife are members of New Hampton Chapter, No. 75, O. E. S. He is likewise a Knight of Pythias, having his membership in Lancelot Lodge, No. 183. Mrs. Pierson belongs to the Baptist church. The period of their residence in New Hampton now covers more than two decades and they are well known and highly esteemed throughout the community, while Mr. Pierson enjoys an enviable reputation as one of its most enterprising citizens and foremost business men.

#### JOSEPH ANDERA.

Joseph Andera, deceased, was numbered among the pioneer residents of Howard county who settled in this section of the state when it was a wild and undeveloped region, giving little promise of future growth and improvement. Mr. Andera was born in Bohemia on the 10th of August, 1850, a son of Frank and Catherine (Chekal) Andera, who crossed the Atlantic to the new world in 1862, settling first in Canada. A year later they crossed the border into the United States and established their home at Spillville, Winneshiek county, Iowa, where both the father and mother continued to reside until called to their final rest.

Joseph Andera was reared under the parental roof and in Spillville, in 1873, was united in marriage to Miss Mary Kovarik, a native of Bohemia, who came to the United