

In 1896 Mr. Curran was united in marriage to Miss Jennie O'Brien, of Independence, Iowa, by whom he has two sons. William Francis, who is now attending Dubuque College, of Dubuque, Iowa, received military training for the great World war at Fort Sheridan. James Omer is a high school student.

In politics Mr. Curran is a democrat but not an office seeker. He and his wife are members of the Catholic church and he also has membership with the Knights of Columbus and the Catholic Order of Foresters. He has always lived in Iowa and the spirit of western enterprise and progress has found exemplification in his career.

W. J. BOWEN & SON.

W. J. Bowen & Son are the well known proprietors of the Nashua Woolen Mills and in this connection are perfecting and developing an enterprise of substantial proportions, regarded as one of the leading productive industries of the town. The senior partner, W. J. Bowen, was born in South Wales, May 27, 1853, and is a son of Thomas and Ann (Jones) Bowen. The father was a woolen manufacturer of Wales and his ancestors for many generations were engaged in the same line of business, W. J. Bowen being of the fourteenth generation of the Bowen family connected with this line of business activity. He came to the United States in August, 1873, and joined his uncle, D. W. Jones, who was operating woolen mills in Manchester, Iowa. There he worked in his uncle's mills for twenty-seven years and during that period became familiar with every phase of the business.

In 1900 Mr. Bowen came to Nashua and purchased the Nashua Woolen Mills, which had been established by the Union Woolen Mills Company in 1884. The mill was built and equipped with modern machinery but was operated for only about a year. It then lay idle until the time that Mr. Bowen purchased the plant. In the intervening nineteen years he has not only placed the business upon a substantial basis but has continuously developed and enlarged the scope of his activities. There is no phase of the trade with which he is not thoroughly familiar. He has grown up in the woolen manufacturing business and knows every detail thereof and under his management the plant at Nashua has been developed into one of the important industrial institutions of Chickasaw county. Here the firm manufactures blankets, flannels, mackinaws, cashmere, shawls, wool batts and yarns, turning out nothing but all wool products. Moreover, the house has established a reputation for making the best goods in this line in the country and the products are known and sold from coast to coast. For the past three years the concern has been working on a big government contract, supplying army blankets and other articles in the line of woolen goods.

W. J. Bowen was married in Wales, January 21, 1876, having returned to his native land for his bride, who in her maidenhood was Miss Mary Ann Thomas. They became the parents of seven children, of whom six survive, namely: Richard, a resident of Portland, Oregon, where he is a traction inspector; Albert, who is engaged in the undertaking business; David, who is proprietor of an electric plant southeast of Rock Island which furnishes power for several coal mines and power and light for seven towns; Thomas, the junior partner in the firm of W. J. Bowen & Son; Violet, the wife of Dr. G. H. Olsen, a practicing dentist of Fargo, North Dakota; and Neta, the wife of W. L. Tupper, a banker of Hurdsfield, North Dakota.

Thomas Bowen, the junior member of the firm of W. J. Bowen & Son, was born in Manchester, Iowa, June 29, 1885, and there attended the public schools, while later he continued his education in the State Agricultural College at Ames for three years. Because of illness he was obliged to discontinue his studies. From his thirteenth year he worked more or less in the woolen mills and in his boyhood days therefore became thoroughly familiar with the business. He is of the fifteenth generation of the Bowen family to be identified with the woolen manufacturing industry. In 1908 he was taken into partnership by his father in the ownership and conduct of the Nashua plant under the firm style of W. J. Bowen & Son, and to the father's long experience and capability