

In November, 1899, Mr. Pilgrim was united in marriage to Miss Gertrude Hill, a daughter of George and Catherine (Reiter) Hill, the former a native of Ohio and the latter of Pennsylvania. The parents came to Jefferson county, Iowa, at an early date and until 1895 the father operated a farm in that locality. He then removed to Decorah, where he has since engaged in landscape gardening. Mr. and Mrs. Pilgrim have two children: Dora Vesper, aged eleven; and Ellis Clement, aged seven.

Mr. Pilgrim is a devout member of the Methodist church and gives his political allegiance to the republican party, serving as secretary of the school board. His life has been a busy, useful and active one, and his success is indicated in his ownership of one of the valuable farming properties of Winneshiek county.

JOHN NELSON TOPLIFF, SR.

After a long and active career devoted to agricultural pursuits John Nelson Topliff, Sr., lives retired in Decorah in the enjoyment of a competence which provides him with all the conveniences and many of the luxuries of life. For many years he was a prominent farmer in Winneshiek county and has not only attained his own success along that line but has been instrumental in promoting general agricultural conditions and advancement. He has lived retired in Decorah since 1891, having become connected with the business life of the city as the owner of valuable property here. Although seventy-seven years of age, he is still active and enjoys the best of health, taking interest in all matters that affect the community and giving his support to all worthy causes.

Born in Newark, New Jersey, on July 24, 1836, he is a son of Elias and Sarah (Woodworth) Topliff, the father born near Coventry, Connecticut, of English stock. Elias Topliff studied medicine in order to practice as physician and surgeon and for a time was active in his profession. Subsequently, however, he engaged in the jewelry business and upon coming to Ohio, where he located near Milford Center, there engaged for ten years at the shoemaker's trade. In 1847 he made removal to northeastern Iowa and tried to find a suitable location for settlement. The first spot which aroused his interest was two miles west of Postville, in Winneshiek county, and although it appealed to him as a likely location, he was not entirely satisfied and traveled on for some time, but finding nothing more suitable, subsequently returned to make his home there. He drove back to Ohio and bringing his family, settled on the property. His journeys were fraught with obstacles and hardships, as there were no roads at the time and he had to follow Indian trails. It was in 1848 that Mr. Topliff took up three hundred and twenty acres of land, partly in Allamakee county and partly in Winneshiek county. There he lived until the spring of 1852, when he was elected judge of Allamakee county and in order to enter upon his duties moved to Columbus, which was the county seat at the time. Public-spirited and progressive, he held public office from that time until his death. He was the first judge of Allamakee county and he died in Waukon, this state, in November, 1860, while serving in the important position of county treasurer.