

Pythias and with his college society, the Chi Psi fraternity. He stands today as one of the alert, wide-awake business men of Winneshiek county, accomplishing what he undertakes by his determination, capable management and undaunted energy.

JOHN C. HEXOM.

Among the commercial houses of Decorah there is none that enjoys a higher reputation than the firm of J. C. Hexom & Son, general merchants. The senior partner and principal owner, John C. Hexom, to whose enterprise the flourishing condition of the business is largely due, is a native son of this county, being born in Glenwood township on December 9, 1858, his parents being Christian and Pernille (Gamme) Hexom, natives of Norway. After the father came to America he located in Wisconsin in 1853, remaining in that state for a short time. In 1854 he came to Winneshiek county and at the end of a year made his way to Houston county, Minnesota, but in 1856 returned to this county. Here he entered one hundred and sixty acres of land, which he cleared, improved and operated until 1887, selling out to good advantage and then removing to Lake county, South Dakota, where he purchased land near Madison. He has sold this property and is now living retired. He was drawn upon for service in the Civil war but, as he had a large family, considered it his higher duty to remain with and care for them and provided, at the expense of eight hundred dollars, another man to take his place. He has now attained the remarkable age of eighty-five years, being born in August, 1828, but the mother passed away in February, 1899, in Lake county, South Dakota.

John C. Hexom was reared at home and educated in the district schools near the father's farm in Winneshiek county, working on the home place until he was of age. In 1881 he entered the employ of C. M. Goddard as clerk, remaining in this capacity until 1887, when he, in company with a brother, established a store, carrying men's furnishings, groceries and shoes, but since the fire which occurred in 1893 the stock has been confined to shoes and groceries. The partnership continued until 1896, when John C. Hexom bought out his brother's interest, conducting the store alone until 1910, when his son, Charles Philip, became a member of the firm, which is now conducted under the name of J. C. Hexom & Son. It is one of the largest establishments of its kind in Decorah, a first-class, complete line of stock being carried in both branches and the store enjoying an extensive patronage which assures the firm of gratifying annual returns. It is largely due to the ability, industry and circumspection of Mr. Hexom that this establishment has attained its present proportions and, while it is a gratifying individual source of income to its owners, it is also largely a contributing factor to the prosperous commercial conditions of Decorah. The firm holds membership in the Decorah Commercial Club.

In February, 1884, Mr. Hexom was married to Miss Julia Swenson, whose parents were natives of Norway. The father was a pioneer here, where he began farming operations at an early day and remained until his death, the mother also having passed away. Mr. and Mrs. Hexom had five children: Charles