

held until 1882, when he was elected to the office of county superintendent of schools of Renville county, serving until 1907, with the exception of two terms. During his superintendency he was much interested in the work of the Minnesota Educational Association, at one time being elected President of the County Superintendent's Section. With his family he resided in Olivia from 1901 to 1908, when he removed to Minneapolis. In 1909 while engaged in school work at Moose Lake, Minn., Mr. Ericson was taken ill with pneumonia, and passed away at his home in Minneapolis, on April 17. He was buried at Palmyra, Minn., where a monument has been erected and dedicated to his memory by the school children and teachers of Renville county. The surviving members of Mr. Ericson's family are his widow, his sons Spencer, Newman L., and Clair G., and his daughter Alice, all of Minneapolis, and his son Edward J., of Raymond, Minn. Eric Ericson's name is perpetuated in the name of Ericson township, which was designated in his honor.

Henry Kelsey, a pioneer editor of Renville county, was born in Danville, New York, in 1838. In 1842 he was taken by his parents to Ohio, and the next year to Wisconsin. In 1857 he reached Reed's Landing, in this state. From 1861 to June, 1864, he served in the Civil war. After a year's experience as a printer he took charge of a daily paper at Fond du Lac, Wisconsin. In 1867 he removed to Paxton, Illinois. Two years later he located at Chippewa Falls, Wis., where he was engaged as a printer and editor. In 1871 he was editor of a paper at Paxton, Illinois. Then he was editor of a paper at Lone Tree, Nebraska, for two years. In 1874 he bought the Renville County Times at Beaver Falls from Darwin S. Hall. In 1890 he moved the paper to Olivia, and ten years later sold to Wilson & Soule. In 1900 he moved his family to Woodburn, Oregon, where he died seven years later. In 1865, Mr. Kelsey married Leonore McMillen, and they had five children.

Henry Ahrens, one of the few settlers who lived in the county before the Massacre and returned afterwards, was born in Hanover, Germany, August 2, 1833, and came to this country in 1853. In 1854 he located in New York and the following year moved to Cincinnati, Ohio, going to Illinois in 1859. He was married in 1861 to Minnie Bobson, and that year they came to Minnesota and located in Nicollet county. The following spring they came to Beaver Falls, but were driven out that summer by the Massacre. The story of their thrilling escape, the destruction of their home, the loss of all their worldly possessions, their sojourn in Illinois, and their return to their former home is told at length elsewhere in this history in connection with the Wichman narratives. In addition it is interesting to note that when the family first came here they drove all the way from Will county

with an ox team, at the Indian Outbreak drove all the way back to Will county, and afterward came to this country again in the same manner. Judge Ahrens and his good wife took an active part in forming the destinies of the new county. For almost fifty years Judge Ahrens earnestly and devotedly served his town, county, state and country in various official capacities, being the county's first treasurer, one of the earliest commissioners, and later being honored by being sent to the state senate, in which capacity he showed that same solid worth and good judgment which had previously been his distinguishing characteristics. In 1903 the family moved to Morton, and here died on July 29, 1910, at the age of sixty-eight, she who through so many trying years had been his faithful wife and helpmate. Judge Ahrens continued to live in Morton, until, rich in honor, years, and the respect of his fellow men, he died Jan. 30, 1914, at the age of eighty-one years. In the family there were nine children. Of these there are living six, Fritz, Reikie, Eliza, Henry, Frank and Charles.

P. H. Swift, for many years a leading newspaper man in the Northwest, was one of the remarkable characters of Beaver Falls in the early days and left his impress on the life of the county. He was born in Orange county, Vermont, Dec. 28, 1843, son of Henry S. and Diana C. Swift, and descended from early Colonial and heroic Revolutionary ancestry. He attended the common schools of Edgerton, Wisconsin, until 1857, and then entered the normal department of the Albion Academy, leaving in his Junior year in June, 1861. At that time he enlisted in Company C, Eleventh Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry. A little later he was promoted to be sergeant. Aug. 30, 1862, upon recommendation of the field officer "for merit," he was promoted to be second lieutenant of Co. E, Thirty-third Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry. During the Siege of Vicksburg he was promoted to be first lieutenant, June 24, 1864, and to captain Aug. 29, 1864. He was wounded at Tupelo, Miss., July 15, 1864, by a fragment of a shell, and resigned Sept. 27, 1864, at Little Rock, Arkansas. Of his five brothers who engaged in the war, two were killed in battle, two wounded, and one crippled for life. After his resignation, Captain Swift returned to Edgerton, Wis., and soon after entered upon the study of law, being admitted to the Rock county bar in June, 1867. Then he came to Beaver Falls and started practice. He was the first county attorney of Renville county and the first man from this county to sit in the legislature. While in the legislature he was chairman of the committee on federal relations, and a member of the committees on judiciary, and towns and counties. In 1872 he removed to Wisconsin, and engaged in journalism, publishing papers at Clinton and Oconto, in that state. For six years he was editor and publisher of the Oconto County Reporter. In January, 1885, he went to Rice Lake, Wis., to take