

sports in his home locality. He is a member of the Gun club and an active and interested participant in all shooting contests and has given his influence to the encouragement of the athletic spirit of the community, faithfully supporting the baseball and other teams in all their interests. He is a member of the Elks lodge. Mr. Mossefin is that type of business man and citizen whose interest touches every phase of the

life of a community and whose services are given freely in any project which tends to the progress and general welfare. He was married in 1901, at Warren, Minnesota, to Lena Taralseth, the daughter of K. L. Taralseth, who was born at Minneapolis and is a graduate of Carleton college at Northfield, Minnesota. Mr. Mossefin and his wife are members of the Synod Lutheran church.

HON. JOHN HOLTEN.

Hon. John Holten, of Fertile, an eminent citizen, business man and statesman of Polk county, was born at Sundahl, Norway, September 18, 1849, and grew to manhood in his native land. In 1872 he came to the United States and settled in Winneshiek county, Iowa, where he spent seven years before coming to Minnesota and taking a homestead claim in Norman county. There he was active in public affairs and in the organization of Sundahl township, which upon his petition, received its name from his old home in Norway and he also served as the first township clerk and assessor. His father, John J. Holten, had come to Iowa in 1873 and joined his son in Norman county, making his home on an adjoining homestead where he continued to reside until his death, February 16, 1910, at the age of eighty-six years. The death of his wife occurred some two years earlier, in her ninety-first year. Mr. Holten's career as a merchant dates from the start of the village of Fertile, when in partnership with Mr. Carlson he engaged in the agricultural machinery business. The usual success and extensive operations of this firm has set a worthy pace for the rapid growth of the town; from a business started with but capital sufficient for the freight charges on a carload of machinery, it has advanced to a twenty thousand dollar stock and totals the annual sales at forty thousand. In 1886 Mr. Holten had become a wheat buyer at Twin Valley and in December of that year transferred his operations to Fertile and this enterprise continued to receive his attention for a number of years, the management of the

store being left to his partner, Mr. Carlson. In 1892 the latter removed to Tennessee and Mr. Holten became sole owner of the business, two years later adding a stock of general merchandise. Mr. Carlson returned to Fertile in 1897 and the old relation was again resumed and the firm has since continued as Holten & Carlson. They are the owners of the attractive business block which they occupy, one of the largest in Fertile, and the adjoining building which was formerly utilized for farm machinery, a department which was discontinued in 1915, the firm interests now being directed solely to a general mercantile trade. Mr. Holten is still the owner of his Norman county homestead which comprises 220 acres and, in partnership with Mr. Carlson, owns a quarter section of land four miles north of Fertile. Mr. Holten's achievements have not been confined to the private interests of the business world but his talent and attention has been given freely for the benefit of the public welfare and progress where the worth of his service has marked him as a leader in the activities of the commonwealth. His influence has been prominent in the furthering of all civic improvements and as president of the Fair association, he has assisted in putting the Fertile fair on equally notable basis with the County fair at Crookston. In local offices he has filled the positions of village treasurer, village recorder, and a member of the board of education for fourteen years, the last six of which he was president of the board and for three terms has been president of the town council. In 1907 his field of service was

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widened through his election to the lower house of the State Legislature as representative from the sixty-second district. An issue of that election was the county option law and he made his stand as a staunch defender of temperance, in which cause he has always been a valiant fighter. He was re-elected for a second term and in 1911 without making a personal campaign for favor, and was again returned to office, receiving a larger majority from his fellow voters than in previous elections. His activity and ability as a legislator brought him a wide reputation and the confidence and high regard of his constituents. During his membership in the House he served on numerous important committees, on the State Prison and Reform committee, the several committees regulating commerce and retail trade, public lands and the state fair and in 1911 was chairman of the drainage committee and was appropriation commissioner for roads

and bridges. He also sat in the special session of 1912. He was not a candidate for re-election in 1913 and has given his attention to his business interests. Mr. Holten is a member of the Sons of Norway and of the United Lutheran church and has given faithful service as a trustee in that congregation for many years. His favorite recreation is found in out of door life and he has collected many trophies which attest to his skill as a hunter and fisherman. Mr. Holten was married in 1892, to Elina Hoff, of Battle Lake, Ottertail county, and they have a family of two sons and five daughters, John Chester, who is associated with his father in the mercantile business; Melvin Stanley, employed in the Citizens State bank; Frances, who is a student in the Normal school at St. Cloud; Esther and Agnes, members of the high school classes of 1916 and 1917, and Lillian and Ena.

B. E. BEARSON.

B. E. Bearson, of Fertile, well known real estate man and proprietor of the Bearson & Son garage, has been actively associated off and on with the business activities of that place for some twenty-five years. He is a native of the state, born in Fillmore county, November 20, 1864, and grew to manhood in a pioneer farm home. When eighteen years of age he embarked upon his commercial career as a dealer in horses, meeting with steady success in his venture and within a few years began to ship into the northern part of the state. He came to Polk county in 1890, locating at Fertile and continued as a horse dealer for several years, buying in southern Minnesota and shipping to Fertile and Fargo, North Dakota, and the adjacent agricultural districts. Subsequently he made Britton, South Dakota, his shipping point for several years and then returned to Polk county and opened a general store at Mentor in 1903 and during the three years of mercantile operations began his activity as a real estate dealer, having previously invested in farm lands near Fertile and

Mentor. In 1904 he removed to Fertile and bought land adjoining the town, where he has made a spacious and attractive country home, situated on a forty acre tract. He began his business operations in the county with a capital of \$2,000, and the success to which he has attained and the steady prosperity of his efforts, attests to his marked ability as a business man and to his worth as a citizen. He continues to engage in the shipping of horses in Polk county but devotes the most of his attention to the real estate business and now owns some twelve hundred acres of land in Minnesota, Wisconsin and the Dakotas and is interested in town property and business buildings in Fertile and other places. His land includes both wild and cultivated tracts and through his policy of improving every piece of property in which he invests, he has signally contributed to the progress and development of the country. He has recently extended his interests to the automobile business and has erected a modern garage in Fertile and operates a repair shop and automobile agency; his son, Edwin