

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

charge of the Barron County Chronotype. Some years later the Leader was launched at Rice Lake by Col. Swift and his sons. In April, 1906, he disposed of his newspaper interests in Rice Lake and went to Watertown, Wis., where he purchased, with his two sons, the Watertown Republican, which a few months later he changed to a daily under the name of the Watertown Leader. He was prominent in public affairs, was city school superintendent, county supervisor, and was foremost in advancing all causes tending to the upbuilding of the city, county and state. For four years he was correspondence clerk in the Wisconsin state treasury.

May 25, 1865, Col. Swift married Mrs. Mary C. Swift, widow of his brother, Henry S. Swift, who was killed in battle April 19, 1863, leaving one child, Henry S., Jr. Colonel and Mrs. Swift had two children, Dean M. and Ward L. D. B. Swift lives in Winona, Minn., and travels for the Wright, Barry & Stilwell Co., St. Paul. W. L. Swift is connected with the Eau Claire (Wis.) Press Co.

**Newton G. Poore** was born at Columbus, Penn., May 28, 1838. At the age of four years he was taken to Ohio by his parents, and with the exception of one year in Kentucky he lived in various places in that state until he came to Minnesota. For seventeen years he made his home near Hastings, in Dakota county. One of these years he devoted to steamboating on the Mississippi, and one to working for the government in the South. It was in 1872 that he came to Renville county and took up his home in Melville township. He was married, in November, 1860, to Sarah J. Finney, and they had five children.

**Hans Gronnerud**, the pioneer banker of Renville county and for many years a leader in political life, was born in Norway, May 23, 1840, and there received a college and military education. He came to Renville county in 1872, and at once took an active part in public affairs. He was married in 1864 to R. Eiseth, and they had six children.

**David Carrothers** settled in Beaver Falls before the Indian Massacre, escaped on the first day, and afterward returned and became a prominent man in the county. He was one of the original proprietors of Beaver Falls village, he built the first courthouse, and was an early sheriff.

**Rev. Johannes Ellefson Bergh**, a pioneer preacher of western Renville county, was born near the village of Vossevanger, Norway, May 5, 1842, and at the age of fifteen came to Dane county, Wisconsin. In 1861 he entered Lutheran College, then located at Half Way Creek, Wisconsin, and was one of the first graduates of that school in 1866. In that year he entered the Divinity school of the German Missouri Lutheran Synod, of St. Louis, Mo., and was ordained to the ministry Sept. 3, 1869. His first call at Muskegon.