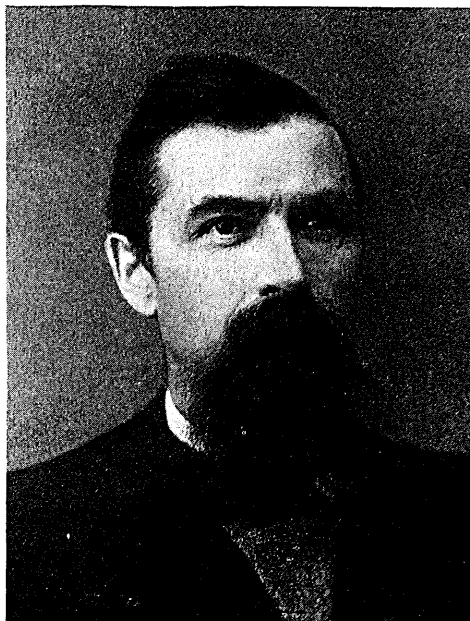


LARS O. THORPE.

Lars O. Thorpe, cashier of the Kandiyohi County Bank at Willmar, is a type of the successful Scandinavian-American settlers frequently found in the state of Minnesota. He was born in Vikor Parish, Hardanger, Norway, on December 24, 1847. His father, Ole Thorpe, was a teacher in the common schools and owned a small farm. He was in moderate circumstances. His wife was Miss Britha Skaare. Both were well connected and religious people. Young Lars attended the common school near his home for a few months, but after his father's death, when he was but five years old, he received little schooling. His step-father owned a freighting vessel, and Lars made several trips as cook on this ship. For three years he was employed on a fishing vessel. When seventeen years of age the poor prospects for the future suggested to the young man immigration to America, and, with the help of his step-father and his own little savings, he managed to come as far as Detroit, Michigan. From that point a fellow passenger assisted him to Sharon, Wisconsin. Here Mr. Thorpe worked on farms and attended the common schools for about three months during the succeeding winter. In the spring of 1865 he came to Winona and worked in a planing mill and later on a farm. The next winter he went to Dodge County, and was employed as teacher in a parochial school. In the following spring he followed a company of land hunters, and traveled with oxen and covered wagons along the Minnesota river as far as Chippewa County, where they settled. He returned to Dodge County during that summer, and in the fall of 1867 left for Norway to fulfill a promise given his parents, that he would return in four years. In the spring of 1868 he returned to America with a brother and sister, and they all located in Dodge County. The next year found Mr. Thorpe contracting for railroad work in Meeker County, and in the same summer he located a homestead in Kandiyohi County. At this time he concluded to learn the printers' trade and came to Minneapolis and commenced type setting on the Nordisk Folkeblad. But printing did not agree with his health, and he accepted an offer from A. J. Clark, who had just established the Kandiyohi Reveille, and went to Kandiyohi County in the spring of 1871. In the



fall of that year the county seat was established at Willmar, Mr. Clark's paper suspended and Mr. Thorpe was thrown out of employment. He located on a farm in Dovre, Kandiyohi County, and tried to combine farming in a small way with teaching and the duties of Justice of the Peace and Town Clerk. In 1875 he was elected Register of Deeds of the county, which office he held for three terms. In 1881 the directors of the Kandiyohi County Bank tendered Mr. Thorpe the position of cashier. He accepted the offer and has occupied the position ever since. During the next year the Willmar Seminary was established and Mr. Thorpe took an active part in putting the institution on its feet. As a member of the republican party Mr. Thorpe has taken an active part in the county and state elections. He was presidential elector in 1884 and was elected state senator in 1894. He has held numerous local offices. As a member of the Lutheran Synod, he has been a member of several important committees, and is now alternate for the member-at-large of the Church Council. One of Mr. Thorpe's hobbies has been practical temperance work. On June 6, 1870, he was married to Martha Qvale, of Dodge County. They have had nine children. Six are now living, Dorothea, now Mrs. J. O. Estreem, of New London; Edward Lawrence, Christian Scriver, Edith Beatrice, Jane Olea, Bertha Herborg.