

Our subject was the eldest son in a large family of children of whom these four survive: E. D.; Susannah M., the widow of James Rucker, of Macon County; Martha L., wife of N. W. Rucker, of Benton County, Ark.; and William H., a resident of Decatur.

The subject of this biographical review grew to manhood in the place of his birth, and from early boyhood was engaged in farming, so that when he adopted that calling for his lifework, he had already had a good deal of experience and a practical preparation for the task that lay before him. His education was conducted in the pioneer schools of his native State, which did not offer many advantages to the youth of that day. He has endeavored by reading and observation to keep himself well posted and possesses much valuable information.

Mr. Horton was married in 1849 in his native State to Mary C. Rucker, who was also born in Tennessee, and was a daughter of William and Nancy Rucker. Of the children born of that union these survive to bless the declining years of their father: James; Nancy A., wife of Emanuel Schroll; Sarah L., wife of J. M. Wallace; Mary, wife of Josiah Andrews; Charles, Laura B., Hattie, Della and Jesse. January 31, 1876 death crossed the threshold of the home of our subject and removed from it the beloved wife and mother, who had journeyed by his side more than a quarter of a century, and had contributed her share in the upbuilding of their home. She was a woman whose warm heart and kindly nature attracted to her many friends, and she was mourned and missed by many outside of her family circle.

In 1853 our subject came to Illinois with his family, and resided in different parts of Macon County until 1884, when he came to Piatt County and made a permanent settlement on his present farm on section 18, Cerro Gordo Township. He has here eighty acres of good land that is under excellent cultivation, and its improvements are of a high order.

Mr. Horton is identified with the Farmers' Mutual Benefit Association, and he favors all things that will in any way advance the interests of the community. In politics he is with the Democrats. He is serving as School Director, and does all that lies

in his power to further the educational facilities of his district. He is one of our so-called self-made men, as he has acquired his property solely by hard work and frugal management. He stands well among his fellow-citizens, as his reputation for honesty and fairness in all his dealings is of the best.



**T**HOMAS S. WEEDMAN. This name will be recognized by many of our readers as that of a gentleman who has borne an important part in the development of the agricultural resources of that section of the Prairie State surrounding Farmer City, De Witt County, and who has also been a potent factor in the political and municipal affairs of the town mentioned. He is now Mayor of that thriving city, serving his second term in that capacity, and doing excellent work in raising the place to a higher rank among the cities of the State that it had previously held. Prior to his election to the Mayoralty Mr. Weedman had served several terms as a member of the City Council and had conclusively demonstrated the fact that the interest he manifested in the improvement of the place was not actuated by selfish motives, but arose from purer and nobler sources.

Mr. Weedman may well be interested in this people and country as he has in both the interest of one born here, whose life has been almost entirely spent in labor with and for the citizens of De Witt County. His birthplace was in Santa Anna Township, one and one-half miles west of Farmer City, and his natal day was January 12, 1839. He is the youngest of the seven sons and three daughters born to John and Rachel (Wilson) Weedman, who became residents of this State in 1830. They were natives of Pennsylvania and Maryland respectively and journeyed hither overland soon after their marriage. They halted at McLean County near Heyworth, took possession of a piece of Government land, improved it and made it their home six years. They then came to De Witt County, securing another tract of Government land in Santa Anna Township which was their home for many years. The mother died in 1854 at the age of fifty-

eight. The father subsequently married Mrs. Manerva Yazell of LeRoy, and afterward removed to Iowa where he died in 1868 at an advanced age. John Weedman was a man of prominence and is well remembered by the older citizens of this section of the State. He was an old-line Whig and later a Republican in politics, earnest in the support of his party but never seeking office for himself. In 1860 he and his seven sons, all voters, attended the National Convention which nominated Abraham Lincoln for President of the United States, and it becoming known to the spectators that the group of eight were father and sons, their appearance created quite a sensation. Mr. Weedman was a Methodist in religion. (For further items in the family history see the biographical sketch of George Weedman on another page.)

The gentleman whose name introduces these paragraphs received careful home training and as good an education as the schools of the time afforded opportunity for. After studying in the county he attended a business college in Bloomington, there becoming conversant with the principles which he has applied with so good advantage to the work which he has carried on. Mr. Weedman determined to pursue the calling of a farmer and on property not far from Farmer City he made his home for many years, successfully carrying on his chosen pursuits and also the stock-raising business which he connected therewith. He retains his interest in and connection with his former work, although for the past twenty years he has been dealing largely in grain, buying and shipping, and sent the first load ever shipped from Farmer City, which was in 1869, and in the grain business has made money. A man of active habits, industrious and not afraid of hard work, he has found plenty to occupy his time and has never known what it is to be idle.

It would readily be supposed that a family whose members felt the interest manifested by the Weedmans in the nomination of Abraham Lincoln would send some of their number to the front when the country seemed in danger of disruption. It is a matter of no surprise therefore, to learn that he of whom we write enlisted July 10, 1861, in the Second Illinois Cavalry, Col. Noble commanding, and became an integral part of Company F, under

Capt. R. Bowman. Immediately after its organization the regiment was sent to Camp Butler, Springfield, being the first to enter the camp after its establishment. After being called to the South the boys first came in contact with the enemy at Bolivar, Tenn., where the regiment suffered considerable loss but held the place. From that time on the Second did good service in general skirmish work until the engagement of Holly Springs, Miss., where Company F, which then numbered forty-four men, lost seven killed—among them Isaiah Weedman, brother of our subject—fourteen wounded and five taken prisoners. Among the prisoners was our subject, but he and his comrades were paroled before they had been confined in prison walls, and were later exchanged and rejoined their regiment.

Mr. Weedman was exchanged in time to take an active part in the battle of Vicksburg and was subsequently in the thickest of the fight at Jackson, Miss., continuing to act with his company until the expiration of his term, when all who survived the dangers through which they had passed were discharged in Baton Rouge, La., August 10, 1864. At that time Mr. Weedman ranked as Quartermaster-Sergeant but the early months of his life as a soldier were passed as a private. His record as a warrior is a creditable one proving his moral and physical courage and thorough patriotism. As would naturally be supposed he has joined the organization which commemorates camp life, his name being on the roll of Lemon Post, G. A. R., at Farmer City.

In Farmer City, December 25, 1866, Mr. Weedman was united in marriage with Miss Mary M. Brownlee an educated and refined young lady and one possessing religious faith and devotedness. She was born in Athens, Ohio, September 4, 1843, being the first daughter and second child born to Thomas and Sarah (Baker) Brownlee. Her parents were natives of Pennsylvania and Maine respectively, the paternal line being of Scotch lineage and her mother being descended from old New England families. Mr. Brownlee was a mechanic and followed his trade until past sixty years old. His wife had died some years before, when their daughter, Mrs. Weedman, was but five or six years old. She was a Presbyterian, while Mr. Brownlee was an earnest Methodist. Mrs. Weedman received a

part of her education in the place of her nativity, but came to Farmer City when sixteen years of age, completing her studies here. She is well fitted for social prominence and takes an active part in local society matters and the work connected with the Methodist Church.

Three children have been sent to bless the hearts and home of Mr. and Mrs. Weedman, and their thoughts have been drawn to the land beyond the tomb by the loss of one who died in infancy. The survivors are Fred J. and Ted G., the former of whom is a graduate of the Farmer City High School and is now attending the State University at Champaign. Mr. Weedman is a prominent local politician, working earnestly for the advancement of the Republican party. He belongs to De Molay Lodge, No. 24, K. T. at Bloomington. Having witnessed the development of this section of the country from an almost primitive state, he is justly proud of its present condition and pleased to recall the fact that he and his progenitors have been intimately connected with the labors necessary to bring about so happy a state of affairs. He is one of the highly respected citizens, his worth of character and strength of mind being duly recognized by those who enjoy his acquaintance.



**G**EORGE L. ARBOGAST. It is at all times a pleasure to peruse the records of the lives of our honored dead and to gaze upon portraits representing the familiar lineaments of friends who have passed away. Our readers will be pleased to notice on the opposite page the portrait of the late Mr. Arbogast and to glean from these paragraphs the most important events in his life. The son of one of De Witt County's pioneers, in due time Mr. Arbogast became the owner of the old homestead that he had assisted his father in reclaiming from the wilderness, and thus became a potent factor in advancing the agricultural interests of this section. By his death ere he had attained old age De Witt Township was deprived of one of its most useful citizens and he was mourned by many

who valued him for his friendship and esteemed him for his many noble attributes of heart and mind.

Mr. Arbogast was born in Clarke County, Ohio, July 26, 1829. He was a brother of Henry J. and Daniel Arbogast of De Witt County, both of whom are represented in this volume, and in their biographies will be found a full history of the family. Our subject was ten years of age when his parents brought him to Illinois in October, 1839, and in their pioneer home on an unbroken piece of land on section 10, De Witt Township, purchased from the Government, he assisted his father in developing a farm. This place remained his home during his life, and in time he became its sole proprietor. The farm consisted of three hundred and fifty-nine acres of valuable land and is yet in the possession of the family, belonging chiefly to the widow of our subject and her only son, Charles. It is amply supplied with fine buildings, is under a high state of cultivation and is universally conceded to be one of the most beautiful places in this part of the county. The farm is well watered and well stocked, and is a comfortable home for the family, who aim to hand it down from father to son, from generation to generation, and desire that the deed of ownership shall always be in the name of the family, and in the future, as in the past, always be kept free from debt.

Our subject passed his early life on the old homestead, and here attained his majority. When he was twenty-four years of age he purchased a farm in Rutledge Township, which he improved and lived upon till 1864. In that year, he sold that property and went to Kansas. But after a short sojourn in that State, he decided to come back to Illinois, and on his return he purchased his father's old homestead and here lived till death called him hence February 26, 1885. He was a successful man and was prominent in many ways. In early life he was a member of the United Brethren Church, but later united with the Protestant Methodist Church and died in that faith. His political views found expression in the tenets of the Republican party, of which he was a strong supporter. In the latter part of his life he was a member of Mt. Pleasant Lodge, No. 126, I. O. O. F.,