

THE
BIOGRAPHICAL RECORD
OF
CLINTON COUNTY,
IOWA.

ILLUSTRATED.

The people that take no pride in the noble achievements of remote ancestors will never achieve anything worthy to be remembered with pride by remote generations."—MACAULAY.

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H. S.

Fort Wayne, Muncie & Cincinnati Railroad for one year, and with the Pittsburg, Fort Wayne & Chicago Railroad Company about the same length of time. Coming to Clinton in 1882, he entered the employ of the Chicago & Northwestern Railway as a journeyman, and worked in the old shops on Second street until the new shop on Camanche avenue was built. Here he had charge of locating and fitting the machinery, and when the shop was completed in June, 1900, he was appointed foreman. Previously he had worked in the air-brake department five years, and had charge of the tool-making department about the same length of time. He now has supervision of all the repair work in connection with the new round house, which is said to be the largest round house in the world, and he has eleven men working under him. He is a skilled mechanic and is well qualified to fill the responsible position which he now holds.

Mr. Spalding was married in Clinton, May 3, 1882, to Miss Euphemia Ross, and to them were born five children, of whom David died at the age of two years. Those living are Magdeline, William, Effie and James. Miss Ross was also born in the northern part of Scotland, she coming to Clinton, where she lived till her marriage. In his social relations Mr. Spalding is a member of the Modern Woodmen of America. He is well and favorably known, and has a host of warm friends in Clinton.

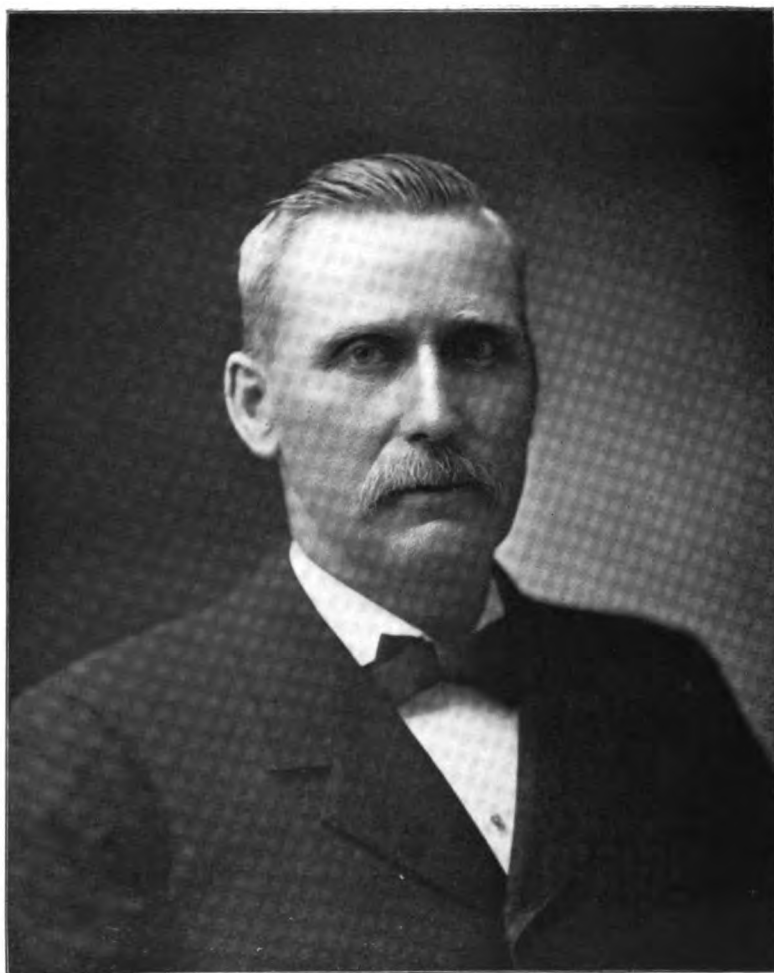
GEORGE E. WILSON.

It is always interesting to know the secret of success, to review the course that a man has taken in his efforts to gain prosperity, and an investigation into the life record of Mr. Wilson will show that he has

placed his dependence upon the substantial qualities of indefatigable labor and perseverance, and that to this has been added sound judgment. He to-day stands at the head of the Clinton Bridge and Iron Works, one of the leading industrial concerns of Clinton, Iowa.

Mr. Wilson is a native of England, his birth having occurred March 18, 1847, and when about nine years of age he came to America. His parents were George and Eliza (Roberts) Wilson. The mother died in England, and he came to this country with the father and three sisters, he being the only son. The father located near Rockford, in Winnebago county, Illinois, and for many years was a resident of the Prairie state, but was eventually killed in a railroad accident near Rockford in 1892, when about seventy years of age.

Mr. Wilson was reared on a farm and assisted in the farm work from the age of seven until he was seventeen years of age. As the opportunity was afforded him he attended school in his native land until the removal of the family to the United States when he was nine years of age. Soon after his arrival here he attended school for about five weeks, and again, at the age of nineteen years, for six weeks he attended a country school one winter, during which time he did chores in payment for his board. Beyond this he has educated himself, and is to-day a man of broad and general knowledge, and withal a polished and refined gentleman. After leaving the farm Mr. Wilson worked in a flouring mill and in a reaper factory, and also learned the moulder's trade. Subsequently he was employed at the machinist and foundry business, and also worked at pattern making, serving an apprenticeship in Rockford. He completed his term about the time when the Civil war was ended and went



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south, spending the period of reconstruction in Louisiana and Alabama. He was in the employ of the Mobile & Ohio Railroad for about two years, and then went to New Orleans, where he worked at his trade for about two years. After about four years spent in the south he returned north and located in Beloit, Wisconsin.

In 1872, shortly after his return from the south, Mr. Wilson was united in marriage at Rockford, Illinois, to Miss Hannah Fitzmaurice, daughter of John Fitzmaurice, an old resident of Boone county, Illinois, where her parents died when she was a child, after which she was taken and reared by an aunt, a resident of Rockford, Illinois.

At Beloit, Wisconsin, Mr. Wilson was in the employ of the Merrill & Houston Iron Works, and was with the company for two years, after which he moved to Omaha, Nebraska, where he had charge of a plant for a short time. After leaving Omaha he was for a few months engaged in the butter business at De Kalb, Illinois. His next service was with the Williams & Orton Manufacturing Company, at Sterling, Illinois, but soon after entering their employ, however, he engaged in business on his own account in connection with that company, in the manufacture of mill machinery and gas engines, which company was later merged into the Charter Gas Engine Company. In 1892 he closed negotiations which resulted in his present connection with the Clinton Bridge and Iron Works. This is one of the leading industrial concerns of the country, and the present officers are G. E. Wilson, president and treasurer, and G. E. Wilson, Jr., secretary. The business was incorporated in 1892 with the same officers as the present company, succeeding the Clinton Bridge and Iron Company, which in turn was the successor to the Union Iron Works Company.

Their contract work covers a large amount of territory, extending as far west as the Pacific coast and south to Louisiana and Texas. It also covers a wide range to the north and east. They build every kind of bridge known, and their business has already reached great magnitude and is continually increasing. They furnish employment to from three hundred to three hundred and fifty men, including their contracting agents. The business of the company is indicated by the fact that these men are employed throughout the year and work to a considerable extent overtime, and many times running night and day. The plant is located between First and Second avenues and extends two blocks east from Second street. It covers between eight and ten acres of ground, and is splendidly equipped with the latest improved machinery and most modern facilities for turning out everything demanded in their line of work.

Mr. and Mrs. Wilson have five children: Louise, at home; G. E., and J. F., who are connected with their father in business, the former is the secretary and the latter is vice-president of the company; Orrin E., who is a student in the Leland Stanford University, of California, and is one of the directors of the Clinton Bridge and Iron Works; Frank E., who is also a director in the corporation and is busily employed in the office. The four sons and father constitute the board of directors of the company.

Mr. Wilson manifested his loyalty to the government during the Civil war by enlisting in the Fifty-second Illinois Infantry, as a member of Company E, about six months before the surrender of General Lee. He was never sent to the front, however. Twice before this time he had run away from home in order to join the army, but his father would not permit him to become a

soldier on account of his youthful age. At the third attempt, however, he succeeded in winning his father's consent.

Mr. Wilson has every reason to be proud of what he has accomplished in life. He was only seven years of age when, in England, he began to work in the fields for sixpence per day, and after working in this manner for some time he was given eightpence, equal to sixteen cents in our money. In the fall of 1856 he crossed the Atlantic in a sailing vessel, which required thirty-three days to make the voyage, and from New York he made his way to Chicago as an emigrant, going to Dunkirk by rail, thence to Toledo by boat, and from there to Chicago in an emigrant train. The city at that time presented a very different appearance from the metropolis of the present. He saw a four-mule team stuck in the mud on Fifth avenue in front of where the Northwestern Railroad general offices are now located. When he was at Dunkirk, New York, waiting for the boat, he worked for a few days at picking up potatoes for a farmer, and thus earned a few pennies. On the lake trip they encountered one of the worst storms that ever visited the lake region, and they were compelled to put in port for three days. After starting again the boat became stuck on a sand bar and thus delayed them for an additional three days. Such were some of the difficulties and trials which Mr. Wilson encountered during his early residence in America, but perseverance and a strong purpose have enabled him to overcome all the obstacles in his path, and with resolute will he has worked his way upward until he now occupies a commanding position in the world of trade. His business interests are far-reaching, and furnish to him a handsome income annually. But the most envious can

not grudge him success, so honorably has it been won and so worthily is it used.

Mr. Wilson is a member of Sterling Lodge, No. 57, A. F. & A. M., and also the chapter, council and commandery at Sterling, and El Kahir Temple, Mystic Shrine, Cedar Rapids, Iowa. While not a politician in the ordinary sense of the term, he has always taken an interest in governmental affairs, and while at Sterling he served as alderman from his ward, during which time many of the public improvements in the city were carried on. His ability as a financier is unquestioned, and in addition to his private interests he is a stockholder and director in the Merchants National Bank of Clinton. With his family, he lives at No. 1020 North Second street, Clinton.

DANIEL ECHARD.

The subject of this review, who is one of the leading farmers and representative citizens of Bloomfield township, his home being on section 10, was born in Wayne county, Ohio, on the 22d of July, 1842, and is a son of Peter and Margaret (Hartman) Echard, both natives of Hesse-Darmstadt, Germany. The father was a soldier of the German army. He was born in 1811, and continued his residence in his native land for a few years after his marriage, when he came to the United States, and made his home in Franklin county, Pennsylvania, for three years. At the end of that time he removed to Wayne county, Ohio, and purchased a small tract of timberland, on which he built a small log house, living there until the spring of 1862, when he removed eighteen miles north of that place. There he owned two eighty-acre tracts,