ship and has served it wisely and faithfully as constable and supervisor.

On April 14, 1886, Mr. Bensen was married in Dakota county to Miss Mary Sjolie, who was born in that county December 27, 1865, a daughter of Martin and Engebord Sjolie, natives of Norway who came to this country in 1864 or 1865 and settled in Dakota county, where the father died when he was about fifty-five years of age. The mother is still living. Mr. and Mrs. Bensen have had eleven children, ten of whom are living. They are Benjamin, Ida, Guida, Louis, Malton, Minnie, Joseph, Martha, Myrtle and Georgia. The other child, a daughter named Lavine, strayed away from home in the early spring of 1892 and was found frozen to death about a mile distant. She was two years old at the time. The parents are members of the United Lutheran church and active in all its work for the improvement of the community.

EINAR O. MELSNENESS.

Conducting his farming operations and other lines of business with enterprise, vigor and judgment, and rendering the people excellent service as clerk of Badger township, Einar O. Melsness, whose fine farm of 240 acres near the village of Erskine is almost wholly the product of his own industry, skill and good management, is a highly useful and esteemed resident of Polk county and one of its representative citizens.

Mr. Melsness is a native of Dakota county, Minnesota, where his life began March 23, 1872. He lived there with his parents until he reached the age of twelve, and then passed one year with them in Walsh county, North Dakota. In 1885 the family moved to Polk county and located on a farm in Badger township. The parents, Christian O. and Olia (Enersdatter) Melsness, were natives of Norway. The mother died at their Badger township home February 9, 1915, aged seventy-five years. The father is still living.

Einar O. Melsness was educated in the common schools and at a private college in Crookston. For seven years he taught school in Polk county, but his principal occupation in life has been that of farming. During three seasons, however, he was also occupied in buying and shipping grain, and throughout one summer he was employed in the State Bank at Erskine. He has always taken an earnest interest and an active part in township affairs of a public nature, and has rendered his full share of service in their proper administration, having served during the last fifteen years as township clerk. He was also secretary and manager of the Erskine creamery several years.

On April 10, 1912, Mr. Melsness was united in marriage with Miss Christine Jorgenson, a native of Badger township and a daughter of Peter Jorgenson, of Erskine. They have one child, their son Martin O. Mr. and Mrs. Melsness stand high in their home locality and well deserve the universal esteem in which they are held.

GILBERT K. ESPESETH.

Gilbert K. Espeseth, of Erskine, president of the State Bank of Erskine and prominent merchant, has been notably identified with the business activities of that place since the days of its settlement. He was born in Norway, February 27, 1863, and was reared in his native land. In 1882 he accompanied his parents to this country, and after a short time spent in Grand Forks, North Dakota, removed to Polk county, Minnesota, where his father, Knute Espeseth, took a homestead claim, being one of the pioneer settlers of Badger township. Gilbert Espeseth remained on the farm until 1889, when he embarked upon his commercial career, and in partnership with Henry T. Gilbertson, opened a store on the town site of Erskine,