Indians, which constantly engendered fear, as the county was sparsely settled, the buildings poor, provisions low, want and starvation staring them in the face, and she the only provider and protector to the sick husband and the four small children. The yoke of oxen had to be mortgaged to get flour and provisions. A year and a half passed before Steen got his health back, and a chance to sell his claim for enough to get out of debt and to make a new start. They then moved to the town of Sheldon, Houston county, and took up a claim in Section 30, where they resided for over twenty years and raised a big family; the children, in addition to those already mentioned, being Andrew, Elias, Ellen, Anne, and John.

At the outbreak of the Civil war the parents had a nucleus for a small army, which taxed their ability to the utmost to keep in proper discipline; but under the stern orders of their superiors the younger ones soon became efficient in planting, hoeing, and husking corn, and other duties on the farm, and chafing under the situation that all were too young to partake in the defense of their country. Mr. Knutson finally, in 1864, volunteered in Company K of the Eleventh Minnesota, and served to the close of the war.

In 1871 the two older boys took land in Polk county, Minnesota, and selected a claim for the father in Section 30, town of Vineland, to where he went in 1875, and the rest of the family followed in 1876. Here he lived until he passed to the other life, in 1881. He served as Town Supervisor of Vineland for several years. He was also active in church work, and one of the organizers of the first Lutheran Church in Houston county. Mother Steenerson died twelve years later, or in 1893, and both are buried in the Climax Cemetery, where appropriate monuments mark their last resting place.

Few have been more closely identified with the growth and development of the State than they were; and few have reared as large a family of boys and girls, under adverse conditions, all of whom grew to manhood and became prominent citizens of Polk county, and elsewhere.

The following is a chronology of the offices held in the County and State by the Steenersons: Knute, sheriff of Chippewa county in 1876; Levi, county commissioner of Polk county for several years; Christopher, the first superintendent of schools of Polk county, in 1876, and later clerk of court for many years; Halvor, county attorney of Polk county, state senator, and member of Congress; Andrew, sheriff of Polk county; Elias, postmaster of Crookston for nine years, and mayor of Fisher in the early eighties; John, mayor of Esmond, North Dakota; Anne, teacher and member of the school board at Climax; Ellen, teacher.

No doubt but that the old folks longed to go back to their native land during the times of distress, when pioneering in Houston county, and possibly felt they had made a mistake, yet that thought never found an utterance. Their faith in their adopted country and its institutions seemed to be implicit, and their hope for final success seemed to be instinctive. They became part of their adopted country, and that they had made no mistake they were well satisfied during their declining years.

JAMES NISBET.

James Nisbet, an early citizen and for many years a prominent farmer of Huntsville township, was born in county Lanark, Ontario, June 7, 1846, and died in Polk county, November 27, 1910. He was the son of William and Cristena (Lindsay) Nisbet, who were natives of Scotland. James Nisbet was one of four brothers who located in Polk county in the early seventies and were widely identified with the settlement and development of the western part of the county. David Nisbet died a number of years ago; Robert Nisbet was a resident of Nisbet township, which was named in his honor and Thomas Nisbet was for many years a farmer in Huntsville township and was living in Grand Forks at the time of his death in