Merrill was born in Illinois October 10, 1863, and came to Polk county in his boyhood with his parents, J. B. and Polly (Brainerd) Merrill. The family located on the farm which is a part of the one owned and operated by the widow of their son Anson C., the father having sold it to him when he was ready to take charge of it. The parents then moved to Fisher, and there the father kept a general store in partnership with his son, C. B. Merrill, until the father died as the result of an accident, his wife also passing away at Fisher five years afterward.

Some time later C. B. Merrill moved to the state of Washington. A. A. Merrill, another son of the family, was a farmer in Nesbit township, one mile north of the old family home, and died on his farm in July, 1914. The members of his family are still living on that farm. Still another son, G. E. Merrill, owned a farm half a mile east of the old home. He is now living at Hood River, in the state of Oregon. Their sister Ella is the wife of O. J. Tinkham, of Fisher township.

The elder Mr. Merrill owned a considerable body of land which became the property of his children. Anson C. got the old home place of 160 acres, and to this he kept adding by successive purchases until he owned two whole sections and a quarter of another one, also 40 acres of timber or 1,480 acres in all, and the whole body of this land is still in the possession of his family. He raised great quantities of grain and kept six to eight men in his employ all the time. He also raised and handled large numbers of cattle, fattening beeves for the markets himself and buying and shipping all the live stock in the neighborhood that was intended for the market. The dwelling house on the farm was built by him, but the barn and some of the other improvements were added after his death, but were included in his plans while living.

Mr. Merrill was married January 22, 1893, to Miss Ida Strande, a daughter of Ole K. and Carrie (Skatrud) Strande, of Nesbit township. She was born in Manitowoc county, Wisconsin, and was seven years old when the family moved to Polk county and twenty-one at the time of her marriage. Three children, Alvis, Ellen and Anson, were born of the union, and all of whom are living. Ellen was a Polk county school teacher for two years. At the time of Mr. Merrill's death the oldest of the three was only three years of age. He is now twenty-one. He has given careful attention to a course of study in agriculture at the state farm.

Mrs. Merrill has won warm admiration and high praise from the whole people of her own and the surrounding townships. Left a young widow, with three small children and a very large body of land to look after, she entered upon her heavy and momentous duties with a resolute spirit and the heroic fortitude of a Spartan matron, and she has met the requirements of her position with great fidelity and ability. She has continued to carry on the farm on a scale equal to that of her husband and made every phase and feature of its business profitable. She has also reared her children with the utmost care and developed them into very useful and worthy members of the community, furnishing an admirable example of sturdy American womanhood at its best under severe trials and responsibilities.

JOHN E. ELG.

As the founder of the village of Eldred, for which he obtained its selection as a station on the Great Northern railroad, and as one of its leading merchants and business men, John E. Elg has been and is a source of service and benefit to the part of Polk county in which the village is located for which its residents are grateful. By his course he has shown himself to be enterprising and progressive, and these qualities have won for him all the success he enjoys in life.

Mr. Elg was born in Sweden January 8, 1858, and in 1872 he came to the United States and located in Washington county, Minnesota. In 1883 he moved to