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OLE FIGLAND.

In a history of Poweshiek county mention should be made of Ole Figland, now deceased, whose efforts along agricultural lines earned for him the proud American title of a self-made man. He was one of Norway's contributions to the citizenship of Iowa, and throughout his lifetime exemplified many of the sterling traits for which the people of that country have ever been noted.

In early manhood he left his native country to seek a home amid the strange environment of a strange land. Crossing the Atlantic to America, he made his way direct to Chicago, and thence went to Wisconsin, arriving in that state in 1861. There he worked as a laborer for a few years, after which he went to Michigan and was there employed as a chopper of cordwood for three winters. He then returned to Wisconsin for a short time, after which he came to Poweshiek county, locating in Searsboro in 1866. In 1871 he came to Malcom township and purchased a tract of unbroken prairie located on section 31. With characteristic energy he at once began its improvement and as the years passed succeeded in developing it into a highly cultivated tract. This farm, consisting of ninety-six acres, became the homestead, and subsequently he added other property, becoming the owner of two hundred and twenty acres lying across the road in Grinnell township. Later he traded eighty acres of that property for land in South Dakota, and also sold forty acres. He improved the home place with a good dwelling and substantial outbuildings, and continued to carry on agricultural pursuits there for a number of years. Later, however, he rented it and went to South Dakota, spending his last years on his property in that state.

Something of the prosperity which attended his efforts is indicated by the fact that he reached Chicago with a cash capital of but twenty-five cents, with no knowledge whatever of the language or customs of the American people, and at the time of his death he not only owned two hundred and sixteen acres in the home farm in Poweshiek county, but also six quarter sections of land in Sanborn county, South Dakota, all well improved, which stand as a monument to his life of undaunted energy, unfaltering industry and a perseverance that never flagged. When death claimed him, at the comparatively early age of fifty-six years, he was able to leave to his family a most comfortable competence.

Mr. Figland was united in marriage, in 1863, near Madison, Wisconsin, to Miss Annie Sandmark, who was born in Norway on the 24th of April, 1840. After the death of her mother she came with a sister to the United States to join her father in Wisconsin, arriving in that state in 1861. Unto Mr. and Mrs. Figland were born nine children, as follows: Charles, of Grinnell township; Belle, the wife of Ed Larson, of Minneapolis; Christina, who married M. C. Bean, of Wheelock, North Dakota; Anna, the wife of Christ Olson, of Malta, Illinois; Lily, who married Theodore Olson, of Grinnell; Lena, who passed away at the age of one year, seven months; Lewis Johann, who died when two years, nine months old; Clara Josephine, who passed away when eleven months old; and Louis J., renting the home place in Poweshiek county, who married Miss Nora Tysdal and has one child, Le Roy. The mother still survives and makes her home on the old homestead farm with her youngest son.

Mr. Figland passed away on the 12th of October, 1892, his death resulting from the kick of a horse. He was a strong, powerful man physically, and still in the prime of life. The story of his success is short and simple. It contains no exciting chapters, but is a record of well directed effort, guided by a sturdy common sense and persistency of purpose. He came to this country with no capital save brains, energy, integrity and rugged health, but he was not afraid to work, and accepted any honorable employment which came to his hand, and as time passed he attained a position of independence which was well won and justly merited.