

E. Frances Atwater, the well known apiarist, is the sole proprietor of the bee keeping and honey producing industry carried on in Meridian, Idaho by The E. F. Atwater Company, and his products not only have a nation-wide market but are now finding their way into foreign countries. Mr. Atwater was born in Decatur, Burt county, Nebraska, in January, 1881, a son of George E. Atwater, formerly of Meridian, now of Boise, Idaho, who is prominently known through Ada county, of which he has been a resident for about twenty years.

E. Francis Atwater spent most of his boyhood in the states of Nebraska, Iowa and South Dakota, finishing his public and high school education in the schools of Yankton, South Dakota, where his parents lived for seven years. At the age of fifteen he first became attracted to and interested in the keeping of bees, while living at Yankton, beginning with a single hive given him by his father. His only sister, Mrs. Daisy M. Biddick, now living in Nampa, this state, and at that time a resident of Meridian, wrote her relatives in South Dakota of what a wonderful country Idaho was for bee culture, with special reference to Boise valley as having unusual advantages for apiarists. Attracted by this information, Mr. Atwater removed to Idaho in 1901, locating at Meridian his parents following him in the next year. In 1901, he and Mrs. Biddick made an initial purchase of eighty colonies of bees, and thus was laid the foundation of the Atwater bee industry, which has since spread over Ada and Canyon counties one of the largest apiaries in the northwest and the largest individual enterprise of its kind in Idaho.

The steady growth of Mr. Atwater's bee business has culminated in his now being the owner of twelve yards located in Ada and Canyon counties, embracing over one thousand colonies of honey producing bees. Since 1905 all the way from one to four carloads of honey per year have been produced at the Atwater apiaries, it being estimated that all the product up to 1920 would made a train load of over thirty cars. In 1915, the output was three and three-quarter carloads of honey: while in 1918 the product of the bees brought the largest returns, amounting to about twenty-three thousand dollars' worth of honey, some of which was marketed in the United States and the rest sent foreign countries. Mr. Atwater is vice president and director of the Idaho-Oregon Honey Producers Association, and was prominent in the old Idaho-Oregon Beekeepers association, which preceded the present organization. He was formerly a director of the National Beekeepers Association. He has given extensive study to the culture of bees and has been a student of bee literature, at the same time having written many articles for publication, of authority on all matters pertaining to bee culture.

During 1917 and 1918 while this country engaged in the World war, Mr. Atwater was in the service of the government, acting in the capacity of special field agent and lecturer in bee-keeping, under the auspices of the United States Department of Agriculture extension work. The field of his operations along this line covered the states of California, Arizona and New Mexico. This position was given him without any solicitation on his part.

On February 14, 1911, at Boise, Mr. Atwater was united in marriage to Miss Fay Gwendolyn Nesbit, only daughter of George Nesbit, the first white man to be wounded in the Bannock Indian war, as recorded in Hailey's History of Iaho. Her mother was the late Dr. Minnie Stuart Nesbitt, formerly of Boise, who

died October 6, 1919. George Nesbitt and his wife were pioneers of Idaho and he is still a resident of Boise, where his daughter Fay Gwendolyn was born. Mr. and Mrs. Atwater are the parents of one child, a daughter, Fay Marguerite, also born in Boise.

The Atwater home, built nine years ago, is one of the prettiest of the better class houses in Meridian. Adjacent to it, Mr Atwater owns an entire block much of which is shaded lawn and the balance occupied with an apiary and various buildings used for the making of hives and extracting honey.