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Lillie Nelson, 80

Dec. 14, 1916 - April 28, 1997

IRWIN - Lillie Nelson, daughter of Nels M. and Dagmar (Christiansen) Jensen, was born Dec. 14, 1916, in Gates. Her mother died when Lillie was only two years of age, and her father's sister, Elsa Johanna Jensen, moved in with the family to help raise Lillie and her sister and brothers. She was baptized and confirmed at the Elk Horn Lutheran Church. She attended country schools through the eighth grade, and then worked as a hired girl in Harlan, during her teenage years.

June 28, 1936, she married Thomas H. Nelson in an outdoor wedding at her family's home in Gates. This day was especially memorable because the ceremony was performed under a mulberry tree, which provided shade from the extreme heat of the day. The couple farmed in the Atlantic, Kirkman and Irwin areas for many years. They moved to Irwin in 1962, and became residents of the Baptist Memorial Home in 1991. She was a member of St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Irwin, and was active in the St. Paul's Ladies' Aid while she lived on the farm. After moving into Irwin, she was known as an accomplished seamstress who did sewing for her family and others. In her later years, she also did quilting. She died April 28, 1997, at Clarkson Hospital in Omaha, NE, at age 80 years, four months and 14 days.

Preceding her in death were her parents and two brothers, Sophus and Tony. She is survived by her husband of 60 years, Thomas H. Nelson of the Baptist Memorial Home; two daughters, Verna (John) Erickson and Linda (Vernon) Brue all of Harlan; one son, Darrell E. Nelson of Harlan, and his fiancée, Donna Main of Cherokee; one brother, Pete Jensen of Harlan; one sister, Hilga Cordes of Harlan; seven grandchildren; five great grandchildren and other relatives.

Funeral services were held April 30, 1997, at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Irwin, with Pastor Sidney Flack officiating. Casket bearers were Scott Nelson, Jeff Nelson, Michael Erickson, Robert Brue, Jim Nelson and Jerry Jensen. Burial was in the Danway Cemetery in rural Shelby County. Burmeister Funeral Home in charge of arrangements.