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Esther Myrtina Sornson, 99

Oct. 3, 1894 - July 3, 1994

Harlan - Esther Myrtina Sornson, daughter of Laust (Danish for Louis) and Anna Kathryn Nielsen Sornson, was born Oct. 3, 1894, in a prairie sod house that was built into a hillside in Lake County, near Chester, SD. She attended school near there, and had the same teacher for the first six grades. At the age of 12, she was baptized and became a member of the Danish Baptist church of Dell Rapids, SD. As a young lady, she attended Northwestern Bible College in Minneapolis, MN. After her graduation in 1934, she worked as a dean at the College. Driving a Model T filled with young people, she spent two summers teaching Bible School in Eastern MT. For three years, she had the privilege to care for her brother, Oscar, when he was ill. She and Oscar then operated a general mercantile store in Chester. Traveling in her Model A, she also sold novelty items on the road for a period of time. At the age of 55, she moved to Seattle, WA, and worked as a church secretary and missionary. She also worked in a bookstore, and in a large department store, where she did monogramming. She enjoyed taking trips to Canada during these years. She retired in Harlan, Jan. 29, 1965. After her new home was built at 1506-7th Street, she lived there until July 1, 1985, when she moved into the Baptist Memorial Home in Harlan. She died July 3, 1994 at the Baptist Memorial Home, at age 99 years and 9 months.

Preceding her in death were her parents, and her brother Oscar and his wife, Ida. Survivors include two nieces, Norna (Art) Johnson of Yakima, WA and Mildred (J.S.) Hall of Smithsburg, MD; two nephews, Louis (Betty) of Washington, D.C., and Robert and his wife of Detroit, MI and other relatives.

A prayer service was held July 6, 1994, and the funeral service was held July 7, 1994, at Burmeister Funeral Home, with Rev. Vincent Nelson presiding at both services. Honorary casket bearers were Mr. and Mrs. Merle Nelson, Mr. and Mrs. Cliff Hanson, Mr. and Mrs. Harold Shupe, Mr. and Mrs. Reno Stofferson, Mr. and Mrs. Marion Christensen, and Mr. and Mrs. Don Keena. Casket bearers were Eugene Juhl, Donald Norgaard, Lloyd Nelson, Laverne Nelson, Wayne Petersen, and Herbert Nelson. Burial was in Merrill's Grove cemetery in Fiscus.