



Edna Nelson

June 9, 2006

Edna was born May 31, 1909 in Lake Preston, SD, the daughter of George and Emily (Sendelbach) Miller. Richard and Ella Green of Hampton, IA adopted Edna and her younger sister, Evelyn, after their mother died in 1911. Richard Green married Mary Jane Wortley Rowe in 1915 following the death of his first wife; by the time Edna was six she had had three mothers.

Edna grew up on a farm near Dows, IA and from a very early age helped with the plowing and other farm work. She first attended a one-room school but later the family moved to Hampton where Edna graduated from high school in 1927. The following year she entered nurses training at St. Barnabas Hospital in Minneapolis, MN, graduating in the spring of 1931

She married Roy Nelson from Minneapolis on September 17, 1932, in Clark, SD. They lived in the Minneapolis area - where Edna began her nursing career - until they moved to Cedar Falls in 1942. They bought ten acres behind Sartori Hospital (on what is now Division St) to start a truck farm; thousands of quarts of strawberries, along with raspberries, tomatoes, melons, popcorn, and other vegetables were picked and sold over the years. During those years Edna worked at Sartori Hospital during most of the year but "took the summers off" to help with the farming. In the mid 1950's the land was sold and a number of houses were built on the land now named Nelson's Garden Addition. Her husband, Roy, died in 1968 but Edna continued to live in her house on the corner of 6th and Division until she moved into assisted living at the Western Home in 2002 -- 60 years.

Edna was a nurse at Sartori Hospital for 35 years-and for many of those years she worked as head nurse in Obstetrics. One article written for the Sartori Spotlight called her "the little Mother of O.B." and said she helped many a new mother adjust to the responsibility that a baby brought to her life; "she has helped in so many deliveries that nothing excites her." She retired in 1977. Following her "retirement" she began many years of volunteer work-much of it done for First United Methodist Church. She was an active member of United Methodist Women, serving as circle chair and as the person responsible for receptions, and funeral meals. She helped in the kitchen for many church events such as Bell Choir fundraisers and Hunger Task Force soup days, made quilts for shut-ins and sewed hundreds of layettes for babies. She was also a tireless worker for Community Meals.

Edna enjoyed sewing, cooking and baking, gardening and in later years traveling. Her family was very important to her and visited her daughters, and later her granddaughter and their families as often as she was able.

Edna is survived by daughters, Marybeth Nelson of Minneapolis, MN and Janet (Dale) Hawley of Manhattan, KS; granddaughters, Julie (Ken) Zimmerman of Houston, TX, Janise (Bryan) Smith of Chantilly, VA and Joyce (Paul) Bright of St. Louis, MO. There are five great grandchildren: Katherine Zimmerman, Kyle and Marisa Smith, and Kristin and Kacey Bright.

Edna died Friday, June 9, 2006 at the Western Home Communities-Martin Center in Cedar Falls. She was preceded in death by her parents, her husband, Roy, and her sister, Evelyn George.