



Marie H. Blanke

June 21, 1923 - December 26, 2013

Helen Marie Schommer Blanke, age 90 , formerly of Geneva, died Thursday, December 26, 2013 at the Blue Valley Lutheran Nursing Home in Hebron. Marie, as she was known to her family and friends, was born on June 21, 1923 at Turkey Creek, Nebraska. She was baptized on June 24, 1923 by Father A.J. Lutz. Her first communion was taken on June 5, 1932 at St. Mary's Church, and she was confirmed on November 4, 1936. Marie attended District 49 School, graduating from the 8th grade in May 1938. She attended two years of high school, sacrificing her education to care for her seven brothers and sisters while her mother traveled to South Dakota to care for her ill mother. Marie worked for several years at a sewing factory in Fairbury until the factory closed and relocated. She returned to the Geneva area, working in several private homes and at the Fairmont Airbase doing private duty care, baby-sitting, and housework. Dances were one of the main forms of entertainment Marie's youth, and she met her husband, Melvin Blanke, at a dance in Milligan. Marie and Melvin were united in marriage on December 28, 1944 at Grace Lutheran Church South at Ohiowa, and would have celebrated 69 years of marriage two days after her death. The couple resided on the Blanke farmstead east of Strange where they raised their daughter, Madolene Marie, who was born on Father's Day. Marie spent her life serving and caring for those around her. Many people enjoyed Marie's cooking at Fran's Café, the Hilltop Café, Hazway Café, Westside Café, and Holcrode Bakery in Geneva. She worked as a nurse's aide at Heritage Nursing Home and the

Fillmore County Hospital Long-Term care unit. Marie faithfully served her church and community, donating many hours of time. She was a member of the Grace Lutheran Ladies Aide for over 63 years, and was also a member of the VFW in Geneva for a similar period of time. In her spare time, Marie was always busy with gardening and canning her produce, as well as sewing, embroidery, and crocheting. In addition to the beautiful pillows, and embroidered or crocheted pillowcases and handiwork that were given as gifts, Marie and her sister-in-laws sewed many quilt tops for Lutheran World Relief. Melvin and Marie loved the fellowship of dancing, and were members of a Square Dancing Club. They also enjoyed bowling, and were members of a camping club in their retirement years. They drove their Model A car in parades for 29 years, meeting many new friends. The decline of Marie's eyesight and 3 unsuccessful cornea transplants left her totally blind in 2008, and Melvin and Marie moved to Blue Valley Lutheran Homes for additional care. Marie is preceded in death by her parents, Ben and Mabel Schommer; four brothers, John Richard Schommer, Bernard James Schommer, Paul Richard Schommer, and Anthony Nicholas Schommer; two sisters Katherine, Saatmann and Margaret Reinsch, and granddaughter, Laurel Neubauer. Marie is survived by her husband, Melvin, of Blue Valley Nursing Home in Hebron; Sister Roseann Baker of Waterloo, IA, daughter Madolene Neubauer and husband Larry of Bedford, TX; grandson Mark Neubauer of Fort Worth, Tx, granddaughter Michele Newbrough and husband Michael of Fort Worth, TX, and great-granddaughter, Kirsten of Fort Worth, TX, and many nephews and nieces, family, and friends. Funeral services were conducted from Grace Lutheran Church, Ohiowa, NE on Monday, December 30, 2013 with Pastor Jonathan Jensen and Maynard Kellerman officiating. Deb Craig accompanied Stephanie Graves, Elizabeth Gianunzio and Andrew Craig who sang musical selections How Great Thou Art, Amazing Grace, My Chains Are Gone and I Can Only Imagine. Deb also accompanied the congregation who sang What a Friend We Have In Jesus and The Old Rugged Cross. Casket bearers were Mark Neubauer, Michael Newbrough, Darren Dageforde, Rick Dageforde, Joe

Reinsch, Brian Neubauer and Corey Hintz. Interment was in the Grace Lutheran Church with Farmer & Son Funeral Home in charges of arrangements. Memorials are directed to the family for the Grace Lutheran Cemetery.