VICTORIA D. FRANSEN

(Written text and photographs provided by Mary Kathleen (Fransen) Verlinich Johnson). Victoria D. Fransen was born on April 27, 1909, on the homestead farmed by her parents near Coleharbor, North Dakota, and was the daughter of John August and Anna Katarina (Johannesson/Nelson) Fransen. Victoria was the first of three children born to John and Anna (Nelson) Fransen. She grew up in the Coleharbor community and was confirmed in the Lutheran faith. Victoria graduated from Coleharbor High School and received her teaching certificate from Minot State Teachers College, Minot, North Dakota. She became a one-room school teacher of children in grades 1 - 8 in rural McLean County. Her days started early with stoking the stove with coal so the school was warm when the children arrived. She lived with the family of one of her students during the week. On Friday afternoon her brother, Arvid, would drive a team of horses to bring her home for the week-end.

Victoria later attended Capitol Commercial College in Bismarck. She was employed by the Bank of North Dakota and Gold Seal Company where she worked for 26 years. Victoria was an active member of the First Lutheran Church in Bismarck, North Dakota. She and her sister, Anne, lived together in Bismarck in a home at 405 1st Street. Victoria Fransen loved life and was a very special person to family and friends. Victoria D. Fransen never married.

Victoria Fransen died on August 16, 2000, from a stroke, age 91, at the Mandan Care Center in Bismarck, North Dakota. Interment was at the Fairview Cemetery in Bismarck, North Dakota.

A photograph of Victoria D. Fransen taken during the early 1950s. North Dakota.


A photograph of Victoria D. Fransen in boat on the Kuskokwim River, Bethel, Alaska. Date: early 1980s.
A LAND THAT'S HARD TO BEAT

Call it a land of barren prairie, And a land of drought and heat, But in my humble estimation It's a land that's hard to beat.

Where dust storms are so common Being water make you drown, And you become a roaming hobo Trying to follow up your town.

Where the only spot of beauty Is some colored rock and slate, And there's only one skyscraper In the whole dust covered state.

Where it is too cold in winter And in summer it's too hot Where no Spring rains come in April Though they'd really help a lot.

Where the cattle in the pastures See mirages on the sands Of water holes and fodder And clover covered lands.

Where dude ranches aren't so common 'Cause the dudes can't stand the gaff, But the rest of us still live here And let the scoffers laugh.

When Mother Nature gives a little Of that blessing we call rain, It becomes a land of plenty With wavy fields of grain.

Our cattle top the market, Finest bread comes from our wheat, So in my humble estimation It's a land that's hard to beat.

The earthly sojourn of our parents and grandparents is finished. They have passed from our sight into a BRIGHT NEW DAY which defies our comprehension, but they can never pass from our hearts and our minds. Their lives became so much a part of ours, it is as if — the Song is ended, but the Melody lingers on.

— Victoria & Anne Fransen

This poem was written by Victoria D. Fransen and Anne Marie Fransen in tribute to all the parents and grandparents (the pioneers) that settled the plains of North Dakota. Taken from and courtesy of - McLean County Heritage. McLean County, North Dakota. McLean County Historical Society, Washburn, North Dakota. Printed by Taylor Publishing Company, Dallas, Texas. Page 2 (1978).

A poem was written by Victoria D. Fransen during the dry year of 1934. (Courtesy of John Arvid Fransen).

Victoria D. Fransen (left) photographed with her brother, Arvid Fransen, and sister, Anne Marie Fransen, (standing in back) and cousin, Martin Leonard Nelson, and his wife, Mabel Hilda (Nelson) Nelson. Photograph thought to be taken in the mid 1960s in Bismarck, North Dakota. (Courtesy of John Arvid Fransen).

Victoria Fransen Victoria D. Fransen, 91, Bismarck, died Aug. 16, 2000, in a Mandan care center. Services will be held at 10:30 a.m. Saturday at First Lutheran Church, Bismarck, with the Rev. Tom Dunham officiating. Burial will be in Fairview Cemetery, Bismarck.

Burial will be in Fairview Cemetery, Bismarck. Visitations will be from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Friday at Eastgate Funeral Service, Bismarck, and one hour prior to the service at the church. Victoria was born April 27, 1909, at Coleharbor, to John and Anna (Nelson) Fransen. She graduated from Coleharbor High School and received her teaching certificate from Minot State Teachers College. Victoria taught school in rural McLean County for several years. She attended Capitol Commercial College in Bismarck. She was employed by the Bank of North Dakota and worked 26 years at Gold Seal Co. in Bismarck. After her retirement, she continued to live in Bismarck. Victoria was a member of First Lutheran Church in Bismarck and was very active there. Victoria is survived by one brother and sister-in-law, Arvid and Bernice Fransen, Bismarck; one niece, Mary Fransen and her husband, Jim Johnson, Northfield, Minn.; two nephews, Robert and his wife, Melanie Fransen, Eden Prairie, Minn., and John and his wife, Renee Fransen, Coleharbor; and five grand nieces and nephews, Emily, Erin, Carrie, Matt and Brian. She was preceded in death by her parents; and one sister, Anne Fransen. Victoria loved life. She was a very special person to her family and friends.

(Eastgate Funeral Service, Bismarck)