

This is your life - Vivian Christine Schauer

(April - 1995)

I was the fifth child born to Ned and Anna Busk Nelsen. I was born the spring after Dad bought the farm where Jay and Ruth Takle live.

I was five years old when I started country school. We had $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile to walk to school. I particularly remember the huge snowbanks we had to climb over to get to the schoolhouse. Then in the spring, there would be a lot of water to get across.

Our biggest enjoyment was the program we put on with the basket socials following. During the last couple years, I was usually given the job of announcing the program. I also represented the school at our spelling contests and usually came in second.

I think I had most of the childhood diseases. One Thanksgiving, Irene and I had measles, so all we got to eat was soup. I had Chicken Pox late in the spring, but went to our school picnic the last day anyway. The second year of school, I had Whooping Cough. The doctor thought that Irene and I had Diphtheria, but it turned out to be strep throat. We missed a lot of school, but did get back in time to go coasting on the hill south of the school house.

We always had certain chores to do, such as bringing in wood and cobs to burn. When we were younger, we did chicken chores, and as we got older, we had to milk cows. We also had to herd the cattle on the stubble field after the grain was threshed.

We earned money by picking potato bugs for a few cents a hundred for the adult bugs, but we also had to pick off the leaves that had eggs on them. I really felt rich when the neighbor lady hired me to take care of her boy when she had threshers and she gave me a whole quarter!

Mother always had a big garden, so there was always plenty of hoeing and weeding to be done. She had a big strawberry patch and we had to pick and help can them.

Most Saturday and Wednesday nights we went to town, and on Sunday nights a lot of the time we would go to Bean Lake roller skating. We had to help shock grain and pick corn, but no matter how tired we were, it was good to get out and away from it all.

I attended High School for two years, but after that I didn't have a way to get to school so I stayed home and helped mother. It was at that time that Betty Ann died, so everything fell on me to do. Jim was only a year old. As Vera got older and could take over more, I began to work out. I was what was known as a "hired girl." Wages were two to three dollars a week. When I was between jobs, I would come home and help mother. The last job I had was for Ralph Johnson and I got

five dollars a week, but I worked part time clerking in the store beside doing the housework.

I married Albert Schauer, December 14, 1937, at Sioux Falls, South Dakota. We lived with his mother a few weeks and then went to work for Hugo Schmalz for the summer. We moved into Westbrook for a while before moving out to the George Klasse farm on the edge of town. We lived upstairs in a couple rooms for two years. Larry was born while we lived there. After that, we rented the Schrieber farm in Rosehill township and lived there for three years. Linda and Chuck were born while we lived there and Rachel started country school in District 48 before we moved to Dovray township just north of where Bob and Sally Nelsen live. Kathy was born on this farm. Three years later, we bought a farm northeast of Storden, where we lived for twenty-two years.

In the fall of 1970, we sold the farm to Larry and moved into Windom, where I began to work at the Toro plant. During vacations, we took some trips, going to the Bahamas, the Canadian Rockies, and Florida. After retiring, we took several more trips, as we spent six winters in St. Petersburg, Florida.

We have been married for 57 years. We have five children, 18 grandchildren, and 17 great-grandchildren.

In 1990, Albert entered the Sogge Memorial Good Samaritan home in Windom, where he still resides. I sold my home in Windom in 1994 and moved into the Westwood Apartments in Westbrook. About that time, Irene became sicker and eventually came to live in the Good Samaritan Home in Westbrook. I was glad that I was living in Westbrook, so I was able to see more of her before she died in January of 1995.

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