

Elva Willis, 87

April 9, 1917 - March 23, 2005

ATLANTIC — Elva Geraldine Willis was born April 9, 1917, on a farm in Lincoln Township south of Walnut to Harley and Ida (Maassen) Davis. The family moved to a farm in Layton Township. She grew up on the farm and went to country school and graduated from Walnut High School, with a teacher's certificate, in 1938. In 1938, she and brother, Eugene, started farming the Lincoln Township farm with their dad. A few years later Earl and Elva farmed there. In 1946, Elva moved to Berkley, CA, and later to Oakland, CA. She worked as a long distance telephone operator for 25 years, retiring in 1972.

Elva married Kenneth Willis Nov. 1, 1959, at Oakland, CA. Elva became a frequent visitor to a Senior Citizen Center in Oakland, CA, and learned to paint scenery pictures with oil and acrylic paints. She moved to Atlantic, in September of 1989. She was a member of the Evangelical Free Church in California and continued her membership in Atlantic. She did volunteer work at the Atlantic Nursing and Rehab and The Chestnut Tree Gift Shop. She was a resident of The Allen House from July 1999 to February 2001, when she moved to the Atlantic Nursing and Rehab. She died March 23, 2005, at age 87.

Preceding her in death were her husband, Kenneth Willis, in 1963; her parents, Harley and Ida Davis; two brothers, Eugene Davis, December 1984, and Earl Davis, March 2000; sister-in-law, Beulah Davis; brother-in-law, Dale Petersen, June 1998; and a step-daughter, Patricia Paxton. Survivors are sisters, Dorthea Petersen of Atlantic; Shirley (Delmar) Nielsen of Council Bluffs; sister-in-law, Arlene Davis of Hancock; stepchildren, Jerry and Judy Willis of California; stepson-in-law, Lynn Paxton of Idaho; and five step grandchildren and a number of nieces, nephews and cousins.

Funeral services were held at the Evangelical Free Church March 26, 2005, with Pastor Terry Schoenfeld officiating. Burial was in the Walnut Cemetery. Roland Funeral Home of Atlantic in charge of arrangements.