

Christian and Johanna Opp

1906 – 1989 / 1905-1995



Christian George Opp and Johanna Marie Moeller were married November 23, 1926. They had two children, Darlene (Winter) Malfetti and Robert. With the exception of approximately seven years (1942-49), when they lived in Grand Island, all of their married life was spent on the family farm five miles east of Wood River.

Chris was born July 20, 1906 to John G. and Minnie (Lorenzen) Opp. He was the eldest of six children: Emma (Meyer); John L; (Jim) Opp, Jr.; Evelyn (Schultz); Louis; and Gertrude (Franke).

Chris attended District 44 and Wood River High School. He played violin and other musical instruments and along with his brother, Jim, Frank Opp, Frank Krall and others performed at local barn dances at the Opp farms and neighboring barns. They also had an engagement at the Wood River Opera House and played in the Wood River Band before there was a band stand.

Chris pitched for the Wood River neighborhood baseball team, which played teams from surrounding communities.

Chris farmed the ground and raised cattle. He also was a mechanic and electrician. He worked for the Rural Electrification Association (REA) where he brought electricity, for the first time, to many central Nebraska farm homes. He revered the land and enjoyed hunting and fishing.

Johanna was born on a farm near Doniphan, NE, on June 13, 1905, to Henry and Emma (Boltz) Moeller, the fifth in a family of seven: John; Elsie (Wiese); Albert; Clara (Becker); Rose (Dibbern); and Nora (Wiese). Her mother died when she was thirteen. Her father was a farmer and cattleman.

Johanna attended Doniphan schools where the teacher advised her to change her name from "Johanna" to "Hanna" so that it wouldn't "sound so German". (Sentiment toward Germany at that time was negative.)

Johanna was an accomplished seamstress and enjoyed the outdoors and gardening. She was a lifelong active member of St. Paul's English Lutheran Church of Grand Island, and a member of the Lydia Circle of that church. She enjoyed cards with friends and had an active interest in youth groups such as 4-H, especially when her grandchildren, Brad and Mary Winter, spent the summer at the farm.