

# **Louise Pheteplace**

## **2016 Cemetery Walk**

My name is Louise Marie (La Brun) Pheteplace. I was born in 1887 to American citizens who immigrated from France. My parents had six other children, three girls named Caroline, Mathilda, and Mabel, and three boys name Joseph, Amab, and Luverne. All three of my brothers served in the U.S. military.

My father was a ship-builder in Sioux City, and a member of the Ship-Builders Union.

The family spent many of their early years in Jefferson, S.D. After Roy Pheteplace and I married, we lived there for a time, and our older daughter, Myrtle, was born there.

We later moved to Moneta, IA, and we would occasionally crank up our Model T Ford, and with our two daughters, went back to Jefferson for reunions and family visits.

My husband, Roy, was employed by a telephone company as we established ourselves in Moneta. While there, we built a new home, and when we left Moneta to move to Hartley, Grandma Pheteplace lived in that home. Roy served on the school board when the school was built in Moneta.

Following his work at the telephone company, Roy was manager of the grain elevator in Moneta. He was very devoted to the elevator business, spending as many hours as he thought necessary to make the business flourish.

As a young woman, I trained to be a nurse at the St. Joseph's Hospital in Sioux City. In those years, rural hospitals were uncommon, and nurses were often required to practice their profession in the homes of their patients. In addition to caring for a patient, we cooked meals, did laundry and cleaning and whatever else was required to keep the household running.

It was my great pleasure to attend the delivery of many babies as an assistant to the doctor, and occasionally without the doctor if the baby came before he arrived.

After Dr. Hand purchased the Colby House on Central Avenue and converted it to a hospital, I was employed by him and several doctors who followed him until the Hand Hospital was replaced by the Community Memorial Hospital in 1964.

In those early years, it was the responsibility of each nurse to provide her own uniforms, always white, and we wore our school caps to denote that we were trained and registered nurses, as RN's. We were also responsible for basic equipment such as a syringe and needles for injections of medications, which I carried in a metal container. We kept the needles sharp with the use of a whetstone, and they were boiled for 20 minutes following their use.

Perhaps the greatest advance in medical care during my lifetime was the discovery of penicillin in the early 1940's. Penicillin cured many infections that were otherwise deadly.

As I look back, I believe I was somewhat of a pioneer in the field of rural nursing, and my professional training made it possible to support myself and my girls after my husband died at a rather early age.

I remained in Hartley after my retirement where both of my married daughters, Myrtle (Dale) Lorenzen, and Margaret (Edwin) Zinn lived with their families. I was thus able to watch my grandchildren, Richard and Joe Lorenzen and Mary and Janet Zinn, grow up.

I was a life-long and faithful member of the Catholic Church, and I spent my last days in the Community Memorial Health Center in Hartley. As we would greet each other at St. Joseph's Church, I leave you with this "Peace Be With You".