



Blanche Lorraine Wilson

September 16, 1914 - February 2, 2010

Blanche Lorraine Wilson (nee Johnson) departed this world peacefully at 11:05 A.M., Tuesday, February 2nd., at Providence Portland, attended by family members, after brief complications wrought by heart ailment and pneumonia.

Blanche came into the life of this world on September 16th., 1914, enjoying a long and fruitful life as homemaker and elementary school teacher and devoted, loving mother to Judith Ann, Jon Mark, Thomas James, and Steven Matthew Wilson, as well as wife to her beloved husband Melvin Clay Wilson of sixty-one years. He predeceased her in 1996.

Descended of an old pioneer family of Hill, going back to John Winthrop's fleet, the family was southern English. Her maternal great, great grandfather, Jedediah Hill served under Lafayette during the War for Independence, and his son, John Hill, Blanche's great grandfather, served with the New York Militia in the War of 1812, being one of three brothers, who served in that war. One of these veteran brothers was father to her mother's mother, who was drawing a pension from that war up until this grandmother's death in 1946. At eighty-nine, she was the last of these pensioners as was widely noted at the time. After New England, the family then removed to southeastern Iowa in about 1844, then the frontier, where this maternal grandmother, Esther Ann Hill, was born.

She in turn married James Morgan, an orphaned boy of Irish famine immigrants, who served as an "errand boy", attaching himself during the Civil War, to union troops in Missouri . Some of her uncles also fought in that war and she had nephews who served in the First World War. One of her cousins, Henry Hill, came to Oregon with the great wagon train emigration of the 1840's, staked land claims at what is now Independence, Oregon, then went to California seeking gold in 1848 before returning to Independence for good. Blanche's mother and father followed him there from Iowa in 1900, as did Grandmother and Grandfather Morgan in 1902.

Blanche's mother, Blanche Pearl Morgan, also married the orphaned son of immigrants, Benjamin Johnson, whose parents came from Sweden. Blanche was sixth of eight children and the last one living. It is a large, extended family of Hills in Independence, for whom a school is named there after Henry Hill, who formed a fair number of early Independence's population.

After graduating from Independence High School in 1932 and then Monmouth normal school, she began teaching elementary school in the Hubbard area, and married our father Mel in 1935, also a teacher and from Independence, where they had known each other from childhood. They soon moved to Portland, where Mel spent his career as a principal, but in 1950 moved to the outskirts of Oregon City, where Blanche first substituted all over Oregon City, while her children were small, teaching kindergarten at one time at Eastham Elementary School, many future classmates of son Tom, who had Mrs. Jacobi for kindergarten at the same time downstairs in early 1953. She spent her last years of teaching at Bilquist School in Clackamas, retiring in 1973 when Mel did.

She was devoted to teaching and to her students, and they returned her affection in kind. She was a long-time supporter of education, the Urban

League of Portland, and cared passionately about the less-privileged of the country, striving always to bring them as much quality education as she could. She was extremely altruistic, loved music, the Oregon countryside and rustic American folk history, was a gifted singer - never off-key - and an enthusiastic gardener and reader. To all these things she was an avid letter writer, corresponding with politicians and authors frequently in her long life. She is survived by all of her children.

A private gathering at graveside will be held for family members, Friday, March 5th., at 1:30 P.M., Mountain View Cemetary, Oregon City. A general reception shall follow at Ainsworth House in Oregon City, 2:30-4:30 P.M. The family asks that in lieu of flowers, any contributions be made to the City of Independence Heritage Museum; P.O. Box 7, 112 S. 3rd. St.; Independence, OR 97351 (503)838-4989.

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Tribute Wall



“ *Blanche Lorraine Wilson*

January 28, 2023 at 02:51 PM



“ *Blanche Wilson always was, and remains a bright point of light in the Johnson family. Serene and dedicated, tenacious in her causes, stubborn and stalwart in politics, loving, caring, and nurturing nestled in a warm and wonderful sense of humor.*

Our sympathies, thoughts and prayers are with her family, as we quietly reflect on a wonderful life, and our good blessings to have known her. Her light has now faded, but remains a warm glow in all of us.

Dave and Jodie Ward - February 18, 2010 at 12:00 AM