EULOGY

Delivered by: Lowell C. Hansen, II, nephew of Ralph E. Hansen
Date: June 24, 1981
Place: Harrisburg, SD--United Methodist Church

THIS AFTERNOON WE ARE GATHERED TOGETHER TO GIVE THANKSGIVING FOR THE LIFE OF RALPH EDWARD HANSEN.

RALPH EDWARD HANSEN WAS BORN ON MARCH 24, 1907 TO EMMA AND PETER HANSEN. HE WAS THE YOUNGEST IN THE FAMILY, HAVING TWO OLDER BROTHERS--LOWELL AND MELVIN, AND ONE OLDER SISTER, LOU. RALPH WAS PROCEEDED IN DEATH BY ALL OF HIS FAMILY.

RALPH GRADUATED FROM VIBORG HIGH SCHOOL IN 1924, AND IMMEDIATELY MOVED TO SIOUX FALLS WHERE HE WORKED WITH HIS BROTHERS AT JACK RABBIT LINES.

RALPH MARRIED LOUISE "LOVEY" INGALLS IN 1930, AND JEANNIE, THEIR DAUGHTER, WAS BORN IN 1937.

WORLD WAR II TOOK RALPH TO THE SOUTH PACIFIC IN 1943, WHERE HE SERVED WITH HONOR UNTIL HE WAS DISCHARGED AND RETURNED HOME IN 1945. RALPH WAS A MEMBER OF THE NAVY SEABEES AND HIS UNIT WAS OFTEN CALLED ON TO GO INTO BATTLE IN ADVANCE OF LANDING FORCES TO PREPARE THE INVASION CITE FOR THE MARINES.

RALPH RETURNED TO JACK RABBIT LINES IN 1945 WHERE HE SERVED IN MANY DIFFERENT CAPACITIES--RANGING FROM DRIVER TO CORPORATION OFFICER.

TRAGEDY STRUCK RALPH AND "LOVEY" HANSEN WHEN SHE WAS STRICKEN WITH CANCER AND DIED IN 1958. JUST A YEAR LATER, TRAGEDY STRUCK THE FAMILY OF ONE OF RALPH'S FRIENDS--ARCHIE AND ELEANOR CLARK. ARCHIE DIED OF A HEART ATTACK--AND THUS GOD HAD CREATED A SITUATION--AS HE SO OFTEN DOES--WHERE OUT OF DARKNESS, CAME LIGHT.

ELEANOR CLARK AND RALPH HANSEN WERE MARRIED ON JUNE 3RD, 1961--AND FOR EACH OF THEM IT WAS THE BEGINNING OF 20 OF THE MOST BEAUTIFUL--MOST ENJOYABLE--AND MOST LOVING YEARS ANY TWO PEOPLE COULD ENJOY TOGETHER. I WISH I COULD ADEQUATELY DESCRIBE THESE PAST 20 YEARS, BUT WORDS ALONE CANNOT REVEAL THE TREMENDOUS LOVE RELATIONSHIP RALPH AND ELEANOR ENJOYED TOGETHER.

LET ME SAY JUST THIS--IT WAS A JOY TO SEE, AND A TRIBUTE TO THE SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP CALLED MARRIAGE.

RALPH AND ELEANOR WERE PROUD TO BRING THEIR CHILDREN TOGETHER INTO ONE FAMILY. THEY ARE JEANNIE GUBER, WILLIAM CLARK, AND MARGORIE OPPOLD.

RALPH AND ELEANOR WERE BLESSED WITH NINE GRANDCHILDREN AND ONE GREAT-GRANDCHILD.

BILL HAS THREE SONS--WILLIAM, JAMES, AND MICHAEL CLARK
MARJORIE AND JIM OPPOLD ALSO HAVE THREE SONS--JAMES, JEFFREY, AND JOSEPH, AND ONE DAUGHTER, JANET.
JEANNIE HAS TWO SONS--MICHAEL AND JEFFREY GUBER

THE GREAT-GRANDDAUGHTER, MICHELLE, IS THE CHILD OF JEFFREY OPPOLD.

RALPH EDWARD HANSEN PASSED AWAY AT 9:30 LAST SATURDAY EVENING AT MCKENNAN HOSPITAL. ELEANOR WAS AT HIS SIDE, AS SHE ALWAYS WAS.

WILL ROGERS ONCE SAID--
"THE TWO BEST THINGS THAT CAN HAPPEN TO A MAN ARE TO BE LOVED BY HIS WIFE, AND RESPECTED BY THE PEOPLE HE COMES FROM."

RALPH WAS LOVED BY ELEANOR--DEEPLY--AND HE WAS RESPECTED BY EVERY PERSON WHO KNEW HIM.

RALPH HANSEN WAS, LIKE MILLIONS OF PEOPLE IN AMERICA, A CONTRIBUTOR. HE PUT MORE BACK INTO LIFE THAN HE TOOK OUT. HE WAS BORN WITH A FIERCE DANISH PRIDE--HE WORKED HARD AT EVERYTHING HE DID--HE LOVED--AND HE WAS LOVED IN RETURN.

HE WAS A MAN YOU COULD DEPEND UPON--IF A NEIGHBOR NEEDED HELP, RALPH WAS THERE. WHENEVER A DIFFICULT SITUATION CAME ABOUT--RALPH ALWAYS SEEMED TO GRAVITY TOWARD THE ACTION, AND HE OFTEN STOOD IN THE GAP UNTIL THE TROUBLE PASSED.

RALPH HANSEN NEVER SERVED ON A BOARD--NEVER OCCUPIED ANY SPECIAL PLACE IN GOVERNMENT--NEVER LISTENED TO THE CROWD ROAR HIS NAME--AND YET, RALPH HANSEN WAS A VERY SPECIAL MAN. HE, LIKE MILLIONS OF OTHERS, WAS THE MUSCLE--THE BACKBONE--AND THE NERVE CENTER OF HIS FAMILY--OF HIS NEIGHBORHOOD--AND OF HIS COUNTRY.

POPE JOHN PAUL II PROBABLY SAID IT BETTER THAN ANYONE ELSE WHEN HE SAID, "A MAN IS MEASURED NOT BY WHAT HE HAS, BUT BY WHAT HE IS."

RALPH EDWARD HANSEN WILL BE REMEMBERED FOR WHAT HE WAS, A GOOD NEIGHBOR, A CARING FATHER, AND A LOVING HUSBAND.