

Obituary Describes Hardships and Pathos Endured Because of Ill Health

(Editor's Note: Ordinarily we do not print this lengthy an obituary, due to lack of space. We thought our readers would appreciate reading this one in its completion, as written by the family, describing so thoroughly the hardships the deceased encountered during his life and his ability to remain cheerful in spirit and loyal to his God through it all).

Peter R. Klaassen, son of Bernhard and Marie Dick Klaassen, was born on a farm north of Windom, Minn. on May 12, 1897, and passed away in his home at 2:45 p.m., on September 26, 1953. He reached the age of 56 years, four months and fourteen days.

He received his education in a rural school, Mountain Lake grade school, Mountain Lake Bible School, and one year of high school.

He was baptized on the confession of his faith in the Lord Jesus as his Saviour, and received into the fellowship of the Gospel Mennonite church on May 20, 1918. When he moved to a farm near Delft, he transferred his membership to the Delft Immanuel church. He remained a faithful member of this church to the end.

On a cold stormy day on January 19, 1922, he was married to Helena Thiessen, daughter of Isaac and Katherina Buhler Thiessen. Whether this was an omen of what the future held in store for him, one cannot know, but his life was filled with storms.

Before he married, he was going to start farming for himself, but that had to be postponed because of two operations for ruptured appendix in the short period of about three months. Each time he was very sick in the hospital for 26 days.

The difficulties that arose from low prices during the depression days were further increased when he developed undulant fever, in the spring of 1933. His determination to win against all odds, caused him to release his hired man, and he together with his wife worked from four in the morning till eleven at night. For a month he worked this way even though his temperature ran up to 102 and 103 degrees. During that summer his brother and sister-in-law helped them on the farm. When they had to return to their teaching duties in the fall, he had to go to the hospital where he stayed for 55 days. He suffered severely with temperature rising to 103 degrees. The doctor could not explain the sudden change for the better, but to them it was no mystery. Devine help had been received through intercessory prayer.

The heavy financial obligations that resulted from this long illness, and the pressure that was brought for settlement, caused him to sell out just before prices went up and crops were good.

Undulant fever had left him in a weakened condition. A bad case of hernia made it worse. One day a car passed his place rather slowly. Finally the driver turned back and came into the yard. He noticed that the buildings were nicely painted, the yard was well kept; in fact, the surroundings showed every sign of prosperity. The man inquired if this was where P. R. Klaassen lived. Then he introduced himself as an agent for the Federal Land Bank. "I can't understand this", he said. "I have been sent to foreclose on you. I have taken many foreclosure procedures, but usually the places are run down, and buildings delapidated. I drove by this place because I couldn't believe it could be the right place. How do you explain this?" Peter told this agent