



Gladys Esther Laude

May 31, 1921 - February 21, 2008

Gladys Esther Laude was a loving wife, mother and grandmother who cherished the time she spent with her family. Though shy in personality, she was bold in creativity. Her talent for music, poetry and story unfolded the beauty of her heart and made life sweet for those around her. She was a woman of faith who lived her 86 years in gratitude to her Lord and Savior. Gladys was born at a time when America was recovering from the first World War and straining to rebuild its economy. The nation's can-do spirit was reflected in Charles Lindbergh's solo flight across the ocean, Henry Ford's mass production of the automobile, and the Suffrage Movement that won women the right to vote. On a farm in Eden Township of Mason County, Michigan, Emery and Hattie (Morse) Marrison welcomed the birth of their third child on May 31, 1921. Gladys Esther and her five brothers and sisters grew up knowing what it meant to work hard on the land that their father farmed. Gladys did her fair share of chores and developed an appreciation for outdoor life. However, "nature" got a bit too close one day when she encountered a bear while picking berries. Gladys attended Major School, but because she had many health problems and walking was difficult, her father often took her to school on a sled, sleigh, or wagon, and picked up neighborhood kids along the way. When her mother became sick, Gladys left school after the 8th grade and stayed home to help care for her younger brothers and sisters. For all the responsibilities she undertook, Gladys still had lots of fun. She liked to go to the movies in Scottville, sing, and play guitar. The talent she showed when she

first picked up a guitar at age 16, became a source of lifelong pleasure. As a young woman, Gladys worked for short time at bean canning factory in Scottville, Michigan, but it was long enough to meet the man who became her husband. During their courtship, Francis Earl Laude came to know Gladys and her family very well, since many dates included taking her younger siblings along. Their love and commitment was sealed on April 12, 1941 at the courthouse in Ludington with her brother Howard Mariison and Francis' sister Mildred Laude, standing with them as attendants. Then they boarded a car ferry and headed across Lake Michigan to Milwaukee and back for their honeymoon. Gladys and Francis first set up housekeeping in small mobile home in Scottville, but moved to Flint a short time later. Francis found work there during WWII, and the young couple began their family with the birth of their first child, Gary, in 1942. Near the end of the war, the young family moved back to Ludington, where Francis worked for the REA, and they welcomed their first daughter Carole into the family. In 1949, the couple began a new venture by moving onto a 700 acre farm on First Street in nearby Custer and began dairy and beef farming. There they welcomed daughter Beverly, into their hearts and home. When the family moved to the Scottville in 1965, their house on East US 10 became their permanent home. Francis worked in real estate, and Gladys continued to enjoy music. Besides playing the acoustic guitar, she also played the electric guitar and would delight her family with her beautiful singing. Occasionally, she would join with her brother-in-law, Bill Clapper, who often played for dances at the Rendezvous in Walhalla. Gladys always enjoyed dancing, and singing was so much a part of her life. Gladys was artistic in others ways, as well: she wrote stories for her children. Even if she only had small scrap of paper to write on, she could still compose a story or poem that seemed to flow out of her creative spirit. The words Gladys wrote had a way of inspiring others. Over the years, family members received many letters and cards on birthdays and holidays, and Gladys never missed one special occasion. What made them most special was the encouragement Gladys offered. It was her gift to those she

loved. Gladys was an active person who found enough recreation to enjoy close to home. Except for one day spent in Sault Ste. Marie, Canada, or traveling thru Wisconsin to visit her grandson, and the occasional trip to the Upper Peninsula, Gladys and Francis stayed around Mason County. They liked to snowmobile with friends from around Scottville, and were members of the local Odd Fellow and Rebekah Lodges. Gladys also enjoyed her flower garden in summertime, or working on crossword puzzles and playing cards. In fact, she played Solitaire so often, the deck wore out and she could barely see the suite or numbers. Gladys also liked to watch Lawrence Welk, Wheel of Fortune, and the Price is Right with such regularity that if anyone called during a show, she just said she would call back later. Gladys lived her life in the quiet assurance that she was loved by God, and so she showed love for others. She delighted in little children, especially her grandchildren and great-grandchildren, and would beam when they visited her. Her love for God grew out of her personal commitment and her heritage of faith. Her grandfather was the first minister at Bachelor Evangelical Covenant Church, and Gladys was a longtime member of Custer Baptist Church. In later years, her sister Beatrice Riffle and husband Thurman would pick up Gladys and take her with them to Bachelor Church. She attended there many years, and her faith was nurtured through the praises she loved to sing to her God. Gladys Esther Laude went to be with her Lord on Thursday, February 21, 2008 at Oakview Medical Care Facility in Ludington. She was surrounded by her beloved children who carry on her legacy of faith, hope and love. Gladys was preceded in death by her husband Francis on January 12, 1995, her beloved grandson Michael Smith, 4 great-grandchildren, her brothers Howard Marrison, Maynard Marrison and his wife Beulah, and her sister Beatrice Riffle and her husband Thurman. She will be lovingly remembered by her son Gary (Carol) Laude of Muskegon, her daughters Carole (Chuck) Wendt of Scottville, and Beverly (Donald) Chaney of Kalamazoo; her grandchildren Brian Laude, Darren (Kathrina) Laude, Jay Laude, Julianne Laude all of Muskegon, Scott (Monica) Wendt of Levering,

Christine Wendt of Spring Lake, Michelle (Dennis) Caskey of Caledonia, Melanie (Tim) Rankin, and Melissa (Daynon) Peebles all of Kalamazoo; 20 great-grandchildren, 2 great, great-grandchildren; her brother Lee (June) Marrison of Muskegon, her sister Mildred (Joe) Fishel of Hart, her brother-in-law Harry (Shirley) Laude of Ludington, and many nieces and nephews.