

Helen A. Maxwell, 93

Feb. 9, 1908 - April 8, 2001

HARLAN – Helen Ann Maxwell was born to Elmer and Grace (Meyer) Bright Feb. 9, 1908, on a farm near Sioux Rapids in Buena Vista County. She was baptized and confirmed in the Methodist Church in Sioux Rapids. She graduated from Sioux Rapids High School in 1926. She attended many of her school reunions including her 73rd all school reunion in June 1999. She was the only member of her class attending the reunion and the 2nd oldest at the reunion. To further her education, she graduated from University of Commerce in Des Moines, now named AIB. She traveled to school from Sioux Rapids to Des Moines by train. Helen was employed as a nanny for the Langsett Family moving with them from Northern Iowa to Harlan, in 1933.

April 12, 1934, she married John Donald Maxwell in the Methodist Parsonage in Papillion, NE. Keeping their marriage a secret for several months, the couple later celebrated with friends and relatives with a dance at the Corley Dance Hall. They moved to a farm near Sioux Rapids in 1935. Four children were born to this union. They farmed northeast of Storm Lake for many years. She was a farm wife and was active in the ladies activities of the Methodist Church in Truesdale. Moving to Harlan in 1960, she did some babysitting, was a "pink lady" for the Hospital Auxiliary and a member of the United Methodist Women. After purchasing their home on East Okoboiji, they spent the summer months at the lake. They spent the winters in Arizona. They moved to an apartment in Harlan in 1988. Don died October 1988. Helen remained in the apartment until April 2000 when she moved to Elm Crest Assisted Living, later moving to full nursing care at Elm Crest. She died April 8, 2001, at Elm Crest Retirement Home at age 93 years, one month and 30 days.

Preceding her in death were her parents; her husband, Don of 54 years; her sister, Alice Bappe Grey; brothers, Alfred, William and Floyd Bright; and her son, Gary Donald in 1997. Survivors include her children, Jack Lee Maxwell (Marian) of Stewartville, MN; daughter-in-law, Marjorie Ann Maxwell of Kansas City, MO; Patricia Ann (Dan) Kleinpaste of Harlan; Richard A. Maxwell of Cheney, KS; brother, Elmer Bright (Fern) of Sioux Rapids; sister-in-law, Arlene Bright of Sioux Rapids; 11 grandchildren; 23 great grandchildren and other relatives.

Funeral services were held April 10, 2001, at Pauley Funeral Home with Rev. Paul Wilcox officiating. Burial was in the Harlan Cemetery with Flora Rice, Richard Rice, Bob and Opal Bertsch, Karl and Maesel Sweet, Mike Flanigan, John A. Christiansen and Jim Gustafson honorary casket bearers. Casket bearers were Kimberly Sue Burmeister, Karen Christine Reason, Terry Dean Maxwell, Deborah Ann Huber, Curtis Lee Olson, Craig Lee Maxwell, Gayle Ann Franklin, Cristal Lynn Collins, Patricia Kelly Kelly, Deanna Lynn Stone and Dawn Marie Christiansen. Pauley Funeral Home in charge of arrangements.

