

Esther Dea, 99

July 16, 1917 - Aug. 8, 2016

AVOCA — Esther Margaret (Paul) Dea was born July 6, 1917, to Franklin B. and Martha C. (Petersen) Paul. She grew up on a farm 5½ miles northwest of Shelby, in Harrison County. Her father traveled to that farmstead in a covered wagon when he was a baby.

Esther attended a one room country school for nine years, primary through eighth grade. After taking state tests in Persia, she entered Shelby Consolidated High School and graduated as valedictorian of the Class of 1935. She had proudly attended every Shelby-Tennant Banquet since its beginning in 1946.

Esther stayed home helping her mother and taking secretarial correspondence courses until the age of 22 years. She was then united in marriage to Richard (Dick) Dea on June 14, 1939. They made their home in Shelby while Dick worked at the Farmers Savings Bank. Their first daughter, Donna, was born in 1942, a month before Dick enlisted in the Navy during WWII. After discharge from the service in 1946, Dick and Esther moved to a farm two miles south of Avoca, where they spent the remainder of their lives together. Their daughter Kathleen was born in 1947, and son William was born in 1954.

Esther was a homemaker and avid gardener. She took on many of the farming chores after Dick returned to the Citizens Savings Bank for 13 years. Esther also helped with the auction clerking business for many years. She volunteered at the Avoca Nursing Home for weekly Bingo and spent many hours cleaning the church. Esther was a charter member of the Knox Project Club, an organization of neighborhood women who took county extension lessons for home and self improvement. Esther belonged to the Newtown-Avoca Historical Society and opened the Newtown country school house for visitors on Sunday afternoons during the summer. Esther and Dick were Farm Bureau members. Esther joined St. Mary's Catholic Church in 1939 and had been an active member since then. She found God in the sprouting of a garden seed, the birth of a new baby calf, and a good old time Christian hymn.

Dick and Esther loved to travel and were blessed to be able to visit 13 European countries, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Panama Canal, South America, and all 50 of the United States. Esther's grandchildren remember her famous sour cream rolls, pumpkin pie, homemade ice cream, and bread. She was always up for a good game of marbles followed by root beer floats. Esther M. Dea died on Monday, August 8, 2016, at Avoca Specialty Care in Avoca. She had reached the age of 99 years, 1 month, and 2 days.

Esther M. Dea was preceded in death by her husband Richard; her parents; her brothers, John, Clarence, and Ralph Paul; and her sisters, Gladys Boylan and Florence Paul. She leaves behind a loving family: two daughters, Donna Dea and Kathleen (Thomas) Pattee, both of Avoca; one son, William (Sondra) Dea of Avoca; eight grandchildren, Thomas Krohn of Mary Esther, FL, William (Amy) Pattee of Avoca, Michael (Jenny) Pattee of Hubbard, NE, Tamara (Eric) Lott of Cincinnati, OH, Quincy (Lea Anne) Dea of Treynor, Jana (Jeff) Schmitz of Harlan, Patrick Dea (Scott Booher) of Minneapolis, MN, and Franklin (Hope) Dea of Boise, ID; 20 great-grandchildren, Nathan, Ryan, and Evan Pattee, Jake, Ben, and Abby Wostoupal, Will and Thomas Pattee, Kaitlyn, Andrew, Jacob, and Brianna Lott, Gallatin and Irelyn Dea, Kathleen, Ethan, and Clara Schmitz, and Thomas, Jenni, and Dustin Krohn; three sisters-in-law, Helen Dea of Avoca, Beverly Dea of Shelby, and Mary Zimmerman of Council Bluffs; her very dear niece, Shirley Kuebrich; and many devoted nieces, nephews and good friends.

A prayer service was held on Thursday, August 11, 2016, at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Avoca. Mass of Christian Burial was held on Friday, August 12, 2016, at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Avoca, with Father Tom Doolley celebrating. Altar servers were Ryan Pattee and Evan Pattee. The reader was Tom Pattee, and Nathan Pattee offered the petitions. Gift bearers were Kathleen Schmitz and Kaitlyn Lott. Serving as Eucharistic Ministers were Melody Cordes, Skip Prokupek, and Barb Butcher. Patrick Dea, Charlotte Wise, and St. Mary's Choir provided service music. Casket bearers were Bill Pattee, Mike Pattee, Tami Lott, Quincy Dea, Jana Schmitz, Patrick Dea, and Franklin Dea. Burial was in the Grace-land Cemetery, Avoca. Condolences may be left online at www.burmeisterjohannsen.com.



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