

Ronald Johnson, 85

July 30, 1917 - April 4, 2003

AVOCA – Ronald C. Johnson was born in Avoca, July 30, 1917, the son of Clarence and Alma Neve Johnson. He graduated from high school in 1934 and spent the next 10 years working on farms, in a grocery store, and attending business school in Omaha. During that time, he also worked for the Iowa State Highway Commission in Avoca and Ames, the Des Moines Ordinance Plant located in Ankeny, and the Hercules Powder Plant in Baraboo, WI.

Ronald married Betty Maassen Camblin Oct. 5, 1941. In 1943, he entered the Army, and spent a year overseas in the European Theater serving under General George Patten's 4th Armored Division as an armored infantryman. While there, he received many honors, including three Bronze Stars, a Presidential Citation and a Purple Heart. After the war, he returned to his family in Harlan and worked for the Farmer's Grain Dealers Association of Fort Dodge. In 1946, he became the General Manager of the Avoca Alfalfa Milling Company, which he managed until it was sold in 1981. He participated in many community activities, serving 10 years each on the Avoca Council and the Avoca School Board plus he also served as Trustee and Elder of the United Church of Avoca. He also was president of the Avoca Community Club, past Master of the Masonic Lodge and a member of Scottish Rite and Tangier Temple, along with BPOE, American Legion and Purple Heart Association. Since 1968, Ronald was instrumental in making sure the local second graders attended the Shrine Circus yearly. He died April 4, 2003, at Harlan, at age 85.

He is survived by his wife, Betty of Avoca; his sons, Tom (Beverly) of Frazier Park, CA; Lee (Janet) of Mercer Island, WA; Gary (Patty) of Atlantic; and David (Colleen) of Kingdom City, Saudia Arabia; eight grandchildren; five great grandchildren; his sister, Ruth Rock of Oakland; nieces and nephews and other relatives.

Funeral services were held April 8, 2003, at the United Church of Avoca with Pastor Nancy Ross-Hullinger officiating. Burial was in the Graceland Cemetery with military graveside rites by the Fred Funston American Legion Post #227. Honorary casket bearers were Kenny Kahl and Ronnie Shuning. Casket bearers were Harry Olsen, Jay Hansen, Alan Maassen, Darrell Jacobsen, Lynn Hansen and Mike Sampson. Pauley Knutson Funeral Home in charge of arrangements.