

Emma McLaughlin, 99

Feb. 14, 1916 - Jan. 17, 2016

SHELBY — February 14, 1916, in Jacksonville, FL, Emma Caroline was born to William and Edna (Holiday) Robinson. Her mother died when she was two years old. A year later, Fred married Edna's sister, Bertha, and she became Emma Caroline's mother. They came to Iowa and made both Shelby and Council Bluffs their home. Graduating from Abraham Lincoln High School in Council Bluffs with the Class of 1933, she did dressmaking and mending for a bit of income.

It was in the Shelby Methodist Church that Emma Caroline met Willard McLaughlin through a young peoples group called Epworth

League. They were married on September 3, 1935 in the Robinson home in Shelby. They took a two-week honeymoon to Colorado driving a Model A coupe. Living on the homesteaded McLaughlin farm, Emma Caroline was initiated by driving a team and wagon hauling corn for harvest. She loved her work with Willard of farm management and gardening. The farm was home for her even after Willard passed away in 1985. They were blessed with two children: Lee and Caroline.

Emma Caroline was an active member of the Shelby Methodist Church for eighty years. She was a long-time member of the United Methodist Women, enjoyed the UMW Bible studies and donated crocheted works to the Prayer Shawl Ministry. Her volunteerism to the community included the Woman's Federated Club, Carstens Farm Homestead, and a 4-H parent and leader. Her love of art was expressed in many ways. As a china painter, she created beautiful serving and decorative plates that the family always got to enjoy at the holiday meals in her home. She helped found The Corner Attic, an art group in Shelby that met regularly to paint and learn new skills. Her oil and watercolor paintings included floral, portrait, and landscapes. Grandchildren painted with her as well as baked with her. Her love of sewing produced many pieces of clothing and quilts for the family.

Always a lady of purpose and with a learning wit and positive attitude, "Grams" kept up with the times. Her computer and emailing skills were excellent. She texted on her cell phone daily to family members. A year ago, a 99th birthday party was well attended to celebrate her life and love of family and friends. Emma Caroline died on Sunday, January 17, 2016 at Myrtue Medical Center in Harlan, at the age of ninety-nine years, eleven months, and three days.

Emma Caroline was preceded in death by her parents, husband, son Lee, and brother Fred. She is survived by her daughter Caroline and her husband Gary Schmitz of Omaha, NE; daughter-in-law Marie McLaughlin and her husband Clay Pearce of Harlan; five grandchildren: Scott and Shawn McLaughlin of Defiance, Mark and Christy McLaughlin of Ankeny, Jay McLaughlin of Harlan, Lindsay Lee of Omaha, and Andrea and Dan Stein of Omaha; nine great-grandchildren; other family members and friends.

Rev. Nathan Tabelisma officiated the 10:00 a.m. funeral service on Wednesday, January 20, 2016 at the United Methodist Church in Shelby. Music was provided by Rebecca Tabelisma. Serving as casket bearers were Scott McLaughlin, Mark McLaughlin, Jay McLaughlin, Lindsay Lee, Andrea Stein, and Dan Stein. Burial was held at the Shelby Cemetery.



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