

**Maxwell Towne, 96****June 19, 1919 - July 12, 2015**

**KIMBALLTON** — Maxwell, son of William and Jesse (Barry) Towne, was born on June 19, 1919 at home on the family farm near Maywood, NE. Max was the sixth child of 12 born to the couple. He graduated from high school in Curtis in 1937, and enrolled at the University of Nebraska Lincoln in 1938 where he studied agriculture and agronomy. While at the University, Max joined Alpha Gamma Rho fraternity.

Max was joined in marriage to Margaret Jean Stroemer of Alvo, NE on July 24, 1943. Four children were born into this union: Carol, Steve, Bruce, and Barb. In January 1943, with the escalating intensity of World War II, Max chose to join his three older brothers in the fight and enrolled in the United States Army. Having participated in ROTC (Reserve Officer Training Corp) for four years at the University of Nebraska, Max was assigned the rank of Second Lieutenant upon entry. Max and his bride Jean moved to Ft. Sill, OK in the summer of 1943 where Max trained as an artillery officer. Max sought deployment overseas, but despite his best efforts, Max spent the next 27 months stateside. With the defeat of Germany on May 8, 1945 (V-E Day), the Allies turned their concentration on Japan, who remained steadfast in her resistance. In response to the Army's call for officer volunteers to lead the invasion of Japan, Max volunteered on May 9, 1945 to join the assault force. In August 1945, as Max and the various branches of the US military were readying for the invasion, President Truman gave the order to drop the bomb, and then a second one. Japan surrendered, the long war was over, and the conventional invasion never happened.

In February 1946, Max and Jean welcomed their first child into the family, a daughter, who they named Carol. After completing his military service in Japan as part of the post-World War II occupation force, Max went back to the University of Nebraska Lincoln in 1947 and got his Bachelor of Science degree in agriculture, making Max the first person in his family to receive a college degree. Max took his newly minted degree and put it to good use, taking a job as agriculture lender at the Stockyards National Bank, Omaha. A second child, a son who they named Stephen, was born in January 1948. In 1950 Max was recalled into the military with the eruption of hostilities in Korea. Max was assigned back to Ft. Sill, OK to train troops for the conflict and during this time achieved the rank of Captain. Max moved his family of four to Lawton, OK who remained there for the duration until Max was discharged from the Army a second time in 1952. Max then moved the family back to Bellevue, NE whereupon Max resumed his career in banking with the Stockyards National Bank. In 1955 Max took a position with the Livestock National Bank, Sioux City. It was here in February 1956, in Sioux City, that the burgeoning family welcomed a third child, a boy who they named Bruce, into the fold. In 1957 Max was offered, and he accepted, a position as President of Landmands National Bank, Kimballton. The family of five pulled up stakes and relocated to the quaint farming community Max and Jean called home for the remainder of their lives. In December 1960 the final spot in the family roster was filled with the birth of a daughter, who they named Barbara. In 1972, Max retired from Landmands National Bank due to health issues. Max's entire banking career was spent with banks focused on agriculture lending. Max felt a strong affinity for, and empathy with, the family farmer, having grown up himself on a ranch in western Nebraska and seeing his family face the exigencies of weather, crop prices, and capital availability on his family's fortunes during the Great Depression. Max loved to help people succeed. Banking afforded him that opportunity.

Max never lost his passion for agriculture, raising chickens, hogs, and cattle, as well as crop farming, at various times throughout his life. Max retired from all farming activities in 1976. Max's interests included anything about the lives and exploits of his kids, his grandkids, and his great-grandkids. He enjoyed reading and watching sports on television, especially baseball, and in particular the St Louis Cardinals. And every Fall he followed his alma mater's football team, the University of Nebraska Cornhuskers. After health issues forced his retirement, and he had time on his hands, Max developed a spiritual curiosity which led him to accept Jesus into his life. He found great comfort in sitting on his patio, feeling the gentle evening breezes brush against his face, and contemplating any number of issues. Jean passed away in 2010 at the age of 88. In November 2011 Max became a resident of Salem Lutheran Home in Elk Horn. On July 12, 2015 Max passed away at Myrtue Memorial Hospital in Harlan at the age of 96 years and 23 days.

Max is preceded in death by his parents; wife Jean; five brothers, William Towne, Lawrence Towne and wife Jean, Melvin Towne and wife Theresa, Floyd Towne, and Leonard Towne, who died in infancy; two sisters, Rowena Burton and husband Roy, and Verle Nelson and husband Clare; sister-in-law Lois Towne; and brother-in-law Willis Ervin. He is survived by his loving children: Carol Weitzenkamp of Rapid City, SD, Stephen Towne and wife Carol of Dallas, TX, Bruce Towne and wife Terry of Gowrie, IA, Barbara Ducat and husband Michael of Minneapolis, MN; 11 grandchildren: David Weitzenkamp, Mark Weitzenkamp, Janet Grundstrom and husband David, Jeff Towne and wife Amy, Megan Eastman and husband Jon, Andrea Sanger and husband Steve, Greg

Towne, Kirsten Olsen and husband Adam, Maria Towne, Sam Ducat and Grace Ducat; 10 great-grandchildren: Michael Grundstrom, Dylan Grundstrom, Julia Eastman, Nathan Towne, Kyle Eastman, Lucas Eastman, Lucas Towne, Scarlett Olson, Elizabeth Sanger, and Colin Sanger; three brothers: Virgil Towne of Curtis, NE, Leland Towne of Wood River, NE, and Harold Towne and wife June of Louisiana, MO; sister Georgiana Ervin of Golden, CO; and nieces, nephews, and friends.

Funeral services will be held at the Elk Horn Lutheran Church on July 29, 2015 at 10:30 a.m., with visitation beginning at 9:30 a.m. Burial will follow at the Elk Horn Lutheran Cemetery.



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