

Esther Johanna Gildersleeve

October 23, 1915 - October 5, 2001

Funeral services for former Wheatland resident, Esther Johanna Gildersleeve, 85, will be held Friday, October 12 at 1 p.m. at Platte Funeral Chapel in Wheatland, with Reverend Les Ludlam of the Untied Methodist Church officiating. Interment will be in the Wheatland Cemetery at Wheatland.

Mrs. Gildersleeve died Friday, October 5 at Memorial City Hospital in Houston, Texas. Esther was born October 23, 1915, to Frank and Louise (Erxleben) Longe, the last of eight children, at the farm home, seven miles south of Wakefield, Neb. in Wayne County. Esther lived on the family farm in Wayne County until her marriage to Lowell Gildersleeve in Wakefield, Neb. on June 7, 1938. From that time they moved to Traer, Iowa, where Lowell taught high school and where son, Charles was born in 1940.

In 1942 they moved to Bowling Green, Ohio, where Lowell was inducted in the Army Air Corps in 1943 and then on to Grand Rapids, Mich. for Officer Training School (OTS). After OTS, they moved to Gilbert, Ariz. where daughter, Pamela was born in 1944. From there it was on to Oklahoma City to train with Lowell's bomber crew, after which Lowell was off to the South Pacific and the Japanese Theater of World War II. Esther and the children moved to her home, the Wayne County farm, to stay with her mother for the duration of the war.

When Lowell returned in 1946, it was off to Washington D.C. to work in the housing industry. After one year, Esther and the family moved to Zearing, Iowa, to farm from 1947 to 1962. Then after several moves to Albuquerque for Lowell's advanced degree, on to Fort Collins, Colo. in 1963, where she worked in the restaurant business and then managed two women's clothing store businesses for a number of years.

In 1977, when 63 years of age, Esther and Lowell purchased an insurance agency in Wheatland, a profession both participated in until retirement in 1988, after celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary. Previous to assisting as a partner in the family Town & Country Insurance Company, Esther worked in Dower's Flower and Gift shop in Wheatland. Esther moved to Houston, Texas, in 1996, to be near family. She was a member of the United Methodist Church and enjoyed working.

Esther is survived by two children, Charles Gildersleeve and wife, Patricia of Omaha, Neb. and Pamela and husband, Hubert Tett of Houston, Texas; five grandchildren, Joanna and husband, Robert Maffitt of Fremont, Neb., Debra and Cynthia Gildersleeve of Omaha, Neb., David and wife, Saralyn Tett and Suzanne Tett all of Houston; one sister Louise Longe Larsen of Wayne Neb. and four great-grandchildren, Tyler and Kirsten Maffitt of Fremont, and Alexander and Daphne Tett of Houston.

She was preceded in death by her parents; husband, Lowell on January 4, 1993; four brothers, August, Rudolph, Albert, and Walter Longe; and two sisters, Martha Longa Biermann, and Hulda Longa Turner.

Serving as pallbearers will be Mike Dreher, Tom Bramlet, Don Parkin, Jeff Brown, Zack Ash, and Bayard Wilson.

Memorials to the American Heart Association, Memorial & Tribute Program, 1807 Capitol Avenue Suite 109, Cheyenne, WY 82001 would be appreciated by the family.

Family and friends may call at the funeral chapel on Thursday from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. and on Friday from 9 a.m. to Noon.

Platte Funeral Chapel of Wheatland is in charge of the arrangements.