



Helen Opal Cranston

Helen Opal Cranston, formerly of Deep River, was born December 11, 1913, at Deep River, IA and passed away on May 24, 2008, at the Brooklyn Community Estates in Brooklyn, at age 94 years, 5 months and 13 days. Funeral services will be held at the United Church of Deep River on Friday, May 30, 2008 at 10:30 a.m. Burial will be at the Goldenrod Cemetery in Deep River. Visitation will be held at the Holland-Coble Funeral Home in Montezuma, beginning at 12:00 p.m. on Thursday, with the family being present to greet guests from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to the United Church of Deep River, at PO Box 130, Deep River, IA 52222. Holland-Coble Funeral Home is in charge of the arrangements.

Helen was the daughter of Vida M. McWilliams and David C. Johnston. She was raised on the home farm northwest of Deep River, and spent over 80 of her years living on the home farm. She attended country school and then graduated from Deep River High School in 1931. She was captain of the 1931

Deep River girls' state basketball team, the first team from Poweshiek County to go to the state tournament. On December 28, 1933, she married high school classmate, Burdett Cranston, in Kirksville, MO. They were blessed with nearly 67 years of marriage, before Burdett's passing August 29, 2000.

Helen was not only a homemaker, but a farm wife, and like most farm wives of her generation, she devoted her life to raising her family, teaching them values of hard work and integrity. She was an avid gardener and canned hundreds of jars of fruits and vegetables each year to provide for her family. She dressed a hundred or more chickens each summer. She was a renowned cook. Some of her family's favorite foods include her pies and cookies, chicken-and-noodles, rhubarb pudding, fried chicken and gravy, fried steak and gravy, and home-made ice cream. She was a member of the Sunshine Sisters and also the Pleasant Ridge club. She and Burdett enjoyed socializing and attending card parties. Throughout her life she was an active member of the Deep River Presbyterian Church, later the United Church of Deep River, until her health failed her.

Helen's family includes four sons and two daughters: Beverly Simpson (Jay) of Colorado Springs; Richard (Kymme Ludwig) of Phoenix, AZ; Karen Quick (Harold) of Lineville, IA; Dr. David (Linda Ferguson) Cranston of Grinnell, Stephen (Francene Besser) of Deep River; and Donald (Betsy Benicosa) of Deep River. She had fourteen grandchildren, fourteen great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandchild and a brother David Mac Johnston Pleasanton, CA. at the time of her death. She was preceded in death by her parents, her husband, and two sons-in-law, Jay Simpson and Harold Quick. She was a loving and devoted mother and grandmother who long will be missed.

GH 5/2/08