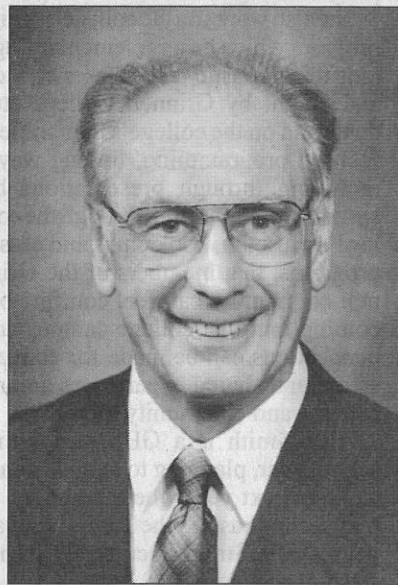


Merle Allen Lamb ^{61-R} 12-16-2021



Having delivered three times the usual boxes of birthday chocolates for the 92nd December 11, 2021, birthday of his beloved Ruth, "his best girl in the World," Merle, a man whose former physique rivaled that of Charles Atlas, now a mere 106 pounds, yielded up a most loving heart to God's greater love at 6:06 p.m. that evening; Ruth's hand in his, the best pick he ever made from his 99 years, 10 months, and 20 days of boxes of chocolates.

The fourth son of William L. and Emma C. (Schultz) Lamb, Merle was born January 21, 1922, in the family farm-

house four miles north of Malcom, Iowa. He grew up on the farm and graduated the eighth grade from his one-room rural schoolhouse. As a youth he drew drinking water from the well at the creek; trapped muskrats; by eleven hand-picked corn and milked cows; and later occasionally participated in boxing matches at the Malcom auditorium. November 21, 1942, at 20, he was drafted for World War II. After a 3:00 a.m. physical in Montezuma and a later breakfast at Grinnell's Monroe Hotel, he and the local boys were bussed to Camp Dodge. From there his first train ride and trip out of Iowa took him to Camp Beal, Calif., where after training he went to Camp Bowie, Texas (part way on open railroad flat cars guarding the tanks they carried), then to Camp Kilmore, N.J., and then New York City where he saw his first television through a store window, and the Statue of Liberty. After a 13-day ocean voyage and anchoring off South Hampton, England, under the cover of darkness, his ship crossed the English Channel to Le Harve, France, where he was ordered to post guard for the ship and its human cargo. Advancing through France, Germany and into Austria, his division fought battles in the Rhineland and Ruhr Valley, liberated four prisoner of war camps, and Braunau, Austria, the fuehrer's birthplace. Once the war in Europe had ended and his unit was done confronting disbelieving German soldiers, he visited the fuehrer's bombed-out infamous Berghof vacation mountain hideaway known as the Eagles Nest, a medieval castle in the middle of a lake, and Paris' Arc de Triomphe and Eiffel Tower before returning to Iowa in route to the Pacific, and Japan, until those plans went up in a mushroom cloud of smoke somewhat like the tons of incendiary bombs created over German cities. Becoming a communications sergeant in the 46th Tank Battalion, 13th Armored (Black Cat) Division of the United States Army he survived serving 3 years, 2 months, and 23 days. In honor of the 13th Armored his discharge from Jefferson Barracks, Missouri, came the 13th of February, 1946. Throughout his stint he served in the 5th, 7th and 9th Armies, and for a while in the 3rd Army under the command of General George S. Patton. He received two Bronze Battle Stars and the Good Conduct medal. He was a member of the Malcom American Legion and pleased so many years after the war to have been honored with a Quilt of Valor for his service. The year of his discharge he earned his pilot's license under the GI bill and loved flying, especially with his initially terrified wife-to-be; his mom took flight with him, but not dad; perhaps because he once buzzed low enough over his two brothers on a tractor in the field that one of their hats blew off.

Merle A. Lamb

Merle A. Lamb, 99, of Grinnell died on Dec. 11, 2021, at UnityPoint Grinnell Regional Medical Center.

A funeral service has been scheduled for 1 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 16, at the Smith Funeral Home in Grinnell. Burial will be in Hazelwood Cemetery in Grinnell.

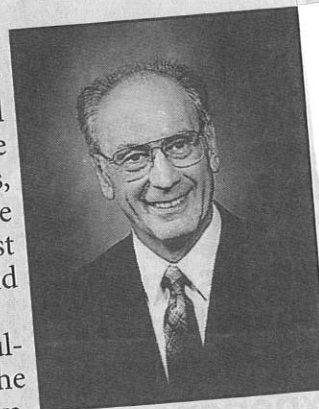
Visitation will be held from 2 to 8 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 15 at the Smith Funeral Home and with the Lamb family present from 5 to 8 p.m. Wednesday evening.

June 21, 1952, in the small St. John's Lutheran Church on Elm Street, he married Ruth Kathryn Parker, the girl he had once taken to a dance at the college's girl's gym when he was on leave in the service, that same girl who on other than dancing dates, had braved his airplane antics just as his strong, vibrant, and feisty mother had. Later baptized at St. John's on East Street he continued as a member. Cherishing his wife of 69 and a half years, he was a caring and meticulous husband and father who made sure his children never lacked the opportunity to pursue their heart's desire. As he nurtured them the expansive precisely groomed farm of a back yard garden and orchard transformed into the neighborhood swingset playground, ball diamond, football field, and motorcycle track to the entertainment of neighborhood retirees; his garage, into the neighborhood bicycle and fix it shop. Lifetime neighbors often felt his helping hand and he was one of the early Leave it Better Than You Found It award recipients. Thrilled having ridden a motorcycle while standing on the seat in his early years, come 1972, at age 50, he bought his first, a Bridgestone 90 his kids rode more than he did. He later rode Harley Davidsons into his 80s, letting his son ride the first he purchased to high school, and even for dates, so long as all bugs were cleaned off afterward; Merle claimed motorcycles were the next best thing to airplanes.

A jack-of-all-trades, he drove a semi-truck back and forth to the Chicago stockyards for a year and five months, was employed by numerous farmers, worked at the Phillips 66 filling station and at the local Swift chicken hatchery, but for 38 years and 10 months from 1948 to 1987 he had become a loyal union member who worked throughout plants one and two at Maytag in Newton. Regularly he carpooled with his brother and others and one year won Maytag's maximum employee idea award. Oh, for just one more Russell Stover pecan turtle delight together flying 500 feet above the earth!

Merle is survived by his loving wife Ruth, daughter, Diane Sue Lamb, son and daughter-in-law, Dale Allen Lamb and Mary J. Lamb, grandson, Jacob Allen Lamb, many nieces, nephews, and good friends. Devoted son, Dennis Eugene Lamb, preceded him in death as did his parents, Ruth's parents, his four brothers, Truman, Faye, La Verne, and Shirel, two sisters; Bernice Pals and Maxine Smith, four brother-in-laws and five sister-in-laws.

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