

Recase

11-3-2023

## ELLEN MERCK

Dec. 23, 1924 - Oct. 27, 2023

Ellen Merck, 98 of Grinnell and formerly of Montezuma passed away October 27, 2023 at St. Francis Manor in Grinnell. Services will be at 10:30 a.m. Wednesday, November 1, at Montezuma United Methodist Church. Burial will be in the Jackson Township Cemetery, Montezuma. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Hammond Center, Heifer Project, Montezuma United Methodist Church or the Grinnell United Methodist Church. Holland-Coble Funeral Home of Montezuma is in charge of arrangements.

Ellen Arlene Merck was born December 23, 1924 on the Iowa/Poweshiek County line east of Deep River, to George Jacob Rank and Freela Lou Hicklin Rank. She had three younger brothers, Bernard, Daryl and David. Ellen was graduated from Deep River High School in 1942.

After going to William Penn, she was able to teach country school at Bunker Hill and Scott #7 as well as in Thornburg. She also coached girls' basketball while teaching in Thornburg.

Ellen was united in marriage to Eugene Jordan Merck February 23, 1946. To this union three children were born, Rebecca, Lynn and JoAnn. The Merck's also added Dwaine Gooding to their family in 1954. Eugene and Ellen started farming SE of Deep River after they were married, then bought the farm NE of Montezuma.

She was active in the church, Farm Bureau, 4-H leader, Grange, cards, popcorn group, and going on many trips. Gene and Ellen visited every state, Canada and Mexico and went to visit their granddaughter, Kathy, in Denmark visiting other countries while there. Sewing was Ellen's passion, she made close to 500 pillow case dolls, quilts for every child and grandchild.

At the Hammond Center, she continued sewing and made turtle mops for everyone and sewed prayer pocket quilts, she also made stuffed animals, bears and geese. Ellen grew vegetables and she and Gene even became master gardeners together.

Ellen loved planting flowers in shoes and made everyone bring her a pair of shoes. Her Christmas cactus was her pride and joy. Ellen was a devoted Christian. Watching church services on TV was her usual routine on Sunday mornings after moving to the Hammond Center Assisted Living.

She is survived by her children, Becky Schlesselman of Grinnell and Jo (Steve) Wiley of New Sharon; a bonus son, Dwaine Gooding of West Burlington, daughter-in-law, Donna Merck of Kalona; grandchildren, Ray Schlesselman, Kathy (Henning) Bilgrav, Jeannie (Christian) Zulauf, Elonda (Adam) Eischen, Melissa (Clint) Spurgeon, Chad Wiley, Ryan (Kate) Merck, Michelle Merck, Erik (Beth) Gooding; 20 great grandchildren, and one great great grandchild; brothers, Daryl (Nell) Rank and David (Nancy) Rank; as well as many other relatives and friends.

Preceding her in death is her husband, Eugene; her parents, George and Freela Rank; her son, Lynn Merck; her brother, Bernard (Lucille) Rank, son-in-law, David Schlesselman and daughter-in-law, Vonda Gooding.