

## **Richard Henry "Fritz" Johnson, 81**

*Jan. 20, 1918 - Jan. 6, 2000*

**KIMBALLTON** - Richard Henry "Fritz" Johnson, son of Carl F. and Ella C. (Thompson) Johnson, was born Jan. 20, 1918, in Douglas Township, rural Shelby County. He was raised in Douglas Township, near Kirkman. After graduating from Kirkman High School in 1935, he attended Drake University in Des Moines, for one year.

June 22, 1947, he married Virginia A. Petersen in the Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Jacksonville. The couple began farming in the Irwin area and continued farming there until 1953. After living in Ashland, NE for two years, they moved to Oakland, where he sold cars and represented Squealer Feed for 22 years. While living in Oakland, he served as a city councilman. Fritz and Virginia returned to Shelby County and lived on the Petersen family farm located in Jackson Township, six miles northeast of Jacksonville. He was a member of Bethlehem Lutheran Church, and was always active in community service. He was a 32°, 50-year Mason, and past master of both Sardi Lodge AF & AM #444 of Irwin, and Ark Lodge #335 of Oakland. He was also a member of the Scottish Rite and Tangier Shrine Temple in Omaha. He played basketball for Kirkman when he was a youth. He then refereed basketball games in Shelby County from the late 1930's - 1940's. He died Jan. 6, 2000, at Jennie Edmundson Hospital in Co. Bluffs, at age 81 years, 11 months and 17 days.



Preceding him in death were his parents; one brother, Gaillard Johnson; and two sisters, Agrita Caruthers and Frances Miller. Survivors include his wife, Virginia Johnson of Kimballton; one son, Franklin Johnson of Plant City, FL; two daughters, Ellen (Dr. Kevan) Whitsitt of Columbia, MO and Catherine (William) Neumann of West Des Moines; one brother, Donald (Yvonne) Johnson of Webster City; one sister, Edna (Donald) Wickersham of Des Moines; four grandchildren, Julie Whitsitt, Collin Whitsitt, Alexander Neumann and Peter Neumann; and other relatives.

Funeral services were held Jan. 10, 2000, at Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Jacksonville, with Pastor Mary Lunde officiating. Honorary casket bearers were Gale Barratt, Garland Barratt, Harry Petersen, Jr., Everett Greve, Keith Campbell and Russell E. Petersen. Casket bearers were Paul Petersen, Edward Andersen, Ronald Petersen, Neil Ohms, David Christensen, Roger Johnson and Jerry Wickersham. Burial was in the Jacksonville Cemetery. Burmeister-Johannsen Funeral Home in charge of arrangements.