

Willis Lippold, 76

June 30, 1923 - May 21, 2000

AVOCA - Willis George Lippold was born June 20, 1923, in Pleasant Township southwest of Avoca, son of George and Hertha Bornholdt Lippold. He was one of five children. He attended country school through the eighth grade. Willis was then needed at home to help with the farming operation. He entered the United States Army Dec. 29, 1942. He served in the United States and Italy. He was discharged Jan. 6, 1946, and returned to Avoca, to work for his dad.

He married Evelyn Nelson Aug. 12, 1949. They were the parents of four children, Steve, Judy, Dale and Cindy. All the children helped on the farm with the haying, chores, thrashing, breaking horses and truck drives for their Grandpa George. When George died Willis inherited the buildings and the 60 acres where their family resided. In 1972 Dick Sparrow of Zearing asked Willis and Evelyn to help put a 40-horse hitch together for the Milwaukee Circus Parade. They took it on the road for five years to parades like the Rose Bowl, Cotton Bowl, Indianapolis, Nashville and New York. Willis was head horseman and lead out-rider. Evelyn was head cook for the crew of 50-75 people. The horses were sold in 1978, because they had no sponsor. In 1988, Paul Sparrow, Dick's son, started up again with the 40-horse hitch and Willis was back with him as head horseman and lead out-rider. They drove every year at the Milwaukee Circus Parade. Willis died at Oakland Manor Nursing Home May 21, 2000, at age 76 years, 11 months and one day.

He was preceded in death by his parents. He is survived by his wife, Evelyn; their children, Steve (Debbie) of Avoca; Judy (Fred) Brunner of Ames; Dale (Melody) of Avoca and Cindy of Ankeny; his sister, Dorothy (Tony) Schneider of Columbus, NE; three brothers, Earl (Joanne) of Shelby; Loring (Donna) and Larry (Adine), all of Avoca; seven grandchildren and six great grandchildren; nieces, nephews and other relatives.

Funeral services were held May 24, 2000, at the Trinity Lutheran Church, Avoca, with Pastor John Rinde and Lay Assistant Wayne Paulsen officiating. Burial was in the Graceland Cemetery with military graveside rites performed by the Veterans of Foreign Wars. Honorary casket bearers were Phil McBride, Kenny Greiman, Paul Sparrow, Mark Sparrow, Lynn Apenhorst, Terry Pierce, Bill Couser, Brad Schreiber, Dick Sparrow, Paul Sparrow, Jamie Sparrow, Tim Sparrow, Paul Sparrow, Robert Sparrow, Curt Ramirez and Denny Meggers. Casket bearers were Jeff Carroll, Larry Knop, Andy Willet, Chris Welch, Phill Zimmerman and Dean Willet. Knutson Funeral Home in charge of arrangements.