

Holton,



Irene Verana Cowger, 104, of Holton, passed away Friday, July 10, 2020 at Vintage Park in Holton. She was born November 28, 1915 in Soldier, KS, the daughter of John W. and Sophia V. (Baertch) Spiker.

Irene married Arch (Dick) Cowger on November 7, 1935 in Hiawatha, KS. They started their lives together farming in and around Soldier and Circleville, eventually settling outside of Soldier. Irene moved to Holton in 1985 after Dick passed away.

Irene and her twin sister, Lorene, left school at age 16 and entered the workforce to help support the family. School was very important to her but family always came first. Even after she married, she made sure the children who lived around their farm made it to school by picking them up and driving them to their schools. There were usually 4 – 6 youngsters in the car. On September 25, 2019, at the age of 103, Irene was honored with a Jackson Heights High School diploma.

Irene was never idle very long. She was a 4-H Leader through the Jackson County Extension Service for many years and was honored at the Grand Marshall of the Jackson County 4-H Fair Parade at age 90. She was a member of the East Grant Club, a long- time member of the Holton Hospital Auxiliary, volunteered for the Holton community dinners and enjoyed square dancing into her mid 90's.

She was probably best known for her champion pies and quilts. She started quilting at the age of 16. The very first quilt she made resided on her bed at Vintage Park in Holton. When asked how many quilts she had made in her lifetime, she thought she had made over 100. In 2010, she selected and delivered a quilt for each of her nieces and nephews.

Her parents; her husband, Arch; and her siblings, Gladys Slocum, Clifford, Leonard, Raymond, her twin sister, Lorene Bottenberg, Gordon and little Ivan Lowell, preceded Irene in death.

Many relatives and friends survive.

Irene will lie in state beginning Monday, July 13, 2020 at the Mercer Funeral Home in Holton. Graveside Service will be 10:00 a.m. Thursday, July 16, 2020 at Olive Hill Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be given to Avalon Hospice c/o Mercer Funeral Home, P.O. Box 270, Holton, KS 66436. To leave a special message for the family, please visit www.mercerfuneralhomes.com.