

Milton Jule (Mick) Simpson, 89, of Burwell, Nebraska died April 6, 2013, at Community Memorial Health Center in Burwell.

Funeral services will be 10:30 a.m. Wednesday, April 10, 2013 at the United Methodist Church in Burwell, Nebraska. Burial will be in Cottonwood Cemetery in Burwell. Pastor Dennis Davenport will officiate. Visitation will be Tuesday from 5 – 7 p.m. at Hitchcock Funeral Home in Burwell. In Lieu of flowers, memorials are suggested to the Methodist Church or the Burwell Veterans Park.

Mick was born February 22, 1924, in St. Edward, Nebraska to Henry and Eula (Phillipps) Simpson. One of twelve children, six boys and six girls, Mick and his family moved to Burwell in 1933 in search of work. Mick graduated from Burwell High School in 1943, president of his senior class.

Mick joined the armed services during World War II in 1943. His military education included training as a paratrooper in the U.S. Army. He also served with the Army Corps of Engineers in England, France, and Germany in the building of bridges, airfields, mine clearings, and roads. He proudly served along with four of his five brothers. His mother kept five stars in her window in honor of her sons until they all came home.

After his discharge from the Army in 1946, Mick returned home to the girl he left behind, Hilda Adamek. Hilda returned to Burwell in the spring of 1947 from California where she had also contributed to the war effort by working as a riveter for the Boeing Aircraft Factory. They were married August 9, 1947, in Grand Island, Nebraska. Together, they raised four children in whom they instilled their patriotism and love of God, country, and community.

Mick worked hard in the plumbing business for sixty years. He first worked as a plumber for Bill Johnson and then started his own business, Burwell Plumbing and Well Drilling, with his partner, Les Stahlecker. In the fall of 1972, his son, Ron and family, moved home from Fairbanks, Alaska, and Ron began working in the business. After Mick and Les dissolved the partnership in 1975, Mick and Ron went into business together as operators of Burwell Plumbing and Heating. In 1990, Ron and Judy bought the business from Mick and Hilda. Although technically Mick was no longer the boss, Ron always lovingly continued to call his dad "Chief." Mick served customers in the plumbing business until he was in his eighties.

Mick was a long-time member of First United Methodist Church, American Legion Clifford Clark Post #298, and the Burwell Volunteer Fire Department. It was an honor for Mick to serve as a member of the Burwell Color Guard. He willingly gave of his time by helping each year with the avenue of flags in preparation for Memorial Day. While his children were in the public school system, Mick also served on the Burwell Public School Board.

Mick loved all sports, especially the Burwell Longhorns, the Nebraska Cornhuskers, and the Chicago Cubs. He was an avid hunter and sportsman, but his greatest past time was fishing. His favorite spot was at the Phillipps place in Brown County. He especially enjoyed outings with his children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. He patiently baited hooks and untangled fishing lines, always giving the fishing accolades to the younger ones. In 1999, Mick earned his Master Angler award.

Mick was a friend to all. Whether he was in his pickup or on the street, he always had a wave or a whistle for everyone. He had a keen sense of humor and a hearty laugh. He loved a good joke, and rumor has it that he might have instigated a practical joke or two in his time. He relished his morning coffee group and the company of his friends. He was always ready for a good game of cards.

Family was very important to Mick. He was proud of his four children and loved them deeply. He also enjoyed the company of extended family including nieces and nephews. The Simpson family reunion was a special time of the year for him.

Mick is survived by his four children; Ron and his wife, Judy Simpson of Burwell, Nebraska; Rhonda and her husband Doug Roberts of Pueblo, Colorado; Nancy and her husband Jerome Maxson of Kearney, Nebraska, and Paula and her husband Matt Young of Milford Nebraska; six grandchildren, sixteen great-grandchildren; one sister Donna and her husband Herman Johnson of Colorado Springs, Colorado, and several nieces and nephews.

Mick was preceded in death by his parents; his wife, Hilda, five brothers, Robert (Buck), Henry (Jack), Donald (Doc), Darrell, and William (Bill) Simpson; five sisters, Mildred Christensen, Naomi (Nippy) Snyder, Dorothy Wagner, Lola Greathouse, and Joan McGrew.