

William Howe "Bill, Bud, Willie" Pearl was born in St. Johnsbury Aug. 16, 1921, the son of Raymond A. and Alida Howe Pearl. His early life was spent on Cliff Street until the premature illness in 1936 of his father. This changed forever the life of the family. He attended all eight grades in Summer Street School and graduated from St. Johnsbury Academy with the Class of 1939. His first employment was with the A. H. Gleason Grocery Co. at the corner of Main and Central streets, a great place to work, with Ray P. Bailey, proprietor. Before leaving for the United States Army in 1942, he lived with wonderful friends, Mr. and Mrs. Charles W. Ruiter at 120 Main St. Mr. Pearl was assigned as a member of the cadre at Fort Devens in Massachusetts, going on numerous trips to deliver troops to various stations in the eastern part of the country. In 1943 he was assigned to Camp Edwards, Mass., where he was a corporal of the Guard for the East Coast Processing Center. On Jan. 8, 1944, he married his longtime sweetheart, Lucia Johnson, at South Congregational Church in St. Johnsbury. In January 1944, he went to infantry training at Camp Croft, S.C., with a large contingent from the South. At the close of training, William Pearl was sent to the to Ford Ord, Calif. He became a member of the 21st Infantry Regimental Combat Team, Col. William J. Verbeck commanding. The outfit went from Layte to Mindoro and thence to the small island of Lubang. The next landing was at the large island of Mindanao. While he was on the ship, report came that President Roosevelt had died. Cpl. Pearl, throughout the campaign, was advanced in grade three times to sergeant, to staff sergeant and to technical sergeant in charge of a platoon. Throughout the campaign the men were on foot all the time. He was very fortunate to have survived and been one of the few in his rifle company who was able to be there every

day. The end of the war came while he was on Mindanao and his outfit was sent to the Japanese naval base at Kure with the men taking up occupation of Japan at Okayama. He returned to the United States on the Troop Ship Admiral Hugh Rodman. His first two years at home he worked for Mr. Simon Atwood at Mt. Pleasant Cemetery. He was associated with the Ralston Purina Company until he was offered the position of caretaker in 1953 at Mt. Pleasant Cemetery upon the death of Mr. Atwood. This work interested him very much and he was able to open up several areas in the cemetery, and in 1966 open the first crematory in the state of Vermont. While at the cemetery, he took an abiding interest in the cemetery, gave talks on the cemetery and its people, and served as a trustee. He always had a great interest in the history of the area and was active in the St. Johnsbury Historical Society. He was a life-long member of North Congregational Church, joining under the leadership of the Rev. George Avery Neeld, who he greatly admired. While chairman of the church business committee, he was responsible for spearheading the installation of the sprinkler system and later was chairman of the North Congregational church tower fund drive to restore the church tower with the help of his friend, George Crosby, who was the treasurer. At the time of William Pearl's death, he was deacon emeritus of North Congregational Church. He served on the board of St. Johnsbury's zoning adjustment for a number of years. He and his family enjoyed canoeing, swimming and row-boating on Joe's Pond, where they purchased the small island in 1955. The family has enjoyed their farm in the town of Danville since 1959. William is survived by his beloved wife, Lucia, of 66 years; his two daughters, Peggy Pearl of East Ryegate, and Elizabeth Sargent and her husband Robert of

Danville; his daughter-in-law Sheri Sargent Pearl; five grandchildren; two great grandchildren; and a sister-in-law, Alice Johnson Blair of Danville; as well as several nieces and nephews. He was predeceased by two sons, Thomas in 1982 and John in 2009, as well as a sister, Margaret Pearl Ide in 2008. A memorial service will be held at North Congregational Church on Saturday, May 1, at 3:30 p.m. Donations may be made to The St. Johnsbury History & Heritage Center, c/o Reg Wakeham, 1302 Main St., St. Johnsbury, VT 05819.