

## **Earl and Mildred Akin**

Mildred and Earl Akin moved to Cochran County from Amherst in September of 1937. Times were bad, and they were broke. Hugh Gainer moved them and their five children north of Whiteface in a Chevrolet pickup and trailer. They came to pull cotton and head maize. Mildred was 32 years of age and Earl was 37. They had only flour, corn meal, and lard to live on until payday. Leonard and Earl Gainer lived with them in a three room house. The oldest son, Hershel, and Leonard would rabbits with a .22 single shot rifle. They fried the cotton tails and made chili with the jack rabbits, and did they taste good!

They moved in late December of 1937 to Battertown, near Maple. The kids rode in the chicken coop school bus to school at Morton.

Their community would get together in the fall and make sorghum syrup. Some members of the community were the Tuckers, Powells, and the Lowes.

In 1941, they moved east of Lehman on the C. C. Slaughter land. They moved their household belongings, and even the bundled feed. Many a trip was made with the tractor and trailer moving the bundles.

Community involvement was the main source of entertainment. The families would gather in homes or at the schoolhouse. The adults would play 42 or dominoes, and the kids would play ring games. Homemade ice cream sure tasted good for refreshments.

In December, 1941, America was provoked to enter the war. Hershel left for California and worked for Douglas Aircraft until he entered the Air Corp. Elmer volunteered for the Navy and was placed in the Army in 1944. Barbara, their youngest child, was born in September, 1944. These were troubled times for the family. Mildred and Earl were both in bad health, and Roy stayed at home to help run the farm and take care of the younger children: Dorothy, Don, and Barbara.

The family lived at Lehman until the boys came home from the war. Hard times and dry weather forced them out of farming, and they moved to Morton in 1947. Earl and the boys began carpentering. 1950 came and the Korean conflict with it. Roy was drafted and Elmer, a WWII veteran, was recalled to serve their favorite Uncle Sam.

Mildred continued to hold the family together while Earl did his carpentry work. The family attended the Methodist Church. Mildred worked with the Home Demonstration Club, Camp Fire Girls, and was supervisor at the Morton School Cafeteria for eight years.

Following his retirement, Earl continued to putter around in his shop and made many what-nots. Many of his friends and family members were recipients of his handiwork.

Earl died on April 23, 1972. Mildred stayed in Morton until August 1978. Barbara needed her to help baby-sit with her new baby, and she moved on to help her family again. Mildred still crochets and has made each of her six children and ten grandchildren afghans.

Special celebrations have included a 40th anniversary in 1962. Many family members and friends attended wishing them many more happy years.

May 25, 1985, Mildred celebrated her 80th birthday. Her children and their families honored her with a party, inviting all her friends to come help celebrate.

Mildred and Earl watched a county and their children grow to maturity and felt proud of their contributions.

*Submitted by Elmer Akin*

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