

On January 19, 1849, Pleasant Cockerham acquired 112 acres of land on the south fork of the Mitchell's River for \$225.00 from John Kennedy. Pleasant was married to the former Elizabeth (Betsy) Snow, born April 6, 1834. They had two children; Plutina, born September 29, 1860, and Thomas Frost. Pleasant left to fight for the South in the Civil War and never returned. Assuming Pleasant was dead, the land was divided by his heirs, Plutina and Thomas Frost Cockerham.

W.R. Wilmoth married an Irish girl by the name of Joanna and they had four children, three daughters and one son by the name of Robert, born March 9, 1855. The Wilmoth family resided in the Zephyr community.

Robert Wilmoth married Plutina Cockerham November 16, 1877. At the time of their marriage, they bought Thomas Frost's interest in the Pleasant Cockerham land. Robert and Plutina had ten children, six girls and four boys. Henry Etter (1879-1968), Elizabeth Myrtle (1882-1956), Betty Florence (1884-1956), Mary Mamie (1888-1962), Plutina Bertie (1892-), Phola Edgar (1893-1950),

Robert Lonnie (1895-1949), Richard Grady (1897-1970), Elsie Beatrice (1900-1919), Raymond Parker (Dick) (1903-1946). As of this writing, all are deceased except Bertie who is retired in Winston-Salem after serving as Hostess of the Winston-Salem Woman's Club for many years.

Robert, in addition to being a good husband, father and farmer served for many years as Magistrate and Deputy Sheriff of Surry County under J.W. Davis, Sheriff. He, also served on the local school committee for several years. Between the years 1905-1909, Robert purchased and additional 112 acres making the farm a total of 224 acres.

The children of Robert and Plutina settled in different parts of the country. The only one to return and stay in Surry County was Mamie. She married Ralph Edward Beane on October 30, 1910, and had three sons: Ralph Wilmoth born November 26, 1913, in Helena, Arkansas; John Robert born August 3, 1916, in Thomasville, N.C.; Ralph Edward, Jr. born April 3, 1922, in Flowery Branch, Ga.

Mamie and her three sons returned to Surry County in 1927 to live with her parents after she was divorced from Ralph. It was evident almost from the beginning that her oldest son, Ralph, would carry on the farm. It became more evident at the death of Robert, his grandfather on July 25, 1929.

All three boys graduated from Mountain Park High School, although Ralph was the first person to receive a diploma from the new building, Chatham Hall, at Mountain Park Institute.

Plutina Wilmoth died August 17, 1932, leaving the Wilmoth estate to her heirs. In 1934, Mamie and her oldest son purchased the estate from the heirs for \$4500.00. During this time, Mamie worked at Chatham Manufacturing Company from 1930 until her retirement in 1951. In 1930, the Beanes bought their first car, a 1929 A-Model Ford. They continued to farm and raise tobacco until 1940, when they started a dairy farm with 10 cows.

On December 22, 1940, Ralph married Nell May Byrd, daughter of Luther and Nelia Byrd of Wilkes County. They had a daughter, Mary

Elizabeth, born April 14, 1942.

Ralph and Nell continued to farm and increase their number of dairy cows and continued to milk by hand. Ralph became involved with Triple-A, a committee measuring tobacco. Later, this committee was to become ASC and was instrumental in obtaining Federal Crop Insurance for insuring tobacco. He was appointed to the Tri-Creek Soil & Water Conservation for Surry County in 1943, and is still serving.

In 1943, Ralph aided in getting subscribers for both rural electric and telephone. Due to the shortage of supplies during World War Two, electricity was not realized on the Beane farm until 1946, and the telephone was not available until 1950. Ralph and Nell purchased their first electric milking machine in 1949. At that time, they built a dairy barn and sold Grade C milk to the Carnation Company for \$2.50 per one hundred pounds. 24 years later at their retirement, they were milking 75 cows and selling Grade A milk to Sealtest Dairies.

Ralph continued with his community involvement and was elected a director of the Rural Electric Association in 1951. He was elected President in 1964, and serves in that capacity today.

During the many long hours of work by Ralph, Nell, and Mamie working and supporting each other, the farm became a very rewarding and productive homestead. Nell and Mamie always made sure the freezer was filled and the shelves lined with fresh fruits and vegetables from the garden. In 1951, they built a very comfortable ranch-style home directly behind the original homeplace. Shortly after completion of the home, they purchased two additional tracts of land making the farm acreage approximately 314 acres.

Ralph served as a director of the Farm Bureau from 1956-1960. He has served in the capacity of Vocational Advisor for all Surry County Schools and School Board Committee at both Mountain Park High School and Surry Central High School since 1954. He has also been active in the Ruritan Club, serving as President for two years.

The Beane family attended Mountain Park Baptist Church where Ralph served as Sunday School Superintendent for six years and has been a Deacon since 1952. Nell sang in the choir, and Mary played the piano for four years. Mamie died February 28, 1962, and is buried in the Mountain Park Cemetery.

Mary graduated from Mountain Park High School and Mitchell College, Statesville, N.C. She married Steve Elam on November 28, 1963. She and husband Steve have a son Michael Stephen, born December 23, 1966, and a son Jeffrey Lindon, born May 15, 1971, reside in Dunwoody, Georgia.

Sources: Family Bible and personal knowledge.

— Ralph Wilmoth Beane
and Mary Beane Elam