

Ed & Donna Hamilton's *Legacy*

Legacies of faith and of love have built, and continue to nurture, our church and this great nation.

The lives and legacy of Ed and Donna Hamilton illustrate for United Methodists in Missouri just how much we have been blessed by those who have gone before us. In their honor, the Foundation has created a special designation for grants used in support of rural ministries. Such grants are to be identified as "Hamilton Grants" in honor and memory of these extraordinary persons.

The Hamiltons were dedicated members of the Elmo United Methodist Church in Nodaway County, Missouri, and are remembered by family and friends as persons of considerable social awareness and concern.

Following World War II, Ed was appointed by President Truman as one of three Missouri Commissioners of Agriculture. Ed was an active participant in helping rebuild European livestock herds after the war, accompanying shipments of cattle overseas. At one time, Ed was cited as the person who knew Missouri agriculture the best.

Ed and Donna had no children, but were beloved by a large extended family. Reverend Richard Phillips, the Hamilton's great nephew, remembers his Aunt and Uncle as "remarkable persons" who "were 'parents' to many of their siblings' offspring." Rev. Phillips remembers fondly, "I had the great fortune to live with them and to farm with them for a time. My wife and I farmed with them the first year we were married."

*Right:
Ed & Donna on a
wedding anniversary*



Ed Hamilton and a favorite horse—Cir. 1940



Elmo UMC Men's Class cir. 1930, taught by Ed

A close family friend of the Hamiltons was their former pastor, Bishop Monk Bryan. He had many fond memories of riding horses with the Hamiltons on their farm, introducing his young family to the pleasures he knew as a boy in rural Texas. Bishop Bryan treasured the saddle given to him by the Hamiltons and recalls with a smile Donna's favorite horse, named 'Sunday.'

Ed and Donna's estate plan gave final expression to their life and faith. They made arrangements for bequests to extended family, loved ones and their beloved local church. In keeping with their larger vision for the community of faith, however, the Hamiltons used the Foundation as the instrument of their largest financial legacy.

Mrs. Hamilton died in 1979, at which time the Hamilton's farm was bequeathed to the Foundation. Valued at nearly \$700,000, the proceeds from the sale of the farm became a major part of the Foundation endowment. To date, the Hamilton gift has provided grants to ministries throughout the state greatly exceeding the original gift. Meanwhile, the original gift continues to grow and will extend the reach of the of the Hamilton legacy for generations to come.