

Dean Blakely, 85

Oct. 24, 1918 - Dec. 6, 2003

CRANSTON, RI – Harold Dean Blakely, the son of Archie and Hazel (Tilton) Blakely, was born Oct. 24, 1918, in Harlan. He graduated from Harlan High School in 1936, and began farming the family homestead in Lincoln Township. In 1968, in keeping with his interest in promoting and raising good meat-type hogs, Deane toured Europe with a farm group, observing hog operations. Deane was an active soil conservationist, and while serving as township committeeman for the ASCS, he developed one of the first farm plans with terraced contour farming methods. He sat on many farm related committees and boards including the Shelby County Fair Board. The first chairman of the County Extension Council, he was also a 4-H leader. Deane was a member of both the Shelby County Beef Producers and the Shelby County Pork Producers. In 1970, he was named the first Shelby County Pork Producer of the Year.

Deane married Erma Wilkinson Gauer May 23, 1970, in Harlan. The couple moved to Cranston, RI, in February 2003. Deane was an active member of the First United Methodist Church in Harlan, where he held many church offices and served as an usher for over 40 years. He died Dec. 6, 2003, at the Harborside Healthcare Greenwood House in Warwick, RI, at age 85 years, one month and 12 days.

Deane was preceded in death by his parents and a brother, Jamie Blakely. He is survived by his wife, Erma Blakely, of Cranston, RI; one stepson, Paul (Madelon) Gauer of Cameron, MT; one stepdaughter, Pamela (William) Sanders of Cranston, RI; one sister, Naomi Proffitt of Pasadena, TX; two grandsons, David Paul Gauer and Matthew William Sanders, and other relatives.

Funeral services were held Dec. 12, 2003, at Burmeister-Johannsen Funeral Home with Pastor Ed Frank of the First United Methodist Church, Harlan, officiating. Casket bearers were James Burmeister, Ronald Krohn, Dallas Klindt, Jon Awtry, Ken Blakely and Don Plumb. Burial was in the Harlan Cemetery. The Burmeister-Johannsen Funeral Home in charge of arrangements.