

ETHEL E. ELLER

Ashe County, North Carolina

George Michael Eller, 2. Peter, 3. Jacob, 4. Luke, 5. Hansford, 6. Henderson, 7 · Ethel

Ethel Eller, daughter of Henderson and Nancy "Nannie" Sullivan Eller, was born near Lansing, North Carolina, February 21, 1905, and lived her 88 years in Lansing. She married Edwin Cicero Eller, Jr. and to them were born three children, Morris Edwin, Daphne, and Laura Nan. Edwin and Ethel owned a farm on the edge of Lansing, raising corn, tobacco, cows, chickens, and planting a large garden each year.



When Edwin became postmaster in 1932, Ethel became his assistant and worked in his place while he served in the Navy during World War II. During his absence, she also ran the farm, which meant getting up before daybreak to milk and feed the cows and chickens, and to get wood in.

Their son, Morris, was serving in the Air Force and daughter Daphne was away in college. Only Laura Nan was left to help with the farm work. Ethel was appointed postmaster when Edwin retired and kept that position until her retirement at age 70.

The Ellers were strong supporters in all areas of the community. When the stone school building was being constructed in the 1930's, the Ellers lived in a large white frame house with four large rooms not being used by the family. These rooms were made available for classrooms. The frame house was later torn down and replaced by a brick house. When there was no place for boarding teachers to stay in the community, the Eller home was opened to these teachers and to some students who needed a place to stay. Over the years, many teachers became "adopted" members of the family.

A deep longing for the formal education she could not have instilled in Ethel the necessity for her three children to have college degrees.

Although they were in the midst of the "Great Depression", Ethel and Edwin made major sacrifices so that the children could attend college.

Ethel continued her encouragement to others to further their education. She served two terms on the Ashe County Board of Education; she was a member and supporter of "Friends of the Library"; and a supporter of the Arts Civic Center and Arts Council. She volunteered many hours over many years to the Heart Association and was serving on the Ashe Memorial Hospital Board of Trustees at the time of her death. Over the years, she has been an active member of the Home Demonstration Clubs. Her desire for the town of Lansing to grow and develop prompted her to give needed land to the town on which to build a well and a reservoir.

Ethel was a perky, vivacious, determined, "feisty" lady who was always in the forefront for improvement in her town, county, and state; and an ardent supporter of political leaders, both locally and nationally.

She was an active and loyal member of the Phoenix Baptist Church but she also supported the Lansing Methodist and Presbyterian Churches with her presence and her contributions.

Ethel loved people and was especially proud of her own children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren.

A. Morris Edwin was born May 17, 1924. He served in the Air Force during World War II and graduated from the University of North Carolina. He married Marilou Grosch, who died August 9, 1992. To them were born four children:

1. Roxanne was born December 22, 1958. She graduated from Appalachian State University and married Thomas Foster on May 31, 1987.
2. Todd Morris was born February 4, 1960, and graduated from Appalachian State University. He married Ruth Halik May 11, 1991. They have a son, Alexander, born September 21, 1993.
3. Gregory Edwin was born June 26, 1961. He graduated from the University of North Carolina and married Mary Anne Klimchek on May 30, 1992.
4. Tracey Louise was born January 17, 1964. She

graduated from Randolph Technical Institute with a major in photography.

B. Daphne was born June 22, 1926, and graduated from Woman's College of the University of North Carolina. She later received a master's degree in home economics and returned to earn a master's degree in library science in 1986. She married George Alan Leonard August 2, 1953. They have three children:

1. Mary Theresa was born May 12, 1955. She graduated from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro and married Craig Lewis May 8, 1978. Christopher Scott was born February 24, 1983, and Cameron Lee and Courtney Leigh were born August 24, 1986.

2. Nancy Catherine was born February 8, 1957. She graduated from Appalachian State University and married Robert Jordan February 24, 1980. Robert Lee, Jr. was born February 10, 1983 and Laura Catherine was born April 23, 1985.

3. Elizabeth Eller was born March 28, 1960. She graduated from the University of North Carolina and married Dale Paulson on November 1, 1986. They have one daughter, Kelly Elizabeth, born September 8, 1993.

C. Laura Nan was born July 2, 1932. She graduated from Appalachian State University and married Arthur Wasserman November 22, 1964. He died July 11, 1980. She has no children.

In her later years, Ethel's strongest dream was that her children would build retirement homes near her. Just a few months before her death, her dream was fulfilled. All three children have homes side-by-side at Ellerdale Acres, overlooking Phoenix Mountain, which is believed to be named for the ship "Phoenix" which brought George Michael Eller to America from Germany in 1743.

In Ethel's kitchen hangs a needlepoint plaque which reads: "Ask God's blessings on your work, but don't ask Him to do it." This reflects her own personal philosophy, and she lived this philosophy to the fullest. One of the many sympathy cards received after her death on October 19, 1993, expresses beautifully how this loving, kind, generous lady will be remembered: "Those we

hold most dear never truly leave us ... they live on in the kindness they showed, the comfort they shared, and the love they brought into our lives."

Name: Daphne Eller Leonard

Address: P.O. Box 416

Lansing, NC 28643

Source of information: Personal knowledge