In 1938, Ralph Shannon began his farming career in the Cousins community near Plainview. In 1939, he married Elizabeth Keniston.

After their marriage, they continued to live and farm in the Cousins community until 1948, when they moved to the Halfway community, where they farmed until they retired in 1980.

At Halfway, they were devoted to the community and the First Baptist Church of Halfway. Elizabeth served as church organist for 20 years and Ralph served as Trustee until his death.

Ralph and Elizabeth had no children of their own, but whether young family members, or children of friends, they encouraged them all to pursue an education. Upon retiring, they agreed that they would establish an endowed scholarship at Wayland Baptist University to enable young people to obtain a Christian education.