

William S. "Bill" Farner, 83 *25*

May 10, 1911 - Feb. 8, 1995

Carroll - William S. "Bill" Farner, who for 15 years as mayor guided Carroll through major economic growth and oversaw completion of significant community projects, died early Feb. 8, 1995 of complications from pneumonia. He was 83.

Funeral services for Mr. Farner, founder of Farner-Bocken Co. of Carroll, were Feb. 11, 1995, at First United Methodist Church in Carroll with Rev. Lanny Tuttle, Robert S. Bruner and Dr. L.B. Westendorf officiating.

Honorary casket bearers were Dr. L.B. Westendorf, Robert S. Bruner, Louis Nagl, Vernis Juergens and Bill Evans. Casket bearers were Steve Farner Jr., Tyler Farner, Jay Norgaard, Tom Anderson, Matt Farner, Dean Onken and Jeff Honold. Burial was at the Carroll cemetery.

He was born May 10, 1911, at Stuart, NE, son of Sophet and Louisa (Nieter) Farner, and spent his younger years in the Stuart community. He graduated from Stuart Community High School. He attended the University of Nebraska for one year on a football scholarship. He then moved to Harlan.

He and Lois M. Hulsebus were married April 4, 1935, at Harlan. After attending the University of Nebraska, he was a salesman with Liggett & Meyers Tobacco. He moved to Carroll in 1939, and with Don Bocken, established the Farner-Bocken Co. in Carroll. It opened as a two-man, one-truck wholesale business. During the 1940s and 1950s, Farner-Bocken's sales force grew rapidly and in the 1960s and 1970s new branches were added. The firm has continued to grow and prosper in recent years under the direction of Farner's four sons and two sons-in-law.

John Norgaard, a native of Harlan, is the current president of the company, which now has 400 employees which serves stores in seven Midwest states.

While mayor, he led efforts toward Carroll's first urban renewal project, a \$7 million program that razed part of Carroll's business district and rebuilt it as an enclosed shopping mall. Part of the project was a city-county government complex that bears his name.

Farner played baseball in his early years, Norgaard said, and helped to establish the Iowa State Baseball League. He also was instrumental in developing a baseball stadium in Carroll and later the Community Recreation Center.

He helped lead a community drive in 1970 to build the current St. Anthony Hospital. After Farner's wife, Lois, died about five months ago, Farner-Bocken donated \$100,000 in her name to an expansion project at the hospital.

Iowa Gov. Harold Hughes appointed Farner to the Iowa Development Commission in 1965. He served as commission chairman for three years.

Farner founded and was first president of the Iowa Association of Tobacco Distributors and also served on the board of the National Tobacco Distributors Association.

He was a member of First United Methodist Church of Carroll, the Loyal Order of Moose, Signet Lodge No. 264 AF AM, the Benevolent and Protective order of Elks, the Carroll Country Club and the Carroll Chamber of Commerce.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Lois, Sept. 7, 1994; a grandson, Christopher Farner; four brothers, Frank, Lloyd, Ben and Leo Farner; and a sister, Leslie Hewett. He is survived by six children and their spouses: Sam Farner (Delores) of Cedar Rapids, Sally Norgaard (John) of Carroll, Steve Farner (LaVonne) of Ames, Cy Farner (Sandy) of Sioux Falls, SD, Sara Anderson (Dennis) of Carroll and Tom Farner (Jean) of Carroll; 10 grandchildren; four great-grandchildren; a brother, Ted Farner (June) of Centerville; and a sister, Zana Menuey (Arnold) of Phoenix, AZ.

Sharp Funeral Home in charge of arrangements.