

FRIDAY INSURANCE AGENCY, INC.

“Tales from the Aisles”

By Mickey Thomas

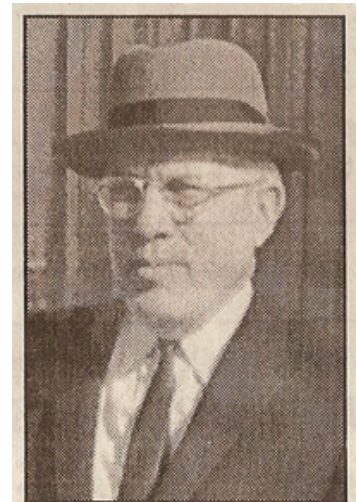
A limited series about visions and memories that linger in the aisles after a career in Robinson’s, Osceola’s landmark business.

Main Street History – the Friday Insurance Agency

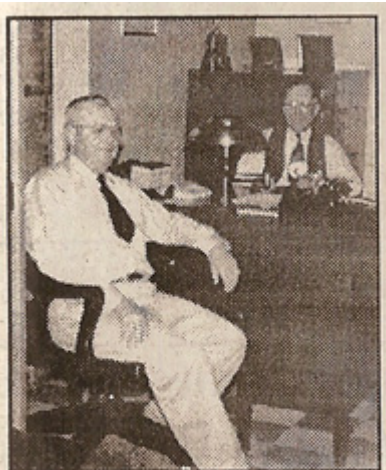
Clarence Friday grew up in Murray. His first job out of school was at Goldsmith’s, a large general store, located on the southwest corner of the Osceola square that was later destroyed in the tragic fire of 1917. Friday also worked at the Osceola State Bank which was on the southeast corner of the square where Hart’s Fashion and Bridal is now located.

Clarence Friday became associated with Fred Carlson, President of Madrid State bank, when Carlson hired Friday to be bank Cashier. Clarence Friday met and married Fred Carlson’s sister Linnea Ringstrind. In 1932 the Madrid State Bank closed. Fred Carlson and Clarence Friday went to work for the Farm Credit Association in Omaha, Carlson as a land appraiser, and Friday as a loan supervisor.

Osceola’s oldest independent insurance agency began in 1935 in the depths of the Great Depression when Clarence Friday and Fred Carlson purchased the Clyde Insurance Agency which was located above Robinson’s Store. The first location of the Carlson-Friday Insurance Agency was on the second floor of the Dalby building just north of Redman’s Pizza and Steak House, the building where Marce’s Gold Boutique is located. At the time there were 30 licensed insurance AGENTS IN Osceola. A few familiar



Clarence Friday



Fred Carlson and
Clarence Friday.
1959 photo

names of agents were Ross See, Harold Young and Warren Barnard. In 1942 the Carlson Friday Insurance Agency moved to the second floor above the Lyric Theater across the hall from the E.K. Jones law office.

Clarence Friday managed the insurance agency and Fred Carlson was the salesman. I remember Fred Carlson vividly as a well-liked down to earth type of guy who was equally comfortable selling insurance to farmers, merchants and home owners. Carlson made the practice of calling on his customers yearly to review their insurance needs. For 15 years Fred Carlson organized the “farmer-businessmen” dinners that were held at rural churches throughout the county. Carlson made contacts with the church ladies who could cook and serve the meals, he sold tickets, and planned the programs. The ladies of the churches valued the opportunity to earn money to support their Church. The food at these dinners was great as each church group tries to serve up the best food.

Clarence Friday was a pillar in the business community. He was instrumental in bringing our early industries, Snowdons and Miller Products, to Osceola. Although he was a “workaholic”, he enjoyed visiting Osceola businesses. Frequently referred to by his initials, C.D., he always dressed in a suit, tie and hat. C.D.’s usually serious face would light up with a big smile when we met in the aisles. His mannerisms always conveyed to me the feeling that this was an important visit.

Fred Carlson retired in 1958. It was at this period of time that Noel Friday, son of Clarence Friday, became associated with the agency after having worked in the Des Moines office of the Hawkeye Security Insurance Co. The firm name then became the Friday Insurance Agency Inc.



As existing insurance agents chose retirement the Friday Insurance Agency began buying agencies. In 1962 the Friday Insurance Agency purchased the agency and building belonging to Ernie Garris and Ray Overholtzer at 205 South Main Street, a location long occupied by the Banta Abstract Company. Friday’s would occupy this location until 1974 when they built their present office building adjacent to the south on land where Dr. Kraft’s office had been located.



Through the years Friday’s have had a loyal staff. Vesta Emary was office manager for many years. She was succeeded by long tenured manager, Shirley Woods. The present office manager, Elaine Lee, has worked for the Friday Insurance Agency for 28 years. The first home owner’s insurance policy that Noel Friday remembers selling was to the Glen Moore Hughes family when Elaine was just a baby.

Clarence Friday enjoyed his work and it seemed so fitting that when his time came that he died at his desk at the Friday Insurance Agency in 1975. Noel Friday has successfully continued the Friday insurance Agency using the business plan developed by his father.

Noel Friday’s interest in collecting antique cars has led to the selling of specialized insurance products to other car collectors and car clubs. Twenty years ago Noel created a unique insurance policy for insuring bull studs. The policy insures the animal’s life and the owner against mix up and mislabeling semen.

Doug Miller is the associate agent at Friday’s. Brenda Reasoner is the accountant. The Friday Insurance Agency serves 10 counties and is licensed in 13 states.

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