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Growing Up With Waterloo

Since the pioneers first crossed the Mississippi into the Black Hawk Purchase, millions of men and women have been proud to call themselves Iowans. Over the century and a quarter that has elapsed between 1833 and 1958, these Iowans have exhibited rare qualities of courage, industry, and perseverance, coupled with a firm belief in education and faith in Almighty God.

It took a lot of dedicated sons and daughters of Hawkeyeland to convert this land from a trackless wilderness into the state we call Iowa today. And it has taken men with vision, hope, and high ideals to serve as leaders and point the way. Happily, Iowa has never lacked for sound leaders, either in pioneer days or in the Twentieth Century. One such a leader in modern times is Arch W. McFarlane — an enthusiastic and constructive civic leader, a successful businessman, and a veritable tribune of the people. Known by many as the "Sage of Black Hawk County," Arch McFarlane's counsel and leadership have been treasured

by the people of Iowa for more than four decades.

What of the heritage of this unusual man? Arch McFarlane was born at Waterloo of sturdy Scotch-English stock on April 14, 1885. His father, William Wallace McFarlane, was a warden and elder in the First Presbyterian Church, and a stern disciplinarian, who brought Arch up to respect the curfew, be diligent at all times, and fear the Lord. His mother, Emma Julia Moss, was of English ancestry and a staunch Episcopalian. As a boy, Arch went to the Presbyterian Sunday school, and his sister joined the Presbyterian Church. When he was fourteen, however, Arch was invited to sing in the Christ Episcopal Boys' Choir. Later he sang in the mixed choir of that church with his future wife — Elsie Hawkins. His experience in the Episcopal choir determined his later choice of that denomination as his church.

William Wallace McFarlane was a hard-working man who transmitted much of his industry and perseverance to his son. An expert stone mason, he helped his father, Alexander McFarlane, cut blocks of stone for many of the Rock Island Railroad bridges in northeast Iowa. For over a quarter of a century he was employed by the Illinois Central Railroad. Although his hours were long, McFarlane found time for many civic duties, serving on the Waterloo City Council, as Park Commissioner, and as president of the School Board.

From early boyhood young Arch was taught the virtues of industry. The McFarlanes had their own cow, and Arch and his brother Edward were required to feed, milk, and bed her down. They also curried and fed Toby, the family horse. It was a proud day when young Arch was permitted to drive Toby hitched to the family's rubber-tired surrey to take Elsie Hawkins for a ride.

Feeding the chickens, gathering eggs, and churning butter were all homespun tasks. The cow and chickens, coupled with the family vegetable garden in which young Arch learned the mysteries of spading, planting, and weeding, provided the McFarlanes with the kind of Social Security Herbert Hoover has described in his boyhood in West Branch.

Young Arch's responsibilities did not end when he finished the family chores. Each morning (and most evenings) he delivered the milk from Mrs. W. W. Fisher's two cows. He hauled the milk on a regular route from house to house, carting it around in a big can, pouring out a pint or quart into a receptacle each customer placed on the back porch. As a lad Arch carried the *Waterloo Reporter*, and he also drove Alice Wilson, the stepdaughter of Henry W. Grout, to the home of the people where she boarded during the schoolweek — a house next to the country school where she taught. For taking Miss Wilson out early on Monday morning and bringing her back to Wa-

terloo on Friday evening, young Arch received one dollar per week.

Still another chore that Arch performed during high school days was working out the poll tax of other Waterloo citizens. For sweeping streets and digging sidewalks he received \$1.25 per day for a ten-hour day — 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. — from Street Commissioner George Hafer.

Although busy with a half-dozen jobs, Arch found time for play with the neighbor boys on the Alcott School playground. Baseball, tag, goal, and duck-on-the-rock were popular summer games, while bob-sledding and ice-skating afforded winter recreation. But when his father blew his whistle sharply at nine o'clock, young Arch and his brother would scurry home, knowing full well it was time for bed. He was always required to "toe the mark," even when in high school. Thus, he always had to receive special permission to attend a dance and had to be home by eleven o'clock.

Young Arch went through the fourth grade at Alcott School and completed his elementary education at Hawthorne School. He graduated from East High School in 1904, distinguishing himself as a public speaker when he gave the Memorial Day address as the Freshman class orator in the opera house. His early political aspirations came to light when he achieved the senior class presidency. He was excellent in algebra, trigonometry, and higher mathematics, liked English, but

was poor in history. Throughout his high school days he found occasional moments for golf, hunting and fishing, and swimming in the Cedar River above the dam.

Looking backward over a period of half a century, Arch McFarlane recalls nostalgically his many fine teachers in grade and high school. He particularly treasured the influence of his Presbyterian Sunday school teacher, Mrs. Crouse, and the ministers in Christ Episcopal Church. Memorial Day, the Fourth of July (with the fun enjoyed at the neighborhood celebration), Thanksgiving and Christmas, all were important days in his Waterloo boyhood.

But there were outside forces at work that helped to broaden the horizon of young McFarlane. An omnivorous reader, he would wait with impatience for the *Youth's Companion* to come and would read it from cover to cover. Going to Brown's Opera and to an occasional vaudeville show were likewise welcome breaks in an otherwise busy life. He always attended the circus, carrying water to the elephants in order to get a free pass. His trip to the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago at the age of eight left an indelible impression in his mind.

Like so many youths who graduated from high school around the turn of the century, Arch McFarlane sought and found employment with Smith, Lichty, and Hillman, a prominent Waterloo

wholesale grocery company. On Saturday evenings he clerked in the W. C. Brownlee Shoe Store. Mr. Brownlee's daughter, Doris, later married Thomas E. Martin, now United States Senator from Iowa.

Arch's father forsook railroading to enter the coal and stone business under the firm name of Bartlett and McFarlane. Arch himself became a traveling fuel salesman for the Northwestern Fuel Company in 1906. He loved the work and met with immediate success, his genial personality and straightforward manner winning him many friends and customers.

For more than half a century Arch McFarlane has been the outstanding individual coal salesman of Iowa. In 1908 he became associated with Hunter W. Finch Fuel Company. In 1914 he formed the Puritan Coal Company in Chicago out of which grew his own company — the Arch McFarlane Fuel Company, Inc. In 1958, at seventy-three, he still carries on his active salesmanship with all the vigor and zest of youth. His motto has always been: "If you can't get your order for prompt shipment, take it for future shipment."

Arch McFarlane's early experiences as a traveling salesman in northeastern Iowa were destined to play an important part in his later legislative career. The decade between 1906 and 1916 saw Iowa without paved or gravel roads and salesmen were constantly mired in the mud. Automobiles

were still novel horseless carriages. Traveling men went from key points in Iowa on railroads and then hired a horse and buggy to visit the various customers on their routes. Frequently several salesmen divided expenses by going together, McFarlane's companions usually being a couple of grocery salesmen and a lumber salesman. A typical trip for Arch in 1910 from Waterloo would be on the railroad to Fayette, and then by livery to Wadena and Arlington, then by train to Strawberry Point, all in one day. Another one-day trip was by train to Marble Rock, by livery to Greene and Packard, and then by train to Clarksville.

It was not until 1914 that Arch bought his first car — a Ford. This was quickly followed by a Maxwell, an Essex, and a Hudson; in later years he graduated from Buick to Cadillac. As he makes the rounds of his customers covering a territory bounded by Waterloo on the west, Cedar Rapids on the south, Dubuque on the east, and Minnesota on the north, McFarlane frequently recalls those "good old days" when he mired down in the deep Iowa mud and had to be pulled out by some sympathetic Iowa farmer.

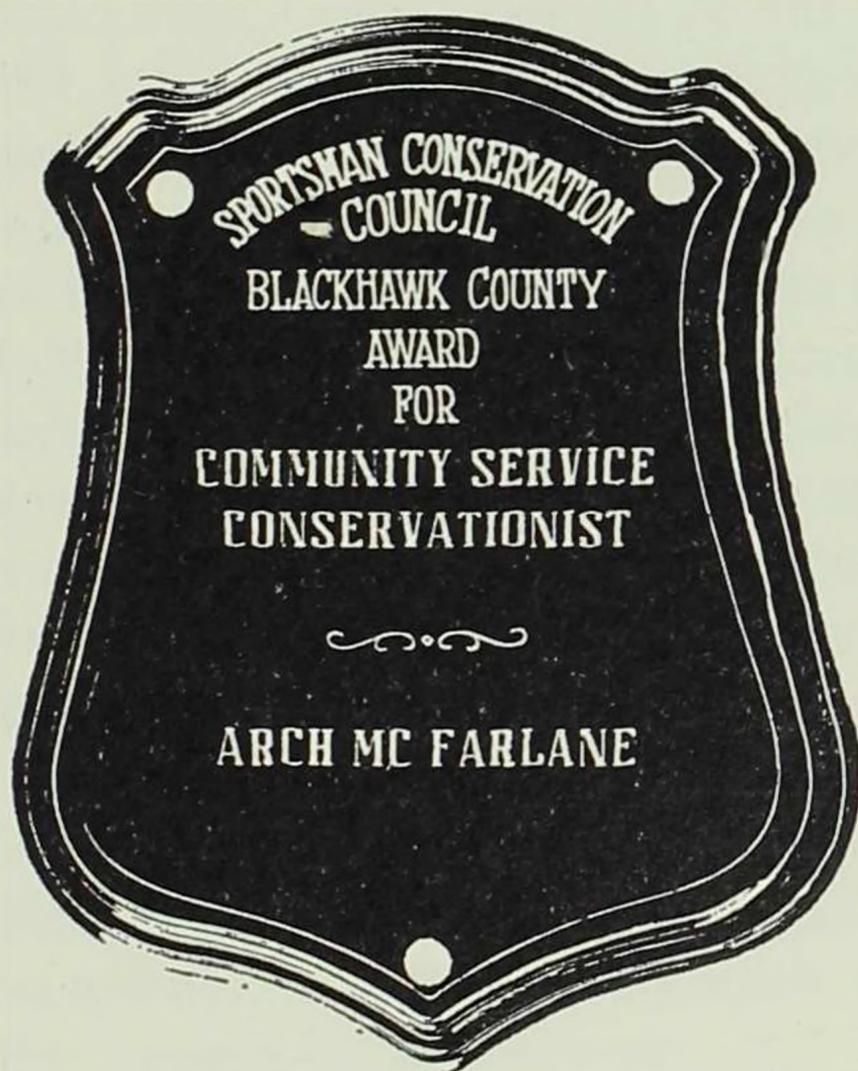
Although he belongs to many organizations, the United Commercial Travelers is doubtless nearest to his heart. Arch joined the Waterloo Council in 1907 when there were only thirty-two Councils in Iowa. Mason City had the first Council in Iowa while Waterloo was the tenth town in the Hawk-

eye State to secure a Council. Arch McFarlane has held every state and local office in the United Commercial Travelers. In addition, he has served in the line for six years, and was elected Supreme Counselor of the United Commercial Travelers of America in 1931. He has attended all Supreme Council sessions and is the second oldest past Supreme Counselor in line of service. His interest in the UCT is as fresh in 1958 as it was when he worked his way through the various offices as a budding young salesman.

Arch McFarlane has always lived in Waterloo — except one year (1893) when he lived in Cedar Falls. He was educated in Waterloo. In Waterloo, too, he married his childhood sweetheart, Elsie Hawkins, who has been his constant and faithful helpmate throughout his life. He has seen the town grow in population rank among the cities in Iowa from fifteenth in 1885 to fifth in 1950. He has loved the "Waterloo Way" that has resulted in a ten-fold increase in population from 6,479 to 65,198 between 1885 and 1950.

Throughout McFarlane's long career he has worked for the good of Iowa in many areas — the improvement of roads, the enlarging of educational opportunities, and the betterment of the situation of county, city, and state employees. One of his main interests has been conservation, and this interest has won him local, state, and national recognition. His promotion of conservation did

not go unrecognized, as the following award for community service as a conservationist so clearly attests.



His friends are legion, not only in Waterloo and Black Hawk County, but all over eastern Iowa wherever he may travel. His sprightly step, cheery smile, and warm personality have endeared him to men in all walks of life. He has seen his favorite college — Iowa State Teachers College — grow from a mere infant to one of the finest educational institutions in the United States. He has seen industry come to Waterloo, making that city one of the industrial giants in Iowa. He has

seen the average Waterloo laboring man make more money in a fraction of an hour than he himself made in a ten-hour day as a young man. He has seen the Waterloo Dairy Cattle Congress develop from its humble beginnings in 1910 to the greatest dairy show in the United States. He has seen all this, and he has loved it. His pride in showing off the new Waterloo airport excels his nostalgic memories of the mud road fight in the 1917 legislature. And yet his respect for the past and for the proud history of the Commonwealth of Iowa burns deep within him. Waterloo and Iowa join in saluting this outstanding citizen whose noble heart and broad mind have done so much to make the Hawkeye State a better land in which to live.

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