



Newspaper Story
by Bill J. Austin Carlen Marks
50 Years With Coca-Cola
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And for the past 50 years James A. Carlen of Cookeville, a civil engineer by education, has woven the name Coca-Cola into the fabric of this county as well as many others in middle Tennessee and portions of Kentucky. And, at 76, he's still on the job. Pemberton, who created Coca-Cola in 1886 was an Atlanta pharmacist; Robinson was his bookkeeper; and Asa Candler was a hard-working Atlanta druggist who in 1888 had invested in Coca-Cola and through one of the twists in business, became its sole owner in April, 1891. On August 15, Saturday, Mr. Carlen will celebrate his 50th anniversary with the Coca-Cola bottling firm in Cookeville, Tennessee. "It's been a fast 50 years," he says. "I like to meet people and I

have met plenty of them in this business. And, everything considered I've enjoyed every one of these 50 years," he adds.

Mr. Carlen graduated from the University of Tennessee in 1929 with a B.S. degree in civil engineering. And then became manager of the Tennessee Electrical Power Co. at Oneida, TN. The power company was producing for Oneida and Huntsville and then became part of the Tennessee Valley Authority when it was created by Congress.

While Carlen was in Onedia the Coca-Cola firm here was operating at Cedar Avenue and First Street. Hugh Harris was president; Walter R. Carlen, James' father was vice president and Algood Carlen, Walter's brother, was secretary treasurer.

Caption for picture above: James A. Carlen will celebrate 50 years with Coca-Cola Bottling Co., this Saturday. There will be an open house at the plant from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. And, this cap machine – operated by foot power, was on of the earliest capping machines. With it, Carlen and one other man could cap two hundred cases of Coke a day. Now modern equipment will produce 350 bottles a minute.

Minerva Tennessee Huddleston – b. 9 January 1859 – d. 2 October 1947
md 13 January 1878 James Anthony Carlen –
b. 24 May 1854 – d. 8 March 1938
s/o William Bernard & Sarah Caroline "Sally" (Holladay) Carlen
Buried: Cookeville City Cemetery, Cookeville, TN

Obituary of James A. Carlen

Prominent Cookeville businessman and civic leader James Anthony Carlen, president of the Coca-Cola Bottling Co. here for many years, died yesterday in a Hilton head, South Carolina, Hospital. He was 79.

Funeral services are set for 3 p.m. Wednesday, July 25, at First United Methodist Church here with Rev. Maurice Moore and Rev. Lexie Freeman officiating. The body will lie in state at the church one hour before the funeral. Burial will be in Cookeville City Cemetery.

The family will receive friends at the Carlen home at 22 South Elm St. Tuesday evening from 7 to 9 p.m.

A native of Putnam County, he was the son of the late Walter R. and Fanny Richmond Carlen. He was the father of Jim Carlen of Columbia, South Carolina, former head football coach at Texas Tech University and the University of South Carolina.

Mr. Carlen attended Tennessee Polytechnic Institute, now Tennessee Tech University, and was a graduate of the University of Tennessee at Knoxville, where he received a degree in civil engineering.

He worked a short time as an engineer with the Tennessee Electric Power Co., which was acquired in the 1930's by the TVA, and later worked for the Coca Cola Bottling Co., here, where he was a former manager, part owner and later president for many years. He retired after more than 55 years of service.

He was a member of the board of Governors of the National Coca Cola Bottlers Association and served terms as its chairman.

Mr. Carlen was a past president of several organizations, including the Tennessee Bottlers Association, the Cookeville Rotary Club, the Cookeville Lions Club, the Cookeville-Putnam County Chamber of Commerce and the Tennessee Tech Athletic Foundation. He was a director in the Bank of Putnam County.

He was a member of the board of trust of TTU's College of Engineering and a member of the Backsliders Sunday School class at First United Methodist Church of Cookeville. He was also a former chairman of the official board at his church.

His family also includes his wife, Roberta Hill Carlen; another son, W. Hill Carlen; a sister, Mrs. Phillip Webb, all of Cookeville; and five grandchildren.

Memorial contributions may be made to the James A. Carlen Scholarship Fund at TTU through the Bank of Putnam County.

Active pallbearers will be Billy Carlen, Walter Whitson Carlen, Wendell Lon, Frank Alexandria, Brank McLean, Jim Fite, Dave Maddux, and Bill Johnson.

Hooper & Huddleston Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements.