

Obituary  
William E. Becker

William Edward "Bill" Becker was born to William Becker and Elizabeth Margaret Kelly Becker on July 22, 1922. He passed away October 13, 2007, at the Exeter Care Center in Exeter at the age of 85 years, 2 months and 21 days of age. He was one of four children in the family.

Bill attended rural school district #68 through the seventh grade and then his eighth grade year attended rural school district # 24. He graduated from Exeter High School with the Class of 1940. After graduation he began farming with his father. He entered the U. S. Army during World War II in December of 1944 and was honorably discharged in October of 1946. Following his discharge from the service he returned home and resumed farming with his father along with raising livestock.

He was married to Mary Alyce Hoarty of Grafton, Nebraska on April 30, 1949 at the St. Helena's Catholic Church in Grafton. Three sons were born to this marriage. They made their home on a farm south of Exeter and spent 34 years in the farming and trucking business. Because of his love for livestock and trucking, you could often find him at local sale barns on any given day of the week, buying and selling livestock for himself and others. He always knew where the very best cheeseburgers and homemade pie was served and later treated his grandchildren to the same. Time spent with Grandpa Bill was time remembered by each grandchild. Many an hour was patiently spent teaching each grandchild to drive the country roads safely long before they were driving age. In 1983, Bill and Mary moved to Exeter, where together they managed the Farmer Funeral Home with care and concern for each family who came through the door.

Bill was a loving husband, father and grandfather and his life revolved around farming, family and friends. His children and grandchildren were what made Bill's eye's twinkle and he was very proud of each child and grandchild's accomplishments. His grandchildren lovingly remember his attempts to place a small "token" in each of their pockets, much to the chagrin of their parents. A "token" was a five or ten dollar bill that Grandpa wanted to see they received. All remembered that their first beer was offered and taken at Grandpa Bill and Grandma Mary's house and all were at separate times and groups taken to Brownsville at one or more times in their lives. Those trips were what memories are made of. Coffee with the family following Mass was a tradition continued to this day.

In 1952 Bill began assisting Burton Farmer in the funeral business by helping with death calls at the hospital, nursing homes, airports and train depots. He later assisted Burton with conducting funerals. When Bill and Mary moved from the farm to town, they resided in the funeral home for several years before purchasing a home just south of the funeral home. He continued this relationship with the Farmer family until just about a year ago working with three generations of Farmer's. "Are you sure Burton would have done it that way", was a phrase that reverberated in PR's ears more than once when he first began coming to Exeter. His care and concern for the business and each family that passed through its doors were deeply appreciated during these past 52 years. To know Bill was to have a good friend and the phrase "let's have a "shooter" didn't have anything to do with guns. Being a friend and neighbor came naturally to this good-hearted soul who will be missed not only by his family but also by his extended family at Farmer & Son.

He was preceded in death by his parents, wife Mary and sisters, Lenora Eckles and Elaine Hassler Gulbrandson.

Surviving are sons; Bob and wife Pat of Exeter, Mike and wife Barb of Lincoln and John and wife Peg of Exeter; sister, Jean Volkmer of Exeter, brother-in-law, Philip Eckles of Nelson, Gene Hoarty and wife Pat of Geneva; and sister-in-law, Darlene Hoarty Higgins of Wessington Springs, S.D.; grandchildren, Jeremy Becker of Auburn, Minn., Kimberly Bartolomeo and husband Chris of Mountain View, Calif., Alicia and husband Kenny Smetter, Jessica and husband Ryan Allington, Zachary Becker and Mitchell Becker all of Lincoln and Bailee Becker of Omaha; great grandchildren Chasity and Caitlyn Smetter of Lincoln.

Funeral services were conducted at 10:00 a.m., Wednesday, October 17, 2007 from the St. Stephen's Catholic Church in Exeter with Father Stephen Cooney and Father Kenneth Borowiak officiating. Organist was Agnes Becker and the Cantor was Jessica Ruhl. Mark Becker served as Acolyte and Doug Anderson was Reader. Casket bearers were Jeremy Becker, Kimberly and Chris Bortolomeo, Alicia Smetter, Jessica and Ryan Allington, Zachary, Mitchell and Bailee Becker. Honorary bearers were Don Becker, John Brower, P.R. and Shaun Farmer & John Steider. Interment with military honors by Wm. Sullivan American Legion Post #218 was held at the Exeter Cemetery. Memorials are directed to the Exeter Legion, St. Stephen's Catholic Church or to the Exeter Fire Department. Farmer Funeral Home was in charge of arrangements.