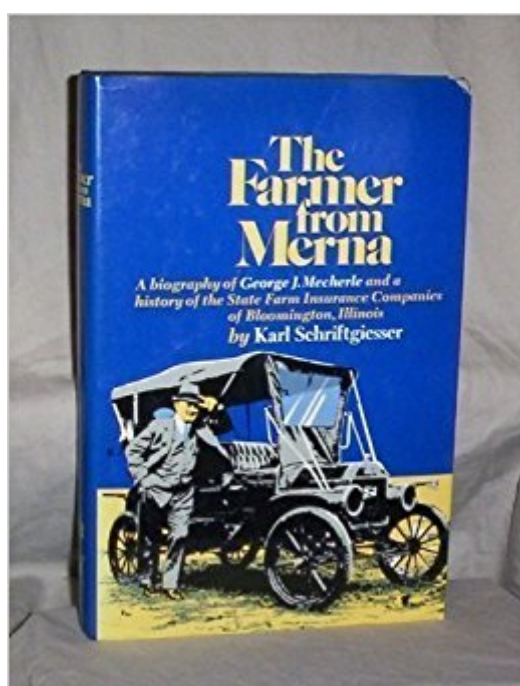


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The Farmer From Merna: A Biography Of George J. Mecherle And A History Of The State Farm Insurance Companies Of Bloomington, Illinois



Synopsis

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loved the book, not what I expected

Overall a fairly dull book. The pre-insurance life of Mecherle family and G.J's early life are interesting. The book is written in history style that is no longer used and the book ends up getting pretty dry and boring. The book explains why State Farm went from a tiny mutual company and expanded to be America's largest Auto and Home insurer in the US. Not the worst book you will read, but not the best. If you are into business history or insurance it probably should be read by you.

"State Farm was launched in 1922, by a 45-year-old, semi-retired Illinois farmer, to compete with long-established insurers — haughty institutions in New York, Philadelphia and Hartford that possessed overwhelming advantages in capital, reputation, and distribution. Because State Farm is a mutual company, its board members and managers could not be owners, and it had no access to capital markets during its years of fast growth. Similarly, the business never

had the stock options or lavish salaries that many people think vital if an American enterprise is to attract able managers and thrive. In the end, however, State Farm eclipsed all its competitors. In fact, by 1999 the company had amassed a tangible net worth exceeding that of all but four American businesses. If you want to read how this happened, get a copy of *The Farmer from Merna*."-Warren Buffet, Year 2000 Berkshire Hathaway Annual Report Instant gratification it is not. But America has had too much instant gratification, and now it is time to get back to work.

I'm sorry that one of it's readers tends to think it is for nothing more than insomnia and making coffee jokes. It's obvious they never understood it's meaning and that is why they no longer work for State Farm (A great company to work for)! This book is rather incredible if you take it for what it is worth and look at where State Farm is today. A great inspiration for any entrepreneur.

This book is required reading for State Farm employees (at least it was when I worked there!). I guarantee this book will put to sleep within five minutes of reading, regardless of your energy level. How bad is it? If you tear out the pages and use them as filters for your coffee maker, it will decaffeinate your coffee! Forget anesthesia, read *The Farmer From Merna*!

Do you really want to read a book about State Farm, written by State Farm? This book is handed out to all employees when they are hired, as part of the brainwashing process. The company was founded on a tradition of not bribing politicians and not influencing legislation. That doesn't apply anymore, as we're asked to call our legislators to support corporate legal initiatives. Don't get me wrong, 99% of companies do worse, giving money directly to candidates and lobbyists. But that's just a sad comment about the state of our current political and corporate environment.

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