ST. LOUIS — Russell C. Akerson, 85, of St. Louis, died Nov. 11, 1996, at Barnes Hospital in St. Louis.

Funeral services for Mr. Akerson will be at 11:30 a.m. Thursday at John L. Ziegenhein and Sons Funeral Home in St. Louis. Burial will be at Park Lawn Cemetery.

Mr. Akerson was born March 17, 1911, in North St. Louis County. He was raised in Hannibal and graduated from Hannibal Senior High School.

He was married to Dorothy M. Akerson. She survives in St. Louis.

Other survivors include two sons, Alan Akerson and Brian Akerson, both of St. Louis; two grandsons, Jeffrey Akerson of Columbia, and Scott Akerson of St. Louis; one brother, Oliver Akerson of Hannibal; and one sister, Angelin McGowan of Allegan, Mich.

Mr. Akerson was a retired grocery store owner and former wirephoto operator for two news wire services.

Mr. Akerson worked for the old United Press news service in St. Paul, Minn., during the early 1930s, then in 1937 for eight years, he was a wirephoto operator for the Associated Press St. Louis bureau.

He became a grocer in the Carondelet area of St. Louis in 1945. His first store was at Minnesota and Nagel streets, the second at 7706 Ivory Street. He left the grocery business in 1967 and became an accountant for Conrad Inc., a regional liquor distributor.

Mr. Akerson retired in 1981.

Visitation will be from 3 p.m. to 9 p.m. today at the funeral home.

Memorials may be made to Grace U.C.C., 5700 Leona St., St. Louis, Mo. 63116 or Alzheimer's Association, 3374 Olive Boulevard, St. Louis, Mo. 63132.