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O'Brien, William Smith, Jr. (1859 -)

Dorothy Hansmann

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O'BRIEN, WILLIAM SMITH JR.

File No. B-976

William Smith O'Brien Jr. was born in Prescott, Wisconsin, June 16, 1859, the son of William Smith O'Brien Sr. who had immigrated from England and Ireland in 1856. This journey required three months. There were six boys in the Senior O'Brien's family.

William Smith O'Brien, Jr. came to Minneapolis in 1880 at the age of twenty-one years. He lived there six years and moved to Sauk Centre in 1884. Sauk Centre had become quite a large "small" town by 1884. There were wooden sidewalks built on Main Street and a few gas street lights had been installed. At this time the "Sauk Centre House" was the best hotel this side of Minneapolis.

In 1886 William Smith O'Brien Jr. was married to Elizabeth Perkinson. She was born at Shakopee, Minnesota. They were married in the Methodist Church by Reverend Jessie Searles. To this union were born five children.

Mr. O'Brien's most prized possession is a sharks tooth a hundred and seventy-five years old, which he obtained from an uncle who was supposed to have been one of the crew that captured the shark from which the tooth was extracted.

Mr. O'Brien says, "Times were much harder and "depressed" at that time than they are at the present, but people were so used to them they thought nothing of it and just took it all calmly in the day's stride. The trouble with the present generation is they haven't learned to "take it" and just sit down and bemoan their fate instead of getting out and doing something about it."

Mr. O'Brien makes his home with his daughters in Sauk Centre. His wife died in 1934.

Interviewed: William Smith O'Brien Jr.
Date: August 14, 1936
By: Dorothy Hansmann

FROM THE RECORDS IN THE STEARNS COUNTY COURT HOUSE

FOR THE WILLIAM SMITH O'BRIEN BIOGRAPHY

DEATH RECORD BOOK 1 PAGE 25 LINE 663

Elizabeth Anna O'Brien Born in Minnesota March 27, 1865

Daughter of Wm. B. Perkinson and Armanda Salmond

Died October 10, 1934

Age 70 years 6 months and 13 days