

**August 6,2009**

**Yes, Aunt Alice and Uncle Berry Fussell are buried in the "Old" Forrest City cemetery, same as my dad and my grandparents. My aunt Dot was with us the last time we were there, and she showed us. The O' Brien's - Thom and Mazie, and son Thomas, are buried on the left as you drive into the cemetery. Dot said that the Fussells are directly across the road from them, back off the road on the right, and their graves are covered with growth of all kinds. We couldn't get to them even then. I don't think they're in the cemetery book, but they are there. Aunt Alice didn't die until 1943. My daddy died in 1939, so she was buried after he was. His headstone has been nearly destroyed twice. Mother had it repaired and put back up the first time, but the second time she gave up. It was knocked off the base and lying on the ground when we last saw it. It's a shame that people do that.**

**I'll attach photos of the ones I have. I also have copies of Thomas's obituary in 1919, and Bill's in 1944. Bill is buried in France. He was with Patton's Third Army. You can see that my grandfather was a very popular man in Forrest City and well-loved. I'll just send you pictures, and you can use what you want to. Thanks for sending Grandma Rau's obituary; I have a copy of that from the paper.**

**The only annual I have is 1947, when they honored Bill and other servicemen from Forrest City who died in World War II. There were 24 of them! I don't know if they had them before, but I can check with Martha Ann Davis Fox, in Little Rock; she'd know. She and I have never lost touch since 1940, kind of amazing. I'll see what I can find out.**

**This has been so much fun! My sister from Florida is coming tomorrow. She was born in Forrest City, in the clinic there, in Dec. 1940. She's my half sister, but we don't count that. So I may be a little longer getting back to you.**

**Alice Kennedy Lee**

**The Fussell's in Forrest City Cemetery:**

**Berry Fussell in the 1930 Census, age 78, Born Tennessee in 1852, died after 1930.**

**Alice O'Brien Fussell, b. 1850 in Indiana d.1943 Married 1910**

**The O'Brien burials in Forrest City Cemetery:**

**O'Brien, Francis Joseph**

**b. Feb. 22, 1909 d. Oct. 4, 1920 Forrest City Cemetery**

**O'Brien, Mazie Staats**

**b. Jun. 28, 1882 d. Oct. 20, 1964 Forrest City Cemetery**

**O'Brien, Thomas**

**b. Feb. 19, 1881 d. Mar. 4, 1918 Forrest City Cemetery**

**The Kennedy's Buried in Forrest City Cemetery:  
Kennedy, Charles Fay**



**b. December 13, 1898 d. June 27, 1939**

**s/o Charles Thomas & Emma Lillian Harville Kennedy; h/o Alice Marie O'Brien**

**From Daughter, Alice Marie Kennedy Lee: August 8,2009**

**This is my daddy's headstone in the Old Forrest City Cemetery. Charles Kennedy was a salesman for White Rose Gas and Oil Company with territory in Louisiana. He became ill one morning at a hotel where he was staying in Baton Rouge, La., was taken to the hospital and diagnosed with "acute indigestion." Five hours later when the nurse brought his supper tray, he started to sit up to eat, and fell backward, dead of a heart attack at age 40. It was a terrible shock to the family, who had no idea his condition was critical. He was a member of the Forrest City Methodist Church and a 32nd degree Mason.**

## **Thomas O'Brien-1915**



**March 4,1918-Forrest City Times-Herald, Forrest City, Arkansas**

The body of Thomas O'Brien, proprietor of the Palace Market, and one of the city's best loved citizens, reached here Wednesday afternoon from the sanitarium at Booneville, Arkansas, where he expired on Tuesday, March 4,1918, after being an inmate of that institution for treatment about two months. He had never fully recovered from the effects of flu and pneumonia in the epidemic last fall. The funeral services were held from the First Methodist church Thursday afternoon, conducted by Rev. G. G. Davidson, and under the auspices of the Odd Fellows Lodge who took charge of the remains and conducted the most impressive services at the grave site in the Forrest City cemetery.

Mr. O'Brien was 38 years of age and had been ill for a number of months, having never recovered from the effects of flu and pneumonia of which he was a victim during the flu epidemic last fall.

In the passing of Mr .O'Brien the community has lost one of the best citizens, the family a beloved husband and father.

Thomas O'Brien established the Palace Market here twelve years ago; he was a faithful member of the Methodist church, holding the position of Secretary in this church for four years.

He had been city clerk for about six years, was a member of the Woodmen of the World, held the office of treasurer in the Odd Fellows lodge; and master of District No.98 of this order. In business circles he was highly esteemed and admired by his associates.

The surviving members of his family include his widow Mazie Staats O'Brien, six children, Alice Marie, Thomas, Frances Joseph, Rosida, William B., and Dorothy; two sisters, Mrs. Margaret Johnson of Memphis, and Mrs. A. L. Wittich of St. Louis; two brothers, Charles and Joe O'Brien of St. Louis, Mo.

The active pall bearers were: Messrs. R. P. Hunt, J. C. Bell, Joe G. Moore, J. R. Bussey, T. W. Horney, and Charles Haven; honorary, W.A. Pearson, J. W. Harris, A. C. Bridewell, R..S. Stevens, D. A. Pelton, and P. W. Lewis.

The floral offerings sent as a last respect to the memory of the deceased by the many friends and relatives, were numerous and beautiful.

**Son: Francis Joseph O'Brien (Feb.22,1909 to Oct.4,1920)**

**A Bright Boy Passes Away: Francis Joe O'Brien, the eleven year old son of the late Thomas and Mrs. O'Brien, passes away on Monday, the 4th of October, 1920, and was laid to rest on the morning of the 6th at the Forrest City cemetery, Rev. J. H. O' Bryant of the Methodist church conducting the funeral ceremony. The bright boy, a victim of typhoid fever, and while all that could be done with the best medical skill and loving hands he could not rally and passed into the great beyond. Forrest City Times Herald Oct.7,1920**

**His Grandmother: Mrs. Narcissa Hellen Rau (1824 to Mar.31,1908)**

#### **DEATH OF MRS. RAU**

**Mrs. N. H. Rau, mother of Mrs. Berry Fussell and grandmother of Mr. Tommie O'Brien, is dead. A dark and gloomy canopy hangs over the home where she had been loved and so tenderly cared for these many, many years. She had been an invalid for 11 or 12 years, and the dark Angel of Death relieved her of her sufferings and the Master called her faithful spirit home Tuesday, Mar.31,1908.**

**She had reached the ripe old age of 83 years, and passed away peacefully without any suffering. The funeral took place Wednesday afternoon from the residence to the Forrest City cemetery in the presence of a large concourse of friends and relatives, where Rev. B. L. Wilford of the Methodist church, of which she was faithful member, performed the religious ceremonies.**

**Mrs. Rau came from St. Louis, Missouri, to Wynne, Arkansas about 12 years ago to make her home with her daughter, Mrs. Berry Fussell, and thence to Forrest City. We extend sympathy to the family and friends in their time of loss.**

**Forrest City Times Newspaper Apr.3,1908**

**From Alice Kennedy Lee:**

**Uncle Berry Fussell, I have a picture of him and Aunt Alice Smith Fussell, Her name was Alice Mc Clure when she married Uncle Berry in St. Louis in 1890. But she was not his first wife; it was her younger sister, Nora Smith. Nora died of tuberculosis in 1888, and he married Aunt Alice two years later. Their mother, Narcissa Hellen Wilson Smith Rau, ran a boarding house where railroad men stayed when they were in St. Louis. Uncle Berry was a mail clerk on the railroad and stayed there. My great-grandfather, Thomas O'Brien Sr., was an engineer from New Orleans who roomed there, also. He married their sister, Rosa. They were both killed in the "Great Cyclone" that hit St. Louis in May of 1896. That's how their son, Thom, wound up with Aunt Alice and Uncle Berry in Forrest City, after his marriage they set him up in business.**

**From Alice Marie Kennedy Lee-August 8,2009**

**Thomas and Mazie Staats O'Brien**

**Thom and Mazie Staats O'Brien were married in St. Louis, Missouri, on May 15, 1902. They had both been orphaned very young, and Thom's Aunt Alice and her husband, Berry Fussell, moved them to Forrest City, Arkansas, with them, where they set Thom up in a meat market called the Palace Market. The Fussells were a prominent family in St. Francis County at that time. Berry worked as a mail clerk on the railroad and boarded in the home of Alice's mother when he was in St. Louis. He had married her youngest sister, Nora, who died very young of tuberculosis in 1888. Two years later, he and Alice were married on July 1, 1890.**

**They moved to St. Francis County about 1896. Berry was also listed as a farmer on censuses. His family owned the land where the Holiday Inn in Forrest City was built much later.**

**Thom O'Brien became a highly respected member of the community, serving as captain of the local baseball team, city clerk, secretary of the Methodist Church, treasurer of the Odd Fellows Lodge, and master of District No. 98 of Odd Fellows. He was a member of Woodmen of the World.**

**All of these organizations paid tribute to him in the local paper when he died in 1919 at age 38, leaving Mazie widowed with six young children: Alice Marie, Thomas Edward, Francis Joseph, Rosida Lucille, William Berry, and Dorothy Estelle. The next year after his death, their son, Joseph, contracted typhoid fever and died at age eleven. Bill, William Berry, lied about his age and joined the National Guard when he was 16, went into the regular army in 1940, and was killed with Patton's Third Army in France on November 11, 1944. He was a first lieutenant. Both of these brothers had obituaries in the Forrest City Times Herald. The other four siblings moved away from Forrest City in the 1940's.**

**Alice worked for several years as secretary in the law firm of Samuel and Burke Mann. She married Charles Kennedy in Forrest City on November 8, 1924, had one daughter, Alice Marie. Charles died of a heart attack at age forty, and is buried in the old cemetery. Alice married a Kentuckian, Nolte Reynolds, in 1940. They had two daughters. Thomas married Marguerite Carter, had four children, and died in Memphis in 1989. He is buried in the family plot in the old Forrest City cemetery. Rose married Robert Dowdy, had three children, and died in Nashville, Tennessee, in 1997. Dot married George Quinton, had three sons, and is now living in Memphis at this time with one son.**

**(2009)**

#### CARD OF THANKS.

No words can express the deep gratitude which we feel toward the hundreds of dear friends in Forrest City who are and were so devoted and kind to us in the loss of our beloved husband and father. We can never repay those who were responsible for these beautiful deeds of friendship and love with which our darkened home was showered and which feel as a healing and soothing balm upon our wounded and broken spirits.

It seems that our very all has been taken away from us and our only consolation and solace comes from the knowledge that we remain in the midst of those whose friendship for our beloved and revered one, knew no bounds; and our lives will be consecrated by the effort to prove ourselves worthy of such sincere and steadfast devotion.

May the God of all wisdom and grace bless and prosper you all is the earnest prayer of

MRS. THOS. O'BRIEN, and  
CHILDREN.

## MES. FORREST CITY, ARK.

THOMAS O'BRIEN.

The subject of this sketch: "I Knew By His Smiles."

Smiles are angels of the soul, who play on the placid brow of a sincere man, and sport spontaneously through the promptings of the heart.

Smiles are the open way to the labyrinth of one's inner nature, and gives to every bearer of same a true index of one's character.

A man of hate cannot smile. The man who loves smiles. Love is that element which emanates from the fountains of life—the source of God's power. "God is a spirit," also "God is love." Without love there could be no order and law. It was the love of the Omnipotent that designed and planned the atonement. So, may I say, in all truth, that the man as I knew on account of his smiles, was a man after God's own heart, and that he lived a marked life, which deeply impressed those who came in contact with him.

Thomas O'Brien was one of those spirits who harmoniously drew men to him, and by this attraction made him, in fact, naturally a fraternal and beneficent sharer in the affairs which by their nature thoroughly humanize. His life was governed by that law which rewards the faithful with happiness, joy and peace, and above all brings one to a perfect peace, in that he becomes reconciled and resigned to await the judgment on that day when all persons shall receive their just dues by a wise and faultless judge.

The persons who gave to the life and memory of the deceased the pure and stainless flowers, blessed by the dew of Heaven, which ornamented the casket and made fragrant the altar on which the remains rest, were but the reflections of a life, which had walked in a garden of roses, and along the pathway made beautiful by the blossoms of smiles, wreathed and garlanded by songs

and laughter, bringing to those with whom he met that which is in fact, really of worth. This life was not of materialism, neither earthly, but one of spirit, claiming for itself celestial fire through the medium of faith. Every tear which fell over the broken form of this subject had within them the rainbow of promise. His was no mistaken face, no "bitter smile behind a painted grin he wore." The great English poet tells us of the "smile of Heaven," and another said, "Joyous of our conquest easily won." These poetic phrases are applicable to the deceased. We are told that the great conquest won was on his marriage day when he confessed to the world the "new birth," it must have been then and there he exclaimed, "I will joy in the God of my salvation," thereafter the stream of his joy made manifest by the smiles he wore, danced and played on its way toward the gulf of the eternal. Let the consolation be made known to his wife, children and friends in that they may know and be comforted with the truth, that he died as he lived, true in faith, courageous and dauntless in resignation to his fate, and fidelity to his Master. Smile on, Thomas O'Brien, as we called here, May the Angels

of bliss supported by love and without fear, beckon to those who linger here—wife, children and friends—called to your Father, the Christ, the Blessed End.

"There is no death! the stars go down  
To rise upon some fairer shore!  
And bright in Heaven's jeweled crown

They shine forever more.

Where'er He sees a smile too bright  
A heart too pure for talent and vice,  
He bears it to that world of light  
To dwell in Paradise.

And ever new as though unseen  
The dear immortal spirits tread,  
For all the boundless universe  
Is life, there is no dead."

—M. B. NORFLEET.

## Thomas O'Brien Obituary

### THOS. O'BRIEN DIED LAST TUESDAY

The funeral of Thomas O'Brien, who died in the Belleville sanitarium at Belleville, Ark., Tuesday, was held from the Methodist church Thursday afternoon at 2:30 o'clock, with interment in Forest City cemetery under auspices of Forest City Lodge No. 124, I. O. O. F.

Mr. O'Brien was 38 years of age and had been ill for a number of months, having never recovered from the effects of the flu and pneumonia of which he was a victim during the first epidemic, last fall.

In the passing of Mr. O'Brien the community has lost one of its best citizens, the family a beloved husband and father.

Thomas O'Brien established the Palace Market here twelve years ago; he was a faithful member of the Methodist church, holding the position of secretary in this church for four years.



THOS. O'BRIEN.

He had been city clerk for almost six years, was a member of the Woodmen of the World, held the office of treasurer in the Odd Fellows lodge; he was also district deputy grand treasurer in the Odd Fellows lodge, and master of District No. 24 of this order. In business circles he was highly respected and admired by his associates.

The surviving members of his family are his widow, six children, Allen, M., Thomas, Francis, Rosalee, William B. and Dorothy; two sisters, Mrs. Margaret Johnson of Memphis and Mrs. A. L. White of St. Louis; two brothers, Charles O'Brien and Joe O'Brien of St. Louis; in all of these is extended the sincere and beautiful sympathy of the entire community.

The active pall bearers were Messrs. R. P. Hunt, J. C. Bell, Joe G. Moore, J. R. Bamey, T. W. Hootsey, Charles Bamey, Henry W. A. Pearson, J. W. Harris, A. C. Brink, L. H. S. Stevens, Dr. G. A. Peltan, P. W. Lewis.

The floral offerings sent as a last respect to the memory of the deceased by the many friends and relatives, were numerous and beautiful.



## Times Tribute to Thomas O'Brien

### BELOVED CITIZEN GONE.

The body of Thomas O'Brien, proprietor of the Palace Market, and one of the city's best-loved citizens, reached here Wednesday afternoon from the sanitarium at Booneville, where he expired on Tuesday night, after having been an inmate of that institution for treatment about two months. Deceased is survived by a wife and six bright children. The funeral services were solemnized from the First Methodist church Thursday afternoon at 2:30 o'clock, after which the local Odd Fellows lodge took charge of the remains and conducted most impressive services at the grave in the Forrest City cemetery. A deeply touching eulogy was paid the deceased by Rev. G. G. Davidson in his sermon over the bier of deceased at the church.

The active pallbearers chosen were Biley Hunt, S. A. Rolfe, S. L. Kirkpatrick, James R. Bussey, T. W. Horney and Charles Haven.

Honorary pallbearers: W. A. Pearson, W. C. Bridewell, R. S. Stevens, D. A. Pelton, P. W. Lewis and J. M. Harris.

In addition to the heartbroken widow, the dear children who survive are Alice, Thomas, Roside, Francis, William B. and Dorothy.

The Times joins in tenderest sympathy to these loved ones and w pray God's richest blessings upon them in this dark and bitter when no human words of cheer or comfort can reach their hearts.