

William John Aszmann

William John Aszmann was the son of William Frederick Aszmann (1862-1912) and Josephine “Sofa” Reichstadt (1864-1929). Born 10 August 1899 in South St. Paul, William was the fourth of eight children: George, Elma, Laura, William, Luella, Edward, Peter and Ruth. His father worked as a farmer in 1895, but also worked at a packing house in South St. Paul. Both William and Josephine came directly from Germany. After his father’s death in 1912, William may have had to work and provide for the family, since his mother never had a job.

During WWI, William served in the U.S. Naval Reserve. He enlisted 17 June 1918 and served as a second class seaman in Seattle, Washington. He was released from service on 18 February 1919.

He became a truck driver for Swift & Company when he returned from the War and stayed with this position his whole life. He married Anna M. Bares in 1924, and they had two sons. Donald was born in 1925, and was a WWII veteran. Their son Earl was born in 1929. His brother Edward (1901-1992) lived with them for a while, as he is listed in the 1930 Census. His brother was also a truck driver for a packing house. William Aszmann died 2 August 1989 in Hennepin County, Minnesota at age 89 and is buried in Oak Hill Cemetery in South St. Paul.

Note: No photo of William Aszmann was available when
Dakota County in the World War went to print.

From the source below, public thought of German immigrants at the time was that they were “spies” or traitors—or as the propaganda wanted society to believe. William went to fight in the war for the United States, but even so, his family might have still faced severe prejudice at home in Minnesota.

<https://www.archives.gov/files/publications/prologue/2014/summer/germans.pdf>