

Alex Coța Funari

1893-1970

Alex Coța Funari was born April 16, 1893 in what was then Nagyszentmiklos, Hungary, now known as Sannicolau Mare, Romania. Alex Funari and his brothers Stefan and Andro (Andrew) immigrated to Minnesota in the early 1900s as young men; Alex arrived in 1912. His father was Lazar Funari, who remained in Europe.

Alex was married to Maria Palade in about 1915 in Minnesota. He worked as a barber for Mitru “Mike” Papes on Concord Street. Their children were Louis, Steve, and Alex Jr. The couple were not legally married, so even though Alex claimed exemption from the draft, it was denied. He was inducted into the Army on 22 September 1917 and was sent to Camp Dodge, Iowa. Newspaper accounts said that his wife was “almost destitute” and could not support her family during his absence. Funari was not discharged from service until 3 September 1918.

After the War, Alex Funari worked again as a barber or as a laborer, and in 1954 he worked as a city sanitation worker for South St. Paul. He died of pneumonia on 15 June 1970 at the VA Hospital in St. Cloud, age 77, and is buried at Oak Hill Cemetery in South St. Paul, Minnesota.