

Fredrick Joseph Kelnberger

Fredrick Joseph Kelnberger was born 17 October 1893 in St. Paul, Ramsey County, Minnesota. He was the son of John Kelnberger (1856-1902) and Adolphine Bock (1855-1918), both Germans born in Austria. They came to the U.S. in 1885 with the eldest children, Johanna/Anna and John; the rest of their eight children were born in Minnesota: Mary, William, Frank, Fredrick, Joseph G., and Clara. Before he died in 1902, John Kelnberger was a salesman at Swift & Company in South St. Paul. In 1900, the family was living at 218 Eaton Street in St. Paul. By 1910, they had moved to 1095 Robert Street in West St. Paul. The father, John, died in 1902, so all of the children who were 16 years or older had jobs to help support the family. Three of the boys served in WWI: Frank, Fred, and Joseph.



Prior to the War, Fredrick worked as a packer for Swift & Company in South St. Paul. He registered for the draft on 5 June 1917 while living with his family in West St. Paul; he was 23 years old. Fredrick enlisted on 7 April 1918 and served as a private in Company F, 1st Gas Regiment, 30th Engineer Corps. The 1st Gas Regiment became known as “Gas & Flame” or “Hell Fire Boys,” which was written about in *Story of the 1st Gas Regiment* by James T. Addison, Chaplain, found online at https://archive.org/details/storyoffirstgasr00addi_0/page/n8.

Fredrick’s company departed 30 June 1918 from Hoboken, New Jersey on the USS *President Grant* and arrived at Brest, France on 13 July 1918. Meanwhile, his mother, Adolphina Kelnberger, died on 11 July 1918 in Dakota County. Fredrick was stationed at LaVille-aux-Bois, France from 17 to 18 July 1918. He saw action in the battles of St. Mihiel, Argonne-Meuse, Bois de Bath Ville, and Meuse, where he was located on the day of the Armistice on 11 November 1918. He departed Brest on 24 January 1919 and arrived in New York on 2 February 1919. He was mustered out of service at Camp Grant, Rockford, Illinois as a corporal.

After the War, Fredrick reentered the service on 14 December 1920 and was honorably discharged on 13 December 1923 as a 1st sergeant from Battery B, 11th Field Artillery Regiment of the U.S. Army. He may have been stationed in Hawaii, but records are scarce.

He married Mabel L. Bean on 5 December 1927. They were divorced in Quincy, California in 1930. Fredrick served on a Nevada Veterans of Foreign Wars committee for national defense in

1940. By 1942, when he registered for the WWII draft, Fredrick was married to Bernadine Chugg, and they were living in Las Vegas, Nevada where he was working at the Boulder Dam (later called Hoover Dam) for the federal Bureau of Reclamation in Boulder City, Nevada. (Bernardine's brother, George W. Chugg, a U.S. Army private, died of disease in a Japanese prison camp in 1943.)

Fredrick Joseph Kelnberger died 21 June 1952 at Los Angeles County, California. He was 58 years old. He is buried in Los Angeles National Cemetery, also known as Sawtelle Veterans Cemetery. Bernarine H. Kelnberger died in Whittier, California in 1985.