

John Peter Karpen

John Karpen was born in Hastings, Minnesota on February 24, 1889 to Hilarius (Hillary) Karpen (1851-1928) and Helen Daniels Karpen (1853-1931). Hillary was born in Germany and Helen in Wisconsin. John had already served in the First Minnesota, Company H, 206th Infantry as a Corporal for two years when he registered for the WWI draft at age 28. He was the current Superintendent of Dakota County Schools. He did not request an exemption and was drafted. Josephine Raetz, Principal of Lincoln School in South Park, South St Paul replaced him until he returned from the war.

He enlisted on September 21, 1917 and trained at Camp Dodge, where he was promoted to Sergeant. He was assigned to the National Army, 88th Division, 338th Machine Gun Battalion, Company C. They did go to France on September 7, 1918 but by this time the war was almost over. He was released on December 20, 1918. He answered the call again and served in WWII from March 21, 1942 until January 18, 1946.

He married Agnes Marie Heinen (1894-1972) and their first child was born in 1922. He worked in sales, first at a retail marble company and then he sold insurance. By 1940 he was once again the Superintendent of Schools for Dakota County. He died on November 27, 1978 at the age of 89. He was a resident of Regina Nursing home at the time. He is buried at St Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Cemetery in Hastings, Minnesota. His son John Paul Karpen also served in WWII.