Joseph M. Katzer

Joseph M. Katzer was born 3 May 1889 in Belle Plaine, Scott County, Minnesota to Mathias Katzer (1858-1931) and Antonia "Annie" Schumann (1859-1940). Mathias Katzer's parents came from Holland to Belle Plaine before 1870. Mathias was a butcher in Belle Plaine. He and Antonia had seven children: Arnold, Theresa, Joseph, Frank, Kathryn, Clara and Walburga.

Prior to the War, Joseph worked as a yard foreman in South St. Paul at the Union Stockyards Company. He registered for the draft on 5 June 1917 at South St. Paul. He claimed exemption for dependency, stating that he supported his mother. He was single.

Joseph was drafted and was inducted into the service on 22 September 1917. He served as a wagoner in the Headquarters Detachment, 335th Machine Gun Battalion, 87th Infantry Division. A wagoner was responsible for care and maintenance of the horses or mules, wagons and ambulances used in transporting troops and supplies. During the War, Joseph sent a military helmet and a gas mask to South St. Paul Mayor George Kramer, and it was written about in the local newspaper in March 1919. At that time, his mother Annie was reportedly living in an apartment above the Kleinboehl building in South St. Paul; it is not clear where Mathias Katzer was living.

Joseph was discharged from service on 21 March 1919 and returned to live in South St. Paul at 408 South Concord, and worked for a time as a driver for Thomas B. Todd. Joseph worked as an auto mechanic for W. J. Irish in St. Paul from about 1920 until his death in 1931. He was married to Pearl Nordeen (1893-1931), who died just a few weeks before Joseph. His father, Mathias Katzer, also died in 1931. It does not appear that Joseph and Pearl had any children.

Joseph M. Katzer died on 16 September 1931 of acute appendicitis in St. Paul, Minnesota, where he resided at 254 Rice Street. He was 42 years old. He was laid to rest in Saints Peter and Paul Cemetery in Belle Plaine, Minnesota.

Note to Researchers: A military service questionnaire and a bonus file exist at the Minnesota Historical Society, but were not consulted for this summary. No photo of this soldier was located.