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### Kemper, Katherine (Caspers) (1855 - )

Walter B. Haupt

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KEMPER, KATHERINE (CASPERS)

File No. B-661

Katherine Caspers was born on March 1, 1855, in Port Washington, Wisconsin.

Katherine Caspers is the daughter of Lawrence and Ann (Zens) Caspers of Meire Grove, Minnesota, now deceased.

Lawrence and Ann (Zens) Caspers were born in Treves, Germany, and were married there. They came to America on a sailing vessel on their wedding trip. The trip proved an eventful one for them. Leaving Treves, Germany, they traveled overland to Antwerp, Belgium, where they boarded a sailing vessel bound for London, England.

After a few days in London, they purchased a ticket for New York. This ticket, they discovered, when they arrived at the dock, was a fake, and the man who sold it to them disappeared. Since they had very little extra money, Lawrence Caspers was forced to go to work in London for some time, before they were able to buy another ticket. When he accomplished this they boarded a sailing vessel bound for New York. The trip across the Atlantic took three months. During the voyage they encountered heavy winds which blew the ship a considerable distance to the north, where they encountered ice floes and cold weather. At times it became so cold that the passengers had to stay in bed all day to keep warm.

Arriving in New York, Lawrence Caspers had very little money and was again forced to go to work before continuing their trip west. He found employment in Buffalo and Albany, where he worked until he again had money enough to travel.

The trip from New York State to Milwaukee, was made on a Steam-boat. While the boat was passing through the locks at Niagara Falls, Mrs. Caspers fell overboard, but was rescued by the crew.

Reaching Milwaukee, they vowed they would never make another trip on water.

Work was scarce at Milwaukee and so they went to Port Washington, Wisconsin, where they were obliged to live in a small one room log house with another family, while Mr. Caspers cut wood for 25 cents a day. This work he continued to do until he was able to buy a twenty acre tract of land from the government. Homesteads were not available at that time.

On this place he erected a log cabin and barn. The first year there was no stove, the cooking being done over an open fire. The first furniture was also constructed by Mr. Caspers. Most of the farm implements including a wagon, constructed all of wood, were made by Lawrence Caspers.

When the Caspers family arrived on the farm, there were no roads, so they were obliged to cut a narrow cartway through the woods, and as there were several streams to be crossed, they laid a few timbers across to serve as bridges.

One day as Lawrence Caspers had left for town with the team of oxen, a heavy rain washed out all the improvised bridges, and he was not able to return for some time. The family, who had only little food on hand when he left, soon, were without food and spent several days without a thing to eat.

Indians were numerous during the first few years. Although they were quite friendly they soon became a nuisance to the settlers, for as long as they were in the country the settler was unable to rely on his gun for meat. Finally when they became too bold, helping themselves to the crops whenever they wanted, the government dispatched troops to Port



Washington, who drove them out. When they were gone for some time, deer and other game became plentiful, which was a great help.

After several years of this 20 acre farm, and having put it in a tillable state, and desiring more land, Mr. Caspers sold and purchased another 60 acre tract of wild land on which he again improved.

While on this place a daughter, Louisa, married Henry Shulte and they migrated to Stearns County settling on a farm near Meire Grove.

Katherine at the age of seventeen also left, in the year 1872, to work for her sister at Meire Grove. Three and a half years later Lawrence Caspers disposed of his farm in Wisconsin and also moved to Meire Grove. Thus the whole family now resided in Stearns County.

On February 7, 1877, Katherine Caspers married Henry Kemper of New Munich.

Henry Kemper was born on September 26, 1846, in Oldenburg, Germany. At the age of 22 he came to America. During the first few years here he worked in a foundry at Cincinnati, Ohio. From there he came to New Munich, where he worked on the farm of Math Zierden, where he remained until a year before his marriage, and then bought a farm in Millwood township.

In the fall of the first year on this place, the grasshoppers arrived devouring whatever crops that had not yet been harvested. The next year, the first year of his married life, these grasshoppers ruined most of the crop again. The harvest consisted of 22 bushels of oats, potatoes and a few bushels of wheat. The wheat was ground to serve as flour. During the interview Mrs. Kemper remarked, " All we had to eat the first year was potatoes and dark bread. My husband enjoyed the dark bread and often wanted it in later years, but I was so fed up on it that I

never cared for it since." The next year, " she went on to say, "we had the best crop I had ever seen before or after the grasshopper scourge, and so Mr. Kemper was able to buy a reaper, to cut the grain which we at that time considered a wonderful piece of machinery on which no further improvement could be made."

After twelve years on this farm, Mr. Kemper sold and bought a farm near St. Anthony where he farmed for twenty-seven years. During all these years he had seen good years and lean years but when he retired in 1916 he was able to build a comfortable home for himself, his wife and daughter and give them a comfortable living.

On April 14, 1923, Henry Kemper died and was buried at Albany.

Mrs. Katherine (Caspers) Kemper despite her age is still able to be around. A daughter, Veronica, lives with her.

Henry and Katherine (Caspers) Kemper are the parents of ten children.

Mary, born December 31, 1879 married Henry Wolters of Krain township. They have ten children, Hubert, Alphonse, Albin, Lawrence, Veronica, Emily, Theresa, Cecelia, Cornelia and Cyril. Mary (Kempers) Wolters died on December 31, 1928.

Three children, Joseph age ten, Philomin age five and Peter age two, died during a diptheria epidemic.

Peter and Ann died in infancy.

Fred, born August 23, 1881 married Margaret Roesch of Kraintown. They reside in Jenkins, Minnesota, where he is manager of a lumber yard. They have seven children, Nora, Nobbert, Herbert, Edward, Albert, Mary Lou, and Robert.



KEMPER, KATHERINE (CASPER)

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John, born September 3, 1886, married Nellie Shaw of Indianapolis, Indiana. They reside at Brainerd, Minnesota where he is manager of a lumber yard.

Lawrence, born October 17, 1893 is employed in Montana.

Veronica, born January 6, 1896, is at home.

There are also seven great grandchildren.

Interviewed: Katherine(Caspers) Kemper  
Interviewer: Walter B. Haupt  
Date: April 7, 1937

Publication Granted

FROM THE RECORDS IN THE STEARNS COUNTY COURT HOUSE

FOR THE KATHERINE (CASPERS) KEMPER BIOGRAPHY

<u>Name</u>	<u>Date of Birth</u>	<u>Place of Birth</u>	<u>Father's Name</u>	<u>Age</u>
1. Mary Kemper	Dec. 30, 1879	Millwood	Henry Kemper	
2. Fred Kemper	Aug. 26, 1881	"	" "	
3. John Kemper	Sept. 13, 1885	"	" "	
4. Lorenz Kemper	Oct. 17, 1893	"	" "	
5. Nina Kemper	Jan. 5, 1896	"	" "	

<u>Mother's Name</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Book</u>	<u>Page</u>	<u>Line</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
1. Katherine		A	359	17	
2. Katy		A	449	25	
3. Katherine		B	24	14	
4. Katherine		(1893)B3	114	3	
5. Katherine		(1896)B6	139	2	

MARRIAGE RECORD BOOK E. PAGE 452

Henry Kemper and Catherine Caspers

Married at New Munich, February 7, 1877

By: Rev. P. Cornelius Wittman, O. S. B.

Witnesses: John Caspers and Mary Primus

DEATH RECORD BOOK A. PAGE 158 LINE 11

Peter Kemper Died September 16, 1887

Son of Henry and Katherine Kemper

Age 4 months and 8 days

Page 2

DEATH RECORD BOOK 1893 A 3 PAGE 65 LINE 1

Peter Kemper, Died December 19, 1893

Son of Henry and Catherine Kemper

Age years.

DEATH RECORD BOOK A. PAGE 77 LINE 3

Anna Kemper Died August 31, 1880

Age 2 years 9 months and 10 days

Daughter of Henry Kemper

DEATH RECORD BOOK U. PAGE 18 LINE 404

Mary Wolters, Died December 31, 1928

Daughter of Henry Kemper and Catherine Caspers

Age 49 years

DEATH RECORD BOOK P. PAGE 9 LINE 218

Henry Kemper Born in Germany, September 26, 1846

Died April 14, 1923

Age 76 years 6 months and 18 days



KEMPER, KATHERINE (CASPERS)

Second interview to affirm or correct information in biography as compared to information as listed in the legal records in the Stearns County Court House .

AFFIRMED:

Birth of Fred Kemper, August 23, 1881, is correct as stated in the biography.

AFFIRMED:

Birth of Veronica Kemper, January 6, 1896, is correct as stated in the biography.

AFFIRMED:

Spelling of name Veronica, is correct as stated in biography.

AFFIRMED:

Birth of Mary Kemper, December 31, 1879, is correct as stated in the biography.

NOTE:

Birth of John, not certain, but party interviewed is of the opinion that date as given in biography September 3, 1886, is correct.

Reinterviewed: Veronica Kemper  
Date: November 29, 1937  
By: Walter B. Haupt