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Mandernach, John (1857 -)

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Pallansch, Alexander, "Mandernach, John (1857 -)" (1939). *WPA Biographic Summaries*. 814.
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MANDERNACH, JOHN

File No. B-858

John Mandernach Jr. was born June 29, 1857 in Olkland, Prisen, Trier, Germany.

The son of John Mandernach Sr. and Trienweiler Mandernach's parents owned a small farm in Germany, and on this they made their livelihood. John Sr. and (Trienweiler) Mandernach were the parents of four children: Nicholas, Peter, Catherine and John.

The children all attended the Olkland school in Germany. John started school at the age of six and finished when he was fourteen years of age. The government restrictions were very rigid and all children had to attend school eight years.

John's teacher's name was Kouter, and this was his school master all eight years that he attended.

After John's school days he helped his folks with the farm work, and worked as a teamster hauling hay and grain, for other farmers. John owned a team of horses and they hired him when they had hauling to do.

John's brother Peter was in military training for three years, as required by law in Germany. All boys of age would had to have military training. His brother Nicholas by accident shot one of his fingers off while loading a gun which was to be used in a wedding celebration. This was the costume then to give the married couple a salute. Because of this accident Nicholas did not have to serve in the army.

When John was supposed to enlist luck was with him, and he having many friends was always told to go to the end of the line and as only a few were taken out of this rank, ^{so} each time was omitted until the roster was filled. Due to his brother's accident John had to help his parents with the farm work. John's father was ill and died about this time.

In the year 1890 on the 12th of October, John married Marie Kammes. Marie (Kammes) Mandernach was born in Hittengen Kries Bitburg, Germany. This wedding took place in Trier, Germany at the Lorencius church.

The attendants at the ceremony were Magadeline Kammes and Peter Kammes.

On the 18th of October 1890, John and his wife sailed for America. The voyage was very rough the captain gave all passengers orders to stay below because the decks were awash. There were very few nice days and the trip was very rough. After eleven days they landed at New York.

From New York they migrated to Belding, Michigan near Miricam, where John was employed on a farm. His employers name was Jacob Kuhn, a cousin to Frank Kuhn who lived in this vicinity. John worked at this location seven years.

To John and Marie (Kammes) Mandernach three children were born: Catherine, Magadeline, and Peter.

On the 16th of September 1897 John his wife and family came to Richmond, Minnesota. The trip from Miricam to Richmond was made with ship from Grand Haven to Milwaukee. Up Mississippi to St. Paul. From here they took the train to St. Cloud. As no passenger trains came to

Richmond they rode in a freight train caboose to Richmond.

The first five years in Richmond John hauled grain ^{for} the Richmond elevator. John also served on the police force for one year. In the year 1902 Rev. Father Ludger Ehrens was Pastor of the Richmond Parish. The third of April he asked John to take the job as janitor, John consented even though the pay was very small. As times changed John received a raise in salary and had held the same job thirty-seven years.

John and his wife are still in good health. One of their daughters Magadeline is a nun and teaches school at Gladstone, North Dakota. Another daughter named Joe Middendorf from Richmond. John and wife have eighteen grandchildren.

John and wife have many interesting stories to relate. The town of Trier was a large market place with lovely buildings and seventeen Catholic churches.

Marie Mandernach remembers how many times she walked the street and found it filled with blood stains of people that had been beaten to death for their religion. These people were all buried underneath the Catholic church.

One of these Catholic churches had an large dome which took several years to built. When it was completed every time the clock would strike the twelve apostoles would appear. The men that built this dome would lay the stone in the daytime, and at night would carry up the supply for the following day. One evening a stranger offered to help, if they were building a Wirz House, in English called saloon. No one answered and so he took a stone and while going up the ladder one man said this is a Catholic church we are building. The man disgustedly let the stone

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fall and in doing so it landed just outside the entrance door. This stone turned black and no one was ever able to remove it.

John and wife have many more interesting stories to relate. Both are in good health, and John at the age of 82 years is still janitor in the St. Peter and Paul church of Richmond.

Interviewed: John Mandernach
Date: January 16, 1939
By: Alexander Pallansch

Publication Granted

Interviewed in German.