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Meier, Joseph (1843 - 1908)

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MEIER, JOSEPH

File No. B-880

Joseph Meier was born February 11, 1843, in Bavaria, Germany. When a lad of eight years, he came to this country with his mother and step-father, Frank Stahl, settling first in New York State, where they lived for twelve years. Unable to make any progress there, because the land was too densely covered with trees, and the wood which they cut could not be sold and had to be burned, they decided to go to Illinois where they had heard of the great plains. Arriving there they rented a farm for three years. They were unable to homestead land as it had been taken up by settlers before them, and to buy was out of the question because they had very little money. This was in 1866. At this time the fertile valleys of Minnesota were given a great deal of publicity by the railroads who were then extending their lines westward, and so they decided to come here, filing a claim on the place where Ludwig Meier now lives.

The trip from Illinois was made by train as far as Elk River, this was as far as the line went. From there they came by stage to Two River Settlement, which was a little Southeast of where Albany is now located. At that time only five or six settlers resided here. Where the village of Albany now stands was then a wild and unbroken forest. The nearest trading post was St. Cloud, twenty-five miles away.

Indians were few at this time but they would appear quite frequently, usually to beg food or drink. Since the settlers usually supplied their wants, they never had any serious trouble with any of them.

The chief crop was wheat. Just enough oats and corn was grown to supply their own needs, as there was no market for these two products.

Threshing was done with flails the first years. Later on Paul Obermiller bought a threshing machine, operated by horsepower, and he did all the threshing for the settlers. The wheat had to be hauled by oxen

to St. Cloud a trip that usually took three days.

The first complete crop failure occurred in the year 1873 due to the grasshopper scourge of that year. They came in such large swarms that at times, the sun was hidden by the clouds of grasshoppers and it became as dark as night. They did a thorough job of it devouring every green thing in the fields. After completing their destruction they all left.

The following year proved to be one of the best years that Mr. Meier had witnessed before or after the grasshopper scourge. All crops of grain, grass and potatoes yielded so abundantly that the family had to work almost day and night to harvest them.

When the St. Paul, Minneapolis and Manitoba (now Great Northern) Railroad extended its road to Two River Settlement they gave Albany its present name. They also gave the settlers a chance to earn some extra cash as they bought all the ties they could hew out of oak logs. It is for this reason too, that very few oak trees are to be found on the Meier and surrounding homesteads.

Although the Red River Carts passed the Meier homestead about two miles distant the creak and squeak of the carts could be heard very plainly since the carts were constructed wholly of wood no metal bearings of any kind were used, and Mr. Meier also knew that he soon would have some of the occupants at his place either begging or trying to do some trading.

On February 5, 1868 Joseph Meier married Anna Katzner. This was the first wedding that took place in Albany township. There being no church here at that time the ceremony was performed in the one room log cabin home of John Schwinghammer. Father Benedict Haindl, who was then stationed at St. Joseph performed the ceremony. The attendants were Mr. and Mrs.

Rupert Weitzel.

Joseph and Anna (Katzner) Meier had seven children, two of which died in infancy. Peter, was born November 4, 1868, was married to Mary Schrom. They had no children of their own but adopted two. Peter died January 31, 1934 and was buried at Albany.

Frank J., is married to Katie Grunloh and they reside on a farm near Holdingford where he is one of the successful farmers of that community he has ten children: Hildegard, who is Mrs. Jos. Gabernatz; Elenore, now Mrs. Harry Sandkamp; Clara, married Frank Schweitzer; Elizabeth, Mrs. Victor Moonen. Angela, Christina, Roman, Edmund, Leo, and Cyril at home.

Ludwig, born January 7, 1883 married Annie Froelich of Albany, and resides on the old home place where he is one of the outstanding farmers of the community. His kindness and fair dealings have won him a host of friends. He was a director on the school board for twelve years. Ludwig and Annie (Froelich) Meier have eleven children. Anna, born December 1, 1905, married Frank Schlepenbach May 11, 1927 and they have five children, Lucille, Norbert, Florence, Sylvester and Agnes. Lena, born October 11, 1906, is at home. Anton, born March 15, 1908, married Frances Gillitzer, daughter of Guido Gillitzer of St. Joseph. They reside on a farm near St. Francis. They have one son, James. The eight younger children of Ludwig and Anna (Froelich) Meier are at home: Joseph, born October 15, 1909; Tracis, born March 1, 1911; Agnes, born January 11, 1913; Peter, born May 19, 1915; Andrew, born January 26, 1917; George, born February 22, 1922; Nicholas, born January 31, 1925; Dorothy, born October 20, 1927; Thresia, the youngest daughter of Joseph Meier, married John T. Brinkman. John Brinkman, before his death which occurred January 4, 1933, was one one of leaders of this community, being successful in almost all business

MEIER, JOSEPH

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ventures he undertook. Mrs. Thresia (Meier) Brinkman is the mother of the following children: Alma, married Elmer Schoenecker and they have one daughter, Mary. Before her marriage Mrs. Schoenecker practiced nursing at the Richmond Hospital, where she also attended her father at the time of his death. Laura and Erma are the proprietors and operators of the "Brinkys" Beauty Parlor at Albany. Arnold and Florence are at home.

Joseph Meier, the person who heads this biography died November 10, 1908 and was buried in the Catholic Cemetery at Albany. His wife, Anna (Katzner) Meier died November 11, 1920, and was buried next to him.

Interviewed: Ludwig Meier
Date: March 15, 1937
By: Walter Haupt

Publication Granted

FROM THE RECORDS IN THE STEARNS COUNTY COURT HOUSE

FOR THE JOSEPH MEIER BIOGRAPHY

<u>Name</u>	<u>Date of Birth</u>	<u>Place of Birth</u>	<u>Father's Name</u>	<u>Age</u>
1. Lintpold Meier	Jan. 6, 1879	Albany	Joseph Meier	
2. Anna Meier	Dec. 17, 1883	"	" "	
3. Thresia Meier	June 14, 1886	"	" "	

<u>Mother's Name</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Book</u>	<u>Page</u>	<u>Line</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
1. Anna		A	343	14	
2. "		A	535	21	
3. "		B	43	29	

MARRIAGE RECORD BOOK C. PAGE 139

Joseph Myer and Anna Kotezner

Married at Two Rivers, February 5, 1868

By: Rev. Benedict Haindl O. S. B.

Witnesses: L. M. Schwinghamer and John Auer

DEATH RECORD BOOK M. PAGE 1 LINE 9

Mrs. Anna Meier Born in Germany May 11, 1848

Daughter of George and Anna Katzner

Died November 11, 1920

Age 72 years 6 months

FROM THE RECORDS IN THE STEARNS COUNTY COURT HOUSE

FOR THE JOSEPH MEIER BIOGRAPHY (CON'T)

DEATH RECORD BOOK L. PAGE 11 LINE 323

Peter J. Meier Born in Albany November 4, 1868

Son of Joseph Meier and Anna Katzner

Died January 31, 1934

Age 65 years 2 months and 27 days

DEATH RECORD BOOK B. PAGE 271 LINE 2

Joseph Meier Born in Germany February 11, 1843

Son of John Meier and Mary Schllittenhover

Died November 10, 1908

Age 65 years 8 months and 29 days

BOOK OF DEEDS X PAGE 121

Filed February 2, 1874

Homestead Claim

United States Government to Joseph Meier

The South East Quarter (S Et) of Section 19 in Township 125

Range 31 West, containing 160 acres application # 2906