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Schackmann, John (1849 - 1924)

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SCHACKMANN, JOHN

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John Schackmann was born August 29, 1849 in Germany, and was one of a family of six children, Micheal, John, Mary, Margaret, Katherine, and Lena.

John received his schooling in Germany and when about seventeen years of age, his parents brought the family to America, the trip took about eight or nine weeks.

Upon their arrival in Saint Cloud the Schackmann family settled on the Streitz farm southwest of town. While living here John got a job working for a man named Rausch on a farm near Saint Nicholas. Here he worked until his marriage about 1869, to Miss Anna Burgard born in Germany February, 1846. At the time of her marriage she had been working for the Gans family in Saint Cloud. John and Anna (Burgard) Schackmann were the first couple to be married in the old Saint Nicholas Church.

After the wedding the newlyweds took a claim near Saint Nicholas where they built a two room log house which contained two windows. Their first field was a tiny clearing which contained about one-fourth of an acre. The woods were so dense that they had to climb a tree to see any distance.

These first years were very trying for the young couple as the only meat they received was from a neighbor, Wilhelm Bersheit, who lived forty acres away, this meat was venison which he had shot in the woods near the homestead. The winters were long, cold, and hard. Sometimes they didn't have enough to eat, and the mournful howl of the wolves made the homestead seem lonesome and away from friendly neighbors.

One summer grasshoppers destroyed all the crops and even ate some of their clothing. As time went by they cleared new land and new neighbors moved in. Crops were good and by the time their first child arrived they

were fairly well established in their pioneer home.

In all they had nine children: Mary, (Mrs. Adolph Marx), of Eden Valley; Anna, (Mrs. George Dullinger), of Holdingford; Susa, (Mrs. Peter Hommerding), of Saint Cloud; Lena, (Mrs. Antone Oster), of Cold Spring; Peter, living on the old homestead; Nick, living in Watkins; and three dead, John, Katherine, and one unnamed infant.

In 1914 John moved to Cold Spring where he lived in retirement until his death April 11, 1924. His wife, Anna, died January, 1917.

There are twenty-four grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

Interviewed: Mrs. Susan (Schackmann) Hommerding

Date: September 9, 1936

By: Virgil Chirhart

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