

## **John Walter “JW” Bloomstrand**

(Note: Local newspapers refer to him as Walt or Walter most commonly.)

John Walter Bloomstrand was born on May 12, 1886 in Smaland, Sweden. His parents were John Bloomstrand and Hedda Johanson (noted also as Hattie or Sophia). The couple immigrated to Hastings from Sweden in 1888 with their two children at the time, Walter and Alma. Walter was three years old. In 1893, the Bloomstrands moved to Nininger. John worked as a stone mason. Walter eventually had seven siblings: Carl, David, Albert, Helen, Alma, Anna, and Lillian. Prior to his military service, Walter worked as an attendant at a state asylum.

Walter enlisted in June of 1916. He served at Camp Cody in New Mexico on the United States Border. Walter also served in France as a cook with the 135th Infantry, Company G.

After his military service, Walter married Maude Isabel Hyde of Lake City on September 30, 1919. They lived in Nininger Township. Walter was noted as “well liked” in the community and ran a popcorn wagon for around 20 years. Later, he operated a resort known as Walt’s Cave in Nininger. He enjoyed being a father, hunting and fishing. Walter and Maude had seven children: Robert, Kenneth, Margie, Marylin, Dolores, Virginia and Shirley. In 1931, Walter found the decomposing body of a 15 year old St. Paul resident, Vernon Bovee. He had drowned while paddling his raft some six months earlier. In the 1940s, the Bloomstrands lived off Route #2 in Hastings, MN. Walter worked at his small grocery store in Nininger. He was a member of the Disabled American Veterans and American Legion organizations. Maude died in February of 1944 following a paralytic stroke. In about 1952, Walter had an operation at the Minneapolis Veterans’ Hospital, but never recovered. Walter died of a “lingering illness of about two years” on August 9, 1954 and was buried at Lakeside Cemetery in Hastings, MN. He was 68 years old.



John & Hedda Bloomstrand Family photo

Back Row, L>R: Anna, David, Helen, Alma, Albert, Lillian.

Front Row: L>R: Carl, John, Hedda, Walter (JW)