John Joseph Fink was born 3 August 1888 to Conrad Fink (1856-1927) and Ursula Denk (1860-1931), who immigrated to the U.S. from Austria around 1887. They had a large family of at least ten children. They belonged to St. Michael’s Catholic Church.

Fink lived in West St. Paul when he enlisted on 21 Sep 1918. Prior to that he had worked as a harness maker and as a farmhand on his uncle’s ranch in South Dakota. He received his training at Camp Funston, Kansas, where he was assigned to the 70th Infantry, 10th Division. He died within three weeks of enlistment.

He died on 10 October 1918 of influenza while at Camp Funston, where some of the first known American cases of the worldwide epidemic were reported. He is buried in Calvary Cemetery in St. Paul, Minnesota.