

These are the stories of the Johan and Catherine Kochendorfer family found on findagrave.com, created by Bill Cox and Curtis Dahlin. They are buried in the Oakland Cemetery, St. Paul, MN, Block 57, Lot 4.

In August, 1862, Johann and Catherine Kochendorfer and their five children lived on a farm in Flora Township, Renville County, Minnesota. The Dakota Indians, who lived on a nearby reservation, were frustrated with their situation for a variety of reasons. Consequently, on August 18, 1862, they lashed out at the whites in the area, killing hundreds. Included in their victims were Johann, Catherine, and three-year-old Sarah Kochendorfer. Four Kochendorfer children were able to make their escape, reaching safety at Fort Ridgely. The three victims were buried where they fell, but over the years, their graves were lost track of. They were rediscovered in 1891, and the remains were reburied in St. Paul's Oakland Cemetery. The inscription on their gravestone reads "Kochendorfer, Johan 38 Yrs, Catherine 36 Yrs, Sarah 3 Yrs. Victims of Redwood Falls Massacre, Aug. 1862."

Catherine Lechler was born in Baden-Wurttemberg, Germany, in 1826 and emigrated to America aboard a sailing vessel in 1847. While on the ship, she met Johann Kochendorfer, a German native, and they were married shortly after arriving in the new country. They bought a farm at Cazenovia, Woodford County, Illinois, where five of their children were born: Barbara (died 1851 in infancy), John, Rose, Kate, and Margaret. The family moved to St. Paul, MN in 1857, where daughter Sarah was born, and then moved to Renville County, MN in April of 1862. Here they lived on a claim in the northeast corner of the southeast quarter of section 33 in Flora Township. The area was known as the Middle Creek settlement. On August 18, 1862, the first day of the Dakota uprising, Indians attacked the settlement, killing several in the community. Catherine's husband, Johann, was shot and killed near the farmhouse. The Indians then went indoors to kill Catherine and the youngest daughter, Sarah. The other children, John, Rose, Kate, and Margaret, escaped to Ft. Ridgely with the help of some neighbors. Catherine, Johann, and Sarah were originally buried in an unmarked grave on their claim. In 1891, their remains were found on the farmsite, then

owned by Henry Timms. John Kochendorfer claimed the remains of his parents and sister, and they were reburied in Oakland Cemetery.

Here are their children as listed below their memorials:

Children:

Barbara Kochendorfer (1847 - 1851)\*

John Kochendorfer (1851 - 1933)\*

Rosena Kochendorfer Keller (1854 - 1934)\*

Catherina Kochendorfer Stapf (1855 - 1896)\*

Margaret Kochendorfer Erchinger (1857 - 1938)\*

Sarah Kochendorfer (1859 - 1862)\*