

RAMSEY COUNTY
History
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Volume 49, Number 4

“With Pen, Ink, and
Paper”

*October 1857: The Kochen-
dorfers Arrive in St. Paul*

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“He Was a Dear Friend”

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Private Railway Car

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Robert Minor, right, and his son, Walter, at James J. Hill’s fishing camp on the Saint John River in Quebec, Canada in 1919. Minor worked as the steward on Hill’s private railroad car and would also handle cooking duties when Hill made his annual summer retreat to his fishing lodge. Photo reproduced by permission from a private collection.

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THE MISSION STATEMENT OF THE RAMSEY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS ON DECEMBER 20, 2007:

The Ramsey County Historical Society inspires current and future generations
to learn from and value their history by engaging in a diverse program
of presenting, publishing and preserving.

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William Boss and His Specialty Manufacturing Company
Harlan Stoehr

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A Message from the Editorial Board

This issue brings us fascinating portraits of different lives intersecting with history. Eileen McCormack has examined materials from the Hill family’s papers at the Minnesota Historical Society to bring us the story of Robert C. Minor, who had a place of honor as the African-American steward of James J. Hill’s private railroad car. Daniel Munson has unearthed the detailed letters of Catherine Kochendorfer, who arrived in St. Paul by wagon from Illinois, but soon moved with her family near Redwood Falls and lost her life in the Dakota conflict of 1862. And Harlan Stoehr shares the reflections and career history of William Boss, a pioneering agricultural engineer who taught at the University of Minnesota’s School of Agriculture, held numerous patents, and founded the Specialty Manufacturing Company. Issues like this remind us of RCHS’s mission to preserve, share, and honor the memories of citizens who have gone before us. All important lives, all worth remembering, and all fun to read about!

Anne Cowie,
Chair, Editorial Board

“With Pen, Ink, and Paper”

October 1857: The Kochendorfers Arrive in St. Paul

Daniel C. Munson

Johan and Catherine Kochendorfer were German immigrant farmers in central Illinois—near the town of Cazenovia—in the 1850s. They were farming near Catherine’s sister, Rosina, and Rosina’s family when they decided to pack their bags and travel by covered wagon with their four children to the Minnesota Territory. They arrived in St. Paul in the early fall of 1857.¹

Before she left Illinois, Catherine promised to write to Rosina after she arrived in Minnesota, and she did so. But Catherine’s letter was exceptional in at least three ways: (1) it was very detailed, and filled with the family’s plans and wonderful glimpses into what pioneer life was like for those tough, sturdy folks; (2) it was beautifully written, almost poetic; and (3) her sister Rosina in Illinois saved it, perhaps instinctively appreciating its quality. Catherine wrote Rosina more letters, and Rosina saved some of those letters as well.

Many of those letters survive today. Catherine wrote to Rosina from St. Paul until late April 1862, when the Homestead Act encouraged the Kochendorfers to take up farming again. Catherine and Johan were homesteading along the Minnesota River near Redwood Falls in August 1862 when they were killed in the early hours of the U.S.-Dakota War, or Sioux Uprising. Their farm was just across the river from the Rice Creek Soldiers’ Lodge—the collection of Dakota warriors who had grown discontented with the reservation boundaries and reservation life that was strongly encouraged by the terms of the treaty that the Dakota had signed with the U.S. government in 1851.²

Catherine and Johan had five children living with them on that 160-acre farm: 11-year-old Johan Jr.; 9-year-old Rosina; 7-year-old Katherine; 5-year-old Margaret; and 3-year-old Sarah. When they were attacked by those Dakota warriors that first morning of the Uprising, four of the five

children ran into the woods and down into the ravine alongside the creek that ran through the Kochendorfers’ acreage. Sarah, the youngest, was killed along with her parents. The four children made the 25-mile journey to Fort Ridgely, walking roughly a dozen miles before catching an ox cart ride for the remaining distance. (When five-year-old Margaret could walk no more that day, her brother Johan carried her for stretches.)

Those four children made it back to St. Paul. They were eventually put with families in the St. Paul area, families con-

nected to them through the church their parents had joined on arriving in St. Paul in 1857.

Catherine’s Letter

A couple of decades later, the youngest surviving child, Margaret, began corresponding with her Aunt Rosina in Illinois. Margaret knew that her aunt still had the letters that her mother had written Rosina during the years 1857–1862. Margaret asked for those letters.

The letters were in German, and Margaret set about translating those letters so that her children and her many nieces and nephews could read them in English.³ The true treasure in this series of letters is that first one, the one Margaret’s mother, Catherine, wrote on arriving in St. Paul, that first letter from November 1857. Margaret Kochendorfer’s translation reads as follows:



The Kochendorfer family in St. Paul in 1858–1859. Left to right, they are Margaret, Catherine, Johan Jr., daughter Catherine, Johan Sr., and Rosina. Photo courtesy of the Brown County Historical Society, New Ulm, Minn.

St. Paul, November 2nd, 1857⁴

Dearly Beloved Brother-in-Law and Sister,
The Grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of His soul be with you all. Amen.

I feel so happy, and thankful to God that His wisdom so arranged it, that although we are separated, we may, with pen, ink, and paper have heartfelt talks, which is especially very dear to me at this time.⁵ I assure you that I miss you so much. Many, many times I wish I could be in your midst, though I have not regretted our coming here, but love draws me to you—but I am living in hopes. Dear Sister, I promised you that in one month after our departure you should have a letter, but it will not be quite so soon as that, for unavoidable reasons.

Dear friends, I will now write you about our trip. On Tuesday morning we left Brother Horner's accompanied with best wishes for a happy journey. We were wishing if only we might find such a comfort and shelter every night, with loving Christian friends, as our wagon is so full and it is hard to find room to sit, saying nothing of lying down—we could not think of that.

Tuesday evening we arrived safely at Miknolle,⁶ where we expected to send some of our things ahead by freight, but found there was no railroad there. At the outskirts of the place Johan inquired at a house whether we might make our beds up in the hay loft. They wanted us to come into their home, but we were glad to get the hay loft, but we used their stove to get our supper and breakfast, and also accepted their offer of the use of their dining table. These people were American Baptists.

Content and happy we started out again in the morning in our dear Lord's name, knowing He was with us on our trip. After several miles we met Brother Rohrbach who was on his way to visit at Hollandsgrove. After an enjoyable chat with him we went on again. At noon we arrived at Peru, where we sent our trunk ahead by freight to Dunleith. That night we unloaded our wagon and made up our beds in it. Often we would drive into farmyards and always found folks kind and obliging.

That Friday night was the most troublesome we had. We stopped early at a house, built a fire near the road and unloaded our things, when an old man drove a herd of

cattle by. He stopped and looked closely at everything, but said very little. Then he went on, but turned and came back to us and kissed little Katherine.⁷ Then he looked around curiously. Then he went over to the other children (they were sitting in the wagon seat near the fire) and gave Rose a kiss, too, and at the same time took her half apple and ate it without saying a word. Later on he left us. We slept little that night but the old man did not return.

The following noon we stopped at a German woman's home. When she heard we were German movers she came from the house to see us and wanted to know where we were going. After hearing that we were going to Minnesota she said "Why are you going there? The grasshoppers have eaten everything, and the people are almost starving." That certainly was not very encouraging news, especially after we learned that she was also one of our [fellow] Evangelical church members.

She also told us that recently a man passed by who said that the grasshoppers had destroyed everything—that there were so many that you could not see the sun and everything is high priced. Flour, he said, was 18 dollars a barrel [?]; corn was 2-1/2 dollars per bushel; oats 1-1/2 per bushel. This news discouraged us so much that we almost made up our minds to buy a farm in Iowa for perhaps a year or two before coming here to Minnesota. But man proposes and God disposes.

Until Saturday we had wonderful weather, nice roads, no hills—only around Peru—and lovely prairie land—fine farms and nice houses. On Saturday we reached some hills where we now found poor roads, poor farms and poor houses. Just the reverse of what we had seen before, but we always found kind and obliging people, even in these poorer surroundings, and quite often they were also Germans as well.

Also on that Friday evening Johan could get no hay and therefore gave the horses more oats than usual and watered them before starting Saturday. That night Petty [one of the horses] was very sick. We feared that she would die. The next morning she felt better again so we started on again, driving slowly.

We had pleasant weather. Sunday afternoon it rained some but during the night we had a heavy rain but we did not mind it in the wagon. Our baggage was in a shed where it kept dry, too. It was on this Sunday



Marilyn Hoffman, left, is the keeper of the Kochendorfer family's records. Here she holds a photo from about 1870 of Johan Kochendorfer Jr., left, and Charles Schmidt, a Mdewakaton Sioux, both of whom were the adopted sons of Gottfried and Mary Schmidt, who farmed in Dakota County. Dan Munson holds another family record, the first page of the 1857 letter that Catherine wrote to her sister from St. Paul. Photo courtesy of Daniel C. Munson.

and Monday that we encountered the worst roads—up one hill and down another. Sometimes a mile long, but Petty was well and went fine.

On Monday we also passed within a mile of the well built, large town by the name of Carrlina.⁸ Most of the inhabitants were German. As we were close to the town we did not care to stay all night in the open, so John inquired at a pretty home whether we might drive into the yard. He was the Postmaster of the place and he said yes, we should drive behind the shed where his Irish hired man had built a shanty for his family. Our wagon was near this shanty and at first we were afraid, but we found them to be very nice people. In the evening they brought the children potatoes, tea, milk, etc. In the morning we made our coffee on their stove and they did everything they could to make us comfortable. It seemed to us as though our dear Lord had led and guided the people all along our trip to treat us with kindness, for which we were so grateful to Him.

Tuesday afternoon we arrived at Dunleith.⁹ The expenses of our trip to this point, so far, was a little over five dollars. Here we picked up our trunk at the freight office and the charges amounted to one dollar. Hay, that in the beginning of the trip



Margaret Kochendorfer Erchinger in the 1880s. Photo courtesy of Marilyn Hoffman.

cost five or ten cents now was twenty-five or fifty and we were afraid as it was getting cooler and the weather was so changeable that we now decided to take the steamboat to St. Paul. We purchased what groceries and feed we could and boarded the boat with our family and wagon and team. The boat fare to St. Paul was twenty-five dollars and we then arrived here at St. Paul.

We enjoyed good health on our journey. Margaret cut three teeth on the way.¹⁰ Her condition was fine.

After our arrival we hunted up Brother Dieter who was very kind and urged us to stay with them.¹¹ The next day we rented a small cabin, 13x19 feet, well built. The rent is 4 dollars monthly. We put a barn up for the horses, which is to come out of the rent, as our landlord will keep it. They live on the same lot with us. They are Catholics.

Lumber that you, in Illinois, pay twenty or twenty-two for, we here in St. Paul get for

sixteen dollars. Calico is priced the same as there. Flour is six dollars a barrel and we and the Dieters each bought three barrels. In that way we got it for five dollars seventy five cents. For cabbage we pay the same as you did last year. Potatoes are 40-50 cents per bushel, butter is 20-30 cents, eggs are 25-30 cents, lard is 22 cents, pork 15 cents, beef 10 cents. Interest on one hundred dollars is three dollars per month, but five at the bank.¹²

Business here is quite dull. A man, with his team, gets five dollars a day. According to that we can easily make a living this winter, if Johan gets enough work to keep him busy.

Dear Sister, you have no cause to worry about us, even if our money is almost used up. We paid 25 dollars for a stove (about the size of yours) bedsteads, chairs and table, so in our comfortable little house we will see how the wind will blow this winter. John bought 41 dollars worth of hay, about 4-1/2 tons. They say everything will be higher

when the boats no longer run, so you see we and our horses will be comfortable

We do not hear much about grasshoppers here. They have been quite troublesome in some parts of Minnesota but let me assure you, it will not cause a famine here.

Now I have written about the prices of different things, as I know about them, and I assure you they are correct, but if some believe (as I heard said before we left Illinois) that the truth about prices is never written, they may believe as they please.

We live quite close to our little church. It is quite pretty and comfortable. It was built this past summer, but alas, there is but a very small congregation. There are not many members here. We enjoy the services, especially that they arrive and leave quietly, still we do not feel quite at home among them yet. The singing is still strange to us, and love to you, our dear brothers and sisters, makes us think back and prompts us to often pray for you.

Dear friends, I must also tell you about the condition of our health. We have had very few days since our arrival that we were in good health. We have all had bad colds. We were sick two weeks with this. The children still look bad, especially Johan, who has had a bad diarrhea. When we took the bandages off his broken arm, we found it had not been properly set, so it was crooked, but he has no pain and we are in hopes that he will not be inconvenienced with it. He asks me to tell you about it, dear sister and brother-in-law.¹³ Rosina also asks me to tell her godmother and godfather that they should come here. Kathryn says she will cook apples, dumplings, potatoes and cabbage for you when you come.

I will let Johan tell you about the surrounding country as he knows more about that than I do. He moved a family up to where our minister, Reverend Tarnutzer expects to start a new congregation. They left here Monday morning on October 26th and came back on Saturday. He received 25 dollars for taking them up there, but had only seventeen left when he arrived home as hotel charges are high. He drove ninety or ninety five miles to the place. I expected he would be gone two or three weeks as he expected to look around the country to make a claim, so that is the reason why we did not write before as I wanted to tell you all the news about his trip. After we had our things

somewhat in order we bought writing paper and expected to write to you. Then all at once he had to go with that family. Then I waited till he would return.

Dear Rose, now please write real soon to us. I should love to have a letter right now. How is your little Mary? And the other children? Remember us to all the brothers and sisters in your congregation and the Blue Creek congregation, and also father and mother Winkler. In closing, I wish you God's rich blessing, peace and unity and we ask for your believing prayers in our behalf. May God's Grace lead and guide us, so we may be true and faithful to the end, is the prayer of your loving sister.

Catharina Kochendorfer

. . .

Dear Brother-in-Law and Sister-in-Law,

The peace of God be with you. Amen. Because Kathryn has written quite a lengthy letter I will be brief. You know likely that I do not like to write. I want you to know how it is about getting land here. Around St. Paul it is quite hilly. It is about the same as between Black Partridge and the Blue Creek.¹⁴ It is also uneven and sandy, but very fertile. Everything grows well, especially potatoes. We bought some potatoes from a German man, who had three acres in potatoes, from which he harvested a total of 600 bushels. He sold them at 50 cents per bushel, and received 300 dollars. He paid 10 dollars rent per acre per year. He lives about five miles from here.

Land is very expensive around St. Paul. Another man purchased forty acres, two miles out, for 500 dollars, and there was a frame house on this land. Ten acres are under cultivation and the rest is not cleared. By this you can judge what a poor man can do here, but you must not be discouraged, for there are many other opportunities also.

Last week I drove ninety miles up the Minnesota River, which runs somewhat south from here to a new little town named Mankato. There are still good opportunities there. People there told me that 15 miles farther on there was fine land to be opened next spring which they report is very good land.

I did not see this land. When I left home last week I expected to take a claim while up there. When I arrived I learned that you must be on it thirty days before applying for



Kochendorfer siblings, Rose, Margaret, and John, left to right, visiting the grave of their sister, Catherine or Kate, in the early 1920s in Farmington, Minn. Photo courtesy of Marilyn Hoffman.

it and that was too long for me to stay and too expensive also.

We have now decided, if it is God's will, to stay here in St. Paul until next spring, then in March go up to Mankato, rent us a home there, till I can make a claim.

Flour, oats, corn and wheat are hauled to Mankato in the fall of the year by team. Flour there costs \$11 per barrel, so you can see how everything there is more expensive and we are better off here this winter.

Now remember, if any of you want to come to take a claim, you will have to be on it 30 days, and then you are supposed to be on it from time to time. If a person has the money to pay then there is no problem. There is very much land taken and unless you want to take a claim you are better off in Illinois, for provisions are very expensive here and a good laborer only gets \$1 per day. This is

about all I can say at this time. After we are on the land we perhaps can tell more about it.

I will close with best wishes for you and the brothers and sisters in the class, also those at Blue Creek, not forgetting Brother Himmel. May God give you all the Grace to walk in the narrow way of life, which gives us so much joy here, but especially in that heavenly home, to join all the saints in singing praises to our God. Hallelujah, Amen!

Your Loving Brother,
Johan Kochendorfer

Johan did not make that trek back to Mankato in the spring of 1858. We do not know precisely why not. Perhaps he did not manage to accumulate the needed money over the winter of 1857–1858. (A worldwide business recession reached Minnesota in 1857; thus it's very likely

that Johan's drayage business suffered.) Perhaps he realized that March in Minnesota was much colder than he anticipated. We do know that his dream to do so did not die that winter. Four years later, with the passage of the Homestead Act that eliminated the requirement of a cash outlay to secure up to 160 acres of public land, Johan would realize this dream of farming that rich black soil alongside the Minnesota River, just upstream from Mankato.

Promoting Westward Expansion

The Homestead Act of 1862 made Johan Kochendorfer's hopes expressed in that November 1857 letter a reality. The onset of Civil War hostilities the year before had caused the Congressional delegations from the ten seceding southern states to leave Washington D.C., and with them went most of the opposition to the idea of "free homestead" legislation. It was the delegations from the Southern states that could see clearly how these new Northern states like Minnesota would be the main beneficiaries of such a "free homestead" act.

Members of the state delegations from the South could do the electoral math: in the election of 1840 the states that would form the Confederacy had 94 electoral votes; the upper Midwest—the area that would become Illinois, Iowa, Wisconsin, and Minnesota—had only 5. (Only Illinois had been granted statehood at that point.) A mere twenty years later, in 1860, these same Confederate states had 90 electoral votes, but those upper Midwest states now had 24, and all 24 were cast for Republican anti-slavery candidate Abraham Lincoln.

The political implications of the election of Abraham Lincoln and the Republicans in 1860 for those Southern states were stark: Lincoln and the Republicans had control of the executive branch with their control of nearly all the electoral votes north of the Ohio River. The South suddenly realized it could not effectively influence executive branch action.

With the departure of the delegations from the Southern states, the Homestead Act of 1862 passed in a landslide. The



This granite stone in Oakland Cemetery marks the last resting place of Johan and Catherine Kochendorfer and their daughter Sarah. Photo courtesy of Curt Dahlin.

House of Representatives passed it easily in February, the Senate soon afterwards, and President Lincoln signed in on May 20, 1862.

The following day, May 21, Catherine Kochendorfer dated a letter she then sent to her sister Rosina in Illinois from her new homestead just upstream from Redwood Falls. (The Kochendorfers had moved from St. Paul roughly three weeks earlier.) In it she described that "the land here is wonderful, as good as we only hope for." That letter has also been preserved by the family.

The Children Who Survived

Following the tragic events of August 1862, Catherine and Johan's orphaned children—Johan Jr., Rosina, Catherine, and Margaret—made their way to St. Paul, and were looked after and cared for by members of the St. Paul Evangelical Church community. The four children made a trip south to St. Louis by steamboat late that year, perhaps to travel to and stay with Catherine's sister Rosina's family back in Cazenovia, but the children returned to St. Paul the following spring, perhaps because Rosina and her husband Michael Ebert simply couldn't care for the four Kochendorfer children in addition to their own children.

In 1863 the four children were then put with three different families in the St. Paul area. Johan Jr. and Margaret went to live with Gottfried and Mary Schmidt, who farmed in what is now South St. Paul. Rosina was sent to live at the Keller farm in Trimbelle Township, just east of Prescott, Wisconsin. Catherine was sent

to live with the Muellers, who farmed near Hampton, Minnesota.

The four Kochendorfer children became part of the St. Paul community.¹⁵ They all married and had many children. They mastered English, and as they did, their names would change. "John" had five children, "Rose" had six, "Kate" had ten, and "Maggie" had five. The detailed genealogy now kept by Catherine's granddaughter, Marilyn Hoffman, lists roughly one thousand descendants of that original Kochendorfer family that arrived in St. Paul in October 1857.

Three of the four children who survived—John, Rose, and Kate—were temperamentally farming people. They married and farmed with their spouses, and they gave their farms to their children, who then farmed. The youngest of the children, Maggie, was more of a city gal. She married and lived in St. Paul, and later she and her husband John Erchinger moved their growing family to Tacoma, Washington.

Margaret was very literate and a good writer. She asked Aunt Rosina for those letters that her mother had written. Margaret pored over those many letters, as well as other documents concerning her parents' lives, and she painstakingly translated them from the German. The Kochendorfer family story survives today in such vividness because of daughter Margaret's literary efforts.

That November 1857 letter was the most detailed and poignant of the letters Margaret's parents wrote. Margaret's translation—"I feel so happy, and thankful to God, that His wisdom so arranged it, that although we are separated, we may with pen, ink and paper have heartfelt talks, which is especially very dear to me at this time. I assure you that I miss you so much"—is touching. Margaret would have remembered how her mother spoke German to her as a child, and as she read this letter, she could perhaps hear again how her mother would have spoken those words. Might Margaret have felt that same thankfulness as she considered "His wisdom" in arranging things so that Margaret could—through that same medium of "pen, ink, and paper"—hear again from her beloved mother? One can hope so.¹⁶

Shortly after sister Kate died in 1896, Margaret moved to Tacoma, Washington with her husband and their family, and she lived there the rest of her life. Margaret and her family had been taking care of Gottfried Schmidt's widow, Mary, following Gottfried's death in 1890, and Mary moved to Tacoma along with Margaret's family and lived with them until her death in 1908.

Margaret traveled to Minnesota to visit with her sister Rose and her brother John. During one of those visits, Margaret and John and Rose went to Farmington to visit the gravesite of their beloved sister Kate. There is a photo taken of the three of them alongside Kate's grave.

Margaret kept all these family records and translations together, and she passed them along to one of her nephews in Minnesota, Seybert Stapf, perhaps reasoning that most of the interest in the family's dramatic story was back in Minnesota. These records are now kept by one of Seybert Stapf's daughters, Marilyn Hoffman, of Hampton, Minnesota.

Margaret was the last survivor of the four children who so narrowly escaped death in August 1862. She died in 1937, in Tacoma, Washington. Her gravestone reads "Margaret K. Erchinger 1857–1937." The "K" on that stone stands, of course, for Kochendorfer. It had been 75 years since Margaret had lived in a

Kochendorfer household, but her pride in her family and in the Kochendorfer family story is still visible in that middle initial that her descendants made sure was engraved into that stone.

An engineer by education and employment, Dan Munson lives in Maplewood. His research into the Kochendorfers' story resulted from a chance discovery of the headstone for Johan, Catherine, and Sarah on a family bicycle expedition through Oakland Cemetery one Memorial Day while visiting the gravesites of his family's forebears in that cemetery.

Notes

1. The dramatic Kochendorfer family story is told in the new Minnesota history book *Malice Toward None: Abraham Lincoln, the Civil War, the Homestead Act, and the Massacre—and Inspiring Survival—of the Kochendorfers* (St. Cloud, Minn.: North Star Press, 2014). The author of this article is the author of that book. He is not related at all to the Kochendorfers, and he came upon their inspiring story and these wonderful Kochendorfer family records as a result of a chance incident described in the book.

2. For more information on the causes and outcome of the U.S.-Dakota War, see Gary C. Anderson and Alan R. Woolworth, eds., *Through Dakota Eyes: Narrative Accounts of the Minnesota Indian War of 1862* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1988) and Kenneth Carley, *Sioux Uprising of 1862*, 2d ed. (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2001). Robert M. Tegeder also writes about the deaths of the Kochendorfers in his book *John Kochendorfer and the Sioux Uprising* (Apple Valley, Minn.: R.M. Tegeder, 1988).

3. Margaret's mother, Catherine, used a German handwriting style that might best be described as "Kurrent" script. The distinctive capital "S" that Catherine used in addressing her letter to her "Vielgeliebte Schwager und Schwester"—her "Much, or Dearly, Beloved Brother-in-Law and Sister"—is characteristic of Kurrent script.

4. Catherine originally wrote "October," but "October" was crossed out and what looks like another hand wrote "November." I therefore suspect that she composed the letter during that first month but did not finish it, and that her husband may have completed it in November.

5. This wonderful sentence, in the original German—so far as your author can make it out

at this point—reads as follows: "Ich bin froh und Dankbar zu Gott, das seine Weisheit so angeordnet(?), das, obwohl wir getrennt ist, . . . normalishe (?) Feder, Tinte, und Papier haben herzen. . . ." (The rest of the sentence is too difficult to make out. It is a good thing that daughter Margaret translated this and others of her mother's letters all those years ago when the ink was not so faded as it is today.)

6. Catherine may have meant Magnolia, or perhaps McNabb, Illinois, two towns that are both between Cazenovia and Peru. Both place names would have been difficult for a German-speaker to remember and then spell correctly weeks later.

7. Daughter Katherine was two years old at the time.

8. Catherine is probably referring here to the town of Mount Carroll, Illinois. Mount Carroll is in a somewhat hilly part of northwestern Illinois.

9. Today this city is called East Dubuque, Illinois.

10. Margaret was six months old during the journey from Illinois. Her mother spelled her name "Marguerite."

11. This may be a reference to Ferdinand Dieter, a member and class leader of the Emmanuel Evangelical Church, located at that time at the corner of 11th and Pine Streets in St. Paul. This congregation was formed in 1857 and is active today as the Mounds Park United Methodist Church at the corner of Earl and Euclid Streets in the Dayton's Bluff area of St. Paul. It's likely that the Kochendorfers or members of their Evangelical congregation in Illinois had made contact with members of the St. Paul Evangelical Church in advance of this trip, so that Ferdinand Dieter knew that this new

church family, the Kochendorfer family, was traveling to St. Paul.

12. Catherine's information regarding prevailing bank interest rates might not have been perfect. 3% and 5% per month would have been considered usurious, both then and now.

13. Catherine does not describe how young Johan broke his arm, and young Johan wishes his aunt and uncle to hear about his condition. This suggests his aunt and uncle were aware of the fact, and therefore that his arm was probably broken and bandaged before the family left for Minnesota.

14. These place names survive today as the names of rural roads near Metamora, Illinois: Black Partridge Road and Black Partridge Park north and west of Metamora, and Blue Creek Trail southwest of Metamora.

15. Following their deaths in August 1862, Johan and Catherine Kochendorfer and their daughter Sarah were hastily buried near where they were killed close by Middle Creek in Flora Township. The location of this grave was unknown until 1891 when a farmer in that area accidentally uncovered their remains. He contacted son Johan in St. Paul and Johan had the remains of his parents and sister reinterred at Oakland Cemetery.

16. We know that Margaret had a gift for gratitude. She closed one of her letters describing her life, her parents and her family story as follows: "The devout Christian life [of her parents] and the earnest prayers for their children have been a great blessing to us and our children. My prayer is that all the descendants may so live, taking Jesus as their Savior and guide, and that we may all meet in that heavenly home, praising God for His wonderful love shown us here."

R.C.H.S.

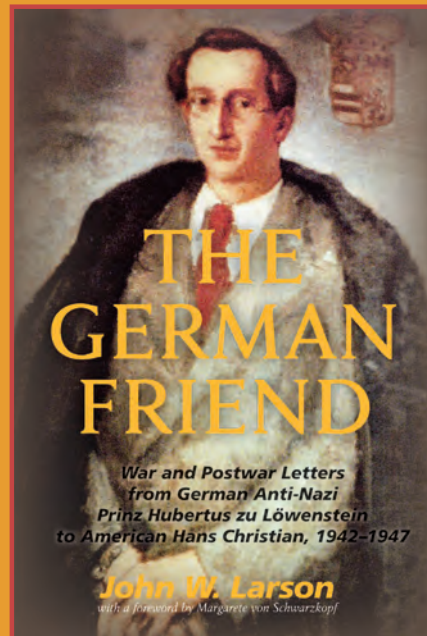
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