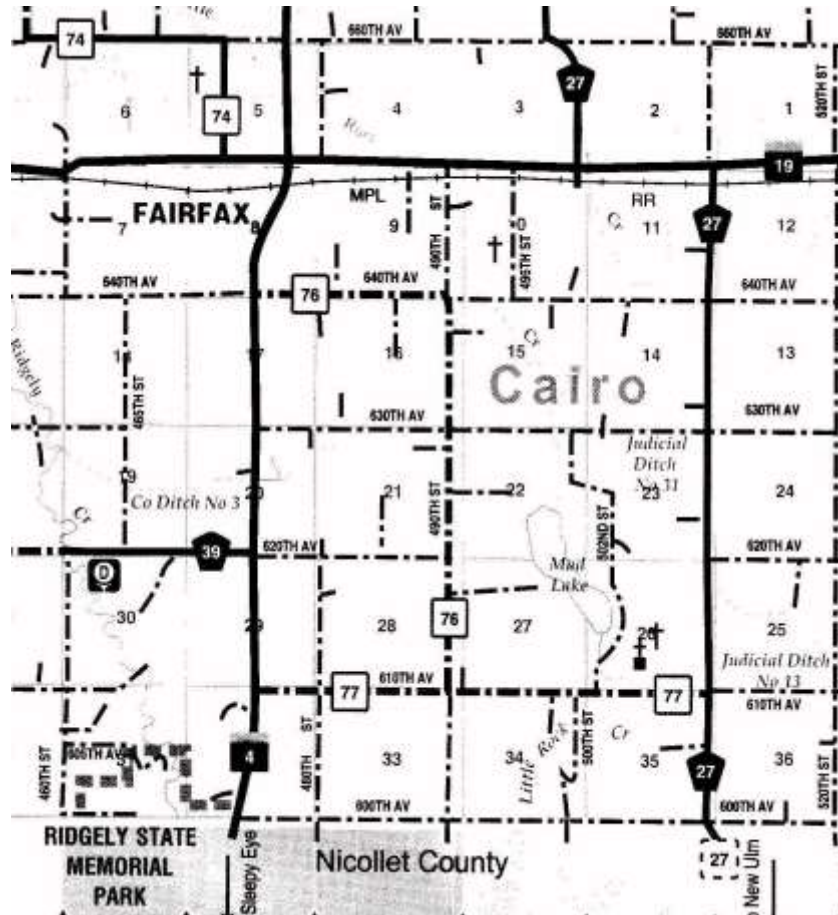


Cairo Township



Cairo Township was a sparsely populated place at the time of the outbreak. The only known settlements were in section 26 on or near Mud Lake, located just west of Hwy. 27 and north of County Road 77 on the above map. A cemetery and church symbol cover that section number. The only known family to return was the Rieke family who came back after two months. Notice the close proximity to Fort Ridgely.

George Bucher

George Bucher was killed, probably while escaping to the fort, in Section 33 of Cairo Township on August 19, 1862. He is buried in an unmarked grave. It is not known where he lived.

John Henry and Agatha Strieff Bühler (Buchro, Buehro)

John and Agatha married in Nicollet County on April 17, 1860. John, age 34 and Agatha, 32 and their son Henry, age unknown but believed to be one to two years of age, lived in Section 26, one mile northeast of Fort Ridgely. They were a neighbor of Felix Smith. Both men and their families escaped to the fort but on August 20, John's wife asked him to return for a dress. On their return to the fort, both John and Felix were killed. John was originally buried on the banks of Fort Creek but was later reburied in the New Ulm City Cemetery. His tombstone contains 3 additional names. John was thirty-four years, 4 months and 4 days old when he died.

Agatha filed for a Military Warrant on Section 27 on January 1, 1864, but there is no record of her living there in the 1865 census. A Depredation Claim #338 was filed on behalf of John Buhrer (decd.), amount unknown by

Cairo Township

Agatha Buhner of Brown County, and full payment was made for relief of depredation damages. There is nothing further known about this family. Agatha may have remarried.

There is another Buehro family that appears on the Fort Ridgely list of refugees: N. 33, home near fort, wife Anna, 30, children daughter W. 5, and infant E., year old. John and N. may be brothers.

***Johan Frederick and Gertrude Anna (Burke), William, George, Victor, Adam, Henry, August Ernest, Herman, Anna Maria and Lisetta Rieke**

Prussian immigrants, the Rieke family homesteaded about four miles east of Fort Ridgely near Mud Lake, on Section 26 in 1859, and they were among the early settlers of the county. The sons provided hay for Fort Ridgely and had a camp one mile from the post. When they heard the news that the Dakota were killing whites, they all went to the fort for safety. Four of their sons were among the fort defender; Victor, George and Adam were put in charge of the field guns. Henry, also listed as a defender, died of a heart ailment while at the fort.

The family returned to their claims two months after the outbreak and commenced farming. The father, Frederick, who was born January 21, 1796, died in March 17, 1879 in Cairo Township, and the mother, Gertrude, aka Maria Katherina Gerutha, who was born November 10, 1807 and died April 12, 1897. Both are buried in the Bethel Cemetery in Cairo Township. They had thirteen children.

Frederick was born September 27, 1826 and died January 30, 1905. He married Wilhelmine Lamire. Fred is buried in the West Newton Cemetery, in Nicollet County, MN. A Frederick Rieke filed a Depredation Claim #1238 for \$225.00, and full payment was made for relief of depredation damages. It is not certain if this claim was filed by the father or the son.

Mary Elisabeth was born November 16, 1828 and died May 5, 1908. She married John Overbeck.

William, born in December, 1831, married Louisa Vollmer and they had seven children. He died November 24, 1907 in Cairo Township at the age of 77. Louisa died June 24, 1900 in Cairo Township. Both are buried in the Bethel Cemetery.

George Christian Wilhelm, born March 1, 1834, married Sophia Lammers on April 26, 1864, a widow of William who was killed in Flora Township during the uprising. Sophia and her two children were taken hostage and released six weeks later. George and Sophia became the parents of seven additional children. Sophia died July 8, 1906 and George died September 20, 1926 in Cairo Township. Both are buried in the Bethel Cemetery in Cairo Township. See more on the Lammers family in the Flora Township chapter.

Victor was born March 5, 1836 and married Wilhelmine Wulfe. They had five children. He died in Franklin, in Renville County on September 25, 1913 at the age of 77. Mina died March 31, 1934 at the age of 91. They are also buried in the Bethel Cemetery. Victor Rieke filed a Depredation Claim #963 in the amount of \$475.00, and full payment was made for relief of depredation damages.

Adam, born June 1 1840, married Ernestine Sander March 15, 1871 and they were the parents of four children. Ernestine died September 8, 1916 in Fairfax and Adam passed on April 17, 1920 in Franklin. Both are buried in the Bethel Cemetery in Cairo Township. Adam eventually took over the family homestead on Mud Lake. His narrative can be found in the New Settler Stories chapter.

Cairo Township

Henry was born December 29, 1842. He died at Fort Ridgely on August 23, 1862 from a heart condition during the outbreak. He is probably buried at Fort Ridgely.

August Earnest was born in December 3, 1845 and married Amelia Grunke on December 6, 1880. He died April 18, 1937. Amelia died in Cairo Township on April 3, 1945 and they are both buried in the Bethel Cemetery.

Anna Mary (known as Mary) was born in March 8, 1847. She married Charles Fenske and they were the parents of three known children, Emma, George and Alma. She died March 9, 1945 in Fairfax and is buried in the Bethel Cemetery. Dorothy Busch submitted this story: "Great Grandpa, George Rieke, had a sister whose given name was Anna Mary but was usually called Mary. She was born on March 8, 1847, so was 15 years old at the time of the Uprising. Along with other family members, Mary had gone to Fort Ridgely for safety.

Mary was considered a defender of the Fort, along with her brothers, Adam, Victor, George, August, and Heinrich. Her name appears on the Defenders Monument at the Fort because of a role she played on August 19, 1862. She had been ordered to watch the women and children, making sure none of them raised their heads above the window sills on the second floor of the stone barracks where they took refuge along with several Indian women. Mary overheard one of these Indian women say to another that this would be a good time to attack the Fort since most of the soldiers were away. This woman started to leave, Mary tried to stop her, but couldn't, so she ran down the stairs to find a soldier. Finding one, she told him what she had heard; he went after the Indian and brought her back upstairs. He told Mary to guard her with her life (drawing his sword to add emphasis) as she was a spy who would have warned the attacking Indians about the weakness of the Fort's defenses. Mary truly helped save the Fort and no doubt changed the progress of the uprising because the Indians held off until August 20th, by which time the group of defenders had increased in numbers. Mary received a pension from the State of Minnesota as long as she lived. She died on March 9, 1942, attaining the age of 95!"

Lisetta was born June 22, 1850 and died August 22, 1915. She was the wife of Claus Anthony. They are buried in the Riverside Cemetery, Albany, Linn, OR.

Herman was born July 18, 1853 and died December 8, 1862.

In addition, there were two children who died young: Eberhard, born March 3, 1838, died November 18, 1839 and Anna Catherine, born October 2, 1825 and died December 3, 1825.

Felix Smith Family

This family lived about 3 miles from the fort, either in western Nicollet County or eastern Renville County. Felix and his family had sought refuge at the fort but he returned to his home with neighbor John Bühler. On their way back to the fort, both men were killed. Smith is buried in the extreme southeast corner of Section 32 in this township. It is not known if that is where he lived or where he died. His family is not listed as the Fort Ridgely refugee lists.

Cairo Township

Those Who Were Killed

George **Bucher**, perhaps 52
John **Bührer** 34
Felix **Smith**

Those Who Escaped

Agatha **Bührer**, 32, wife of John and son Henry, 1
N., 33, and Anna **Buehro**, 30, daughter W., 5, and infant E.
Johan Frederick, 66 and Gertrude Anna (Burke) **Rieke**, 54
William, 31, George, 28, Victor, 26, Adam, 21, Henry, 20, August Ernest, 16,
Anna Marie, 15, Herman, 9 and Lisetta **Rieke**, children of Johan and Gertrude

Descendants

Rieke

Dorothy Busch, Nancy Gulbranson

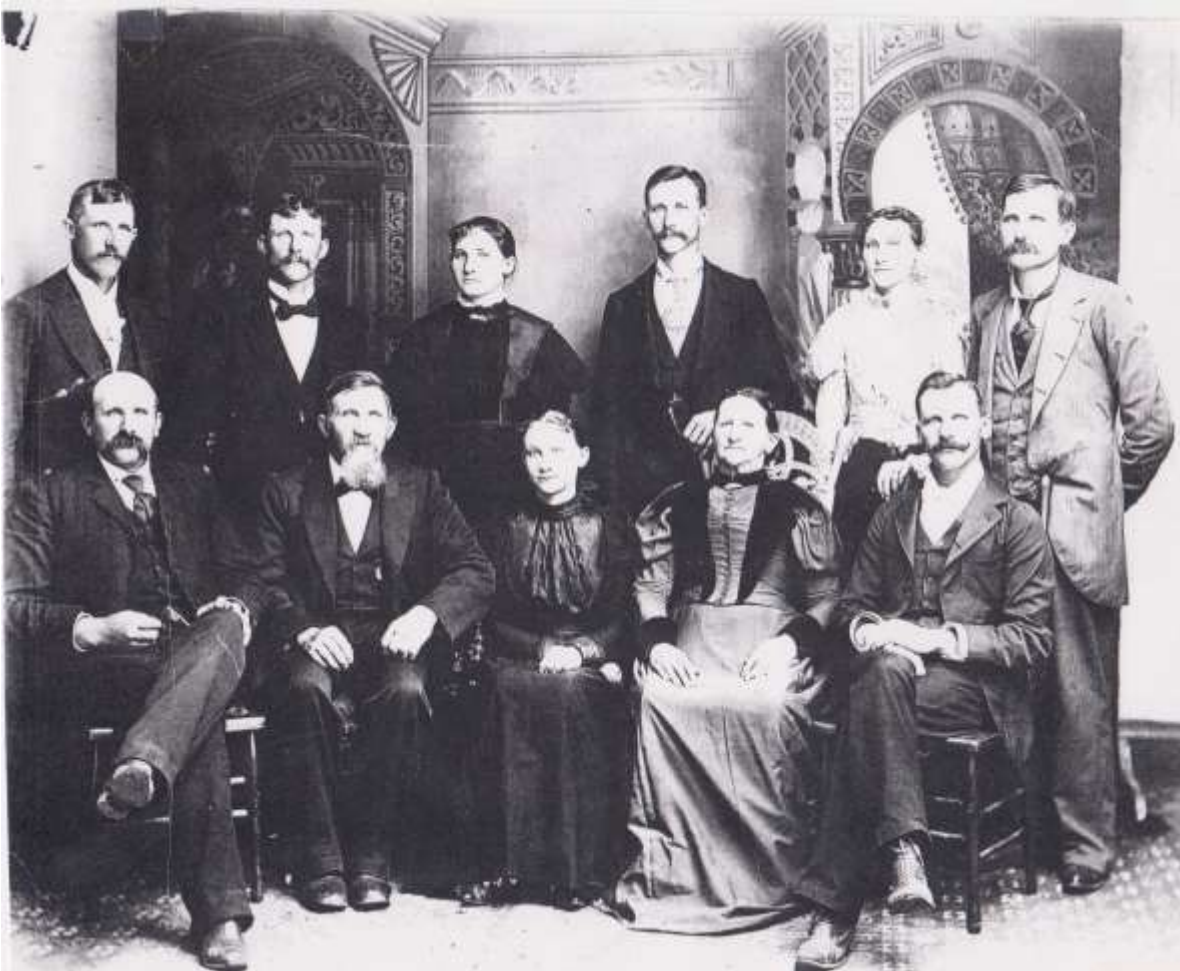


Above, the **Bethel Methodist Church**, formerly the Mud Lake Methodist Church, Cairo Township, 1987. The church was in the corner of the old George Rieke homestead (now the Wiethoff farm). The Bethel Cemetery is still maintained but the church building was taken down because of vandalism. Many of the Rieke family are buried in this cemetery. Below, the George Rieke home near Mud Lake, built in the 1870's. The home has been somewhat altered but is still standing. George maintained beautiful formal gardens on the northwest side of the house. Both photos courtesy of Dorothy Busch.



Cairo Township

Below, the **George Rieke Family** including Sophia and William Lammers sons, Fred and Charles Lammers. William Lammers, named for his father, had died before this photo was taken. Front row, L to R: Fred Lammers, George, Clara, Sophia, and August Victor Rieke; Back row, L to R: Henry, Herman, Louisa, Gust (G.A.), Tilly and Charles Lammers. Both photographs below courtesy of Nancy Gulbranson.



Below, Johann Heinrich Friedrich and Gertrud Burke Rieke, the parents of George and his 12 siblings, who settled on Mud Lake about 1860.



Cairo Township

Sophia Scheer Lammers and George Rieke were married September 26, 1864. Sophia died in 1906 at the age of 69 and George died in 1926 at the age of 92. Sophia was the widow of William Lammers who was killed during the uprising. This photo submitted by Nancy Gulbranson and Dorothy Busch.



Cairo Township

Cairo Township Homestead Sections

Bucher - Section 33 (killed in this section)

Bührer – Section 27

Rieke – Section 26

Smith – Section 32

