Iron Cross now marks Salomea Job Dockter’s resting place in Friedens Lutheran Cemetery

By Terri Lang

Since 1935, Salomea (Job) Dockter has had no marker that identified her grave. She had been buried beside her husband, Gottlieb Dockter, who died in 1901. He had a marker, an iron cross.

“It is time for her to have a lasting marker of her own,” Carol Just said.

Salomea (Job) Dockter is Carol Just’s great-great grandmother. Serving as the family history recorder, Carol had hunted for Salomea’s grave for decades.

Several of Salomea’s descendants, and at least one noted scholar, have researched her and her husband Gottlieb’s role in the early settlement of Emmons and McIntosh counties.

“Several written documents indicated that she was buried next to her forebears in the Friedens Cemetery,” she said.

Located in McIntosh County, Friedens (Peace) Lutheran Cemetery is about 1.5 miles east of 25th Avenue (commonly known as the Zeeland road that runs north and south), on 85th Street SE.

Research showed Salomea was also missing from the church records.

“The sexton of Friedens Cemetery told me that the pastor had five parishes to serve and it was likely an oversight,” Carol said.

After it was confirmed that Salomea was actually buried there, Carol collaborated with others to finally mark her great-great-grandmother’s resting place.

Dockter descendants, Carol Just and Bill Bosch, a great-grandson of Salomea, met at a Germans from Russia Conference in 2015. They discovered their shared ancestry and together decided to create a marker for Salomea.

Ray Dockter, a longtime warden of Linton, is a great-grandson of Salomea. He designed and created a cross for her grave site. He said it was a lot of work, but he worked on it over the slower winter months.

“Her husband’s cross is made of wrought iron, that is what blacksmiths used. The cross I made for her is made of steel,” Dockter said. “That’s what a welder uses.”

On Sept. 9, 2017, the iron cross, made specifically for her, was dedicated at a family ceremony at Friedens Cemetery, honoring Salomea (Job) Dockter.

History of Salomea (Job) Dockter

(provided by Carol Just)

Born in Neudorf, South Russia in 1841, Salomea Job was the oldest child of Jacob and Magdalene Job. Jacob’s father, Ludwig Job, was just a boy when he came to Neudorf with his parents, Ludwig and Salomea, from the village of Otersheim in the Rhineland Palatinate region of Germany. They were part of a group of seven families that left that region around 1809 to answer Czar Alexander’s call to accept free land in the uncontrolled steppe of southern Russia.

Salomea married Gottlieb Dockter on Nov. 1, 1866. Gottlieb’s grandfather left the village of Sessenheim in the Alsace region of what is now France in the first decades of the 19th century. Gottlieb’s

Gravesite flowers were from the garden of Salomea’s great-granddaughter, LaVerna (Dockter) Kaseman of Wishek.

Salomea Job was born in Neudorf, South Russia, on May 14, 1849. She migrated to America in 1889, settling on a homestead 12 miles east of Linton. She died in 1935.

“Her husband’s cross is made especially for her,” Dockter said. “That’s what blacksmiths used. The cross I made for her is made of wrought iron, that is what blacksmiths used. The cross I made for her is made of steel,” Dockter said. “That’s what a welder uses.”

On Nov. 1, 1866, Salomea Job married Gottlieb Dockter, both grew up in Neudorf, South Russia. Gottlieb died in 1901. They had 12 children, but it is believed that five children died while they lived in Russia. Pictured here are, front row, left to right, John, Salomea, Jacob and Martin; back row, Gottlieb, Eva, Christine, Magdalene, George and Emma.

Carol Just welcomed family and friends to the ceremony. Carol is a great-granddaughter of Salomea Job Dockter.

Through the first winter. Statehood was declared a few months after their arrival in America. North Dakota was their new home.

Salomea was a trained healer and midwife and as the area settlement grew her services were greatly needed. She gave birth to two more children after they arrived to their homestead. One child was delivered in a wagon box as their sod home had not yet been erected. Their nine children were - Jacob (married Katharina Heine), Gottlieb (married Katharina Schaffer), Christina (married George Backhaus, later Conrad Meister), Magdalena (married William McAllister), John (married Christianna Jespel), Martin (married Elizabeth Hoff), George (married Magdalena Flegel), Eva (married Nathan Sheffield), and Emma (married Forrest LaPaug).

The family and friends gathered at the Friedens (Peace) Lutheran Cemetery in rural Zeeland for a church service on Sept. 9, 2017, for the iron cross dedication ceremony honoring Salomea (Job) Dockter.

Those who took part in the ceremony are, left to right, Carol Just, Les Dockter, Joan Boschee, Cleo Boschee and LaVerna Dockter Kaseman. Carol read a “Remembrance of the Faithful Departed,” Cleo read a poem from “A Tribute” by Nina Farley Wishek (early Dakota pioneer, author and poet), Les read “Whispers from the Prairie” by Catharine McAllister Lija (Salomea’s granddaughter) and Cleo and LaVerna led the Lord’s Prayer in German.

Family and friends gather at the Friedens (Peace) Lutheran Cemetery in rural Zeeland on Saturday, Sept. 9, 2017, for the iron cross dedication ceremony honoring Salomea (Job) Dockter.
At the Friedens Cemetery, family of Salomea (Job) Dockter gathered to honor her as an iron cross was placed at her gravesite. Pictured are, front row, left to right, Marge (Dockter) Hesterman, David Schweigert, Elwood Dietrich, Bill Bosch and Jerome Kelsh; back row, Kenneth Dietrich, Les Dockter, Carol Just, Darwin Dockter, Maggie Dockter, Linnea Dockter, Janice (Dockter) and Richard Smith, LaVerna (Dockter) Kaseeman, Rich Smith, Evelyn (Dockter) Kelsh, Dylan Smith, Delores Dockter and Leo Dockter.

Carol Just visited Ottersheim in May of 2017. Salomea Job’s grandfather, Ludwig Job, was from the village of Ottersheim in the Rhineland Pfalz region of Germany. Carol’s parents, Julius and Helen (Dockter) Just, moved to LaMoure County in 1944, but were both born in the Zeeland area; thus Carol spent much of her time as a child, youth and later as an adult in the Wishek/Zeeland area.

Joan (Heyne) Boschee demonstrated grave witching as family and friends gather for the dedication. Boschee and Ellon Meidinger (not pictured) of Wishek provided grave witching assistance and their expertise for the family doing family history and research on Salomea.

Leading the German Hymn “So Nimm Denn Meine Hande” are Cleo Boschee and Laverna (Dockter) Kaseman.

Visiting from Sturgis, S.D., was Elwood Dietrich, a great-grandson of Salomea.

Those who contributed their efforts in having a lasting marker for Salomea (Job) Dockter are, left to right, Bill Bosch of Spearfish, S.D. (Salomea’s great-grandson), Ray Dockter of Linton (Salomea’s great-grandson), Richard and Janice (Dockter) Smith of Linton and Carol Just of Minneapolis, Minn. Bill and Carol did the research, Ray made the cross, and Richard and Carol assisted in getting the word out to extended family on the event. Bill and his brother, Alex Bosch, of Linton, also prepared the site and helped with the installation of the cross.

Ray Dockter of Dockter’s Welding in Linton, is a great-grandson of Salomea. He designed and created a cross for her gravesite.

Salomea’s great-great-grandchildren Leslie (Les) Dockter, left, and Marjorie (Dockter) Hestermann (Leslie and Marjorie are siblings), traveled from Arizona for the dedication.