

Benjamin Emerson Shumway was born March 15, 1823, in Mattawamkeag, Penobscot County, Maine. He resided in Maine for 25 years, working in the lumber business.

In 1848 he moved to Minnesota. In 1850 Emerson's parents, their nine children (including Emerson), and their in-laws and children, moved to Ramsey in Anoka County. When they first arrived, Emerson's parents were sick with typhoid fever. The nearest physicians were at St. Anthony, and the settlers were skeptical regarding the qualifications of frontier physicians in general. Because she was a skillful nurse, Emerson's mother directed as best she could the treatment which was given to herself and her stricken husband. They both recovered.

Nathan, Emerson's brother, built a log cabin. Of course, it was a small cabin, and inadequate for the eight men and six women in one small longhouse, along with 17 children. Some relatives decided to sleep outdoors for the first few nights. Emerson built a house not too far from the river, and John Shumway built on the riverbank in front of it, near what was the steamboat landing. Penuel Shumway and his wife had a child, Fernando, on March 22, 1851. He



Susan on horse, with her parents, Benjamin Emerson Shumway beside oxen, and Mahala Conklin Shumway on the wagon. On right is Mahala and Benjamin Emerson Shumway. Photo about 1890 in Susanville, Lassen, California. Courtesy of McDonald Family Collection, Seattle, Washington.



was the first white child in Anoka County. Unfortunately, Fernando's mother died July 9, 1851.

By 1851 Emerson joined Thomas A. Holmes and friends at the "founding" of Shakopee. After helping build the Holmes Trading Post, Emerson got sick with smallpox in the fall of 1852. After his recovery, he moved to St. Paul.

Emerson then married the servant girl of William Holmes, brother of Thomas A. and Susana Shook Holmes, who were early settlers in Holmes Mill (later called Jordan), Minnesota. Her name was Mahala Conklin, born June 9, 1835, in Marion County, Ohio. Julius A. Coller II's *The Shakopee Story* and Rev. Edward D. Neill's *History of the Minnesota River* say that Emerson and Mahala were the first marriage in Scott County. However, they were married in St Paul, Ramsey County, on June 7, 1853.

The Shakopee Story, *History of the Minnesota Valley*, and an article about Shumway in the December 3, 1909 *Scott County Argus* note that in the fall of 1857, Emerson and Mahala joined a wagon train to California and were killed in the Mountain Meadows Massacre.

The Mountain Meadows Massacre was the killing of roughly 120 immigrants who were passing through southern Utah in September 1857. The massacre occurred on September 11, 1857, in a mountain valley about 35 miles southwest of Cedar City, Utah. The immigrants – men, women, and children – were traveling from Arkansas to California, part of the Baker Fancher wagon train. They were killed by a group of Mormons with the help of local Paiute Indians.

The Mountain Meadows Massacre was an awful part of history.

The only problem is that Emerson and Mahala were never involved.

They were not killed there, although many books say they were. In fact, they didn't even head west until 1859.

In 1859, Emerson and Mahala crossed the plains with an ox team, and spent the first winter in Honey Lake Valley, California. Emerson was engaged in prospecting and mining in California and Nevada for ten years. Emerson and Mahala located near Horse Lake Valley, California. They ran a stock ranch for twenty years, and then sold the stock and ranch and moved to Oregon.

Benjamin Emerson Shumway died February 6, 1909, in Logan, Oregon.

The February 19, 1909 *Oregon City Courier* notes that "Benjamin Emerson Shumway quietly passed away at 6:30 p.m., Saturday, February 6th, at his home on the Norton

donation claim, Clackamas County, Oregon at the age of 85 years, 10 months and 2 days.

“He was born at Mattewamkeg, Maine, March 15, 1823, residing in the state of Maine until he was 25 years of age, following the lumber business. In 1848 he went to Minnesota, locating on land near the Falls of St. Anthony on the present site of Minneapolis, was one of the founders of the town of Shockope, [sic] Minn.

“In 1859 he crossed the plains with an ox team, wintering the first winter in Honeylake valley, Cal. He engaged in prospecting and mining in California and Nevada for about ten years. In 1869 he located land in Horselake valley, Lossen [sic] County, California, at which place he conducted a stock ranch for about twenty years, when he sold out stock and ranch, removing to Oregon, where he has resided every [sic] since.

“He was married in St. Paul City, Minn., June 7, 1853, raising a family and three children, two of whom, E. B. Shumway and Mrs. L. Allen, survive, with the wife, Mrs. Mahala Shumway….”

His wife, Mahala Conklin Shumway, died 2 ½ months later on April 30, 1909, also in the city of Logan.

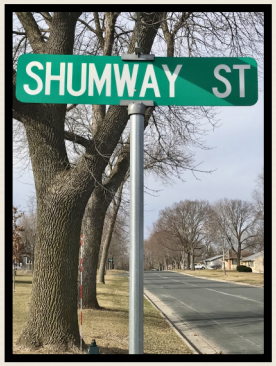
Bibliography

Coller, Julius A., II. *The Shakopee Story*. North Star Pictures, Inc. 1960, reprinted 2009, Shakopee Heritage Society.

Neill, Edward D. *History of the Minnesota Valley Including the Explorers and Pioneers of Minnesota*. Minneapolis: North Star Publishing, 1882.

Oregon City Courier, 19 Feb. 1909.

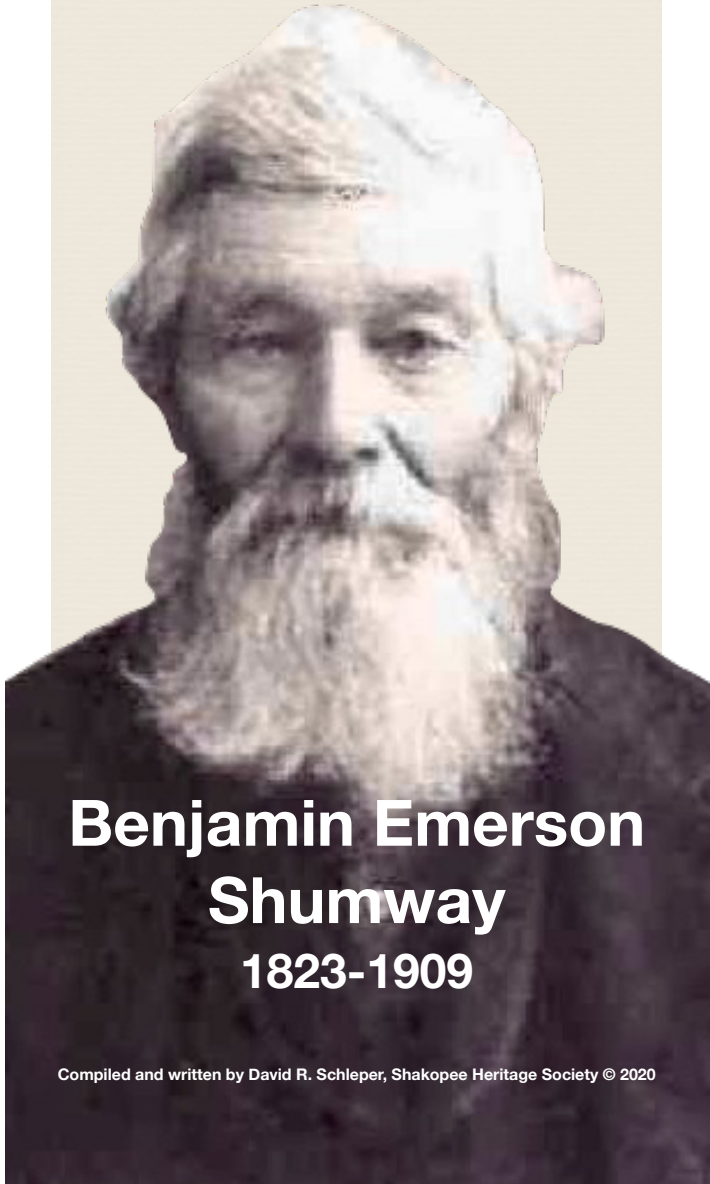
Scott County Argus, 3 Dec. 1909.





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1823-1909

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