Edward D. Neill's book, *History of the Minnesota Valley, Including the Explorers and Pioneers of Minnesota*, remembers "…a hired girl of William Holmes…" William Hinds's book, *An 1891 Sketch of Shakopee Minn: Historical and Industrial* mentions "…a servant girl, M ——— Conklin, who afterwards worked for Wm. Holmes family and the next year was married to Emerson Shumway, in St. Paul."

Like most men who wrote books in the 1800s, men, especially white men, are celebrated. But women? They are ignored or never remembered. But the women were here, and they should be recognized.

This servant girl, this hired girl, had a name. She was Mahala Conklin. And she should be remembered.

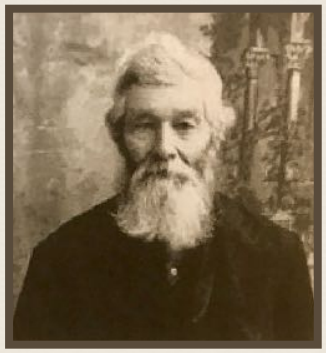
Mahala was born June 9, 1835, in Marion County, Ohio. Her father was William James Conklin, Jr., and her mother was Easter Esther Ackley. Mahala, one of 14 children, moved to Lytle's Creek in Farmers Creek Township, Iowa.

For Mahala, life on the farm was grueling. It was hard spending every day trying to feed all the children, in-laws, nieces, and nephews. At some point, Mahala headed to St. Paul, probably in 1851, and from there went to Holmes Landing.

By 1851 Emerson Shumway joined Thomas A. Holmes and friends at the founding of



Easter Esther Ackley Conklin, Mahala's mother, was fed up with the drinking and fighting of Mahala's father. While Mahala's two brothers held him down, Easter used a butcher knife to sever his neck. Easter was charged with murder, but was acquitted because she was acting in self-defense!



Benjamin Emerson Shumway from ancestry.com and Dana Pereau.



Susan on horse, with her parents, Benjamin Emerson Shumway beside oxen, and Mahala Conklin Shumway on the wagon.

Holmesville or Holmes Landing, later called Sha K' Pay, Minnesota Territory.

Mahala worked as a servant of the Haywood family. She worked in their temporary shanty built in 1852 in an area that is now the corner of First Avenue and Holmes Street in downtown Shakopee. Mr. and Mrs. Haywood and their daughter, along with Mahala, lived there until the fall. Then the Haywoods moved up the valley, taking the boards of the shanty with them.

At that time, Mahala became a servant of William Holmes, brother of Thomas.

In the small village that later became Shakopee, Shumway got smallpox in the fall of 1852. After he recovered, he moved to St. Paul and then married the servant girl, Mahala.

The Shakopee Story by Julius A. Coller II, the *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 Shumway joined a wagon train to California and were killed in the Mountain Meadows Massacre.

The only problem is that Emerson and Mahala were never involved. They were not killed there.

In fact, they didn't even head west until 1859.

In 1859, Emerson and Mahala left Anoka, crossing 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.

Mahala and Emerson had four children: Emerson Bartlett (1852-1946), Hester (about 1854-1860), Mary Ella (1855-1895); and Susan (Susie) Shumway (1867-1945).

By 1869, Emerson and Mahala located near Horse Lake Valley, California. They ran a stock ranch for twenty years and then sold out the stock and ranch and moved to Oregon.

Benjamin Emerson Shumway died February 6, 1909, in Logan, Clackamas County, Oregon. He was buried at Logan Pleasant View Cemetery in Oregon City, Oregon.

The May 7, 1909 *Oregon City Enterprise* noted: "Mrs. Shumway, widow of the late B. E.



Mahala and Benjamin Emerson Shumway. Photo about 1890 in Susanville, Lassen, California. Courtesy of McDonald Family Collection, Seattle, Washington.



Shumway, who died a few months since, died on April 30 and the remains were buried at the Pleasant View Cemetery on May 1. Mrs. Shumway came here from California with her husband several years ago. She was about 70 years of age."

Bibliography

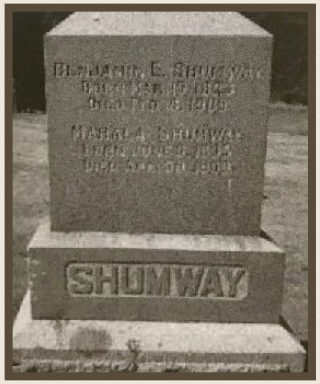
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HOLMES LANDING



Holmes's original trading post and later store building, a pen and ink drawing by Lorraine Coller. From *The Shakopee Story* by Julius A. Coller II, p. 27.

In the fall of 1851, Thomas A. Holmes and William Quinn arrived west of Tínta Otuŋwe and called the area Holmes Landing, or Holmesville. The name was used for a few years before the name was switched to the name of the Dakota leader Ṡakpe II.

Titus, Moses Starr (1879). Address at the Minnesota Historical Society.

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Mahala Conklin Shumway

1835-1909

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