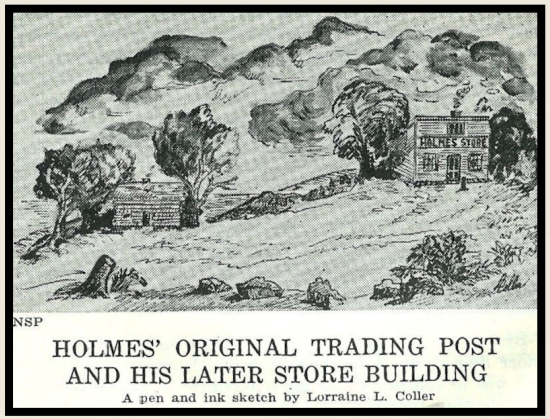


Bill Quinn was born near Coldwater Springs near Fort Snelling. His father was Peter Quinn who was an Irish immigrant. His mother was Ineyahwiŋ, who was part Cree Indian. He received extraordinarily strong education at Fort Snelling and three years' boarding and studying in Fort Garry, British North America. He married at age twenty to Angelique Jeffries, of the Mdewakanton band in 1848, and had three children. Bill spoke Chippewa, Dakota, English, French, and perhaps other languages.

On right is a drawing of the Holmes's Trading Post and store building by Lorraine L. Coller in *The Shakopee Story* by Julius Coller II.



Thomas Andrew Holmes was born on March 4, 1804, in Burgettstown, Pennsylvania, son of William Holmes and Rachel Day Holmes.

He slowly moved west, from Ohio (where he married Ursula L. Kennedy), Michigan, Indiana, and Wisconsin Territory. Thomas and his brother-in-law, Robert M. Kennedy and families tried to settle in the Winona prairie in what was later Minnesota, but Dakota leader Wapahaśa refused. So, Holmes and his group moved and opened a trading post at Wah-ma-dee, or Eagle Bluffs. It was soon named Holmes Landing and later was called Fountain City.

Ursula stayed in Dubuque for treatment of periodic attacks that made her frantic with pain. She started using opiates and died in 1841. Ursula was one of four wives of Thomas Holmes. Other wives include Witch-e-aim (died within a year), Helen M. Taisey (divorced after four years), and Harriet Richards Woodbury.

Holmes headed to Minnesota Territory ten years later, arriving in Sauk Rapids in the winter of 1849. He served in the Territorial House.

Meanwhile, the area of what was later Shakopee wasn't open for settlement to white people in 1851. They had to wait until February 1853 after the ratification of treaties.

But Thomas Holmes wanted to establish townsites with an eye to the profit they represented. He asked for carte blanche trading rights but was denied. He was then allowed a license for two sites.

By getting a license to trade in 1851, Holmes was a squatter on Indian land. It gave him a toehold on townsites before claims could be legally settled. He "improved" the land with dwellings, warehouses, and stores, and thus was less liable to be taken over by settler-colonists and promoters who came along later. "In other words, fur trading was not an end in itself with these men as it had been with some of the earlier traders in the valley. Rather, it was a means of obtaining a legal or quasi-legal claim on the land they staked out before they could actually file their preemptions with the government," said Roberts and Dobbs.

Holmes conferred at Ft. Snelling with William L. Quinn and engaged him as a guide and companion on the investigating tour.

"In a good canoe, with a week's provisions, Holmes and Quinn started out from Ft. Snelling. In a hollow near the Shakopee Indian Village, they landed and looked over the ground," said the *Compendium of History and Biography of Carver and Hennepin Counties, Minnesota*. Holmes and Quinn also traveled up the Minnesota River where a twenty-acre clearing in the Big Woods attracted his attention. He claimed it as his second site, the Chaska town site.

When they returned to Ft. Snelling, Holmes went to Itasca and began bringing a stock of goods back to Holmes Landing for trading. It was said he brought the logs to build the post upstream on his flatboat. "There he (Thomas A. Holmes) loaded his stock of goods and some building materials on the flat boat 'Wild Paddy.' The boat was propelled by sails and pikes, the latter being operated by John McKenzie and Emerson Shumway," said Julius Coller II.

The Holmes Log Trading Store was built in the summer of 1851 on the riverbank of the levee of the St. Peter's River, in what is now downtown Shakopee (it became the Minnesota River on June 19, 1852).

It was on the east side of Holmes Street. According to Donald P. Wagner, in a footnote in *The Diary of Daniel M. Storer*, Holmes "personally burned the lime for chinking the logs." It was located at the riverbank, between the present Holmes Street Bridge, with the front door facing the river.

According to Henry Hinds, the store in the winter of 1852 and early 1853 did not furnish a very extensive assortment of goods. It was basically supplied with powder and lead, and some calico, blankets, tobacco, and Indian

trinkets. The Dakota Indians would pay Holmes in money and furs. Sometimes the Dakota bought on credit and were paid when they received their annuities from the government. When the Dakota were forced to move to the reservation, they frequently still stopped at the store with their annuities.

“Hundreds of birchbark and dugout canoes, wedged closely together, lined the south bank of the river from the present Lewis Street eastward for nearly a mile downstream to Pond’s Creek. The Shakopee band, joined by several other groups, numbered more than 2,000 by the time they left Shakopee on October the 19th (1853),” said Julius Coller II. “Silently and sadly, the glum redmen departed from the hunting grounds of their fathers to make a new home in an unknown country.”

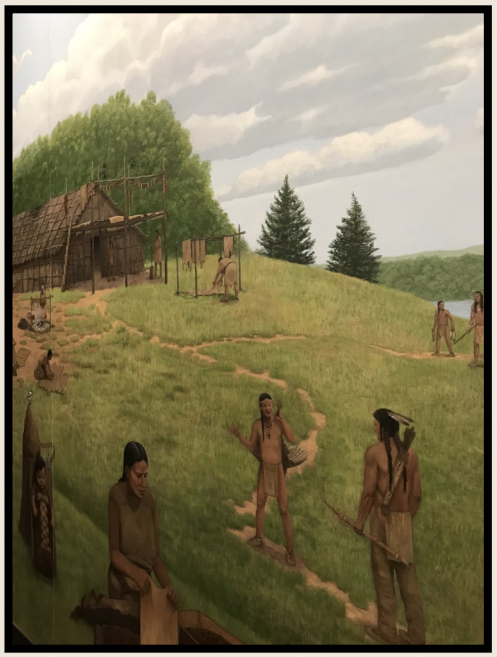
Holmes was stricken with “town-site fever.” He also went further west, heading to the gold fields of what later became Montana in 1862, 1864, and 1866. He left Shakopee in 1878, and moved to Cullman, Alabama, where he was a farmer. Thomas Andrew Holmes died on July 2, 1888, at age 84.

His fourth wife, Harriet Woodbury Holmes, returned to Shakopee, where she lived at her home on the northwest corner of Fifth and Spencer Street until just before she died, at age 87. Harriet was buried at Valley Cemetery in Shakopee.

Bibliography

Compendium of history and biography of Minneapolis and Hennepin County, Minnesota. Chicago: H. Taylor & Co., 1914.

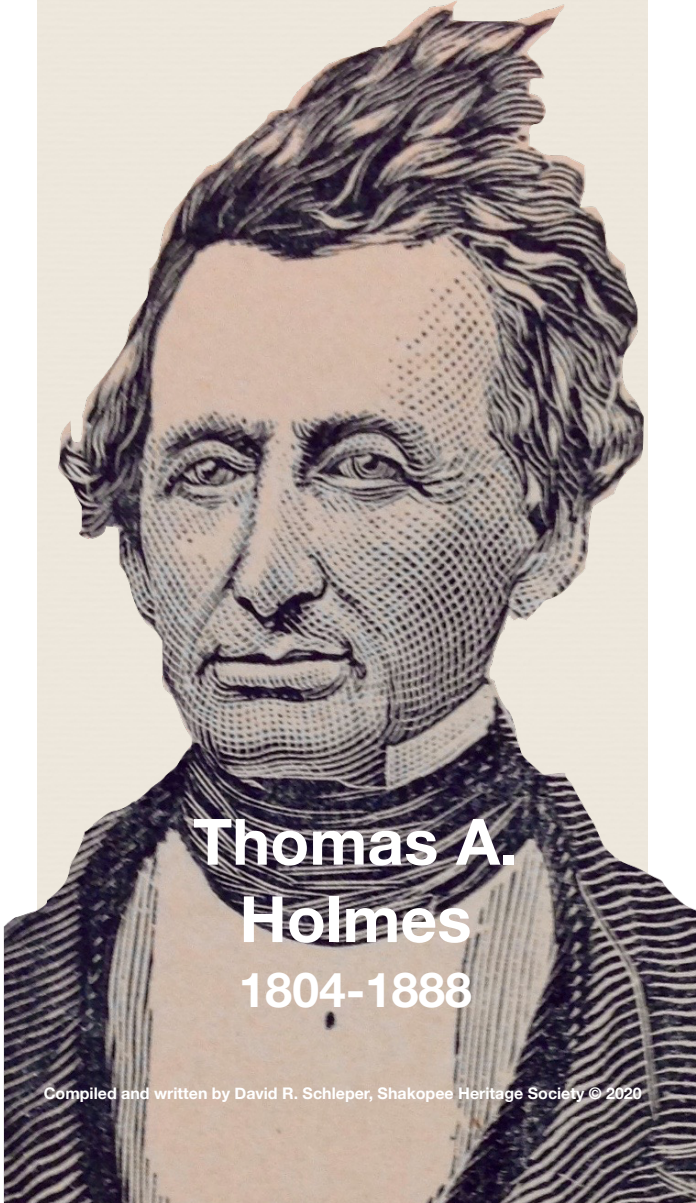
The Diary of Daniel M. Storer from 1849 to 1905: A Pioneer Builder and Merchant-His Personal History of Shakopee, Minnesota from August 1853 to January 1905. Shakopee Heritage Society, 2003.



From Mdewakanton: Dwellers of the Spirit Lake at Hoċokata Ti, 2019. Though Thomas Holmes was said to be the first person in the area in 1851, the Dakota, with 600 people, had been living here for many years. When many of the Dakota were forced to leave the area in 1853, some Dakota still lived in the area, and their descendants still live in the area.

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SHAKOPEE HERITAGE SOCIETY



Thomas A. Holmes

1804-1888

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