

According to Samuel, "...the young mother (Cordelia), never very strong, gradually failed in health from that time. The oldest girl, Jennette, now eight years of age, was a great comfort and help to her mother, whom she was said to resemble closely in both character and person. She was morbidly conscientious and must have been rather precocious, since she had finished reading the Bible through by course before she was six years of age."

In the fall of 1851, Samuel Pond obtained from the Board a year's leave of absence, and prepared to visit New England. The journey was a fatiguing one, as much of it was by stage. In Connecticut, kind friends "took charge of the four children, for their mother was rapidly failing, and by the first of February it was evident that the end was near."

The dying mother, Cordelia, expressed a desire to see all her children once more, knowing that it would be the last time in this world. "To the older ones she gave words of counsel which were carefully heeded and diligently followed. Jennette Clarissa never forgot her mother's parting words. Mr. Edward Pond went over the icy hill and brought Elnathan Judson from his aunt Jennette's, to receive his mother's last kiss and listen to her dying words. She told him to be a good boy and love God. To the youngest, she said, 'Poor boy! He will not remember his mother!' and kissed him farewell."

Before the dawn of the sixth day, Cordelia passed away at the age of 36 years, fourteen of them spent in continuous service of the Dakotas. The tombstone of Cordelia Eggleston Pond is at the Old Judea Cemetery, Washington, Litchfield County, Connecticut.

Samuel, widowed at age 43, was left with four young children. He remarried an old

school friend, Rebecca Susan Smith, in Connecticut about 2 months after Cordelia's death. They returned to the mission in Shakopee, where Rebecca Susan Smith Pond, Samuel's second wife, died on July 9, 1891. Samuel joined her in death on December 12, 1891, at the age of 83.



The tombstone (on left) of Cordelia Eggleston Pond is at the Old Judea Cemetery, Washington, Litchfield County, Connecticut. On right is Cordelia Eggleston Pond's marker at Valley Cemetery in Shakopee. It is a cenotaph.



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**Cordelia Eggleston
Pond
1815-1852**



It was the beginning of November, 1847. Cordelia Eggleston Pond, along with her husband, Samuel W. Pond and their children, Jeanette, age 5, Rebecca, who was age 3, and baby Elnathan, who was just a month old, arrived at Tinta Otunje, which Samuel called Prairieville.

They moved into the mission house, which had been built on a gently rising ground, about a half mile south of the Rivière Saint-Pierre (St. Peter's River) over the last few months. According to Samuel Pond, Jr., the mission house was "about half a mile south of the Minnesota River.

What was Cordelia Eggleston Pond thought as she looked at the Faribault Trading Post, the Dakota village of 600 people, and the mission house, right in the middle of it all? There were no white families except for Hazen P. Mooers and for the missionaries who lived 14 miles away at Oak Grove. Around her was 600 men, women, and children of the Eastern Dakota Mdewakantowanj, or the Spirit Lake People. As a missionary, Cordelia focused on caring for her children, keeping house, and feeding the family, along with ministering to the Dakota.



Painting by Dave Geister © 2019 Shakopee Heritage Society.

Cordelia Eggleston was born on November 22, 1815, in the small community of Stafford, just outside of Batavia, New York. Cordelia's father, Esquire Ebenezer Eggleston, died eight weeks earlier. Her mother was Anna Kingsley Eggleston, who was left a widow with eight children. When Cordelia left home in 1837, she unlikely saw her mother again, as she died in 1843.

Cordelia's older sister, Julia, married Reverend Jedediah Stevens, and eventually their mission station was a Lake Harriet Mission. Cordelia decided to join them there.

According to Samuel Pond, Jr., "...a sister of Mrs. Stevens, Miss Cordelia Eggleston, then a young lady of twenty-two, had joined the Lake Harriet Mission in the capacity of teacher. She was a great favorite with her sister, Mrs. Stevens, who had long and diligently laid her plan to have her younger sister associated with her at her work in the Indian country, and was much elated with her success."

"The lady commended herself to all by her amiable character, modest demeanor, and personal attractions...."



The Pond Mission House from the Minnesota Historical Society.

During the spring and summer following Mr. Pond's return to Bde Maka Ska, he saw much of this young teacher and the acquaintance resulted in a marriage engagement after a brief courtship in the beautiful groves bordering the lovely lake," said Samuel Pond Jr.

On November 22, 1838, Samuel W. Pond married Cordelia Eggleston near the Mission Boarding School near Bde Maka Ska. It was attended by anyone of importance in the territory, including U.S. Army doctor, John Emerson, owner of Dred Scott (who was living at Fort Snelling), political, civil, and military and groomsman, Henry H. Sibley, and Reverend J.D. Stevens, whose wife was a sister of the bride.

In 1847 the family moved to Prairieville. Cordelia and Samuel had four children, Jennette, Rebecca, Elnathan, and Samuel Jr. According to Samuel, "... though we have endeavored to have as little property exposed as possible we are obliged to be continually on the watch. My wife had been only a mile from home in three years, and when the Indians are here, I seldom go out of sight of the house unless I am obliged to do so."