

After Thomas A. Holmes died in Cullman, Alabama on July 2, 1888, Harriet Richards Woodbury Holmes returned to Shakopee, where she lived closed to St. Mary's Catholic Church. The house was located on the northwest corner of Fifth and Spencer Street.

Twenty-three years later, the house in Shakopee caught fire, and was burned completely. Since 1912, Harriet lived with her two nieces, Mrs. Ora Peck and Mrs. Eva Dame.

Harriet Richards Woodbury Holmes died on October 6, 1916 of arterial sclerosis at the home of her niece, Eva Dame, in Albert Lee, Minnesota.

According to the Obituary of Mrs. Harriet Holmes from the **Shakopee Tribune**, October 13, 1916, Harriet was buried at Valley Cemetery. An article in **Shakopee Argus**, July 11, 1913, recalled the death of Harriet Richards Woodbury Holmes.



Harriet Richards Woodbury Holmes tombstone is located on Fourth Avenue at the Valley Cemetery in Shakopee.



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**Harriet Richards
Woodbury
Holmes**

**The Fourth Wife of
Thomas A. Holmes
1828-1915**

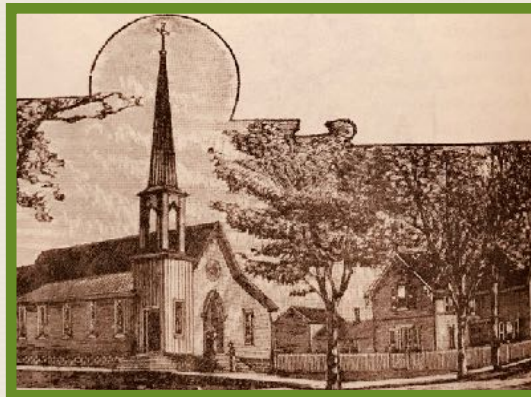
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Harriet Richards Woodbury was born in New Boston, New Hampshire on July 29, 1828, the third youngest in a family of 7 daughters and 4 sons. Her parents were Captain Benjamin Smith Woodbury (1773-1846) and Sally Burns Jones (1796-1883) according to ancestry.com at <https://www.ancestry.com/family-tree/tree/72120012/family/familyview?cfpid=34250348216>.

Harriet Richards Woodbury watched her sister, Eliza Jane Woodbury married Luther Morse Brown and they moved to Minnesota Territory, Harriet decided to join them in 1858.

On September 2, 1858, Thomas A. Holmes married for the fourth time, to Harriet R. Woodbury. The marriage happened at St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Shakopee. Harriet was 30 years old, and Thomas A. Holmes was 54 years old.



St. Peter's Episcopal Church (1854-1921) in Shakopee City, Minnesota Territory was the location of the marriage of Thomas A. Holmes and Harriet Richards Woodbury on September 2, 1858. This was the fourth marriage of Thomas Holmes, and the first marriage of Harriet. Harriet was 30 years old, and Tom was 54.

The church on the left was built in 1861 on the southeast corner of Holmes and Third Street. The new church had stained glass windows, a bell, an exquisite little altar, and pews with cushions.

It was torn down in 1921.

The wedding happened 5 months after the divorce of Thomas A. Holmes' third wife, Helen M. Taisey Holmes.

Harriet met and marriage Thomas, probably because she had heard that he was a millionaire. While he was too much of a pioneer to take much of the fruits of his enterprises, he prospered enough to live in comfort, as did his wife, Harriet.

Starting in 1862, Thomas A. Holmes decided to organize a group who went to Montana Territory to search for gold. It was the first of three trips. According to Julius Collier II in his book, **The Shakopee Story**, the first trip took the expedition three months to journey across the plains in large covered government wagons drawn by oxen. They also had to confront Indians who were here first. But the prize of the excursion was gold, including one nugget sent back to Shakopee which was worth about \$700. One prospector after another returned back to Shakopee

but the Holmes' expedition left as a memento in what was to become the state of Montana, according to Collier on page 569.

For Harriet, the breaks when Thomas headed west probably helped the marriage, and they continue to live together until Tom died.

In 1873, Thomas Holmes commenced a suit in District Court to get the possession of the Court House block. The block had been given to the town, but Holmes claimed that he should get the block back as their were irregularities in the dedication of the block to the public, according to **The Shakopee Story**. Some people were resentful, and within the year the case was decided against Holmes. This is probably why Tom and Harriet decided to move out of the city in 1878. They went to Cullman, Alabama, where they engaged in agriculture.