

The verdict was that “Mrs. Elizabeth Scharf came to her death by accidental drowning in the Minnesota River, near the city of Chaska, on the evening of the 29th Day of September A.D. 1894.”

The sheriff discharged the prisoner, Louis.

He moved into his wife’s parents house until he married Augusta Haase on September 15, 1896 in Chaska.

Louis and Augusta had 4 children.

While Louis enjoyed his four children, I am sure he often thought back to his first wife and the five children, including Mary Elizabeth Scharf, who died in the cold Minnesota River.



Daniel M. Storer

*“Mr. Nich. Schaef was at Chaska to the fair the 29th, and he got drunk and drove off the ferry boat into the river. His wife and her sister and four children were drowned. Schaef was not drowned himself.”*

- From ***The Diary of Daniel M. Storer from 1849 to 1905: A Pioneer Builder and Merchant in Shakopee, Minnesota*** by Shakopee Heritage Society, 2003, p. 203.



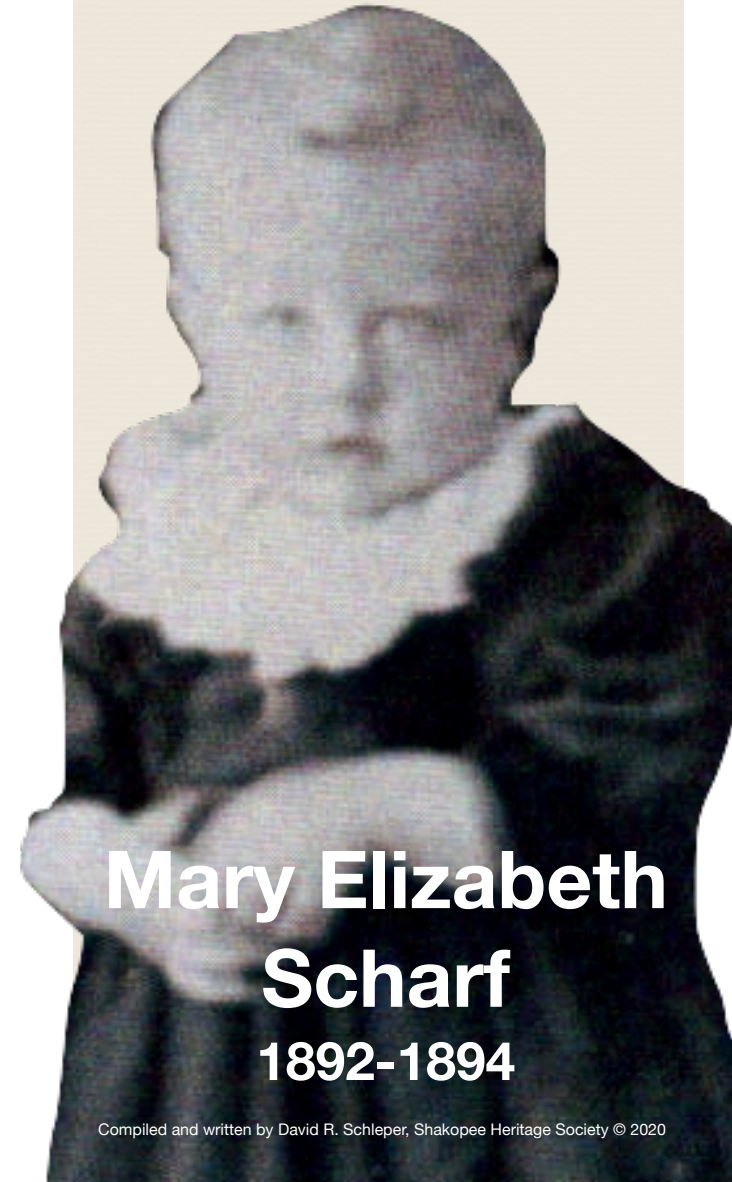
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## SHAKOPEE HERITAGE SOCIETY



**Mary Elizabeth  
Scharf  
1892-1894**



Louis Scharf and Elizabeth Rosckes got married at St. Mark's Catholic Church on November 25, 1884.

They had 5 children: Mary Catherine, Anna Catherine, John Henry, William John, and Mary Elizabeth Scharf.

On September 29, 1894, the family, along with a sister-in-law, went to the Chaska Fair.

In Shakopee, in order to cross the river to Chaska, three ferries were available. One was the Major Richard C. Murphy's Ferry, on the south side of the Minnesota River a mile and a half east of Shakopee in what was called Eagle Creek. The second ferry was the Luther M. Brown's Ferry which was located a half mile below Holmes Street. Some research show that it was located on the west side of the original town plat of Shakopee. The third ferry was the Thomas A. Holmes Ferry, located at the foot of Cass Street in the western portion of platted Shakopee. The ferry was located west of downtown in order to accommodate settlers on the north side of the river.

Louis, Elizabeth, her sister, and the five children lived at Nic Majors farm just outside of Shakopee, and it is assuming that they used the Thomas A. Holmes Ferry on Cass Street.

Louis Scharf and Elizabeth Rosckes got married at St. Mark's on November 25, 1884. From Scharf: A Family History by Margaret Elftmann at Shakopee Library, R 929.2 ELF.

Louis and Elizabeth had 5 children: Mary Catherine, Anna Catherine, John Henry, William John, and Mary Elizabeth Scharf.

All five children, along with Elizabeth and her sister, died from a ferry accident in downtown Shakopee in the Minnesota River on September 24, 1894.

The headed home to rural Shakopee at 7 p.m. They had to take the ferry over the Minnesota River to Shakopee.

Louis might have been drunk. He had been driving very fast.

A block from the river, J. Kunz of the Kunz Oil Company of Minneapolis told him to slow down.

But Louis continued to drive fast, whipping his horses furiously.

The horses kept prancing and jumping. The horses started a run down the bank toward the ferry. Louis tried to control

them, but they rushed down, broke the in-gate, and the horses, wagon, and all of the occupants headed into the cold and angry river.

The ferry man, Chris, rushed to the scene but could only see Louis, clinging to the wagon box, and crying for help.

A boat was rowed out to get Louis. One paper noted that he was too under the influence of liquor to realize what happened.

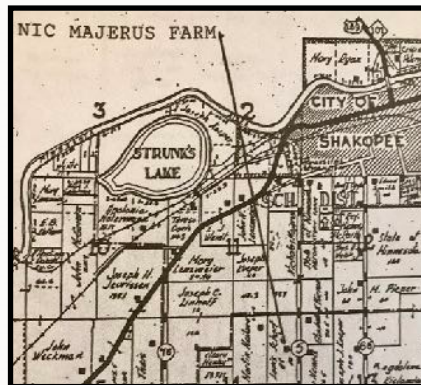
The search was begun for the bodies.

The horses and wagon were found at the bottom of the river at the end of the ferry in 15 feet of water.

The body of his wife, Elizabeth, her sister, and the five children were all found in 15 feet of water.

Sad was the spectacle in the undertaker's room.

Louis was arrested and a coroner's inquest commenced.



Louis and Elizabeth lived at the Nic Majerus farm just outside Shakopee.