



The wood frame Pond Mission House was razed in 1907. The foundation is still there, across the road from Memorial Park in east Shakopee. A historic marker tells about the Mission House and Reverend Samuel W. Pond.

Samuel and his brother Gideon both resigned from the Dakota Mission after the Treaties of 1851 removed all of the Dakota people to the Upper and Lower Sioux Agency reservations in western Minnesota.

Samuel became the founding pastor of the first Presbyterian Church in the rapidly growing city of Shakopee, Minnesota. He served as pastor for thirteen years.

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.



Pond family tombstones at the Valley Cemetery in Shakopee. by David R. Schleper, 2019.

## Prairieville



**In 1847, Dakota leader Šakpe II invited Samuel and Cordelia Eggleston Pond to set up a mission and school at his village of Tínta Otunwe, with the promise of Dakota sending their children to the school. Pond called the area Prairieville, a translation of Prairie Village.**

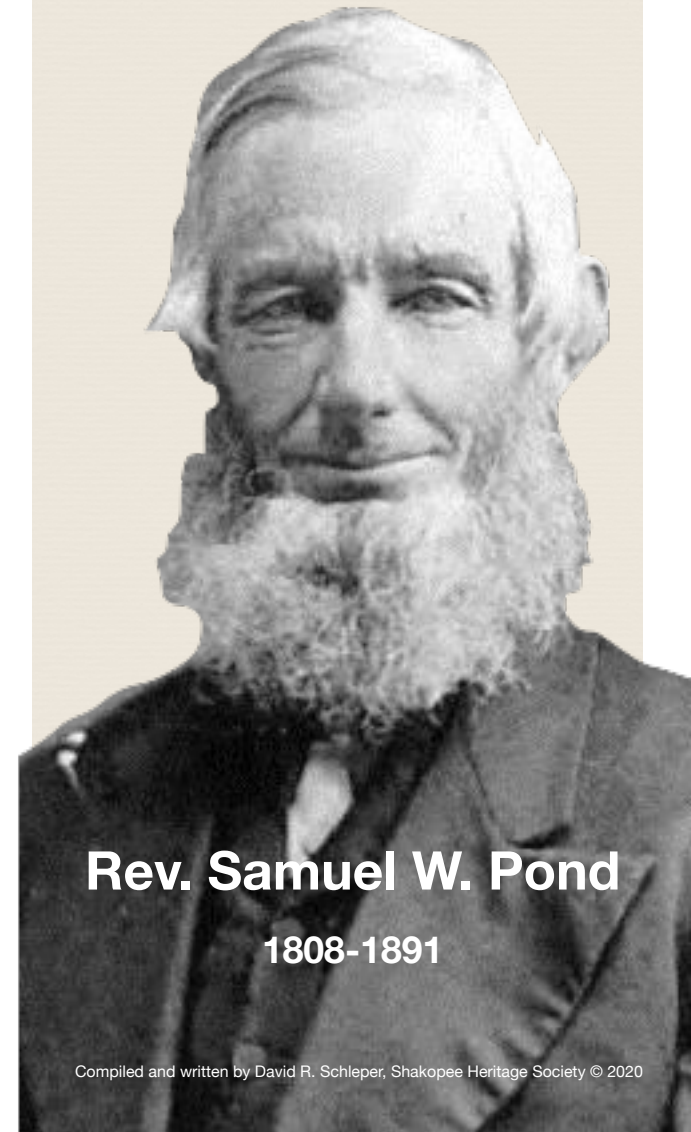
MNDOT Historic Roadside Development Structures Inventory at [INVENTORY www.dot.state.mn.us/adsides/historic/files/iforms/SC-SPC-069.pdf](http://INVENTORY.www.dot.state.mn.us/adsides/historic/files/iforms/SC-SPC-069.pdf), 1941.



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## SHAKOPEE HERITAGE SOCIETY



**Rev. Samuel W. Pond**

**1808-1891**



Reverend Samuel W. Pond "probably knew more about the Dakota than any other white person in the mid-nineteenth century. He spoke their language more fluently, and he was an especially keen observer of Dakota economic, social, and religious institutions."

—Gary Clayton Anderson

Samuel Pond and his brother, Gideon, arrived in 1834 in the area later called Minnesota. He was a missionary, language translator, agricultural instructor, carpenter, farmer, and ongoing advocate for fair treatment of American Indians.

As Samuel got off the steamboat, he asked someone how to say, "What is this?" in Dakota. As he wrote this down, he walked over to a Dakota and said, "Ka taku he," Samuel asked, pointing to a horse that was near the steamboat landing. (This would sound like "gay-dah-koo-hey.")

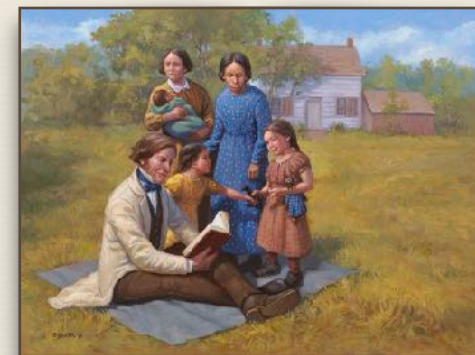
"Hé šúnkawkakħanġ héčha," the man responded.

And Samuel Pond quickly wrote down the word for horse, šúnkawkakħanġ. And Samuel continued, doing this for years, eventually creating the Pond-Dakota alphabet, which is still used today.

Shortly after, Samuel and his brother began teaching Euro-American farming to Dakota people near Bde Maka Ska in present-day Minneapolis. And the brothers continued to work on the Dakota dictionary. Samuel noted, "The language was a game I went to hunt, and I was as eager in the pursuit of that as the Indians were in pursuit of the deer." The alphabet was used for the publication of hymnals, many books of the bible, and the first dictionary of the Dakota to which later missionaries also contributed.



Pond Mission House in Prairieville by unknown painter.



Painting by Dave Geister © 2019 Shakopee Heritage Society.

In 1847, Samuel Pond and family accepted an invitation from Sakpe II to locate in Tinta Oturŋwe, which Samuel W. Pond called Prairieville. Samuel W. Pond, Cordelia Eggleston Pond, and their three children moved into their new home, along with Jane Lamont Titus. Samuel was called *Ceta Wambli*, meaning Red Eagle, by the Dakota. Jeanette was five years old; Rebecca was three, and baby Elnathan was scarcely a month old when they moved in. (Samuel, Jr. was born a few years later.)

Elnathan remembered in 1925, "There were no white children excepting my brother, my two sisters, and myself....I recall that white men were a rare sight, and our childish eyes grew round with wonder when we saw one!"

The Mission House was built in the middle of Šakpe II village of Tinta Oturŋwe, where approximately 600 Dakota lived in tipi tanka (or bark lodges). It was a busy place, and Pond decided to surround the Mission House and front garden with a fence of tall stakes to prevent the Dakota from claiming a portion of the crops that Pond's family planted.

Samuel W. Pond described the site: "The mission house at Shakopee was pleasantly located on gently rising ground, about half a mile south of the Minnesota River. At a distance of twenty rods or so to the West was the house of Oliver Faribault. Between these two dwellings was a ravine through which ran a never failing spring of clear cold water..." The Mission House was "...sufficiently commodious, carefully and comfortably built, although inexpensive in all its appointments. The walls were carefully filled with moistened clay, making them probably bullet-proof and rendering the house very warm."

According to Samuel, "...the young mother (Cordelia), never very strong, gradually failed in health from that time.

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. Samuel knew that Cordelia was failing.

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 receive his mother's last kiss and listen to her dying words. She told him to be a good boy and love God. To Judson from his aunt Jennette's, to the youngest, she said, 'Poor boy! He will not remember his mother!' and kissed him farewell."

Cordelia Eggleston Pond passed away at the age of 36 years, fourteen of them spent in continuous service of the Dakotas.

Samuel, widowed at age 43, was left with four young children.

He remarried an old school friend, Rebecca Susan Smith about 2 months after Cordelia's death. Samuel and Susan did not have any children. They returned to the mission at Shakopee.