

Murphy unfailingly collected his fare in mid-steam, even during the Battle of Shakopee, which was fought less than a hundred yards from his home. The Dakota buried their enemies near Faribault Post, not too far off from Murphy's place.

Some Shakopee people called the inn "Murphy's Folly" because Major Murphy supported David Faribault, who lived nearby. David Faribault wanted to develop Eagle Creek. Murphy had built his two-story inn, a wharf, and a huge barn for the products from the 900 acre farm. He thought that the railroad would junction at Eagle Creek. Instead, the railroad picked Shakopee. As the river trade and stage coach travel succumbed to the railroad, so did the prosperity of Murphy's Folly.

Richard Murphy was President of the 1st Legislative Session of the Senate in Minnesota. He was sworn in on December 7, 1857 and subscribed to the oath of office on December 8, 1857. He continued until December 6, 1859.

On January 10, 1875, Major Murphy died. In the Shakopee Argus obituary, the editor notes: "No man living can say that he ever deceived him by anything he said or done. He was, if you use such an expression, 'Honest to a fault.' He loved his family and his 'kith and kin.'"

Once the railroads arrived, the inn became a farmhouse. By 1900, it was abandoned "to tramps and the elements." In 1936, the National Youth Administration refurbished the 3-story stone house. In 1947, it became emergency housing. By 1956, the house was owned by the city of Shakopee, and before too long, was torn down.



Major Richard G. Murphy is buried at Valley Cemetery in Shakopee.



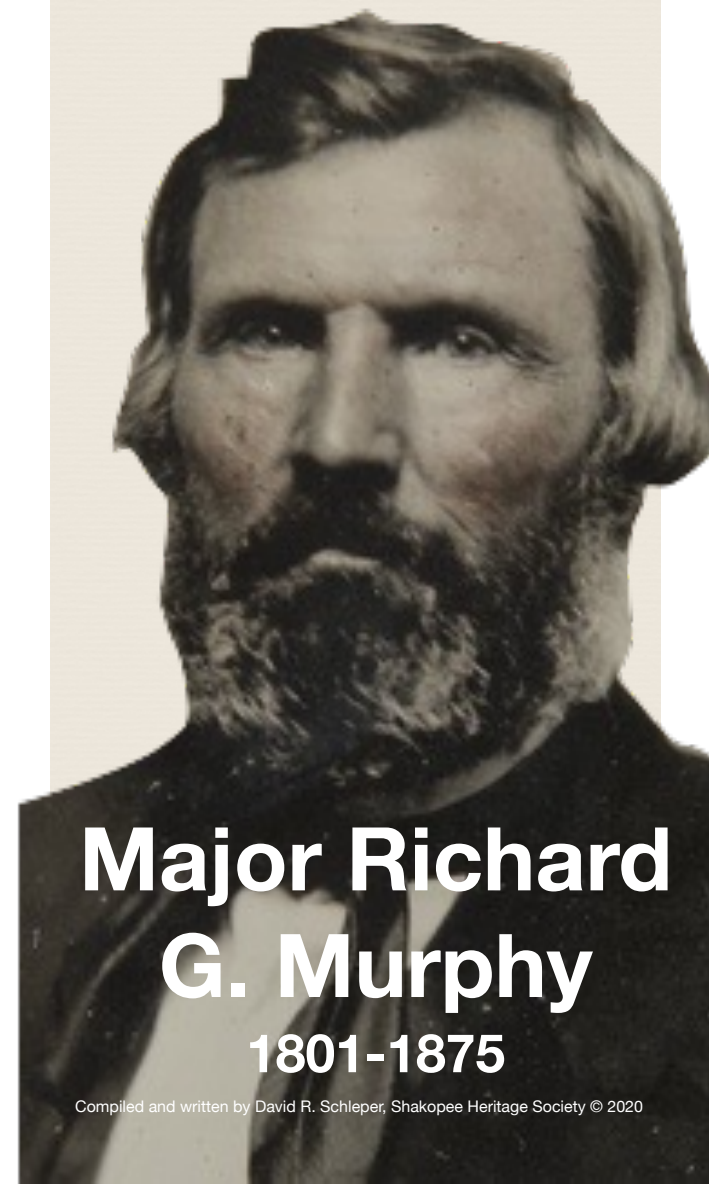
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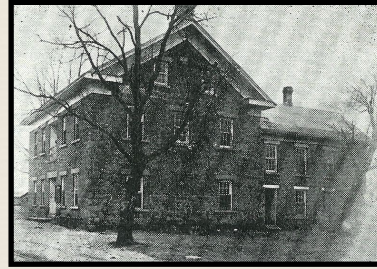
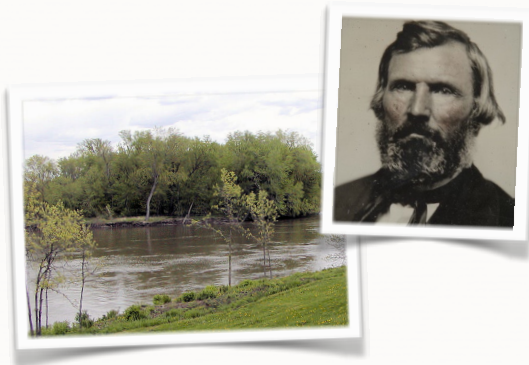


SHAKOPEE HERITAGE SOCIETY



Major Richard G. Murphy

1801-1875



Murphy's Inn was built in 1853 in Eagle Creek Township in east Shakopee. It was a Mecca for visitors from Shakopee and all over the area. They had a wooden floor for dancing, and good drink, and conversation, it was a fun place to be. By 1900, the inn was abandoned, but in 1936 it was used for the National Youth Administration. In 1947, it was emergency housing, and by 1956 the inn, now part of the city of Shakopee, was torn down. The Landing in Shakopee has the foundation of the Murphy's Inn.

Major Richard G. Murphy was born in Tennessee on January 4, 1804, and he never saw the inside of a school except for a 3-month period when he was 21. He fought in the Blackhawk War and in 1832 he was elected to his state's legislature of Illinois. In 1848 President Polk appointed him Indian Agent in the Territory of Minnesota.

Indian agencies were created as part of the US government's efforts to control trade between the US and Native American nations. Throughout its more than 30-year history, the St. Peters agency was administered by several individuals, including Richard Murphy, who was an Indian agent in 1848-1849.

During the early 1800s, the US government adopted policies aimed at acculturating and assimilating Native people into European American society. Agents at the St. Peters Agency encouraged Dakota people to give up hunting as a primary method of subsistence, educate their children according to European American standards, give up their traditional religion to become practicing Christians, and adopt European American agricultural methods.

The US government's policy of assimilation would effectively destroy the traditional cultural identities of Native American nations. Many historians have argued that the US government believed that if Native people did not adopt European American culture, they would become extinct as a people. This paternalistic attitude influenced interactions between the Dakota and the US government throughout the first half of the 1800s, and its effects continue to be felt today.

Major Murphy's first wife was Sarah Sally Lemen, born November 2, 1809 in St. Clair, Illinois. They married on September 2, 1834. They had five children: William, Mary Ann, Joseph, Benton, and George. His second wife was Nancy Glore, and they got married on April 17, 1851 in Randolph, Illinois.

A stage line was established between St. Paul and Shakopee in 1853, and a ferry across the river at Shakopee opened the same year.

The first license for a ferry across the Minnesota river was granted to Thomas A. Holmes in 1853, and let to John Hare. The ferry crossed the river near the town

site. On July 3, 1864, license for a ferry was granted to Richard Murphy at a point called Murphy's Landing, about a mile below the village of Shakopee. (A third ferry was licensed on January 1, 1855 to Luther M. Brown at a point half a mile below Holmes street. This ferry was of short duration.)

In 1853 Murphy settled in Eagle Creek Township just East of Shakopee, where he built a large two-story house and hotel. It became a mecca for travelers, with good food, drink, merry dancing, and fresh horses. Back then, it was only about 1 ½ miles from Shakopee, and many parties and dances were held there. It was the liveliest pioneer inn on the Minnesota River between Fort Snelling and New Ulm.

Richard G Murphy had the exclusive right for 15 years to operate a ferry across the Minnesota. Nearby was a grist mill where Samuel Pond and Cordelia Eggleston Pond's sons worked. The grist mill and the area where the Murphy's Ferry is now part of Three River Park's *The Landing* near Memorial Park in Shakopee.