

## Descendants of history-makers meet at Historic Fort Snelling

Updated: May 23, 2013 - 9:26 PM **Richard Tsong-Taatarii** • [tsong-taatarii@startribune.com](mailto:tsong-taatarii@startribune.com)

A solemn sense of history and perhaps even some ghosts were in the air Thursday at Historic Fort Snelling, when the descendants of 19th-century figures central to events involving white settlers, black slaves and American Indians came together.

Lynne Jackson, the great-great-granddaughter of slaves Dred and Harriet Scott, and Leonard Prescott, the great-great-grandson of Philander Prescott, a white settler, and his Dakota wife, Mary, met at the reconstructed quarters occupied for about four years by Scott when he was in service to the fort surgeon. Above, the two embraced after learning more about each other's ancestors.

Partly based on his experience in free territories like Minnesota, Scott unsuccessfully sued for his freedom and that of his wife and daughters. The resulting 1857 "Dred Scott Decision" was among the catalysts for the Civil War. Philander Prescott operated a trading post near what is now Prescott, Wis., and was killed at the Lower Sioux Agency during the bloody 1862 U.S.-Dakota War. Many Indians were imprisoned at the fort during that time.

Jackson is executive director of the Missouri-based Dred Scott Heritage Foundation. Her visit to the Twin Cities was arranged by the Minnesota African American Museum. Prescott is former chairman of the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community. □

PAMELA MILLER



Leonard Prescott and Lynne Jackson, descendants of key figures in the history of Fort Snelling and Minnesota, said goodbye in one of the restored rooms at the fort.

Dred Scott, a slave whose bid for freedom was waged unsuccessfully all the way to the Supreme Court, lived at Historic Fort Snelling for about four years.