

Northern Emigrant Route.

Fayette McMullin was third Governor appointed for Washington Territory, but J. Patton Anderson, who was appointed to succeed Governor Isaac I. Stevens in 1857, did not qualify, and so Mr. McMullin was the second actual Governor of the Territory. The following letter is a copy of one he wrote to the Secretary of War. It is among the collections in the Library of the University of Washington.

Territory of Washington,
Executive Office,
Olympia, November 28th, 1857.

Hon. John B. Floyd,
Secretary of War.

Sir:

I herewith transmit to the Department for your consideration "Joint Resolutions of the Legislative Assembly of this Territory passed at the Session of 1855-56," concerning the protection of settlers and emigrants between the Mississippi Valleys and the Pacific Ocean," etc. etc.

The intense hostility of all the Indian tribes of the prairies in the vicinity of, and for some distance to the north of the usual route traveled by emigrants, leading up the great Platte river, by way of Fort Laramie, and from thence to Oregon by way of Fort Hall, and of all the tribes to the south of this route, instigated as they are by, and likely to remain under the influence of the Mormons in Utah, with whom the United States are about to be involved in serious difficulties, together with the recent horrible massacre of a whole train of emigrants, men, women and children, numbering 118 souls, indicates in my judgment the great necessity of a safer and better route for emigrants from the Atlantic States, by land, to the territories of Oregon and Washington.

From the most reliable information I can gain it is believed that the Northern route, leaving the Mississippi at some point in Minnesota and proceeding over the plains of the upper Missouri to Ft. Benton and thence across the Rocky Mountains to the valleys of the Columbia and to Puget Sound, offers the safest and shortest route to our North West Pacific possessions.

Grass, wood and water, the three great essential requisites, in making the overland journey to this Coast, are said to be found on this trail in greater abundance than the routes farther south.

Of the entire feasibility of that portion of the route leading through the plains of Minnesota and Nebraska, to the foothills of the Rocky Mountains, there can be no possible doubt. Of the character of the country from thence across the mountains, through the valley of the Bitter Root or St. Mary's Coeur d'Alene, Spokane, and Walla Walla country, I beg to refer you to

the extracts given from Governor Stevens' Report and in my letter published in the Pioneer and Democrat, a copy of which I herewith transmit to you.

I am Sir truly and respectfully,

Your obt. st.,

F. McMULLIN,
Gov. Ter. Wash.

P. S.—I have to request that you will present my kindest regards to Mrs. Floyd and to remember me kindly to my friends and late colleagues from Virginia, and accept for yourself my sincere wishes for your welfare and success in the important Dept. over which you preside.

I hope to hear from you at your leisure.

F. McM.

Beginnings of the Canal.

The following letter is interesting in the light of recent developments in the case of the building of a canal from tide water to Lake Washington. James Scott was Secretary of the Territory from 1870 to 1872. James McNaught afterwards gained a national reputation as counsel for the Northern Pacific Railroad Company.

Seattle, W. T., Jan. 6th, 1871.

Dr. J. Scott, Sect.

Sir:

I herewith send you articles of incorporation of "The Lake Washington Canal Company." Please file them in your office and send bill to me and oblige

Your obt. servt.

J. McNAUGHT.

While the above seems as though it might be the very inception of efforts to build the canal, mention should here be made of a still earlier effort. John Pike, for whom Pike Street in Seattle was named, was the architect and builder of the famous old Territorial University building now being used as the temporary home of the Seattle Public Library. He had a son Harvey Pike, who was both enterprising and energetic. About 1860 Harvey Pike began to dig a canal at the "Portage," to connect Lake Washington and Lake Union. For many years the evidence of this beginning could have been seen, but the work proved too great and was abandoned.