

MEMORIAL

OF

THE LEGISLATURE OF MINNESOTA,

IN FAVOR OF

The establishment of a mail route from the city of St. Cloud, in Minnesota, by the way of Fort Abercrombie and Bannock City, in the Territory of Idaho, to Fort Walla-Walla.

MARCH 4, 1864.—Referred to the Committee on Post Offices and Post Roads and ordered to be printed.

Your memorialists, the legislature of the State of Minnesota, would respectfully represent, that the emigrant route from St. Cloud to Bannock City, by the way of Fort Abercrombie, is now ascertained by repeated trials, to be a complete success. Besides the pioneer expedition and exploration of Governor Stevens, Captain Fisk has made two successful trips over nearly the same tract, with wagon trains and mounted men, during the last two years. The face of the country along this route is highly favorable for a national thoroughfare, as it passes over the water shed of the continent—has less snow than any other road to the mountains—leading for the greater part along valleys abounding in water, grass, and wood, from St. Cloud to Abercrombie, a distance of 170 miles. The country is rich in soil, and capable of supporting a dense population. Thence to Fort Union, if not so productive, is yet not barren, as grass and water, soil and wood, are found in sufficient quantities to supply emigrant trains, and to support settlements at intervals for most of the distance. From Fort Union to Fort Benton, near the foot of the Rocky mountains, a distance of 300 miles or more, the Missouri valley lies almost due east and west, abounding in fuel, timber, and bottom lands, with many smaller valleys opening to it from the north, fertile in grass, and capable of producing the cereals. From Fort Benton to Fort Walla-Walla, passing completely over the mountain and mineral region, is a good wagon road leading to Oregon and Washington. In no other latitude on the continent of North America do the Rocky mountain regions afford so much arable and productive land, with wood, timber, and water inexhaustible from fort to fort. In a military point of view, it is believed to be more important than any other *known* route to the gold mines in Idaho and Washington Territories. From Fort Abercrombie to Fort Benton, and north of that line to and beyond the British possessions, is the great buffalo range of the continent, and is now and will continue to be for years, perhaps ages to come, the hunting grounds of the hostile Sioux. Attracted by game or impelled by fear, these *savage demons* will linger and hang on these borders where neutral territory will afford them an easy refuge, if not a friendly encouragement.

2 MAIL ROUTE FROM ST. CLOUD TO FORT WALLA-WALLA.

It is along this vicinity of a coterminous boundary that a line of forts will soon be found necessary, of which the first in the series will be *Abercrombie*. They will be necessary to shelter our emigrant trains to the mines and to the Pacific, as well as our frontier settlements, which will steadily push along this thoroughfare to the foot of the mountains, and to the mines of Idaho and Washington. Semi-weekly mails, therefore, following the thousands of our countrymen who are preparing to pass over this well-attested route to Virginia and Bannock cities the ensuing spring, is but a harbinger of a national necessity which cannot be long in safety postponed. The large sum of money already expended by the nation in opening this route and in building a military road across the mountains, leading, as it does, from one national fortress to another, and alluring thousands of our countrymen to golden cities, should not have been vainly consumed, when so little *now* remains to be done to have it end in a national blessing.

Your memorialists, therefore, ask that a semi-weekly mail route be established from the city of St. Cloud, (a point to which eastern and southern mails daily arrive,) by the way of Fort Abercrombie, Virginia, and Bannock cities, in Idaho, and thence to Walla-Walla, to connect with other mail routes running through Oregon and Washington.

CHARLES D. SHERWOOD,
President of the Senate.

JARED BENSON,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

Approved February twentieth, one thousand eight hundred and sixty-four.
STEPHEN MILLER.

STATE OF MINNESOTA.

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE,
St. Paul, February 27, 1864.

[SEAL.] I certify the foregoing to be a true copy of the original on file in this office.

D. BLAKELY,
Secretary of State.