

MULLAN CHRONICLES

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Summer 2003



Bridges and rivers loomed large on MR

(This article was found by Mullanite, Robert Dunsmore of Osburn, ID in *The Pacific Northwesterner*, Winter 1958; reprinted with permission.

Part Three

Continued from last edition

By Joe Baily

On the Blackfoot that winter they built a bridge 235 feet long, throwing a boom over the wide river, damming up floating ice, cutting an opening in the ice to hold the piers, gathering rocks to fill the piers, whipsawing planks 17 feet by 3 feet.

In May of 1862, Mullan went on to Fort Benton by pack train, where he took a mackinaw boat to St. Louis. He came back to the Deer Lodge valley.

Mullan's travail on this road was now nearing its end, and, fittingly for him, with the first real emigrants

beginning to come over it. Travellers, he called them, "journeying safely and pleasantly toward the setting sun."

From a number of these travellers "journeying into the setting sun" in the summer of 1862 we have first hand accounts. There is, for instance, the diary of Charles Rumley, pioneer assayer of Helena, librarian of the Montana state historical society, 1875-85, who died in Helena in 1897.

His party left Fort LaBarge, near Fort Benton, on June 20, wagonning over a good road. They passed Bird Tail rock, and the Little Prickly Pear, fires six guns at sunrise of the 4th of July, met oxen teams on the road, made snowballs on the summit of the Continental Divide, stopped in the Deer Lodge valley to work the placers.

He headed on in mid-August and at

the junction of the Blackfoot and Deer Lodge rivers he reports coming upon a tree bearing the mark MR 439, he says, Mullan Road 439 miles to Walla Walla, actually meaning Military Road. After another month in the Big Hole diggings he headed in September for Walla Walla and from here on every day carries the mention of MR 411, MR 405, MR 392, and so on, a testimonial to the careful blazing of the Mullan Road by its builders.

The Mullan Road was in high favor in this summer and fall of 1862. On August 23 appeared in the Walla Walla Statesman a letter signed by Twenty-Two Emigrants.

The pass over the Rockies they described as "a low easy pass, a mere depression in the range." In the valleys

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Mullan Day 2003 Meets in Alberton

It was a wonderful day at Alberton for participants of the 16th annual John Mullan Day. Mother Nature cooperated with clear skies and a light breeze.

Our good friend Robert Dunsmore of Osborn ID gave a presentation based on all the documents, maps and photos he has collected over the years. Bob worked for the Idaho Department of Highways and as such began his interest in the road that runs through his area. We appreciate all he has done to collect and save anything relevant to "our" road. Thank you so much Bob.

(See "Mullan Day" page two)



Using muscle power that would have made Mullan happy, Bill Thomas, Chuck Mead, Wayne Bricker, Bob Dunsmore and Wade Bilbrey remove a tree that blocked the excursion over the Scenic Rocks section of the road.

Coeur d'Alene River crossed by 69

of the St. Regis Borgia, Hell Gate and Big Blackfoot were over 50 bridges, they reported, and they crossed on four ferries.

The elements, however were to work havoc with Mullan's axe and shovel passage when each winter struck thereafter, and this was to be well illustrated through the first one after he completed it. By 1863 the travellers who braved it weren't bringing such rosy reports as those of the 22 Emigrants of 1862.

Henry Cummins was one of those, and his report in the Oregon Argus of September 28, 1863, was anything but favorable.

Cummins headed east over the road, leaving Walla Walla May 25, 1863. Travel to the Spokane river he described as "disagreeable" and went on to say, "The road through the

Coeur d'Alene mountains to the mission is bad, entirely washed out by mountain streams." He and his party found the river high at the mission and had to employ Indians to take their baggage over in canoes. Their horses were driven in a gang into the water and washed a quarter mile downstream.

They counted 69 crossings of the Coeur d'Alene river in the mountains. More than half the Mullan bridges were washed away. In places the river ran for miles along the road and they waded their horses knee deep.

In the next few years, however, the Mullan road received much travel because of the flurry of mining in Montana at Alder Gulch, Virginia City, Last Chance Gulch, Helena, and elsewhere.

The movement was reflected in the business of the Mullan terminal towns of Fort Benton and Walla Walla. From four steamboats which arrived at Fort Benton with much heralding in 1862 the number jumped to 31 in 1866, a high of 69 in 1867, down to 42 in 1869. (A good description of the steamboat traffic is in *Fort Benton, World's Innermost Port* by Joel Overholser.)

Walla Walla on the other side grew to great prominence as an outfitting point for the mines. By 1870 Walla Walla county had a population of 5300 and Walla Walla with 1394 was the largest city in Washington territory.

Simeon G. Reed, president of the Oregon Steam Navigation Co. which has been called "that remarkable monopoly of river transportation in the 1860s and 1870s" wrote on September 4, 1865, "Even now the population of that section (Montana) is not less than 25,000 to 30,000, which is perhaps equal to the population of Idaho at this time ... Within the last two weeks fully 1000 pack animals have left Walla Walla and Lewiston for that country by way of the Mullan Road."

What Reed was after in this year of 1865 - and it has considerable bearing on the travel on the Mullan Road - was the development of a rival route to the Montana mines by way of Lake Pend Oreille on boats to be built by his company to go over the lake to the Clark Fork, ply it to above Cabinet Gorge, as far as Thompson Falls to connect with another boat on the upper river beyond the falls. This Pend Oreille route saw considerable use.

It was in 1865 that Mullan gave his road additional publicity by publishing his *Miners and Travellers Guide To Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming and Colorado, via the Missouri and Columbia Rivers, Prepared by Capt. John Mullan, late Superintendent of the Northern Overland Wagon Road and Commissioner of the Northern Pacific Railroad.* Mullan had become a captain in 1863, and had married meanwhile and resigned his commission to try his hand at carrying mails and express.

In 1866 in The Oregon Herald appeared a defense of Mullan's route, worded thusly, "A great many routes have been opened and all have been more or less travelled by those whose business led them to the mining regions of Montana. A majority up to this time are in favor of the Mullan route as being the shortest and best and all concur that this road can be put in good order for a moiety of the sum it would take to build a road elsewhere."

Washington's territorial assembly in 1866 sent a memorial to congress stating that not less than 20,000 person had passed over the Mullan Road in a single season.

Probably the most valuable report of travel on the road is that of the trip in 1867 in the journal of Henry Lueg, who made his notes daily in a small leather book in German script.

Lueg's party met a number of heavy freight wagons between Benton and

Mullan Day...

(Continued from Page One)

After punch and wonderful cookies we went to Chuck Mead's place at Cyr. We took a couple of trucks and traversed the Scenic Rocks section going up and back over the original road behind his place. It was fascinating to see how the road was cut in the rocks and along various creeks and side hills. We also saw the letters carved in rocks near the top. It is too bad we will probably never know to whom the initials belong. A couple of places along the top we are sure the workmen had to be part mountain goat as it was "pretty darn close to the edge" and showed the ability of Mullan's roadbuilding expertise.

After viewing the road we went to a place east of Alberton and viewed the Indian petroglyphs along the old US 10. It was a great meeting and we look forward to next year.

bridges

Helena City, some drawn by as many as 12 oxen.

The party's difficulties were greatest beyond Missoula, where they found that nothing had been done by way of upkeep on Mullan's Road in the five years since its construction, except what necessarily had to be done by the miners and emigrants passing. They met others often on the road.

Now we are coming into the 1870s on the Mullan Road, and reports of its use were not so prominent in the newspapers of the region. The mining excitement had died down, but in its place was the consistent roll into this region of the wagons bearing families.

There were still scattered accounts of journeys through these parts, although it is reasonable to believe that the Palouse sector was often travelled. In the Woodstock letters appears an account of a trip from Missoula to the Mission of the Sacred Heart in 1878, in which the writer comments on its lack of use. "From this point on, the route we are to follow is the continuation of the old Mullan Road. It has not been used for many years. It is considered impassable for wagons but we are going to demonstrate it is not so."

The years of 1877-78 were to see a flurry of interest in the now old Mullan Road, stirred up by a grizzled old warrior, General of the Army William T. Sherman.

(Continued in the next edition.)

Good news and sad news from Dr FitzHugh Mullan

First, the good news:

His daughter, Caitlin, and Wes Crain will be married this coming Labor Day. We wish them all the happiness in the world. Fitz has authored a book *Big Doctoring in America; Profiles in Primary Care*. The museum will be getting a copy for our collection and Fitz has offered to inscribe the book for us.

Sad News: Hugh Mullan, 91; Pioneering Psychiatrist

Hugh Mullan, 91, a Washington psychiatrist who was an early practitioner of group therapy and served as president of the American Group Psychotherapy Association, died of congestive heart failure March 22 (2003) at the Washington Home. He lived in the District. Dr. Mullan trained as a physician and as a traditional Freudian psychiatrist prior to World War II and began practicing group therapy in New York in the early 1950s'. Family members said he courted controversy in his acceptance of group practice methods, therapists who were not physicians, and the premise that the therapist as well as the patient was altered during the therapeutic process.

In the early 1970s, he ran the Area C Mental Health Service Program, based at D.C. General Hospital. From 1973 until he retired in 1986, he practiced privately in the Kalorama area of Washington. He taught group therapy at Georgetown University, where he was a clinical professor of psychiatry, and at the Washington School of Psychiatry. In the late 1970s, he was an attending psychiatrist at St. Elizabeths Hospital. Dr.

Mullan wrote extensively about his principles of practice in psychiatric journals and wrote three books.

He was born on Staten Island NY, while his father was serving in the Public Health Service there. Dr. Mullan graduated from the Severn School in Annapolis, the U.S. Naval Academy, and the medical school of Cornell University. He interned at the U.S. Marine Hospital on Staten Island, and then served as a medical officer in the Army Air Forces during World War II. He was posted to Europe in 1944 and 1945, and retired in the 1970s as a colonel in the Army Reserve.

After World War II, he trained in analytical psychiatry at the New York Psychiatric Institute and with Dr. Karen Horney under the auspices of the Association for the Advancement of Psychoanalysis. He was in private practice in New York before moving in the late 1960s to New Orleans. He taught at Tulane University and was chief of psychiatry at the New Orleans Veterans Hospital. Dr. Mullan was a member of the Cosmos Club, the American Psychiatric Association, the liaison group of the bioethics program at the National Institutes of Health and the Washington Metropolitan Bioethics Network.

Survivors include his wife of 61 years, Mariquita Paez MacManus of Washington; three children, Dr. Fitzhugh Mullan of Bethesda, Anthony Mullan of Washington, and Dr. Marquita Gabriela Mullan of Brookline, MA; and five grandchildren.

(In a note from Fitz: He was buried at Arlington National Cemetery on April 29 with full military honors. It was quite spectacular and would have made John Mullan proud.)

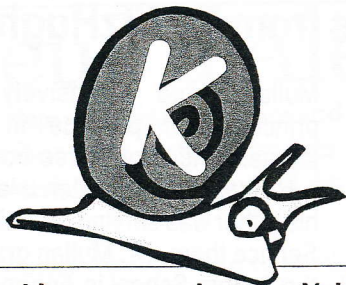
MC

SHORT NOTES SHORT NOTES SHORT NOTES SHORT NOTES SHORT NOTES

Professor Paul McDermott, in Maryland, sent the museum a copy of the proposal to have the name of presently named St. Regis Pass, on the Idaho-Montana line, just southwest of Lookout Pass, returned to its original name of "Sohon Pass." Prof. McDermott did a lot of documentation of the fact that it was originally named

by Mullan for his good friend, Sohon. As the sesquicentennial (150 years) of the building of the road is fast coming upon us it is only fitting that the pass be returned to remember Sohon. McDermott feels it may take a year or so for action to be taken, but feels there is a good argument for the change. We'll keep you informed.

On June 1st there was an article in the Missoulian about a professor, Bill Youngs, from Eastern Washington University at Cheney, who is doing research on the Mullan Road. We contacted him and he will be coming over to see our collections sometime this summer. It will be good to share information.



We won't give up, hope you won't give up on us!

We will continue to get the *Chronicles* out. When you pay for a year you will get a full four issues no matter how many years it takes!

Memberships are now shown as Volume and issue number, i.e., if yours shows 9-4 it means you are now due to renew. Also my email address is mrshezzie@blackfoot.net. Thank you for all the support you have given us in over 10 years of trying to share information on this most fascinating man and his venture. You will get four issues for your membership dues! Be patient with us please, for there is hope.

MC

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