

THE MINNESOTA MARKER IN THE WASHINGTON MONUMENT

The writer visited the Washington Monument when in Washington last December, and walking down discovered near the top of the monument a marker placed there by the state of Minnesota. This stone appears to be a piece of boiler plate with the word "Minnesota" painted thereon, and beyond any question of doubt is the cheapest marker placed on this monument. The writer's curiosity was aroused in connection therewith, and he will greatly appreciate information about its origin.

M. A. P., Minneapolis

The Minnesota marker in the Washington Monument consists of a piece of red pipestone from the famous quarries in southwestern Minnesota. Long before the days of the white man, the Indians went there to gather material for their pipes. The stone is unique, and no material could be more appropriate for a Minnesota marker.

The particular piece of pipestone used here has a rather interesting history. In his *History of Minnesota*, 1: 121 n., Dr. Folwell makes the following statement about it: "A slab of the red pipestone, procured by General Sibley and presented to the first territorial legislature in 1849, was forwarded to the national capital to be built into the Washington Monument." With the stone Sibley sent a letter which is printed in the *Council Journal* of Minnesota Territory for 1849 (p. 30). Part of the letter follows:

The undersigned, having seen a notice in the public journals, some time since, signed by the general agent of the Washington Monument Association, to the effect that a portion of rock from each State would be received to be used in the construction of the monument, has caused to be procured from the quarry, about two hundred miles distant, a specimen of the red or pipe stone, which is peculiar to our Territory, to be proffered for that purpose.

Believing it to be meet and proper that Minnesota should not be backward in her contribution to a work which is intended to perpetuate the memory of the 'Father of his Country,' and that the offering should be that of the constituted authorities of the Territory, rather than the act of a private individual, I have hereby the honor to present the specimen of rock to your honorable

body, for your acceptance, to be disposed of in such manner as your wisdom may suggest.

The slab is about two and a half feet in length, and a little over one and a half in breadth, and two inches in thickness.

According to a report made in 1855, Minnesota was one of two territories which had "contributed a block of marble or stone, inscribed with its arms or some suitable inscription or device" to be built into the Washington Monument. In addition, every state and many foreign nations had sent stones.

The Indians looked upon the pipestone quarry as sacred ground and they objected to having the whites visit it. Until 1836 only a few traders had seen it. In that year George Catlin, the famous artist, made his way to the quarry despite the protests of the Indians, and he wrote the first account of it. This is published in Catlin's *Letters and Notes on the Manners, Customs, and Condition of the North American Indians*, 2: 166-176 (London and New York, 1841). A brief account of Catlin's Minnesota visit appears in Dr. Folwell's *History of Minnesota*, 1: 119-121. Dr. Folwell records that "A specimen of the red pipestone was sent by Catlin to a Boston chemist, who after analysis pronounced it to be a new mineral compound and gave it the name 'catlinite.'" By this name it still is known.

B. L. H.

ALEXANDER FARIBAULT

Can you give me some information about the career of Alexander Faribault, in whose honor the city of Faribault was named?¹

According to the manuscript census schedules of Minnesota for the year 1850 Alexander Faribault was at the time forty-four years of age and a native of Minnesota. According to a manuscript sketch of the founders of the city of Faribault

¹ This inquiry was received shortly before the celebration at Faribault in July, 1926, of the centennial of the founding of the city. See *ante*, 7: 373.



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