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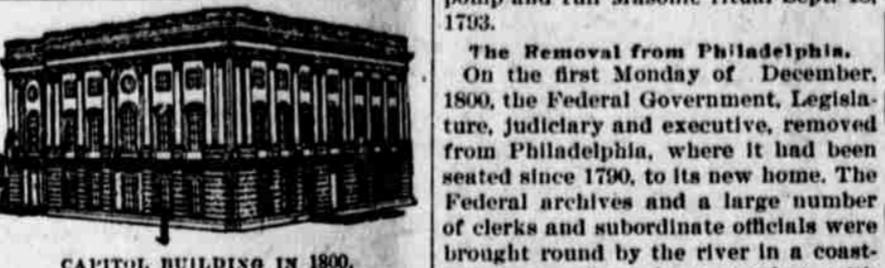
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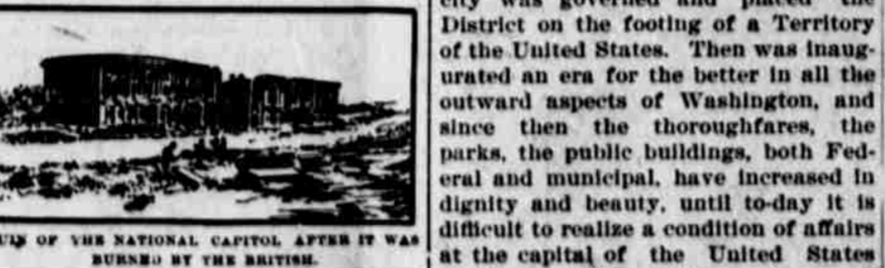
It took more than ten years of hard and bitter fighting in Congress to fix the location of the national capital at Washington, the centennial of which action was recently celebrated. Several times during that period of struggle it seemed certain that the "Federal City" would be located elsewhere. Once such action was prevented only by the casting vote of Vice President John Adams in the United States Senate after the House had passed a bill fixing the location of the



capital on the "east bank of the River Susquehanna," and the Senate had taken a tie vote on the same proposition. On another occasion a bill amended by the Senate so that the seat of national government was fixed at Germantown, Pa., was passed by the House and finally failed of adoption because of an amendment made by the House that the State of Pennsylvania should have control over the national territory until Congress should pass suitable laws for its government. This amendment required further action by the Senate, but in the meantime the Senate had adjourned and the amended bill was never heard of again. By such apparent accidents and by such small chances was the choice of a site for the Federal Government guided. The final selection of "the banks of the Potomac" was the result of a compromise, in which Jefferson played the most important part.

The story of Washington's founding and growth is most interesting. In the year 1788 all there was to show of the Federal capital of the young republic was a provision of the Constitution for the establishment of such a city upon territory outside the limits of all the constituent States. In that year the Legislature of Maryland passed an act "to cede to Congress a district ten miles square in this State for the seat of the Government of the United States." About a year later an act of similar import was passed by the Legislature of Virginia. Meanwhile the Federal Legislature, sitting in New York, carried on a heated and stormy wrangle over the question of a permanent seat for itself and its successors. Eventually it was decided to accept the offer of Maryland and Virginia, despite the most violent opposition in some quarters, and the Senate bill in favor of the proffered site was signed by George Washington, July 16, 1790. The Senate act left a great deal to the President's discretion. The area of his choice extended 105 miles along the serpentine course of the Potomac, from Williamsport to Hagerstown, and it is certain that the final determination was largely due to Washington's own preference. It also rested with him alone to appoint three commissioners provided for by Congress to survey and plot the Federal District, to acquire land by purchase or the accept-

ance of gifts, and to provide "suitable buildings for the accommodation of Congress and for the public offices of the Government prior to the first Monday of December, 1800."



Everything went smoothly for a time. The lands accepted by the nation from Maryland and Virginia were laid out and sites were chosen for the public buildings, but then trouble arose. Considerable difficulty was encountered when an effort was made to acquire freehold titles to the land required for the public buildings, but patient persuasion overcame all obstacles, and March 30, 1791, nineteen proprietors of the soil signed an agreement conveying their property in trust to the chief executive to be laid off as a Federal city.

Four days earlier than this date Major Peter Charles L'Enfant, one of the soldiers who accompanied Lafayette to the United States and who was named as the engineer to draw the plans, had presented his report to the President. L'Enfant's idea of what the Federal capital should be was much more like what it has now become than the monotonous rectangular block arrangement which seemed good to Thomas Jefferson and other Americans of that day. Some of his opinions were objected to, but he refused to change them, so he was called upon to resign his position, and he was succeeded by Andrew Ellicott, of Pennsylvania.

The cornerstone of the Federal District was laid at Hunter's Point on April 15, 1791, and a site was chosen for the Capitol of the United States on Corn Abye Manor, the lord of which was Daniel Carroll. To obtain the best design for the building itself a prize of a city lot and \$500 was offered for open competition. The plan was to be sent in before July 15, 1792. The prize was so small that but little effort among competent architects was excited and but seventeen sketches were offered. The plans of William Thornton, a physician of English parentage, were accepted, and the corner stone of the Capitol Building was laid with great pomp and full Masonic ritual Sept. 18, 1793.

The Removal from Philadelphia. On the first Monday of December, 1800, the Federal Government, Legislature, Judiciary and executive, removed from Philadelphia, where it had been seated since 1790, to its new home. The Federal archives and a large number of clerks and subordinate officials were brought round by the river in a coasting sloop and set down at what, with few exceptions, they regarded as a hideous and unwholesome swamp beyond the confines of civilization. Everybody, from the Treasury clerks and their families, up to Mrs. Adams, the President's wife, grumbled and repined at the change. The Capitol was unfinished and made, as they universally complained, a very unfit shelter for the nation's legislators. Of the latter, when Congress assembled, only a few could find board and lodging within the limits of the Federal city itself.

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