

The Passing of a Landmark



THE OLD BRICK CAPITOL
Photo by Underwood & Underwood

By ELMO SCOTT WATSON

THE United States Supreme court is soon to have a new home in the National Capital befitting the dignity of that important branch of the federal government, but the selection of a site for this temple of justice has meant the passing of one of the most historic buildings in Washington. For 115 years there stood at the corner of Maryland avenue and First street, N. E., in the block adjoining the Library of Congress, a building, known as the "Old Brick Capitol," because at a critical period in our history it housed the government of the United States. But now it is no more. It has been torn down so that upon its site may be erected the stately new home of the national judiciary.

The Old Brick Capitol came into being as the result of one of the greatest catastrophes which ever befell the republic—the burning of the Capitol and other government buildings in Washington by the British during the War of 1812. As we look back upon it now, it seems strange that our government should have been so apathetic and the citizens of Washington so indifferent to danger as they were in August, 1814, when a British fleet sailed into Chesapeake bay and anchored off Fort Mifflin. If they gave the matter any thought at all, it was that New York or Baltimore might be attacked, but it seemed to occur to no one that the National Capitol was in any serious danger.

For one thing, they counted on Fort Mifflin to keep the invaders from coming up the bay, and if the enemy should attempt a naval attack on Washington by way of the Potomac river, they seemed to believe that the antiquated cannon placed at several points below the city would hold them off. It was no tribute to the intelligence of the British leaders to believe this and, as might have been expected, the enemy did exactly what no one seems to have thought they would do. They launched a land attack from the other direction and so swift were their movements and so inadequate the preparations by the Americans for guarding against such an emergency that the red coats were almost upon the city before they were discovered.

Then there was a great scurrying around and General Winder hastily assembled a force of some 6,000 men to halt the invaders. Five hundred of his men were sailors but the remainder were raw and undisciplined militia, and it was with this force that he faced an army of 5,000 British, mostly sailors and marines, under Admiral Cockburn and General Ross at Bladensburg. Americans to this day remember with shame the "Bladensburg races," as the newspapers of the day called the rout which followed. For although the 500 American sailors made a brave stand, the militia ran and the troops, who were with them in their panicky flight. In the meantime Dolly Madison, the wife of the President, was proving herself a heroine. When news of the Bladensburg disaster reached Washington, most of the government officials and hundreds of citizens fled inconspicuously with no thought of trying to save anything from the invaders. But Dolly seized the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the United States and other priceless documents, loaded them and other valuables of the government in a farm wagon and took them across the Potomac into Virginia, where she was later joined by the President, who was forced to hide out in the woods as the enemy marched into the Capital.



BELLE BOYD

The British made a triumphant entry of it on August 24. Entering the Executive Mansion, the British officers, according to their own account, drank the British king's wine and then set fire to the building. Next they visited the Capitol and Admiral Cockburn took his seat in the chair of the speaker of the house of representatives. Springing to his feet, he shouted, "Shall this harbor of Yankee Democracy be burned? All for it will say 'Aye!'" Shouts of "Aye! Aye!" filled the room and a few minutes later the torch was applied. Next they destroyed the treasury building, set fire to other government structures, and when they departed they left behind them a city virtually in ashes.

Washington, with its smoking ruins, was in a critical situation. Many members of congress had never been fully reconciled to moving the National Capitol from old-established Philadelphia to this "backwoods village," and after the scattered legislators had reassembled, a movement was started to abandon Washington and reestablish the seat of government in Philadelphia. Then a group of leading Washington citizens got busy. They determined to provide, at their own expense, a suitable meeting place when the new congress convened.

It was this structure which for the next four years housed the government of the United States. President James Monroe took the oath of office on a platform erected on the north side of the building, the first outdoor inauguration ceremonies since Washington's in New York, and the one which established the precedent for the induction into office of later Presidents. But even more important during the four eventful years of the Old Brick Capitol's early history were the acts of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth congresses which met in it.

They granted a charter for 20 years to that bank of the United States against which Andrew Jackson waged his famous fight. They appropriated a million a year for eight years for naval construction. They authorized the President to engage John Trumbull to make his four big paintings for the new Capitol that was to be. They granted to Revolutionary veterans pensions of \$20 a month to officers and \$8 to privates, on "proof of need." They enacted, on April 4, 1818, the law adopting Capt. Samuel Chester Reid's design for the national flag. They ratified the treaty with Great Britain for the restriction of naval forces on the Great Lakes. They authorized the President to take possession of East and West Florida. They admitted Mississippi, Indiana and Illinois into the Union; made organized territories of Alabama and Arkansas and authorized Alabama to take steps for statehood.

Perhaps most important of all was the long debate over the request of

Missouri to be admitted as a state. The request was not granted at that time. But John W. Taylor, a representative from New York, introduced an amendment to the bill for the admission of Missouri, providing that no slavery nor involuntary servitude should exist north of the line of 36 degrees 30 minutes north latitude. This he was finally prevailed upon to withdraw. But in the next congress it was taken up again by Henry Clay and was pressed to adoption as the famous Missouri compromise.

In the meantime, work was going forward on the rebuilding of the Capitol, and on December 6, 1819, just four years and two days after the Fourteenth congress assembled in the Old Brick Capitol, the sixteenth congress assembled in the new marble Capitol, the first unit of the great structure which houses our government today. The Old Brick Capitol was turned over to the Circuit court for its use—an appropriate predecessor of the new home of the Supreme court which is to be built on its site. Later the Old Brick Capitol became a fashionable boarding house and served as a home for many notables during the next three decades. In it John C. Calhoun, statesman, senator and Vice President, lived for nearly a quarter of a century, and he died in one of the rooms on the second floor in 1841.

The Civil war brought to the Old Brick Capitol its second era of fame. Commandeered by the War department for use as a house of detention, it became known as Old Capitol Prison and held within its walls scores of so-called "prisoners of state"—blockade runners, foreign army officers captured while serving in the Confederate forces, conscientious objectors, Union deserters and Confederate spies. Undoubtedly the most famous of all these was the betwixting woman spy for the men in gray—Belle Boyd.

While Belle Boyd was incarcerated there, after her first capture, she was accustomed to give a concert in her room every night for the benefit of other prisoners, and this invariably began with the singing of "Maryland, My Maryland." She was released in exchange for a Union general and sent South under a flag of truce. But she was soon at her work again, was again captured and once more sent to Old Capitol. During this period the prison was also the scene of one grim event—the execution of Maj. Henry Wirz, keeper of the Confederate prison camp at Andersonville, Ga. Tried by a military tribunal, presided over by Gen. Lew Wallace, later famous as the author of "Ben Hur," Wirz was convicted of conspiracy to undermine the health of Union prisoners and of violating the rules of civilized warfare and was hanged on a gallows in the prison courtyard on November 10, 1865.

After the war the Old Brick Capitol was remodeled and converted into three private dwellings, which were occupied by Associate Justice Field of the Supreme court, General Dunn and Mrs. Condit-Smith. In this period it was the scene of one more event of historic interest. In one of the drawing rooms Miss Gulsula Condit-Smith became the wife of Maj. Gen. Leonard Wood, soldier, territorial administrator and candidate for the nomination for the Presidency.

In 1921 Mrs. O. H. P. Belmont bought the building and presented it to the National Woman's party for its national headquarters. It became a gathering place for the feminists, not only of America but of the whole world, and there was carried on the work for the freedom and equality of women. Finally the government, in seeking a site for the new Supreme court building, selected this one, instituted condemnation proceedings two years ago, and this year the work of razing it began.

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THE CHAIRMAN

The boys of one of Doctor Stryker's classes at Hamilton college got a goose and tied it securely in his chair and pushed the chair under his desk, just before his expected arrival. He entered, pulled out his chair, and saw the goose occupying it.

"I beg your pardon, gentlemen," said he. "I didn't know you were having a class meeting!"—Christian Advocate.

DISPLAYED VANITY



He—That doctor is an authority on the circulation of the blood.
She—And vein of his knowledge I'd say.

A Difficulty

"It's hard for a well-meaning man. The public mind to reach. We'd rather see a ball game than stand round and hear a speech."

Widow's Might

Two tramps stopped at the home of a lone widow, and one went in to beg. Very soon he came out with a black eye.

"Well, did you get anything, Jack?" asked the other.
"Yes," growled the poor sufferer, "I got the widow's might."

Serious Subject

Son—Ma, didn't pa used to have a red nose?
Ma—Yes, dear, why do you ask?
Son—It was such a funny color. What became of it?
Ma—Hush, Johnnie, your father is very sensitive. He may be terribly angry if he hears you.

James, Are You Slipping?

She—James, dear, can you see the moon?
He—Yes, my dear!
She—Oh, James! Then you don't love me any more!
He—Don't you know that love is blind?

Signs of Influence

"Do you warn lobbyists not to visit your office?"
"No," answered Senator Sorghum. "If a lobbyist never came to see me it would immediately be suspected that I had lost my influence."—Washington Star.

LEAD TO THE HEART



Visitor—You have wonderful streets here—regular arteries of trade. Where do they lead?
Native—To the heart of the town.

A Blub

Singin' in the bathtub. Is done by lots of bores. Still we can be thankful. The tubs are all indoors.

For Measured Service

Mrs. Kidless—I hear the Nurse-maids' union is on strike. What's it all about?
Mrs. Multikids—This time they're demanding taximeters on the babies' perambulators.

Figuratively Speaking

"They say you are a figurehead."
"Well," answered Senator Sorghum, "you'll have to admit that my campaign fund represents a pretty imposing figure."

Clean Record

Mistress—Do you think you will settle down here? You've left so many situations.
Maid—Yes, m'm. But, remember, I didn't leave any of them voluntarily.—Porthshire Constitutional.

The Struggle

"Where are you going, Jackie? Are you going fishing or are you on the way to school?"
"I don't know. I'm just fighting with my conscience."

Strike Period Note in Restoring Home of Lee

The restored home of Gen. Robert E. Lee will be one of a fine old southern family of the period rather than a large museum of antiquities. Major General DeWitt, the new quartermaster general, says the work is being vigorously carried on by the War department, with every possible effort being made to get authoritative information. The department wants the restoration to capture those times when it was occupied by the Lee and Custis families.

In addition to providing for the restoration of the building proper, congress contemplated complete refurnishing and authorized acceptance of furniture donations. It has been definitely decided, General DeWitt says, to accept only genuine originals of the proper period. An accepted article will carry the donor's name.

Shift to Cities Checked

The farm-to-city shift of population, which in 1923 had given indications of reaching alarming proportions, has fallen away until during 1924 the loss to the farms was only 269,400.

It is estimated that 1,870,000 persons left farms to reside in the cities, but during the same period 1,257,000 left the cities for the farms. Helping to balance the shift were the 631,000 births on the farms, with only 281,000 deaths. During the peak year of 1926 more than 2,100,000 persons left the farms for the cities.

Wonderful Bridge

The Natural bridge is in Rock-bridge county, Virginia. It was left by the collapse of the remainder of the roof of a tunnel formed by water percolating through a joint or fissure athwart the stream. The tunnel thus formed was gradually enlarged until all the water of the stream was diverted from the stream bed below the joint of ingress, leaving a bridge. It has a span of 90 feet and is from 50 to 100 feet wide.

Goodly Supply

Jimmy was taking a motor trip to California with his father and mother, and each little western town through which they passed had a signboard, giving the name of the village, and underneath, awaiting the results of the census, the abbreviation "Pop." with a blank space for the number of inhabitants. Jimmy observed this for several hours, and then he exclaimed, "Gee, isn't it funny? Every town we go through has pop for sale!"

Safety in Suburbs

If you live in the average city or suburban home with houses of at least equal height around you, lightning is apt to make you a victim only once in every thousand years or so.—Country Home.

English Public Schools

The public school system of England was introduced by the Foster education act of 1870. Before the public schools were introduced into England the schools were largely denominational.

Fair Warning

"She said if any man kissed her without fair warning, she would scream for her father."
"What did you do?"
"I warned her."—Tit-Bits.

Many a man is blamed for a bad disposition when he really is suffering from constipation. The best remedy is Wright's Indian Vegetable Pills. 25c a box. 372 Pearl St., N. Y. Adv.

Regarding Costly

"Why don't you marry Isabelle? She's pretty as a picture."
"Yes, but the frame is too expensive."

Venerable Cathedral

The Cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris was founded in 1163 and it took two centuries to build it.

Many Names for Deity

There are said to be 99 beautiful Arabic names of God so used.

The Pan-American Union says that Paraguay is the only country in South America that manufactures lace in fairly large quantities.

White men have always exacted heavy pay for carrying what they call the "white man's burden."

Don't Scratch

Here's the sure, quick, easy way to kill all mosquitoes indoors and keep 'em away outdoors!



Spray clean smelling

FLIT

The World's Largest Selling Insect Killer



CHILDREN CRY FOR IT—

CHILDREN hate to take medicine as a rule, but every child loves the taste of Castoria. And this pure vegetable preparation is just as good as it tastes; just as bland and just as harmless as the recipe reads.

When Baby's cry warns of colic, a few drops of Castoria has him soothed, asleep again in a jiffy. Nothing is more valuable in diarrhea. When coated tongue or bad breath tell of constipation, invoke its gentle aid to cleanse and regulate a child's bowels. In colds or children's diseases, you should use it to keep the system from clogging.

Castoria is sold in every drug store; the genuine always bears Chas. H. Fletcher's signature.



Mirror Walls for Room

Complete walls of the drawing room in the new apartment of the marquis and marquise de Caen Maura in London are mirrors. Some guests say they have found it rather a strain to see themselves posing in most unbecoming positions even though sitting in luxurious aquamarine velvet covered chairs, and also a shock to see a fireplace with coal fire appearing as if out of nowhere in the middle of a huge looking glass.

HEALTHY COMPLEXIONS

Healthy complexions come from healthy systems. Free the body of poisons with Feen-a-mint. Effective in smaller doses. All druggists sell this safe, scientific laxative.

Feen-a-mint FOR CONSTIPATION

Wanted—Old books and pamphlets on "Life of Mary Jemison." Indian captive; give publisher's name, address and date. Good Book Exchange, Box 357, Rochester, N. Y.

KREMOLA SKIN BLEACH
Wonderful and sure. Makes your skin beautiful, also cures eczema. Frees it from freckles, removes freckles. Used over forty years. It is and has been the best skin cream. Ask your dealer or write Dr. C. H. Berry Co., 2930 Mich. Av., Chicago.

CUREX used in cases of ECZEMA, TETTER, ITCH and other skin troubles is guaranteed to bring relief even though other treatment may have failed. Send one dollar today for prompt shipment of this healing preparation. Your money refunded without question if not satisfied. THE THOMAS CHEMICAL CO. Box 306 - - - Lynchburg, Va.

For Sale—25 acre farm in Southern Delaware, 3 acres woodland and pasture, 5 in pine, remainder tillage, 5 room house, screened porch, 8 ft. by 20 ft.; bath; hot, cold water; cellar; about 250 hens, mostly high-bred; about 800 chicks, hatched April 19; 4 young cows, one male; all T. B. tested; tractor; Hammer type feed mill; power corn sheller, and farm equipment. Near or near school, 3 minutes' walk to school, church, \$4,000, including crops, if sold at once. Owner, G. E. Chase, Rt. 2, Laurel, Del.

W. N. U., BALTIMORE, NO. 31-1920.

"Robot" Flying Restricted

As the result of the successful flights of airplanes with "robot" pilots in several countries, an amendment to the international air convention has been made to provide that pilotless aircraft shall not fly over any other country except its own.

Flit is sold only in this yellow can with the black band.



Kills Flies Mosquitoes Moths Bed Bugs Roaches Ants
Because its stinging vapor KILLS QUICKER