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National Intelligencer.

We lately published a report of the committee of the Senate on a projected road to unite the Atlantic with the Western country. This object yields in importance to few that can be named within the scope of Congressional powers. We, therefore, trust that it will receive the attention it merits. The following letter, from Mr. ELIE WILLIAMS to a member of Congress, is offered as throwing light generally on the subject, without any intention of the Editor to intimate an opinion respecting the best route for the contemplated road.

City of Washington, 12 Feb. 1804

DEAR SIR,

In conformity to your request, I herewith submit a few observations relative to the road bill now under consideration in Congress.

I presume that the object of the government in this institution, is not merely to facilitate the conveyance of the mails, but that it contemplates a measure, which in its consequences, will operate as a cement in the union, inasmuch as it will encrease the attachment of the western people to the general government, and to the Atlantic shore: I mean the opening of one great and easy avenue through the mountains and rugged space which lays between the seat of the general government and the western country.

With this grand object in view your bill very properly directs the location of a point on some part of the Potomac (that river having its source in a part of the Allegany mountain which lays nearest the city of Washington) and no doubt contemplates the location of such a point westward of the Laurelhill, as may be thought best calculated to accommodate the largest possible scope of country on that side. The fixing of these points then, constitutes the most important part of the business and will of course become a subject of deliberate and careful enquiry. How far my ideas are correct in this enquiry, can only be determined by time and experience; I am however under impressions that Cumberland on the Potomac, and the mouth of Georges creek on the Monongahela, are points worthy of attention in the commencement of this great establishment. Various considerations favor this direction of the road. It would enter the western country at a point which, in my opinion, embraces the largest possible latitude in the calculation of general utility and the accommodation of the country settled and capable of settlement, and by being extended to the nearest point on the Ohio at or below Wheeling, would, from the circuitous course of the Monongahela and Ohio rivers, increase these advantages in a degree worthy of consideration. In this direction the road would lay in the centre of the richest and best settled parts of the Monongahela country, and would afford an important accommodation to an establishment in the vicinity of Laurelhill, a situation which commands in a high degree the requisite resources of a public arsenal and laboratory, from whence, ordnance and military stores could be transported at will to the seat of government or any part of the Mississippi; the Laurel Hill abounding in iron ore of various qualities, will, with the copper and lead of the Illinois, the sulphur and salt-petre of Kentucky, and other resources of our country, at some future period, render our military and naval stores completely independent of foreign countries.

The towns and settlements on each side of this grand road, will provide for their own accommodation by carrying post and other roads into it, and from the point mentioned on the Ohio, mails may pass to Detroit by way of Sandusky, accommodating on their way, the settlements rapidly forming on the military donation lands, on the waters of Muskingum, and the Connecticut settlement on the Couyega and lake Erie, and from the same point mails may pass to Marietta, to Lancaster on the river Hochockin to Chilicothe on the Sciota, and proceed to Fort Wayne, or Post Vincennes and Kaskaskias.

I mention Cumberland because I think it the highest point on the Potomac to which navigation can be relied on, and because by being at the confluence of the north branch and Wills creek, the improvement of the navigation of both these streams will thereby meet with encouragement. Although boats have come from higher points up the north branch of Potomac, yet from the circumstance of the whole of its navigable parts lying almost south of Cumberland, little or no advantage could be gained as to distance by land, by beginning the road at New Creek (the highest point of safe navigation in the best season) instead of Cumberland, and the difference of distance in getting up by water to these points is nearly or quite twenty miles. If the object of the institution was merely the establishment of post roads, Morgan Town, Clarkesburg, Marietta, Chilicothe and other remote places could be provided for on routes something shorter, but the roads, in that case, must be carried over a great extent of country, mountainous and rough, neither settled or capable of being so, leaving the most valuable settlements on the waters of the Monongahela and upper parts of the Ohio much to the north, with very scattered settlements and broken country, for a great extent on the south. On this route there would be a small distance in the Alleghany mountain, more level than the other route, but being, what is called glades, and more miry and deep, would in the event of there being made a stone cap'd turnpike, cost considerably more than the route on grounds, which, tho' more uneven, abound in the materials for covering the road. But it must be useless for me to trouble you with further observations on a route incapable of serving the purposes which I must suppose the government have in view.

The experience of half a century in the Indian trade has shewn us that exclusive of the trade engrossed by the British North West company, merchandize taken up the St. Lawrence and to the Illinois by way of the lakes, can be sold on the Mississippi so much lower in price than goods taken up that river, as to give them a decided preference, even as far down the Mississippi as the mouth of the Ohio; the St. Lawrence route affording transportation so much easier than that found in ascending the rapid current of the Mississippi; and I have no hesitation in saying, that if such a road was taken through the Allegany Mountain as in my opinion is very practicable, the transportation of merchandize from the seat of government to the mouth of the Ohio would be less expensive than from Orleans to that place. This fact, which I think cannot be controverted, must satisfy us that the trade of the western country must pass thro' a circular channel, the exportations descending the various branches of the Mississippi through it's mouth, and the importations come thro' the Atlantic states; it remains then to remove from this channel, the obstructions, which so heavily tax its importations. This certainly is an object of tenfold value compared with the expense of effecting it, and is a subject in which the community are so generally interested that general joy must result from its meeting the attention and patronage of the government.

My observations, relative to the water courses and their capacity in navigation, the face and geography of the country mentioned, are founded on information derived from the circumstances of my having been engaged for several years in business which compelled me to traverse the country, in the purchase of supplies for the western army, and in examining and procuring the best means of transportation by land and water in various directions through the Western country, and in the transportation of merchandize across the Allegany mountain on various routes. I find however that with all these advantages it is impossible for me in a description by letter to give you that comprehensive information which the magnitude of the subject requires. This can only be done by a reference to an accurate map of the country.

It will give me pleasure, at all times, to promote by any thing in my power the object of your researches.

With highest respect, I am,
Your obedient servant.
ELIE WILLIAMS.

MESSAGE from the President of the United States, communicating a report of the surveyor of the public buildings at the city of Washington, on the subject of the said buildings, and the application of the monies appropriated for them.

To the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States.

I lay before Congres a report of the surveyor of the public buildings, stating the progress made on them during the last season, and what may be expected to be accomplished in the ensuing one.

TH: JEFFERSON.

Dec 27, 1805.

To the President of the United States of America.

The Report of the Surveyor of the public buildings of the United States, at Washington.

Washington, December 22d, 1805.

SIR,

IN applying the appropriations of the last session of Congress, of 110.000 dollars, to the prosecution of the work on the south wing of the capitol, and of 20,000 dollars to the service of the other public buildings, I have endeavored so to comply with your directions, as to forward the progress of the works to the utmost extent of the limited resources of this city. The mass of building which has been erected, is the best evidence of the industry and fidelity of the workmen who have been employed: but the hopes which were entertained that it might be possible to complete the hall of representatives in time for their occupancy, during the present session, have been disappointed. The interference and competition of several large public and private buildings, which have been carried on in the district and at Baltimore, rendered it difficult to procure any considerable body of workmen; and the quarries of freestone, at Acquia, have proved more than usually precarious, in the supply of the larger and finer blocks required for the interior of the capitol.*

At the commencement of the season, the external walls of the south wing of the capitol were carried up above the windows of the principal floor, but of the interior, no part, except one half of the cellars, was constructed. The cellar story, and the whole of the ground story, are now completely built & vaulted, & all the exterior & interior walls of the upper stories are carried up. The colonade, which is to support the roof, is not yet erected, but all the bases are wrought, two thirds of the shaft blocks are at the work, and half of these are wrought. A great part of the entablature is also delivered, and of the remainder, a large portion is quarried and ready to be brought up to the city. There are also on hand, materials sufficient to commence the work of the next season with vigor, and early, without waiting for the tardy supplies of the spring.

The whole of the ground story being vaulted, less carpenter's work is required than in ordinary buildings. The doors, sashes and frames, with their dressings, are now in hand. A considerable supply of excellent boards, plank and timber is procured. The roof is also in progress, and will be in great forwardness before next spring; nor will such part of the work, in freestone, as can be executed under cover, be interrupted by the winter.

I herewith submit a plan and description of the ground story of the south wing of the capitol, as the uses of the several apartments cannot be understood in their present state, without it.

I. A survey of the north wing of the capitol, and especially of its roof, was made early in the season, with a view to such repairs and improvements as could be effected with advantage. This survey was made with great care, and was the more necessary, as several very alarming failures appeared in the floors and timber work of the building. It was discovered that these failures arose, not only from the extremely injudicious construction of the framings, but that the rot had attacked timbers of principal importance. Such ceilings, therefore, or parts of them, as appeared to cover defects, were stripped. The ceiling of the library, now occupied by the house of representatives, though cracked, was found to be perfectly safe. But it was absolutely necessary to support the floor of the room in a substantial manner. This was performed by dividing the office of the Secretary of the Senate into two committee rooms, by strong partitions. Such other defects as were discovered in the Senate chamber, and in other apartments, were also corrected in such a manner as to render every part of the wing secure from danger for some time to come.

It became however, evident, in consequence of this minute examination of the state of the building, that nothing but the safety of the floors & ceilings, & the tightness of the roof, ought at present to become the objects of attention. For it is very certain, that had such operations been undertaken, as would have rendered the Senate chamber more commodious and warm, and have procured for that branch of the legislature the offices and committee rooms which are so much wanted, or if any attempt had been made to accommodate the supreme court of the United States in such manner as to prevent the disturbance of legislative proceedings, by the crowd of citizens that sometimes attend the court, and necessarily fill the passages and vestibules, so much time would have been occupied, and such a general derangement of the building occasioned, as to have made it doubtful, whether either house would have had their chamber finished for use in sufficient time for the session. The improvements, therefore, which must ultimately be made for the better accommodation of the national legislature in this wing, have been postponed until after the completion of the south wing.

II. At the President's house two small buildings have been erected, containing some of those domestic offices without which that building could not conveniently be inhabited. They contain a meat house, cellars for liquors, coals and wood, and privies, and are intended to be faced to the south by a covered passage, or colonnade.* Further menial offices, and some of them of the first necessity, are still wanted, before the dwelling of the President of the United States will be provided with all those domestic accommodations which are required by most private citizens.

III. As none of the works on the public buildings are suspended, or completed, it is not possible now to give an exact statement of the claims to which the several appropriations are liable, together with the money already paid. On application, however, to the superintendant of the city he has obligingly furnished me with the present state of his account of monies paid, from which results the following statement, which cannot materially differ from the truth.

	Dollars.
1. Appropriation for the south wing of the capitol,	110,000
Dec. 20th 1805.	
Monies actually paid for labor and materials,	67,894,15
Estimated outstanding claims,	7,500
Balance unexpended,	34.605,85
Dollars	110.000
2. Appropriation for the other public buildings,	20.000
Dec. 20th, 1805.	
Monies actually paid, 1. North wing capitol,	282,34
2. President's house	11,961,74
Estimated outstanding claims,	1,500
Balance unexpended,	6,255,92
Dollars.	20.000

Whether the balance of dollars, 34,605 85 cents will be sufficient to complete the south wing of the capitol, cannot in the present mixed state of the work be accurately calculated. The course of disappointments, accidents, & fluctuations in the prices of materials & labor, which always attend the execution of so complicated a work, and have especially occurred in this city, naturally tend rather to increase than diminish the expence relatively to the estimate. And in some instances this has actually taken place. Should then the balance now unexpended be exhausted before the building be entirely ready for the reception of the house, the work must enevitably stop, even if it were in such a state that a small comparative sum would complete it, and thus one year be lo[st]. And it must also be taken into view, that this fund is liable to a deduction for a portion of salaries which formed no part of the estimate of the building, they being chargeable to the public work generally; and that it ought also to cover the fitting up of the house which though indispensibly necessary is not chargeable to the building account, nor is included in the estimate.

I therefore respectfully submit to you the apparent necessity of a further appropriation to meet any eventual deficiency, and to provide for fitting up the house when finished.

It is also my duty to state to you another point which appears to be of considerable importance.

As the whole south wing of the capitol is occupied by the house of representatives in one great apartment, there could be no approach or entrance into the hall but from the center of the capitol, that is, through the center of the north wall of the wing, which is indeed, both as to beauty and convenience, the only proper point of entrance.

Now, as the ground story is occupied by the offices, there can be no communication between the house and the offices, but by the stairs which are intended to be carried up close to the north wall, in that part of the building which corresponds to the south end of the north wing, in which is placed the door of entrance, and the vestibule of the senate chamber. In the estimate, submitted to the committee of the house of representatives, there was an item for the erection of this part of the wing; but as it was not afterwards included in the appropriation, the work itself was necessarily omitted, much to the disadvantage of the building, which, both in expence and solidity, loses by the partial erection of its detached parts, at different periods of time.

This part of the work, I respectfully presume it is now necessary to erect.—Otherwise a very expensive, though only temporary building of wood, must be constructed, containing the stair cases and communications of the house with its committtee rooms and offices.

Under all these considerations, I beg to submit the following estimate of sums required to proceed to the completion of the work next season, independently of the sums now in hand.

1. To meet any eventual deficiency in the appropriation for the south wing, &c.	25,000
2. To erect that part of the building which is to contain the communication of the offices with the house of representatives,	13,000
3. To render the building accessible by removing earth & rubbish to fill up, on the south front, to the gallery doors, & to restore the communication with the north wing,	2,000
Total—*Dolls.*	40,000

In the above estimate, I have confined myself to the works on the south wing of the capitol. The unexpended balance, applicable to the other public buildings, and to the north wing for repairs, and their progressive improvement and completion, is 6,255 dollars and 92 cents. I submit to your consideration, in how far this sum may be sufficient for the probable expenditure of next season.

I am, with true respect,
Yours, faithfully, &c.
B. HENRY LATROBE,
Surveyor of the public buildings, United States, Washington.

Plan of the office story of the south wing of the Capitol.

In viewing the arrangement of the office story of the south wing of the capitol, it must be remembered, that the place and number of the windows is unalterably fixed by those of the north wing, and that no light can be procured for the numerous apartments from the north side of the south wing. It must also be considered, that the hall of representatives, which occupies the whole of the principal floor above in one great apartment, cuts off all possibility of carrying the flues of the fire places through the interior part of the building, and also determines the place of the walls and piers below, by the place of the colonnade that will surround the area of the house, and which approaches in the center of each front to the external walls.

Many difficulties have arisen from these two sources, and objections have been made to the narrowness of a few of the rooms which a knowledge of these facts may remove. Every room however has been so contrived that there will be no deficiency of light and space, when the windows, many of which are blocked up by the workmen, shall be opened, and the materials which fill the apartments shall be removed.

The entrance to the office story will be in the recessed part of the building, proposed to be added the next season. Beyond the vestibule are the stairs which lead to the hall of representatives, the stairs will be lighted by a lanthorn light in the roof, and give light both to the vestibule and to the passage leading to the offices. Beyond the stairs is a small octagon lobby, which to the right opens towards the north wing, and to the left leads to the offices. From this lobby a passage leads towards the south, the opposite door is that of the clerk's office, within this apartment are two small offices for the engrossing clerks, and very spacious depositaries of the public records. A passage or corridor also extends from east to west; at each end it opens into a waiting room or antichamber to three committee rooms on each front, two smaller and one large. Each of these rooms are separately accessible.

On each side of the corridor by which you enter, is a large vault to contain fuel and coal, and also a stove or furnace, by which the hall above will be heated, whenever its fire places are not sufficient for that purpose. These vaults communicate with the very capacious cellar below.

On the east side and separated from this passage, are the privies, which are so constructed as to prevent their being a nuisance, and on the west is a separate entrance to the large north west committee room.

The access to the galleries is by external doors, near the angles of the south front, by which the citizens may enter without passing through any part of the building or crouding the passages of the house or offices.

Inaugural Speech of Thomas M'Kean, Governor of Pennsylvania.

Friends and Fellow Citizens,

The honor which our constituents have conferred, by my election, for a third period to the office of Governor, I accept with a grateful sense of their confidence and with an undiminished zeal for their service.

It is true, that some circumstances have occurred, in the course of the election, which I did not anticipate, as respected myself; but which more than on my own, I lament on account of the public. I did not anticipate that the close of a life sincerely devoted, as far as my means and judgement extend, to advance the liberty, independence and prosperity of my native country, would have been embittered by any imputation of a dereliction of principle, or any usurpation of power:—by artful combinations to impair the confidence of the people; or by by groundless slanders to destroy an honest reputation. These, however, are evils, in relation to the *individual*, of too little moment to attract your attention; but as they affect the great interests, political and social, of the community, you will re-

* *The freestone of Acquia, used in the public buildings, is a calcareous sand stone, of very excellent quality, and the quarries are, in appearance, inexhaustible; it is, however, subject to clay holes, to nodules of iron ore (pyrites) and to masses of flint; and the hardness and durability of the rock is often very various in the same stratum. it also suffers expansion and contraction, from moisture and dryness, to a greater degree than any stone with which I am acquainted: even after a block is taken out of the quarry and delivered in the city, and in some cases after it has been wrought, it is liable to fly to pieces, if rapidly dried by violent heat or wind; but if it once becomes dry, and remains sound, it has never been known afterwards to fail.*

* *In all these offices the house was wholly deficient.*