

Pennsylvania Avenue with South Carolina Avenue, between 7th and 9th Streets, S.E., was depicted on L'Enfant's plan and acquired by the federal government in 1791 as part of the right-of-way for streets and avenues.³⁰ Although never formally named, since 1976 when the Metro opened the western portion has been known as Eastern Market Metro Plaza.

The “spacious Avenues” that were to grandly traverse the Capitol Hill neighborhood were to be 160 feet wide, with pavement, gravel walks, and carriage ways. These included Pennsylvania Avenue, Maryland Avenue, New Jersey Avenue, Delaware Avenue, and East Capitol Street, all radiating from the Capitol grounds. South Carolina, North Carolina, Massachusetts, and Georgia (now Potomac) Avenues, each 160 feet in width, were all to cross the neighborhood. The “other Streets” were to be narrower, with widths respective of their use and vistas. The 120-foot-wide Kentucky Avenue, branching out from Pennsylvania Avenue at what is now Barney Circle to Lincoln Park, was to run southeast-northwest from a bridge over the Eastern Branch.³¹ Tennessee Avenue was to mirror Kentucky Avenue, traveling southwest-northeast from Lincoln Park to 15th Street, N.E., and further connecting with roads into Maryland. Bisecting the neighborhood at the center, East Capitol Street was to extend from the Capitol to a bridge crossing the Eastern Branch. East Capitol Street was specifically selected by L'Enfant as the “Avenue from the two bridges to the Federal house.”³²

Two other areas of note in the L'Enfant Plan, and subsequent published maps of the federal city, were Public Appropriations 13 and 14. These reservations comprised land on Capitol Hill reserved solely for federal uses, and ultimately affected the neighborhood's development throughout the nineteenth century. Reservation 13, east of 19th Street, S.E. between B and G Streets along the Eastern Branch in Capitol Hill East, was designated as “Hospital Square,” which later maps refer to as “Marine Hospital Square.”³³ No matter the appellation, the land was intended for the care and housing of the sick, and eventually served the poor and criminal. The remote parcel became the site of an almshouse, workhouse, infirmary,

powder magazine, and in 1843, the Washington Asylum; all institutions that greatly retarded the development of the surrounding area.

Reservation 14 was designated as the Exchange Square, and was anticipated to be used for commercial shipping. Because of its access to deep water, the site became the Washington Navy Yard, strategically located on the west bank of the Eastern Branch at the end of 8th Street, S.E. Although Congress never appropriated any money for the creation of the Navy Yard, Secretary of the Navy Benjamin Stoddert, encouraged by George Washington, used the money from a 1799 appropriation for ship construction to build the establishment. Initially, most of the land was underwater, but landfill operations, as Benjamin Stoddert had anticipated, and the addition of Squares 883 and 884, steadily increased

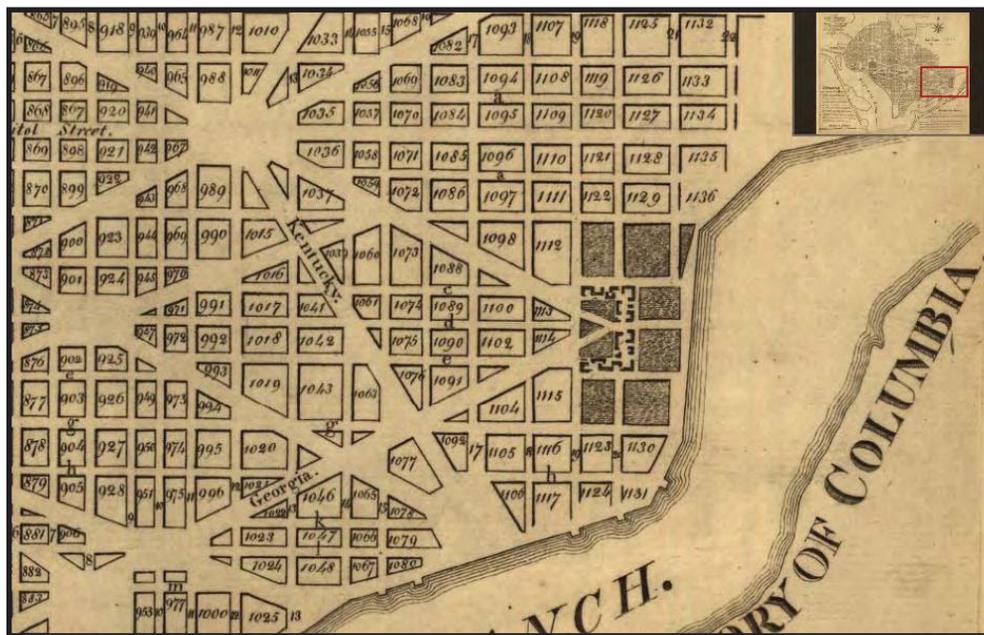


FIGURE 8: Andrew Ellicott, *Plan of the City of Washington in the Territory of Columbia ceded by the States of Virginia and Maryland to the Unites States of America, and by then established as the Seat of their Government, after the Year MDCCC, 1792.* (Courtesy of Geography and Maps, Library of Congress)

its size from about 16 acres in 1801, to almost 40 acres by 1858.³⁴ President Thomas Jefferson's great interest in the development of the federal city "and his desire to keep the Navy in a location where he could watch over it prevented the Navy Yard from languishing."³⁵ Although L'Enfant had believed the Eastern Branch "better adapted to commerce" than the Potomac River, commercial shipping never materialized along the Eastern Branch as silting gradually made the river narrower and shallower at the same time that ocean-going vessels were becoming larger.³⁶ This forced the Navy Yard activities to turn increasingly to the design and production of armaments rather than ship-related commerce. Of significance for the Capitol Hill neighborhood was the site's designation as the "depository of supplies and the repair facility" for the U.S. Navy, a status that brought opportunities for employment, and thus development, to the area.³⁷

3. LAND-GRABBING: THE SPECULATORS ON CAPITOL HILL

With the division of city squares underway, the public sale of half of the lots in each square began on October 17, 1791. The first auction "established \$265 as the average price for a 40-by-100-foot lot in the city," a price that pleased the presidentially-appointed commissioners charged with raising the money to fund the city's development. Yet, only 31 lots were sold initially, and while the price per lot increased in subsequent sales, even fewer conveyed.³⁸

Pressured to sell lots and raise needed monies, the city commissioners were encouraged to allow James Greenleaf to purchase 3,000 lots "for \$66 each in September 1793 with seven years in which to pay, despite the fact that the commissioners had heretofore been doing anything they could to support a price of \$300 a lot, payable within three years."³⁹ Greenleaf, a young, yet successful, merchant from Boston, was rumored to have a million dollars to invest in the capital city. George Washington showed his support of any investment dealings with Greenleaf, stating that he "was represented to me as a gentleman of large property and having command of much money in this country and Europe."⁴⁰ Simultaneous to negotiating with President Washington for his extensive western landholdings and also purchasing 15,000 acres in Maryland's Frederick County from District Commissioner Thomas Johnson, Greenleaf bargained to get "most

everything he wanted in the federal city.”⁴¹

In December 1793, Greenleaf formed a partnership called the North American Land Company with Robert Morris and John Nicholson. Morris and Nicholson were “two of the most prominent financiers in the United States,” who like Greenleaf wished to monopolize, and therefore profit significantly, from land sales in order “to wipe out debts caused by a bank failure in London. To pull it off, they thought, they needed only one thing: cash to pay the downpayments [sic] and taxes on six million acres from Pennsylvania to Georgia, on which they had contracts.”⁴² James Greenleaf, claiming to have a line of credit available in Amsterdam, seemed the perfect investment partner. A loan to purchase the western properties of George Washington was to be secured by mortgages on the Washington lots.⁴³

The speculators added to their federal city holdings in December 1793 when Greenleaf agreed to buy an additional 3,000 lots at \$95.10 per lot. Greenleaf’s initial purchase of 3,000 lots was merged into this larger contract. The final purchase terms averaged \$80 per lot, “with 1/7 of the price payable in 1794 (\$68,000), and the balance to be paid in six annual installments, and without interest.” According to the agreement, the partners “were to select their 6,000 public lots from among certain enumerated squares, 1,500 lots in squares northeast of Massachusetts Avenue and 4,500 lots in squares southwest of Massachusetts Avenue.”⁴⁴ The excluded squares on Capitol Hill to the east of 13th Street were south of South Carolina and Massachusetts Avenues.⁴⁵ The investors were required to oversee construction annually of at least “20 two-story brick buildings,” each measuring no less than 1,200 square feet, over the next ten years. “The purchasers were not to sell before 1796 unless the sale contract required that a brick house with these specifications be built on every third lot within four years after the sale date.”⁴⁶ Few of the required buildings were actually completed.

Spending and investing unwisely, Greenleaf and his partners defaulted on their

first \$68,000 payment in 1794. The speculators hoped to raise the funds needed through loans from the Amsterdam banks, which required collateral the three men did not yet have beyond a pledge of their personal security. With the reluctant support of George Washington, the city commissioners authorized the transfer of deeds for 1,000 lots. The Dutch bankers eventually granted a loan of \$780,000, “but in the end, the bankers agreed only to offer participation shares in the loan, and this raised only a minimal amount (\$48,000). [Yet] by the summer of 1794 the commissioners were desperate for money, so they agreed to give Greenleaf, Morris, and Nicholson deeds to additional groups of lots, secured by their personal pledges. One group of lots was in Squares 626 to 1114, many of which were on Capitol Hill. On this basis, the Bank of Columbia lent the three [speculators] \$60,000, which they sent to the commissioners toward the first \$68,000 payment.”⁴⁷

Transfer of selected lots on Capitol Hill among the three investors and a few prospective buyers began in July 1795 in Squares 630 through 1114.⁴⁸ In June 1796, Morris and Nicholson had mortgaged 1,250 lots in the 142 squares stretching from the Capitol grounds to the Eastern Branch.⁴⁹ In total, the men controlled 7,234 lots; Greenleaf owned an additional 1,341 lots. Of these, 6,000 were public lots and 2,575 had been purchased from the original landowners, including 220 lots bought from Daniel Carroll. By the end of the eighteenth century, Morris and Nicholson held lots in Squares 1045, 1046, 1047 and 1048, which were located south of Pennsylvania Avenue between 13th and 14th Streets, S.E. Despite sales and mortgages, disputes and defaults quickly began to unravel the investments, with the three men collectively owing creditors, including the District of Columbia Commissioners, an estimated \$12 million by 1797. In May of that year, a committee of Philadelphia creditors, under the direction of trustees headed by Henry Pratt, were assigned claim to all the landholdings of Greenleaf, Nicholson, and Morris in the federal city. The creditors contested the District commissioners’ resale of lots that Greenleaf had not paid for. Some of those purchasing these lots also defaulted and the property had to be sold for a second

time.⁵⁰

The practices of the three speculators in transferring, assigning notes, and mortgaging the land numerous times resulted in several lawsuits as multiple parties competed for title to the lots. A few of the disputes were referred to the Supreme Court, which “noted the immense size of the file in one group of cases, resulting from ‘the large and multifarious transactions, originating in the speculations of Morris, Nicholson & Greenleaf, in the land of this city.’”⁵¹ The transactions undertaken by these three men, individually and as partners, affected land titles throughout the first half of the nineteenth century, with creditors holding property on Capitol Hill for many decades.

4. REALITY OF A FEDERAL TOWN: THE LACK OF PROMISED DEVELOPMENT

President George Washington, from his tenure in office until his death in 1799, was the driving force behind the formation of what he viewed as a grand “Federal City.”⁵² He was keenly aware that the creation and subsequent development of the capital was necessary for the future growth and stability of the Union. “By enticing private investors with a bold city plan and building on the grand scale, he hoped to silence critics of the Potomac site and to make the new seat of government the ‘Metropolis of America,’ the political and cultural center of the United States.” Historian C.W. Harris contended, the president’s “strategy and L’Enfant’s plan had been predicated upon the growth of a dynamic commercial city as well as upon the requirements of the federal government.”⁵³ Initially, however, this growth did not materialize, and the metropolitan model that George Washington and Pierre L’Enfant had envisioned was displaced under the tenure of President Thomas Jefferson, who foresaw a more modest “federal town.” While Jefferson would continue construction of the President’s House and Capitol, and commence building the Navy Yard, he “identified republican purposes in those public buildings... [reducing] the federal establishment, its budget, and the public debt.” This “perpetuated the existing, disconnected communities within the federal city

rather than joining them, as L'Enfant wished, in urban coherence.”⁵⁴

Early investors in the Capitol Hill area, like Greenleaf, Morris, and Nicholson, expected the fledgling city to grow eastward from the Capitol, but were soon disappointed by the slow rate of development. One of the primary factors retarding growth of Capitol Hill beyond the immediate vicinity of the U.S. Capitol and Navy Yard during these early years was the lack of other government buildings and federal investment that would have encouraged development and increased land values. Investors' expectations were somewhat thwarted in 1796 when George Washington made the decision to locate the executive departments close to the President's House. Consequently, the density of development on Capitol Hill was distinctly less than that in the area between the Capitol and the President's House. Owners of substantial property in the area east of Capitol Hill, including Daniel Carroll, Thomas Law, and William Prout who had been promised increased property values and developing commerce, protested to city officials and incoming president John Adams that it was their understanding that offices of the executive branch were to be located close to the Capitol.⁵⁵ Their complaints went unanswered.

One of the most outspoken and prolific early proponents for the Capitol Hill area was Thomas Law, who was developing much of New Jersey Avenue from the Capitol to the Potomac River. Law has been described facetiously as “...the original [member of the] East Washington Citizens' Association [who] could detect discrimination in favor of the west end plainly enough, for he stood always on the watch-tower.”⁵⁶ Law observed the initial development trend and the issues hindering it on Capitol Hill:

The legislature of Maryland had started a bank for the city, but it was established in George Town [sic] and the money loaned was to those who would build in the Town or at the west end of the city. A bridge was built also by the Commissioners at the city expense over

Rock Creek with a draw, and it was to have the Navy Yard there and the marine barracks were laid on its banks and the marine corps encamped there.

The President's house was advanced rapidly and the Capitol was only above ground and the foundation was so bad that it was to be undone and commenced again. In short Mr. Stoddert, Secretary of Navy, and the majority of the Commissioners and the bank being George Town men, resolved to have Congress meet in the President's house or in George Town college and to make the progress of the west end tend to counteract that of the Capitol.

General Washington having been informed of these injurious ideas in the Commissioners and being displeased at witnessing the slow advancement of the Capitol ordered the Commissioners to live in the city and to encourage persons to build for the accommodation of Congress.

That the public might have encouragement to build General Washington commenced two houses. This example gave confidence and houses were seen to spring up with rapidity, notwithstanding the natural rivalship [sic] of two adjacent towns, which had been long before established [Carrollsborg and Hamburgh]. New Jersey Avenue, then full of stumps of trees was opened to have access to the Eastern Branch, and merchants made wharves and warehouses.... Houses also rapidly sprang up about the Capitol although double prices were paid for workmen, brick and materials.⁵⁷

The positioning of the Capitol building itself, some believed, may actually have played a role in the development of the immediate neighborhood, as Law pointed out. Local historian Dr. James Dudley Morgan, who spoke often at the

Columbia Historical Society at the turn of the twentieth century, claimed that “L’Enfant knew, and thought everyone else understood, that the Capitol was to face westward, and that the city would go likewise.”⁵⁸ Dr. Morgan argued that the designated locations of the President’s House and its grounds, the intended placement of the foreign legations, and site for the equestrian statue of George Washington [now site of Washington Monument] all spoke to westward development that would leave the Capitol Hill neighborhood to the east without “encouragement of improvements.”⁵⁹ Early designs of the Capitol building indicate it was intended to face westward, “crowning the hill with its architectural front toward the grand opening and vista through the center of the mall... toward the broad water surface of the river on the west.”⁶⁰ In his redesign of the Capitol building, Benjamin Latrobe seems to have been the first to introduce the east



FIGURE 10: George Cook and William Bennett, *City of Washington from Beyond the Navy Yard*, 1834. From John W. Reps, *Washington on View: The Nation’s Capital Since 1790* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1991), 81.

façade as the primary elevation with the addition of the monumental cascading stair. Although this would eventually link the building with a neighborhood of imposing government buildings including the Library of Congress, House and Senate office buildings, and the Supreme Court, the redesign would do little to encourage residential and commercial growth beyond to the east in the later years.

Yet, according to his own words, Pierre L'Enfant never envisioned development would be confined to any one part of the city, especially in just the western area between the Capitol and President's House. His writings indicated he had not favored any particular area of the federal city, but rather spoke of how the "space of about two miles each way" from the Eastern Branch to Georgetown would "present a most eligible [sic] position for the first settlement of a grand City."⁶¹

Further, based on his assessment of the landscape and waterways, L'Enfant determined that Capitol Hill was best adapted to mercantile activities, which were essential to the growth and continued development and stability of any city. His plan indicated that East Capitol Street, which bisects the area, should be an avenue of bazaars, with "pavement on each side... pass[ing] under an Arched way, under whose cover, Shops will be most conveniently and agreeably situated."⁶² Equal in width to the diagonally laid avenues, East Capitol Street was intended to extend from the Capitol to a bridge crossing the Eastern Branch into Maryland, thereby allowing easy access to wharves and shipping facilities bringing in the necessary goods for residents. L'Enfant's design signified his intended importance of Capitol Hill, east of the Capitol building, with the placement of a column in Lincoln Park. The pillar "would indicate the position of the Prime Meridian for the American continent. It would have taken the place of the Greenwich meridian as the line from which all longitudinal measurements would be made in this hemisphere. Its base would have been 85 feet above sea level, thus visible to ships coming upriver from well below Alexandria."⁶³ The arch and meridian column were never constructed, and commercial activity along East Capitol Street as



FIGURE 11: John Plumbe, *United States Capitol, Washington, D.C., east front elevation*, 1846. (Prints and Photographs, Library of Congress)

L'Enfant envisioned never fully developed.⁶⁴ Instead, the street would become a prominent residential corridor in the late nineteenth century with a few small shops and corner stores serving the neighborhood.

The primary activities attracting residents, both temporary and permanent, to Capitol Hill in the early nineteenth century were in great part related to the legislative and judiciary sessions at the U.S. Capitol, and the naval and maritime operations at the Navy Yard. Yet, a number of craftsmen, tradesmen, and laborers—including living-out slaves—populated Capitol Hill, many living there because of the opportunities presented by the variety of ongoing construction activities. The most significant building campaign was the construction, reconstruction, and enlargement of the Capitol, which enabled the employment of hired-out slaves and skilled artisans who lived within walking distance of the premier federal building. But like the elected officials of Congress and maritime residents living on Capitol Hill, those involved in building construction were somewhat transient, relocating elsewhere in the city as employment demanded.

Moreover, most legislators chose to reside in temporary housing rather than their own permanent dwellings; consequently, the development around the Capitol consisted primarily of boardinghouses and hostelrys. In 1795, William Tunnick opened his establishment at 9th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue, S.E. The fashionable hotel, “one of the earliest known to have existed,” housed many guests from southern Maryland, who “arrived in Washington City via the ferry that crossed the Anacostia River.”⁶⁵ The Federal-style Carroll Row, erected c. 1800 by Daniel Carroll of Duddington at 1st and A Streets, S.E., served as boardinghouses for members of Congress, including John Quincy Adams and Abraham Lincoln.⁶⁶ Varnum Hotel was constructed c. 1796 by Thomas Law as speculative development, which for Law was not very lucrative. Prominently located at the intersection of New Jersey Avenue and C Street, the brick building was leased in 1800 to innkeepers who advertised that they had “opened houses of entertainment...about 200 paces from the Capitol on New Jersey Avenue, leading



FIGURE 12: William James Bennet, *City of Washington from beyond the Navy Yard*, 1883. (Courtesy of Prints and Photographs, Library of Congress).

from thence to the Eastern Branch.”⁶⁷ Thomas Jefferson, who was living at the hotel when he was sworn in as President of the United States in March 1801, walked those 200 paces to the Capitol before his inauguration.⁶⁸ He continued to live at the boardinghouse “for two more weeks as president while repairs were made to the White House.”⁶⁹ The enclave of temporary housing around the Capitol created what was described as a “knolltop settlement of legislators...from beginning to end of the Jeffersonian era.”⁷⁰



FIGURE 13: J.F. Jarvis, *View down Pennsylvania Avenue from the U.S. Capitol, Washington, D.C., with Carroll Row on the left*, 1880. (Courtesy of Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress)

Many of the boardinghouses and hotels were short-lived, operating on average from two to eight years in the first two decades of the nineteenth century. During this period, 147 boardinghouses, hotels, and taverns were noted in personal “letters, diaries, congressional directories, published accounts of contemporary visitors, and a variety of secondary articles and descriptions of Washington.”⁷¹ These records documented that 63 of these buildings were located on Capitol Hill, while another 61 lined the streets from the Capitol to the President’s House and an additional 23 populated Georgetown.⁷²

In 1801, the Board of Commissioners created by President George Washington to oversee the design and subsequent development of the federal city reported to newly elected President Thomas Jefferson regarding the construction of “houses in an habitable state on 15th of May 1800.” In total, the city was improved by 108 brick and 261 wood-frame houses. Of these, 39% were located on Capitol Hill—40 brick and 104 wood frame. More than half of these houses were located between the Capitol and 6th Street. The survey conducted by the commissioners recorded an additional 266 houses, the majority being wood frame, had been erected during the 18 months between May 1800 and November 1801. Eighty of these houses were located on Capitol Hill, again the vast majority west of 6th Street.⁷³

By the late 1820s, the small neighborhood in the vicinity of the Capitol had grown to include “some two or three thousand souls” residing in brick houses “three stories high and decent without being in the least elegant.”⁷⁴ A few of the permanent dwellings standing in the early part of the nineteenth century that still stand today were those of: William Mayne Duncanson (The Maples, 1795-1796), Robert Sewall (Sewall-Belmont House, 1800), George Watterson House (ca. 1802), and Mountjoy Bayly (Hiram Johnson House, 1800). Daniel Carroll, whose Duddington Manor is no longer in existence, was at that time the “owner of the most extensive landholdings in early Washington.”⁷⁵ His property, which included the site Duddington Manor, was sacrificed in large part to create what is

now the “Mall as far west as Fourteenth Street, along with the site of the Capitol and all of its associated buildings.” The remaining tract was a full city block at 1st and E Streets, S.E. on which stood his Georgian-style house, large garden, and “array of outbuildings including a smoke house, spring house, stable and log slave quarter. Given that he owned twenty-five slaves in 1800, some of them were probably quartered in rooms within Carroll’s residence....”⁷⁶ The nearby home of William Duncanson, known as The Maples, was staffed by “seven slaves most of whom were quartered at one end of his carriage house. Their domestic space consisted of a common room on the ground floor with two bedrooms above.”⁷⁷

Contemporary accounts also attest to the slow development of the area around the Navy Yard, which, by the turn of the nineteenth century, was improved by only “half a dozen houses—exclusive of shacks—a very large but perfectly empty warehouse, and a wharf graced by not a single vessel.”⁷⁸ The 1801 Commissioners Report documented that by November of that year the area around the Navy Yard contained 73 houses.⁷⁹ Just ten of the recorded buildings were constructed of brick. Commercial trade beyond that provided by the small shops of local merchants who catered principally to the transient seamen and resident workers was localized around the market square (Reservations 15 and 16), located in the rectangular parcel bisected by 6th Street, S.E. at its intersection with K and L Streets. Standing out amongst the modest houses and shops on Navy Yard Hill was the Marine Corps Commandant’s House (1801-5) at 8th and G Streets. Designed by George Hadfield, the prominent commandant’s dwelling was an early reflection of the Federal style with oval-shaped reception rooms overlooking the parade grounds.⁸⁰ The adjacent Barracks (1801-6) housed a “detachment of Marines, who served as nightwatchmen for the public buildings, and with their band, as entertainers at official ceremonies and social functions.”⁸¹ The wood-frame barracks were located just two blocks south of what is today known as Eastern Market Metro Plaza and fostered early development in the area, although growth did not extend as far north as Pennsylvania and South Carolina Avenues.

Eventually, however, as the Navy Yard developed into one of the more prosperous industries in the federal city, the surrounding neighborhood would stretch further northward to D Street. New construction occurred at a faster rate on Navy Yard Hill than it did near the Capitol, from which development extended eastward only as far as 6th Street by 1850. In addition to the activities of the Navy Yard, growth in this area was encouraged by the introduction of Gilbert Vanderwerken's omnibuses, which were horse-drawn wagons that traveled from Georgetown to the Navy Yard. The success of the privately owned transportation company allowed expansion of the line east to 11th Street, S.E., and up to 7th Street, N.W., which in turn encouraged development.

There was some development in the antebellum era to the immediate north of the Capitol in the area that acquired the unattractive moniker "Swampoodle."⁸² Centered on Square 677 and roughly bounded by 1st Street, N.W. on the west, 2nd Street, N.E. on the east, and K and G Streets on the north and south, in the vicinity of where Union Station is now located, Swampoodle owed its name to a newspaper reporter who in 1859, while covering the dedication of the St. Aloysius Catholic Church at North Capitol and I Streets, N.E. referred to the area as "being dotted with 'swamps' and 'puddles.'"⁸³ Adapting these two words, the name Swampoodle was irrevocably attached to this area well into the twentieth century. It was home to working-class laborers and immigrants, many of whom came in the mid-nineteenth century because of the employment opportunities. In 1851, work began on the two large wings and an enlarged dome for the Capitol. Construction on the Capitol continued throughout the Civil War and was completed in 1865. At the same time renovation of the Capitol was beginning, the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad (B&O) moved its passenger depot from 2nd Street and Pennsylvania Avenue to New Jersey Avenue and C Street, N.W. In 1856, Cornelius Wendell built the city's largest printing plant at the southwest corner of North Capitol and H Streets, which, in 1861, became the Government Printing Office.⁸⁴ During the Civil War, many African American contrabands and freedmen settled in Swampoodle.

The religious needs of the steadily increasing number of Capitol Hill residents were addressed by five churches, all located within close proximity to the Navy Yard; religious services were also held in the Capitol for members of Congress and their families.⁸⁵ Located at 620 G Street, S.E., Christ Church, Washington Parish, was incorporated in 1794, making it the first Episcopal parish founded in the newly created federal city.⁸⁶ The initial section of the building was constructed in 1806-7 with Robert Alexander acting as architect. Growth of the congregation led to the enlargement of the building in 1824 with a Gothic Revival-style façade, and bell tower added in 1849.⁸⁷ The Methodist presence in Washington City began in 1802 when an interracial congregation started worshipping at Greenleaf's Point in the southwest section of the city. After a move to Capitol Hill in about 1807, the congregation, known over time by several names, including Ebenezer Station and Fourth Street Station, built a brick church at what is now 514 Fourth Street, S.E., becoming the federal city's first Methodist church.⁸⁸ Growth in the congregation finally led to a split in 1827, with the black members establishing their own congregation and building a white frame church (known as "Little Ebenezer") on the northeast corner of Fourth and D Streets, S.E., in 1838.⁸⁹ "Little Ebenezer" was Capitol Hill's first African American congregation.⁹⁰ The Second Baptist Church, with a congregation known to have existed prior to 1854, was sited at 4th Street and Virginia Avenue in Square 823.⁹¹ St. Peter's Catholic Church, constructed in 1821-4, was located at 2nd and C Streets, S.E., close to the Capitol building.⁹²

5. CAPITOL HILL: MOVING EASTWARD

Other than in the vicinity of the Navy Yard and immediately around the U.S. Capitol, development and growth on Capitol Hill, extending east of 6th Street to the Eastern Branch, were spotty at best during the first half of the nineteenth century because of a lack of federal investment and bias towards other areas of the city. Most of the squares were unimproved, used by nearby residents as gardens, and many of the streets existed only on L'Enfant's plan. North of

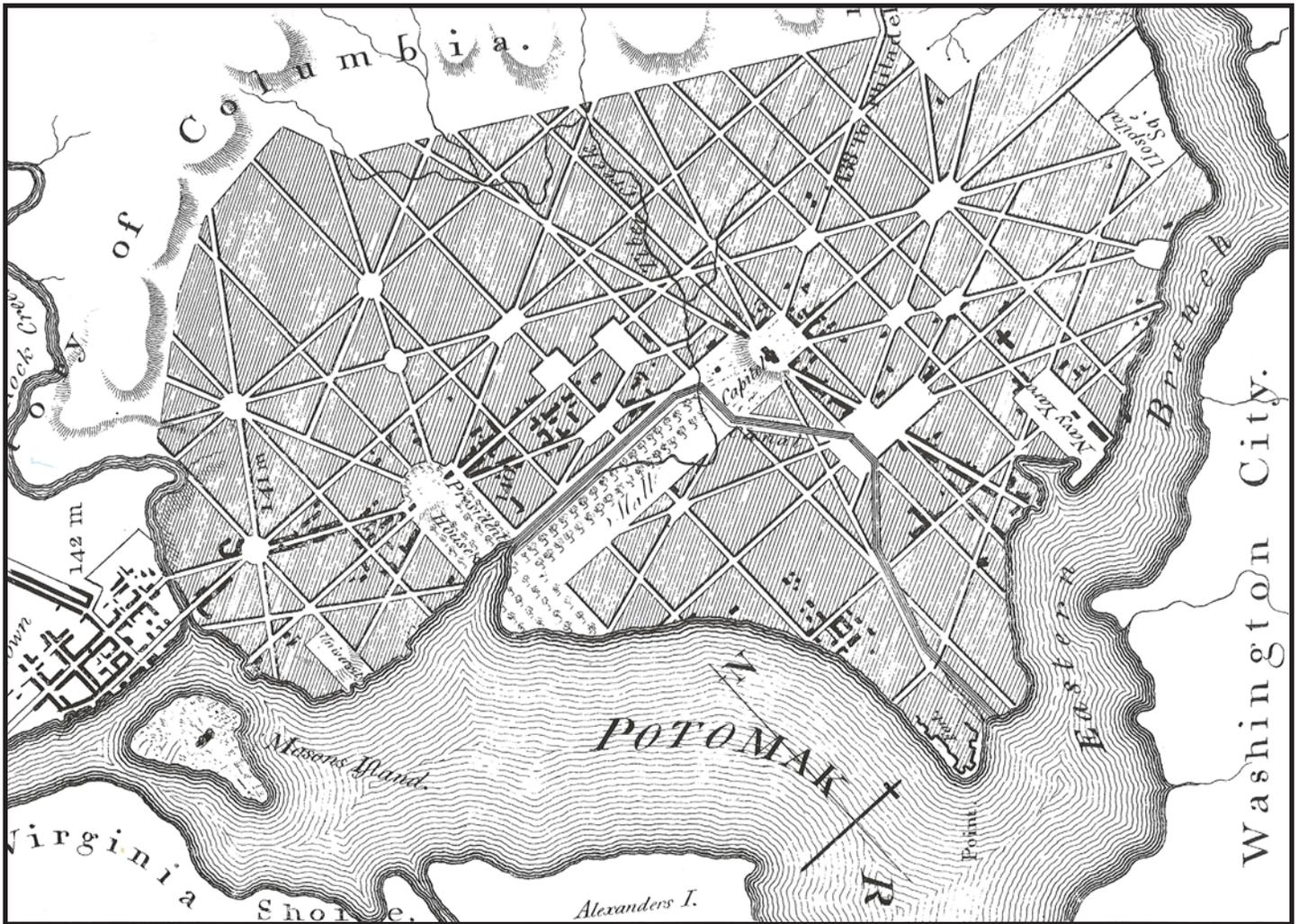


FIGURE 14: S.S. Moore and T.W. Jones, *Washington City, The Traveller's Directory, or A Pocket Companion; Showing the Course of the Main Road from Philadelphia to New York, and from Philadelphia to Washington, 1802.*