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MISSOURI'S ELEVEN STATE CAPITOLS.

May 6th, 1913, at the City of Jefferson, ground was broken for the construction of the new State Capitol. Among the addresses delivered at the ceremony was the following by Cornelius Roach, of Carthage, Missouri, Secretary of State of Missouri:

“On occasions of this character, men are wont to grow retrospective, particularly on matters historical. The general public may be surprised at the statement that the new Capitol, for which ground is broken today, is the eleventh State Capitol of Missouri. In a general way a “Capitol” is a State House, but the burden of authorities limits one to the conviction that strictly speaking a “Capitol” is the building in which the Legislative Body meets. When Shakespeare said, ‘Comes Cæsar to the Capitol tomorrow?’ he referred to the Temple of Jupiter, at Rome, on the Mons Capitolinus, where the Senate met, the Senate being the Legislative Body of the government at that time.

“The first Legislative Body charged with the duty of making laws for this State was the Constitutional Convention, which met in June, 1820, for the purpose of framing a Constitution for the prospective State to be known as Missouri. This Body met in a hotel in St. Louis, known as the Mansion house, located on the northeast corner of Third and Vine. The building was a three-story brick structure, and was then regarded as one of the most pretentious buildings west of the Mississippi River. The forty-one members of that Body held their deliberations, the five weeks of their session, in the spacious dining hall of the hotel. This ‘Mansion House’ hotel was built in 1816 by Gen. Wm. Rector, a member of the first Constitutional Convention and United States Surveyor-General for Illinois and Mis-

souri. The structure was built for his office and residence, but, in 1819, he enlarged the house and converted it into a hotel. As such it was occupied for many years, during which period it was the scene of many interesting and noteworthy incidents. Theatrical companies for lack of more suitable houses performed in the dining room of this historical hostelry, and, for many years, it was the principal ball room in St. Louis, where the society of the city held its most fashionable functions.

“The second building which Missouri used as a Capitol was the one in which the first State Legislature met, in September, 1820, after the State had been admitted to the Union. This Capitol was the ‘Missouri Hotel,’ built by Thomas Brady in 1819. It was built of stone with three stories and basement, and was situated on the southwest corner of Main and Morgan. For years the ‘Missouri Hotel’ stood as one of the most notable landmarks of St. Louis. It disappeared in 1873, when it was razed to give place to a business structure. In its day, this was the finest hotel in the Mississippi Valley. In this Capitol, the Legislature canvassed the election returns and announced the election of Alexander McNair as Missouri’s first Governor. These returns also showed the election of John Scott as the first member of Congress. The first Governor appointed the Secretary of State, State Auditor, State Treasurer, and Attorney General. These appointees, however, all resigned within a year, wherein we observe that history in some instances does not often ‘repeat itself.’ In the dining room of the ‘Missouri Hotel,’ where was held the joint session of the Legislature, composed of fourteen State Senators and forty-three members, David Barton and Thomas Benton were elected the first United States Senators. The former was unanimously elected, but the election of the latter was attended by a long and bitter contest.

The man, who cast the deciding ballot, was carried, bed and all, from an upper room in the hotel, into the joint session, and so sick that he was scarcely able to lift his head from the pillow. While an impressive silence prevailed, he raised his voice, cast his ballot for Benton, and broke the deadlock that had last for weeks. A few days later, the sick man died. Before the Legislature adjourned, the county from which he came was named 'Ralls,' in his honor. This session of the Legislature passed an act making St. Charles the State capital until October, 1826. Before closing its deliberations, the First General Assembly passed an act providing for the selection of a permanent seat of government, and named a commission of five citizens to locate the new capital. These commissioners were by law allowed four dollars per day for their services, but the time of their service was limited to twenty-five days. In June, 1821, a special session of the Legislature was held in St. Charles, the temporary capital. The third Capitol, the one used in St. Charles, was a plain, two-story, brick building, about twenty by thirty feet, with a saddleback roof. December 31st, 1821, the act was approved, which the Legislature in session at St. Charles passed, which fixed the location of the permanent seat of government on the south bank of the Missouri river, within forty miles of the mouth of the Osage, on four certain sections of land specified in that act. December 31st, annually, should be a red-letter day in the 'City of Jefferson,' that being the name given by law to the permanent capital of the State.

Nearly a year later, the act was approved which named Josiah Ramsey, Jr., John Gordon, and Adam Hope, trustees charged with the duty of building in the City of Jefferson a brick structure not to exceed forty by sixty feet, to be two stories in height. These trustees

chose the hill in the City of Jefferson now occupied by the Executive Mansion as the place for the new State House. The law creating the trustees stated that the building should be made suitable for the residence of the Governors, but that it should contain two large rooms, and should be built with two large fireplaces—the large rooms to be made suitable for the use of the two houses of the Legislature, the Senate on the second floor and the House on the first floor. The structure that was to serve as the fourth Capitol was to cost not to exceed \$25,000. On February 18th, 1825, an act was approved appropriating \$18,573 to the contractors that erected the Governor's House and State Capitol. A little over two years were required for the trustees to construct that Capitol. It is nowhere recorded that there was any complaint on the part of the public on account of the time consumed in constructing the first Capitol that Missouri taxpayers built for the State. At the same rate of expenditure, the Capitol building commissioners of 1911, having 160 times as much money to expend, may employ their time for 320 years, finish their task in 2233, and yet make as good progress as was made by their pioneer predecessors. In January, 1829, the Fifth General Assembly passed an act providing for public improvements at the State Capitol, the improvements to consist of a brick kitchen and a log, or frame, stable. The former was to be one-story high, sixteen by thirty feet, with partition, in order that one end might be used as a smoke-house. The cost of kitchen and stable was not to exceed \$500.

The Ninth General Assembly passed an act, approved February 2, 1837, creating a commission of the five elective State officers, and appropriating \$75,000 for a new Capitol, the new Capitol to be located on 'Capitol Hill,' the first hill west of the one now occupied by the 'Mansion.' The new structure was to be of sufficient

size to accommodate the House of Representatives and the Senate, a State Library, executive rooms, and State offices, to be fire-proof, inside and out, to be covered with sheet copper or lead, the interior to be of brick and the exterior of stone. Before the work was begun, a fire on the 17th of November, 1837, completely consumed the Capitol that was constructed in 1825 and 1826, with all its precious historical contents, whereupon the Legislature met in the fifth Capitol, the Cole County Court House, until 1840, when it occupied the new building. Several different appropriations were made for the construction of the Capitol begun in 1837. When finished, the sixth Capitol cost nearly \$350,000. In his message to the Legislature of 1840, Governor Boggs praised the work of the contractor, stating among other things that the building was not only spacious and convenient but fire-proof. About three years were consumed in the construction of that Capitol, and, if the same rate of progress is made by the Commission of 1911, comparative expenditure considered, the eleventh Capitol will be finished about the year 1940. The first building that occupied 'Capitol Hill' was eighty-five by one hundred and ninety-two feet, had two floors and a basement, and a dome one hundred and thirty feet high. The walls were of brick and stone, the stone being taken from the bluffs in the immediate vicinity, with the exception of the stone in the stately columns fronting the rotunda, which stone was quarried in the bluffs of Callaway county. As finished the sixth Capitol was said to be one of the three handsomest and most classical public buildings in the United States, the other two being the State Capitol on 'Capitol Hill' in Boston, and the present County Court House in the City of St. Louis, between 4th and Broadway. The beauty of Missouri's sixth Capitol was so widely advertised that architects from all over the

east, and some from Europe, came to the City of Jefferson to study its outlines and symmetry. That building served the purposes of the State until 1887, when the growth of the commonwealth necessitated additions and an entire remodeling. This, the seventh, Capitol was finished in 1888. A north wing and a south wing were added, each seventy-six by one hundred and nine feet, the central portion modified, the height of the dome increased to 185 feet, in an endeavor to make the outlines of the building proportionate, all at a cost of \$220,000. If the Capitol Commission of 1911 expends its appropriation at the same rate per year as the Capitol Commission of 1888 did, the building just begun will be completed in 1926. More than a year was consumed in constructing the seventh Capitol. The Governor, the Secretary of State, the State Auditor, the State Treasurer, the Attorney General, the Superintendent of Schools, and the Commissioner of Permanent Seat of Government, were constituted the commission in charge of the work. Again the law required that the building should be fire-proof. As near as work of that character was customarily done at that time, the building was fire-proof. Experience, however, has taught that not only must the floors, walls and ceilings be of fire-proof material but the framework, as well as the frames of the windows and doors, must be iron, steel, or concrete, or made of some other fire-resisting material in order to be fire-proof.

The floor space in the Capitol burned in 1911 was about 50,000 square feet. The eleventh Capitol will have a floor space of about 320,000 square feet, besides nearly three acres in the subbasement.

After the fire of 1911 that consumed the seventh Capitol, the Senate found temporary quarters in the court room of the Court En Banc in the New Supreme Court Building; the House found temporary quarters

in St. Peter's Hall on West High Street, these two structures containing the two legislative bodies thus making the eighth and ninth State Capitols for Missouri.

The tenth and present temporary Capitol was constructed in three months, during 1912, at a cost of \$51,000. Every citizen of the State who has seen this temporary Capitol is astonished at the rapidity with which the building was constructed. The unthinking might be warranted in believing that if the new Capitol is constructed with equal speed universal satisfaction will follow. A little mental arithmetic in round numbers, however, will banish that conclusion, for an expenditure of \$50,000 in three months means only \$200,000 a year. As \$3,000,000 is fifteen times \$200,000, the new Capitol will be finished in 1928, if the same speed is adopted as characterized the construction of this temporary Capitol. We have the assurance, however, of the architects of the eleventh Capitol, Messrs. Tracey and Swartwout of New York, and are cheered by the expressed conviction of the members of the Capitol Building Commission, Messrs. E. W. Stephens of Columbia, Chairman, A. A. Speer of Chamois, J. C. A. Hiller of Glencoe, and Theo. Lacaff of Nevada, who are in position to know whereof they speak, that the eleventh Capitol will be finished during 1916, in ample time for the session of the 49th General Assembly.

During the past ninety-three years, Missouri's population has increased from 66,000 to 3,300,000, or has, in other words, been multiplied by fifty; if the next ninety-three years shows a corresponding increase, Missouri's population in the year 2006 will be 165,000,000. The first Capitol Missouri built cost \$18,000 in 1825; the eleventh, for which we this 6th day of May, 1913, break ground, will cost almost two hundred times as much; if the next eighty-eight years shows the same rate of progress in Capitol investment, the year 2001 will see the be-

ginning of a Missouri Capitol costing \$700,000,000; or, if the expenditure for that purpose corresponds to the record made of population growth, the Capitol of the year 2000 will cost \$175,000,000, and instead of having a floor area of ten or eleven acres, the Missouri Capitol of the next century will have a floor area of 500 acres. Missouri's future measured by the progress made the past century challenges the imagination of a 20th century Jules Verne or Baron Munchausen. Not having the fancy of these world-renowned novelists, I leave to the patriotic, public-spirited citizens of the State the pleasures of dreaming of Missouri's future greatness and grandeur.