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Washington in 1861 was just an unkempt village, its water supply came from pumps and springs; there were no sewers; weeds ran riot in the parks; and none of the streets were lighted except Pennsylvania Avenue. The Tiber - that ancient canal up which boats used to come in the early years laden with stone for the Capitol,- "was a receptacle for the city's filth and refuse." The streets were not paved, and the mud was something to be remembered. At Lincoln's second inaugural the French Minister's carriage was stalled on F street, the unfortunate man, in all his court splendor, had to be carried to the sidewalk on the back of his footman.

In the early fifties an attempt was made to establish a street car-line in the city of Magnificent Distances, but, as usual, there were plenty of objectors - they said the necessities of the city did not require it, and also claimed that it would ruin Pennsylvania Avenue for the purpose for which it was originally intended. So the old omnibuses continued to do duty between Georgetown and Washington until 1862 when the Washington and Georgetown railroad was built, extending to the Navy Yard.

Although it was nearly three score years and ten since the corner-stone of the Capitol was laid it was still unfinished at the beginning of the Civil War. As the Nation grew the Capitol needed to be enlarged, and the corner-stones of the extensions - now known as the Senate and House wings - were laid in 1851, The south wing

was so far completed in December 1857 that the House moved into the new Hall of Representatives, but it was not until January 1859 that the Senate bequeathed its old debating-ground to the Supreme Court and went into its new quarters. These wings were still incomplete when the War began, that delayed the building of the eastern porticos and much other work on the Capitol. The great iron dome was not finished until 1863, when the statue of Liberty was placed in position amid the cheers of thousands of soldiers, and salutes from the guns in Washington and the many forts surrounding the city.

The west side of the Capitol presented a very different appearance from that of today. There was what is known as the old terrace and a single flight of steps, but as the Capitol had turned its back on the city, which, contrary to the expectations of the early fathers, had grown west instead of east, a more imposing entrance was thought to be necessary on this side, so the grand staircase and marble terrace have been added in recent years.

The Capitol grounds are nearly twice as large - fifty eight acres and a half - as when they were surrounded by the high old-fashioned iron fence, which was mounted on a granite coping. When the fence was removed Congress passed a resolution that it should be placed around the Smithsonian grounds, but it has now disappeared from there except along B street where a portion of it is still on guard.

The city in 1861 did not cover as much territory as it does today, and the limit of the northwest, which was about fifteenth

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and M streets, was considered quite suburban. "In those years," said a white haired old man, who knew Washington in its salad days, "we used to go gunning for reed birds in what is now the fashionable West End."

At that time the most aristocratic part of the city was about Lafayette Square, and several of President Lincoln's Cabinet lived in that neighborhood. Secretary Seward occupied a house on Madison Place, facing the park, that was built by Commodore Rodgers on land once owned by Henry Clay. After the Commodore's death the old house had a varied history. It was the home of Roger B. Taney, when Secretary of the Treasury, and of Mr. Paulding, Secretary of the Navy, then it became a fashionable boarding house, where President Polk lived several months while the White House was being repaired. Just before the war it was occupied by the Washington Club, and during that time was the scene of the Sickles-Key tragedy. It was Mr. Seward's home for eight years, and was a social as well as a political center. Here the attempt was made to assassinate the Secretary, and here his only daughter died, adding another shadow to the many that clustered about the old house. It was used as a Government office for some years, then it stood idle for a long period until another Secretary of State choose it for his home. Superstitious people considered it an unlucky house, and there was much shaking of heads when Mr. Blaine selected it for a residence during the Harrison administration. Many sorrows came to the Blaines in their new home, and, at last, after months of suffering the great statesman died there. That old mansion was one of the

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most historic houses in Washington, and an effort was made to have the Government buy it, but Congress failed to pass the resolution, so another old landmark disappeared and an opera house was erected upon its site.

Just across Lafayette Square on H street, almost facing the White House, lived Hon. Gideon Welles, Secretary of the Navy, This fine old double house, which played such an important part in the unwritten history of the Lincoln administration, became a Cabinet home for the second time during Cleveland's last term when it was occupied by Mr. Lamont.

A little farther west on H street was the home of Caleb B Smith, who was Secretary of the Interior until 1863.

Lincoln's Postmaster General, Hon. Montgomery Blair, lived in one of the most famous of the old historic houses in Washington. It is just around the corner from Lafayette Square, facing Pennsylvania Avenue, within a stone's throw of the "President's House." This old mansion was built way back in 1810 by Dr. Lovell, Surgeon General of the Army. Soon after his death it was purchased by Francis P. Blair, Sr., a man who had much to do with the making of presidents for two generations, and here he lived for many years until he retired to his country seat. Then it was leased to the late George Bancroft during his short term as Secretary of the Navy, and to his successor in the Cabinet John T. Mason. It was the home of Thomas Ewing, of Ohio, who was the first Secretary of the Interior, and in the spacious drawingroom his only daughter was married to

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his adopted son, William T. Sherman, then first lieutenant of the third artillery. "It was a very brilliant affair, at which were present President Taylor and his entire Cabinet, of which Secretary Ewing was a member; Senators Clay, Webster, Mr. Calhoun, Jefferson Davis, Stephen A. Douglas, members of the Army and Navy, and hosts of notable people resident in Washington." Fillmore's Secretary of the Treasury, "silvered-tongued Tom Corwin," adds another to the group of distinguished men who have occupied the Blair mansion, In 1853 Montgomery Blair took possesion of his father's old home , and since that time his family has lived there,

The other members of President Lincoln's official family did not live so near him. Simon Cameron, who was Secretary of War only until January 1862, occupied a house on the corner of Fifteenth and I streets. It became the home of Senator Morgan, Ex-Governor of New York, when Mr. Cameron went as Minister to Russia, and an old lady told me ~~that~~ she used to go there during the war to sew for the refugees. Hamilton Fish lived there when he was Secretary of State, and the house was famous for the elegant entertainments given by Mrs. Fish.

Everybody remembers Edwin M. Stanton, who succeeded Mr. Cameron as head of the War Department, and the fine double house he occupied on K street, opposite Franklin Park, is still pointed out to strangers.

Attorney General Bates lived on F street, between sixth and seventh, which was a fashionable part of the city at that time. But it is now given up entirely to business, - his old home shared

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"the common fate of all" and was turned into offices.

On the corner of Sixth and E streets is a large square house - now occupied by a club - that was the home of Salmon P. Chase when he was the Secretary of the Treasury. Beautiful Kate Chase was mistress of her father's house, and many pleasant memories cluster about this old home. She was a very popular hostess, as she had great tact and magnetism as well as great beauty. "It is said that no woman had more to do in influencing the movements on the military and political chessboards than she, and it was her influence largely that kept McClellan at the head of the Army."

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