
Proceedings of the Commissioners for the District of Columbia

A Data Set from the Minute Books, 1797

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Research data set for the Washington proto-lodge series

Transcribed from the author's photographs of National Archives Record Group 42.
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Cover Letter

October 23, 2026

To the reader, and to the editors of the Washington proto-lodge series:

This volume presents the Proceedings of the Commissioners for the District of Columbia as a data set. The minute book was photographed page by page at the National Archives, and every entry has been read from those photographs and set down here as a line in a table: each meeting, each order on the Treasurer, each contract for brick, stone, timber and lime, each lot sold and square divided, each licence to live and trade in the new city, and each order about the men who did the work.

The aim is a faithful reproduction. Names, sums and terms are given as the clerk wrote them. Where the book itself is unclear, a word inked over or a figure faded, the table says so in plain words rather than guess. Where a page has not yet been photographed, or the photograph is blurred, the page is listed under Pages Still to Photograph, so that the gap is visible and can be filled without disturbing the rest.

The tables are the evidence; the summary of findings and the conclusion draw out the story they tell. That story runs through the whole series: how a stretch of farms and tobacco landings on the Potomac became first a village of labourers and craftsmen, then a city of legislators and executives, and at last the seat of American justice, and how the brickmakers, stone cutters, carpenters, smiths and labourers who built it gathered in the lodges of George-Town and Washington.

Each year is a separate data file, added as it is transcribed. The spreadsheet and CSV files carry the same rows as the printed tables, for anyone who wishes to count, sort or test them.

Thomas M. Saharsky, author and archivist

About This Data Set

The three commissioners named by President Washington in January 1791 kept a minute book of every meeting: who attended, what they ordered, whom they paid, what land they divided and sold, and what stone, timber and lime they bought. This data set turns those minutes into tables, one line per event, so that men, money and materials can be counted, sorted and traced from year to year.

Source. National Archives, Record Group 42, Records of the Commissioners for the District of Columbia, Proceedings (Entry 21), original volume 3 (catalogued as volume 2 of 5), MS pp. 58-140 (Jan. 2 to June 6, 1797). Photographed by Thomas M. Saharsky, Feb. 22, 2023.

What each table holds. A, the calendar of meetings; B, officers and agents; C, lot sales; D, the division of squares between the public and the original proprietors; E, contracts and offers for materials; F, orders on the Treasurer; G, orders about labour and the workmen, with the licences to live and trade in the city; H, men who also appear on the lodge rolls; I, the Estimate for the Treasury Office.

Conventions. Dates are given as year-month-day. Names keep the spelling of the minute book, except that a person's settled series spelling is used where the book varies. Money is given as written: pounds, shillings and pence of Maryland currency (7s 6d to the dollar, so £1 = \$2.67) or dollars. MS pages are the folio numbers written in the minute book.

Adding years. Each year is a separate data file. As the photographs for later years are transcribed, each year is added and this edition is rebuilt, with all tables and counts carried forward. The spreadsheet and CSV files carry the same rows as the printed tables.

Coverage of the 1797 photographs. Pages 58 to 139 (January 2 to April 21, 1797) are read in full. Page 140 opens a meeting of June 6, 1797 that the clerk began and never finished; the rest of that page and page 141 are blank, and no meetings are entered between April 21 and June 6. The long schedules of squares and lots chosen by Morris and Nicholson (MS 72-83) and of the squares signed with Notley Young (MS 124) are summarized rather than copied lot by lot. The photographs after MS 141 are held on the author's drive and are still to be read; they will extend this year.

Pages Still to Photograph

These minute-book pages are missing or unreadable in the present photographs. Each is marked here so that a later photograph can be read and added to its year without changing the rest of the data set.

MS pages	Dates	Status
MS 140-141	June 6, 1797	Entry begun and left unfinished; pages otherwise blank
After MS 141	June 1797 onward	Photographs on file, not yet read (to be added)

The Year at a Glance

Measure	1797
Meetings recorded	63
Attendance	Scott 56, Thornton 56, White 53
Squares divided with proprietors	19
Lot certificates entered	14 certificates for 36 lots
Value of sales priced in pounds	£124 Md. (about \$331) for 1 certificates
Contracts and supply offers	9
Orders on the Treasurer	19
Licences to build or trade	2

Summary of Findings

Theme	Year	What the minutes show
Land	1797	Cranch's statement shows Morris, Nicholson and Greenleaf bound to 294 houses; Dermott delivers their selection of 15,584,666 sq. ft (January 19); Law's 306 lots settled (April 10); squares divided with Notley Young; defaulted lots advertised for May.
Buildings	1797	Plans for the Treasury, State, War and Post Office buildings 'on the Presidents Square' go to the President (January 31; approved March 3); Hoban reports the lead wanted for the President's house roof; Blagden reports 475 tons of free stone still wanted for the Capitol.
Materials	1797	Belt's 500,000 bricks (January 20) and Fenwick's 200,000 (January 25); Cooke and Brent's 625 tons of stone; Gridley's eight tons of bar iron; shingles from Portsmouth and Norfolk; timber rafted from Bladensburg; 100 barrels of pork from Baltimore.
Jobs and trades	1797	Allen Wyley contracts for all the Capitol brick-work (March 24); the stone carvers under Edwards are raised to 12s 6d a day; the carpenters ask for a rise; Munroe takes on the Treasurer's and Pay-master's duties; quarter salaries set April 3.
Labour	1797	Bell ringers at each public building for a dollar a month; Waterstone boards up to twenty labourers at twenty shillings a week; Hollingshead oversees the labourers getting timber; Smallwood asks more pay as overseer.
Lodge men	1797	Belt contracts for brick with Hoban as surety; Gridley the smith buys iron and a lot in Sq. 143; O'Neale builds in Sq. 78; Nicholas King surveys; David Cummins carves stone; the Ralph lots in Sq. 400 pass to Wm P. Matthews.

What the 1797 Minutes Show

The year opens with money. On January 9 the clerk, Thomas Munroe, was told to deliver the commissioners' two bonds to Benjamin Harwood, trustee for Maryland, and take a transfer of \$100,000 in six per cent stock; by January 24 he had sold \$20,000 of it to William Marbury, the State's agent, at 16s 7d in the pound, and in March the remaining stock was put in the hands of the Bank of Columbia, whose president, Benjamin Stoddert, offered to sell it as the board needed cash. A power to transfer it was given to 'Charles Weyman' (March 6). On April 3 the quarter's salaries were set down: each commissioner \$400, Munroe \$250, William Brent assistant clerk \$175, Elisha O. Williams principal overseer \$212.50, and 'James Hoban Architect Presidt House' and 'George Hadfield Ditto Capitol' \$350 each. With the offices of Treasurer and Pay-master abolished, Munroe took on their duties and was given \$250 a year more.

The building contracts of the season were let in January and March. Middleton Belt contracted (January 20) to make 'Five hundred thousand good, sound hard bricks' at \$6 a thousand in the brick-yards of the Capitol, the President's house 'or any other place', 150,000 to be ready by June 1; James Hoban and William Deakins junior bound themselves with him. Bennett Fenwick contracted for 200,000 more (January 25), with Marsham Waring as surety. On March 24 Allen Wyley agreed 'to do all the brick-work at the Capitol, for the present season' at fourteen shillings a thousand for straight work, seventeen and six for circular work and eleven and three for every arch, the commissioners to find labourers and lay all materials on the spot. Cooke and Brent agreed to furnish 625 tons of stone; Blagden reported 475 tons of free stone still wanted; Hoban reported the lead wanted for the roof of the President's house; shingles came by the tens of thousands from Portsmouth and Norfolk; timber was cut near Bladensburg and rafted down by Belt.

The men at the works appear by name. The stone carvers 'who work under the immediate Direction of Mr Edwards', David Cummins, Joseph Huddleston, James Jack, Frederick Gibson, Patrick McCarty, Francis Cochran and Archibald Burns, petitioned for more pay and were allowed twelve shillings and sixpence a day from April 1. The carpenters applied for a rise on April 11. Hadfield was allowed ten monthly hands; Samuel Smallwood asked for higher wages as overseer; James Hollingshead was overseer of the labourers getting timber; and on January 30 the overseers at the Capitol and the President's house were each told to employ a labourer 'to ring the Bell' at the public buildings for a dollar a month. David Waterstone took a public house for the year on condition he 'will board any

number of Labourers in the public Works ... not exceeding twenty, at twenty shillings per week', and was licensed to retail spirits in April. Richard Gridley, smith, was sold eight tons of bar iron; Dr Cartwright and the hospital accounts were paid.

Two larger matters ran through the spring. The first was the Morris, Nicholson and Greenleaf contract: William Cranch's statement (entered January 18) showed the speculators had bound their buyers to 294 houses, 82 more than the contract required, and on January 19 J. R. Dermott delivered their selection of 15,584,666 square feet; Thomas Law's titles were argued before the Attorney General and the President, and on April 10 the board agreed to give Law title to his 306 lots once Morris and Nicholson gave bond for his buildings. The second was the plan of government: on January 31 the board sent the President 'Plans of the Offices for the Treasury, Depart of State, Department of War & post Office intended to be erected on the Presidents Square', which he approved (letter of March 3), and a coloured map of the city went to Amsterdam to pledge the public property for a loan. On April 21 the board asked P. B. Key to defend it in 'a suit brought agt them by Collin Williamson.'

Table A. Calendar of Meetings

Date	Place	Present	MS pages	Business
1797-01-02		GS, WT, AW	58	Quarterly salaries; Williams to advertise for 100 labourers.
1797-01-04		GS, WT, AW	59	President's approval of the Maryland loan; Law's certificate; Sq. 105 lots.
1797-01-09		GS, WT, AW	60-61	Letters from Blodget and 'the revd Mr Ralph'; Stoddert offers for \$30,000 stock; instructions to Munroe on the Maryland bonds and stock.
1797-01-10		GS, WT, AW	60	Nicholson asks Sq. 467 lots for Wm Prentis; letter to Marbury, agent for Maryland.
1797-01-12		GS, WT, AW	62	Hadfield's estimate of stone wanted for the Capitol and Blagden's for the President's house; Hamburg lots exchanged.
1797-01-13		GS, WT, AW	63	Gantt's opinions; Squares 6 and 11 divided with Robert Peter.
1797-01-14		GS, AW	63	Proceedings read.
1797-01-16		GS, WT, AW	64-65	Lots in Sq. 27 to George French; Squares 100 and 117 settled between Lingan and Peter; Key's opinion on Law's titles.
1797-01-17		GS, WT, AW	65-66	Scott's Annapolis expenses; Lingan, Blodget and Holmead divisions; Sweeny certificate (Charles Jones's lot).
1797-01-18		GS, WT, AW	67-70	Cranch's statement of Morris, Nicholson and Greenleaf's sales entered; Blagden on the deficiency of free stone; Waterstone's lease.
1797-01-19		GS, WT, AW	71-83	Forrest's certificates; \$2,200 to Cooke & Brent; Morris and Nicholson's selection of 15,584,666 sq. ft entered; Elizabeth Henderson licensed.
1797-01-21		WT, AW	84-85	Belt's contract for 500,000 bricks entered; Blagden's report of stone wanted.
1797-01-23		GS, WT, AW	86-87	Certificate to Dunlop and Carleton for 1,240,922 1/2 sq. ft of Morris and Nicholson's selection.
1797-01-24		GS, WT, AW	87-88	Munroe reports the Maryland stock sold and transferred; checks to Cooke & Brent and Munroe.
1797-01-25		GS, WT, AW	88-89	Lot 9, Sq. 78 to William O'Neale on building terms; accounts; Sq. 678 divided.
1797-01-27		GS, WT, AW	90-91	Fenwick's contract for 200,000 bricks; Law's certificate of Dec. 5, 1796 cancelled.
1797-01-28		GS, WT, AW	92	Nicholson accepts the board's proposition on his selection; accounts.
1797-01-30		GS, WT, AW	93	Iron from Snowden; bell ringers at the public buildings; Burnes divisions.

Date	Place	Present	MS pages	Business
1797-01-31		GS, WT, AW	94-95	Plan of the city to the Willinks; plans of the executive offices sent to the President; Peter and Carroll certificates.
1797-02-01		GS, WT, AW	95	Shingles from Portsmouth; Nicholson's certificates and squares.
1797-02-02		GS, WT, AW	96	Sq. 161 divided; Snowden's iron accepted; forms of deeds from Nicholson.
1797-02-03		GS, WT, AW	97-98	Sq. 161 lots to Thomas S. Lee; Davidson's memorial to the President; letter to the Willinks.
1797-02-04		GS, WT, AW	98-99	Walker's letter to the President; conditional sale to the Rev. Mr Ralph; Dermott to copy the President's appropriation for Davidson.
1797-02-06		GS, WT, AW	99-100	Law's claim to titles laid before the President; King to examine the clay ground in the Capitol Square; Blagden on the stone contracts.
1797-02-07		GS, WT, AW	100-101	Walker's paragraph sent to Forrest; scaffold poles for the Capitol; Gantt and Morsell paid.
1797-02-14		GS, WT	102-103	Nicholson and Law letters entered; level for O'Neale's house; 475 tons of free stone wanted; stock sold to Marbury.
1797-02-15		GS, WT	104	Certificate to Dr Snively; O'Neale paid.
1797-02-20		GS, WT	104-105	Letters from the President, Carroll, Young, Morris, Lowndes, Blodget and Key; Blagden's return of materials.
1797-02-21		GS, WT	106-107	Defaulted lots advertised for sale on the first Monday in May; lime to be paid on the overseers' certificate; Hoban and O'Neale certificates.
1797-02-25		GS, WT	108	Delany's list of pledged lots; Dermott's reports.
1797-02-27		GS, WT	109	Certificate to Richard Gridley; Ringgold and Law contracts; Blagden paid \$1,160.
1797-03-02		GS, WT	109-110	Fenwick advanced \$300; eight tons of bar iron to Gridley.
1797-03-03		GS, WT	110	\$200 to Robert Sutton for scaffold poles.
1797-03-06		GS, WT, AW	111-112	Bank of Columbia to act as agent for the six per cent stock; power to Charles Weyman.
1797-03-07		GS, WT, AW	112-113	Attorney General's opinion on Law's titles; the President approves the plans of the public offices; Smallwood asks for higher wages. (MS date overwritten.)
1797-03-08		GS, WT, AW	113	Nesmith intends to resign; letter to Hadfield.
1797-03-09		GS, WT, AW	113-114	King's plan of a Water Street; lead for the President's house roof; Cooke & Brent to furnish 625 tons of stone.
1797-03-10		WT, AW	114	Hadfield to employ ten hands for a month.
1797-03-13		WT, AW	115	Sq. 38 to Isaac Pollock; Gridley and Hollingshead accounts.
1797-03-14		WT, AW	115-116	Greenleaf's bond and warning.
1797-03-15		WT, AW	116	Munroe's accounts approved; timber cut near Bladensburg.
1797-03-16		WT, AW	116-117	Belt rafts timber; certificates in Squares 216 and 372 cancelled.
1797-03-20		WT, AW	117-118	Jardella's travel from Philadelphia; stone carvers petition for wages; map to Amsterdam via Pickering and Vans Murray.
1797-03-21		GS, WT, AW	119	Snowden's receipt for Matthews's note; Langley's proposal.
1797-03-22		GS, WT, AW	119-121	Shingles; Schooner 'Experience'; Peter, Bailey and Davidson divisions.
1797-03-23		GS, WT, AW	121	Sq. 977 divided; level for Barry's lot; Davidson heirs' squares.
1797-03-24		GS, AW	122-124	Allen Wyley's contract for the Capitol brick-work; Sq. 650 redivided; Greenleaf squares signed.
1797-03-27		GS, AW	125	Accounts of Wiley, Blagden and Richardson.

Date	Place	Present	MS pages	Business
1797-03-28		GS, WT, AW	125-126	Letter from the Governor of Virginia; letter from Hadfield.
1797-03-29		GS, AW	126	Stone carvers allowed 12s 6d a day from April 1.
1797-03-30		GS, AW	127	Munroe asks a higher salary.
1797-03-31		GS, AW	127-128	\$400 advance to Belt; Marbury paid a quarter's interest.
1797-04-03		GS, WT, AW	128-129	Quarter's salaries; Munroe given \$250 more for the Treasurer's and Pay-master's duties; Law's sugar house on Sq. 744.
1797-04-04		GS, WT, AW	130	Waterston licensed; Belt, Boucher paid.
1797-04-05		GS, WT, AW	130-131	Accounts.
1797-04-06		GS, WT, AW	131	Checks to Barnet White, baker, Munroe and Blagden.
1797-04-07		GS, WT, AW	131-133	Shingles; William Brent's salary raised; Carroll and Prout divisions.
1797-04-10		GS, WT, AW	133-134	Titles to be granted to Law for 306 lots.
1797-04-11		GS, WT, AW	135	Certificate to Wm P. Matthews for Sq. 400; carpenters ask higher wages; Squares 740, 741, 744 public.
1797-04-12		GS, WT, AW	136-137	Dermott excused in the afternoons; Sq. 771 redivided for the canal.
1797-04-17		GS, WT	137-138	Davidson, Oden, Young and Carroll divisions.
1797-04-21		GS, WT	139	100 barrels of pork from Baltimore; Key to defend Collin Williamson's suit; check to Chs Jones.
1797-06-06		GS, AW	140	Entry begun and left unfinished.

Table B. Officers and Agents

Name	Office	From	Note
Gustavus Scott, William Thornton, Alexander White	Commissioners	(continuing)	\$400 a quarter each
Thomas Munroe	Clerk to the commissioners	(continuing)	Takes the Treasurer's and Pay-master's duties; \$250 a year more from April 1797
William Brent	Assistant clerk	(continuing)	\$700 a year, raised by \$100 from April 1797
Capt. Elisha O. Williams	Principal overseer	(continuing)	\$212.50 a quarter
James Hoban	Architect of the President's house	(continuing)	\$350 a quarter
George Hadfield	Architect of the Capitol	(continuing)	\$350 a quarter
Nicholas King	Surveyor	(continuing)	Levels, water street, Capitol clay ground
James R. Dermott	Surveying office	(continuing)	Allowed afternoons off for his health (Apr. 12)
Samuel Smallwood	Overseer	(by Mar. 1797)	Asks higher wages
Isaac Nesmith	Weigher of free stone at Hamburg	(by Mar. 1797)	Intends to resign (Mar. 8)

Table C. Lot Sales

Certificate date	Purchaser	Residence	Square	Lots	Price (£ Md. or \$)	Note	MS page
1797-01-16	George French (at request of Morris's attorney)		27	4-9		certificate in fee	64
1797-01-17	George and Sarah Sweeny, assignees of Charles Jones		290	13		certificate in fee	65
1797-01-23	James Dunlop and Joseph Carleton (Morris & Nicholson selection)		various	1,240,9 22½ sq. ft		certificate in fee	86-87
1797-01-25	William O'Neale		78	9	124	£100 in full if a two story brick or stone dwelling house is built within two years	88
1797-01-31	Robert Peter (Morris & Nicholson selection)		1, 31, 170	1, 3, 17, 18, 20; 4-7; 15, 16		certificate in fee	94
1797-02-03	Thomas S. Lee (Morris & Nicholson)		161	1, 3, 4, 6, 7		60,932 sq. ft; \$80 a standard lot	97
1797-02-04	The Rev. Mr Ralph		400	2, 3		conditional sale; bill for \$604.62 by Wm P. Matthews	98
1797-02-15	Dr Henry Snively		83	1		certificate in fee	104
1797-02-21	James Hoban		729	8, 9, 26		certificate in fee	107
1797-02-21	William O'Neale		78	1, 30		certificate in fee	107
1797-02-27	Richard Gridley		143	10		certificate in fee	109
1797-03-13	Isaac Pollock (order of Gen. Forrest)		38	whole square		awarded to Forrest and Campbell in lieu of property west of Sq. 4	115
1797-03-20	Sebert Scott, assignee of Richard Bland Lee		4	2		certificate in fee	118
1797-04-11	Wm P. Matthews		400	2, 3		certificate in fee (the Ralph lots)	135

Terms of sale: one quarter down; the rest in three equal yearly payments with interest; deed on full payment. No bid under twenty shillings (three dollars in 1792). The 1791 rows are the public sale of October 17-19, 1791. The 1792 and 1793 rows are the sales entered in the minutes; the lists of the public sales of October 1792 and September 17-19, 1793 were kept apart from the minutes (in 1793, in the separate Sale Book). The 1793 Morris and Greenleaf row is one contract for 6,000 lots.

Table D. Division of Squares

Square	Original proprietors	Lots kept by proprietors	Lots for public sale	Witnesses
6, 11	Robert Peter	6: lots 2-6; 11: lot 2	6: 1, 7, 8; 11: 1, 3	Jan. 13
100, 117	James M. Lingan and Robert Peter	100 to Peter; 117 to Lingan	as before	Jan. 16
154, 134, 137, 133	Lingan, Blodget, Holmead	154 and 133 to Lingan	134, 137	Jan. 17
96-153 (Lingan)	James M. Lingan	whole squares 151, 111, 113, 96, 114, 115, 138, 99; parts of 116, 139	whole squares 152, 153, 135, 112, 94, 95, 97; parts of 116, 139	MS 66
150, 177	Lingan and Peter	150: 4-8; 177: 1-3, 10-16	150: 1-3, 9-13; 177: 4-9	MS 66

Square	Original proprietors	Lots kept by proprietors	Lots for public sale	Witnesses
678	Daniel Carroll of Duddington and Benjamin Oden	even lots	odd lots	Jan. 25
453, 454, S of 572	David Burnes	453: 1-4, 15-20; 454: 5-17; S of 572: 2	453: 5-14; 454: 1-4, 18-26; S of 572: 1	Jan. 30
161	Samuel Davidson and Samuel Blodget (by Daniel Reintzel)	2, 9, 10 Davidson; 8 Blodget	1, 3-7	Feb. 2
W of 23, 13	Robert Peter and Wm Bailey	23: 1, 3; 13: 1, 2, 6, 7, 9, 11, 14	23: 2; 13: 3-5, 8, 10, 12, 13	Mar. 22
216, 222, 220, 218	Samuel Davidson; heirs of John Davidson	216 to Samuel Davidson; 222: 4-8, 13, 14; 220 whole	222: 1-3, 9-12, 15; 218 whole	Mar. 22-23
977	D. Carroll, Wm Prout, Wm King	3-16	1, 2, 17-28 (subject to be sold)	Mar. 23
650	Daniel Carroll of Duddington	5-25 (outside Carrollsburgh); 1-4 in lieu of Carrollsburgh lots 103-106		Mar. 24 (erroneously divided Sept. 14, 1796)
953, 789-792, 1000	Carroll, Prout (and Wm King for 1000)	953: 10-23; 1000: 3-16; parts of 790-792	953: 1-9, 24-28; 789 whole; 1000: 1, 2, 17-28	Apr. 7
826, 853, 946, 955	Daniel Carroll of Duddington	826: 3-15; 853: 1, 3; 946: 2; 955 whole	826: 1, 2, 16-26; 853: 2, 4; 946: 1	Apr. 7
879, 880, 881	William Prout	879 whole; 881: 3-9	880 whole; 881: 1, 2, 10-14	Apr. 7
740, 741, 744	Daniel Carroll of Duddington		whole squares	Apr. 11
771	D. Carroll and James Barry	1 Barry; 5-7 Carroll	2-4	Apr. 12 (redivided to run the canal)
164	Samuel Davidson		whole square	Apr. 17 (Dec. 23, 1796)
565, 673-675, 620, 621	Benjamin Oden, Notley Young, D. Carroll	675: 7-13, 21-27; 674, 673: 6-11, 18-23; 620, 621: 1-5, 12-17, 24	565 whole; remaining lots	Apr. 17

Under the deeds in trust each square was split between the original proprietor and the public, whose half was sold to raise money for the public buildings.

Table E. Contracts and Supply of Materials

Date	Party	Residence	Goods or work	Terms	MS page
1797-01-18	David Waterstone		Lease of a public house for the year	\$60 by Jan. 1, 1798; to board up to twenty labourers in the public works at twenty shillings a week	67-68
1797-01-20	Middleton Belt		500,000 good, sound hard bricks in the brick-yards of the Capitol, the President's house or elsewhere; 150,000 by June 1	\$6 a thousand; \$600 and \$100 advanced; sureties James Hoban and William Deakins junr.	84-85
1797-01-25	Bennett Fenwick		200,000 bricks at the Capitol brick-yards; 50,000 by June 1	\$6 a thousand; \$300 advanced; surety Marsham Waring	90-91
1797-02-02	Thomas Snowden		Iron	his proposition accepted	96
1797-03-02	Richard Gridley		Eight tons of bar iron	security given for payment	110
1797-03-03	Robert Sutton		Scaffold poles	\$200 advanced; Wm H. Dorsey security	110

Date	Party	Residence	Goods or work	Terms	MS page
1797-03-09	Cooke and Brent		625 tons of stone	\$1,400 advanced on the new contract	114
1797-03-24	Allen Wyley		All the brick-work at the Capitol for the season	14s Md. a thousand straight, 17s 6d circular, 11s 3d an arch; bond \$10,000	122-123
1797-04-21	Graham and Haskins, Baltimore	Baltimore	100 barrels of pork for the city	\$2,100, paid by Deakins's note at sixty days	139

Table F. Orders on the Treasurer

Date	Payee	Amount	For	MS page
1797-01-24	Cooke and Brent	\$2,200; \$450 (Feb. 25); \$1,400 (Mar. 9); \$700 (Mar. 31)	stone	88, 108, 114, 128
1797-01-25	Lewis Clephan (Glazier)	\$217.28	glazing	89
1797-01-25	James Hoban	\$21.26 expenses; \$132.96 house rent		89
1797-01-25	Richard Gridley	\$237.50 (four accounts); \$64.90, \$72.35 (Feb. 21); \$94.66 Capitol, \$38.21 President's house (Mar. 13)	smith's work	89, 107, 115
1797-01-27	Elisha O. Williams	\$212.50	principal overseer	90
1797-01-28	Alexr McCormick	\$10.84 (2 accounts); \$3.50 (Feb. 20)		92, 105
1797-01-31	Mitchell & Belt	\$2.25	account	94
1797-02-04	Nicholas King	\$147.33; \$133.33 (Apr. 3)	surveying	99, 128
1797-02-27	George Blagden	\$1,160; \$951.36 (Mar. 7); \$700.07 with Richardson (Mar. 27)	stone and articles bought in Baltimore	109, 113, 125
1797-03-13	James Hollingshead	\$2.55; \$6.51	overseer of the labourers getting timber	115
1797-03-15	Timber cutters near Bladensburg	\$54.27	cutting timber for the Capitol	116
1797-03-16	Middleton Belt	\$17.87; \$15.12 (Apr. 4); \$400 advance (Mar. 31)	rafting timber from near Bladensburg; brick contract	116, 127, 130
1797-03-20	Andrew Jardella	\$53.50	travel from Philadelphia and back (to be paid by Robert Morris)	117
1797-03-22	John White	\$454.50	75,750 shingles at \$6	120
1797-03-24	Allen Wyley	\$300; \$200.22 (Mar. 27); \$8.33	brick-work at the Capitol	122-125

Date	Payee	Amount	For	MS page
1797-04-03	Commissioners, clerks, overseer, architects	\$400 each; Munroe \$250; Brent \$175; Williams \$212.50; Hoban \$350; Hadfield \$350	quarter's salary	128
1797-04-06	Barnet White, Baker	\$90		131
1797-04-07	Capt. Savenne	\$193.20	32,200 shingles	131
1797-04-21	Chs Jones	\$200		139

Table G. Labour and the Workmen

Date	Order	MS page
1797-01-02	Capt. Williams to advertise for 100 labourers at up to \$70 a year, or \$60 from March 1 to Dec. 20.	58
1797-01-18	Waterstone to board up to twenty labourers in the public works at twenty shillings a week.	68
1797-01-30	The overseers at the Capitol and the President's house each to employ a labourer 'to ring the Bell' at the public buildings, at no more than a dollar a month.	93
1797-02-06	King to examine the ground in the Capitol Square where 'the Brick makers in public Employment propose to dig for Clay'.	100
1797-03-07	Samuel Smallwood asks to have his wages as overseer raised.	112
1797-03-10	Hadfield to employ ten hands for a month at the lowest price he can obtain them.	114
1797-03-29	Stone carvers under Mr Edwards (David Cummins, Joseph Huddleston, James Jack, Frederick Gibson, Patrick McCarty, Francis Cochran, Archibald Burns) allowed 12s 6d a day from April 1.	126
1797-04-11	'Application received from the Carpenters to raise their Wages.'	135

Licences to Live and Trade in the City

Under article 5 of the President's terms, no one could put up even a temporary building without the commissioners' leave. These licences show who first lived and worked on the ground of the city.

Date	Name	Leave granted	MS page
1797-01-19	Elizabeth Henderson	to retail Spirituous Liquors	72
1797-04-04	David Waterston	to retail Spirituous Liquors in the City of Washington	130

The President's Terms and Conditions for building, October 17, 1791

1. Outer and party walls of brick or stone. 2. Houses parallel to the street; no foundation or party wall begun until the commissioners' superintendent has set the lines. 3. No wall higher than 40 feet to the roof anywhere, and none lower than 35 feet on the avenues. 4. The superintendent sets party walls half on each lot; the next builder repays half the cost. 5. Temporary buildings for lodging workmen and storing materials by the commissioners' leave. 6. Ways into the squares kept for public use. 7. No vaults under the streets and no stoops, porches, cellar doors or leaning walls on the footway. 8. These rules bind every conveyance under the deeds in trust.

Table H. Lodge Members in the Proceedings

Every name in the minutes was checked against the corrected lodge rolls (October 21, 2026) and the 525-man cross-reference. "Same man" means the rolls and the series books identify him; "probable" and "possible" mark a shared name that the records do not yet prove.

Name	In the Proceedings	On the lodge rolls	Match	Note
Collen Williamson	P. B. Key engaged to defend 'a suit brought agt them by Collin Williamson' (Apr. 21)	Federal No. 15 (roll: 'Collin')	Same man	Master stonemason
James Hoban	surety for Belt's brick contract (Jan. 20); house rent \$132.96 (Jan. 25); certificate for Sq. 729 lots 8, 9, 26 (Feb. 21); reports the lead wanted for the President's house roof; salary \$350 a quarter as 'Architect Presidt House' (Apr. 3)	Federal No. 15 (1794-1801)	Same man	Architect, carpenter and joiner
Middleton Belt	contracts for 500,000 bricks at \$6 a thousand with James Hoban and William Deakins jr as sureties (Jan. 20); rafts timber from Bladensburg	Federal No. 15 (brick maker, supplier)	Same man	
Alexander McCormick	'Alexr McCormick' paid on two accounts (Jan. 28, Feb. 20)	Federal No. 15 (dry-goods merchant)	Probable	Not the Rev. Andrew T. McCormick
Charles Jones	certificate to George and Sarah Sweeny, his assignees, for Lot 13, Sq. 290 (Jan. 17); check to 'Chs Jones' (Apr. 21)	Columbia No. 35 and Federal No. 15 (W.M. of Columbia No. 35, 1802-1809)	Possible	A common name
William O'Neale	Lot 9, Sq. 78 for £100 if a two story brick or stone house is built within two years (Jan. 25); certificate for Sq. 78 lots 1, 30 (Feb. 21)	Federal No. 15 (M.M., P.M.; delegate 1806; signs the Hamburg quarry labour rolls, Dec. 1795)	Same man	Quarry master
George Ralph	conditional sale to 'the Rev. Mr Ralph' (Feb. 4); the Sq. 400 lots certified to Wm P. Matthews (Apr. 11)	Grand Chaplain 1795-96; Federal roll: 'non Member Grand Chaplin'	Same man	Not a member of No. 15 (series register)
Nicholas King	paid \$147.33 and \$133.33 for surveying (Feb. 4, Apr. 3)	Federal No. 15 (Surveyor of the City; E.A. Apr. 27, 1801, F.C. Jan. 3, 1803, M.M. Feb. 7, 1803; later Secretary, S.W. and W.M.)	Same man	City surveyor; joined the lodge after these minutes
Richard Gridley	smith's work at the Capitol and the President's house (Jan. 25-Mar. 13); certificate for Lot 10, Sq. 143 (Feb. 27); buys eight tons of bar iron (Mar. 2)	Federal No. 15 (blacksmith; ledger and rolls 1797-99); charter member of Columbia No. 13	Same man	Smith
David Cumming	'David Cummins', one of the stone carvers 'under the immediate Direction of Mr Edwards', allowed 12s 6d a day from Apr. 1 (Mar. 29)	Federal No. 15 (stone carver at the President's house, 1794-95; ledger and rolls 1797-99)	Same man	Stone carver; clerk writes 'Cummins'
Owen Donlevy	account allowed (Jan. 25)	Federal No. 15 (ledger and rolls 1797-99)	Probable	

Names in the minutes that are not on the lodge rolls are listed after the conclusion.

Conclusion: The Work of 1797

The spring of 1797 is the season the board stopped arguing and started building again. Maryland's stock was turned into cash through the Bank of Columbia, and the money went at once into contracts: Belt's half million bricks, Fenwick's two hundred thousand, Wyley's brick-work for the whole Capitol at so much a thousand, and Cooke and Brent's stone. The minutes now name the men at the work, the seven carvers under Edwards who won twelve and six a day, the carpenters asking for a rise, the labourer hired to ring the bell, the tavern-keeper who boarded twenty labourers a week. Above them the plan of government took its first shape outside the two great houses, when the President approved offices for the Treasury, State, War and the Post Office on the President's Square. The book breaks off on April 21, with a June entry begun and never finished; the photographs that follow are still to be read.

The same names run from the minute book into the lodge rolls. The innkeeper who served the first sale, the merchant who bought at it, the baker who paid for his house out of his wages, the master stone cutter and the architect of both great buildings were, or became, members of the lodges of George-Town and Washington. The minute book records that the first corner stone of the President's house was laid in the company of 'a numerous collection of Free Masons,' and that the commissioners themselves called on 'Those of the Craft, however dispersed' to lay the Capitol's. This is the first chapter of the story that the series sets out to tell: how the village of labourers became a city of legislators and executives, and the seat of American government and justice.

Names Not on the Lodge Rolls

Thomas Johnson, David Stuart, Daniel Carroll, John Mackall Gantt, William Deakins Jr., Andrew Ellicott, Benjamin Ellicott, Isaac Roberdeau, Peter Charles L'Enfant, James McKenna, Thomas Cooke, Francis Cabot, Benjamin Stoddert, Uriah Forrest, James M. Lingan, Samuel Davidson, Robert Peter, David Burnes, Leonard Harbaugh, Anthony Hoke, William Hill, Charles Glisan, Patrick Whelan, Absalom Wroe, Elisha O. Williams, Fielder Bowie, Stephen Hallet, George Fenwick, Henry Barnes, McDermott Roe, James R. Dermott, Samuel Blodget, Jeremiah Kale (a John Kale is on the Federal roll 1800-1801), William Thornton, James Greenleaf, Robert Morris, Thomas Curtis, Isaac Briggs, Elliott Monroe, George White, Henry Lee, Abijah Bond, William Venable, Henry Edwards, Edward Burrows, Daniel Reintzel (other Reintzels are on the rolls), John Templeman, Robert T. Hooe, David Ross, Thomas Johnson Jr., George Wherley, Anthony Gozler, Stuart Williams, Notley Young, Philip Richard Fendall, Lewis Hipkins, John Mulliken, William King, Alexander Doyle, Richard Johns, Ignatius Fenwick, Archibald Orme, George French, John Gibson, George Brent, Gustavus Scott, John Dobson, John Dunbar, the Rev. Anthony Caffry, Thomas Freeman, James Maitland, John Delahunty, Christopher Richmond, Luther Martin, John Mitchell, Walter Stewart, George Blagden, Alexander Harrison, Thomas Sim Lee, Alexander White, Thomas Munroe, William Brent, George Hadfield, Thomas Carberry, William Rutherford, George Walker, Bennett Fenwick, Joseph Boon, John Nicholson, Allen Wyley, Marsham Waring, David Waterstone, Samuel Smallwood, James Hollingshead (not on these rolls; some series books call him a No. 41 man).