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FURNISHING PLAN
FOR THE
FIRST FLOOR OF CONGRESS HALL
INDEPENDENCE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK
CRBIB#010860 July 1959 INDE-252

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Office Memorandum - UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : Chief, Branch of Museums

DATE: September 14, 1959

FROM : Acting Chief Historian

INDE-CH-71-01

CIRBIB #010860

SUBJECT: Comment on Furnishing Plans, Independence NHP

We have been glad to review the historical findings in the following furnishing plans:

1. First Floor of Congress Hall, Parts A-C; submitted August 13.
2. Mayor's Court, Old City Hall; Parts A-C; submitted August 31.
3. First Floor of Independence Hall, Parts A-C; submitted September 1.

We consider these studies to be excellent and will be glad to see Parts D-E for these studies when received.

Rogers W. Young
Acting Chief Historian

SEP 11 1959

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EED
J. F. L.
J. F. L.
J. F. L.

Eastern Office
Division of Design and Construction
Philadelphia 6, Pa.

September 4, 1959

Memorandum

To: Chief of Design and Construction

From: Chief, DDC

Subject: Furnishing Plan (Parts A, B and C) for the First
Floor of Congress Hall, Independence National
Historical Park

After reviewing the subject report we are pleased to
recommend its approval with the following comments:

There are several parts of the report which we feel
the architectural investigation of this building will be able to
augment. As mentioned in this report, footnote 51, Part C Notes
page 8, Samuel Edgerton has been doing a study of the heating of
Congress Hall. As well as this, a study of the Speaker's Dais
in relation to the existing holes in the west wall, mentioned in
Part C page 4 is forthcoming. We also feel that drawings should
be made to adequately study the layout for the 105 members' desks
on the otorged platforms. We shall especially try to find any
evidence of the method of hanging the venetian blinds and
curtains referred to.

Such questions as which possible door the bust of
Franklin hung above and just how it was supported will also be
considered. Presumably any bust over the Speaker's Chair would
have been incorporated with the dais construction, but an
investigation will be made of the wall over the port holes for
signs of shelf anchors, etc.

Not mentioned in the report, but to be seen in
Illustration No. 1, Part C., is a precedent for having the first
row of House members' desks on the floor. At the back of the
proposed plan are four rows up to the last row, and then there
are four rows down to the floor again and the first of the five
rows of desks.

Every effort will be made in the architectural investigation to relate our study to this furniture study in order that coordinating conclusions be brought forth.

May we suggest that it might be interesting and helpful to obtain the comments on this report from such people as Dr. Robert G. Smith of the University of Pennsylvania and/or Charles F. Montgomery, Director of The Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum--both men of renown in the field of the history of furnishings in America.

(Sgt.) Edward S. Zimmer

Edward S. Zimmer
Chief

In duplicate

Copy to: Regional Director, Region Five
Superintendent, Independence MP

Region Five
421 Walnut Street
Philadelphia 6, Pa.

August 28, 1959

Memorandum

To: Director

From: Regional Director

Subject: Furnishing Plan (Parts A, B and C) for the First Floor
of Congress Hall, Independence NHP

We recommend this plan to your approval. As is to be expected of reports prepared by the Independence staff, it is very readable, simply organized, and as succinct as the need for completeness and the importance of the structure permit.

You may note that no estimate of the cost of furnishing Congress Hall is given in the report. However, PCP B-144, Restoration Congress Hall, includes an item of \$200,000 for "interpretive development," i.e., furnishings and exhibits.

Because refurnishing naturally overlaps or is involved in the architectural restoration of the structure, by copy of this memorandum, we are requesting comments from the EODC, to reach your office by no later than September 8. If this arrangement is satisfactory to you, we plan to do so, too, with future furnishing plans.

(Sgd.) Daniel J. Tobin

Daniel J. Tobin
Regional Director

In duplicate ✓

Copy to: Chief, EODC, w/copy of report
Supt., Independence



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Region Five
421 Walnut Street
Philadelphia 6, Pa.

August 13, 1959

IN REPLY REFER TO

H30

AUG 14 1959

Kirk

W. C.

Young

Lewis

8/17

Memorandum

To: Director

From: Acting Regional Director

Subject: Furnishing Plan for the First Floor of Congress Hall

We are forwarding attached two copies of the Furnishing Plan, Sections A to C, for the first floor of Congress Hall. This report was requested in Acting Director Tolson's memorandum of September 11, 1958.

We are not commenting on the report at this time, but will circulate it throughout the office and submit comments when Regional Chief of Interpretation Nelligan returns from annual leave later in the month.

Benjamin F. Gibson
Benjamin F. Gibson
Acting Regional Director

In duplicate

Attachments

Copy to: Supt., Independence

LIBRARY,
PLANNING AND RESOURCE PRESERVATION
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, WABO

FURNISHING PLAN
FOR THE
FIRST FLOOR OF CONGRESS HALL

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Prepared by

Staff

Independence National Historical Park

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

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July 1959

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PART A

STATEMENT OF INTERPRETIVE PURPOSE

Prepared by Historian David A. Kimball

STATEMENT OF INTERPRETIVE PURPOSE

From December 6, 1790, until May 14, 1800, Congress Hall was the Capitol of the United States. In it, Congress met to debate and act upon legislation which shaped the destiny of the new nation. The proposed refurnishing of the first floor will recreate the setting in which the House of Representatives played its role and is essential to effective interpretation of this aspect of the Park story.

PART B

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Prepared by Historian David A. Kimball

PART B

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Congress Hall was erected between 1787 and 1789 to serve as a courthouse and common hall for the County of Philadelphia. When completed, the first floor of the interior measured about 47 feet wide on Chestnut Street by 63 feet in length along Sixth Street exclusive of an 8 feet deep bay at the south end. This floor was divided into a vestibule 10 feet across the Chestnut Street front and a large room occupying the remainder of the ground floor.

In July 1790, the Congress of the United States voted to establish the temporary national capital in Philadelphia, and in September of that year a committee of city councilmen and county commissioners began to fit up and furnish the county courthouse for service as the meeting place of Congress; the second floor for the Senate, the first floor for the House of Representatives. This work had no effect on the first floor vestibule, but it did result in construction of a gallery and erection of a public loggia, or standing place, beneath it which occupied the northern 22 feet of the large south room, leaving the remaining 30 feet plus the space in the bay to accommodate the sixty-five members of the House. In 1793 the House Chamber was extended southward an additional 38 feet to accommodate an increase in the membership of the House.

When the Congress removed to Washington in 1800, Congress Hall reverted to its original use. Later, the first floor was altered to provide courtrooms, and it was not until the 1912-1913 restoration that the

House Chamber and vestibule were restored to their original dimensions and appearance.

The Vestibule

The vestibule across the front of Congress Hall contained the stairways to the second floor and provided an entrance to the House Chamber. When, in 1790, a public gallery was built at the northern end of the room, access to it was provided by way of the vestibule staircases; access to the loggia under it was, of course, by way of the door in the south wall of the vestibule. From 1790 until 1800, members of the United States Senate climbed the vestibule stairs on their way to attend the sessions of that body; Presidents Washington and Adams passed through the vestibule to attend their inaugurations and to deliver "State of the Union" messages; and the public passed through it into the loggia or up the stairs and into the gallery to listen to the debates in the House of Representatives.

The House of Representatives Chamber

In the 18 months between the completion of Congress Hall and the beginning of preparations to fit up and furnish it to accommodate Congress, the building was the meeting place of such bodies as the mayor and aldermen of the city, conventions of freeholders to nominate candidates for local office, the county commissioners, the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, the Mayor's Court, and the United States Court for the District of Pennsylvania. Most of these organizations met on the second floor, but the meetings of freeholders may have been held in the large first floor room.

In September 1790, a joint committee began to prepare the building for the reception of Congress, and on December 6, 1790, the third session of the first House of Representatives convened in the large first floor room of Congress Hall. Perhaps the best indication of the importance of the House of Representatives at this time lies in the experience and capability of its sixty-five members. Included among them were four men who had signed the Declaration of Independence;¹ nine men who sat in the Constitutional Convention;² twenty-three who had served in the Continental Congress, including a former president of that body;³ two who had held key administrative posts under the Confederation;⁴ and two former general officers of the American Army.⁵ The committee in charge of furnishing the Chamber was fully conscious of the importance of the House, and did its best to provide accommodations commensurate with it. That they succeeded is shown by the comment of the gadabout Philadelphian Jacob Hiltzheimer who, on December 3, 1790, "Visited the 2 rooms fitted up for Congress... and think them unnecessarily fine."⁶

The enlargement of 1793 provided accommodations for forty-one additional members of the House without altering the style of the House Chamber or its furnishings.

The decade during which the House of Representatives met in the first floor room of Congress Hall was one of phenomenal legislative achievement and political maturation. Vermont, Kentucky and Tennessee were admitted to the Union, the nation's finances were placed on a firm footing,

coastal fortifications were undertaken, the Navy and Marine Corps were established, and many other important actions taken. In the course of these actions, proponents and opponents to the various measures coalesced into distinct and recognizable political parties.

When, on May 14, 1800, the first session of the Sixth Congress adjourned, the House Chamber reverted to use by the County of Philadelphia, and the furniture which had been provided for the House was put in storage.⁷ The room was then fitted up for service as a courtroom, a use which continued for most of the next century.

NOTES

Part B
Notes

1. Roger Sherman, William Floyd, George Clymer and Elbridge Gerry -
A Biographical Congressional Directory 1774-1911, 61 Cong. 2 sess.
Sen. Doc. 654, hereafter cited as "Congressional Directory."
2. Roger Sherman, George Clymer, Elbridge Gerry, Abraham Baldwin,
Daniel Carroll, Nicholas Gilman, Hugh Williamson, Thomas Fitzsimons,
and James Madison - Congressional Directory.
3. Congressional Directory.
4. Jonathan Trumbull, a former comptroller of the treasury, and Commis-
sary General Jeremiah Wadsworth - Congressional Directory.
5. John P. G. Muhlenberg and Thomas Sumter - Congressional Directory.
6. Hiltzheimer diary.
7. "The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
To Church Culnan
To Expenses for removing the Furniture used by the Representatives of
the United States from the Upper Gallery and that of the U.S. Senate
from their chamber, to the Pennsylvania Senate Chamber in the State
House by Order of His Excellency Thomas McKean Esqr. Governor \$8
Philad. June 27, 1801" - "Cong. Hall - Phila., 1800" in Public
Records Office, Harrisburg.

PART C

DOCUMENTED ACCOUNT OF HISTORIC FURNITURE

Prepared by Historian David A. Kintall

PART C

DOCUMENTED ACCOUNT
OF HISTORIC FURNITURE

When, In July 1790, the Congress of the United States voted to establish Philadelphia as the temporary national capital, the city and county commissioners assumed the task of providing, fitting, and furnishing a building for use by Congress.¹ The Congress brought with it from New York little other than its books, papers, and the mace which the House of Representatives had purchased in September of 1790. When increases in the membership of both bodies necessitated additional furniture, most of it was also acquired by the commissioners. Thus, almost all of the furniture used by the House of Representatives during the ten years when it met on the first floor of Congress Hall had been purchased by the city and county of Philadelphia, with funds provided by the state government.

The Vestibule

The narrow vestibule across the Chestnut Street front of the building appears to have been devoid of furniture during the years when the House met in the room to the south. There is no record of the purchase of furniture for it, none of the contemporary descriptions of the building indicate that it contained furniture, and both its size and its function as a means of access to the stairs leading to the House gallery and second floor and to the loggia under the House gallery suggest that it was unfurnished.

The House of Representatives Chamber

The northernmost 22 feet of the House Chamber was taken up by a loggia, probably separated from the floor of the House by a low wooden

railing, and a gallery above. No seating was provided in the loggia, a fact attested to by Thomas Twining who visited Congress in 1795:

Two folding-doors, accessible to everybody, led me at once into the hall of the National Representatives,... I stood in the space reserved for strangers, between the entrance and the low partition which separates it from the part occupied by the members. This space was small, and without seats.²

The gallery above must have contained seats, but there is no specific documentation for this fact.³

The remainder of the south room, first floor, was set aside for the House of Representatives. From 1790 until the adjournment of the Second Congress on March 3, 1793, this area measured about 47 feet in width by 30 feet in length, with the bay at the south providing an additional 8 feet in length. Apparently the Speaker sat on a dais in the bay, with the members of the House sitting in rows facing him (see Illustration No. 1).⁴

In 1793, in consequence of the increase in membership of the House from 65 to 105, Congress Hall was extended southward some 28 feet. This enlarged the floor of the House to an area of 47 feet wide and 58 feet long plus the 8 feet of bay. At the same time, the city and county commissioners purchased additional furniture to accommodate the new members and rearranged the room. The resulting arrangement was described by a member of the House as follows:

Perhaps you have a curiosity to have a description of Congress Hall; it is a large, elegant brick building, the north end on Chestnut Street. The Representative's room is on the lower floor. The Speaker sits in a large

arm chair with a table before him like a toilette, covered with green cloth, fringed. The Speaker's seat is elevated about 2 feet and is on the west side of the hall. The members' seats are 3 rows of desks, rising one above another in the form of a semi-circle, opposite the Speaker; these are writing-desks with large armed chairs with leather bottoms. There is a lock and key to each desk and places on the desks for ink, pens, sand and a plentiful supply of paper. There are two fireplaces, on each side of the hall with stoves.

There is a good deal of room outside the semi-circle, or, as we speak, "without the bar," to which we introduce strangers to hear the debates, and where considerable numbers are always in attendance, as well as in the gallery which is at the north end. At the south end, without the bar, there is an area or half circle with three large windows looking into a large square or walk, the only mall in the city, and two doors from the hall open into it. There are holes for the Southern and Eastern mails into which we deposit our letters to be carried to the Post Office by the doorkeeper.⁵

Speaker's Dais

From 1790 until March 1793, the Speaker's dais seems to have stood in the bay at the south end of the room. No description of this dais has been found, but, if it corresponded with the dais shown on the plan proposed for Old City Hall (see Illustration No. 1), it consisted of a platform raised four steps from the floor and large enough to accommodate the chair and desk of the Speaker in the center and a desk and chair on either side for the clerk and, perhaps, the chaplain.

On May 22, 1793, the Boston Columbian Centinel announced that during the enlargement of the House chamber then in progress, "...the Speaker's chair is to be removed to the west side of the House...." That this was done is confirmed by Theophilus Bradbury's statement that "The

Speaker's seat is...on the west side of the hall." It stood near the center of the radii of the risers upon which the members sat,⁶ and was perhaps 8 or 10 feet out from the west wall of the room.⁷

Contemporary descriptions of the dais differ widely. It was variously described as "elevated a few steps above the floor,"⁸ "a kind of pulpit,"⁹ and "a platform raised some steps from the ground and railed in."¹⁰ The dais may well have consisted of more than one level; a French visitor writing of the ceremonies which took place on the opening of Congress in 1794 stated that the President "seats himself in the chair ordinarily occupied by the Speaker of the House; then, a moment later, he rises, steps forward to a position between the two presidents of the Senate and Chamber, but on a step above them."¹¹ If that was the case, the Clerk of the House had his table and chair on the lower step. Contemporary descriptions of the inauguration of John Adams as President indicate the dais may have been large enough to accommodate five or more chairs,¹² and the reference to the fact that notetakers were permitted to sit behind the Speaker indicates that the dais did not have a high back as does the one now in the room (see Illustration No. 3).¹³ During the 1912-1913 restoration of the structure the American Institute of Architects found marks on the original flooring of the House chamber which indicated the location of the dais, but no drawings of this evidence have been found.¹⁴ The architectural study of the building currently in progress has revealed a set of four joist holes between the second and third windows from the southern end of the west wall about 3 feet above floor level. The joist holes are

at the approximate center of the dais area. They suggest a T-shaped dais similar to the one shown in Illustration No. 1.

Stepped Platform

In February 1794, shortly after the enlargement of Congress Hall, had been completed, a visitor noted that the "seats of the members, are in three parallel semielliptick rows rising above each other leaving a small area between them and the Speaker's and Secretary's seats which are in the center of the semiellipse."¹⁵ Later visitors described a similar arrangement: "the seats in three rows formed semi-circles behind each other,"¹⁶ and the "members seats are 3 rows of desks, rising one above another in the form of a semi-circle, opposite the Speaker."¹⁷ Still another visitor, reminiscing many years later, recalled that "The House of Representatives in session, occupied the whole of the ground floor, upon a platform elevated three steps in ascent plainly carpeted, and covering nearly the whole of the area,..."¹⁸ During the restoration of 1912-1913, the A.I.A. discovered that the sheathing of the north partition of the cross hall introduced in 1818-1820 was composed of wide boards, tongued and grooved, and some with nosings, which they felt were once either floor boards or part of the platform of the House.¹⁹ The A.I.A. also found "upon removing some modern flooring...the original floor of the House, of yellow pine planks six to ten inches wide,...bearing marks of attachments clearly indicating the location of the Speaker's platform and elsewhere of the bar of the House, which seems to have described a curve enclosing the last row of

seats."²⁰ Unfortunately, no record of the location of those markings has yet been found.

While this evidence establishes that a semicircular platform was present in the House in the years between 1793 and 1800, it leaves the appearance of the platform in doubt. Did the platform have three steps, or did the floor of the House constitute the first level? What were the precise dimensions of the platform? Was it divided into two or more sections with a passageway between them? How high was the railing behind it?

The platform probably had only two steps; the floor of the House accommodated the first row of desks and chairs.²¹ There is no documentary evidence as to the dimensions of the platform other than McKoy's recollection that it covered "nearly the whole of the area," but it must have been large enough to provide in three rows a total of at least 250 linear feet of space,²² and each step must have been wide enough to accommodate a desk and chair and still leave room for the members to pass back and forth to their seats. The platform may have been divided by a passage through the center leading from the entrance in the east wall to the Speaker's dais.

The railing around the rear of the platform, evidence of which was found by the A.I.A., separated the floor or working area of the House from a loggia or promenade where members could walk and refresh themselves, and to which they could introduce their friends for a close up view of the proceedings of the House.²³ This railing must have been no more than 5 feet high, for members standing outside the bar occasionally leaned on the railing while conversing with members seated within,²⁴ and on at least one

occasion visitors in the area without the bar pressed so tightly against the railing that the presiding officer counted some of them as voting on a question before the House.²⁵

Carpets

Included among the accounts of the city and county commissioners for furnishing Congress Hall in 1790 are payments for carpeting which indicate that about 630 yards was purchased (see Appendixes A and B). Of this total 132-1/2 yards was for the Senate Chamber, and about 100 yards more was for the House offices.²⁶ This left about 400 yards of carpet for the remaining 416 square yards, more or less, of floor space in the building. From this it is clear that the House chamber, and perhaps the loggia as well, was carpeted, and this fact is confirmed by contemporary descriptions of the room.²⁷

The enlargement of 1793 added some 144 square yards of floor space to the House Chamber. In November and December of 1793, the county commissioners bought a total of 380-3/4 yards of carpet, so that it is certain that all of the floor of the House and probably the loggia as well was carpeted.²⁸ This is confirmed by a bill for £12.7.6 submitted by Samuel Benge on November 22, 1793, for "To makeing the Carpet to fit the House 330 yds at 9d including Tacks &c."²⁹ Two years later, in the fall of 1795, Clerk of the House John Beckley purchased additional carpeting from Josiah Lusby and William Adcock. The total amount paid for this carpeting was \$371.65.³⁰

The only known contemporary reference to the material in the carpets is Bradbury's statement that "The floors of both halls are covered with woolen carpets." There is no indication as to the color of the carpeting.

Chairs

Among the furnishings purchased by the county commissioners in 1790 were ninety-two mahogany arm chairs, stuffed with horse hair, upholstered in black leather, and brass-nailed (see Appendix B, Items Nos. 51, 83, 84, 85, 89, 90, and 192; and Illustrations Nos. 5 and 6). Of these, twenty-seven were for the Senate Chamber; the remaining sixty-five for the House. During the enlargement of 1793, forty-five more chairs were procured,³¹ of which forty-four were for the House.³² The additional forty-four chairs brought the total number purchased for the House to 109, or one for each of the 106 members, including the Speaker, with three left over.³³

In addition to the chairs of the members, the Chamber contained chairs for the Clerk of the House, for newspapermen who recorded the debates,³⁴ and at least on occasion for members of the Senate and of the diplomatic corps.³⁵ Other than the observation of Moreau de St. Méry following attendance at the opening of Congress that "the members of the Senate occup[ied] armchairs," there is no evidence as to the appearance of the latter chairs, nor, although there must have been at least thirty for the Senate and ten or more for the diplomatic corps, is there any indication of their number.

Of the 137 members chairs known to have been purchased by the city and county commissioners, several are now in the Independence National Historical Park Collection, and at least two others have been located (see Appendix C for a comparative analysis of the chairs owned by the Park, and Appendix D for a short history of the movement of Congress Hall furniture after 1800).³⁶ The chairs in the collection are all upholstered in black leather.

Desks and Tables

The purchase of desks to accommodate the members of the House in 1790 must have been included in the £469.6.0 paid Thomas Affleck (see Appendix B, item 92). In 1791, a visitor to the House mentioned that he had seen "the writing desks of the most shining mahogany; the superb drawers for every Member to lock his brains, memory, and other documents in...."³⁷

On December 15, 1793, the commissioners in charge of enlarging Congress Hall paid Affleck £100 for "80 feet mahogany desks with drawers for [Congress] @ 25/" and £3 for "cutting and fitting up the old furniture."³⁸ On January 10, 1794, he was paid £3.2.6 for "an addition of 2 feet 6 Inches to a Table for Congress @ 25/."³⁹ Apparently, desks fitted together to form rows which followed the curve of the stepped platform upon which they rested. Each member had, not an individual desk, but rather a place at a long desk which contained a drawer for his personal

use (see Illustrations Nos. 7 and 8 for photographs of desks fitting this general description which were used by the House while it met in New York's Federal Hall). This conclusion is supported by several contemporary descriptions of the chamber⁴⁰ and by a letter in which Charles Willson Peale remarks that the "furniture left here [Philadelphia] consists of some long mahogany Tables of the form of a segment of a Circle,..."⁴¹ Unfortunately, no more detailed descriptions of the desks have been found, but they must have resembled those used by Congress while in New York rather closely.

In addition to the desks of the members, the furniture of the House included a desk for the Speaker, a desk for the clerk, a table on which water and perhaps somewhat stronger beverages were kept for the refreshment of the members, and tables or desks for the press stenographers. These items may have been included in the furniture purchased from Affleck in 1790, or in the "Tables and Desk" for which Matthew Armour was paid £8.2.3 (see Appendix B, entries 101 and 192).⁴²

The only contemporary description of the Speaker's desk as yet found said that "the speaker sits in a large arm chair with a table before him like a toilette, covered with green cloth, fringed."⁴³ The use of "toilette" in this connection seems to indicate a desk similar to the so-called "Delegates Desk" in the Independence National Historical Park Collection (see Illustration No. 9).⁴⁴

Contemporary descriptions of the clerk's desk, or clerks' desks, are even less detailed, and conflict as to numbers and location. In 1794, a visitor remarked that "In the middle but towards one side is the Speaker's

Chair,...in front of which but below are the Secretary's Desk of Beautiful Mahogany."⁴⁵ Four months later, another visitor remarked that the clerks sat below the Speaker, but did not describe their desks.⁴⁶ The question is further complicated by a description of the House Chamber during the observances of Washington's death which mentions that "The Speaker's Chair and table, and the tables on each side, are entirely shrouded in black."⁴⁷ McKoy remembered that there were "four narrow desks between the Sixth Street windows for the [press] stenographers,..." but did not mention the location of the Clerk's desk. On January 1, 1802, a committee of the House of Representatives of Pennsylvania reported that among the furniture left behind in Philadelphia by the state and federal governments were "clerk's desks."⁴⁸

Conflicting though this evidence is, certain tentative conclusions can be drawn. The Clerk of the House had a desk of mahogany, possibly similar to the so-called "Declaration Desk" shown in Illustration No. 10⁴⁹ which was placed in front of but below the Speaker. The press stenographers had tables of unknown material and design which probably stood behind the Speaker's dais next to the Sixth Street wall. One or more of the assistants to the Clerk of the House may also have had tables in the chamber flanking that of the Clerk, although this seems improbable.

In addition to the desks and tables for members, Speaker, Clerk and stenographers, the Chamber contained a refreshment table located at the southern end, outside the bar:

...Colonel Parker left his bench and went to refresh himself at a table where there were earthen pots and bottles of Molasses liquor for the members....⁵⁰

None of the desks and tables used in the House Chamber between 1790 and 1800 are known to exist.

Stoves

In 1790 there were eight fireplaces in Congress Hall, two pair on the east and west walls of each story. Among the disbursements made in 1790 for fitting up Congress Hall for use by Congress were three for stoves: £8.16.6 "for 2 large Franklin Stoves," £4.5.0 "for a Stove," and £18.15.2 "for Stoves and Chimney backs" (see Appendix B, entries 74, 96 and 104). Assuming that the stoves mentioned in entry 104 cost approximately the same as those in the other two accounts, the £18.15.2 probably bought three stoves and two chimney backs, so that a total of six stoves and two chimney backs were purchased. The chimney backs probably were used in the Senate Chamber, so that from 1790 until 1793 the House contained four Franklin or "open" stoves, one in each of its fireplaces.

The enlargement of the building in 1793 added four fireplaces, one on each of the east and west walls of both floors of the addition. This made a total of six fireplaces in the House Chamber; two under the gallery, two at the south end (see Illustration No. 2), and two in the middle of the Chamber (these were not restored during the 1912-1913 restoration and are not shown in the illustration). One of the latter may have been bricked up, however.⁵¹

Soon after completion of the enlargement, more stoves were purchased for Congress Hall. On December 24, 1793, the city and county commissioners bought "2 large open stoves" for £10,⁵² at about the same time they bought two more "stoves" for £8.8.9,⁵³ and on January 18, 1794, they purchased "one ten plate Stove and Seven foot pipe" for £8.10.0.⁵⁴ When these purchases were complete, the commissioners had purchased eleven stoves, all but one of which were probably either Franklin or "open" stoves, and two chimney backs for a building which had only eleven or twelve fire-places. Voucher references to "pulling down & Setting up 8 Stoves" indicate that at least eight stoves were in use in 1794.⁵⁵

At least four, and probably six, of these stoves were in use in the House. Bradbury stated that "There are two fireplaces, on each side of the hall with stoves." There is no indication as to whether by "hall" Bradbury meant the entire first floor chamber or just that part south of the loggia and gallery. If the latter was meant, then probably there were two more stoves in the fireplaces under the gallery. None of these stoves are known to exist.

In addition to stoves, the furnishings of the House Chamber included such accessories as "Copper Ashes Bucketts" (see Appendix B, entry 99), fenders,⁵⁶ shovels and tongs, and perhaps andirons.⁵⁷

Venetian Blinds

Among the items purchased for Congress Hall in 1790 were venetian blinds (see Appendix B, entry 86). Nine of these were for the round headed windows in the House of Representatives Chamber; the other two windows in

the House and those in the vestibule either were already equipped with blinds or went without them.⁵⁸

With the beginning of the enlargement in 1793, Samuel Benge was paid for "taking down 15 Sets Venetian Blinds."⁵⁹ Benge supplied "72 yds Green Cord" for repair of the blinds,⁶⁰ and David Evans repaired them⁶¹ and made four new blinds for the building, two of which must have been for the additional windows in the House Chamber.⁶² From December of 1793 until 1800 venetian blinds adapted to the arched windows hung in all of the windows of the House Chamber except perhaps for the two windows under the gallery. The use of "green cord" in these blinds indicates that the tapes and slats were green as well.

Curtains

The purchase, in 1790, of "101 yds. Pearnought," cloth, and the payment to William Bankson of £163.9.10 for "Upholsterers Work" (see Appendix B, entries 100, 102 and 103) indicate that curtains were provided for the House Chamber.⁶³ Certainly there were canopy curtains over the Speaker's Chair, for a newspaper satirist mentions them specifically.⁶⁴

On April 27, 1793, Samuel Benge was paid 8s9d for "Taking down Large Curtin over Speaker Chair Door and other Curtins in the Sennet Chamber & Congress rooms & Cleansing Do."⁶⁵ On the twenty-second of November following he was paid 7s6d for "fixing up Curtin behind the Congress Speaker's Chair."⁶⁶ On December 21, he was paid an additional 9s6d for "fixing up 5 Green Stuff blinds at the back of the Venetian Blinds."⁶⁷ These items indicate the curtains purchased in 1790 were taken down when Congress Hall was

enlarged, and were cleaned and replaced when the work was finished. However, the canopy curtain over the Speaker's chair, if it was put back, did not long remain in place, for McKoy explicitly states that the Speaker's chair was "without canopy," and none of the other descriptions of the House Chamber after enlargement mention what would have been a rather distinctive feature.

Lighting Fixtures

The House of Representatives occasionally met well into the evening, and consequently required some sort of artificial light.⁶⁸ On at least two occasions the Clerk of the House purchased a considerable quantity of candles,⁶⁹ and John McAllister, writing to John W. Wallace in 1872, recollected being in the House when John Marshall was speaking on the case of Jonathan Robins and that the "speech occupied the whole afternoon; indeed, candles were lighted before the close of it." This evidence, plus the total absence of items for the purchase of oil in the surviving accounts of the Clerk of the House, prove that the Chamber was lighted by candles rather than some form of lamps during evening sessions. No description of the fixtures in which the candles were placed has yet been found. It is of interest, however, that none of the vouchers for fitting up the building in 1790 or for enlarging it in 1793 indicate that chandeliers were installed.

Art Objects

Among the few furnishings brought by Congress from New York were one or more busts or statues, and one or two of these were placed in the House Chamber. On January 27, 1792, Clerk Beckley "paid Martin Jugiez Acc^t

for bronzing statue...4.00,"⁷⁰ and on May 31 of the following year he paid "John Coburn for taking down the Statue in the House of Representatives... 12 [dollars]."⁷¹

In describing his visit to the House of Representatives in June 1794, Wansey mentioned that "over the door I observed a bust of Dr. Franklin the great founder of their liberties, and the father of their present constitution."⁷² Moreover, the Library Company of Philadelphia has in their collection a large bust of Minerva, the Roman goddess of wisdom, which is supposed to have been placed over the Speaker's chair during the first sessions of the Congress of the United States.⁷³

On April 11, 1792, "A memorial was read, from Signor Guiseppe Cerrachi (the artist, who executed the bust that stands over Mr. Speaker's chair) setting forth that he is ready to enter upon the execution of a design...."⁷⁴ Whether this bust was that of Minerva is not known. Dr. Charles Coleman Sellers, who is now engaged in a study of all existing busts and statues of Franklin, states that Cerrachi did a bust of Franklin. It is possible, therefore, that the bust of Franklin noted by Wansey was the Cerrachi bust which had once been over the Speaker's chair but had been moved to a new location by the date of Wansey's visit. It is equally possible that both a bust of Minerva and a bust of Franklin had been in the Chamber from 1790 to 1793, although it is almost certain that the Minerva had in any case been removed during the latter year, since none of the later writers who describe the room mention it.

The only other works of art known to have been in the Chamber were prints of John Trumbull's paintings "Quebec" and "Bunker Hill." These prints were presented to the House by Trumbull in 1799, accepted by that body, and "suspended on the right and left of the Speaker's Chair,...."⁷⁵

Miscellany

In addition to the many pieces of furniture discussed above, the House of Representatives contained many small items which were in everyday use. Perhaps the most intriguing of these were the House's share of the "50 Spitting boxes for Congress, £6.5" purchased from David Evans in 1790.⁷⁶ At least as useful, however, were the water pitcher, cups or glasses, and "earthen pots and bottles of Molasses liquor" which graced the refreshment table;⁷⁷ the "ink, pens, wafers, &c." on each desk;⁷⁸ the ballot box on the clerk's table used in electing the Clerk, Speaker, and committees; the "holes for the Southern and Eastern mails" mentioned by Bradbury; and the letter box.⁷⁹

Special Events

On at least one occasion, that of the announcement of Washington's death, temporary additions to the decor of the House were made:

The House of Representatives of Congress exhibits a pleasing, though mournful evidence of the respect which is felt for the character of General Washington, and of the unfeigned regret which has been excited by the melancholy event of his death. The Speaker's Chair and table, and the tables on each side, are entirely shrouded in black. The casement in the rear of the Speaker's Chair, and the recess are also elegantly ornamented with mourning emblems. The prints presented to the House by Mr. Trumbull are overhung with curtains of black. Between these, and in the centre of the House, Mr. Peale

proprietor of the Museum, has added a very striking likeness of the illustrious Hero, which besides being highly ornamental to the house, acts as an intelligible and feeling index to the occasion of the mourning emblems which surround it.⁸⁰

The Portico

There is as yet no evidence as to whether the portico added to Congress Hall in 1793 functioned only as an antechamber to the House and a covered passageway between the House Chamber and the offices of that body in the West Wing of Independence Hall, or whether it also provided additional office space. In view of the fact that recent archeological investigations have shown that the portico measured about 28 feet 6 inches in length by 18 feet 6 inches in width, the latter is a strong possibility. If that was the case, the room or rooms in the portico may have been furnished as were the clerk's office and committee rooms (see Appendix E).

Conclusions

The House of Representatives Chamber as it now stands is, with certain exceptions, an accurate restoration architecturally of the room in which Congress met from 1793 until 1800. It is a room imposing in scale and in the taste and simplicity of its architectural features. It is almost completely lacking in the one ingredient most essential to recreating the scene in which Congress met: the furnishings which so transformed an almost austere room as to lead one discriminating observer of the contemporary scene to characterize it as "unnecessarily fine."

The furnishings, many of them made by men who had played a leading role in establishing Philadelphia's leadership in the field of fine furniture, consisted of the following items:

1. A Speaker's dais raised a few steps above the floor and railed in stood at or near the center of the west wall.
2. A stepped platform consisting of two levels and enclosed by a low railing at the rear, large enough to accommodate, together with one row on the floor, the desks and chairs of 105 members of the House.
3. A woolen carpet of an unknown color which covered all of the floor of the House including the stepped platform and probably the floor of the loggia as well.
4. One hundred six mahogany arm chairs, stuffed with horse hair and covered with black leather, brass-nailed. One of these was used by the Speaker, the others by the members.

5. A mahogany "toilette" desk covered with green baize for the Speaker, a mahogany desk of unknown design for the Clerk, three curved rows of mahogany table desks with a drawer and lock for each of the members, a refreshment table, and four tables for reporters.

6. Six Franklin or open stoves, one in each of the fireplaces in the Chamber and the loggia.

7. Venetian blinds with fan heads in each of the round headed windows of the Chamber, but not the loggia.

8. Curtains in the windows.

9. Enough candelsticks to provide illumination for the floor of the chamber.

10. Prints of the John Trumbull paintings "Bunker Hill" and "Quebec," and a bust of Benjamin Franklin.

11. Such miscellaneous items as spitting boxes, writing materials, stove accessories, and so forth.

Furthermore, on at least one occasion, black crepe draperies were added to transform the room from a comfortable working space to a suitable scene in which to conduct the observance of Washington's death.

NOTES

1. Clerk of Common Council of Philadelphia to Miers Fisher, September 9, 1790, Miers Fisher Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania. The state legislature, in 1791, voted to reimburse the city and county for the monies spent for this purpose.
2. Thomas Twining, Travels in America 100 Years Ago (New York, 1884), 50. Hereafter cited as Twining, Travels.
3. The author, who is 6 feet 1 inch tall, found that if he sat on the steps of the gallery as restored by the A.I.A. in 1911-1913, he was unable to see any of the floor of the House except from the two top steps, and then only the southern portion. The portion which can be seen was not constructed until 1793. Even if the gallery front had been a railing, instead of solid panelling as the restoration is, it would have been impossible to see much of the floor of the House unless one were sitting on benches. The accounts of the city and county commissioners for preparing Congress Hall for the reception of Congress are complete (see Appendixes A and B). The account of the county commissioners specifies, in general terms, the type of work for which each payment was made, the account of the city commissioners was apparently for establishing the clerk's office and committee rooms in the West Wing of Independence Hall; neither contains an item which could be for the purchase of benches for the gallery. Perhaps the benches were relatively crude, and are accounted for in one of the large payments for "Carpenters Work."
4. It should be noted that the plan shown in Illustration No. 1 was a suggested seating arrangement, and was for Old City Hall rather than Congress Hall. There is no direct evidence as to the seating arrangement of the House of Representatives during these years; strangely enough, no description of the House for this period has been found. However, an article in the Boston Columbian Centinel for May 22, 1793, describing the alterations then being made to Congress Hall remarks that "The seats will preserve the oval form, but the Speaker's chair is to be removed to the west side of the House...." This would indicate that the Speaker's chair had been located elsewhere, and the bay would have been the most logical location for it.
5. "Letter from Theophilus Bradbury, M.C. from Essex County Mass., to his daughter Harriet," Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography, VIII (1884), 226. Hereafter cited as Bradbury Letter.
6. "On entering the House of Representatives, I was struck with the convenient arrangement of the seats for the members: ...the seats in three rows formed semi-circles behind each other, facing the Speaker, who was

in kind of pulpit near the centre of the radii,..." - Henry Wansey, An Excursion to the United States of North America, In the Summer of 1799 (2nd Ed., Salisbury, 1798), 97. Hereafter cited as Wansey, An Excursion.

7. "There was, I believe, a moveable wooden rostrum for the Speaker and Clerks, which, I think, was at some time near the west end or side of the Chamber, probably eight or ten feet from the west wall,..." - John McAllister to John W. Wallace, February 19, 1872, quoted in "The Report of the Committee on Restoring Congress Hall," Papers of the American Institute of Architects, Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Hereafter cited as McAllister Letter. The letter contains the reminiscences of an elderly man, and are not necessarily accurate. However, the distance of the dais from the west wall is apparently substantiated by a description of a fight between Representatives Griswold and Lyon in Claypoole's American Daily Advertiser, February 16, 1798, which states that "At length getting behind the Speaker's chair, Mr. L. snatched up the tongs from the fire...."
8. Nicholas King, "Journal of Observations and Occurences in a Voyage from England to America in the Year 1793" (Typescript, Huntington Library). Hereafter cited as King, "Journal."
9. Wansey, An Excursion, 97-99.
10. Perkins, Bradford, "A Diplomat's Wife in Philadelphia: Letters of Henrietta Liston, 1796-1800," The William and Mary Quarterly, XI, (October 1954), 606.
11. Anna M. and Kenneth Roberts, eds., Moreau de St. Mery's American Journey (Garden City, 1947), 349-350. Hereafter cited as Moreau, American Journey.
12. "...the President of the United States,...came into the Chamber of the House of Representatives, and took his seat in the chair usually occupied by the Speaker. The Vice-President and Secretary of the Senate were seated in advance, inclining to the right of the President, the late Speaker of the House of Representatives and Clerk on the left, and the Justices of the Supreme Court were seated round a table in front of the President of the United States." - [United States Senate], Executive Journal [title page missing], I, 231. Hereafter cited as U. S. Senate, Executive Journal.
13. "Accordingly, I have attended with other notetakers back of the Speaker's chair,..." - Philadelphia Aurora, February 17, 1798.

14. "...upon removing some modern flooring parts of the original floor of the House, of yellow pine planks six to ten inches wide, were disclosed, bearing marks of attachments clearly indicating the location at the western side of the hall of the Speaker's platform...." - Frank Miles Day, "The Restoration of Congress Hall," Old Penn Weekly Review (November 1, 1913). The proposed dais shown on the plan reproduced as Illustration No. 2 may incorporate these findings. The portion of original flooring adjacent to the dais was retained in place.
15. King, "Journal." Similar stepped platforms may have been in use prior to 1793; the proposed seating plan (see Illustration No. 1) seems to indicate this. They would not, however, have been large enough for use after the enlargement. The records of payments made during the enlargement contain no record of payments made specifically for the construction of platforms, but payments for materials and carpenters work were large enough to have included such construction.
16. Wansey, An Excursion.
17. Bradbury Letter.
18. Letter of Mr. McKoy to Poulson's American Daily Advertiser, quoted in "The Report of the Committee on Restoring Congress Hall," Papers of the American Institute of Architects, Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Hereafter cited as McKoy Letter.
19. Photo, Negative No. CN-5202 (taken February 13, 1912), in Independence National Historical Park Photo Files.
20. Frank Miles Day, "The Restoration of Congress Hall," Old Penn Weekly Review (November 1, 1913).
21. There would have been no need to elevate the first row of seats above the floor. Moreover, if the first level had been raised above the floor, the railing at the rear of the platform, which we have reason to believe was not more than 5 feet high measured from the floor, would have risen only at most about 2 feet 9 inches above the level of the last step of the riser.
22. Beginning with December of 1793, there were 105 members of the House to provide seating space for, and since each chair was 2 feet wide, each member would need about 2-1/2 feet at a minimum. Roger Griswold, a member of the House from Connecticut, in reporting his assault on Representative Lyon, wrote "that as soon as I saw him in his seat I took my

cane and walk'd across the floor in front of the speakers chair, which is more than forty feet in extent...." - Roger Griswold to "Dear Sir," February 25, 1798, Lane Collection, Yale University.

23. "Mr. BAYARD observed that the gentleman from Pennsylvania had told the House a number of things he did not know; amongst these was the ground upon which the Speaker had a right to turn out Strangers from the floor of the House. Mr. B. was surprized that gentleman who knew so much, should be ignorant of this. There was scarcely a member in the House, he thought, who did not know that the House was divided into different parts; one of which was for the members, and another for strangers. The part assigned to the members was the floor and the lobby; and the galleries for those who choose to attend their proceedings. With respect to the lobby, the Speaker, as the general conservator or peace and order in the House, had the same charge over it, as over other parts of the house.... But the gentleman said there was no rule upon the Subject. Nor could there be any; for though gentlemen sometimes introduced their friends into the lobby of the House, which was a thing of courtesy, they certainly had no right to do so." - Claypoole's American Daily Advertiser, March 23, 1798.
24. Appearing before the Committee of Privileges considering the action of Representative Lyon, who had spat in the face of Representative Griswold, Speaker Dayton testified that he had been seated "in one of the members seats next to the bar" talking to Lyon, who "was standing without the bar of the house, leaning on the same, and holding a conversation with the speaker;..." - Porcupine's Gazette, February 3, 1798. Griswold, in describing his part in the affray, wrote that "As to my stepping out of the seat and standing by him [Lyon] it was nothing more than getting up and taking a single step to a spot where I could conveniently lean my arm on the bar..." - Roger Griswold to "Dear Sir," February 25, 1798, Lane Collection, Yale University.
25. "Mr. W. Smith enquired of the Chairman whether there was not an error in counting the votes on the question of yesterday.
"The Chairman replied that there was. It arose, he supposed, from the number of strangers in the House, and from their pressing to near the members...." - Claypoole's American Daily Advertiser, May 31, 1797.
26. The carpet purchased from William P. Sprague (Entry 215, Appendix B) was for the Senate Chamber - Dunlap's American Daily Advertiser, June 6, 1791.

The £38.17.10 paid John Harland on December 10, 1790 (Appendix A) was probably for the House committee rooms.

27. "The floor of that part of the hall in which the members sat is covered by a carpet" - King, "Journal." "The floors of both halls are covered with woolen carpets" - Bradbury Letter. "The House of Representatives, in session, occupied the whole of the ground floor, upon a platform elevated three steps in ascent plainly carpeted,..." - McKoy Letter.
28. On November 20, 1793, the county commissioners bought from Josiah Lusby "81 yds. In grain Carpeting" at 8/4 per yard, or a total of £13.15.0. On November 25, they bought from John Harland "2 ps. 4-1/4 Carpeting 102-1/4 yd 8/4," a total of £42.12.1. On December 14, the commissioners also purchased from Sarah Clark "1 Biece Carpeting 71 yds at 8/4," "1 [Piece Carpeting] 73 yds at 8/4," and "1 [Piece Carpeting] 53-1/2 yds at 6/3," or a total cost of £76.14.14-1/2. - Vouchers, "Congress Hall, Philadelphia, 1790's," State Records Office, Harrisburg. Hereafter cited as "Vouchers, 1793-94," State Records Office.
29. Voucher 165, "Vouchers, 1793-94," State Records Office.
30. Account No. 7689, "The United States in Account with John Beckley," Miscellaneous Treasury Records of the General Accounting Office (R.G. 217), National Archives. Hereafter cited as Miscellaneous Treasury Records. The account does not indicate whether this carpet was for the House Chamber or for its offices and/or committee rooms.
31. "Philadelphia 7th November 1793
The Commissioners of the City and County of Philada.
To Thos. Affleck Dr.
To 45 Mahogany Arm Chairs for Congress
@ 35 / £78.15.0"
Voucher 193, "Vouchers, 1793-94," State Records Office.
32. "1793 The City and County Commissioners for
Congress Hall
... [to Samuel Bengel]
22d Nov.
44 Elbow Chairs stuffed & cov'd with)
black leather and brass nailed at) - 33.0.0
15/ pr Chair
1 Do Cov'd Red Leather for Sennet Chamber-15.0"

Voucher 165, "Vouchers, 1793-94," State Records Office. On March 22, 1793, Benge had been given \$69.72 for "Upholsterer's work" by Clerk of the House Beckley, but this was probably for reupholstering since the account contains nothing to indicate purchase of any new furniture. - Account No. 4200, "The United States in Account with John Beckley," Miscellaneous Treasury Records.

33. "He [each member] sits on an arm chair covered with leather." - King, "Journal." "The Speaker sits in a large arm chair.... The members' seats are 3 rows of desks,...with large armed chairs with leather bottoms." - Bradbury Letter. Moreau de St. Mery in his American Journey, 1793-1798, states that the members sat upon benches, but this is contravened by conclusive evidence that chairs were used.

34. "The House of Representatives, in session, occupied the whole of the ground floor,...and [there were] four narrow desks between the Sixth Street windows for the [press] stenographers, Lloyd, Sales, Callender and Duane." - McKoy Letter.

"The House have thought it of public utility, and right when their galleries are open, to admit notetakers to a more convenient situation for hearing and writing than their crowded gallery; that whatever was published respecting their public transactions might have the best chance of being correct. Accordingly, I have attended with other notetakers back of the Speakers chair,..." - Philadelphia Aurora, February 17, 1798.

35. "I shall say a word about the ceremony which takes place at the opening of the sessions of Congress.

...
"The Senate attends in a body, and it is then that the Chamber of Representatives becomes the Congress. The members of the Senate occupy armchairs in the center of the gathering." - Moreau, American Journey, 349-50.

"The late President of the United States, the great and good Washington, took a seat as a private citizen, a little in front of the seats assigned for the Senate, which were on the south side of the House; the foreign ministers and members of the House of Representatives took their usual seats: a great concourse of both sexes being present [for Adams' inauguration.]" - U. S. Senate, Executive Journal, 231.

36. "What is of greater import to us of a later day, is the tracing and verification of the pedigrees of a varied group of admirable pieces (deduced through descriptive data in the original manuscript accounts and a receipt book) which were expertly constructed by Thomas Affleck. To

chronicle them all here would be an unnecessary task, but is enough to mention: ...the Delegate's chairs supplied for Congress Hall (yet now [1935] displayed in Independence Hall);..." - William M. Hornor, Blue Book Philadelphia Furniture (Philadelphia, 1935), 73-74. The provenance of two of the twenty-three similar chairs in the Independence National Historical Park Collection tends to establish them as chairs used by Congress.

37. Independent Gazetteer, March 5, 1791.
38. Voucher 193, "Vouchers, 1793-94," State Records Office.
39. Voucher 194, "Vouchers, 1793-94," State Records Office.
40. "Before each row of members is a Mahogany Desk with a drawer for papers and a place for ink, pens, wafers, &c for each member."-King, "Journal."

"...every member was accommodated for writing by their being a circular writing desk to each of the circular seats:..." - Wamsey, An Excursion.

"The members' seats are three rows of desks, rising one above another in the form of a semi-circle,...these are writing desks... There is a lock and key to each desk and places on the desks for ink, pens, and a plentiful supply of paper." - Bradbury Letter.
41. C. W. Peale to Charles Biddle, March 3, 1812, C. W. Peale Letterbook, III, 54-55, American Philosophical Society.
42. Matthew Armour is not among the Philadelphia cabinetmakers mentioned in Hornor's definitive Blue Book, and he is listed in the 1793 city directory as "house carpenter." This should not be taken, however, as conclusive evidence that he was incapable of executing skilled cabinet work such as the Speaker's desk must have been.
43. Bradbury Letter.
44. The "Delegate's Desk" is attributed by Hornor to John Folwell, who is known to have made desks for the Pennsylvania Assembly in 1778-1779. Whether this attribution is based on historical data, stylistic peculiarities, or tradition is not known. This desk and the "Declaration Desk," and "Secretary's Desk" as well, should be carefully studied and their attribution checked, since, if the attribution is not correct, they might be the desks of the Speaker and/or Clerk of the House of Representatives.
45. King, "Journal."

46. Wansey, An Excursion.
 47. Claypoole's American Daily Advertiser, December 26, 1799.
 48. Pennsylvania, Journal of the House of Representatives of Pennsylvania, 1801, ([Lancaster], [1801]), 89.
 49. This desk is attributed to Folwell, an attribution which should be very carefully checked.
 50. Moreau, American Journey, 90. Writing to an unknown correspondent, Representative Griswold, in describing his affray with Lyon, remarked that Lyon renewed the combat while Griswold "was standing at the South end of the Hall." - Griswold to "Dear Sir," February 25, 1798, Lane Collection, Yale University. The Philadelphia Aurora of February 6, 1798, noted that the incident occurred while "Mr. G. was standing at that part of the house where water is placed for the use of members."
- Moreau's reference to molasses liquor is confirmed by records of the purchase on March 7, 1798, of \$110 worth of "Sugarhouse syrup" followed by the purchase on March 9 of \$45.50 worth of "lime juice." Account No. 10,460, "The United States in Account with Jonathan W. Condry,..." Miscellaneous Treasury Records.
51. Independence National Historical Park, Historic Structures Report Part I on Congress Hall (typescript, May 1959), Chapter II, Section 1, 17-22. Samuel Edgerton, student architect in the Historic Structures Section, Architectural Branch, E.O.D.C., is now engaged in an architectural investigation of the fireplaces of Congress Hall and an historical study of the means by which the building was heated. A report of his findings is now being prepared, and should add greatly to our knowledge on this subject.
 52. Voucher 201, "Vouchers, 1793-94," State Records Office.
 53. Voucher 202, "Vouchers, 1793-94," State Records Office.
 54. Voucher 185, "Vouchers, 1793-94," State Records Office.
 55. Unnumbered Voucher, September 26, 1794, "Vouchers, 1793-94," State Records Office. Also, there is a reference to "Setting 8 Stoves" in Voucher 176, "Vouchers, 1793-94," State Records Office.

56. "January 18th 1794

To the Commissioners of the City and County of
Philadelphia

To John Mitten Dr.

For Iron Work delivered to Congress	£	5d
To Two Fenders weight 35 pounds...	2	12 6
To Do for Do weight 30 pound	2	5 0"

Voucher 199, "Vouchers, 1793-94," State Records Office.

57. "County and City Commissioners
For Congress Hall

1793 To William Kane Dr.

12 month 23 ...
To 2 Pair Kitchen and Irons 1.15.0
To 2 Pair ditto Shovel & Tongs 1.17.6"

Voucher 200, "Vouchers, 1793-94," State Records Office.

58. "Dec. 9. Philadelphia County Commissioners -

6 Venetian Blinds for Congress, with plain fronts
in Senate Chamber and Committee Rooms in County
Court House at £4.10 each -
9 do for Arch windows down stairs in the House of
Representatives of U.S. at £6 each. Lengthening
5 Blinds, 3 tossils, etc., £2."

"Excerpts from the Day-Books of David Evans," The Pennsylvania Magazine
of History and Biography, XXVII (1903), 51.

59. Voucher 165, "Vouchers, 1793-94," State Records Office.

60. Ibid.

61. Voucher 149, "Vouchers, 1793-94," State Records Office.

62. Unnumbered Voucher, January 2, 1794, "Vouchers, 1793-94," State Records
Office.

63. The chairs made by Affleck were upholstered by Thomas Jacquette and John David, the tables which constituted a large part of Affleck's bill needed no upholstering, and the work of laying the carpets is accounted for. The payment to Bankson indicates that he did a lot of work; it is exceeded in amount only by the payments to Affleck for furniture and to Sadler and Govett for carpentry, and it is difficult to imagine what the work could have involved other than preparing and installing curtains.
64. "Uncle Gwynn. Pray, for what purposes are those canopy curtains intended, which are in the upper and lower Rouse [sic].
- "Morgan. They are intended to ornament the heads of the President, Vice-President, and Speaker, and to give elegant sanction to whatever they may say or do." - Independent Gazetteer, March 5, 1791.
65. Voucher 165, "Vouchers, 1793-94," State Records Office.
66. Ibid.
67. Voucher 204, "Vouchers, 1793-94," State Records Office. Perhaps these "Green Stuff binds" were curtain ties, although more probably they had something to do with the blinds themselves.
68. "Congress did not break up till midnight,..." - James Hillhouse to Rebecca Hillhouse, March 2, 1793, Hillhouse Family Papers, Yale University. Similar references to late sessions occasionally occur in newspaper accounts of the proceedings of the House.
69. On November 19, 1795, Clerk Beckley purchased candles from Garret Cottinger for \$48.80 - Account No. 7689, "The United States in Account with John Beckley," Miscellaneous Treasury Records. Again on March 12, 1799, Clerk Condry bought \$39.66 worth of candles from Charles Minifie - Account No. 10,460, "The United States in Account with Jonathan Condry," Miscellaneous Treasury Records. At this time tallow candles purchased for the various Federal executive offices cost about 20¢ per pound.
70. Account No. 2039, Miscellaneous Treasury Records.
71. Account No. 4200, Miscellaneous Treasury Records.
72. Wansey, An Excursion.
73. "In regard to the Bust of Minerva I can find no reference to it in the minutes, but I have always understood that it was made to stand behind

the Speaker's Chair in the first Congress that sat in Philadelphia and upon removal of Congress to Washington, it was presented to the Library." - Note by George M. Abbot, December 4, 1890, "The Library Company Philadelphia [notebook]," Library Company of Philadelphia.

74. Dunlap and Claypoole's American Daily Advertiser, April 13, 1792. A phone call to Mr. Barney Chesnick of the Library Company elicited the information that the Minerva is unsigned and has not been attributed. Its size would seem to eliminate it as the bust over the Speaker's chair unless it can be attributed to Cerrachi.
75. Claypoole's American Daily Advertiser, December 3, 1799.
76. "Excerpts from the Day-Books of David Evans," The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography, XXVII (1903), 51.
77. Moreau, American Journey, 90.
78. King, "Journal." The only evidence of the purchase of inkstands is an item in Account No. 3819, Miscellaneous Treasury Records, for \$19.80 "paid Joseph Stansbury for inkstands," and in view of the sum paid these were probably for the offices. Members were in the habit of writing at their desks, however, as is shown by the following:

"Brother Hillhouse is this moment proving the propriety of the article [in Jay's Treaty] prohibiting Sesquetrations or confiscation,... He once in a while speaks so loud as to interrupt me for a moment but on reflecting that he is on the right side I compose myself again & go to writing." - Nathaniel Smith to D. Daggett, April 1796, D. Daggett Letterbook, Rare Book Room, Yale University.
79. "When the house was balloting he [Samuel Smith of Maryland] left his seat to take his letters from the letter box:..." - Parcupine's Gazette, February 7, 1798.
80. Claypoole's American Daily Advertiser, December 26, 1799. Also, Elizur Goodrich to [D. Davenport], December 26, 1799, Davenport Letterbooks, Rare Book Room, Yale University.

APPENDIXES

A P P E N D I X A

Statement of Expenditures by the Corporation of Philadelphia for the
Accommodation of Congress, 1790

[from manuscript at the Pennsylvania Historical and
Museum Commission, Harrisburg]

Tr Accomodations for the Congress of the United States
To the Corporation of the City of Philadelphia

1790

Nov. 24	To Cash paid the Committees order to Govett & Co.	37.10--
Dec. 4	To ditto ... ditto .. John Ashmead ...	2. --
7	To ditto ... ditto .. John Harland ...	38.17.10
13	To ditto ... ditto .. Benj. Morgan ...	15. 3. 9
17	To ditto ... ditto .. Moses Rowan ...	40. 6. 9
21	To ditto ... ditto .. Wm Bankson ...	9. 1. -
23	To ditto ... ditto .. Sadler & Govett...	37.10. -
30	To ditto ... ditto .. Richard Sermon ...	7.17. 8
31	To ditto ... ditto .. John Harland ...	5.17. 0
	To ditto ... ditto .. B & Ed Carnes ...	3.13. 0

1791

Feb. 14	To ditto ... ditto .. Tobias Cummings ..	-- 2. 6
Apr. 11	To ditto ... ditto .. Poultney & Wistar ..	4.14. 3
June 10	To ditto Mayor's order to Govett & Sadler ...	179. 9. 6-1/2
July 25	To ditto Committee ord-- Wm. Cox	18.15. -
		<u>£ 400.18. 3-1/2</u>

To the Tr. of the Corporation

A P P E N D I X B

Disbursements Paid for Fitting Up Congress Hall in 1790
/from manuscript at the Pennsylvania Historical
and Museum Commission, Harrisburg/

Amount of Disbursements paid by the Commissioners of the City and
County of Philadelphia, for fitting the New County Court House, for
the accommodation of Congress. (1791)

Nº	14	To Matthew Armour, for 4 setts of Pillaster Ornaments	3. 0. 0
	51	To Gurney & Smith, for 51 Morroco Skins	21.13. 6
	59	To John Harland, for 132-1/2 Yds. Carpeting	51.16. 6
	66	To Thomas Armat, for Carpetg. thread & binding	9.17. 0
	69	To Caleb Emlen, for a Pine Log & Carting	2.10. 0
	70	To William Adcock, for 21 Yds. Carpeting	7.17. 6
	74	To Potts & Hobart, for 2 large Franklin Stoves	8.16. 6
	77	To Edward Jones, for 3-1/2 days labour	0.14. 0
	78	To James Tully, for blacking Stoves	0.18. 9
	80	To Joseph Fry, for Work done	7.13. 9
	81	To Samuel Shoemaker, for Plaistg. & Whitewashing	19.18. 6
	83	To Thomas Affleck, for Magogany	10.12.10
	84	To Thomas Jaquetts, for Stuffing, Covering &) Brassnailing 43 Elbow Chairs)	82. 2. 0
	85	To Elisha Gordon, for Goat Skins	22.11. 0
	86	To David Evans, for Venetian Blinds	91. 5. 0
	87	To William Zane, for Brass Nails	20.10. 0
	88	To Andrew Geyer, paid for Washing, &c.	1. 7. 0
	89	To Jonathan Meredith, for Goat & Morocco Skins	34. 0. 0
	90	To John Davis, for Stuffing, Covering & Brassnailing) 49 Elbow Chairs)	98. 2. 3
	93	To Joseph Skerrett, for Smith Work	13. 8.11
	94	To Richard Sermon, for ditto	21.19. 8
	96	To John Kaighn, for a Stove	4. 5. 0
	97	To Solomon White & Co. for Quality binding	1.14. 6
	99	To And ^w Eisenhoot, for 2 Copper Ashes Bucketts	4.13. 0
	100	To John Harland, for Capetg. & Cloth	120. 7. 1-1/2
	101	To Matthew Armour, for Tables & Desk	8. 2. 3
	102	To William Bankson, for Upholsterers Work	163. 9.10
	103	To Jonathan Carmatt, for 101 Yds. Fearnought	17.13. 6
	104	To Hilary Baker, for Stoves & Chimney backs	18.15. 2
	106	To Wayne & Sheppard, for Lath	1.13. 0
	107	To Samuel Fletcher, for COLUMNS & Bannisters	8. 5. 3
	109	To Tho ^s Poultney & Sons, for Iron Mongery	40. 4. 5
	112	To Harrison & M ^c Gee, for Boards, Plank & Scantling	55.18. 5
	116	To Wetherill & Truman, for Plank & Scantling	13. 1. 5
	117	To Jacob Eckfelatt, for 4 Shoe Scrapers	4.10. 0
	119	To Israel Jones, for Rum	6.15. 7
	120	To Robert Haydock, for Pluming	74.15. -1/2

122	To Joseph Rakestraw, for Measg. Carpenters Work	4. 4. 0
124	To Souder & Robins, for Bricklayers Work & Materials	24. 6. 4
128	To William Stiles, for Stone Cutters Work	22.18.11
129	To Anthony Cuthbert, for a pr. Mast	1.18. 0
135	To Jones, Clerk & Cresson, for Boards	25.17..1
146	To Jospeh Skerrett, for Smiths Work	2.11. 6
149	To John West, for Boards, Plank & Lath	13. 3. 8
156	To Jacob Eckfelatt, for Iron Work	4.10. 0
192	To Thomas Affleck, for Furniture	469. 6. 0
215	To William P. Sprague, for 132-1/2 Yds. Carpetting,&	156.12. 6
216	To Sadler & Govett, for Carpenters Work	366.14. 2
217	To William Bankson, for makg. a large Carpet &) 50 Yds. Green Cord	4. 0. 0
218	To Robert Haydock, for Painting	26. 1. 6
230	To Caleb Emlen, for Plank	4. 5. 0

£ 2201. 6.11

deduct for Sundries charged in Poultney & Son's
Acct. N^o 109

.15.10-1/2

£ 2200.11. -1/2

Philadelphia, October 5th 1791.

Errors Excepted

Evan Thomas

Andrew Geyer

Sam^l Church

A P P E N D I X C

MEASUREMENTS OF THE "DELEGATES' " CHAIRS, Prepared by Museum Curator
Vernon Tancil

The twenty-eight "Delegates' " chairs were examined and measured to determine whether there are any significant differences. The chairs may be termed Sheraton-~~style~~ in feeling. They are armchairs and have upholstered backs and seats. The high back and straight front seat are rectangular. The ~~open~~ arms are upholstered and, with one exception, rest on arm supports of double curvature with molded fronts, enlarging from top to bottom. The exception has arm supports of only one curve, being straight from top to mid-center then curving outward to the bottom. The tapering front legs are molded on the outward two sides. This molding differs slightly in some chairs; these variations are not obvious, the design intending to be the same. The rear legs are quadrangular, plain, and canted. The chairs do not have stretchers.

The measurements of the chairs differ most in the height of the legs, the range being from 11-1/2 inches to 15-1/2 inches. This is reflected in the differences of the overall heights of the chairs, the range being from 34-1/2 inches to 38-3/8 inches. The variations which occur in the other measurements are much less and may be noted in the following list of comparative measurements. It is felt that most of the differences result from the chairs being hand produced and/or from the difficulty of obtaining accurate measurements because of the poor condition of the chairs.

Comparative list showing range of measurements:

Height ranges from 34-1/2 inches to 38-3/8 inches

14	chairs	measure	between	36-37	inches
5	"	"	"	35-36	inches
3	"	"	below	35	inches
1	chair	measures	above	37	inches

Width of seats range from 23-8/16 inches to 24-5/16 inches

6	between	23-1/2	-	24	inches
17	between	24	-	24-5/16	inches

Width of back at the arms: all range between 9-4/16 inches and 9-10/16 inches

Height of arm supports: all range between 10-1/4 inches and 11 inches.

Height of front legs range between 11-1/2 inches and 15-1/2 inches

3	chairs	measure	between	11-1/2	-	12	inches
5	"	"	"	12	-	13	inches
12	"	"	"	13	-	14	inches
2	"	"	"	14	-	15	inches
1	chair	measures		15			inches

Front legs taper from

range	of	top	of	leg	1-9/16	-	2	inches
range	of	foot	of	leg	4/16	-	8/16	of an inch

Range of taper from top to bottom is from 10/16 of an inch to 5/16 of an inch

2	differ	from	top	of	leg	to	foot	by	10/16	of an inch
2	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	by	9/16	of an inch
9	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	by	8/16	of an inch
3	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	by	7/16	of an inch
3	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	by	6/16	of an inch
4	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	by	5/16	of an inch

Arm supports taper from

range	at	top	from	1-4/16	-	1-7/16	inches
range	at	bottom	from	1-8/16	to	2	inches

Range of increase from top to bottom is from 2/16 to 10/16 of an inch

1	differs	from	top	to	bottom	of	arm	support	by	2/16	of an inch
10	differ	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	by	4/16	of an inch
5	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	by	5/16	of an inch
4	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	by	6/16	of an inch
1	differs	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	by	7/16	of an inch
1	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	by	8/16	of an inch
1	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	by	10/16	of an inch

The range that arm supports are set from front of seat is from 3 to 4-1/2 inches

6	chairs	have	arm	supports	set	from	front	between	3	-	3-8/16	inches
11	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	3-9/16	- 4 inches
6	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	4-1/16	- 4-1/2 inches

A P P E N D I X D

Congress Hall Furniture 1800-1812, prepared by Historian Mary Ann Hagan

In 1799, the state government moved from Philadelphia to Lancaster taking its furniture with it. In 1800, the Federal government moved to Washington, leaving behind the furniture purchased for the accommodation of Congress by the state. The disposition of this furniture soon became a subject of consideration by the state legislature.

The first action taken with regard to the Congress Hall furniture was to remove it to the Senate Chamber in the State House; an action for which one Charles Culvan was paid eight dollars in July 1801. In December of that year the loan of a portion of this furniture was requested by the Marshall of the Eastern District of Pennsylvania "for the accommodation of the Federal Courts," and on December 21, a committee of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives was appointed to "enquire and report to the House in what manner the said furniture may be disposed of." The request of the Marshall was denied, and in 1803 the "desks, chairs, etc." or a substantial portion of them, were removed to Lancaster and put into use by the state Senate. The old furniture of the state Senate was then sold.

It is possible that some of the Congress Hall furniture came under the provision for sale of furniture according to an 1812 amendment to the 1812 bill for removing the state capital to Harrisburg. This amendment stated that "the respective officers of government shall pay the money arising from the sale of certain furniture into the state treasury." However, since there are frequent references to payments made by the state for repairs to chairs in the

period after the removal to Harrisburg, it seems possible that only the chairs in very poor condition were sold in 1812; for example, one of the few vouchers to mention the purchase of new chairs, that of December 12, 1812, shows that fifteen dollars was paid for new chairs while at the same time thirty dollars was paid for the repair of chairs. It is possible, therefore, that some of the chairs used by Congress from 1790 to 1800 were made use of by the Pennsylvania legislature until they were beyond repair and were then discarded.

In 1814 small sums were paid by the state for mending chairs and twenty-one dollars was paid for chairs. In 1817 J. Emerson covered chairs at the cost of \$28.25 and in 1820 he charged roughly twenty dollars for covering desks. In the latter year two different accounts were paid six dollars each for chairs. In January of 1826, the state assembly considered a resolution for the repair of the chairs which had been "occupied by the sages of '76," presumably referring to the Congress Hall chairs. This resolution would have provided for the preservation of the chairs "in some safe place" because of their historic associations. Action on the resolution was postponed until February but it failed to be again considered at that time. The following December, \$77.26 was paid for repairing chairs and varnishing desks. In February of 1839 an account to the amount of \$85.94 for the repair of desks, including repair of leather, was reported as settled by the Senate committee on accounts. In 1840, \$144.12 was paid for floor cloth and furniture.

In preparing for the centennial of the adoption of the Declaration of Independence, Colonel Frank M. Etting began to assemble the "Congress Hall chairs," which had become scattered in the years between 1812 and 1870, under

the assumption that they were the "Signers' Chairs." One was obtained from the United States Supreme Court, two from the State Capitol building at Harrisburg, and one from the American Philosophical Society. The others came from private owners. A few were added after the Centennial. The collection at Independence Hall now includes twenty-three chairs of the type Affleck made for Congress in the 1790's.

A P P E N D I X E

MS Inventory of Furnishings by J. Beckley, Clerk, House of Representatives,
17 November 1790, in Miers Fisher Papers, [1775-1814], Historical Society
of Pennsylvania

Articles of Furniture necessary to be provided for the Committee-rooms
and Clerk's Office of the House of Representatives.

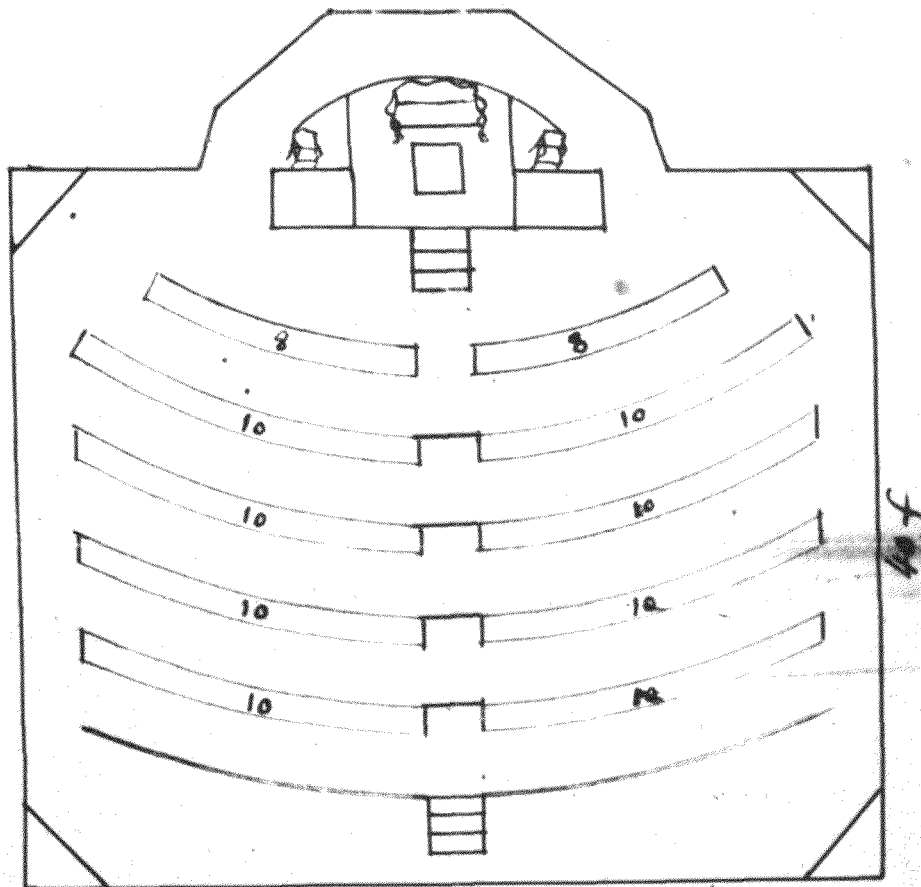
Each Committee room	1 dozen Chairs	Wm Cox
Moses Rowan	1 pine table covered with green baise, 8 feet long by 3-1/2 feet in width, with drawers, locks, keys, &c	
D ^o	1 double Book press (pine) with sliding divisions; each part of the press to be 3-1/2 feet high, 1-1/2 feet deep, and 3 feet 4 inches wide; with locks and keys 1 complete wooden inkstand, with drawer, glasses, &c	
Clerks Office	1 dozen Chairs; one half of which will be necessary for the small Lobby room adjoining it. Wm Cox	
Moses Rowan	1 pine table 6 feet long & 3 feet wide, covered with green baise, with drawers, locks, &c	
D ^o	2 ditto, each 3 feet long and 2 feet 8 inches wide; covered with green baise, and finished in like manner.	
D ^o	2 double presses of same dimensions as for the Com- mittee rooms. 3 pewter Ink pieces	

Note. It is requisite that the furniture for the Clerks' office should be
first provided, in order that the papers of Congress may be immediately
moved into it and arranged.

John Beckley, Clk; H:R:^s
17th November 1790

ILLUSTRATIONS

Plan of the City Hall of Philadelphia as it may be laid out to contain 96 Chairs for the Representatives of the United States, or in case of need by putting the Chairs nearer together 106 - as 2 f. are allowed for each Chair whereas 20 Inches is sufficient.



46 f

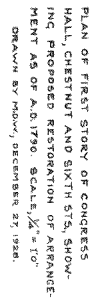
NB - A Chimney is proposed for each corner & sufficient space is left to sit round them

A Passage $3\frac{1}{2}$ f wide is left on the Sides & before the Speakers Chair to communicate with the Offices the Philosophical Hall by a Door thro the Middle of Bow -

A Passage is left of 3 f between the Desks for the North Door to the Chair -

A Passage of 3 f. 3 In. between each Row of Desks for the Members to sit & pass round each other without disturbance -

1000



See title on plan. The stepped platform shown on the plan would seat only 72 members, and, therefore, must be inaccurate. Compare with Illustration No. 4, and note that the one step of the platform shown on the plan was omitted from the restored platform.

Part C
Illustration No. 3



Photo of the House of Representatives
Chamber taken in 1937 showing the re-
stored Speaker's dais.

Part C
Illustration No. 4



Photo of the partially refurnished House of Representatives Chamber taken in 1951 and showing the stepped platforms built and installed in 1934. Note outline in lower right corner of floor area covered by original Speaker's dais.

Part C
Illustration No. 5



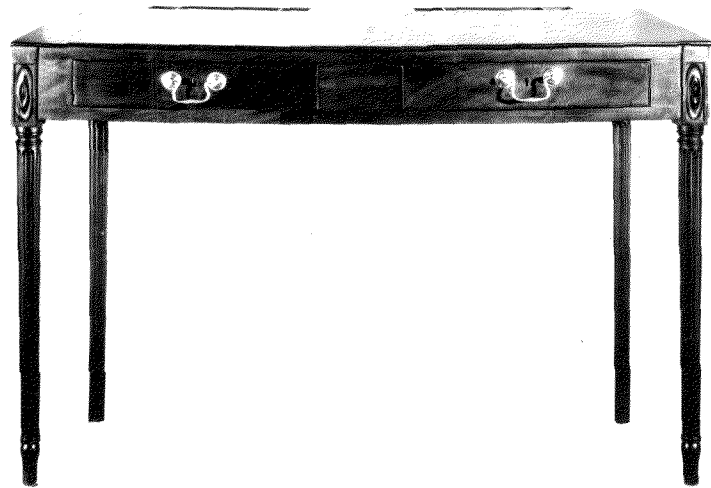
Leather upholstered elbow chair made
by Thomas Affleck for the Congress of
the United States, and now in the
Independence National Historical Park
Collection.

Part C
Illustration No. 6



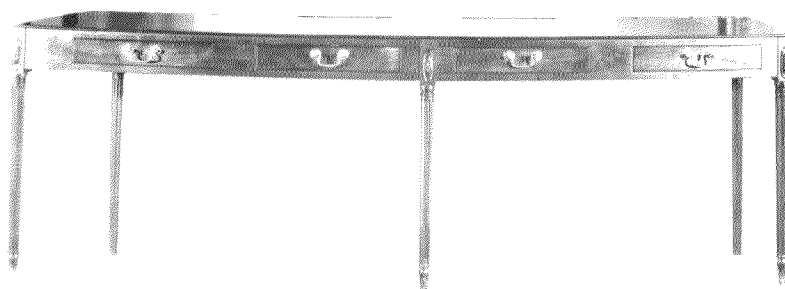
Frame of a leather upholstered elbow chair made by Affleck for Congress Hall, and now in the Independence National Historical Park Collection. This photo was taken in 1921; the chair has since been reupholstered and stretchers removed.

Part C
Illustration No. 7



"Short Table" from the Federal Hall,
New York, Collection. Note the cur-
vature of this table.

Part C
Illustration No. 8



"Long Table" from the Federal Hall
Collection. Again note that the
table is curved.

Part C
Illustration No. 9



So-called "Delegate's Desk" from the Independence National Historical Park Collection. The desk of the Speaker may have resembled this desk.

Part C
Illustration No. 10



So-called "Declaration Desk" in the Independence National Historical Park Collection. This desk possesses stylistic characteristics which indicate that it is of a period later than 1776. The desk of the Clerk may have resembled this desk.