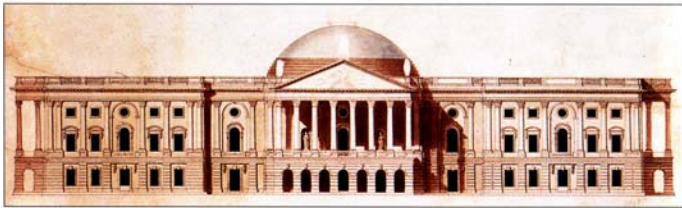


## The United States Capitol: Its Place in Our History



In 1793, Congress paid **Dr. William Thornton** \$500 for the winning Capitol design.

**George Washington** laid the Capitol's cornerstone in a ceremony on September 18, 1793. In November 1800, Congress and the Library of Congress moved into the first part of the Capitol to be built.

Additional work continued until 1814 when the British army burned the Capitol during the War of 1812.



The Capitol was rebuilt and completed in the 1820s, but by the 1850s the old House and Senate chambers, or rooms, were too small. Major additions took place during the next 15 years. By 1860, the House and Senate had moved into their new locations and the Supreme Court settled into the Old Senate Chamber.



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During the Civil War while the new dome was being finished, areas of the Capitol briefly became storehouses and barracks for Union soldiers and served as a hospital.

Modernizing the Capitol has been an on-going process. In 1874 the first elevator was installed, electric lights began replacing gaslights in the 1880s and air conditioning was completed by 1951.

The Capitol has kept pace with changes in communications since **Samuel Morse's** use of the telegraph in 1844. Telephone service started in the 1880s, and cable TV broadcasts began from the House in 1979 and the Senate in 1986. House Members electronically cast their votes, and all Members of Congress have access to the Internet. (Internet: [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov) and [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov))



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