

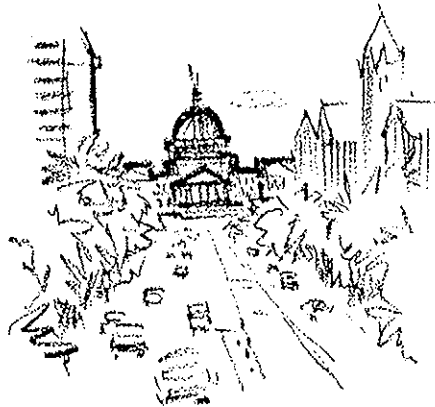
A LETTER

From WASHINGTON

*One familiar with the city
writes charmingly of her impressions*

Editor, *Ohioana: of Ohio and Ohioans:*

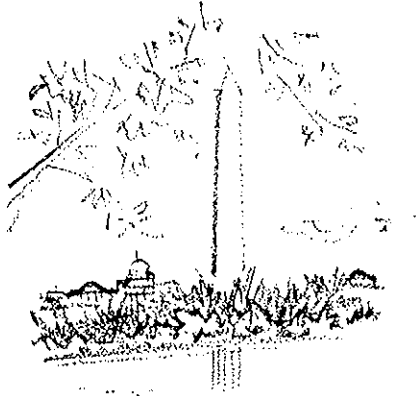
One cannot live at the crossroads of the world today and not be conscious of its past history and history in the making. Arriving by plane one Spring night, we dropped down out of the clouds into the diamond outlined design of the most beautiful city in the world, first known as the Federal City, later as Washington.



As we drove to our hotel from the airport I could not help but contrast our mode of travel and arrival with that of the first occupants of the White House, John and Abigail Adams. She had come by stage from Quincy, Massachusetts, sending their belongings, many of which were lost, by water.

We drove through the arching elms past the Basin and Mall, looking both ways at the vista planned by L'Enfant and remembered that this was once swamp land, malaria-ridden and filled with Potomac fever, the original ailment that affected those who came to live on the river, and still does, but in a different way.

Passing the White House with its brilliantly lighted and beautifully draped windows, I thought back to Abigail Adams' first glimpse of the Executive Mansion—for she came to an unfinished, bare, cold house set down in a wilderness



of trees almost surrounded by marshland, the location known as Swamp Poodle and Foggy Bottom. She came reluctantly, but courageously to the new Capitol, armed with a resolute spirit, deep convictions, and a thorough training in protocol through her many years association with Martha Washington in Philadelphia—her husband to assume his responsibilities in developing "A New Order for the Ages."

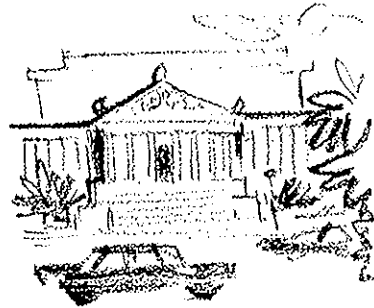
Jenkins Hill

The Capitol, on top of Jenkins Hill in the distance, was only partially built and a muddy stream, actually an open sewer, ran down the hillside into and through the heart of the commons. The government had been moved to the new site and Congress, a group of 32 in the Senate and 106 in the House, was already sitting and soon to be voting on a ten and one-half million dollar government expenditure for 1800.

Shaking off these thoughts of the past, I became conscious as we drove along, of an inscription above the door of the Archives Building—"The Past is Prologue"—and it was with a heart full of awe and gratitude that I thought of the firm foundation and sure development of

the structure of our national government; the discernment and wisdom of those stalwarts gathered in Philadelphia through whose vision our nation has grown in dignity and strength.

I thought with pride of many men who have been called into the service of government—among them Harrison, Hayes, Grant, McKinley, Garfield, Taft, Harding



—all serving in the highest office of the nation and of the countless others in the House and Senate representing our people back in the homeland. Catching a glimpse of the Smithsonian Institution, I thought of the contributions of Light and Flight which are commemorated there and the impetus these discoveries of Edison and the Wright brothers gave to the development of the country.

"The Past is Prologue," our satellites are in orbit, and sound government with world peace is our goal. May those who come years hence to Washington look back on this Present, which will then be Past, with the same gratitude and pride as we hold today for our nation's founders and men of vision.

Yes, as you may have guessed, this visitor was from Ohio.

Harriet D. Bricker

Mrs. John W. Bricker needs no introduction to Ohio readers.