

SETTING THE CAPSTONE

THE WASHINGTON MONUMENT FINISHED AT LAST.

THE AMERICAN FLAG FLOATING 600 FEET ABOVE THE GROUND, FIFTY FEET ABOVE THE TOP OF THE OBELISK.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 6.—The Washington Monument was completed this afternoon by setting in place the marble capstone and its pyramidal apex of aluminium. The ceremonies were few and simple, an elaborate celebration of the event being reserved for Washington's Birthday. Soon after 2 o'clock Col. Thomas L. Casey, the Government engineer in charge, and his assistants, Capt. Davis, United States Army, and Bernard R. Green, civil engineer, together with Master Mechanic McLaughlin and several workmen, standing on a narrow platform built around the sloping marble roof near the summit, proceeded to set the capstone, weighing 6,300 pounds, which was suspended from a framework of heavy joists, supported by the platform and towering 40 feet above them. As soon as the capstone was set the American flag was unfurled overhead and a salute of 21 guns was fired by Major Hanneman's militia battery in the White House grounds, far below. The sound of cheers also came up faintly from a crowd of spectators gathered around the base of the monument, while a number of invited guests on the 500-foot platform and in the interior of the monument at that level struck up the "Star-Spangled Banner" and other patriotic songs.

A steady downpour of rain had given place a little while previously to a brisk gale of wind at this elevation, (blowing about 55 miles an hour,) and very few of the invited guests cared to avail themselves of the privilege of climbing the nearly perpendicular ladder from the 500-foot platform to the dizzy height of 533 feet, from which three or four journalists and a half dozen adventurous climbers witnessed the setting of the capstone, and subsequently ascended to the pinnacle. Meanwhile the Washington Monument Society, represented by Dr. Joseph M. Toner, the Hon. Horatio King, Gen. William McKee Dunn, Dr. Daniel B. Clark, and T. L. Harvey, Secretary, held a meeting on the elevator platform at the height of 500 feet, and when the artillery firing announced the setting of the capstone, adopted a resolution, offered by Gen. Dunn, "congratulating the American people on the completion of this enduring monument of our Nation's gratitude to the Father of his country." Among those present to-day at the completion of the structure was one of the master mechanics who laid the corner stone of this monument, more than 36 years ago, and the old watchman of the monument, who has been continuously employed in that capacity during nearly the whole of the intervening period.

The flag over the monument floated to-day (and will remain for several days until the timbers are all removed) from a flagstaff the top of which is exactly 600 feet from the ground, thus displaying the American colors at the greatest height of construction ever yet known in the world. The monument itself, with its total height of 550 feet, far overtops every other structure of human hands. The aluminium apex of the monument is engraved with inscriptions as follows: On one face: "Chief Engineer and Architect, Thomas Lincoln Casey, Colonel Corps of Engineers; Assistants, George W. Davis, Fourteenth United States Infantry; Bernard R. Green, civil engineer; Master Mechanic, P. H. McLaughlin." On another: "Cornerstone laid on bed of foundation July 4, 1848. First stone, at height of 152 feet, laid Aug. 7, 1880. Capstone set Dec. 6, 1884." On a third: "Joint Commission at setting of capstone—Chester A. Arthur; W. W. Corcoran, Chairman; M. E. Bell, Edward Clark, John Newton. Act of Aug. 2, 1876." And on the fourth face the words "Laus Deo."

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