

## George Hadfield

( - 6 Feb 1826)

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**Hadfield.** Last evening, George Hadfield Esq., Architect. His friends and fellow citizens are invited to attend his funeral from his late residence near the Post Office, this afternoon at 3 o'clock.

*The National Intelligencer, February 13, 1826*

### Obituary

It is a duty we owe to the founders of our city, when any of them are called from the scene of their former usefulness, to do honor to their memory, by recording with truth, whatever they have done in laying the foundation of our infant metropolis, or promoting its welfare. It is but doing justice to the dead; and it is to be hoped, when such men die, that it will excite the living to emulate them. Amongst this class may be placed the late Mr. George Hadfield, Architect, who died at his residence in this city, on

Sunday Evening, the 5th instant, aged about 62 yrs.

Mr. Hadfield was born in Florence, in Italy, of English parents, who, in the early part of his life removed to England. He there studied the profession of an Architect, under the celebrated Wyatt. As a reward for the extraordinary talents he displayed whilst a student, he received prizes of the gold and silver medals from the Royal Academy; and was pensioned by it, to complete his studies, for three years at Rome.

About the year 1794 or '95, Mr. West and Mr. Trumbull, then in London, having been written to by the Commissioners appointed to lay out this City at the request of Gen. Washington, to procure an Architect to superintend the building of the Capitol, selected Mr. Hadfield, who had just then returned from Italy, covered with honors. He continued to superintend that building for about four years, when one of those cabals, which have so often disturbed its harmony in carrying it on, forced him to retire. Amongst the works which will serve to perpetuate his memory in this city, are the City Hall; the Public Offices, which were built from his design; Mr.



*George Hadfield*

Custis's house; Com. Porter's; Mr. Way's Row, now occupied by Mr. Gunton, and others; Weightman's Row, now occupied by Mr. Poor and others; Col. Tayloe's, now Williamson's hotel; the Mausoleum, built for the families of Van Ness and Burns; and the Branch Bank of the United States. It is only to be regretted that there are so few remains of his uncommon talents.

Mr. Hadfield possessed the most refined and correct ideas in the Fine Arts; his love of liberty and independence was unconquerable, and to which he sacrificed all his prospects of wealth and fame. His unassuming modesty was only equaled by his transcendent talents. He was never married; and his nearest relatives, two sisters, both of London, left to bemoan his loss, are Mrs. Cosway, the widow of

the celebrated artist, Mr. Cosway; and Mrs. Coombes, the widow of the no less celebrated Mr. Coombes, one of the best political and satirical writers of the age.

Mr. Hadfield was a member of the "Columbian Institute," to which he has requested to be given his drawings of the "Ruins of Premaeste, near Rome," taken when a student.

*I.T. Friary, They Built the Capitol, Garrett & Massie, Richmond, 1940, pp. 44-45.*

As Dame Rumor began to circulate hints that Hallet might not continue long in office, there arose the natural query as to who would take his place. John Trumbull, the painter, who was then at London in the diplomatic service of the United States, wrote a letter to the Commissioners, on September 13, 1794, in which he recommended George Hadfield for the position.