



## Dublin was in the running for State Capital

Ohio had been admitted to the Union in 1803 and had as its temporary capital the settlement of Chillicothe, as Congress had passed a law in 1800, established that town as the seat of government of the Northwest Territory. A general desire for more central location began to show itself, so the legislature in Feb. 1810, appointed five commissioners, James Finley, W. Silliman, Joseph Darlington, Reisin Beall and William McFarland to select the most eligible site for a state capital. These men were to meet and make their report at Franklinton the following September. Franklinton along with Delaware, Dublin and Worthington were considered for the capital and on Sept. 12,

1810, a report was submitted to the legislature in favor of a place on the west side of the Scioto, twelve miles above Franklinton, this site belonging to John Sells. No definite action was taken until February 1812, when four enterprising young men, Lynn Starling, John Kerr, Alexander McLoughlin and James Johnston, having obtained an eligible site opposite Franklinton, conceived a plan for inducing the legislature to locate thereon the permanent capital of the state. Their proposition was to give ten acres of land for capital buildings, ten additional acres for a penitentiary as specified by the legislature, the cost of said buildings not to exceed fifty thousand dollars. The offer was so generous that

in spite of the recommendations of the commissioners, this site was accepted on the twenty-first of February, 1812, at which time it was given the name of Columbus.

### SOURCES

Excerpted from "The Dublin Story"; primarily from records of town informal village historians Fay Eberly and Newton J. Dominy.

*There is another version of the story, one for years told far more often in Dublin than the one recorded above.*

## Dublin Aced in Bid for State Capital

By Richard E. Bloom, Dispatch Staff Reporter, October 8, 1982

Three aces beat three kings at anybody's poker table—even when you're playing for state capital stakes.

Now nobody can say for certain, but old-timers around Dublin will tell you that is exactly how the Irish namesake came to lose its bid to Columbus as the capital of Ohio.

The story runs something like this. Back in 1812 Dublin Worthington and Franklinton area were all jockeying for that particular prize, with Dublin holding the inside track.

Then one night in February, representatives of all three, plus members of both the site selection committee and the state legislature, began playing poker.

The whiskey and money flowed feely and in

time, only Dublin's John Sells and a Dr. Smith of Franklinton remained.

Finally the two agreed on a no-limit, show-down hand with a winner-take-all pot—the capital of Ohio. Sells, matching Smith's offer of 10 acres for the statehouse with 35 of his own, took two cards. Smith did the same.

Bets and raises ran easy and high. Finally the doctor called for the hands. Sells, perhaps barely able to restrain his jubilation, turned over three kings, a 10 and a two.

Smith revealed three aces, a jack and a three and walked away with a bona fide claim to the capital city.

The story, true or not, still holds a certain fantasy that many would like to believe. But

true or not, the fact remains that Columbus, a spin-off of Franklinton progress, emerged as both the capital and the anchor for central Ohio development.

Founded by Lyne Starling in the early 1800's, Columbus was quick to fall in step with national progress.

Residential lots went on sale in June 1812. Fifteen years later more than 2,000 residents had settled in the city, which boasted a public square, a penitentiary and state offices.