

north-and-south line, showed that lines run on the same course, as indicated by the needle, crossed each other at every attempt. It was supposed that local magnetic attraction of some sort deflected the needle at various points, and prevented its normal action, and it therefore could not be depended upon for accurate work. I was convinced that, unless some means could be found to neutralize the effects thus produced, the work could not go on; and that for want of the requisite knowledge and skill, and proper instruments, I would be compelled to score another failure.

There was, at that time, a gang of masons and stonecutters on the ground, at work getting out material for the foundation of the capitol, which was to occupy the center of the park. The precise location of this center was yet to be determined from the boundary lines, which were first to be accurately and definitely established by the surveyor; for this reason, my failure was certain to embarrass and delay, and perhaps stop, their work, and cause loss to the contractors as well.

It was therefore with a heavy heart that I reported to the commissioner in charge, Augustus A. Bird, my inability to make the survey, and my intention to start for Green Bay on the following day. While explaining to him the obstacles in my way, it fortunately happened that a traveller who had stopped at our boarding house for the night, on his way across the country, heard our conversation; at its conclusion, he approached me, and, asking a few questions relative to the work in hand, suggested a mode of operation which at once seemed to remove all difficulties. It would take too much time and space to explain in detail the *modus operandi*; suffice it to say, that the plan recommended was adopted, was entirely successful, and proved to be so accurate that, as the work progressed, any error in course or distance was at once discovered and corrected. The next morning, the traveller (whose name I did not learn) resumed his journey, and I never again saw him. With a cheerful, thankful heart, I began operations in the field, and before the noon hour arrived had the boundary