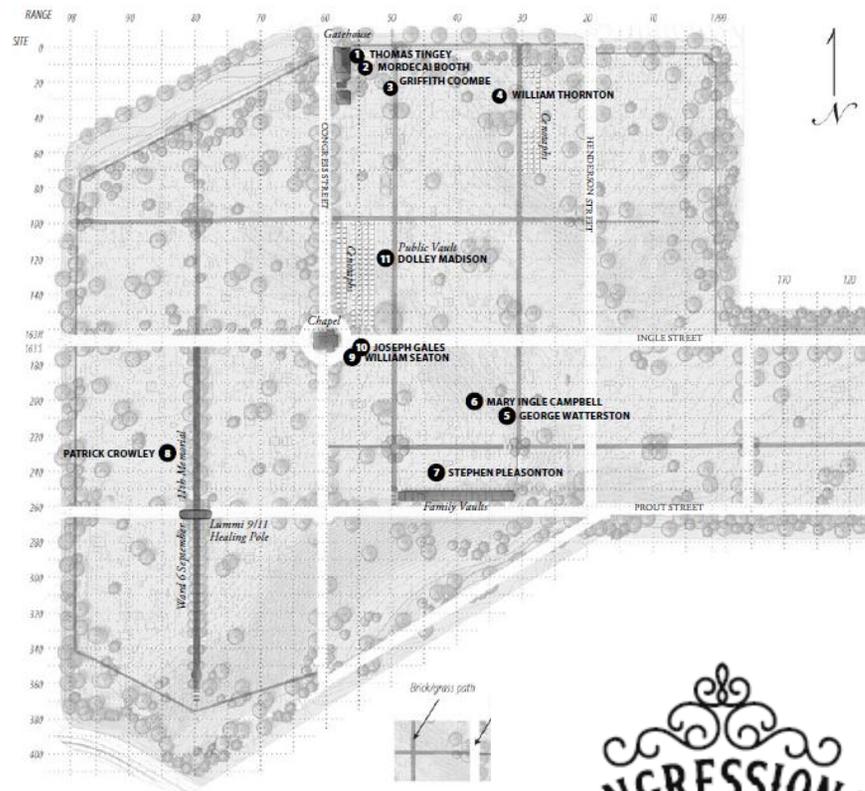


11. DOROTHEA (DOLLEY) MADISON (1768–1849) the wife of President James Madison served from 1809 until 1817. She first married John Todd, Jr. (1764–1793), a lawyer who was instrumental in keeping her father out of bankruptcy. The couple had two sons, John Payne (1792–1852) and William Temple (b./d. 1793). Her husband and their youngest son, William Temple, died in 1793 of a yellow fever. Dolley Todd married James Madison in 1794. Dolley Madison was noted as a gracious hostess, whose sassy, ebullient personality seemed at odds with her Quaker upbringing. Her most lasting achievement was her rescue of valuable treasures, including state papers and a Gilbert Stuart painting of President George Washington from the White House before it was burned by the British army in 1814. First Lady Madison was temporarily interred in the Public Vault until she could be moved to her final resting place. PUBLIC VAULT



With thanks to archivist and historian, Sandy Schmidt whose decade of dedicated research produced over 25,000 obituaries on our web site, without which we could not tell the stories of the hundreds of individuals who make up the tapestry of heritage at Historic Congressional Cemetery.

Join us!

Founded in 1807 as Washington Parish Burial Ground, Congressional Cemetery soon became America's first de facto national cemetery, predating Arlington Cemetery by 70 years. By the 1830s, several decades of congressional appropriations for infrastructure gave rise to the popular name "Congressional Cemetery." The Cemetery grew from 4.5 to 32.5 acres, and holds more than 55,000 individuals in 30,000 burial sites, marked by 14,000 headstones. The federal government owns 800 sites, including 165 cenotaphs which honor members of Congress.

The Association for the Preservation of Historic Congressional Cemetery is a private, nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to the restoration, interpretation, and management of Congressional Cemetery. It is predominantly a volunteer-based organization relying on over 400 neighbors, history buffs, conservators, dogwalkers, and armed forces personnel each year to restore and maintain this national treasure. Established in 1976, the Association is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. We welcome you to become a member of the Association to help us continue our third century of service to the Nation's Capital.



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HISTORIC CONGRESSIONAL CEMETERY
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BICENTENNIAL HERITAGE FESTIVAL

1807  2007

ASSOCIATION FOR THE PRESERVATION OF
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Walking Tour

THE BURNING OF WASHINGTON

HISTORY comes to life in Congressional Cemetery. The creak and clang of the wrought iron gate signals your arrival into the early decades of our national heritage. Surrounding you are the men and women who shaped the new capital and gave substance to the new nation—Congressmen and tradesmen, diplomats and domestics, explorers and architects, soldiers and musicians. The English war was a distant quiet thunder on the finger lakes of New York when the residents of the U.S. capital settled in for the sweltering mid-summer heat of Washington, little knowing just how hot the young city would soon become. In August of 1814 the British struck. Retaliating for the American burning of York (which was at the time the capital of Canada), the British attacked Washington, setting fire to the magnificent Capitol Building, the White House and many other public buildings, with flames so high they were seen miles away. President Madison and what was left of the government fled the city while First Lady Dolley Madison frantically cut George Washington's portrait from its frame at the White House. Not far away, Stephen Pleasonton, a Treasury clerk, gathered documents to safeguard them against the flames: the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the papers of George Washington. On the riverfront, Commodore Thomas Tingey, builder of the Navy Yard and the last U.S. officer in the city, finally gave the order to Mordecai Booth: *Burn the Navy Yard!* As you walk the trail of this self-guided tour, note the artistry and craftsmanship of the memorial stone carvings and try to decipher the cultural language of the iconography.

The following are numbered to correspond with the map on the back. Also refer to the Range (R) and Site (S) grid numbers to help locate each gravesite.

1. CAPTAIN THOMAS TINGEY (1750–1829) was one of the founders of the Congressional Cemetery and first Commandant of the Navy Yard. He and his family lived in the Commandant's house for so many years that, at his death, it was found he had willed the house to his family. Although the family moved out, the Captain's ghost has refused to budge. R57/S1

2. MORDECAI BOOTH (–1831) was for many years the principle clerk in the Commandant's office of the Navy Yard. As the Capitol Building went up in flames during the British invasion of August 1814, Commodore Tingey gave Booth the order to burn the Navy Yard. R53/S2



An 1814 British cartoon shows President James Madison and probably John Armstrong, Secretary of War, with bundles of papers, fleeing from Washington, with burning buildings behind them.

3. GRIFFITH COOMBE (–1845) was one of the best-known men in the early days of Washington and a very successful man of business. His wife was Mary Pleasonton, sister to Stephen (see #7). His residence at the corner of Georgia (now Potomac) Avenue and Third Street SE was one of the first and finest houses in Washington. When the British were advancing upon Washington in August 1814, General Winder and his small army

retreated from Maryland into the city and encamped on the Navy Yard Common. He chose the house of Griffith Coombe for his headquarters where he received the President and his cabinet and war councils before he left with his troops for Bladensburg. R50/S20-29

4. DR. WILLIAM THORNTON (–1828) was born in the West Indies and studied medicine in Scotland. He entered a contest to design the U.S.



Capitol exterior and won. He later designed the Octagon House. Summoned by Martha Washington in George Washington's final hours, he arrived too late, but still suggested a warm lamb's blood transfusion, which was not undertaken.

During the War of 1812, while the British were setting the city to flames, he personally appealed to the British officers to spare the Patent Office, of which he was Superintendent, and the resident models of patented devices. R33/S39

5. GEORGE WATTERSTON (1783–1854). As the war with England raged

around the city, Watterston marched with Captain Benjamin Burch's company to meet the British at nearby Bladensburg. He returned to the city to find his own house pillaged, the Capitol in ruins, and the fledgling Library of Congress within the Capitol building destroyed. In 1815, President Madison appointed George Watterston as the first full-time Librarian of Congress. WATTERSTON VAULT



6. MARY J. INGLE CAMPBELL (1801–1839) was born in the Ingle homestead on New Jersey Avenue to one of the most prominent families in the city. At the age of eleven, Mary Campbell witnessed the torching of the city during the British invasion in the War of 1812. Her recollections describe the terrific rainstorm that helped drown the fires set by the British, and the actions taken by citizens to quench the flames and care for injured British soldiers left behind, as well as her discussions with the British Commander Admiral Cockburn. R37/S213

7. STEPHEN PLEASONTON (–1855) was a clerk in the Treasury Department during the War of 1812. Upon hearing rumors that the British were nearby, he and others obtained course linen bags into which they placed the original Declaration of Independence, the Articles of Confederation, most of the international treaties and national laws, and General Washington's Revolutionary War papers, together with many other documents. Despite the great demand for wagons or anything with wheels, Pleasonton found some carts and amid the general panic, carted the bags to a mill beyond Georgetown. In the middle of the night he decided this location lacked security and rose to take the documents by horseback to Leesburg, 35 miles away. R43/244

8. PATRICK CROWLEY (1798–1886) was an apprentice at the *National Intelligencer* when the British made their raid on this city in 1814, and recorded the sacking and destruction of public buildings. He noted that General Ross was praised for the respect he showed to citizens who did not interfere with his troops, but that Admiral Cockburn was despised for his indifference of citizens' rights. Mr. Francis Key sent a manuscript copy of "The Star Spangled Banner" to the *Intelligencer* and gave permission to

Crowley to print it on slips of paper to distribute. Crowley made about two hundred dollars by its sale on the streets. R84/S231

9. COL. WILLIAM WINSTON SEATON (1785–1866), in his youth was referred to as the "most elegant young man in Virginia." He became co-owner with Joseph Gales of the *National Intelligencer*. The British troops burned the newspaper's offices in



retaliation for their harsh criticism of the British. Seaton served in the battle of Bladensburg. Later in life he served as the Mayor of Washington for five terms (1840–1850). R57/S165

10. JOSEPH GALES (1786–1860) moved to Washington around 1807 to join the *National Intelligencer*. A few years later, he and his brother-in-law, William Seaton, became the owners of the paper. Joseph and Juliana Gales were on a trip to Raleigh at the time of the British invasion in 1814. Their city house at Ninth and E Streets narrowly escaped being burnt when the housekeeper had presence of mind to close all the shutters and put a sign "For Rent" on the front door. As the *Intelligencer* was known to be the Government organ, the printing establishment was put to flame and completely destroyed by the advancing British troops. R55/S168

A WORD OF CAUTION: The centuries have made many grave markers and sites unstable. Please be careful near grave markers and watch where you step: depressions and sink holes lie hidden in grass, and footstones and corner markers can trip the unwary.