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

II. DORTHEA (DOLLEY) MADISON (1768–1849)
The wife of President James Madison, she served as First
Lady 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

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.

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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.

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. In August 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. 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

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 burn the Navy Yard.

Funding for the preservation and maintenance of Historic Congressional
Cemetery is provided in part by the Congressional Cemetery Endowment,
which was created with matching funds provided by the Congress of
the United States and administered by the National Trust for Historic
Preservation. The property is owned by Christ Church Washington Parish.

The Association for the Preservation of Historic Congressional
Cemetery is a private, nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization established in
1976 and 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 help restore and
maintain this national treasure. In 1979, the Association succeeded
in having Congressional Cemetery listed on the National Register of
Historic Places. It became a National Historic Landmark in 2011. Please
join the Association or make a donation and help in the third century of
service to the Nation's Capital.

Join us!

This BURNING OF DC TOUR highlights just a
few of the hundreds of fascinating people buried in
Congressional Cemetery. As you walk the trail of this
self-guided letterboxing tour, note the artistry
and craftsmanship of the memorial stone carvings and try
to decipher the cultural language of the iconography.
1. THOMAS TINGEY (1750–1829)
He 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 (1765–1831)
For many years, he was the principle clerk in the Commandant’s office of the Navy Yard. As the Capitol For many years, he was the principle clerk in the Commandant’s office of the Navy Yard. As the Capitol

R5/S2 NO MARKER

3. GRIFFITH COOMBE (1765–1845)
One of the best-known men in the early days of Washington, he was also 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 Southeast 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 (1759–1828)
Born in the West Indies, he studied medicine in Scotland. He entered a contest to design the U.S. Capitol exterior and submitted the winning design, “west elevation, high dome” in 1793.

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 fledging 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)
She 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 PLEASANTON (1776–1855)
He moved to Washington around 1807 to join 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).

R75/S165

8. PATRICK CROWLEY (1798–1860)
In his youth, he 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 paper. Crowley made about two hundred dollars by its sale on the streets.

R84/S231

9. WILLIAM WINSTON SEATON (1785–1866)
He 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

R57/S1

10. JOSEPH GALES (1786–1860)
He 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

R43/S244

An 1814 British cartoon shows President James Madison and probably John Armstrong, Secretary of War, with bundles of papers, fleeing from the British troops. Seaton served in the battle of Bladensburg.

R10/S234

George Watterston’s drawing of the U.S. Capitol after burning by the British, including fire damage to the Senate and House wings, damaged colonnade in the House of Representatives chamber, and the removal of the façade and roof. Watterston was the first full-time Librarian of Congress.

R43/S239

An 1814 engraving by William Strickland of artwork by George Munger is titled, “A view of the President’s house in the city of Washington after the destruction of the 24th August 1814.”

R43/S235

As an engraving by William Strickland of artwork by George Munger is titled, “A view of the President’s house in the city of Washington after the destruction of the 24th August 1814.”

R43/S235

A British wood engraving, “The taking of the city of Washington in America,” shows the view from the Potomac River of the city under attack by Major General Ross, August 24, 1814.

R55/S165

Thornton’s winning design for the Capitol, “west elevation, high dome,” was submitted in 1793.

R33/S39

George Watterston’s drawing of the U.S. Capitol after burning by the British, including fire damage to the Senate and House wings, damaged colonnade in the House of Representatives chamber, and the removal of the façade and roof.