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
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). He was a successful merchant and 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.

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 won. He later designed the Octagon House. He was one of the founders of the Congressional Cemetery. He entered a contest to design the U.S. Capitol exterior and won. He later designed the Octagon House. Summoned by President Madison appointed him as Librarian of Congress.

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.

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 burning of the city during the British invasion in 1814. Her recollections describe the terrible panic that resulted from 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 discussion with the British Commander Admiral Cockburn.

7. STEPHEN PLEASANTON (1776–1855)
As clerk in the Treasury Department during the War of 1812, 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 amidst 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.

8. PATRICK CROWLEY (1798–1860)
As architect at the National Intelligencer when the British made their raid on this city in 1814, he 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 to citizens’ rights.

9. WILLIAM WINSTON SEATON (1785–1866)
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 newspaper’s offices in retaliation for their harsh criticism of the British. Seaton served in the battle of Bladensburg. Later in life he was referred to as the “most elegant young man in Virginia.”

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 it.