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MRS. MADISON  
By Gilbert Stuart

# LIFE AND LETTERS

OF

# DOLLY MADISON

ALLEN C. CLARK

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I confess I do not admire contention in any form, either political or civil.

—*Dolly P. Madison*

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WASHINGTON, D. C.  
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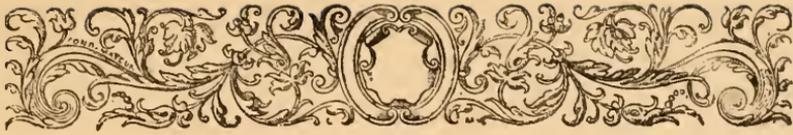
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## WHY WRITTEN

**M**R. AND MRS. JAMES FRANKLIN HOOD, at their residence in Washington, were the hosts of the Dolly Madison Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, the evening of May 19, 1911. At their request a paper was prepared for the entertainment of the guests. That paper is the nucleus of this elaboration. If, perchance, the reader is entertained, the acknowledgment is due to them.

The *Public Ledger*, Philadelphia, June 2, 1912, in an interesting article, says that Dolly Madison, probably above all other American women, has, for some not any too well understood reason, been regarded with a sympathetic and sentimental interest. And, *The Evening Star*, in its able editorial column, May 12, 1912, has: "A little myth is mixed with her fame, but that is to be allowed for. It inheres in all fame." That the unfading fame of Mrs. Madison has its foundation more on fact or more on fancy, the reader, it is believed, has, within these pages, sufficient evidence to pass judgment.

Deal gently with us, ye who read!

—*Oliver Wendell Holmes.*



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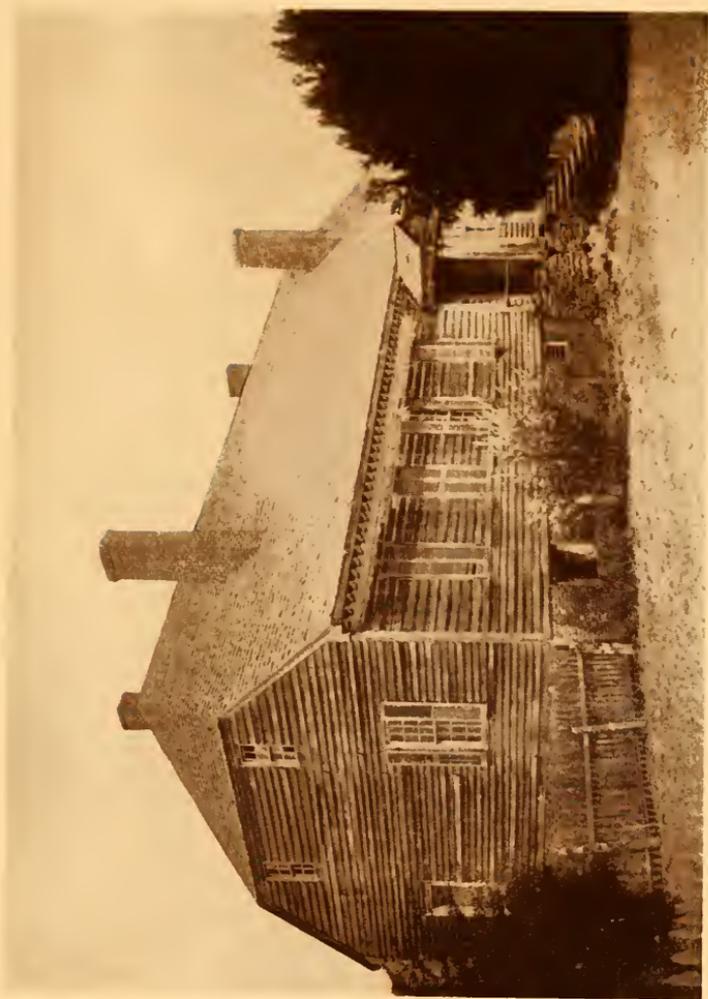


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SCOTCH TOWN, VIRGINIA





## CHAPTER I

1768-1799

**T**HE incomparable Dolly! It is not irreverent of Dorothea Payne Madison; it is expressive of admiration and affection. The superiority in comparison is only an attempt to adequately aggregate her attractive attributes. The queens of our chosen kings are a long line; a line all strung with gems, each with especial excellence, but Queen Dolly sparkles the most. An adoring and affectionate wife was Mrs. Washington; and when her husband entered she arose and said "The President." No hero of the times that evolved the Revolution and consummated it is entitled to greater honor than the heroine, Abigail Smith Adams. Mrs. Adams could cultivate a farm, raise children, spin cloth, study literature, teach herself French, and do all manner of wonderful things, all at the same time; and write besides the chattiest letters and letters political and philosophical. And how she could write—she was the equal of the elder Adams and the younger Adams, and nothing more can be added of letter-writing praise. Mrs. Adams was the mistress of the Executive Mansion from November 16, 1800, to March 4, 1801. She, in scriptural paraphrase, said: "I am a

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

mortal enemy to anything but a cheerful countenance and merry heart," and in this King Cole spirit while living in "the Castle" kept the fires going "to secure from daily agues"; and, in absence of fence, yard or other convenience, used the great unfinished audience-room to hang up the clothes in. It is items like these, that Mrs. Adams has preserved, that make history worth reading.

It is only fair to say this much of Mrs. Adams—for she in four months exercised her housewife ability to have in readiness "the Castle" for Mrs. Madison's reign of sixteen years. Mr. Jefferson was a widower, and in the absence of his daughters, and they were almost always absent, Mrs. Madison, the wife of the Secretary of State, was the first lady by substitution; and, of course, was in the succeeding eight years that in her own right.

Letters are conversation—conversation expressed with more care and deliberateness than by spoken language. Letters express thought and the thought expressed exhibits the character. The spirit of the letter indicates that of the writer as vivacious or slow, gay or sad. The style reflects the culture; and the conformity to rules shows the education.

Letters live and the writers die. The scene of the letter is always acted although the actors have long since made exit.

Letters suggest life—the mind is there in the phrasing; the hand is there that pushed the penning. Letters awaken memory—the absent or gone return—the mental mirror has a more perfect presence than a painted portrait. Letters recreate the unseen writer; the reader imagines the writer; from the letter catches the soul and gives it a human form.

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In Dolly Madison's day letters had a superior excellence. More brilliancy of thought then and more uniqueness of telling. Variety, freshness and style are opposite the commonplaces of these machine days. Quaint are the old letters with their lazy abbreviations and simple punctuation. If the letters that have been preserved are exponents, the writers wrote for the generations. The letters quoted are all in the appropriate styles of the rhetoric. Some of the friendship letters are talking letters (in their naturalness, the best of all); others are clothed in courtesy with classic ornaments, but whatever their style or their contents, they will be passed by with brief comment, or none at all, for to the intelligent the apparent needs no pointing and the well-said needs no re-saying.

Dorothea Payne was born May 20, 1768. Her mother's maiden name was Mary Coles. Mary was the daughter of William Coles and Lucy Winston.\* William was Irish and hailed from Enniscarthy, on the River Sliney, in the County Wexford, Ireland. Her father was John Payne, son of John Payne, senior, an Englishman, who married Ann Fleming, of Scotch parentage and noble lineage.

John Payne, junior, soon after his marriage, purchased an estate in Hanover County, Virginia, within driving distance of his father's plantation and of Coles Hill, the plantation of his father-in-law—neither far distant from the James River and the city of Richmond. The son's mansion was called Scotch Town.

Dorothea smiled first in North Carolina, where her parents were on a visit. She was named in honor of Dorothea Spotswood Dandridge, granddaughter of

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\*Memorandum in *Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison* in the Public Library, District of Columbia.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

Alexander Spotswood, the Governor. This Dorothea successively married Patrick Henry and Edmund Winston, notable men, and cousins of our Dorothea's mother.\* Dorothea was the eldest daughter. Dorothea had these brothers and sisters who reached majority, although the accuracy of the list is not claimed: William, Isaac, Temple, John, Walter, Lucy, Anna and Mary. Dorothea was quickly changed to Dolly.

Dolly's parents joined the Society of Friends soon after marriage. True to the tenets of the Society, they manumitted their slaves. They were inclined to locate in Philadelphia, the stronghold of the sect. A preliminary visit was made.

Journal of Elizabeth Drinker:

1781, March 5. Molly Payne spent ye day, and lodged with us. She and son Walter breakfasted ye 6th.

Evidently favorably impressed with the plan, they executed it. Their servers did not accept release from servitude with favor and Mother Amy made the migration with the family and continued in its service; and from her savings of wages to her mistress bequeathed five hundred dollars.†

Journal of Elizabeth Drinker:

1783, July 9. John Payne's family came to reside in Philad<sup>a</sup>.

It is said that the Paynes were entertained at the Drinker's who lived at the corner of Front street and Drinker's alley (now effaced) until they secured a home for themselves.‡

\**Dolly Madison*. Maud Wilder Goodwin.

†*Ibid*.

‡The Paynes \* \* \* only stopped at their friend's house until they could obtain a house of their own. Where this was located is

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The Philadelphia Directory, 1785. By Francis White:

John Paine, Merchant. Fifth between Market and Arch streets.

Between the Drinkers and Paynes was affiliation for Elizabeth Drinker's father like Mary Payne's, familiarly Molly, was a native of the county, Wexford, in the old country.\*

Journal of Elizabeth Drinker:

1784, July 10. Sally Drinker and Walter Payne, Billy Sansom and Polly Wells, Jacob Downing and Dolly Payne, went to our place at Frankford. Dolly and Josey Sansom and Nancy Drinker (from Par La Ville) met them there. A squabble. Nancy returned home in ye evening with her sister.

Through Haddonfield, New Jersey, two leagues from Camden, runs ye King's Highway, as says the tablet:

This street was laid out and surveyed in 1681 by order of the representatives of the King of England, and called "Ye King's Highway."

Ancient buttonwoods line the highway, these buttonwoods, which, in vain, endeavor to match their antiquity are considerably over an hundred feet tall. The king had forethought of a need of a highway for says the second tablet:

The British army passed under these trees after evacuating Philadelphia, June, 1778.

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not known, but in 1785 John Payne, according to MacPherson's Directory, lived at 410 Third street. The site of this structure, after considerable investigation, had been found to be that of the present building now numbered 57 North Third street, the fourth house below Arch street, on the east side.—*Public Ledger*, June 2, 1912.

\*The Journal of Elizabeth Drinker.

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On the King's Highway is the mansion that disdains the decays of time, for it was built in 1750. Soon after its putting up, it became the property of Hugh Creighton, who made of it, a tavern, and of himself, the tavern's keeper. The State of New Jersey was born there and therein is a tablet whereon it is told.

Mr. Creighton's tavern has another distinction. W. Jay Mills, in *Historic Houses of New Jersey*, has:

The visits to Haddonfield were bright spots in Dolly Payne's early life. Hugh Creighton was not a strict Friend, and his wife, Mary French, was a woman of most lovable character, with a heart large enough to take in all the world's people who chanced to cross her quiet pathway. Tavern keeping in the eighties of the eighteenth century, although an honorable and profitable occupation in Southern Jersey, was frowned upon by the generality of Friends, as their discipline did not permit them to look on it with favor. Life at her uncle's\* genial hearth was much broader than in her own home at Philadelphia. In the former place she obtained some of her first impressions of days untinged by the gray shadows of the meeting house.

As a girl of eighteen in the year 1786, she is described as being of slight figure, possessing a delicately oval face, a nose tilted like a flower, jet black hair, and blue eyes of wondrous sweetness. Those beautiful eyes, with their power to scintillate with playfulness or mellow with sympathy, wrought great havoc with the hearts of the Quaker lads of Haddonfield. Although many years have flown since she tripped through the quiet streets and lanes of the place her memory is alive there. Elderly people still repeat what their fathers and grandfathers once said of her, and from the glowing tributes paid to her youthful charms it is easy to imagine that many a

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\*The writer thinks "Uncle" and "Aunt" Creighton are familiar and not family endearments.



231 NEW STREET, PHILADELPHIA



## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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good Quaker lad's love was laid at her shrine. \* \* \*  
In those early Haddonfield days she often took frolicsome rides with her cousins in the mail coaches that stopped twice daily at the tavern, driving a mile or two out on the highway and walking home.

\* \* \* Commodore James P. Cooper, U. S. N., who died in the town in 1854, aged ninety-three years, was often her devoted attendant on these occasions and on berrying excursions, and in later life never tired of singing her praises. \* \* \*

Many times during the year "Aunt Creighton" drove to Trenton to visit friends on Queen st., generally taking the young people with her. Those trips with her kind aunt delighted the merry Quakeress, who with her love of fine things, inherited no doubt from her courtly ancestors, the Coles and the Flemings. Wandering through Green st., and Pinkerton alley shops and fingering the "world's goods" she was as happy as any maiden of to-day out for the first time on a shopping expedition.

Harriet Taylor Upton—in *Our Early Presidents, Their Wives and Children*:

She was wondrously fair. Her mother, who would not permit her to wear jewels, taught her to take care of her complexion. She was sent to school with long gloves on her hands and arms, a close sunbonnet and a white linen mask on her face; in fact it is plain to see that in many ways great attention was bestowed upon the outward as well as the inward graces of the young Friend. \* \* \* There is in existence still belonging to this period, a delicate gray satin Quaker gown, with elbow sleeves and square neck worn by the young beauty—Dolly certainly may be called a beauty.

Mr. Payne, an educated man, took celebrity as a lay preacher or Public Friend and on the First Day in the Meeting House removed his broad-brim and with his eloquence moved his hearers. It still stands the Free

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Quaker Meeting House at the southwest corner of Fifth and Mulberry streets and used for the Apprentices' Free Library.\*

John Todd, senior, was a pedagogue. He taught the r's, and while so doing, to appease his brutal nature, applied on pretexts constant castigations. His was the Quaker school for boys on Fourth street below Chesnut and known as Proud's School. Robert Proud was the early historian of Pennsylvania and his portrait is in its Historical Society.†

Directories of Philadelphia :

1785.	John Todd, Schoolmaster, corner of Fourth and Chesnut streets.
1791	103, Chestnut.
1793	103, Chestnut.

"In that delighted land which is washed by the Delaware waters" Dolly passed her budding womanhood. "And her ear was pleased with the Thee and Thou of the Quakers;" and for one she resigned her name for his. However it was the paternal dictation to which she yielded and that she had said to the proposal she "never meant to marry."‡ After the formidable formalities of the church, she and John Todd, junior, were married, January 27, 1790. Elizabeth Collins was the bridesmaid and Anthony Morris, the groomsman.§ And on the register the witnesses signed their names, John, James, Mary and Alice Todd, the bridegroom's relatives; John and

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\**Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison:*

*Dolly Madison.* Maud Wilder Goodwin.

†*Annals of Philadelphia.* John F. Watson.

*Public Ledger,* June 2, 1912.

‡*Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison.*

§Stated by descendants.

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Mary Payne, Lucy, Anna and Mary, the bride's relatives and sixty others.\* The bride was in her twenty-second year and the groom in his twenty-seventh—for he was born, November 17, 1763. The wedding was solemnized in the Friends' Meeting-House on Pine street, since razed. Todd practiced law and had a lucrative practice.†

The bride and groom went to housekeeping at 85 Chesnut street next to the corner of Third. The site is now numbered 231.‡

Philadelphia Directory, 1791:

John Todd, Esq., Attorney at law 85, Chesnut.

Lucy, Dolly's sister, in 1792, at the age of fifteen, married George Steptoe Washington, a nephew, and favorite of General Washington. George Steptoe inherited from his father, Samuel, "Harewood," in Jefferson county, Virginia. The father had a love for the chase—he had for it his trained stud of horses and pack of dogs; and his love was not confined to the chase for he had a line of wives that did not stop until the count of five.§

Philadelphia Directory, 1791:

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\**Dolly Madison*. Maud Wilder Goodwin.

†*Public Ledger*, June 2, 1912.

‡Charles Godfrey Leland: "I was born in a house on Chestnut street, the second door below Third street, on the north side. It had been built in the old Colonial time, and in the room in which I first saw life there was an old chimney piece which was so remarkable that strangers visiting the city often came to see it. \* \* \* It was then a boarding house kept by Mrs. Rodgers. She had taken it from a lady who also kept it for boarders. The daughter of this latter married President Madison. She was known as 'Dolly Madison,' famous for her grace, accomplishments and *belle humeur*, of whom there are stories still current in Washington." This is 85 Chestnut street, old numbering. A. C. C.

§*Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison*.

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John Paine, Starch maker. 89 Elm St.\*

Mr. Payne, because of inexperience in commercial matters or because of the severe stringency of the times, made a failure. The loss consequent to the liberation of slaves and that of the business changed affluence to dependence. The change of circumstances made a change of spirit—from cheer to chagrin; and a change from soundness to sickness. He died October 24, 1792, and was buried in the Free Quaker burial ground on Fifth street near Locust, now no more. He by will gave his wife his entire estate and the exclusive executorship. The property was in lands in Kentucky and Virginia. George Walker and John Todd were the witnesses.

Mrs. Payne during her husband's life and after his death—1791'2'3—was engaged in the arduous task of keeping a boarding establishment.

Philadelphia Directory, 1793:

Mary Payne, widow, boarding house, 96 N. Third st.

The structure stands; it is 150 N. Third—present numbering.† It was patronized by the prominent politically and the proprietress had social prominence. She declined business in 1793 and lived with her daughter, Lucy.

Joseph Jackson, who has the pen of a ready writer and can accomplish a diligent search, is the authority that Dolly Todd lived at 231 New Street, 150 North Third Street, and when Dolly Madison at 429 Spruce Street, Philadelphia.

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\*In *Public Ledger*, June 2, 1912, reproduced "231 New street, where Dolly Madison's father made starch and where she lived when she married John Todd."

†*Public Ledger*, June 2, 1912.

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Mr. Todd, Dolly's husband, bought, November 23, 1791, from the estate of Jonathan Dilworth, the site where is now 149 and 153 So. Fourth and 341 and 343 Walnut. Number 51 then, 153 now, is where John and Dolly lived and where were born the sons, John Payne, February 29, 1792, and William Temple in the summer of 1793; both namesakes of Dolly's brothers.

In the summer, the city was scourged with yellow fever. The pestilence made heroes and proved cowards. Mr. Todd was a hero.

In the Journal of Elizabeth Drinker, August 23, 1793, is, "A fever prevails in the City \* \* \* of ye malignant kind;" and November 2, same year, "What a favorable reverse, which calls for humility and thanks." Daily, between the dates is a terrible tale.

Thomas Jefferson to James Madison

Sept. 8, 1793.

\* \* \* The yellow fever increases. The week before last about 3. a day died. This last week about 11. a day have died, consequently, from known data about 33. a day are taken, and there are about 330. patients under it. They are much scattered through the town, and it is the opinion of the physicians that there is no possibility of stopping it. They agree that it is a nondescript disease, and no two agree in any one part of their process of cure. The Presid<sup>t</sup> goes off the day after tomorrow, as he had always intended. Knox then takes flight. Hamilton\* is ill of the fever, as is said. He had two physicians out at his house the night before last. His family think him in danger, & he puts himself so by his excessive alarm. He had been miserable several days before from a firm persuasion he should catch it. A man as timid as he is on the water, as timid on horseback, as timid in sickness, would

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\*Alexander Hamilton.

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be a phaenomenon if his courage of which he has the reputation in military occasions were genuine. His friends, who have not seen him, suspect it is only an autumnal fever he has. I would really go away, because I think there is rational danger, but that I had announced that I should not go till the beginning of October, & I do not like to exhibit the appearance of panic. Besides that I think there might be serious ills proceed from there being not a single member of the administration in place. Poor Hutcheson dined with me on Friday was sennight, was taken that night on his return home, & died the day before yesterday.

Mr. Todd removed his wife, at the time in a critical condition, and the two sons to Gray's Ferry, a rural pleasure place on the Schuylkill's banks. He left her with the promise of returning and leaving her no more until the exigency expired. He, in the city, did for his clients what required immediate doing; and, in the city, he found his father and mother victims of the epidemic. Both parents died\* and John Todd, the father, made a will making his sons John and James and Samuel Jones, executors, in which he bequeathed to his son John five hundred pounds; to his grandsons, John Payne and William Temple Todd, fifty pounds each; his silver watch to his son, John, in trust for John Payne or in case of his death, for William Temple; the residue of the estate to his five grandchildren.

Mr. Todd on his return bore with him the dread disease. At the threshold, he to Dolly's mother said: "I feel the fever in my veins, but I must see *her* once more."† In a few hours he was dead—"a martyr to professional duty." In the embrace was contamination.

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\*In the Journal of Elizabeth Drinker the father's death is reported October 3; the mother's October 12.

†*Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison.*

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The younger child died and Dolly recovered. Mr. Todd died October 24, 1793. He by a will in sentimental and sermonical sentencing gave his widow an estate of value. Appendix A.

Philadelphia directories:

1793. John Todd, jun. Esq. attorney at law 51 So Fourth St.

1794. Dorothy Todd, widow, 51 So. Fourth St.

Twenty-five and a widow! Not her fault surely and surely she felt her fascination. The sympathy, the protection, the admiration, the adoration and all that from the hypnotized men a widow has. Any widow that—but Dolly was so charming, so youthful—no wonder her friend bid “Hide thy face—there are so many staring at thee”; and so good to see that “gentlemen would station themselves where they might see her pass.”

Among Dolly's acquaintances was the New York Senator, Aaron Burr, of reputation—irresistible to the sex of skirts and no wise self-restrictive of his irresistibility. Of Burr, Madison solicited a meeting with the pretty widow. She writes to her confidante, Mrs. Lee, she who was Elizabeth Collins, 1794:

Thou must come to me,—Aaron Burr says that the great little Madison has asked to be brought to see me this evening.

The rumor of an engagement soon reached the Executive Mansion; it did not have to travel fast as from Dolly's house it was only several blocks distant; definitely, the mansion was on Market street near Sixth. Mrs. Washington from the privilege of station or the standing of relationship—the Payne and Washington families hav-

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ing intermarried—she exercised feminine curiosity and arrogance of advice. The inquisitor paid deference to Dolly's sect in the use of its peculiar personal pronouns; or whoever made the report, made it that way:

Mrs. Washington: "Dolly, is it true that you are engaged to James Madison?"

Dolly: "No; I think not."

Mrs. W.: "If it is so, do not be ashamed to confess it; rather be proud; he will make thee a good husband, and all the better for being so much older. We both approve of it; the esteem and friendship existing between Mr. Madison and my husband is very great, and we would wish thee to be happy."\*

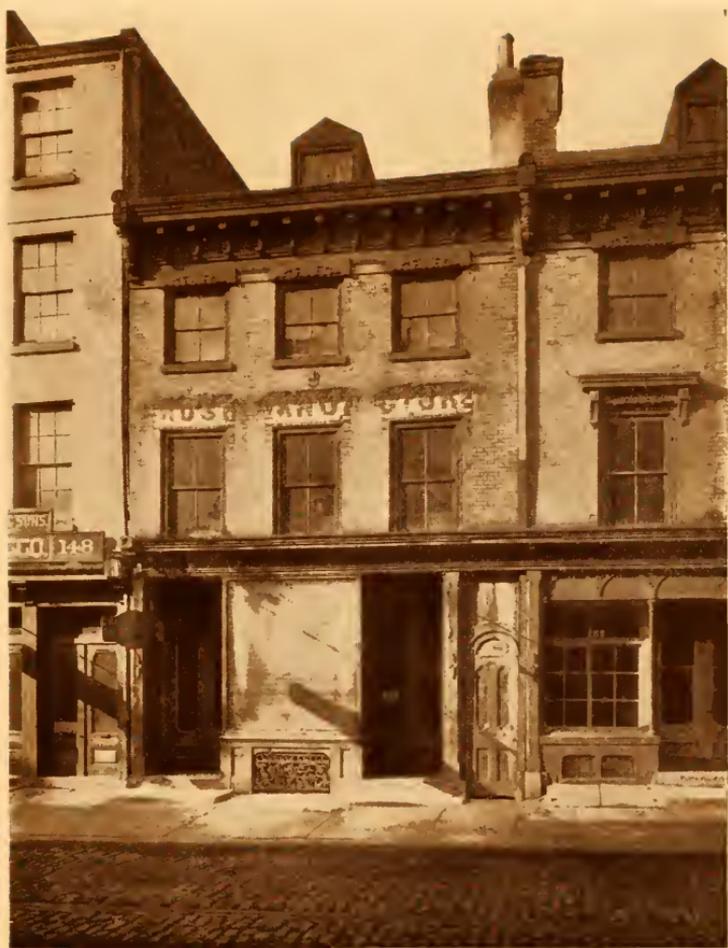
The fragments of a love letter in the courtship days! Dolly had visited her people in the scenes of her childhood. At Fredericksburg, on the way to her sister, Lucy, she wrote to the aspirant an encouraging note—it had an endearing *stile*. Of Mr. Madison's letter, in turn, words are lost in the folds of the three part pages preserved.†

Orange Aug: 18. 94: I rec<sup>d</sup> some days ago your precious favor from Fredg. I cannot exprefs, but hope you will conceive the joy it gave me. The delay in hearing of your leaving Hanover which I regarded as the only satisfactory proof of your recovery, had filled me with extreme \* \* \* inquietude, and the consummation of that welcome event was endeared to me by the *stile* in which it was conveyed. I hope you will never have another *deliberation* on that subject. If the sentiments of

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\**Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison.*

†In the handwriting of Mrs. Madison—"Part of a letter from Mr Madison to Mrs Todd Aug: 18. 1794"



150 N. THIRD STREET, PHILADELPHIA



## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

my heart can guarantee those of yours, they assure me there can never be a cause for it.

Mr. Madison's letter says that he is indefinitely detained by the illness of a foreigner with whom he was to travel. He says that it is cruel he should be obliged to mingle with the delicious hopes imparted by her letter, the painful apprehensions of delay; that the adverse incident is the more mortifying as he had spared no efforts and made some sacrifices to meet her. And he hopes that the unavoidable delay will not extend its influence to the epoch in which he is to repeat the claim of which she is apprised.

Suits in love should not,  
Like suits in law, be rock'd from term to term.

Madison was a lawyer; he knew the reason and result of dilatory tactics in law suits; he sought a speedy decision in his love suit. He that called a-wooing was much a man, with a tongue for persuasion, but it is a fact that Dolly hesitated and, perhaps better to take the issue under advisement, retired to quietude. Mrs. Dolly Todd with her infant and younger sister, Anna, visited her sister Lucy, and her husband, George Steptoe Washington, at their estate, Harewood, in the vicinity of Charlestown, West Virginia. From there she addressed a letter to Mr. Wilkins, her counsel at Philadelphia, seeking advice. This law-learned gentleman with the alliterative name was on the most friendly relation with the widow. His penmanship was almost perfect, however his habit of slightly enlarging the first letter of the word sometimes makes it difficult to decide if a capital is intended. Mr. Wilkins had his office at 119 S. Second Street, original numbering.

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Mrs Dolley P. Todd  
particular Care of Martinsburg  
Geo. Washington Jun. Esq Virginia.

Philadelphia August 22<sup>nd</sup> 1794.

I will not delay a moment my ever dear and valued friend to reply to your last interesting Epistle. Flattered as I am by your Condescension in consulting me on this important Occasion and truly and disinterestedly solicitous for your Welfare—the Task I undertake is far from being a painful one. As your friend I feel not the least Hesitation in forming my Opinion—ought I then feel any reluctance in communicating it?

Mr M—n is a man whom I admire. I know his attachment to you and did not therefore content myself with taking his Character from the Breath of popular applause—but consulted those who knew him intimately in private Life. His private Character therefore I have every reason to believe is good and amiable. He unites to the great Talents which have secured his public Approbation those engaging Qualities that contribute so highly to domestic Felicity. To such a man therefore I do most freely consent that my beloved sister be united and happy.

Yes my dear and amiable Julia you have my fullest and freest Approbation of the Step you are about to take. No Wish is dearer to my Heart than your Happiness & Heaven is my Witness that nothing is less selfish than my Attachment to you. That I have not been insensible to your Charms ought not I think to be regarded as a Fault—few persons in similar Situations would not have felt their irresistible Influence; but none I will venture to say could have mingled in their Emotions more true Respect and more Fraternal Affection than I have.

With respect to the Settlement on your Son I will give you my sentiments frankly. You are placed in a critical situation in this Affair—the Eyes of the World are upon you and your Enemies have already opened their Mouths to censure and condemn you. I hope you will disappoint them—I believe you will now be just—for you have hith-

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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erto always been generous. I must confess I conceive it to be your duty to make some Settlement upon him and I know you too well to doubt your Inclination to do it. The only Question can be to what Amount and in what Manner shall this Settlement be made.

Mr M——n is as I am informed a man of genteel tho not of large property. He has a right to expect some part but does not want the whole of your Estate. I would suggest therefore that your House and Stables situate in Fourth Street be previously to your marriage conveyed to Trustees in Trust to receive the Rents Issues and profits during the Minority of your Son and apply the same first to discharge the Sum of £350 with the Interest (being the remaining sum due of the purchase money & which ought to be regarded as an encumbrance on the premises) & in the second place to the support & Education of your Son stipulating if you please that for this purpose the payments of the proceeds be made to your future Husband and yourself as it is to be presumed your son will always remain under your joint Care and Protection) and in trust farther to convey the premises to your Son in fee simple upon his arriving at the Age of twenty one years but if he should die before he attains that Age to convey to yourself and your Heirs.

Your Son as a residuary Legatee of his Grand Father will be entitled to something—but the Amount of the Legacy is wholly uncertain. The provision which I have mentioned will in your Circumstances be a generous one—I only fear it will be thought unreasonably great. But those who know Julia as well as I do will look for Conduct at once maternally affectionate and exactly bountiful.

If I have given my Opinion with too much freedom—I earnestly solicit your pardon. I am sensible that neither Age or Wisdom or Relationship authorize me to advise—but your own Command has opened my Lips and Friendship bids me be sincere. With the truest Wishes for your Happiness I am my dear Julia ever & affectionately yours

Wm. W. Wilkins

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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My respects to Mrs Payne. Hallowell informs me that he considered himself *obliged* to pay the money to Isaac & has paid it to his Order. Compliments to Miss Anna. I must beg her pardon for detaining these Letters so long in my possession as I expected daily to hear from you. I wished to dispatch in one packet. I shall attend as usual to your affairs till my power is revoked.

Mr. Wilkins' advice was acceptable and upon it she acted and likely would have acted the same had it been adverse for in the words of General Washington :

For my own part, I never did nor do I believe I ever shall give advice to a woman who is setting out on a matrimonial voyage. First, because I never could advise one to marry without her own consent; and, secondly, because I know it is to no purpose to advise her to refrain when she has obtained it. A woman rarely asks an opinion, or requires advice on such an occasion, till her resolution is formed, and then it is with the hope and expectation of obtaining a sanction, not that she means to be governed by your disapprobation, that she applies.

As said Mr. Wilkins' advice was acceptable for Mrs. Todd acted upon it in advance of receiving it; however, that is in advance of the story. Mr. Madison tells it himself to his father.

Harewood October 5, 1794

Dear & Hon<sup>d</sup> Sir

I have detained Sam by whom I send this so much longer than I intended & you expected that many apologies are due for the liberty. I hope it will be a sufficient one that I found him indispensable for a variety of little services, which I did not particularly take into view before I left Orange. There he can himself explain and I therefore leave the task to him; proceeding to the history of what relates to myself. On my arrival here I was able to



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urge so many conveniences in hastening the event which I solicited that it took place on the 15<sup>th</sup> ult: on the friday following we set out accompanied by Mifs A. Payne, and Mifs Harriot Washington, on a visit to my sister Hite, when we arrived the next day, having stopped a night at Winchester with Mr. Bailmain. We had been a day or two only at Mr. Hites, before a slight indisposition which my wife had felt for several days, ended in a regular ague & fever. The fits tho' succeeded by compleat intermissions were so severe that I thought it prudent to call in a Physician from Winchester. Doc<sup>r</sup> Mackay not being in the way Doc<sup>r</sup> Baldwin attended, and by a decisive administration of the Bark soon expelled the complaint. She has since recovered very fast & I hope notwithstanding a slight indisposition this morning which may be the effect of fatigue & change of weather, that no return is in the least to be apprehended. We left Mr. Hites the day before yesterday. Our time was passed there with great pleasure on our side, and I hope with not less on the other. Our departure however was embittered by the loss sustained the night preceeding by my sister which you will have an account of from Mr H. by this opportunity. In 8 or 10 days we expect to set out for Philad<sup>a</sup>—your daughter in law begs you and my mother to accept her best and most respectful affections, which she means to express herself by an early opportunity. She wishes Fanny also be sensible of the pleasure with which a correspondence with her would be carried on. \* \* \*

I remain your affecte son

JS. MADISON JR

Mr. Madison and Mrs. Todd were married at Harewood, Monday, September 15, 1794. Rev. Dr. Balmaine, a Madison connection, by marriage, officiated.\* The groom was forty-three; the bride twenty-six. The fair biographers have failed to make a wedding

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\**Dolly Madison*. Maud Wilder Goodwin.

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costume for the bride; but to the groom gave ruffles of Mechlin lace for the bridesmaids to cut up into charms.\* They had their honeymoon at Harewood with her people, and their wedding trip to his people, and, as he says, with great pleasure on his side and the hope of not less on her's.

It was the season when the summer sun yet shines strong and nature is thinking of the brighter vestments of autumn. The twittering of the birds, the humming of the insects, the lullaby of the leaves were the chorus of the beating of happiness in the newly intertwined hearts. We might say more of this—but Mr. and Mrs. Madison, themselves, had to hurry from the country to the city—the city of Philadelphia—the former for Congressional duties; the latter for social life. Society was in high feather in 1794, and Dolly Madison came to be the most graceful plume. The chief social channel was the assemblies at Oeller's tavern on Chestnut Street.† The rules of the dance were severe, for instance the 10th:

No gentleman admitible in boots, colored stocking, or undress.\*

The Madisons took the house 115 Spruce Street, between Fourth and Fifth, now numbered 429.‡

Mr. White was from Virginia a Delegate in the Continental Congress and a Representative in Congress. For eloquence and patriotism he was distinguished. His staunch support of the situation on the Potomac turned the legislative tide. And he was of

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\**Dolly Madison*. Maud Wilder Goodwin.

†James Oeller's place was on the south side of Chestnut, west of Sixth and immediately west of the Circus. Pictured in *Public Ledger*, October 12, 1913.

‡Directory of Philadelphia, 1795.

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the Commissioners in charge of the foundation affairs of the government's city.

Woodville 2<sup>d</sup> Nov. 1794

Dear Sir

Your passing through this Country without giving me the pleasure of seeing you was no small disappointment, and having some acquaintance with the amiable Lady to whom you are now united. My disappointment was not lessened from that circumstance—I requested Mr Bailmain not only to make known our wishes, but to let us know when you came to Town, that Mrs. White and myself might have waited on you and Mrs Madison, but he says the shortness of your stay there, did not permit him to comply with my request

\* \* \*

Dear Sir

Your most Ob Serv

ALEX WHITE

Rev. James Madison had the distinction of being the second cousin to James Madison, the first Bishop of Virginia and President of the William and Mary College.

Williamsburg

Nov. 12<sup>h</sup> 1794

My Dear Sir,

I cannot refrain sending you my sincere congratulations, upon an Event which promises you so much Happiness. It was my Intention to have paid you a short Visit, in September, upon my Return from the Mountains, but heard, when in your Neighbourhood, that you were from Home, & engaged in the pursuit, which terminated so agreeably to yourself, & I trust also, to the amiable Partner whom you have Selected. Present her

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too, if you please, with my Congratulations & ardent wishes for your mutual Happiness.—

\* \* \*

With the most sincere Esteem, I am D Sir,  
Y<sup>r</sup> Friend,

J MADISON

To James Monroe

Philada, Decr 4, 1794.

Dear Sir

\* \* \*

Present my best respects to Mrs. Monroe and Eliza, and tell them I shall be able on their return to present them with a new acquaintance who is prepared by my representations to receive them with all the affection they merit, & who I flatter myself will be entitled to theirs. The event which puts this in my power took place on the 15th of Sept<sup>r</sup>. We are at present inhabitants of the House which you occupied last winter & shall continue in it during the session.\*

Horatio Gates was an English-American soldier. The visitor to the Capitol at Washington sees him there with repressed smile and smart regimentals in the rôle of conqueror receiving from Burgoyne the emblem of surrender.

New York 27<sup>th</sup> December 1794.

My dear Sir

Permit me thus late to present to you, & Mrs Madison, mine, & my Marys Compliments of Congratulation; and to wish ye both every Earthly Felicity; make us also

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\**The Writings of James Madison.* Gaillard Hunt.

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happy by saying you will both pay a Vifsit to Rose Hill next Summer;—

\* \* \*

\* \* \* with Marys and My Most respectful Compliments to Mrs Maddison, I am

My dear Sir

Your faithfull

Humble Servant,

Horatio Gates:—

The appeal of Jefferson to Madison, his near neighbor, close friend and political legatee not to desert the steering of the ship of state for fear that it might be dashed to destruction, a fear that seems to be constant with the statesmen, has with it the gift of prophecy:

Monticello, Dec. 28. 1794.

\* \* \* Hold on then, my dear friend, that we may not shipwreck in the meanwhile. I do not see, in the minds of those with whom I converse, a greater affliction than the fear of your retirement; but this must not be, unless to a more splendid & a more efficacious post. There I should rejoice to see you, I hope I may say, I shall rejoice to see you. I have long had much in my mind to say to you on that subject. But double delicacies have kept me silent.

\* \* \*

Present me respectfully to Mrs. Madison, and pray her to keep you where you are for her own satisfaction and the public good, and accept the cordial affections of us all. Adieu.

Mrs. Madison's matrimonial joy was dimmed by fraternal bereavement.

Journal of Elizabeth Drinker:

1795, January 5. I heard this evening of the death of two of Molly Payne's sons, Temple and Isaac—the latter

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

offended a man in Virginia, who sometime afterward shot him with a pistol.

Congress adjourned March 3, 1795. A journey was made. The journey over the wide waters was by ferry. All the overland by stage. The roads were rutted. The ride was rough. The weather was mild. On the route were settlements, thick and thin, and widely separated. The route was mostly through virgin forests and pristine nature. From Philadelphia was the start, then came Chester, then Wilmington, then Elkton and then across the broad Susquehanna at Havre de Grace where "the scenery is grand and picturesque" and then the considerable Baltimore, then thrifty George Town, and then across the Potomac from where were visted the incomplete President's Palace and the Capitol in the embryonic city for the nation, then Mount Vernon and then down and up the valley sides and over the mountain tops to Charlottesville and then the destination, the Madison mansion, Montpellier. The journey was six or seven days. The way was not new to Mr. Madison and to Dolly it was not entirely new. A new experience confronts Dolly. Anticipated with pleasure and too, with timidity—the welcome. The venerable father and mother and the sweet sister await the addition to themselves and so do the black visaged with wide eyes and laughing, the coming. The welcome is not to be worded. Dolly is installed as mistress of Montpellier.

Philip Freneau at the College of New Jersey (Princeton) was the room mate of James Madison and there he wrote the *Poetical History of the Prophet Jonah*. "The Poet of the Revolution" had like the others his own code of capitalization and punctuation and put down his wife with a small f.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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Monmouth, May 20th 1795.—

My respected friend,

\* \* \*

The public papers some time ago announced your marriage. I wish you all possible happiness with the lady whom you chosen for your companion through life—Mrs Freneau joins me in the same, and desires me to present her best respects to your lady and yourself—and should you ever take an excursion to these parts of Jersey we will endeavor to give Mrs Madison and yourself—"if not a costly welcome, yet a kind."—

I am, Sir,

with great esteem

Your friend and humble Servt

Philip Freneau.

That the laudation given Mrs. Madison was not attributable to prestige of position is proven by the letter of the elder Adams to his Mrs. Adams :

Philadelphia, 27 February, 1796.

My Dearest Friend,

I Dined yesterday with Mr. Madison. Mrs. Madison is a fine woman, and his two sisters are equally so. One of them is married to George Washington, one of the nephews of the President who were sometimes at our house. Mr. Washington came and civilly inquired after your health. These ladies, whose name was Payne, are of a Quaker family, once of North Carolina.

Mr. Madison retired from Congress, March 4, 1797.

Of the Madisons, the neighborly qualities, are shown by the fruits and besides—the thought of the table wants of their neighbors, the Monroes, thirty miles away.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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Madison to Monroe.

Feb'y 5, 1798.

\* \* \*

Calling to mind the difficulty you may experience from the general failure of the potato crop last year, I beg you to accept by the bearer a couple of bushels, which may furnish the seed for your garden, if nothing more. Mrs. Madison insists on adding for Mrs. Monroe a few pickles and preserves, with half a dozen bottles of gooseberries and a bag of dried cherries, which will not be wanted by us until another season will afford a supply, and which the time of your return home must have deprived her of, as the fruit of the last season. We both wish we could substitute something more worthy of acceptance.\*

John George Jackson, March 14, 1799, from Clarksburg, Virginia, wrote to Mr. Madison and enclosed a letter to Miss Polly Paine—Mrs. Madison's youngest sister, Mary. The next year, Polly was Mrs. Jackson.

In completeness the first biography is that of Lucia Beverly Cutts, a grand-niece, anonymously, called the *Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison*. To the work she brought ability and to that the affection of kinship. With like literary ability Maud Wilder Goodwin has in her tersely-titled *Dolly Madison* given her life; and in the work has been diligent with the dragnet of research to a degree not to be overstated. These works that have preceded have made this possible.

The will of Mrs. Payne, the mother, was admitted to probate by Mrs. Madison proving the handwriting. John Todd who prepared the will had died, and at the time of probate, January, 1796, George Walker, the living wit-

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\**Letters and Other Writings of James Madison.*

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

ness, was residing in the city of Washington. He was its earliest promoter. Indeed the Federal City in its perfection of plan and magnificence in extent was his conception.

Dunlap's *American Daily Advertiser*, Saturday, April 9, 1791:

We hear, that the proprietors of the land between Rock-Creek and the Tyber river, have, with much credit to themselves, made a donation of some lots in the proposed Federal City, to Mr. George Walker, which they rather consider a small tribute to genius and merit, than an adequate reward for the first projector of the magnificent plan now in contemplation and attended with every favorable prospect of being fully accomplished.

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## CHAPTER II

1800-1808

**I**N *THE beginning* thus begins The Book. *In the beginning* begins the account of the creation. In the beginning is an apt phrase to introduce the first step in a story. The beginning of the story of the city—the city culled out for the nation—is interesting; is more interesting than the after chapters—the chapters that carry the narration of maturer growth. The beginning is the most important in the development as the bent twig inclines the tree. The story of the beginning of the city is a story of society. The little knots of society were widely scattered before the removal of the government from Philadelphia to Washington and on the removal—and years thereafter—society's habitations were as distantly apart although not so sparse. But, the appropriate date to be given the beginning is the time of that removal.

Mrs. Madison came to the city in 1801 and went from it by death in 1849—roundly, half a century, exactly forty-eight years and three months. She did not live in the city continuously yet continuously was in close touch with it. The story of the city and the story of Mrs. Madison are closely interwoven—the threads of each are the warp and woof of the fabric, rather, the parts of the same story. The social set which gave impetus to the city's progress had the Madisons, particularly Mrs. Madison and her associates. These associates, all entertaining characters, fit into her life and it is fitting that their parts

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

in the social doings and all other local affairs should be touched upon. The facts disclosed may cause the reader the reflection that "of a good beginning cometh a good end" and that the city in the beginning had such strong characters is consequent its fortunate consummations.

From the time the site was selected to the time of the removal of government was a decade. Much had been done in the meantime in laying out streets, putting up private residences and public buildings. Much more might have been done. Much more was needed. The failure may have been consequent upon limited facilities and funds. Mrs. Adams, the President's wife, referring to the discomforts at the Castle from the lack of everything of convenience makes disparaging comparison with Yankee activity.

Phil 20 Jan<sup>y</sup> 1800

Dr Sir

I am not authorized to say, but I am sure it will give the Prest & M<sup>rs</sup> Adams great satisfaction, if you will plan, & cause to be executed, something like a garden, at the North side of the President's House.

That large, naked, ugly looking building will be a very inconvenient residence for a Family, without something of this kind is done at once. You have seen Bingham's garden in Phil<sup>a</sup>.—I mean something like that, to be enclosed with open railing. The ground should not be levelled—but Trees should be planted at once, so as to make it an agreeable place to walk in, even this summer.

I do not think the Com<sup>rs</sup> have sufficiently attended to the accomodation of the Prest—a private gent<sup>n</sup> preparing a residence for his Friend, would have done more than has been done. Would you not be ashamed to conduct the Prest to the House without there being an enclosure of any kind about it. Is there a stable—a carriage House—too is necessary. \* \* \*

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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This attention to the Prest is so proper, that no doubt your colleagues will immediately adopt the ideas you suggest on the subject. I should be glad to have an oppy of informing the Prest what is doing for his accomodation.

Remember, that he will want his House in June—

I am D Sr—Yrs very sincerely

Ben Stoddert

Mr. Stoddert, the Secretary of the Navy, was no stranger to the section. He was a citizen of George Town which offered itself as a ready built city for the nation's city. He resided in the mansion, 3400 Prospect avenue. He was an original proprietor. The letter of Mr. Stoddert was to Dr. Thornton. He was one of the three city commissioners. It was written to him because he was an architect and a genius at drawing and a genius generally.

Mrs. Thornton's Diary:

(1800, January) Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> After dinner Dr T—— began a letter to Mr Stoddert Secretary of the Navy, in answer to one from him requesting him to induce his Colleagues to lay out a garden & other necessary out Offices to the President's House.—This is a difficult work without they had large funds to make every thing to accord with the Building.

Friday 31<sup>st</sup> Jan<sup>y</sup> Dr T—— wrote his letter to Mr Stoddert and enclosed a ground plan of the President's House, of which I made a Copy before he sent it.

Mrs. Adams to Mrs. William Smith

Washington,

Nov. 21st, 1800.

My dear Sister:—

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\*

I sit out early intending to make my 36 miles, if possible; no travelling, however, but by day-light. We took

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

a direction, as we supposed right, but in the first turn went wrong, and were wandering more than two hours in the woods in different paths, holding down and breaking bows of trees which we could not pass, until we met a solitary black fellow with a horse and cart. We inquired of him the way and he kindly offered to conduct us, which he did two miles, and then gave us such a clue as led us to the post-road and the Inn where we got some dinner.

I arrived about one o'clock at this place, known by the name of *the City*, and the name is all that you can call so, as I expected to find it a new country with houses scattered over a space of ten miles, and trees and stumps in plenty with a castle of a house—so I found it—the President's house is in a beautiful situation in front of which is the Potomac with a view of Alexandria—the country around is romantic, but a wild and wilderness at present. I have been to Georgetown and felt all that Mrs. Cranch described when she was a resident there. It is the very dirtiest hole I ever saw for a place of any trade, or respectability of inhabitants. It is only one mile from me, but a quagmire after every rain. Here we are obliged to send daily for marketting. The Capitol is near two miles from us. As to roads we shall make them by the frequent passing before winter, but I am determined to be satisfied and content, to say nothing of inconvenience, etc. That must be a worse place than even Georgetown, that I could not reside in for three months.

\* \* \*

I have the pleasure to say we are all at present well, tho the Newspapers very kindly gave the President the Ague and fever. I am rejoiced that it was only in the paper that he had it. This day the President meets the two houses to deliver the speech. There has not been a House until yesterday. We have had some very cold weather and we feel it keenly. This house is twice as large as our meeting house. I believe the great Hall is as big. I am sure it is twice as long. Cut your coat according to your cloth—but this house is built for ages

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to come—the establishment necessary is a tax which cannot be born by the present salary—nobody can form an idea of it but those who come into it. I had much rather live in the house at Philadelphia—not one room or chamber is finished of the whole. It is habitable by fires in every part, thirteen of which we are obliged to keep daily, or sleep in wet and damp places.

Yours as ever,  
A. A.

The discomforts connected with the Federal City with others was those of travel. The journey from Philadelphia has been unexaggeratedly told by Isaac Weld, junior, November, 1795 in *Travels through the States of North America* and by Thomas Twining April, 1796 in *Travels in America 100 Years Ago*.

Margaret Bayard and Samuel Harrison Smith were already second cousins when in Philadelphia, September 29, 1800, they became bride and groom. Their wedding tour was the journey to their new home. At first they did not keep house.

### Mrs. Thornton's Diary:

(1800 October) Friday 24th— \* \* \* After dinner we went to the Capitol, called on M<sup>r</sup> & M<sup>rs</sup> Smith at Stelle's tavern.\*

Mr. Smith was a newspaper pioneer. In Philadelphia he published a daily and evening paper under the title *New World*. Newspaper literature was more expensive then and newspaper reading less general. The two months' trial proved the financial futility and even as a

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\*Stelle's tavern at this date was at the corner of A street and New Jersey avenue, S.E.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

once-daily the paper was a failure. From John Oswald he purchased a newspaper and under a new title *Universal Gazette* he published it weekly; he transferred that journalistic enterprise. In Washington, he established the *National Intelligencer*, October 31, 1800, of long life. It was announced at the birth:

But while the editor classes with our dearest rights the liberty of the press, he is decidedly inimical to its licentiousness. As, on the one hand, the conduct of public men and the tendency of public measures will be freely examined, so, on the other hand, private character will remain inviolable, nor shall indelicate expressions admitted, however disguised by satire or enlivened by wit.

This principle preached was practiced and for it the proprietor secured the sobriquet "*Silky, Milky Smith.*"

Mrs. Smith was of unusual literary talent, and by magazine articles and in the guise of fiction, concurrently preserved what went on the primitive days, and the most interesting historically of the Federal City. Her letters less studied and all the more entertaining by their spontaneity, ably edited by the litterateur, Gaillard Hunt, under title *Forty Years of Washington Society*, are like unto a delightful wandering into a luxuriant tangle of gossip, philosophy, politics, autobiography, history and every other literary growth. The primary sketch of Mrs. Madison is that of Mrs. Smith and that is how Mrs. Madison would have it for late in life she acknowledged to the authoress:

I \* \* \* can assure you that if a Biographical sketch must be taken, its accomplishment by your pen would be more agreeable to me than by any other to which such a task could be committed, being persuaded



HAREWOOD, WEST VIRGINIA



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not only of its competency, but of the just dispositions by which it would be guided.

Mrs. Smith's descriptions are true and her conclusions fair, for in parallel accounts, by eminent writers there is close correspondence.\*

Margaret Bayard Smith says :†

The infant metropolis of the union was at that time almost a wilderness. The president's house stood unenclosed on a piece of waste and barren ground, separated from the capitol by an almost impassable marsh. That building was not half completed, and standing as it did amidst the rough masses of stone and other materials collected for its construction, and half hidden by the venerable oaks that still shaded their native soil, looked more like a ruin in the midst of its fallen fragments and coeval shades, than a new and rising edifice. The silence and solitude of the surrounding space were calculated to enforce this idea, for beyond the capitol-hill, far as the eye could reach, the city as it was called, lay in a state of nature, covered with thick groves and forest trees, wide and verdant plains, with only here and there a house along the intersecting ways, that could not yet be properly called streets.

The original proprietors of the grounds on which the city was located retained their rural residences and their habits of living. The new inhabitants, who thronged to the seat of government came from every quarter of the union, bringing with them the modes and customs of their respective states. Mr. Madison from Virginia, Mr. Gallatin from Pennsylvania, General Dearborn from Massachusetts, and Robert Smith from Maryland, were the

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\*Biographical sketch and portrait of Mrs. Smith in *Forty Years of Washington Society*.

†Mrs. Madison. *National Portrait Gallery*. Herring and Long-acre, 1836.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

heads of the several departments of government. With these came numerous political friends and dependants to fill the subordinate places in the public offices.

Albert Gallatin to Mrs. Gallatin made this pessimistic picture of what he subsequently called "this hateful place."

Washington City, 15th January, 1801.

\* \* \* Our local situation is far from being pleasant or even convenient. Around the Capitol are seven or eight boarding-houses, one tailor, one shoemaker, one printer, a washing-woman, a grocery shop, a pamphlets and stationery shop, a small dry goods shop, and an oyster house. This makes the whole of the Federal City as connected with the Capitol. At the distance of three-fourths of a mile, on or near the Eastern Branch, lie scattered the habitations of Mr. Law and of Mr. Carroll, the principal proprietaries of the ground, half a dozen houses, a very large, but perfectly empty warehouse, and a wharf graced by not a single vessel. And this makes the whole intended commercial part of the city, unless we include in it what is called the Twenty Buildings, being so many unfinished houses commenced by Morris and Nicholson, and perhaps as many undertaken by Greenleaf, both which groups lie, at a distance of half-mile from each other, near the mouth of the Eastern Branch and the Potowmack, and are divided by a large swamp from the Capitol Hill and the little village connected with it. Taking a contrary direction from the Capitol towards the President's house, the same swamp intervenes, and a straight causeway, which measures one mile and half and seventeen perches, forms the communication between the two buildings. A small stream, about the size of the largest of the two runs between Clare's and our house, and decorated with the pompous appellation of "Tyber," feeds without draining the swamps, and along that causeway (called the Pennsylvania Avenue), between the Cap-

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itol and the President's House, not a single house intervenes or can intervene without devoting its wretched tenant to perpetual fevers. From the President's House to Georgetown the distance is not quite a mile and a half, the ground is high and level; the public offices and from fifty to one hundred good houses are finished; the President's House is a very elegant building, and this part of the city on account of its natural situation, of its vicinity to Georgetown, with which it communicates over Rock Creek by two bridges, and by the concourse of people drawn by having business with the public offices, will improve considerably and may within a short time form a town equal in size and population to Lancaster or Annapolis.

Dr. Thornton was always on the alert to do hospitality. And his kind disposition and enthusiastic nature included a partiality to everything that was connected with the city of Washington even its climate.

City of Washington 16th March 1801

Dear Sir

I had expected, with more satisfaction & pleasure than I can express, your arrival in this city, when I heard of your late afflictive loss, in which I sincerely sympathize. I also lament on another account your detention in Virginia.—The President, whose tender regard for you makes him always speak with an uncommon degree of Interest for your welfare, informed me that you had long experienced delicate Health, and he even feared a change of climate might finally be requisite.—I do not think I ever enjoyed such Health as since my residence in this place, and I sincerely hope that this Change from your present situation may be so favorable, that you will have cause to pronounce it one of the healthiest places in the world. \* \* \*

\* \* \*

We are anxiously looking for you, and I take the liberty of requesting you to make my House your Home on your

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

arrival. If you should like our plain mode of living I shall rejoice exceedingly in your stay; if not, I will leave nothing undone to endeavour to obtain better accommodations for one whom I so sincerely regard.—We hope Mrs Madison will be with you, & we request you will present to her the joint compliments and good wishes of my Family

and accept

dear Sir,

the regard & esteem of

your respectful and sincere Friend,

William Thornton

James Madison Esq<sup>re</sup>.

Because of the death of Madison's father at Montpelier, the Madisons were not present at the inauguration. They came in the spring (1801). The Madisons were the guests of the President while they furnished a house.

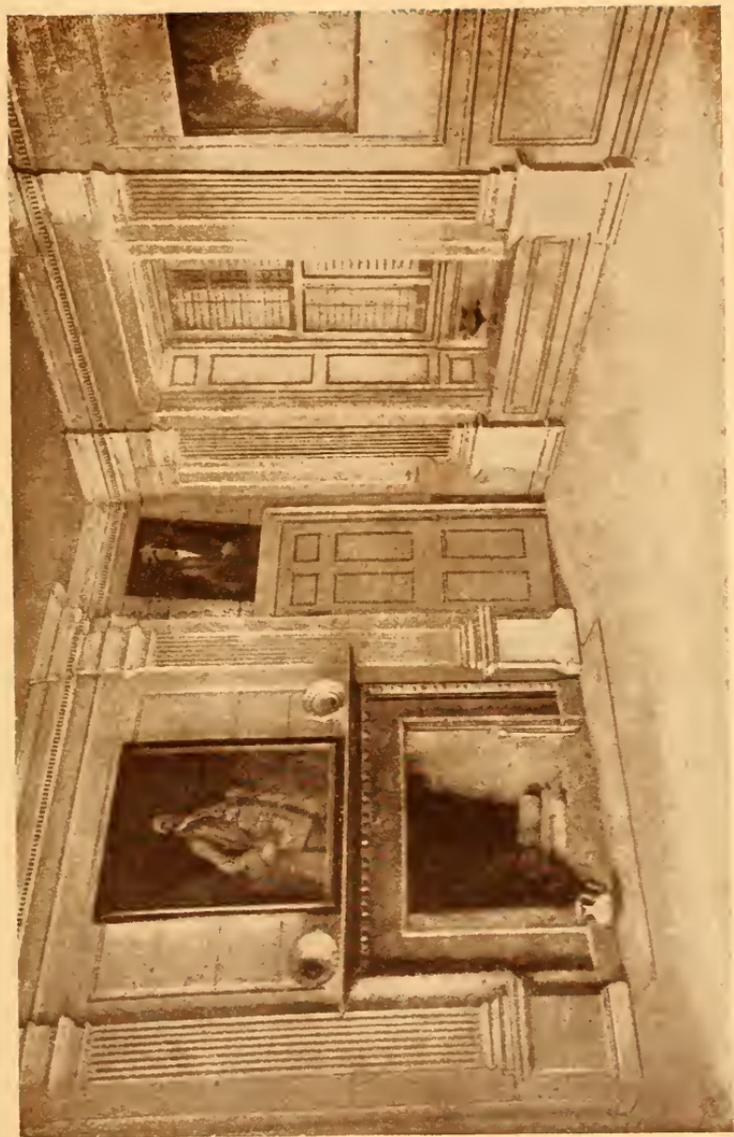
Mrs. Smith, May 26th, 1801, writes :

Mrs. Madison is at the President's at present. Mrs. Gallatin is in our neighborhood at present. The house Mr. G. has taken is next door to the Madisons' and three miles distant from us.

The Smiths lived on New Jersey Avenue in a row now The Varnum. The Madisons rented one of the Six Buildings.\*

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\*Mr. Madison's landlord was the firm, Jonah Thompson and Richard Veitch, merchants of Alexandria, Va. They owned (present numbering) 2113, 2109 and 2107 Pennsylvania avenue; from Georgetown, the third, fifth and sixth houses of the row. The sixth house was occupied by Benjamin Stoddert and used as the Navy Office. The Madisons likely lived in No. 2113.



HAREWOOD, WEST VIRGINIA



## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

Mrs. Smith's initial mention of Mrs. Madison is:

May 20, 1801.

I have become acquainted with and am highly pleased with her; she has good humour and sprightliness, united to the most affable and agreeable manners.

And on the morrow:

Since I last wrote I have formed quite a social acquaintance with Mrs. Madison and her sister; indeed it is impossible for an acquaintance with them to be different.

On the twenty-fifth Independence Day, at the Nation's City, President Jefferson contributed with his cordiality, good cheer, to the company "which separated about 2 o'clock and betook themselves to the various places of entertainment provided for the celebration of the day." The citizens who were too kind spirited to slight any entertainer must have been at least loaded with patriotism. Mrs. Madison did not go for it was a man's affair but the Secretary of State did as likewise M. Pichon, Chargé d'Affaires of the French republic, the government dignitaries and "strangers of distinction." If Mrs. Madison had attended she would have seen the handsome Captain Tingey, as he sang to the accompaniment of the Marine Band, Thomas Law's song composed for the day with variations from Joseph Hopkinson:

Hail Columbia, happy land  
Hail ye patriots, heaven born band.

And in the Captain's finishing burst of melody:

Firm united let us be  
Rallying round our liberty,  
As a band of brothers join'd  
Peace and safety we shall find.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

she would have added to the "loud plaudits" the Captain received. This celebration of those of the day was held at the hostelry of McMunn and Conrad, (The Varnum) and began at 4 o'clock P.M.\*

City of Washington 15<sup>th</sup> Aug<sup>st</sup> 1801.—

My dear Friend

\* \* \* I accordingly turned my attention to Mr Vofs's House, next door to the one I occupy, but was afraid we should not agree. We have however concluded, but I was under the necessity of infringing one of the rules not really specified but strongly hinted in your Letter. I was obliged to agree to an advance of the rent on your entering the House, but laid him under a penalty of 1000 Dolls. if the House should not be finished by the 1<sup>st</sup> of Octr.— \* \* \* The Cellar I have directed to be divided, that one may serve for wine &c, the other for coals, &c—and for security against Fire a cupola on the roof, which will add to the House in other respects.

\* \* \*

I who lately was nothing less than a Commissioner or Edile, am now reduced to a High-way man—you will remember we are engaged in making Highways.—The City improves rapidly.—

I am, dear Sir, with best compliments to the Ladies of your Family, your respectful & affectionate Friend

William Thornton—

James Madison Esq<sup>re</sup>.

The annexed letter was directed to Montpellier.

The Madisons located in Mr. Voss's house on F between Thirteenth and Fourteenth streets and there remained the entire terms of his Secretaryship. When first numbered it was 244 F street; the site is now the Adams Building and is numbered 1333. John Quincy

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\**National Intelligencer*, July 6, 1801.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

Adams latterly owned and occupied the house and it became known as the Adams House.

Mrs. Kate Kearney Henry says :

I may add that my grandfather, Richard Forrest, built and lived at what is now called the Ebbitt House, and the Madisons and Adams' were their opposite neighbors for many years.

Mr. Madison spent freely and entertained open-handedly. He had costly service, choice things to eat and imported vintages to drink.\* His pocket book was sometimes empty when the bill collector called. He first paid with a note at ninety days. When the second hand coach and silver plated harness seemed a lower grade he got another second hand outfit. He indulged his fancy for good horses. On the authority of Gaillard Hunt, with his next door neighbor, Dr. Thornton, he owned a race horse. History does not disclose how many times that fleet-footed nag heard "they're off" or how many times the racer's nose was in front. Whether the horse brought fortune or misfortune is only a guess. Yet if misfortune chills friendship then it was that—for these two friends had that sensitive and suspicious friendship always ready for rupture and reconciliation.

The Rev. Manasseh Cutler's ideas and Mr. Gallatin's are diametric. The reverend gentleman tells his daughter :

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\*One of many. Invoice of One Puncheon Best Champain Prime old Brandy, at least 15 years old, from Cognac, augmented to 4th shipped on board the Ship Susan, Capt. Howard, on acct of James Madison Esqr. Secretary of State \* \* \* frcs 789.81 Bordeaux, October 19, 1807.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

Washington, Dec. 21, 1801.

My Dear Betsy:—

The city of Washington, in point of situation, is much more delightful than I expected to find it. The ground, in general, is elevated, mostly cleared and commands a pleasing prospect of the Potomac River. The buildings are brick and erected in what are called large blocks, that is, from two to five to six houses joined together, and appear like one long building. There is one block of seven, another of nine, and one of twenty houses, but they are scattered over a large extent of ground. The block in which I live contains six houses,\* four stories high, and very handsomely furnished. It is situated east of the Capitol, on the highest ground in the city. \* \* \* I am not much pleased with the Capitol. It is a huge pile built, indeed, with handsome stone, very heavy in its appearance without, and not very pleasant within. The President's house is superb, well proportioned, and pleasantly situated.

Doctor Samuel Latham Mitchell from New York was in Washington from 1801 to 1813, either as Senator or Representative. When Mrs. Mitchell was at home he wrote her almost daily to let her know what was doing and that at Washington she had an ardent lover. He was amiable in disposition and attractive in person. He was learned and could tell his learning. "We all love the doctor, and every body likes to hear him talk." He was wanted in the political conferences and as much in the social functions.

Washington, January 3, 1802.

The company at dinner consisted of both ladies and gentlemen, and was extremely sociable and agreeable. Since that day Mr. Madison has made me a friendly visit, and I have spent an evening with Mrs. M.

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\*Carroll Row. Site of Library of Congress.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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While Congress sat in New York it was reported that he was fascinated by the celebrated Mrs. Colden, of our city, she who was so noted for her masculine understanding and activity, as well as for feminine graces and accomplishments. But Mr. Madison was reserved for another widow, who some years after became connected to him by the nuptial tie. \* \* \* She has a fine person and a most engaging countenance, which pleases not so much from mere symmetry or complexion as from expression. Her smile, her conversation, and her manners are so engaging that it is no wonder that such a young widow, with her fine blue eyes and large share of animation, should be indeed a *queen of hearts*. By this second marriage she has become the wife of one of the first men of the nation, and enjoys all the respectability and *éclat* of such a position.

Mr. Madison had wooed and won Miss Catherine Floyd, the daughter of General William Floyd, one of the Signers. Won the promise of matrimony, that is all, for the young Miss of sixteen, to please her new fancy, exercised her feminine prerogative and sent him a note of dismissal which was sealed with dough. If the seal meant not—your cake is dough—it had no explicable excuse. Mr. Jefferson could sympathize: "I sincerely lament the misadventure which has happened from whatever cause it may have happened; should it be final, however, the world presents the same and many other resources of happiness."

Of a holiday of that time Senator Mitchell writes:

Washington, January 4, 1802.

New Year's Day was a time of great parade in the city of Washington. The weather being fine, gave every body an opportunity of exhibiting. The great place of resort was the President's Mansion.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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\* \* \* The President was standing near the middle of the room, to salute and converse with visitors.  
\* \* \* Among the ladies were the President's two daughters, Mrs. Randolph and Mrs. Eppes, to whom I paid my obeisance; then to Mrs. Madison and her sister, Miss Paine; then to Mrs. Gallatin and Miss Nicholson, besides a number of others. Beaux growing scarce or inattentive, toward the last I had to officiate myself, and to escort several of the fair creatures in succession to their carriages.

The Reverend Mr. Cutler was a guest; the guests were men of health with appetite and digestion.

1802. Feb. 6. Saturday. Dined at the Presidents.  
\* \* \* Rice soup, round of beef, turkey, mutton, ham, loin of veal, cutlets of mutton or veal, fried eggs, fried beef, a pie called macaroni, which appeared to be a rich crust filled with the strillions of onions, or shallots, which I took it to be, tasted very strong, and not very agreeable. Mr. Lewis told me there were none in it; it was an Italian dish, and what appeared like onions was made of flour and butter, with a particularly strong liquor mixed with them. Ice-cream very good, crust wholly dried, crumbled into thin flakes; a dish somewhat like a pudding—inside white as milk or curd, very porous and light, covered with cream-sauce—very fine. Many other jim cracks, a great variety of fruit, plenty of wines, and good.

Senator Mitchell writes of another holiday:

Washington, March 17, 1802.

As I walked out this morning I observed the sons of Hibernia had adorned their hats with the shamrock in honor of St. Patrick, their tutelary saint.

Mrs. Thornton's diary begins with September 30, 1798 and ends, August, 1865. Some parts are missing. The entries were made on the day. The items are indubitable facts. Rarely are they with comment. First is daily

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stated, the day of the month, the day of the week, and the weather condition. Many omissions of newspapers and other accounts are supplied, and such supplied omissions are important in perfecting a complete narrative. The diary is of valuable historic worth notwithstanding her depreciation, December 31, 1829:

Our lives pass on, one day so much like another that there is little use in recording its daily events—to myself it is sometimes gratifying to refer to days past—but to others useless—I have for many years kept these memorandums & it has become a habit that I can hardly resign—but why do what will not gratify or serve anyone?—notwithstanding I go on!

Dr. and Mrs. Thornton's visit to Montpelier was from September 5 to Wednesday, October 6, 1802. Mrs. Thornton in her diary gives a description of the Madison home.

Arrived at Mr Madison's country seat, about 110 miles from the City of Washington and situated in Orange County Virginia—5 miles from Orange Court House in one of the mountains forming the ridge called the South West mountains—it is in a mild & romantic Country, very generally covered with fine flourishing timber & forest trees;—The house originally built by his father but added to by himself is upwards of 80 feet in Length with a handsome (but unfinished) portico of the Tuscan order, plain but grand appearance, rendered more pleasing by displaying a taste for the arts which is rarely to be found in such retired and remote situations. If I may judge from the appearance of the generality of the plantations I have seen—in many of which even sufficient taste to place a common fence is wanting—The House is on a height commanding an extensive view of the blue ridge, which by the constant variation in the appearance

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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of the clouds, and consequently of the mountains form a very agreeable & varied object, sometimes appearing very distant, sometimes much separated and distinct and often like rolling waves.—Mr M. possesses a large tract of land, on some parts of which, the views are more picturesque, than where the House is placed, but that scite is very fine, wanting only a water view to complete it,—the grounds are susceptible of great improvements, and when those he contemplates are executed, it will be a handsome place & approach very much in similarity to some of the elegant seats in England of which many beautiful views are given in Sandby's views &c

Rev. Mr. Cutler records President Jefferson's second New Year's reception :

January 1, 1803. Saturday. About 12, I went with Mr. Tillinghast in a hack to the President's to pay him the compliments of the season. We found in the octagon hall, which seemed to be improved as a levee room, a large company of ladies and gentlemen; the Heads of Departments, Foreign Ministers, Charge de Affaires, and Consuls; strangers, members of both Houses, both Federalists and Democrats. Among the ladies, were the President's daughters, Mrs. Pechon, Mrs. Madison and her sister, Miss Payne; ladies of members of Congress, and some elderly ladies, whom I did not know. The entertainment was wine, punch and cake.

From *Winter in Washington*—Margaret Bayard Smith (published anonymously) :

\* \* \* Begged her to describe some of the ladies' dresses which she had seen that morning at the levee.

“First of all, cousin, tell me how Mrs. M. was dressed; for I heard you say at dinner, she looked like a queen.”

“But it was not her dress that gave her that majestic appearance.”



429 SPRUCE STREET, PHILADELPHIA



"Tell me, though, what dress she wore, cousin, for I love dearly to hear about such things."

"Well, let me think. She had on her head a turban of white satin, with three large white ostrich feathers hanging over her face, very becoming indeed! Her dress, too, of white satin, made high in the neck, with long sleeves, and large capes, trimmed with swan's down, was rich and beautiful."

"And had she no diamonds, cousin?"

"No, my dear, she never wears diamonds in the morning; she looked remarkably well, and as much like a bride, as a queen, for she wore no colours."

\*

\*

\*

"What need you," said he, looking at the lady of the Secretary of State—"what need you manners more captivating, more winning, more polished, than those of that amiable woman? I have, by turns, resided in all the courts of Europe, and, most positively I assure you, I never have seen any Duchess, Princess, or Queen, whose manners, with equal dignity, blended equal sweetness. Her stately person, her lofty carriage, her affable and gracious manner, would make her appear to advantage at any court in the world. Upon my soul, I have often exclaimed to myself, as I have seen her moving through admiring crowds, pleasing all, by making all pleased with themselves, yet looking superior to all, I often have exclaimed—"She moves a goddess, and she looks a queen.'"

It is another's sentiment that horse races are desports of great men though many gentlemen by such means gallop quite out of their fortunes. But in the Madisonian era the race was the popular diversion and on the course gathered the man of cloth as he whose clothes indicate worldliness. Then it was the only field sport; the diamond and the gridiron were unevolved. There was a horse-racing, cock-fighting, loud-swearing gentry and the

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

socially known gamed too with the cards, the more frequent game being "brag." The women maintained "the rights of the Card-table" and the game of these gamesters was "loo."

Sir Augustus Foster :

Cards were a great resource of an evening, and gaming was all the fashion, at brag especially, for the men who frequented society were chiefly from Virginia or the Western States, and were very fond of this the most gambling of all games as being one of countenance as well as cards. Loo was the innocent diversion of the ladies, who, when they were looed, pronounced the word in a very mincing manner.

Mr. Smith to Mrs. Smith :\*

July 5, 1803, Washington.

\* \* \* By the by, what do you think of my going to such an extent as to win 2 Doll. at Loo the first time I ever played the game, and being the most successful at the table? I confess I felt some mortification at putting the money of Mrs. Madison and Mrs. Duval into my pocket.

Upon this incident Gaillard Hunt makes the comment :†

It will be discomfoting to fashionable ladies of the present day who play "bridge" for money to know that Mrs. Madison subsequently gave up playing cards for stakes and was sorry she had ever indulged in the practice.

Mr Madison and his family take a family dinner with Th: Jefferson tomorrow (Tuesday) Will Doctr Thornton and his family join us?

Monday July 11, 03

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\**Notes on the United States. Quarterly Review.*

†*Forty Years of Washington Society.* Margaret Bayard Smith.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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Dr. Thornton established the race course. It was on the road, now Columbia, west of Fourteenth street.

The Rev. Dr. Cutler describes in his journal, graphically, the popular amusement:

1803. November 8, Tuesday. Horse races commenced.

To his son:

As the races form one trait of the character of the Southern States, it is a subject which may afford you some amusement. The race ground is on an old field, with somewhat of a rising in the middle. The race path is made about fifty feet wide, measuring one mile from the bench of the judges round to the stage again. In the center of this circle, a prodigious number of booths are erected, which stand upon the highest part of the ground. Under them are tables spread, much like the booths at Commencement (at Cambridge), but on the tops, for they are all built with boards, are platforms to accommodate spectators. At the time of the racing, these are filled with people of all descriptions. On the western side, and without the circus, is rising ground, where the carriages of the most respectable people take their stand. These, if they were not all *Democrats*, I should call the *Noblesse*. Their carriages are elegant, and their attendants and servants numerous. They are from different parts of the Southern and Middle States, and filled principally with ladies, and about one hundred in number. The ground within the circus is spread over with people on horseback, common hacks, and single carriages; a great number of women on horses and many a rich and elegant dress. On the eastern side is the stage for the bench of judges, elevated fifteen feet from the ground; at a distance of about ten rods, toward which the horses approach first, is another stage, on wheels. This is called the distanced stage. If any horses in the race do not arrive at this stage before the foremost arrives at the stage

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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from which they started, they are said to be distanced, and are taken out, and not suffered to run again in the same race.

While the horses were running, the whole ground within the circus was spread over with people on horse-back, stretching round, full speed, to different parts of the circus, to see the race. This was a striking part of the show, for it was supposed there were about 800 on horse-back, and many of them mounted on excellent horses. There were about 200 carriages and between 3,000 and 4,000 people—black, and white, and yellow; of all conditions, from the President of the United States to the beggar in his rags; of all ages and of both sexes, for I should judge one-third were females. \* \* \* It was said the toll collected from carriages and horses (people on foot passed free) was 1,200 dollars \* \* \* Mr. Tayloe, of this city, is one of the most famous of the Jockey Club. He had five horses run, one on each day; all come near winning, but failed. He is said generally to be lucky. He is very rich—his horses are valued at more than 10,000 dollars. It is said that Holmes has sold one of his winning horses for 3,500 dollars. So it is that these Nabobs sport with their money. Vast sums were bet on the grounds by individuals. It is said one member of Congress lost, in private bets, 700 dollars. Such are the evils attending these races. But in one respect I was much disappointed. Among the numerous rabble, I saw very few instances of intoxication. I am tired, and can only add, that I am

Your affectionate parent,  
M. Cutler

Senator Mitchell playfully tells the proceedings of the day to Mrs. Mitchell:

Washington, December 16, 1803.

The horse-races for the season have begun this day within the Territory of Columbia, and I have been on the turf to behold this great and fashionable exhibition. The



MRS. MADISON  
By James Peale



ground on which the coursers try their speed is about four miles from the Capitol Hill. For several weeks this time has been anticipated with great expectation. People from far and near throng to behold the spectacle. Particularly from the adjacent States of Virginia and Maryland a multitude of spectators were assembled. The races, though beginning today (Tuesday), are to continue until Saturday.

So keen was the relish for the sport that there was a serious wish of a number of the members to adjourn Congress for a few days. \* \* \* The Senate actually did adjourn for three days, not on account of the races, you will observe, but merely to admit a mason to plaster the ceiling of their chamber, which had fallen down a few days before. The House of Representatives met and adjourned; but you must not suppose this was done to allow the honorable gentlemen to show themselves on the race-ground: you are rather to imagine that no business was in a due state of preparation to be acted upon. \* \* \*

The sport being over, the great men and the pretty women and the sporting jockeys and the reverend sirs and many of the little folks quitted the field.

To Tom Moore:

George Town, near Washington, Sunday, 1804.

Before this letter reaches you, you will have heard of our landing at Alexandria, after six days' *disputation* with winds, tides, and ignorant navigators. The following morning we set off for this place in a coachie. The cold was very severe, and the roads intolerable, nevertheless, I laughed every step of the way. Mr. Thornton met us at Alexandria, and advised this mode of conveyance as the best both for ease and quickness. Mr. M. had never been in one of these vehicles, and his *quiet* astonishment and *inward groaning* gave rise to my mirth and risibility. On entering our apartments here, I asked the master of the house what he could give us for dinner.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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He immediately changed his *position*, walked to the fireplace, reclined his head on the chimney-piece, looked at me, or rather stared, and replied, "Why, Mistress Merry, our custom is to give the best we have, but I *keeps* no *schedule* whatever. My house is full; but you shall have *yore* dinner." So we had, God knows! but neither his B. Majesty's Minister or Mistress Merry could eat a morsel that was served. A few days will, I hope, place us in some hovel of our own. Mr. Thornton is indefatigable in his endeavors to procure us every comfort. He is *quiet*, sensible well-informed man, without brilliancy or elocution. Well-educated, and full of information, which he details slowly from a natural impediment in his speech. Upon the whole he is a great acquisition, and I rejoice to hear he is not likely to leave us; but this *entre nous*—let not a word escape you that I write—trifles become *giants* in the mouths of Americans. We have alarmed the Congress itself with the number of our servants and the *immensity* of our baggage: the former they cannot account for; the latter, they have ingeniously settled, is to be sold, and that their *home markets* will be injured if foreign ministers are allowed to bring over such profusion of luxuries for sale. Do they desire to have one of Dr. Parry's Christians live amongst them?

I rejoice you did not come with us. At this season the Potomac is a poor reward for the *innumerable* difficulties and impositions a traveller meets with. Its immensity inspires awe and surprise that almost deadens sense, and its sameness, for some hundreds of miles, is quite overpowering; to this add a total want of cultivation, without any diversity of ground, without an atom of sublimity or grandeur, or even cheerfulness. Within a hundred miles of Alexandria the scene changes for the better. You have well-clothed mountains and magnificent woods that may charm in their summer or autumnal dress, but in the month of November they show you the savage deserts, the miserable negroes' huts, and the causes why this country is so devoted a victim to disease. At some moments I wish you were here. Matter arises

every instant that you would convert into amusement, but the *per contra* makes us both bear the deprivation of your society with resignation, though not without regret. When we are comfortable come and see us. You have older friends, but none who value you more highly than Mr. M. and the writer of this blackened scrawl. I hope you are a good decipherer, or you will soon regret entering into a correspondence with me; I cannot write well, nor read what I write. I should have told you the house you heard talked of for us is not to be had either for *love* or money. Mr. M. frets, and every moment *exclaims*, "Why it is a thousand times worse than the worst parts of Spain!" I laugh, and resolve to bear up *stoutly* against difficulties while Heaven blesses me with health. I am now perfectly well, and to-morrow shall *exhibit* at the Capitol. The Capitol—good heavens, what profanation!! Here is a creek, too—a dirty arm of the river—which they have dignified by calling it the Tiber. What patience one need have with ignorance and self-conceit.

Adieu! let me hear from you soon, and accept the sincere friendship of

E. Merry.

Mrs. Smith, January 23, 1804, says:\*

But certainly there is no place in the United States where one hears and sees so many strange things, or where so many odd characters are to be met with.

And in corroboration she relates:

But of Mad'm —— I think it no harm to speak the truth. She has made a great noise here, and mobs of boys have crowded round her splendid equipage to see what I hope will not often be seen in this country, an almost naked woman. An elegant and select party was given to her by Mrs. Robt. Smith;† her appearance was

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\**Forty Years of Washington Society.*

†Robert Smith—Secretary of the Navy.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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such that it threw all the company into confusion, and no one dar'd to look at her but by stealth; the window shutters being left open, a crowd assembled round the windows to get a look at this beautiful little creature, for every one allows she is extremely beautiful. Her dress was the thinnest sarcenet and white crepe without the least stiffening in it, made without a single plait in the skirt, the width at the bottom being made of gores; there was scarcely any waist to it and no sleeves; her back, her bosom, part of her waist and her arms were uncover'd and the rest of her form visible. She was engaged the next evening at Madm P's, Mrs. R. Smith and several other ladies sent her word, if she wished to meet them there, she must promise to have more clothes on.

It is in this letter that Mrs. Smith tells of Mrs. Merry, the British Minister's wife, being at Robert Smith's large and splendid ball, and of her appearance and of her impressions of that aggressive lady:

Mrs. Merry was there and her dress attracted great attention; it was brilliant and fantastic, white satin with a long train, dark blue crape of the same length over it and white crape drapery down to her knees and open at one side, so thickly cover'd with silver spangles that it appear'd to be a brilliant silver tissue; a breadth of blue crape, about four yards long, and in other words a long shawl, put over her head, instead of over her shoulders and hanging down to the floor, her hair bound tight to her head with a band like her drapery, with a diamond crescent before and a diamond comb behind, diamond earrings and necklace, displayed on a bare bosom. She is a large, tall well-made woman, rather masculine, very free and affable in her manners, but easy without being graceful. She is said to be a woman of fine understanding and she is so entirely the talker and actor in all companies, that her good husband passes quite unnoticed; he is plain

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in his appearance and called rather inferior in understanding.\*

The Merry incident is that the President offered his arm to Mrs. Madison and ignored her whispered "Take Mrs. Merry." The Merrys, she on his arm, followed. The British Minister complained to his government. Mr. Madison offered to apply diplomatic ointment to the hurt and with what curative effect can be guessed from his letter to Mr. Monroe:

Washington, Feby 16, 1804.

Dear Sir In a private letter by Mr. Baring I gave you a detail of what had passed here on the subject of etiquette. I had hoped that no farther jars would have ensued as I still hope that the good Sense of the British government respecting the right of the government here to fix its routes of intercourse and the sentiments and manners of the country to which they ought to be adapted will give the proper instructions for preventing like incidents in future. In the meantime a fresh circumstance has taken place which calls for explanation.

The President being desirous of keeping open for cordial civilities whatever channels the scruples of Mr My might not have closed asked me what these were understood to be and particularly whether he would come and take friendly and familiar dinners with him I undertook to feel his pulse thro' some hand that would do it with the least impropriety. From the information obtained I inferred that an invitation would be readily accepted and with the less doubt as he had dined with me (his lady declining†) after the offense originally taken. The invitation was accordingly sent and terminated in the note from him to me & my answer herewith inclosed. I need not comment on this display of diplomatic superstition, truly

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\**Forty Years of Washington Society.* Margaret Bayard Smith.

†Mrs. Thornton's Diary states that Mrs. Merry was ill.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

extraordinary in this age and in this country. We were willing to refer it to the personal character of a man accustomed to see importance in such trifles and over cautious against displeasing his government by surrendering the minutest of his or its pretentions. What we apprehend is, that with these causes may be mingled a jealousy of our disposition towards England and that the mortifications which he has inflicted on himself are to be set down to that account.\*

And Madison to Monroe, the same day, writes :

Thornton has also declined an invitation from the Prest. This shews that he unites without necessity with Merry. He has latterly expressed much jealousy of our views founded on little and unmeaning circumstances.\*

Benjamin Ogle Tayloe says that Mrs. Madison informed him in her old age that immediately after the dinner in the drawing room to her with emotion, the Marchioness D'Yrujo said, "This will be cause of war."†

Mr & Mrs Merry  
request the Honor of  
Mrs Brodeau's  
Company at Tea  
on Monday Evg the 9<sup>th</sup> of April  
An Answer is desired

Extracts from Notes on the United States by Sir Augustus Foster edited by the Right Hon. Sir Augustus J. Foster, Bart. are in the Quarterly Review, Vol. 68. Sir Augustus Foster was the Secretary to the Legation 1804'5'6; and the Envoy in 1811 to the declaration of the War 1812. His comment and criticism are discri-

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\**Writings of James Madison.* Edited by Gaillard Hunt.

†*In Memoriam—Benjamin Ogle Tayloe.* Winslow M. Watson.

minate and he rebukes the travellers who have made biassed reports as going bilious and returning with a double portion. It is only economy of space that forbids the repeating of the Notes in full.

\* \* \* I conclude Mr. Jefferson and Mr. Madison were too much of the gentleman not to feel ashamed of what they were doing, and consequently did it awkwardly, as people must do who affect bad manners for a particular object. I allude to the sudden alteration in the etiquette heretofore practised by General Washington and Mr. Adams on dinner being announced. Mr. and Mrs. Merry were so thoroughly unaware of this intention that they had not had time to think of what they should do on the occasion, and Mr. Jefferson had not requested any one present to look to the strangers; so, when he took to dinner the lady next to him, Mr. Madison followed his example, and the Senators and members of the House of Representatives walked off with their respective dames—leaving the astonished Merry—(who was of the old school, having passed a great part of his life at Madrid)—gazing after them, till at last he made common cause with his better half: offering her his arm with a formel air, and giving a hint to one of the servants to send for his carriage, he took her to the table and sat by her,—the half-ashamed and half-awkward President not even attempting an excuse. And this same scene was for consistency's sake repeated nearly in the same manner at the house of the Secretary of State. Ever afterwards Mr. Merry refused their invitations; messages were sent to beg he would dine with the President as Mr. Merry, putting aside his quality of British Minister; but this he could not well do without, as he thought, sanctioning in some sort their previous treatment of the representative of Great Britain, as long as no apology was offered for the past: so he never met his Excellency any more at table, since the President, unlike any social monarchs of the north, keeps his state—neither he nor his wife accepting of invitations.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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T. Cutler's manuscripts:

Dr. Cutler, while in Washington, was often at Mr. Madison's, who was then Secretary of State. He found Mrs. Madison very amiable, and exceedingly pleasant and sensible in conversation. On one occasion, she spoke of the dishonesty of the Democrats. Dr. Cutler said, inquiringly, "You do not believe all the Democrats are dishonest?" "Yes," she said, "I do, every one of them!" which produced a hearty laugh, in which Mr. Madison himself joined.

Mrs. Madison's intent, in the remark, is conjectural. It can be conjectured that the remark was a play on the Doctor's political partiality and to please him by an implied mutuality of opinion.

Journal of Dr. Cutler:

(1804) *Feb 21 Tuesday.* Very pleasant. Attended at Hall. Dined with Mr. Madison. An excellent dinner. The round of Beef of which the Soup is made is called *Bouilli*. It had in the dish spices and something of the sweet herb and Garlic kind, and a rich gravy. It is very much boiled, and is still very good. We had a dish with what appeared to be Cabbage, much boiled, then cut in long strings and somewhat mashed; in the middle a large Ham, with the Cabbage around. It looked like our country dishes of Bacon and Cabbage, with the Cabbage mashed up, after being boiled till sodden and turned dark. The Dessert good; much as usual, except two dishes which appeared like Apple pie, in the form of the half of a Musk-melon, the flat side down, tops creased deep, and the color a dark brown.

A foreigner, said to be Mrs. Merry, Dr. Cutler's friend, criticized the Madison table, "that it was more like a harvest-home supper, than the entertainment of a Sec-

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

retary of State." Mrs. Madison conceded the correctness of the criticism and as remembered by Mrs. Smith, she said:\*

That she thought abundance was preferable to elegance; that circumstances formed customs, and customs formed taste; and as profusion so repugnant to foreign customs arose from the happy circumstance of the abundance and prosperity of our country, she did not hesitate to sacrifice the delicacy of European taste, for the less elegant, but more liberal fashion of Virginia.

To Mrs. Poole:

Washington, Feb. 28, 1804

My Dear Daughter:— \* \* \* The British Minister and his lady have been the subjects of much conversation, especially with respect to repeated affronts they have received. There can be no doubt they have been treated very improperly. A few days since, Mr. J. Q. Adams, of the Senate, General Wadsworth and myself, made the Minister a formal visit. We were introduced by Mr. Adams, and treated with much politeness. Mr. Merry is a well-formed, genteel man, extremely easy and social. But I was especially pleased with his lady, who is a remarkably fine woman. It happened that I was seated by her. She entered instantly into the most agreeable conversation, which continued during the visit, while the other gentlemen were conversing with each other. She was just as easy and social as if we had been long acquainted, and continued so as long as we tarried, which was about a couple of hours. \* \* \*

Your affectionate parent,

M. Cutler

Miss Anna Payne was married to Richard Cutts, Friday, March 30, 1804.

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\*Mrs. Madison—National Portrait Gallery. Margaret B. Smith.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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*National Intelligencer*, Wednesday, April 4.

Married—on Saturday last, by the Revd. Dr. Gantt, RICHARD CUTTS, Esquire, a representative from Maffachusetts, to Miss Paine of this City.

Mrs. Thornton's Diary :

1804. March 30. Received invitation to Miss Payne's marriage.—I wrote a note to her & Mrs. Madison.

Harriet Taylor Upton says :\*

Although the wedding was a fine affair, the presents according to the custom of the time were simply tokens of love, planned and made by those who gave them—embroidery, paintings, and original poetry. Madame Deschoff, † the wife of the Russian Minister, sent the usual wedding-present of her country; two wine-coolers, one filled with salt—the essence of life, the other with bread—the staff of life

To Mrs. Isaac Winston.

April 9, 1804.

I consider myself a most unlucky being, my dearest aunt, in regard to my letters to you, for you certainly cannot have received my two last or you would have alluded to them in yours, which we have this moment received. What must my dear uncle think of me! but I will now take the opportunity to scold you for not knowing my heart better, which has always been open to you,—you speak to me in apologies for my Cousin Dolly's stay, when I have considered it as a favor, and a very great pleasure, only wishing we could live together all our lives. We hope and expect to go to you in May. Public business.

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\*Our Early Presidents, Their Wives and Children.

†M. De Dashkoff, Charge d'Affaires and Consul-General of the Emperor of Russia to the U. S.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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perhaps, was never thicker. I have just received a long letter from mamma, who is quite well, and I pray that your fears may not be realized, my dear aunt, but that you may spend a great deal of time together in this life. I should be miserable, indeed, if I did not feel such a conviction. I am taking care of my best prunes and figs for you. Tell dear uncle I am ashamed to speak to him, but he will see by this that it was not my fault. Farewell, dearest aunt, I have nothing new to tell you as you must know all about Burr.

Ever your devoted,  
Dolly.\*

To Anna :

April 26, 1804.

Though few are the days passed since you left me, my dearest Anna, they have been spent in anxious impatience to hear from you.' Your letter from Baltimore relieved my mind, and the one from Philadelphia this hour received gives me the greatest pleasure. To trace you and your dear husband in that regretted city, where we have spent our early years, to find that even there you can recollect with affection the solitary being you have left behind, reflects a ray of brightness on my sombre prospects. I will now give you a little sketch of our times here. I shut myself up from the time you entered the stage until Saturday, when we went to drive in the rain with Marshall Brent. All our acquaintance called in to see me on the different mornings. Those few whom I saw seemed to sympathize with me in your loss!!! I drank tea with the Tingeys and Mrs. Forrest, the amount of visits accomplished. A letter from the President announces the death of poor Maria, and the consequent misery it has occasioned them all. This is among the many proofs of the uncertainty of life. A girl so young, so lovely! All the efforts of friends and doctors availed nothing. I am delighted with the kind attention you

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\**Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison.*

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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meet from our old acquaintance, and have no doubt but that you will have a grateful welcome in all the places you are destined to visit. Remember me to the McKears, and to Sally say a great deal, for I feel a tenderness for her and her husband, independent of circumstances.

Your devoted sister,  
Dolly.\*

In the early Philadelphia directories are:

1791 Thomas Tingey Sea Captain 16 Union St  
1794 Thomas Tingey, Sea captain 121 So. Third St.  
1793

The Captain was brave. In the war with France he had command of the *Ganges* and two small vessels. With them he guarded the passage between Cuba and Haiti (1798).† A British officer to impress men boarded a ship in the Captain's command, and to the officer, he said:

"A public ship carries no protection for her men but her country's flag. I do not expect to succeed in the action with you, but I will die at my quarters before a man shall be taken off this ship." The British officer was impressed and his ship sailed away.‡

The Captain was gallant. Gallant the same as he was brave. His social gallantry was not hollowness—it was heartfelt hospitality. His hospitality had the initiative; and his service had sacrifice.

The Captain was portly and handsome—handsome without the gold braid and cocked hat. When he bowed it was a graceful manoeuvre, and smiled—altogether it was a picture to captivate. In all the "polish'd horde"

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\**Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison.*

†*Commodore John Rodgers.* Charles Oscar Paullin.

‡*The Evening Star.* November 27, 1906.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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there was none to rank with the Captain. He was society's beau ideal. No swell dance, no public dinner in the Captain's prime, and the city's primitive period, without the Captain's piloting. For the dancing assembly, the Captain was always of the Committee, the chairman or captain of it.

In Philadelphia, the Captain was Dolly's friend; her neighbor—he lived a square east and a square south of her. In Washington he welcomed her, he and Mrs. Tingey, the Mrs. Tingey.\*

From Mrs. Anna Cutts :

Boston, May, 1804.

My Dearest Dolly,—How I miss you it would not be possible to say. The town of Boston is all confusion, no regularity anywhere, and after Philadelphia and New York it seemed as if I should be stifled; the situations and prospects outside of the town are delightful, but you have heard from others, more capable of describing it. We have very pleasant lodgings, and for my companion the famous Madame Knox, who although very haughty I find pleasant and sensible. Chess is now her mania, which she plays extremely well, only too often for my fancy, who am not of late so partial to it. Every morning after breakfast, there is a summons from her ladyship, which if I attend pins me to her apron-string until time to dress for dinner, after which she retires, again inviting me to battle. Out of twenty-one games, in only two, and a draw game, has she shown me any mercy; she is certainly the most successful player I ever encountered. Thursday we dined at the Mortons', an extremely pleasant place, the house and grounds quite tasteful. Mrs. Morton strikes one most at home, believe me, and had I her establishment would never quit it for anything

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\*The Captain was three times married.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

in Washington. She has four fine daughters, all women, and two of them very pretty. They gave us a handsome dinner and a pleasant party, with a dash at Loo in the evening, to please Mrs. Knox, I suppose. The Federal party in Boston prevails,—however, in spite of my connections, I find much civility among them. Always, my dearly beloved sister, much love, in which my husband joins me,

Yours devotedly,  
Anna.\*

Tom Moore made the transatlantic trip with Mr. and Mrs. Merry. After a visit to “the region of isles,” the Bermudas, he returned to Norfolk. From there overland he crossed the States northward, and on the way tarried at Washington.

At Washington, I passed some days with the English minister, Mr. Merry; and was, by him, presented at the levee of the President, Jefferson, whom I found sitting with General Dearborn and one or two other officers, and in the same homely costume, comprising slippers and Connemara stockings, in which Mr. Merry had been received by him—much to that formal minister’s horror—when waiting upon him, in full dress, to deliver his credentials. My single interview with this remarkable person was of very short duration; but to have seen and spoken with the man who drew up the Declaration of American Independence was an event not to be forgotten.

His visit was in “the season of youth” (twenty-fifth year); and the Preface to the Second Volume venders that of the first and his poems so severe and satirical on American men and matters. He might have plead immaturity, but pleads in mitigation:

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\**Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison.*

\* \* \* my mind was left open too much to the influence of the feelings and prejudices of those I chiefly conorted with; and, certainly, in no quarter was I so sure to find decided hostility, both to the men and the principles then dominant throughout the Union, as among officers of the British navy, and in the ranks of an angry Federalist opposition.

And happily concludes:

While the good will I have experienced from more than one distinguished American sufficiently assures me that any injustice I may have done to that land of free-men, if not long since wholly forgotten, is now remembered only to be forgiven.\*

And surely much might be forgiven in slight recompense for the melodious rhythm and sweet fancy of the songs he sung on this side of the Atlantic waste.

From Washington, he tells metrically Dr. Thomas Hume, they will have a "frank exchange of heart" whether by the Thames or the Potomac, and

"O'er lake and marsh, through fevers and through fogs,  
'Midst bears and yankees, democrats and frogs,  
Thy foot shall follow me, thy heart and eyes  
With me shall wonder, and with me despise.

In fancy now, beneath the twilight gloom,  
Come, let me lead thee o'er this 'second Rome!'  
Where tribunes rule, where dusky Davi bow,  
And what was Goose Creek once is Tiber now:—  
This embryo capital, where Fancy sees  
Squares in morasses, obelisks in trees;  
Which second-sighted seers, ev'n now, adorn  
With shrines unbuilt and heroes yet unborn,  
Though not but woods and J——n they see  
Where streets should run and sages ought to be."

The poet amplifies by a footnote:

A little stream runs through the city, which with intolerable affectation, they have styled the Tiber. It was originally called Goose Creek.

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\**Life and Letters of Washington Irving.*

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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The Tiber crossed Pennsylvania Avenue at Second Street. It was two-thirds of a street wide. Its bottom was sandy and its bed interspersed with boulders. The current was swift and, after storms, a torrent. In the olden days on Second Street, a little north of the Avenue, a road inclined and it was a favorite place for the horses to slake their thirst. The water nearly reached the body of the vehicles.

A proprietor, a Pope, of a small domain which embraced the prominence many years afterwards the site of the Capitol, called it Rome and the stream through it Tiber. The deed from Pope was in frame exhibited on the walls of the Tax Collector's office. In the numerous shiftings of the local government's offices this ancient muniment of title was lost.\*

Moore was in Washington the fore part of June, 1804. Then, Mrs. Madison was at Montpelier, held by rheumatism. It was unfortunate that they did not meet. Dolly could "smile brightly" and Tom could "sing sweetly," and the mixture would have cured Dolly of her aches and Tom of his grouches. Dolly's mother was born in the County Wexford and Tom's father was born in the County Kerry—not so far between—and that made a Celtic relation. Between these relatives would have been a skirmish of Celtic

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\*"That the Washington 'Tiber' had borne the name long before the City of Washington was ever dreamed of is shown by the fact that a patent was issued by the Colonial authorities of Maryland on May 13, 1664, to a facetious gentleman, by the name of Francis Pope, for a tract of land called 'Rome,' situated on 'Tiber' Creek, and containing 400 acres. This tract fell within the lines of the City of Washington and the capitol building is situated upon or near it. Mr. Pope had, evidently, a desire to be known as 'Pope, of Rome, on Tiber.'" *Old Georgetown*—Hugh T. Taggart.



SIX BUILDINGS

Pennsylvania Avenue between Twenty-first and Twenty-second  
Streets Northwest



## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

wit, a truce, a peace, and to Tom the whole country would have worn a reflection of Dolly's smile.

In the fourth year at Washington, Mrs. Madison succumbed to physical ailment. She had an attack of rheumatism, the inflammatory kind. From Montpelier, June 3, 1804, she tells her sister, Anna, of the painfulness of it; of the bleeding by Dr. Willis and the nursing by Mother Madison, and of her intended return to Washington the week after.

Washington, June, 1804.

MY DEAREST ANNA,—How delighted I should be to accompany you to all the charming places you mentioned, to see all the kind people, and to play Loo with Mrs. Knox. Mr. Madison would write, but is overwhelmed with business. \* \* \* He always sends his affectionate love. Mount Vernon has been set on fire five different times, and it is suspected some malicious persons are determined to reduce it to ashes. Oh, the wickedness of men and women! I am afraid to accept their invitations.\*

The date of the letter which follows can be supplied by the entry in Mrs. Thornton's dairy:

(1804) June 5, Tuesday. Dr T. at the president's with the Baron Humboldt.

TO MRS. ANNA CUTTS:

We spent last evening at Mr. Pichon's. Our city is now almost deserted, and will be more so in a week or two. Dr. and Mrs. T. sat yesterday for the last time to Stuart. He has now nearly finished all his portraits and says he means to go directly to Boston, but that is what he has said these two years; being a man of genius, he

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\**Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison.*

of course does things differently from other people. I hope he will be here next winter, as he has bought a square to build a "Temple" upon. Where will you celebrate the Fourth of July, my dear sister? We are to have grand doings here. Mr. Van Ness is to deliver an oration, Mr. L. says, in the woods, and the ladies are to be permitted to partake of the mirth. We have lately had a great treat in the company of a charming Prussian Baron. All the ladies say they are in love with him, notwithstanding his want of personal charms. He is the most polite, modest, well-informed and interesting traveller we have ever met, and is much pleased with America. I hope one day you will become acquainted with our charming Baron Humboldt. He sails in a few days for France with his companions, and is going to publish an account of his travels in South America, where he lived five years, proposing to return here again. He had with him a train of philosophers, who, though clever and entertaining, did not compare to the Baron.\*

Washington, July 16, 1804.

MY DEAREST ANNA,—Yours from Maine reached me yesterday, and I need not say how delighted I am at your description of places and persons, and at the knowledge of your fecility. We go to Montpelier this week. Payne continues weak and sick; and my prospects rise and fall to sadness as this precious child recovers or declines. You have heard, no doubt, of the terrible duel and death of poor Hamilton.†

Thomas Law was of a noble family; its nobility was in intellectual distinction. His father was a bishop and his brothers were bishops and his sisters, wives of bishops, except that a brother was the eminent Edward Law, the advocate of Warren Hastings, the Lord Chief Justice and titled Baron Ellenborough. Thomas Law in early years

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\**Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison.*

†*Ibid.*

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

went to India in the employ of the East India Company and in early years became the Collector of a district of two million souls and as the Collector had legislative, executive and judicial control. He made reforms of great good to the people and great glory to himself. Disagreement with the company and litigation had the consequence of his coming to the United States. In Philadelphia, he met the principal promoters of the Capital City and caught their enthusiasm to the extent that he invested almost all his capital. In Philadelphia, he met Miss Elizabeth Custis, Mrs. Washington's granddaughter, and by her charms he was caught and he invested all his happiness in her.

Thomas Twining, who visited the Laws at their home on the banks of the Potomac, said he was surprised that he who had had "the splendor and consequence of a prince" should be satisfied with his situation although he had "a companion with whom a man might be happy anywhere." Mr. Law, abroad, visited his kin; Mrs. Law, at home, relieved her loneliness. Mr. Law returned to hear the gossip. "A Bill elegantly made out in due form," in duplicate, of total separation was very gratifying to both. Just how Mrs. Law relieved her loneliness, Dr. Thornton has this hint in his letter to Mr. Madison; August 17, 1803:

Mrs Law has dashed in a very high military state lately, & I suppose will beat up for Amazonian Volunteers. My wife said she would write to your good Lady, and as all the dear Creatures like a little Tincture of Extravagance I am confident she will describe Mad<sup>e</sup> Law in Colours that even a Description of Cleopatra's Gala Suit could not touch. I shall leave Mrs Law therefore on Horseback to be TAKEN OFF by the Ladies, although attended by seven officers.—

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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It was only a freedom. Mr. Law, himself, said, "I have always paid tribute correctly due to Mrs. Law's purity of conduct, which I never did impeach."

Mrs. Madison to Mrs. Law:\*

Washington, Oct<sup>r</sup> 17<sup>th</sup> 1804.

My dear Mrs. Law—Mr. Madison is willing to take David for 400 dol<sup>r</sup>s to be paid at the end of the year from the time of his coming into service with lawful interest from that date, it being understood that at the expiration of five years he is to become free, & that in the mean time Mr. M. is to be his owner. If these terms are satisfactory you will be so good as to have the contract prepared & on his appearing with it, Mr. Madison will send you his obligation for the price.

The sale of the slave was incident to Mrs. Law's severance of the marital tie and relinquishment of house-keeping. The provision of the contract, the freedom of the slave at the end of a brief period, indicates Mrs. Madison's fidelity to Quaker principle—no human property.

Doctor Manasseh Cutler, by marvellous availment of time, was widely wise. He as counsel could construe the law to favor his client's cause; indeed, he was tendered a judgeship by President Washington. He could expound the Scriptures; that was his employment by inclination. So well he knew the curative qualities of drugs and herbs, he could heal all manner of sickness. He could read the signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars, and he wrote like the astronomers. Like unto the man of wisdom who

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\*Charles Roberts' autographic collection by favor of the Haverford College, Pennsylvania.



2411 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, WASHINGTON, D. C.



## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

“spake of trees, from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall,” so could he speak of trees and plants and of all that have roots and sprout.

He did many wonderful things and it takes the large volumes to contain them.\* In Congress, he perceived the politicians were so absorbed in their own official salvation that they failed to appreciate the importance of creating the Botanical Gardens, a measure he advocated.

Dr. Cutler to Dr. Jonathan Stokes:

Hamilton, May 15, 1805

\* \* \* The last winter I had the pleasure of forming an acquaintance with a lady who has a fine taste for Botany, the lady of your Minister Plenipotentiary, Mrs. Merry. She is making progress, and is indefatigable in her attention to the plants of this country.

Washington, June 4, 1805.

My Dearest Anna,—I wrote to you from my bed, to which I have been confined for ten days with a bad knee; it has become very painful, and two doctors have applied caustic with the hope of getting me well, but Heaven only knows! I feel as if I should never walk again. My dear husband insists upon taking me to Philadelphia to be under Dr. Physic’s care, but he cannot stay with me, and I dread the separation.

Yesterday we had brother George, Thornton, and Lawrence Washington to spend the day, and I enjoyed the sound of Virginia hilarity echoing through the house; George coughs incessantly, looks thin and hoarse, but has no idea of dying. Since I wrote you two days past. I have heard sad things of Turreau,—that he whips his

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\**The Life, Journals and Correspondence of Manasseh Cutler*,—William Parker Cutler and Julia Perkins Cutler.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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wife, and abuses her dreadfully; I pity her sincerely; she is an amiable, sensible woman. A letter from Mount Vernon begging me to come there, but alas! I shall walk no more.

Yours ever,  
Dolly.\*

Mrs. Madison's kind words were for Madame, the wife of General Turreau de Garambonville, the French Minister. He was marked for the guillotine and was saved by a trick of the jailor's daughter. Gratitude was the basis of a marriage without the essential element. She followed him to the United States. In society resplendent in diamonds and gold he appeared but without the Madame. In Tayloe's reminiscences is that the cries of the Madame aroused the neighbors of Turreau, who lived in the Seven Buildings, and that his accomplished secretary, Count de Carbre, who played exquisitely the flute, attempted to drown them by his music. That the neighbors became indignant and threatening. That at the climax of the clamor, the eccentric Dr. Thornton arrived and arrested the flagellation. That Turreau to Thornton, fiercely said: "Dr. Thornton, you do not know de law of de nation;" and that Dr. Thornton to Turreau replied: "But I know the laws of humanity, and I mean to enforce them." In fact, the Madame cried out in grief and in remonstrance at the General's insistence that she return to France. She ultimately did. The circumstances of the disturbance in form of sworn testimony was reduced to writing by Dr. Thornton in his capacity as a justice of the peace.

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\**Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison.*

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

Washington, July 8, 1805.

Still, my dear Anna, must your sister write to you from the bed. \* \* \* I feel now very impatient to be in Montpellier, and have confidence in the change of air, though this place seems to be healthy, if terribly warm and dry. I had a long friendly note from the President yesterday, begging me to get Virginia's wedding garments, also trinkets and dresses for all the family. I shall drive to the shops, but am not able to alight; and so little variety in Georgetown; but I must do my best for them, and have promised to be at the wedding, if possible, the last of this month. \* \* \* The Fourth of July I spent at the President's, sitting quite still, and amusing myself with the mob. Farewell.

Your own sister,  
Dolly.\*

The injured knee which did not yield to the treatment of the local practitioners caused a visit to Philadelphia for treatment by him with name of professional appropriateness—Doctor Philip Syng Physick. The journey to Philadelphia was with suffering and anxiety. She tells sister, Anna, July 29, 1805:

\* \* \* And here I am on my bed, with my dear husband sitting anxiously by me, who is my most willing nurse. But you know how delicate he is. I tremble for him; one night on the way he was taken very ill with his old complaint, and I could not fly to aid him as I used to do. Heaven in its mercy restored him next morning, and he would not pause until he heard my fate from Doctor Physic.†

Philadelphia, July 31, 1805.

My Dear Sister,—We are in excellent lodgings on Sansom Street, and I feel like another being. Dr. Physic

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\**Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison.*

†*Ibid.*

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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has put my knee in splints and promises me a cure in time. I have the world to see me, and many invitations to the houses of the gentry, but withstand all, to be at ease here. I have not seen where I am, yet, and the longer I stay, the less do the vanities tempt me, though, as you know, I usually like the routs all too well. You ask who is the kindest to me here, and I can tell you that, among a number, Betsey Pemberton bears off the palm. Never can I forget Betsey, who has been to me what you would have been. I have had a lecture from S. L. on seeing too much company, and it brought to my mind the time when our society used to control me entirely, and debar me from so many advantages and pleasures; even now, I feel my ancient terror revive in a great degree. Madison is well, though besieged with callers; he sends his love to you both, as I do.

Ever your devoted  
Dolly.\*

Philadelphia, October 23, 1805.

A few hours only have passed since you left me, my beloved, and I find nothing can relieve the oppression of my mind but speaking to you, in this, the only way. Dr. Physic called before you had gone far, but I could only find voice to tell him my knee felt better. Betsey Pemberton and Amy are sitting by me, and seem to respect the grief they know I feel at even so short a separation from one who is all to me. I shall be better when Peter returns with news, not that any length of time could lessen my first regret, but an assurance that you are well and easy will contribute to make me so. \* \* \* Betsey puts on your hat to divert me, but I cannot look at her.

October 24.—What a sad day! The watchman announced a cloudy morning at one o'clock, and from that moment I found myself unable to sleep, from anxiety for thee, my dearest husband. Detention, cold, and accident seem to menace thee. Betsey, who lay beside me, ad-

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\**Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison.*

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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ministered several drops of laudanum, which had a partial effect. Every one is most kind and attentive.

October 25.—This clear, cold morning will favor your journey, and enliven the feelings of my darling. I have nothing new to tell you. The knee is mending, and I sit just as you left me. The doctor, during his short visits, talks of you. He regards you more than any man he knows, and nothing could please him so much as a prospect of passing his life near you; sentiments so congenial to my own, and in such cases, like dew-drops on flowers, exhilarate as they fall. \* \* \* Adieu, my beloved, our hearts understand each other.

In fond affection thine,  
Dolly P. Madison.\*

Pemberton and Physick and Syng are Philadelphia families of ye olden times who went to ye meeting in ye morning and drank tea together in ye evening. In her journal Elizabeth Drinker says, October 16, 1758, "Spent ye afternoon at Israel Pemberton's"; March 22, 1759 "Called after meeting at A. Physick's"; and the next day "Called after dinner at P. Syng's, bought a pr. of buckles."

Philadelphia, October 26, 1805.

My Dearest Husband,—

Peter returned safe with your dear letter, and cheered me with a favorable account of the prospects of your getting home in the stage. I was sorry you could not ride further in our carriage, as it might have spared you fatigue.

In my dreams last night, I saw you in your chamber, unable to move, from riding so far and so fast. I pray that an early letter from you may chase away the painful impression of this vision. I am still improving, and shall

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\**Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison.*

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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observe strictly what you say on the subject of the doctor's precepts.

October 28.—I have this moment received the letters you inclosed from Washington. I rejoice to hear you are there, and shall await the next post with impatience; by that, you will speak for yourself. The Marquis and Marchioness came to see me yesterday, with many other friends. I am getting well as fast as I can, for I have the reward in view of then seeing my beloved. Tell me if Mrs. Randolph is expected, and all the news you shall have time and patience to give me. I have written you every day since we parted, but am so shut up that I can say nothing to amuse; when I begin to drive out, I hope to become a more interesting correspondent. Did you see the Bishop, or engage a place at school for Payne? Farewell, until to-morrow, my best friend; think of thy wife, who thinks and dreams of thee.

Dolly.\*

Philadelphia, October 30, 1805.

I have at this moment perused with delight thy letter, my darling husband, with its enclosures. To find you love me, have my child safe, and that my mother is well, seems to comprise all my happiness. The doctor has ordered me some drops, which I take dutifully. I walk about the room, and hope a few days more will enable me to ride, so that you may expect me to fly to you as soon—ah! I wish I might say how soon. Madame Pichon writes me an affectionate letter, and begs me to accept a pair of ear-rings for her sake. You no doubt have them, as they are not with the letter. I am punctual in delivering to Betsey all your commands, and she insists on adding a postscript to this which I am not to see. I have also a letter from the President, asking me to procure several articles for Mrs. Randolph, which I shall soon be able to do, by driving to the shop doors. There have been many callers today, and pressing invitations. It is

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\**Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison.*

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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now past nine o'clock, and I cease to write, only to dream of thee. Tell Mrs. Thornton I am having the model of a bonnet made for her; the new ones are just coming in. Write soon to thy devoted

Dolly\*

Philadelphia, November 1, 1805.

I have great pleasure, my beloved, in repeating to you what the doctor has just told me—that I may reasonably hope to leave this place in a fortnight; but I am so impatient to be restored to you. \* \* \* Kiss my child for me, and remember me to my friends. Adieu, my dear husband. Peter brings me no letter from you, which really unfits me from writing more to any one.

Your ever affectionate

Dolly.†

Yours of the 1st instant my dearest gives me much happiness but it cannot be complete till I have you with me. Let me know the moment you can of the time you will set out that I may make arrangements for paying the Dr. &c My tob has been sold in Ricd but unfortunately the bills are not yet come on & are on N. York at 60 days so that some recognition will be necessary. I did not expect you would receive much from your Tenants. Dont forget to do something as to insuring the buildings. Your question as to Spain & England is puzzling, as one gets into ill humor it is possible the other may change her countenance. If a general war takes place in Europe Spain will probably be less disposed to insult us & England less sparing of her insults whether a war will be forced by either is more than can be foreseen. It certainly will not if they consult their interest. The power of deciding questions of war & providing measures that will make or meet it is with Congress & that is always an answer to Newspapers. Madam T‡ is here the General

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\* *Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison.*

† *Ibid.*

‡ Turreau.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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is not. Your friends are all well except Capt T\* who has been in extreme danger but is mending. Mrs T also has been unwell. I enclose a letter from Payne & one from Mrs. R. Miss P. postscript makes my mouth water. Cousin Isaac's would too, if he had ever had the taste which I have had.

Your own

Affec

J. M.†

Philadelphia, November 15, 1805.

My Darling Husband,—I have just parted from Colonel Patton, who is well pleased with the payment of the horses, and congratulated me on possessing such a handsome pair. I went to pay some visits this morning, and on my return found Anthony Morris waiting, with a petition from his wife that I would let him wait upon me to her house for some days; but I am too fearful of taxing my strength, much as I love these old and dear friends. \* \* \*

November 17.—Anna and her husband arrived last evening, my beloved, and so pleased and agitated was I, that I could not sleep. We will leave on Monday, if I am quite strong enough, but I will await your commands. Farewell my beloved one,

Dolly.‡

The "Bishop" in Mrs. Madison's letter of October 28 is Bishop John Carroll. He, in answer to Mr. Madison's letter of November 1<sup>st</sup>, on the 15<sup>th</sup> informed him the college will be ready to receive his son December 1<sup>st</sup>. In Baltimore Payne had the care of Mrs. Madison's friends.

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\*Tingey.

†*Writings of James Madison.* Gaillard Hunt.

‡*Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison.*



MR. AND MRS. JAMES MADISON

By T. C. Liebers



## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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Latrobe in his journal says:\*

The city abounds in cases of extreme poverty and distress. The families of workmen whom the unhealthiness of the city, and idleness arising from the capricious manner in which the appropriations for the erection of public buildings have been granted, give to them for a short time high wages and again for a whole season do not afford them a week's work. The result is distressing. Workmen who are ruined in circumstances and health are to be found in extreme indigence scattered in wretched huts over this waste which *the law* calls the American metropolis. They inhabit the half-finished houses, now tumbling to ruin, which the madness of speculation had erected. Besides these wretched remnants of industrious and happy families enticed hither by their own golden dreams, or the golden promises of swindling or deceiving speculators. There are higher orders of beings quite as wretched and almost as poor, though as yet not quite so ragged. These are master tradesmen, chiefly building artisans, who purchased lots and perhaps built houses in which they invested their all. Many of them brought hither have sunk the earnings of a laborious life, which in any other spot would have given to them ease and to their children education. Distress and want of employment has made many of them sots. Few have saved their capital. Most of them hate, calumniate or envy each other, for they are all fighting for the scanty means of support which the city affords.

Above these again are others who brought large fortunes to this great vortex that swallowed everything irrecoverably that was thrown into it. Law, Duncanson, Stoddart, and many others, from affluent circumstances, are involved by their sanguine hopes in embarrassment from which nothing but the grave will set them free.

Daily through the city stalks the picture of famine. L'Enfant and his dog. \* \* \* He is too proud to

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\**Journal of Benjamin H. Latrobe, Architect of the Capitol at Washington.*

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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receive any assistance and it is very doubtful in what manner he subsists.

L'Enfant devised the city's plan, so he said. Some say he didn't and some say he did. Those who say he did are in the large majority. And he that stalked along with a bell-shaped hat on his head and the canine sympathizer and sharer at his heels, the figure of famine, has been given a stone—at Arlington—and his bones lie under it. And right on the edge of the city a circle has been given his name but the effigy of another man stands within it.

Washington, May 17, 1806.

To Dr. Cutler.

My Dear Sir:—A few days since I had the pleasure to receive a letter from Mr. Barclay, informing me that your present to me was safely arrived, and should be shipped by the first Vessel that sailed for England. Allow me to offer my sincere thanks for your great bounty to me, and to beg I may have the pleasure of sending you, in return, from England, any seeds or plants you may wish for.

We shall probably sail for England next month; we are already packed up, and only await the arrival of Lord Selkirk, to embark. I think with pleasure of cultivating the American plants, and have some hope Mr. Merry will not be immediately employed, so I can enjoy my chief delight, my garden and my farm.

From the Botanical Garden at Cambridge I have received one hundred and fifty different sorts of seeds. Will any of them be acceptable to you? If so, I shall have pleasure in sending them by the first safe conveyance.

If Withering's Botany will be useful, I will send it at the same time, having two Editions?

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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Mr. Merry joins me in best wishes for your health and happiness, and I remain, my dear sir,

Your obliged friend and servant,  
Eliz'th Merry.

P.S.—I beg a line from you soon. I do not yet know at what Port we shall embark.

Samuel Harrison Smith after an exact decade relinquished the proprietorship of *The Intelligencer* with the design of producing from the soil and sowing for literary products. Mr. Smith would not be of

A race  
Of proud-lined loiterers, that never sow,  
Nor put a plant in earth, nor use a plough.

And he bought, 1803, a farm near the Rock Creek Church, now a part of the grounds of the Catholic University of America. It was called Turkey Thicket; he re-named it Sydney. The mansion has been added to, front and rear, but its pebble-dashed sides are outlined. Mrs. Smith's glad surprise had outlet in

All I will say is that I am *delighted* with it. A good house on the top of a high hill, with high hills all around it, embower'd in woods, thro' an opening of which the Potomack, its shores and Mason's Island are distinctly seen. I have never been more charmingly surprised than on seeing this retreat, but enough of it by and by.\*†

To Miss Susan B. Smith:

Washington, July 31, 1806 Thursday Evening.

\* \* \* Last Sunday while I had my little flock around me, the noise of carriages drew us to the door and Mr.

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\**Forty Years of Washington Society.* Margaret Bayard Smith.

†Seat of S. H. Smith, Esq.—*Historical Sketches of the Ten Miles Square.*—Jonathan Elliot.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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and Mrs. Madison, Dr. and Mrs. Thornton and Mrs. B. came to spend the evening. Mrs. M. was all that was tender, affectionate and attractive as usual; Mr. M. was in one of his most sportive moods, the Dr. in his philosophical and the ladies disposed to be pleased. The afternoon was passed sans ceremonie, they sat on the benches beneath the trees, swung in the hammock, walked about and Mrs. T. led the way through the kitchen to look at my milk house; she was so pleased that she called the Dr., and he so pleased that he called all the rest and so my milk house underwent the inspection of the secretary, the philosopher and the good ladies.\*

To Mrs. John Payne:

Montpellier, August 4, 1806.

Expressions are wanting, my dearest mother, to convey to you my feelings; I have not been very well since hearing from poor Mary, and it seems to me I can never feel as I have done. Dolly and Lucy both gone! they are now angels, and can never know evil or misery; ought we not to console ourselves with this reflection? I trust my beloved mother, whose trials have been so many, will excuse her fortitude, which is to preserve her for those of us that are left. I wrote thee by the last post, and have written repeatedly to John, but received only the enclosed letters. I shall now look out for vessels going to the Mediterranean, and write by them to him: thine for him, thee had better enclose to me. Payne is to follow us in the stage on the 14th; I am looking for a letter to cheer me with the news of thy health.

Ever thine, affectionately,

Dolly.†

To Mrs. Cutts:

Washington, March 27, 1807.

I am grieved, my dear Anna, at not hearing a word from you since you left us! What can be the matter?

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\**Forty Years of Washington Society.* Margaret Bayard Smith.

†*Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison.*



MRS. THOMAS LAW (ELIZABETH PARKE CUSTIS)

By Gilbert Stuart



## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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If the precious children engross your time, surely my good brother would think to relieve my anxiety by writing himself. \* \* \* I suppose you have heard that Burr is retaken, and on his way to Richmond for trial. We are quiet, and have but few parties. We went to the wedding feast of Miss Stoddard, and dined last Saturday with Mr. Erskine. Miss Clinton is still here with her father, but they have sent for a vessel, and intend sailing in a few days.

Ever thy loving sister,  
Dolly.\*

Mrs. Kate Kearney Henry has inherited by descent the congratulatory note of Mrs. Madison and her poetic creation on the birth of her mother.

26th Sept<sup>r</sup> 1807

—I most sincerely congratulate you my dear friend on the acquisition you have announced to me this morn?—May the Horoscope of your young daughter be the most happy—May the bright aspect of her destiny be cronicled in unerring lines—adieu kifs the Parent & child for one who sighs to see them. I inclose you one more packet for Mr W. I cannot doubt but the others have reached him safely thro your hands we expect to set out on the 1<sup>t</sup> day of Oct<sup>r</sup> & it will take us 4 days to compleat the journey.

truly yours  
D M

Mr. Forrest

Twere fair—to thee I send,  
The offering humble, of a tender friend  
With many pious wishes for thy House  
From Husband, Children, to the *little Mouse*

D. M

From

M<sup>rs</sup> Madison

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\**Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison.*

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

From the Charles Roberts Autographic Collection in the Haverford College, Haverford, Pa.

To Mrs. Henry Dearborn:

My dear friend—I send you little Handkerchief & hope it will fit you—will the General & yourself have the goodness to take dinner with us on Saturday? we will have only 3 or 4 friends—pray do & let me know by your coachman tomorrow—I am not very well this morn? or I should have spent it with you—ever affectionately

Yours

D. P M

Mrs. Payne, Mrs. Madison's mother, died Wednesday evening, October 21, 1807, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Jackson. General John George Jackson was intermittently a Member of Congress from Virginia, March 3, 1807 to March 3, 1817. His speeches monopolized the Congressional columns. He was the first District Judge for the western part of Virginia, now West Virginia.

Novr 7th 1807

Deep affliction my dear friend has for some time past arrested my pen! My beloved & tender Mother left us forever, on the 20<sup>th</sup> of October last—she was in Virgia with my youngest sister where she died without suffering or regret— —

The lofs is only ours, & for that only ought we, her children to mourn!

Mr Madison writes with me in best wishes, & regard for you & yours

D P Madison

I can have no doubt but that Fitzgerald's statement is proper—& the balance due to us will perhaps answer for a new ensurance, if you will have the goodnefs to apply it—

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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Senator Mitchell writes, November 23, 1807:

Yesterday I saw at church in the new hall many of the great folks here, and had the honor of escorting Mrs. Madison through the crowd to her carriage. She inquired kindly after you, and so did Mrs. Cutts. The former of these ladies has the prospect of being *Lady President*.

By the arrangement of the Congressional chaplains, clergymen without discrimination as to creed, were on the Sabbath in the Speaker's chair to deliver a sermon. The assemblies were popular and space was at a premium. They had more of a ball-room appearance than reverence for a sacred place or presence. Whispering and tittering and antics calculated to destroy the chance of slumber were in evidence as nowadays when the fashionable gather at the theatre to prevent those from hearing or seeing who have paid for the chance. At these assemblies ludicrous incidents called back to earth when the minds were in heavenly direction.

Mrs. Smith says:

The music was as little in union with devotional feelings, as the place. The marine-band were the performers. Their scarlet uniforms, their various instruments, made quite a dazzling appearance in the gallery. The marches they played were good and inspiring, but in their attempts to accompany the psalm-singing of the congregation, they completely failed and after a while, the practice was discontinued.—it was too ridiculous.\*

Sir Augustus Foster says:

Church-service can certainly never be called an amusement but, from the variety of persons who were allowed to preach in the House of Representatives, there un-

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\**Forty Years of Washington Society.* Margaret Bayard Smith.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

doubtedly was some alloy of curiosity in the motives which led one to go there. Though the regular chaplain was a Presbyterian, sometimes a Methodist, a minister of the Church of England, or a Quaker, and sometimes even a woman, took the Speaker's chair; and I do not think there was much devotion among the majority. The New Englanders, generally speaking, are very religious but, though there are many exceptions, I cannot say as much for the Marylanders, and still less for the Virginians.

The Rev. Mr. Brackenridge did the sermonizing sometimes. Mrs. Smith, of him, says:

This pious and reverend preacher, made up in zeal and fidelity, what he lacked in natural talents or acquired knowledge.\*

And, Mrs. Seaton, of him says:

We heard to-day a most confused declamatory discourse, without method or matter, from Mr. Breckinridge, who is the Presbyterian Atlas of the District.†

If Mr. Brackenridge was not a gifted preacher, he was, at least, no false prophet. The violation of the fourth commandment aroused his righteous indignation and he wrathfully warned:

It is not the people who will suffer for these enormities, you, the law-givers, who are the cause of this crime, will in your public capacity suffer for it. Yes, it is the *government* that will be punished, and as, with Nineveh of old, it will not be the habitations of the people, but your temples and your palaces that will be burned to the ground, for it is by fire that this sin has usually been punished.‡

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\**Forty Years of Washington Society.* Margaret Bayard Smith.

†*William Winston Seaton. A Biographical Sketch.*

‡*Forty Years of Washington Society.* Margaret Bayard Smith.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

Herein are repeated anecdotes and traditions of Mrs. Madison as history of the anecdotes and traditions and not as actualities.

It is told that Mr. Clay called to pay his respects to Mr. Madison; that he with the cherry-ripe smile of the door-maid was so taken he kissed her; that Mr. Madison appearing on the scene, she passed the coin to him; that, thereupon, Mr. Clay remarked: "Had I, Madam, known you were Mrs. Madison the coin would have been larger."

Dr. Mitchell in the letter to Mrs. Mitchell, November 23, 1807, in which he mentioned Mrs. Madison as a prospective *Lady President*, says:

Mr. Madison and Mr. Clinton are the two prominent characters talked of to succeed him (Mr. Jefferson.) The former gives dinners and makes generous displays to the members. The latter lives snug at his lodgings, and keeps aloof from such captivating exhibitions. The Secretary of State has a wife to aid his pretensions. The Vice-President has nothing of female succor on his side.

And the Doctor reminds of his prophecy:

Washington, January 25, 1808.

On Saturday evening there was held a grand caucus of the Republican members of Congress at the Capitol, of whom about ninety were present. Their object was to nominate a President and Vice President of the United States for the term of four years from March 4, 1809. Almost all the votes ran in favor of James Madison as President, and about an equal number were given for George Clinton as Vice President.

So, as I foretold you in my former letters, Mrs. Madison has a bright prospect of becoming Lady Presidentess, and of being mistress of the sumptuous mansion on Palatine Hill for four years.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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From John G. Jackson to Mr. Madison:

Clarksburg July 17<sup>th</sup> 1808.

My dear friend

\* \* \* I cannot write you without saying my miseries are past endurance; without speaking of my incalculable, & unparalleled misfortunes—you know my Mary well, yes you gave her to me at the Altar, you witnessed our union, & our happiness you saw the little prattlers that she gave me—In the short period of seven fleeting years all these things took place, & above all but one,—& she too dearest of all has been torn from me in the same period—

Not so long after this lamentation, to wit: September 13, 1810, General Jackson accepted Mr. Madison's congratulations on another marriage.\*

Montpellier, August 28, 1808.

With heartfelt joy, my beloved sister, did I receive the short letter of my brother, giving the good tidings of your third son, and the promising health of you both. Mr. Madison, Lucy, George and Payne were with me, and we all clapped our hands in triumph. \* \* \*

Lucy left me on the 24<sup>th</sup>, and George seemed no better. We expect to go back to the city the last of September, because of public business. The President and Madison have been greatly perplexed by the remonstrances from so many towns to remove the Embargo. You see they refer to Congress, and the evading it is a terrible thing. Madison is uneasy and feels bound to return to the seat of government, where I shall be sorry to go so soon. The hope of my meeting you, dear Anna, is the chief sweetener to my prospects. The family here are as they always are, most affectionate and kind, and send a thousand loves to you. I expect a large party to fill the house next week.

Ever thy

Dolly. †

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\*Married Miss Mary Meigs, daughter of Return J. Meigs, Postmaster under President Madison.

†*Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison.*

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

From the Charles Roberts Autograph Collection in Haverford College, Haverford, Pa.

To Doctr Thomas Park enclosing; November 30, 1808, acknowledgment of rent collected from K. Fitzgerald and Dr. Soltanstill:

You have allways been so good to me my dear friend that I will not even now dispair of your forgiveness.— Six weeks ago we ware flatter'd with the hope of seeing you & your daughter in Washington, where I proposed to make my peace by a personal explanation of all omisions

As it is, permit me to assure you of my gratitude & respect and my sincear wishes for your health & happiness in which my Husband cordially joins me

D P M

Life and Letters of Dolly Madison



### CHAPTER III

1809-1813

THE Senator contrasts the Madison dinners and displays with the competitor's social aloofness. Dinners and displays are decisive diplomacy.

That all-softening, overpowering knell,  
The tocsin of the soul,—the dinner-bell.

The call that appetite has on mortals will be in the future as in the past and as in the present, equally strong. The alarm that Lord Byron poetically acknowledges will always have the waiting with open ears. There is music in the tinkle of glass, melody in the rattle of knives and forks and spoons, fragrance in the aroma and beauty in the decoration to all who have appetite. In eating and drinking is there zest to conversation and conviviality—a mental elation as much as a treat to taste—and for the time a respite from the worries. The Madison diplomacy—dinners and displays—was not the planned means for an end, it was the irreflective manifestation of generous natures.

Mrs. Thornton's Diary:

(1809) March 1. Wednesday. Mr & Mrs. Madison dined with us for the last time I suppose—also Mr. & Mrs. Cutts Mr. Jackson—the Attorney Gen<sup>l</sup>—& Mr Craig from Phil<sup>a</sup>

General Washington was not inaugurated until April 30th. The first inauguration had its inaugural ball.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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The *Daily Advertiser*.  
New York, Friday, May 8, 1789.

Last evening the Subscribers of the Dancing Assembly gave an elegant BALL and ENTERTAINMENT to his Excellency the PRESIDENT of the United States, who was pleased to honor the company with his presence.—His Excellency the Vice-President, most of the members of both Houses of Congress, the Governor of New York, the Chancellor, and Chief Justice of the State the hon. John Jay, and the hon. Gen. Knox, the Commissioners of the Treasury, his Worship the Mayor of the city, the late President of Congress, the Gov. of the Western Territory, the Baron Steuben, the Count de Mouftier, Ambassador of his most Christian Majesty, and many other foreigners of distinction were present. A numerous and brilliant collection of Ladies graced the room with their appearance. The whole number of persons was about three hundred. The company retired about two o'clock, after having spent a most agreeable evening. Joy, satisfaction and vivacity was expressive in every countenance—and every pleasure seemed to be heightened by the presence of Washington.

The second inaugural ball has this announcement :

Dunlap's *American Daily Advertiser*.  
Saturday, March 2, 1793.  
A Card.

THE MEMBERS of the SENATE and HOUSE of REPRESENTATIVES of the UNITED STATES are respectfully invited to a Ball on the fourth March, 1793; to be given by the DANCING ASSEMBLY in honor of the Unanimous Re-election of GEORGE WASHINGTON, the President of the United States;—the Anniversary of the Present Form of the Government of the United States; and, a Parting Leave with the Members of the Present Congress.

February 27th, 1793.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

Neither Adams or Jefferson had the introductory festivity. The next inaugural ball after Washington's second was Madison's at Washington.

March 4, 1809. The *National Intelligencer* tells of Mr. Madison's first installation as Chief Magistrate this way:

On Saturday, James Madison in obedience to the voice of his country, assumed the duties of President of the U. States. The day, from its commencement to its close, was marked by the liveliest demonstrations of joy. It appeared as if the *people*, actuated by a general and spontaneous impulse, determined to manifest, in the strongest manner, the interest excited by this great event, and their conviction of the close connection between it and their happiness.

Mr. Madison came dressed to be inaugurated "in a full suit of cloth of American manufacture, made of the wool of Merinos raised in this country; his coat, from the manufactory of Col. Humphreys, and his vestcoat and small clothes from that of Chancellor Livingston, the clothes being, we understand, severally presented by those gentlemen."

The *National Intelligencer*, a Republican paper, could recognize real merit:

Of the Inaugural Address, without attempting a critique, we may be permitted to say, that in point of style it is chaste and nervous, and in point of principle worthy of the man so honorable called upon to preside over the affairs of a free and enlightened people.

Mrs. Smith says:

Mr. Madison was extremely pale and trembled excessively when he first began to speak, but soon gained confidence and spoke audibly.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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After the inaugural ceremonies there was a reception to the public by Mr. and Mrs. Madison at their residence—the street was blocked with carriages and the house thronged with people.

Says Mrs. Smith:

She looked extremely beautiful, was drest in a plain cambrick dress with a very long train, plain round the neck without any handkerchief, and a beautiful bonnet of purple velvet, and white sattin with white plumes. She was all dignity, grace and affability.

Gaillard Hunt in *The First Inauguration Ball\** with the delightful detail makes *then* almost *now*—tells who were there, how they got there and how they appeared when there. The new President and the Presidentess came in “the Presidential coach with its four stout horses and black coachman and footman”; the President of the Board of Alderman and Mrs. Carroll, his wife, in a coach with four mules. Mr. Carroll owned the property where the ball was given and lived at Duddington all of two squares from it.

National Intelligencer:

### Inauguration Ball.

A Dancing Assembly will be held on the 4th inst. at Mr. Long’s Hotel—Tickets to be obtained at the bar, on application to a Manager.

Thomas Tingey,	}	}	William Brent,
John P. Van Ness,			John Graham,
Franklin Wharton,			A. Henderson,
Daniel Carroll,			James Eakin,
John Tayloe,			John Law,
James H. Blake,			Isaac A. Cole.

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\*Scribner’s Magazine, March, 1905.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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N. B. The Dancing will commence at 7 o'clock precisely.

March 1—2t.\*

Says Mrs. Smith of Mrs. Madison:

She looked a queen. She had on a pale buff coloured velvet, made plain, with a very long train, but not the least trimming—a beautiful pearl necklace, earrings & bracelet—her head dress was a turban of the same colour'd velvet & white satin—(from Paris) with two superb plumes of the bird of paradise feathers. It would be *absolutely impossible* for any one to behave with more perfect propriety than she did. Unassuming dignity, sweetness, grace—It seems to me, that such manners would disarm envy itself & conciliate even enemies.

To the Ball came four hundred from hereabout and all the way from Baltimore. The grand entrance began by Jefferson's March and the coming in of Mr. Jefferson with his escort, Mr. Coles. The band struck Madison's March, and followed Mrs. Madison escorted by a manager, preceding Mr. Madison and Mrs. Cutts. The managers presented Mrs. Madison with a dancing-card. Said she, "What am I to do with it. I do not dance?" Replied the gallant Captain Tingey, "Give it to your neighbor." Responded she, "Oh, no, that would look like partiality." The Captain with "Then I will" passed it to Mrs. Cutts.

The small space was packed with people. Some stood on benches for relief. The window panes were broken to prevent suffocation. The crowd pressed upon Mr. and Mrs. Madison and upon her to catch a word, or smile,

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\*Robert Long was the Proprietor. The northern house of Carroll Row. Site of Library of Congress.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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or a look. Said Mrs. Smith, sympathetically, to him: "I wish with all my heart I had a little bit of a seat to offer you." With a most woe begone face, and looking as if he could scarcely stand, said he "I wish so too." The managers interrupted with a request that he remain to the supper and assenting he turned to her—"But I would much rather be in bed."

To the supper Mrs. Madison was led by General Turreau de Garambonville, the French Minister, and Mrs. Cutts by the Honorable David Montague Erskine,\* the English Minister. Mrs. Madison sat at the centre of the table between these Ministers:

Mrs. Smith noted:

I chose a place where I could see Mrs. M. to advantage. She really, in manners and appearance, answered all my ideas of royalty. She was so equally gracious to both French and English, and so affable to all.

John Quincy Adams in his diary noted:

And in the evening went with the ladies to a ball at Long's in honor of the new President. The crowd was excessive, the heat oppressive and the entertainment bad.

Mrs. Thornton's Diary:

(1809) March 4. I went to the Capitol with Mrs F.,† Dr T. and Mr Weightman having the carriage horses in the Troop—an immense crowd to hear Mr M's speech—returned & paid our respects to the new president & Lady. —a crowd there too went to the Ball—near 400 persons at it the old & new presidents attending Ball \$4.00

March 11. Mr & Mrs M. went to the *Great House*. Mr M. came in after dinner for a few minutes.

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\*Married Frances Cadwalader; lived in Peter Mansion, 2618 K N.W.

†Mrs. Richard Forrest.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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March 20. We bought Mr Mrs M. tables \$50.00.

Mrs. Thornton also records that the Dr. and herself dined on the 24th of that month "at the president's with a large party; and, on the 31st, when it rained "we went in Mrs. Duvall's carriage to M<sup>s</sup> first drawing room evening."

The popularity of the First Lady is illustrated by the advertisement here abbreviated:

*Washington Theatre*  
In Honor of the Day!

\* \* \*

THE POINT OF HONOR

or,

THE SCHOOL FOR SOLDIERS.

After which will be  
presented an Entertainment,  
call'd the

INDEPENDENCE OF COLUMBIA

Consisting of Singing, Dancing and Recitation to commence with Mrs. *Madison's* Minuet and Allemands, (as composed by Mr. Francis) By Mr. Francis and Mrs. Wilmot.

The government conscious of its growth and greater importance in the galaxy of the nations and in a spirit of pride appropriated five thousand dollars for furnishing its President's house in a more elegant style. It was done under the supervision of the architect, Latrobe, and his account is dated May 29, 1809.\*

If at times the tie of friendship between the Madisons and Thorntons became loosened, as likely it did, Mrs. Madison always heartily accepted the proffer of Mrs.

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\*The itemized account is in *Dolly Madison*.—Maud Wilder Goodwin.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

Thornton that it be quickly tightened. Friends as lovers have their differences to equally enjoy the reconcilements.

23<sup>d</sup> August.

—I feel grateful to you my dear Mrs Thornton for you(r) last letter, & particularly so, for the sentiments of friendship & affection you exprefs in it—I never had a doubt but that the Doctr would settle his differences with the Patent men with satisfaction & honor to himself—nor could I doubt that he would ever loose sight of his antient friendship with Mr M.—I trust he will never find it essential to go to Tortola as I cannot believe such a removal would tend to your happiness—in which I have allways felt an interest—my dear Sister left me this morn<sup>g</sup> & I feel gloomy in consequence of a separation which may be very long—dear Anna has her 3<sup>d</sup> son & is perfectly well. Jack Madison the youth who was so ill, is much better & at the springs—Mr Fairfax slept here a few nights ago—when very unfortunately for us we were visiting at brother W<sup>ms</sup>. We should have been gratified at seeing & entertaining Mr F but he was hastening home after a Tour of the South on business—This was a week ago—We go to Monticello tomorrow as public business oblidges Mr M. to see the President—pray tell me when Mrs Barlow returns from Phil<sup>a</sup> & when she's comeing to Virg<sup>a</sup> & any thing else tell me, that you can—I expect to see you before long—at least there is a prospect of our return to W. before the end of Sept.

Adeiu for the present—give my love to your Mama & the Doctr.

Truly Yours

— D P M

in such haste that I have not time to write tolerably—Mr M & Payne add best regards—

1<sup>st</sup> Sept.

You allways write charming letters my dear Mrs T & when I profit by them as I have done by your last I lament my inability to return you *the same*—For tho the world may be dull with us, yet you, are in or near a town. I



SYDNEY, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA



## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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am absolutely in the country where the people I see are nearly all unknown to you—This of course must make me lack the pleasing incident—We returned from Monticello after passing a week with the inhabitants Mrs Randolph looks fat & cheerful her new son is a fine one *but crows* as you could wish anything to be. Ann was most busily occupied in making dresses &c & for her wedding (wedding) which is to take place on the 15<sup>th</sup> of this month. They wished us to be there on the occasion but that was out of the question. The President had a good deal of company—among them was Mr Hay who is to marry Miss Monroe Mr Wert the author of the British Spy &c I did not see Mrs Monroe or Mrs Trist who were in the neighborhood—on our return, we spent a day & night at Colo Walkers—they enquired affectionately after you—Your Mamma & the Doc<sup>r</sup>. Mrs Nelson reminded me of past times when playing on her delightful organ—I expect the whole family in a day or 2 to pay me a visit—we have some company, lately arrived, from the upper country. They tell me they saw Mr & Mrs R Smith near Bath in Berkley—so I suppose they have changed their rout from the York to the Virga Springs—I am glad to find that you have gay partys now & then & hope they will continue as I hope to join in your bustle by & by—

I should like to see a good Play once more but fear they will not stay with you long enuf—We have not fixed on the day of returning, but suppose the last in this month may bring us up—I am obliged to leave you, without saying half I wish, as I am in the midst of mirth & confusion. I am greaved to hear of the sicknefs in the city—is it in our neighborhood? We shall not have a good Bunch of grapes this season—all withered—Have you heard of a Barrel of Slips Mrs Cathcart sent me? I fear they will be spoil<sup>d</sup> unless buried in the earth.

Adeiu Mr M & Payne beg to add their best regard & wishes, with mine for you.

& yours,

Mrs Thornton  
F Street

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

The Rev. Teunis S. Hamlin in *Historic Homes of Washington\** relates, from Tayloe's reminiscences, that Madison having doubts of Dolly's mental qualifications, and to test, gave her a book to read and criticize. That she, wily Quakeress, had Burr write a letter of opinion for her to copy. And, the letter in Burr's brilliancy convinced Madison "that his lady-love's intellect was equal to her beauty." The reverend gentleman should have thought of the apocrypha as he repeated this unlikely story. The fair Quakeress would hardly ask another to do what she could so well do herself. Dolly appreciated Burr's intermediary commission and its happy conclusion, if endowed with ordinary gratitude. That Burr thought himself entitled to gratitude is natural and it is a fact. To have the advantage of that sentiment at a time of trouble, Theodosia Burr Alston, June 24, 1809, from Rocky River Springs, wrote to Mrs. Madison to intercede with the President to permit her father to return to the country.† And the same year, Rebecca Blodget (Mrs. Samuel Blodget)‡ from Washington prayed the President to remove the prosecution against Burr; appealing to him to ignore the justice or injustice of it, and, indirectly, brought Mrs. Madison into the issue. And, it is in print, that Burr surreptitiously called upon her; that he leaped over the low paling fence enclosing the grounds of the palace and found Mrs. Madison watering the roses; that he seemed to argue with her and that she silently and seriously listened; and that, in the circus manner he came, he left.

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\**Scribner's Magazine*, October, 1893.

†*Life of Col. Aaron Burr*. Charles Burr Todd.

‡Portrait in Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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July 22<sup>d</sup>, 1809.

Dear Madam,

When I reflect on your amiable condescension, in conferring on me the elegant representation of your present self I am at a loss how to thank you sufficiently—Mr & Mrs Cadwalader who have lately seen its lovely & greatly beloved original at Washington, both pronounce it to be as correct a resemblance as the painters art can portray—Indeed I cannot express the variety, nor the degree of pleasure & pride it affords to myself & all my Friends; Those who formerly enjoyed the pleasure of your acquaintance, retrace the lines, features and expressions of a face and form on which they once gazed with delight, & those who have not been so favored gratify an anxious and amiable curiosity, on beholding a just resemblance of Her, in whose virtues they also claim an interest, as the dignified representative of our sex in every female virtue adorned with all her sex's beauty, grace & loveliness—  
\* \* \* Adieu my dearest Mrs Madison when I write to you, I forget myself in so delightful an employment; even now I lay down my pen with reluctance.

Believe me your most

obliged, devoted & affectionate

Phebe P. Morris.

Gaillard Hunt says:

The original house at Montpelier was built between 1756 and 1760 by Madison's father and was a plain, rectangular brick edifice of four rooms. It was enlarged at different times and various improvements made, the most important being in 1809 by Dr. Thornton. Latrobe also lent assistance in adding the wings. The house was of flawless taste architecturally when Mrs. Smith paid her visit.\*

Mrs. Madison, the mother of Mr. Madison, had a separate establishment in a wing of the mansion. Mother Madison grew old gracefully and in old age had the energy of mind of her youth.

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\**Forty Years of Washington Society.* Margaret Bayard Smith.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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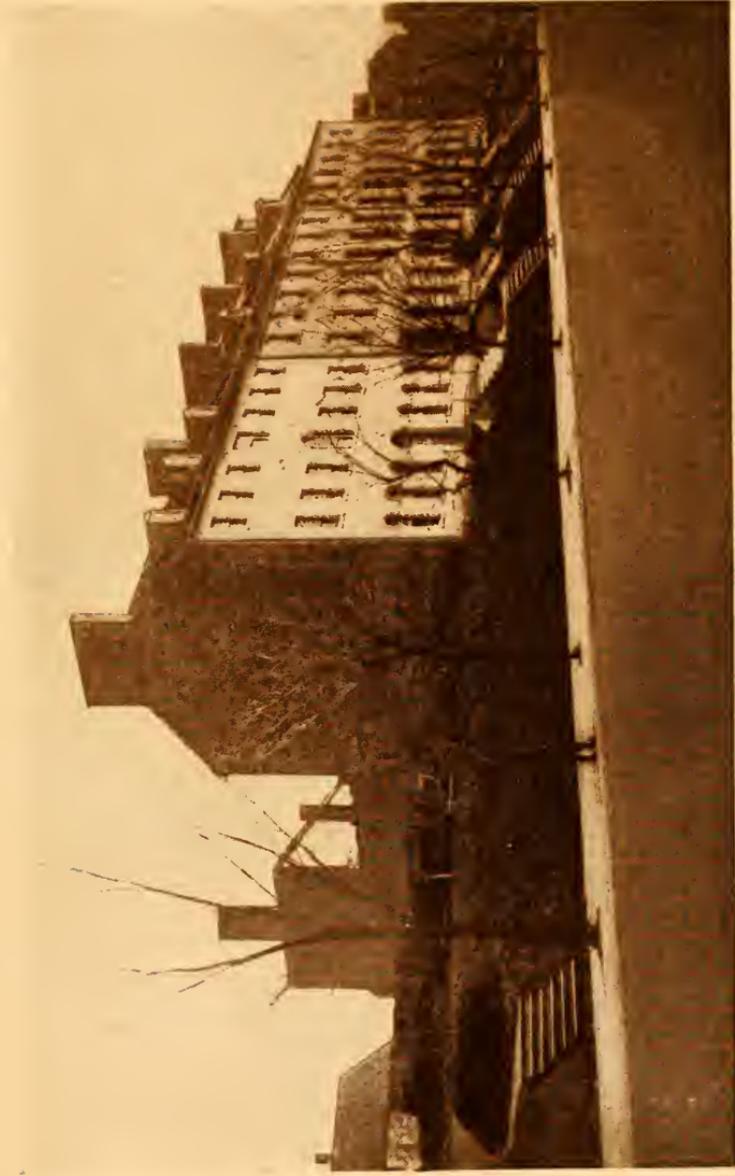
Mrs. Smith's account of the Smiths' visit to Montpelier is under date, August 4, 1809:\*

The sadness which all day hung on my spirits was instantly dispelled by the cheering smile of Mrs. Madison and the friendly greeting of our good President. \* \* \* No restraint, no ceremony. Hospitality is the presiding genius of this house, and Mrs. M. is Kindness personified. She enquired why I had not brought the little girls, I told her the fear of incomoding my friends. "Oh," said she laughing, "I should not have known they were here, among all the rest, for at this moment we have only three and twenty in the house." "Three and twenty," exclaimed I, "Why where do you store them?" "Oh we have room in plenty." \* \* \* At this house I realized being in Virginia, Mr. Madison, plain, friendly, communicative, and unceremonious as any Virginia planter could be—Mrs. Madison, uniting to all the elegance and polish of fashion, the unadulterated simplicity, frankness, warmth, and friendliness of her native character and native state. Their mode of living, too, if it had more elegance than is found among the planters, was characterized by that abundance, that hospitality, and that freedom, we are taught to look for on a Virginian plantation. \* \* \* The gentlemen went to the piazza, the ladies, who all had children, to their chambers, and I sat with Mrs. M. till bed time talking of Washington. \* \* \* How unassuming, how kind is this woman. How any human being be her enemy. Truly, in her there is to be found no gall, but the pure milk of human kindness.

Mrs. Smith tells of the attentions to her, affectionate and thoughtful and feminine. That "no man is a hero to his valet-de-chambre" had the reverse exposition at Montpellier in Nany, the maid: "Yes, the best I believe in the world,—I am sure I would not change her for any mistress in the whole country."

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\**Forty Years of Washington Society.* Margaret Bayard Smith.



CARROLL ROW, WASHINGTON, D. C.



## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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The spirited letter to Mr. Latrobe has the glint of pique. It is the only letter found that shows ruffling of temper. It was written on a spur. In Mrs. Madison's letter may be detected irony or of the other forms of expression that are used to wound. Be that as it may, it phrases trenchantly various phases of worldly wisdom. An absence of inquisitiveness about others' affairs on her part, she has happily hit. "It is one of my sources of happiness never to desire a knowledge of other people's business."

Sept: 12<sup>th</sup> 1809.

Incredulous, indeed must be the ear that receives without belief the "varnished tale," but most happy would it be, for you, could you listen *without* emotion, to the variety of falsehoods, framed but to play, on your sensibility.—The letter I have this moment rec<sup>d</sup> from you, gives me uneasiness; because I find my conduct, which always contradicted any opinion, or expression against you, has been insufficient to assure you judgment, that I would, at least—be consistent.—In the first place my affection for Mrs Latrobe would in itself prevent my doing injustice to her Husband—& in the next, I always knew, that I had no right to animadvert on his journeys, or conduct, as a public officer—(& as it is one of my sources of happiness, never to desire a knowledge of other people's business). Thirdly, I never for a moment doubted your taste or honour, in the direction of public buildings, or even in the building of our *little* Carriage. The moment we examined the latter, we declared *you* had been deceived by the maker.

Mrs Sweny is a woman of many words—I have never talk'd to her, or before her, but of her work.—In your absence; she would rehearse to the Household *terrible tales of dis-affection*, from the Capitol—which I lamented for your sake—I can account for Mrs Sweny's mis-information to you, only by supposing her offended at my leaving her but little to do in the house—not knowing

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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how far I could incur additional \* \* \* I therefore ordered, that she should merely repair the beds.—I shall be strict in my examination of the servants, when I return as I wish to know those, who have taken the liberty to misrepresent me. I will say little of the anonymous letters, but that you excite my surprise at suffering *them* to have the slightest effect on your spirits, or transactions. Allow me again to thank you, with all my heart, for the trouble you have taken, in many instances, to oblige and accommodate me,—and tho' our enemies may strive to throw around me, ungrateful appearances, I shall take a pleasure in counteracting their designs.—

D. P. Madison.

Mr. Latrobe, the justly famous architect, justly, because of the monuments of his genius, had of the traits with which a genius is privileged—excitability and irritability. His genius was of such superiority he could at once perceive the flaws in the creation of any other genius, which, in his openness and to undeceive the people, he promptly pointed out. The mentioned traits caused the architect to make criticisms and contests. Mrs. Madison ought not to have been surprised that the famous architect was disturbed at anonymous attack. Of all attacks that from the unseen and unknown source is most destructive to peace of mind as it from uncertainty produces a spreading suspicion embracing friend and foe and at the same time deprives the victim of defense. The less sensitive than a genius can but suffer by the cowardly anonymous.

Joseph Pearson came to Congress from North Carolina and General Jackson, Mrs. Madison's brother-in-law, came too from Virginia. These statesmen had a political difference. To arbitrate its merit they decided to shoot at each other, which they did somewhere in the outskirts. It was a rather difficult difference to arbitrate

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

for at the first fire was no decision. The second fire proved that the General was right in the contention for he hit Mr. Pearson and hurt him badly. Whether Mrs. Madison knew aforetime of the arbitration and was alarmed at the outcome, the newspapers have no mention, neither of the affair itself.

Mr. and Mrs. Madison, the first New Year's Day of their regime, gave a reception. It was as popular as those of these years. Mrs. Thornton in the diary has recorded that Monday, January 1st, 1810, was a very fine day; and

A very crowded assembly at the presidents. We staid about two hours. president & Lady went to Georget<sup>n</sup> Assembly Chariot broke at night.

George Watterston wrote novels and histories. These were in prose. In poetry were his romances. First came "The Wanderer in Jamaica," 1810. He dedicated this poem to Mrs. Dolly Madison, so:

Madam, I have presumed to address this poetical effusion to you, from the reputation you have acquired of being desirous to promote the cause of general literature.

Mr. Madison read this dedication and recognized in it Mr. Watterston's capability as a librarian. And, at the first available chance, he made him it for the Library of Congress.\*

The social joys and the city conditions at this period of Mrs. Madison's life is told by Sir Augustus Foster, then on his second visit:

Most of the members of the Congress, it is true, keep to their lodgings, but still there a sufficient number of them who are sociable, or whose families come to the

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\**History of the Library of Congress.* William Dawson Johnston.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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city for a season, and there is no want of handsome ladies for the balls, especially at George Town; indeed, I never saw prettier girls anywhere. As there are but few of them, however, in proportion to the great number of men who frequent the places of amusement in the federal city, it is one of the most marrying places of the whole continent—a truth which was beginning to be found out, and became, by-and-by, the cause of vast numbers flocking thither all round from the four points of the compass. Maugre the march of intellect so much vaunted in the present century, the literary education of these ladies is far from being worthy of the age of knowledge, and conversation is apt to flag, though a seat by the ladies is always much coveted. Dancing and music served to eke out the time, but one got to be heartily sick of hearing the same song everywhere, even when it was “Just like love is yonder rose.” No matter how this was sung—the words alone were the men-traps; the belle of the evening was declared to be just like both—and people looked round as if the listener was expected to become on the instant very tender and to propose—and sometimes such a result does in reality take place, and both parties, when betrothed, use a great deal of billing and cooing, eat out of the same plate, drink out of the same glass, and show off their love to the whole company.

\* \* \*

In going to assemblies one had sometimes to drive three or four miles within the city bounds, and very often at great risk of an overturn, or of being what was termed “stalled,” or stuck in the mud, when one can neither go backwards nor forwards, and either loses one’s shoes or one’s patience.

Anna Hollingsworth Wharton has contributed an item of social history.\*

Visitors to the capital then, as in our own day, were expected to leave their cards at the White House. In

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\**Social Life in the Early Republic.*



# Fold-out Placeholder

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# Fold-out Placeholder

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## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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one of her letters to a friend in another city Mrs. Madison expressed lively regret that some of her Philadelphia acquaintances had not left their cards, as she wished to invite them to dinner, and had no idea where they were stopping, having sent to several of the "principal taverns" to try to find them.

Sir Augustus Foster made a tour in Virginia. At fifteen miles from Montpelier he made the acquaintance of a Scotchman, Mr. Dowie; and through him he made the acquaintance of "the estimable beverage called mint-julep." Sir Augustus says:

There are some very fine woods about Montpelier, but no pleasure-grounds, though Mr. Madison talked of some day laying out a space for an English park, which he might render very beautiful from the easy, graceful descent of his hills into the plains below.

I thought Mr. Jefferson more of a statesman and man of the world than Mr. Madison, who was rather too much the disputatious pleader; yet the latter was better informed, and, moreover, a social, jovial, and good-humoured companion, full of anecdote, sometimes rather of a loose description, but oftener of a political and historical interest. He was a little man with small features, rather wizened when I saw him, but occasionally lit up with a good-natured smile. He wore a black coat, stockings with shoes buckled, and had his hair powdered, with a tail.

In the parlors of the Union Tavern in Georgetown, Mrs. Madison crowned the pretty Miss Margaret O'Neale, the award for the most graceful exhibition of the pupils of a dancing school. Miss Margaret is known to fame as "Peggy O'Neale." In Jackson's administration, she it was, who kicked up a social storm.\*

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\*Margaret O'Neill in *Famous American Belles of the Nineteenth Century*. Virginia Tatnall Peacock.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

Ever since Dolly had been Mrs. Madison, Anna, a sister, lived with her and until she became Mrs. Cutts. Mr. Cutts was a member of Congress from the district of Maine, then a part of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. When Mr. Cutts came to Washington, Anna came too, and was near Dolly. Lucy, the widow of George Steptoe Washington, came occasionally to live with Dolly. They—Dolly, Lucy and Anna—made a radiant trio.

Washington Irving to Henry Brevoort :

City of Washington, Jan. 13, 1811.

Dear Brevoort :

My journey to Baltimore was terrible and sublime—as full of adventurous matter and direful peril as one of Walter Scott's pantomimic, melo-dramatic, romantic tales. I was three days on the road, and slept one night in a log-house. Yet somehow or another, I lived through it all; and lived merrily into the bargain, for which I thank a large stock of good humor, which I put up before my departure from New York, as travelling stores to last me throughout my expedition. \* \* \*

The ride from Baltimore to Washington was still worse than the former one; but I had two or three geniuses for fellow-passengers, and made out to amuse myself very well. I arrived at the Inn about dusk; and, understanding that Mrs. Madison was to have her levee or drawing-room that very evening, I swore by all my gods I would be there. But how? was the question. I had got away down into Georgetown, and the persons to whom my letters of introduction were directed, lived all upon Capitol Hill, about three miles off, while the President's house was exactly half way. Here was a non-plus enough to startle any man of less enterprising spirit; but I had sworn to be there, and I determined to keep my oath, and like Caleb Quotem, to "have a place at the Review." So I mounted with a stout heart to my room; resolved to put

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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on my pease blossoms and silk stockings; gird up my loins; and sally forth on my expedition; and like a vagabond knight errant, trust to Providence for success and whole bones. Just as I descended from my attic chamber full of this valorous spirit, I was met by my landlord, with whom, and the head waiter, by-the-bye, I had held a private cabinet counsel on the subject. Bully Rook informed me that there was a party of gentlemen just going from the house, one of whom, Mr. Fontaine Maury, of New York, had offered his services to introduce me to "the sublime Porte." I cut one of my best opera flourishes; skipped into the dressing-room, popped my head into the hands of a sanguinary Jacobinical barber, who carried havoc and desolation into the lower regions of my face, mowed down all the beard on one of my cheeks and laid the other in blood like a conquered province; and thus, like a second Banquo, with "twenty mortal murders on my head"; in a few minutes I emerged from dirt and darkness into the blazing splendor of Mrs. Madison's drawing-room. Here I was most graciously received; found a crowded collection of great and little men, of ugly old women and beautiful young ones, and in ten minutes was hand and glove with half the people in the assemblage. Mrs. Madison is a fine, portly, buxom dame, who has a smile and a pleasant word for everybody. Her sisters, Mrs. Cutts and Mrs. Washington, are like the two merry wives of Windsor: but as to Jemmy Madison—ah poor Jemmy!—he is but a withered little apple—john. \* \* \*

Since that memorable evening I have been in a constant round of banqueting, revelling and dancing. The Congress has been sitting with closed doors, so that I have not much of the wisdom of the nation; but I have had enough matter for observation and entertainment to last me a handful of months. I only want a chosen fellow like yourself to help me wonder, admire, and laugh—as it is, I must endeavor to do these things as well as I can by myself.

I am delightfully moored "head and stern" in the family of John P. Van Ness, brother of William P. He is an

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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old friend of mine, and insisted on my coming to his house the morning after my arrival. The family is very agreeable. Mrs. Van Ness is a pretty and pleasant little woman, and quite gay; then there are two pretty girls likewise, one a Miss Smith, *clean* from Long Island, her father being member of Congress; she is a fine blooming country-lass, and a great belle here; you see I am in clover—happy dog!

Washington, Feb. 7, 1811.

Dear Brevoort:

\* \* \*

I wish with all my heart you had come on with me, for my time has passed delightfully. I have become acquainted with almost everybody here, and find the most complete medley of character I ever mingled amongst. As I do not suffer party feelings to bias my mind I have associated with both parties, and have found worthy and intelligent men in both, with honest hearts, enlightened minds, generous feelings, and bitter prejudices. A free communication of this kind tends more than any thing else to divest a man's mind of party bigotry, to make him regardless of those jaundiced representations of persons and things which he is too apt to have held up to him by party writers, and to beget in him that candid, tolerant, good-natured habit of thinking, which I think every man that values his own comfort and utility should strive to cultivate.

You would be amused, were you to arrive here just now, to see the odd and heterogeneous circle of acquaintances I have formed. One day I am dining with a knot of honest, furious Federalists, who are damning all their opponents as a set of consummate scoundrels, panders of Bonaparte, &c, &c. The next day I dine, perhaps, with some of the very best men I have heard thus anathematized, and find them equally honest, warm, and indignant; and if I take their word for it, I had been dining the day before with some of the greatest knaves in the nation, men absolutely paid and suborned by the British government.



ANTHONY MORRIS

By James Peale



## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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To show you the mode of life I lead, I give you my engagements for this week. On Monday I dined with the mess of officers at the barracks; in the evening a ball at Van Ness's. On Tuesday with my cousin Knickerbocker and several merry Federalists. On Wednesday I dined with General Turreau; who had a very pleasant party of Frenchmen and democrats; in the evening at Mrs. Madison's levee, which was brilliant and crowded with interesting men and fine women. On Thursday a dinner at Latrobe's. On Friday a dinner at the Secretary of the Navy's,\* and in the evening a ball at the Mayor's.† Saturday as yet is unengaged. At all the parties you meet with so many intelligent people that your mind is continually and delightfully exercised.

Eight or more trips Mr. Irving made to Washington. This the second, was to watch the Congressional measures likely to disastrously affect the fortunes of the mercantile firm (R. & E. Irving & Co. in New York and P. Irving & Co. in England) of which he had recently become a partner. An appointment as Secretary to the Minister to France was suggested and the suggestion was pleasing to him as "an advantageous opportunity of acquiring information and material for literary purposes." Joel Barlow, the poet of the Columbiad, was umbraged at the author's alleged criticisms; and the poet being the Minister, gave his preference to another unaware the author was innocent.

To William Irving,  
Washington, Feb. 16, '11.

I find that it has been the custom to leave the choice to the minister himself, in which case I have no chance. The Secretary of State was the first person who sug-

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\*Paul Hamilton.

†Robert Brent.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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gested the idea, and he is very solicitous for it; indeed, I have experienced great cordiality from him while here. The President, on its being mentioned to him, said some very handsome things of me, and I made no doubt will express a wish in my favor on the subject; more especially as Mrs. Madison is a sworn friend of mine, and indeed all the ladies of the household and myself great cronies. I shall let the thing take its chance. I have made no application, neither shall I make any; and if I go away from Washington with nothing but the great good will that has been expressed and manifested towards me, I shall thank God for all his mercies, and think I have made a very advantageous visit.

TO MR. AND MRS. JOEL BARLOW :

Washington, 1811 (April).

This unexpected opportunity and short notice, my beloved friends, scarce gives me time to embrace you round; still I do it with my whole heart. I have received all your most welcome letters—Mr. Barlow's and Mr. Lee's, by the Constitution, with one, too, from Mr. Warden—all of which I should like to answer now, were it not that the despatches go in one hour, and I can only return to each individual my love and best thanks for their goodness and friendship. Before this, you know of our Embargo,—to be followed by War!! Yes, that terrible event is at hand, I fear; our appointments for the purpose are mostly made and the recruiting business goes on with alacrity. \* \* \*

Tell Mr. Lee that I shall be ever grateful for the fatigue and trouble he must have experienced for my sake, in procuring the valuable collection he sent me; the bill was immediately paid, but he will be astonished at the amount of duties—two thousand dollars. I fear I shall never have money enough to send again. All the articles are beautiful; the heads I could not get on, being a little tight, so I shall lay them aside until next winter, when I can have them enlarged to fit. The flowers, trimmings, and ornaments were enchanting. I wish I could gratify you, my dear friend, in the matter of the portraits you so

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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kindly wish of us; but I see little prospect at present of accomplishing it. Stuart is far from us, and we have no painter of skill in this place; be assured, if an opportunity occurs, I will do my best to send you what you wish.

\* \* \* Do write me continually of your dear selves, and what you are doing; you cannot image the impatience felt when you are silent.

Your ever affectionate

DOLLY MADISON.\*

Courtesy of the Public Library, Boston, Mass.:

William Lee Esqr

Consul for Bordeaux

Now in

Mail

New York

I have the pleasure to assure you my estimable friend, that your dear daughter had recovered her health and bloom, previous to her Mama's letter; which I prize too highly to *indulge* you with a sight of, at *present*,—

My good nature may perhaps be wrought upon by your return to Washington—and I will make use of *this* advantage over you, to bring you back before your departure for France. Mrs. Lee is so good as to tell me, that the ship *Ann* will bring the articles I sent for—she was to sail from *Bazonne* about the last of Feb'y.—I thought last week, that Mr. Barlow would have embarked by the end of this—but some little cause for *hesitation* has again occurred & he may not leave us, until the provoking *Essex* shall appear. My sister left me three days ago, she charged me with many adieu's for you & assurances of regard. I have nothing new, or more agreeable to tell you, from the seat of Govt. than that we go on, in cheerful tranquility, &

Tho the mast bows beneath the *wind*,

*We make no mercenary prayers,*

*Nor with the Gods a bargain bind,*

*With future vows and streaming tears.*

D P M

7". May—11—

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\**Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison.*

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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Joel Barlow to Mrs. Madison :

Our girls will write you about courts, and fashions, and finery. \* \* \* My tour of duty is over. I am now initiated in the mysteries.\*

Mrs. Barlow to Mrs. Madison :

Mr. Brooks has given us many little (as well as great) anecdotes respecting Washington and our friends there. We had an account of the French and English ministers' balls, with all the little etc., the sleighing parties and the general gayety which reigned there. \* \* \* I want to send you some pretty things in embroidery which are the high style here, gold and silver with silk done on mull. Mr. Lee has sent you so much of every kind of dress, and it is so difficult to send to the port, and then to get any one to take charge of valuable things, that I shall send nothing.

Dr. Thornton's sensitiveness gave him a mercurial character. His mercury's rise and fall was indexed by his letters. He highly valued the Madisons' relation to him. By their attention, he was elated and by their neglect, he was depressed; and their inattention, although otherwise, he imagined, intended.

To President Madison :—

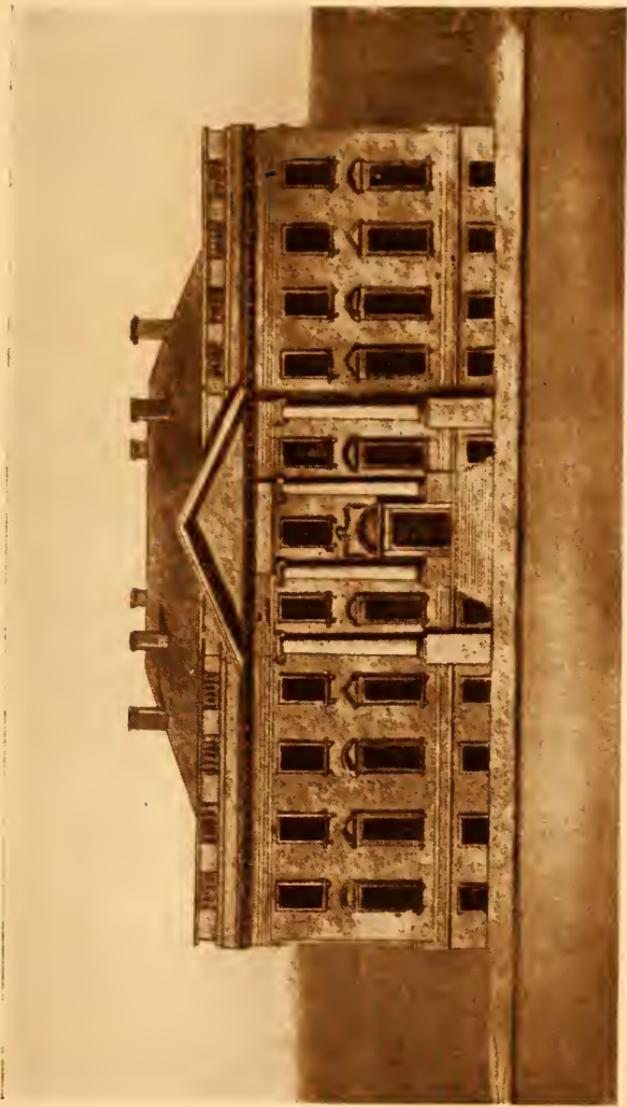
Washington City  
3<sup>d</sup> Aug<sup>t</sup> 1811

Dr Sir

I lie still so very sick in bed I am obliged to get Mr Lyon to write a few lines for me, we were exceedingly obliged by the kind attention of your amiable Lady and self, at the time of your departure and if your good wishes could have reinstated me I should not be now lying in the low situation I am in.

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\**Life and Letters of Joel Barlow, LL.D.* Charles Burr Todd.



THE PRESIDENT'S HOUSE



## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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The next is undated.

Monday Morning

Sir

To prevent any suspicion of a deficiency in respect to you and your Lady—whom we have never ceased to more than respect & esteem—I am unwilling to permit you to depart without expressing our sincere regret that when your Departure was made known to all our Friends by her farewell visit to them, and they were thereby enabled to pay their parting respects, we remained ignorant thereof, and were consequently precluded from joining in so affectionate a visit. Had it been merely accident, we should not in apologizing for an apparent want of attention have had to mingle with our regrets any of those feelings which afflict while they affect:—but I have long had to lament a marked distance and coldness towards me for which I cannot account, and am the more affected by it, because we once enjoyed the happiness of being considered as among your Friends. It would have been kind to have mentioned any cause of dissatisfaction rather wound us by exhibiting to the world our misfortune in the loss of your friendship & esteem.—

Farewell, & may the Almighty bless you & yours.—

William Thornton.

President of the United States.

My own beloved Phebe—Your letters have been rec<sup>d</sup> & prized beyond expression, & yet appearances contradict the assertion—During my stay in Virg<sup>a</sup> I had not one solitary day for wrighting, & could only send a few hurried lines to my sisters.—You will then pardon my delinquency sweet daughter & recollect a crowded house distracts the attention and occasions neglect when the heart is not in fault—

We returned to this place 3 days ago, & you will readily imagin my occupation *curtesying kissing &c* our numerous acquaintances flock around us.—But I am impatient to enquire whether you will not visit me this winter? Tell dear Papa to remember & to perform

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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his promis—that my Husband & myself will receive you with open arms.—Tell my own dear Betsy that she owes me a letter & that Mr Waddell & herself must come with you—*I am in earnest*—Phebe, & sincerely wish you to come.

The story of Mr M—— having been hurt was entirely without foundation as are many other *silly reports*. He thanks you for your kind concern & sends you a kifs for it—

I will avail myself of your offer to chuse me a *facinating* Head-drefs—I enclose you 20\$—my darling & you will add to the Bonit or Turbin some artificial Flower or fruit for the Head—I expect my sister W—— in a day or two when I will write you again & more fully—In great haste my dear girl—but ever affectionately  
Yours friend

D P M.—

6 Octor 11,—

Anthony St. John Baker, an English diplomatist, in his only edition of three books, has this:

Three days after our arrival at Washington (from the North), October 23d, 1811, the races took place. I attended them, Mr. Foster driving me in his curricule. He had the best equipage on the ground. His horses are very fine ones, and his grooms sported their best liveries. Mrs. Madison was present, with four grays in a chariot, and Mrs. Tayloe in a coach and four, which were the only equipages deserving notice, Madame Jerome's (the wife of the King of Westphalia) being very modest, with a pair of horses. Serurier, the French Minister, was there on foot, followed by a servant.

It already appears that Mrs. Madison believed that a bird, to be beautiful, must have bright plumage. And that she gave Mr. and Mrs. Joel Barlow the commission will not surprise.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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Washington, November 15, 1811.

EVER DEAR AND VALUED FRIENDS,—Your notes giving us an account of your progress on the water were grateful, indeed, but the news of your safe arrival in France infinitely more so. Many, many are the questions that rise to my lips. How did you bear the voyage? How is dear Clara, Mr. Barlow, et cetera? I hope soon to know these things, which I confess interest *me* more than the success of your mission, of which few have a doubt. Even the enemies of our Minister admit his talents and virtue; how then can any one doubt? We passed two months on our mountain in health and peace, returning the first of October to a sick and afflicted city. The unfinished canal caused a bilious fever to prevail through all its streets; many died, and Congress convened in dread of contagion. Happily all fear is now over, and public business engrosses them very thoroughly. \* \* \*

The French Minister, Mr. Serurier, is still delighted with Kalorama, and takes much pleasure in beautifying the grounds. Mrs. Baldwin was well and cheerful when I saw her some days since; she no doubt is writing volumes, and keeps you posted as to the health of your little dog. \* \* \* We have new members in abundance, with their wives and daughters; and I have never felt the entertainment of company oppressive until now. How I wish I were in France with you for a little relaxation. As for you, my dear friends, have everything and we nothing that is beautiful. I will ask the favor of you to send me by a safe vessel large head-dresses, a few flowers, feathers, gloves, and stockings, black and white, with anything else pretty and suitable for an economist, and let me know the amount.\* \* \* \*

The bale of beauty came and the bill for duty was two thousand dollars, and Mrs. Madison again thought of economy.

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\**Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison.*

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

Washington, December 20, 1811.

My Dearest Anna:—I received with joy your letter last evening, which, being longer than usual, raised my spirits, which have been rather low in these troublous times. No Constitution heard of yet; the *Hornet* went to take despatches and to let them know our determination to fight for our rights. I wrote by the *Hornet* to Mrs. Barlow, and begged her to send me anything she thought suitable in the way of millinery. I fear I cannot obtain a new-fashioned pattern for you, but will make a cap such as is much worn. The intrigues for President and Vice-President go on, but I think it may terminate as the last did. The Clintons, Smiths, Armstrongs, et cetera, are all in the field, and I believe there will be war. Mr. Madison sees no end to the perplexities without it, and they seem to be going on with the preparations. General Dearborn, you know, is nominated to command. Congress talks of adjourning for two months, but I believe it is merely a threatening, and they will sit until June. Before then I trust you will be able to come on, as the roads become passable by April.

Devotedly your sister,  
Dolly Madison.\*

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\**Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison.*



## CHAPTER

1812-1816

MISS PHOEBE MORRIS and her mother came as the guests of Mrs. Madison in 1812. Miss Phoebe to her sister, Rebecca, in Philadelphia, writes:

The President and Mrs. Madison expected me before the first of January, and were extremely sorry that we did not arrive by that time, as it was a great day there. The House was crowded with company from *top to bottom*, the chambers and every room was occupied with Ladies and Gentlemen and all descriptions of persons. I have a dear little room, with an alcove Bed which adjoins Mrs. Washington's. The chamber I occupied last year was too large and too cold for me, Mrs. Madison said, but she gave it to Brother.\* He seems very well contented and went with me yesterday to see Mrs. Galatin. Today he has set off with Mr. Payne on horseback to ride over the city and visit the Patent Office. Yesterday we had a crowd of morning visitors, Miss Caton, Mrs. Van Ness, the Miss Washingtons and a number of others whose names I cannot recollect. Maria Ringgold is here, but I have not seen her, she is in deep mourning and scarcely goes out at all.†

Miss Phoebe had as yet failed to see the captivating Madame Bonaparte because that beauty had had an attack of rheumatism, due to an imprudent exposure of her

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\*James Pemberton Morris.

†*Social Life in the Early Republic*. Anne Hollingsworth Wharton.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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beautiful shoulders. By February 17, 1812, Miss Phoebe could rhapsodize:

How I wish you could see Madame Bonaparte in all the splendor of dress, and all the attractions of beauty. I think I never beheld a human form so faultless. To the utmost symmetry of features is added so much vivacity, such captivating sweetness! and her sylphic form "thinly veiled" displays all the graces of a Venus de Medicis. She appears particularly lovely in a fine crepe robe of a beautiful azure colour interwoven with silver, in this attire she is truly celestial, and it is impossible to look on any one else when she is present.\*

Mrs. Madison to Anthony Morris:

You have allways given me credit my dear friend, for a lively perception of what was right—Upon the strength of which, I will assure you, that your excellent letters to our beloved Phebe are such, as I would have my sister daughter & friend, follow, to the very letter. I think however, that you feel too accutely the trifling observations on her indisposition, at Mr<sup>s</sup> Tayloe's ball every body in this place understood that she had danced too much & tho the incident was unpleasant, I am perfectly convinced that her uncommon understanding, & sweet temper are guaranty's for the propriety of her conduct thro' life. I have never neglected you in my heart, tho I am a delinquent in writing—your plan of sending James to Europe I like better than that of going yourself—yet, if it is your pleasure, I pray that you may be gratified. Phebe says she will never separate from you—It gives me pleasure to write the letters for Mr Howell—he will *find friends*, in our Minister, & Consul at Paris—Why does not James go with him? When we have the pleasure to see you, we will consult on the manner, & possibility of finding a situation, worthy your acceptance at this

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\**Social Life in the Early Republic.* Anne Hollingsworth Wharton.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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moment I fear there are few within the gift of M——  
Kifs the dear girls for me & believe us most truly yours  
D P M

2<sup>d</sup> March 12

To Mrs. Anna Cutts :

Washington, March 20, 1812.

Before this reaches you, my beloved sister, Lucy will be married to Judge Todd, of Kentucky. You are, I know, prepared for it, and reconciled to her choice of a man of the most estimable character. Their home is now to be in Lexington, very near our old friend, General Taylor, but as a Supreme Judge he is obliged to come here for two months every winter, and binds himself to bring her to her friends when she pleases to come. You may imagine my grief is not slight at the parting, and Lucy too is in deep distress.

\* \* \* All are busy electioneering yet.

The Federalists affronted to a man. Not one of the two houses of Congress will enter Madison's door since the communications of Henry except Livingston, who considers himself attached by his' appointment.

Judge Todd was an aggressive suitor. The Widow Washington was a resistant citadel. The first attack, or call it proposal, met with repulse. Dejectedly, the Judge in his carriage departed for his Kentucky home. Of the widow's yielding

“to be a second prey,”

the Judge was apprized by the letter brought him by the horseback messenger who overtook him at Lancaster, Pennsylvania. The Judge in the carriage *came back* the way he came.\*

Phoebe Morris to Anthony Morris No. 72 S. Second St. Phila.

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\*Justice Todd's first wife was Elizabeth Harris of Newtown, Pa. The incident is given by George D. Todd, Esq., of Louisville, Ky.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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Washington, March 22<sup>d</sup> 1812

My dear Papa

I write in the most delightful yet strange agitation possible—Mrs Washington is to be married next Sunday to Judge Todd & Miss Hamilton, Miss Hay & myself are to be Bridesmaids & Mr Coles Mr Payne & Payne Todd Groomsmen—We have already shed so many tears on the occasion that we now begin to smile as we view the bright side of the Picture. The Judge is so estimable & amiable a man that every person respects & admires him; he is very rich, very handsome.

Poor Mrs Washington has caused a great deal of distress to herself & all of us by this unexpected event they go off the next morning to Harewood & proceed from thence to the Judge's estate in Kentucky—Mrs W—— will write a postscript—Mrs Madison says she wishes *most earnestly* that you be here at the marriage.

Your flattering *Eulogium* very highly valued friend, I shall prize, and recollect, when, *I am far away*—the prospect of separation now before me, from all my heart has been *accustomed* to love depresses me beyond description, but, we must *yield* to fate—I hope your wishes in my favor may be availing—and be assured they are sincerely reciprocated to you—for the last time perhaps I sign the Initials of——

L. W. . . .

*National Intelligencer*

Tuesday, March 31, 1812.

On Sunday evening at the residence of the President of the United States by the Rev. Mr. McCormick, THOMAS TODD, esq. one of the Judges of the Supreme Court of the United States, to Mrs. LUCY WASHINGTON, sister of Mrs. Madison.

The wedding of the widower Todd and the widow Washington is the first in the Executive Mansion.\*

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\*Appendix F.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

The Rev. Andrew T. McCormick and the Rev. Stephen Bloomer Balch in making one of two were rivals. The couple that the one did not yoke the other did. The Rev. Mr. McCormick was of the proud faith, the Episcopalian, and the Rev. Mr. Balch, the disciple of predestination and the other essentials of Presbyterianism.

Mr. Madison was weak physically and strong mentally; he was weak in physical courage and strong in moral courage. As the man who represented the nation he was a manly representative; as a representative exhibited a strong nation. His representation was the spirit of himself. He resorted to no tricks to catch the people's favor. He did not act simplicity or preach economy or practice any other artifice. He was approachable by the most humble. He observed the conventionalities of official etiquette and the dazzlingly decorated diplomat had the deference he would have had in any other cultured country. In his day, demagogues there were, as there always have been. They may have the people's good at heart; they surely have at heart their own. For political preservation or preferment, they create and cater to clamor. They catch the breeze of the current time and sail with it.

Says Mrs. Madison:

The Federalists, as I told you, were all affronted with Madison—refused to dine with him, or even come to the house. But they have changed. Last night and the night before, our rooms were crowded with Republicans, and such a rallying of our party has alarmed them into a return.

Mr. Madison was pacific. A Federalist's taunt in the halls of Congress "he could not be kicked into a fight" became a common remark. He hoped the horrors of

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

war would be averted. In May, the *Hornet* came with information that ended hope of favorable change. The wrongs by Great Britain continued. Mr. Madison's patience ceased. His patriotism changed from peace to war. His spirit stirred the national spirit. His determination for war became the people's determination. However with division for the Federalists were united against it and some Republicans acted with them. In the whirlpool of discords and doubts, Mrs. Madison said: "the world seems to be running mad, what with one thing or another."

March 27, 1812.

The Vice-President lies dangerously ill,\* and electioneering for his office goes on beyond description—the world seems to be running mad, what with one thing or another. The Federalists, as I told you, were all affronted with Madison—refused to dine with him, or even come to the house. But they have changed. Last night and the night before, our rooms were crowded with Republicans, and such a rallying of our party has alarmed them into a return. They came in a large body last night also, and are continuing calling; even D. B. W. (who is a fine fellow) came last night. The old and the young turned out together. The war business goes on slowly, but I fear it will be sure. Where are your husband's vessels? and why does he not get them in? Congress will be here until May, and perhaps longer.†

Washington, 1812.

I wrote you that the Embargo would take place three or four days before it did, dear Anna.‡ General Dearborn

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\*George Clinton died April 20, 1912.

†*Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison*.

‡Congress passed, April 4, 1812, an act laying an embargo for ninety days, on all vessels within the jurisdiction of the United States.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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will leave in a few days. I went to Mrs. Eustis's last Sunday evening with Mr. and Mrs. M.—only two or three ladies present. Foster, Serurier, General Dearborn, Mr. Brent, and one or two other men, but dull. Mrs. Hamilton\* and Mrs. Eustis† have had parties—no one else. Congress will *not* adjourn, I believe, though it has been much spoken of; the intention is on the decline now, from an idea that it will make a bad impression, both in and out of our country. So now, my dear sister, it seems May will smile on your journey to us; tell me when and how you begin it. I received a letter by ship from Mrs. Barlow, which I will send you. She says the *Hornet* will sail in a few days, and will bring us a treaty of commerce, et cetera. Every prospect is fair in that quarter.‡

Washington, May 12, 1812.

My Dear Anna,—John Randolph has been firing away at the "House" this morning against the declaration of war, but we think it will have little effect. I told you of the *Hornet* and all the news it brought. We have nothing among ourselves worth repeating. Lucy writes often and is still delighted with Kentucky; our friends in Virginia are all well. My dear husband is overpowered with business, but is in good health. We had all the heads of departments here yesterday to dinner, with their wives.

I will write you, dear Anna, every day that I can take up my pen, and am already prepared with a room, and every sisterly attention for your husband; he will be here, I hope, in time to give his vote for war. However, I may be mistaken, and that dreaded epoch may be some distance off.

Payne is in Baltimore yet, and as much admired and respected as you could wish. He writes me that Mrs. Patterson and Mrs. Bonaparte are very kind to him, and he is invited out all the time. We intend to send him in a few months to Princeton. Kiss the sweet girls and

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\*Paul Hamilton, of South Carolina, Secretary of Navy.

†William Eustis, of Massachusetts, Secretary of War.

‡*Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison.*

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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boys for me, and sleep in peace, my dear sister. Heaven will preserve you and yours as you trust in its great power.

Ever your own

Dolly.\*

A bill declaring war against Great Britain was passed by the House of Representatives June 4, 1812; by the Senate, June 17; concurred by both branches, June 18. The President issued a proclamation of war, June 19.

Sally McKean and the Marchioness de Casa Yrujo is or are the same. Sally was the daughter of Thomas McKean, "a signer," a Chief Justice and a Governor of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. She was vivacious and her letters likewise were lively. In the book of beauty, wherein are beautiful women, beautiful printing and beautiful word pictures, which book of beauty is the *Social Life in the Early Republic*, is a reproduction of the Marchioness as she was portrayed by the gifted Gilbert Stuart.

Baltimore, June 20, 1812.

My Dear Mrs. Madison,—I arrived here about ten days ago, and had a strong desire to write you the moment of my arrival, but the state of affairs suggested to me this idea, that it was most prudent to suspend it until things took a decisive turn, lest some exalted patriot might suspect an innocent correspondence. \* \* \*

Your son Payne has been twice to see me, but unfortunately I was out both times; the Marquis saw him, and says he is a fine young man, grown so tall and handsome. I shall make an effort to find him to-day, and intend to ask him if he remembers that when a little fellow he pulled off General Van Courtland's wig at the very moment he was making me a flourishing compliment. What has become of the old beau? \* \* \*

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\**Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison.*

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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\* \* \* I verily think when I see you and Anna once more, there is so much to tell you of what I have seen and heard abroad as would keep me talking for three days without stopping, and I am morally certain I should make you laugh, and your good husband too, for I am just as giddy and full of spirits as ever. Indeed, I am for the French principle, never to let anything trouble me much unless it is absolutely necessary.

Your sister Lucy is again married, I hear, but am sorry she has gone so far off; rumor says she has been a great belle, and is as lovely and amiable as ever. \* \* \* In answer to the thousand questions I have asked about you, they say that you never looked so well in your life, and that you give and have given universal satisfaction to all friends and visitors, which is, indeed, a very difficult matter, that of pleasing everybody. You, however, were always so good, and possessed such an amiable temper, as to make every one your friend. I have heard much in your praise from the American gentlemen who have been in Brazil, when, you may be sure, I asked hundreds of questions about you all. \* \* \* Give my love (yes love!) to Mr. Madison, and ask him if he has entirely forgotten me, and the dear old times? \* \* \* The Marquis desires his best compliments to yourself and Mr. Madison. And believe me, my dear Mrs. Madison, your old and affectionate friend,

Sally D'Yrujo.

The Morris letters, Anthony, Phoebe and Rebecca, are too numerous for a volume of the size intended. They are uniformly well written. In letters of earlier date than that which follows Mr. Morris thanks Mrs. Madison for the holiday given his daughter, Phoebe, at Washington, and refers to Phoebe as "your daughter," as he frequently did. He had requested Mrs. Madison to receive a seminary student, Mademoiselle Victorine du Pont, the

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

daughter of Mr. du Pont, near Wilmington, and a friend of Phoebe's.\*

Anthony Morris was a Quaker. He was much like Dolly in attributes. Like her, and un-Quakerlike, he liked war and dress. He wore no broad-brim, or sombre suits, or said *thee* or *thou*. He came to the verge of being read out of church because "he had the world's manners" and signed as Speaker of the Senate a warlike measure—to provide troops to suppress the Whiskey Rebellion.

He was a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania. He was a lawyer and a merchant. He was a legislator and represented his native Philadelphia. He is recollected:

The Senate of Pennsylvania held their deliberations, in an upper chamber of the State House, Anthony Morris, Speaker, in the Chair, facing the north. His personal appearance from the chair, was that of an amiable, contemplative, placid-looking gentleman, dressed fashionably

\*From Senator du Pont:  
Winterthur,  
Delaware.

24th October, 1912.

Allen C. Clark, Esq.,  
My dear sir:

In reply to your letter of the 14th instant, which was only received on my return from Europe a few days ago, I will say that the person to whom you refer was my aunt, Victorine Elizabeth du Pont, born in Paris August 30th, 1792, died January 19th, 1861, in Christiana Hundred near Wilmington, Delaware. She married late in 1813 Ferdinand Bauduy, who died of pneumonia a few months after the marriage. She never married again.

She was at Madame Rivardi's school near Philadelphia for a number of years, but I do not think that she was a school girl in 1812.

If I can give you any further information about her or her friends, please let me know.

Yours very truly,

H. A. du Pont.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

plain, in a suit of mixed or drab cloth; fair complexion, and light flaxen hair, slightly powdered, his imperturbable serenity of countenance, seemingly illuminated by a brilliant pair of silver mounted spectacles.

Besides his city, he had a country place, "The Highlands," situated on the Skippack Road in Montgomery county; and another, the Bolton farm in Berks county. He was born February 10, 1766; married in 1790; and from 1808 was a widower.\*

Mrs. Madison liked Mr. Morris; she loved Phoebe. Her affection had a test—to exert her influence for Mr. Morris. He went to live on the Bolton farm; but neither the city air nor the country air of the Commonwealth was helpful to his health; he needed a more decided change. He concluded that a foreign mission would be the real restorative.

Mr. Morris made undoubtedly a skillful diplomatist for he was diplomatic. To the letter, next quoted, is a long postscript, in which he tells of the numerous opportunities for introductory letters which he declines while he denies the reported relationship but that he could not decline the request of his estimable friend, Samuel Mifflin, and reminds it was only politeness, for Mr. Mifflin seeks the place which he seeks.

Bolton Farm, July 20, 1812.

My hon<sup>d</sup> Friend

I have by this mail written to the President relative to an appointment, which involves in its consequences (should they at any time be such as I wish) so much of the fate of our darling Phoebe, that I should from this consideration only be inexcusable in not mentioning it to you; while I anticipate the probability that from various causes my views may not now be attainable, I

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\**The Morris Family of Philadelphia.* Robert C. Moon, M.D.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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indulge the belief that neither the personal wishes of the President or yourself will be among the number; I shall therefore easily reconcile myself to a disappointment, which will come with healing on its Wings;

I yet feel most sensibly and almost constantly my honor<sup>d</sup> friend, the necessity of a total change of scene to my health, my feelings, and my Interests. I wish to try a new heaven, and a new earth, thro every clime, I should carry with me, the recollection of those Friends, which have been ever my most endearing consolations, from the enchanting days of Youth & Joy, to the maturity of meredian life, Hope would still flatter me with a return to them, and to my native land regenerated, and restored to feelings, without which, Life, is only a duty to be endured; while mine lasts, among its principal pleasures, will be the remembrance of your early and uninterrupted friendship; the terms of your last grateful evidence of flattering attention, in the sanction of Miss Dupont's introduction, I shall ever cherish with particular pride and pleasure; the Sensations which both these sources of gratification confer, I shall always experience with those of the purest Esteem & Gratitude, while I am permitted to subscribe myself

Y<sup>r</sup> truly sincere & faithful Friend

A. Morris

Francis Jeffrey, of the *Edinburgh Review*, who visited the city of Washington in 1812 said, "Mr. Madison reminded me of a schoolmaster dressed up for a funeral." This jocular detraction is related by Benjamin Ogle Tayloe in his reminiscences; he is moved to resentment. Mr. Madison was too large of mind to have minded the jest. Although himself the subject, his merriment, in the outlet, would have been, at least, a smile. Mr. Jeffrey became a Lord, an English Lord, and aspired for an American wife and he achieved his aspiration.\*

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\*Charlotte Wilkes, of New York, grandniece of the English politician, John Wilkes.



THE OCTAGON, WASHINGTON, D. C.



## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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Tom Moore ridiculed America; Mr. Jeffrey ridiculed America. Lord Jeffrey ridiculed Tom Moore; Tom Moore proposed a duel. Jeffrey and Moore went to Chalk Farm near London to shoot with powder in their pistols and nothing else and both made themselves ridiculous. (1806.)

With Mrs. Madison the cares of the human race slipped by in the sight of flying horses.

Mrs. Seaton's diary:\*

October, 1812.

Yesterday was a day of all days in Washington—hundreds of strangers from Maryland and Virginia in their grand equipages, to see a race! Gov. Wright with his horses to run, Col. Holmes with his, and people of every condition straining at full speed. Mr. and Mrs. Madison, the departments of government, all, all for the race! Major L——, who is hand and glove with every grandee, and perfectly in his element, called for William, while I accompanied Dr. and Mrs. Blake, and old Governor Wright of Maryland, in their handsome carriage to the field. It was an exhilarating spectacle, even if one took no interest in the main event of the day; and such an assemblage of stylish equipages I never before witnessed.

From Mrs. Seaton's diary is culled her first drawing-room experience:

November 12, 1812.

\* \* \* On Tuesday, William and I repaired to the palace between four and five o'clock, our carriage setting us down *after* the first comers, and *before* the last. It is customary, on whatever occasion, to advance to the upper end of the room, pay your obeisance to Mrs. Madi-

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\*William Winston Seaton of the National Intelligencer. A Biographical Sketch.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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son, courtesy to his Highness, and take a seat; after this ceremony being at liberty to speak to acquaintances, or amuse yourself as at another party. The party already assembled consisted of the Treasurer of the United States; Mr. Russell, the American Minister to England; Mr. Cutts, brother-in-law to Mrs. Madison; Gen. Van Ness and family; Gen. Smith and daughter from New York; Patrick Magruder's family;\* Col. Goodwyn and daughter; Mr. Coles, the Private Secretary; Washington Irving, the author of Knickerbocker and Salmagundi; Mr. Thomas, an European; a young Russian, Mr. Poin-dexter, William R. King and two other gentlemen; and these, with Mr. and Mrs. Madison, and Payne Todd, their son, completed the selected company.

Mrs. Madison very handsomely came to me and led me nearest the fire, introduced Mrs. Magruder, and sat down between us, politely conversing on familiar subjects, and by her own ease of manner, making her guests feel at home. Mr. King came to our side *sans cérémonie*, and gayly chatted with us until dinner was announced. Mrs. Magruder, by priority of age, was entitled to the right hand of her Hostess; and I, in virtue of being a stranger, to the next seat. Mr. Russell to her left, Mr. Coles at the foot of the table, the President in the middle, which relieves him from the trouble of serving guests, drinking wine, etc. The dinner was certainly very fine; but still I was rather surprised, as it did not surpass some I have eaten in Carolina. There were many French dishes, and exquisite wines, I presume, by the praises bestowed on them; but I have been so little accustomed to drink, that I could not discern the difference between Sherry and rare old Burgundy Madeira. Comment on the quality of the wine seems to form the chief topic after the removal of the cloth, and during the dessert, at which by the way, no pastry is countenanced. Ice-creams, mac-caroons, preserves and various cakes are placed on the table, which are removed for almonds, raisins, pecan-

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\*Librarian of Congress and Clerk of the House of Representatives.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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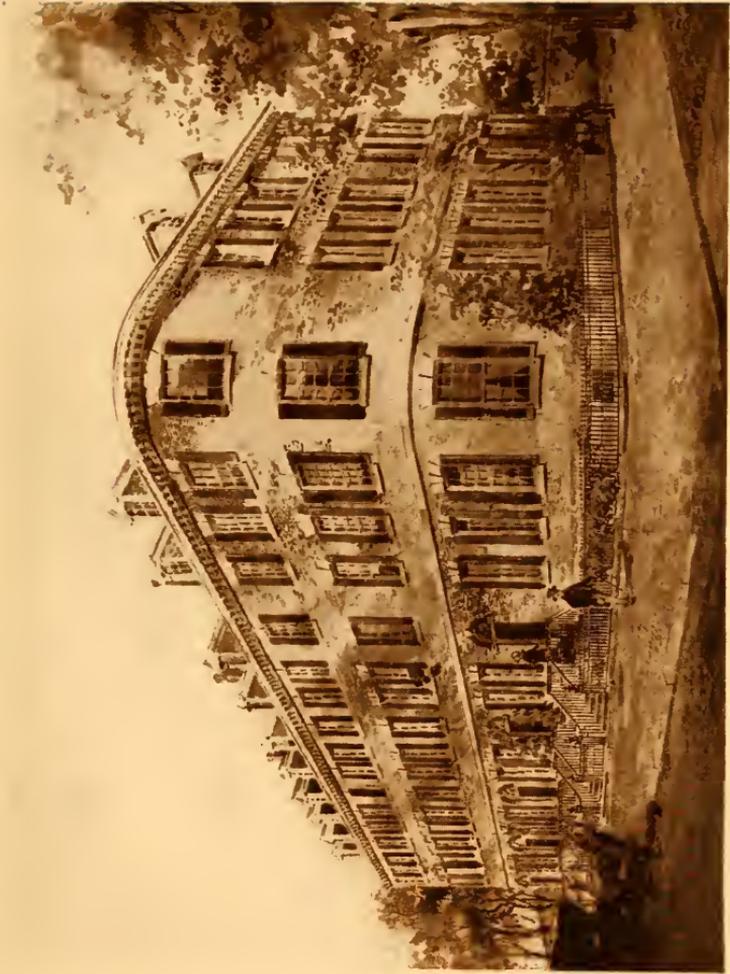
nuts, apples, pears, etc. Candles were introduced before the ladies left the table; and the gentlemen continued half an hour longer to drink a social glass. Meantime Mrs. Madison insisted on my playing on her elegant grand piano a waltz for Miss Smith and Miss Magruder to dance, the figure of which she instructed them in. By this time the gentlemen came in, and we adjourned to the tea-room, and here in the most delightful manner imaginable I shared with Miss Smith, who is remarkably intelligent, the pleasure of Mrs. Madison's conversation on books, men and manners, literature in general, and many special branches of knowledge. I never spent a more rational or pleasing half hour than that which preceded our return home. On paying our compliments at parting, we were politely and particularly invited to attend the levee the next evening. \* \* \* I would describe the dignified appearance of Mrs. Madison, but I could not do her justice. 'Tis not her form, 'tis not her face, it is the woman altogether, whom I should wish you to see. She wears a crimson cap that almost hides her forehead, but which becomes her extremely, and reminds one of a crown from its brilliant appearance, contrasted with the white satin folds and her jet black curls; but her demeanor is so far removed from the hauteur generally attendant on royalty, that your fancy can carry the resemblance no further than the headdress. \* \* \* In a conspicuous position every fault is rendered more discernible to common eyes, and more liable to censure; and the same rule certainly enables every virtue to shine with more brilliancy than when confined to an inferior station in society; but *I*, and I am by no means singular in the opinion, believe that Mrs. Madison's conduct would be graced by propriety were she placed in the most adverse circumstances of life.

Mr. Preston has in his journal his first visit to the Madisons. He was eighteen and the year 1812.

I and my conductor proceeded in the hack in utter silence. The appearance of the house and grounds was very grand. There was a multitude of carriages at the

door; many persons were going in and coming out; especially many in gaudy regimentals. Upon entering a room where there were fifteen or twenty persons, Mr. Madison turned toward us, and the General said, presenting me, "My young kinsman, Mr. Preston, who has come to present his respects to you and Mrs. Madison." The President was a little man with powdered head, having an abstracted air and a pale countenance, with but little flow of courtesy. Around the room was a blaze of military men and naval officers in brilliant uniforms. The furniture of the room, with the brilliant mirrors, was very magnificent. While we stood, Mrs. Madison entered—a tall, portly, elegant lady, with a turban on her head and a book in her hand. She advanced straight to me, and, extending her left hand, said: "Are you William Campbell Preston, the son of my old friend and most beloved kinswoman, Sally Campbell?" I assented. She said: "Sit down, my son; for you are my son, and I am the first person who ever saw you in this world. Mr. Madison, this is the son of Mrs. Preston who was born in Philadelphia." The President shook hands with me cordially. "General Wilkinson," said Mrs. Madison, addressing a gentleman who seemed to have been dipped in Pactolus, "I must present this young gentleman to our distinguished men—Captain Decatur, Mr. Cheves; and yet, after all, you would as soon be presented to the young ladies," turning to three who entered at this moment, "Miss Maria Mayo, Miss Worthington and your kinswoman, Miss Sally Coles. Now, young ladies, this young gentleman, if not my son, is my protege, and I commend him to your special consideration. With you, he shall be my guest at the White House as long as he remains in the city. I am his mother's kinswoman, and stand towards him in the relation of a parent." All this was performed with an easy grace and benignity which no woman in the world could have exceeded. My awkwardness and terror suddenly subsided into a romantic admiration for the magnificent woman before me.

Thus suddenly and strangely domesticated in the President's house, I found myself translated into a new and



THE SEVEN BUILDINGS, WASHINGTON, D. C.



fairy sort of existence. Edward Coles was private secretary to the President, a relation, a thorough gentleman, and one of the best-natured and most kindly-affectioned men it has ever been my fortune to know. He was an inmate of the house, as were Miss Mayo, afterwards Mrs. General Scott, and Miss Coles, afterwards Mrs. Andrew Stevenson. These ladies were experienced belles, used to reigning over a multitude of willing subjects. They soon turned me to account; made me useful as an attendant; were entertained by my freshness—perhaps amused at my greenness. I rode with them, danced with them, waited on them, and in a short time they created or developed in me a talent for thread paper verses, on which they levied contributions. When I met Mrs. Scott in New York, she gracefully, and even touchingly, alluded to one of these half-extempores, which, with the tact that made her so admired, she had remembered for thirty years.

His (Madison) labors were incessant; his countenance was pallid and hard; his social intercourse was entirely committed to Mrs. Madison, and was arranged with infinite tact and elegance. He appeared in society daily, with an unmoved and abstracted air, not relaxing, except towards the end of a protracted dinner, with confidential friends. Then he became anecdotal, facetious, a little broad occasionally in his discourse, after the manner of the old school. His most confidential companion was a Mr. Cutts, a kinsman of his wife, whom General Jackson afterwards removed from office. This gentleman habitually recounted to the President, over a glass of wine, the news, gossip and *on dits* of the day. Mr. Madison listened with interest to his details, frequently interposing questions in a dry, keen way, and, as it seemed to me, directing his inquiries more to personal matters than to things of real importance. He showed more interest in hearing about General Marshall, as he called the Chief Justice, than in regard to any one else, frequently asking, "What does General Marshall say about such and such matters?" For the diplomatic corps (I forget who they were) he habitually, and somewhat os-

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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tentatively, expressed the most thorough contempt. Mrs. Madison told me the necessities of society made sad inroads upon his time, and that she was wearied of it to exhaustion. As she always entered the drawing-room with a volume in her hand, I said: "Still you have time to read." "Oh, no," said she, "not a word; I have this book in my hand—a very fine copy of *Don Quixote*—to have something not ungraceful to say, and, if need be, to supply a word of talk." She was always prompt in making her appearance in the drawing-room, and when out of it was very assiduous with household offices. She told me that Mr. Madison slept very little, going to bed late and getting up frequently during the night to write or read; for which purpose a candle was always kept burning in the chamber. When not in company, he habitually addressed Mrs. Madison by the familiar epithet of "Dolly," under the influence of which the lady, and on no other occasion, relaxed the deliberate and somewhat stately demeanor which always characterized her. I was a gay young man, favorably received and considered in consequence of being in the White House and a pet of Mrs. Madison's, she being universally beloved and admired.

Lucia Beverly Cutts is the authority for the episode that a visiting red man, painted and feathered, wandered into Mrs. Madison's chamber; that she on entering saw him in the mirror; that she walked unconcernedly into an adjoining room; that she summoned a negro domestic and then re-entered her room. Mrs. Madison and the domestic gently persuaded the astonished aborigine he was in the wrong place.

The addition of date and detail is in Mrs. Thornton's diary:

1812. August 17. Indians dined at the president's.

22. We were preparing to go to the farm\* when Mrs. Madison sent to invite us to see the

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\*Four miles beyond Georgetown on the Fredericktown road. At or in vicinity of Chevy Chase.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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Indian Talk—there were 40 of different tribes several of whom made speeches after the president had done—The presents were afterwards given lasted six hours—

August 26. Set off after dinner to go to George Tr saw an assemblage at the president's and stopped—saw the Indians dance a little & then returned home.

Mrs. E. F. Ellet has this incident :

At one of her receptions, a tall, dangling youth, fresh from the backwoods, made his appearance, and took his stand against a partition wall. He stood in that position like a fixture for half an hour, and finally ventured to take a cup of coffee, which it was then the custom to hand around. Mrs. Madison's keen eye had noticed his embarrassment, and she wished to relieve it. She walked up and addressed him. The poor youth, astonished, dropped the saucer on the floor, and unconsciously thrust the cup into his breeches pocket. "The crowd is so great" —remarked the gentle lady—"that no one can avoid being jostled. The servant will bring you another cup of coffee. Pray, how did you leave your excellent mother? I had once the honor of knowing her but I have not seen her for some years?" Thus she continued, till the poor youth felt as if he were in the company of an old acquaintance. He took care, secretly and soon, to dislodge the protuberance in his pocket.\*

It is a charming story of Dolly Madison and an old Quaker friend of hers who was dining at the President's house. She appeared in a handsome evening gown that showed her fair shoulders, and raising her wine glass to her lips, bowed to her guest saying gaily: "Here's to thy absent broadbrim Friend Hallowell," to which came the quick retort, with a stately bow, "And here's to thy absent kerchief, Friend Dorothy."

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\**The Court Circles of the Republic.*

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

The anecdotes of Dolly Madison may be apocryphal and the reminiscences be romance yet both are legitimately a part of her after-life written biography. Time has given a seal of authenticity. Their accuracy, that is exactness to the details of truth, may be doubted for besides the weakness of memory is the inclination to color with shades more fancy or more strong, in other words, to exaggerate. As anecdotes and reminiscences of her, her written life to be anywise complete must take cognizance of them. So often repeated have some of them been that the thought of her brings the thought of them. Whether true, partially true or not true at all, like parables which have their correlative moral, the stories of Dolly Madison emphasize her charming characteristics.

Before the close of the year 1811 Mrs. Madison predicted war. President Madison, June 1, 1812, in a confidential message recited the causes of complaint against Great Britain and declared it the duty of Congress to decide, by constitutional authority, whether should be longer endured the wrongs without resistance and retaliation. In August, General William Hull surrendered Detroit without defense while Captain Isaac Hall scored a signal victory with the frigate Constitution over the British frigate, Guerriere. This success and the successive naval conquests gave the British boast of driving the "bits of striped bunting" from the ocean, a sinking of pride.

John Jacob Astor at the date of the letter was forty-nine years of age. His visits to Washington were in connection with his investments in securities of the general government. It is tradition, his pleasant relationship with the Madisons. It is passed down that he made for the Madisons a purchase of a dinner set and failed to send a bill for it. Mr. Astor and Richard Forrest were guests

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

of the President, and the set was so decorately effective that Mr. Forrest was surprised into an exclamation. This so pleased Mr. Astor that he imported a similar set for Mr. Forrest. Pieces of the open-work china are prized possessions of Mrs. Henry, a granddaughter. Mr. Astor sold furs, pianos and almost anything that is now sold in a modern mammoth department store.

Mr Astor presents his best respects to Mrs Madison and begs Leave to assure her that he had not forgotten the box of Tea which he had promised to send the Delay arose from a desire of sending the very best which he might receive and he there for waited for a second arrival from Canton and to make sure that Mrs Madison should have the best he send a small box of each Cargo the Enterprize & the Hannibal the former he send by Land to the care of Mr Forest & the later by water in the Sloop Astria which he hopes will have safe arrival—he has taking the Liberty to add two Boxes of superior sweet oile & two small Boxes contain'g Maderia wine the Later he Requests Mrs Madison will have the goodnefs to present to Mr Madison as wine which has been at the River Columbia on the northwest coast of this continent & which is perhaps of the onley wine in this country which has ben In that river—Mr Astor Recollects with great pleasure all the good wishes which Mrs Madison expressed for him when he was Last at Washington—and he has not forgotten The bargain made at that time—he well remembers Mrs Madison's Assurances that all Mr Astors ships should arrive and he is happy to say that two have arrived from Canton with valuable Cargoes two are yet out both to China should they arrive agreeable to Mrs Madisons goodwishes one of them shall be transferred to Mrs Madison and it shall be the best of them.

New York 29 Nov 1812

December 8, 1812. The *National Intelligencer* issued an extra. The city was illuminated. News had come of a third naval victory. By coincidence a Naval Ball was set for that evening. It was in honor of the heroes of

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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the sea, Captain Hull, Morris and Stewart. The banquet room of Tomlinson's Hotel was decorated with the flags of the conquered *Alert* and the *Guerriere*. In the gayety, unexpectedly, appeared Lieut. Hamilton, bearing the flag of the *Macedonian*, conquered by Captain Decatur. The wildest enthusiasm prevailed. "Yankee Doodle" quickened the already quick pulse of patriotism. Mrs. Madison was the recipient of the trophy.

Mr. Barlow died at Zarnowiec near Cracow in Poland, December 24, 1812. While on a journey acute inflammation of the lungs caused his death.

Miss Clara Baldwin to Mrs. Madison:

Paris, 16th February, 1813.

Death has entered our happy family and torn from it its head, its support, its all, and left us a prey to sorrow and unavailing regret. My poor sister is overwhelmed with anguish, and the melancholy task of writing to those friends who best knew and loved the dear departed devolves on me; and after our family, you, our much esteemed friend, will most sensibly feel this cruel bereavement. \* \* \*

This circumstance adds double poignancy to our anguish, especially to my poor sister's: it harrows up her soul to think his precious remains lie buried in such a distant, savage land, and that in a few months there will be an impassable distance between her and them. It would be a melancholy consolation to her if they were deposited at Kalorama or indeed in any part of the country he loved so well, and in whose service he expired. I hope his countrymen will do justice to his worth and his virtues, and that his memory will live forever.\*  
\* \* \*

Mrs. Upton quotes from a letter that part which describes the First Lady's costume at the reception on New Year's Day, 1813:

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\**Life and Letters of Joel Barlow, LL.D.* Charles Burr Todd.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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Mrs. Madison received in a robe of pink satin, trimmed elaborately with ermine, gold chains and clasps about her waist and wrists, and upon her head a white satin and velvet turban with a crescent in front, and crowned with nodding ostrich plumes.\*

Mrs. Madison wrote many letters and in not one is argument or anger predicated on politics. She says to Mr. Madison, November 1, 1805:

I wish you would indulge me with some information respecting the war with Spain, and the disagreement with England, which is so generally expected. You know I am not much of a politician, but I am extremely anxious to hear (as far as you think proper) what is going forward in the Cabinet. On this subject, I believe you would not desire your wife to be the active partisan that our neighbor is, Mrs. L., nor will there be the slightest danger, while she is conscious of her want of talents, and the diffidence in expressing those opinions, already imperfectly understood by me.

Mrs. Madison's province was that of cementing friends and conciliating foes. To this end she contributed friendliness, tact, talk and Celtic wit. She had a wonderful faculty of remembering faces and facility in recalling facts; and she could tell the addressed something of himself thereby assuring him, the addressee, of what was already more than suspected—his wide known importance. It has been said that Mrs. Madison made Mr. Madison the second time the President.

Writes James G. Blaine of her:

She saved the administration of her husband, held him back from the extreme of Jeffersonism and enabled him

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\**Our Early Presidents, their Wives and Children.* Harriet Taylor Upton.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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to escape the terrible dilemma of the war of 1812. But for her De Witt Clinton would have been chosen President in 1812.

This is not provable even if probable. No doubt she did make his rocky road to Dublin more travelling. In the early administrations, political ambitions made personal animosities. Now, politics is a game and the politicians in friendly rivalry try their luck with the public like boys on a bank with line, bait and hook to catch the nibbling fish.

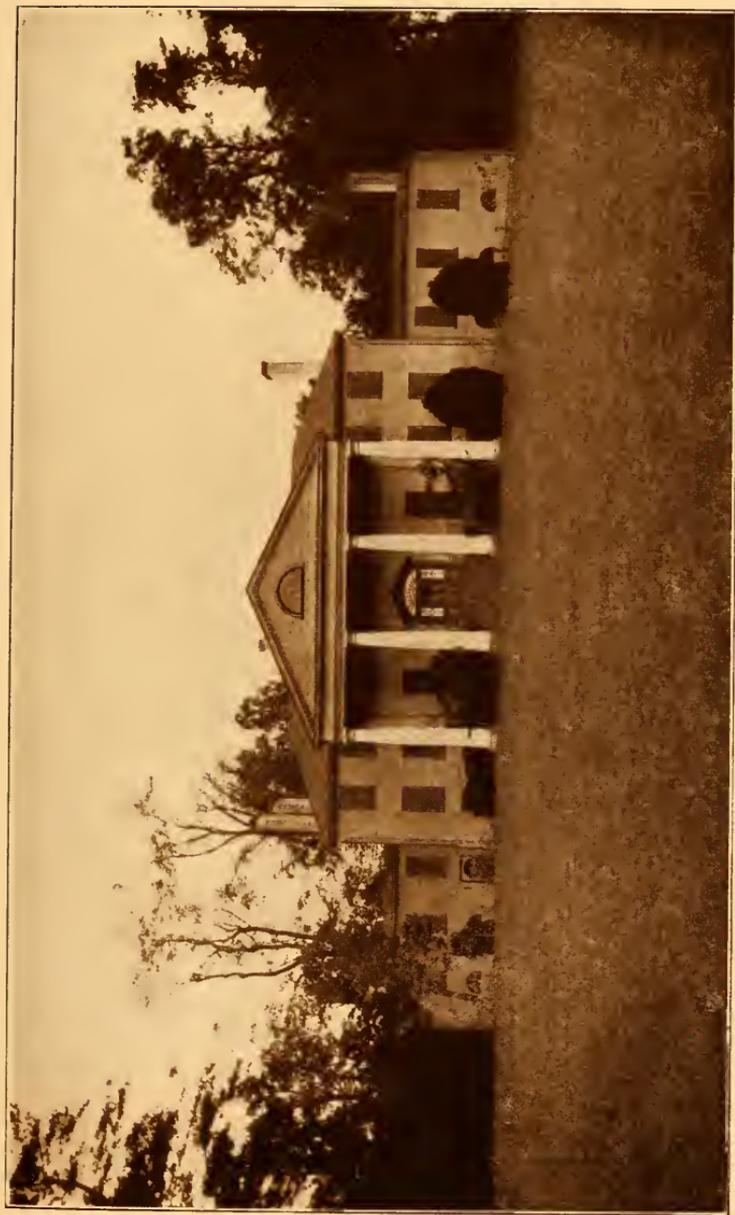
Although Mrs. Madison did not become involved in the antagonisms and animosities, she was not unmindful of what was passing in the political world. The criticisms of Mr. Madison and of herself, of his and her friends must have, at least, annoyed her. She, however, had the wisdom or knowledge of human nature, to recognize that the criticism of Mr. Madison was co-incident to his high position and in consequence, of the turbulence of the times; that the criticisms were as clouds that pass with the storm and only for the time hide the beauties of the firmament. She thought deeply and the depth of thought is evident in her deduction:

All this is from the people, not from the Cabinet, yet you know everything vibrates there.

The politicians like the pendulum swing to a motive power; the power is the people; and the politicians are very careful not to move in discord and to their relegation.

March 4, 1813. The second inaugural address had the confidence of a Commander-in-Chief:

As the war was just in its origin, and necessary and noble in its objects, we can reflect with a proud satisfaction, that, in carrying it on, no principle of justice or



MONTPELLIER, VIRGINIA



## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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honor, no usage of civilized nations, no precept of courtesy or humanity have been infringed. The war has been waged on our part with scrupulous regard to all these obligations, and in a spirit of liberality which was never surpassed. \* \* \*

Already have the gallant exploits of our naval heroes proved to the world our inherent capacity to maintain our rights on one element. If the reputation of our arms has been thrown under clouds on the other, presaging flashes of heroic enterprize assure us that nothing is wanting to corresponding triumphs there also, but the discipline and habits which are in daily progress.

Mrs. Seaton says :

The Chief Magistrate's voice was so low, and the audience so very great, that scarcely a word could be distinguished. On concluding, the oath of office was administered by the Chief Justice, and the little man was accompanied on his return to the palace by the multitude ; for every creature that could afford twenty-five cents for hack-hire was present. The major part of the respectable citizens offered their congratulations, ate his ice-creams and bon-bons, drank his Madeira, made their bow and retired, leaving him fatigued beyond measure with the incessant bending to which his politeness urged him, and in which he never allows himself to be eclipsed, returning bow for bow, even to those *ad infinitum* of Serurier and other foreigners.

The inaugural ball was at Davis's Hotel\* and with the dignitaries was "a most lively assemblage of the lovely ones of our district."

The journal entry of Mrs. Seaton has that Mrs. Madison invited her to the drawing-room of Wednesday—which were every Wednesday evening—and "not to desert the standard altogether."

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\*Pennsylvania Avenue between Sixth and Seventh Streets, north side.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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The optimism expressed in the inaugural address was not the spirit of all; at least, not of Gouverneur Morris, the friend of Clinton, Madison's vanquished opponent, for writes he:

When I read Mr. Madison's message I supposed him to be out of his senses, and have since been told that he never goes sober to bed. Whether intoxicated by opium or wine was not said, but I learned last winter, that pains in his teeth had driven him to use the former too freely. The administration can do nothing, if the British Minister be not crazy too, for these cannot but know how impossible it is for us to prosecute the war. Of course, their reply to our overtures is, "We will consider."\*

Because Mrs. Madison had her own way of spelling some words and spelled differently than in the spelling book she is said to have been deficient in education. Men of undoubted erudition and who have their names inscribed on parchments of final degrees have had, likewise, their own orthography. Mrs. Madison particularly during the presidency was Mr. Madison's amanuensis. And she consistently to her system made *were* into *ware* and changed *ie* into *ei*. She was not unyieldingly stubborn or stubbornly antagonistic and along her time she slipped easily concessions from her own to the more recognized rule in the collocation of the letters in words.

Mrs. Madison to Miss Phoebe Morris, 1813.

You remember the Judges; they have been some time amongst us, and are as agreeable as ever. They talk of you continually, particularly Story—all but Judge Todd who has remained with dear Lucy to nurse their young daughter of whom they are very proud. It is called

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\**Diary and Letters of Gouverneur Morris*. Edited by Anne Cary Morris.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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Madisonia Dolley. The last name I am determin'd shall be left out when they come to me next summer.\*

Edward Coles was at the dates of the next two letters the private secretary to the President; he was absent to recover health. He became Governor of Illinois.

Washington, May 12, 1813.

Your letter caused me great affliction, my dear cousin; the continuation of your illness and Payne's reluctance at leaving America, left me without fortitude to write, until now that a letter has come from my son on ship-board, in which he expresses satisfaction at all around him. He had seen Mr. Swertchkoff, who assured him you would soon be well in spite of yourself. We indulge this pleasing hope in addition to that of your remaining with us, to the last. Not that I would for the world retard any plan for your prosperity; but that I flatter myself the western country may be given up for something more consonant with your happiness, and that of your connections, among them there are none who feel a more affectionate interest in you than Mr. Madison and myself. I hope you will believe that such is our regard and esteem for you that we should consider your leaving us a misfortune. Mr. Madison can do very well without a secretary until your health is reëstablished. The winter is not the season for emigration, so that next summer you will be better able to make your election—to go or not to go.

And now if I could I would describe to you the fears and alarms that circulate around me. For the last week all the city and Georgetown (except the Cabinet) have expected a visit from the enemy, and were not lacking in their expressions of terror and reproach. Yesterday an express announced the pause of a frigate at the mouth

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\**Social Life in the Early Republic.* Anne Hollingsworth Wharton.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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of the Potomac. The commander sent his boats to examine a Swedish ship that lay near, but our informer was too frightened to wait for further news. We are making considerable efforts for defense. The fort is being repaired, and five hundred militia, with perhaps as many regulars, are to be stationed on the Green, near the Windmill, or rather Major Taylor's. The twenty tents already look well in my eyes, who have always been an advocate for fighting when assailed, though a Quaker. I therefore keep the old Tunisian sabre within reach. One of our generals has discovered a plan of the British,—it is to land as many chosen rogues as they can about fourteen miles below Alexandria, in the night, so that they may be on hand to burn the President's house and offices. I do not tremble at this, but feel hurt that the admiral (of Havre de Grace memory) should send me word that he would make his bow at my drawing-room very soon. Mrs. Bounaparte and Miss Stevenson returned to their house four days ago to secure their wardrobe, but I question whether they leave us again, as strangers and members are crowding in. Mr. Monroe and family dined with us yesterday in a large party given to Mr. Jones. Mr. Hay is with them, having come to escort Mrs. Monroe to Richmond on a visit of three weeks to her two daughters. Cousin Sally is still in South Carolina, and Miss Mayo is as gay as ever. Anna has not been very well of late, and her children are ill with measles, so that I confine myself very much with them.

Be careful of yourself, dear cousin, and return as soon as you can to your anxious friends.

Dolly Madison.\*

Dear Sir

\* \* \* Would a confidential service for a time at Cadiz, in an informal character be acceptable to you? The service is of an important nature and implies a respectable though unaccredited & in some respects un-

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\**Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison.*



DR. WILLIAM THORNTON  
By Gilbert Stuart



## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

avowed agent. The allowance will be at the rate of upwards of \$3,000. \* \* \*

Accept my friendly respects

James Madison.

May 5, 1813.

A. Morris, Esqr

Spain claimed territory, known as West Florida, on either side of the Mississippi, ceded by France to the United States. The mission related to this. His services are highly praised in the letter of recall, October 11, 1814, consequent to the appointment of a Minister to Spain.

Written from Philadelphia:

My dear Friend

I write to you in sincere anxiety for the health of the President, & flatter myself that you will indulge me with at least a line to say whether the reports of his illness are not exaggerated, be assured my dearest Mrs Madison of my sympathy and tendernefs for every incident which interests you, & particularly for one of this nature in which I shall ever feel a peculiar & personal concern. The anxiety of your mind must be so great on this subject that I only mention at Papa's request the determination he has made to leave us all here except Brother that he may be at more liberty to avail himself of the first opportunity which shall present itself from any port—  
Adieu my dearest

June 24. (1813)

Mrs Madison

P. P. Morris.

To Edward Coles:

July 2, 1813.

I have the happiness to assure you, my dear cousin, that Mr. Madison recovers; for the last three weeks his fever has been so slight as to permit him to take bark every hour and with good effect. It is three weeks now

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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I have nursed him, night and day,—sometimes with despair! but now that I see he will get well I feel as if I might die myself from fatigue. Adieu!

Ever yours,

D. P. Madison.\*

Anne Hollingsworth Wharton says:

Edward Coles, who had been private secretary of Mr. Jefferson, retained his position under his successor until he was sent by Mr. Madison as special ambassador to Russia. Mr. Coles, one of Mrs. Madison's numerous Virginia cousins, was a man of much more than ordinary ability and breadth of view. After his return from Russia, being conscientiously opposed to slavery, Mr. Coles removed to Illinois and there freed the large number of slaves that he had inherited from his father, giving each head of a family one hundred and sixty acres of land. He was afterwards elected governor of Illinois and others prevented the pro-slavery faction in that State from gaining control. Edward Coles passed the last years of his life in Philadelphia, where he helped to found the Republican party.†

The Rev. Mason L. Weems was the rector of Pohick Church and General Washington was of the congregation. "Parson Weems" in his itineracy could fiddle, for a crowd, relate amusing anecdotes and then sell his wares—his books. He could in the drink emporiums mimic the over-drinkers and then offer his treatises on intemperance. All these things give him fame; a fame which might fade with the flight of time. But what will not fade or rather what cannot be pulled down by those ruthless people who have a cruel gratification in destroying the cherished beliefs is a more substantial support for his fame; and his fame will last undimmed as that of the illustrious Washington. That incident in the boyhood of Washington which the Parson only knew and only saved

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\**Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison.*

†*Social Life in the Early Republic.*

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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which proves the reward of truth that withstands the temptation to turn from it. The iconoclasts may rage yet their rage will avail naught for no one will visit the sacred scenes of the boyhood days without openly or furtively looking for the roots of a cherry tree and for the axe that laid upon them.

But could not the Parson make a flourish of flattery!

I beg leave, in this way, to inform Mrs Madison that I have it very much at heart to reprint a book which I firmly believe will do great Good. As I know of no Lady who has so large an interest at stake in *this Country* as Mrs. Madison has, nor any who holds so distinguished a place in it, I dont know to whom, in equity, I ought so properly to look for patronage to my book as to herself. It is certainly no adulation, Honor'd Madame to say that you are one of the "*Favord Few*" who to do good need but to will it. The elevation of your Rank, together with the charm of your benevolent spirit & polish'd manners differs<sup>d</sup> so widely as they are by the Members of the National Legislature & the brilliant crowds that attend your Levees give you an Influence which no other Lady can pretend to especially among the Fair Sex of our Country. And this forms another reason why I solicit your patronage to this Book; tis a book peculiarly apt to please & profit the Ladies. Many of the finest delineations, of character in it are taken from persons of their Sex, the Graces which render them so singularly amiable & beneficent are painted in colours uncommonly correct & captivating; and to crown all, the style is admirably suited to the Sentiments & subjects—at once elegantly rounded & musically sweet.

The book I allude to is "*Hunter's Sacred Biography*" or a delineation of sundry of the most distinguished Characters recorded in the Holy Scriptures. Tho' an European work it has gone thro' several editions in America; and is spoken of in terms little short of rapture, by all who read it. The patronage of this excellent book which I solicit of Mrs Madison, is a *recommendation* of it. A recommendation of it, Honor'd Madam from your

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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pen w<sup>d</sup> insure it a wide Circulation among your Fair Country women; and mingled as it w<sup>d</sup> be by maternal Love, with the milk of a thousand nurseries it wou'd contribute to raise up myriads of Angelic Characters to adorn & blefs the rising Generation.

Knowing how very dear such a result, w<sup>d</sup> be to you—to *you* Honord Madam who have been nurtured in the bosom of Society remarkable for their Christian Philanthropy, I can not but afsure myself that you will with pleasure give me the powerful aid of your Recommendation to this highly moralizing work. Hundreds of the Clergy are ready to give me their recommendations, but as it is chiefly on the Ladies that I count for the Circulation of it, I had rather have a few lines from Mrs Madison than from a whole Bench of Bishops. You will please observe that Doctor Blair was much indebted for the wide circulation of his Sermons, to Queen Charlotte.

As you may not have seen  
this Book, I send you a borrow<sup>d</sup>

Volume; at the 68<sup>th</sup> page of which,  
part the 2<sup>d</sup>, you will find the commencement of the Biography of Ruth from which I flatter myself you will find sufficient matter to elicit the Approbation I request, and which I believe all important to its wide Succesfs.

I pray you accept my heartiest Congratulations for the returning Health of His Excellency—to whom I herewith send a Vol of "Doctr Hunter." If in the lucid intervals of Public Care, his Excellency shou'd honor this Vol. with a coup d'oeil, he will perhaps discover in it the marks of a Genius & Spirit which I think will please him. With sentiments of the highest Respect, I remain,  
Honor<sup>d</sup> Madam,

Your very humb. Serv<sup>t</sup>

M. L. Weems.

Dumfries, July 22, 1813



## CHAPTER IV

1814-1816

I N HER life's story, Mrs. Seaton gives this day's part :

January 2, 1814.

\* \* \* Yesterday being New Year's day, *everybody*, affected or disaffected towards the government, attended to pay Mrs. Madison the compliments of the season. Between one and two o'clock we drove to the President's, where it was with much difficulty we made good our entrance, though all of our acquaintances endeavored with the utmost civility to compress themselves as small as they could for our accommodation. The marine band, stationed in the ante-room, continued playing in spite of the crowds pressing on their very heads. But if our pity was excited for these hapless musicians, what must we not have experienced for some members of our own sex; who, not foreseeing the excessive heat of the apartments, had more reason to apprehend the efforts of nature to relieve herself from the effects of the confined atmosphere. You perhaps will not understand that I allude to the rouge which some of our fashionables had unfortunately laid on with an unsparing hand, and which assimilating with the pearl-powder, dust and perspiration, made them altogether unlovely to soul and to eye.

Her majesty's appearance was truly regal,—dressed in a robe of pink satin, trimmed elaborately with ermine, a white velvet and satin turban, with nodding ostrich plumes and a crescent in front, gold chain and clasps around the waist and wrists. 'Tis here the woman who adorns the dress, and not the dress that beautifies the woman. I cannot conceive a female better calculated to dignify the station which she occupies in society than Mrs. Madison,—amiable in private life and affable in

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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public, she is admired and esteemed by the rich and beloved by the poor. You are aware that she snuffs; but in her hands the snuff-box seems only a gracious implement with which to charm. Her frank cordiality to all guests is in contrast to the manner of the President, who is very formal, reserved and precise, yet not wanting in a certain dignity. Being so low of stature, he was in imminent danger of being confounded with the plebeian crowd; and was pushed and jostled about like a common citizen,—but not so with her ladyship! The towering feathers and excessive throng distinctly pointed her station wherever she moved.

After partaking of some ice-creams and a glass of Madeira, shaking hands with the President and tendering our good wishes, we were preparing to leave the rooms, when our attention was attracted through the window towards what we conceived to be a rolling ball of burnished gold, carried with swiftness through the air by two gilt wings. Our anxiety increased the nearer it approached, until it actually stopped before the door; and from it alighted, weighted with gold lace, the French Minister and suite. We now also perceived that what we had supposed to be wings, were nothing more than gorgeous footmen with *chapeaux bras*, gilt braided skirts and splendid swords. Nothing ever was witnessed in Washington so brilliant and dazzling,—a meridian sun blazing full on this carriage filled with diamonds and glittering orders, and gilt to the edge of the wheels,—you may well imagine how the natives stared and rubbed their eyes to be convinced 't was no fairy dream.

A social custom that prevailed in Mrs. Madison's regime, likewise an example of vanity, appears in Mrs. Smith's letter of March 14, 1814:\*

The debates in congress have this winter been very attractive to the ladies. Mr. Ingersol is among the number of orators most admired. But Mr. Pinckney† carries

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\**Forty Years of Washington Society.*

†William Pinkney of Maryland.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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the palm from all the congressional orators, Forsythe excepted. His resignation of his office seems to have added to his popularity, and animated him in his professional pursuits. Never have his talents been displayed with such power and brilliancy. Curiosity led me against my judgment, to join the female crowd who throng the court rooms.\* A place in which I think women have no business. The effect of female admiration and attention has been very obvious, but it is a doubt to me whether it has been beneficial, indeed I believe otherwise. A member told me he doubted not there had been much more speaking on this account, and another gentleman told me, that one day Mr. Pinckney had finished his argument and was just about seating himself when Mrs. Madison and a train of ladies enter'd,—he recommenced, went over the same ground, using fewer arguments, but scattering more flowers.

Payne Todd accompanied the Peace Commission. It consisted of John Quincy Adams, James A. Bayard, Henry Clay, Jonathan Russell and Albert Gallatin.

From Mrs. Gallatin to Mrs. Madison :

New York, July 2, 1814.

I understand, my dear friend, that you did not receive any letter from Payne by the last arrivals. I will communicate to you with pleasure what Mr. Gallatin says of him. He says Todd and Millegan left St. Petersburg before them, and took the Sweden route; found the coast frozen, and after a long detention came by way of Copenhagen, and joined them at Amsterdam the day before they left it; that Payne had gone on a visit to Paris, and was to return to Mr. Gallatin in three weeks; he set off the 7th of May from London. He will have a very pleasant jaunt no doubt, and Dallas expected to follow him. Millegan was gone on a message to Gottenburgh. I dare not write you a long letter for fear of being too late for

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\*United States Supreme Court.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

the mail, and I wish you to get the information as soon as possible, for I know you must be anxious. Remember me to your sister and believe me your very sincere friend.  
W. Gallatin.\*

Miss Brown, a guest of Benjamin Homans, Chief Clerk in the Department of State, tells of a reception at the President's, July 4, 1814:

I see her now, as we entered she was crossing the crowded vestibule, conducted by two fair girls, one on each side. Where they were conducting her I do not know, but she had evidently surrendered herself to their sprightly guidance with her usual benignant sweetness. She stopped to receive our greetings, and that gave me time to admire the tasteful simplicity of her dress. White—but of what material I forget. Her hair hung in ringlets on each side of her face, surrounded by the snowy folds of her unvarying turban, ornamented on one side by a few heads of green wheat. She may have worn jewels, but if she did they were so eclipsed by her inherent charms as to be unnoticed.†

Lucia Beverly Cutts, quotes Mrs. Madison, "I would rather fight with my hands than my tongue"; and says that when word wars were waged, Mrs. Madison withdrew and returned when the hint had restored peace. She, of herself, says, May 12, 1813, to a relative, Mr. Coles, and suggestive of latter day slang:

The twenty tents already look well in my eyes, who have always been an advocate for fighting when assailed, though a Quaker. I therefore keep the old Tunisian sabre within reach.

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\**Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison.*

†*Social Life in the Early Republic.* Anne Hollingsworth Wharton.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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Very likely when she read the scaring headlines of British attack her eye wandered to the blade hung upon the wall. Queen Dolly with her headpiece—turban and crescent—and the sabre held before her no doubt would have looked formidable—but it is another's sentiment :

There are persons whose loveliness is more formidable than a whole regiment of sabred hussars with their fierce-looking moustaches.

The people were in apprehension. Mrs. Seaton, March 1813, enters :

You will see by the Federal Republican, that the plan might be carried into execution without a miracle, of seizing the President and Secretaries with fifty or a hundred men; rendering this nation a laughing-stock to every other in the world.

The militia musters and manoeuvres were in Lafayette Square, then called the President's Square, opposite the Executive Mansion. At the period of the Second War, Pennsylvania avenue from Fifteenth to Seventeenth streets ran along a common with no stately elms or other trees; and along the avenue westward was only one house, that a small frame, till was reached the Seven Buildings. The grounds of the Executive Mansion on that avenue front had slight natural shade and were inexpensively enclosed. The view from the Mansion was little broken by the habitations and Mrs. Madison for the field glass had in every direction a distant horizon.\*

Came to visit Mrs. Madison, did two Quaker ladies, Rebekah Hubbs and Sarah Scull. Rebecca and Sarah were with Dolly of the Friends' Society in Philadelphia in

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\**Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison.*

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

the early days. Rebekah for herself and for Sarah writes :

*Seventh Month, 13, 1814.*

\* \* \* And now, my dear friend, having visited thy dwelling much bowed down in mind under a sense of my weakness, having none but the Lord to appeal to, to justify me in my visit, to relieve my mind of much that was on it. \* \* \* Assuredly, dear Dorothy, I think I shall ever remember thee with gratitude of heart, thee and thy beloved companion, your kind and Christian entertainment of us; God will not be wanting to reward your love.

Rebekah adds the postscript:

My love to thy dear, ancient mother-in-law, who I believe is not far from the kingdom of Heaven.

Mr. Madison was absent from home; he, the Commander-in-Chief, was at the camp and from "Mr Williams about 6 or 7 miles from Washington Tuesday Aug 13," he told of the high spirits of the troops and gave the varied reports of the enemy to "My Dearest."\*

Washington, August 23, 1814.

My Dear Madam,—In the present state of alarm and bustle of preparation for the worst that may happen, I imagine it will be more convenient to dispense with the enjoyment of your hospitality to-day, and, therefore, pray you to admit this as an excuse for Mr. Jones, Lucy, and myself. Mr. Jones is deeply engaged in dispatching marines and attending to other public duties. Lucy and I are packing, with the possibility of having to leave; but in the event of necessity we know not where to go, nor have we any means yet prepared for the conveyance of our effects. I sincerely hope and trust the necessity may be avoided, but there appears rather serious cause

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\**Writings of James Madison.* Gaillard Hunt.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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of apprehension. Our carriage horse is sick, and our coachman absent, or I should have called last evening to see your sister. I feel great solicitude on her account. Yours very truly and affectionately.

E. Jones.\*

August 24, 1814. Washington was a manless city. The men were running with the army—running hard, except those in the neighboring woods where they were that they might not see the British such was their contempt for them.

The President was on the scene of battle or near it. He was busy, busy writing notes to his wife with a pencil. He was Commander-in-Chief, he issued an order, of course, it had to be obeyed. It was

Come, Armstrong; come, Monroe; let us go; and leave it to the commanding general.

And a poet has slapped the order into rhyme:

Fly, Monroe, fly. Run, Armstrong, run.  
Were the last words of Madison.

The Battle of Bladensburg was fought. The Americans ran from the British who were too wearied to stand; and in turn the British fled with fear from an American thunder storm.\*

It surprised almost a criticism from Mrs. Madison:

I can descry only groups of military wandering in all directions, as if there was a lack of arms or spirit to fight for their own firesides.

Had she not been influenced by Madison's fear—and remained—the house would have been exempt. Said General Ross:

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\**Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison.*

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I have heard so much of praise of Mrs. Madison, that I would rather protect than burn a house which sheltered so excellent a lady.

Mrs. Madison to her sister, Mrs. Todd, reported the experiences at the President's House, as a stenographer takes a speech. It gives the thrill of reality. And she to Mrs. Latrobe gave a graphic account.

Extract from a letter to my sister published in the sketch of my life written for the National Portrait Gallery.

Tuesday Augt 23<sup>d</sup> 1814.

Dear Sister,—My husband left me yesterday morn<sup>g</sup> to join Gen. Winder. He enquired anxiously whether I had courage, or firmness to remain in the President's house until his return, on the morrow, or succeeding day and on my assurance that I had no fear but for him and the success of our army, he left me, beseeching me to take care of myself, and of the cabinet papers, public and private. I have since rec<sup>d</sup> two despatches from him written with a pencil;\* the last is alarming, because he desires I should be ready at a moment's warning to enter my carriage and leave the city; that the enemy seemed stronger than had been reported, and that it might happen they would reach the city, with intention to destroy it. \* \* \* I am accordingly ready; I have pressed as many cabinet papers into trunks as to fill one carriage; our private property must be sacrificed, as it is impossible to procure wagons for its transportation. I am determined not to go myself until I see Mr. Madison safe, and he can accompany me,—as I hear of much hostility

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\*Mr. Chester Bailey, in *Poulson's Advertiser*, Philadelphia, says: The Treasury Office was also soon on fire; the President's house being first despoiled of a few objects of curiosity—some pictures and books from Mr. Madison's library, and a parcel of the pencil notes received by Mrs. Madison from her husband while he was with the troops.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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towards him. \* \* \* disaffection stalks around us. \* \* \* My friends and acquaintances are all gone; even Col. C——, with his hundred men, who were stationed as a guard to the enclosure. \* \* \* French John (a faithful domestic,) with his usual activity and resolution, offers to spike the cannon at the gate, and to lay a train of powder which would blow up the British should they enter the house. To the last proposition I positively object, without being able, however, to make him understand why all advantages in war may not be taken.

Wednesday mornḡ twelve o'clock.—Since sunrise I have been turning my spy glafs in every direction and watching with unwearied anxiety, hoping to discover the approach of my dear husband and his friends; but, alas, I can descry only groups of military wandering in all directions, as if there was a lack of arms, or of spirit to fight for their own firesides.\*

Three o'clock.—Will you believe it, my sister? We have had a battle, or skirmish near Bladensburg, and I am still here within sound of the cannon! M<sup>r</sup> Madison comes not; may God protect him! Two messengers, covered with dust, come to bid me fly; but I wait for him. \* \* \* At this late hour, a wagon has been procured; I have had it filled with the plate and most valuable portable articles belonging to the house; whether it will reach its destination, the Bank of Maryland, or fall into the hands of British soldiery, events must determine.

Our kind friend, M<sup>r</sup> Carroll, has come to hasten my departure, and is in a very bad humor with me because I insist on waiting until the large picture of Gen. Washington is secured, and it requires to be unscrewed from

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\*A sparsely built section. See *In Memoriam: Benjamin Ogle Tayloe*. "What in the early part of the last century was known as the President's Square, was then, and for many years afterward, a common, with a graveyard on a small portion, which during the thirties, after the visit of Lafayette, became known and recognized by his name."—James Croggon, *The Evening Star*, June 17, 1906, and April 19, 1913.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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the wall.\* This process was found too tedious for these perilous moments; I have ordered the frame to be broken, and the canvass taken out; it is done,—and the precious portrait placed in the hands of two gentlemen of New York, for safe keeping.† And now, dear sister, I must leave this house, or the retreating army will make me a prisoner in it, by filling up the road I am directed to take. When I shall again write to you, or where I shall be to-morrow, I cannot tell!!

DOLLY.

TO MRS. LATROBE:

December 3, 1814.

\* \* \*

Two hours before the enemy entered the city, I left the house where Mr. Latrobe's elegant taste had been so justly admired, and where you and I had so often wandered together, and on that *very day* I sent out the silver (nearly all)—the velvet curtains and Gen. Washington's picture, the cabinet papers, a few books, and the small clock—left everything else belonging to the publick, our own valuable stores of every description, a part of my clothes, and all my servants' clothes, &c., &c., in short, it would fatigue you to read the list of *my* losses, or an account of the general *dismay*, or *particular* distresses of your acquaintance. Mrs. Hunter and Mrs. Thompson were the only ladies who stood their ground. I confess that I was so unfeminine as to be free from fear, and willing to remain in the *Castle*. If I could have had a cannon through every window, but alas! those who should have placed them there, fled before me, and my whole heart mourned for my country! I remained nearly

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\*On the removal of the seat of government to Washington, in 1800, a magnificent portrait of General Washington, painted by Stuart partly, and completed by Winstanley, to whom President John Adams' son-in-law, Colonel Smith, stood for the unfinished limbs and body, hung in the state dining-room."—*The Ladies of the White House*. Laura Carter Holloway.

†Jacob Barker and Robert G. L. DePeyster.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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three days out of town, but I cannot tell you what I felt on re-entering it—such destruction—such confusion! The fleet full in view and in the act of robbing Alexandria! The citizens expecting *another visit*—and at night the rockets were seen flying near us!

Paul Jennings, valet to Mr. Madison, relates the stirring scene, with slight variance, due to the excitement at the enactment and the shading of memory, for he relates it forty-nine years after :

While waiting, at just about 3, as Sukey, the house-servant, was lolling out of a chamber window, James Smith, a free colored man who had accompanied Mr. Madison to Bladensburg, galloped up to the house, waving his hat, and cried out: "Clear out, clear out! Gen. Armstrong has ordered a retreat!" All then was confusion. Mrs. Madison ordered her carriage, and passing through the dining-room, caught up what silver she could crowd into her old-fashioned reticule, and then jumped into the chariot with her servant-girl Sukey, and Daniel Carroll who took charge of them; Jo. Bohn drove them over to Georgetown Heights; the British were expected in a few minutes.

Miss Brown wrote that her mother and sister saw "Mrs. Madison in her carriage flying full speed through Georgetown, accompanied by an officer carrying a drawn sword. Where the poor fugitive found a refuge I did not learn.\*

At Georgetown, the President met his lady, she having left the city only half an hour before, having remained with great composure at the President's house until a message brought her the tidings that the British were within a few miles of the city, and that our army were retreating without any chance of being rallied so as to check their march.†

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\**Social Life in the Early Republic.* Anne Hollingsworth Wharton.

†*Baltimore Patriot*, August 26, 1814.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

At the meeting Mr. and Mrs. Madison agreed on the routes and rendezvous of retreat.

The refuge may have been the place of Walter S. Chandler, afterwards owned by Colonel Thomas L. McKenney and named by him Weston. He wrote he was fervently thankful "that Dolly Madison could have found such hospitable refuge at Weston."

Authentic accounts in detail of the flights of Mr. and Mrs. Madison cannot be given with assurance. That night (Wednesday) under guard she slept in a tent in the encampment\* and the next day (Thursday), crossed into Virginia.†

It is repeatedly stated that on the Virginia side of the Potomac she arrived at the place of Mr. Love; that he was with the troops, and in his absence Mrs. Love made a hospitable hostess; that she pushed on to a tavern; that the tavern mistress, for fancied grievances, reviled her; and that from the tavern she moved further on to Mrs. Minor's.

On Saturday, the 27th, she received a note from Mr. Madison advising her to return; on Sunday she did.

The valet's (Paul Jennings) account is essentially similar:

Mrs. Madison slept that night at Mr. Love's, two or three miles over the river. After leaving that place she called in at a house and went up stairs. The lady of the house learning who she was became furious, and went to the stairs and screamed out, "Miss Madison! you come down and go out! Your husband has got mine out fight-

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\*At Tennallytown, two miles north of the heights of Georgetown, D. C.

†*Forty Years of Washington Society.* Margaret Bayard Smith.



MRS. WILLIAM THORNTON  
By Gilbert Stuart



## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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ing, and d—— you, you shan't stay in my house; so get out!" Mrs. Madison complied, and went to Mrs. Minor's, a few miles further, where she stayed a day or two, and then returned to Washington, where she found Mr. Madison at her brother-in-law's, Richard Cutts, on F Street. All the facts about Mrs. M. I learned from her servant, Sukey.

Anne Hollingsworth Wharton has identified Mrs. Madison's first (Virginia) refuge in the flight. It is Rokeby, beyond Chain Bridge. It was the country seat of Richard H. Love, whose wife was Elizabeth Matilda Lee. From Sir Walter Scott's Rokeby, which a little time before appeared, he named it. Scott's heroine is Matilda, as was his.

The movements of Mr. Madison on these eventful days have more definite detail. Extract from his

Memorandum, Aug. 24, 1914.

When the battle had decidedly commenced, I observed to the Secretary of War and Secy of State that it would be proper to withdraw to a position in the rear, where we could act according to circumstances; leaving military movements now to the military functionaries who were responsible for them. This we did, Mr. Rush soon joining us. When it became manifest that the battle was lost, Mr. Rush accompanying me, I fell *down into the road leading to the City and returned to it.*

It had been previously settled that in the event of the enemy's taking possession of the city and the necessity of Executive consultation elsewhere, Frederick

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The lady of a house where the British officers supped on the evening they entered the city, recognized among them a person who had been at her house, and even called on Mrs. Madison in the President's house (as the person declared) in the disguise of a distressed woman, *on the Saturday preceding the capture!* This is a fact which may be relied on.—*National Intelligencer.*

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

Town would be the proper place for the assembling of the Cabinet.

Mr. Madison dined at Mr. Cutts', on Fourteenth Street, between four and five o'clock; and arose before the cloth was removed upon hearing of the arrival of the Secretary of War. This interview, as related by Mr. Barker, with that Secretary was at Mr. Monroe's\* near O'Neal's, and lasted until seven o'clock. They separated to meet for a final interview at eight o'clock.† The interview, as related by Mr. Carroll, was on Windmill or Camp Hill.

A spectator, in the *Baltimore Patriot*, August 26:

The President, who had been on horseback with the army the whole day, retired from the mortifying scene and left the city on horseback, accompanied by General Mason and Mr. Carroll.‡

From a lengthy letter of recollection:

Sydenham, near Philadelphia, 10th July, 1855.

My Dear Sir,

\* \* \*

\* \* \* I have, indeed, to this hour, the vivid impression upon my eye of columns of flame and smoke ascending throughout the night of the 24th of August from the Capitol, President's house, and other public edifices, as the whole were on fire, some burning slowly, others with bursts of flame and sparks mounting high up in the dark horizon. This never can be forgotten by

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\*Mr. Monroe, Secretary of State, 2017 I Street. John Armstrong, Secretary of War, and George W. Campbell, Secretary of Treasury, lived in the same house in the Seven Buildings.

†Related by Jacob Barker in a public letter to James Gordon Bennett, May 5, 1848. Mr. Barker dined that day at Mr. Cutts' with Mr. Madison and in the evening with Mr. Armstrong at O'Neal's.

‡Charles J. Carroll in *The New York Herald*, January 31, 1848.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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me, as I accompanied out of the city on that memorable night in 1814, President Madison, Mr. Jones, then Secretary of the Navy, General Mason, of Annalostan Island, Mr. Charles Carroll, of Bellevue, and Mr. Tench Ringgold. There were no others of our group that I remember.

If at intervals the dismal sight was lost to our view, we got it again from some hill-top or eminence where we paused to look at it. We were on horseback, attended by servants, proceeding on the Virginia side of the Potomac, which we crossed at the Little Falls, intending to recross at the Great Falls that night or the next morning, so as to be again on the Maryland side, and return to Washington as the movements of the enemy and our own strength might prompt.

\*

\*

\*

Richard Rush.

Colonel J. S. Williams, Washington.\*

Brookville† Aug. 27 10 oC

My dearest

Finding that our army had left Montgomery Court House, we pushed on to this place, with a view to join it, or proceed to the City, as further information might prescribe. I have just rec<sup>d</sup> a line from Col. Monroe, saying that the Enemy were out of Washington, & on the retreat to their Ships & advising our immediate return to Washington. We shall accordingly set out thither immediately. You will all of course take the same resolution. I know not where we are in the first instance to hide our heads; but shall look for a place on my arrival. Mr. Rush offers his house in the six buildings, and the offer claims attention. Perhaps I may fall in with Mr. Cutts, and have the aid of his advice. I saw Mr. Bradley

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\**History of the Invasion and Capture of Washington.*—John S. Williams.

†Then as now a small Quaker settlement; it is nineteen miles north of the Capitol.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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at Montgomery Ct H. who told me that Mrs Cutts was well, & Jamey will give up some particulars w<sup>ch</sup> I have not time to write.

Truly yours

J. Madison

Since the above it is found necessary to detain Jamey, & I sent a Trooper

Mr. Madison to Mrs. Madison :

I cannot yet learn what has been the result. Should the port have been taken, the British ships with their barges will be able to throw the city again into alarm, and you may be again compelled to retire from it, which I find would have a disagreeable effect. Should the Ships have failed in their attack, you can not return too soon. \* \* \* keep Freeman till the question is decided, and then lose no time in sending him to You. In the mean time it will be best for you to remain in your present quarters. I wrote you yesterday morning by express, from Brookeville, and at the same time to the Secy of the Navy, supposing you all to be together. It is possible the separation may have prevented your receiving the letter. I returned to the city yesterday, in company with Mr. Monroe, Mr. Rush, &c., and have summoned the Heads of Dept. to meet here without delay. Inclosed is a letter from Mr. Cutts. My next will be by Freeman, & as soon as I can decide the points of your coming on.

Ever & most affy. yours,

J. M.

Upon her return Mrs. Madison found both ends of Long Bridge were burnt. Colonel Fenwick "busy in transporting munitions of war over the Potomac in the only boat left at his disposal, peremptorily refused to let any unknown woman cross in the boat with her carriage."



MARCIA BURNES  
By James Peale



## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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She disclosed herself confidentially, and she "was driven in her carriage into the frail boat, which bore her homewards."

The tornado that burst upon the British to scare them away and was to the Americans better than a fort is reproduced in varied lights of lurid rhetoric.

The British correspondent tells of the tornado thus :

Our column was completely dispersed, as if it had received a total defeat; some of the men flying for shelter behind walls and buildings, and others falling flat upon the ground to prevent themselves from being carried away by the tempest; nay, such was the violence of the wind, that two pieces of cannon which stood upon the eminence were fairly lifted from the ground and borne several yards to the rear.\*

George Gleig, subsequently Chaplain General of the British Army writes to Horatio King :

On the 25th a hurricane fell on the city, which unroofed houses and upset our three-pounder guns. It upset me also. It fairly lifted me out of the saddle, and the horse which I had been riding I never saw again.†

Miss Brown, who was of the Homans party, in her recollections, has this of the storm :

The government papers and other valuables were covered with tarpaulins, Into the corners under these we crept, but failed to find entire protection from the deluges of rain. The boats were lashed together and to the trees on shore, which we were afterwards told bent over like hoops, while the clouds seemed to pause over our devoted heads and pour down one continuous stream of elec-

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\**History of the late War.*—Charles J. Ingersoll.

†*The Battle of Bladensburg.*—Horatio King.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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tricity. How long this lasted I know not, I only have an abiding sense of my forlorn condition, wet and comfortless without a change of clothing. When the storm abated we were again *put to sea*, in no condition to pass the night. As we were being pushed up stream, anxiously scanning the shore for some house where we might find shelter, we were happy as to descry a log cabin known to the boatmen as the Hominy House.\*

Mrs. Smith's report of Mrs. Madison's flight:†

August 30.

\* \* \* After this melancholy survey, Mr. Smith went to see the President, who was at Mr. Cutts' (his brother in law) where we found Mrs. Madison and her sister Mrs. Cutts. Mrs. M. seem'd much depress'd, she could scarcely speak without tears. She told me she had remained in the city till a few hours before the English enter'd. She was so confident of Victory that she was calmly listening to the roar of cannon, and watching the rockets in the air, when she perceived our troops rushing into the city, with the haste and dismay of a routed force. The friends with her then hurried her away, (her carriage being previously ready) and she with many other families, among whom was Mrs. Thornton and Mrs. Cutting with her, retreated with the flying army. In George town they perceived some men before them carrying off the picture of Genl. Washington (the large one by Stewart) which with the plate, was all that was saved out of the President's house. Mrs. M. lost all her own property. \* \* \* Mrs. M. slept that night in the encampment, a guard being placed around her tent, the next day she cross'd into Virginia, where she remained until Sunday, when she return'd to meet her husband.

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\**Social Life in the Early Republic.* Anne Hollingsworth Wharton. Harmony House was near Cabin John.

†*Forty Years of Washington Society.*

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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Mrs. Thornton's vivid recitals in the diary are like unto histrionic scenes of the historic events that were attended with much excitement and confusion.

1814. August. Monday 22. Mrs. Cutts & Forrest went away. The president went to the camp this evening with Mr Armstrong &c.

Tuesday 23. Dr T. went today with Mr Cutts & Mr R<sup>d</sup> Forrest intending to go to the Camp near the Wood Yard but met the president & suite and Dr T & Mr C went with them near Bladensburg. Dr T. rode, reconnoitering with Col. Monroe Mr Chas Carroll Rush & Ringgold & returned at midnight. \* \* \* Had the horses harnessed ready to go off as we had several acct<sup>s</sup> that the enemy were near Bladensburg.—Our troops came over the bridge again

Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> No accounts at ten this morning of the course of the enemy. Almost all our acquaintance gone out of town nearly all the movable property taken away—offices shut up & all business at a stand.

We heard rumours that the armies had engaged, & expected to hear the cannon &c but heard nothing—at last saw a man riding as hard as possible towards the president's house—we sent up soon after & found that Mrs M— was gone—We set down to dinner but I cou'd eat nothing & we dilly dally'd till we saw our retreating army come up the avenue—we then hastened away, and were escorted out of town by our defeated troops, Gen<sup>l</sup> Washington's picture & a cart load of goods from the president's House in Company—(it was supposed that Mr Custis got some of the soldiers' to take out this picture.) When we got to the upper part of George T<sup>n</sup>— we met Mr Richards who advised us not to proceed up the road, as it was crowded with troops &c & that there was a rumour that the British were to head them that way & give them Battle. \* \* \*

Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> Dr T went to the City & by his exertions, saved the patent office from destruction—They

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

were on the point of setting it on fire, & he represented to the officer (Col Jones) that it was the museum of the arts & that it wou'd be a loss to all the world—The war office was not burnt till after breakfast today—The rope walks were burnt.—We had a dreadful storm & gust but fortunately unaccompanied with rain—The weather during all the fires fortunately was very calm, but it appears almost miraculous that the whole place was not consumed.—But great pains was taken by the English not to injure private property. It is feared that very little property had been saved out of the president's House—Dr T— returned to dinner & we set out at 1/2 after 4 for our farm.—

Friday 26. Dr T. went to town—we went over to Mr Bradley's\* to see Mr Cutts \* \* \*

Saturday 27 Rain. It cleared up about noon & we prepared to come to town, as Dr T said he must be in town every day—we came in & brought dinner with us—Mr Cutts & family came in & many other persons—\* \* \* The President is at Mr. Rush's.—\* \* \*

Sunday 28th \* \* \* The president Monroe & Rush stopped at Mr Cutts' door—I lent Mr M— a spy glafs.—The people are violently irritated at the thought of our attempting to make any more futile resistance. \* \* \* Dr T— followed the president & party to tell them what the people said—They did not appear pleased at it said they wou'd hear of no deputation & that the people must all arm—Dr T. came home & distressed us more than ever by taking his sword & going out to call the people & to join them—\* \* \* Mrs M came to Mrs Cutts' in Parrotts carriage—Mr Madison Monroe &c dined there.—\* \* \* Mrs Smith & family came in & staid to tea we stepped in to see Mrs Madison, she was very violent against the English—& wished we had 10000 such men as were passing (a few troopers) *to sink*

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\*The present Chevy Chase Club building. *The Bradley Family and The Times in Which They Lived.* Charles S. Bradley.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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*our enemy to the bottomless pit.* She had better attribute the loss of her palace to the right cause viz want of proper defence in time.

Monday 29th \* \* \* The president & Lady being next door we were guarded at night. \* \* \*

September, Wednesday 7th Dr T published in the Natl Intelligencer a statement of his conduct while the enemy were in the city. \* \* \*

Thursday 8th \* \* \* I had a long conversation with Mrs Cutts & Madison today They have listened to many misrepresentations & falsehoods concerning Dr T— & of course are not pleased with him——

The enemy surely beyond the suburbs and the temporary-away again at home, engaged, each for himself, a war in the newspaper. Dr. Thornton struck the first blow and quickly in the battle of ink came James H. Blake, the Mayor, Com. Tingey, Dr. James Ewell, Com. Rodgers, Gen. Winder, Mr. Monroe, the President, and others. Such defiance, boldness, bravery, courage, intrepidity and spirit of "Don't give up the ship," and "Strike—for your altars and your fires!" and all that make a thrilling story of war as was never equalled—such valor was not even exhibited on the fields of Bladensburg. So relentless was the strife that Dr. Blake attacked Dr. Thornton's reputation as a poet; and Dr. Thornton charged Dr. Blake with cowardice because it happened he had affairs out of the city when the marauders came to the city.

An unknown poet has embalmed

The  
Bladensburg Races.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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Probably it is not generally known that the *Flight of Mahomet*, the *Flight of John Gilpin*, and the *Flight of Bladensburg*, all occurred on the 24th of August.

James Madison a soldier was,  
Of courage and renown,  
And *Generalissimo* was he  
Of famous Washington.

Quoth *Madison* unto his spouse,  
"Though frightened we have been  
These two last tedious weeks, yet we  
No enemy have seen.

"To-morrow is the twenty-fourth,  
And much indeed I fear  
That then, or on the following day,  
That *Cockburn* will be here."

"To-morrow, then," quoth she, "we'll fly,  
As fast as we can pour  
Northward, unto Montgomery,  
All in our coach and four.

"My sister *Cutts*, and *Cutts*, and I,  
And *Cutts's* children three,  
Will fill the coach;—so you must ride  
On horseback after we."

He soon replied, "I do admire  
Of human kind but one,  
And you are she, my *Dolly* dear;  
Therefore it shall be done."

\* \* \*

The morning came—the coach was brought,  
But yet was not allow'd  
To drive up to the door, for fear  
The Mob should grumble loud.

At Brother *Cutts'* the coach was staid,  
Where they might all get in—  
Six precious souls, and all agog  
To dash through thick and thin.

Smack went the whip; round went the wheels;  
Were never folks so glad:  
The dust did rise beneath the coach,  
As though the dust were mad.

The *General*, at his horse's side,  
Seized fast the flowing mane,  
And up he got in haste to start,  
But soon stopt short again.

For saddle-tree scarce reach'd was he,  
And seated to his mind,  
When, turning round his face, he saw  
His *Cabinet* behind.

*Monroe* was there, and *Armstrong* bold,  
No bolder man *mote* be,  
And *Rush*, the *Attorney-Gen-e-ral*,  
All on their horses three.

\* \* \*

The *Cabinet* on horseback sat,  
And there they reason'd high,  
If for the camp they should set out,  
Or northward straight should fly.

Not long before the gallant *Four*  
Had plann'd it to their mind;  
When *Cuffee* scream'd, "De Shappo-hat  
And Sword be leave behind!"

"Good lack!" quoth he, "then bring 'em me,  
My leathern belt likewise,  
In which I bear my trusty Sword,  
When I do exercise."

Now Mistress *Dolly* (careful soul!)  
Two wrapper-bags had found,  
To hold the sword and chapeau-bras,  
And keep them safe and Sound.

Up *Cuffee* starts—and brings the bags,  
And lays them open wide;  
Then puts the chapeau on his head,  
The sword upon his side.

\* \* \*

Now see him starting once again,  
Upon his nimble steed,  
Full slowly pacing through the street,  
With caution and good heed.

But gaining soon the country road  
Beneath his well-shod feet,  
The snorting beast began to trot,  
Which gall'd him in his seat.

As luck would have it, all at once,  
At distance in the rear,  
Six gallant troopers, mounted well,  
Approaching did appear.

And one, upon his bugle horn,  
So loud a blast did blow,  
Our *Hero* wish'd him ten miles off—  
He *scar'd* the *Griffin* so.

So "Fair and softly!" *James* did cry;  
But *James* he cried in vain:  
The *Griffin* gallop'd off outright,  
In spite of curb or rein.

So, stooping down, (as he needs must,  
Who cannot sit upright,)  
He grasp'd the mane with both his hands,  
And eke with all his might.



COTTAGE OF DAVID BURNES, WASHINGTON, D. C.



## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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\* \* \*

The wind did blow; the cloak did fly,  
Like streamer long and blue;  
Till, loop and button failing both,  
At last—away it flew.

Then, might all people well discern  
The gallant *Little Man*;  
His sword did thump behind his back,  
So merrily he ran.

*Rush* follow'd on, and *Armstrong* scream'd;  
The troopers one and all;  
And eke *Monroe* cried out, I guess,  
As loud as he could bawl.

Stop there! your Excellency! stop!  
The northern road you'll pass—  
We'll get into a pretty scrape,  
If further on we chase.

\* \* \*

And still, as fast as he rode on,  
'Twas marvellous to view  
How he outrode the *Cabinet*,  
And eke the troopers too.

And now, as he went towering down,  
His little head full low,  
His sword flew up against his hat,  
And gave him such a blow.

Off went at once his chapeau-bras,  
And fell into the road:  
Our *Hero* never stop't thereat,  
But onward still he rode.

Thus, all along the District through,  
These gambols he did play,  
Until he came unto the spot  
Where Winder's forces lay.

\* \* \*

Up came *Monroe*, and *Armstrong* too,  
And *Rush* brought up the last;—  
The troopers pass'd, and hung their heads,  
Asham'd that they were beat.

“Where are the British? Winder, where?  
And Cockburn, where is he?—  
D'ye think your men will fight, or run,  
When they the British see?—

*Armstrong* and *Rush*, stay here in camp,  
I'm sure you're not afraid;—  
*Ourselves* will now return; and you,  
*Monroe*, shall be our Aid.

And, *Winder*, do not fire your guns,  
Nor let your trumpets play,  
Till we are out of sight—Forsooth,  
My horse will run away.

The camp he quits: *Monroe* and he  
With speed their steps retrace:  
And soon they gain'd the northern road,  
So rapid was their pace.

Then, speaking to his horse, he said,  
“I am in haste to dine:  
'Twas for *your* pleasure I came here;  
You shall go back for *mine*.”

Ah! luckless word, and bootless boast,  
For which he paid full dear!—  
Just as he spake, a cannonade  
Did roar most loud and clear.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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Whereat his horse did snort, as if  
He heard a lion roar,  
And gallop'd off with all his might,  
As he had done before.

Away went Madison—away  
Went chapeau-bras once more;  
So frightened was the horse, it fell  
Much sooner than before.

\* \* \*

Away went *Madison*—away  
*Monroe* went at his heels—  
And, all the while, his lab'ring back  
A merry thumping feels.

Now, at Montgomery, his wife  
Out of the window, spied  
Her gallant husband, wond'ring much  
To see how he did ride.

“Stop, stop! your Highness, here's the house!”  
They all at once did roar;  
“Here, at Montgom'ry, you're as safe  
As ten miles off or more!—

“Stop him, Monroe! here's sister Cutts,  
The Girls, and Cutts, and I;  
The dinner's cold, and we are tir'd!”  
*Monroe* says, “So am I.”

But neither his horse, nor *James*, a whit  
Inclin'd to tarry there;  
For why?—the distant cannonade  
Was rumbling in his rear.

So, like an arrow swift, he flew,  
Shot from an archer's bow;  
So did he fly—so after him  
So swift did fly *Monroe*.

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Six gentlemen upon the road  
Beheld our *General* ride—  
Monroe behind—the chapeau gone;  
The *broad sword* by his side.

What News? What News? your Highness! say,  
Not one of them was mute:—  
He pass'd right on—they; one and all,  
Soon join'd in the pursuit.

But all the windows on the road  
Flew open, in short space;  
The women thinking, I suppose,  
Our *General* rode *Express*:

And so he did; for he first bore  
The news to Frederick-town;  
Nor stopt, from where he first got up,  
Till he again got down.

Now long live *Madison*, the brave!  
And *Armstrong*, long live he!  
And *Rush!* and *Cutts!* *Monroe!* and *Jones!*  
And *Dolly*, long live *She!*

\* \* \*

The adherents of John Sioussat, the guardian of the door, claim the honor of the rescue of the portrait and inextinguishable honor on that account; more explicitly that he deftly cut the canvas from the frame and warned the gentlemen who were about to fold it not to do so for fear of cracking. The testimony is not convincing yet there is glory without dispute for Mr. Sioussat. He did remain until all had fled and did rescue the bright-coated, screech-voiced macaw—escorting her to Colonel Tayloe's. Mr. Sioussat continued on to Philadelphia.\*

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\*Half a century later, when the White House was undergoing a renovation, this portrait was sent, with many others subsequently

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

The news of the disaster at Washington reached Washington Irving while descending at night, the Hudson. A person who came on at Poughkeepsie related in detail the destruction of the public buildings. In a lull a paltry spirit lifted itself from a settee and derisively "wondered what *Jimmy* Madison would say now." Indignantly Mr. Irving responded:

Sir, do you seize on such a disaster only for a sneer? Let me tell you, sir, it is not now a question about *Jimmy* Madison or *Jimmy* Armstrong. The pride and honor of the nation are wounded; the country is insulted and disgraced by this barbarous success, and every loyal citizen would feel the ignominy and be earnest to avenge it.

The news had only to reach Philadelphia for it to offer to be an asylum for the homeless rulers and to make again a home for the government.

This resolution was concurred August 27, 1814:

Resolved by the Select and Common Councils of the city of Philadelphia, that the Presidents of Councils be authorized to write to the President of the United States and inform him, that if the executive and Congress deem the city of Philadelphia a suitable place under existing circumstances for them to assemble and reside at, that the necessary buildings will be provided by councils for their accommodation as well as the public offices attached to the different departments.

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added to this solitary collection, to be cleaned and the frame bur-nished. The artist found on examination that the canvas had never been cut, since the rusted tacks, time-worn frame, and the size compared with the original picture, was the most conclusive evidence that Mrs. Madison did not cut it out with a carving-knife, as many traditions have industriously circulated. *Ladies of the White House*. Laura Carter Holloway.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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William Wirt to Mrs. Wirt:

Georgetown, D. C., October 14, 1814.

Here I am at Crawford's. \* \* \* I am surrounded by a vast crowd of Legislators and gentlemen of the Turf, assembled for the races which are to commence to-morrow. The races!—amid the ruins and desolation of Washington.

\* \* \*

I went to look at the ruins of the President's house. The rooms which you saw so richly furnished, exhibited nothing but unroofed naked walls, cracked, defaced and blackened with fire. \* \* \* From this mournful monument of American imbecility and improvidence, and of British atrocity, I went to the lobby of the House of Representatives,—a miserable little narrow box, in which I was crowded and suffocated three hours, in order to see and hear the wise men of the nation. They are no great things.

Mrs. Madison, while at her sister's, standing in the doorway, saw the Rev. Mr. Brackenridge passing by. She stopped him and said:

I little thought, Sir, when I heard that threatening sermon of yours, that its denunciation would so soon be realized.

And, seriously taking the remark, replied he:

Oh, Madam, I trust this chastening of the Lord, may not be in vain.

*National Intelligencer*, September 9, 1814:

The Public Buildings having been mostly destroyed, the various offices are locating themselves in those private houses that are most commodious and conveniently situated for the purpose. The President will occupy Col. Tayloe's large house, which was lately occupied by

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the French Minister. The Department of State occupies the house lately occupied by Judge Duvall. The Treasury Department is fixed at the house formerly occupied by the British Minister Foster; the War Office is in the building adjoining the Bank of the Metropolis; the Navy Office is in Mr. Mechlin's house near the West Market, and the General Post Office is one of Mr. Way's new houses.

The Commissioners on the part of the United States first met with the Commissioners for Great Britain at Ghent, August 6, 1814; the terms of the treaty were concluded December 24, following.

The Octagon became the Executive Mansion. It was officially known as the Executive Annex. It is at New York avenue and Eighteenth street. It was built by Colonel John Tayloe after plans of Dr. Thornton; commenced in 1798 and completed in 1800. In the drawing room to the right of the hall on the first floor before the mantel, classically carved, Queen Dolly did receive with queenly grace.

A joyous occasion it was at the Octagon when news of peace came. Elation of spirit rose high. A guest writes:

Late in the afternoon came thundering down Pennsylvania Avenue a coach and four foaming steeds, in which was the bearer of the good news. Cheers followed the carriage as it sped on its way to the residence of the President. Soon after nightfall, members of Congress and others deeply interested in the event presented themselves at the President's house, the doors of which stood open. When the writer of this entered the drawing-room at about eight o'clock, it was crowded to its full capacity, Mrs. Madison (the President being with the Cabinet) doing the honors of the occasion. And

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what a happy scene it was! Among the members present were gentlemen of opposite politics, but lately arrayed against one another in continual conflict and fierce debate, now with elated spirits thanking God, and with softened hearts cordially felicitating one another upon the joyful intelligence which (should the terms of the treaty prove acceptable) should re-establish peace. But the most conspicuous object in the room, the observed of all observers, was Mrs. Madison herself, then in the meridian of life and queenly beauty. She was in her person, for the moment, the representative of the feelings of him who was in grave consultation with his official advisers. No one could doubt, who beheld the radiance of joy which lighted up her countenance and diffused its beams around, that all uncertainty was at an end, and that the government of the country had, in very truth (to use an expression of Mr. Adams on a very different occasion), "passed from gloom to glory." With a grace all her own, to her visitors she reciprocated heartfelt congratulations upon the glorious and happy change in the aspect of public affairs; dispensing with liberal hand to every individual in the large assembly the proverbial hospitalities of that house.\*

The valet has told this thrilling news with more thrill. And in almost these exact words he says: When the news of peace arrived we all went crazy with joy. Miss Sally Coles, a cousin of Mrs. Madison, from the head of the stairs cried out "Peace! Peace!" and told the butler, John Freeman, to serve out without stint wine to all within. "I played the President's March on the violin," and Mr. Sioussat (the valiant who plotted the train of powder, rescued the parrot and secreted the Algerian fire-arms) with joy and wine was drunk for two days. It appears from the valet's account that to Mr. Sioussat's

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\**Dolly Madison.* Maud Wilder Goodwin.



1202 D STREET, WASHINGTON, D. C.



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joyous exhibition others could not reach for says he: "Mr. Madison and all his cabinet were as pleased as any, but did not show their joy in this manner." And further he says: "Such another joyful time was never seen in Washington." With the news of peace came that of General Jackson's victory at New Orleans and there were great illuminations.

Mrs. Thornton's diary:

- Feb'y 11. Saturday. Rockets fired for the Evacuation of N. Orleans—
- 13. Rumours of expresses announcing peace.
- 14. Mrs Madison & Miss Coles called.—H. Carroll arrived this eveng bringing the Treaty.—\*
- 15. We went to the Drawing Room, a crowd. George T<sup>n</sup> illuminated.
- 18. Treaty exchanged in the night of Friday—Cannons Rockets & Illuminations to night.

The Octagon was the Executive Mansion during the Peace Winter.

The corner house of the Seven Buildings, Pennsylvania Avenue and Nineteenth street, became the Executive Mansion until the close of Madison's administration. Now on the first floor are shelves lined with drugs for physical disorders when then were concocted remedies to heal the disruption with England and the troubles of the States and now a tailor sitting Turk-like sews up seams and puts on patches just like they did then in political things. The belles and beaux and society gods and goddesses ascended the mahogany stairway to the

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\*Treaty was signed that evening. See Ingersoll's *History of the Second War*.

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drawing room on the second floor where under that same chandelier suspended by a great chain stood the hostess. And before the same windows stood with lighted candles trained slaves as motionless as sculptured Egyptians.

Here a dinner was given General Andrew Jackson where he appeared as awkward in stiff masculine dress as did Queen Dolly gorgeous in a court gown, of which the society reporter took note. The front of the petticoat was of pink satin embroidered in pale lavender and natural colors; that the skirt and train draped over this was of pink and lilac striped satin brocaded in silver; and that the bodice of this toilet was cut very low.

A glimpse of the home and society life of Mrs. Madison while at the Seven Buildings and of Washington ways are given by Mrs. Benjamin W. Crowninshield, wife of the Secretary of the Navy, in letters to her mother.

November 11, 1815.

About twelve o'clock Mr. C. came in and said I must go immediately to see Mrs. Madison. Our girls went with me. She lives in the same block with us. I did not alter my dress. Well, we rung at the door, the servant showed us to the room—no one there. It was a large room, had three windows in front, blue window curtains which appeared to be of embossed cambric, damask pattern, red silk frinze \* \* \* In about two minutes the lady appeared, received us very agreeably, noticed the children much, inquired their names, because she told them she meant to be much acquainted with them. You could not but feel at your ease in her company. She was dressed in a white cambric gown, buttoned all the way up in front, a little strip of work along the button-holes, but ruffled around the bottom. A peach-bloom colored silk scarf with a rich border over her shoulders by her sleeves. She had a spencer of satin of the same color,

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and likewise a turban of gauze, all of peach bloom. She looked very well indeed.\*

Dec. 7: (1815)

Ball to-night. Last eve I went to the drawing-room. We were not crowded, but one room well filled; all much dressed, but their new dresses saved for this eve. Mrs. Madison's is a sky-blue striped velvet—a frock—fine, elegant lace round the neck and lace handkerchief inside and a large ruff, white lace turban starred in gold, and white feather. Clothes so long that stockings or shoes are not seen, but white shoes generally worn. \* \* \* The folks here in the house say I must dress my hair, not cover it up, so last eve it was combed up as high on the top as I could get it, braided, and a bunch of flowers pinned in with one of my best ornaments—the green and gold one. In the evening Mrs. Madison said, “Oh, Mrs. C., your butterfly is too much hidden.” I asked her what she meant. She replied “that elegant ornament in your hair—it is superb indeed.” I imagine she took a liking to it, for she had neat little ornaments—emeralds set in gold.†

This call in the columns of the *National Intelligencer*, October 10, 1815 was for the formation of the Washington City Orphan Asylum:

Orphans' Asylum. The Ladies of the county of Washington and neighborhood are requested to meet at the Hall of Representatives, this day, at 11 o'clock, A.M. for the purpose of joining an association to provide an asylum for the destitute Orphans. When we reflect that these orphans, by the death of their parents, are in a particular manner placed by Providence under the protection of society—when we consider the wretchedness and vice to which they are peculiarly exposed, without the benefit of the admonitory voice or the protecting care of their parents, it is hoped that the Ladies will shew the

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\**The Story of the White House.* Esther Singleton.

†*Ibid.*

interest they take in the fate of those destitute and forsaken children, by their zeal and humanity in endeavoring to supply to them, as far as in their power, the place of the deceased parents. A nobler object cannot engage the sympathy of our females—when we reflect, too, how uncertain are all human possessions, we know not, but that we may be providing a respectable and comfortable asylum for our own descendants.—“Cast your bread upon the waters, and after many days, it shall return to you.”—It is therefore hoped, that there will be a full and punctual attendance; particularly by those ladies who have already subscribed to this institution.

N. B. It will be recollected that the above day of meeting will be the day of payment.

Mrs. Madison was elected first directress and Mrs. Van Ness, second directress. Mrs. Madison held the honor during Mr. Madison's presidency. She gave twenty dollars and a cow and besides her own deft handiwork in cutting for the seamstresses.

In after years in the newspaper the asylum authorities made acknowledgment of donations and admonition for others in this quaint quotation from the scriptures: *Ye shall eat neither bread, nor parched corn, nor green ears, until the self-same day that ye have brought an offering unto your God.*

Mrs. Crowninshield, 1815, writes:

Christmas morn. It seems more like our Independence—guns firing all night. I am going to the Catholic church—it is their great day. Last eve we passed at the President's—took the girls with us. \* \* \* She had the parrot brought in for the girls, and he ran after Mary to catch her feet. She screamed and jumped into a chair and pulled hold of Mrs. Madison. We had quite a frolic there, returning soon after eight.\*

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\**The Story of the White House.* Esther Singleton.

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At the New Year's reception, 1816, Mrs. Crowninshield made note of this costume:

Mrs. Madison was dressed in a yellow satin embroidered all over with sprigs of butterflies, not two alike in her dress; a narrow border in all colors, made high in the neck; a little cape, long sleeves, and a white bonnet with feathers.\*

Mrs. Crowninshield chronicles an incident indicative of Mrs. Madison's self-inconvenience in consideration of others.

February 1, 1816.

Mrs. Madison has been sick since Sunday—bilious colic. I have seen her once since, and she left her chamber to meet a party in her drawing-room who dined there, but she could not go to the table, and has been more unwell since—had no levee last evening.†

Mrs. Crowninshield, February 16, 1816, writes:

I was at the drawing-room on Wednesday—expected to be the only one, as there were so many the last Levee, and there was another party the same eve. Soon after I got in Mrs. Madison said how much we think alike—both with a little blue and flowers. I had on my blue velvet and flowers on my head. Mrs. Madison a muslin dotted in silver over blue—a beautiful blue turban and feathers. I have never seen her look so well.‡

It is reported that the most splendid Presidential reception ever given to that date was in February, 1816.§

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\**Recollection of Men and Things at Washington during the third of a Century.* L. A. Gobright.

†*The Story of the White House.* Esther Singleton.

‡*Ibid.*

§*Ibid.*

“The decorations were magnificent, and the building was brilliantly illuminated from garret to cellar, much of this light being made by pine torches held by trained slaves.” Chief Justice Marshall and the Associate Justices of the Supreme Court, in their gowns, were there; and, the Peace Commissioners—Bayard, Clay, Gallatin and Russell; and Generals Brown, Gaines, Ripley and Scott, with their aids, in their military gorgeousness; and the Diplomatic Corps in their decorations. The Cabinet and Congress and citizens were there. In this aggregation of suns, stars and satellites shined most dazzlingly, Dolly. “Mrs. Madison appeared in a toilet of rose-colored satin, and white velvet train, which swept the floor for several yards. The train was lined with lavender satin and edged with a ruching of lace. She also wore a gold girdle and gold necklace and bracelets. This costume was completed by a turban of white velvet, trimmed with white ostrich tips, and a gold embroidered crown.” Mrs. Madison’s beauty of person, grace in manner, sparkle of speech, richness in apparel, elicited from Sir Charles Bagot, himself handsome and courtlike—“she looked every inch a queen.”

This was the hey-day of her glory. Her spirit was bright. The brightness of her spirit was matched by the brightness of her dress. Any somberness of apparel of her girlhood was over-equalled by the gayety of that of her womanhood.

Mrs. Crowninshield, April 6, 1816, writes:

We dined at the President’s on Tuesday. The dinner very handsome, more so than any I have seen—the heads of Departments and all the foreign Ministers there. Mrs. Bagot dressed in a light green Italian crepe, striped with folds of white satin about a quarter apart, a roll of

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satin at the bottom with large braids of satin. It was shorter than the satin dress under it. It stuck out very much around the bottom. Three bracelets on one arm, two on the other—all different. A string of pearls round her neck—dress very low behind. She has the whitest neck I ever saw, for she has black eyes and hair, and white flowers round her head, and her hair was above it—a great wave on the top. \* \* \* She is a very agreeable lady—is determined to be pleased with everything.\*

The Right Honorable Charles Bagot, Grand Cross of the Bath and Privy Councillor, His British Majesty's Minister, was cultured and courteous and fit to conciliate the countries at the conclusion of the war. His equipment of excellence was emphasized by the presence of the most beautiful Mrs. Bagot. Sir Charles was of lineage, antique and aristocratic; his father was Lord Bagot of Bagot's Bromley, and his mother, the daughter of Lord Bolingbroke. Lady Bagot was the Honorable Miss Wellesley, daughter of Lord Maryborough, Earl of Mornington, and the niece of the Duke of Wellington. Her father and his brother, Lord Cowley, had celebrity for handsomeness. The brother had the prethoughtfulness to have Sir Thomas Lawrence preserve in oil paints his handsomeness for to the eyes to be a perpetual feast. Lady Bagot like Sir Charles was a diplomat and none discerned she disliked the society of the States and deplored "the necessity of sticking pins in herself to keep awake at the stupid balls." Sir Charles and Lady Bagot were with the Madisons *en rapport* and visited Montpellier.†

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\**The Story of the White House.* Esther Singleton.

†*William Winston Seaton. A Biographical Sketch.*

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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Two ladies of the common people from the West were lost on their way to the President's house. An elderly gentleman, a friend of the Madison's, amused at their rusticity and pleased with their simplicity conducted them in person. The family were at breakfast, nevertheless, Mrs. Madison promptly came into the drawing-room and by her cordiality eased the ladies of their timidity. That the President's Lady should be so plainly dressed, to wit: "in a dark gray stuff dress, with a white apron, and kerchief pinned across her breast" astonished them and also assured them that she was not elevated in spirit as in station and made so bold "P'r'aps you wouldn't mind if I just kissed you, to tell my girls about." They both carried away the happy recollection of a kiss with the endearing embrace that went with it.\*

That Mrs. Madison heightened the tint given her by nature was claimed by her sex that were envious. Mrs. Seaton put in her journal:

January 2, 1813.

\* \* \* Mrs. Madison is said to rouge; but not evident to my eyes, and I do not think it true, as I am well assured I saw her color come and go at the naval ball, when the flag of the Macedonian was presented to her by young Hamilton.†

Miss Mary Kirkpatrick, Mrs. Smith's niece, was at a drawing room, December 4, 1816, and she observed that Mrs. Madison's "face look'd like a flame." Upon this, Mrs. Smith's annotator, unmindful it was either heat or health, ungallantly asserts that "Truth compels the statement—Mrs. Madison painted."‡ But I adopt the same

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\**Ladies of the White House.* Laura Carter Holloway.

†*William Winston Seaton. A Biographical Sketch.*

‡*Forty Years of Washington Society.* Margaret Bayard Smith.



MANSION SQUARE, WASHINGTON, D. C.



## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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compliment *The Good-Natured Man* made to his adored—"Your warmer blushes soon convinced the company, that the colouring was all from nature." Others have adopted for this period a convenient territory, that is, some did paint that need not to, not to be odd with the fashion.

Mrs. Seaton in her journal, immediately supplements the sentence above:

Mrs. C. and Mrs. G. paint excessively, and think it becoming; but with them it was no deception, only folly, and they speak of it as indispensable to a *decent* appearance.\*

Dolly was standing at the window of her home on Fourth street in Philadelphia; her friend, Mistress Lee, asked that she bend so that her blooming cheeks might be reached; the friend's suspicions were false—the color was too deep for erasure.

In May, 1816, The *Washington*, Commodore Isaac Chauncey in command, arrived at Annapolis, where she attracted much attention. An American seventy-four was so unusual a sight that she was visited by a party from Washington, consisting of the President and Mrs. Madison, Secretary Crowninshield, and Navy Commissioners Rodgers† and Porter.

William W. Birth who passed nearly all of his ninety and nine years in Washington had this interesting recollection:

In the easternmost of the Seven Buildings, at the corner of 19th street, President Madison lived for a short time, after the burning of his national home in August,

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\*William Winston Seaton. *A Biographical Sketch.*

†Commodore John Rodgers. Charles Oscar Paullin.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

1814. I remember seeing Mrs. Madison there frequently at the corner window feeding and petting a fine macaw parrot. This bird's brilliant plumage was a great attraction to the youngsters of both sexes of that time, and at the regular feeding hours many were drawn to the corner to see the handsome bird and hear its mistress talk to it. She as well as her pet was very engaging. I can clearly recall her as she appeared in her inevitable turban. Mrs. Madison was a favorite under all circumstances, in all places and on all occasions. She was not beautiful, but there was a something in her manner that always interested and charmed.

Fitz-Greene Halleck, of ease and elegance in prose as in poetry, who made Marco Bozzaris immortal and in the doing himself,

One of the few, the immortal names that were not born to die,

had in his coterie of cultured friends the gentlemen who took a part in the rescue of the Washington portrait—Jacob Barker and Robert G. L. DePeyster. Barker was a banker and had his counting-room at 84 South street and in Wall street at the time Halleck was of his bookkeepers. Halleck and DePeyster were life-friends and exchanged letters of polished phrasing upon topics social and sometimes political and of the latter character the poet notwithstanding as he confessed had never himself voted politically but had socially twice, "once for an assistant alderman, and once for a ten-dollar bill, both of which proved counterfeit.

In the letter to his mother which follows the poet struck a practical note, true now as then, that is, the greatness of the republic's city will be greater in a multi-

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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plied measure when its citizens have the energy and enterprise to encourage commerce.

To Mrs. Israel Halleck, 1816:

In November, having some business in Philadelphia, and actuated by a desire to see (or rather to say that I had seen) some of the Southern cities, I travelled as far as Alexandria, in Virginia, stopping some days at Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, etc., on the way. \* \* \* Washington is a mere desert. Well might Anacreon Moore ridicule its "Goose Creek," its swamps and marshes. Since he visited it some slight improvement has been made, but the present generation and its children's children will rest quiet in their grave or sleep in 'dull cold marble' before it will present an appearance worthy of its illustrious founder. Its natural situation is, however, admirable. Its site is very commanding, and had it the aid of commerce, without which nothing can flourish (I might almost say exist) in this country, its choice as the capital of a great empire would have been highly judicious. I paused for some time on the field of Bladensburg, rendered memorable by the battle which decided the fate of Washington, and added one to the tears of indignation and regret which every American must drop upon that spot. Never was there a better place for defense marked out by the finger of Nature for a warrior's choice, and never was there a field more shamefully abandoned. The English fought like bloodhounds. They had to march every step of the way uphill, and, had had any thing like a decent resistance been made to their progress, the bloody victory of St. Sebastian's would have found its rival in historic annals. The roadside is dotted with the graves of their dead; over that of a colonel who fell in the battle, a small sprig of mullet had grown, as if Nature meant to mark it as distinct from the common dust of the forgotten brave. Caps, shreds of cloth, etc., and now and then an arm or a leg, scattered on the field, were still discernible when

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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I passed. The capitol and President's house were in ruins. They had commenced repairing them, but it must take many years to reinstate them in their former splendor. They were very fine buildings, the President's house certainly the finest in America. His Excellency was then in town. He was ill, and I did not see him. His brother-in-law, Mr. Cutts, with whom I was acquainted, offered to introduce me, but, as my stay was very short, I declined his offer. I saw Mrs. Madison at the theatre, where a number of gentlemen amateurs were murdering a play or two. She is a very handsome, dignified-looking personage, and I understand presides at her levee in a style not excelled by European courts. She has much suavity of manner and of the grace and demeanor of polished society than her husband. I also saw Mr. and Mrs. Gallatin, and sundry other "great folks," whose sole interest was derived from their temporary ascendancy in the concerns of our famous Republic.

An English traveller, Lieut. Francis Hall, 14th Light Dragoons has so described the local scene in his *Travels in Canada and The United States in 1816 and 1817* that the reader can see it in this distance of time and without eyes almost as clearly as Mrs. Madison actually did, day by day:

From the foot of the Capitol hill there runs a straight road, (intended to be a street,) planted with poplars for about two miles, to the President's house, a handsome stone mansion, forming a conspicuous object from the Capitol Hill: near it are the public offices, and some streets nearly filled up: about a half a mile further is a pleasant row of houses, in one of which the President at present resides: there are a few tolerable houses still further on the road to George Town, and this is nearly the sum total of the City for 1816. It used to be a joke against Washington, that next door neighbours must go through a wood to make their visits; but the jest and



MRS. JOHN P. VAN NESS  
By Charles B. King



## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

forest have vanished together: there is now scarcely a tree betwixt George Town and the Navy Yard, two miles beyond the Capitol, except the poplars I have mentioned, which may be considered as the *locum tenentes* of future houses. I doubt the policy of such thorough clearing; clumps of trees are preferable objects to vacant spaces, and the city in its present state, being commenced from the extremities instead of the centre, has a disjointed and naked appearance.

And the traveller who has written his narrative entertainingly without departing from veracity has this of the presidential procedure, socially:

The President, or rather his lady, holds a drawing-room weekly, during the sitting of Congress. He takes by the hand those who are presented to him; shaking hands being discovered in America to be more rational and manly than kissing them. For the rest, it is much as such things are every where, chatting, and tea, compliments and ices, a little music, (some scandal, I suppose, among the ladies,) and to bed.

Samuel Lorenzo Knapp says:

The president's house is a magnificent mansion.  
\* \* \* On the south eastern side of the wall there is a stone arch for a gateway; it looks, from the antiquity of the style and the colour of the material of which it is made, as if it had stood centuries defying the climate. Two large ancient weeping willows, one on each side of the arch, add much to its venerable appearance. These trees have not grown up since the date of the federal constitution. They are older than *the city's charter*. They were provincial seedlings, now national monuments. { It is said that an accomplished lady of the *Great House* in former days, when congratulated upon her elevation, remarked with a smile, "I don't know that there is much cause for congratulation; the President of

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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the United States generally comes in at the iron gate, and goes out at the *weeping willows*."

The jest is not definitely attributed to Mrs. Madison but John Quincy Adams said "The term of her husband's Presidency was tempestuous and turbulent" and she knew that the Presidential honor comes with thorns as the rose is not all color and fragrance.



## CHAPTER V

1817-1830

THE reign of Madison as President and of Mrs. Madison as First Lady was in a few days to be no more. Mr. Madison to William Eustis, March, 1817, writes:

Mrs. M. would gladly say what would equally express the feelings she retains for Mrs. Eustis, but she is obliged, by intense occupations in the packing and other arrangements, to refer to me the pleasure of doing it for her.\*

On March 4, Mr. Madison responded to the citizens of Washington, in a speech, short and stately.†

Mrs. Lee wrote to Mrs. Madison the letter. The writer is the same Mistress Lee to whom Dolly wrote of the introduction of Madison to be made by Burr:

Washington, March 4, 1817.

My Dear Friend,—On this day eight years ago, I wrote from the retirement of Sully to congratulate you on the joyful event that placed you in the highest station our country can bestow. I then enjoyed the proudest feelings—that my friend, the friend of my youth, who never had forsaken me, should be thus distinguished and so peculiarly fitted for it.

How much greater cause have I to congratulate you at this period, for having so filled it as to render yourself more enviable this day than your successor, as it is more difficult to deserve gratitude and thanks of the community than their congratulations. You have most decidedly deserved all of this. Being deprived, by the sickness of my child, from joining the multitude to-day in

\**Letters and Other Writings of James Madison.*

†*Ibid.*

paying my respects where they are due, I feel the sweetest consolation in devoting myself to you. My heart clings to you, my beloved friend, and has done so for the last fortnight, with a selfishness that produces the keenest feelings of regret, and though my domestic habits, more than inclination, have prevented my taking advantage of your kind invitations to be more with you, yet I felt a security and pleasure in being so near you, and a confidence in your affection, that constituted my chief pride as a citizen, I assure you. But the period has at length arrived when we must again part. You will retire from the tumult and fatigue of public life to your favorite retreat in Orange County, and will carry with you principles and manners not to be put off with the robe of state, having been drawn from maternal breasts, and nurtured from the example of those dear, pious parents, to whom you ever resigned yourself with such filial obedience and devotion as to bring their blessings on your head. Talents such as yours were never intended to remain inactive; on retiring from public life, you will form a more fortunate arrangement of your time, be able to display them in the more noble and interesting walks of life. You will cherish them, my dear friend, in a more native soil; they will constitute the chief felicity of your dear, venerated husband, and descend in full perfection to your son. I remember at this moment, in my last conversation with my venerable uncle, your father's friend, he said of you, "She will hold out to the end; she was a dutiful daughter, and never turned her back on an old friend, and was charitable to the poor." Will you do me the favor, dear Dolly,—for it is near my heart that you should,—take advantage of some leisure moment to say something for me to your husband. In the fullness of my gratitude I can express nothing, but shall ever hold in remembrance the highly valued friendship and confidence he has shown my husband. I rejoice to hear that you do not leave the city very soon, and may hope to enjoy your society, though I presume your engagements are most numerous just now. I must ask your pardon for thrusting such an epistle upon you, but it relieves my heart, and will not,

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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I trust, wound yours; it demands no other acknowledgment, at present, than a cordial reception. It grows dark, and I want you to have this on this momentous evening.

Believe me most truly yours,

Eliza Lee.

Mr. Johnson was an Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court.

Washington, 1817.

I am this moment on the eve of leaving Washington, and shall leave it without a parting interview with one whom I must be indulged in the liberty of comprising among the most respected and most cherished of my friends. But you, madam, cannot mistake the feelings which dictate to me this mode of making you an humble tender of a most affectionate adieu.

You are now about to enter upon the enjoyment of the most enviable state which can fall to the lot of mankind—to carry with you to your retirement the blessings of all who ever knew you. Think not, madam, that I address to you the language of flattery. It is what no one but yourself would hesitate at conceding. And be assured that all who have ever enjoyed the honor of your acquaintance, will long remember that polite condescension which never failed to encourage the diffident, that suavity of manner which tempted the morose or thoughtful to be cheerful, or that benevolence of aspect which suffered no one to turn from you without an emotion of gratitude.

Permit, madam, one who has shared his due proportion of your attentions to make you a sincere tender of the most heartfelt gratitude and respect, and wish that you may long enjoy every blessing that Heaven dispenses to the meritorious.

Do me the favor to tender to Mr. Madison also a respectful adieu, and a cordial and sincerely friendly one to your son.

Very respectfully,

William Johnson, Jr.\*

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\**Dolly Madison*. Maud Wilder Goodwin.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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The Madisons retired to Montpellier. Not strictly for retirement. Mr. Madison was constantly employed in study and correspondence. Mrs. Madison had the care of the garden, the domestic direction and the management of the plantation. She read to her husband. She attended his mother. At times she herself was indisposed and held to her bed, yet this did not exempt her from the strain of supervision. The hordes of guests came to Montpellier—the great indeed and those feeling great, the welcome and those to be made welcome.

The overtax of hospitality was much the same at Jefferson's. The steward of Monticello, Captain Bacon, says of the guests:

They travelled in their own carriages and came in gangs, the whole family with carriage and riding horses and servants, sometimes three or four such gangs at a time. We had thirty-six stalls for horses, and only used about ten of them for the stock we kept there. Very often all of the rest were full and I had to send horses off to another place. I have often sent a wagon-load of hay up to the stable, and the next morning there would not be enough left to make a bird's nest. I have killed a fine beef and it would be eaten in a day or two.\*

Between the families, Jefferson and Madison, was closest intimacy. Monticello and Montpellier were about thirty miles apart—a day's journey.

Washington, June 29-1817-

My beloved friend

I did not intend your Sister should have left the city without a letter from me acknowledging the receipt of those precious testimonies of your Friendship, and confidence, lately finished by Wood.—At no other period of our lives could they have been so acceptable.

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\**Dolly Madison*. Maud Wilder Goodwin.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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The likeness of your dear Husband almost breaths and exprefses much of the serenity of his feelings at the moment it was taken. in short. it is, *himself*, and most valuable to us.—

Your likenefs my dear friend is not so satisfactory to *me*. to a common observer, it is sufficient, and instantly recognized.—But I lament the absence of that exprefion of your eye, which speaks *from*, and *to*, the Heart—the want of which robs your countenance of its richest treasure. And tho, whilst memory lasts, I shall always be able to supply, to myself, the deficiency, yet I regret I cannot paint it to my children. Wood however, has promised to try his skill again when we meet in Washington. \* \* \*

Adieu God bless you all

Affey

Eliza Lee

The portraits of Mr. and Mrs. Madison by Wood are in the possession of Lee connections, the Davidges. It is not the portrait of Mrs. Madison by Wood made familiar by reproductions in engravings.

Oliver Oldschool (Nathan Sargent) in *The Port Folio*.  
April, 1818:

It is our privilege to offer a passing testimony to distinguished excellence; but on the present occasion we do not feel authorized to enter into the usual details of biography. At a time when the restless spirit of party covered every path with thorns, this lady held the branch of conciliation and she well deserves a place among those who endeavour to promote peace and good will. In the exalted station from which she recently descended, she never neglected her early friends, but extended to all who approached her, those attentions which add dignity to the great and inspire the humble with confidences. A politician of the present day, exclaimed, on a memorable occasion, "We are all federalists, we are all republicans." In her intercourse with society, Mrs. Madison reduced this liberal sentiment to practice; her circle was at once

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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the model of polished life and the dwelling of cheerfulness. We had the pleasure of seeing her some years ago, on the occasion of a splendid fête, which was given by his excellency M. Daschkoff, the minister from Russia, in honor of the natal day of his sovereign. We remarked the ease with which she glided into the stream of conversation and accommodated herself of its endless variety. In the art of conversation she is said to be distinguished, and it became evident in the course of the evening, that the gladness which played in the countenances of those whom she approached, was inspired by something more than mere respect. \* \* \*

We have not forgotten how admirably the air of authority was softened by the smile of gayety: and it is pleasing to recall a certain expression that must have been created by the happiest of all dispositions—*a wish to please, and a willingness to be pleased*. This, indeed, is to be truly good and really great. Like a summer's sun she rose in our political horizon, gloriously, and she sunk, benignly.

March 30<sup>th</sup> 1819

My belov<sup>d</sup> friend,

\* \* \* Do you know? or do not know my belov<sup>d</sup> Dolly that your absence from this city is more and more lamented. That the urbanity, benevolence, and cheerfulness that was difused through the circles over which *you* presided will be long sought for *in vain*—But *you* are happier and Oh! that I could witness that superior happiness you enjoy in bestowing those talents and virtues on the dear objects that alone claim them—Truly did I enjoy the picture painted by the pen of Mrs Miller in a letter a few days since, as original as herself she says “I spent 2 days with Mr and Mrs Madison—they enquired kindly after you. Her soul is as big as ever and her body has not decreased. Mr M. is the picture of happiness they look like Adam and eve in Paradise— \* \* \*

E. Lee

Mrs. Madison was the first lady of the land and Madame de Neuville was the first lady of the other lands. In



JOHN PETER VAN NESS

By Gilbert Stuart



## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

the world of society in the Capital City, Mrs. Madison was the most popular of our own women, and Madame de Neuville was the most popular of the representative women of the foreign lands.

THE honor of M<sup>RS</sup> S. H. Smith's company is requested at a BALL, to be given in compliment to his Excellency Mr. HYDE DE NEUVILLE and his LADY, on Tuesday evening, the 18th inst. in the Mayor's Buildings, adjoining the Franklin Hotel.

### Managers.

Benj. G. Orr,	John Tayloe,
D. Carroll, of Dud'n,	Alexander Kerr,
John Rodgers,	W. W. Seaton,
Henry Huntt,	James Eakin,
David M. Forrest,	French Forrest.

Washington City, May 8, 1819.

Mrs. Seaton was a fair reporter :

May, 1819.

The public ball was a great success, Monsieur de Neuville making a very impressive little speech of thanks to the citizens. William, with five other married men, officiated as master of ceremonies, and I was pleased that he had an opportunity of testifying respect for the worthy old couple, as we have spent many agreeable hours in their hospitable house. They are uncertain if their master\* will send them here again, but profess a desire to represent their nation at this republican capital rather than at any of the splendid courts of Europe, not excepting St. Petersburg, considered by the far the most magnificent in the world. They came, the morning they started, to see us, bringing remembrances of the children. The French, more than any other people, study these graceful attentions, slight in themselves, but the sure avenue to a mother's heart. †

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\**William Winston Seaton. A Biographical Sketch.*

†*Ibid.*

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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Mr. Madison to Mr. Coles:

Montpellier, September 3, 1819.

\* . \* \*

We congratulate you much on the various successes of your western career, and the first thing that strikes us is the rapidity of your promotions. Bounding over the preliminary sailorship, the first step on the deck of your bark—pardon me, of the noble structure the Ark—makes you a pilot; the name of pilot is scarcely pronounced before you are a captain; and in less than a twinkling of an eye the captain starts up a commodore. On the land a scene opens out before us in which you, too, figure. We see you at once a ploughman, a rail-splitter, a fence-builder, a corn-planter, and a hay-maker. To all these rural functions, which leave but a single defect in your title of husband—(man), you add the facilities of a town life. And to cap the whole you enjoy the official dignity of "Register of Land Office" in the important Territory of Illinois.

\* \* \* Mrs. Madison as well as myself is much gratified by your promise to devote the next winter to your native haunts. We sincerely hope your arrangements will give us an ample share of your time. We will then take the case of your bachelorship into serious and full consideration. Mrs. Madison is well disposed to give all her aid in getting that old thorn out of your side, and putting a young rib in its place. She very justly remarks, however, that with your own exertions hers will not be wanted, and without them, not deserved.

Accept our joint wishes for your health and every other happiness.

James Madison.\*

To Governor Coles, Illinois.

Montpellier, September 5, 1819.

I am afraid, dear cousin, that while you and I deliberate who to choose for a wife, we shall lose some of the

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\**Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison.*

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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finest girls now grown. For instance, it is reported that Ellen Randolph is to be married to General Cooke, and Virginia to William Burwell. Our niece Eliza was married to Mr. Willis in May, and her sister is to be bound to her brother on the 16th of this month; still I have hopes for you, that your future one may become manifest to reward your merits and long search.

We have been expecting a visit from my beloved, Sally, until within the last few days, when I was informed she had gone to the Virginia Springs. Payne still says he will write to you. I suspect he begins to feel with you that a good wife would add to his happiness. I am sadly disappointed at not having my dear Lucy with me next winter; the Judge has persuaded her to remain in Frankfort until they can remove altogether, which the change in the judiciary will soon authorize him to do. \* \* \* I must not expect to amuse you, only in truth can assure you of our affectionate interest and friendship, hoping to see you soon amongst us.

Dolly P. Madison.\*

The correspondence discloses that for Miss Phoebe, Mrs. Madison had a strong affection; and that Mrs. Madison had an anticipation of a marriage which would make Miss Phoebe a near relative. Parental suggestion, although mildly or indirectly given, in such matters arouses sometimes a spirit of contrariness. At any rate, Mr. Payne parried and tarried until the affair drifted into indifference.

Bolton Farm March 22 1820—

My dear Mrs Madison

\* \* \* When I review the incidents in my life which will appear to me among the most important in its varied character, I always trace your hand in their origin; & shall always ascribe to it an influence which shall be gratefully

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\**Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison.*

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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acknowledged as to my good & guardian Genius. When life was new & gaiety & fashion & perhaps folly, were my favorite pursuits you guided my steps thro' the giddy dance, at a time too, when the dignity & brilliancy of your station, while they confer'd favor on every object of its selection, might well have divided & distracted your choice. To the delicacy of your attention then, & since, I have never been insensible, & will never permit myself to think that I am not among the first who ought to be selected to smooth the pillow of sickness when it may assail you, or to assist you in every office of affection.

\* \* \*

Your ever faithful & most affeate friend,  
P. P. Morris

Montpellier, July 5, 1820.

I have just received yours, dearest Anna, and rejoice that you are well and have your friends about you. Yesterday we had ninety persons to dine with us at one table,—put up on the lawn, under a thick arbor. The dinner was profuse and good, and the company very orderly. Many of them were old acquaintance of yours, and among them the two Barbours. We had no ladies except mother Madison, and Nelly Willis; the day was cool and pleasant; half a dozen only stayed all night with us, and they are now about to depart. Colonel Monroe's letter this morning announces the advent of the French Minister, and we shall expect him this evening, or perhaps sooner. I am less worried here with an hundred visitors than with twenty-five in Washington,—this summer especially. I wish, dearest, you had just a country home as this. I truly believe it is the happiest and most true life, and would be so good for you and the dear children.

Always your devoted sister,  
Dolly P. Madison.\*

Mrs. Madison was intensely human. The experiences, the hopes, all that is common to the genus, that is good,

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\**Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison.*

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

was hers. And who of the humans who has a rural retreat and is selfish but gloats that the possession is *his* and if unselfish but grieves that others are denied such joys as are his. Mrs. Madison, unselfish, unusually unselfish, grieves that her sister does not have the happiest and truest life in a country home like hers.

His hospitable gate,  
Unbarr'd to all, invites a numerous train  
Of daily guests.

Jefferson at Monticello and Monroe at Oak Hill, the former's estate now close to the enclosure of the University of Virginia and the latter's within, were actually eaten out of house and home. These statesmen who could frame a declaration to create a nation or formulate a doctrine to preserve a nation had not sufficient stamina to stand against the selfish crowds or had not sufficient sense to be aware that if more is paid out than comes in, in the course of time, is bankruptcy. The letter of Mrs. Madison to her sister, immediately before quoted, indicates that at Montpelier were the same large ideas of hospitality as at Monticello and Oak Hill.

To Mrs. Madison:

Dr Madam

Phoebe had delayed so long a reply to your most wellcome letter of April in the daily expectation of seeing Mr Todd, that she was about concluding him a false knight, and was actually preparing a denunciation of him to you, when he suddenly appeared at Bolton to speak for himself, which he has done so amiably and satisfactorily that he has silenced all censure, and made the most favorable impressions on our hearts, indeed my excellent friend I cant convey to you the pleasure his company

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afforded to us all. \* \* \* Phoebe is preparing for a ride with him to Bristol, and has made me her Secy.  
\* \* \*

Yr most devoted Friend

A. Morris.

Bolton, near Bristol,  
Penna.

July. 14 1820.

Sunday, July 15<sup>th</sup> (1820)

My dearest Mrs Madison,

I have delayed answering your most welcome letter, because it led me to expect the pleasure of seeing your Son, who did not arrive until last Wednesday. I dare say he has been sufficiently wearied with my questions, for I was so glad to see him and to know every thing about you, how you looked, what you did, what you put on, &c &c all the minute details which I thought my long absence would make reasonable. however I think I have extracted this satisfaction from him, that you are still my own Mrs Madison, blooming, gay, and affectionate as ever. My dear, Father is in very good health, & tolerable spirits, although I think he looks considerably older than when you saw him. It is a long time since I have seen him so much gratified as by the visit of Mr Todd who he says he admires for his own sake & loves for yours—Our residence is retired enough to exclude much gaiety, but not to deprive us of reasonable gratifications, & the sweet prattle of our little family, is more enlivening than any entertainment you can imagine. They are, (*in our eyes, I mean*) beautiful as cherubs and full of intelligence. Major Nourse is now stationed at Bristol, which is an additional source of pleasure to us, as Louisa and I divide much of our time between our dear Rebecca, & our own home. He endeavored without success to, induce Payne to remain for a longer time among us & carried him to Bristol to vary the scene where Major Nourse wished him to continue for a few days, but all our united attractions failed after two short days & he proceeded on his

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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journey. The tranquil uniformity of our lives leaves but little to enliven or narrate in a letter, though it is a situation exempt from much care, and if properly considered a happier one than the more turbulent varieties of the gay world can offer—for my own part, one of the liveliest sensations of my heart which is now ungratified is that I do not see you for

Oft in the stilly night  
When slumber's chain has bound me  
Fond mem'ry brings the light  
Of other days around me.

\* \* \*

—believe me, your ever affectionate  
Phoebe P. Morris.

—I was glad to rece<sup>e</sup> the few lines from you at Baltimore. my dearest Payne and can have no doubt that you have good reasons for remaining there—I am sorry & disappointed at my letters not reaching your hands—I wrote you at W. at Phil<sup>a</sup> & at Baltimore, those for the last place were enclosed to your aunt C. who, I desired would keep the last one until she saw you. It was short, & in my great alarm it contained a request that you w<sup>d</sup> come to me as I had a wish to travel a distance from home on acct of the Typhus fever—but that fear has been dissipated for the present by children in the house geting well & the negros also. I trust therefore that you will not leave your businefs unfinished on my account tho I cannot exprefs my anxiety to see you. \* \* \*

Adieu my son—may Heaven bless thee! Your papa sends his love to you

24th May. 21

Payne Todd

Washington

care of

M<sup>rs</sup> Cutts

Montpellier, April 9, 1823.

I am impatient to hear from you, my dearest Payne, and had I known where to direct I should have written

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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you before this: not that there is anything particular to communicate, but for the pleasure of repeating how much I love you, and to hear of your happiness.

Your father received the journal of "Las Casas," with your name in it, from Philadelphia, which is an indication that you are there, and I write accordingly. We returned yesterday from Monticello, after passing three days with Mr. Jefferson and one with Judge Nelson.

\* \* \* Adieu, my dear boy. Your father joins me in affectionate wishes for you.

Your  
Mother\*

Mrs. Madison was not "exempt from public haunt" in her rural retreat yet less for a few years is recorded of her.

The source of tiredness that affected Mrs. Madison has affected the countless many since.

We see & hear so much of the Pre<sup>l</sup> candidates that I am as tired of them as I was of Monroes Tour

Adieu my dearest son

Allways your affecte

M

April 12 '23

Monroe's tour began in June and ended in September (1817.) Monroe, after the inaugural ceremonies, returned to his residence, 2017 I Street, and held a reception.

The next letter ends the letters of Miss Phoebe. Phoebe Pemberton Morris in 1825 died at Bolton Farm. She was sweet and sympathetic.

Washington January 19, 1824.

My dearest Mrs. Madison,—I have been in Washington about a fortnight, where every body reminds me of

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\**Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison.*



ROSEDALE, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA



## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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you; but alas! sometimes painfully, for so many scenes of joy and sorrow have passed since the happy period of my early youth, which was rendered more joyous by your protecting care. We are very comfortably established together at the "six buildings." I often think of you and my dear Mr. Madison alone at Montpelier, for you have told me that there is not much visiting in winter. I know all your motions and ways so well, that at any hour of the day I can represent to myself what you are doing. What do you think of the probability of having the Marquis de Lafayette for a visit, for surely Montpelier will be the first place to fly to, when he comes to the United States. \* \* \*

\* \* \* We all attended Mrs. Adams's reception on the 8th, and it was really a very brilliant party, and admirably well arranged. The ladies climbed the chairs and benches to see General Jackson, and Mrs. Adams very gracefully took his arm, and walked through the apartments with him, which gratified the general curiosity.

\* \* \* Adieu, my dearest and best friend; believe me, as ever,

Your own affectionate

Phoebe Morris.\*

Decr 2<sup>d</sup> 1824—

I have rec<sup>d</sup> yours my dearest Payne of the 23<sup>d</sup> & 24<sup>th</sup> Nov<sup>r</sup> & was impatient to answer them yesterday (the day of their reaching me) but owing to the winter establishment for the male, no post leaves this until tomorrow morn<sup>g</sup>—Mr Clay with 2 members of Congress left us yesterday after pass<sup>g</sup> 2 days—Mr C inquired affectionately after you as does all your old acquaintance whom I see—but my dear son it seems to be the wonder of them all that you sh<sup>d</sup> stay so long from us—& now I am ashamed to tell when asked how long my only child has been absent from the home of his mother!—your Papa

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\**Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison.*

& myself entreat you to come to us—to arrange your business with those concern'd to return to them when necessary & let us see you here as soon as possible with your interest—convenience. Your Papa thinks as I do that it would be best for your reputation & happiness as well as ours that you sh<sup>d</sup> have the appearance of consulting your parents on subjects of deep acct. to you & that you sh<sup>d</sup> find it so in *returning* to Phil<sup>a</sup> when you appointed, to chose to do so I have said in my late letters as well as this all that *I thought sufficient* to influence you—I must now put my trust in God alone! If the young lady you have followed so long, has not yet been won, I fear she declines the chance Son to favor your happiness here after tho others might found who would. I enclose you 30\$ instead of 20 which you mentioned, & tho I am sure—'tis insufficient for the journey, I am unable to add to the sum today—I recently p<sup>d</sup> Holoway \$200 on your note, with interest for two years—The other small debts in the quarter's settled long ago with funds of yours in my hands. I hope you will write me the moment you get this that I may know certainly your determinations & make up my own. I can add no news that is likely to interest you except that poor Judge Todd is likely to die & that Ellen Randolph is to be married to Mr. Cooledge “— — — occurrence” you allude to, I hope is propitious (if it were for your good we might rejoice in your immediate union provided it brought you speedily to our arms who love with inexpressible tenderness and constancy,

—Your own Mother\*

Mr. Webster to Mr. Mason:

Washington, December 29, 1824.

\* \* \* I have been home from Virginia a week.  
\* \* \* We were two days at Mr. Madison's. He was very agreeable, and treated us with much hospitality.

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\**Our Early Presidents, Their Wives and Children.* Harriet Taylor Upton.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

\* \* \* Mrs. Madison is in perfect health, and remembers all her Washington acquaintance.

Maj. Thomas L. McKenney, April 7, 1825, writes to Mrs. Madison that he occasionally sees her son, Mr. Todd, and that he is well.

### MONTPELLIER

How fair beneath Virginian skies  
Montpellier strikes the travellers' eyes,  
Emerging from its forest bower  
Like feudal chieftain's lonely tower,—  
With parks, and lawns, and gardens drest  
In peaceful verdure proudly blest:—  
—What blended charms arrest the sight!  
The distant mountains misty height—  
The circling prospects' cultur'd bound,  
The echoing temple's attic round,—  
The locust copse, where warblers throng  
And pour to heaven the festive song,  
The flowers in bright profusion seen,  
The luscious fig's luxuriant green,—  
The clasping vines, whose clusters fair  
Seem as of genial France the care,—  
The bright-eyed pheasant,—beauteous guest,—  
The eastern bird, with gorgeous vest,—  
The snowy jefsamine that towers  
Soft curtain of the nightly bowers,—  
While China's pride, to favoring rays  
Its purple pensile spikes displays;—  
The halls, whose varied stores impart  
The classic pencil's magic art,—  
The chisel's life-bestowing power,—  
The lore that cheats the studious hour,—  
And music's strains, which vainly vie  
With the glad spirit's melody.—  
Ah! here that soul benignant reigns,  
Which tunes to joy these blest domains,—

Which not in splendid deeds alone  
Of hospitality is shewn,—  
But o'er the lone, domestic scene  
Still beams inspiring and serene,  
And deigns to cheer with smile of grace  
The happy menial's ebon face.—  
—Here Wisdom rests in sylvan shade  
Which once an empire's counsels sway'd,  
And Goodness,—whose persuasive art  
So justly won that empire's heart,—  
And Piety,—with hoary hair,  
Which rising from this Eden fair  
Beholds, by mortal step untrod,  
A brighter Eden with its God.—  
—Montpellier! there, thy name have set  
A gem in Memory's coronet,  
Whose lustre ruthless time shall spare  
Till from her brow that crown he tear,—  
Till from her page that trace he rend  
Which of a stranger made a friend.—

L. H. Sigourney.

Norwich, Connecticut  
August 26<sup>th</sup> 1825.

John Henri Isaac Browere made life masks of the Madisons.

Mr. Madison made a certificate:

Per request of Mr. Browere, busts of myself and of my wife, regarded as exact likenesses, have been executed by him in plaister, being casts made from the moulds formed on our persons, of which this certificate is given under my hand at Montpellier, 19, October, 1825.

James Madison.

Charles Henry Hart in pictures reproduced the plaster counterparts and made this comment:

The bust of Madison is very fine in character and expression, but that of Mrs. Madison is of particular

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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interest, as being the only woman's face handed down to us by Browere. Her beauty has been heralded by more than one voice and one pen, but not one of the many portraits that we have of her, from that painted by Gilbert Stuart, aged about thirty, to the one drawn by Eastman Johnson, shortly before her death, sustains the verbal verdict of her admirers; and now the life mask by Browere would seem to settle the question of her beauty in the negative.

And the Broweres preserved, by permission, the name, Dolly Madison. The Miss was born July 3, 1826.

Madison to Lafayette, August 21, 1824:

I this instant learn, my dear friend, that you have safely reached the shores where you will be hailed by every voice of a free people. That of no one, as you will believe, springs more from the heart than mine. May I not hope that the course of your movements will give me an opportunity of proving it, by the warmth of my embrace on my own threshold. Make me happy by a line to that effect when you can snatch a moment for a single one from the eager gratulations pouring in upon you.\*

General Lafayette from Richmond, Virginia, arrived at Monticello, Thursday, November 4th. At the reposeful seat of his illustrious friend he was a week. Then, as arranged, he passed on to Montpelier, where he received the limit of sincere hospitality. At home he was at Montpelier and with Mrs. Madison he visited the cabins of the negroes. Granny Milly, one hundred and four years of age, lived with her daughters and granddaughters, the youngest seventy years of age, all retired from the labors of the plantation. These the

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\**Writings of James Madison.* Gaillard Hunt.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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Marquis visited and they got friendly and he would return with the token of friendship, a fresh egg or a bright flower. He was forced to go by his engagements and he was at Washington, the 23d of that month. The pleasure the noble Frenchman received, he repaid in the same currency and he left with the hosts, memories of him too pleasant to be forgotten.\*

The foreign accent that disclosed the distinguished foreigner to be French was not at all unfamiliar at Montpellier. The Madisons had a French gardener, M. Beazée, and he had Madame Beazée. The Madame protected her complexion with a mighty shade which Mrs. Madison styled the "Beazée bonnet." The Beazées, like the French everywhere, never forgot the superior beauty of the language of France with all its other incomparable beauties; and with native-land pride and with goodness and generosity taught the more enlightened slaves on the plantation *la langue Français* and they to a Parisian had a jargon as queer as the dialect of a Tartarin and his neighbors in the south of his country.†

To Mrs. Andrew Stevenson:

Montpellier, 1826.

I have received by post just now, my ever dear cousin, your welcome letter, and cannot express my anxiety to embrace you once more; but a spell rests upon me, and withholds me from those I love most in this world; not

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\**Memoirs of the Marquis De La Fayette, Major-General in the Revolutionary Army of the United States of America together with his Tour through the United States.* Frederick Butler.

*Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison.*

†*Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison.*

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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a mile can I go from home; and in no way can I account for it, but that my husband is fixed here, and hates to have me leave him. This is the third winter in which he has been engaged in the arrangement of papers, and the business seems to accumulate as he proceeds, so that it might outlast my patience, and yet I cannot press him to forsake a duty so important, or find it in my heart to leave him during its fulfillment. We very often speak of you, and the many causes of our admiration for you, concluding, by assuring one another, that if we could leave home this winter, it should be only to visit you and Mr. Stevenson.\* \* \* \*

Mrs. Madison at all times had with her a relative. Of the second generation, her nieces were with her not as visitors, but as daughters. Especially was her affection for her sister Anna's children. The correspondence with Mary and Dolly was more extensive than with their brothers or it is more accessible. At the date of the next letter Dolly was fifteen years of age.

Mrs. Madison had fear, she could not repress, that her nephew, Walter, would be lost at sea. The fear with which she was assailed was to her a foretelling of fate. There was a last voyage; he went to sea and he never came back.

To Dolly Payne Madison Cutts:

Montpellier, July 30, 1826.

Your letter, my dearest niece, with the one before it, came quite safely, for which I return many thanks and kisses. I rejoice, too, dear Dolly, to see how well you write and express yourself, and am as proud of all your acquirements as if you were my own daughter. I trust you will yet be with me this summer, when I shall see your improvement in person also, and enjoy the sweet

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\*Portrait of Mrs. Stevenson by G. P. A. Healy reproduced in *Social Life in the Early Republic*.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

assurance of your affection. Mary Lee and her husband have been indisposed, but are better. They say often they hope you will come with your dear mother, as do all your relatives and friends in this quarter. The old lady, —even the negroes, young and old, want to see you, dear.

We had old Mr. Patterson and his son Edward from Baltimore to stay with us several days, and they tell me that Madame Bonaparte is still in France, and her son gone to Rome to visit his father. Mr. Monroe left us yesterday, disappointed in his views of raising money from his land. Mr. B. continued on his way to the Springs, and I was disappointed at not sending a packet to you, inclosing the flounce which I wanted you to wear, worked by me long ago.

I received by the last post a letter from your cousin Payne, at New York; he writes in fine health and spirits, and says he will be detained only a few weeks longer in that city. I sincerely hope to see him soon, though it is impossible for me to prefer Virginia to the North. If I were in Washington with you I know I could not conform to the formal rules of visiting they now have, but would disgrace myself by rushing about among my friends at all hours. Here I find it most agreeable to stay at home, everything around me is so beautiful. Our garden promises grapes and figs in abundance, but I shall not enjoy them unless your mamma comes, and brings you to help us with them; tell the boys they must come too. Alas! poor Walter, away at sea! I can scarcely trust myself to think of him,—his image fills my eyes with tears.

Adieu, and believe me always your tender mother and aunt.

Dolly P. Madison.

P.S. We are very old-fashioned here. Can you send me a paper pattern of the present sleeve, and describe the width of dress and waist; also how turbans are pinned up, bonnets worn, as well as how to behave in the fashion?\*

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\**Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison.*



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## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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W. Thornton's respectful compliments to Captain Basil Hall & would immediately have waited on him to pay his respects to wish him the compts of the season & to congratulate him on his safe arrival at the metropolis of the U. States where he will meet with most cordial & universal welcome but W. T. is at present confined by sicknefs.—He invites Capt Hall to hear the Oration this day at two o'clock at the Capitol, by Mr. Southard Secy of the Navy Dept a Member of the Columbian Institute; and he also requests the honor of the company of Captain Hall to dine with the Institute this Day at half past 4 o'clock at Gadsby's Hotel.—W. Thornton had the honor of being acquainted with the late Lord Selkirk, & Mr. Halket.—He was also a student in the same class with Sir James Hall when at Edinburgh.—

City of Wash<sup>n</sup> 31<sup>st</sup> Dec<sup>r</sup> 1827—

Captain Basil Hall's *Travels in North America, in the years 1827 and 1828* appeared in print 1829. It is not always pleasant to see ourselves as others see us. Captain Hall saw what was American through the usual English vision. His courteous treatment at Washington could not swerve his candid description of it:

We went from Baltimore to Washington, on the 29th of December, 1827. There was still daylight enough, when we arrived, to show this singular capital, which is so much scattered that scarcely any of the ordinary appearances of a city strike the eye. Here and there ranges of buildings are starting up, but by far the greater number of the houses are detached from one another. The streets, where streets are, have been made so unusually wide, that the connexion is quite loose; and the whole affair, to use the quaint simile of a friend at Washington, looks as if some giant had scattered a box of his child's toys at random on the ground.

That Madame Bonaparte did not have a spark of patriotic pride and that she could be piqued at a slur upon

her own people at home is apparent from the retort to the superior and supercilious Lord Dundas at a dinner in London. To her affirmative answer to—had she read Captain Basil Hall's work on America?—the lord supplemented the inquiry "And did you observe that he called all Americans vulgarians?" And after a pause to arrest attention came: "Yes, and I was not surprised. Were the Americans descendants of the Indians and Esquimaux I should have been; but being the direct descendants of the English, nothing is more natural than that they should be vulgarians."

In the dress of fiction, Mrs. Smith has displayed fact—Mrs. Madison's tact in the line of friendliness—in her admirable novel, *What is Gentility*.\* The daughter seeks gentility through society recognition, ignoring the graces of mind and manner—and this is an episode in the seeking:

Alas it was too true!—The booby of a servant had not shown her where to go, but stood, holding the street door open, and gazing in admiration on the President's lady, who, perceiving an open door before her, had entered. Poor Mrs. McCarty! Had she seen a ghost enter, she could not have been more frightened. She jumped up, and trying to escape unseen, stumbled over the rocker of her *eternal* rocking chair, as Catharine called it. Down she fell, prostrate before the President's lady—away flew the pipe, scattering its sparks and ashes.—And how long good Mrs. McCarty might have lain there, it would be hard to say, since, to rise, without help,

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\*The writer is indebted to Mrs. Kate Kearney Henry for the use of the book.

In the copy of *Forty Years of Washington Society* belonging to the Public Library (District of Columbia) is pencilled this footnote: "She drove around Washington in an old carriage of disreputable appearance and one day a wag tacked on it a card bearing the legend: 'This is gentility.'"

was more than she could do. But long she did not lay—for Mrs. M-d-n, with a politeness flowing from the warmth and benevolence of her nature, stooped, and most kindly assisted Mrs. McCarty to rise and reseat herself—she even picked up the pipe, but instead of offering it to the distressed old lady, whose embarrassment she perceived, she laid it without observation on the table, and then in a tone of voice full of benignity, inquired whether she was hurt, and whether she should ring for any assistance? At the sound of so sweet a voice, Mrs. McCarty ventured to look in the face of the speaker, where she was almost afraid she should see the smile of derision. Far from it—the smile was as sweet as the voice; and there was something so good, so encouraging in the manner that after two or three hard drawn breaths, Mrs. McCarty was able to reply:

“I hope you will excuse me Ma’am,” said she, “I am growing old and clumsy.”

“We must all grow old,” replied Mrs. M-d-n; “and I think it quite becoming to grow fat as we grow old.”

“Now do you *rately* Ma’am? Well, if I don’t tell our Kitty that, for she is always saying how vulgar it is to be short and fat.”

“Mrs. Washington, in her old age, was about your size, I believe, that is, if I remember aright;” said the benevolent Mrs. M-d-n.

“Now is that possible! Well I’ll be sure to tell my *dater* that too. What! *Jineral* Washington’s lady, I suppose you mean, Ma’am?”

“Yes, our good and great Washington.”

“Well now, that’s comfortable tidings. When I tell our Kitty, she can’t after that say it is vulgar to be fat and short. And can you tell me, Ma’am, whether our dear old President’s lady ever smoked? For that is another thing my *dater* is always twitting me about.”

“I never heard that she did,” replied Mrs. M-d-n, scarcely able to suppress a smile; “but it is a very common custom, I am told, among the old ladies in Virginia, and the other tobacco states; and indeed, I have heard lately,

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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that among the young ladies in Baltimore, it is quite the fashion to smoke cigars."

"Well now, you can't think, Ma'am, what heart's content you have given me—I'll be sure, Ma'am, to tell our Kitty all you have said."

Here a pause ensued, which Mrs. M-d-n however filled up by taking her snuff box from her reticule, and offering it to Mrs. McCarty, who, though she never took snuff, could not refuse such an honor, and failed not to admire the elegant gold box, which she said was *raal raal genteel*.

Mrs. Smith's picture pleased the former French minister's wife:

Paris, January 26, 1829.

\* \* \* But, my friend, I wished to speak to you of the pleasure I derived from your pretty story about "What is real gentility." It is charming. It is a very faithful depiction of the character of Mr. and Mrs. Madison. It seemed to me that I saw her. The visit of Mrs. Madison to the good mother who falls and breaks her pipe, is a picture made from nature. \* \* \*

A. Emilie Pichon.\*

Louis André Pichon was the French representative; 1801—'5. M. and Mme. Pichon were a delightful couple; happy themselves, they made their happiness contagious. Amusing anecdotes of them are sprinkled through the early pages.†

Doctor Thornton died March 28, 1828.

The acceptance of his design for the Capitol caused him to locate in the capital city. The Doctor's attainments were remarkable in their scope. His career in

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\**Forty Years of Washington Society*. Margaret Bayard Smith.

†"I do not think you could have selected a minister more beloved by our country, nor more attached to his own." Dr. Thornton to C. F. Volney, July 23, 1804.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

diversity is no less remarkable. Mrs. Thornton in her notes for his biography has: "philosophy, politics, Finance, astronomy, medicine, Botany, Poetry, painting, religion, agriculture, in short, all subjects by turns occupied his active mind."

Tudor Place is an example of his architecture and others are elsewhere mentioned in this work.

The Doctor was an artist with the pencil and the brush. He limned the features of Washington, of Jefferson, and of his friend, the Countess Beauharnais,—a friendship of his Parisian life—and likewise did he of Mrs. Thornton and himself; and his art included flowers and the beautiful inanimate.

He was a poet. Perhaps his poetry might not have alone rewarded him with celebrity but the brilliant John Randolph of Roanoke matched with the doctor's rhyme, two pages of his prose.

His rhyming repartee was sometimes pleasing—for General Washington in a game of billiards stopped his play to laugh at a poetic shot. The Doctor asked the General how far a cannon\* would carry, for on the heights of Dover is a very long cannon called Queen Anne's Pocket Pistol, inscribed

Charge me well and keep me clean,  
I'll carry o'er to Calais Green.

As it is twenty one miles over, the General laughingly observed, "Upon my word Doctor that would be a very long shot."†

His poetic propensity had too often outburst to prevent preservations. His man had with him this message in measure:

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\*A term in billiards when the ball played upon glances off and strikes another. Letter of Thomas Law, September, 1823.

†*Ibid.*

April 12, 1811.

To the good People.

Pray let the Bearer, Peter, pass,  
He rides a Horse, & leads an afs—  
This is the *Vicar* fam'd of *Bray*  
He goes, at Mr Brent's to stay—  
Peter returns, without delay

To Peter.

If any one you chance to meet  
Stay not to talk, but pass & greet.  
And neither give nor take a treat.

The Doctor was English and of the Society of Friends but his Lancashire lineage did not lessen the ardor for his adopted country and in the clash between it and Great Britain he promptly put on his sword and mounted his charger for he was a cavalry officer—first a lieutenant and then, a captain.

Mrs. Smith's second visit to Montpellier is described:

Monday, 17<sup>th</sup> August (1828.)

Mr. M. met us in the Portico and gave us a cordial welcome. In the Hall Mrs. Madison received me with open arms and that overflowing kindness and affection which seems a part of her nature. We were at first conducted into the Drawing room, which opens on the back Portico and thus commands a view through the whole house, which is surrounded with an extensive lawn, as green as in spring, the lawn is enclosed with fine trees, chiefly forest, but interspersed with weeping willows and other ornamental trees, all of most luxuriant growth and vivid verdure. It was a beautiful scene. The drawing-room walls are covered with pictures, some very fine, from the ancient masters, but most of them portraits of our most distinguished men, six or eight by Stewart. The mantelpiece, tables in each corner and in fact wherever one could be fixed, were filled with busts, and

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groups of figures in plaster, so that this apartment had more the appearance of a museum of the arts than of a drawing room. It was a charming room, giving activity to the mind, by the historic and classic ideas that it awakened.

\* \* \* She drew Anna\* on the sofa beside her and gave her half a dozen pretty books to look over, while drawing a french arm chair, or fauteuil (what charming things they are!) close by her, I reclined at my ease, while we talked,—and oh how we did talk. We went over the last 20 years and talked of scenes long past and of persons far away or dead. These reminiscences were delightful. She certainly has always been, and still is one of the happiest of human beings. Like myself, she seems to have no place about her which could afford a lodgement for care or trouble. Time seems to favour her as much as fortune. She looks young and she says she feels so. I can believe her, nor do I think she will ever look or feel like an old woman. They are seldom alone, but have a succession of visitors, among whom are a great many foreigners. Few visit our country without visiting Monticello and Montpelier. She gave me an entertaining account of the visit of the three members of parliament, who passed several days with them. I could scarcely credit my senses, when dinner was announced and I found it to be four o'clock! So rapidly had the morning passed away. We did not rise from table until six o'clock. Mr. Madison was chief speaker, and his conversation was a stream of history, and continued so until ten o'clock, when we separated for the night, so rich in sentiments and facts, so enlivened by anecdotes and epigrammatic remarks, so frank and confidential as to opinions on men and measures, that it had an interest and charm, which the conversation of few men now living, could have. He spoke of scenes in which he himself had acted a conspicuous part and of great men, who had been actors in the same theatre. No common-places. Every sentence he spoke, was worthy

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\*Mrs. Smith's daughter.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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of being written down. The formation and adoption of the Constitution. The Convention and first congress, the characters of their members and the secret debates. Franklin, Washington, Hamilton, John Adams, Jefferson, Jay, Patrick Henry, and a host of other great men were spoken of and characteristic anecdotes of all related. It was living History! When I retired for the night, I felt as if my mind was full to over-flowing, as if it could not contain all the ideas it had received, as if it had feasted to satiety. And this entertaining, interesting and communicative personage, had a single stranger or indifferent person been present, would have been mute, cold and repulsive. After dinner, we all walked in the Portico, (or piazza, which is 60 feet long, supported on six lofty pillars) until twilight, then retreated to the drawing room, where we sat in a little group close together and took our coffee while we talked. Some of Mr. M.'s anecdotes were very droll, and we often laughed very heartily. \* \* \* He retains all the sportiveness of his character, which he used to reveal now and then to those whom he knew intimately, and Mrs. M. says he is as fond of a frolic and of romping with the girls as ever. His little blue eyes sparkled like stars from under his bushy grey eye-brows and amidst the deep wrinkles of his poor thin face. Nor have they lost their look of mischief, that used to lurk in their corners, and which vanished and gave place to an expression ever solemn, when the conversation took a serious turn.

In the course of the evening, at my request Mrs. M. took me to see old Mrs. Madison. She lacks but 3 years of being a hundred years old. When I enquired of her how she was, "I have been a blest woman," she replied, "blest all my life, and blest in this my old age. I have no sickness, no pain; excepting my hearing, my senses are but little impaired. I pass my time in reading and knitting." Something being said of the infirmities of old age. "You," said she, looking at Mrs. M., "you are *my* mother now, and take care of me in my old age." I felt much affected by the sight of this venerable



THE HIGHLANDS, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA



## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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woman. Her face is not much wrinkled as her son's who is only 77 years old.\*

Said Mrs. Madison to Anna, while on the portico:

"Come, let us run a race. I do not believe you can out run me. Madison and I often run races here, when the weather does not allow us to walk." And adds Mrs. Smith—"She really did run very briskly,—it was more than I could do, had I attempted it."† \* \* \*

Captain Tingey was the first commandant at the Washington Navy Yard; he was commandant until his death. The Captain's mental strength never weakened;—to the Secretary of the Navy, February 2, 1829, he writes:

But justice to myself in my present infirm state, and approximately the close of my seventy-eighth year, I am incapable of the lively energy of a youthful seaman and require some relaxation, at least from the multiplicity of cares these double duties require. I am therefore constrained to solicit your further endeavors to have me released from the duties of the agency altogether.

And, in the same month on the twenty third day, at the tenth hour in the forenoon he was released from all the duties, he heretofore had so honorably performed. And on the next day, Wednesday, at twelve, meridian, with soldier's rites, he was laid at rest. And the Navy Department directed a requiem of thirteen minute guns, that the flag fly at half mast and that the officers wear crape.‡

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\*Mrs. Eleanor Conway Madison, the mother, died in 1829 at the age of 98 years.

†*Forty Years of Washington Society.* Margaret Bayard Smith.

‡*History of the Washington Navy Yard.* H. B. Hibben.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

To her nephew, Richard D. Cutts:

I admired the presents you sent me very much, and thank you more for the kindness that induced you to send them. When I was in Richmond I bought you a handsome knife, but not having an opportunity to send it I think best to inclose you a dollar to buy you one in Washington for my sake—please do so and be assured that I never can forget your affection, but that I reciprocate it with all my heart—I am laying up some things for you which I know will please you when we meet. Your cousins are all intending to write you. Dolly wrote you by the last post, and I helped her out with bad poetry—still it would show you our great regard. I think you'll lose your heart with one of your fair cousins when you have them all before you to choose from—your mamma's namesake is a sweet one and very sensible.

From Charles Roberts Collection in the Haverford College, Haverford, Pa.

I am very grateful for your charming letter my dear friend, and for those good wishes which we received with the warm affection, which Mr. Madison and myself have ever felt for you.

The handsome Oration spoken by your son has been read by us both with admiration of its composition, and feelings flattered by his partiality for the subject of it.

I must keep it for his sake, whom we hope to see, one day, in the brilliant career of his Father. Your kind promise of visiting us, this year will not be forgotten. The fulfilment of it would be a high gratification to us.

I rejoice to hear from you, that our dear Mrs. Mason is so nearly well—please to present me to Mrs. Murray and to her, as one who can never forget them. With my best regards for Mr. Rush and kisses for your sweet little ones, most truly yours

D. P. Madison

Montpellier July 1829—

To

Mrs. Rush

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

Richmond August 10<sup>th</sup> 1829.

Mr and Mrs Madison

My Dear Sir and Madam

Permit me to assure you, I was very much gratified, that your District had honored the state so far, as to place you, Sir, in the Convention for altering, or amending the Constitution. It is at the same time with sincere sorrow and concern I have learnt; that the state of your health has, since that time, been impaired by indisposition; but I earnestly hope; that it is already completely restored, or will be at least so far improved, as to enable you to take your seat in the Convention, and to afford that important service to the state, which it justly anticipates from your weight of character, superior intelligence, and long experience in public affairs.—I beg leave also, Sir, and Madam, to assure you that I still recollect, with affectionate sensibilities your kind attentions during a long personal acquaintance, and that it would now afford me great pleasure, if yourselves and inmates would consent to become members of my family, and to accept a chamber in the government house during the session of the approaching Convention. That position would afford you some accommodations, which it might be difficult to obtain in any house of public entertainment in the City. It is retired, near the Capitol, and would afford you opportunities of receiving visits from your numerous friends, with more ease and convenience to yourselves, than perhaps elsewhere. Permit me to press your acceptance of this invitation, and to assure you in so doing, you would afford the sincerest pleasure to myself, as well as to every member of my family.

Be pleased, Sir, and Madam, to accept my respectful and friendly regards.

Wm B. Giles

The Honorable

James Madison & Lady  
Montpelier.

At the Constitutional Convention, October 5, 1829,  
Mr. Madison nominated Mr. Monroe for the presiding

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

officer. He and Mr. Marshall, the Chief Justice, escorted Mr. Monroe to the chair. Mr. Madison made a statesmanlike address. It was a convention of great minds. Its proceedings were fully reported. Mr. and Mrs. Madison were the guests of her Cousin, Sallie Stevenson.

Anne Royall, authoress and editress, was a spectator. She makes this "pen-portrait."\*

Mr. Madison is a small, aged man, with a remarkable small head and face, and keen vigorous countenance. He was dressed in a plain Quaker coloured coat, and his hair was powdered; he was leaning forward, and seemed to listen to the debates with deep attention.

Sarah Harvey Porter in *The Life and Times of Anne Royall*:

American biography is well peppered with descriptions of charming Dolly Madison, but not one among them all shows her in a pleasanter light than does the following where she is seen wiping the dust from the feet of a tired old woman who had trudged far to see her.

Anne Royall—in *Southern Tours*:

Early one morning I called for a hack to wait on Mrs. Madison, as she lived some distance from my residence. The ruffian who keeps the hacks at the Union, said he must have \$1 for hitching, and \$2 an hour—I took it afoot! Mr. and Mrs. Madison boarded at Hon. A. Stevenson's, a mile and a quarter; but I walked three miles before I found it. The ignorance of the people is such, that they can only tell where the Church, the Prison, and the Court-room is; after walking my very soul out, I found the house, and was quite mortified, that Mrs. Madison was not at home. "Where

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\*Mrs. Royall's *Southern Tour*.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

is Mr. Stevenson?" "Mr. Stevenson is very ill, and his family cannot leave him!" "Where is Mrs. Madison's servant?" The servant was out—I spoke this with spirit, and desired them to say "Mrs. R. was in the house." Mrs. Madison heard it and sent word she would be down in a minute. I listened for her step, and never was I more astonished. I expected to have seen a little old dried up woman; instead of this, a tall, young, active, elegant woman stood before me. "This Mrs. Madison—impossible;" she was the self-same lady of whom I had heard more anecdotes than any family in Europe or America. No wonder she was the idol at Washington—at once in possession of every thing that could enoble woman. But chiefly she captivates by her artless though warm affability—affectedness and her, are farther asunder than the poles; and her fine full eye and countenance, displays a majestic brilliancy found in no other face. She is a stout, tall, straight woman, muscular but not fat, and as active on her feet as a girl. Her face is large, full and oval, rather dark than fair, her eye is dark, large and expressive; her face is not handsome nor does it appear ever to have been so. It is diffused with a slight tinge of red, and rather wide in the middle—but her power to please, the irresistible grace of her every movement sheds such a charm over all she says and does, that it is impossible not to admire her. She was dressed in a plain black silk dress, and wore a silk checked turban on her head, and black glossy curls. But to witness how active she would run out—bring a glass of water, wipe the mud off of my shoes and tie them—seeing I was fatigued she pressed me with much earnestness to await dinner—I was greatly disappointed in her size and height, but much more in her youthful appearance. She appears young enough for Mr. Madison's daughter; there is more indulgence in her eye than any mortal's."

Mrs. Madison again alludes to the apprehension about her nephew, Walter. She discloses her interest in what

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

is passing in the world; her preference for the place where she reigned at the head and in the hearts; her tastes in literature; and, her match-making proclivity—the regret she expresses at the failure of young Van Buren's overture.

To her niece, Dolly Cutts:

Montpellier, March 10, 1830.

I am now seated, pen in hand, my sweet niece, to write you, though not in the humor for the success I desire in producing an amusing letter such as mine *should* be in answer to yours.

Imagine, if you can, a greater trial to the patience of us farmers than the destruction of a radiant patch of green peas by frost! It came last night on the skirts of a storm; and while I was lamenting that our dear midshipman, Walter, should ever be exposed to such winds, my young adventurers at home were completely wrecked off their moorings! But away with complaints, other patches equally radiant will arise, and I will mourn no longer over a mess of peas or pottage, but would rather meet you somewhere, or hear about your last party. I had, indeed, my "*quantum sufficit*" of gayety in Richmond, but what I enjoyed most was the quiet but thorough hospitality of the inhabitants among whom I should like to spend my winters. Washington, if my old friends were still there, would no doubt be my preference; but I confess I do not admire contention in any form, either political or civil. In my quiet retreat I like to hear of what is going on, and therefore hope, my dear, you will not be timid in telling me, though your statements shall be seen by no one else. I wish that circumstances would have permitted you to have accepted Mr. V. B.'s invitation, but I cannot doubt you had a good reason for declining. By the bye, do you ever get hold of a clever novel, new or old, that you

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

could send me? I bought Cooper's last, but did not care for it, because the story was so full of horrors.

Adieu, my dearest Dolly, think of me as your own friend as well as aunt, and write as often as you can to

Yours affectionately,

Dolly P. Madison.\*

It is delicately, most delicately put, by Mr. Anthony Morris. Robert Morris, the Financier of the American Revolution, and others of his standard, were confined at the Debtors' Prison in Prune street, Philadelphia, until their friends paid their debts or let them die. John Payne Todd now from experience knew what he might have known from reading for he may have taken from Mrs. Smith's book rack her copy of Dr. Dodd's *Thoughts in Prison* and read:

Harsh on its sullen hinge  
Grates the dread door; the massy bolts respond  
Tremendous to the surly Keeper's touch.  
The dire keys clang: with movement dull and slow  
While their behest the ponderous locks perform:  
And, fastened firm, the object of their care  
Is left to Solitude,—to Sorrow left!

Dear Madam

I have to mention to you a most painful subject from a sense of duty to my most valued friend your excellent sister, to whom, or to M<sup>r</sup> Madison, I cannot write directly, without an intimation from you, who know many circumstances with which I am unacquainted. You will anticipate that my reference is to M<sup>r</sup> Payne Todd, whose long confinement in Philad<sup>a</sup> you are no doubt appriz<sup>d</sup> of; He is now I am credibly informed, most anxious to return to Montpelier; to enable him to do this, \$200

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\**Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison.*

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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in cash, and an assumption of \$400 payable at any convenient future day are said to be required.

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Anthony Morris.

May 19<sup>th</sup> 1830

To Mrs. Cutts

The germ of love is change. Love makes the eye brighter, the heart faster, the step lighter and all about more beautiful. The affected can see in the adored the most beautiful of mortals and worthy to associate with the gods. Mrs. Madison tells much better the change that love makes.

To her niece, Dolly Cutts:

Montpellier, November, 1830.

Dearest Niece,—I have been so much engaged in the book you kindly sent by the last post, that I have scarcely left myself time to thank you for it by this. I will, however, take an early opportunity to show my gratitude by a longer letter.

If you can send me the "Romance of History" I will be very glad, and will make the proper dispatch in the perusal of it. Governor Barbour is here and will stay some time. Phillippa does not expect to see Washington again for some time, and regrets it much. Her father is now a judge and she a recluse. I find you have no idea yet of the improvement love can make, or you would not surmise that another must have had to do with the courting for John. After he became acquainted with S. Carter, his tongue twanged as if sent from a bow! Last winter when I witnessed his attentions to her, and heard him talk and laugh like Gany-mede, I knew it was Cupid's act, by the color. She is a sweet girl and I hope you will see her before long. You and my dear Mary.

Ever your affectionate aunt,

Dolly P. Madison.\*

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\**Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison.*



## CHAPTER VI

1831-1834

THE letter which follows bears the earliest date of a letter to the niece Mary. Mary at that time was sweet sixteen.

To her niece, Mary Estelle Elizabeth Cutts:

Montpellier, January 5, 1831.

Dearest Mary,—Yours, ending on the 2d of January, came to relieve my oppressed heart with the tidings of your beloved mother's recovery from that extreme illness, under which I knew or feared she was laboring.

I had written a week ago this day to Dolly and one to you, inclosed to your father, which could hardly have reached you, or you would have yielded to my pleadings for that single line by every post which would tell me your mamma is better and has a prospect of regaining her health. To secure this, my dearest girls, you must help her in every way you can, keep her room quiet, and herself free from the slightest agitation or uneasiness. The nervousness of which Dr. Sim speaks must be attended to with all your delicacy of thought and conduct; her sufferings have caused it, and now, no one should approach her who is not sensible of the importance of smiles and comfort to one who has been so near the grave. May Heaven sustain and support her for many years to come to bless you with her protecting love.

I enclose "The Oxonians," which I could not read, while my heart was oppressed by fears for you all. We are well and send love.

Your own aunt,

Dolly P. Madison.\*

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\**Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison.*

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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To her niece, Mary Cutts:

Montpellier, September 18, 1831.

My dearest Mary,—I hasten to answer your nice letter in order to obtain your forgiveness about the mislaid letter; I fear Beckey may have used it to kindle the fire she was so anxious about for her master, and as far as I can discover collected everything in the way of paper on my table this morning. It was so short I hope you can recollect enough of it to write it again for your amiable correspondent, to whom give my assurance of love. I am so grieved that your mamma is not well, but trust it proceeds from fatigue. Do persuade her to go to see Mrs. B. and not to worry about household cares. I hope the alarm of “insurrections” is over in the city, though every one should be on guard after this. I am quiet, hearing little about it, and quite helpless if in danger. Tell Mr. Trist I send him a few leaves, if not the whole flower, of his dear lady (Cape Jessamine), who is now blooming, when all her contemporaries have changed color and are passing away, emblematic of her good disposition and heart, whose fragrance will last until the end.

Your Uncle Madison still wears the bead ring you placed on his finger, and I see him look at it every now and then without saying anything.

My eyes are troubling me, still I write on a great deal of nonsense. To-morrow I expect a large party from Richmond and the lower country to stay with us. I feel very grateful to all those ladies who are so kind to your mother while she is ailing, and could love the blackest Indian who was good to her; indeed, it seems to me I would like to bribe the whole world to make her well. Payne is on the wing again with three gentlemen in his train.

Adieu, dearest niece. Ever yours,

Dolly P. Madison.\*

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\**Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison.*

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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To Mrs. Frances D. Lear:

I hasten to thank you beloved friend (as well as very sore eyes will permit me) for your interesting letter, of the 26<sup>th</sup> in which you tell me my dear sister is on the recovery—I pray that it may be the case, and that she may be long spared to her family and to me! I have as you suppose been miserable about her, and tho the girls have been good in writing, and she also when able, I have found all communications too slow for my constant anxiety—My dear Husband is still confined to his bed—In addition to a disabling Rheumatism throughout the winter, he has had a bilious fever, which has reduced him so much that he can only walk from one bed to another. I never leave him, more than a few minutes at a time, and have not left the enclosure around our house for the last eight months on account of his continued indisposition, concerning which, friends at a distance, have rec<sup>d</sup> but too favorable reports.—Our Physicians have advised the warm springs for Mr Madison, and we hoped to have him taken there, but as he could not travel unless conveyed in his bed, we dare not think of it for the present.—Now my precious friend I would exprefs my deep regret that any obstacle should exist to our enjoyment of your society this summer. No persons should I be more delighted to see here, than yourself, your son & daughter and I will still indulge the hope, that my Husband will be well enough for this gratification, & my sister sufficiently recovered to come with you, before the Winter throws its barriers between us.—I must ever love the kind friends of my sister, yourself, Mrs Bomford, Mrs Clay—have been as sisters to her—and some others also, of whom she speaks with great sensibility Doctr Sim\* especially are enroll'd by me on a grateful memory! We hear at a distance of the alarming cholera, but as yet, no report of its existence in our State.—Be pleased to present my affectionate

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\*Dr. Thomas Sim, when President of Medical Society died of epidemic cholera, September 13, 1832.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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love to Mrs Randolph & Mrs Trist, & tell them I shall be proud of my new cousin Ellen—

Accept Mr Madisons best wishes—& my son's best respects, with the long, & sincere attachment of your

D. P. Madison

Mrs Lear.

To her niece, Mary Cutts :

Montpellier, December, 1831.

My Own Dear Niece,—I have been the most disconsolate of persons these three or four days, and all because of a violent toothache. The book you mention I will keep unless you say no, while I read the second volume, and send them both to you by Walter, who is summoned to Philadelphia on the first Monday in January, and will stop in Washington to see you.

In my last I informed you that Walter and Payne had been detained abroad by bad weather, but now they are safe and sound with us, and we have played chess and talked together all this time without the appearance of ennui. Thank my dear Dolly for her kind letter; and I rejoice in her recovery, which is due in a great measure to the judicious nursing of a good mother.

I hope you will soon be going to parties, and give me a detailed account of what is going forward amongst the various characters in Washington.

I have so long been confined by the side of my dear sick husband, never seeing or hearing outside of his room, that I make a dull correspondent.

Your uncle is better now than he was three days ago, and I trust will continue to mend, but his poor hands are still sore, and so swollen as to be almost useless, and so I lend him mine. The music-box is playing beside me, and seems well adapted to solitude, as I look out at our mountains, white with snow, and the winter's wind sounding loud and cold. I hope you will take more than usual care of yourself this weather, and wish I

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

could cover you with furs; but ah! if I dare indulge in wishes—

Good night, my love. Your fond aunt,  
Dolly Madison.\*

Mrs. Madison to Edward Coles:

Montpelleir 4. March 1832

Your interesting letter dear cousin of Feby 22<sup>d</sup> claims our best thanks and I hasten to give you in return the assurance that my Husband continues to get better—The tedious disease which has confined him so long, is passing gradually away, and he now looks nearly as well as usual—has a fine appetite and good spirits. We of his household have also recovered from indisposition and like the birds, are busy in sun shine, hope, and spring weather. Our peas are green and flourishing and all our rural treasures are hailed with the freshness of spirit which is brought to the enjoyment of gay assemblies—tho not like those which might be compared to odour fled, as soon as shed, in morning's winged dream but as our admiral Paulding says—"Like the witching influence over the hearts of those who, tho they have sat at the worlds great Banquet, still preserve or relish far more wholesome aliment and plainer luxuries."

I am sorry your winter in New York has not been so pleasant as you anticipated but Washington may, and no doubt will indemnify you I hear of many fine girls being there, and perhaps your kindred spirit hover's near the Domicil of your sister. I shall write to cousin Sally by this post, and hope that Mr. Stevenson and herself will call on us, on their return to Richmond--you had better come with them and cheat Illinois. the pigs and Prairies yet a little longer of their victim.

But, where ever you go dear cousin, believe me our affectionate wishes for your happiness will follow you.

The narrative you gave us concerning "the little grey man" I. R.—y is indeed curious and I think Mr. G—s

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\**Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison.*

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

lazy fit, is likely to withhold the case too long, from the world's knowledge

To her sister, Mrs. Anna Cutts:

Montpellier, August 2, 1832.

Beloved Sister Anna,—Mrs. Mason has just written me to say you are a little better, and those dear daughters of yours, Mary and Dolly, whom I shall ever feel are my own children, have often consoled me by their letters since you were unable to write. Your husband and boys too have written frequently,—all in that affectionate feeling towards you which manifested their deep love; and although I cannot see or assist you in your long and painful sickness, yet am I very thankful to the Almighty for his favors in bestowing such devoted friends as have surrounded your pillow.

My dear husband is recovering, I hope, slowly, though still confined to his bed. He speaks of you to me every day with all the partiality and love of a tender brother, and ardently hopes that we may be long spared to each other.

Mrs. Clay and her husband did not call to see me as we expected. They understood that General Jackson was at Montpelier and passed on to Governor Barbour's. The next day Mr. Clay came for a few hours, but did not meet the President here. I regretted much not seeing Mrs. Clay, as she would have talked to me of you.

Do, dear sister, strive to get well and strong for my sake and your children's; what should we do without you! As soon as my eyes are well I will write to dear Mrs. B.\* In the meantime offer her my love and thanks for all her goodness to you.

Adieu, my dear, ever and always,

Your loving sister,

Dolly P. Madison.†

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\*Portrait of Clara Baldwin Bomford, wife of Col. George Bomford, reproduced in *The Story of Kalorama*.—Corra Bacon-Foster.

†*Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison*.

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Nature is infinite that it allows not comparison in bereavement. No parent says I would preferably spare this daughter or that son. No child says I would lose rather the father or the mother. No brother and no sister breathes if it must be one, let that sister or that brother precede. Nature has made the very thought horrible. Anna Payne as maiden and Anna Payne Cutts as matron had been to Dolly Payne, Dolly Payne Todd and Dolly Payne Madison, daughter, sister and companion. Other bereavements to Mrs. Madison might to the limit be severe yet none more severe.

The illness of the sister had been protracted. In that there was warning of an earthly separation and in protraction, too, there was hope. In the fluctuations the rise to restoration proved no more than the futile grasping of hope.

That time and this time—at this writing an even eighty years, in the cycles of centuries naught,—what a difference in availability! In the year 1832, the time in travel, between Washington and Montpellier was several days. Now by rail, the time is reckoned in hours; by telegraph and by telephone, in seconds. With present facility, the surviving sister might a ministering angel have been; she might have smoothed the pillow and caressed the brow; she might have had the last glance at going and the first of peace, the emancipation from earthly disturbances. With present facility, the bereaved sister would not have written:

Where are her remains? I will myself write my gratitude to the kind friends who were privileged to do what I could not for my lamented sister.

All the detail the writer gathers is that from Mrs. Thornton's diary:

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

Mrs. Anna Cutts, Mrs. Madison's beloved sister died the morning of August 4, 1832. The disorder was dropsy of the heart.

And the advertised funeral notice in the *Daily National Intelligencer*. Tuesday, December 7, 1832:

In this City, on the morning of the 4th Inst. Anna, wife of Honorable Richard Cutts, late 2nd Comptroller of the U. S. Treasury.

The gentle declining makes appropriate the *Death-bed* lines of the gentle poet, Hood:

Our very hopes belied our fears,  
Our fears our hopes belied;  
We thought her dying while she slept,  
And sleeping when she died.

Anna Payne was portrayed by Gilbert Stuart. This portrait has, as a background, a caricature of Stuart, himself, created and allowed to remain as a jest. The portrait is reproduced in *Social Life in the Early Republic*.

Mrs. Cutts was born in Virginia, November 11, 1779.

Montpellier, August 5, 1832.

Dear Brother,—The heart of your miserable sister mourns with you and for your dear children.

Come to us as soon as you can, and bring them all with you; I am deeply interested in them as if they were my own. Where are her remains? I will myself write my gratitude to the kind friends who were privileged to do what I could not for my lamented sister.

Mr. Madison partakes in our sorrows, and in my wish to see you all here. Show this to Dolly and Mary,



ST. JOHN'S CHURCH, WASHINGTON, D. C.



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please, as I cannot write to them at this moment. Yours came yesterday.

Affectionately your sister,  
Dolly P. Madison.\*

Around the memory of Marcia Burnes is a halo. She was the "pretty and pleasant little woman" of Washington Irving. She was the daughter of David Burnes, esquire, or "Davy Burnes." He was of the original proprietors. His tract, he inherited.† It lie on the bank of the Potomac and extended far inland. The Tyber Creek or Goose Creek‡ ran through it; and on the wide mouth of the creek, of name high flown or low, was his cottage. He was according to the sketch writers, Scotch and stubborn. If ever he had an ancestor

"Wha hae wi' Wallace bled"

by his time in the line transfered to America, he lost the Caledonian dialect for his ancestral emigrant was his grandfather. He is set down as a specimen of stubbornness because President Washington wrote of him as "obstinate Mr. Burns." Sometimes in dictionary Eng-

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\**Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison.*

†"Beall's Levels," two hundred and twenty-five acres, was granted to Colonel Vivian Beall in 1703. A portion of this tract, with some vacant ground added, was the property of David Burnes \* \* \*. It was patented to him on a re-survey in 1774, as the eldest son and heir at law of his father, James Burnes, for whom it was re-surveyed in 1769, and who had died before obtaining the patent. James Burnes, the father of David, occupied the land as a tenant for two years before purchasing it from Henry Massey.—*Old Georgetown.* Hugh T. Taggart.

‡In the early years was a wharf on the creek immediately south of the present Municipal Building.

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lish and sometimes in imitation Scotch, Mrs. Burnes is quoted as saying to the President:

I suppose you think that people here are going to take every grist that comes from you as pure grain; but what would you have been if you had not married the rich Widow Custis?

The rude remark attributed to Mr. Burnes has been attributed to others. It was a scurrility of the times. The diary of President Washington positively proves that the incident is without probability of fact. At six in the evening at his lodging place, Suter's tavern, the President addressed with the other landholders, Mr. Burnes\*; and on the forenoon of the next day, they mutually agreed and entered into articles. Mr. Burnes was the second to sign. Now, Mr. Burnes, was accustomed to decide upon argument—for was he not a magistrate—but of that further on—and perhaps he did avail himself of the chance to prove that he equally well could argue at as he argued to. Perhaps, Mr. Burnes, did inherit a slight strain of Scottish stubbornness but it was only a pleasantry of the President to the Secretary of State, from Mt. Vernon, 31 March:

To these considerations all the principal landholders \* \* \* will readily come into the measure, even the obstinate Mr. Burnes.

David Burnes recognized refinement; as he, himself, was refined. He had reverence for what Sir William Blackstone calls "a rule of civil conduct prescribed by the supreme power in the state." He was himself a justice of the peace and sat in judgment and dispensed even-

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\*March 29, 1791.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

handed justice with preambles to his decision delivered with solemnity and with awe-inspiring halts in his talk. His son he destined for the law but in his twentieth year he died and on his tablet was cut:

He was a youth amiable & intelligent  
who promised fair to become  
an honor to his friends, and  
an ornament to his Country.

In Georgetown was Marcia's preliminary schooling. In Baltimore, the finishing education; the while, living in the family of the eccentric luminary of the law, Luther Martin.\* At the same time, John, her brother, was successfully studying law in Mr. Martin's office. Marcia was ten when her brother died, 1792; and seventeen when her father died, 1799.

Marcia inherited the entire estate subject to her mother's dower.† She had beauty and grace and the additional magnet—money. In select society was Mistress Burnes and Miss Burnes in the earliest days as Mrs. Thornton's record of daily doings shows.

John Peter Van Ness came to Congress for the term, 1801'3. He was a lawyer by preparation. He had ancestry and attractiveness and won over the rivals, the merry Marcia. The anniversary of her twentieth birthday was her wedding day, May 9, 1802.

Mr. and Mrs. Van Ness, at first, made their home on Pennsylvania avenue on the site of the present 1109 and 1111. Mr. Van Ness, across the way, D and Twelfth streets, built two substantial mansions. In the mansion next to the corner did he establish himself and his youth-

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\*Portrait reproduced in *Social Life in the Republic*.

†Miss Burnes' guardian for legal purposes was William Mayne Duncanson.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

ful wife.\* From there to Miss Mary Fairlee, Washington Irving, July 7, 1807, wrote:

I am now scribbling in the parlor of Mr. Van Ness, at whose house I am on a visit.

And it was there, January 1811, Irving found himself "delightfully moored," "in clover" and "a lucky dog."

The citizens had complimented Mr. Van Ness by electing him a Major of their militia and the President formally commissioned him. And Congress upon investigation decided he had forfeited his seat as a Representative by the acceptance of the trifling military honor and accepted his resignation. The Major was happily anchored in Washington and it did not matter.†

Mrs. Van Ness had at heart the Orphan Asylum. Mrs. Smith writes:‡

23, Novr. 1817.

\* \* \* Few persons are admitted to the great house and not a single lady has as yet seen Mrs. Monroe, Mrs. Cutts excepted, and a committee from the Orphan Asylum, on which occasion Mrs. Van Ness first called to know when Mrs. M. would receive the committee.

The mansion in Mansion Square, 17th and 18th, B and C streets, n.w. was designed by Latrobe and built under his direction. The date of completion is variously stated from 1816 to 1820. It is said to have been in its prime the most elegant residence in the United States.

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\*December 1, 1804.

1202 D Street. He rented the corner house.

†January 28, 1805, promoted to Lieutenant Colonel commandant of the First Legion of the Militia, D. C., from Major.

‡*Forty Years of Washington Society.*

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It was ornated with carving and sculpture by artists of celebrity. It had hot and cold water in every chamber; the first dwelling with these conveniences. It had spacious storage underneath for the vintages. Mansion Square was a park and in it and at the elbow of the stately structure was the Burnes cottage. With the grandeur of the mansion was apace the hospitality that ruled. General Van Ness contributed courtliness and Mrs. Van Ness, sprightliness. The General may sometimes have thought of that slight touch of Scotch in Marcia, and thinking of that touch and the slight Marcia he had the thought,

She is a winsome wee thing,  
She is a handsome wee thing,  
She is a bonny wee thing,  
This sweet wee wife o' mine.

To the General and Mrs. Van Ness was born a daughter, June 12, 1803. She returned from Philadelphia, 1820, highly educated.

Mrs. Kate Kearney Henry says:

In 1821 Ann Elbertina married Arthur Middleton of South Carolina. His grandfather was a signer of the Declaration of Independence. He was Secretary of Legation at Madrid when Cornelius P. Van Ness, an uncle of his wife's, was United States Minister to Spain. Few weddings of the present day equal and none surpass the elegance and munificence of that occasion; there were six bridesmaids and groomsmen. The former were Miss Casenove, who married General Archibald Henderson, Commandant at the Marine Corps; Miss Frances P. Lewis, a daughter of Lawrence Lewis (Washington's nephew), who married General Butler, U. S. A.; Miss Laura Wirt, daughter of William Wirt, who mar-

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ried Thomas Randall, Esq.; Miss Mason, who married her cousin, George Mason of Gunston; Miss Lee, who married Dr. Bailey Washington of the U. S. N., and Miss Mary Ann Kerr, a niece of Mrs. Peter Hagner. The festivities lasted nearly a month; each bridesmaid gave a party; each groomsman, a dinner.

Mrs. Middleton died, November 22, 1823. "In giving birth to a daughter, she fell a victim to a malignant fever, which had already proved fatal to many other ladies of the district in a similar situation." The bereavement affected Mrs. Van Ness beyond rebound. A mausoleum of graceful architecture, circular and colonnaded, patterned by George Hadfield, a replica of the Temple of Vesta at Tivoli, near Rome, was built. The location was H between Ninth and Tenth streets, northwest, south side. It became known as the Mausoleum Square. About the mortuary monument were the Burnes graves of the generations.\*

Prior to 1826, the asylum was in a house on Seventh between H and I streets and was for girls only. Mrs. Van Ness made a munificent contribution to the Orphan Asylum, of which she was the First Directress; and before a large presence, she laid the corner stone of a capacious and suitable building which was erected adjoining the sepulchre. This was the orphans' home from 1826 to 1866.

Mrs. Van Ness made Mansion Square a paradise of plants, some arranged with care and some with carelessness, all with taste. Her taste, not alone in nature, was shown in art—in paintings, in engravings and in sculp-

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\*The Mausoleum—*Historical Sketches of the Ten Miles Square.*  
Jonathan Elliot.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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ture. She had care for the domestics; of their everyday needs and pleasures and of their spiritual for every morning and evening she joined the corps in devotional exercises. Her ideas of propriety had not the latter-day liberty and she not to let the adopted daughter\* with the other young ladies of Mme. Bonfil's French school appear in public entertainment arranged for them a May-day festival with a May-pole in the Square.†

Mrs. Smith's letter :‡

Decr. 21st 1827

\* \* \* Next week there is to be a Fair, for the benefit of the Orphan Asylum. Every female in the City, I believe, from the highest to the lowest has been at work for it. Mrs. Van Ness spares neither time or expense.

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\*Marcia Van Ness, daughter of Cornelius P., brother of Gen. Van Ness. Married Sir William Gore Ouseley, March 27, 1828.

†MANSION SQUARE. In the plan of the City \* \* \* was designated as above, on a map made by N. King, Esq., formerly Surveyor of the City. \* \* \* They improved at great expense, the Square in the best modern taste, both as to buildings and grounds—the latter of which, in addition to their lofty, dignified, paternal trees, are abundantly supplied with the best native and foreign fruits, including figs and grapes, and adorned with a great variety of ornamental shrubs and plants, hedges, quincunxes, gravel walks, vines, bowers, &c. \* \* \* The entrance into this walled square is through an iron gate between two lodges at the north east angle, fronting on the street and the President's Square. Thence there is a winding carriage way, skirted by ornamental trees, shrubbery and flowers, ascending an artificial mound at the north front of the house, and passing under an elegant, projecting stone portico at the door. This portico is the first of the kind, if not the only one, excepting that recently erected at the President's House, in the United States. \* \* \* *Historical Sketches of the Ten Miles Square.* Jonathan Elliot.

‡*Forty Years of Washington Society.*

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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Mrs. Smith's letter:\*

August 17, (1832).

\* \* \* Poor Mrs. Cutts is no more. She has been long extremely ill. \* \* \* Mrs. Van Ness, another contemporary in my social life, is now dangerously ill of fever.

Mrs. Van Ness's life-object was the mitigation of others' misfortune. She was singularly self-unthinking. And at the end she said "Heaven bless *you*, my dear husband, never mind *me*."

The notice in the *Daily National Intelligencer*, Monday, September 10, 1832:

Died, after a severe and protracted illness at 10 o'clock, A.M. yesterday, Mrs. Van Ness, wife of Gen. John P. Van Ness, Mayor of this City. Of this lady it may be emphatically said that she was the guardian of the Orphan and the benefactress of the Poor.

The funeral discourse was delivered by the Rev. William Hawley, Rector of St. John's Church. Excerpts from it, are:

In early life she was distinguished for great sprightliness of mind, and amiableness of disposition, which seldom or never failed of winning the affections, and securing the esteem of all her acquaintance. The sedateness of her manners gave dignity to her deportment, and genuine piety of her heart, as was exemplified more extensively in after life, placed her among the first in society, in the estimation of all who knew her intimately, or enjoyed the pleasure and honor of her acquaintance.

The old cottage house, in which she was born, and in which her beloved parents ended their days, was an object of her deep veneration and regard—a true token

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\**Forty Years of Washington Society.*

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of genuine filial affection—of undying love for the memory of departed Parents, which dutiful children will always cherish to their latest breath. In this humble dwelling, over whose venerable roof wave the branches of trees planted by her dear Parents, and now stretching forth their kindred boughs to shelter it from the pelting storm, she had selected a secluded apartment, with appropriate arrangements for solemn meditation, to which she often retired and spent hours in quiet solitude and in holy communion with God and Saviour.

On the evening of the 9th inst. at a meeting held at the Western Town House,\* it was resolved that a memorial be drawn and a plate executed. This inscription was engraved:

The Citizens of Washington  
In testimony of their veneration for  
Departed Worth,  
Dedicate this plate to the memory of  
Marcia Van Ness,  
The excellent consort of J. P. Van Ness.

If Piety, Charity, high principle and exalted worth, could have averted the shafts of Fate, she would still have remained among us, a bright example of every virtue. The hand of death has removed her to a purer and happier state of existence; and while we lament her loss, let us endeavor to emulate her virtues.

A touching arrangement was that “on the arriving at the gate of the sepulchre, the little female orphans, in divided ranks, stood without, while the procession passed between them within the gate. The body being placed in front of the door of the Vault, these orphan children approached and strewed the bier with branches of the weeping willow.” The tributes of the press, of organizations and of individuals are an appendix to the printed

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\*S.W. corner of I and 20th Streets.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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discourse.\* The poetical tribute in the appendix signed H. G. is said to have been written by Horatio Greenough;† the tribute on the mausoleum is in the same style.

The splendid sepulchre is now on an eminence in Oak Hill Cemetery. On it are inscribed besides the poetical tribute, the birth, marriage and death dates of Mrs. Van Ness and daughter.‡

In the Washington City Orphan Asylum is a portrait of Mrs. Van Ness; the young children in it are representative of her beneficence and of the fostering care of that beneficent institution. It is a copy by the local artist, Charles Bird King after F. Alexander.§ Mr. King put in the children.

In The National Portrait Gallery of Distinguished Americans,

“Names that must not wither, though the earth  
Forgets her empires with a just decay.”

are one hundred and seventeen sketches illustrated each with a steel engraving and of these—five are of women: Martha Washington, Catherine M. Sedgwick, Marcia Van Ness, Dolly P. Madison and Abigail Adams. The sketch of Mrs. Van Ness is by C. Middleton.||

Mr. Madison was the President of the University of Virginia at the time of Mrs. Madison's letter of wifely

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\**Funeral discourse on the death of Mrs. Marcia Van Ness.* Rev. William Hawley.

†So said by George Alfred Townsend in *Washington, Outside and Inside.*

‡Gen. Van Ness died March 7, 1846. His remains went to the elaborate edifice where were his wife's. Marcia's father, mother and brother are interred in Rock Creek Cemetery.

§*History of the Rise and Progress of the Arts of Design.* William Dunlap.

||See *Marcia Burns. Famous American Belles of the Nineteenth Century.* Virginia Tatnall Peacock.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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alarm. The letter indicates that Mr. Madison had the best possession possible—a sympathetic wife.

Monday,—9 O'Clock.

My Beloved,—I trust in God that you are well again, as your letters assure me you are. How bitterly I regret not going with you! Yours of "Friday midday" did not reach me till last evg. I felt so full of fear that you might relapse that I hastened to pack a few clothes and give orders for the carriage to be ready and the post waited for. This mor'g, happily the messenger has returned with your letter of yesterday, which revives my heart and leads me to hope you will be up at home on Wednesday night with your own affectionate nurse. If business sh'd detain you longer—or you sh'd feel unwell again, let me come for you. Mama and all are well. I enclose you one letter. The only one rec'd by yesterday's post, with two latest papers, to read on your journey back. I hope you rec'd my last of Thursday containing letters and papers. My mind is so anxiously occupied about you that I cannot write. May angels guard thee, my dear best friend!

D—.

To James Madison,  
University.  
Tuesday mor'g.

Mrs. Madison's advice for getting to the goal of perfection and happiness—going with the virtues—has the certainty of foreknowledge; while the foretelling of the sibyl without disclosing the path has the danger of failure by the loss of the way.

To her niece, Mary:

Montpellier, August 1, 1833.

May your fortune, dearest Mary, be even *better* than the sybil's predictions. There is one secret, however, she did not tell you, and that is the power we all have in forming our own destinies.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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We must press on that intricate path leading to perfection and happiness, by doing all that is good and noble, before we can be taken under the silver wing of our rewarding angel; this I feel sure you will aim at, and succeed beyond doubt. It will not be necessary, dear child, to recapitulate all the virtues important to render us worthy and deserving of good fortune, because you know them well.

I received your last letter just a week after the date on the inside, though the envelope was marked for the 26th.

I hope the book I sent has been received, and that ere this you are ready to go on your visit to Cousin William. Present me affectionately to him and the girls; I should delight in seeing them all. Your uncle Madison mends in his health, but has many relapses. We have had more company this summer than I can enumerate, and though I enjoy it, my health has not been so good as usual, this morning I was not able to breakfast with my eight guests, but went for a drive with my dear husband and shall join them at dinner.

Your affectionate aunt,  
Dolly P. Madison.\*

Mrs. Madison knew the little cares and crosses and chagrins of children; she knew in what was their sports, their joys and their hopes—and she in that knowledge and the sympathizing use of it made a good guide to childhood.

To her nephew, Richard D. Cutts:

My dear Richard—I have been highly gratified by your letters and ought to have thanked you for them long ago—but you are too well acquainted with the active life I had, not to forgive my delinquency—and too

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\**Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison.*

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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well assured of my true affection for you to my silence proceeded from indifference to your correspondence.

I rejoice at the recovery of Madison and his prospect of happiness—Dear Thomas and lady, I hope to be acquainted with before very long.—You have returned to that excellent Institution, where advantages of every sort, await the good and studious—the few years will bring you to some profession—you must tell your unkle Madison & myself what you have fixed your mind upon as best suited to your views of independence and prosperity.

Your unkle Jas & cousins eight in Va desire to be affectionately presented to you. When you visit us again, which I hope will be soon your cousins will have grown out of your knowledge—they go to a tolerable school & improve accordingly.

—Adieu, for the *present*—accept from Mr M and all of us best wishes & love.

D P Madison

Montpellier 4 Octr 1833

To Mrs. J. Madison Cutts:

Montpellier, Jan'y 25, 1834.

Before this I trust my dearest Ellen has recovered from her cold and is in the enjoyment of all the agreeable society around her.

I am very thankful for your letter. It was full of intelligence and amusement, and I hope you will continue to write me whenever your leisure will permit, as I cannot expect letters from our dear Madison, because all his attention is justly due to his fair bride. I received, however, his kind note enclosing the court plaster, for which Mr. M. offers you his thanks. The prints came safe to hand and Anna intends to acknowledge them for herself and sisters, who were all highly pleased with them.

I am very proud of being remembered by the amiable friends you mention, and beg to be presented to them

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when you see them again. You are so good as to wish I had been with you at the theatre, as well as at Mrs. Tayloe's party. I am sure I should have been delighted at both, but the next good thing to being with you is to receive accounts of all things from you.

I have been so unlucky as to cut my finger, which makes it difficult to hold my pen, and which will explain to you my bad and short letter. Your cousin Payne offers you love and respect, and I think is inclined to speak for himself.

Adieu, and believe me, your  
Affectionate aunt,  
D. P. Madison.\*

The eldest son of sister Anna, James Madison Cutts, was married in 1834. The wedding tour was by stage coach to Montpellier. The bridal party were haled with joy. The namesake of Mr. Madison from him received many practical precepts and the bride heard many exclamations of pleasure by Mrs. Madison over the wedding clothes.

To Payne Todd:

Montpellier, July 20, 1834.

Yours, dearest, promising to write me again, came safely, and I was glad to hear mine, with the enclosure, had reached you. You did not tell me whether you had been successful in your collections. If not, you will want supplies proportioned to your detention; I am anxious that you should have them, and you know the little I have in my power is at your command, though but "a drop in the bucket." You will tell me when you intend to return, that I may have the pleasure of expecting you.

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\**Dolly Madison*. J. Madison Cutts. Records of the Columbia Historical Society.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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Messrs. Patton and Rives dined with us on the 12th; they inquired for you, and said they had hoped to see you at the party as a "Jackson man." General Madison came with them, looking well and happy. Mr. Madison is better, though very ill a few days since, and I now hope he will soon be well enough for me to leave him on an expedition to the Court House. It would be quite an event for me to go there, five miles from home. Our last tobacco was a failure; it sold at seven when seventeen was expected; so it goes with planters. Dolly and Mary wrote me yesterday that you were very popular in Washington, and I should like to be with you to witness it—the respect and love shown to my son would be the highest gratification the world could bestow upon me. I think to inclose this to my brother to deliver, in case of your having left, to keep it for you, or return when you are at home, as I shall inclose. \* \* \* We have seen but few strangers since you left home. Mr. Burney, of Baltimore, called on his way to the Springs, and Mr. Randall, of Philadelphia, with his daughters and niece. He said, by the way, that he had caught a glimpse of you at the station, but lost sight of you again, as he was busy with his baggage.

I suppose you saw Madam Serurier before she went on her travels. If you see Mrs. Lear, tell her she must come from the Springs to visit me. And now, adieu, my dear son; may Heaven preserve and protect you, prays

Your mother,

Dolly P. Madison.\*

Mrs. Madison to Mrs. Smith, August 31, 1834, gave a biographical sketch of herself:

My family are all Virginians except myself, who was born in N. Carolina, whilst my Parents were there on a visit of one year, to an Uncle. Their families on both sides, were among the most respectable, and they,

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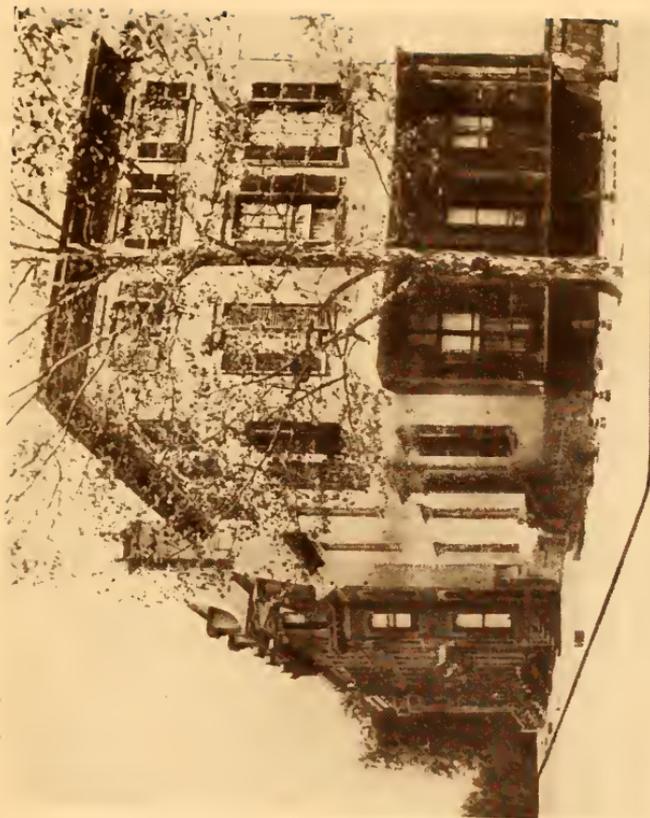
\**Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison.*

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

becoming members of the society of friends, soon after their marriage manumitted their Slaves, and left this state for that of Pennsylvania, bearing with them their children to be educated in their religion—I believe my age at that time was 11 or 12 years—I was educated in Philadelphia where I was married to Mr. Todd in 1790, and to Mr. Madison in 94, when I returned with him to the soil of my Father, and to Washington, where you have already traced me with the kindness of a Sister. In the year 91, and after the death of my Father, my Mother received into her house some Gentlemen as boarders—and in 93 she left Philadelphia to reside with her daughter Washington—afterwards, with my sister Jackson, and occasionally with me.\*

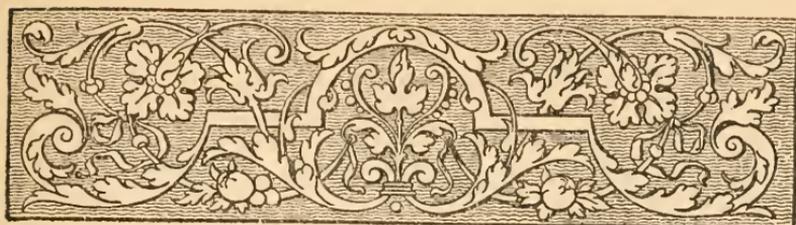
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\**Forty Years of Washington Society.* Margaret Bayard Smith.



DOLLY MADISON HOUSE, WASHINGTON, D. C.





## CHAPTER VII

1835-1840

**H**ARRIET MARTINEAU began her five weeks visit at Washington, January 13, 1835.\* She decided the visit to be the most profitable and the least agreeable in her western travel. Washington, she says, "is no place for persons of domestic tastes;" it is for "persons who love dissipation, persons who love to watch the game of politics, and those who make a study of strong minds under strong excitements."

She came to Montpellier, by invitation, February 18th. Says she:

The dwelling stands on a gentle eminence, and is neat and even handsome in its exterior with a flight of steps leading up to the portico. A lawn and woods, which must be pleasant in summer, stretch behind, and from the front there is a noble object on the horizon, the mountain-chain which traverses the state, and makes it eminent for its scenery.

Mrs. M. is celebrated throughout the country for the grace and dignity with which she discharged the arduous duties which devolve upon the president's lady. For a term of eight years she administered the hospitalities of the White House with such discretion, impartiality, and kindness, that it is believed she gratified everyone and offended nobody. She is a strong-minded woman, fully capable of entering into her husband's occupations and

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\*Miss Martineau stopped at Mrs. Peyton's, at the northwest corner of Pennsylvania Avenue and John Marshall Place. Now Reuter's Hotel.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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cares; and there is little doubt that he owed to her intellectual companionship, as well as her ability in sustaining the outward dignity of the office. When I was her guest she was in excellent health and lively spirits; and I trust that though she has since lost the great object of her life, she may find interests enough to occupy and cheer many years more of an honoured old age.\*

Christopher Pease Cranch, the son of Judge Cranch,† was an author and artist; he could paint word pictures as he could paint portraits; he could paint word pictures in poetry. The Judge was austere; the son took all more lightly; of consequence, the son would see that for which the Judge would not look. And the son saw and made this picture:

I gaz'd upon the dance, when ladies dight  
Were moving in the light  
Of mirrors and of lamps. With music and with flowers,  
Danced on the joyous hours;  
And fairest bosoms  
Heav'd happily beneath the winter roses' blossoms:  
And it is well;  
Youth hath its time,  
Merry hearts will merrily chime.

“And it is well” when healthy. The light stepping is in measure to light spirits. The dance is of beauty when in grace and innocence. In grotesqueness and suggestiveness it is evil. In this day under coarse titles are sensual movements. In the day of Mrs. Madison was an approach which when reported to her by her niece she deprecated in her elegant way.

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\**Retrospect of Western Travel*. Harriet Martineau.

†Biographical Sketch of William Cranch in *Greenleaf and Law in the Federal City*. Allen C. Clark.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

To her niece, Mary Cutts:

Montpellier, (December 2, 1834.\*)

There has been a spell upon my fingers for a long time, dearest niece, and even now there rests one on my eyes; still I would commune with you, whom I love so much, and tell you that your letters are all received, and my spirits rising as I peruse them, because my hopes are renewed for dear Walter in your amiable efforts to embark him again on the waves of fortune. I rejoice at the pleasant visit you made to Kalorama with dear Dolché. I was anxious to write and tell you of our visit from Miss Martineau, and how much we enjoyed her enlightened conversation and unassuming manners. We also liked her lively little friend, Miss Jeffries. Ah me! my eyes are even now so troublesome that I must hasten to say as much as I can in a short space of time, hoping to do more when they are better.

I have no idea of the new dance you speak of, or its motions, but approve of your declining to learn it, if disapproved of by society. Our sex are ever losers, when they stem the torrent of public opinion. Baron K's parties must be piquant and agreeable, but if Sir Charles Vaughn leaves what will you all do?

Your uncle is still about the same, but I hope as the season advances he will gain strength again. With love to all the dear ones,

Always your own aunt,

Dolly P. Madison.†

Letter of Mrs. Smith:

16 April, 1835.

\* \* \* In former years I was intimate with both, as well as with Mrs. Cutts and Mrs. Van Ness, all conspicuous members of the social and fashionable circle of that day. We have been travelling the same road and about the same age. They have finished their journey, —and I am near the end of mine?‡

\*Incorrect date.

†*Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison.*

‡*Forty Years of Washington Society.* Margaret Bayard Smith.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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Montpellier, May 11, 1835.

Dearest Dolly,—Payne met a friend (Mr. H.) of yours yesterday at Orange Court House, and brought him home to dinner, with his two cousins. We were much pleased with his society, as well as the account he gave of you and Mary. He told me of your pleasant party, and how much he admired and regarded you both, but not half as much about you as I want to know; indeed, how could he, when my love for you makes me wish to trace your every word and deed throughout the year. He gave me your letter, and told us about all the great personages now with you; but what was my grief to receive only our music box! the box I prized—the one you and Mary gave me—was missing! I will hope, however, that it was left with you, and I shall still hear it in these deep shades.

\* \* \*

Your own and always,

Dolly P. Madison.\*

Count Alfred Guillaume Gabriel D'Orsay, was the *arbiter elegantiarum* of the fashionable gentlemen. The Right Hon. Benjamin Disraeli, Earl of Beaconsfield, in *Henrietta Temple* as the Count Alcibiades de Mirabel describes him. An imitator, the same as he, had a satin-lined coat of flowing grandeur, revealing a breastplate of starched cambric, broad and brilliant; wristbands turned with precision, fastened with jewelled studs, radiantly glittering; a satin waistcoat, creaseless hosen and foot-gear, Parisian polished. The mimetic powers of this mimic, like the others, copied the outside only; with them, the soul was wanting. Of the Court's philosophy is:

Feel slightly, think little, never plan, never brood. Everything depends upon the circulation; take care of

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\**Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison.*

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

it. Take the world as you find it; enjoying everything.  
Vive la bagatelle!

To her niece, Mary Cutts:

Montpellier, October 31, (1835\*)

I was delighted to receive your last letter, my dearest Mary, as I am always, and sorry for your disappointment at not seeing Thomas and his wife. You inquire if Count d'Orsay has been here? Yes, he spent nearly three weeks with us, off and on, and seemed to enjoy himself very much. He is a great sportsman, and would borrow Payne's summer clothes, and go forth, returning as ragged as bushes and mire could make him, rest for several days, and then off again, tumbling into the river, losing his way—and yet come home laughing at his adventures. We found him an elegant young man, sensible and well-informed, except on the intricacies of our woods. I forget, now, who introduced him; I think General Dearborn sent a letter of introduction. Mr. and Mrs. Stevenson stayed a week with me, but I have not yet heard from Mrs. Grimes and her children, of their time for coming. I must tell you that my English beauty has given me a calf as pretty as herself; tell this to dear Dolly that she may be glad with me. Have you any amusing books, no matter how old, to lend me? You see in what haste I write; tell me everything that you are doing, dear girls; my heart follows you all the time, in spite of my engrossing family. It is now late at night and my eyes close. Dear love to you all. Good night, and sweet dreams! Your aunt

Dolly†

Mr. Madison strengthened sufficiently to give Mrs. Madison the social season of 1835'6 in Washington.

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\*Incorrect date.

†*Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison.*

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Her absence was eighteen years. She arrived October 19, 1835. Mrs. Thornton records that she, Dr. and Mrs. Miller paid their respects on the 28th; and that on the 20th of November, Mrs. Miller and she repeated the visit.

Mrs. Wilcox was born in the Executive Mansion. She was the daughter of the nephew and niece, (married cousins,) of President Jackson. She lived many years in Washington; and at advanced age, there, passed away.

Mary Emily Donelson Wilcox was one of the children who gave the party her mother superintended:

The children of President Jackson's family request you to join them on Christmas Day, at four o'clock P.M., in a frolic in the East Room.

Washington, December 19, 1835.

Of the grown-up guests was Mrs. Madison bringing her grand-niece, Addie Cutts.\*

An entry in Mrs. Thornton's diary has a marked similarity to one of twenty six years previous:

1836. January 1st. Monday. Very fine day. A crowd at the president's & Mrs Madison.

Charles Jared Ingersoll, with his other distinctions, has that of historian. He and his daughter visited the Madisons at Montpelier; their first day there being May 2, 1836. For preservation and not for publication he made notes, however the death of Madison a little while after the visit prompted him to let the public have them through the medium of *The Globe*, Washington, August 12, 1836. Only a little is taken from the delightful report:

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\**Christmas Under Three Flags.* Mary Emily Donelson Wilcox.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

The house is a two-story brick mansion, with wings and colonnades front and back, in good design, but decayed and in need of inconsiderable repairs, which, at a trifling expense, would make a great difference in favor of the first impression of his residence. The house was built by his father; the wings and colonnades by himself. The rooms are good, furnished with French carpets, large windows, a good many paintings and some statuary—altogether without any fashionable or very elegant equipment, yet in a gentlemanlike style of rural prosperity. The table was not only abundantly, but handsomely provided; good soups, flesh, fish, and vegetables, well cooked—desert and excellent wine of various kinds; and when Mrs. Madison was prevailing on me to eat hot bread at breakfast, she said, "You city people think it unwholesome, but we eat heartily, like the French, and never feel ourselves worse for it." She looks just as she did twenty years ago, and dresses in the same manner, with her turban and cravat; rises early, is very active, but seldom leaves the house, as her devotion to Mr. Madison is incessant, and he needs all her constant attention. \* \* \* The estate consists of near two thousand acres of good land—the red soil, John Randolph said, in which Presidents grow. \* \* \* Soon after our arrival, Mrs. Madison took us into the room he occupies during the day, and from that time I passed the greater part of three days at his side, listening to his conversation. \* \* \* We found him more unwell than usual, and with a difficulty of breathing, which affects his speech; so that Mrs. Madison told me I must talk, and not let him. But as I wanted to listen, and he appeared to grow better every day, our conversation animated without fatiguing him. \* \* \*

To her sister, Mrs. Todd:

Montpellier, May 8<sup>th</sup> 36

I have rec<sup>d</sup> dearest sister your letter of April 22<sup>d</sup> I am grieved to tell you that my dear Husband has been unusually sick for some days, and is at present unable

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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to write, or even exert his thoughts, without oppressive fatigue—he desires me however, to enclose Gov<sup>r</sup> Shelby's\* letter to him of May 15<sup>th</sup> 1814—according to Mr Todd's request, which it gives him pleasure to comply with.

I hope that such a testimony in favour of Gen<sup>l</sup> Harrison, & such facts & explanations will dispose charges against his military character, & conduct whether proceeding from error or personal hostility.

D. P. Madison

Mr. Madison in old age was very feeble. He was reclining on a sofa when he requested a visitor to draw a chair near him and added, "Strange as it may appear, I always talk better when I *lie*."†

Mr. Madison, although always described as small and slight and inferentially physically weak, lived to be eighty five. He died on the morning of the 28<sup>th</sup> of June, 1836. He was born on the 5<sup>th</sup> of March, 1751, old style; or on the 16<sup>th</sup> of the new.

To Richard Cutts:

Montpellier. July 5, 1836.

I could never doubt your sympathy, dear brother, and require it much now. When can you come and see me? I hope it will be soon, relying on that hearty welcome always in store for you, and each one of your dear children, who have been even as my own. I wish you would see Mr. Morris at the Highlands, and say to him from me that his friendship is a dear consolation. I prize his advice, and, as from my early and most faithful friend, will strive to follow that contained in his letter

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\*General Isaac Shelby—Governor of Kentucky. Voted a gold medal for his conduct in the invasion of Canada, War 1812.

†*In Memoriam: Benjamin Ogle Tayloe.*

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

of the 1st as well as any other which he may extend to me when he visits Montpellier. \* \* \* I would write more, dear Richard, but have no power over my confused and oppressed mind to speak fully of the enduring goodness of my beloved husband. He left me many pledges of his confidence and love; especially do I value his writings. From the procedure of the first part of the "Debates in the Convention," I have to pay donations to several institutions. My brother and son are making a copy to send to England.

Adieu, with love,

Dolly P. Madison.\*

Mrs. Madison received letters of sympathy from the most eminent and her responses were counterparts of literary excellence.

The Congress of the United States conferred upon her the frank privilege.† It passed condolatory resolutions and the President transmitted them with a personal condolence:

Washington, July 9, 1836.

Madam,—It appearing to have been the intention of Congress to make me the organ of assuring you of the profound respect entertained by both its branches for your person and character, and of their sincere condolence in the late afflicting dispensation of Providence, which has at once deprived you of a beloved companion, and your country of one of its most valued citizens, I perform that duty by transmitting the documents herewith enclosed.

No expression of my own sensibility at the loss sustained by yourself and the nation could add to the consolation to be derived from these high evidences of the public sympathy. Be assured, madam, that there is not one of your countrymen who feels more poignantly the blow which has fallen upon you, or who will cherish with a more enduring constancy the memory of the virtues,

\**Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison.*

†*Statutes at Large, July 2, 1836. V. 107.*

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

the services, and the purity of the illustrious man whose glorious and patriotic life has just been terminated by a tranquil death.

I have the honor to be, madam, your most obedient servant,

Andrew Jackson.

To Mrs. D. P. Madison, Montpelier, Virginia

To the President, Mrs. Madison replied :

Montpelier, August 20, 1836.

I received, sir, in due time, your letter conveying to me, the resolutions Congress were pleased to adopt on the occasion of the death of my beloved husband,—A communication made, the more grateful by the kind expression of your sympathy which it contained.

The high and just estimation of my husband by my countrymen and friends, and their generous participation in the sorrow occasioned by our irretrievable loss (expressed through their supreme authorities and otherwise) are the only solace of which my heart is susceptible on the departure of him who had never lost sight of that consistency, symmetry and beauty of character in all its parts, which secured to him the love and admiration of his country, and which must ever be the subject of peculiar and tender reverence to one whose happiness was derived from their daily and constant exercise.

The best return I can make for the sympathy of my country is to fulfil the sacred trust his confidence reposed in me, that of placing before it and the world what his pen prepared for their use,—a legacy the importance of which is deeply impressed on my mind.

With great respect,

D. P. Madison.

To the President of the United States.

In the autographic collection of James F. Hood, Esq., is this letter :

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

Washington, D. C., July 13th 1836.

Mrs. D. P. Madison  
Madam

The Washington National Monument Society has done me the honor of assigning to me the melancholy, yet grateful duty of communicating the enclosed resolutions, as a faint expression of their sympathy to your recent bereavement.

If your sorrows could be alleviated in proportion to the sympathy of others, they would be light indeed; for you may be assured that that sympathy is universal.

There was not a citizen of the United States, it is believed, who did not honor the illustrious deceased, while living, nor is there one who does not sincerely lament his death.

Such a life and such a death afford a consolation which can be surpassed only by the assurance that he has gone to receive his reward.

I beg you, Madam, to be assured, of my deep personal sympathy in your affliction, and of the perfect respect with which I am your obed<sup>t</sup> serv<sup>t</sup>.

W. Cranch, 1st V. Prest of  
the Washn. Monument Society.

Madison was the President of the Society, succeeding Chief Justice Marshall, the first President.

Mr. Madison's will is dated April 15, 1835. To Mrs. Madison he devised Montpelier subject to a charge of nine thousand dollars; the Washington (Dolly Madison house) property; and bequeathed the proceeds of the Constitution papers subject to charges aggregating about twelve thousand dollars, principally bequests to educational institutions. Mr. Madison valued these papers at fifty thousand dollars; largely in excess over the amount realized through them.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

Says Mr. Madison in his will:

Considering the peculiarity and magnitude of the occasion which produced the convention at Philadelphia in 1787, the characters who composed it, the constitution which resulted from their deliberations, its effects during a trial of so many years on the prosperity of the people living under it, and the interest it has inspired among the friends of free government, it is not an unreasonable interference that a careful and extended report of the proceedings of that body, which were with closed doors, by a member who was constant in attendance, will be particularly gratifying to the people of the United States, and to all who take an interest in the progress of political science and the cause of true liberty.

Madison's last message. It is in the handwriting of Mrs. Madison.

### Advice to my Country.

As this advice, if it ever see the light will not do it till I am no more it may be considered as issuing from the tomb when the truth alone can be respected, and the happiness of man alone consulted. It will be entitled therefore to whatever weight, can be derived from good intentions, and from the experience of one, who has served his Country in various stations through a period of forty years, who espoused in his youth and adhered through his life to the cause of its liberty and who has borne a part in most of the transactions which will constitute epochs of its destiny.

The advice nearest to my heart and dearest in my convictions is that the Union of the States be cherished and perpetuated. Let the open enemy to it be regarded as a Pandora with her box opened; and the disguised one, as the serpent creeping with his deadly wiles into Paradise.

Madison.\*

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\**Writings of James Madison.* Gaillard Hunt. Signed by Madison.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

Mrs. Madison to Mr. Clay:

Montpeler, November 8, 1836.

The continued and very severe affection of my eyes, not permitting, but with much difficulty, even the signature of my name, has deferred, dear friend, the acknowledgments due for your very kind and very acceptable letter of August 18th. I should sooner have resorted for this purpose to the pen of an amanuensis, but that the failure of my general health combining equal, and sometimes greater suffering, rendered dictation very painful, and hope still flattered me that I might yet use my own. So much time having elapsed with little improvement in my situation, I can submit no longer delay in offering this explanation of my silence, nor omit the expression of my deep sensibility to that pure and true sympathy which I am conscious I receive from such highly valued friends as Mrs. Clay and yourself.

The sources of consolation in my bereavement which you suggest, are those which my heart can most truly appreciate. The reflected rays of his virtues still linger around me, and my mind now dwells with calmer feelings on their mellowed tints. He left me, too, a charge, dear and sacred, and deeply impressed with its value to his fame, and its usefulness to his country. The important trust sustained me under the heavy pressure of recent loss, and formed an oasis to the desert it created in my feelings.

In fulfillment of his wishes I have, therefore devoted myself to the object of having prepared for the press the productions of his pen. It will form the surest evidence of his claim to the gratitude of his country and the world. With the aid of my brother, who has prepared copies of the debates in the Revolutionary Congress and in the Convention, under Mr. Madison's eye, triplicates have been completed for publication here and abroad. My son went, in July, as far as New York, and remained there for the purpose of negotiating with the most eminent publishers, and I have had communi-

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

cation with those in other cities, but no offer has been made by any entitled to confidence, which would free me from heavy and inconvenient advances and the risk of impositions and eventual loss. Under these circumstances I have been advised by a friend to offer the work to the patronage of Congress, asking their aid so far as to relieve the work from the charges upon it, principally for literary and other benevolent purposes, and, after their use by Congress, to give me the stereotype plates. This would at once allow me to throw them into general circulation on a scale that would remunerate me more in accordance with the expectations entertained by their author, and would also allow the price to be so graduated as to insure their general diffusion.

As this plan was suggested by one favorable to the Administration, he advised also that the channel of his friends, as the majority of those who were to decide on the proposition, should be employed in making it, and pledged their support. This work being a record only of what passed preceding the existence of present parties, can not associate the name of Madison with either, and therefore its introduction and advocacy by the one can be no bar to the favor of the other. On your part, I am sure that, in my yielding to it this direction, you will perceive no deviation from the high respect and friendly regard I entertain toward yourself, but approving an adoption of this course as most conducive to success, you will, with your friends, insure it on the merits of the work alone, uninfluenced by adversary feeling toward the source from whence the measures originated.

It was my intention to have gone to Washington, principally with a view to obtain in personal conference the advice of my best friends, but my protracted ill health, and the approach of an inclement season I fear may prevent the journey.

In addition to the three volumes of the Debates (near six hundred pages each) now ready for the press, matter enough for another volume is expected, and nearly four

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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hundred pages copied, of writings and letters on Constitutional subjects, considerable selections have also been made from his early correspondence, which may form a volume on the legislative proceedings of Virginia, and historical letters of the period from 1780 up to the commencement of the new Government. His Congressional and Executive career may furnish two more. His writings already in print, as "Political Observations," a pamphlet in 1795, "Examinations of the British Doctrine," etc., it is thought should be embodied with his other works for more permanent preservation.

It is important that these manuscripts should be prepared and committed to the press as early as they can follow the Debates, and the success of the latter will much facilitate the publication of the former, even if Congress should decline a like patronage to them, a mode which would be much preferred.

The near approach of the time which will call you to your Senatorial duties rendering it uncertain whether this would reach you ere your departure from home, I deem it safest to address it to Washington, whence I hope, on your safe arrival, you will favor me with an acknowledgment of its receipt and any suggestions your friendship may offer.

Accept for Mrs. Clay and yourself my affectionate respects.

Mrs. Madison communicated with the President November 15, 1836, relative to the manuscripts of Mr. Madison and he, in turn, December 6, 1836, communicated with Congress. For the manuscripts by joint resolution an appropriation was made by the Congress March 3, 1837.\* The resolution was passed by the Senate, February 20, 1837, by a vote of thirty-two to fourteen. Senators Clay, Crittenden, Preston, Rives, Robbins and

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\**Statutes at Large V. 171.* \$30,000.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

Webster advocated the measure and Senator Calhoun antagonized it.

Montpellier, April 1, 1837.

Dear Sir.

Be pleased to deliver to the order of the Secretary of State the box\* deposited with you for safe keeping containing the manuscript copy of the Debates in the Convention of 1787 and of the Debates &c in the Congress of the Confederation: and accept my thanks for your kind guardianship of them.

D. P. Madison

Richard Smith, Esq:  
Cashier of the late  
Bank of the United States.

Mr. Smith will be so obliging as to deliver the box of MS. above mentioned to the Bearer.

John Forsyth  
Secy. of State  
April 6, 1837

Highlands Geotown D. C. May 10<sup>th</sup> (Wed) 1837

Dear Mrs Madison

Among the reviving powers of Spring which I pray may shed its choicest blessings on Mont Pelier, its influence here, is, to renew the hope to my dear Mary and myself of making our so long intended visit to its Shrine, which, without even waiting for your concurrence as to time, We propose to do so on the first fair day Thursday—this plan, if not again postpon'd by some adverse fate, will bring us to the Court House on Friday evening by the Stage—

With the most affectionate remembrances of Mrs Nourse & her whole household, and with every most respectful consideration, I am ever

Yr mo. ob. st & devoted Friend

Anthony Morris

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\*See Appendix D.



BELLE VUE, WASHINGTON, D. C.



## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

Joseph Nourse all through the revolutionary war did service with the pen. From 1776 and for fifty-three years he thus served the government. When the government from Philadelphia moved, he moved as a part of it. He first owned Bellevue on the heights of suburban Georgetown. On the turnpike to Rockville, farther countryward, he built on and developed the tract whereon is now the cathedral of the Episcopal church. His son, Charles Joseph, in Philadelphia, married Rebecca, the daughter of Anthony Morris. A seer had foretold she would marry a butcher and she did marry of the War Department, the chief clerk. These Nourses who attended the government gave General Jackson the inspiration of his witty threat, he would "soon clear out the Nourserly."\* Mr. Nourse, the son, with stone quarried in the neighborhood, built the Highlands, opposite the mansion of George French, Junior. The friendship of Mrs. Madison for Mr. Morris and Rebecca was added to by the additional family. In the Nourse family to this date Mrs. Madison is a pleasant memory. Father Morris came to live permanently with Rebecca and Rebecca's husband. One visit sure he and his granddaughter made to Montpellier. There the little Miss was timid. Mr. Madison carried her on his shoulders and interested her in the pictures. "The tender mercies of the wicked are cruel" and Mr. Payne likewise carried her on his shoulders and in easy reach of the macaw to snap her finger. And Mary Nourse always abominated Mr. Payne Todd. Mrs. Madison passed hours, many times, at The Highlands.

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\**Social Life in the Early Republic.* Anne Hollingsworth Wharton.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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Mrs. Madison to Anthony Morris:

Montpellier, September 2, 1837.

Accept a thousand thanks, dear friend, for your two unanswered letters, containing the best advice in the world, and which I have followed as far as I could on my visit to the White Sulphur Springs, a new world to me, who have never left Montpellier for nearly six years, even for a day. I passed three or four days at the Warm Springs, and two weeks at the White Sulphur, drinking moderately at the waters, and bathing my poor eyes a dozen times a day. The effect was excellent. My health was strengthened to its former standing, and my eyes grew white again; but in my drive home of six days in the dust they took the fancy to relapse a little; still I cannot refrain from expressing with my own pen (forbidden by you) my grateful sense of your kind friendship on every occasion.

I met with many relations and friends on "my grand tour," and had every reason to be gratified, but for my own sad, impatient spirit, which continually dwelt on my duties at home yet unfinished. In truth, my five weeks' absence from Montpellier made me feel as if I had deserted my duties, and therefore was not entitled to the kindness everywhere shown me, and so I am at home at work again.\*

Quoted in *Historic Homes in Washington*. Mary S. Lockwood:

I took her to be sixty or seventy years old. The same smile played upon her features, and the same look of benevolence and good nature beamed in her countenance. She had lost the stately and Minerva-like motion which once distinguished her in the house of the President, where she moved with the grace and dignity of a queen; but her manner of receiving was gracious and kind, and her deportment was quiet and collected. She

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\**Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison.*

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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received all visitors with the same attention and kindly greeting.

She remarked that a new generation seemed to have sprung up. "What a difference," said she, "it makes in society. Here are young men and women who were not born when I was here last, whose names are familiar to me, but whose faces are unknown. I seem suddenly to have awakened after a dream of twenty years, to find myself surrounded by strangers." "Ah! Madam," remarked one of the ladies, "the city is no longer what it was when you were the mistress of the White House. Your successors have been sickly, tame, spiritless and indifferent. The mansion you made so charming and attractive, is now almost inaccessible. The present incumbent has no female relative to preside over it, and seems so much absorbed in party politics that he will scarcely open the house to those who wish to see it. The very tone of society has been affected by these changes. At one time such was the bitterness of party feeling that no visits were exchanged between those belonging to the administration and those in opposition. Almost all the old citizens are now excluded from office, and brawlers, broken merchants, disbanded officers and idle young men have been put in their places. But society is beginning to improve, and the fashionables of all parties mingle more harmoniously. Foreigners, now, as in your day, are all the go. A poor attaché, a gambling ambassador, a beggarly German baron, or a nominal French count, is preferred to the most substantial and accomplished citizen among the young women at this Court."

The Senate bill authorizing Mrs. Madison to publish in foreign countries any of the papers purchased by the government was passed by the House, October 13, 1837.\*

Journal of John Quincy Adams:

October 24. (1837). This morning I visited Mrs. Madison, who has come to take up her residence in this

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\*October 14, 1837. *Statutes at Large V. 205.*

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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city. I had not seen her since March, 1809. The deprecations of time are not so perceptible in her personal appearance as might be expected. She is a woman of placid appearance, equable temperament, and less susceptible of laceration of the scourges of the world abroad than most others. \* \* \* The succeeding twenty years (after Madison's presidency) she has passed in retirement—so long as he lived, with him, and now upwards of a year since his decease. She intended to have removed to this place last autumn, but was prevented by an inflammatory disease in her eyes, from which she has almost wholly recovered. There is no trace of it in her appearance now.

The children were a part of the parties in Mrs. Madison's time.

From Mr. Adams' journal, again:

November 2. (1837.) "Attended the sociable party to which I had been invited by Mrs. Forsyth. President Van Buren and his son Martin were there, Mr. Martini, Chargé d'Affaires from Belgium, Mr. Cavalcanti d'Albuquerque, the Chargé d'Affaires from Brazil, with his lately married wife and sister, Miss Okey, of New York.\* Miss Hughes, who Mrs. Meigs, Mrs. Forsyth's mother, told me was engaged to Mr. Tacon, two Miss Macombs, Major Macomb, and the General's son, Mr. Forsyth's children, six or seven daughters, and one boy about twelve years old. Mrs. Meigs told me that Mrs. Madison had engaged to be there, but had sent this evening an excuse—her eyes being unable to bear the light. The conversation was pleasant, easy, and truly sociable."

Mrs. Meigs love to Mrs. Madison and begs her acceptance of some boxes of guava marmalade & jelly which my daughter gave me--& I hope you are well.

Wednesday evening.

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\*Miss Oakey married Mr. d'Albuquerque.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

Mr. Clay to Francis Brooke :

Washington, December 19, 1837.

My Dear Sir,—I received your favor of the 17th. Mr. Madison's Journal is not yet ordered to be printed, and, without any such object in the delay, it may lead to the benefit of Mrs. Madison, by allowing the sale and diffusion of the European edition of the work. When printed by Congress, I will recollect your wish to obtain a copy.

The Dolly Madison House was built by Mr. Richard Cutts. It is at the corner of Madison Place and H street. Mr. Cutts became involved in debt and for advances by Mr. Madison, the property was transferred to him\* and by him devised to the widow. Here she held court just as she did in the Mansion just beyond and slightly hidden by the trees and the distinguished who visited the President and his consort in turn visited her. Her board may not have been so bountifully laden as in the former days for she at times was much embarrassed. This inconvenient condition was due to the demands of her son, John Payne Todd, for she had had an ample fortune. The house is described by the Misses Jane and Eliza Wilkes, daughters of Admiral Wilkes, who acquired the property :

It was then (1837) a small two-story-and-attic structure, having a gable roof which sloped east and west and

\*Extract from memorandum by Mr. Madison :

Mr. M. agreed to purchase the House and lots of Mr. Cutts in the City of Washington under the following circumstances. A considerable sum had been left under the control of Mr. Cutts subject to the call of Mr. M. which it was expected would be delayed for a very short time. Before the call was made Mr. Cutts yielding to sanguine calculations both of as to profit and the prompt means of replacing the money applied the fund to flattering speculations.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

which was provided with dormer windows. It had no back building, and the principal entrance to the house, reached by plain wooden steps, was at the corner where a window now is on the Lafayette Square front. The yard or garden extended south to the Tayloe mansion on the Lafayette Square side, and east to the middle of the square on the H Street side.

Here, so near by the President's, Dolly had *her* plum tree. The plums she dispensed were good things, and richer than Tyrian purple. When Dolly shook the plum tree there was a plum for many, bursting with juicy meat.

The PRESIDENT  
Requests the honor of  
Mrs Madison's  
Company at dinner Friday the 24<sup>th</sup> Nov.  
at 5. oClock.

The favor of an Answer is desired.

Mrs. Madison's social activity immediately ensuing her return to the realm of her former social reign may be better impressed by an exhibit of her memoranda of functions at which she was a guest.

List of dinners:

November	24, 1837.	The President.
January	10, 1838.	Mefsrs. Clay, Mr. & Mrs. Crittenden.
	18	The President.
	19	The Secretary of State.
	23	Mr. Memucum Hunt, Minister Plep from Texas.
		The Mifs at Mrs. Lindenbergers.
		Mr. & Mrs. Preston.
February	8	Mr. & Mrs. Poinsett.
	17	Mr. & Mrs. Woodbury.
March	1	Genl Van Nefs.
	17	Mr. & Mrs. Webster, and Mr. & Mrs. Curtis.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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Evening parties attended:

December 11, 1837.	Mrs. Gilpin.
	Mrs. Kerr.
	Mrs. C. Cutts.
13	Mrs. Poinsett.
January 8	Mrs. Forsyth.
16	Mrs. Hill.
March 7	The Minister of France.
12	Mr. and Mrs. Polk.
13	Mrs. Alex. Hunter.
20	Mrs. Pleasonton.

Mrs. Madison made a list of her calls at this period. Her visiting list included the higher officials of the government, legislative, judicial and departmental, and the old residents of the city and its environs. She utilized for her visiting list a congressional directory making additions, as Mrs. and Miss, and alterations and explanations.

Mrs. Madison's list included residents of the extreme ends of the city and of country seats. She had constant offers of private carriages to make her social journeys.

Gen. Van Nefs requests the honor of Mrs Madison's Company at dinner, on Thursday, 1<sup>st</sup> of March. at 5 O'Clock.

Mansion Square  
22<sup>d</sup> Feby (1838)

The favor of an Answer is desired.

The journal of John Quincy Adams:

March 15. (1838.) Mrs. Madison had requested that I would call to see her, and I went last evening. Her object was to consult me respecting the publication of her late husband's manuscripts, and she said she had concluded to have one volume of correspondence, concern-

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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ing constitutional questions since 1829, published immediately by the Harpers, at New York.

Some business arrangement between Mrs. Madison and the Harpers was consummated. Payne, the son, wrote of disputes and differences in the settlement—the invariable happening in all affairs he managed for his mother.\*

From Mrs. Madison to Mrs. Smith:

Montpellier, Sept. 10th, 1838.

Yours, of the 6th my ever dear friend has come to make me blush for my delinquency, nor will I now add a long apology for an ungracious silence, as is sometimes done in such cases, but simply tell you that on my arrival at home after a warm and dusty ride, I found myself involved in a variety of business—reading, writing, and flying about the house, garden, and grove—straining my eyes to the height of my spirits, until they became inflamed, and frightened into idleness and to quietly sitting in drawing-room with my kind connexions and neighbours—sometimes talking like the *farmeress*, and often acting the Character from my rocking chair; being thus obliged to give up one of my most prized enjoyments that of corresponding with enlightened and loved friends like yourself.

\* \* \* In truth, I am dissatisfied with the location of Montpellier from which I can never separate myself entirely, when I think how happy I should be if it joined Washington, where I could see you always, and my valued acquaintances also of that city, among the first of whom is dear Mrs. Bomford.

When you see our amiable neighbours, of the whole square, present me most kindly to them—also to Mrs. Lear Mrs. Thornton and Mrs. Graham.

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\*Nov. 21, 1843. My dear Mother—I am to confer with one of the Harpers as soon as I can see him about a difference in balance in your favor.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

I left some things of great value to me in my house and am glad to find from John's\* account that the depre-  
dation did not amount to more than petty larceny.†

The acclaim with which Mrs. Madison was received must have made her happy. It is inconsistent with the attributes of humanity, to think otherwise; and her hap-  
piness shone in the smiles. Yet the smiling must have been through tears for her heart was heavy with grief in the declining part of the year, 1838.

So the cheek may be tinged with a warm sunny smile,  
Though the cold heart to ruin runs darkly the while.  
—Moore.

The Cutts children since motherless were her children; she to them and they to her, felt the tender office.

In September of that year, the second born, the nephew died.

*Daily National Intelligencer*, October 3, 1838:

At Fort Jesup, Louisiana, on the 2d of last September, after a short illness, First Lieut. Thomas Cutts, Third Infantry, son of the Hon. Richard Cutts, of this city.

The death of this young officer brings inconsolable grief to his wife and children, to his father and family, and to the friends of his early childhood here.

In December the fifth born, the beloved namesake Dolly Payne Madison passed away. Between the two were the motherly and daughterly letters; the former counselling and encouraging, the latter news-telling and advice-asking.

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\*Mr. Sioussat, former domestic at the Executive Mansion.

†*Forty Years of Washington Society*. The Smith residence was the present 734 Fifteenth Street.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

*Daily National Intelligencer*, December 14, 1838.

Yesterday morning, at 8 o'clock, Miss Dolly Payne Madison Cutts, eldest daughter of the honorable Richard Cutts of this city. Her funeral will take place from the residence of her father, in Fourteenth street, tomorrow, (Saturday) at 11 o'clock A.M. which the friends of the family are invited to attend without further notice.

Be affable and courteous in youth, that  
You may be honour'd in age.

—Lilly's Sappho and Phaon.

Mrs. Madison's affability was in youth—throughout—and in age. In youth she was courteous to age and in age, she was bending to youth. It is no wonder, then, that in age she was honored by youth and that youth courted her presence and withdrew every limitation that might discourage it.

Bal Costumé

Mrs. Weightman requests the pleasure of Mrs. Madison's company on Thursday evening the 21<sup>st</sup> of Feb. at 8 o'clock in Fancy Costume.

Thursday Jany 31<sup>st</sup> (1839)

My dear Madam

Understanding that you feel some difficulty in coming to the Fancy Ball in Fancy Costume, allow me to say that I shall be most happy to see you in your usual drefs—

I am dear Madam

Yrs most cordially

Serena L. Weightman

Miss Serena was the daughter of General Roger C. Weightman. General Weightman was a bookseller and had his literary exchange at the corner of Pennsylvania

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

avenue and Sixth street where is the National Hotel. He succeeded General Walter Jones as Major General. He was Mayor when General Lafayette came. He from cordiality and yet unthinkingly invited to a Fourth of July dinner, Sir Charles Vaughan. He overlooked that the buncombe served might be unpalatable to the British Minister. Sir Charles "was a finished diplomat;" he was not insulted for he caught the spirit of the invitation and indited a polite response that he thought he should be indisposed on the Fourth of July.\*

Angelica Singleton of South Carolina, a cousin of Mrs. Madison, was by her introduced to President Van Buren. The introduction was by appointment; and the family of Senator Preston was of the party. In the year following, 1838, and in November, she was married to Major Van Buren, the President's eldest son. The daughter-in-law was the First Lady during Van Buren's and the fact is a consequent circumstance to Mrs. Madison's intermedium. It is hereinbefore, March 30, 1830, that Mrs. Madison was disappointed with the failure of a coalition between her niece, Dolly, and the handsome Abraham. The second offering of a relative to the Van Buren marital altar did not fail.

The *Boston Post* has:

The Executive Mansion was a place of much more than usual attraction in consequence of the first appearance there of the bride of the President's son and private secretary, Mrs. Abram Van Buren. \* \* \* A constant current set from the President's house to the modest mansion of the much respected lady of ex-President Madison.

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\*Perley's *Reminiscences of Sixty Years in the National Metropolis*. Ben. Perley Poore.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

To Mrs. Madison:

As we were disappointed in tasting the French preserves at dinner on Saturday I bring you a bottle of strawberries now—I am very anxious to see you for a few minutes to consult you on a very important subject & therefore will call again in about an hour.

thine ever

S. A. V. B.—

March 8<sup>th</sup> 1839

My dear Madam,

I send you a few of the oranges which we have just received from Charleston—

I regret that they are so much injured by transportation, that our supply is so much diminished, that we cannot send you another dozen, as we intended—

With kindest love to Cousin Anna I remain ever yours—Adieu—

S. A. V. B.—

We are off this evening—

The tribute to Mrs. John Quincy Adams to Mrs. Madison is by one most illustrious in the line of American Queens.

I received your Letter yesterday, my Dear Mary and am sorry to learn that Mrs Madison is unwell—I hope that change of air will prove beneficial to her and that she will return home rebraced; for renewed conquest next winter—There are few Ladies who retained their power over the heart of mankind so *long* as she has through the winning attraction of her manner and conversation—

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\*

Mrs Thornton seems quite happy with us. Mrs Charles has another fine Boy ten lbs and a half when he was born, and looks as if he had formed to play his part in this at present murderous world at least with good

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

fists to fight his way—He is four weeks old on Saturday next—No name at present—

Adieu! Mary and Louisa are well and desire remembrance to you. \* \* \*

Louisa Catherine Adams.

Mrs Madison presents her best respects to the Managers of the "Bachelors' Ball" and regrets that she cannot have the pleasure of being present at their entertainment, which promises as ever a high gratification.

Mrs. Madison to her niece, Mrs. Lucy H. Conway:\*

Washington, February 2, 1839.

I hope, my dear Lucy, that you will forgive an appearance of neglect which my silence may have implied since the receipt of your kind letter, when I assure you that such a feeling toward you shall never come into my mind. I have waited some intimation of a speedy appointment from the secretary in favor of W. Williams, but I am constrained to tell you that none such have been made. I find he considers himself in the right to make no promises, but to bestow the vacancies as they occur and as midshipmen are required to complete equipments of ships and smaller vessels—Wesley may be summoned in his turn, but when is the question that cannot be answered. I will continue to remind him of the wishes and merit of the applicant and however tedious the suspense may seem, I think success must crown him at last. I should rejoice to hear that your health and spirits were better, my dear Lucy, as I consider it the positive duty of those who are afflicted to exert their religion and their reason in favor of resignation, cheerfully allowing the flowers to spring up in the heart which Providence sees fit to wither for a time that we may be sensible of our unstable hold on the blessings of this world from which I believe it a mercy to the just and pure spirit to be recalled.

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\*Belongs to Mrs. Kate Conway Macon Paulson, Sewickley, Pa.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

Mr. R. M. Newman says that the little paper box is preserved which was presented to his parents on his birth (1843) at their homestead, Hilton, adjoining Montpelier. The box contained a baby dress and cap. With the gift was a slip of paper, now on the box, in Mrs. Madison's handwriting: "For Lewis Cass." As the father disliked Cass as Mrs. Madison admired him; the gentle hint had only its humor.

Mrs. Nelly C. Willis of Orange, Virginia, has this reminiscence of Mrs. Madison's charming wifely partiality:

It seems Uncle James was very fond of telling anecdotes which Aunt Dolly would applaud unto the third and fourth edition of the same tale, remarking that Mr. Madison's stories were always so good they could stand repetition.

I have received Sir, your letter of March the 30th requesting a copy of Mr. Madison's Will, which you suppose may have been printed—I am not aware that this has ever been done, or that such a proceeding could be considered necessary to any one I must therefore respectfully decline furnishing a copy of it for your friend in England.

D. P. Madison

Mr. Tappan  
April 3<sup>d</sup> 1839

This publication is mainly of letters. The merit of the letters makes the merit of the publication. The letters of Mrs. Preston are dew with the flowers, freshness and sweetness. The literary flowers of Mrs. Preston are the symbols of a soul, sincere and stainless.

Mrs. Madison was the harmonizer of her day. Her home was the shrine of true friendships, free of the alloy of asperities of creeds and codes and all that excite

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

rivalries, jealousies and antagonisms. Her presence that had the influence of peace be unto you was sought by those who appreciate that benign quality.

Robert Young Hayne, the champion of State rights, had in forensic encounter in the forum met Daniel Webster, the champion of the Union. The effort of the young Carolinian has given him historic immortality. He had become the Governor of South Carolina and his successor in the Senate was William Campbell Preston, the husband of Mrs. Preston who indited the charming notes.

William Campbell Preston was born in Philadelphia. His mother was Sarah Campbell before her marriage; the Sally Campbell who was the companion of Dolly in her girlhood and young wifhood days. Master Preston lived awhile with the Madison family in the President's palace; and of his visit there he, himself, tells in his springy style. He was maternally related to Patrick Henry and equal to him in oratory. He was the friend of Washington Irving; they made a tramp together in Scotland. He relinquished Senatorial honor rather than abide dictation. He accepted the presidency of the University of South Carolina. He was a classical scholar and had classic features. As to the latter distinguishment one can for one's self see—his portrait by G. P. A. Healy is in the National Gallery at Washington. That a helpmeet is heaven's blessing not to be overlooked was his notion for he had two.

Of the tribute in *The Charleston Mercury*, May 26, 1860 is:

His aversion—perhaps his difficulty in writing, with the consciousness that he could not faithfully portray himself in the spontaneous efforts of his oratory—led

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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him to neglect committing to writing his chief exhibitions of eloquence. His manners—his wit—his oratory, must all be traditional. One of his distinguished contemporaries mentioned to us, his personification when in circuit, in playfulness, of Mercutio, at a little country inn. Although he had often seen the character portrayed on the stage, he never comprehended it before. A new and sudden blaze, was thrown over the conception of SHAKESPEARE.

It is to be noticed that Mrs. Preston has adopted General Washington's designation of the city of Washington—the Federal City—of the fanciful names to the writer the most pleasing.

My dear Madam

The daughters of Dr Ramsay of our state & Miss Hayne daughter of our former Senator are to pass this evening with us—

Will you deem me over bold if I again beg your presence? We are trying to show them what is most worthy of note in our Federal City & we feel if they do not make your acquaintance they will have missed its chiefest attraction, & therefore trust to see you & cousin Annie when the shades of evening fall—

Yours with respectful love

L. P. Preston

Washington

My dear Madam

We are now your tenant and this idea enhances the agreeableness of our new situation, which, of itself, is very charming at this season—your kindness in this particular adds to many kindnesses that I am proud to remember. I sincerely wish that you could furnish me some occasion to shew my willingness to serve you.

You have doubtless heard of poor Angelica's misfortune. She is doing however pretty well & the doctors tell me she is beyond danger.



MRS. MADISON  
By Joseph Wood



## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

With affectionate salutations, I am Dear Madam with the highest respst

Yr friend best

Wm C. Preston

2nd April 40

Mrs. Madison.

Thursday—

My dear Madam

Will you dine with us on Saturday next at 6 Oclk—

Mr & Mrs Abbott Laurence from Boston, have promised us to do so & Mrs Laurence is exceedingly anxious to make your acquaintance—She intends waiting on you tomorrow but her pleasure will be increased, by having a LARGER opportunity of seeing you which I trust you will afford her by meeting her at our house on next Saturday.

With cousinly greetings to your Annie I am Dear Mrs Madison with

respectful affection

Yours &c &c

L. P. Preston

23d April

Is it not a delicious fancy, a delightful trick of unselfishness, or something of Quixotic pleasantry, that the tenant invite the landlady to come and abide with her?

My dear Madam

It has been in my heart to write to you for many days past—Indeed ever since we found ourselves ensconced in the comfortable quarters you so kindly vouchsafed us we have intended to thank you in good set terms.

We almost fancy ourselves in our own shady quiet home when we look out upon the trees and grass & hear Birds, instead of Auction Bells & hacks as we daily did on Pennsylvania Avenue.

Now that I have enumerated such causes of content you would hardly my dear Mrs Madison expect me to

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

acknowledge that we crave another Boon at your hands—yet so it is & I would not be a daughter of Eve did I not desire more than has been given me—we want you to give us *yourself*—the roads are good the weather balmy & if you and cousin Anna will be room mates we shall be delighted to have you as inmates of *our* house—

Everybody in the City will be pleased to see you—Mrs Singleton who is on a visit & Mrs Van Buren will particularly so—poor Angelica is getting over her disappointment: especially since her Mother's arrival has she been comforted—her baby girl lived but two hours—

I met Miss Cutts at Miss Tayloe's the other night, quite well—not long since Mr Preston passed the evg pleasantly with her Father & self playing whist—

Whenever you are not better employed we beg you to drop us a line—Both Mr Preston & Sally beg to be remembered to you & your niece—Pray greet her for yours with respectful affection

Louise P. Preston—

Mr. Preston occupied the Dolly Madison house in 1840; Mr. John Jordan Crittenden, Attorney-General, in 1841; Mr. James J. Roosevelt, a Member of Congress from New York, in 1843.

Francis Preston Blair was of the Virginia stock and he was born at Abingdon. He had the education for editorial work and was the editor of *The Globe*, a Democratic paper published at Washington; however, he was early in the Republican party. His son by marriage, Samuel Phillips Lee, entered the United States Navy, as midshipman, 1825, and was rear-admiral when he retired, 1873.

Mrs. Madison to Mrs. Blair:

Montpellier, July 1<sup>st</sup> 1840

At length my dear Madam I am enabled to thank you for your acceptable gift by Mr. Chapman "The path-

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

finder" of our admired Cooper—It has amused some of my neighbours & myself very much, and it reminds me always of your constant kindness during my residence in Washington, which I beg you to believe will keep its place in my remembrance.

Be pleased to offer my salutations to your daughter & accept them for yourself.

Troy, October 20<sup>th</sup> 1840.

Dear Mrs Madison

Mary tells me that you have an idea of coming to New York this autumn. Mama is delighted to hear it, as she hopes to have a visit from you at Troy. You must wish to see the far famed scenery of the Hudson's river. The Steam boats come from New York here, 160 miles in about eight or ten hours—The "Troy" is the best boat—it leaves New York at 7 o'clock in the morning—you will be amused constantly during the day in admiring the splendid scenery—& the beautiful country seats which line the banks of the river. The Hudson, unlike the Potomac, is narrow, and so deep, that the Steam boats run close along the shores—you might sometimes speak to people in their houses.—

Now, when will you come! Mama desires you to let her know the exact time, that she may not be from home. She hopes that you will be able to amuse yourself for a few days—say a fortnight—she will drive you all about the neighborhood, to see every thing that is curious. Every body here will be delighted to see Mrs Madison.— I only fear they will keep you too long from us at Washington.—

Papa lives at No. 17 Second street. If you write from N. Y. to name the day when you will come up the river, he will be at the wharf to receive you, with a servant to take your baggage—the house is but a few rods from the Steam boat landing.

You disappointed us dreadfully last winter by remaining in the country. I hope you will never be so cruel again.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

Will you remember me kindly to Mrs. Paine, and believe me

dear Madam

yrs aff.

Mrs D. P. Madison  
Montpelier  
Orange County  
Virginia

Julia M. D. Tayloe

Miss Julia Marcia Dickinson, the only child of Hon. John D. Dickinson, became Mrs. Benjamin Ogle Tayloe in Troy, November 8, 1824. She was the first Mrs. Tayloe. She died July 4, 1846. Miss Phoebe Warren of Troy, April 17, 1849, became Mrs. Tayloe, the second.

Mrs. Tayloe speaks of the speed of the steamboat made on the Hudson where Fulton, thirty seven years before, August 11, 1807, made the first successful trip with the Clermont.

And here it is appropriate to quote that poet prophet, Erasmus Darwin, who in 1781, caught the far future:

Soon shall thy arm, unconquer'd steam! afar  
Drag the slow barge, or drive the rapid car;  
Or on wide-waving wings expanded bear  
The flying chariot through the field of air.

I am truly sorry my good friend that the cow should behave so badly, but still hope that she will return to the kind protection of your family—if she has failed however to do so until this time and you think it best you will advertise her (as your own).

I enclose \$10 to reconcile the little ones for their fatigue as well as for the honor you may do the wanderer by announcing her in a newspaper.

D. P. Madison.\*

Mr John Sioussat.

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\*Both letters to Mr. Sioussat are from *The First Master of Ceremonies of the White House*. John H. McCormick, M.D.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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Mrs. Madison considerateness for the indebted Doctor gives a possible opportunity for an application to herself, further on: *With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.*

Mr Sioussat,

I am glad, Sir, and obliged by your letter of the 5th. telling me that my home was in order through your acceptable attention to the repairs ect. and I wish I could be there to see it but the indisposition of my niece Miss Payne has made it impossible for us to set out for Washington during the last two weeks she is now better, but the weather and roads continue the uncertainty of our leaving home. I therefore enclose you \$40 to reimburse you and if J. M. Cutts does not settle with Mr. Harvey I will do so on receipt of his bill. I regret having applied to Dr. Lanior for \$200 when it was inconvenient for him to pay it but have no doubt of his doing so when better health enables him to think of and attend to business, until which we wait for him, and I must still trouble you to care for my little establishment which I would transfer for a time to some friends if I did not still hope to return to it this winter.

With good wishes for yourself and family,

D. P. Madison\*

Montpellier

Dec. 10th. 40

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\*Both letters, *loc. cit.*

Life and Letters of Dolly Madison



## CHAPTER VIII

1841-1844

Washington Dist of Col March 9—1841

To Mrs D. Madison,

WILL you my kind, and early friend, excuse the liberty which I am about to take? I am prompted by the remembrance of by-gone days, and by the confidence reposed in me by your illustrious husband, to ask a favor of you. You know I was honored by Mr. Madison with a call to preside over the then Indian Trade Department; and afterwards by Mr Monroe, to organize a bureau in connexion with the War Department, & to manage our Indian Relations. I believe I succeeded to the entire satisfaction of the Government, the country, & the Indians. It was G<sup>l</sup> Jackson's pleasure to proscribe me—I was, without cause, driven to herd with the cattle, or to live as I might. This power is prostrate. A new, and as I hope and believe, a better day has dawned upon us. I have been constantly in the field, batt'ling for the change that has been made—The victory won, I am before the Executive, with the arrow of proscription yet in me, asking by the mouths of the citizens (Whigs I mean) of Four States, to be restored to my former position, as Commifsioner of Indian Affairs. Will you do me the great kindness to address a letter to President Harrison, in my behalf, and ask him to restore me to the place I once occupied? And if you please, at your *earliest* convenience—for, you know, Doctor Young says—"Even gold may come a day too late"—

I hope you are well—happy you must be—May a kind Providence preside over and blefs you—With my kind regards to your Son, I am yours most respectfully, & most gratefully—

Tho. L. M. Kenney—

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

That Mrs. Sewall was Rufus Choate's sister Mary was not the cause of Dr. Thomas Sewall's celebrity. The Doctor was celebrated in his own right. He is on a most elevated eminence in the medical history of Washington city. He was of the founders in medical organizations and of the staff in institutions of medical teaching. He wrote medical essays and some were translated for the foreigners to read. In the History of the Medical Society of the District of Columbia is a picture of a handsome man in perfect health and also a biographical sketch of the Doctor which with attempted brevity is somewhat of length because of numerous honors and stations.

Washington City  
June 8, 1841

Dear Madam

Yesterday your nephew Mr. Cutts called on me & informed me that you were still a good deal troubled with your old complaint the ophthalmia & that you desired me to send you a little more of the ointment. I have accordingly procured a small box of it & enclose it by mail. I hope that you will still find it useful. I have generally found it more efficacious by using it not more than a week at a time & then remitting its use for a few days. I send you but a small quantity as it is better to be fresh & I hope also, that before you need another supply, we shall have the pleasure of seeing you in Washington. We understand that you may be here in Oct. a season of the year when you can travel with safety & comfort.

Your friends here are all quite well at present. Mr. S. H. Smith had a severe illness about the time that the President died, but has fully recovered & Mrs. Smith I think has been in better health than for many years.

Mr. Crittenden & family are now occupying your house which gives it an air of cheerfulness which it much needed.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

Mr. C. Cutts's sons were restored to office & are doing exceedingly well. They are fine steady promising young men & enjoy the friendship & confidence of all.

Mr. M. St. Clark as you have doubtless seen is restored to the clerkship of the House, a situation which he much needed.

Should you come to W. & spend the winter you will find here a large number of your old friends, who have been long absent.

Be pleased to present my best regards to your son & to Miss Paine.

With sentiments of the highest consideration & regard  
Tho. Sewall.

Mr. Roosevelt's wife, Cornelia, was a famous beauty.\*

Montpellier Aug<sup>t</sup> 1<sup>t</sup> 41

Dear Sir—I had the gratification to find myself kindly remembered in yours to my son, of July 24<sup>th</sup> and you will be assured that I appreciate your regard, whilst I am sensible of having rec<sup>d</sup> so many proofs of it.

I fully intend to occupy my House in the square next winter the value of which would be greatly enhanced by Mr. Roosevelt's building for himself a better habitation on the Lot between Mrs. Tayloe & myself.

Affect<sup>e</sup> salutation to Mrs. Smith & your daughters from their fd

D. P. M.

Good fortune is like the tree in summer full-leaved and evil fortune like the tree in winter barren of foliage. In good fortune the friends are as the numberless leaves; in evil fortune all are fallen away. No, not all, always blow away, a few sometimes cling till the Spring comes and other leaves replace. Adversity, it is the sentiment of Lord Greville, is the touchstone of merit and the

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\*James J. Roosevelt married Cornelia, daughter of Cornelius P. Van Ness.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

meritorious exhibit the quality in acts of kind interest toward the victim of adversity. He of merit toward him of adversity does not substitute the deference of the better days with indifference. And, Mrs. Madison, bares her noble soul when she touchingly says, "my brother and his family who are in spite of their bad fortune inexpressibly dear to me."

Mrs. Madison to General James Taylor :\*

Dec. 27th 41—

I have rec<sup>d</sup> y<sup>r</sup> kind letter d<sup>r</sup> friend with feelings of much interest. To find myself still remembered by y<sup>r</sup> estimable lady & daughter is gratifying to that attachment I cherish for you & them—& I thank you both for the kindness you have shown to my brother & his family who are in spite of their bad fortune inexpressibly dear to me—I still hope that adversity will not always follow them in their adopted country, & that smiling days still await them—my first wish on their leaving us was that they should stop in Ky or O. & since they have come to the margin of both states—I trust William will contribute to their comfort as you d<sup>r</sup> f<sup>d</sup> have so amiably done.

I wish Mrs. Taylor & y<sup>r</sup> self c<sup>d</sup> have been in Washington this winter—you would witness rather a strange state of things, & found many charming people. Your old f<sup>d</sup> my sister Todd spent the last year with me—she had regained her health & much of that sprightlinefs of spirit before her return to her son W<sup>m</sup> Washington's—from whom I often hear good tidings of her. You will be pleased to hear that Mr. Clay is again well enough to resume his seat in the Senate, after some days sicknefs. All others of y<sup>r</sup> acquaintance are well & gay—My son & Anna & myself dined with Mr & Mrs Rives Xmas day where the party being all Virginian's our style of gayety for this season was revered. Accept my best wishes that it may always be a happy with you & yours—

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\*Belle Vue, Newport, Ky.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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Mrs. Robert Tyler writes:

1841.

What wonderful changes take place, my dearest M——! Here am I, née Priscilla Cooper (nez retroussé you will perhaps think), actually living in, and, what is more, presiding at—the White House! I look at myself, like a little old woman, and exclaim, “Can this be I?” I have not had one moment to myself since my arrival, and the most extraordinary thing is that I feel as if I had been used to living here always, and receive the cabinet Ministers, the Diplomatic Corps, the heads of the Army and Navy, etc., etc., with the facility which astonishes me. “Some achieve greatness, some are born to it.” I am plainly born to it. I really do possess a degree of modest assurance that surprises me more than it does any one else. I am complimented on every side; my hidden virtues are coming out. I am considered “*charmante*” by the Frenchmen, “lovely” by the Americans, and “really quite nice, you know” by the English. \* \* \* I have had some lovely dresses made, which fit me to perfection—one a pearl-colored silk that will set you crazy. \* \* \* I occupy poor General Harrison’s room. \* \* \* The nice comfortable bedroom with its handsome furniture and curtains, its luxurious arm-chairs, and all its belongings, I enjoy, I believe, more than anything in the establishment. The pleasantest part of my life is when I can shut myself up here with my precious baby. \* \* \* The greatest trouble I anticipate is paying visits. There was a doubt at first whether I must visit in person or send cards; but I asked Mrs. Madison’s advice upon the subject, and she says, return all my visits by all means. Mrs. Bache says so too. So three days in the week I am to spend three hours a day driving from one street to another in this city of magnificent distances. \* \* \* I see so many great men and so constantly, that I cannot appreciate the blessing! The fact is, when you meet them in every day life, you forget they *are* great men at all, and just find them the most charming companions in the world, talk-

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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ing the most delightful nonsense especially the almost awful-looking Mr. Webster, who entertains me with the most charming gossip.\*

Mrs. Robert Tyler again writes:

Washington, 1841.

My first state dinner is over; oh! such a long one, our first dinner in the state dining-room. I was the only lady at the table. What with the long table, the flowers, and bright and brilliant dresses and orders of "Dips," not dip candles, I felt dreadfully confused. Mr. Webster says I acquitted myself admirably. I tried to be as cheerful as possible, though I felt miserable all the time, as my baby was crying, and I received message after message to come to the nursery.

I think father is a charming host. He received his guests with so much courtesy and simplicity of manner, and I do not think his power of conversation was surpassed, or even equalled by those around him.

The British Minister, Mr. Fox, is frightful to behold; he has the reputation of great ability.†

Mrs. Thornton's Diary:

January 1842. This year commences auspiciously as regards the weather—a beautiful bright day—& all the people are gay & stirring—The president's House overflowing—Many not able to gain entrance, & those that do in fear of being crushed to death—or of losing a limb Mrs & Mrs Adams—Mrs Madison—some of the Secretaries & many private families received Company—& provided ample refreshments—

My dear Mrs. Madison

Knowing your fear of strange horses, I have made a vacant place in our carriage for you. The carriage is

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\**The Story of the White House.* Esther Singleton.

†*Historic Homes in Washington.* Mary S. Lockwood.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

close and comfortable and you can not increase your cold in riding in it—may I hope that you will let us call for you—at about a quarter past eleven. I regret that our party is so numerous that it is not in our power to offer seats to Miss Payne & Miss Legaré. Their carriage tho' can come—here & go with our party without inconveniencing them—I hope. I receive your flattering note this morning & I thank you for it—believe me most affectionately

your friend

E. P. Tyler

Mrs. Madison

My dear Mrs. Madison

Friday night I give my last party at Washington and I wish to know if it will be agreeable to you to honour me with your company. I trust that you may find it so—for it would destroy my feelings of pleasure in having my friends around me—if you were not able to be with them—with the greatest affection I remain most sincerely my dear Madam

Your friend

E. P. Tyler

Mrs. Madison

Elizabeth, the third daughter, married William Waller, of Williamsburg, Virginia, Tuesday, January 31, 1842. The marriage service was in the East Room of the Executive Mansion. She was in her nineteenth year.\*

Mrs. Robert Tyler writes:

Washington, February, 1842.

\* \* \* Lizzie has had quite a grand wedding, although the intention was that it should be quiet and private. This, under the circumstances, though was found im-

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\**Ladies of the White House.* Laura Carter Holloway.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

possible. The guests consisted of Mrs. Madison, the members of the cabinet, with their wives and daughters, the foreign ministers near the government, and some few personal friends, outside of the family and their relatives.

Lizzie looked surpassingly lovely in her wedding dress and long blonde-lace veil; her face literally covered with blushes and dimples. She behaved remarkably well, too; any quantity of compliments were paid to her. I heard one of her bridesmaids express to Mr. Webster her surprise at Lizzie consenting to give up her belleship, with all the delights of her position, and retire to a quiet Virginia home. "Ah," said he,

Love rules the court, the camp, the grove,  
And love is heaven, and heaven is love.\*

Mrs. Robert Tyler writes:

1842.

I went to the Assembly last night, matronizing five young ladies all dressed in rose color, all so lovely too—Clementina Pleasanton and Belle Stevenson, the prettiest of all. Belle has the most perfect figure and face I ever saw, and Miss Pleasanton has a style, *je ne sais quoi*, about her that makes her the most attractive of the two.

The ball was a brilliant one admirably lighted, and not crowded, the ladies all well dressed and showing to advantage. I spent a delightful evening. As I declined dancing I had the pleasure of talking to many grave senators and among the rest, had a long conversation with Mr. Southard. As we stood at the end of the room, which is the old theatre transferred into a ball-room, he said: "On the very spot where we stand, I saw the best acting I ever witnessed. I came into the theatre and took my seat by John Q. Adams. There were never two more delighted people. Mr. Adams said he had seen the same play abroad, in France and England, John Kemble and the great Talma in the part, Kean, Cook,

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\**Ladies of the White House.* Laura Carter Holloway.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

and Macready, but he had never seen it so admirably acted as then." I entirely agreed with him in his admiration, though I was not so capable of judging by comparison as he.

Mr. Southard here paused. Though my heart told me to whom he was alluding, I could not help asking him, "What was the play, and who was the actor?"

"The play was Macbeth, and the performer, Mr. Cooper."

I could not restrain the tears that sprang to my eyes, as I heard my dear father so enthusiastically spoken of. I looked around, and thought, not only had papa's footsteps trod these boards,—I looked down at the velvet dress of Mrs. Tyler, and thought of the one I wore there, six years before, as Lady Randolph, when we struggled through a miserable engagement of a few rainy nights!\*

Mrs. Madison's heartstrings must have drawn tense in the full realization of rare friendship when she read Mrs. Lee's recital of "cousin" Nancy's review of her (Mrs. Madison's) life, event to event; the visit to Baltimore; and the school days of her son under her (Nancy's) mother-like care; and with the reminder that they were all old friends of the Society of Friends, a dear family from which they all sprung.

Baltimore, Feby 16—1842

\* \* \* I found myself seated some evenings ago in a most charming circle of our old Quaker friends—at the House of that dear little cousin Nancy Poultney, as she requests me to call her, surrounded by her children—your name, and my account of you gave such life and spirits to the dear old woman that she could talk of nothing else—she carried me back to every event of your early life to the time you spent with her in this city, to her

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\**Historic Homes in Washington.* Mary S. Lockwood.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

care and affection for your son when he was here at college—she begged me to write to you to give you “her dear love” and tell you how she longed to see you once more—all this I do cheerfully well knowing how you venerate, and love, not only your old friends, but all that dear Family from which we both sprung. \* \* \*

God blefs you my belov'd friend—

E. Lee

I return this interesting book my dear Mifs Wightt which you were so good as to loan me—the perusal of which enchained my attention and as it deserved—my admiration. The following lines among many others manifest feelings and principles all must approve—

Sure God's bright smile is on this sunny earth,  
And all his gifts and mercies showered on man;  
For all may drink of pleasure's fragrant cup,  
Who walk apart in an unblemished life,  
From Fashion's follies or the rage of vice.

Ahasuerus

by Robert Tyler.\*

March 18<sup>th</sup> 1842. Yours truly

D. P. Madison.

Mrs. Madison made her only visit to New York the early part of April, 1842, on the business of publishing the Madison papers. On her onward way she tarried at Philadelphia a few weeks. She with Miss Cutts housed on Thirteenth street. Her friends vied in bestowing kind attentions. These friends were the Quakers and Quakeresses, the friends of her youth, the strongest friends, for at that season are made the most deep and dear and enduring impressions. The attentions were those of affection and not those of adulation for Mrs.

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\*Son of the President.



FRIENDSHIP, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA



## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

Madison had descended from the official throne and her age was as the sun descended to the horizon. The Willcock's at Walnut and Eleventh streets requested the honor of her company at dinner; and with their compliments read "to be eaten today." Of other functions was a ball in her honor.

My Dear Mrs Madison—

I heard yesterday of your arrival in town with the greatest pleasure, & am truly grieved that I cannot be the *first* of your friends to welcome you, as no one can feel more gratified at the hope of seeing you—I am a prisoner to my chamber, by order of my Physician for an inflammation of my throat, & chest, & he will not consent to my going out today, as it rains.—Mr Gilpin will have the pleasure to call as soon as his Court adjourns this morn'g—but I would not wait to let him be the bearer of my regrets to you—tomorrow if the sun shines, I will certainly see you—please make my kindest regards to Miss Anne Payne, who I hope is with you, & receive

My affectionate love  
for yourself—  
Y<sup>r</sup> friend

Eliza Gilpin

Wednesday M<sup>g</sup> —12<sup>th</sup>  
April (1842)

Mrs Parish requests the favor of Mrs Madison's company, Wednesday evening next at 8 o'clock.  
47 Barclay st  
April 23<sup>d</sup>

Wednesday Ev<sup>g</sup>

Most dear Mrs Madison.

All the elements have combin'd to prevent me, and all the Highlanders, from seeing you, since your return from the far-fam'd city, once of Brotherly Love; but,

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

Mary, or Caroline will today have the happiness to present our united congratulations, to you, and to the "Sweet Annie" as she has been christen'd we are told, in our bulletins from Philad<sup>a</sup>.

Mary will also present my imploring tabatière with so much grace, that I am sure it will be return'd with renew'd fragrance from your hands—I hope you will be able to tell her, that the Philadelphians, have nobly done their duty, by the devotion they have paid to its once fairest flower—

most respectfully

A. M.

Mrs. Madison to Mrs. Gilpin:

My very dr Eliza—Ever since the rec<sup>t</sup> of your two last letters I have been anxious to write, & to tell you how much I regretted the want of power over the car & my party to cause them to stop at your mansion on my return from N. Y.—It w<sup>d</sup> have afforded me a great gratification to see you there in the enjoym<sup>t</sup> of health & happiness, so near too our beautiful city of "brotherly love"—but I was compell'd to hasten home without a delay of more than one day with Mr & Mrs Coles.

I w<sup>d</sup> now answer your kind enquiry of where I sh<sup>d</sup> pass the summer but that is uncertain—I must first make a long visit to my d Lucy & my nephew & nieces Washington in the upper country—thence a short one to Montpr<sup>r</sup> & lastly to the Springs—thus is my time laid out for me & the next winter is in such distant perspective that I can only hope to be in this city—wish I could with more certainty name the place & time for our meeting but if I ventured to do so, I might subject you & myself to disappoint<sup>t</sup> but I trust it will yet be my ever kind & dr fd & I will look forward in the hope of seeing you again & longer in Phil<sup>a</sup> next year—present me to your children & believe me most truly your aff<sup>te</sup> sister

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

Mr. Rush, when Attorney-General, lived in the Six Buildings;\* No. 2117 Pennsylvania Avenue, the range or row in which the Madisons at one time lived.

Mrs. Madison to Richard Rush, Sydenham near Philadelphia.

Washington May 1842

\* \* \* I would now if I had the power, express in this short letter my devoted friendship for my beloved Mrs Rush and her sweet daughters adding to that number your excellent sons but it is not to be described save in these few words—I am truly their sister, and yours.

Sydenham, near Phila.

June 15<sup>th</sup> 1842.

Dear Madam,

My father on his late return from Washington delivered to me the beautiful little keepsake you have so kindly sent me, for which I beg leave to return my sincere thanks.

As containing Mr Madison's hair it will ever be precious to me and I shall doubly prize it as your kind gift.

My mother requests me to say that she received the porcelain cup & saucer, and how much it has gratified her to have this little token of your remembrance, which is always so dear to her.

She and my sisters desire me to convey their most affectionate remembrances to you, and also to Miss Payne.

I remain dear Madam, with renewed thanks for the locket.

Yours respectfully  
attached & affectionate

Madison Rush.

To  
Mrs Madison

\**Social Life in the Early Republic.* Anne Hollingsworth Wharton.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

First having the written assurance of General Bomford that the Washington property was ample security and the title thereto was without flaw vested in Mrs. Madison to her request, John Jacob Astor acceded to take a mortgage of three thousand dollars. The deed is dated August 16, 1842.

Daniel Webster with posterity is preeminent for oratory, diplomacy and statesmanship. But Mr. Webster was a man of flesh and blood. In that day on the streets the people frequently saw a strong-featured, large-framed man going to and from the market in the company of a servant and a large basket.\*

\* \* \* The hungry edge of appetite  
By bare imagination of a feast

would not do for him. It must be substantial, select—what went on the board—turned and seasoned aright—just as Monica, the Virginia negress, did it.

Mr. Webster wrote many short notes and if, by chance, one were found, it would read likely like this:

Dear W. W. S.,—Fish all right for tomorrow. Let them *bask* in Monica's ice-box till the day comes,

D. W.

5 o'clock.  
To Mr. Seaton.

I am sitting down, all alone at five o'clock, to a nice leg of lamb, etc., and a glass of cool claret—come.

D. W.

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\*Perley's *Reminiscences of Sixty Years in the National Metropolis*.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

Mr. Webster was domestic—home-loving—and home is not without hearts—a family. Grace Fletcher, his wife, died January 21, 1828.

Mr. Webster made a second venture; made it, December 12, 1829. He married Caroline LeRoy, the second daughter of Jacob LeRoy, a merchant of wealth and a descendant of an ancient New York family. It may be an awkward situation for some to make the announcement—to make it gently—to children and family; it may be an epistolary guide for such to know of Mr. Webster's.

To Fletcher Webster :

New York, December 14, 1829.

My Dear Son: You have been informed that an important change in my domestic condition was expected to take place. It happened on Saturday. The lady who is now to bear the relation of mother to you, and Julia, and Edward, I am sure will be found worthy of all your affection and regard; and I am equally certain that she will experience from all of you the utmost kindness and attachment.

\* \* \*

I am always, with much affection, your father,  
D. Webster.\*

Mrs. Webster had the attributes of a true wife and measured equal to her husband's high station. For nearly twenty three years was she his wife; then his widow.

My Dear Sir,—Mrs. Webster leaves in the cars this P. M. Speaking of a little basket of one half dozen

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\**Life of Daniel Webster.* George Ticknor Curtis.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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peaches and two sickle pears, the other evening,—how well-timed it would be, if that basket, contents as aforesaid, should meet her at the cars!

I have the honor, with distinguished consideration, etc.

Yours,

D. Webster.

Mr. Seaton

My dear Mrs Madison

Will you & my friend Annie, gratify Mr Webster the young ladies, & myself, by dining on Saturday next informally with us at 5 o'clock.

I trust that your engagements may not interfere—In our present establishment we do not pretend to entertain—as we have neither space or other requisites—

Therefore in asking the favor of your company we pray you to be assured of a welcome but an entirely social dinner—

Very cordially

Yours ever

C. LeRoy Webster.

Wednesday Evg

May I be allowed my dear Mrs Madison to ask your acceptance of some West India preserves just rec<sup>d</sup> from my nephews in Cuba selected by them & of the choice kind.

With great regard  
ever yours

C. LeRoy Webster.

Saturday

My dear Mrs Madison

Mr & Mrs James King of New York are now here arrived last af. I desire an introduction to you—May I be permitted to introduce them & at what hour is the most agreeable to you shall we call James G. King is the son of Rufus King whom you have doubtless

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

known in former days when he was here in congress—  
Mrs King was a Miss Gracie of New York daughter of  
Archibald Gracie a distinguished & wealthy merchant

My kind regards to Miss Legaré & Anne &

Be assured of my sincere regard

C. LeRoy Webster.

Saturday Morn

My dear Mrs Madison

I send you a few pens & with them the necessary accompaniments which I pray you to accept.

You will excuse I trust the liberty I have taken in combining these articles for writing, but enjoying the convenience of all these things around me & knowing that you often make your friends happy by sending them your autograph I have ventured to send the *scal* to prevent theft &c.

With great regard  
always

C. LeRoy Webster

Friday Morn

To Mrs. Webster.

Wonder not sweet One that I find a resemblance to thee in my bright new pen—but how much more doth thy likeness appear as I look upon this fair unblemished paper—It reflecteth only thee in my imagination where thou art fixed as with a seal.

D. P. Madison.

July 23<sup>d</sup> 42.

Mrs. Madison to Mrs. Webster :

Aug<sup>t</sup> 25<sup>th</sup> 42.—

I thank you dear Friend for remembering me, in your busy moment of preparation to depart—believe me, I am grieved that my journey will be in the opposite direction to that of one, I so love and respect as yourself—

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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but my sorrow is tempered by high hopes of meeting you here again, in perfect health, and I trust that such too will be the fortune of your estimable Husband—whose happiness must be augmented at the termination of his good work, in forming our Treaty.

May every blessing attend you!

Anna offers you affectionate adieux and we unite in bidding them to Miss Fletcher.—

My dear Mrs Madison

I am going to drive this morn<sup>g</sup> at ½ twelve for the first time & I feel a desire to see you *once more* will you allow me to ask you to accompany me if you have no other engagement—Yours with great regard ever

D. Webster.

Thursday

Alexander Baring, Lord Ashburton, was the son of Francis Baring, a king merchant. He came as a mercantile emissary and negotiated a matrimonial alliance with Miss Bingham, the daughter of the prominent Philadelphian, William Bingham. He became the master mind of Baring Brothers & Co. London. He came again to the United States; the second time as the special ambassador because of his knowledge of American things and his pacific policy. He with Mr. Webster concluded, August 9, 1842, the Ashburton Treaty, defining the boundary between Canada and Maine, determining the suppression of the slave trade and the extradition of fugitives from justice.

Lord Ashburton lived in (now) the Coleman Mansion, 1525 H street, and Mr. Webster, in (now) the Corcoran Mansion, 1611 H street. It is said that the diplomatic checkers were played either at one or other of these his-

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

toric houses;\* but Mrs. Madison lived close by, H and the President's Square, and it was around her hospitable table and to the encouragement of her smiles, the game progressed to drawn victory. Master Slaughter, a grandnephew, was there, and his wondering eyes, not much higher than the table, were in close range with the maps spread out. Master Slaughter when a man was James E. Slaughter, a Brigadier-General, provisional service, in the Confederate Army.†

Mrs. Madison to  
Hon<sup>ble</sup> Mr Marcy  
Secretary of War

Will Gov. Marcy permit me to present to him Mr James Edwin Slaughter—lately a student from the Military Academy in Lexington, Virginia—He is very solicitous to enter the Army & to manifest his zeal in the cause of war—He bears with him letters of recommen-

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\*Immediately west of the house in which Sumner died and adjoining St. John's Church, on the east, is the great double house, the walls of which are veneered with stucco, painted with remarkably close resemblance to brownstone. The house was built by Matthew St. Clair Clarke, who was from 1822 to 1834, the Clerk of the House of Representatives. When Lord Alexander Baring Ashburton was sent to the United States in 1842 by Sir Robert Peel to take up the unsettled condition of the Northeastern Boundary question, it was this house which became his residence. Much of the negotiation between the representatives of the two governments, which led to the final agreement between them, was conducted there and it may be that the treaty itself was signed there. \* \* \* Daniel Webster was then Secretary of State, and, as a token of the pleasant relations between the two statesmen, Webster named one of his sons for Lord Ashburton. For his part in the treaty achievement Lord Ashburton was accorded in both Houses of Parliament, a complimentary vote of thanks, and an earldom was offered him, which he, however, declined.—*Historic Washington Homes*. Hal H. Smith.

†Related by General Slaughter to Hon. Hannis Taylor.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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dation—but being young in knowledge he insists upon my writing also—which I do

With great respect & esteem

October 14<sup>th</sup> 1842.

To Genl Peyton

Your touching expressions of *care* for your friend, will always be remembered by her — as well as your valued regard of past years.

On the subject of Montpelier I have had but one wish, and intention,—it is to retain it, during my life and then, to leave it to my son with one thousand acres of land attached to it. Montpelier has been proposed for by a gentleman of your City, with whom I have not a personal acquaintance, but a very high respect, Mr Moncure and should I ever sell or rent, I might feel bound to allow him the first offer—I gave away, & sold some of the tract belonging to Montpelier which gave rise to reports.

I returned home in fine health but becoming a nurse to my household I soon imbibed the prevailing epidemic sorethroat and still feel the effects tho' slight—lassitude &c which causes me to curtail my letter.

With every good wish for you and yours,

D. P. Madison.\*

You will *be pleased* to write me on any subject and at any time.

(To General Bernard Peyton,)

Richmond.

Marian Gouveneur, of her Recollections, has:

During the winter of 1842 James Gordon Bennett took his bride, who was Miss Henrietta Agnes Crean of New York, to Washington on their wedding journey. As this season had been unusually severe, great distress

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\*Letter in possession of Honorable Alexander B. Hagner, former Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the District of Columbia.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

prevailed, and a number of society women organized a charity ball for the relief of the destitute. It was given under the patronage of Mrs. Madison (the ex-President's widow), Mrs. Samuel L. Gouverneur (my husband's mother), Mrs. Benjamin Ogle Tayloe (Julia Maria Dickinson of Troy, New York), and other society matrons, and, as can readily be understood, was a financial as well as a social success. Tickets were eagerly sought, and Mr. Bennett applied for them for his wife and himself. At first he was refused, but after consideration Mrs. Madison and Mrs. Gouverneur of the committee upon invitations granted his request on condition that no mention of the ball should appear in the columns of the *Herald*. Mr. Bennett and his wife accordingly attended the entertainment, where the latter was much admired and danced to her heart's content. Two days later, however, much to the chagrin and indignation of the managers, an extended account of the ball appeared in the *Herald*.\*

With trembling hand, Mrs. Madison to Mrs. Lear writes:

February 9. (1843?)

Your last letter my beloved Friend was acceptable and precious to me. It was a proof of your kind partiality in the forgiveness of my silence—and it contained the best of wishes which must ever hover over my memory—"those consolations which this world can neither give nor take away" may the amiable sister who breathed this wish for me in like manner be blessed.

Finding on my return that the fortunes of an Absentee threatened me I determined to remain here "to direct the storm" and have no doubt of an agreeable result. A pleasant family desire to rent half the Montpellier house to which I may consent and deliver myself of cares and trouble—when this is consummated I will

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\*As I Remember. *Recollections of American Society during the Nineteenth Century.*

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

come to you—In the meantime I will often communicate with you and always be near you in spirit and in truth.

Your affectionate

D. P. Madison.

Mrs. Madison in the letter, September 2, 1837, relative to the visit to the White Sulphur Springs mentions the benefit to her disordered eyes. With the changes from impairment to improvement and improvement to impairment it was a continual net loss. It was a severe strain on her eyes to keep pace with an extensive correspondence and to gratify the album folks with sentiments original with her or otherwise originated. That she might have escape from this tax or that her correspondents and those who wished to treasure the tracing of her hand might have specimens of neat penmanship and a true index of her yet youthfulness she resorted to a delicate deception. This deception dates approximately from 1836. Some one, and it must have been nieces or other relatives, imitated her hand with remarkable skill and indeed it takes an expert to detect the difference. In the last years Mrs. Madison's hand was tremulous while the dainty notes and choice sentiments which emanated from her were in fine chirography. However, all the emanations have her real autograph.

From her nephew, Richard D. Cutts:

Washington City—Sept 26<sup>th</sup> 1843.

My Dear Aunt—

Your kind letter with Anne's has been received—being in your own handwriting, it was an afsurance of your recovered & recovering health—

R. D. C.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

John Sioussat, the Madison's "faithful domestic," in after years kindly served Mrs. Madison in the care of her "little establishment" at Washington—the Dolly Madison house—during her absence. These services were as late as 1843 as he writes:\*

Washington, November 15, 1843.

Dear Madam

I received your letter last week enclosing fifteen dollars. I enclose you the bills of the slater and glacier they are both paid I hope soon to have the pleasure to see you in Washington I wish to know if you have any further commands for me before your arrival here, if you have please to send me word and I will execute them

I am respectfully

Your obedient servant

John Sioussat

Mrs. Madison,

I take the liberty of addressing you to have if you will grant me the favor of taking your likeness, fearing at the same time that one entirely unknown to you is scarcely justified in presuming upon your well known obliging kindness and knowing that you have so frequently been solicited for the privilege that it must have become an irksome task to sit to an artist of much more celebrity than myself. I send for your inspection a fancy piece which has just been completed that you my dear Madam may judge somewhat of my ability. I am but a Tyro in the art but have a great desire to perfect myself.

Most respectfully yours

E. Milligan

Friday

Dec. 15<sup>t</sup> (1843).

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\**The First Master of Ceremonies of the White House.* John H. McCormick, M.D.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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Philadelphia, Dec: 23. 1843

A Merry Christmas to you, and a happy new year and many returns of them to you, my dear cousin and may you live to enjoy a ripe old age, and as long as life may be desirable, is my anxious wish and ardent prayer. These good wishes, if I mistake not the arrangements of the mail, will be rec<sup>d</sup> by you in good time on Christmas morning. \* \* \*

I have therefore only time now to add that we often refer to & talk of the enjoyments we had during our charming visit to you last Oct<sup>r</sup>—your & cousin Ann's kind reception & treatment of us, have made impressions on the children which they will never lose a recollection: They talk now of things that then occurred, as if they had occurred yesterday. The hickory stick horse, which that impudent & forward fellow Derritt (our driver) cut for Edward, he brought all the way home, & has it yet—he calls it his "Madison Horse," & rides it whenever he can.

\* \* \*

To Mrs Madison

Edward Coles

To Mrs. Madison:

My beloved Friend

I welcome you home to Washington with all my heart—and must hope very soon to have the pleasure of embracing you.

I am sure you will be please to hear that I have made a visit at last, to our friends, Mrs. Hull and Mrs Rush—will tell you about them, and of Philadelphia when we meet—My love if you please to dearest Annie—and may I ask you my dear friend to forward the enclosed letter to Mrs Wingate? She sent me one under the frank of a member of Congress—but I cannot make out the name—

With all my love and devoted attachment  
believe me ever your own

26<sup>th</sup> December 1843

F. D. Lear

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

The letter that follows is from the wife of the faithful domestic, John Sioussat. That Mrs. Madison was loved by the high and humble, by the prosperous and by the poor, by all without the distinctions that people make is shown in the letter as in others.

Washington January 1 1844

to Mrs Madison

Lady I am almost a stranger to you but you have been a kind friend to my husband the urbanity and condescension with which you have allways treated him emboldens me to say a few words to you on the present occasion the commencement of a new year Lady you stand so highly exalted you occupy so preeminent a station in society you are so dear and so beloved by all your friends a love which you owe less to your high rank than to your amiable and engaging manners to wish you a happy new year seems to be a mere form you who are both good and great must be ever happy but the blessing of the Almighty God the King on his throne and the peasant in his humble cot stand alike in need of it and may this blefsing rest on you and all who are dear to you may you see many returns of this day and may each succeeding year be crowned with health peace and joy may you long very long yet continue the centre of a brilliant circle and when at last full of years and honor you shall descend into the tomb and your Spirit shall return to your Creator.

May you meet every whom you hold dear  
For the bright regions of eternal peace  
There then to live throughout undying years  
Where every tear is dried where care and anguish  
cease.

Lady there are many who will pay you the compliments of the day they are entitled by their rank to so for they move in the highest sphere but none can wish

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

you more fervently happiness than your humble and obedient servant Julia C Sioufsa

New Year's Day 1844

To Mrs. Madison

I chose to be always before you, my beloved friend, though I don't believe one word that "out of sight I shall be out of mind" with you, but I wish to use no opportunity or leave none *unimproved* of deserving your kindness as well as to enjoy it as I do. May very many returns of this day find you in health & happiness, & prosperity as universally beloved as you are: & though melancholy circumstances prevent me enjoying this day with the zest I would otherwise do, yet believe me among the mercies & comforts I have the passed year enjoyed, I number my present situation, being not only a friend & guest in your house, but feeling myself once more at home with one like a mother & to whom I hope I shall ever prove myself a worthy daughter.

Ever & sincerely aff<sup>te</sup>

your Mary S. Legaré.

This, from the daughter of the Captain. She, when Miss Tingey, with Mrs. Tingey, her mother, welcomed in ways and words, Mrs. Madison, to Washington.

Windsor Jan'y 3, 1844.

Mrs Madison

\* \* \* You do not know with what real pleasure I heard of you last summer on my visit to your city. Time, I understand passes gently o'er your brow, as if your virtues should still be enshrined, in bright & acceptable beauty. \* \* \*

Wishing your life may glide on in happiness & health & futurity bring its rich reward, believe me my dear Mrs Madison as sincerely as ever

Your respectful—affectionate

Margaret G. T. Wingate\*

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\*Miss Margaret Gay Tingey married Joseph Ferdinand Wingate, November 29, 1908.



MRS. MADISON  
By Fleming



## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

*The Daily Globe.* Monday, January 8, 1844:

Mr. Saunders submitted a resolution, as follows:—  
Mr. Thompson of Mississippi yielding to allow it to be offered:

Resolved, unanimously, That a committee be appointed on the part of this House to wait on Mrs. Madison, and to assure her that, whenever it shall be her pleasure to visit the House, she be requested to take a seat within the Hall.

He moved this resolution in consequence of having seen Mrs. Madison in the gallery.

The resolution was agreed to: and it was ordered that Mr. Saunders and Mr. Charles J. Ingersoll be the said committee.

Mrs. Madison:

Permit me to thank you Gentlemen, as the Committee on the part of the House of Representatives, for the great gratification you have conferred upon me this day by the delivery of the favor from that Honorable Body allowing me a seat within its Hall. I shall be ever proud to recollect it, as a token of their remembrance, collectively and individually, of one who has gone before us.

Washington, Jan'y 9<sup>th</sup> 1844.

Mrs. Todd, Dolly's sister Lucy, in a letter a little while previous to that quoted as delicately intimates that it is a "consummation devoutly to be wished" that the fair visitor and "the Colonel," (Payne's military title) would make a life alignment. In this Lucy discloses that she like Dolly believed in matches made on earth.

Miss Mary S. L'Egaré was a visiting companion of Mrs. Madison during the social season of 1843'4. She

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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was popular and talented especially was her talent with "instruments, that made melodious chime." Her brother, Hugh Swinton L'Egaré, was of the national law-makers, Attorney-General and Secretary of State. Her cousin, James L'Egaré, was strong in her affections. Their home was Charleston, S. C.

Jan<sup>y</sup> 5<sup>th</sup> 1844

My dear Sister

I am happy to hear of your safe arrival at Washington & much grieved to hear of poor cousin Sally's helpless state of health & sincerely hope your expectations of her recovery may be realized.—I have no doubt your visit was greeted with much pleasure—I hope you left dear Payne well—Miss Legare, I have no doubt will be an agreeable accession to your society in Washington—the high estimation in which the memory of her brother is held & her own intrinsic worth, will make her a great pet & favorite at the great Metropolis, what a happy occurrence, my dear sister, it would be, to make her a member of your family. I presume your acquaintances were delighted to meet with you again & I hope you find every thing presaging a happy issue to the object of your visit—it would please me much to hear of your success & I would rather suppose that the present would be a very favorable time for making the offer of your papers—Congress, being, at this time, engaged in nothing of importance—tho' the feeling of retrenchment & economy may operate somewhat ag<sup>st</sup> you & I am inclined to think that this Congress will pause long before it will passively receive any attack upon its liberality—It would afford me always pleasure to hear how you are advancing in that business as well as in any other. I can assure you, my dear sister, that nothing distresses me more than the existence of any thing like family feuds. W<sup>m</sup> seems conscious of having given no cause of offence, & considers it a great piece of impertinence in Louisa's meddling in his business, of which,

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she is as ignorant as the man in the moon, & disseminating thro' the world reports which she collects from negroes & others, who are no better. Ever your affectionate sister

Lucy P. Todd

Mrs. Todd's husband, Judge Todd, died at Frankfort, Kentucky, February 7, 1826.

To the Committee of the Whig Citizens of the City & County of Philadelphia.

Washington, Feb. 8th 1844.

Gentlemen:

I pray you to accept my best thanks for the polite invitation to celebrate with you the happy occasion of glory & prosperity to our Country in the birth of Washington—with my regrets that I cannot have that pleasure added to my gratification at the expression of your veneration for the memory of my sainted husband.

With good wishes and great respect

D. P. Madison.

To Messrs Conrad  
Riddle  
Reid  
Hanna &  
Thomas } Committee

To Mrs. Madison:

If I understood the servant aright Mrs. Madison was kind enough to consent to my desire to take her likeness. If she will do me the favor to intimate any time when it would be agreeable for me to call upon her she will very much oblige

Very respectfully  
her obt. Servt

E. Milligan.

To Miss Milligan:

Mrs. Madison respects to Miss Milligan to whom she owes an apology for not complying with her wishes be-

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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fore this, which she hopes will be accepted now, with her proposal that Miss M. will come on Thursday next at 11 o'clock.

Feby 26<sup>th</sup> 44.

Afton, Feby 27, 1844

My dear Madam

Words are but feeble auxiliaries to express the *grateful emotions* of my Heart! when informed by my son, of the *kind, & generous* treatment which he had received at your hands; Children are the Keys—which unlock the Parents Heart!—the emotions of which—like the blessed spirit of our divine Redeemer, can only described by those who have felt its heavenly influences.

My sons description of his pleasing intercourse with you, in Washington, brought to my mind many dormant reflections—it placed in review gone-by days, when each returning summer, witnessed the neighboring families convening at old Auburn for the purpose of gathering around the hospitable board with their Chief-Magistrate, and his Lady—and well do I remember, tho but a child, how highly I prized, the tender carefeses, the *bland*, the generous, courtesy of the loved, the admired Mrs. Madison! and happy, thrice happy should I be to have it in my power, to make some acknowledgments, under my own roof, of the renewed obligations I feel myself under, and if Mrs. Madison will do us the favor, to call, and spend a few weeks, on her return from the seat of Government, no stimulous to exertion should be wanting to render her save pleasant and happy: indeed I should love to talk with you, of olden times, I should love to talk of your Mother, who was so intimate with mine—and of dear old Mrs Winston whose memory I love to cherish: I should like to hear what has become of Mrs Cutts family, particularly her daughter Dolly—and your brother John where is he, and his Canadian Lady who use to visit us from Mr Armsteads, My son tells me you have a very interesting niece with you, who I presume is his daughter, we should be happy to see her with you, and

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

if you will afford me, these gratifications my son will meet you with our carriage when you may choose to direct.

Your Old, but in all probability  
forgotten friend

Emily Bradford once known  
to you as Emily Slaughter

February 28, 1844 was the direful catastrophe, the bursting of the mammoth gun, The Peacemaker, on board of the United States ship, The Princeton, under the command of Captain Stockton, instantly killing Abel P. Upshur, Secretary of State, Thomas W. Gilmer, Secretary of the Navy, Captain Beverly Kennon, U. S. N., Chief of the Bureau of Construction and Equipment, Virgil Maxey, Chargé d'Affaires at Belgium, David Gardiner, ex-Senator of New York and some of the crew and maiming others. From Alexandria the ship had descended the river fourteen or fifteen miles and on the return opposite Fort Washington was the calamity. The guests numbered four hundred, many of whom were women and of them not one was injured. Mrs. Madison was of the guests. She relieved the injured and sympathized with the bereaved. As the report spread friends gathered at her house and her return was the assurance they sought. She never heard mention of the affair without blanching cheeks.

The four were laid in state at the President's house. There was a public funeral. Also were there official announcements and general cessation of business and every mark of respect.

In the long accounts in the papers not a sailor's name appears as fatally or otherwise wounded. Miss Payne did not overlook the oversight.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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From Mrs. Madison and Miss Annie Payne to Miss Theodosia Davis:

Washington, March 22<sup>d</sup> 1844.

I am very sensible of a delinquency towards you my very dear Theodosia but not in my thoughts or affections so that you must forgive me as it has proceeded from a too constant round of occupation and an inflamed eye which has interfered with my writing to many others of my best friends for a long time past—however I will refer you to Anna who has much to say to you—after my tender Adieus for the present. Please to wear the enclosed ring—the gold of which, came from a mine in my Virginia neighborhood.

You must first let me tell you how delighted Aunt was with your nice little present—too nice for the purpose you intended my dear Mifs Davis! but which she will keep & prize them for your sake. Lieut. Blake was polite enough to deliver it with your letter and *I* ought long since to have acknowledged them for her for it has not been in Aunt's power to do so. \* \* \*

Washington is beginning to throw aside the gloom which has overshadowed it since that sad catastrophe on board the Princeton—Judge Upshur, Gov. Gilmer, & Mr. Gardiner's families have all left and Mrs. Kennon has gone to her mother's in Geo. town.—Mrs. Maxey's daughter a resident here. The suffering of the poor seamen seemed forgotten in the sympathies extended to the bereaved of their conspicuous men. Capt. Stockton I see is your City—He can never recover from the remembrance of that fatal day. My Aunt was on Board—but fortunately down below. It will be long before she loses sight of that scene tho' she was spared the horrors on Deck.

\*

\*

\*

Yr Affte fd

A. P.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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Philadelphia 21 March | 44.

My dear Mrs. Madison

After a very pleasant ride to Baltimore on Tuesday afternoon, I passed a most agreeable day at the Exchange Hotel, in company with some agreeable Bostonians whose acquaintance I soon made, by playing upon a very good instrument some of my most captivating pieces, among which, was dear Anne's favorite March in the Caravan. The day after as I intended we sat out under a cloudy sky, had an hours hard rain, & at ½ after 3 o'clock reached this goodly city of Penn memory. I found it very much improved & apparently increased coming in on the Western side I could judge pretty well of this last fact) since I was here in |34. \* \* \* Young Morris is really a very pleasing gentlemanly person, quite handsome, & in manner & smiles reminds me of Walter Davidge & my far away cousin James L'Egaré whom Mrs. Morris knows. \* \* \* Give my dear love to Anne, tell her though I did not require anything to remind me of her, yet that ring chosés to turn round & round (being much too large) as much as to say don't forget or "dinna forgit" her.

\* \* \*

With my love to Mary Cutts—I remain my dear Mrs M. your affte friend

M. S. L'Egaré

Mrs. Madison to Miss L'Egaré:

Wash: March 23<sup>d</sup> 44

I rec'd your welcome letter my dr Miss L late last night & this morn<sup>g</sup> cheered our sweet Cath<sup>e</sup> with one for herself & sister. The girls are perfectly well & promise to dine with us to-morrow. I requested that they would write you as soon as possible & send me their letter I will forward.

I rejoice at your safe arrival in Phil<sup>a</sup> & at the satisfaction which seems to flow upon you from what you have seen there already—may no disappointment lurk

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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there or anywhere else for you! Our friends the Spencers are well, & I have sent your kind remembrances to the Davidge's thro' their son.

Your Mr. Morris came to enquire for tidings of you yesterday, but he was too early for the mail, & the regale I have in store for him your approbation of his grandson is yet in store.

\* \* \*

Mrs. Madison to Miss L'Egaré:

Pts Sq: Apl 15<sup>th</sup> 44.

Sir R<sup>d</sup> Pakenham is established in Mr. Webster's dwelling and we find him an agreeable gentleman as well as our new Secty Mason who with his family are in Mrs. Stewart's House.

Mrs. Madison to John Young Mason, Secretary of the Navy:

Permit me dear friend to introduce to you a very fine young man my connection James Todd—who is very desirous to see you who are so high in the estimation of all—It is merely his great respect for you which induces me to take the liberty he covets of placing his name before you.

John Canfield Spencer married the daughter of James Scott Smith of New York city. He came to Washington in 1807, carrying for the electoral college its vote. He made the acquaintance of Mr. Madison “which through life was profitable to both parties.”

Lucien Brock Proctor says:

As a writer he aimed at no graces of language or ornamented diction, and yet his style was of almost crystalline purity—of inherent dignity, and replete without learning.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

Mr. Spencer was the aggressive member of Tyler's Cabinet.

Nathan Sargent in his *Public Men and Events* says:

Spencer was a man of great abilities, industry, and endurance, curt manners, and irascible temper. \* \* \* It is but just to say of him that he rendered the country important service in the Treasury Department, which he administered with an ability, assiduity, integrity, and faithfulness seldom equaled since the days of Hamilton.

The Spencers lived in 14 Jackson Place—the Sickles house. It is associated with tragedy.

Washington May 20, 1844

My dear Madam

Will you excuse the liberty taken by Mrs Spencer and myself in sending you some choice old Sherry, in which we would ask you to pledge us in commemoration of this return of your birthday?

Allow us to express our fervent prayers for as many returns of the same anniversary as shall bring you happiness, and that to the last they may be crowned with blessings like those you have scattered on all around you, giving you that peace and comfort here which are a foretaste of the joys received for "the pure in heart."

Gratefully and truly

Your friend & servt

J. C. Spencer

Mrs. Madison

I have always been moved by your united goodnefs towards me, my very friends Mr & Mrs Spencer and have as often enquired of myself by what merit I could have elicited such a distinction—My conclusion has been that it proceeded only from the pure, the upright, the tender hearts, with which I have been favored to commune—this will ever be as it is now, my pride and con-

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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solution. Your fine old Wine I hope to taste with you and yours tomorrow evening—It will be nectar to your affectionate

D. P. Madison—

May 20<sup>th</sup> 1844.

Washington May 22<sup>d</sup> 44.

I wrote you my dear the day before yesterday—I again take the pen so soon after my last to tell you that our friends Dromgoole & John Y. Mason came to see me yesterday about the papers saying that many were anxious to vote me the amount with which I would be satisfied could I name it—I was at a loss from delicacy & a want of knowledge what to name—

They mentioned the sum for the Debates but I did not reply farther—hoping to obtain an answer from you to my late letters in which I wished you to advise—they wanted the letter explaining the reasons for the Veto on the Bank—after adhering long to a contrary opinion—Will you now tell me if I should let the Committee see that explanatory letter and what other letters I had best shew them as specimens of the writings and the sum expected for them—stereotype, & all—what to say of Copyright—

They and others advise that the sale of these papers should be consummated “in my time” and during this session—I have given no direct answer but told them I wanted you here to act for me, and to enlighten me as to one more point whether they could have the letters or some of them to Mr M.

Now my dear Son will you say at once what you think best to these particular questions.—They seem to dwell on the \$30,000 as if that was the proper sum, without absolutely expressing it—but I must *speak now* as they are impatient to have some data—You know J. Y. Mason by character—he is kindly directed to my cause. Oh, that you my beloved were fixed in all things, to cooperate with me—I will not say to act solely, for me

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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because, I had become the object of interest, and lefs would be done without me. This is one of the opportunities so seldom allowed, wherein it is proper for persons to speak *well* of Themselves, and I therefore have & will repeat to you these facts as necessary to be taken into view.—I want your reply a few days—five—Your last s<sup>d</sup> nothing in answer to my 6 last—Rd Smith applied thro Ballard—can you settle it—or can you remit any to me & when  
To John P. Todd.

While all but submerged in the sea of difficulty, Mrs. Madison maintained a calm and even cheerful exterior and indeed while buffeting with her own troubles she reached a helping hand to all she could help.

Friday forenoon, May 24, 1844, Morse's Electro-Magnetic Telegraph was put into operation. At the Capitol, in Washington, in the office of the Clerk of the House of Representatives, was a telegraphic apparatus and the other in the third story of the warehouse of the railroad depot in Pratt between Charles and Light streets, Baltimore. In Baltimore, a large number of guests "were present to see the operations of this truly astonishing contrivance." The names sent down were returned plainly written before the lapse of half a minute. To the inquiry "What is the time" came from the Capitol "Forty nine minutes past eleven;" and to, "How many persons are spectators to the telegraphic experiments at Washington?" came, "Sixteen." The first message was *What hath God wrought* by Miss Annie G. Ellsworth, daughter of Henry Leavett Ellsworth, Commissioner of Patents and a granddaughter of the Chief Justice Oliver Ellsworth. Mrs. Madison's reply to a friend was ready and happy.\* The newspaper ac-

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\*Miss Fanny Maury Burke, of Alexandria, Va.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

count concludes "This indeed is the annihilation of space."\*

John Bryan, from Charleston, S. C., May 28, 1844, to Mrs. Madison writes a letter acknowledging the kindness and hospitality in taking care of his motherless children.

Mrs. Thornton's Diary:

Wednesday. June 5<sup>th</sup> 1844. My old friend Mrs S. Harrison Smith was struck with apoplexy this morning about 5 o'clock—

on thursday she departed this Life—to the great regret of relatives—friends—& acquaintances—She was universally & deservedly esteemed by all who had any intercourse with her—

The slaves lived contentedly, as a rule, it is believed. But the slave families were under a threatening cloud—the threat of disruption. It was almost inevitable that reverse in finance or settlement of estate would sometimes cause sales and consequent separation—husband from wife, parent from child. It was the curse incident to slavery. Because of the financial embarrassment of Mrs. Madison her slaves had been by process of law seized and the sheriff's last act was closely impending. Because of the coming calamity, a negro educated to write, for the slaves besought Mrs. Madison's help to the extent she could extend it. The appeal was natural and unsensationally sentenced. It could not

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\*The *Baltimore Patriot*, Saturday afternoon, May 25, 1844.

See *Life and Times of Anne Royall*—Sarah Harvey Porter, p 190. *Souvenir of My Time*—Jessie Benton Fremont.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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otherwise than distress the whole-hearted, tender-hearted proprietress. Mrs. Madison thought of human chattels as human creatures. She visited her slaves; she made for them; she prescribed for them. She knew that the black-hued had emotions like unto those of the more fortunately hued. She planned amusements for them; gave them relaxation from their labor; provided comfortable cottages with plots for flowers and vegetables; and when age crept up, retired them to pass the remnant of their days in restfulness.

The embarrassment of Mrs. Madison is not accounted. It has been charged to her son's failings but he was always trying. It may be chargeable to crop failure or repeated failures of productiveness;\* more likely it was her failure in the management of a plantation. She had sold a part of Montpelier. The slaves' appeal nerved her to further sacrifice to avert human suffering and she parted with the remainder including the mansion.

Orange July 5<sup>th</sup> 1844.

My Miftrefs

I don't like to send you bad news but the condition of all of us your servants is very bad, and we do not know whether you are acquainted with it. The sheriff has taken all of us and says he will sell us at next court unless something is done before to prevent it—We are afraid we shall be bought by what are called negro buyers

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\*Mr. Jefferson to Mr. Madison, February 17, 1826: "But the long succession of years of stunted crops, of reduced prices, the general prostration of the farming business under levies for the support of manufacturers, etc., with the calamitous fluctuations of value of our paper medium, have kept agriculture in a state of abject depression, which has peopled the western States by silently breaking up those on the Atlantic; and glutted the land market, while it drew off its bidders."

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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and sent away from our husbands and wives. If we are obliged to be sold perhaps you could get neighbors to buy us that have husbands and wives, so as to save us some misery which will in a greater or less degree be sure to fall upon us at being separated from you as well as from one another. We are very sure you are sorry for this state of things and we do not like to trouble you with it but think my dear mistress what our sorrow will be. The sale is only a fortnight from next monday but perhaps you could make some bargain with somebody by which we could be kept together. \* \* \*

Sarah

To Mrs. Madison:

My dear Friend

I send to enquire how you are today, & most especially about your poor eyes—I trust the inflammation has subsided—& that you are quite well—I am anticipating the pleasure of seeing yourself & dear Anna with me tomorrow—to pass the day—if it be agreeable to yourself—I shall be delighted to realize this long promised visit—

The bearer will wait your answer—and with my love for Anna I remain dear friend as ever your devoted

F. D. Lear

Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> August—1844

Washington Aug. 12<sup>th</sup> 1844.

I have executed and send this day the Indenture &c according to your request, my kind and respected Friend—the accuracy of which will I hope be found adequate to the occasion—I should have enclosed them to my son a day or two before this but the Secretary of State and Chief Clerk were absent and I found a difficulty in having the seal annexed to them—It is now done and I trust a blessing will follow the transaction—to you and to myself—No one, I think, can appreciate my feeling of grief and dismay at the necessity of transferring to another a beloved home.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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I have expressed to Payne my readiness to return for a short time in order to assist in the arrangements of the household contents which must be in confusion some of which I wish to retain.

I have told him also that you and himself would place as much money to my credit in Bank as was consistent with the engagements you have mutually concluded—taking in view of course the sum you were so good as to loan me when I saw you last.

I wish also to retain some few of the black people but cannot designate them at this time—I would write more in order to elicit more from you on the interesting subject which still troubles us but that I am yet very much indisposed.

Annie offers you her affectionate remembrances and thanks for yours.

D. P. Madison.

To Henry W. Moncure, Esq:  
Richmond  
Virginia.

After the execution and before the delivery of the deed, Mr. Moncure became convinced that Mrs. Madison was parting with Montpelier with reluctance; he learned that the prospects were propitious for the sale of the Madison letters to the general government and by interview with the party holding the largest lien that he desired only the payment of the interest, and with true Virginia chivalry asked Mrs. Madison to be frank and to say if she wished to cancel the sale and declared if yes, he would restore with ready cheerfulness on his part and without reproach on hers to restore all rights and privileges, the same as if the subject had never been canvassed. His letter, August 31, 1844.

Washington Sept<sup>r</sup> 3<sup>d</sup> 1844.

I have received dear Friend your generous and considerate proposals, and I thank you for them—I will not

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however take such latitude in the advantage you offer me, as to annul the arrangements you concluded with my son—I had made up my mind to them, when I sent the Deed, and I hope that your mutual proceedings since, are satisfactory to you both as they appeared to myself so far as I understood the minutia of them that I should be permitted to choose some few of the Negroes, and some of the furniture and to retain the family Burial place—Pray excuse this brief answer to your last of ——I am not well eno: to add more at present than my respectful regards to which Anna's are cordially added.

D. P. Madison.

To Mr Moncure  
Richd.

The first deed to Mr. Moncure for a part of the Montpellier estate is dated November 12, 1842; for the residue, August 1, 1844. The entire estate was 1767 acres.

—This weather dearest seems to forbid my hopes of passing the evening with you and our interesting friends Mr & Mrs Pynes—I hope however that I may soon see you and them at my house. Anna is better and more obedient to Dr Sewall this morning—Her love visits you with mine.

Ever yours

Monday

D. P. Madison.

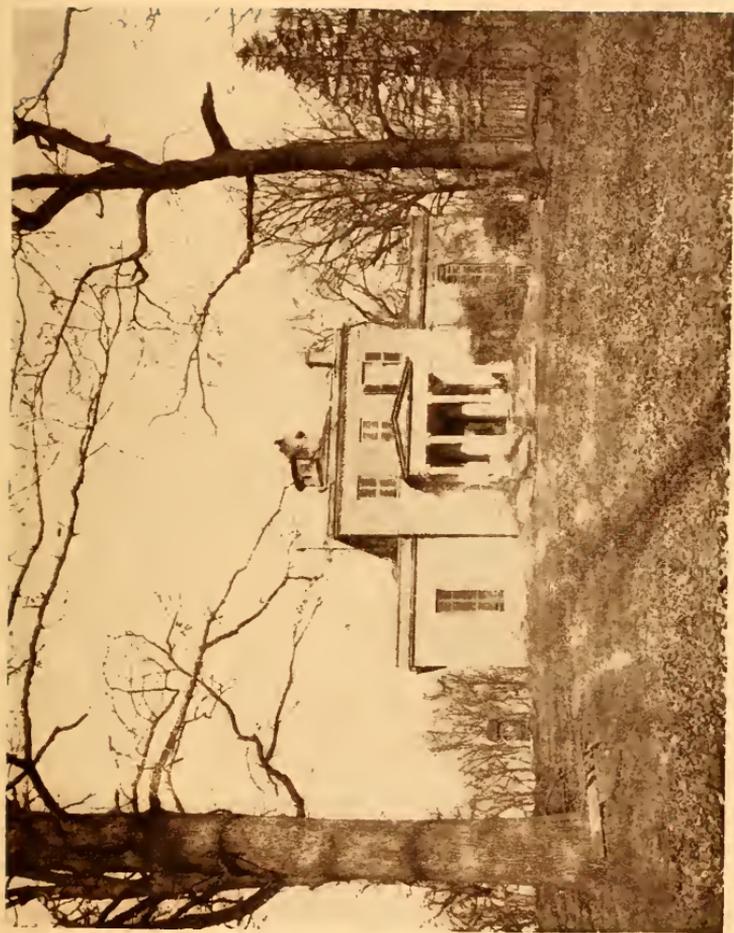
Likely it did not come to Mrs. Madison as she wrote to them with whom she daily associated four decades before the sentiment of Dr. Goldsmith that old friends, old times, old manners, everything that's old is worthy of loving.

Mrs. Madison to Mr. and Mrs. Gallatin, New York:

Wash. Oct 44

Beloved friends.

I take the liberty to introduce to you the granddaughter of Mr. Jefferson & daughter of Mrs. Ran-



BRENTWOOD, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA



## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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dolph of Monticello, who was in her life so dear to us. Mrs Meikleham who will hand you this is desirous to settle in N. Y. with her husband who proposes to practice among his peers of good physicians—They are lately from the Havana where he was considered very able & respectable. I hope they will find you both in best health & in the remembrance of your ever affte

My dear Mrs Madison

It is a fine day, for having your likenefs taken, the sun is not so bright as to effect your eyes, & yet sufficiently so, for the purpose, I hope you feel well enough to ride up with me this morning, but unless you are quite well, and entirely disposed to do so, I beg my dear Mrs Madison you will not allow your amiable nature to overcome your inclinations, for my gratification, as any other time will do as well—about 12 o'clock is a good time to go, tho your own convenience shall be consulted—I should like to have you, wear one of your *pretty* white turbans, & your neck drefs'd as it was at Mrs Tayloe's, the other evening, if you please, excuse this liberty I pray, & believe me most affectionately Yours

E. S. Spencer

Albany, Oct<sup>r</sup> 27<sup>th</sup> 1844

My very dear & respected friend

\* \* \*

Little Laura is standing by my side and says, "Grand-mama tell Mrs Madison I send a kifs to her & Miss Payne," poor little soul, she has been very ill with scarlet fever and is just recovering, with care, I hope to have her well in a short time.

\* \* \*

E. S. Spencer.

The mortgage of the Washington property—the Dolly Madison house; the sale of Montpelier; the transfer of slaves to a friendly owner—all of these sacrifices

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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were insufficient to lift the heavy burden of debt. To the dun of the Bank of the Metropolis, by its Cashier, she offered without complaining to strengthen that creditor's claim, securing to the limit of her resources and prospects. Mrs. Madison's coffers were empty of coin yet she was rich in honesty and honor. Mrs. Madison had learned from experience what Dr. Samuel Johnson, in a letter, sagaciously says: "It is scarcely to be imagined to what debts will swell, that are daily increasing by small additions, and how carelessly in a state of desperation debts are contracted."

Richard Smith was the Cashier of the Bank of the Metropolis. He resided on Pennsylvania avenue opposite the Treasury building and next door to the bank—Corcoran and Riggs.

Washington Nov<sup>r</sup> 1844.

Dear Sir

I expect in a few days my agent, and will endeavor to give the Board of trustees satisfactory security for the loan existing between the Bank and myself. In the meantime, I have only to say that my house & lots here are the only property real, which I possess in the city and they are encumbered to the amount of 3000\$. If you should deem them sufficiently valuable to bear the additional burthen. I am willing to enter into this arrangement immediately and can add to it personal property. My furniture & everything of a personal description is free from incumbrances. The last is now insured for 2500\$ by the Washington & Georgetown Fire insurance company. I expect shortly some valuable servants likewise which will add to my property of this description here and my agent could transfer it, if required. I hope shortly during the coming 90 days to be in funds, if not to pay off the whole considerably to reduce the

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debt, which the Bank have always so obligingly accommodated me with.

with great esteem Dr Sir I am yr's

D. P. Madison.

Rich<sup>d</sup> Smith Esq<sup>r</sup>

Talent is good and tact is better. Mrs. Madison had talent and in greater store, the greater gift, tact. She knew the appreciative effect of saying or writing just what was wanted. And in advising as a mother her nephew to do what he wanted to do and to do it quickly—the act being praiseworthy—heightened his valuation of her wisdom and strengthened his love for her. Nothing of insincerity was there in the advice; most heartily she could have given it; for, the young lady to come into the family fold was of the family of Jefferson.

Mrs. Madison to her nephew, Richard D. Cutts:

Wash. Oct. 30<sup>th</sup> 44

I have just now rec<sup>d</sup> yours my very dear Richard & I hasten to give you freely that which you ask of me "the advice of a mother,"—It is, that you immediately secure for your life & even after, the lonely one who has promised you her hand—she who I am persuaded would be a prize to any man—Why then should delay obstruct *your* happiness, when your father's house tho' small would be a pleasant abode for a few months at the end of which, you could take one more ample & suited to your mutual taste—This is my opinion & my counsel dear Richard and may Heaven's blessing follow the pursuance of it & strengthen that judgment & pure spirit which I know lives in your soul.

Your Aunt & constant friend

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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Linstid's—near Annapolis—  
Nov<sup>r</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> 1844.

My Dear Aunt—

\* \* \* Let me again assure you, Dear Aunt, that the interest you manifest in my plans & wishes affords me more happiness than I can express. If Martha has not wealth—she has a heart & disposition like your own which win & attract all who come within their influence. I am sure you will love her.

\* \* \*

Ever your affectionate Nephew

R. D. Cutts.

The mansion had no high-sounding name when Joseph Nourse bought it, 1805. It is the most honorable in seniority of the structures on the heights of Georgetown. It is a part of the tract, the Rock of Dumbarton. Before Mr. Nourse had it, Samuel Jackson had, and a little before Gabriel Duval, the comptroller of the currency. It is another of the mansions built of the brick which came as ballast from England and before its rebellious colonies declared they "are, and of right ought to be, Free and Independent States" and even before the Stamp Act. More exactly it is set down the mansion was built in 1760. Its park of four and a third acres did not equal Mr. Nourse's ambition of domain and to Charles Carroll of Bellevue he sold it and his (George) town lots (1813) and with the proceeds bought the site of the future cathedral. Mr. Carroll gave it his family designation and it is singularly appropriate to the picturesque panorama.

Mr. Carroll was leading in local affairs—financial and social. With the President and Mrs. Madison, he and his family were *en rapport*. Mrs. Madison visited Bellevue. It is said in *The Ladies of the White House* that

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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Mrs. Madison in her flight first went to Bellevue. Commodore John Rodgers, for a number of years prior to 1820 lived there.

Samuel Whitall, formerly of Philadelphia, in 1820, came permanently to it. Mr. Whitall was of the Friends and talked in their quaint Quakerie. "Grandpa Whitall" leased lands at Mt. Vernon from Bushrod Washington. To and from there he was drawn by a white horse in an old two-wheeled gig and to the urchins he passed he distributed mints from his deep pockets. He never discarded a "blue cut-away coat, with bright brass buttons, the high stock and ruffled shirt" for the foolish dress innovations.

Charles E. Rittenhouse came from Philadelphia to become a banker, the president of the Bank of Commerce and of the firm of Rittenhouse, Fowler and Co. and he came to marry the former Philadelphian's daughter, the beautiful Sarah Whitall, who inherited the beautiful home and passed there all her life, the scriptural allotment, three score and ten.

Bellevue is now the residence of its owner, John L. Newbold, Esq. Its approach is Q street east of Twenty-eighth and Mill street is the eastern boundary.

Somewhat back from the village street  
Stands the old-fashion'd country seat.

—Longfellow.

General Uriah Forrest called the large tract he acquired (1788) Rosedale after the Forrest estates in England. "General Forrest lost a leg at the battle of Brandywine, and was severely wounded at Germantown, where he was aide to Washington. Nevertheless he married, after the war, Rebecca, the beautiful daughter

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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of Governor George Plater, of Maryland.”\* And, “Just after the war General Forrest was sent on a secret mission to Germany. On his return he presented his accounts to the Government, saying, ‘I am a rich man and the Government is poor; I will not accept any pay for my services, but I will keep the account and some day the Government will be rich and my family may become poor and then can be paid what is due me.’” The financial reversal of country and of citizen came and the citizen’s family has been convinced “republics are ungrateful.” Twice was he in the Continental Congress and he was the first clerk of the District court and had his office in one of the “round top” buildings, which were close by the circle on Pennsylvania avenue and Twenty-third street.

March 29 (1791). Dined at Col<sup>o</sup> Forrest’s today with the Commissioners & others.—Washington’s Diary.

That day from the porch of Rosedale, the first President looked upon all to be within the bounds of the Federal City; the evening of that day, he met the landholders to enter into articles of surrender. At Rosedale, Mrs. Madison visited the General’s descendants, the Greens and the Iturbides.†

Iron-wrought in the wall is—“Friendship.” It is the country seat of John R. McLean, Esquire, as editor and elsewhere eminent. It is on Wisconsin Avenue, the ancient road to Frederick Town. The mansion is

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\**Richard Forrest and His Times*. Kate Kearney Henry. Rosedale is in Cleveland Park.

†The original house was erected about 1756; a part remains; a part of an addition made about 1805 also remains. The main part or “new house” was erected about 1860.—*The Evening Star*, February 14, 1914.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

colonial and in color true, buff. It is said to have been built by George French. French had his town house in George Town.\* His enterprises were large—land and mercantile. In the settlement, to George, junior, came the country place, a part of Terra Firma (1813). He gave it a name suggestive of the garden of paradise—Eden Bower. Whether it was a bower in the sense of a home—

Dear lovely bowers of innocence and ease.

—Goldsmith.

or from the cedars, proud and tall, that lined the ancient roadway through which vernaly carpeted, in later years the black-robed priests paced as they murmured prayers—cannot be decided. “The monarch oak,” within the boxwood semi-circle, reminds of Dryden’s “patriarch of trees”—

Three centuries he grows, and there he stays  
Supreme in state; and in three more decays.

From the estate of French it went to Thomas S. Jesup (1839), and from General Jesup to Richard P. Pile, said to be a retired merchant of Barbadoes (1843); and from Pile to the Georgetown College. During the ownership by the college, it was The Villa. Mr. McLean acquired a part of the adjoining tract and the name of that tract he gave to both—Friendship. Mrs. Madison visited General and Mrs. Jesup, Mr. and Mrs. Pile.

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\*S. W. corner of Bridge (M) and Montgomery (28th) obliterated.

Life and Letters of Dolly Madison



## CHAPTER IX

1845-1847

MRS. MADISON was frequently requested for letters of introduction to the Washingtons who lived at Mount Vernon. Mrs. Madison by her sister was slightly related; it was not however the relationship but a friendship that made Mrs. Madison's introductory notes passports to the patriotic shrine.

My dear Mrs Washington\* will permit me to introduce to her, two of my estimable young friends, Mr Caldwell and Mr Polk, of the President's family. They like all other pilgrims to the attractive home of your ancestor, are anxious for permission to see the present inheritors of that venerated spot.

If my dear niece Christine is with you, give her a thousand good wishes and loves from Annie and myself,—who are impatient to see her good husband and self, with us in the City—where *your promised* visit still lingers in the memory of your friend—

My dear Mrs Washington

Another relative sues to be presented to you, your son, and daughter, thro me.

J. M. Cutts is the son of my sister and cousin to the Hare Wood family—you will find him worthy of the favor he solicits.

Truly yours,

D. P. Madison

Mrs. DeKay who solicited Mrs. Madison's sesame was the daughter of the gifted poet, Joseph Rodman Drake, who wrote *The American Flag*.

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\*Wife of Col. John Augustine Washington.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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Flag of the free heart's hope and home!  
By angel hands to valour given!

My dear Mrs. Madison

The Com: & myself called last evening to solicit from your kind indulgence a letter of introduction to the family at Mount Vernon—As this morning is so fine & cool we have determined to avail ourselves of it & hope it will not be trespassing too much upon your known kindness to ask a note.

With great respect  
Your obt<sup>t</sup> Sevt

Janet H. De Kay  
nee Drake

The date of the note introducing Mr. Caldwell and Mr. Polk is guessed to be about the date of the New Year's reception, 1845:

Mr. Polk,\* the brother of the President-elect was at the President's house yesterday. He appeared to be quite a centre of attraction in the East Room; and appeared to be the observed of all observers, particularly on the part of the fair, whose Eveishness seemed to be more excited in relation to his whereabouts than that of the President and other members of his family who received company in the Elliptic Room.†

In 1856 under the laws of Virginia was organized the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association of the Union. Miss Pamela Cunningham, of Columbia, D. C., was the originator and the first regent.‡ The Association in 1858 made the purchase from contributions—\$200,000 for 200 A.

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\*William H. Polk, U. S. Chargé d'Affaires at Naples.

†*The Story of the White House*. Esther Singleton.

‡*American Monthly Magazine*, Vol. III, No. 2.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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Boston Tremont House Jan<sup>y</sup> 8-45

To Mrs D. P. Madison,  
Dear Madam,

I have a book in hand. In giving it to the public, which I hope to do in the coming Spring, it is my wish to invest it with all the *attraction* that I may be able to bestow upon it. There is so much of this in your name, as to lead me to ask the privilege of dedicating one of the divisions of the work to you. Besides, I shall be gratifying my own heart, by giving utterance, under this form to the grateful sense it cherishes of the worth of your illustrious husband, and at the same time of my obligations to him for the confidence he reposed in me in calling me into the public service; as well as the remembrance it cherishes of your many, and rich, and varied excellences. Although, I shall feel that you will be doing me, and my cause, a great favor by granting the permission I solicit.

\*

\*

\*

Tho. L. McKenney

Mrs. Madison received letters of all sorts and from all classes. Of the odd a sample comes next. It is much abbreviated. Several foolscap sheets are covered with descriptions of misfortunes which if borne with cheerfulness would discount Mark Tapley's credit and if with patience destroy ancient Job's reputation.

New York Feby 14<sup>th</sup> 1845

Mrs. Madison,  
Dear Madam,

\* \* \* I walked twelve miles in a severe northeast snow and rain storm, and caught such a cold, in riding afterwards in an open waggon 27 miles that for 18 months I was confined in Boston, with the rheumatism, pain in my side, and the severest cough man ever recovered from. \* \* \* Since then I have been en-

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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gaged in varnishing, and have brought it to a perfection heretofore unknown. \* \* \* I am anxious to get to Washington, to varnish the railings round the Presidents House and Capitol, also, the paintings and gilt frames &c in the White House and Capitol. But this is but a trifle compared with my desire to promote the Glorious cause of Temperance! I have been preparing myself to deliver such an effectual address, before the Assembled Wisdom of the Nation, in the Capitol, as I humbly trust will make such an impression on the Members of Congress, as will induce them to disseminate the Heavenly Cause throughout this highly favored land. If possible I intend to deliver my Address, on a Sunday afternoon and evening the 23d inst. the day after the celebration of the Birth day of Washington. I can speak six hours I think on that subject \* \* \* without fatiguing my audience, having an intermission of two hours between. With the blessing of Heaven, and the encouragement of the American people I hope to become to my own Native Country, what Fatlier Mathew is to his! \* \* \* Oh what a scene to behold your noble self, John Quincy Adams, The President & Vice President. Heads of Departments, President and Vice President elect, my old and most estimable Friend General Winfield Scott, Members of Congress and assembled to hear a poor Green Mountain wood chopper Boy, through the Blessing of God, melting the great Assemblage into tears! It would be worthy of the pencil of a Hogarth, or the pen of a Shakespear. Our worthy Mayor Harper, & those who have only heard a small part of what I am prepared with, say they have never heard the like.

\* \* \*

Benjamin Owen Tyler.

If you have a few dollars to assist, to get my varnish prepared and get to Washington, I shall be able to return it to you within thirty days.—

Respectfully yours, &c

B. O. Tyler.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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William Cabell Rives of Virginia represented that Commonwealth in its councils and it in the councils of the common country. Twice was he Minister to the court of France. He was of the Peace Commission and in the failure of its overtures followed secession. His legal studies were under Jefferson. Not far from Monticello, he made his home—Castle Hill, Albemarle county. He is the author of *The Life and Times of James Madison*.

Mrs. Rives, Judith Page Walker when a Miss, was talented. She modestly as "A Lady of Virginia" wrote *Tales and Souvenirs of a Residence in Europe*. Mr. and Mrs. Rives are the grandparents of Amelia Rives, the famed authoress, whose *The Quick and the Dead*, is scened in the ancestral precincts. The Rives lived at 14 Jackson Place.

My dear Mrs. Madison,

I have two special favors to ask, which I hope you will grant—one to let us have the pleasure of escorting you to "Nova Zembla" at half past five o'clock,—the other to dine with us tomorrow, in company with Lord Morpeth & a few other dignitaries.—

Ever yours most truly

J. P. R.

It was Lord Morpeth who declared that a canvas-duck was a delicacy worth the crossing of the Atlantic. This is from a juvenile Rives:

Dear Mrs. Madison

We are very much obliged to you for your nice present; but mamma is not at home, she went over to Alexandria to see Brother Willie who is quite sick. I

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

am afraid I will keep Aunt Sue waiting, for I always  
take very long to write good bye.

believe me  
as ever

Yours

Amelie S. Rives

To Thomas Ritchie, "Father Ritchie," was "open every ear" for he told the news; he was the proprietor of *The Union*. The Ritchies had their hospitable home on G between Thirteenth and Fourteenth streets.

Everybody seem delighted with the Ritchie family as for myself I am truly so.— \* \* \* I must hasten to close my letter lest the post sh<sup>d</sup> leave it—but I will first ask you to remember, & love me a little & to be afsured that my attachment to you & yours continues ardent as in the beginning—

D. P. M.

Captain Jesse Duncan Elliott knew of the triumphs of the sea. In command, he was second with Commodore Perry first, in the battle of Lake Erie; and he soon after that memorable victory succeeded Perry in the command of the lake. He was of Decatur's squadron and commanded a sloop of war in the Algerian affair. His gallantry on the seas was only equalled by his gallantries to the fair on the land. His letter is deciphered as follows:

Philadelphia Friday  
Morning

My Dear Madam

It was not until this day that I could say with certainty I would be enabled to ask the favor of your charming nieces hand for one of the many dances she will have on the 4<sup>th</sup> March, How much pleasure it would afford me to be still farther at your order and

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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at her service to see you safe to at & through the Ball to your own house.

I have made some very considerable progrefs in my collection of paintings & Daguerreotypes that of Paul Jones I will bring with me as an exhibition of the rest, should you have sufficiently recovered from your attack of influenza I hope to accompany you to the artist, and cancel the small obligation to me, which when done I shall place a no small estimate on. I have a portion of the lock of your venerated husband enclosed with that of Washington Franklin & Gen<sup>l</sup> Jackson in a plane gold ring, and hope with your aid to include that of Mr Jefferson.

With kind regards to my young friend and an assurance of my own high esteem for yourself.

I am very truly

Your friend

J. D. Elliot

Mrs Dolly Paine Madison  
Washington  
City

I accompany Mrs Dallas Mr. Rush and a few other friends as a kind of Phila party to the Inauguration.

Maud Wilder Goodwin in *Dolly Madison* refers to the loss of Commodore Elliott at the inaugural ball of President Polk at the National Theatre, March 4, 1845. He lost his wallet and its contents; and of its contents he regretted most the loss of the letter of Mrs. Madison and of the lock of hair of Mr. Madison which was in company with the locks of Washington, Franklin and Jackson.

To Mrs. Madison:

My Dear Friend

In offering my thanks for the much prized bundle you sent me last evening, I must ask your acceptance

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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of the enclosed trifle, with best wishes for your health and happiness, much love to Anna, Farewell

M. K. Crittenden.

Sunday March 23<sup>rd</sup> (1845)

From Mrs. Madison:

—I have bathed & coaxed my eyes sweet fd with the hope of them being in plight to appear before you this evg, but in vain—they require another day or two of indulgence, the usual procefs with perverse dispositions, always too slow in returning to good humour even in appearance—such are the eyes—

of yours most truly

Mrs. Crittenden

From Anthony Morris:

Highlands—Thursday Morning—

Will you excuse Me dearest Dear M<sup>rs</sup> M for solliciting the favor of you to be at Home *this morning* with your sweetest sweet Flower by your side, to receive two Philad<sup>a</sup> Ladies—Daughters of Her who was well known to you I think, when she was Nancy Pancoast\*—the one Daughter is now M<sup>rs</sup> Buckley,† the other is M<sup>rs</sup> Perrot‡—They are pafsing thro' Washington on their return Home from Richmond, and won't be received with favor by their Mother, nor by the Philadelphians, if they cant say they have seen you and your Daughter—please to caution this fair Lafsie not to fall in Love with young M<sup>r</sup> P. because he is "ower young to marry yet"—

yr Obt & faithful

A. M.

Richard Cutts was born, June 22, 1771, on Cutts's Island, Saco, in the district of Maine. He graduated at

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\*Ann Pancoast, wife of Luke W. Morris.

†Hannah Ann (Morris), wife of Effingham Laurence Buckley.

‡Sarah Wistar (Morris), wife of Joseph Perot.



MRS. MADISON  
By W. S. Elwell



## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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Harvard, 1790. He was a member of Congress from December 7, 1801, to March 3, 1813. He was Superintendent-general of military supplies from June 3, 1813, until his removal by President Jackson. He lived many years at the residence on the east side, center, of Fourteenth street between Pennsylvania avenue and F street, Washington, D. C., and there died, April 7, 1845.

Mrs. Madison to David Hume, the Postmaster at Orange Courthouse, Va.

Pres. Sq: July 9<sup>th</sup> 45.

Will my good friend Mr. Hume have the kindness to write me a line in which to inform me whether my son is in his neighborhood, or in Richmond, as I am anxious for the acknowledgment of several letters which has been written by me to him lately.

With best wishes

Mr. Hume replied that he had no doubt all the letters were received.

To co-erce the collection of a claim General Madison, the brother of Mr. Madison, had against Mrs. Madison, he declined to deliver letters and papers that had been loaned to him. Without the return of these the prospective purchase by Congress would be blocked. A law suit resulted. The circumstances are narrated in Miss Annie Payne's affidavit, May 6, 1846:

I recollect not a great while before Mr. M's death hearing him ask Gen. Madison to be sure and return to him the letters and papers he was then handing him—and afterwards I heard him with a good deal of anxiety tell Mrs. M. that she must certainly get back from him those papers—that Gen. M. had not yet returned them—and that it would be of importance she should have them. In Sept. '39 when Gen. M. enquired of her,

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Mrs. M., if she had thought of his request that she would give to him or some of his family something in remembrance of the expense he had incurred in settling up his father's estate Mrs. M. answered him that her husband had himself assured her that there was no debt due from him or any account whatever to any member of his family. He told her that he knew the time had elapsed by which he could recover anything by law but that in justice upwards of \$2,000 was due him as executor and that he could and would prove this to be the case to her but that he did not ask it of her as a debt—he appealed to her generosity and hoped she would then give him some memoranda of her intention—she took the slate and wrote to this effect “Without the admission of any debt from my husband to his brother William, on his father's account, I give you this mem<sup>o</sup> at Gen. Madison's solicitation for some gift of generosity to him or to his family in case he can prove to me, that there had been a debt due tho' too long ago for the law to recover it now—feeling therefore, every wish of yielding to his persuasion at some future day, I write this as an evidence of my intention, to give his family or to cause to be paid to one of them \$\_\_\_\_\_.

John S. Barbour was a prominent politician and practitioner. He was a member of Congress from 1822 to 1833.

Catalpa July 19<sup>th</sup> 1845

My Dear Madam

I am very sensible that gross injustice is done you in the matter of which I have both written & spoken so often to you. And I fear that I am obtrusive in my communications. They are at least disinterested; & if they be as successful as my wishes are pure of all selfish consideration; justice will be done to you.

My connexion by blood with those whose interest is adversary to yours; will plead my apology for caution & *confidence* in my communication with you. If John

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P. Todd Esq: will call at my house I can probably aid him, and I will do so very cordially; & *with zeal, to the result*, whenever he will call. I am not acquainted with your counsel (Mr. Halladay, else I would write to him.

I am with kindest respect and the best wishes

Y<sup>r</sup> faithful friend

J. S. Barbour

Mrs. D. P. Madison  
Washington City

Mrs. Madison to John S. Barbour, Esq.  
Catalpa, near Culpeper C H Va  
Wash., July 21<sup>st</sup> 45

I ought before this dear Sir, to have acknowledged your disinterested kindness in the communication you made me, but I flattered myself that my son would better express in person to you the grateful feeling with which I must ever remember them—I beg you to be assured that whether or not, I profit by your good wishes, I shall count it a great gratification that your sympathy & counsel were freely given to me.

I am ignorant of the progress made in the suit, & without an acquaintance with the Advocates engaged in it—being too indisposed to make my way to the scene in such oppressive weather.

With aff<sup>te</sup> salutations for your daughter.

Your friend

Mrs Madison presents her affectionate respects to the Sisters of the Visitation and regrets that indisposition deprives her of the great pleasure of accepting their kind invitation to their Academy this day.

July 23<sup>d</sup> '45

Mr. Madison's relative, James Madison, was a bishop of the Episcopal Church in Virginia. Mr. Madison adhered to the faith of his fathers; and Mrs. Madison in the services attended with him. Perhaps for a few

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

months they worshipped at the new St. John's. Alexander B. Hagner in *History and Reminiscences of St. John's Church, Washington, D. C.*, has:

In December, 1816, the Committee appointed to wait on President Madison and offer him his choice of a pew in the Church free of purchase, reported that the President desired the choice should be made by the Committee, who accordingly selected one, among the large pews of the first class.

Upon coming to Washington she renewed her attendance and worshipped with her intimate friends, Mesdames Hamilton, Thornton and Lear. In piety she was Quaker and Episcopalian; she was the essence that all faiths tend to reach; in the form, from affiliation, she changed.

Dear Aunt Lear

Aunt & myself intend to be christened this morning in Church and we wish much that you should be present—It will be at Twelve. No one is to be there except Mrs Adams and her daughters, cousin Mary & Louisa Adams.

Accept our love & believe me always yours

Anne Payne

To the Rev<sup>d</sup> Mr Pyne  
St. John's Church

Dear Friend—I wish to be with you this day of Confirmation and would ask if you had any counsel to give me.

July 15<sup>th</sup> 1845

To Mrs. Madison:

My dearest friend

I am obliged to write on this scrap—I have no counsel to give, but to go on as you have begun. God blefs you.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

and keep you in His Holy favour—Gladly shall I enroll you in the list of my candidates—I should like to see my friend Annie too—

Ever affectionately

Yr

Smith Pyne

To Rev. Mr. Pyne:

According to your intimation of this morning dear Friend I send you my name in full and hope if there is aught else for me to do, that I shall know it from you who I am proud to greet in the fine character of our good and kind Pastor.

Dolly Payne Madison

July 27<sup>th</sup> 1845.

Mrs. Madison to her nephew, Richard D. Cutts:

And now, my dear Richard, I must tell you on what our thoughts have dwelt a great deal—and that is to become worthy of membership in the church which I have attended for the last forty years, and which Anna has attended all her life. Yesterday this long-wished-for confirmation took place. Bishop Whittingham performed the ceremony, and we had an excellent sermon from the Bishop of New Jersey—a fine preacher and beautiful champion for Charity, which “suspects not nor thinks no evil.”

Extract from a long letter to Mrs. Madison:

August 3, 1845.

It has been with no ordinary emotions that I have lately received the intelligence, that you have assumed the profession of faith.

A. M. Boyd.

Cambridge.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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To Philadelphia Sept. 1, 1845.

Mrs. D. P. Madison,

My dear Madam,

The vol which you did me the honor to patronize, by permitting its dedication to you, is in the press. It has been delayed by those obstacles which lie always almost in the way of authors—But it is on its way through the press, and will, bye & bye, appear before the public. My chief anxiety is, that it may prove not unworthy of the distinguished name under whose auspices it will appear. If I succeed in making the work acceptable to you, I shall have achieved one great end which I had in view in its preparation. The editor of the Knickerbocker has been kind enough to notice the enterprize. I have no copy of that number, or I would sent it to you; but the notice having been copied by an Editor of a paper in this City, I send you a paper containing the Knickerbocker's notice—which is certainly very friendly. I had a ramble last Saturday in company with a beloved friend, in Bartram's gardens, and thought, and talked of you. But it does not require a walk there, to revive recollections of one, who, with her illustrious consort, will live in my memory whilst this faculty shall be left to me. I do not know how it is, but it is true, that I revel more in the past, than I do in the present, or the future; and in all the backward tracks which my fancy takes, it is sure to embrace that glorious period, when JAMES MADISON was President of the U. States, and you, Madam, were at his side, lending that high station the charms of your person, & conversation, and enriching the circle in which you moved by that gracious manner, which made you THE BELOVED OF ALL. I enquire after you of all I see, who come from Washington, & who know you, & visit you; and am made happy to hear from all. of the excellent state of your health, &c. May it long be continued to you, crowned with every other earthly blefsing, is the prayer of your sincere and devoted friend

Tho: L: McKenney

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

As had Mr. Madison so had Mrs. Madison the art feeling. As her spoken and written thought was cultured so was her sense of decorative beauty. Her home had Gilbert Stuart and John Vanderlyn's portraiture and other works of recognized masters. Examples that were of slight value when in her possession are now treasures only the wealthy can possess. She had besides many well-chosen engravings; and besides art objects that are now guarded in numerous cabinets. In the encouragement of art, Mrs. Madison could quite appropriately donate of her valuable keepsakes; and from affection for the city that had in it so much of personal history intertwined.

### Copy of Circular Letter Addressed to Mrs. Baker Arch Below 11th Street

A number of Gentlemen, Stockholders and others, have taken much interest in an effort to reconstruct the Academy of the Fine Arts, which was recently visited by a destructive fire. They have been pleased to invite co-operation from their female friends. If the master spirits of the human race, the Lords of this fair creation, are willing in an hour of need, to confess the value of assistance from the feebler sex, there will be nothing intrusive or indelicate in the acceptance of so flattering an invitation. A tribute at once so unusual and agreeable.

A few ladies having consented to put their shoulders to a wheel, set in motion by stronger hands than theirs, though yet deep in the mire, would imitate the Mouse in the Fable, which, by persevering use of its small means, relieved the Lion from the net. If then, they may, on this occasion produce a corresponding effect, may they not be permitted, for once, to quit the quiet and unpretending routine of domestic charities, to aid the noble exertions of their leaders in this benevolent enterprise. They cordially invite the assistance of all

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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who are willing hearted and nimble fingered; tasteful in constructing and ingenious in executing works of fancy and of female skill. The products of pencil or pen, needle, spindle or shuttle; knitting or netting needles; braiding or bead work; embroidery, feather or shell work; in short, all the Sister Arts are called on, to combine in the grand scheme of raising up and adorning the walls of their beloved Academy.

“As mole hills piled to mountains rise,” none need be deterred from contributing small offerings to the *Grand Bazaar*. The spirit that gives according to its means is both just and generous; and the female who can spare a few hours of ingenious labour, is no less a benefactress, than she, who out of her abundance, has the privilege of making a large donation.

From the beautiful stores that adorn our City, an interest in this undertaking may be confidently expected. A taste for the *Fine Arts*, is frequently cultivated by those so constantly examining the splendid fabrics of the *Useful Arts*, and taste and liberality should grow with the wealth they produce. Aid from these fashionable marts (jewellery and fancy articles of every kind) is respectfully solicited.

In addition to the places of residence of the members of the Committee and of the Directors a place of deposit for contributions will be opened at No. 66 Walnut Street, between the hours of 9 and 3; and tables at the Bazaar provided; to display them to best advantage.

The name of each contributor should accompany the articles sent, that distance as well as domestic patrons, may be acknowledged and appreciated.

A committee appointed from among the Lady-Patronesses, will receive and arrange all articles that come into their possession, during the period preceding the opening of the Bazaar. Ladies at their Summer retreats, may like the industrious Ant, be providing for the coming season and bring their shining stores, in bright October to the *Fair Bazaar*, while those who

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

labour or collect within the City, may deposit as above, at their own convenience.

Miss Gratz, 2 Boston Row.

Mrs. John C. Montgomery, 233 Pine St.

Miss Percival, Broad & Locust Sts.

Mrs. Henry D. Gilpin, 99 Walnut St.

Mrs. Peter, 68 South 4th Street

Mrs. John W. Field, 3 Belmont Row,  
Spruce St.

Committee. Miss Sally Peters, 18 Girard Street

Mrs. Doctr. Y. G. Nancrede, Walnut & 10th

Mrs. George M. Dallas, 259 Walnut Street

Mrs. John Sergeant, 89 South 4th St.

Mrs. Thomas Biddle, 8 York Buildings,  
Walnut St.

Mrs. H. Pratt McKean, Spruce above tenth  
Street

Philadelphia, July the 30th 1845.

Miss Eliza Sibley, daughter of Dr. John Sibley, of Natchitoches, Louisiana, married Josiah Stoddard Johnston, who was a Senator of that State. A charming widow she was and she married the handsome Henry Dilwood Gilpin.

Mr. Gilpin was a talented lawyer and his talent rewarded him with honors and riches. He was the U. S. District Attorney at Philadelphia, Solicitor of the Treasury; and during Van Buren's administration Attorney-General. He wrote much. His works include a Biography of the Signers of the Declaration of Independence. Under the auspices of Congress he edited the Madison Papers, published in three octavo volumes. He reported the Cases of the U. S. District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania. He had a distinct literary leaning and an artistic sense. His numerous papers for

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periodicals give this proof. He travelled abroad and was the recipient of special courtesies. He was of the management of the University of Pennsylvania and Girard College. He was vice-president of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania;\* and President of the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts. Mr. Gilpin was born in Lancaster, England.

Phila October 22<sup>d</sup> 1845

My dear Mrs Madison

I received the Evg before last, your most valuable & acceptable package—& hasten as one of the Managers of the Bazaar to return you my very sincere thanks—your kind & prompt manner of doing so great a favor, adds greatly to its value & I assure you it is highly appreciated by us—We look with emotion, & with veneration upon the letters of those great & good men (now all gathered to their Father) but whose acts remain, as bright and splendid examples to others—& for your own beautiful manuscript, again let me very truly thank you, my dear Mrs Madison—I am sure you will be pleased to hear that the exertions of the Ladies have proved entirely successful & when the receipts are all returned & some remaining valuable articles disposed of—the sum realised will exceed ten thousand dollars—this with the aid of the gentlemen will, we trust rebuild the academy & leave a fund to add to the Paintings. I hope my dear Mrs Madison that you have entirely recovered from the effects of your indisposition & may have no return of it during the autumn. Would not a little change of air, & scene benifit you,—you know you have cordial & kind friends here to greet you & *first* among them, my Husband & myself—I beg you to present me affectionately to your niece—& re-

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\*Portraits of Mr. and Mrs. Gilpin in the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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ceive the assurances of Mr Gilpin & my unchanged interest & sincere regard—

Very affectionately,

Y<sup>rs</sup> Eliza Gilpin

99, Walnut St

Phila

Mrs. Madison's ancient friend, Samuel Harrison Smith, died November 1, 1845. The gazetteers omit his appointment by President Madison, of date September 30, 1814, to perform the duties of the Secretary of the Treasury. The biographical sketch in the Daily National Intelligencer, December 2, 1845, concludes:

It only remains for us to add that the evening of his life of blameless purity and simplicity found him conscious, prepared and tranquil; and, that, having lived the life of a Philosopher, he gave, to the friends who surrounded him in his last moments, a lesson how a Christian ought to die.

Richard Dominicus Cutts and Martha Jefferson Hackley were married December 16, 1845. The wedding was at Norfolk, Va., and Mrs. Madison's niece, Mary, was of the out-of-town visitors. She says the bride was the only one not excited.

Harriet Taylor Upton has relative to Mrs. Madison's reception in honor of the new united couple:

To the close of life she wore the dress she had liked many years before, and looked like a picture in it always—an historical portrait. This costume worn on all state occasions—and there were many, for the mansion on Lafayette Square was to the President's house like the residence of the Queen Dowager—was a black velvet gown, with leg-of-mutton sleeves, and a short waist; the skirt in full gathers; it opened upon the breast and

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was filled in with a good deal of white tulle rising to a ruff about the face. Upon her hair was a turban of white satin covered with clouds of white tulle; and thrown about her shoulders with a Frenchwoman's grace was a favorite satin scarf of rich stripes in the Roman colors. So appareled, she presided at one of the last gayeties in the house on Lafayette Square. \* \* \* It was an immense reception; all the great people of Washington were there, for together with the respect affectionately due Mrs. Madison, both bride and bridegroom were old favorites in Maryland and Virginia society, and all the evening there was a throng pressing in at the front door and issuing at the back as at a Presidential levee. The young pair spent six months with Mrs. Madison.\*

I salute you dear Mrs Clarke with a kifs from the Bridal store but in my own spirit—The President was too ill to appear—his handsome and pleasant lady, however, caused us to forget in a measure, the misfortune.

Truly yours

D. P. Madison

To Mrs. Madison:

My dear Neighbor—The carriage is going out this morning and will call for you—what time will you be ready to go—Suit your convenience, as it makes no difference, to me—

Your sincere friend,

Anna R. Clarke.

Richard Smith's acknowledgment to Mrs. Madison:

Jan: 1, 1846

My dear Madam

I am truly thankful for your remembrance of me; & the handsome & curious little souvenir shall be cherished as a testimonial of your regard. I only repeat a

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\**Our Early Presidents, Their Wives and Children.*

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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hacknied expression in wishing you much happiness in this New Year, but it is the earnest prayer of my heart that you may long live to enable your friends to testify how much they respect & love you.

Ever yours—

Mrs: Madison

Rd Smith

The memory of the Rev. Mr. Pyne in St. John's will not be outliven. The Hon. Mr. Hagner says he was called through the influence of the Hon. John C. Spencer and in his *History of St. John's Church*, further says:

He was a man of elegant education and of fine mind and literary attainments, and was certainly one of the most effective preachers of our Church at that day; and was especially noted for his fine rendition of the Scriptures, which he read with remarkable beauty of enunciation and pathos. He was a brilliant conversationalist, and had a good deal of the wit and plain talk that reminded one of the accounts of the many-sided "Sidney" whom he somewhat resembled in his tastes and acquirements.

To Mrs. Madison:

My dearest Friend

Had you sought through the world you could not have made me a more acceptable & appropriate gift— In spite of the law against the right of primogeniture it shall be an heir loom, for two generations at least— My son John will inherit it & prize it, when we, I trust through the blest faith we hold in common, shall be the common recipients of those blessings which God has in store for his children.

\* \* \*

God bless and preserve you many years here, and crown them with "long life ever for ever."

With devoted affection

Yr friend & Pastor

Jan'y 1st 1846.

Smith Pyne

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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The draught may have been bitter but there a curing cordial in the way the medicine was proffered by Mrs. Madison.

Cherish confidence in thy Doctrefs sweet friend and take this Tincture morning & night—one teaspoon in water.—

Of the wife of the President with whom Mrs. Madison was most intimate was the wife of Mr. Polk. During his residence in the Capital City as Speaker of the House of Representatives (1835-'39), Mrs. Madison and Mrs. Polk often sat at the same table. That the Tylers were to be retired gave Mrs. Madison regret; that the Polks were to succeed gave her elation. Mrs. Polk eschewed cards and dances and the frivolities. She was simple and sincere. She made a handsome hostess.

Of the levee, January 21, 1846:

This evening the President for the first time received his friends at the White House, and if a large and highly respectable assemblage could gratify him, he had no cause of complaint. \* \* \*

It was one of the most interesting incidents of the evening to see Mrs. Madison promenade the East Room, with the appearance of almost youthful agility.\*

A part is taken of a guest's description of a levee:

In the centre of the room stands the President, willing to shake as many people by the hand as may be presented to him while his strength lasts; and a fine gentlemanly man he is, Democrat or no Democrat.

At his right hand you will probably discover Mr. Marcy, the Secretary of the War. There is also Mr.

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\**The Story of the White House.* Esther Singleton.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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Dallas, performing acts of civility with the air of a perfect courtier to every one. Behind the President stands Mrs. Polk, whom I will uphold on any and every occasion of your attending the levee to be one of the finest women in the room. You will probably find her supported by an elderly lady in a black turban, who you will know at once is Mrs. Madison; behind them will be twenty or thirty young ladies standing at ease, laughing and flirting with young M.C.'s among whom not the least conspicuous for gallantry and gentlemanly deportment will be Judge Douglas of Illinois.

\* \* \*

To the East Room you repair, then; and find a spacious apartment splendidly furnished and brilliantly illuminated. There is comparative stillness here; the conversation is more moderate, but the ferocious trumpets and clarionets are outside the folding-doors, and the least provocation in the world will arouse their anger. The great amusement of the evening now commences; all before has been merely preparatory. This popular court pastime consists in solemnly promenading round the room in pairs. \* \* \*

Senators, Ministers, Congressmen, mechanics, clerks, and would-be-clerks are there, leading ladies belonging to every stage in society, from the fashionable belle of the higher circles to the more fashionable seamstress. Solemnly and without pause, they perform their slow gyrations, while a group of young men in the centre survey their motions, quizzing their dresses and general appearance. The whole affair seems to have been got up for the amusement of this knot of spectators, some of whom are preparing mental notes descriptive of the satin of Miss A., the beaming eyes of Miss B., the gallantry of Gen. C. and the stateliness of Col. D., for the papers throughout the Union.

The dresses of the ladies form a subject for abstruse study. Half an hour's contemplation is sufficient to distract any man of common mind. \* \* \*

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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Some men parade in gravity, some are merry and others are foppish; there is a good sprinkling of military and naval uniforms, and there are a few horny-faced strangers who are—Ah ye narcotic gods!—chewing tobacco. Soon the company increases; a few ladies, exhausted by their peripatetic labors, seat themselves on sofas; groups of gentlemen congregate around them to talk nonsense and look killing. Count Bodisco holds a private levee at one end of the room, and all the world is introduced. The French, British and other Ambassadors cluster together, glittering in uniforms and the crosses of foreign orders and frightful moustaches and beards. Mr. Polk is forgotten—the gold lace and brilliant swords usurp all attention. Such introducing, such scraping, such curtseying, such jabbering of foreign compliments and violent efforts of some of our people to do the polite in uncouth tongues—such a wild clamor of conversation rages—the band, too, has become insane and the room is oppressively warm, when the President enters leading a lady—probably Mrs. Madison, and followed by Mrs. Polk and all the great people of Washington.

The noise increases, the complimenting and bowing go on worse than ever; the band has taken matters in its own hands and the instruments have become ungovernable; the promenading ceases. The President has a word for every one, and all mingle together in irregular groups chatting and laughing and coquetting, until unable any longer to bear such tumult you rush distractedly from the room, and give the young “nigger” who has charge of your hat and cloak a shilling for his trouble, which generosity he gratefully repays by presenting you with an ancient *chapeau* in the last stages of existence.\*

Mrs. Madison made an exception to Dr. Franklin's debt observations, to wit: that “Creditors have better

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\**The Story of the White House.* Esther Singleton.



KALORAMA, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA



## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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memories than Debtors and that the debtor who cannot pay promptly fears to face his creditor.”

Washington March 24<sup>th</sup> 1846

Dear Friend—I ought to have written my apology and explanation on the subject of my debt to you, some time ago—and can only hope for your forgiveness by telling you of my difficulties which “lengthen as I go”—My hope of emancipation from them has kept me patiently looking forward to the purchase by this Congress of my Husband’s writings—but the early day is yet in perspective when I may return your kind loan and its interest, for the last twelve months.

I had the pleasure to see your grand sons the Messrs Langdon during their short visit to Washington—as well as Mr Cogswell, who promised me a second visit, but did not come.

Accept from me, with your wonted goodness, this explanation of my delinquency, and believe me, with wishes for your happiness, your constant friend.

John Jacob Astor Esqr

New York

General Walter Jones was nationally famous for erudition in the law and for his purity of language. He was “a well of English pure and undefiled.” His practice was important and he was counsel in *causes celebres* among which the Girard and Myra Clark Gaines. He had a part in the Bladensburg battle but it was not on account of that, that President Monroe made him a Brigadier-General or that he arose to the higher rank, Major-General.

Yet now and then your men of wit  
Will condescend and take a bit. (vanity)

—Swift.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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And if it was a vanity, the truly great Walter Jones had his bit, for to him it was a fascination—"in full uniform, with blue saddle cloth embroidered with gold"—to ride "at its head on all public occasions—inaugurations and funerals of Presidents, etc."\*

General Jones in his declining days lived with Dr. and Mrs. Thomas Miller. Mrs. Miller was Miss Virginia Jones, the daughter of the General; and Miss Harriotte Jones, was another daughter. Mr. Miller was *the* Physician of the city and in the continuous administrations including Harrison and Buchanan, he was the President's physician. Sir William Howard Russell, correspondent of the *London Times*, has given him the title "The Great Virginia Doctor." He had all the honors of the profession; and to the limit, his practice would permit, he gave his time to other than health direction for the public benefit. Dr. and Mrs. Miller, at first, lived with Mrs. Thornton on F street. She sat in the Miller pew and always had an escort in one of the Miller family to and from service. Dr. Miller after living elsewhere (E street near Fourteenth), bought the historic Thornton house and there permanently lived and by his hospitality added to its historic record. It stands today still erect but in its old age much altered. Its original number was 346; present 1331.†

Gen<sup>l</sup> & Mrs Jones will be happy to see Mrs Madison on Thursday evening 14<sup>th</sup> at 8 o'clock.—

Mrs. Madison to Miss Harriet Jones:

These early peeping peas and blushing radishes await the fostering hand and beaming eye of my sweet young

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\**Walter Jones and His Times*. Fanny Lee Jones. Records of the Columbia Historical Society.

†*Dr. Thomas Miller and His Times*. Virginia Miller.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

friend Harriet when they will embellish her table and soothe her impatience at their tardy perfection.

Affectionately

I send you a few Specimens of German Scenery which you will please divide with *Sisters* for me.

April 2<sup>d</sup> 1846

The sisters Jones did divide the pictures and to this day they are highly prized.

My dear kind Friend

My Sisters join me in grateful thanks for your beautiful present. The scenes are *most beautiful* and we have all been very happy this morning examining them—we have each made choice of that which pleased us best, and shall always preserve it, as a memento of our Father's dear and valued friend. The fine seed you have been so kind as to send me, I shall sow with care, and with them try to cultivate patience, and enjoy the *anticipation* of their beauty and perfection—tho I fear much this same patience will be sown with the seed and unfortunately wait to Spring up with them too—not so however the seed of Love which your kindness has planted in my heart—it is already Springing up in true affection, and sending out many warm wishes for your health and happiness and all the best blessings of Providence. Papa and my Sisters send their best love to you and to Annie.

affectionately y<sup>rs</sup>

Harriotte Jones

Saturday

April 4<sup>th</sup> (1846)

(Card)

Mrs. T. Miller

At home Every Tuesday Morning

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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My dear Mrs Madison

I anticipated the pleasure of passing this evening with you, but have been prevented by the sufferings of my *pet* from violent inflammation of the eyes.

Please present my affectionate regards to your niece Miss Payne, her kind message to father was duly delivered, he felt much flattered & if his health permitted would have enjoyed a pleasant Evening with you both, for the last few days he has been very unwell.

believe me

most truly yrs

Friday

Virginia Miller

Apr 23<sup>d</sup> 46—

—My Dearest—It has been too long since I was cheered with a line from you—What are you about that prevents your communicating with your Mother? You are taking special care of our mutual property of every sort, I trust—& my confidence in you to restore it to me is not diminished by the sad & tedious time in which I have been deprived of its use—a part of the furniture I wished to divide with you, & a part of it desired to sell but I wished to be with you & together choose what best to dispose of. \* \* \*

Anxious

Mother!

Mrs. Lear, May 2, 1846, invited Mrs. Madison to sit with her in the Van Ness pew, St. John's Church, which she thought of occupying thereafter.

To Mrs. Lear:

—Many thanks dear Friend—your fruit is sweeter than ours—I wish we could say quite well but that is not the case tho' we are bustling about yet—Anna will go to a Bridal party this evening—I decline on account of a promise to see Kalorama but there & everywhere we “think of thee my love.”

D. P. Madison.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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Says Mrs. Smith, November 7, 1831:\*

Madame Iturbide, the former Empress of Mexico, is close to us.

Sister Gertrude, the nun, who last spring escaped from the convent at George Town, is an inmate of her family, in fact, an adopted daughter and has the whole charge of her three daughters. Sister Gertrude I knew well in her childhood, saw now and then through the convent grate and on one occasion when accidentally alone with her, offered if she wished to leave it, to communicate her desire to her relatives, but she then said she was confined more by her own inclination, than by her vows, or the walls that surrounded her.

Says Ben: Perley Poore:†

Miss Ann G. Wightt, a cousin of Mrs. Van Ness, created a great sensation in Washington by coming to her house for a home. She was a runaway nun from the Convent of the Visitation in Georgetown, and had been known in the community as Sister Gertrude. No one ever knew rightly the cause of her sudden departure from the convent. Some said it was disappointed ambition in not being appointed superioress; others, that it was a case of love; but she never told, and the ladies of the convent were just as reticent. She became an inmate of the elegant Van Ness mansion and was a noted and brilliant woman in society. It was said that she had written a book, exposing the inner life of the convent, to be published after her death, but I have never heard of its appearance. A few years after she left the convent she accompanied the family of the American Minister to Spain, and resided for some time at Madrid, where she was a great favorite in Court circles.

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\**Forty Years of Washington Society.*

†*Perley's Reminiscences of Sixty Years in the National Metropolis.*

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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Says Mrs. Kate Kearney Henry:

She was a cousin of Mrs. Van Ness, being a niece of Mrs. David Burns, who was a Miss Ann Wight of Charles Co., Md. \* \* \* She was a most charming person in her manners and conversation, and was sought as an honored guest on all distinguished occasions.

My dear Mrs Madison

Some friends of mine, wish me to accompany them to Mount Vernon tomorrow, & although I have been there several times within the last ten years, I do not feel sufficiently well acquainted to introduce them.

Will you have the goodness to write me a line of introduction? you can say "Miss Wightt of Washington & party &c &c"

I am going down on the Avenue now & on my return will call for the note hoping it will be convenient for you to give it to me, & to have it ready by that time. I trust Anna has entirely recovered & that you are perfectly well.

Some evening during this or the coming week, I promise myself the pleasure of taking Tea with you.

Yours most affectionately &c

Ann G. Wightt\*

Wednesday noon  
May 20<sup>th</sup> 1846

J. Eastman Johnson, who rose to eminence in art, in his stepping stone days executed portraits in black and white.

Dear Mrs. Madison—

I am very much obliged to you for your patience in permitting me to keep the picture of Mr. Madison until now—I hope I have not been charged with neglect in a disposition to take advantage of your politeness in retaining it so long, though perhaps I deserve it—

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\*Died at Richmond, Va., November 19, 1867.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

If you will please not forget the little memorial which you promised me of your signature &c, you will increase my obligation to you & very much gratify,

Yours very respectfully

J. Eastman Johnson

Saturday May 23<sup>d</sup> (1846)

### THE NATIONAL FAIR.

Thursday, May 21, to Wednesday, June 3, 1846.

Forgotten! The citizens' (of Washington) greatest exhibition of enterprise; an example for emulation. It was a fair for the display, encouragement and advancement of American manufactures. No other was on so extensive scale until the Centennial in Philadelphia in 1876 but that was international. Multitudes paid the shilling to enter and went in. The newspapers devoted daily detailed descriptions. W. W. Seaton was the chairman of the committee of superintendence; the others of the committee in their activity forgot to get their names in print. The ladies' association had the refreshment rights and spent the substantial profits on the poor—very poor, then.

Mrs. Madison gave the Fair the approval of her presence.

On Wednesday, May 27<sup>th</sup>, the trustees, teachers and pupils of the public schools, matrons and children of orphan asylums were guests and marched in procession to the pavilions; and continued on the rotunda and parks of the Capitol. The pupils mustered four hundred and the orphans two hundred and fifty. And, a part of Friday afternoon, the 29<sup>th</sup>, was appropriated to the admission of people of color.

Too much space cannot be assigned this important item of local and national history and from the resumé of the *Daily National Intelligencer*, June 4, is taken thus:

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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The National Fair closed finally last night at ten o'clock agreeably to the published notice some days ago. This great exemplification of American ingenuity, projected and prosecuted under some doubts of its success, has far more than equalled the highest hopes of the patriotic gentlemen who originated and carried it forward. During the entire fortnight that it has been open, its immense saloons have been thronged by day and crowded by night with interested and gratified spectators, who have come hither from all quarters to view its treasures. \* \* \* We can only say that the National Fair has been a source of pleasure and instruction to the thousands who have visited it, and of no little advantage, we believe, to our National Metropolis; that we feel that our city is much indebted to the liberal contributors to whose public spirit we owe it; and we trust that they will find in the success of their experiment a sufficient inducement to repeat it periodically, or occasionally, hereafter.

Brooklyn, N. Y.

July 4, 46

To

Mrs D. P. Madison

Dear Madam,

\* \* \* Your old friend Mr Astor is very feeble.

He is at hurl-gate, and may linger on awhile longer, but can have no pleasure in life. I am told by those who best know him that his relish for wealth is as keen as ever: That gone, he is gone.

I hope you continue to enjoy your accustomed health? May it be long continued to you. Where is your son? And how is he? How thin'd has the tree become of its leaves—I mean how many of those once known to us both have dropt off!

\* \* \*

Ever yours

Tho. L: McKenney

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

Maj. McKenney\* came to Mr. Madison with a note of introduction from Gen. Van Ness. It was dated July 28, 1814. The Major came with a suggestion stated in the note—"the project of calling into the field a battalion of militia of the District during the agitation and alarm produced by the menaces of the enemy." A little later, September 2, from Camp Windmill Point, below Windmill Hill (old Naval Observatory), in the city on the Potomac he wrote the President. And during the war he fought and wrote. When the fighting ceased, he did not cease writing; and had Mr. Madison as a correspondent. And when Mr. Madison passed on, Mrs. Madison was the successor.

Maj. McKenney was the proprietor of the country-seat Weston, on the Tennallytown road, not far above Georgetown, from some time in 1817 and for several years. The mansion of wood was commanding; it was latterly known as Ruthven Lodge. It, in 1911, fell before suburban extension. The kingdom of leaves was a veritable Eden. A sequestered path the Major called the Dolly Madison Walk. The Major, always enthusiastic, dedicated his attainment and life-work for the advancement of the American aborigines. He wrote several treatises on the Indian and that in conjunction with James Hall of Cincinnati was a success from the standards of artistic embellishment and literary merit.† Maj. McKenney quotes these charming lines, so like a setting of gems:

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\*Voluntary aid-de-camp to Brigadier-General Walter Smith of D. C. militia. Was in the Bladensburg affair.

†Attached to the War Department, is the office of Indian Affairs, with the duties of which Col. McKenney is charged. \* \* \* In it are arrayed, in tasteful order, the likenesses of one hundred and thirty Indian chiefs, in their native costume. These likenesses having been taken from life, (with a few exceptions) by King, of this city, are not only fine specimens of the art, but in point of

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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Ye say their cone—like cabins  
That clustered o'er the vale,  
Have disappeared as withered leaves  
Before the autumn gale;  
But their memory liveth on your hills,  
Their baptism on your shore;  
Your ever rolling rivers speak,  
Their dialect of yore.

Something of Maj. McKenney's style can be gained from his defiant sentiments in declamatory sentences in the first letter herein reproduced and the other letters in gentler mood.

The cultured Ella Loraine Dorsey has contributed this sketch of Colonel Thomas Loraine McKenney:

He was twenty years Commissioner of Indian affairs: he held a commission in the war of '12: he was the son of Wm. McKenney of Kent Co. Md., and his wife Anne Barber: \* \* \* he was descended from the famous Quaker preacher Sarah Grubb: he was interested in the Liberian Colony: he was extremely active at the time of the Irish famine in procuring and sending the corn ships to Ireland: he was an old line Whig and as such suffered from the Jacksonian policy: but his office "was offered to twenty gentlemen, before one could be found willing to take it from a blameless gentleman a position of trust he had filled acceptably for twenty years."

The trip he made with Gen. Cass was remarkable: his *North American Indians* is standard.

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exact delineation, and spirited, and close resemblance to the originals, they are *perfect*. \* \* \* How deeply interesting would it be, were Col. McKenney to embody all he knows of the history and biography of these Indians, thus represented in his office; and intersperse it with the anecdotes which relate to so many of them.—*Historical Sketches of the Ten Miles Square*. Jonathan Elliot.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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His death took place in N. Y. City in 185— while on a journey.

His name among the Indians was "The White Eagle," from his crest of beautiful white hair and bold features. He was much trusted and beloved by them, and no treaty was ever broken either by the white or red people during his long incumbency.

He married Miss Editha Gleaves, but she and his only son died and he never remarried.

The battle, while Commissioner, with the Chateaus and other fur traders of Missouri who sought to ruin him, because he would not allow *their* traders to have liquor of any sort at the annual fur markets, or fall trade, is as spirited as any of the modern commercial battles known. They carried it so far as to mutilate the government's books and carry it to Congress through Benton their Senator.

Mrs. Madison to Mrs. Polk :

You have given me a great gratification in the injunction to answer your kind note—I wish I could do so in a manner to entitle it to a place in your valued f<sup>d</sup>s Book but I feel conscious of a dull spirit which for the last three months has bound me in the fear of loosing a very precious niece—whose health is now being restored, & mine in consequence is reviving—I will therefore add to this note aff<sup>te</sup> salutations for you, & for your f<sup>d</sup> whom henceforth I shall claim thro you but whose book I must not injure by a sombre thought.

2<sup>d</sup> Sept. 46.

The letter of Mrs. Madison to Mr. Bancroft refers to the change—Secretary of the Navy to Minister to Great Britain. Mr. Bancroft had been a guest of the Madisons at Montpellier (March-April, 1836) and there came to be a family friendship. Mr. Bancroft was also the Minister to Germany yet is best known by his *History of the United States*. The Bancrofts, 1874, removed to

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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Washington for permanency. He had pleasure in his intimacy with national notables and in the three Rs—reading, riding and roses. The remembrance is yet with many of a small, slight gentleman, white-bearded, with German military cap, astride a large horse. He was an amateur at rose culture. He delighted to correspond with the fraternity of “rosarians.” His place at Newport was Roseclyffe. A popular rose is the “George Bancroft.” His home in Washington, 1623 H street, N.W., had an l-yard in which legions of roses thrived. Under Mr. Bancroft’s tutelage his gardener, John Brady, developed the American Beauty. The Bancrofts, 1845-’6, lived in 1651 Pennsylvania avenue—the Blair mansion; and is said to have lived also in 21 Madison Place—the Benjamin Ogle Tayloe mansion. Mrs. Bancroft, the second, was before Mrs. Elizabeth Davis Bliss.\*

My dear Mrs. Madison,

Miss Annie I presume is going to Mrs. Jessup’s this evening and if you are not going there will you give us the pleasure of your company at dinner today at half past five. I will send the carriage for you if you will allow me. I have one or two Boston friends with me whom I should like to introduce to you.

Yours with very  
high regard

E. D. Bancroft

Mrs. Madison to Mr. Bancroft:

I thank you valued f<sup>d</sup> for the kind present of apostleck rec<sup>d</sup> from you this Morg—you have as well as your lovely lady been so good to my little patient & myself during our too short acquaintance, that it is impofsible to say how much we lament the seperation now at hand—so

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\**Life and Letters of George Bancroft.* M. A. DeWolffe Howe.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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likely to continue thro life—will you both permit me in any case, to assure you of my constant regard and affection—with every wish for your safety and happiness.

Sept. 14<sup>th</sup> 46.

Do not imagine from my silence sweet fd that my gratitude for your magnificent present is not commensurate with its size & my taste—I wd (?) on the occasion but for an aching head—I hope when the sun shines again I may again see you to tell that I shall keep my potato as I would a rose & how highly I estimate the *prize* from your kindness & how affectionately I am always

Yours

D. P. M.

To Mrs Polk

Nov 6<sup>th</sup> 46—

Boston, October 9, 1846.

My Dear Sir,—I was greatly grieved, before leaving Washington, to learn through some friends of the destitute condition of Mrs. Madison, and resolved to see if something in the shape of permanent and periodical relief could not be provided for her by those richer than myself. I think that means may be procured among us close-fisted, dividend-loving Yankees for buying her a little annuity, say of four or five hundred dollars per annum, for the remainder of her life, if it be thought worth while to do so. In order that we may do this, however, it will be necessary to know her precise age, as that will determine the cost,—and as the *older she is the larger the annuity will be* for the same money, it is desirable that she should not use the proverbial privilege of her sex on this subject. Two or three points, then, I should like to be assured of, viz. :—

1. Whether Mrs. Madison's circumstances are really such as to make such an arrangement desirable for her.

2. If so, her exact age in years; if her birthday could be ascertained it might be best.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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3. How such a provision could best be communicated to her *after it is made up*, without occasioning her any feelings of delicacy or mortification, or even obligation.

Pray do not yet commit anybody to this arrangement, as there may still be a "slip betwixt the cup and the lip." But Mr. Webster and I *have a notion* that we can accomplish the matter if we try.

With kind regards to Mrs. Seaton,

Yours most truly and respectfully,

Robert C. Winthrop.

Hon. W. W. Seaton.

The biographer of the intermediary is the authority that the unobtrusive proffer of the northern gentleman was delicately put aside by the southern gentlewoman.

Paul Jennings was a servant of Mr. Webster. His recollections run thus:

Mrs. Madison was a remarkably fine woman. She was beloved by everybody in Washington, white and colored. Whenever soldiers marched by, during the war, she always sent out and invited them in to take wine and refreshments, giving them liberally of the best in the house. Maderia wine was better in those days than now, and more freely drank. In the last days of her life, before Congress purchased her husband's papers, she was in a state of absolute poverty, and I think sometimes suffered for the necessaries of life. While I was a servant to Mr. Webster, he often sent me to her with a market-basket full of provisions, and told me whenever I saw anything in the house that I thought she was in need of, to take it to her. I often did this, and occasionally gave her small sums from my own pocket, though I had years before bought my freedom of her.

Paul Jennings had been Mr. Madison's valet; and Mrs. Madison's servant. The presents of manumission are dated July 8, 1845, and recite the consideration to be

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

“the faithful services of my man servant \* \* \* and the sum of two hundred dollars.” Mrs. Madison preserved a letter caused to be written by Jennings when a slave thanking her for leave of absence to visit his sick wife.

Henry Alexander Scammell Dearborn, although of the northland, in the southland was educated. He on vacation visits to his parents, his father was the Secretary of War, met the genial Mrs. Dolly who always endeared herself to youth. Mr. Dearborn was of the civil and military rule of Massachusetts. He promoted Mount Auburn Cemetery and founded Forest Hills. Horticulture was his main hobby and he had a great garden at Roxbury. He was the first president of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society; and he notified Mr. Madison of his election as an honorary member. He wrote:

Hawthorn Cottage  
Roxbury July 1, 1847

My Dear Madam,

\* \* \* Often do I go back in thought to that delightful period, when my honoured parents resided in Washington & of the intimacy which existed between our family & your estimable household. Such reminiscences “are pleasant, but mournful to the soul.”

With the highest respect from your  
most aft<sup>r</sup> ser<sup>t</sup>

H. A. S. Dearborn

Mrs. Madison.

To Mrs. Madison:

Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> July 47

My beloved Friend

Christmas and New Years day have pafsed & I have not had the pleasure of going to see you. I much hope

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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that you have escaped the Influenza which has of late prevailed so extensively—for my own part a severe cold attacked me some weeks ago with such serious symptoms I have found it necessary to keep in a warm room, and have not felt able to venture abroad in the last few weeks except twice to Church and from thence was compelled to hurry home—my poor hand too, has suffered by the changes in the weather—I am sorry to send so many complaints my beloved friend, but these alone have kept me from you—I hope dear Annie continues well, please give my love to her. my little L—— L Lear is now busily engaged with her lessons, at school every day from ten till two o'clock—she is quite a robust constitution & goes out in all weather—I was glad she had an opportunity of paying her respects to you my dear friend on 1<sup>st</sup> January. I should have taken her over often had I been able to be out—now I am looking for the return of a pleasant season when we shall meet as in former happy days and with all my love remain as ever yr own devoted

F. D. Lear

Mrs. Madison to Mrs. Lear:

January 17<sup>th</sup> 47

My ever dear friend—can you continue to forgive me for an appearance of neglect towards you, whom I have thought & spoken of every day without the power to present myself to contradict this appearance—so untrue. It w<sup>d</sup> almost break my heart to see you in doubt of that affection so long deserved by you & of wh. you have deserved my gratitude—but I will come to the main matter & tell you that I have not had the power tho' determined every day to visit you, to exercise *my will*, having no command over myself.

Adieu for the present, with Annie's & my own love.

To Mrs. Madison:

My beloved Friend—

I received your most welcome note with a *sweet* present on Sunday evening. I wanted to write then, but



JOHN PAYNE TODD



## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

was prevented by persons coming in at the time. I could only send a mefsage— \* \* \* My dear friend I regret that we so seldom meet—but in this season I can scarcely venture out, I am anticipating the return of Spring with fresh delight, that I may have the pleasure of coming to see you very often—time nor circumstance will never make me doubt the warm affection cherished by yourself towards me. I have felt anxious about your health in all these changes but my neice Henriette afsured me you were better and able to contribute to the gratification of herself and others who so dearly appreciate your kindnefs—with my kind love to Annie I remain my beloved friend

Your own devoted

F. D. Lear

Jan'y 20, 1847—

Amos Lawrence was merchant and manufacturer. He accumulated mighty wealth from business and retired from it to distribute the wealth. His benefactions were in books; in books of his approval. His carriage would on the start be filled with books and on the return emptied of them; he passed them out to acquaintances and to strangers. He daily gave by barrels and by whole collections. Andrew Carnegie is the Amos Lawrence of this generation.

To Amos Lawrence Esqr  
Boston—

Washington, March, 1847

Will you permit your unknown friend, dear Sir, to express her gratitude to you for a beautiful drefs from your manufactory so kindly sent me thro' the hands of our estimable Mrs Davis and which I shall wear for your sake.

D. P. M.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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Mrs. Madison determined the rescue of the portrait of Washington. She removed the picture from the wall and remained within the castle until the means of rescue should arrive. At the critical moment came two gentlemen who at her request bore the picture to a place of safety. Mrs. Madison conceived the rescue; the two gentlemen carried the action. Mrs. Madison is entitled to the credit; the two gentlemen declined any. Thirty-three and thirty-four years after, a claim of rescue was made for Charles Carroll by his son. This unfounded claim caused a controversial correspondence in the columns of the press which has the importance of a tempest in a teapot and a little more as it brings out contemporaneous details of the invasion.

Newport May 5<sup>th</sup> 1847

Mrs J. Madison  
Madam

It has been my wish long since to publish the *Narrative*, which you will find in the Express, I send by to day's Mail, relating to the Saving of the Portrait of Washington. The *credit* has been given to others, & it affords me sincere pleasure, *to be the means* of placing the facts before the Country, & to *show* that *to you alone* is to be attributed, the preservation of this valuable Picture of the Father of our Country. I hope your life may long be preserved, & if attachment for your character, *could be* increased, this *narrative* cannot fail, to secure, the love & attachment of the Union, for your self possession, and patriotic feelings, manifested on the occasion referred to.

I am

With great respect

Your Ob St

Robt. G. L. DePeyster.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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“May prosperity and that peace which he seeks, be showered upon him!” Henry Clay was in retirement; at Ashland, in the State of physical perfection and nature in perfection he was resting. Mrs. Madison admired Mr. Clay for his ability and was grateful for the employment of that ability for her. She was drawn to him by his charming conversation and his pleasing personality. Mr. Clay’s first oratorical act in Congress was for a bridge over the Potomac.

Aug. 23<sup>d</sup> 47—

My dear Mrs Seaton

Your kind note of this morning is full of interest to me—your friend must ever feel as you do, a sister’s affection for Mr Clay—May prosperity & that peace which he seeks, be showered upon him!—I have been too ill all day to write & exprefs my whole mind to you. My best respects to Col. Rufsell—

Always yours—

Copied *Truth* in Miss Josephine D. Rufsell’s album.

To Mary E. E. Cutts:

Boston, April 30<sup>th</sup> 1847.

My dear Mary

\* \* \*

You can easily imagine the satisfaction I feel, in having actually accomplished, what for some years, has been so uppermost in my mind—a visit to Wash<sup>ton</sup> & a last look at scenes so endeared, friends so beloved, for so long a time. I really found fewer changes than I could have expected. how much pleasure we had in seeing Mrs. Madison, my Mother’s & Father’s old Friend—Dear Lady, how kind she was & how much we all love her. Charley & Lizzie will never forget her & we all feel to have only seen her, was well worth the journey to Washington.

\* \* \*

E. B. Crowninshield

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

Miss Haswell was the daughter of Charles H. Haswell, Engineer-in-Chief, U. S. N. The Haswells resided on I between Thirteenth and Fourteenth streets.

Miss Haswell—enclosing lines on *Temper*.

—Your nice little basket my sweet friend is filled on its return to you with my thanks—accept them—they will ever adhere to the mind so pure and kind as yours.

Affectionate salutations

September 4<sup>th</sup> 1847.

Mrs. Madison to Hannah H. Cutts, widow of her nephew, Thomas, directed to Danville, Kentucky: (1847)

I hastened to send your letter my dear Niece by Maj: Ringgold—a kind gentleman who promised to deliver it himself—Mr Buchanan having assured me that it was the surest way of your brother's receiving it, as the public despatches were too often lost—I hope he will be cheered by reading it and that you my precious friend may be happy in the knowledge of a kind brother's safety.

I pray you to give many kisses for me to my sweet little girls Mary & Dora—& with all my aff<sup>te</sup> regards to your Mother. I wish you & herself to be assured that it will always give me pleasure to do any thing for you in this quarter.

I would add an account of our pleasant City in which we have remained all the summer without illness except a bilious fever to Annie of a weeks' continuance. Martha & Richard came back a week ago—R<sup>d</sup> is attached to you without a cross thought in his head respecting you—Mary has not yet returned tho a little homesick—she writes that she will be here the first of Oct.—My eye rebels & obliges me to say adieu with every aff<sup>te</sup> wish for your happiness.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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Virginia J. and Septemia were daughters of Mrs. Randolph, the daughter of Thomas Jefferson. Of Mrs. Randolph's seven daughters, Virginia was the eldest; Septemia, the youngest. Virginia married Nicholas P. Trist\*—he was a diplomatist; Septemia married D. S. Meikleham—he was a doctor. Mrs. Randolph rounded out the dozen children by five sons.

Mrs. Madison to Mrs. Trist, care of Dr. Meikleham, 260 W. 20, N. Y.:

Washington Sept 21<sup>st</sup> 1847

My very dear Friend—

As usual I have been delinquent in answering yr kind & welcome but the same weak eye existing on my part pleads for me with you & my precious Septimia—& augments that never dying affection for you, which dwells with me. I have been impatient to congratulate you on the happy success of our dear Mr Trist, whose merit & glory will ever follow him & those he loves best. \* \* \* I hope soon to see you all convened in F St listening to the sweet voices of daughters sisters & those beloved travellers with whom we long for a re-union. \* \* \*

All your acquaintances here enquire afftly after you & when you will return—indeed I know few as highly esteemed as you.

Between the letters to Mrs. Trist, September 21, and to her son, Payne, September 24, are three days. The letter to Mrs. Trist in the hour of her husband's honor in his selection to negotiate with Mexico, is in Mrs. Madison's happiest humor—extolling Mr. Trist's merit and Mrs. Trist's esteem. Mrs. Madison could for the occa-

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\*Nicholas P. Trist, Chief Clerk of State Department, 1845; represented United States in peace negotiations with Mexico, 1848; consul at Havana; private secretary to President Jackson.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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sion so fully forget herself as to fully appreciate the state of others whether of fortune or misfortune, to felicitate or commiserate. A trait of Mrs. Madison is made evident by the contrast of these two letters. Mrs. Seaton in her first observation of Mrs. Madison made her impression indelible—"but *I*, and I am by no means singular in the opinion, believe that Mrs. Madison's conduct would be graced by propriety were she placed in the most adverse circumstances of life." The impression had the prophetic with it. The letter to her son shows that she had reached the end or come "at a stand" with the means for support. With this terrible condition confronting, Mrs. Madison declined to execute any paper which might deceive for credit. "I have nothg to convey away nor with which to benefit myself." Here is heroism. The moralizing by one who has not undergone experience and temptation is to "become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal." The one who has suffered and resisted can rightfully support and strongly support the similar situated. Mrs. Madison smiled to her friends and suffered to herself and complained to no one save her son on whom she had claim.

Sept 24th 1847.—

My beloved—I am too sensible to all the troubles you encounter but I trust in Our Heavenly Father who has in His Mercy supported us to this day—let your faith be in Him, with prayers for His continued Goodness, to us, who are nothing without Him.

I entrusted the letters and some account of the Astor business, to Col. Bomford who promised his faithful attention—but I have rec<sup>d</sup> only verbal acct<sup>s</sup> from him, thro' his wife.—He says he has "made every effort to converse with *him* in vain"—that he cannot *converse*—that his watchful friends do all that for him—and that the

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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prospect of gaining on his former feelings *seems* hopeless—as he can neither listen nor reply. It is thought he will live but a short time, as he now lives on the milk of a wet nurse.

—I am afraid the facility of borrowing in the North could not be extended to our situation, when the same obstructions exist with a multitude of others. I have borrowed as you *must* know to live since and before we parted last, but now I am at a stand, until supplies come from you—I will as you advise take care of “*such men*” whom I detest too much even to hear their defence.

I hope Mr Robinson & yourself will make wise & efficeint conclusions in the case of Walker and every other in dispute. I take for granted that all will be granted with that immovable calmness of spirit which has been found the wisest.

I hope to see you in health and good prospects when you come to visit me in October—you will let me hear from you when you can.

I send you more papers but object to your returning the like. I cannot think of any Deed being necessary for the purpose you mention. I have nothg to convey away nor with which to benefit myself. My eye rebels. Adieu for this time.

To Mrs. Madison:

accept the enclosed mitts my beloved friend, as an evidence that you were not forgotten; and whilst my fingers were employed netting them my heart was clinging still closer & closer to yours—They are an imperfect specimen of my work owing to the difficulty of geting materials in the country were them for my sake, however; and I will try to do better.

I am very anxious to see you and my dear child Anne—and will spend some hours with you when the weather is cooler—for this is weather that suits not either you or me for exercise—Keep in view therefore till we meet

Your friend—

E Lee

October 18<sup>th</sup>—1847—

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

Mrs. Madison to General Winfield S. Scott, recommending William J. Corcoran:

I take the liberty dear General Scott to salute you with anxious wishes for your safety and happiness—May the reward of glory which has so long distinguished your character, await you everywhere. Your family are well—precious Cornelia will come to Washington this day from a marriage in Alexandria when I shall speak of and remember her tender and good father.

\* \* \*

Your constant friend

Washington Oct<sup>r</sup> 23<sup>th</sup> 1847

Will Mrs Madison do her young friend, Lilly Page the favor to accept this little Christmas offering,—The basket was made by the children of an Orphan Asylum in Clarke County Virginia

Saturday

Dec 25<sup>th</sup> (1847)

I am indeed proud of sweet Lilly's remembrance and even more so of yours my very dear Mrs. Page I should sooner have assured you of this and my thousand thanks and good wishes for you and your children's happiness but the cold winds and rains with the misfortunes deprived me of the power and pleasure of hailing you on Christmas day.



## CHAPTER X

1848-1849

MRS. PEARSON requests the pleasure of Mrs. Madison's company on Thursday evening January 13<sup>th</sup> at  $\frac{1}{2}$  8 o'clock.  
Brentwood January 5<sup>th</sup> (1848)

In Mrs. Thornton's diary is with the marginal date, November 3, 1810:

Dr T visited Mr Pearson on his marriage with Miss Brent.

The Brents lived at time of wedding at the southwest intersection of Maryland avenue and Twelfth street.\* Sir Augustus Foster mentions it as one of the three gentlemen's houses, he recollects. Mr. Brent, was the Mayor. Eleanor and Joseph were the bride and groom's given names. The groom was a member from North Carolina and had the argument with firearms on the field of honor with Mrs. Madison's brother-in-law as already related. Mr. Pearson had subsequently another bride; and finally a third, a Miss Worthington of Georgetown. Mrs. Pearson, the final, is she who invites Mrs. Madison to Brentwood. Her daughter married Augustus Jay, of the rightly-renowned Jay family. He for many years was the Secretary of the American legation at France.

*Richmond Enquirer*, Tuesday, August 18, 1829:

Washington, 5th August, 1829.

The late recess of the Circuit Court, and the several recent excursions of the Executive Officers of the gov-

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\*Pictured in *Robert Brent, First Mayor of Washington City*. James Dudley Morgan, M.D.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

ernment, formed an interval of leisure to those here, who, for the last two months, had accustomed themselves to watch the proceedings of the one and the engagements of the other. It afforded me the opportunity of visiting some distant scenery of the district, not very accessible in winter. Among these, are several beautiful improvements above Georgetown, and the interspersion of the wood lands, north of the city, by several tasteful edifices; among which are the mansions of Col. Bomford, Meridian Hill, Mr. Pairo's stately dwelling,\* the abortive college,† and the classic abode of the hon. Joseph Pierson.

The first mentioned is the celebrated Kalorama, where resided the late Joel Barlow. \* \* \* The mansion has long been tenanted by devotees of letters and physical science; and the grounds formed and decorated by the taste of Mrs. Barlow and her hospitable and accomplished sister.

\* \* \*

Proceeding along the same summit, eastwardly, I passed the College, in a decaying state, several rude farms, crossed the Tyber, and in the midst of a grove of native oaks, arrived at the house of Mr. Pierson. It stands on the high grounds east of the Tyber, and one mile from the Capitol: and is without a question the handsomest private mansion in the district.

The mansion was the thought of Dr. Thornton.

Although under the shelter of the

“Earth's tall sons, the cedar, oak and pine,”

the mansion is decaying.

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\*S near Twenty-third street. Still standing.

†Columbia College—Fourteenth Street extended.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

The negro poet, Paul Lawrence Dunbar, of it lines:

An' de big house stan's all quiet lak an' solemn,  
Not a blessed soul in pa'lor, poch, er lawn;  
Not a guest, ner not a ca'iage lef' to hand 'em,  
Tu' de ones, dat tu'ned de latch-string out an' gone.

The strangeness which is fact surpasses the strangeness which is fancy. No novelist has had the ingenuity to create in fiction a litigation with the entanglement and intricacy to equal that in truth—the Myra Clark Gaines litigation. But if a novelist had, it would be criticized as too wild for a chance of probability. No encyclopædic narration can be more than an outline. *Appleton's Encyclopædia* contains a review, clear even if concise. In that celebrated case where many moves, moves with results retrogressive and progressive in the course towards the persistent claimant's ultimate triumph. Myra Clark's first husband was M. W. Whitney of New York; her second, Edmund Pendleton Gaines, Brigadier-General, U. S. A.

Mrs. Gaines will be happy to see Mrs. Madison on Tuesday evening next.

Saturday Feb. 12<sup>th</sup> (1848)

Browns Hotel

Jacob Barker, as said, was a banker. And he was a merchant. At port in a day (April 14, 1812), were anchored five ships of Mr. Barker's; one of these, white and rustling went, proudly out to sea, as *Lady Madison*. The name indexed an admiration by the banker and merchant. Mr. Barker was a financial agent in the negotiation of large loans in which he was singularly successful. Charles J. Ingersoll, the historian of the second war, compares his service in that as important as the service

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

of the Financier of the American Revolution, Robert Morris, in it. Mr. Barker aspired to control the banks, the insurance companies and the manufactories. He was on that account indited for conspiracy. He defended himself and successfully. Mr. Barker, consequently, considered himself adapted for the law. He qualified and in New Orleans practiced. Mr. Barker said "thou," "thee" and "thy" like a Quaker and Mrs. Barker dressed just like a Quakeress. He had a brother who was known as Abraham, the Dutchman.

The controversy over the rescue of the Washington portrait broke out thirty and odd years after the event with gathered fierceness. Besides the claimant, M. John Sioussat; Dr. Carroll claimed on behalf of his father. Dr. Charles J. Carroll was the son of Charles Carroll of BelleVue, the brother of Daniel Carroll of Duddington. BelleVue was the name of his patrimonial estate and he used to identify himself from Charles Carroll of Carrollton, a collateral branch. This extract is sufficient to show the claim of saving the much saved portrait:

The circumstances, notorious in the district at the time, were as follows: On the morning of the 24th, at the request of the President, with Mr. Monroe, my father accompanied him, and they set out to see General Winder, and to reconnoitre the enemy, &c; that on their way towards Bladensburg, the President's horse (or Mr. Monroe's) becoming suddenly lame, he exchanged with my father, who returned to the city, and by invitation of Mr. Madison, stopped to dine, *en famille*, with Mrs. Madison, which he did, and they were sitting at table alone, after dinner, when the President's servant entering, announced the battle and the defeat—that Mrs. Madison must immediately make her escape over to Maj. Carroll's (my father's house in

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Georgetown,) and thence with the family out to his farm—that on the instant, ordering Mrs. Madison's carriage, and rising from the table, taking down the picture, he, with his penknife, cut out or detached (in some way separating) from the frame in which it hung, the original portrait of Washington, and himself saved that portrait.

Mr. Barker has his account in a letter to Dr. Carroll:\*

As soon as our troops broke and retreated the President sent his servant to warn his good lady of her danger, with directions to leave immediately. This messenger must have reached the White House by two o'clock, and Mrs. Madison, Mr. and Mrs. Cutts and servants left immediately thereafter. \* \* \*

Whether I found your father there or whether he came in subsequently, I do not know; but I do know that he assisted in taking down the portrait of Washington and left the house with the President, leaving the portrait on the floor of the room in which it had been suspended to take care of itself, where it remained until the remnant of our army, reduced to about four thousand, passed by, taking the direction of Georgetown, when the portrait was taken by Mr. Depeyster and myself, assisted by two colored boys from the said room; and with it we fell into the trail of the army and continued with it some miles.

Overtaken by night and greatly fatigued, we sought shelter in a farm house. No other persons assisted in removing or preserving the picture.

Westport Connecticut Feby 3<sup>rd</sup> 1848—

M<sup>rs</sup> James Madison  
Respected Madam

In May last I sent you the Herald, containing a Narrative from Jacob Barker & a Letter from myself; the *Object* being, to show, through whose agency the Por-

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\**Social Life in the Early Republic.* Anne Hollingsworth Wharton.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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trait of Washington was saved at the burning of the President's House in August 1814 by the British. To you, the Credit was alone given and the Narrative above referred to, proves, *at your suggestion* it was preserved. The Herald of Monday Morning 31<sup>st</sup> Ultmo contains a Letter, under the Signature of Daniel I. Carroll, giving the credit to his Father & attempts to disprove the Statement of Mr B & myself.

I was the companion of Mr B— during this visit to the capital on that eventful day, & I cannot *permit* the Credit justly due you to be thus taken away, & awarded to another, without an *effort* to obtain (with a view to publication) from you what passed on that occasion. I should be gratified by the receipt of a Letter, as early as your convenience will permit, confirming the correctness of the statement being in the following Words Mr Barker, I wish, if you save, to destroy the Portrait of General Washington, the Eagles, which ornament the Drawing Room, & the four cases of papers' which you will find in the President's private room. The Portrait I am very anxious to save, as it is the Only Original by Stuart; at all events do not let them fall into the hands of the enemy, as their capture would enable them to make a great flourish.

The Picture was saved, & safely restored to the President's Mansion.

I was then young, & remember *distinctly* the above request, and aided to carry out your patriotic instructions. My Own Letter, which accompanied the Narrative, stated my object, I had in view, & I hope under your own signature, to *prove* the truth of our joint declarations.

Very Respectfully,  
Your obedt

Robt. G. L. De Peyster.

P. S. *The Herald* containing  
Mr. Carroll's Letter, I now  
send you.

R. G. L. D. P.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

Mrs. Madison made the requested corroboration:

Washington, February 11th, 1848.

Dear Sir: I did not receive your favor containing the newspapers, and therefore in my impatience to assure you of my gratitude for the interest you take in my defence in the little narrative of the picture rescue.

You will see by the enclosed what was said at the time. The impression that Mr. Carroll saved Stuart's portrait of Washington is erroneous. The paper which was to accompany your letter has not reached me, but I have heard that his family believed he rescued it. On the contrary, Mr. Carroll had left me to join Mr. Madison, when I directed my servants in what manner to remove it from the wall, remaining until it was done. I saw Mr. Barker and yourself (the two gentlemen alluded to) passing, and accepted your offer to assist me, in any way, by inviting you to help me to preserve this portrait, which you kindly carried, between you, to the humble but safe roof which sheltered it awhile. I acted thus because of my respect for General Washington—not that I felt a desire to gain laurels; but, should there be a merit in remaining an hour in danger of life and liberty to save the likeness of anything, the merit in this case belongs to me.

Accept my respect and best wishes.

D. P. Madison.

To Robert G. L. Depeyster,  
Westport, Connecticut.

The letter of Mrs. Madison to her son, February 19th, 1848, announces the death of her sister, Mrs. Todd. Mrs. Madison, the eldest daughter, survived all the others.

I now write to you my beloved not that I have any thing very cheering to say, but that I wish to assure you of my constant thoughts, & prayers.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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You have seen no doubt, that my ever dear sister departed this life some days ago—Wm wrote me that it was by apoplexy.

The writings of my Husband will be purchased by Congress but no one can say at what time, as the Members are more interested in the acquirement of Oregon, & other speculations. I have some attentive friends on the Committee who wish to be benefit me, as most of the Honorable body of Congress—by naming 25000\$—the interest of which will to be place at my command during life & devised as I like—They subject that it will be more to my interest that no interference from any other source shall be seen.

I lay this before you that you may decide with me that our course is acquiesce when nothing better is to be done.

Westport February 25<sup>th</sup> 1848

Mrs D. P. Madison  
Respected Madam

Your Letter with statement, I received in due course of mail. I return you my thanks, for the prompt reply to my wishes, requesting your confirmation of the Picture rescue, and the *Object* I had in view, is now *accomplished* to place before the country, your *sole agency* in this affair, and without your suggestion, this Valuable Portrait of Washington would have shared the fate of every thing else, after you left White House.

I requested the Editors of the Express to send a copy, & in fears they have not, I enclose one to you. Wishing you many years of health & happiness,

Remain

Very Respectfully

Your obedt

Robt. G. L. De Peyster.



MRS. TOBIAS LEAR



## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

To Mrs. Madison by her niece, Rose Adèle Cutts:

Academy of the Visitation  
Georgetown, D. C. Feb. 28<sup>th</sup> 1848.

My own dear Aunt,

I cannot allow another week to pass by, without writing to you, but I warn you before hand, that you will not find my letter interesting, as we school girls never hear any news, and things go on in the same quiet manner every day.—I know you were very sorry to hear of old Mr Adams' death: it was quite sudden, and I suppose it will cast quite a gloom over the city.—Mama came to see me last week, and I need not tell you how glad I was to see her: give my best love to coz. and tell her that I think she is a very naughty young lady, not to answer my letter: and I will not write to her again until she does answer it. I hope to see you on Saturday after next, when I shall visit home, but I will only stay until Sunday evening. At Easter we shall have a week's holy-day, during which time, I expect to enjoy myself very much. We are going to have some plays on Shove Tuesday and I am very glad for I love to look at them. We shall see "the Stranger" & "the Omnibus" which are both very pretty. Do you remember Miss Sarah Linton who became a nun? She with 9 other Sisters from our house have gone to Philadelphia there to found a monastery of their order. I fear before now you have grown tired of my uninteresting letter, so I will close with much love to all, but particularly to my dear Mama, Papa & Maddy: Do not forget to answer my letter as soon as you have time. Adieu, my dear Aunt,

I remain your affectionate niece

Addy Cutts.—

Marian Gouveneur says:\*

I knew Madison Cutts' daughter, Rose Adele Cutts, or "Addie" Cutts, as she was invariably called, when

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\*As I Remember; *Recollections of American Society During the Nineteenth Century.*

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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she first entered society. Her reputation for beauty is well known. I always associate her with japonicas, which she usually wore in her hair and of which her numerous bouquets were chiefly composed. Her father frequently accompanied her to balls, and in the wee small hours of the night, as he became weary, I have often been amused at his summons to depart—"Addie, *allons.*" As quite a young woman Addie Cutts married Stephen A. Douglas, the "Little Giant," whom Lincoln defeated in the memorable presidential election of 1860. \* \* \* Some years after Douglas' death, his widow married General Robert Williams, U. S. A. by whom she had a number of children, one of whom is the wife of Lieut. Commander John B. Patton, U. S. N.

William Wilson Corcoran, the philanthropist. The phrase of distinction, if not always mentioned, is always thought and goes with his name as title go with the truly entitled. Mr. Corcoran was born in Georgetown and was the son of an Irish emigrant. He was a banker; he negotiated loans for the general government; he was surpassing successful. His fortune was large, very large; yet not to compare with the Croesus amassments of the succeeding generation. Of the surplus, he made sensible and substantial donations. His charities and endowments were and are of real benefit. He gave to art, to charity, to church and to praiseworthy projects to particularize would take pages; however, to omit the two to be referred to would be an oversight even in the slightest sketch.

The Corcoran Galley of Art he richly endowed. Its continuous collecting of examples of brush and chisel has been discriminate and in the entirety is an artistic pride of the country.

Mr. Corcoran married, 1835, Louise Armory, the daughter of Commodore Charles Morris. She died November 21, 1840. Her daughter, Louise Morris, was

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

born March 20, 1838. She married George Eustis, a Member of Congress of Louisiana. She died, December 4, 1867, at Cannes, France, by three children survived. She was amiable and admirable. And yet to this day there is sadness in her going and the thought comes the good go on too soon before.

In the papers prized by Mrs. Madison is a visiting card. On it is engraved the name and under the name is the invitation pencilled: (1848)

Wm W. Corcoran  
At home Monday Feb. 28<sup>th</sup> at 8½ o'clock.

Mr. Corcoran was a creditor of Mrs. Madison. He accommodated her with loans. The financial strength was weak; the moral risk was strong—that is how Mr. Corcoran, the banker, estimated her credit. She paid the loans in full. His relation with Mrs. Madison from the financial, followed to the friendly, and he had the friendly footing to talk freely.

Mr. Corcoran: Mrs. Madison, may I ask, how old are you?

Mrs. Madison: I am seventy-two, Mr. Corcoran.

The next year—

Mr. C.: Mrs. Madison, how old are you?

Mrs. M.: I am seventy-two, Mr. Corcoran.

And, the next year after that year—

Mr. C.: Mrs. Madison, how old are you?

Mrs. M.: I am seventy-two, Mr. Corcoran.

Mr. Corcoran endowed a home for gentlewomen. This unique philanthropy, he named in honor of his wife and his daughter—The Louise Home. It is an entire front of a city square—Massachusetts avenue between Fifteenth

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

and Sixteenth streets. The selection of site indicates the same foresight that Mr. Corcoran exercised in his financial affairs. It is the choicest spot in the most beautiful city of the nation. The home, that is, the building, is within a park of its own—vines, shrubbery, trees and walks. Over the iron railing in front swings gracefully a wistaria; beside the main entrance on either side stands sentinel, a magnolia tree. In the spring-time, the purple pendants of the wistaria and the flood of bloom of the magnolia are significant of renewal of youth like the eagles. In the evenings, the cultured guests of the home are seen on the porticoes and the walks. They are presumably in the evening of life but their chatter and cheer indicate a mistaken presumption and that these ladies so young in heart have renewal of youth as often as the fresh and fragrant wistaria and magnolias.

To Miss Louise Corcoran

March 21<sup>s</sup>: 48.

Accept my best thanks precious Louise for your beautiful present—a cake covered with kisses—what a gratifying gift to the friend who loves you. I am disposed to preserve it & shew it to you on your next natal day, as an assurance of the affection I bear you & the respect I cherish for the estimable qualities you already manifest, at the early period of ten years—

Fond Salutations

D. P. M.

Dear Mrs<sup>s</sup> Madison

Accept my warmest thanks for your kind attention to my request for the loan of your portrait for copy—upon consulting my friend Mr Bisbee the artist, for whom I borrowed it, we have come to the conclusion that it will be more gratifying to ourselves & your numerous friends to have a portrait taken from life of

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

one so loved & so highly respected as yourself—it would appear *more natural* to us to see you as you *now* are than as you appeared some years ago and knowing with what kindness & condescension you are always ready to extend to your friends, if in your power, has induced me to make the attempt. We tender you & yours our best wishes.

My love attends you

Elizabeth C. Dietz

Washington

March 22<sup>d</sup> 1848

To Mrs. D. Madison

Delicately humorous is Mrs. Madison's allusion to the stamp of age; yet upon her visage nature had leniently done the stamping. It was the stamp "Of virtue, truth well tried, and wise experience." Women-kind are sensitive of their accumulated years—and so the men; but of the women-kind, Mrs. Madison was more than ordinarily so. And at four score years, Mrs. Madison might hesitate to subject herself to the weariness incident to the infirmity of advanced age.

To Mrs. Elizabeth C. Dietz

March '48.

I am very sorry to have given my kind Mrs. Dietz & our good artist so much trouble in the translation of a wayward face—such mine must have been to have changed so much & unnecessarily for our accommodation—what say you to the likenefs by Wood which I send for choice, being too indisposed to sit at present.

D. P. M.

Mrs. Dietz, February 2, 1848, wrote Mr. Elwell wants to commence her picture tomorrow. And, May 15, 1848, from Springfield, Mass., came:

I am also happy to inform you the picture of Mrs. Madison is most happily received.

W. S. Elwell.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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The American Hemans. Lydia Howard Huntley Sigourney was born Huntley. She began her "earthly pilgrimage" in Norwich, Connecticut, September 1, 1791. She says "no earthly pilgrimage, if faithfully portrayed in its true lights and shadows, but might impart some instruction to a future traveller" and with this modest incentive she has given her's in *Letters of Life*.

She had a constant and confidential friend, her journal, from her eleventh year to her ending year; she died June 10, 1865. To the reminding of this friend, when there might be a slip of forgetfulness, is the pilgrimage on paper correct and complete.

The influence of family and environment were severely religious, and her own inclinations were in accord. Her life was decorous and devout. Her poetry is praise and prayer; her prose pleading for piety.

Her father was a widower when he met the beautiful girl who was to be her mother or to use Mrs. Sigourney's way of saying it, "garnered up his heart in a new trust" after he had "passed several years of lonely mourning." Mrs. Sigourney was an only child.

She, herself, was partial to a ready-made family for the widower she chose in her twenty-eighth year for a life companion had three children. In the meantime, she had been a school-dame, very conscientious, very industrious, very successful, very much loving and very much beloved.

Charles Sigourney, was considerably older than the school mistress for whose heart his own was affected and his age was agreeable to her perchance for the friendship of men older than herself. He built a mansion on a height with extensive grounds in the suburbs of Hartford on the borders of the Connecticut. Down by the river was a tryst for those who required more wooing

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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than a single letter and several glances—for that was all between the merchant and school mistress, indeed, she did not countenance flirtation neither loiter in the purveys of matrimony.

The authoress's writings in poetry and prose are prodigious; they make a little library. Their production is through a period of half a century (1815-1865). She says: "There was a long period after I became a writer for the public, when periodical literature flourished abundantly. \* \* \* On this sea of miscellany I was allured to embark, and having set sail, there was no return. I think now with amazement, and almost incredulity, of the number of articles I was induced by the urgency of editors to furnish. Before I ceased to keep a regular catalogue, they had amounted to more than two thousand. Some of these were afterwards comprehended in selections, though enough for several volumes must still be floating about, like sea-weed among the noteless billows. They were divided among three hundred different publications."

The authoress visited England, Scotland and France, 1840. She was presented to royalty and received by the high in the republic of letters. The reference in Mrs. Madison's letter to the Queen of France is to Marie Amélie, the consort of Louis Philippe, who was deposed February, 1848. In 1825, a few months in advance of Lafayette, she and Mr. Sigourney visited Mr. Jefferson at Monticello and Mr. and Mrs. Madison at Montpellier. Her visit to Montpellier she commemorated in verse. She visited Mrs. Madison in Washington and in Anne Royall's *The Huntress*, February, 1847, is "Washington City was honored with the presence of three of America's most talented authoresses—Mrs. L. H. Sigourney, Mrs. A. L. Phelps and Mrs. Ann S. Stephens."

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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Washington, April 4<sup>th</sup>, 1848

To Mrs Sigourney,  
Hartford,  
Connecticut.

How shall I plead my apology to thee my very dear Friend for such a seeming of neglect to answer thy beautiful and highly prized letters—my Valentine too—a rare favor for me to receive and fascinating as rare! The girls of every age have been candidates for it, but I am too proud of the distinction to allow them more than a copy.

To give you a brief account of myself and those around me since we parted I at once manifest my misfortune in my cause of silence—inflamed eyes, forbidding the use of pen and white paper—They are slowly mending and I hasten to beg the place I prize so highly in your estimation—and to be still remembered by you and your daughter.

I have thought of you and how much and how sadly your feelings would be disturbed at the Revolution so lately begun and apparently ended—Still that estimable, amiable, Queen, who was your friend, will be forever anxious for her Husband, her children and for France—and I am sure will have a deep sympathy in your remembrance of her.

I embrace you dear Friend with lively affection—and as usual promise when my eye is well to be a better correspondent.

D. P. Madison.

To Mrs. Duncan:

I have just time my dear Mrs Duncan (whilst your servant waits) to salute you with my best thanks for your nice old Ham—and to charge you with the *same* regard for our kind Mr Duncan—whose flattering consideration for the *health* of a stranger will be grateful

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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to one who sets a value on the notice of a gentleman so estimable as himself.

Adieu—All pleasantness attend you on your journey.  
D. P. Madison

Apr 6<sup>th</sup> 1848.

Garnett Duncan for Mrs. Duncan sends some snipe, December 9, 1848. Mr. Duncan was a Kentuckian and represented Kentucky in the House, December 6, 1847, to March 3, 1849. Mr. Duncan admired Mrs. Madison; and practically proved his admiration—by kindness and helpfulness.

Born, nurtured, wedded, prized, within the pale  
Of peers and princes, high in camp—at Court—  
He hears in joyous youth, a wild report,  
Swelling the murmurs of the Western gale,  
Of a young people struggling to be free!  
Straight quitting all, across the wave he flies,  
Aids with his sword, wealth, blood, the high emprise!  
And shares the glories of its victory.  
Then comes for fifty years, a high romance  
Of toils, reverses, sufferings, in the cause  
Of man and justice, liberty and France,  
Crowned, at the last, with hope and wide applause,  
Champion of Freedom! Well thy race was run!  
All time shall hail thee, *Europe's noblest Son!*

D. P. Madison

Washington April 25<sup>th</sup> 1848.

The poetical tribute to Lafayette, Mrs. Madison had copied, and she signed it, in the album of Mrs. James J. Roosevelt. It is a truthful voice of her estimation.

To Mrs. Elizabeth Hamilton (Mrs. Alexander Hamilton):

Apr 25<sup>th</sup> 48

My dear Mrs Hamilton

I am delighted with the specimen of your work, with which you have favored me this morning. It is beau-

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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tiful, & precious, coming from your hands—I shall always preserve it for your sake—and beg you now to accept my afft<sup>e</sup> salutations for yourself & Mrs Holly.\*

The note to her son is in her handwriting and very tremulous.

My dear son I enclose you \$50—it may be of some acct in fixing clothes &c Nothing has yet been done in congreffs— When is I'll let you know immediately. As soon as you receive this let me know that it is safe with you.

My eyes are not well.

May 9th 48

To Mrs. J. Madison Cutts:

Monday.

I was so engaged all yesterday, my sweet, that I could not take the pen to tell you that all you did for Mary was in the best style of kindness and propriety.

Be pleased to send Ralph for the proper gloves and shoes.

Yours ever,

D. P. Madison.†

The scene has the action of melodrama. An incendiary fires the house; a neighbor discovers the fire; he warns the servants. The faithful servant, Ralph, through the obscurity of smoke swiftly speeds upstairs and arouses the sleeping Mistress and the Mistress's daughter. She and her daughter are saved. She thinks the second second after her rescue of the safety of the trunk and its thirty thousand dollars of treasure. The faithful Ralph bounds upward and downward again while the fires crackle. The valuable manuscripts are rescued that are

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\*Mrs. Hamilton Holly, Mrs. Hamilton's daughter.

†*Dolly Madison*. J. Madison Cutts.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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to rescue her from indigence and calm her fretting creditors. These scenes of rescue in the first act are hardly acted before the neighbors arrive and with buckets drown the flames that are destroying the Dolly Madison house. A biographer has told with more thrill the exciting episode having more circumstances than Mrs. Madison gave her son.

### *Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison:*

About this time she had a most providential escape from a fire started by incendiaries, who placed matches between the shutters of the hall window and the staircase of her house. As the flames began to ascend towards her room in the early morning, a neighbor aroused the servants, and the man, Ralph, rushing towards his mistress' room, broke down the door and found her quietly sleeping in the midst of dense clouds of smoke. "Mistress," he cried, "I have come to save you," and awakening to the consciousness of danger to her husband's letters and papers, as more important than her own life, she refused to leave until the frightened servants secured them; then Ralph seized her in his arms, rushed down the burning staircase, out of a side door, and placed her in safety in a remote corner of the garden. The fire was soon extinguished by kind neighbors, and Mrs. Madison laughingly returned, clad in a black velvet gown and night-cap, and with bare feet.

To John Payne Todd:

You have seen by the Gazettes, my dear son, that we had an alarm of fire in our house on last Saturday week—at 4 o'clock in the mornng our chamber door was afsailed by Ralph who begged Annie & myself to come down immediately, whilst the stairs remained—we did so, thro' a crackling fire—losing not a moment we reached the garden ground—he returned and brought

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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me down the trunk of papers—when our neighbors (just awakened) came to our assistance, and soon separated the fire from the window frame in which it had made great progress. It has been supposed to be the work of an incendiary and the watch is nightly around the City.—Yesterday Congress passed the Bill for the purchase of Mr Madison's papers—I will enclose you the newspapers—and beg you will tell me whether you have rec<sup>d</sup> my letter enclosing a \$50 note—also to say when you think you can come to me, and whether you have any papers to send me which you think would be better added to those I have.—You promised me to be ready with Harper directions—they are now wanting, as well as all other advice you can give or bring me.

Your affectionate

Mother.

Sunday May 21<sup>st</sup> 48.

For the purchase of the letters of Mr. Madison, Congress, May 31, 1848, appropriated in favor of Mrs. Madison, twenty-five thousand dollars. Twenty thousand of which was vested in James Buchanan, Secretary of State, John Y. Mason, Secretary of the Navy, and Richard Smith, Esq., to invest in stocks for her benefit. The trust fund she could dispose of by last will and testament.\* The Senate bill, in the House, had determined opposition by the economists, the mention of whose names now recalls nobody, save Andrew Johnson; it had, to pass it on her birthday, the eloquent appeal of Alexander H. Stephens.

The purchase had been under Congressional consideration several years. Her friend, Dromgoole, December 17, 1844, produced Mrs. Madison's letter offering the remainder of the Madison manuscripts and then offered

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\**Statutes at Large*. IX, 235.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

a resolution, which was adopted, authorizing purchase and printing. These letters are in the manuscript division of the Library of Congress. The purchase of the letters at the time may have been made to assist Mrs. Madison. However more than equivalent for the consideration was given. The letters are of incalculable historic worth and now in the autographic market more than equal in a financial exchange.

J. Madison Cutts, a grandnephew, writes:

But I remember her best in the last years of her life, when I often looked into her face and with a child's instinct knew she was in distress, and my father told me she was poor, and often being the bearer from him of small sums of money, I knew that she was in need and want, and well do I remember running from the Senate chamber as an avant-courier of my father the moment the Senate by its vote passed the bill making an appropriation of \$25,000 to purchase the remaining letters and papers of Mr. Madison. Thus did Congress and a grateful country relieve her last distresses, and I arrived out of breath the first to bring her the glad tidings which made us all happy for her dear sake.

To Mrs. Morris, wife of Commodore Morris, I and Fifteenth streets, N.W., on receiving a birthday gift:

My very dear Mrs. Morris

The gift from your hands is more precious than I can express—bearing, in your good wishes for me healing on its wings—for these, as well as the beautiful shawl, I thank you. And I must say that the countenance of your Husband, beaming with health & kindness, was delightful to me, on Annie's lively eyes.

Constant affection

D. P. M.

May 22<sup>d</sup> 48

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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Harriet Bowen Coolidge in her ninety-sixth year at her residence, 1515 L, passed on, November 10, 1911. She was the widow of Dr. Richard H. Coolidge, U. S. A., and daughter of Commodore Charles Morris, of fame on the fighting ship, Constitution. With Mrs. Madison she exchanged visits.

Jones' Hotel, Philad  
May 23.

Will you allow me dear Mrs. Madison to be among the many friends to congratulate you upon the pleasing news from Congress which came to you upon your birth-day?

I am sure you will, and I kiss you in thought, and dear Annie too, and assure her that no lover ever treasured a *note more* than I have the last one she wrote me.

The bride & groom (Mr. & Mrs. Baker—Mary Lane) are here and she is looking very lovely. I was at her wedding and I think she is one of the few who can bear a bridal attire at 8 o'clock in the morning, & be pronounced *lovely*—as she was.

Mr. Plitt begs to join me in warm wishes for your continued health.

Very truly, dear Mrs. Madison, your sincere friend,  
Sophie Wager Plitt.

Dear Mrs. Madison,

I cannot refrain from offering you my respectful sympathy and congratulations, on the interesting circumstances of which our friends and the papers have apprised us: the return of an anniversary always so memorable to you, and the gratifying decisions, and evidence of public sympathy, which commemorated it. May you for many years enjoy the return of that day in uninterrupted health and happiness.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

With the kindest remembrance to Miss Paine, I remain always, dear Madam,

With much respect and affection,

Yrs,

Hartford,  
27<sup>th</sup> May.

Anna Coolidge.

Anna Coolidge was the youngest sister of Joseph Coolidge, Jr., who married Eleanora Wayles Randolph, granddaughter of Thomas Jefferson. With the wedding present of a writing desk went a note by him in the third person: \* \* \* "and is the identical one on which he wrote the Declaration of Independence." Miss Coolidge married Colonel William Edgar Prince of New York.

Westport May 29<sup>th</sup> 1848

Mrs. D. P. Madison  
Respected Madam

Dr. Carroll has thought proper to publish another Letter, on the subject of the Picture rescue, still imputing to his Father, the *suggestion*, that led to its preservation, and attempting to fix the credit upon his Father. I sent Mr. Barker, now residing in New Orleans, the reply of Dr. Carroll and the former has this day, sent me the Daily Crescent published in that City, containing Mr. Barker's rejoinder. As it vindicates your statement which I can attest having been present at the time, and believing it will prove interesting to you, I enclose it. I hope, facts & proofs, so firmly established, will put at last, any further attempt of the Dr to deprive you of the credit, so justly due you of saving the picture of Washington.

Respectfully

Robt G. L. De Peyster

New Orleans, May 5, 1848.

James Gordon Bennett, Esq.—Dear Sir: Doctor Carroll has appeared again in the columns of your paper.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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It is strange that he does not understand human nature better than to indulge in coarse epithets and vulgar phrase. This is an age of reason and dignity of thought, and he who expects to make a favorable impression on the public mind by such scurrility as the Doctor has indulged in, will find himself mistaken.

I should have deemed the author of such epistles unworthy of notice, had they not found a place in a respectable newspaper. Your having thought proper to give publicity to this man's abuse of me, it would have been kind in you to have published, in your invaluable paper, Mrs. Madison's statement, and *my reply* to his first effusion, which effusion appeared in *The Herald* of the 31st January last. In days past, you seemed to delight in vindicating your old friend, and did it with great ability and success, insomuch that you corrected and controlled the public opinion of the nation.

\* \* \*

My statement was written on the 8th of February, and published in the *New Orleans Delta* of the 11th February, and Mr. Depuyster's letter was written in Connecticut on the 15th February, consequently before he had seen my statement; and nothing could be more natural than the conclusion he drew from that of Mrs. Madison's, viz: that Mr. Charles Carroll had no agency whatever in this matter; and as to Mr. Carroll's cutting the canvass from the frame with a penknife, as the Doctor alleges, no such thing happened.—The canvass was extended on a light wooden frame, placed in the usual way within a gilt frame, and the latter was secured to the wall, which latter was broken down, and the light frame with the canvass taken out perfect, and continued so until it was returned to the White House. Whether the large gilt frame was broken down from the wall with a penknife, or with an axe, is not of the least consequence.

It will have been perceived that, so far as I was concerned, no attempt has been made or sanctioned by me to claim the honor of having originated the thought,



MRS. RICHARD BLAND LEE



## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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or of having removed the portrait from the wall to the floor. My statement is not only supported by the testimony of Mrs. Madison and Mr. Depuyster, but remains uncontradicted, which was, *that at the bidding of Mrs. Madison, the portrait was removed from the floor of the room, in which it had been hanging, by Mr. Depuyster and myself, aided by two colored boys, and taken by us to the woods, and subsequently returned by me.* Where, then, is the falsification of history alleged by this notable Doctor.

\* \* \*

Jacob Barker.

The life limits of Jacob Barker are December 7, 1779, and December 27, 1871. He was born in Kennebec County, Maine; and he died in Philadelphia. He lived "on twenty-fours a day,"—did this sturdy specimen of manhood. At twenty-one he owned four ships and a brig and in the war of 1812, the British had them all. On the financial waves he went high up and low down and in consequence of the Civil War, in his eighty-eighth year, it was his final time in bankruptcy. The strong features of Mr. Barker are portrayed in *Harper's Cyclopædia of United States History*.

June 29, 1848.

My dear Son—I sent on your trunk the morn<sup>g</sup> after you left, which I trust was safely rec<sup>d</sup> by you as such was the promise of the Captain.—At this moment I am much distressed at the *conversations* you held, and the *determinations* you expressed, on the subject of bringing suit against my Trustees and request the favor of you to make them easy and content, with you by the assurance that you abandon the idea, or that you never had any such intention. I say all this *for you* because I do not believe even *yourself* if you *declared* such an intention, which would at once ruin your fair fame—

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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your mother would have no wish to live after her son issued such threats which would deprive her of her friends, who had no other view in taking the charge but pure friendship.—This I do wish you to put at rest on the receipt of this, without losing a moment.—Half as much as I have written will be sufficient.

Mr Smith was Trustee and executor to my sister's Will, and he is now very infirm, scarcely able to live from day to day, but it is a deep trouble to him to believe that he is to be harrassed with a suit which from every point of view would be unavailable in any one.

Your affte Mother

From the letter of May 9 to her son, it appears that previous to the appropriation act and with no certainty of its immediate passage, as from year to year had been postponement, Mrs. Madison although in dire distress herself, in some way contrived to secure fifty dollars which she forwarded to him to "be of some acct in fixing clothes etc." It appears from her letter to him on the 21st of that same month that he made no acknowledgment of its receipt. From the immediately preceding letter it appears that he had made threats of attacking the trusteeship and thereby harassing her.

The failure to express appreciation or to make any expression at all concerning his mother's sacrifice; the threats to create trouble about the funds in trust, to which, or any part of which, he had no right and could not avail in any attack, show on his part ingratitude and maliciousness. These traits had developed and now controlled him likely through dissipation and disappointment.

The undutiful and unnatural treatment, by son to mother, rendering for good, evil, gives chance for a dissertation on Ingratitude for here is ingratitude in most detestable circumstances.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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A poet lines:

He that's ungrateful has no guilt but one;  
All other crimes may pass for virtues in him.

—Young: *Busiris*.

Another poet, who charges that "Ingratitude more in man" is hateful "than lying, vainness, babbling, drunkenness, or any taint of vice," lines:

That she may feel  
How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is  
To have a thankless child.

—Shakespeare.

John Marshall was the first president of the Washington National Monument Society (1833) and James Madison the second (1835).

On the request of the Society, Mrs. James Madison, Mrs. John Quincy Adams and Mrs. Alexander Hamilton effected an organization of women to assist in accumulating funds. By letters, fairs and functions peculiarly feminine, in various parts of the country, a moderate addition to the funds was the result.

To these three distinguished women invitations to be present at the laying of the corner stone, July 4, 1848, were addressed. Mrs. Madison came, as did Mrs. Hamilton of age ninety-one. Mrs. Madison ignored the discouragement of weather—however "the day was fine. The rain had laid the dust and infused a delicious freshness in the air"—she came under the escort of General Walter Jones.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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Washington National Monument Office,  
June 21, 1848.

Mrs. James Madison:

The committee of arrangements most respectfully invite you to attend the ceremony of laying the corner stone of the Washington National Monument on the 4th day of July next.

In accepting the presidency of the Society, Mr. Madison said: "A monument worthy of Washington, reared by the means proposed, will commemorate at the same time a virtue, a patriotism, and a gratitude truly national, with which the friends of liberty everywhere will sympathize and of which our country may always be proud."

While your illustrious husband did not survive to see the corner stone of the Monument laid, the committee, in common with your fellow-citizens, rejoice that you are in the midst of us, and that on them devolves the pleasing duty of assuring you that your presence on the occasion will greatly gratify the immense audience that will be assembled.

Most respectfully yours,  
Arch. Henderson,  
Chairman of Committee.

To the Committee of Arrangements of the Washington National Monument.

Gentlemen: In accepting, with great sensibility, your flattering invitation to be present with you at the imposing scene of laying the corner stone of the Washington National Monument I feel the highest gratification; and believing that I can in no manner so well express my heartfelt concurrence in my husband's opinion, I will repeat, as you have done, his venerated words: "A monument worthy the memory of Washington, reared by the means proposed, will commemorate at the same time a virtue, a patriotism, and a gratitude truly national, with which the friends of liberty every-

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

where will sympathize and of which our country may always be proud.”

Be pleased to accept, gentlemen, the assurances of my great respect.

D. P. Madison.

Washington, June 22, 1848.

It is pertinent in a life of Mrs. Madison to incorporate the responsive letters of Mrs. Hamilton and Mrs. Adams. The three women called to exalted station by marital choice shone lustrously. In their day and generation none excelled; and in any other, none. On the same theme, their style of expressing themselves makes an interest in comparison—not critical comparison.

Washington City, June 22, 1848.

To Gen. A. Henderson,

Chairman of Committee of Arrangements.

Sir: I had the honor to receive the invitation of the Washington Monument Association to attend the ceremony of laying the corner stone of a National Monument on the 4th of July next at the monument I was about to leave this city, where I have been for a very long time engaged in an application to Congress, which, in the probable course of human events, will be the last, as it is the most interesting, business of my protracted life.

The ceremony in which I am invited to participate calls back recollections so deeply interesting to me, from my early and intimate association with the illustrious man to whom this tribute of a nation's gratitude is so justly due, that I can not deny myself the great gratification of witnessing it.

Have the goodness to make my respects to the committee and to receive my thanks for the flattering terms in which you have communicated their invitation.

With great respect yours,

Elizabeth Hamilton.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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Washington National Monument Office,  
June 21, 1848.

Mrs. John Quincy Adams:

\* \* \*

It is within your knowledge that the Board of Managers first invited your distinguished husband to deliver an address on the ceremony of laying the corner stone of the Monument. He had spoken of the lives and characters of Monroe, Lafayette, and Madison, in compliance with the wishes of his fellow-citizens, and the people without distinction of party, without sectional or geographical divisions, desired he should deliver the address on the occasion mentioned. The subject was held under consideration by him for a month, and when he finally declined, it was solely from a prophetic conviction that he might not have the mental or physical ability to perform the service on the 22d of February, the day then designated.\*

\* \* \*

Most respectfully yours,  
Arch. Henderson,  
Chairman of Committee.

Quincy, June 26, 1848.

Gen. Arch. Henderson,

Chairman of Committee of Arrangements of Washington National Monument:

I have the honor to acknowledge the reception of the polite invitation of the committee of arrangements of the Washington National Monument, to witness the laying of the corner stone of the monument consecrated to the memory of the Father of his Country, immortalized by the crowning fame of military achievement, blended with the wisdom of the statesman and possessed of all the solid virtues of a pure and honest man.

In the choice of the orator whom you had selected for this great occasion, allow me to express my grief

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\*John Quincy Adams died February 23, 1848.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

for a loss which we all deplore. Through a long and meritorious life, he had loved and venerated the General, and fondly gloried in the living worth of the man through his arduous trials and splendid career; and who having the felicity of his personal acquaintance, had enjoyed his favor and protection, which led to all the honors, through his discernment of youthful talent, which the nation has so justly distinguished and appreciated—and who would, had it pleased God to spare him yet a little longer, have done ample justice to a theme in which both heart and mind would have reveled with delight.

The infirmities of health, and the great debility under which I labor, must plead my excuse for declining the flattering invitation which you have done me the honor to send me, not being able to undertake so long a journey in the heat of summer. Permit me, dear General, to assure you, and the committee of arrangements, of the high sense of esteem and consideration of

Your obedient servant,

Louisa Catherine Adams.

June 29 (1848)

My dear Mifs Annie

I thank your good aunt, for the permission to read the papers in relation to attendance at the laying the corner stone of the Washington monument—if she could attend, I feel sure that every possible attention would be paid to her comfort; but it will no doubt be a very dusty, hot & disagreeable occasion, & I should fear she might be injured.

\* \* \*

I thank you, & also Mrs. Madison, for your account about what Mr P Todd said—most probably, he will not move in the matter.

I feel much better today & hope “Richard will soon be himself again.”

Very truly your friend

Rd Smith

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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The paragraph in which Mr. Smith thanks for the "account about what Mr. P Todd said" refers to the threat to oppose the trusteeship of the fund appropriated by Congress.

Rd Smith Esqr

I know that my ever considerate Friend will forgive my difference of opinion with him on the subject of the *appeal to our acquaintance*, as it falls on my fancy like the solicitation of one who had nothing to offer but her claim to sympathy whereas I would recede from such a conclusion and substitute a plain expedient such as the enclosed.

Be pleased to select from the list I send, the gentlemen you think most advisable to be added to the three I have named, and then tell me how to consult them,—or if you will kindly undertake the task.

Truly

D. P. M.

July 10<sup>th</sup> 48.

This is Mrs. Madison's list:

Rd Smith

Dr. J. M. Thomas

Mr. W. T. Carroll

Hon. J. Y. Mason

Hon. E. A. Hannegan of Ind.

Hon. Garrett Duncan of Ky.

Hon. A. H. Stevens of Geo.

Hon. J. H. Clarke of R. I.

Hon. S. D. Hubbard of Ct.

Hon. T. H. Bayly of Va.

Hon. J. M. Dowell of Va.

Hon. J. A. Rockwell of Conn.

Gen. Walter Jones

Maj. Gen. Scott

Com. Morris

Com. Warrington

J. B. H. Smith, Esq.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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July 10<sup>th</sup> 1848.

My dear Son

I ardently hoped that you would have written me about our affairs before this, and that I should have some guide to lead from whelming darknefs—but it is in vain to wait! I wish to tell you all that concerns us, but you are silent about your being at home or absent from it.

I have concluded to have a Raffle for the large painting with other pictures and some plate in order to be better *satisfied*, &c What ought the large painting and those of Washington and Jefferson by Stuart, to bring in a Raffle or sale? those of Adams and Monroe also—please to give some guefs and tell what estimate you place upon Columbus, Vespuccius, Magellan, Cortez and the Bard of Ofsian—

I wrote you a week ago but no answer has come to me tho 'twas important I should have one.

Your M

Mr. Smith suggested a raffle to Mrs. Madison of her personal effects. The suggestion was satisfactory to her and she endorsed on his communication a list of personal property decided to be unnecessary to keep. To Mr. Smith's further suggestion that she notify her friends of the raffle she courteously declined. The raffle had so far advanced in the arrangements as to be nearly ready when Mr. Buchanan signified his displeasure with the undertaking and it was abandoned. Mrs. Madison regarded the trustees of the fund as her advisers, generally, on business.

Of the twenty-five thousand dollars, five thousand was disbursed immediately in the defrayment of debts including the mortgage indebtedness to John Jacob Astor. The balance of the fund was invested in interest-bearing securities. The list of creditors

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

shows the depth of debt. An item is seventy dollars to redeem the pledge of silver forks and gravy spoons, and twenty dollars to take up gold chain. An item is for reimbursement to a young nephew for postage of his letters to her; she had asked that an account be kept. Other items are accounts with tradesmen for necessaries of life. Some of the large loans, particularly that of Mr. Corcoran, were by well-to-do people who were not disposed to crowd.

Relieved of the burden of debt her spirits rebounded and she went on a little jollification.

Let poets boast of Arno's "shelvy side,"  
And sing the beauties of the classic Po,  
Give *me* Potomac's grand, majestic tide,  
Sparkling beneath the sun's effulgent glow.  
—Winifred Gales.

This poet to immortalize in song needs high inspiration to reach the proper note for the arrowy Rhone, the murmuring Loire, the silvery Thames, the blue Danube, the broad Amazon, the palisaded Hudson, the fertile Nile, the fierce Tigres, but yet higher inspiration to harmonize with the majestic Potomac.

The Potomac when its journey to the deep is almost made—where the broader bosom with the broken shores and offspring streams is a union for grandeur and beauty—was as alluring in the ante-bellum days.

Friday Morning.

Dear Mrs. Seaton,—As I could not accompany Mr. Seaton on his expedition to Piney Point, I hope for the subordinate pleasure of listening to his recital of its incidents, his capture of fishes, his battles with the mosquitoes, etc., etc. \* \* \*

Dan'l Webster.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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July 20, 1848, is the date Mrs. Madison paid Mr. Jamison for taking her party to the boat for the trip to Piney Point and July 28 is the date she paid Captain Mitchell for the return passage. That she enjoyed the outing she writes to the young artist, Miss Millegan:

We propose to go home tomorrow after deriving benefit and pleasure from our indulgence.\*

Baron E. Hyde de Neuville during the French revolution was an *emigré* and lived on the Raritan, New Jersey. He was close to Louis XVIII and Charles X. On the enthronement of the former, he came to the United States as the Minister. And from the States he returned to be a Minister to Charles X. The United States to the Baron had been a refuge in season of political storm and for it he had an affection in degree equaling his affection for his native land. In Washington, the people liked him and he liked them; it was a liking from the heart; not on one part bowing to station, nor on the other, diplomatic vincer. And *him* here is they, the Baron and the Baroness. Sure, the de Neuvilles were noble souls who to commemorate the birth of the Duc de Bordeaux or Henry V could think of a plan so unusual and so unusually humane.

Dear Sir,—It is my intention, in celebration of the baptism of the young prince who is one day to rule over the Franks, to make free one poor little slave child. I pray sir, please you, without any mention of my name to obtain information respecting the young slave girl who is spoken of in the enclosed advertisement, to be

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\*Piney Point is described in Mrs. Thornton's Diary.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

sold at public sale, by Moses Poor, auctioneer. This communication I desire to be for yourself alone. \* \* \*

I have the honor to offer you the assurance of my distinguished consideration.

Yours

E. Hyde de Neuville.

Washington, 25 June, 1821.

Monsieur Seaton.\*

The Baron was the Minister, 1816-'22. At the drawing room of Mrs. Madison, came the Baron and Baroness and suite in apparel gay to typify *la belle France*.

Mrs. Smith says:

Decr. 5th 1816. Thursday morning.

\* \* \* Mr. Neuville and suite were there in most splendid costume—not their court dresses however. Blue coats cover'd with gold embroidery. The collar and back literally cover'd with wreaths of fleur de lys with white underclothes and large chapeaux with feathers. The minister's feathers were white, the secretaries black, and their dresses tho' on the same style not so superb as his. Madame and Mademoiselle were very handsomely dress'd in white sattin.†

Baroness de Neuville and Mrs. Madison in nature were akin. To either, what greater praise!

Washington Oct. 14th 48.

My dear Madame de Neuville will accept my affectionate salutations, and do me the favor to believe that the long space of time which has elapsed since I saw her has not diminished my constant love & interest for her, and her excellent husband the Baron de Neuville.

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\*William Winston Seaton. *A Biographical Sketch*.

†*Forty Years of Washington Society*. Margaret Bayard Smith.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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I ask leave to present a worthy citizen of Washington to your acquaintance—who visits France, England & Belgium by appointment of our Executive, on business of his Government. Mr. Peter Hagner Jr is the son of an old and respected friend of mine,—who, with us all will be much gratified to know that he has had the favor of seeing you.

Ever yours

D. P. Madison.

Peter Hagner was born in Philadelphia, October 1, 1772; he died in Washington, July 16, 1850. He was educated in the University of Pennsylvania. After a few years' employment in the counting-house of a Philadelphia firm, Philip Crammond and Co., he entered the service of the United States, and continued in it until the year of his death. He entered the government service, 1793, through the recommendation of Mrs. Dolly Todd—Mrs. Madison. He was a bookkeeper in the office of the War Department accountant; and successively he was chief clerk and an additional accountant. Into his office came Washington and Hamilton and they took kindly notice of him. In 1817, upon its creation, he was appointed Third Auditor of the Treasury and continued in that office until his resignation.

*The Washington Union* has this tribute by Thomas Ritchie:

No government could ever boast of a more able, honest and efficient officer; he has been worth more than his weight in gold to his country. He has been a model of what a public servant should be; and hereafter no higher compliment can be paid to a public officer than to say of him (similar to what was said in Athens of Aristides the Just), "He is as virtuous as Peter Hagner."

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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His second wife's maiden name was Francis Randall. He and she had sons and daughters ten; of the seven sons, three chose arms, three, law; and one, medicine. All the sons were pre-eminent in their chosen professions.\*

Peter Hagner, junior, or Peter Valentine Hagner rose to the rank of Brigadier-General in acknowledgment of his military science and bravery in action. He was abroad for the War Department, 1848-'49, to gather information as to firearms, the system of artillery and equipments of troops.

Accompanying a floral gift was a card inscribed "To Mrs. Madison from her little sweethearts."

My precious little sweet-hearts daughters of beloved  
fd Judge & Mrs. Mason. Be pleased to accept a cake  
from me which tho' cunningly made & prepared for  
you by me cannot equal those sweet flowers I recd on  
Sunday, resembling each of you as if they were fairy  
sisters—

I prefs yr dear lips in imagination beginning with  
Fanny & ending with Catie and the peerlefs Baby.

D. P. M.

To the little Mifses Mason

Elizabeth Fries Lummis to have Fitz-Greene Halleck's autograph sent him a graceful note. And the poet promptly responded with the spirited lines, the first two—

The song that o'er me hovered  
In summer's hour, in summer's hour.

Miss Lummis became a poetess herself. Before she was seventeen she changed Silvio Pellico's Euphemia

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\**Eminent and Representative Men of Virginia and the District of Columbia of the Nineteenth Century.*

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

of Messina into English and when she was seventeen changed her name to Ellet. Professor William H. Ellet was of the chemistry branch of the Columbia College, New York city. Soon after the marriage, was produced on the stage her tragedy based on a Venetian incident, *Teresa Contarini*. Much inquiry and investigation were involved in her most important achievement, *Women of the American Revolution*. It encouraged her for a companion subject, *Domestic History of the American Revolution*. *The Court Circles of the Republic*, in collaboration with Mrs. R. E. Mack is a worthy work. Mrs. Ellet began her literary utility early and although she did not live a long life she accomplished a great deal.

New York Dec. 18<sup>th</sup> (1848)

Dear Madam

I trust you will excuse the liberty I take in addressing you when you learn the object I have in view. I am collecting materials for a volume of biographical sketches of the heroic and distinguished Ladies of the Revolution. In the hope of doing justice to the memory of many whose noble conduct and patriotic sacrifices exerted a great influence on the destinies of their country. I have sought information from surviving members of their families—such as might enable me to furnish a record to last for posterity.—my volume would be unspeakably enriched if you would permit me to add a sketch of yourself—a personal biography, with no further reference than may be necessary to those political events which are matters of history.

Should you, dear Madam, feel disposed to grant me facilities for such a Sketch, I would refer you to Mr. Calhoun and Senator Butler from South Carolina, or to Prof. Palfrey of Boston (who is now in Washington) or to Capt. and Mrs. Wilkes: all of whom know me, and will I trust, bear satisfactory testimony as to my

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

ability to present such a work in a popular form. In case you consider my request favorably, will you have the goodness to commission some one—if your own time should be occupied—to point me out sources of information—and let me know how far I may depend on those you can furnish?

Please let any communication be addressed to me—care of William M. Lummis—New York.

I am, dear Madam

most respectfully yours

E. F. Ellet

Washington Jan<sup>y</sup> 3<sup>d</sup> 1848. (1849)

I have received, my dear Madam, your letter of the 18<sup>th</sup> ult. informing me of your design to publish a volume of sketches of the patriotic ladies of the Revolution—and of your wish to include my life among the number.

Having been but a child at the close of that glorious struggle which resulted in our Independence, I can lay no claim to be included among that distinguished class whose exploits and sacrifices well deserve to be commemorated. Thanking you for your kindness and assuring you that I shall look forward with much interest to your promised volume.

With friendly salutations Yours

D. P. Madison.

To Mrs E. F. Ellet

Care of W<sup>m</sup> M. Lummis—

New York

Will Mrs Madison accept a piece of the Bride and Groom's Cake, from

her gratefully attached

Rosalie V. Smith



MRS. WILLIAM CRAIG



## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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From Mrs. George Graham:\*

Will you my dear Mrs Madison accept the Shawl as a small testimony of my affection, and desire to live in your remembrance.

Thine in all sincerity

M G Graham

It came from *Tunis*

To Mrs. S. C. P. McDowell, Georgetown:

I have rec<sup>d</sup> & shall obey your wishes, my dear cousin, by sending the autograph for your little favorite.—I should have hastened to have done so last eve<sup>s</sup> but that an inflamed eye forbid the looking upon white paper in a bright light. I wish I had known that Miss Plumer, or any of your family were here yesterday, as it w<sup>d</sup> have delighted me to have seen you or them. I have not been as far as Georgetown since I went there on a visit to you & y<sup>r</sup> sweet sisters, but I w<sup>d</sup> rather see you & hear your voices than visit your Heights or commune with your flowers. Let me persuade you to come soon my way in order that I may show you the improvement diffused throughout a District which has hitherto crept lazily towards perfection.

Accept mine with Annie's love & best wishes—

D. P. Madison

Miss Elizabeth Patterson was of figure, petite, of wit, piquant. Her crown of glory was a wavy brown; her laughing and beguiling eyes were hazel; her features Grecian; her mould, faultless; a creature for beauty beyond compare. She dreamt of title. Her dream had promise in the appearance at Baltimore of Jerome Bonaparte, the youngest brother of Napoleon. They met at a ball given by Samuel Chase, "a signer." In a dance

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\*Chief Clerk, Secretary of War; Ad-interim, Secretary of War in Madison's administration.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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his chain became entangled in her hair. It was significant of fate. Mr. Patterson objected and her friends warned and she retorted, "I would rather be the wife of Jerome Bonaparte for one hour than of any other man for life." And on Christmas eve, 1803, they were married; and with high flourish, the ceremony being performed by the Most Reverend John Carroll, Bishop of Baltimore. The bride did not add to her charms by dress for she says "there was as little as possible of any gown at all" and one man said he could put all her clothes into his pocket. The groom was nineteen and the bride eighteen.

To favorably impress the Emperor Napoleon, the President, Mr. Jefferson, and the Secretary of State, Mr. Madison, addressed him by letters; and Mr. Livingston, the ambassador to France, presented the affair and Mr. Robert Patterson, a brother, went over to advocate. Napoleon the only one to be satisfied, and the only one not, after an ominous silence put a ban on "the pretended marriage that Jerome Bonaparte contracted in a foreign country during his minority, without consent of his mother and without previous publication in his native land." He declared "Should he bring her along with him, she shall not put a foot on the territory of France." Jerome was discouraged but she enheartened him; she was confident that her beauty and persuasion would mollify the mighty one—and accordingly they embarked. On the coast of Delaware the vessel was stranded. She hung her handsome clothes on the rope to dry and in the borrowed rustic ones, laughed gaily and ate heartily. Said her irritated aunt "You wicked girl instead of kneeling in thanksgiving for your deliverance you are enjoying roast goose and apple-sauce." She and Jerome arrived at Lisbon where they were met

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by a French guard to prevent her landing. A messenger from Napoleon inquired what he might do for Miss Patterson. To this she retorted "Tell your master that Madame Bonaparte is ambitious and demands her rights as a member of the imperial family." Jerome parted with his wife with the usual protestations of undiminished love. She continued on to Amsterdam and there encountered the same interception. Jerome succumbed to the will of Napoleon and married his choice. She and Jerome after the parting at Lisbon never met save once in a picture gallery and as strangers, seeing but not seeing each other. Not until the death of Napoleon did she enter France. She mingled with royalty and to a degree her youthful dreams had fruition.

Madame gave her son, Jerome, "Bo," a course at Harvard that he might advantageously marry, that is, marry a title; and on the outcome wrote:

I should consider an amiable prolific daughter-in-law a very poor compensation for all the trouble I have had with that boy, and most sincerely hope the amiable scheming (for even in America the women know their own interest and look as sharply after matches as they do here) young ladies will select some other unsuspecting dupe.

Jerome Napoleon Bonaparte married a Baltimore belle.

Madame lived long, very long; in years ninety-four; in weariness longer as the years dragged on. She lived for herself and the resources for a selfish life drain. Writes she:

I am dying with *ennui*, I doze away existence. I am too old to coquet, and without this stimulant I die. I

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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am tired of reading, and of all ways of killing time. I am tired of life, and tired of having lived. It is a bore to grow old.\*

Mme. Bonaparte and her royal husband came to Washington for their wedding tour. The Madisons entertained them. Between Mrs. Madison and Mme. Bonaparte was closest connection; the Madame at times living in the Executive Mansion; throughout they were of reciprocal helpfulness.

My dear Mrs Madison

I shall have great pleasure in accepting your kind invitation for this evening.

I remain your obliged  
friend E. Bonaparte

*The Story of Kalorama* has been told by Corra Bacon-Foster and more exactly and more entertainingly is not to be expected. The picturesque site on a graceful curve of Rock Creek is a part of originally Rock Hill. The mansion was built, 1750. Washington to Tobias Lear, August 28, 1794, writes: “\* \* \* a gentleman eminent in the profession of the law, a man of Character & fortune, and one who has the welfare of the New City much at heart—has been applied to, and accepted the appointed trust.” The gentleman was Gustavus Scott and the trust, a city commissionership. The year he accepted the trust, he acquired the tract—1794.

William Augustine Washington succeeded to the ownership to be followed by Joel Barlow. Mr. Barlow tells his nephew, Stephen Barlow, December 15, 1807:

I have here a most delightful situation; it only wants the improvements we contemplate to make it a little

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\**Elizabeth Patterson in Dames and Daughters of the Young Republic.* Geraldine Brooks.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

paradise. It is a beautiful hill, about one mile from the Potomac and 200 feet in elevation above tidewater, with Washington and Georgetown under my eye and Alexandria eight miles below, still in view, the Potomac reflecting back the sun in a million forms and losing himself among the hills that try on each side to shove him from his course. If you have a plan of the city I can show you my very spot. Look at the stream called Rock Creek, that divides Washington and Georgetown. I am just outside of the city on the Washington side of the Creek, just above where it takes its last bend and begins its straight, short course to the Potomac. My hill is that white, circular spot. I find the name of Belair has been already given to many places in Maryland and Virginia, so by the advice of friends we have changed it for one that is quite new—Calorama, from the Greek, signifying "fine view," and this place presents one of the finest views in America.

"In the contemplated improvements," Latrobe, the architect, and Fulton, the inventor, assisted.

Barlow went as Minister to France and M. Serurier came as Minister from France. Mrs. Madison to Mrs. Barlow, November 15, 1811, writes:

The French Minister, Mr. Serurier, is still delighted with Kalorama, and takes much pleasure in beautifying the grounds.

The estate was devised to Thomas Barlow. Barlow sold it to Henry Baldwin, to be an Associate Justice of the U. S. Supreme Court; and he at once conveyed it to Colonel George Bomford, U. S. A. The Colonel and Mrs. Bomford occupied it for thirty years and for a long time made in it a secluded home for Mrs. Stephen Decatur. In 1846, it was bought in the name of Thomas

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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R. Lovett as trustee for his mother, Mrs. Charles Fletcher.

Kalorama was all along the rendezvous of the cultured of society. And, "The Lovett family proved themselves worthy successors of the brilliant men and women that had preceded them, and the cultured, hospitable life continued. Mr. Thomas Lovett accompanied Minister Marsh to Constantinople in 1850 as an *attaché* of the legation. This perhaps led to introductions into all the foreign legations in Washington whose inmates were always on terms of pleasant intimacy with the family in the most charming country residence in the District." Mr. Charles Fletcher was literary, extremely progressive, remarkably prophetic; and actively interested in many public projects. He numbered among his friends most of the prominent men of his day in official life.\*

Kalorama during the Civil War was a government hospital. After the war its shades and slopes made the popular pic-nic place for the secular and Sunday schools. But the beauty of Kalorama is beautifully told by Corra Bacon Foster and prettily pictured on twenty pages of the Records of the Columbia Historical Society.

Mrs. Fletcher requests the pleasure of Mrs. Madison's company on Friday evening next, at 8½ o'clock.

Kalorama

Feb. 14th.

Eckington, Joseph Gales' country-seat, was named from his place of birth, in England, near Sheffield. Charles B. King, Washington's artist and art authority, was the architect. Mr. Gales and William Winston Sea-

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\**Kalorama Tract, The Sunday Star, April 13, 1913. James Croggon.*

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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ton were the editors and proprietors of the *National Intelligencer*. They reported the debates of Congress, one, the Senate; the other, the House. Their reportorial industry has preserved legislative history that without it would be lost. The memorable debate of Hayne and Webster was taken by Mr. Gales. He was proud by the possession of Mr. Webster's speeches with his corrective interlineations. He, with other honors, was Mayor. His city residence was at E and Ninth streets.

His widow was Sarah Juliana Maria. The men and women of the Gales and Seaton families were all literary and she in this talent was equally one of them. The family setting of this estimable lady is that her father was Theodoric Lee, brother of Henry Lee, "Light Horse Harry," who was the father of General Robert E. Lee.

My dear Mrs Madison,

I expect a few friends to pass the evening with me and shall be most happy if you and Miss Payne will give me the pleasure of your company at  $\frac{1}{2}$  past 8 o'clock.

Believe me dear Madam

Most affectionately

and Truly yours

S. J. M. Gales.

Thursday

Mrs. Madison to Mrs. John G. Todd:

I have received with much sensibility dear Friend your beautiful tho' too flattering poetry, and I desire to assure that I am proud of that regard and approbation which had the power, and the will to brighten each flower, and soften each shade.

I cannot give up a sweet hope that we may meet again, and continue to love each other as I do that amiable connexion of mine.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

The name of him who lectured before *the lovers of learning* and who received Mrs. Madison's thanks for the chance to share with these lovers the feast, is missing.

Permit me Sir to thank you for your interesting Discourse before the Philomathian Society in Middlebury College—My impatience to acknowledge the receipt of it, with that of your kind note, will prevent me now as it deserves on every word.\*

George William Erving was an eminent diplomat.

To Mr Erving—

—May I ask you my valued fd to accept from me the accompanying vols—as a Mem<sup>o</sup> of one you regarded, whose attach<sup>t</sup> for you lasted with her life?—in the same sentiments & wishes for your happiness, wherever you go I wd exprefs my regrets at not seeing you again.

Truly

D. P. M.

A Merry Christmas to Mrs. Madison, and with it a small token of regard from her friends, Mrs. Toombs & Mrs. Crittenden, which they hope she will ware for their sake.

Washington Dec. 24th

A happy Christmas my belov<sup>d</sup> Friend, and my dear own—

I send you in great haste—a couple of Grouse from Mifsouri—by my son the Major—eat them to gratify your

*own friend*

E. Lee

Dear Aunt

I wish you a happy New Year and hope that you will live to enjoy many returns of the same accept this little

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\*A solemn disputation in all the mysteries of the profession, before the face of every philomath, student in astrology, and member of learned societies. Goldsmith, Citizen of the World, LXVIII.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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token of affection from your devoted Niece Adele. Present the wreath to Cousin Annie and beg of her to accept it as a trifling token of my affection.

Your affectionate Niece

Addie

At President Polk's last reception, Dolly Madison sat on a raised platform. She was attired in white satin with the habitual turban of fringed satin of same shade twined about her head. The gown was cut *décoletté* and displayed shoulders and arms beautiful and as beautiful as in the pristine period. The feature of the presidential reception is published in *The Evening Star*, September 2, 1902. The preservation of this personal charm is corroborated to the writer by the grandniece, Mrs. Craig.\*

The President entered in his diary:

James K. Polk's Diary:

Wednesday, 7th February, 1849.— \* \* \* General notice had been given in the City papers that the President's mansion would be open for the reception of visitors this evening. All the parlours including the East Room were lighted up. The Marine band of musicians occupied the outer Hall. Many hundreds of persons, ladies & gentlemen, attended. It was what would be called in the Society of Washington a very fashionable levee. Foreign Ministers, their families & suites, Judges, members of both Houses of Congress, and many citizens and strangers were of the company present. I stood and shook hands with them for over three hours. Towards the close of the evening I passed through the crowded rooms with the venerable Mrs. Madison on my arm. It was near 12 O'Clock when the company retired. \* \* \*

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\*The physical perfections of her young womanhood, none diminished, remained when her spirit fled. Thus said by Mrs. Richard B. (Elizabeth) Lee.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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Queen Dolly's second reign was during the administrations of Van Buren, Tyler and Polk.

Mrs. Madison lapsed into a soft slumber. It deepened and deeper grew until there was no awakening. The transition from the dreaming to the dreamless was between ten and eleven o'clock in the evening on Thursday, July 12th. Apoplexy they called it. On Monday forenoon, early, the tenement was tenderly borne from the home corner to the church corner, St. John's; and was viewed by hundreds as it rested before the chancel. In the afternoon at four, the service began. The Rev. Mr. Pyne, the Rector, "delivered, in a very feeling manner, an eloquent and just eulogy," and was by the Rev. Mr. French assisted in the solemn services. The congregation was dense and its interest, intense. The President was present. At half after five o'clock, the *cortège* moved to the "Congress Cemetery." The *cortège* was national. It was the largest yet seen in the city. It was in this order:

The Reverend Clergy

Attending Physicians

Pall Bearers:

Hon. John M. Clayton,<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Joseph Gales,<sup>2</sup>

Gen. Thomas S. Jesup,<sup>3</sup>

Com. Charles Morris,<sup>4</sup>

Gen. Archibald Henderson,<sup>5</sup>

Gen. Walter Jones,<sup>6</sup>

Hon. William M. Meredith,<sup>7</sup>

Mr. Thomas Ritchie,<sup>8</sup>

Gen. J. G. Totten,<sup>9</sup>

Com. Lewis Warrington,<sup>10</sup>

Mr. Stephen Pleasanton,<sup>11</sup>

Mr. Philip H. Fendall.<sup>12</sup>

1 Secretary of State

2 Editor *National Intelligencer*.

3 Quartermaster-General.

4 Inspector of Ordnance.

5 Col. Com. Marine Corps

6 Lawyer

7 Secretary of the Treasury.

8 Editor of *The Union*.

9 Chief Engineer, U. S. A.

10 Chief Bureau of Ordnance  
and Hydrography.

11 Fifth Auditor, Treasury  
Dept.

12 District Attorney.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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The Family

The President and Cabinet

The Diplomatic Corps

Members of the Senate and House of Representatives  
at present in Washington, and their officers

Judges of the Supreme Court and Courts of the District,  
and their officers

Officers of the Army and Navy

Mayor and Corporation of Washington

Citizens and Strangers

The remains were deposited in the vault, temporarily. The mortal is interred at Montpelier aside that of him whom she loved.

Mr. Morris was ushered to a pew next behind the family. In the pew was an elderly lady. The services over, Mr. Morris and the lady arose. They faced casually. They for a moment hesitated—in that moment of hesitation—were recollection and recognition. They voiced their recognition. They, Mrs. Lee and Mr. Morris, were fifty-nine years before the maid of honor and the groomsman. Before them lie in unwakenable sleep—the bride.

### *Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison:*

A few days before her death she said to a niece who had gone to her, as usual, for sympathy over some small grievance:—

“My dear, do not trouble about it; there is nothing in *this* world worth really caring for. Yes, believe me, I, who have lived so long, repeat to you, there is nothing in *this* world here below worth caring for.” \* \* \*  
For two days she lingered apparently without suffering, waking only when aroused to momentary consciousness, when she would smile lovingly, and put out her arms to embrace those whom she loved so well. Several times she murmured “My poor boy!” as she seemed to feel

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

her son's presence near her, and gently relapsed into that long rest which is peace.

It was proposed by the *Richmond Whig* to the ladies of Richmond and to all the ladies of Virginia, wheresoever they may be that for thirty days they wear upon the left arm a bow of black as a tribute.

The journals reach the heights of eulogy. *The Union* said:

Even when she was possessed of the highest buoyancy of spirits, and presided as the tutelary genius of the White House, she never suffered her head to be turned by the most devoted attentions which were always paid her. She preserved that equanimity of spirit, that simplicity of character, that warmth and sympathy of heart which preserved her from all affectation and arrogance of manner. She was the most considerate and polite person we have ever known.

The *National Intelligencer*, editorially, Saturday, the 14th, made the announcement:

It is with saddened hearts that we announce to our readers the decease of MRS. MADISON, Widow of JAMES MADISON, Ex-President of the United States. \* \* \*

Beloved by all who personally knew her, and universally respected, this venerable Lady closed her long and well-spent life with the calm resignation which goodness of heart combined with piety only can impart. It would seem an abuse of terms to say that we regret the departure of one so ripe and so fitted for a better world. But, in the case of this excellent Lady, she continued until within a few weeks to grace society with her presence, and lend to it those charms with which she adorned the circle of the highest, the wisest, and best, during the bright career of her illustrious husband. Wherever she appeared, every one became conscious of the presence of the spirit of benignity and gentleness, united to all

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the attributes of feminine loveliness. For ourselves whose privilege it was to know and admire her through the last forty years of her life, it would not be easy to speak in terms of exaggeration of the virtues and winning manners of this eminent Lady. To attempt it would add no brightness to her fair name, and would be little needed to move the public sympathy. All of our own country and thousands in other lands will need no language of Eulogy to inspire a deep and sincere regret when they learn the demise of one who touched all hearts by her goodness and won the admiration of all by the charms of dignity and grace.

Simultaneously appeared the tribute of the  
Washington Corporation.

Resolutions of Respect to the Memory of the late Mrs.  
D. P. Madison, widow of Ex-President Madison.

*Resolved by the Board of Aldermen and Board of  
Common Council of the city of Washington,* That they  
have heard with deep sensibility of the death of MRS.  
D. P. MADISON. \* \* \*

Resolved, That the many virtues and excellences of  
the deceased adorning as they did in a pre-eminent de-  
gree the domestic and social circle, and adding lustre to  
the dignified station she has held as the wife and com-  
panion of the pure and illustrious Madison, have made  
a deep impression upon this community, in the midst of  
which she has passed so large a portion of her life, and  
who will always hold in respectful remembrance her  
memory.

\* \* \*

Silas H. Hill,

President of the Board of Common Council,

W. Lenox,

President of the Board of Aldermen.

Approved, July 13, 1849.

W. W. Seaton, Mayor.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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Anne Royall in *The Huntress*, July 21, 1849:

Mrs. Madison Is No More!!

She departed this life on the 12th instant, between 10 and 11 o'clock P.M.—aged about 82. Having had the happiness of her acquaintance, we had written a short eulogy in honor of her virtues, but laid it aside, upon seeing that of the *Intelligencer*, herewith copy into our paper. It is one of the most beautiful specimens of composition that ever fell from the pen of man, and every word true.

Mrs. Madison's will antedates her death only a few days. She bequeathed ten thousand dollars of the fund vested in the trustees, Buchanan, Mason and Smith, to her son, John Payne. The remaining ten thousand to her adopted daughter, Annie Payne, for life. In the alternative, if her son survived her adopted daughter he should have the ten thousand or if she survived him the amount bequeathed to her should be free of conditions. All other property, which included the Dolly Madison house, was bequeathed and devised to the son. The personal property other than the twenty thousand dollars appropriated by Congress amounted to about eight thousand dollars. The latter amount included four paintings by Gilbert Stuart appraised by Mr. King, the local artist, at six hundred and fifty dollars. The son contested the will unsuccessfully. Eminent counsel represented the litigants. Mr. James M. Carlisle appeared for the son and Walter Jones for the adopted daughter. Three weeks prior, more exactly, June 11, Mrs. Madison signed a will drawn by the son which to him gave everything and the exclusive executorship. Judge (John Young) Mason influenced in favor of the daughter by adoption. In the litigation:

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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Mrs. Lee states she came to see Mrs. Madison on the morning of the 9th of July, '49. She was quite sick and kept her eyes closed. After some time when she Miss Payne Mrs. Thomas and J. M. Cutts were in the room it was proposed she, Mrs. M. should have a will, by the Ladies. Afterwards J M Cutts asked her to sign a paper or will to give Cousin Payne something and Cousin Anna perhaps too. To which it was thought she assented. Miss Payne was asking and endeavoring to get her to open her eyes. She had opened her eyes and recognized me. Mrs. Lee when down and was asked to affix her name to this paper. She afterwards learnt J. P. Todd had a will.

*A Grandfather's Legacy.*—William Wilson Corcoran.

Washington, July 20, 1849.

My Dear Sir: I have been for some days past anxious to address you, but amid the difficult and sad duties which I have been called upon to perform, in consequence of that mournful event for which you must have been prepared before your departure, I have not been able until now to return you our heartfelt thanks for the sympathy, kindness and delicacy with which you have, to our grateful observance, evinced your friendship and respect for our loved and honored aunt, Mrs. Madison.

Be pleased, therefore, to accept from myself, Cousin Annie Payne, and immediate family, our warmest and most respectful acknowledgments for the many attentions and kindnesses through which your respect and friendship have been evinced towards her whom we now mourn for, and towards those whom your intimacy with her and the family enabled you to know were most dear to her, but especially towards her devoted adopted daughter and niece—now prostrate and in very precarious health from over exertion and excitement consequent on her irreparable loss.

I fear I shall have to encounter greater difficulty in carrying out the wishes of my honored aunt as I and

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

all her friends knew them, and on your return shall avail myself of your advice as one among that number.

Meanwhile, receive the assurances of our united and profound regards and respect.

Yours truly,

J. Madison Cutts

W. W. Corcoran, Esq.  
Bath Springs, Va.

Hon. James Buchanan, July 15, 1849:

Full of days and beloved by all who enjoyed the privilege of her acquaintance, her memory will be cherished throughout the whole extent of the Union.

Hon. John J. Crittenden, July 20, 1849:

She was full of years and honors, and the natural time for her departure had come. Still her death cannot but be felt as a great bereavement. She was the bright example in which was combined the grace, the dignity and virtue of her sex. Though we knew from her age that she must soon leave us, still we cannot see so much excellence buried from our sight without some natural grief.

Hon. John Y. Mason, July 20, 1849:

The whole nation will mourn her death, and none more than I, who was honored by her confidence and friendship, and who repaid it with the affection and veneration which a son owes to his mother.

Hon. Alexander H. Stephens, August 11, 1849:

It is true my acquaintance with Mrs. Madison was short and slight compared with that of many of her numerous friends, but it had created in me an admira-

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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tion of her many excellencies and virtues and an interest in her welfare which you do not overestimate. And though the light of her sun was permitted to linger longer above that much-dreaded horizon which separates the visible from the invisible world, much longer than falls to the lot of most of the sojourners in life, and though none could reasonably expect or even hope to enjoy the blessings of her society much longer, yet her sudden decease touches the soul and afflicts the heart as if we had not the ever-present consciousness that she but yielded to the inevitable as well as wise and beneficent law of nature in falling as she has, in due time, like the ripe fruit, after all the functions, duties and obligations of life had been fully and perfectly performed. No woman in this country and few in any other ever filled a larger sphere in their day than Mrs. Madison did in hers, and none will ever leave a name and memory more respected, loved and revered.

William C. Preston has in his journal:

When I knew her in after life, widowed, poor and without prestige of station, I found her the same good-natured, kindhearted, considerate, stately person, that she had been in the heyday of her fortunes. Many of her minor habits, formed in early life, continued upon her in old age and poverty. Her manner was urbane, gracious, with an almost imperceptible touch of Quakerism. She continued to the last to wear around her shoulders a magnificent shawl of a green color. She always wore a lofty turban and took snuff from a snuff-box of lava or platina, never from gold. Two years before her death, I was in a whist party with her, when Mr. John Quincy Adams was her partner, and Lord Ashburton mine. Each of the three was over seventy years of age.

Mrs. Trist:

My recollections of Mrs. Madison are of the most agreeable nature, and were formed from a long, inti-

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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mate acquaintance beginning in my childhood and ending only with her life. She had a sweet, natural dignity of manner which attracted while it commanded respect; a proper degree of reserve without stiffness in company with strangers; and a stamp of frankness and sincerity which, with her intimate friends became gayety and even playfulness of manner. There was, too, a cordial, genial, sunny atmosphere surrounding her, which won all hearts—I think one of the secrets of her immense popularity. She was said to be, during Mr. Madison's administration, the most popular person in the United States; and she certainly had a remarkable memory for names and faces. No person introduced to Mrs. Madison at one of the crowded levees at the White House required a second introduction on meeting her again, but had the gratification of being recognized and addressed by his or her own name. Her son, Paine Todd, was a notoriously bad character. His misconduct was the sorrow of his mother's life. Mr. Madison, during his lifetime, bore with him like a father and paid many of his debts, but he was an incorrigible spendthrift. His heartless, unprincipled conduct embittered the last years of his mother's life, and no doubt shortened it.\*

William Cabell Rives:

On the 15th day of September, 1794, he was married to Mrs. Dorothea Payne Todd, who, for the space of forty-two years, till the close of his eventful life, was the faithful and tender companion of his bosom, the partner of his joys and sorrows, and the ornament, as well as helpmeet, of his household. This lady, besides a graceful and attractive person, was endowed with a sweetness of temper, and an unvarying tact and good sense, which fitted her eminently to play the part that devolved upon her in the future elevated fortunes of her husband; diffusing around her, in the Presidential

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\**Ladies of the White House.* Laura Carter Holloway.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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mansion and in the social circles of Washington, an atmosphere of smiles and good humor, in which every sentiment of political animosity was for the time extinguished and forgotten.\*

Benjamin Ogle Tayloe:

Mrs. Madison was a very remarkable woman, had been very handsome, was graceful and gracious. Her *bonhomie* could not be surpassed. She was loved alike by rich and poor.

In entertaining society, Mr. Madison was greatly aided by his wife, who though not highly cultivated, was a woman of wonderful tact. \* \* \* She made Mr. Madison a good wife, her extreme amiability and tact adapting her to the times; it being beyond dispute that no lady has ever done the honors of the White House so gracefully or acceptably as Mrs. Madison. She never forgot a face or a name.†

John S. C. Abbott in the *Lives of the Presidents*:

She was, in person and character, queenly. As graceful as Josephine, with a heart overflowing with kindness, endowed with wonderful powers of conversation, persuasion, and entertainment, and with a face whose frankness and winning smiles at sight won all hearts, she contributed greatly to the popularity and power of her husband in the elevated sphere through which he afterwards moved.

As in the case of Napoleon, all who wished for special favors felt safe if they could secure the advocacy of Josephine; so it was found, that through Mrs. Madison, one could ever obtain the readiest access to the heart of her distinguished husband. She was a true and sympathizing friend of all who were in sorrow.

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\**Life and Times of James Madison.* William C. Rives.

†*In Memoriam: Benjamin Ogle Tayloe.*

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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Mr. Catlin, the renowned delineator of Indian life, when a young man, just after his marriage, was in Virginia, in the vicinity of Mr. Madison's home, endeavoring to earn a living by painting portraits. He was poor, a stranger, in a cheerless inn, and his young wife was taken sick with the intermittent fever. Their situation was desolate indeed. But soon a lady of wonderfully prepossessing appearance and manners entered the chamber, apologized gracefully for the intrusion, introduced herself as Mrs. Madison, and, taking off bonnet and shawl, sat down by the bedside of the sick one, cheered her with words of hope, administered the medicines, and from that hour, with a sister's tenderness, watched over her, and supplied her with comforts and luxuries, until she was quite recovered.

In Washington, she was the life of society. A group of the young were gathered around her. If there were any diffident, timid young girl just making her appearance, she was sure to find in Mrs. Madison a supporting and encouraging friend. Probably no lady has thus far occupied so prominent a position in the very peculiar society which has constituted our republican court as Mrs. Madison. \* \* \* Mrs. Madison was the charm and the life of every social circle in which she appeared.

Mr. Abbott quotes John Quincy Adams:

Of that band of benefactors of the human race, the founders of the Constitution of the United States, James Madison is the last who has gone to his reward. Their glorious work has survived them all. They have transmitted the precious bond to us, now entirely a succeeding generation to them. May it never cease to be a voice of admonition to us, of our duty to transmit the inheritance unimpaired to our children of the rising age!

Mr. Abbott supplements:

She was one of the most remarkable women our country has produced; and it is fitting that her memory

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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should descend to posterity in company with that of the companion of her life.

A grand-nephew, J. Madison Cutts:

I was accustomed to stand by her side at her receptions, often holding her hand, and was introduced to her friends as "her little Madison," and well remember one of those occasions when I saw around her Webster, Clay and Calhoun, and ever afterward was accustomed to call the Kentucky statesman "Cousin Henry." I had the most implicit faith in her, and often on several of her birthdays, moved and instigated by my cousin Anna, her adopted daughter, I had asked her, "Aunty, how old are you," and received annually the same reply. I at first believed that she never could grow older. With equal faith when she told me that the statue of Jefferson, then in front of the White House, always went to dinner whenever it heard the bell ring, I would sit for hours watching it, until with developing reasoning powers I had learned my first lesson in logic—to supply another premise, "but it never hears the bell ring," and draw the correct conclusion, therefore it never goes to dinner.

A grandniece, Adele Cutts Williams, describes a levee of the latter days:

The earliest recollections I have of Aunt Madison are associated with a lovely day in May or June when arrayed in our best, my brother and I accompanied our mother across the ragged little square opposite the White House. We were ushered in by Ralph the young negro, who had succeeded Paul so well known as Mr. Madison's body-servant in old times. We were announced as "young Master and Miss." My mother was "Miss Ellen." This was called Mrs. Madison's Levee-day and everybody came, much as they do now, to make a short

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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visit, gossip a little, then give place to new-comers. Aunt stood near the window. I was a curious little girl only eight or nine years of age, and my wide-open eyes saw a very sweet-looking lady, tall and very erect. She greeted us affectionately and told us to go with Cousin Anna (Anna Payne) who would amuse the young people. I clung to my mother's hand and took observations after the manner of children in general.

Aunt Madison wore a purple velvet dress, with plain straight skirt amply gathered to a tight waist—cut low and filled in with soft tulle. Her pretty white throat was encircled by a lace cravatte such as the old-fashioned gentlemen used to wear, tied twice around and fastened with an amethyst pin (which I remember, as Aunt afterwards gave my mother the earrings to correspond and I was sometimes allowed to wear them.) Thrown lightly over the shoulders was a little lace shawl or cape as in her portrait. I thought her turban very wonderful, as I never saw any one else wear such a head-dress. It was made of some soft silky material and became her rarely.

There were two little bunches of very black curls on either side the smooth white brow; her eyes were blue and laughed when she smiled and greeted the friends who seemed so glad to see her. I wondered at her smooth soft skin as I was told that she was over seventy, which at that time was a great age to me.

A throng of people passed in and out, among them some old ladies, whom I have since known or heard of as the wives of men known to fame. There was Mrs. Decatur who at that time lived in a little cottage near Georgetown College, and never went out except to call on Aunt Madison. She wore a little close bonnet, and had great sad dark eyes. Mrs. Lear (Mrs. Tobias Lear whose husband was Washington's secretary) was another most beautiful old lady whom we all called Aunt, I suppose because all the children loved her. Mr. Bancroft who lived in the Ogle Tayloe house, next door; Mr. and Mrs. Webster, whom I saw for the first time;

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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also Mrs. Polk who was always so gracefully attentive to Mrs. Madison, and was then a tall, handsome, young-looking person and much beloved in society, which was of course much smaller and more united than at this time when the circle is so much larger. I cannot remember if I saw Mr. Clay on that occasion, but I have often been honored as a child at Aunt's house by his friendly greeting. In those days our people were great Whigs, and even now I recall the family mourning over his defeat in the Presidential canvass. There were some foreign ministers who attracted my attention; also I think, M. Bodisco with his beautiful young wife; and M. Calderon de la Barca with his wife whom I shall always remember as the most charming hostess for young people. Long after, when I was still a school-girl, I, with other girls of my own age, was allowed to go to her evenings which she called "Tertulias." We spoke Spanish or French, and I think many of us may thank Madame Calderon that through her we were stimulated to take up the real study of these two languages.

This Levee was over at four o'clock, when only we of the family remained with Aunt who was still fresh and smiling. I have a very distinct consciousness in connection with this Levee that she disliked nothing so much as loud talking or laughing.\*

Jessie Benton Fremont in *Souvenirs of My Time*:

I had the good fortune to be in Westminster Abbey and hear Dean Stanley illustrate the *Parable of the Talents* from the use made of "talents" committed to their keeping by three distinguished men. \* \* \*

Three women come to my mind as illustrious of this parable; one, as having kept hers "wrapped in a napkin." Each of them I knew in her very old age when time had put its stamp and verdict on the result; each had large talents entrusted to her, and long life and conspicuous position in which to use them.

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\**Our Early Presidents, their Wives and Children.* Harriet Taylor Upton.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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Mrs. Madison was one. As the wife of a President, and during the stirring war time of 1812, she had a governing position. She had the great gift of healthy beauty, and much clear common sense as well as quick wit; but her crowning talent was her charm of manners. She had what the French term *courtoisie de coeur*, as well as the courtesy of form also. This no selfish person can have. \* \* \*

The Empress Josephine must have had much the same manner as Mrs. Madison. So had Madame Récamier; I knew intimately well in Paris one of her old French friends who was part of her youth, as well as of her late days, who gave me a lovable instance of her prompt sympathy.

I have heard many things, \* \* \* of Mrs. Madison's way of receiving in the White House. While she was talking with the more distinguished people of her quick eye would mark some shy young man, or nervous-looking woman, not yet used to the society in which she was so naturally at home; after the first part of the reception she always moved about the rooms as a lady would in her own house, and in her own bright natural way said something to any one, and especially to these shy and nervous people which made them glow with the pleased feeling that they were welcome and made to be part of her reception. \* \* \*

Mrs. Madison's considerate happy manner outlasted time and change and many troubles, and made her house in Washington a place where strangers and residents went with pleasure—a shabby house, and the tall handsome old lady in shabby old gowns of velvet or brocade nowise altered from the fashion of her days of power. But she was MRS. MADISON. And in the Washington of my younger day name and character outranked appearances. No one questioned her wearing these short-waisted, puff-sleeved, gored velvet gowns, with a muslin neckerchief tucked into the low waist of the gown, and a little India scarf of lovely faded tones over it. A wide and stiff quilling of net rose high around her throat

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always—and, I fear me, a little rouge and powder were also in use to cover Time's footsteps; the bad taste of the day discouraged gray hair, and Mrs. Madison's dark row of curls was always surmounted by a turban. And with all this she was handsome, magnetic and simply dignified. And very agreeable—with a memory and kind words for every one.

She dined out often and was the chief person always; and on New Year's day her rooms were crowded, for every one who was any one went there across from the President's.

Marian Gouveneur:

It is to the kindness of Mrs. Madison Cutts that I owe the memory of a pleasant visit to Mrs. Madison. She took me to call upon her one afternoon, and I shall never forget the impression made upon me by her turban and long earrings. Her surroundings were of a most interesting character and her graceful bearing and sprightly presence, even in extreme old age, have left a lasting picture upon my memory. \* \* \* The afternoon of my memorable visit to this former mistress of the White House I remember meeting quite a number of visitors in her drawing-room, as temporary sojourners at the National Capital were often eager to meet the gracious woman who had figured so conspicuously in the social history of the country.\*

Mary Estelle Craig, when little Molly Cutts, was much of the time with her popular grand-aunt. She says:

My recollections of Aunt Madison are most charming and have been a green place in my memory all these years; she was always so lovely and kind to her little grandnieces, took so much interest in us and presented us to every one who came to call.

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\*As I Remember; *Recollections of American Society During the Nineteenth Century.*

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

And, "Mrs. Craig remembers very vividly her Christmas spent with her aunt. The presents dear to the child heart given by Mrs. Madison with a tender kiss. 'Christmas box, Molly,' as she said. Then church at St. John's and later a levee where Mrs. Madison, stately in black velvet and white lace, would receive first her friends and later strangers. Mrs. Craig frequently met at her aunt's, Webster, Clay and Calhoun and later Mr. Buchanan."

Mrs. Craig is the daughter of Thomas and Hannah H. Cutts. She is the widow of Captain William Craig, U. S. A.

Danville  
December (23)  
Ky

My dearest Aunt,

I am quite ashamed to own that I have not written to you since I left Washington City. But my dearest Aunt, its not my fault for I have been going to school ever since to Mr & Mrs Steavenson who are considered very excelent teachers, they are assisted by two Miss Miss Franklin's Mrs Stevenson's sisters. There are a great many schools hear and also a College which contains nearly 200 students;

I think this is the dullest place I ever lived in their has not been a dancing party hear since I have been hear. Their is a man hear trying to rais a dancing school but I doant think he will succeed. Ma received a leter from Uncle John the other day he said he sent me a very splendid book cost him 75 dollars Dear Aunt I have not a word of news to tell you so I must close for the present Christ mas Gift

All join in love to you and Cousin Annie good by your affectionate neice

Mary Estelle Cutts

Mrs. Madison's orignations and quotations:  
In her mother's album:

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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The passions are like sounds of nature, only heard in her solitudes. Our senses may captivate us with beauty, but in absence we can forget or by reason we can conquer so superficial an impression; our vanity may enamour us with rank, but the affections of vanity are traced in sand; but who can love genius and not feel that the sentiments it excites partake of its own intensesness and its own immortality?

D. P. Madison.\*

What would the world be to us if the children were no more?

We should dread the desert behind us worse than the dark before.†

'Tis poor and not becoming perfect gentry  
To build their glories at their fathers' cost,  
But at their own expense of blood and virtue  
To raise their living monuments.‡

It is what we deserve when we do not even try to appreciate the good the gods provide us.

Thomas Jefferson who was not in America pending the framing of the Constitution, whose information in all that occurred in the Convention, and of the motives and intents of the framers are derived from Mr Madison whose opinions guided him in the construction of that instrument, is looked up to by many as its father and almost unanimously as its only true expositor.

Honor, like the rainbow, flies the pursuer, and pursues the flier.

D. P. Madison.

June 25<sup>th</sup> 1842

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\**Dolly Madison*. J. Madison Cutts.

†*Ibid*.

‡*Ibid*.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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Mrs. Madison excused her erring son, saying: "Forgive his eccentricities, for his heart is all right"; and adding the quotation with which Mr. Madison attempted to console her:

Errors like straws upon the surface flow;  
Those who would seek for pearls must dive below.\*

For Mifs Dahlgren.

—Deliberate on all things with thy friend;  
But since friends grow not thick on every bough,  
*First, on thy friend, deliberate with thyself,*  
Pause, ponder, sift, not eager in the choice  
Nor jealous of the chosen; fixing, for  
Judge before friendship, then confide till death.

D. P. Madison

Washington Feby 14<sup>th</sup> 1849.†

The governmental residence of the President was originally called The President's House; and subsequently The Executive Mansion; both dignified designations. The earliest mention of it in this publication as the White House is in Mrs. Tyler's letter, 1841. By that time, the name had become popularized. The name came through some unexplained pleasantry during the Jackson administration.‡

The President's House for a period was known as *The Great House*. It is so called in Mrs. Thornton's diary, March 11, 1809; Mrs. Smith's letter, November 23, 1817; Mr. Knapp's historical annotation, 1837.

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\**Dolly Madison*. J. Madison Cutts.

†*Dolly Madison*. Maud Wilder Goodwin.

‡See *The Story of the White House*—Esther Singleton. Vol. I, pp. 210'1.

*Social Life in the Early Republic*—Anne Hollingsworth Wharton, p. 240.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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Strange it is that such an important circumstance should have been lost. Of the fanciful names in the early days are the Castle,\* the Palace,† and the big house.‡

Mrs. Madison's identification with the District is a half century. As she advanced in age, in epochs of ten years, the population, as in the schedule, increased. The increase at the conclusion of the half century was between twelve and thirteen times the commencement. A population of forty thousand that was within the lines of Rock Creek westward and the Eastern Branch eastward, and south of Massachusetts avenue and included the rather thickly populated Georgetown was unquestionably well scattered or not, at least, congested in any locality.

### CENSUS.§

	Washington	Georgetown	County	Total	Colored included
1800 . . . .	3210	2993	1941	8144	2472
1810 . . . .	8208	4908	2315	15431	5126
1820 . . . .	13247	7360	2726	23333	7278
1830 . . . .	18827	8441	2993	30261	9110
1840 . . . .	23364	7312	3069	33745	9819
1850 . . . .	40001	8366	3320	51687	13746

In the last decade the population increased fifty per cent. It was a rapid increase compared with the ten year periods previous. Mrs. Madison had civic pride; she had a pride in the District. And because of the

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\*Mrs. Abigail Adams and Mrs. Madison.

†Mrs. Seaton.

‡Mrs. Smith.

§*The Establishment and Government of the District of Columbia.* William Tindall.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

increase and improvement she was delighted and exultingly wrote to the lady in Georgetown:

Let me persuade you to come soon my *way* in order that I may shew you the improvements diffused throughout a District which has hitherto crept lazily towards perfection.

Exclusive of those mentioned in the narrative these entertained Mrs. Madison by dinner or other social attention.

Abert	Col. and Mrs. Charles
Alsop	Mr. and Mrs. Richard, 93 So. 4th St., Philadelphia, April 13, 1842.
Aulick	Com. and Mrs. John H.
Bache	Mr. and Mrs. Alexander D., Miss Bache
Bell	Mr. and Mrs. John
Berrien	Mr. and Mrs. John McPherson
Blair	Mr. and Mrs. Francis P.
Bodisco	Mr. and Mrs. Alexandre de
Burd	Mrs. E. S.
Calderon de la Barca	Señor Don A.
Carroll	Mr. and Mrs. William T.
Carter	Mrs., Caroline Place, Georgetown Heights.
Clarke	Mr. and Mrs. John H.
Carvalho Moreira	Chev. F. J. de and Mme.
Coxe	Mr. and Mrs. Richard S.
Cross	Mrs. William B.
Cutts	Mrs. L. Henry
Dallas	Mr. and Mrs. George M. and Misses Dallas
Dickens	Mr. and Mrs. Asbury
Gadsby	Mrs. John
Gamble	Mr. and Mrs. James

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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Gardiner	Col. and Mrs. C. K.
Gouveneur	Mr. and Mrs. Samuel L.
Grinnell	Mr. and Mrs. Joseph
Harris	Mrs. Esther W.
Henderson	Gen. and Mrs. Archibald
Hill	Mrs. Charles (Ann S.) Mrs. Clement
Hunter	Mr. and Mrs. Alexander
Jesup	Gen. and Mrs. Thomas S.
Johnson	Mr. and Mrs. Henry
Jones	Lieut. and Mrs. Roger
Macomb	Gen. and Mrs. Alexander
Mason	Mr. and Mrs. John Young
Meade	Mrs. Richard K.
Morris	Com. and Mrs. Charles, Misses Morris
Mosher	Mrs. Theodore
Norris	Mr. and Mrs. Moses
Paulding	Mr. and Mrs. James K., Miss Kemble
Parish	Mrs. Levi
Pleasanton	Mr. and Mrs. Stephen
Plitt	Mrs. Sophie W.
Poinsett	Mr. and Mrs. Joel R.
Riggs	Mrs. George W.
Ritchie	Mrs. Thomas
Robinson	Mr. and Mrs. James, Mount Hope, Georgetown Heights.
Rodgers	Com. and Mrs. John
Scott	Gen. and Mrs. Winfield S.
Sewall	Dr. Thomas
Shubrick	Com. and Mrs. William B.
Smith	Mr. and Mrs. Thomas L.
Stockton	Com. and Mrs. Robert F.
Towson	Gen. and Mrs. Nathan
Van Rensselaer	Elizabeth R.
Van Zandt	N. H.
Walker	Mr. and Mrs. Robert J.
Warrington	Lieut. Lewis, Miss Warrington

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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Watson	Lieut. and Mrs.
Wethered	Mr. and Mrs. John
Wickliffe	Mr. and Mrs. C. A.
Wilkins	Mr. and Mrs. William
Winthrop	Mr. Robert C.
Woodbury	Mr. and Mrs. Levi
Young	Mr. and Mrs. W.

Mrs. Madison kept tab of the visits received by her and reciprocated the courtesy. Her acquaintance were of the first citizens; however, she socially recognized worth even if it had not the credentials of fashion, fortune or position. She was punctilious in the observance of social obligations and from the sincerity of goodwill endeavored to escape the oversight of any one even the least known. And she made the memorandum:

Mrs Watmough (enquire the names & residence of the party introduced by her.)

There is a complete record of Mrs. Madison's visiting itinerary for two weeks—January—February, 1845. She visited thirty places, some days, and, of course, met more than that number of people. She systemed the localities so as to save time and travel.

The painting is almost the natural man.  
—Shakespeare.

We are indebted for the reproduction of Mrs. Madison by Gilbert Stuart to the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts; Mr. and Mrs. James Madison by T. C. Liebers to Miss Mary M. McGuire; Mrs. Thomas Law by Gilbert Stuart to Mrs. Charles T. A. McCormick; Anthony Morris by James Peale to Effingham B. Morris; Dr. and Mrs.

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William Thornton by Gilbert Stuart to Mrs. Sterling Murray; Marcia Burnes by James Peale to the Corcoran Gallery of Art; Mrs. John P. Van Ness by C. B. King to the Washington City Orphan Asylum; Mrs. Madison by Fleming to Mrs. Mary E. Craig; Mrs. Madison by W. S. Elwell to Admiral Seaton Schroeder; Mrs. Richard Bland Lee to Mrs. Fannie W. Reading; and of Mrs. Mary E. Craig to herself.

I cannot but remark a kind of respect, perhaps unconsciously, paid to this great man by his biographers; every house in which he resided is historically mentioned, as if it were an injury to neglect naming any place that he honored by his presence.

Dr. Samuel Johnson—*Life of Milton*.

For photographs of mansions we are indebted for Scotchtown to Mrs. Walton Redd; Harewood (interior) to Mrs. A. Francis Millot; Sydney to Miss Elizabeth Ross and Mrs. J. Ross Thomson; Carroll Row to Wilhelmus B. Bryan, Esq.; Dolly Madison House to the Cosmos Club, and Kalorama to Mrs. Corra Bacon-Foster; Rosedale to Mrs. Louisa Key Norton.

For letters not heretofore published we are indebted to Mrs. John Bratton Erwin (Miss Louise Forrest Nourse), and Mrs. Mary C. Coffey; to Mrs. Henry L. Mann; to the Library of Congress, the Public Library, Boston, the New York Public Library, the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, and the Haverford College, of Haverford, Pennsylvania. We should make particular mention of the all-time courtesy of the Manuscript Division, chief and corps of the Library of Congress.

Appleton Prentiss Clark Griffin, Chief Assistant Librarian of the Library of Congress, of all the bookmen,

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none more versed, has given us the full helpfulness of his knowledge.

We have as yet in our quest for reminiscence found aught but kind thought of Mrs. Madison except in one instance and that an inherited dislike because an ancestral mistress had done something not strictly above reproach in other castes than the ultra-fashionable and it being reported to Mrs. Madison and her opinion requested, complied, "She is a hussy."

Any sketch of Mrs. Madison will from the repetition have a familiar ring. A sketch will be a rearranging of incidents and rearranging of conclusions. The life has been well and rather completely written; and the sources of research have been nearly to the limit explored. We have tried for biographic brevity without panegyric adjective. To the charge there is more of quotation than originality we admit that we have left what others have said as they said it, as better said than we can say it. It is said that nobody ever published a second book because of the results of the first. We are hopeful this presentation of Dolly Madison will be generally thought in some measure worthy of her; anyhow the labor has already had the profit of pleasure.

We have adhered to the promise made in the outset not to amplify the letters of Mrs. Madison. She was a talented letter writer, that must be apparent to all, and that the talent had unusual diversity. From the letters, those from her and those to her, from the events of her life made authentic by current account, her character can be read as plainly as if printed in boldest type in brightest gold on darkest background. The great stations she honored and her greatness in every station of life and her greatness in every exigency of life make her of the greatest of American women.

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Mrs. Madison's correspondence was with those characters who had the merit of worth. She had thoughts well expressed and carefully penned. Not often were any of her letters carelessly written; none, in "tortured or twisted penmanship." Illegibility was not an item of her greatness. No letter of hers would have gone by the route of the Dead Letter Office even had there then been that department to solve the puzzles.

Mrs. Madison was not without hostility and particularly in Virginia during Mr. Madison's first Presidential campaign. At a distance she was less formidable than in personal encounter for the inevitable snuffbox was a weapon of conquest.

The magic influence which the tender of her snuffbox exerted, won from the most obdurate a relaxation from hostility; for none partook of its contents, so graciously and kindly offered, and retained a feeling inimical to its owner.\*

Mrs. Madison, of course, knew that the snuffbox is the Portuguese olive branch and that the production of it is a conciliatory offer and that the to-be-conciliated is to insert thumb and finger in it, although he detests the dust, if he consents to peace.

Mrs. Madison, like Mr. Clay, was very fond of snuff. The lady offered him a pinch from her splendid box which the gentleman accepted with the grace for which he was distinguished. Mrs. Madison put her hand in her pocket, and pulling out a bandanna handkerchief, said, "Mr. Clay, this is for rough work," at the same time applying it at the proper place; "and this," producing a fine lace handkerchief from another pocket, "is my polisher."†

\**Illustrious Characters. Mrs. Madison.* Thomas Wyatt, A.M.

†*Recollections of Men and Things of Washington During the Third of a Century.* L. A. Gobright.

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Mrs. Madison in advanced age was so addicted to snuff that as remembered by an acquaintance, a woman, the bare tips of her mittened hand were tobacco stained.

We have not been able to find the faults of Dolly Madison. That the heroine of our book was without faults, minor ones to be sure, we do not claim. We acknowledge that we do not find them—to confess them and have full credit for the excellences. For it is Doctor Johnson's standard that

he that claims, either in himself or for another, the honours of perfection, will surely injure the reputation which he designs to assist;

however, Dolly's foundation is too firm to be unsteadied by any sketchist.

Mrs. Madison, concurrently would write to her mother, "thee and thine," and to her husband, "you and yours"; she would address him as "My darling husband"; she would refer to him to the kindred as Madison, to the public as Mr. Madison. She could gratify the epicurean appetite of the foreigners and so assure the doubting Quakeresses to call forth their benediction. This is not duplicity; this is "even as I please all men in all things."

Theodore Roosevelt in the *History of Literature* says "the great historian, if the facts permit him, will put before us the men and women as they actually lived, so that we shall recognize them for what they were—living beings." And, in the reconstruction of such an historian, we have attempted to have Mrs. Madison live on paper as she lived in life. And, her adherence to truth was in that degree, she might quote:

I pray you in your letters,

\* \* \*

Speak of me as I am.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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The detail of Mrs. Madison's biographic life we think sufficient for a "Flemish picture"; and if with the detail we had the ability to employ the beautiful colors appropriate to the portrayal of the subject, the picture would be a Meissonier.

Mrs. Madison gave respect to all entitled to respect. The rich and poor, exalted and humble, white and black, had kindly recognition. If we do not call to mind her solicitude for the aged; she seemed more attentive to children and felt sympathetically to them great, their little joys and griefs. Among Mrs. Trist's "childish recollections is her 'running away with us,' as she playfully expressed it, when she took us away with her in her carriage, to give us a drive and then take us home with her to play with two of her nieces near our ages, and lunch on cranberry tarts." Her attentiveness to age has striking illustration in that incident of the venerable Mrs. Madison, her husband's mother, who approaching the century line, leaned, although lightly, on support—pointing to Mrs. Madison, junior, and saying—"She is *my* mother now." She was well informed. She may have read much. Mrs. Seaton is authority that she did and books of educational uplift. But Mr. Preston noticing she always entered the drawing-room with a volume in her hand, said, "Still you have time to read." "Oh, no," said she, "not a word; I have this book in my hand—a very fine copy of Don Quixote—to have something not ungraceful to say, and, if need be to supply a word of talk." Mrs. Madison read sentiment rather than slaughter. To her niece, Dolly, March 10, 1830:

By the bye, do you ever get hold of a clever novel, new or old, that you could send me? I bought Cooper's last, but did not care for it, because the story was so full of horrors.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

Mrs. Madison's day was before the day of agitation for advancement of women politically. What her alignment would have been is useless to consider as it would be a guess without an answer. She was fully feminine. She liked jewels and finery; and she liked costumes of rich material, of creation, beautiful and striking, artistically. The dress of woman has elements of art as has painting. She was skillful in domestic direction. All moved easily, without confusion and without observable command. Her husband did not have added to his worries the daily recital of housekeeping woes; there was no woeful recitals at all. The guest within the walls was always at home as at his own fireside and of the many with the attentions *he* received felt himself the favored. She was up early in the morning before her guests were astir, her bundle of keys dangling from the waist, campaigning the details of the day; and to the guest every day was a new and different day during his guest-time. In every department she, herself, was an expert in execution, whether to cook, or to sew or to put into order, or anything, and what she could do, she could tell others how to do. Mrs. Madison had *all* the attributes of a prudent wife and "a prudent wife is from the Lord." And prudence conducts to felicity.

Among the papers of Mrs. Madison are her grocers' pass-books and her pass-books with the booksellers. She evidently thought, as well as the body, the mind needs daily nourishment and for healthiness, variety. Her treasured papers consist of communications—business and friendly correspondence—and dainty notes, tendering her invitations, with fancifully laced edges, flowered and ribboned. This treasury has prescriptions to cure the ailments and recipes to please the palate. Of the latter is Mrs. Madison's recipe for

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### Sponge Cake.

One lb. flour,  
One dozen eggs,  
One and an half lbs. sugar,  
The juice of two lemons and the rind of three grated.

Mrs. Madison was as far north as New York and south as North Carolina and not west of a narrow coast line. Contracted her life-territory was yet by association with those from everywhere she was cosmopolite. She says: "I was educated in Philadelphia." That education was enlarged by conversation and by her help to her student husband. She lived as appears in her girlhood on the plantation in Virginia and in the city of Philadelphia; in her womanhood, in that city, in the city of Washington and on the plantation in Virginia, Montpelier. Her visits were to New York, to Annapolis, to Baltimore, to Richmond, to the White Sulphur Springs, Virginia, to be sure her life was spent within a small territory.

Mrs. Madison was a miracle. She was the miracle that all the great in spirit are. Her presence when she had entered filled the room. The radiance of her moral beauty diffused cheer and dispelled gloom. All paid homage to her and in the doing but so did to the virtues of which she was an embodiment. They who were close by would have touched the hem of her garment in the thought that from her to them passed virtue. When she was there, everybody felt the occasion was more than ordinary and were inspired to appear to admirable advantage.

Grace was in all her steps, heaven in her eye,  
In every gesture dignity and love.

Milton: *Paradise Lost*.

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When she was present, everybody would be like her, and possess a portion of the ennobling attributes. Her smiles and sweetness were the sesame to every heart. Her sympathy for others which sincerely caused her to rejoice with the rejoicing and sorrow with the sorrowing was from a love—a love of others, in degree greater than for herself. She was a daughter of heaven for she loved them, if any there were, who loved her not. She saluted all like unto the sun which rises on the good and evil and the rain which descends on the just and the unjust.

Here's a sigh to those who love me,  
And a smile to those who hate,  
And whatever skies above me,  
Here's a heart for every fate.

—Lord Byron to Tom Moore.

Good begets good. She was always receiving; it was because she was always giving. And in her darkest days, she was lightening the hearts of others with choice keepsakes as others were striving to lighten her darkness with appropriate attentions, delicately bestowed.

Selfishness is so strong that sensibility to other's fortunes or misfortunes is weak. This selfishness is nigh universal. A mask for selfishness is in giving when receiving, in bookkeeping debtor and creditor exactness. Selfishness may pay well, it seems to, in the possession of goods and chattels yet if good-will of others is a more valuable possession than unselfishness pays better. It is a lesson of Mrs. Madison's life.

Dorothea was quickly changed to Dolly. The pet name stood as her real name. Some preferred to spell it, Dolley.

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The date of death is given as 1768. The grand-niece who wrote *Memoirs and Letters* and others state it as 1772. We think the date as herein given more likely correct from various comparative circumstances; and that the statement of Anne Royall made at the time of Mrs. Madison's death and with whom she was well acquainted entitled to credence.

On the monument that marks her grave at Montpellier is carved:

IN  
M E M O R Y  
OF  
DOLLEY PAYNE  
WIFE OF  
JAMES MADISON  
BORN  
MAY 20, 1768,  
DIED  
JULY 8, 1849.

Nature perennially decorates the grave. The glossy myrtle spreads over, and from it springs a woodbine which tenderly entwists around the slight shaft, and at the foot is a large boxwood. It is in a corner of the Madison burial enclosure and next to the tall monument to "MADISON." The enclosure has the keeping of the Madison, the Conway and the Willis remains. The wall is of brick and low; the gate is of iron and has a scroll, "Madison, 1720."

Montpellier is the country-seat of William duPont, Esquire. The classic mansion sits far back from the old gates. Forward and near to the side of the mansion is the summer house, a circle of columns. Rear-

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ward and to the other side, the flower garden. Montpelier is preserved and protected; it has the perfection of that care which landscape gardening and abundant wealth can give. The ancient forest kings, mighty-bodied, huge-armed and heaven-reaching, stand majestically. In the grove, back of the mansion, the rhododendron gives gayety. All about nature is assisted by artistic arrangement.

The preservation of Montpelier creates a due of gratitude, and national, for with it is most closely associated the memory of Madison, "the Father of the Constitution," and of "Dolly Madison, now famous as the most graceful and courtly hostess the White House ever had."\*

Dolly was a little Miss the day the liberty bell in the Philadelphia tower rang out for *declared* independence. She was a light-hearted girl when she heard the women at home with smiles pass along the rumors of Marion's and Sumter's successful attacks on Cornwallis's hosts of imported invaders and native allies. She was twelve when their looks were anxious at the report of the traitor Arnold's seizure at the city—the city of Richmond. Her coming to Philadelphia preceded two months the ringing of the liberty bell for *decided* independence. She saw the first and successive steps of the new republic in the attempt to go alone. Surely she is a daughter of the American Revolution. She was the *first lady* when the second war with Great Britain was declared; she was the *first lady* at its close. Then Dolly Madison is a Daughter of the American Revolution and she is the eldest daughter of its confirmation.

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\*Mrs. Frank Learned.



## CHAPTER XI

### Apropos

**J**OHAN PAYNE TODD, "Payne" was his mother's idol. He, her only son, was all of her contribution to the world's life. He was educated at a Catholic institution in Baltimore under the care of Madame Bonaparte. He was in looks, handsome; in manners, elegant. That of manliest beauty was he, see to be convinced, the miniature by Joseph Wood reproduced. In society he moved with grace and talked with ease and excited the admiration of his girl cousins. When with the peace commission abroad he was called "the American Prince" and was courted by the nobility and in after years Mr. Clay derisively reminded him:

Do you remember when you were with us in Russia that John Quincy Adams and the rest of us sat in the gallery, and apart from you, and watched you dance with the Princess, we being disbarred because we were not of the royalty.

It is said that his French was more pure than his English, and likely it was, for his many letters although plainly penned are not so plainly understood. He was self-willed and thoughtless. Knowing that his mother's partiality for his presence not only absented himself and unaccounted himself for long lengths of time but neglected to acknowledge her letters. Having written six or so without evoking a reply, she would write to the Postmaster to be sure that they had been delivered. He

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may have resented the apron-string idea. He was dissipated. He drank to excess; he ate in excess. His letters on business indicates he was querulous and suspicious. He caught the mulberry epidemic and imported the Frenchmen to manufacture the silk ere he planted the trees. He built on his plantation, Toddsbirth, nigh unto Montpellier, a Babel-like tower with ball room and state room. Around it, he set small buildings, one of them for his mother, with a window by which she could climb into the dining-room. He was, it is said, for a while to President Madison, private secretary. He was a candidate for Congress but his might-be constituents were too critical to give him sufficient votes. In late life he had less slender shapeliness and more globe-likeness and suggested Falstaff and sac. In late life he lost the admiration of his kin. A cousin recalling him writes:

As for my cousin, Payne Todd, my childish memories of him do not bear repeating. His manners were perfectly Grandisonian, but I was a little afraid of him. Do not ask me why.

To this writer, a relative refers to him as "the miserable creature." His extravagance and erratic methods caused his mother great financial loss. The knowledge of these facts caused Congress in the second appropriation to create the safeguard of trusteeship. With all his faults, with all the weariness and worries he gave her, the mother never lost confidence in him and the hope that eventually he would redeem himself. He was not without, at times, manly ambition but revelry and reverses made him unequal of accomplishment. Not all speak ill of him. A former generation has passed some kind things of him, more particularly in the line of cul-

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ture. With generous impulse in his last will and testament he gave freedom to his slaves for whom he had no further use and perhaps had all already sold.

This belated notice appeared. *Daily National Intelligencer*. Tuesday, January 27, 1852:

In this city, on the morning of the 17th instant, John Payne Todd, Esq., in the 61st year of his age.

Mrs. Madison had all through her life family companionship, that is, a relative lived with, a sister or a niece. Her sister, Anna, lived continuously with her until the marriage. A niece, Dolly P. Madison Payne, lived with her\* and on protracted visits, her nieces, Dolly and Mary Cutts. Finally came to abide until the end, Anna Payne,† a brother's daughter. Mrs. Madison took the niece into her affections as a daughter and accepted her as an adopted daughter. Miss Payne was the private secretary and so assisting that she of the house was all the daughters, and all the brothers, too.

Harriet Taylor Upton of her quotes:

Anna Payne was not handsome, her features being irregular; but her devotion to Mrs. Madison entitles her to the best rewards of Heaven. She was one of the few purely unselfish persons whom one may meet in a life-time.

After Mrs. Madison's death she was received into the home of Dr. and Mrs. Thomas Miller. She married Dr. James H. Causten, jr.

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\*This memorandum is in the handwriting of John Payne Todd: She has a sister named Dolly P. Madison who had probably been more with Mrs. Madison during the life time of her husband and until near the time of the departure of J. or J. C. Payne for the western country.

†*Ibid.*

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Virginia Miller says:

One of the interesting happenings at home on E street was the marriage of Miss Anna Payne, Mrs. Madison's niece, to whom my parents had offered a home after Mrs. Madison's death. While with us she met and married Dr. J. H. Causten, one of my father's favorite pupils. The wedding took place in our parlor, Rev. Dr. Pyne, of St. John's Church, officiating. My grandfather, General Jones, as Mrs. Madison's friend and legal adviser, gave the bride away. I have the note in which Miss Payne asked him to add this to the many kindnesses rendered her aunt and herself.\*

Henry Clay entered into the joy of the occasion and indicated a willingness not only to kiss the happy bride but any of the pretty girls.†

Annie Payne was the daughter of John C. and Clara W. Payne. She was born in Orange county, Virginia; and died November 9, 1852.

Mary Estelle Elizabeth Cutts, between whom and Mrs. Madison was a lively correspondence in the former's youthful days and whenever apart throughout, died at the residence of her cousin, Judge Allen, in Botetourt county, Virginia. She was then in her forty-second year. She was an amateur artist and made portraits in water colors a special evidence of her talents.

My dear Aunt

As it is your birthday I send you the long desired Cupid & hope you will prize it as much for the *copyists'* sake as for the design—which will be more than most people do—who generally solicit my drawings without interest or care for my fair self.

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\**Dr. Thomas Miller and His Times.* Virginia Miller.

†Mrs. Fanny W. Reading was a guest.

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I hope twenty more birthdays may dawn upon you beautifully as this.

Your affectionate niece

Mary

Mrs. Frances Dandridge Henley Lear was the niece of Mrs. Washington and the widow of Colonel Lear. She was his third Mrs. Lear.\* The Colonel was the tutor to Mrs. Washington's grandchildren with his other Washington capacities. On Tuesday morning, December 2, 1856, she passed away. At her late residence, 2136 Pennsylvania avenue, where she lived so long, on Thursday, the mourners gathered. The papers had nothing of the sad service and of the lovely life, because, everybody knew "Aunt Fanny," and everything about her. She retained throughout amiable disposition; and she retained the fashions of her youth and in age appeared old-fashioned.

That so many of the old residents of Washington distinctly remember Mrs. Lear and Mrs. Madison, notwithstanding the improbability or contradiction of their look of years, was the habit of the mothers to take along the daughters, although yet little pinafore Misses, on their social rounds. The writer has interviewed one man and six women who have talked with Mrs. Madison and have vivid recollections of her. The letters of Mrs. Lear to Mrs. Madison are in a small part herein published. Mrs. Lear wrote with a quill and stubbed at that.†

Of Tobias Lear "the private secretary and familiar friend" of General Washington, that which is mortal, has a "place of abode in the City of Silence."‡ otherwise

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\*First wife, Mary Long of Portsmouth, N. H.; second wife, Fanny Washington.

†*Personal Recollections of Early Washington and a Sketch of the Life of Captain William Easby.* Wilhelmina M. Easby-Smith.

‡A story has since been added.

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the Congressional Cemetery, and with him in the abode are his son, Benjamin Lincoln, and his daughter, Maria, and Frances D., his widow. The latter was born November 17, 1779, and survived her husband an even forty years.

Elizabeth Schuyler married the illustrious Alexander Hamilton, December 9, 1780, then a lieutenant-colonel and an aide on Washington's staff. She was industrious and intellectual. She was helpful to the founder of the financial system by her work and by her wisdom. In latter life she lived in the city of Washington. And there completed the compilation of the Hamilton manuscripts which were acquired by the government. And there shared with Mrs. Madison social supremacy. At her residence—(N. S.) H. between Thirteenth and Fourteenth streets N.W.—the most honorable had an impression of honor received in beholding her heartiness and happiness. Her activity in the race with age never flagged. Her active mind gave little chance for physical rust. Her picture in youth—twenty-seven—is by James Earle and reproduced in *Appleton's Cyclopædia of American Biography*; and in age—ninety-four—by Charles Martin and reproduced in *Social Life in the Early Republic*.

Mrs. Hamilton was in Washington in Van Buren's administration, and said to be in Jackson's and several letters connect her with the social happenings during Fillmore's.

In *The Story of the White House* is a letter quoted from which is:

At a State dinner we met Mrs. Alexander Hamilton whom Mr. Fillmore escorted to the table—a plain little

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old lady and very plainly dressed. The dinner consisted of nine courses, and we sat from seven to nine.

In *Social Life in the Early Republic* a letter by Julia F. Miller is quoted:

She was ninety-two years of age at this time and died two years after. She was a tiny little woman, most active and interesting, although she could never have been pretty in her life. She kept me by her side, holding me by the hand, telling me of the things most interesting to me. How she knew Washington (with whom she was a great favorite), and Lafayette, who was "a most interesting young man." How they were often at the house of her father, Gen. Philip Schuyler. How when she was a child she was free of the Washington residence, and if there was company Mrs. Washington would dress her up in something pretty and make her stay to dinner, even if she came uninvited, so that she was presentable at table. She showed me the Stuart portrait of Washington, painted for her, and for which he sat; the old Schuyler chairs and tiny mirrors; most interesting to me. This tiny dot of a woman and of such a great age, happened to think of something in her room which she wanted to show Abbie. Her daughter, Mrs. Hamilton Holley, offered to get it for her. "Sit down, child, don't you think I can get it myself?" and up she went and got it, whatever it was.

Mrs. Hamilton was born in Albany, New York, August 9, 1757. In Washington she died at four in the morning of Thursday, November 9, 1854. The subtraction was evenly ninety-seven years and three months.

Editorially the *Daily National Intelligencer* says:

It was this great man who sought and won Elizabeth Schuyler, and that fact is enough to show her worth. But, had she been no more than an ordinarily endowed

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woman, it would have been impossible to have passed twenty-four years of happy intercourse with such a husband without having her mind richly stored from the treasures of his mighty intellect; and those who knew her even in her declining years will be ready to testify that she was a rare example of the wisdom taught by observant experience, and a bright example of all womanly graces. Her benevolence was most exemplary, and one of the finest manifestations of it was her habit to within a few months of her death, of making occasional visits to all the schools of the city, and she never did so without imparting some moral lesson which showed how deep an interest she took in the welfare of the country which her husband had contributed so largely to make free and independent.

Richard Bland Lee was a Representative from Virginia, March 4, 1789, to March 3, 1795. He voted "aye" for locating the seat of government on the Potomac. He located in Washington. He was judge of the Orphans' Court, and was of the commission to re-erect the public buildings. He lived in the Law Mansion at the N. E. corner of Sixth and M streets S.W. He died in Washington, March 12, 1827.

Says Mrs. Fannie W. Reading: "There were four great women—Mrs. Hamilton, Mrs. Madison, Mrs. Lear and Mrs. Lee." Mrs. Reading is the granddaughter of the Mrs. Lee.

Mrs. Lee when a maid was Miss Elizabeth Collins.\* She lived in Philadelphia; she was born there, February 8, 1768. She was the confidante of Dolly Payne, when that was Dolly's name; of Dolly Todd, when that was the name; and of Dolly Madison, the finality name. When Dolly was lovely as bride in the Quaker Meeting-house, Elizabeth Collins was lovely as bridesmaid. Not so long after she took her turn as the principal in the scene of

\*Married, 1794.

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loveliness; it was when she married the handsome Congressman from Virginia, Mr. Lee. It was to this confidante that Dolly excitedly wrote:

Thou must come to me,—Aaron Burr says that the great little Madison has asked to be brought to see me this evening.

It was to Mrs. Lee she wrote from Harewood, the last time as Mrs. Todd and the first time as Mrs. Madison. In every epoch of Mrs. Madison's life, Mrs. Lee was nigh to felicitate or to sympathize. When she was parting for the unknown world, Mrs. Lee was close to cheer. Mrs. Lee lived on and on and was a nonagenarian. She died the morning of Thursday, June 24, 1858. Hers was a "long life of distinction and usefulness." The funeral service was at her late residence, 468 Sixth street N.W., new numbering 416.

Anthony Morris, always sprightly in spirit, was always sprightly in step. From the Highlands he would walk to Georgetown—it is not a long distance for a good walker—to exercise and to learn in the coffee houses what was the excitement of the day. Something disagreed with him and for two weeks or about that time he was indisposed. One morning he went to his chamber and closed the door. He smoothly shaved and carefully dressed. Then he on the bed reclined himself in easy attitude and closed his eyes. They called him; he replied not. He had closed his eyes never to open them again. He had approached his

### Grave

Like one that wraps the drapery of his couch  
About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams,

—Bryant: *Thanatopsis*.

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It was Rev. Henry Ward Beecher who said that a strong man makes a business of it and dies quickly.

Mr. Morris died November 18, 1860. What there is of his frame of mortality is beside what there is of gentle Phoebe at the Bolton farm.

Mrs. Thornton died Tuesday evening, August 16, 1865. She was in her ninetieth year. The services were held at her late residence, 303 G between Thirteenth and Fourteenth streets.

In the *Daily National Intelligencer* appeared August 22, 1865:

### The Late Anna M. Thornton.

\* \* \* The genius, extensive literary and scientific attainments, agreeable manners, and personal worth of Dr. Thornton united in the varied accomplishments of Mrs. Thornton placed them at once in the foremost rank of the literary, fashionable, and even political society of the Metropolis. She was the last of that circle.

After the passing away of these her associates, Mrs. T. retired into great privacy of life, devoting her time to religious reading and gentle deeds of piety, giving of her little to benevolent objects, and contributing as far as she could to the comforts of others, in all things observing the strictest justice, a sense of which was one of her characteristics. Practicing all the virtues, she lived to be surrounded by the descendants of her early associates, and she died the object of their respect, sympathy and veneration.

The Rochambeau,  
February 13, 1914.

Dear Sir:

In reply to your inquiry about Mrs. Thornton's appearance I would say she was quite small, whether that was due to her being an old lady or not I do not know,

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

but as I remember her she was very short. She always wore dainty white caps and the hair which showed in front was brown. She had beautiful big brown eyes, keen yet soft, wore a simple black dress with a little white shawl thrown round her shoulders. Her hearing, eyesight, mind and memory were good to the very last and she was always alive and interested in whatever concerned her friends and in the current news of the day. Mr. Gaillard Hunt at the Washington Club a week or so ago spoke of what a wonderful man Dr. Thornton was and yet how little known. He spoke of his having been really the inventor of the steamboat, though Fulton got the credit, through getting hold of Dr. Thornton's drawings. His talk carried me back to the many times I had heard Mrs. Thornton speak of her husband having invented the first steamboat and her grief over the little recognition his talents and services had ever obtained and it seemed so strange now to hear honour paid to him and his wonderful genius and influence proclaimed when all who were so deeply interested were gone and it has made me think a great deal of Mrs. Thornton lately. So your question came in strangely. I wish I could give you an idea of her as I see her in my mind's eye—sitting in her arm chair by the window in her parlour—a little table with her glasses, books and papers at her right hand; her feet resting on a little footstool, her room a veritable museum of beautiful old things, from the tapestry-covered chairs to the paintings and bric-a-brac around in great profusion; and she, so simple-hearted and sweet. My mother was a great comfort to her and so tenderly interested in all that concerned her and tried to encourage her to think that some day, justice would be done.

Very truly yours,

Virginia Miller.

Mrs. Brodeau in Philadelphia established a select school for girls under the encouragement of Bishop White

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

and others. In Philadelphia, Dr. Thornton met Miss Anna Maria, the daughter; and they married, October 13, 1790.

Rose Adèle Cutts—the mention of the name to those who have her in the memory brings forth the exclamation—"The beautiful Addie Cutts!" And then to the exclamation comes the supplement—she was beautiful in character.

On the return of James Madison Cutts and his bride from Montpellier she, the bride, was installed the mistress of the home of Richard Cutts. There—the Dolly Madison House—was born Rose Adèle, December 27, 1835.

At a children's fancy ball in the Executive Mansion, as a flower girl, she appeared first formally. She was seven.\*

Virginia Tatnall Peacock says:†

At the time of her death her great-niece was fourteen years old, and already possessed a beauty of the purest Greek type, whose stateliness increased as she advanced towards womanhood. The faultless outline of her profile, the shapeliness of her head, her large, dark eyes, her chestnut hair that showed glints of a golden hue in the sunshine, the creamy tone of her skin, the perfect proportion and development of her tall figure, all combined to make the rare beauty of a personality whose charm was augmented twofold by her own unconsciousness of its rich possession.

Virginia Miller says:

Among those I remember seeing pass by each day were Madison Cutts and his beautiful daughter. \* \* \*  
One of the interesting happenings at home on E street

---

\**Famous American Belles of the Nineteenth Century.*

†*Dr. Thomas Miller and His Times.*

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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was the marriage of Miss Payne, Mrs. Madison's niece, to whom my parents had offered a home after Mrs. Madison's death. \* \* \* Miss Addie Cutts was bridesmaid, and we children thought her the most beautiful of mortals.

Miss Cutts and Stephen A. Douglas, "the little giant," married, November 20, 1856. She accompanied her husband on the campaigning; and in the memorable tour of debate, she and Mr. Lincoln, her husband's foe and friend, respectively, politically and personally, became attached.

Mr. Douglas built a substantial residence in the city of Washington, on Douglas Place, the northeast corner of I street and New Jersey avenue. He died June 3, 1861.

Mrs. Douglas and General Robert Williams married January, 1866. He was handsome in person and gallant in arms. He was a scion of the Williams family of Culpeper county, Virginia.

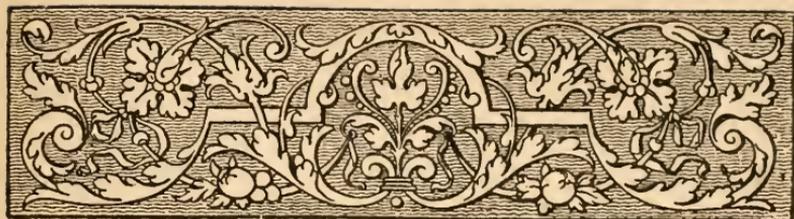
Jessie Benton Fremont says:

Seeing her again but a few years ago, her freshness and added charm surprised me into asking her how she had kept the clock back? and suffered no change only increase of beauty, "Because I am happy, I suppose," she laughed with a lovely blush.

Mrs. Williams died January 26, 1899.

Mrs. Craig, the grandniece of Mrs. Madison, was the hostess at a Dolly Madison tea, 1912, in Washington, D. C., and impersonated the famous of the family with turban and dress à la directoire, and well she might for she has the same features and figure, the statistics of stature being five feet six.

Life and Letters of Dolly Madison



## THE DOLLY MADISON BREAKFAST

MONDAY, MAY 20, 1912

**T**HE one hundred and forty-fourth anniversary of Dolly Payne Madison's birth

The breakfast was given by the daughters of Democracy. Eligible to it were the women folks of the Democratic Senators and Congressmen, of Democrats of the States and the city—and the Madison relatives.

The idea originated with Mrs. Robert C. Wickliffe, wife of a Louisiana Representative, and broached at a luncheon she gave in honor of Mrs. Champ Clark. And in the formulation and forwarding of the affair Mrs. Clark, Mrs. Henry D. Clayton, wife of the Alabama Representative, and Mrs. Oscar W. Underwood, wife of the Alabama Representative, had the major part.

The breakfast was at Rauscher's, and one o'clock, daylight, the hour of beginning. Four hundred were the guests, all in handsome headgear. Dolly alone, in the frame, was without not even a turban. The portrait was the product of Prof. Eliphalet F. Andrews, and was festooned in Southern smilax; and the guest room was brightened with American beauties and other horticultural beauties.

Mrs. Clayton, as chairman of the Executive Committee, made the address of welcome; and Mrs. Wickliffe introduced the toastmistress. Mrs. Champ Clark

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

was the toastmistress and the toasts and they who responded thereto were:

- DOLLY MADISON . . . . . MRS. WM. JENNINGS BRYAN  
"Popular, brave, tolerant."  
JAMES MADISON . . . . . MRS. ALBERT S. BURLESON  
"Man is but half without a woman."  
DOLLY MADISON'S SNUFF-BOX . . . . MRS. S. W. RALSTON  
"You are aware that she snuffs, but in her  
hands the snuff-box becomes only a gracious  
implement with which to charm."  
WOMEN OF THE WHITE HOUSE. MRS. NORMAN E. MACK  
"Be to her virtues very kind."  
WOMEN OF THE CABINET . . . . . MRS. JUDSON HARMON  
"The best example is acquired from the noblest in station."  
THE CONGRESSMAN'S WIFE . . . . . MRS. T. M. OWEN  
"Be that you are, that is a woman."  
THOMAS JEFFERSON, FRIEND OF DOLLY MADISON  
MRS. MARTIN W. LITTLETON  
"I have professed thee my friend and I confess me knit to thy  
deserving."  
THE EQUAL IMPORTANCE OF WOMEN WITH MEN IN THE  
ECONOMIC LIFE OF THE NATION  
MRS. HENRY T. RAINEY  
Peers in intellectuality proved the wives to be of their  
notable husbands.

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Mrs. Henry D. Clayton	Mrs. Edward T. Taylor
Mrs. John Sharp Williams	Mrs. Albert S. Burleson
Mrs. John W. Davis	Mrs. William A. Cullop
Mrs. Perry Belmont	Mrs. William G. Brown

### MEMBERS OF OTHER COMMITTEES

MRS. WILLIS J. ABBOTT	MRS. CHARLES C. CARLIN
MRS. TIMOTHY T. ANSBERRY	MRS. GEORGE E. CHAMBERLAIN
MRS. STEVEN B. AYRES	MRS. BEN CRAVENS
MRS. JOHN H. BANKHEAD	MRS. JAMES M. CURLEY
MRS. JACK BEALL	MRS. S. HUBERT DENT, JR.
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MRS. WILLIAM G. BRANTLEY	MRS. LINCOLN DIXON
MRS. NATHAN P. BRYAN	MRS. FRANK E. DOREMUS
MRS. JOSEPH W. BRYNS	MRS. F. R. DORR
MRS. JAMES C. CANTRILL	MISS ISABEL LAWRENCE DUPRE
MRS. ROBERT J. BULKLEY	MRS. SCOTT FERRIS
MRS. EZEKIEL S. CHANDLER, JR.	MRS. DAVID E. FINLEY

# Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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MRS. FINIS J. GARRETT	MRS. GEORGE F. O'SHAUNESSY
MRS. HENRY GEORGE, JR.	MRS. ROBERT L. OWEN
MRS. GREEN CLAY GOODLOE	MRS. ROBERT N. PAGE
MRS. THOMAS P. GORE	MRS. THOMAS H. PAYNTER
MRS. JAMES M. GRAHAM	MRS. A. MITCHELL PALMER
MRS. CURTIS H. GREGG	MRS. ANDREW J. PETERS
MRS. RUFUS HARDY	MRS. ATLEE POMERENE
MRS. CARL HAYDEN	MRS. JOHN E. RAKER
MRS. J. THOMAS HEFLIN	MRS. JOSEPH E. RANSELL
MRS. GILBERT M. HITCHCOCK	MRS. THOMAS L. REILLY
MRS. BEN JOHNSON	MRS. JOSEPH J. RUSSELL
MRS. JOSEPH F. JOHNSON	MRS. DORSEY W. SHAKLEFORD
MRS. WILLIAM A. JONES	MRS. WILLIAM G. SHARP
MRS. EUGENE F. KINKEAD	MRS. ISAAC R. SHERWOOD
MRS. THOMAS F. KONOP	MRS. THETUS W. SIMS
MRS. GORDON LEE	MRS. CHARLES B. SMITH
MRS. ASBURY F. LEVER	MRS. HOKE SMITH
MRS. MARTIN W. LITTLETON	MRS. JOHN H. STEPHENS
MRS. J. CHARLES LINTHICUM	MRS. WILLIAM J. STONE
MRS. JAMES T. LLOYD	MRS. CLAUDE A. SWANSON
MRS. CHARLES C. MCCORD	MRS. EDWIN F. SWEET
MRS. JAMES E. MARTINE	MRS. EDWARD T. TAYLOR
MRS. ELLA H. MICOU	MRS. SOUTH TRIMBLE
MRS. HENRY L. MYERS	MRS. CLARENCE W. WATSON
MRS. GEORGE A. NEELEY	MRS. ROBERT C. WICKLIFFE
MRS. JAMES A. O'GORMAN	MRS. WILLIAM B. WILSON

## GUESTS OF HONOR TABLE

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MRS. PERRY BELMONT	MRS. HENRY L. MYERS
MRS. ALBERT S. BURLESON	MRS. WILLIAM O. OWEN
MRS. CHAMP CLARK	MRS. JOHN E. RAKER
MRS. WILLIAM A. CULLOP	MRS. HENRY T. RAINEY
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MRS. BEN JOHNSON	MRS. JOHN SHARP WILLIAMS
MRS. MARTIN W. LITTLETON	

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MRS. MARY E. CRAIG	MRS. R. A. PETER
MRS. PEARL T. ELLIS	MISS PETER
MISS M. GOUVERNEUR	MRS. ALEX. RANDALL
MRS. RANDALL HOES	MRS. S. S. RODGERS
MRS. W. C. JOHNSON	MRS. JERRY C. SOUTH
MRS. HARMON MILLER	MRS. M. C. TAYLOR
MISS V. G. MILLER	MRS. TYLER WILSON

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

The souvenir is a little volume, prettily produced, with Dolly's portrait as a frontispiece. It contains a biographical sketch of Mrs. Madison by Miss Roberta Bradshaw, the committees, biographies of the guests of honor, the menu, the musical numbers and the speaking parts together with a directory.

The directory of the wives of Democratic members of the Senate and the House of Representatives in the 62d Congress together with other data associated with the memorable occasion was compiled at the suggestion of Mrs. Champ Clark; and it was appropriately dedicated to her. The credit of this creditable history is to Miss Bradshaw, as press agent, Miss Elizabeth Poe, as publishing director, and Mrs. Henry T. Rainey, as editor.

Another souvenir was a replica in silver of Mrs. Madison's snuffbox with a bas relief of her head after the Andrews creation.



APPENDIX B

I John Todd Junior of the City Philadelphia being of sound and disposing Mind and Memory Do make and publish my last Will and Testament in manner following to wit First I direct my just Debts and Funeral Expences to be paid and satisfied Item.

I Give and devise all my Estate real and personal to the Dear Wife of my Bosom and first and only Woman upon whom my all and only affections were placed, Dolly Payne Todd her Heirs and Assigns forever trusting that as she has proved an Amiable and Affectionate Wife to her John, she will prove and Affectionate Mother to my little Payne and the sweet Babe with which she is now ensient. My last Prayer is may she Educate him in the Ways of Honesty tho' he may be obliged to beg his Bread remembering that will be better to him than a name and Riches. Having a great Opinion of the integrity and honourable conduct of Edward Burd and Edward Tilghman Esquires my dying request is that they will give such advice and Assistance to my dear Wife as they shall think prudent with respect to the Management and disposal of my very small Estate and the settling of my unfinished legal business. I appoint my dear Wife Executrix of this my Will.

Witness my hand and seal this second day of July in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and ninety three. John Todd Jun<sup>r</sup> (Seal.)

Probated November 21, 1793.

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Cutts burial plot is in Oak Hill Cemetery, District of Columbia.

# Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

## APPENDIX C

In the name of God, Amen.

I, Dolly Madison, widow of the late James Madison of Virginia, being of sound & disposing mind and memory but feeble in body having in view the uncertainty of life & the rapid approach of death do make publish and declare the following to be my last will and testament:

That is to say

I hereby give & bequeath to my dear son John Payne Todd the sum of ten thousand dollars being one half of the sum appropriated by the Congress of the United States for the purchase of my husbands papers, which sum stands invested in the names of James Buchanan, John Y. Mason & Richard Smith as trustees:

secondly I give and bequeath to my adopted daughter Annie Payne ten thousand dollars, the remaining half of the said sum of twenty thousand dollars appropriated as aforesaid by Congress and standing in the name of said trustees, for her life time; hereby directing the said sum of ten thousand dollars to remain in the names of the said trustees for the use of my said adopted daughter for her life and that they the said trustees pay the interest, as it becomes due on the same, to her, during her life:

And I further will & devise that should my said son John Payne Todd survive my said daughter that upon her death the sum so devised to her shall be paid over to him & his executors; but in the event of my said adopted daughter Annie Payne, surviving the said John Payne Todd, that the sum above devised to her for life shall be held by the said trustees for her—& her executors free from all condition: leaving all the rest and

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

remainder of my property to be administered and distributed according to law.

D. P. Madison

Signed, published & declared by me the said Dolly P. Madison as my last will & testament, this ninth day of July in the year 1849: in the presence of Sally B. L. Thomas  
Elizabeth Lee  
J. Madison Cutts

### APPENDIX D

The belongings of Mrs. Madison are highly treasured and far scattered. These are all known to the writer:

Gold ring with hair of Washington, given by him to Mrs. Madison, and by her, in 1847, to Rev. George Duffield. Owned by Mrs. Edwards Pierrepont.

A chair. Owned by Miss Virginia Miller.

A fan. Owned by Miss Ella Loraine Dorsey.

Ear drops. Amethysts in quaint gold chains. Adèle Cutts Williams.

Ear drops and necklace. Carbuncles set in tiny old-fashioned seed pearls. Mrs. Madison Cutts.

Two plates in the White House China Collection. Presented by J. Henley Smith.

Necklace, mosaic with blue trimmings. Wedding present from Mr. Madison. Mrs. John B. Henderson.

Handsome plates, one dozen. Mrs. Joseph B. Foraker.

Gold pencil. Miss Rebekah Rawlings.

In the State Department, Bureau of rolls and library, Mrs. Madison's "trunk, a quaint little box, about a foot and a half long, covered with red morocco and adorned with brass tacks and handles." "Contains an important part of the original Constitution papers—the original journal of the federal constitutional convention."

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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### APPENDIX E

Dolly's features are pictured in drawings, engravings, miniatures and paintings. A gallery they would make of real art and beauty. The list is incomplete. No reproduction is mentioned.

Miniature by James Peale, dated 1794.

Pencil drawing by T. C. Liebers. Owned by Joseph C. McGuire, Esq.

Sketch by John Vanderlyn. "February 28, 1803. Saw Mr Vanderlyn begin Mrs M's picture in black lead pencil." Mrs. Thornton's diary.

Portrait by Gilbert Stuart, 1804. Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts.

"June 3, 1804. Stuart has taken an admirable likeness of Mr. Madison; both his and mine are finished."

—Mrs. Madison.

"I send you an engraving from Stuart's Portrait, which tho' indifferently executed, is a better likeness than Mr. Wood's."—Mrs. Madison.

Miniature in water colors by Dr. William Thornton. Reproduced in *Forty Years of Washington Society*.

Silhouette from life. Reproduced in *Forty Years of Washington Society*.

Miniature by artist unknown. Reproduced in the *History of the Centennial Celebration of the Inauguration of George Washington as First President of the United States*.

Miniature. Painted in 1812 or 1814 on ivory. Reproduced in *Our Presidents, Their Wives and Children*.

Engraving in *The Port Folio*. April, 1818. Drawn by Otis.

Portrait by Rembrandt Peale. Owned by the New York Historical Society.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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- Life Mask by John Henri Isaac Browere, October, 1825.  
Reproduced in Browere's *Life Masks of Great Americans*. Charles Henry Hart.
- Portrait by Joseph Wood.
- Portrait by Joseph Wood. Owned by the family of the late Walter D. Davidge.
- Portrait by James Sharpless. Owned by the city of Philadelphia and exhibited in Independence Hall.
- Daguerreotype taken for Mrs. John C. Spencer, 1844.
- Miniature by Elizabeth Milligan. April, 1844.
- Miniature by Fleming.
- Portrait by W. S. Elwell, March, 1848. "A faithful portrait W. W. S." (Seaton.) Owned by Admiral Seaton Schroeder.
- Engraving by R. Soper. *Godey's Magazine and Lady's Book*, November, 1852.
- Portrait by Alonzo Chappel. Reproduced in Portrait Gallery of Eminent Men and Women.
- Portrait by Prof. Eliphalet F. Andrews, 1911. An adaptation.
- Portrait by Eastman Johnson.

Mr. Johnson to his father, March 16, 1841:

On Saturday I commenced a portrait of Mrs. Madison. She was very agreeable and I take much pleasure in going every morning to her house. She comes in at 10 o'clock in full dress for the occasion, and, as she has much taste she looks quite imposing with her white satin turban, black velvet dress and a countenance full of benignity and gentleness. She talks a great deal and in such quick, beautiful tones. So polished and elegant are her manners that it is a pleasure to be in her company. To-day she was telling me of Lafayette, Mr. Jefferson and others.

Portrait, replica of above, for Daniel Webster.

## Life and Letters of Dolly Madison

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### APPENDIX F

Mrs. Washington, the wife of the Associate Justice—they lived at Mount Vernon—under date, Alexandria, March 30, 1812, writes:

Mrs. Washington returns her very affte. compts. to Mrs. Madison, and assures her that it was with much regret she found herself under the necessity of declining Mrs. Madison's invitation to attend the nuptials of her sister. Mrs. Madison's note reached Mrs. Washington only a few hours before that appointed for the performance of the marriage ceremony. Mrs. Washington begs leave, through the medium of Mrs. Madison, to offer her felicitations to Judge and Mrs. Todd; in which Mr. Washington, who is now from home, will heartily join when he hears how happily his good wishes for Judge Todd have succeeded.

### APPENDIX G

The Collection of Period Costume at the National Museum is due to the enthusiasm and effort of Mrs. Julian-James and to her is greatly praiseworthy. It instructs and interests. The decrees of fashion for a century are published.

The gown of Dolly Madison is beautiful buff with graceful figures of grain and ties between. It is over heavy white satin, on which is embroidered a vine of pink roses with the suggestion "The rose is fairest when 'tis budding new." The creation is lace-edged. The sleeves are to the elbow; the bodice is low-cut, yet the charm of person could have been none the less because of the delicate lace that fell from smooth shoulders. The creation was complement to Dolly's charms. In no richer array did ever bow a queen in Solomon's court.

It was lent by Mrs. W. F. E. Wyse.

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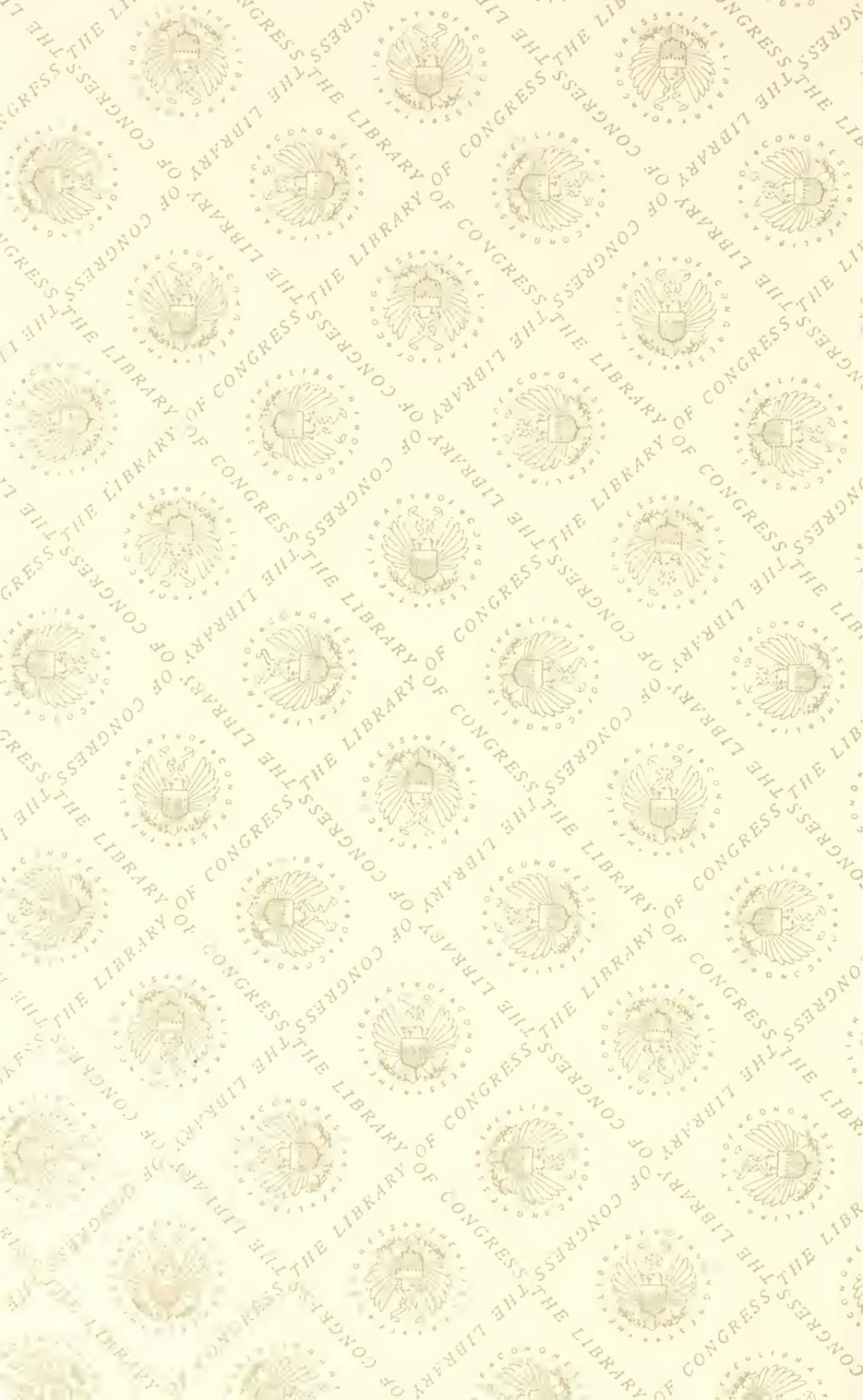
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