



Joseph Wood, *Dolley (Payne) Todd Madison*, 1817. Oil on canvas. Virginia Historical Society, 1967.14.



Bass Otis, *Mrs. James Madison*, ca. 1817. Oil on canvas. New-York Historical Society, Gift of Thomas Jefferson Bryan, 1867.308.



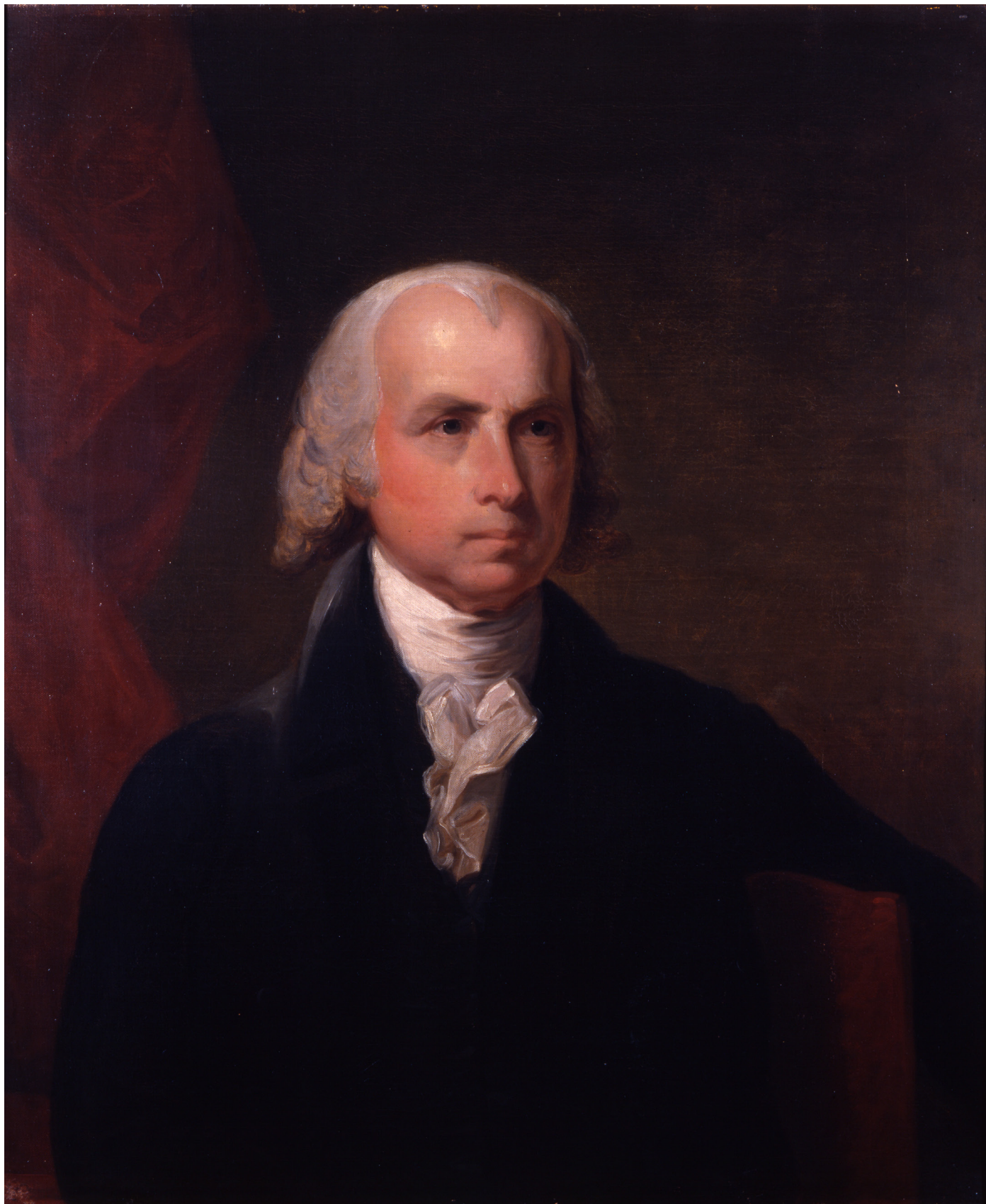
James Sharples Sr., *Dolley Madison*, ca. 1796–1797. Pastel on paper. Independence National Historic Park, Philadelphia.



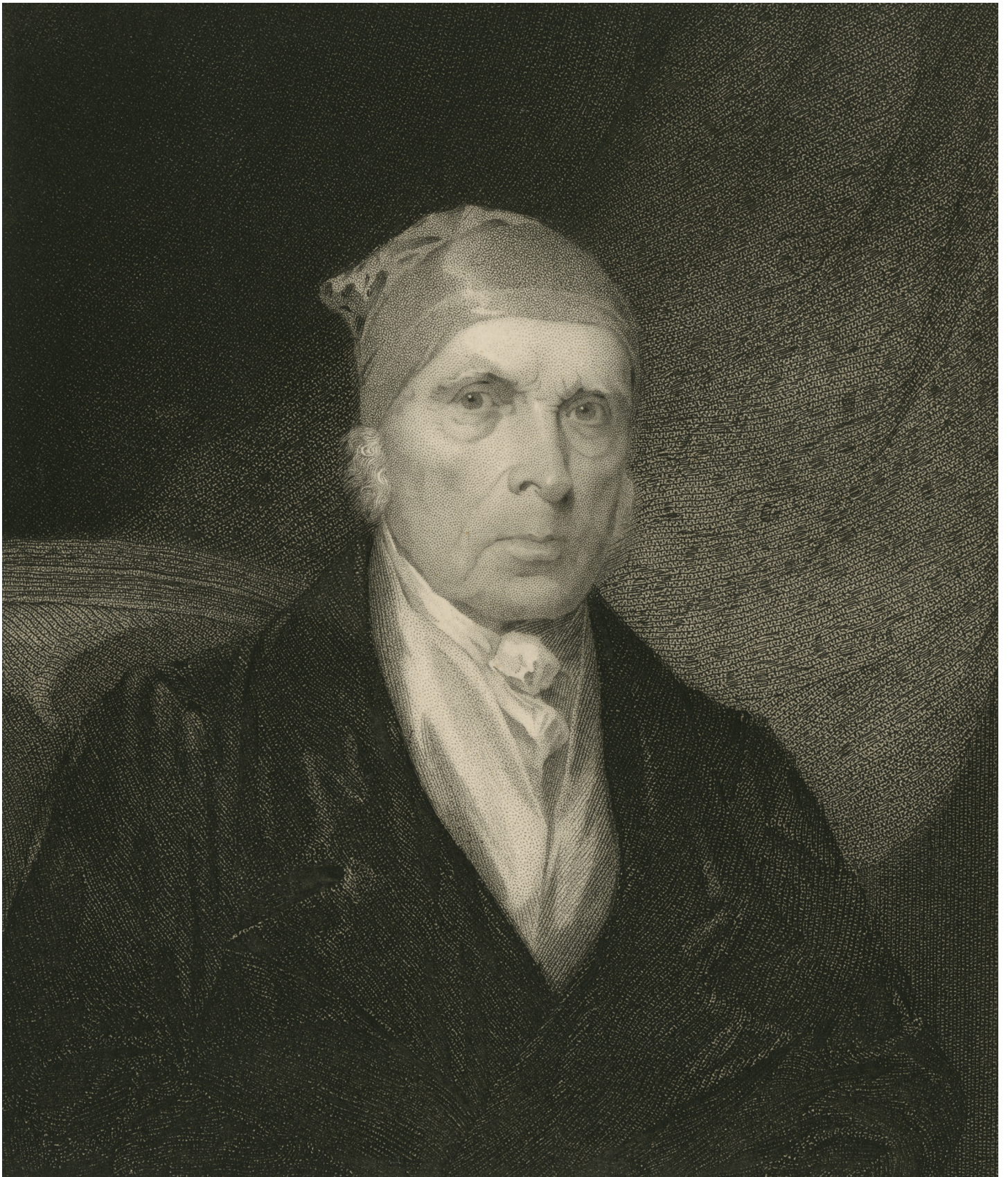
William Russell Birch, *A view of the Capitol of Washington before it was burnt down by the British*, ca. 1800. Watercolor. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C., 2004661947.



Baroness Anne-Marguerite-Henriette Hyde de Neuville, *Montpellier*, 1818, Watercolor, Musée Franco-Américain du Château de Blérancourt.



Asher Brown Durand, *James Madison*, 1835. Oil on canvas. New-York Historical Society, Gift of The New-York Gallery of the Fine Arts, 1858.10.



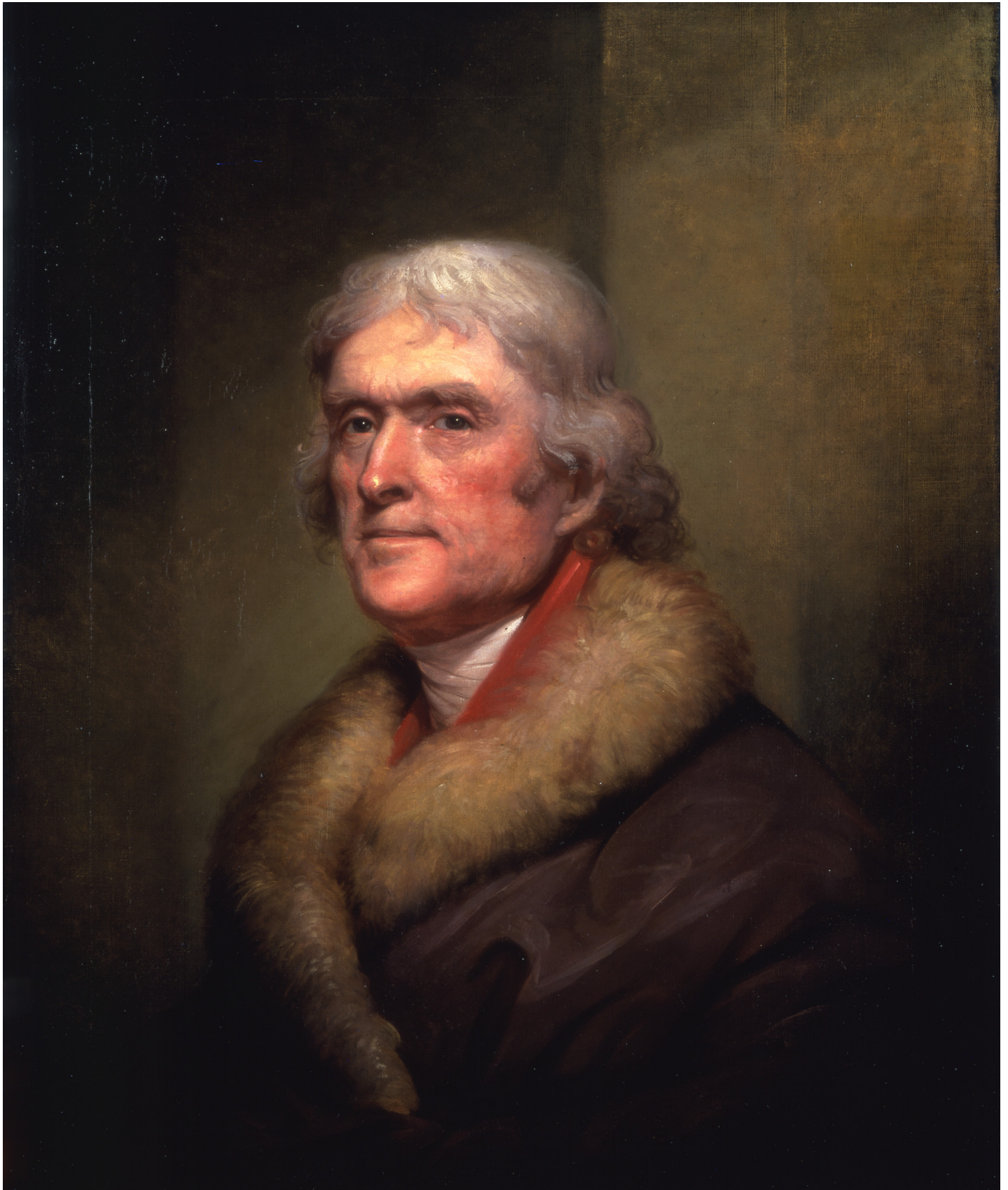
J. B. Longacre (artist), T. B. Welch (engraver), *James Madison, Aged 82*, ca. 1833. Engraving. New-York Historical Society Library, PR 52.



View of the East front of the President's Residence with the addition of the new Portico

Done by Latrobe 1807  
B. Latrobe

Benjamin Henry Latrobe, *The White House ("President's House") Washington, DC, East Front Elevation*, 1807. Drawing on paper: watercolor, ink, and wash. Latrobe Architectural Drawing Archive, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C., 97505109.



Rembrandt Peale, *Thomas Jefferson*, 1805. Oil on linen. New-York Historical Society, Gift of Thomas Jefferson Bryan, 1867.306.



Charles Bird King, *Margaret Bayard Smith*, ca. 1829. Oil on canvas.  
Redwood Library and Athenaeum, Newport, Rhode Island, Gift of the artist.



T. Cartwright and George Beck, *George Town and Federal City*, 1801. Aquatint. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C., 2002695146.



Baroness Anne-Marguerite-Henriette Hyde de Neuville, *Martha Church, Cook in "Ordinary Costume,"* ca. 1807–1814. Watercolor, graphite, and brown ink on paper. New-York Historical Society, 1953.276.

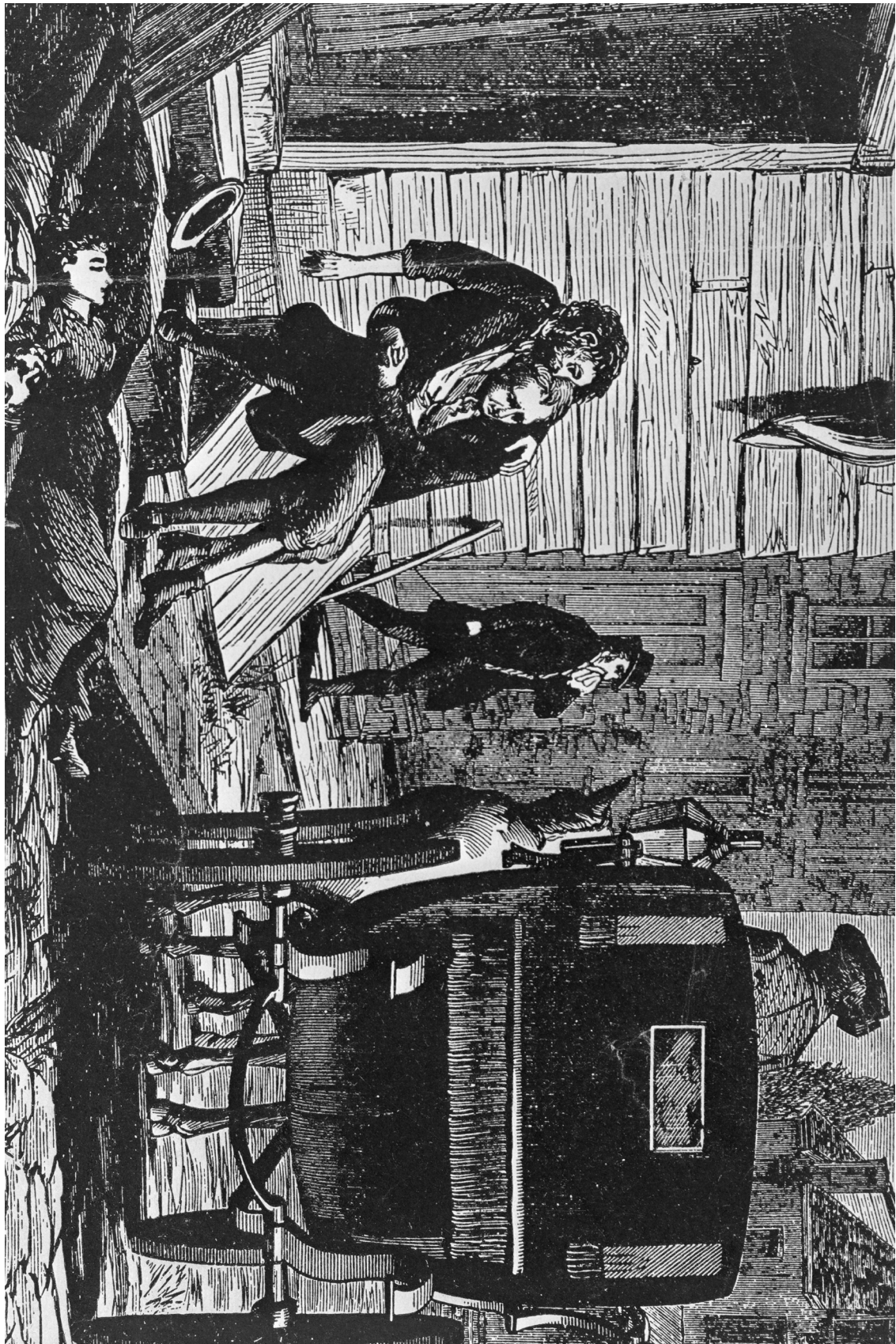


*Dolley Madison's Silk Satin Open Robe.* The National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution.

Eliza Brock



Attributed to Thomas Haig's Pottery, *Pitcher*, 1812–ca.1893. Earthenware. Philadelphia Museum of Art, Gift of Jay A. and Emma Lewis, 2008, 2008-25-15.



*Man Helping Sick Person, 1793.* Original Caption: *Yellow Fever Epidemic in Philadelphia, 1793.* Woodcut. Bettmann / Contributor.



William Russell Birch, *View in Third Street, from Spruce Street, Philadelphia, 1800*. Hand-colored engraving. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C., 2002718881.

## The Language of Coverture

By marriage, the husband and wife are one person in law: that is, the very being or legal existence of the woman is suspended during the marriage, or at least is incorporated and consolidated into that of the husband; under whose wing, protection, and cover, she performs every thing; and is . . . under the protection and influence of her husband, her baron, or lord; and her condition during her marriage is called her coverture. Upon this principle, of an union of person in husband and wife, depend almost all the legal rights, duties, and disabilities, that either of them acquire by the marriage. . . . [E]ven the disabilities which the wife lies under, are for the most part intended for her protection and benefit. So great a favourite is the female sex of the laws of England.



C. Schessele, *Mrs. John Adams (Abigail Smith)*, ca. 1775. Engraving. New-York Historical Society Library, PR 52.



Unknown artist, *Sir William Blackstone*, ca. 1755. Oil on canvas.  
National Portrait Gallery, London, Primary Collection, 388.



*Congressional Pugilists*, 1798. Etching on wove paper. New-York Historical Society Library, PR 10.



Gilbert Stuart, *Dolley Madison*, 1804. Oil on canvas. White House Historical Association / White House Collection, Gift of the Walter H. and Phyllis J. Shorestein Foundation in memory of Phyllis J. Shorestein, 1994, 994.1737.1.

## Frank and Cordial Manners

[Second only to the home of President Thomas Jefferson himself,] the house of the secretary of state was the resort of most company. The frank and cordial manners of its mistress, gave a peculiar charm to the frequent parties there assembled. All foreigners who visited the seat of government; strangers from the different states of the union; the heads of departments; the diplomatic corps; senators, representatives, citizens, mingled with an ease and freedom, a sociability and gayety, to be met with in no other society. Even party spirit, virulent and embittered as it then was, by her gentleness was disarmed. . . .

[Later,] when the term of Mr. Jefferson's presidency drew near its close, the spirit of political intrigue which had lain dormant, was again roused into activity. A new president was to be chosen, and there were several competitors for the people's favor. Each had partisans, zealous and untiring. . . . Amid this cruel warfare of conflicting parties, so calculated to excite angry feelings, Mrs. Madison . . . met these political assailants with a mildness, which disarmed their hostility of its individual rancor, and sometimes even converted political enemies into personal friends, and still oftener succeeded in neutralizing the bitterness of opposition. . . . [Mr. Madison] continued his social intercourse with persons of all opinions; the chiefs of different parties met at his house with perfect good humor; and the frank and polite attentions of Mrs. Madison were paid, without distinction, to all who joined her social circle.



Charles A. Burnett, Photo by Philip Beaurline,  
*Dolley Madison's Snuffbox*, ca. 1800. Silver. Montpelier, a National Trust Historic  
Site, Bequest of Marion duPont Scott, NT85.2.45.

## Dolley's Letter to Anna

. . . The Vice P. lies dangerously ill—Eletioneering for his office goes on beyond all description. The World seems running Mad, what with one thing & another—The Fed[eralists], as I told you, ware all affronted with M[adison], refused to dine or come but they have changed their tack—last night & the night before, our rooms were crouded with republicans & such a ralying of our party has alarm'd them into a return. They came in a large party last night also & are continuelly calling—Even D. R. Will < . . . > who is a fine fellow, came last night. The old & the young Muster'd—The War business goes on slowly—but I fear twill be sure. . . .

### NOTES

*The Vice P.* = Vice President George Clinton, who died April 20, 1812.

*D. R. Will* = David Rogerson Williams of South Carolina, a Republican member of the House of Representatives.

< . . . > = missing or unreadable text.

## Memorandum to Mr. Zantzinger for Purchases

2 Looking Glasses, long, and large as can be bought for \$100.00  
100 yds the best carpeting that can be had for \$1 pr yd— 100.00  
1 piece Black Levantine, 1 piece cheap white satin  
1 piece queens grey florence silk, 20 yds Blond Lace 3 inches wide—  
1 small Box assorted Feathers, do. Flowers, do. Ribbons—  
2 pieces of fine cambric a 2 or three Dolls pr. yd.  
2 pieces pocket Kerchiefs Cambric, at 75 Cents or one Doll pr. kerchief  
10 yds fine Lace at 4 or 5 Dolls pr. yd—1 dito at 2 dols, narrow/  
2 doz: pr. white & one doz pr. black silk stockings large size—  
2 doz pr. white Kid gloves long, & large— 4 doz short do assorted colours  
1 Doz pr. shoes with heels—one doz pr. without—  
—1 piece white crape— — a print, of the bust, of N. Bonaparte, large  
as life, taken by an élève of David; it may be found in the shops  
of the Marchands des gravures < . . . > the price some months since  
was, 20 francs. —4 Orange, or bright yellow Marino Shawls  
not exceeding 12 or 15 Dollars—one large white shawl \$20 or 25  
with a rich border—Two Spring bonnets—Two dito for  
Winter—Two of them for a large Head—one  
of each for a smaller head. all, for the morning  
one douzn fanciful but very cheap snuff boxes

### Notes

*yds.* = yards

*levantine* = a silk fabric, woven for extra texture

*do., dito* = ditto (the same as the previous item)

*dols and doll* = dollars

*pr. yd* = per yard

*pr.* = pair, or per

*doz, douzn* = dozen

*élève* = student (in French)

*David* = French artist Jacques-Louis David

*francs* = French currency

*marino* = a high-quality wool

< . . . > = missing or unreadable text



Attributed to Gilbert Stuart, *George Washington*, 1796. Oil on canvas. White House Historical Association / White House Collection.

## Dolley Madison's Extract

Tuesday Augt. 23d. 1814.

Dear Sister.

—My husband left me yesterday mornng. 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 recd. 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 that they would reach the city, with intention to destroy it. X X X

X X X 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 towards him, X X X disaffection stalks around us.

X X X X X My friends and acquaintances are all gone; Even Col. C— with his hundred men, who were stationed as a guard in the enclosure.

X X 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.

Note

X's = Dolley Madison's use of ellipses.

Wednesday mornng., twelve O'clock. Since sunrise I have been turning my spy glass in every direction and watching with unwearied anxiety, hoping to discern 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! Mr. Madison comes not; may God protect him! Two messengers covered with dust, come to bid me fly; but I wait for him. X X X 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, Mr. 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 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 you, or where I shall be tomorrow, I cannot tell!!



E. C. Perry Photograph Co., *Paul Jennings*, undated. Photograph. Estate of Sylvia Jennings Alexander.

## Paul Jennings's Reminiscence

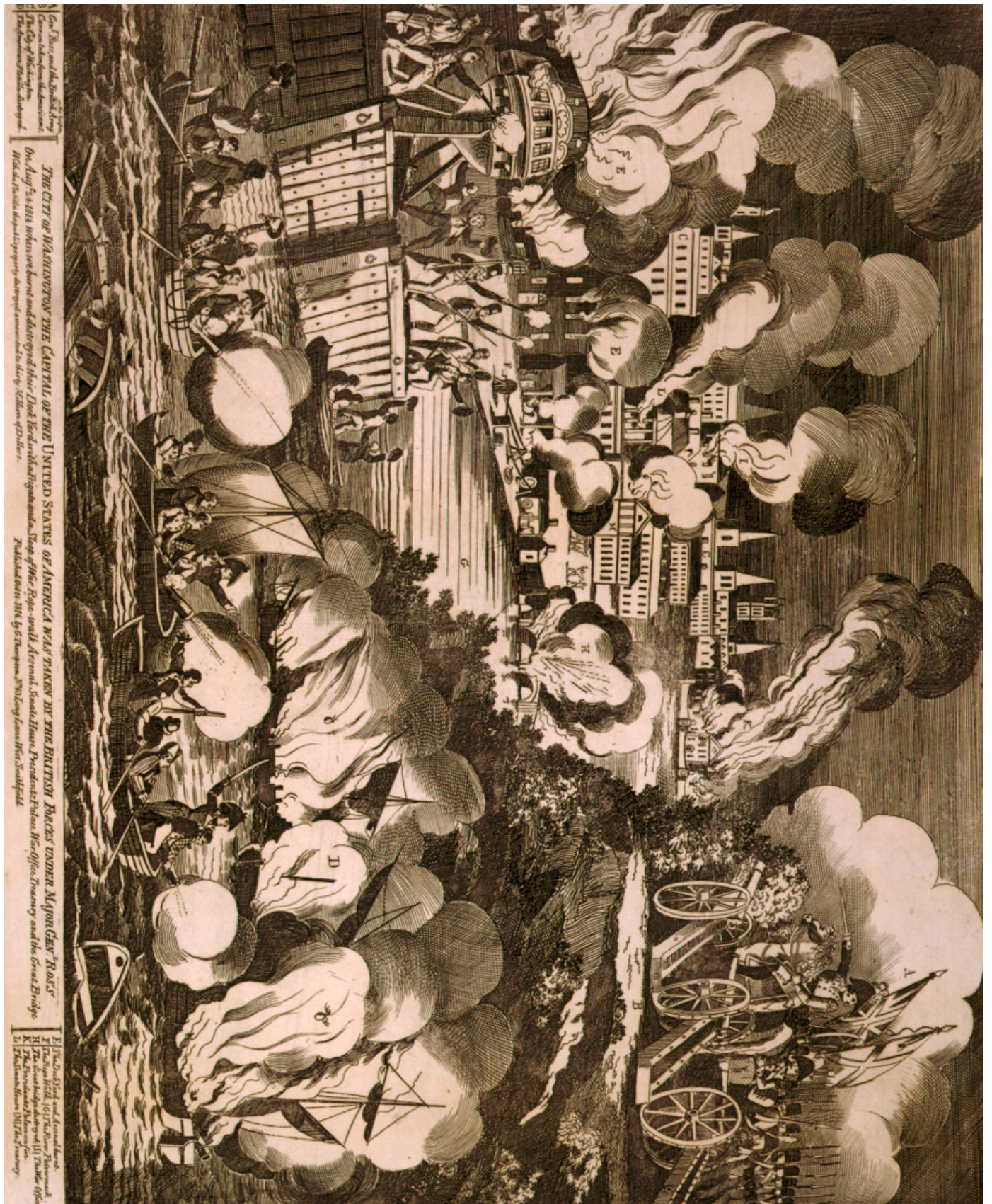
**M**rs. Madison ordered dinner to be ready at 3, as usual; I set the table myself, and brought up the ale, cider, and wine, and placed them in the coolers, as all the Cabinet and several military gentlemen and strangers were expected. While waiting, at just about 3, as Sukey, the house-servant, was 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! General 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. Bolin drove them over to Georgetown Heights; the British were expected in a few minutes . . . [but] they did not arrive for some hours. . . .

It has often been stated in print, that when Mrs. Madison escaped from the White House, she cut out from the frame the large portrait of Washington (now in one of the parlors there), and carried it off. This is totally false. She had no time for doing it. It would have required a ladder to get it down. All she carried off was the silver in her reticule, as the British were thought to be but a few squares off, and were expected every moment. John Susé (a Frenchman, then door-keeper, and still living) and Magraw, the President's gardener, took it down and sent it off on a wagon, with some large silver urns and such other valuables as could be hastily got hold of. When the British did arrive, they ate up the very dinner, and drank the wines, &c., that I had prepared for the President's party.

### Notes

*reticule* = a small handbag

*John Susé* = Jean-Pierre Sioussat, the chief steward (doorkeeper) and chef in the Madison White House.



West Smithfield, Published by G. Thompson, *The Taking of the City of Washington in America*, 1814. Wood engraving. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C., 96510111.



George Munger, *The President's House*, 1814–1815. Watercolor on paper. White House Historical Association / White House Collection.



Mathew B. Brady, *Dolley Madison, three-quarter length portrait of a woman, facing front, seated*, 1848. Half-plate daguerreotype. White House Historical Association / White House Collection.



Attributed to Joseph Wood, *John Payne Todd*, ca. 1817. Watercolor on ivory. Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Miss Mary Madison McGuire, 1936 (36.73).

## Dolley Madison's Letter to Payne

Washington Jany. 22d. 44

If you love me, my dear son, write to me—tell me when you will come to offer the papers to Congress, and to do something with the 4th volume—we are without funds and those we owe are impatient—the time has arrived now when if lost or neglected will never return to us! Mr. R with whom only I have conversed, assured me that if he could do any thing in it—we should chuse—but he had made himself so unpopular—that no open efforts of his would do any good to my interest and therefore some influential member of the lower house should be chosen and employed. Oh, my son! I am too unhappy not to have you with me, and not to have even your opinion and directions, what to do myself or what individuals to engage and at what time! Do not let this often repeated request offend or hurt you my son—but I will say little more—as it is not good for me to write.

You have no doubt seen in the papers a Resolution of Congress inviting me to a seat—and my answer—It is nothing in my eyes or my heart, nor would compliments even higher, unless you and myself were on safe ground with our creditors.

Astor's interest is due the 19th of February—can you obtain it for me? Miss Legaré's best respects to you.

Ever your affectionate mother  
D. P. Madison.

[Envelope]  
J. P. Todd  
Montpelier  
Orange Cy  
Va.

Note  
*chuse* = choose