

Women



History



Dolley, in 1794, about the time she married James Madison



Dolley Madison in 1804

Dolley Madison

Dolley Payne Madison was First Lady of the United States. Her husband, James Madison, was president in 1809 to 1817.

Dolley was born in North Carolina in 1768. Her parents were John Payne and his wife, Mary Coles Payne. They moved to Philadelphia and in 1790 she married John Todd, a lawyer. They had two sons, Payne and William. John Todd and William died in 1793 and Dolley was left a widow with a small son.

Dolley met and fell in love with James Madison in Philadelphia. They married in 1794 and lived in Philadelphia where James served in Congress. They later moved to Virginia. In 1800, President Thomas Jefferson asked James to be Secretary of State. James accepted and he and Dolley moved to Washington D.C.

Jefferson, whose wife was dead, often asked Dolley to serve as hostess for important parties. She was an excellent hostess. She also helped furnish the new White House, which was the official home of the U.S. president.

In 1808, James Madison was elected president and Dolley became first lady. Dolley held many parties and helped make Washington D.C. a popular place.

James was re-elected in 1812, in the middle of the U.S. war with Great Britain. In 1814, the British marched to Washington D.C.

Dolley had to leave quickly, but she managed to save many important things from the White House, such as the silver and a portrait of George Washington. The British burned the White House and it had to be rebuilt.

After James' term as president was over, he and Dolley went back to Virginia. After James died in 1836, Dolley moved back to Washington, D.C., the city she loved. She died there in 1849.



Drawing from 1814 of the burned White House

Where was Dolley born?

Q

Who was Dolley's husband who became president?

AND

What did President Jefferson ask Dolley to do?

A

Whose portrait did Dolley save when the White House burned?