

Dolley Madison Papers
A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress



Manuscript Division, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.
2005

Contact information: <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/mss.contact>

Catalog Record: <https://lcn.loc.gov/mm80031005>

Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms007075>

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Collection Summary

Title: Dolley Madison Papers

Span Dates: 1794-1852

Bulk Dates: (bulk 1836-1849)

ID No.: MSS31005

Creator: Madison, Dolley, 1768-1849

Extent: 1,700 items

Extent: 5 containers

Extent: 2 linear feet

Extent: 4 microfilm reels

Language: Collection material in English

Location: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

LC Catalog record: <https://lccn.loc.gov/mm80031005>

Summary: Wife of President James Madison and prominent Washington, D.C., hostess. Correspondence, financial papers, invitations, calling cards, and other papers relating primarily to personal and family matters including settlement of the Dolley Madison, James Madison, and William Madison estates.

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the LC Catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically.

People

Causten, Anna Payne, 1819-1852--Correspondence.

Clay, Henry, 1777-1852--Correspondence.

Cutts, R. D. (Richard Dominicus), 1817-1883--Correspondence.

Laurie, James--Correspondence.

Lee, Elizabeth Collins, -1858--Correspondence.

Madison, Dolley, 1768-1849--Estate.

Madison, Dolley, 1768-1849.

Madison, James, 1751-1836--Estate.

Madison, William, 1762-1843--Estate.

Mason, John Y. (John Young), 1799-1859--Correspondence.

Moncure, Henry W. (Henry Wood), 1800-1866--Correspondence.

Morris, Anthony, 1766-1860--Correspondence.

Morris, Phoebe--Correspondence.

Smith, Richard--Correspondence.

Todd, John Payne, 1792-1858--Correspondence.

Todd, Rebecca--Correspondence.

Todd, Samuel Poultney--Correspondence.

Places

Montpelier (Va. : Estate)

Virginia--Social life and customs.

Washington (D.C.)--Social life and customs.

Occupations

Presidents' spouses--United States.

Provenance

The papers of Dolley Madison, wife of President James Madison and prominent Washington, D.C., hostess, were transferred to the Library of Congress from the Smithsonian Institution in 1866. Additions to the papers were received by gift, purchase, and transfer, 1909-2004.

Processing History

The papers of Dolley Madison were arranged and described in 1981. The collection was expanded and revised in 2005.

Additional Guides

A partial index to the original material is available in the Manuscript Division Reading Room.

Copyright Status

The status of copyright in the unpublished writings of Dolley Madison is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).

Access and Restrictions

The papers of Dolley Madison are open to research. Researchers are advised to contact the Manuscript Reading Room prior to visiting. Many collections are stored off-site and advance notice is needed to retrieve these items for research use.

Microfilm

A microfilm edition of part of these papers is available on four reels. Consult reference staff in the Manuscript Division concerning availability for purchase or interlibrary loan. To promote preservation of the originals, researchers are required to consult the microfilm edition as available.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container number, Dolley Madison Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

Date	Event
1768, May 20	Born, Guilford County, N.C.
1790	Married John Todd (died 1793)
1794	Married James Madison (died 1836)
1801-1809	Acted as hostess for President Thomas Jefferson while her husband, James Madison, served as secretary of state
1809-1817	First Lady during James Madison's presidency
1817-1836	Resided with James Madison at their plantation, Montpelier, Va., until his death
1837	Returned to Washington, D.C., and resumed her position as a prominent hostess
1849, July 12	Died, Washington, D.C.

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Dolley Payne Todd Madison (1768-1849) date from 1794 to 1852, although the bulk of the material falls in the period after the death of her husband, James Madison, in 1836. The papers consist primarily of correspondence but also include financial papers, invitations, visiting cards, and miscellaneous material. The collection is organized in two segments of original and reproduced items, with a chronological arrangement for each segment.

The correspondence is concerned mainly with family matters including the settlement of Dolley Madison's estate as well as those of William Madison and James Madison. The disposition of her estate dominates the correspondence after 1849, particularly in letters between trustees John Young Mason and Richard Smith. Family members who figure prominently as correspondents include John Payne Todd, surviving son of Dolley Payne and John Todd (1763-1793), her nieces Anna Payne Causten and Rebecca Todd, and her nephews R. D. Cutts and Samuel Poultney Todd.

Other correspondence reflects the extent of Dolley Madison's personal friendships and the use of her influence and contacts to benefit others. Correspondents include Anthony Morris (1766-1860), a Philadelphia merchant and unofficial United States representative to Spain from 1810 to 1814, and his daughter, Phoebe; James Laurie of the American Colonization Society; Henry W. Moncure, a Richmond merchant who eventually bought Montpelier from Madison to ease her financial crisis; and Elizabeth Collins Lee, close friend and confidante.

Also in the collection are such items as inventories of household furnishings at Montpelier and in Washington, accounts with a grocer, and lists of visitors and visits returned by Mrs. Madison. Additional material, including a holograph letter to Dolley Madison from Henry Clay, 1836, regarding the manuscript of James Madison's *Notes of Debates on the Federal Convention of 1787*, and a page from her diary or notebook, 1845, was added to the collection after the microfilm edition was completed.

Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged alphabetically by type of material.

Container List

Available on microfilm. Shelf no. 18,940

Container	Contents
BOX 1 REEL 1	Originals
BOX 1 REEL 1	Correspondence
BOX 1 REEL 1	1794-1842 (9 folders)
BOX 2 REEL 1-2	1843-1845 (5 folders)
BOX 3 REEL 2-3	1846-1849 (6 folders)
BOX 4 REEL 3-4	1850-1852 (2 folders)
BOX 4 REEL 3-4	Undated (5 folders)
BOX 5 REEL 4	(1 folder)
BOX 5 REEL 4	Invitations, 1838-1848
BOX 5 REEL 4	Visiting cards, undated
BOX 5 not filmed	Reproductions, 1809-1849
BOX 5	Addition
BOX 5	Correspondence
BOX 5	Letter from Henry Clay, original and transcript, 1836
BOX 5	Letter to Mrs. Roosevelt, 1843
BOX 5	Engraving of Madison, undated
BOX 5	Page from diary or notebook entitled "Extract from the Revd. Dr. Bethune's Discourse on the death of Genl. Jackson," original and transcript, 1845