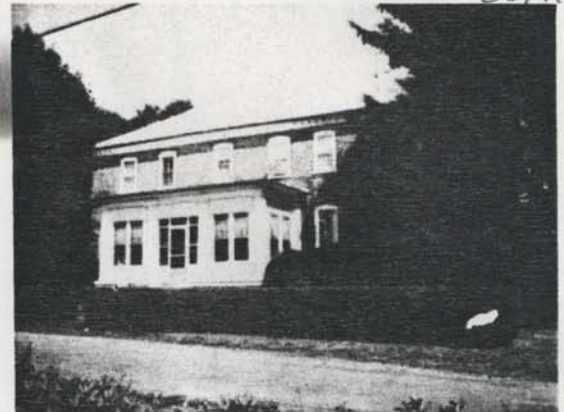


## THE HENDERSON HOUSE OF DUMFRIES



When Marines talk of Henderson Hall, they are referring to the Marine Corps Headquarters area in Washington, D.C. named for Archibald Henderson, the 5th Commandant of the Marine Corps.

When people of Eastern Prince William County talk of the Henderson House, they are referring to the stately ancestral home of Archibald Henderson in the heart of Dumfries.

Between the two, Henderson Hall and Henderson House, is woven a tie that binds the history of the Marine Corps to the rich colonial heritage of Dumfries.

The present owners, Reverend and Mrs. Shumate, are proud of their home, the Henderson House. In her scrap book Mrs. Annie Shumate has documented its history from the days when Alexander Henderson built it in 1785. His son, Archibald Henderson, actively served in the Marine Corps for 53 years. He entered the Corps in 1806 at the age of 23. His term as Commandant lasted 39 years and spanned the terms of eleven presidents.

The Virginia Cavalcade, in an article by Ralph W. Donnelly in the Winter 1971 edition, quotes Archibald Henderson as writing, "However strong may be the feeling which binds us to our common country there is one portion of it to which our early associations attach us with a peculiar and endearing interest. The place of our nativity, the home of our childhood . . ." Surely he was writing of Prince William County where he was born and the Henderson House in Dumfries where he spent his youth.

His accomplishments ranged from heroic action aboard the Constitution in 1812 to personal leadership of his Marines in the Seminole Wars. His most enduring contribution, however, was when "On June 30, 1834, Congress recognized the extent of his accomplishments by the passage of an act which clarified the status of the Marine Corps in relation to the other services and which enlarged its combat mission."

An article by Lynn Montross states "With the appointment of the fifth Commandant, Archibald Henderson in 1820, the Marines began their climb from military apprenticeship to professional status. 'Archie' was unexcelled as a leader . . ."

To visit with the Reverend and Mrs. Shumate in their home, The Henderson House, is a delightful and rewarding experience. If you have lost your faith in your country just talk to Mrs. Annie Shumate, she has faith to spare. If you waver in your public display of allegiance just watch her eyes shine and listen to her determined voice as she tells of sharing the Pledge of Allegiance from the security of her grape arbor as she watched the ceremonies of the dedication of the Weems-Botts Museum. And she proudly tells of helping "her service men"—Marines and those of other armed forces who have lived at the Henderson House over the years. And you know that she has helped each one because, from the bottom of her heart, she felt that she was sharing and participating in making her country stronger.

Mrs. Shumate has often written of her home and its history, and in a letter to the Editor, Potomac News, she once stated: "During the Civil War this house was used as a hospital. The first floor basement a commissary. On the walls upstairs I found under many layers of lime whitewash these words—'Ward Number 5, Quiet—No Loitering on the Stairway'." She also wrote that "It was during these war years that the western section of the Henderson House was destroyed by cannon fire." She then states that her grandfather rebuilt that portion and that it was later that an extension was built on and the porches added.

In describing the interior Mrs. Shumate wrote in another letter "All the original woodwork has been retained with the exception of the lower hall wide-paneling . . . The lovely old mantels are in perfect condition, also the sliding doors and deep seated windows. We replaced 19 outside window sills. New floors were laid over the original floors on the first floor but upstairs the old wide-board floors were never changed."

The footprints of many have marked the Henderson House in Dumfries. It has been placed on the County roster of historical homes of Prince William County and it stands as a monument to our proud ties with history.

We of STALLKNECHT REALTY are proud to be a significant part in this new awareness of our Colonial Heritage.

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