

## Gen. Archibald Henderson

(21 Jan 1783 – 6 Jan 1859)

---

*The Evening Star, January 7, 1859*

### Death of General Archibald Henderson

The community was greatly shocked last evening by the announcement of the sudden death of General Henderson. The deceased had been walking about apparently in his usual health during the morning. Returned from a long walk about 4 o'clock p.m., his usual dinner hour, and feeling somewhat fatigued, he seated himself on a sofa in a reclining posture, with his head resting on an arm of the sofa. The servant, on ringing the dinner bell, observed that he did not appear to notice it, and went to rouse him. He was discovered to be dead. Not a feature of his face was changed, and from the natural disposition of the limbs, it was apparent that death came without a struggle, and the good man and brave soldier had passed to his final rest without suffering in any respect the bitterness of death.

The deceased was born in the year 1783, in the town of Dumfries, Virginia, and entered the service of this country in 1806, being then twenty-three years of age. He was on board the *Constitution*, and commandant of the marine corps in the celebrated battle between the ship and the *Guerrier*, during the last war with Great Britain.

He took an active part in the Creek campaign, in the years 1836-7, having volunteered to that service, an example which was followed by every member of his staff in consequence of his gallant service during that and other Indian wars, he was made General by brevet on the 4th of March, 1843.

In the register at the Adjutant's Office, Marine Barracks, we find the following entry:--"Archibald Henderson, commandant, Brigadier General by brevet, 4th of March, 1843, to take rank from January 27th, 1837, for gallant and meritorious services while in command of the marines in Alabama, Florida, and Tennessee, during the campaigns against the hostile Indians."

*The Evening Star, January 10, 1859*

### Funeral of General Henderson

The funeral of the late lamented General Archibald Henderson took place at 1 o'clock today.

The commandant's officers quarters were draped in mourning habilaments, as, also, were the various offices within the barracks.

The standards in the barracks and in the Navy Yard were placed at half-mast.

The deceased was laid out at the General's quarters in a mahogany coffin, covered with black cloth, and mounted with silver heads, etc. The inside was lined with white satin, and the corpse arrayed in citizens dress, viz.: black cloth coat, pants, and vest.

Upon a massive silver plate was inscribed the following:

General Archibald Henderson

U.S. Marine Corps

Born January 21, 1783

Died January 6, 1859

Arranged upon the coffin were the cap, coat and equipment's worn by the deceased during his life; the sword being a magnificent weapon presented to the General while a colonel by the State of Virginia, upon the sheath of which is the following inscription:

"Presented by the State of Virginia to Colonel Archibald Henderson, of the Marine Corps of the United States, in testimony of the high sense entertained by his native State, of his gallantry and good

conduct in the capture of the Cyane and Levant by the frigate Constellation on the 20th February, 1815, and of his patriotic services generally during the war with Great Britain. Honor to the brave."

At one o'clock, the services of the Episcopal church, of which the deceased was an honored member, were performed over the remains in the presence of a large number of relatives and friends of the deceased, by the Rev Mr. Morsell.

The procession moved in the following order:

Funeral escort in column of march: Battalion of Volunteers, Colonel Wm. Hickey, including the following companies: President's Mounted Guard, Washington Yagers, Union Guards, Washington Light Infantry and Montgomery Guards

Staff and Marine Corps numbering 120 rank and file

Officiating Clergyman and Surgeon of the Garrison.

Pall Bearers

Commodore Smith

Sur. Gen. Lawson

Commodore McCauley

Colonel Craig

Captain Rudd

Colonel Cooper

Captain Ingraham

Colonel Larned

W.W. Seaton, Esq.

P.R. Fendall, Esq.

J.B.H. Smith, Esq.

Thomas Blagden, Esq.

The relations of the deceased

Officers of the militia

Officers of the army

Officers of the navy and marine corps

President of the United States and members of the Cabinet

Distinguished citizens

Arrived at the Congressional Cemetery, the beautiful and impressive words of the Episcopal burial service were read, and the coffin placed in the vault; after which military salutes were fired by the Marine Corps and the other military companies present, and the ceremonies were concluded.

The Secretary of the Navy has issued General Orders in respect to the memory of General H., directing the flags at the several naval stations and of all vessels in commission for sea service to be hoisted at half-mast and thirteen minute guns fired at meridian of the day after the receipt of the order.

Officers of the Navy and Marine Corps will wear crape on their left arm for thirty days.

Commander of the U.S. Marine Corps (1820-1859). Portrait at the Marine Corps Barracks. Called the "Grand Old Man". Served in the Seminole Wars.

### *The Navy Yard Section During the Life of the Rev. William Ryland*

Columbia Historical Society, Volume 4

No list of the notable men of the Navy Yard section would be complete without the name of General Archibald Henderson. He was a native of Prince William County, Virginia; entered the Marine Corps in 1806; became Lieutenant Colonel Commandant thereof in 1820, and was from that time a citizen of Washington until he died. He was one of the most popular men in the city; everybody in the eastern section knew him and respected him. He was particularly popular among the boys, to whom, in the encouragement of a military spirit, he was always kind and generous.

I think that the most of General Henderson's descendants are now residents of other places.