

of the Revolution, he apparently gave up this profession permanently when he joined General Washington's staff. McHenry was included as a partner in the family mercantile business, Daniel McHenry & Son, before 1775, although his participation was probably not significant until after his father's death in 1782. When McHenry accepted the position as secretary of the War Department in 1796, he gave up his share in two "mercantile partnerships" to enter public office free of private business interests. McHenry compiled and published the *Baltimore Directory and Citizens Register* for 1807. **PUBLIC CAREER.** LEGISLATIVE SERVICE: Senate, Western Shore, Term of 1781–1786: 1781–1782, 1782–1783, 1783, 1784, 1785 (did not attend; resigned on January 7, 1786); Lower House, Baltimore Town, 1788, 1789; Senate, Western Shore, Term of 1791–1796: 1791–1792, 1792, 1793, 1794, 1795. OTHER STATE OFFICE: Constitution Ratification Convention, Baltimore Town, 1788. LOCAL OFFICES: justice, Baltimore County, 1782–1784 (resigned); justice, Orphans' Court, Baltimore County, 1783, 1784. MILITARY SERVICE: volunteered as a surgeon for the American army in Cambridge, Massachusetts, by January 1776; surgeon, Fifth Pennsylvania Battalion, commissioned on August 10, 1776, taken prisoner by the British at Fort Washington on November 16, 1776, paroled on January 27, 1777, exchanged March 1778; senior surgeon, Flying Hospital, 1778; assistant secretary to Gen. George Washington, appointed on May 15, 1778, sworn on June 9, 1778; transferred to Lafayette's staff in August 1780; major, with commission dated October 30, 1780; remained with Lafayette through the southern campaign and at Yorktown; resigned from the Army on December 3, 1781. OUT OF STATE SERVICE: delegate, Continental Congress, 1783–1785 (elected on May 12, 1783, to fill vacancy; reelected in November 1783 and December 1784); delegate, Federal Constitutional Convention, signer, 1787; secretary, Department of War, appointed on January 27, 1796, resigned on May 6, 1800 (effective June 1, 1800). As secretary of war, McHenry handled Indian affairs as well as military and naval business until the latter was assigned to *Benjamin Stoddert* (ca. 1751–1813) in 1798. Involved with the preparations for possible war with France, McHenry frequently relied on Alexander Hamilton (1757–1804) for advice on problems of the War Department and on matters referred by President Adams to the cabinet. It was this reliance upon Hamilton which caused Adams to request McHenry's resignation in 1800.

As for McHenry's performance in office, Washington wrote, "I early discovered after he (McHenry) entered upon the duties of his office, that his talents were unequal to great exertions, or deep resources." Hamilton defended McHenry, writing that he was "sensible, judicious, well-informed, of an integrity never questioned. . . ." A later biographer of McHenry wrote that his management of the War Department was "marked more by fidelity and industry than by any conspicuous talent for conducting the complicated affairs of a great department." STANDS ON PUBLIC/PRIVATE ISSUES: McHenry signed the U.S. Constitution with some reservations, but with the feeling that its superiority to confederation warranted its approval. He supported ratification of the Constitution without amendments. Throughout his career McHenry was a staunch Federalist; he maintained an active correspondence with his Federalist associates until his death. In 1791 McHenry wrote a commendation of Benjamin Banneker's almanac, saying, "I consider this negro as a fresh proof that the powers of the mind are disconnected with the color of his skin. . . ." He supported the establishment of a college in Baltimore City, 1803. A modern historian has written that McHenry "was not a great man, but he participated in great events and great men loved him." WEALTH DURING LIFETIME. PERSONAL PROPERTY: 6 slaves, 1790. ANNUAL INCOME: When divesting himself of his shares in two Baltimore partnerships in 1796, McHenry stated that one had netted him £1,000.0.0 per year for five years and that the other was sold at an "actual loss" of about £3,000.0.0. He once told President Washington that there was no need to increase his salary as secretary of the War Department. LAND AT FIRST ELECTION: probably none. SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN LAND BETWEEN FIRST ELECTION AND DEATH: received 400 acres of federal bounty lands for service in the Revolution; inherited the property of his brother John, probably including 3 lots and a lease on a fourth lot in Baltimore Town, 1790; purchased 8 lots and the ground rents on additional lots, all in Baltimore Town, 1791; purchased ca. 92 acres and 9 lots adjoining Baltimore Town to the west in 1792, and built his mansion, "Fayetteville," named for the Marquis de Lafayette; purchased the title to those lots on which he held ground rents, 1796; sold 1 and one-half lots in Baltimore City, 1796–1799; purchased 2 lots and obtained long-term leases on 3 lots in Baltimore City, 1799–1803; leased out 9 lots in Baltimore City, 1803–1804; purchased over 9 acres