

## MICHAEL JENKINS



*Michael Jenkins, courtesy Winterthur museum*

Michael Jenkins was born 25 February 1778 in Long Green Valley in Baltimore County, one of eleven children of Michael Courtney Jenkins and Charity Wheeler, originally from St Mary's County. In 1806, Michael married Ann Worthington, sister of Henry Worthington, Jr.

After serving as a journeyman cabinet maker, he formed a partnership in 1799 in Baltimore with Thomas Combs, a cabinet maker from Charles County. The cabinetmaking venture of these two men met with a large degree of success, and, by 1802, Michael had purchased his partner's share of the business and opened a new shop at 16 Light Street, opposite the Fountain Inn, one of the most famous hotels in Baltimore. He soon added undertaker and coffin making services to the business which remained at that location for over 80 years under the management of his sons, Anthony Hearn and Henry Worthington Jenkins. The company was well known for conducting fine funerals and for its elaborate coffins. Many Baltimore notables were interred by Jenkins, including Major General Samuel Smith; Charles Carroll of "Carrollton"; John Eager Howard; Archbishop John Carroll; and Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court Roger Taney. The cabinet business produced fine furniture for Baltimore establishments such as the Bank of Baltimore and the Maryland Club. The furniture business was discontinued in 1904, the undertaker business continuing to operate in Baltimore and Monkton under the name Henry W. Jenkins and Sons until 2009.



Jenkins Cabinet Shop (1864) courtesy Winterthur

In August 1814, along with brother Edward, Michael Jenkins joined Baltimore City's 5<sup>th</sup> Regiment under Lt Col Joseph Sterrett as a private and served honorably during the War of 1812 at the Battle of Bladensburg and the Battle of North Point where his brother Edward was wounded. Three other brothers, some buried in Cathedral cemetery, also served in Baltimore units during the war and were prominent Baltimore businessmen.

Michael Jenkins died on September 8, 1832, of cholera during a prevailing epidemic, being also the Baltimore City coroner at the time. He was buried in the family plot in the old Cathedral Cemetery. With the closure of that cemetery, the bodies of Michael and wife Ann were reinterred in New Cathedral Cemetery in 1887.