

## **Manses**

Until recently, members of Presbyterian congregations provided residences for their ministers. Such a facility was termed a parsonage or manse. Flounder House was constructed as the parsonage for the Rev. Dr. Isaac Stockton Keith in 1787, and continued to serve as such from that time through the dissolution of the congregation at the close of the next century. At times during the nineteenth century, clergy lived in a manse elsewhere and rented the parsonage to others. The Rev. Dr. Elias Harrison, whose wife died only four years into their marriage, eventually lived with a daughter and her family on Pitt Street. The Rev. James M. Nourse, who served the congregation from 1885 to 1889, resided with his family at 518 Duke Street.

The practice of providing a manse for clergy continued into the twentieth century. When the re-established congregation called its first installed minister, the Rev. Dr. Kenneth G. Phifer in 1950, a manse was provided for his family at 122 North Alfred Street (the structure has since been replaced). The Phifer family relocated to a second manse at 406 West Braddock Road in 1952. When the Rev. Dr. William R. Sengel answered the congregation's call in 1960, a manse was provided for his family at 2414 Ridge Road Drive, where they lived until 1980. Sale of that manse enabled the Meeting House to financially support creation of the City of Alexandria's Guest House and Alexandria Community Shelter facilities; creation of Westminster at Lake Ridge retirement community in Lake Ridge, Virginia; make repairs to the Meeting House in 1987; and create William and Marian Sengel Scholarships for students from foreign countries at Union Theological Seminary and Presbyterian School of Christian Education in Richmond, Virginia and at Yale Divinity School in New Haven, Connecticut.