

Clio's Nursery ^[1]

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Clio's Nursery

by George W. Troxler, 2006

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[Clio's Nursery](#) ^[3], established by pioneer [Presbyterian](#) ^[4] minister [James Hall](#) ^[5], was a successful eighteenth-century classical academy located in what is now east-central [Iredell County](#) ^[6], about ten miles north of Statesville. Although the exact date that the school opened is uncertain, a certificate given to a student in 1780 confirms that it was in operation by August 1778. After the first building was destroyed by a fire, the second schoolhouse was built on top of an adjacent hill.

Hall maintained an active interest in the academy while leaving the teaching to others. During the [Revolution](#) ^[7], he served both as captain of a militia company and as regimental chaplain. When Hall's militia unit was called to active service, classes continued at Clio's Nursery under the supervision of Hall's brother-in-law, James McEwen. McEwen died a short time after his appointment, and he was succeeded in November 1779 by Francis Cummins. Cummins, who later became a Presbyterian minister, had been born in Pennsylvania and moved to [Mecklenburg County](#) ^[8] with his family.

Because of the invasion of the British army, Clio's Nursery was closed from May 1780 to April 1782, when it was reopened under the direction of John Newton. The last teacher at the school was Charles Caldwell, who began teaching there in 1785 or 1786. The school apparently never reopened after Caldwell left in 1787 to reestablish [Crowfield Academy](#) ^[9] in the bounds of Centre Presbyterian Church in Mecklenburg County.

In the short history of Clio's Nursery, an unusually large number of prominent individuals attended the school. A sketch of the academy published in 1858 listed as alumni [George W. Campbell](#) ^[10] of Tennessee, who served as secretary of the treasury in the [James Madison](#) ^[11] administration; [Moses Waddell](#) ^[12], who later became president of the University of Georgia; a U.S. congressman; three judges; and eight ministers.

References:

William Henry Foote, *Sketches of North Carolina, Historical and Biographical* (1846).

Genealogical Society of Iredell County, *The Heritage of Iredell County* (1890).

E. F. Rockwell, "The Second Classical School in Iredell County," *North Carolina Journal of Education* 1 (September 1858).

Additional Resources:

"Clio's Nursery." N.C. Highway Historical Marker M-23, N.C. Office of Archives & History. <https://www.ncdcr.gov/about/history/division-historical-resources/nc-highway-historical-marker-program/Markers.aspx?sp=Markers&k=Markers&sv=M-23> ^[13] (accessed April 5, 2013).

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[UNC Press](#) ^[17]

Authors:

[Troxler, George W.](#) ^[18]

Origin - location:

[Iredell County](#) ^[19]

From:

[Encyclopedia of North Carolina, University of North Carolina Press.](#) ^[20]

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