

Ravenscroft School for Boys ^[1]

Ravenscroft School for Boys

by Ann S. Wright, 2006



Bishop John S. Ravenscroft, 1772-1830, namesake of the Ravenscroft School for Boys. Image courtesy of

NC Office of Archives and History. ^[2] Ravenscroft School for Boys opened in [Asheville](#) ^[3] in 1856 on land purchased by the [Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina](#) ^[4]. The Diocesan Convention of 1854 had agreed to establish a church school for boys in memory of [John Stark Ravenscroft](#) ^[5], the first bishop of the Episcopal Church in North Carolina, and selected Pittsboro as the site. [Jarvis Buxton](#) ^[6], pastor of Trinity Church in Asheville, was appointed principal. Buxton's parishioners, however, were so reluctant for him to leave that they offered to build the school in Asheville. The school operated in Asheville until 1864, when it was forced to close because of the [Civil War](#) ^[7]. In 1868 [Bishop Thomas Atkinson](#) ^[8], along with Buxton, abandoned the idea of a boys school and organized the Ravenscroft Associate Mission and Training, an effort to educate local young men for the ministry. On Sundays, the students went to surrounding areas to conduct services and do missionary work.

In 1887 the Diocesan Convention voted to reestablish the boys' high school. Henry A. Prince was appointed headmaster, and a new building, Schoenberger Hall, was constructed on the grounds to house the training school. Prince was soon succeeded as headmaster by his assistant, Haywood Parker. From 1889 until 1894, Ronald McDonald, son of well-known English writer [George McDonald](#) ^[9], directed the school as a private enterprise under contract with the church. Despite its excellent reputation, the school was unable to attract enough students to make it a financial success. The high cost of tuition, along with advances in the public school system, brought about the close of the school in the late 1890s. Schoenberger Hall became the bishop's residence for western North Carolina and the rest of the property was sold. The old Ravenscroft School building remains as one of the oldest buildings in Asheville.

References:

Marshall DeLancey Haywood, *Lives of the Bishops of North Carolina from the Establishment of the Episcopate in that State to the Division of the Diocese* (1910).

Lawrence Foushee London and Sarah McCulloh Lemmon, eds., *The Episcopal Church in North Carolina, 1701-1959* (1987).

Additional Resources:

National Park Service Register for Historic Places Nomination for Ravenscroft School for Boys in Asheville: <http://www.hpo.ncdcr.gov/nr/BN0012.pdf> ^[10]

Ravenscroft School for Boys, Preservation North Carolina: <http://www.presnc.org/Successes/Ravenscroft-School-for-Boys> ^[11]

Images of the school from North Carolina State University: <http://d.lib.ncsu.edu/collections/catalog/bh1032pnc002> ^[12]

Slusser, Dale Wayne. 2013. *Ravenscroft School in Asheville a History of the Institution and Its People and Buildings* McFarland.

Image Credit:

Bishop John S. Ravenscroft, 1772-1830, namesake of Ravenscroft School for Boy. Image courtesy of NC Office of Archives and History, NC Historical Marker H-71. Available from <https://www.ncdcr.gov/about/history/division-historical-resources/nc-highway-historical-marker-program/Markers.aspx?ct=ddl&sp=search&k=Markers&sv=H-71%20-%20JOHN%20S.%20RAVENSCROFT> [13] (accessed September 11, 2012).

Subjects:

[Antebellum \(1820-1861\)](#) [14]

[Civil War \(1861-1865\)](#) [15]

[Reconstruction \(1865-1876\)](#) [16]

[Gilded Age \(1876-1900\)](#) [17]

[Education](#) [18]

[Schools \(K-12\)](#) [19]

Authors:

[Wright, Ann S.](#) [20]

Origin - location:

[Buncombe County](#) [21]

[Asheville](#) [22]

From:

[Encyclopedia of North Carolina, University of North Carolina Press.](#) [23]

1 January 2006 | Wright, Ann S.

Source URL: <https://ncpedia.org/ravenscroft-school-boys>

Links

[1] <https://ncpedia.org/ravenscroft-school-boys> [2] <https://www.ncdcr.gov/about/history/division-historical-resources/nc-highway-historical-marker-program/Markers.aspx?ct=ddl&sp=search&k=Markers&sv=H-71-JOHN-S.-RAVENSCROFT> [3] <https://ncpedia.org/geography/asheville> [4] <http://www.dionc.org/> [5] <https://ncpedia.org/biography/ravenscroft-john-stark> [6] <https://ncpedia.org/biography/buxton-jarvis> [7] <https://ncpedia.org/history/cw-1900/civil-war> [8] <https://ncpedia.org/biography/atkinson-thomas> [9] <http://www.george-macdonald.com/> [10] <http://www.hpo.ncdcr.gov/nr/BN0012.pdf> [11] <http://www.presnc.org/Successes/Ravenscroft-School-for-Boys> [12] <http://d.lib.ncsu.edu/collections/catalog/bh1032pnc002> [13] <https://www.ncdcr.gov/about/history/division-historical-resources/nc-highway-historical-marker-program/Markers.aspx?ct=ddl&sp=search&k=Markers&sv=H-71%20-%20JOHN%20S.%20RAVENSCROFT> [14] <https://ncpedia.org/category/subjects/antebellum-1820-1> [15] <https://ncpedia.org/category/subjects/civil-war> [16] <https://ncpedia.org/category/subjects/reconstruction> [17] <https://ncpedia.org/category/subjects/gilded-age-1876-1> [18] <https://ncpedia.org/category/subjects/education> [19] <https://ncpedia.org/category/subjects/schools> [20] <https://ncpedia.org/category/authors/wright-ann-s> [21] <https://ncpedia.org/category/origin-location/mountain-8> [22] <https://ncpedia.org/category/origin-location/mountain-9> [23] <https://ncpedia.org/category/entry-source/encyclopedia->