

Warrenton Female Academy ^[1]

Warrenton Female Academy

by Jean B. Anderson, 2006

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Warrenton Female Academy was founded by [Jacob Mordecai](#) ^[3] (1762-1838) in 1809 as a means of livelihood after his commodities brokerage was bankrupted by the Embargo of 1807. Over the years, he was assisted with the teaching by his son Solomon and his daughters Rachel, Julia, Caroline, Judith, and Ellen. The school gained immediate repute for its excellence and attracted the daughters of planters from all over North Carolina and southern Virginia. Students were to be taught the full range of subjects of any classical male academy as well as needlework, music, and dancing.

Having accumulated a modest fortune by 1818, Mordecai decided to retire from teaching and move to Virginia. He sold the building to his son-in-law Achilles Plunkett and two Philadelphians, Joseph Andrews and Thomas P. Jones, who continued the school. Plunkett shortly afterward withdrew to start his own school, but [Warrenton Female Academy](#) ^[1] survived and maintained its strong reputation under various principals until the [Civil War](#) ^[4] shut it down. The restored school building remained standing in the early 2000s.

References:

Charles L. Coon, *North Carolina Schools and Academies, 1790-1840* (1915).

Stanley L. Falk, "The Warrenton Female Academy," *NCHR* 35 (July 1958).

Lizzie W. Montgomery, *Sketches of Old Warrenton* (1924).

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Authors:

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Origin - location:

[Warren County](#) ^[9]

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[Encyclopedia of North Carolina, University of North Carolina Press.](#) ^[10]

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