

Tate, James ^[1]

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by H. Kenneth Stephens II, 1996

d. 1795

James Tate, schoolmaster and clergyman, went to [Wilmington](#) ^[2], N.C., from Ireland in 1760 and opened the first classical school in North Carolina under Presbyterian influence. He initially resided in a tenement on Front Street but later bought a house on the south side of Princess between Front and Second. Tate also owned a tract known as the Four Mile House located near the Race Ground.

The Reverend Mr. Tate never affiliated himself with one congregation. Instead, he preached anywhere people were desirous of the gospel. He was especially active in the area around Black and South Rivers. In the struggle between Great Britain and the colonies Tate served as a member of the [Wilmington Committee of Safety in 1775](#) ^[3]. In October of the same year he became chaplain to the First North Carolina Regiment and later to the Fourth regiment. It was in this capacity that he served with the American troops at Germantown in 1777. Being a staunch [Whig](#) ^[4], he found it necessary to move from Wilmington to the Hawfields section of [Orange County](#) ^[5], where he continued his preaching and teaching.

After the war Tate returned to Wilmington, where he opposed the confiscation of [Tory](#) ^[6] property and ratification of the new Federal Constitution. He was particularly distressed that there was to be no mint in each state of the new nation. Tate died a bachelor. It is probable that he had relatives in the Wilmington area as well as in Orange County. However, he only mentioned one, George Lawson, in his will.

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