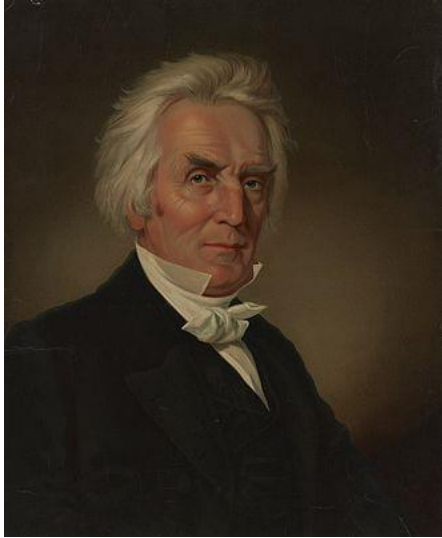


# Alexander Campbell

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Alexander Campbell around 1855

**Alexander Campbell** (12 September 1788 – 4 March 1866) was a Scots-Irish immigrant who became an ordained minister in the United States and joined his father [Thomas Campbell](#) as a leader of a reform effort that is historically known as the [Restoration Movement](#), and by some as the "Stone-Campbell Movement." It resulted in the development of non-denominational Christian churches, which stressed reliance on scripture and few essentials.<sup>[1]:111</sup> Campbell was influenced by similar efforts in Scotland, in particular, by James and [Robert Haldane](#), who emphasized a return to original Christianity as found in the New Testament. In 1832, the group of reformers led by the Campbells merged with a similar movement that began under the leadership of [Barton W. Stone](#) in Kentucky.<sup>[2]:112</sup> Their congregations identified as Disciples of Christ or Christian churches. Several American church groups have historical roots in the Campbells' efforts, including the [Churches of Christ](#), the [Christian churches and churches of Christ](#), [Evangelical Christian Church in Canada](#),<sup>[3][4]</sup> the [Christian Church \(Disciples of Christ\)](#), and the [Latter Day Saint movement](#). Alexander Campbell founded [Bethany College](#) in [Bethany, West Virginia](#).

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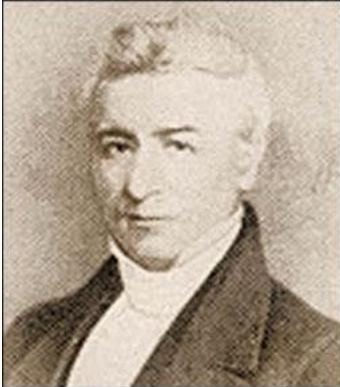
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## Early life and education[[edit](#)]



Front of the Campbell Mansion



Young Alexander Campbell

Alexander Campbell was born 12 September 1788 near [Ballymena](#), in the parish of [Broughshane](#), [County Antrim](#), [Ireland](#).<sup>[1]:98[2]:116</sup> His parents were [Thomas Campbell](#) and Jane Corneigle Campbell, who were of Scots descent.<sup>[2]:116[5]</sup> Like his father, he was educated at the [University of Glasgow](#), where he was greatly influenced by [Scottish Enlightenment](#) philosophy.<sup>[2]:117</sup> He was also influenced by the English philosopher [John Locke](#).<sup>[2]:116</sup> At age 21, Alexander emigrated to the United States with his mother and siblings from Scotland, to join his father Thomas, who had emigrated there in 1807.<sup>[2]:117–118</sup> They sailed from Scotland on the *Latonia* on 3 August 1809 and landed in [New York](#) on 29 September, then traveled overland to Philadelphia.<sup>[2]:118</sup> They continued to western Pennsylvania, where the senior Campbell was serving as a minister in [Washington County](#) on the frontier. Alexander was [ordained](#) by his father's [Brush Run Church](#) on 1 January 1812.<sup>[2]:119</sup>

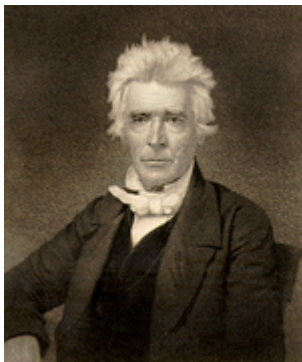
## Marriage and personal life[[edit](#)]

The year before, Campbell had married Margaret Brown on 12 March 1811.<sup>[2]:119[6]:83</sup> Margaret's father John Brown owned a significant amount of land in the Bethany, Virginia area (now in

[West Virginia](#)).<sup>[2]:119</sup> The couple resided in what is now known as the [Alexander Campbell Mansion](#) near Bethany, and had eight children. Their first child, a daughter, was born on 13 March 1812.<sup>[6]:83</sup> His daughter's birth spurred Campbell to study the subject of baptism. He ultimately concluded that scripture did not support the [baptism of infants](#). He came to believe that individuals had to choose conversion for themselves and baptism was not appropriate until they did so.<sup>[6]:83</sup>

After the death of Margaret in 1827, Campbell married again the next year, to Selina Huntington Bakewell on 31 July 1828; they had six children.<sup>[7]:135</sup> Alexander Campbell died on 4 March 1866 at [Bethany, West Virginia](#).<sup>[5]</sup> Selina outlived Alexander, dying on June 28, 1897.<sup>[7]:136,138</sup>

## Public life<sup>[edit]</sup>



Alexander Campbell

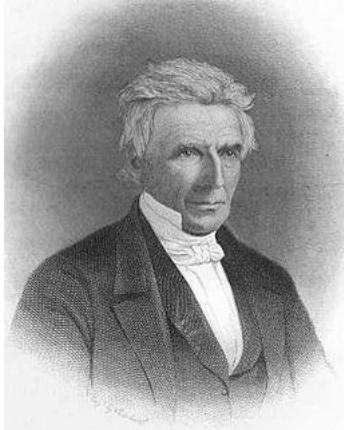
From 1815 to 1834, Campbell and his father kept the Brush Run Church affiliated with a local Baptist association. After disagreements over some issues, they allied with the Mahoning Baptist Association.

Campbell's only formal political service was as a delegate to the [Virginia Constitutional Convention](#) of 1829, held in [Richmond](#). He met some of the leading politicians of the day and was invited to preach in several churches in the capital city.<sup>[2]:123</sup>

In 1840, Campbell founded [Bethany College](#) in Bethany, Virginia (now [West Virginia](#)). He believed that the clergy should be college educated. Many future leaders of the Disciples of Christ and Churches of Christ graduated from the college, although some latter congregations did not attach the same value to theological study and professional clergy.<sup>[2]:129[8]:74–75</sup>

Campbell visited the United Kingdom in 1847. During the trip he gave public lectures in England and Scotland. He went to Ireland to deliver funds that U.S. Restoration Movement churches had raised for relief in the [Great Famine](#). While at [Glasgow](#), he was challenged by James Robertson to a debate on the subject of [slavery](#), which the [American South](#) protected. As a result of the fierce exchange, Robertson sued Campbell for [libel](#). The American denied the charge, but he was arrested and imprisoned for ten days. Campbell was released when the warrant for his arrest was declared to be illegal. The case was ultimately tried, and the jury decided in his favor.<sup>[2]:128–129[5]</sup>

## Writings[[edit](#)]



Alexander Campbell, age 65

While in his early 20s, Campbell wrote several moral essays under the pseudonym "Clarinda." and published them in a local paper.<sup>[9]</sup> In 1820, his debate with the Presbyterian John Walker was published, reminding him of the efficacy of writing and publishing.<sup>[9]</sup> He bought a press and built a small print shop in 1823, establishing what proved to be a successful publishing operation.<sup>[9][10]</sup>

Campbell edited and published two journals. The first was the *Christian Baptist*, which he edited from 1823 through 1830.<sup>[11]:174</sup> The second was *The Millennial Harbinger*, which he began in 1830 and continued to edit until his death in 1866. He became less active in it during the 1850s.<sup>[12]:517–518</sup> In both, he advocated the reform of Christianity along the lines as it was practiced on the American frontier. He encouraged contributions by writers who thought differently from him, and the journals encouraged a lively dialogue about issues in the reform movement.

Campbell expanded his printing operation in 1830 for the *Millennial Harbinger*.<sup>[9]</sup> The change from the *Christian Baptist* to the *Harbinger* was prompted by several concerns. Differences of opinion were arising between Campbell and the Baptists, and in many cases [Baptist associations](#) were expelling persons connected with the Campbell movement. He was concerned that "Christian Baptist" – which he considered to be less appropriate than the biblical term "Disciples" – was becoming the *de facto* name of the group. He also wanted the new journal to have a more positive tone, promoting reform and preparing the world for the millennium and the second coming of Christ.<sup>[9]</sup>

Campbell wrote several books, including *The Christian System*. He also wrote hymns, including "Upon the Banks of Jordan Stood".<sup>[13]</sup> Campbell compiled and published a translation of the New Testament under the title *The Living Oracles*.<sup>[9][14]:87–88</sup> Published in 1826, it was based on an 1818 translation by George Campbell, James MacKnight and Philip Doddridge, and included edits and extensive notes by Campbell.<sup>[2]:122[9][14]:87–88</sup>

## Works[[edit](#)]

- The Living Oracles (1826) — Campbell's translation



2. ^ [Jump up to: <sup>a</sup><sup>b</sup><sup>c</sup><sup>d</sup><sup>e</sup><sup>f</sup><sup>g</sup><sup>h</sup><sup>i</sup><sup>j</sup><sup>k</sup><sup>l</sup><sup>m</sup><sup>n</sup>](#) Douglas Allen Foster and Anthony L. Dunnivant, *The Encyclopedia of the Stone-Campbell Movement: Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Christian Churches/Churches of Christ, Churches of Christ*, [William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.](#), 2004, [ISBN 0-8028-3898-7](#), [ISBN 978-0-8028-3898-8](#), 854 pages, entry on *Campbell, Alexander*
3. [Jump up](#) ^ Sydney E. Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People* (2004)
4. [Jump up](#) ^ Melton's Encyclopedia of American Religions (2009)
5. ^ [Jump up to: <sup>a</sup><sup>b</sup><sup>c</sup>](#)  [Boase, George Clement](#) (1886). "[Campbell, Alexander \(1788-1866\)](#)". In [Stephen, Leslie](#). *Dictionary of National Biography*. **08**. London: Smith, Elder & Co.
6. ^ [Jump up to: <sup>a</sup><sup>b</sup><sup>c</sup>](#) Adron Doran, *Restoring New Testament Christianity*, 21st Century Christian, 1997, [ISBN 0-89098-161-2](#)
7. ^ [Jump up to: <sup>a</sup><sup>b</sup>](#) Douglas Allen Foster and Anthony L. Dunnivant, *The Encyclopedia of the Stone-Campbell Movement: Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Christian Churches/Churches of Christ, Churches of Christ*, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2004, [ISBN 0-8028-3898-7](#), [ISBN 978-0-8028-3898-8](#), 854 pages, entry on *Campbell, Selina Huntington Bakewell*
8. [Jump up](#) ^ Douglas Allen Foster and Anthony L. Dunnivant, *The Encyclopedia of the Stone-Campbell Movement: Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Christian Churches/Churches of Christ, Churches of Christ*, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2004, [ISBN 0-8028-3898-7](#), [ISBN 978-0-8028-3898-8](#), 854 pages, entry on *Bethany College*
9. ^ [Jump up to: <sup>a</sup><sup>b</sup><sup>c</sup><sup>d</sup><sup>e</sup><sup>f</sup><sup>g</sup>](#) Gary Holloway, "[Alexander Campbell as a Publisher](#)", *Restoration Quarterly*, Vol. 37 No. 1 (1995)
10. [Jump up](#) ^ Greg Taylor, "[Alexander Campbell: Millennial Blogger](#)", Disciples of Christ Historical Society, Accessed June 13, 2011
11. [Jump up](#) ^ Douglas Allen Foster and Anthony L. Dunnivant, *The Encyclopedia of the Stone-Campbell Movement: Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Christian Churches/Churches of Christ, Churches of Christ*, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2004, [ISBN 0-8028-3898-7](#), [ISBN 978-0-8028-3898-8](#), 854 pages, entry on *Christian Baptist, The*
12. [Jump up](#) ^ Douglas Allen Foster and Anthony L. Dunnivant, *The Encyclopedia of the Stone-Campbell Movement: Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Christian Churches/Churches of Christ, Churches of Christ*, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2004, [ISBN 0-8028-3898-7](#), [ISBN 978-0-8028-3898-8](#), 854 pages, entry on *Millennial Harbinger, The*
13. [Jump up](#) ^ Richardson, Robert. *Memoirs of Alexander Campbell*. In two volumes. Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1871. [Vol 2, Chapter XXI, Footnote 1](#) Accessed 1-Nov-2008
14. ^ [Jump up to: <sup>a</sup><sup>b</sup>](#) Douglas Allen Foster and Anthony L. Dunnivant, *The Encyclopedia of the Stone-Campbell Movement: Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Christian Churches/Churches of Christ, Churches of Christ*, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2004, [ISBN 0-8028-3898-7](#), [ISBN 978-0-8028-3898-8](#), 854 pages, entry on *Bible, Versions and Translations of*
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16. [Jump up](#) ^ Haley, J. J. [Debates that made history: the story of Alexander Campbell's debates with Rev. John Walker, Rev. W. L. McCalla, Mr. Robert Owen, Bishop Purcell and Rev. Nathan L. Rice](#). Saint Louis, Missouri: Christian Board of Publication, 1920.