

Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet

1787 - 1851

“Founder of the American School for the Deaf”

Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet co-founded America's first school for the deaf with the help of Laurent Clerc in 1817. He is known for supporting several social causes; fighting against slavery, starting a college for women, and serving as chaplain for the Retreat of the Insane.

On a personal note, he married a deaf woman, Sophia Fowler, a former student of the American School for the Deaf. Together, they had 8 hearing children. Their oldest son, Thomas Jr., established the first church for the deaf in America in New York City. His youngest son, Edward, established the world's first college for the deaf, Gallaudet University in Washington D.C.