

Julia Dumont

Vevay, Switzerland County

October 1794 – January 2, 1857

Julia L. Dumont is a true example of a dedicated, educated woman, wife, mother, and teacher whose life influenced her students, neighbors, family, readers, and ensuing generations. She is considered the first woman teacher in Indiana and the first published outside Indiana (Topeka) (Rabb).

Born in Marietta, Ohio, in 1794, to Ebenezer and Martha D. Cory, Julia Louisa Cory, after her father's death, moved with her mother to New York where her mother remarried. Julia was educated at the Milton Academy in Saratoga County and considered a student "with superior mental powers" (Skelcher). In 1811, she began teaching in areas of New York and continued after her marriage to John Dumont in 1812 and then in Ohio and Vevay.

While her husband established his law practice and professional duties in Vevay and other jurisdictions, Julia began her forty-year teaching career. Using methods focusing on the individual, she wrote stories and poems for the children, creating additional materials for them and providing models of writing. When "graded" classrooms were started, Julia was given charge of the high school. Writers Edward Eggleston and his brother George Cary Eggleston have praised her teaching, attributing their successes to her influence (History of Switzerland County 1136).

She published short stories and poems in Midwestern magazines, including the Cincinnati Gazette, the Cincinnati Mirror, the Western Gem and Cabinet of Literature, The Ladies Repository, the Cincinnati Chronicle, the Southwestern Journal and Monthly Review. Before her death in 1857, Julia Dumont compiled many of her short stories in her only book, *Life Sketches from Common Paths*; often contrasting "the beauty of the wilderness with the setting and mood of a pioneer town" (Switz. Co. Historical Society).

Today Julia is remembered as a Midwest Regional writer. The Julia L. Dumont Club, a woman's literary club, still meets in Vevay. Julia is portrayed in living history settings and is characterized in local theater productions. In 1853, a Julia L. Dumont Society was a part of Brookville College in Indiana, originally started for women. A Liberty Ship was dedicated to her during World War II (Vevay Reveille. 12-9-1943).

This profile was provided to ICW by Janet Hendricks, Switzerland County Historian.

For more information about Julia Dumont, go to:

<https://josotl.indiana.edu/index.php/imh/article/download/7068/7850>.

References will be published at the end of Women's History Month.



Photo Courtesy: Find-A-Grave website

(<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/61564712/julia-louisa-dumont>)

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