

Lacy, Drury, Jr. ^[1]

Lacy, Drury, Jr.

by [William S. Powell](#) ^[2], 1991

5 Aug. 1802–1 Aug. 1884



A copy of a William Garl Browne portrait of Drury Lacy Jr. by J. Bentz. Image from Davidson College.

^[3]Drury Lacy, Jr., college president, clergyman, and educator of Welsh ancestry, was born at Ararat, Prince Edward County, Va., where his father, the Reverend Drury Lacy, had a school and was a [Presbyterian](#) ^[4]minister; his mother was Anne Smith. After receiving his early education at the classical school conducted by his father, young Lacy attended Washington College for a year and then entered Hampden-Sydney College where he received a degree in 1822. From 1823 to 1828 he taught school in Virginia, and from 1828 to 1831 he studied at Union Theological Seminary. He was pastor of the Presbyterian church in New Bern, N.C., from 1834 through 1836 and then of the church in Raleigh.

Lacy remained in Raleigh until 1855, when he became president of [Davidson College](#) ^[5]. Early in his administration, the college received a magnificent benefaction from the late [Maxwell Chambers](#) ^[6], making it the wealthiest private college in the South. It was also during Lacy's tenure that the large and handsome chambers building was erected. In 1860 he left Davidson to enter the home mission field of Orange Presbytery, and in August 1863 he became a chaplain in the Forty-seventh Regiment. The regiment saw action in Virginia, particularly at Spottsylvania Court House, Cold Harbor, and Reams' Station. While in the field, Lacy conducted "a Christian Association and an Educational Institute for the moral and mental improvement of his men." For a time he also was chaplain at the General Military Hospital at Wilson, N.C. After the war he taught school, sometimes at [Peace Institute](#) ^[7] in Raleigh, and served a number of churches in the Orange Presbytery that were temporarily without a regular pastor. In 1882 he became pastor of the church in Jonesboro where he spent the remainder of his life.

In 1839 Lacy received an honorary M.A. degree from [The University of North Carolina](#) ^[8]. In 1852 the university awarded him—along with the Reverend [Moses Ashley Curtis](#) ^[9]—a D.D. degree; on the same occasion, it gave Matthew Fontaine Maury a doctor of laws degree. Two of Lacy's sermons were published: *A Thanksgiving Discourse* (1851) and *Address Delivered at the General Military Hospital, Wilson, N.C., on the Day Appointed by the President as a Day of Fasting, Humiliation and Prayer* ^[10] (1863).

Lacy was married twice. His first wife was Williana Wilkinson (1806–46), and following her death he married Mary Ritchie Rice in 1849. By his first wife he was the father of Elizabeth, James Horace, Drury, Jr., and [William Sterling](#) ^[11]. By his second wife he was the father of [Benjamin Rice](#) ^[12].

References:

Mary D. Beaty, *Davidson: A History of the Town from 1835 until 1937*(1979).

Grady L. E. Carroll, Sr., *They Lived in Raleigh: Some Leading Personalities from 1792–1892* vol. 2 (1977).

Minutes of the Seventy-First Session of the Synod of North Carolina(1885).

A. J. Morrison, *College of Hampden Sydney: Dictionary of Biography, 1776–1824*(1920?).

Alfred Nevins, ed., *Encyclopedia of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America*(1884).

E. C. Scott, *Ministerial Directory of the Presbyterian Church, U.S., 1861–1941* (1942).

L. C. Vass, *History of the Presbyterian Church in New Bern*(1886 [portrait]).

Stephen B. Weeks Scrapbook, vol. 8 (North Carolina Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill).

Additional Resources:

Gillespie, Molly P. and Grotjohn, Mark. "Drury Lacy." The Davidson Encyclopedia. Davidson College Archives & Special Collections. "Drury Lacy " Davidson Encyclopedia, June 29, 2006. <http://sites.davidson.edu/archives/encyclopedia/drury-lacy> [13] (accessed December 3, 2013).

Drury Lacy Papers, 1823-1965 (bulk 1823-1903) (collection no. 03641). The Southern Historical Collection. Louis Round Wilson Special Collections Library. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. <http://www2.lib.unc.edu/mss/inv/l/Lacy,Drury.html> [14] (accessed December 3, 2013).

Drury Lacy Family Bible Records. State Archives of North Carolina. <https://digital.ncdcr.gov/Documents/Detail/drury-lacy-family-bible-records/1348903> [15] (accessed December 3, 2013).

Image Credits:

Bentz, J. "Drury Lacy's Presidential Portrait." Portrait. Circa 1900s. The Davidson Encyclopedia. Davidson College Archives & Special Collections. <http://sites.davidson.edu/archives/encyclopedia/drury-lacys-presidential-portrait> [3] (accessed December 3, 2013).

Subjects:

[Biographies](#) [16]

[Religious Leaders and Clergy](#) [17]

[Educators](#) [18]

[Military personnel](#) [19]

Authors:

[Powell, William S.](#) [20]

Origin - location:

[Davidson College](#) [21]

[Raleigh](#) [22]

From:

[Dictionary of North Carolina Biography, University of North Carolina Press.](#) [23]

1 January 1991 | Powell, William S.

Source URL:<https://ncpedia.org/biography/lacy-drury-jr>

Links

[1] <https://ncpedia.org/biography/lacy-drury-jr> [2] <https://ncpedia.org/biography/powell-william> [3] <http://sites.davidson.edu/archives/encyclopedia/drury-lacys-presidential-portrait> [4] <https://ncpedia.org/presbyterian-church> [5] <https://ncpedia.org/davidson-college> [6] <https://ncpedia.org/biography/chambers-maxwell> [7] <https://ncpedia.org/peace-college> [8] <https://ncpedia.org/university-north-carolina-chapel-hi> [9] <https://ncpedia.org/biography/curtis-moses-ashley> [10] <https://archive.org/details/addressdelivered01lacy> [11] <https://ncpedia.org/biography/lacy-william-sterling> [12] <https://ncpedia.org/biography/lacy-benjamin-rice> [13] <http://sites.davidson.edu/archives/encyclopedia/drury-lacy> [14] <http://www2.lib.unc.edu/mss/inv/l/Lacy,Drury.html> [15] <https://digital.ncdcr.gov/Documents/Detail/drury-lacy-family-bible-records/1348903> [16] <https://ncpedia.org/category/subjects/biography-term> [17] <https://ncpedia.org/category/subjects/clergy> [18] <https://ncpedia.org/category/subjects/educators> [19] <https://ncpedia.org/category/subjects/soldiers> [20] <https://ncpedia.org/category/authors/powell-william-s-0> [21] <https://ncpedia.org/category/origin-location/piedmon-56> [22] <https://ncpedia.org/category/origin-location/piedmont-0> [23] <https://ncpedia.org/category/entry-source/dictionary-no>