FitzGerald, Frederick [1]

FitzGerald, Frederick

by James Elliot Moore, 1986; Revised by Jared Dease, Government and Heritage Library, December 2022

1825–31 Aug. 1866

Frederick FitzGerald, Episcopal [2]clergyman and Confederate chaplain, was born in London but came to North Carolina at an early age and was reared in the family of Josiah Collins [3] at Scuppernong. FitzGerald became a candidate for holy orders in 1847 during the episcopate of the Right Reverend Levi S. Ives [4], bishop of North Carolina. He attended Berkeley Divinity School, then studied in Middletown, Conn. After further preparation for the ministry at Valle Crucis, N.C., he was ordained to the diaconate by Bishop Ives at St. Paul's Church, Edenton [5], on 29 Apr. 1851. Immediately, he was sent to Northampton County [6] to take charge of the Church of the Saviour at Jackson. While there he lived with the planter Henry K. Burgwyn [7]at his estate, Thornbury, and tutored the Burgwyn children. When Bishop Ives defected to the Roman Catholic church [8] in 1852, there was no bishop in the diocese to ordain FitzGerald to the priesthood. Consequently, at the request of the standing committee, the Right Reverend John Williams, assistant bishop of Connecticut, ordained him in Christ Church, Philadelphia, on 4 Sept. 1853. During this period, the young clergyman served congregations at Jackson, Halifax, and Occoneechee Neck. The latter group consisted of some of the enslaved people of Burgwyn who met in a chapel at Thornbury. FitzGerald also held services periodically at Murfreesboro and Woodville. It seems to have been his practice to write a history of his parish, and in some cases these survive in manuscript in the front of the parish register.

In 1855 FitzGerald was called to become rector of the Episcopal congregation at Goldsboro, where he was largely responsible for the construction of St. Stephen's Church [9]. Two years later he was recalled to the Church of the Saviour. He felt, however, that he could not leave St. Stephen's and remained in Goldsboro although he gave the Jackson congregation two Sundays a month for about a year. At the same time he also served St. Mary's Church, Kinston. In 1859 FitzGerald was awarded the master of arts degree honoria causa by Trinity College, Hartford, Conn., in recognition of his outstanding contributions to the growth of the Episcopal church in North Carolina.

In 1860 FitzGerald removed to Raleigh. The census of that year lists his household as consisting of his wife Mary, age twenty-four, a native of Connecticut, daughters Elizabeth and Mary, three and one, respectively, and mulatto domestic Louise Steward, twenty-eight, together with Edward and Lady, four and two, apparently her children. In Raleigh he served in the dual capacity of assistant to Dr. Aldert Smedes [10] at St. Mary's School and editor of the newly established*Church Intelligencer*, one of the three church papers published in the Confederacy at the opening of the Civil War. The first issue appeared on 14 Mar. 1860 under the editorship of FitzGerald. On 6 June he resigned both positions to become a chaplain in the Confederate Army. With the rank of major, he served with the Twelfth North Carolina Regiment and at hospitals in and near Raleigh. A chaplain from Maine, captured during the war and imprisoned in Richmond, was once charged with violating his parole; he cited FitzGerald as a reference on his behalf.

After the war FitzGerald observed that he had "neither occupation or revenue." Consequently, he accepted a call to become rector of Trinity Church, Hoboken, N.J., in November 1865. Less than a year later he was called to the Church of the Advent in Nashville, Tenn. While preparing to accept the post, he was stricken with a fatal heart attack in late August. His funeral was held at Trinity Church, Hoboken, and he was buried in Cedar Hill Cemetery, Hartford, Conn. He was survived by his widow, the former Mary Louisa Jarvis, daughter of the Reverend William J. Jarvis of Hartford. A son, Frederick, was born after his father's death.

References:

Alumni records, Trinity College, Hartford, Conn..

Church Intelligencer, 13, 27 Sept. 1866.

Church Review, October 1866.

Henry W. Lewis, *Northampton Parishes* (1951).

Lawrence F. London, "Literature of the Church in the Confederate States,"*Historical Magazine of the Protestant Episcopal Church* 17 (1948).

Official Records of the Rebellion, ser. 2, vol. 2 (1897).

Records in the files of the Confederate Roster Project (North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh).

Additional Resources:

"Obituaries." *The American Quarterly Church Review and Ecclesiastical Register* 18, no. 3 (October 1866). 487-488. http://books.google.com/books?id=Kr_SAAAAMAAJ&pg=PA487#v=onepage&q&f=false [11] (accessed March 4, 2014).

Episcopal Church. Diocese of North Carolina; Hale, E. J. (Edward Jones). *Journal of the Fourtieth annual convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the state of North Carolina [serial].* Fayetteville [N.C.]: Edward J. Hale and Son. 1856. 55-57. https://archive.org/stream/journalofannualc40epis#page/54/mode/2up/ [12] (accessed March 4, 2014).

Cheshire, Joseph Blount. *The church in the Confederate States.* London: Longmans, Green, and Co. 1912. 73, 95, 104. https://archive.org/stream/churchinconfed00ches#page/72/mode/2up [13] (accessed March 4, 2014).

Stroupe, Henry S. "The Beginnings of Religious Journalism in North Carolina 1823-1865." *North Carolina Historical Review* 30, no. 1 (January 1953). 14, 18. https://archive.org/stream/northcarolinahis1953nort#page/14/mode/2up [14] (accessed March 4, 2014).

Frederick FitzGerald to Thomas Ruffin, Goldsboro, N.C. December 8, 1855. *Papers of Thomas Ruffin*, Vol. 2. Raleigh [N.C.]: Edwards and Broughton Printing Co. 1918. 504. https://digital.ncdcr.gov/Documents/Detail/papers-of-thomas-ruffin-vol.-2/2149045?item=2240786 [15] (accessed March 4, 2014).

Subjects:
Biographies [16]
Military personnel [17]
Religious Leaders and Clergy [18]
Authors:
Moore, James Elliott [19]
Origin - location:
Chowan County [20]
Edenton [21]
Greene County [22]
Halifax County [23]
Northampton County [24]
From:
Dictionary of North Carolina Biography, University of North Carolina Press. [25]

1 January 1986 | Moore, James Elliott

Links
[1] https://ncpedia.org/biography/fitzgerald-frederick [2] https://ncpedia.org/episcopal-church [3] https://ncpedia.org/biography/collins-josiah-sr [4] https://ncpedia.org/biography/ives-levi-silliman [5] https://ncpedia.org/edenton [6] https://ncpedia.org/geography/northampton [7] https://ncpedia.org/biography/burgwyn-henry-harry-king [8] https://ncpedia.org/roman-catholic-church [9] http://www.ststephenschurch.com [10] https://ncpedia.org/biography/smedes-albert [11] http://books.google.com/books?id=Kr_SAAAAMAAJ&pg=PA487#v=onepage&q&f=false [12] https://archive.org/stream/journalofannualc40epis#page/54/mode/2up/ [13] https://archive.org/stream/churchinconfed00ches#page/72/mode/2up [14] https://archive.org/stream/northcarolinahis1953nort#page/14/mode/2up [15] https://digital.ncdcr.gov/Documents/Detail/papers-of-thomas-ruffin-vol.-2/2149045?item=2240786 [16] https://ncpedia.org/category/subjects/biography-term [17] https://ncpedia.org/category/subjects/soldiers [18] https://ncpedia.org/category/subjects/clergy [19] https://ncpedia.org/category/authors/moore-james [20] https://ncpedia.org/category/origin-location/coastal-38 [21] https://ncpedia.org/category/origin-location/coastal-56 [22] https://ncpedia.org/category/origin-location/coastal-17 [23] https://ncpedia.org/category/origin-location/coastal-30 [24] https://ncpedia.org/category/origin-location/coastal-31 [25] https://ncpedia.org/category/entry-source/dictionary-no