

## **Simpson, Francis Lucas** <sup>[1]</sup>

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**6 June 1789–22 July 1873**

Francis Lucas Simpson, militia general and state legislator, was the son of Moses and Mary Lucas Garrett Simpson of [Guilford County](#) <sup>[2]</sup>. His parents, who were originally from Fairfax County, Va., moved to northern Guilford County by 1799 and settled on the [Haw River](#) <sup>[3]</sup>. Francis Simpson married his cousin, Priscilla Simpson (1795–1865), on 16 Dec. 1815, and they had seven children: Mary, Nathaniel Henry, Sanford Monroe, Elizabeth, Jane, Emmaline, and Joseph Hawkins, who became a physician. Simpson served as a private in the Guilford County militia and eventually became the colonel in command of the Guilford regiment. By 1851 he had been elected major general of the Ninth Division. In both Guilford and Rockingham counties, he served as a county justice.

A [Democrat](#) <sup>[4]</sup>, Simpson had a long and useful career in the [North Carolina General Assembly](#) <sup>[5]</sup>. He represented Guilford County for six terms in the House of Commons (1825–30 and 1836–37). After moving to [Rockingham County](#) <sup>[6]</sup>, he was in the House of Commons for one term (1858–59) and in the state senate for two terms (1860–64). In the legislature he served on a variety of committees, including those on privileges and elections, agriculture, propositions and grievances, rules, and corporations. During the [Civil War](#) <sup>[7]</sup> he sat on the important joint legislative committee on military affairs. Normally he took little part in the floor activity of the Assembly, but in the session of 1858, with the support of John M. Morehead, he sponsored the effort to charter the Danville-to-[Greensboro](#) <sup>[8]</sup> railroad connection. Opposed by senators desiring the rail line in their own districts, Simpson only partially succeeded by securing a charter in February 1859 to the Dan River and Coalfields Railroad from Danville to [Leaksville](#) <sup>[9]</sup>. This important transportation link was not completed until military requirements forced the Confederate government to build the Piedmont Railroad, which was finished in 1864.

In 1851 Simpson purchased High Rock plantation in Rockingham County, just over the county line from his family seat on the Haw River. In 1860, he owned nearly five hundred acres and had enslaved twenty-eight people as laborers. He continued to live at High Rock until his death and was buried at the family cemetery in Guilford County. Primitive portraits of Francis and Priscilla Simpson are in possession of the family.

### **References:**

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*U.S. Census, 1860* <sup>[17]</sup>.

### **Subjects:**

[Biographies](#) <sup>[18]</sup>

[Military personnel](#) <sup>[19]</sup>

[Public officials](#) <sup>[20]</sup>

### **Authors:**

[Butler, Lindley S.](#) <sup>[21]</sup>

### **Origin - location:**

[Alamance County](#) <sup>[22]</sup>

[Haw River](#) <sup>[23]</sup>

[Guilford County](#) <sup>[24]</sup>

[Greensboro](#) <sup>[25]</sup>

[Rockingham County](#) <sup>[26]</sup>

[Reidsville](#) <sup>[27]</sup>

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