

# MINUTES

OF THE

Nineteenth Annual Session

OF THE

## Wilmington Conference

OF THE

METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH,

CONVENED AT

CRISFIELD, MARYLAND,

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PUBLISHING COMMITTEE—THE SECRETARIES.

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J. MILLER THOMAS.

METHODIST BOOK STORE, S. W. COR. 4TH AND SHIPLEY STREETS,  
WILMINGTON, DEL.

. D., was born in Williams-  
University in 1853. Previous  
s at Amenia Seminary, New  
anguages two years at Wiltra-  
land Conference in 1855, and  
nn, Charlestown, Cambridge,  
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## Rev. A. W. Milby.

Rev. A. W. Milby was born Sept. 15, 1815, at Milton, Del., and died June 13, 1886 at Harrington, Del.

He was converted in early youth and while a student at Dickinson College became convinced that it was his duty to enter the ministry of Christ.

He was graduated from college in 1839, and on Dec. 5, 1841 was licensed as an exhorter by Rev. Joseph Castle in the old Union Church, Philadelphia. He joined the Philadelphia Conference in 1842, and was ordained Deacon by Bishop Morris, April 7th, 1844. He was ordained Elder by Bishop Hedding, April 5th, 1846. On Nov. 11th, 1847, he was married to Rebecca Levis.

The first two years of his ministerial life were spent on Springfield Circuit and New Holland Mission. Then came many years of faithful and laborious service. The churches he served were Haddington, two years; New Castle, two years; Elkton, one year; Georgetown, two years; Laurel, two years; Quantico, two years; Princess Anne, two years; Talbot, two years; Manayunk, two years; Reading, two years; Sanctuary, Philadelphia, two years.

At the close of his' pastorate at Sanctuary he withdrew from the Conference. After an absence of a year and a half, he returned and served the church at Roxboro. From Roxboro' he went to Frederica, where he remained for three years. He was pastor at Chestertown, three years; Laurel, one year; Brandywine, one year; Centreville, one year; Harrington, three years; Denton, two years; Felton, one year. At the Conference of 1883, he was appointed by Bishop Simpson as Presiding Elder of Dover District, and had just entered upon the fourth year of service in that office when his Master called him "up higher"—and after a short illness the service and duties of earth were exchanged for those of heaven.

From the beginning to the end his life was true, upright and faithful, a life upon which it is a pleasure to dwell. His character and influence teach us the beauty and power of truth and righteousness. His purity of heart and generous devotion to others won our admiration and love.

As husband and father he was tender, kind and indulgent. As a Methodist preacher, he was diligent in his work, "fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." As Presiding Elder, he possessed the confidence and affection of his brethren.

Bro. Milby was a good man. His was not the goodness which advertises and sounds a trumpet before itself; but the silent, steadfast, inward purpose of doing right; the struggle of the soul to overcome temptation; the secret longing for something better; the hunger and thirst after righteousness which no man sees. It was not the goodness which only says "Lord, Lord," but that which doeth the will of the Heavenly Father; the goodness which makes a man love God with the whole heart, and his neighbor as himself. Arthur Milby's soul was a loving soul; he was a man of warm feeling and tender sympathy; and yet how his sense of injustice flamed against evil and wrong-doing everywhere! How outspoken his indignation at what seemed to him to be injustice and wrong! Though quick to rebuke Pharisaical pretensions and inconsistencies, no man was more careful of the reputation of others. It did not seem to him to be a light thing for men to indulge in contemptuous speech of their fellows in depreciating and fault-finding conversation; in remarks prompted by envy or jealousy; to spread calumnies in the social atmosphere; to secretly undermine reputation, and to put stumbling blocks in the way of youthful aspirations.

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found such a medium; and in his life, generous wishes, kindly intentions,  
honesty of purpose, truth of speech, righteousness was made attractive.  
He was always ready to defend unpopular truth and to stand by those who  
were wronged.

More than in any man among us was to be found in him that quality  
of which the Apostle speaks as "the simplicity that is in Christ."  
Simplicity, purity and earnestness were his chief characteristics. He acted  
on the principle that no success in life could compensate for the loss of that  
sense of conscious integrity that so surely accompanies a life of fidelity and  
truth. There are places in some of our great northern lakes where you can  
look down as you sail, and count the pebbles on the bottom sixty feet below  
you, so transparent is the water. Something like this, it seems to us, was  
the transparency of the character of our brother. It was without a stain.  
He was from earliest youth devout, reverend, chaste, pure in spirit. He was  
incapable of a small or mean action. There were no dark corners in his  
life to be hid from sight. His motives were always right. *He was pure!*  
We may lift up his character and say "Behold it!" The freshness, purity  
and stainlessness of childhood are yet upon it. Thank God, that He does,  
at times, give us a man whom, without a blush, we can lift up to the great  
Maker, saying, "Take him again, he is unharmed, he is worthy of Thee."  
His life was helpful to all who came within the circle of its influence, and  
his strong individuality impressed itself on others. There are young men  
here to-day who will go through life with higher purposes and nobler ideals  
because of the influence of his life.

No man had more the courage of his opinions than he. What his  
mind thought, that his tongue uttered. His truthfulness was perfect, and if  
he believed a thing, no mortal power could keep him from expressing it. He  
was a faithful student, and profound scholar. He never stopped until he had  
mastered the subject in hand. He built from the bottom, and always builded  
well. I cannot close this paper without a reference to the man as he  
appeared to his friends. He was a true friend. His loving heart glowed  
with steadfast and devoted affection for his friends. A word of kindness, an  
act of good-will was never forgotten. His soul opened to friendships like  
the blossoming fruit-tree to the balmy sunshine in June. His friendship  
once given was not easily withdrawn. Guileless himself, he could not  
believe that others were deceiving him. Nothing short of demonstration  
could convince him of the falsity of any man he had admitted to the circle  
of his friendships. Those of us who knew him well, remember how he was  
accustomed to dwell among great thoughts, and converse on great themes.  
When you went to his home, or if he came to your's, he would call your  
attention to some noble book, or speak of some theme which would lift you  
into the realm of eternal truth, and you left his presence in higher or  
happier mood.

If I may alter a little, a stanza of Goethe, written in commendation of  
Schiller, I would say:

"For he was ours; and may this word of pride,  
Drown with its lofty tone pain's bitter cry;  
With us, the fierce storm over, he could ride  
At anchor in safe harbor, quietly,  
Yet onward did his—spirit stride  
To beauty, goodness, truth eternally;  
And far behind, in mists dissolved away,  
That which confines us all—the common lay!"

His faith was implicit. He knew his God as he knew the "tranquil  
beauty of the stars, or the meridian splendor of the sun." He had no fear of  
death. A laggard, if you please, in the race for reputation and wealth, he  
had gained a richer inheritance, and, dying, left the partner of his life and  
home "dowered with the fragrance of an exemplary life, and his children  
rich in the patrimony of his stainless name."