

# MINUTES

OF THE

FIFTY-FIRST ANNUAL SESSION

OF THE

# Central Illinois Conference

OF THE

Methodist Episcopal Church

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HELD AT

Abingdon, Illinois, Sept. 26 to Oct. 1, 1906

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OFFICIAL RECORDS

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REV. D. S. McCOWN, Editor, Henry, Ill.

REV. VINCENT ATEN, Statistical Editor, Ransom, Ill.

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## BENJAMIN CARROL SWARTS.

Benjamin Carrol Swarts was born August 1st, 1827, near Mt. Vernon, Ill., and died at Arkansas City, Kan., Sept. 16th, 1905. In 1829 the family moved to Warren County and in 1830 to Knox County. His father, Abram D. Swarts, was founder of the town of Abingdon. When about eight years old Benjamin was led to Christ through the influence of a Godly mother. His educational advantages were limited to the district school with one or two years in the Cherry Grove Seminary. In August, 1846, he was licensed to exhort and soon after to preach, his license being signed by Richard Haney. In November, 1846, he was employed as junior preacher on Mercer Circuit, which embraced all of Mercer County and parts of Rock Island, Henry and Knox, having in all thirty-two appointments. In September, 1847, he was received on trial into the Rock River Conference and appointed to Macomb Circuit with Barton H. Cartwright. His appointments were as follows: 1848, Peoria Circuit; 1849, Lacon; 1850, Pekin; 1851, Joliet, though a severe attack of typhoid fever kept him from going to Joliet. In 1852 he was appointed to Canton, 1853 to Monmouth. In 1854 his health having failed, he took a superannuated relation, which he held for six years. In 1860 he was made effective and appointed to Cuba Circuit. In 1861 to Farmington, but feeling it to be his duty to respond to his country's call, he enlisted in the army. He served a year as first lieutenant and was then appointed chaplain of the 41st Illinois. In 1863 he was sent to Ellison Circuit and in 1864 Presiding Elder of Rock Island District, which he held for four years. He then served Monmouth District one year, when his health again failed and he took a superannuated relation and removed to Kansas. His health improving, he was employed by the Presiding Elder to organize the work in Cowley County. In 1871 he transferred to the South Kansas Conference and was appointed to Oswego. In 1872 he was made supernumerary, but in 1885 he was made effective and appointed to Newton District, Southwest Kansas Conference. After three years' service on this district, Bishop Walden appointed him Superintendent of Oklahoma Mission, embracing the whole of Oklahoma and Indian Territories. When the Oklahoma Conference was organized he became a Presiding Elder in that Conference. He transferred back to the Southwest Kansas Conference and was given a superannuated relation, which he held until his death.

B. C. Swarts was a good preacher, a good man, and an earnest Christian, a true friend. He was devoted to the interests of the church he loved, and died in the triumph of his faith in Christ. His funeral was the largest ever held in the city where he lived, showing the esteem in which he was held by the people who knew him in his later life.