

Obituary - William Porcher Miles

Mr. William Porcher Miles, scholar, patriot and man, died at his home at Burnside, Louisiana, Thursday May 11, 1899. Mr. Miles was at different times a member of Congress, member of the secession convention and President of South Carolina College. The following sketch of his life is from the Biography of "Eminent Carolinians":

William Porcher Miles, the second son of James Saunders Miles and his wife, Sarah Bond Warley, daughter of Major Felix Warley of the Revolutionary Army, was born July 4, 1822. He was educated at the schools of Mr. Southworth and at Dr. Waddells' Williston Academy in Abbeville District, at which both his father and his elder brother, the Reverend James Warley Miles, had also been taught. He graduated at the College of Charleston, taking first honors.

Mr. Miles, having married a daughter of Mr. Oliver Berne of Virginia after the war, settled in Nelson County of that state, until called to the Presidency of the University of South Carolina in 1863; then resigning to take charge of his father-in-law's sugar plantations in Louisiana till deceased.

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Miles, William Porcher
1822-1899)
Me Houmas
Ascension Par., La.
May 15, 1887

Wm. Lida Perry

My Dear Madam:

Yours of 15th instant has been forwarded to me here, where I now reside as a Sugar Planter. I served in the U. S. Congress, an M.C. from Charleston, S. C. for some years before the war. Served in the Confederate Congress during the whole war. In this body I was Chairman of the committee on Military Affairs.

Very Respectfully

William Porcher Miles

MILES

William Porcher, signer of the Ordinance of Secession from the Parishes of St. Philip and St. Michael, born July 4, 1822 at Walterboro, Son of James Saunders Miles and Sarah Bond Warley Miles. After attending Willington Academy for a year, he entered the College of Charleston and was graduated in 1842 with highest honors. Studied law but later abandoned that to become a teacher. Assistant Prof. of Math in College of Charleston from 1843 to 1855, during this time his elegant manners, handsome appearance, and reputation for learning, won him

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a notable position in polite circles of Charleston. In 1835 he excited admiration of the public by his heroic services as a volunteer nurse during the yellow fever epidemic at Norfolk, Va. That city presented him with a medal and the people of Charleston offered him the nomination for mayor of Charleston - he accepted and was elected by a good majority - in 1857 he was elected to Congress where he served until his withdrawal in December 1860 - married Betty Beirne in 1863 - 1880 became first President of University of S. C. on its reorganization under white control - 1882 he resigned to become manager of the sugar plantations of his Father-in Law in Ascension Parish, La. - became one of the largest planters in the state, controlled 13 plantations which produced 20 million lbs. of sugar annually. Became President of the Ascension Branch of the La. Sugar Plantations and was one of the founders of a sugar experiment station and of the La. Planter and Sugar Manufacture, a weekly newspaper published in New Orleans. "Bourmas House", his home, was noted for its hospitality and for its collection of rare and beautiful books - he died here May 11, 1899.