

Dr. Alexander Bielaski

(15 May 1851 - 15 Dec 1926)

Bielaski. On December 15, 1926, at his home, 5508 39th st. Alexander Bielaski, D.D., husband of Roselle Bielaski and son of the late Mary Ann Cary and Alexander Bielaski. Funeral services at his late home Friday afternoon, December 17, at 2 o'clock.

The Evening Star, December 16, 1926, p. 9

Dr. Bielaski Retired M.E. Minister Expires



Was Born in Washington 75 Years Ago and Occupied Five Charges in This Section

Rev. Dr. Alexander Bielaski, 75 years old, retired Methodist Episcopal minister died at his residence, 5508 Thirty-ninth street yesterday afternoon. He had been ill several weeks.

Dr. Bielaski was born in Washington and received his early education here. He attended Boston Theological Seminary and St. John's College, Annapolis. He was admitted to this conference of the M.E. Church in 1876 and has occupied five charges in this section. He was pastor of the Union, Ryland, North Capitol, Kensington and Brookland M.E. Churches. He was retired in 1920.

The minister is survived by his widow, Mrs. Roselle Bielaski; three daughters, Mrs. Ruth Shipley, Miss Alice Bielaski and Mrs. Thomas A.H. Miller, Washington; three sons, Frank B. and A. Bruce, New York City, and Fred L., Lima, Peru, and a sister, Mrs. Agnes B. Sprague, Philadelphia.

Funeral services will be held at the residence tomorrow afternoon at 2 o'clock. Rev. J.T. Sticknal will have charge, assisted by Revs. John R. Shannon and J. Phelps Hand. Burial will be in Congressional Cemetery.

The Washington Herald, Dec. 18, 1926

Rev. Dr. Alexander Bielaski

The Rev. Dr. Alexander Bielaski, retired Methodist Episcopal minister, was buried in Congressional Cemetery yesterday. Services were held at his home, 5508 Thirty-ninth st., at 2 o'clock. Dr. Bielaski died Wednesday at the age of 75. He had been ill several weeks.

Dr. Bielaski was born in Washington. He had at various times occupied five pulpits in this vicinity, those of Union, Ryland, North Capitol, Kensington and Brookland M.E. churches. His education was received in St. John's College, Annapolis and Boston Theological Seminary. Dr. Bielaski retired from active preaching in 1920.

Surviving Dr. Bielaski are his widow, Mrs. Roselle Bielaski; three daughters, Mrs. Ruth Shipley, Miss Alice Bielaski, and Mrs. Thomas A.H. Miller, Washington; three sons, Frank B. and A. Bruce, New York city, and Fred L. Lima, Peru, and a sister, Mrs. Agnes B. Aprague, Philadelphia.

Methodist Episcopal Church, Baltimore Conference

When requested by Mrs. Bielaski to prepare a memoir of her departed husband I felt that some one with a more expert pen should be selected to write an adequate chapter of him who had been to me, for more than forty years, a brother beloved and most faithful friend.

Associating with him on hard country circuits and city charges, or during the days off, tramping with rod and gun through the mountains of West Virginia and Western Maryland, I always felt here was the full measure of a man, a Christian gentleman, one in whom my soul could trust.

It is my privilege to call attention to so much of his life as is a matter of record, but the real man, and the very best, is known only by those who shared his intimate fellowship.

Alexander Bielaski was born in Washington, D.C., May 15, 1851, and died at Chevy Chase, D.C., December 15, 1926, in the 76th year of his age.

After several weeks of much suffering he came to the end in the full assurance of faith and in hope of a blessed immortality. He was the son of Alexander and Mary Ann Cary Bielaski, the former a native of Poland.

He was married September 23, 1879, to Miss Roselle Israel, daughter of Rev. Geo. W. and Sarah Roszel Israel. The heroic spirit of these noble ancestors dwelt with the wife and enabled her joyfully to share with her husband the hardships and sacrifices of the traveling preacher. He gave forty-four years of fruitful service to the pastorate.

When he was ten years old, his father, who was serving in the Civil War as Captain and aide-de-camp to Gen. Grant, was killed at the battle of Belmont, leaving a widow and seven young children.

President Lincoln told the mother not to worry, the United States Government would always have a place for a Bielaski, and this was made a matter of record. Shortly afterwards Alexander was appointed a Page in the House of Representatives and his brother was given the same position in the Senate.

Our departed friend told with pride of the many times Lincoln had placed his long, bony hands on his head and spoke words of encouragement.

He remained in Government service until he began to prepare for the Ministry.

His elementary education was received in the public schools of Washington and in private study.

When a mere lad he became a member of the Metropolitan Memorial Sunday School, and when still quite young, was made assistant superintendent. In conjunction with his Sunday School work he became interested in Young Men's Christian Association work, and at the age of seventeen was made an active life member. He took an active part in the Praying Band connected with that organization. He was a leader of men in athletic sports. One of these young men said "Brother Bielaski demonstrated that a man could play ball and still be a Christian gentleman."

His conversion was not at a Methodist Altar, but the result of diligent study of the Scriptures and prayer in the privacy of his own room, but it was none the less real, for he witnessed a clear testimony of his personal faith in the Living Saviour.

He answered many calls to do supply work even before he was given Local Preachers License. Many souls were converted through his straight Gospel Messages.

On December 28, 1874, upon the recommendation of the Quarterly Conference and the endorsement of Rev. W.F. Speake, Presiding Elder, he was given Local Preachers License. I insert here a copy of the action of the Official Board of the Memorial Methodist Episcopal Church.

Washington, D.C., September 8, 1874

"At the regular monthly meeting of the Leaders and Stewards of the Metropolitan Memorial Methodist Episcopal Church held on Monday, September 7, 1874, the following resolution was unanimously adopted. 'Resolved, That the official members of the Metropolitan Methodist Episcopal Church, having full confidence in the gifts, graces and usefulness of our brother Alexander Bielaski, do hereby recommend his admission as a student in the Boston Theological Seminary.'"

(Signed)

O.H. Tiffany, D.D. Pastor

C.C. Burr, Rec. Steward

This is followed by a letter from Dr. Tiffany to Dr. Patton saying, "Bro. Bielaski is a young man from whom we hope and expect the best service and usefulness." Our brother has fully met these expectations. Both church and seminary has had reason to be proud of his record during the forty-four years of active service.

While serving as pastor of Maryland Avenue, Annapolis, St. Johns' College conferred upon him the degree of Doctor of Divinity, an honor well deserved.

According to the record he served six circuits and thirteen stations. At the close of a very successful four years pastorate at Laurel, Maryland, failing health made it necessary for him to ask the Retired Relation, at the Conference of 1920, which relation he held at the time of his death.

Brother Bielaski was pure in heart and life, and lived, in his home and on the street, the same religion he preached.

He was a faithful preacher of the Word. He always preached well. He never apologized for the Gospel, or thought the World needed a new religion. He preached Jesus Christ and Him crucified as the only hope of a sin cursed world. He read strong books. He was a sound and clear expositor of the Word. He wasted no time in circumlocution, but in terse, well chosen words, drove straight to the point. He was no revivalist, in the modern sense of the word, but many souls were made to think on eternal things and gave themselves to God.

Every charge prospered under his careful administration. In every home he was a welcome visitor. A young business man, to whose home he had made frequent visits in the years past, hearing of his death, wrote from a far Western City: "In picturing my ideal of what a minister should be, Mr. Bielaski measures up in every respect. He had stamina and courage as well as religious conviction. I recall with what respect and love we kids used to think of him, when I remember how, as a young man, I keenly enjoyed his visits to our fireside. His healthy wit and clear appraisal of the follies and foibles of human nature were a great education to us. His was a mind which bridged the gulf of years and took youth into its charmed circle. His heart gained the confidence and affection of us all."

He was blessed with a family of whom any man might well be proud. He is survived by his widow, Mrs. Roselle Bieleski, three daughters, Mrs. Ruth Shipley, Miss Alice Bielaski, of Washington and Mrs. Thomas A.H. Miller, of Branchville, Maryland; three sons, A. Bruce and Frank B., of New York City, and Frederick, of Lima Peru, and a sister, Mrs. Agnes B. Sprague, of Philadelphia.

The funeral services were held at his home on Friday afternoon, December 17, and were in charge of J.T. Spicknall, assisted by J. Phelps Hand, District Superintendent, John R. Shannon and A.S. Mowbray.

In accordance with the desire of Brother Bielaski, the services were brief and simple, with no eulogy. The Foundry Quartet sang, "Lead, kindly Light" and "O Love that Wilt not let me go." He was borne to Congressional Cemetery by members of his family and a friend, where he rests until the morning of the Resurrection.

William Harris.