



God's Strange Work: William Miller and the End of the World (Library of Religious Biography)

David L. Rowe

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The fascinating story of an intriguing -- and little understood -- religious figure in nineteenth-century America Calvinist Baptist preacher William Miller (1782 - 1849) was the first prominent American popularizer of using biblical prophecy to determine a specific and imminent time for Christ's return to earth. On October 22, 1844 -- a day known as the Great Disappointment - he and his followers gave away their possessions, abandoned their work, donned white robes, and ascended to rooftops and hilltops to await a Second Coming that never actually came. Or so the story goes. The truth -- revealed here -- is far less titillating but just as captivating. In fact, David Rowe argues, Miller was in many ways a mainstream, even typical figure of his time. Reflecting Rowe's meticulous research throughout, God's Strange Work does more than tell one man's remarkable story. It encapsulates the broader history of American Christianity in the time period and sets the stage for many significant later developments: the founding of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, the tenets of various well-known new religious movements, and even the enduring American fascination with end-times prophecy.

Rowe rescues Miller from the fringes and places him where he rightly belongs -- in the center of American religious history.



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