

The William Miller Paxton Manuscript Collection

Collection Summary

Creator: Paxton, William M. (William Miller), 1824-1904
Dates: 1845-1902
Extent: 11 boxes (4.3 linear feet)
Language(s): English
Repository: Princeton Theological Seminary Libraries. Special Collections.

Chronology

1824 June 7	Born, Adams County, Pennsylvania
1843	Graduated, Pennsylvania College, Gettysburg (now Gettysburg College)
1845-1848	Student, Princeton Theological Seminary
1848 October 4	Ordained, Presbytery of Carlisle
1848-1850	Pastor, Greencastle, Pennsylvania
1851-1865	Pastor, First Church, Pittsburgh
1860-1867	Professor, Sacred Rhetoric, Western Theological Seminary, Allegheny
1860	Awarded honorary Doctor of Divinity, Jefferson College
1866-1883	Pastor, First Church, New York City
1872-1875	Lecturer, Sacred Rhetoric, Union Theological Seminary
1880	Moderator, General Assembly
1883-1902	Professor, Ecclesiastical, Homiletic, and Pastoral Theology, Princeton Theological Seminary
1883	Awarded honorary Doctor of Law, Washington and Jefferson College
1902-1904	Professor emeritus, Princeton Theological Seminary

1904 November 28 Died, Princeton

Biographical Information

William Miller Paxton was born in Adams County, Pennsylvania, on June 7, 1824. He graduated from Pennsylvania College in 1843 and Princeton Theological Seminary in 1848. He was ordained by the Carlisle Presbytery, and served as pastor of Greencastle Presbyterian Church in Pennsylvania (from 1848 to 1850), First Presbyterian Church in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania (from 1850 to 1865), and First Presbyterian Church in New York City (from 1866 to 1883).

Dr. Paxton was also Professor of Sacred Rhetoric at Western Theological Seminary from 1860 to 1867, and Lecturer in Sacred Rhetoric at Union Theological Seminary in New York, from 1872 to 1875. He was awarded the honorary Doctor of Divinity degree from Jefferson College in 1860, and from Washington and Jefferson College in 1883. He was Moderator of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. in 1880. In 1883, Dr. Paxton returned to Princeton Theological Seminary, where he was Professor of Ecclesiastical, Homiletical, and Pastoral Theology until his retirement in 1902. He died in Princeton, November 28, 1904.

Scope and Content

This collection consists of sermons, addresses, notes taken as a student, biographical materials, lecture notes, class records, faculty memoranda, and other material from the life of William Miller Paxton.

Subjects

Paxton, William M. (William Miller), 1824-1904--Archives.

Princeton Theological Seminary--Faculty--Archives.

Class notes.

Lecture notes.

Princeton Theological Seminary. Library. Manuscript collections.

Administrative Information

Processing Information

It is not known when this collection was acquired by the Seminary Libraries. These papers originally existed in two separate parts. The first set of papers, now organized as boxes 1-3 of the collection, were preserved in the library's "File D." Another set of papers, now comprising boxes 4-11 of the collection, were maintained in the library's "Alumni Alcove" collection.

In July of 1994 the first set of papers were semi-organized and placed in document boxes. In June of 1996 the second set of papers were incorporated into the collection, which was largely reorganized at that time. Some items, mostly biographical materials (file 3:3) and correspondence (contained in box 1), were added to the collection from archival office files. The finding aid was written by Raymond D. Cannata under the direction of William O. Harris, Archivist.

Access

There are no special restrictions to access of this collection. It may be examined by library patrons under the normal rules and conditions of Special Collections.

Use of Materials

The following is the acceptable citation for publication: The William Miller Paxton Manuscript Collection. Special Collections, Princeton Theological Seminary Library.

Related Material

See also the following materials in Special Collections:

[The Henry Augustus Boardman Manuscript Collection](#)

[The William Swan Plumer Manuscript Collection](#)

[The Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield Manuscript Collection](#)

Arrangement

Box 1:Special sermons and addresses

Box 2: Notes from Paxton's student days

Box 3: Mementos and biographical materials

Boxes 4-7: Sermons

Box 8: Incomplete sermons and addresses

Boxes 9-10: Lecture notes, class records, and faculty memoranda

Box 11: Miscellaneous materials

Contents

Box 1: Special sermons and addresses

- 1:1 Tribute to SFB Morse the week of his funeral. 1872
- 1:2 Welcoming address to his successor at First Presbyterian Church, New York City. 1883
- 1:3 Speech for the Centennial of Carlisle Presbytery. 1886
- 1:4 Memorial sermon for Dr. Charles Aiken. January 16, 1892
- 1:5 Memorial written for ADF Fandolph. 1896
- 1:6 Funeral sermon for Dr. Gosman of Lawrenceville. 1899
- 1:7 Address as retiring President of Chi Alpha.
- 1:8 Dedication address for the opening of Presbyterian Hospital.
- 1:9 Manuscript sermons (approximately 30) [likely from Paxton's grandfather, the Rev. Dr. William Paxton], dated 1760-1845

Box 1 continued: Other writings

- 1:10 History of the First Presbyterian Church, N.Y.
- 1:11 "A Book for the Times." Review of Hints and Helps in Pastoral Theology.

Box 1 continued: Correspondence

- 1:12 Correspondence with A.B. Belknap of N.Y. June-December 1865
- 1:13 Correspondence with Alexander Russell Stevenson. 1894
- 1:14 Letter to Paxton from Orange. June 1880

- 1:15 Letter to Paxton from Glassboro, New Jersey.
- 1:16 Letter to Paxton from Golden, Colorado. December 14, 1901
- 1:17 Letter to Paxton from Cranford, New Jersey. May 1902
- 1:18 Letter to Paxton from Caesar Augustus Rodney Janvier. May 23, 1902
- 1:19 Letter to Paxton from Samuel Thompson Lowrie.
- 1:20 Letter to Paxton from Nathaniel West. 1900
- 1:21 Letter to AB Belknap from John Cameron Lowrie, recommending Paxton. October, 1865
- 1:22 Chi Alpha ministerial club, New York, resolution on Paxton leaving to go to Princeton, New Jersey. 1883
- 1:23 Charge to Paxton by Rev. Abraham Gosman. 1883
- 1:24 Letters of condolence sent to Mrs. Paxton at Dr. Paxton's death. 1904
- 1:25 Letter to James Baird from Paxton, [photocopy] February 9, 1853

Box 2: Notes from Paxton's student days

- 2:1 Bound Notebook, seminary student 1845-1848
 - Student notes "On Sacred Chronology" September 1845
 - Sermon Is. 32:2
 - "Notes upon Sermons Preached in Chapel". 1845-1847
 - Addison Alexander, Acts 28:28.
 - S. Miller. October 12, 1845
 - C. Hodge. October 19, 1845
 - Addison Alexander. October 26, 1845
 - Dr. Alexander, 1 Peter 2.
 - C. Hodge, Heb. 5:9-10.
 - Addison Alexander, I Cor. 1. November 30, 1845
 - Dr. Alexander, Jude 21. December 5, 1845
 - S. Miller, II Cor. 12:1-4. December 14, 1845
 - Dr. Alexander, Is. 40:31. January 4, 1846
 - S. Miller. January 18, 1846
 - C. Hodge
 - Alexander, Gal. 1:8-9. February 1, 1846

-Dr. Alexander, Lam. 3:22.
-Hodge, Ro. 5:29.
-S. Miller, Titus 2:14.
-Alexander, Jas. 1:17. March 1, 1846
-Hodge, Mt. 28:19-20. April 5, 1846
-Dr. Alexander, Acts 5:31.
-S. Miller, Gen. 1:27. April 18, 1846
-Hodge, Jn. ?. April 26, 1846
-S. Miller, Lk. 24:47. May 5, 1846
-Dr. Potts, Heb. 12:23.
-Dr. Alexander, 2nd Lesson, Mk. 12:29-30. August 30, 1846
-S. Miller, Ro. 8:33-34.
-Dr. Plummer
-Dr. Plummer
-Hodge, Jn. 17:3
-Alexander, I Cor. 16:19-20.
-Hodge, "We are not under the Law".
-Dr. Alexander, Prov. 22:2.
-Dr. Alexander. November 1, 1846
-S. Miller, Eph. 9:8.
-Hodge, Mt. 11:28.
-Alexander, Lk. 9:48.
-Alexander
-S. Miller, Acts 11:21-24.
-S. Miller, Phil. 6:19. January 1847
-Hodge, Ro. 11:33-36.

2:2 Bound Notebook, pastoral work 1848-1865

-List of Marriages performed by Paxton. 1853-1865

-Contributions. 1848

-Notes from a sermon given by Mr. Lee of Lawrenceville, Pennsylvania in Greencastle, Pennsylvania. September 10, 1848

- Financial notes January 8, 1857
 - Financial notes October 8, 1852- February 16, 1854
 - List of journal subscriptions
- 2:3 Bound Notebook, with comments on students' sermons, while teaching at Princeton Seminary 1890-1902

Box 3: Mementos and biographical materials

- 3:1 Address book of Paxton's acquaintances, written in several hands.
- 3:2
- Bound notebook, belonging to Paxton's father, with additions by William Miller Paxton while a Seminary student.
 - Student notes by William Paxton [Paxton's grandfather], on "Logick," "metaphysicks," "systematic divinity," and others, from lectures by Charles Nisbit of Dickinson College. One page marked "Adams Co., July 180(?)" (dated 1760-1845)
 - "Didactic theology" notes of Dr. Alexander's lecture, probably by William Miller Paxton while at the Seminary.
 - Sermon notes
 - Dr. Alexander Mar. 7, 1847
 - S. Miller, Rev. 18:4 Mar. 21, 1847
 - C. Hodge, Col. 1:28
 - Alexander, Lk. 18
- 3:3 Biographical items and obituaries

Box 4- Box 8: Sermons

Note: A card inserted in this group of papers indicated that set of these sermons were written by Paxton's own hand, while two other sets were copied in the hand of his "scribes."

Box 8: Incomplete sermons and addresses

Boxes 9-10: Lecture notes, class records, and faculty memoranda

Box 11: Miscellaneous materials

- School compositions, debates, temperance talks, and other materials.
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