

Silas Aiken (1799-1869)
Sermons, 1830-1862
Doc 727

Introduction

This collection consists of the manuscript sermons of Rev. Silas Aiken, D.D., of Amherst, New Hampshire, Boston, Massachusetts, and Rutland, Vermont. The collection was purchased by the Vermont Historical Society from DeWolfe and Wood, antiquarian book dealers, in 2014. The collection is stored in one archival records center box and consumes 1 linear foot of shelf space.

Biographical Note

Silas Aiken was born in Bedford, New Hampshire. On May 14, 1799, and graduated from Dartmouth College in 1825 as valedictorian of his class. He was ordained pastor of the Congregational Church in Amherst, New Hampshire, on March 4, 1829 and left on March 5, 1837, to accept the pastorate at Park Street Church in Boston, Massachusetts. He left that church in July 1848 and became pastor of the East Parish Congregational Church in Rutland in March of the next year. A new church building was constructed in 1860 and Rev. Aiken asked to be relieved of his duties. The congregation refused and an assistant pastor was hired. In April 1863 the congregation deeded Rev. Aiken the parsonage and on July 1 of that year he retired.

Rev. Aiken married, first, Mary Osgood of Salem, Massachusetts, and, second, Sophia Parsons of Amherst, New Hampshire. They had two sons and three daughters. Rev. Aiken died on April 14, 1869, and is buried in Evergreen Cemetery in Rutland.

Scope and Content

This collection contains a large number of manuscript sermons written by Rev. Silas Aiken, D.D., of Amherst, New Hampshire, Boston, Massachusetts, and Rutland, Vermont, during the period 1830-1862. The sermons essentially cover the breadth of Rev. Aiken's career from when he started preaching in Amherst, New Hampshire, in 1829, to when he retired in Rutland, Vermont, in 1863.

Each sermon is written on folded pieces of paper and stitched together as a little booklet or pamphlet. The top of each sermon usually contains the title of the sermon, the various dates and locations where he delivered the sermon, and the Biblical passage which formed the theme for the sermon. Some sermons have Roman numerals at the top of the page, but not all of them do. For example, a sermon on the subject of "There was great joy in that city" (Acts 8:8) as the numeral XXVIII at the top and the notation "Rewritten March 1862."

Some sermons were delivered once in Boston and then much later in Rutland. For example, "Men persuaded by the terrour of the Lord" was delivered at Park Street on September 14, 1845, and then later in Rutland on August 28, 1853. Other sermons were delivered closer together geographically. Rev. Aiken delivered "The heathen to be saved through preaching the Gospel" on January 11, 1852, in Rutland and ten years later, on January 12, 1862, in nearby Castleton, Vermont. Some sermons were delivered four or five times.

The sermons in the collection are arranged by the year the sermon was first delivered, as far as could be determined. Later delivery dates of the same sermon are not noted in the inventory; the original documents can be consulted for additional dates. The sermons in the first twenty folders, covering 1830-1852, are individually inventoried below. The sermons in the remainder of the folders have not been itemized.

Silas Aiken became a preacher towards the end of revivalism in New England. He oversaw two revivals in Amherst, New Hampshire, and at least one in Boston. Although he was a scholarly preacher, at the end of his career Aiken saw the revivalism of his first years as the pinnacle of his career. He clearly believed in the efficacy of preaching and was probably on the more traditional end of the religious spectrum.

Inventory

Doc 727:01	1830	Amherst, 1830, Deut. 11:18-21
02	1832	Rutland (Mass.?), April 14, 1850, James 1:26, "The Unbridled Tongue"
03	1834	March 9, 1834, Acts 4: 23-31, "The Primitive Disciples in Prayer" July 22, 1834, I Cor. 11:1, "The Christ Example of Paul"
04	1835	Amherst, Mark 8:34, "Christianity as a System of Faith and Practice"
05	1837	Boston, Sept 17, 1837, Matthew 11:23&24, "Obligation Increased by the Gospel". Park Street, Oct. 22, 1837, Hebrews 11:25, "The Choice of Moses"
06	1838	Boston, June 14, 1838, Phil. 1:21, "Usefulness the Glory of Life" Park Street, Oct. 7, 1838, Psalms 46:10 Park Street, Dec. 23, 1838, Deut. 32:10, "What God Does for His People"
07	1839	Park Street, Feb. 10, 1839, Matthew 10:29&30. Park Street, March 1, 1839, John 6:51 Park Street, July 28, 1839, John 17:15, "Why Christians Are Kept in This World" Park Street, Oct. 13, 1839, Psalms 4:1, "On the Greatness and Majesty of God" Park Street, Nov. 3, 1839, Isaiah 28:16 Park Street, Nov. 28, 1839, Ephesians 5:20, "Occasions for Thanksgiving"
08	1840	Park Street, Jan. 3, 1840, I Cor. 11:28 Park Street, Jan. 26, 1840, Romans 10:17, "On Foreign Missions"

- Park Street, Oct. 4, 1840, Isaiah 58:13&14, "The Blessings Connected with Well Spent Sabbaths"
- Park Street, Oct. 30, 1840, Exodus 17:11
- Park Street, Dec 27, 1840, Rev. 1:56
- 09 1841
- Park Street, Jan. 31, 1841, Matthew 22:42, "The Person, Work and Claims of Christ"
- Park Street, March 5, 1841, Psalm 56:12, "Thy Vows Are Upon Me and God"
- New York, June 27, 1841, Hebrews 4:14-16, "The Priesthood of Christ"
- Park Street, Nov.19, 1841, Romans 14:7, "For None of US Liveth to Himself"
- Park Street, Dec. 5, 1841, Proverbs 9:12, "The Consequences of Embracing and Rejecting Religion"
- Dec. 19, 1841, Psalm 102:13&14, "The Lord's Time to Favor Zion"
- 10 1842
- Park Street, Dec. 18, 1842, 2 Corinthians 4:18, "Looking at Things Unseen and Eternal"
- Park Street, June 12, 1842, Luke 2:34 & 35, "The Exhibition of Christ-Reveals the Heart"
- Park Street, June 21, 1842, 1 Peter 5:8, "The Character and Agency of Satan"
- 11 1843
- March 1843, Romans 8:14, "For as Many as Are Led by the Spirit of God, They Are the Sons of God"
- Park Street, July 2, 1843, 1 John 4:9, "The Love of God Proved by the Mission of Christ"
- Park Street, Nov.5, 1843, Isaiah 54:17, "Safety of the Church"
- Park Street, Nov. 5, 1843, Exodus 20:7, "On Profaneness, Third Commandment"
- Park Street, Oct. 22, 1843, Exodus 20"4-6, "On Image and Worship or Second Commandment"
- Park Street, Sept. 10, 1843, 2 Timothy 3:5, "Nature, Causes and Guilt of Religious Formality"
- 12 1844
- Park Street, March 3, 1844, Philippians 3:8, "The Excellence of the Knowledge of Christ"
- Park Street, Feb. 1844, Ephesians 5:11, (only a partial manuscript)
- Park Street, Dec. 22, 1844, John 3:8, "Reality of Divine Influence in Regeneration"
- Park Street, June 3, 1844, Romans 13:11&12, "On Religious Apathy"
- Park Street, Oct. 7, 1844, Matthew 11:30, "Christ Yoke is Easy and His Burden Light"

- Park Street, Oct. 13, 1844, Galatians 1:8&9, "False Teachers Accursed"
- Park Street, Sept. 1, 1844, Ephesians 4:30, "On Grieving the Holy Spirit"
- Park Street, Aug. 11, 1844, Job 21:7, "Why the Wicked Live"
- Park Street, Aug. 4, 1844, Acts 24:25, "Paul Preaching Before Felix"
- Rutland, July 2, 1884, Ephesians 2:13, "A State of Nature and the State of Grace"
- Park Street, June 27, 1844, Luke 22:61 &62, "Fall and Restoration of Peter"
- 13 1845
- Park Street, March 9, 1845, Matthew 26:24, "The Wickedness and Doom of Judas"
- Park Street, Sept. 14, 1845, Corinthians 5:11. "Men Persuaded by the Lessons of the Lord"
- Park Street, Feb. 23, 1845, Isaiah 50:11,"The Ruinous Consequences of Self Flattery"
- Park Street, Jan.5, 1845, Luke 10:42.
- Park Street, June 15,1845 ,James 1:27, "The Religion of Active Goodness"
- Park Street, Aug. 16, 1845, Hebrews 4:13, "On God's Omnisciences"
- 14 1846
- Park Street, April 2, 1846, Psalm 68:30, "On the Atrocities of War"
- Park Street, Oct. 4, 1846, Hebrew 12"1,2, "The Christian's Life a Race"
- Park Street, Jan. 1846, Matthew 7:24-27, "The Parable of the Two Builders"
- Park Street, Feb 1, 1846, Acts 8:5-8, "Philip at Tasmania"
- 15 1847
- Park Street, Sept. 26, 1847, John 14:6, "Christ, the Way, the Truth and the Life"
- Park Street, Sept. 19, 1847, Matthew 28:19, "The Doctrine of the Trinity"
- Park Street, Oct. 17, 1847, Luke 16:31, "The Testimony of the Bible Stronger than That of One Rising from the Dead"
- Park Street, March 14, 1847, Acts 17:30, 31, "Nature, Reasonableness, and Necessity of Evangelical Repentance"
- Park Street, Oct 24, 1847, Acts 17:27 & 28, "On Finding Gods"
- Park Street, Sept. 26 1847, Isaiah 112:3, "The Wells of Salvation"
- 16 1848
- Park Street, Jan 30, 1848, Psalm 85:6, "On Religious Revival"
- 17 1849
- Rutland, Oct 17, 1849, Matthew 20:29-34,
- 18 1850
- Rutland, Sept 8, 1850, Luke 23:42 & 43,"The Penitent Thief"
- Rutland, Nov. 3, 1850, 1John:2:6, "Christ's Example"

- Rutland, Oct. 27, 1850, Jeremiah 2:12 & 13, “The Two Evils”
 Rutland, Nov. 3, 1850, John 13:34 & 35, “The Mutual Love of
 Christians”
- 19 1851
 Rutland, April 6, 1851, Exodus 14:15, “Hindrances to Duty How
 Overcome”
 Rutland, Luke II, Rewritten
 Rutland, Feb.16 1851, 1Kings 19: 11,12 &13, “ God Heard in the Still
 Small Voice”
- 20 1852
 Rutland, Jan 11, 1852, Romans 10: 14, 15 & 17, “The Heathen to be
 Saved Through Preaching the Gospel”
 Rutland, Nov, 28, 1852, Mathew 17:5-7, “The Transfiguration”
 Rutland, April 25, 1852, 2 Cor. 10:4, “The Weapons of Our Warfare”
 Rutland, Jan 18, 1852, Romans 3:20, “Knowledge of Sin by the Law”
 Rutland, Dec 19, 1852, Mathew 7:13:14, “The Difficulty of Salvation”
 Rutland, Oct 17, 1852, Psalm 119, “The Good Mans Grief in Crises of
 Transgression”
 Rutland, April 4, 1852, Proverbs 13:15, “The Way of Sin Hard”
 Rutland, March 28, 1852, Romans 2:4, “On God’s Forbearance”
 Rutland, March 28, 1852, Mathew 12:49,50, “The Family of Christ”
 Rutland, March 7, 1852, Ephesians3:17-19, “The Knowledge of
 Christ’s Love”
- 21 1853
 22 1854
 23 1855
 24 1856
 25 1857
 26 1858
 27 1859
 28 1860
 29 1862
 30 Miscellaneous

Sarah Durham, Mary Carnahan, Paul Carnahan
 August 2017; rev. April 2021
 AikenSilasSermons.docx

