

AMERICAN ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY
MANUSCRIPT COLLECTIONS

NAME OF COLLECTION:

Fiske, Nathan, Papers, 1750-1799

LOCATION(S):

Octavo vols. "F"
Mss. boxes "F"

SIZE OF COLLECTION:

20 octavo volumes; 1 manuscript box

SOURCES OF INFORMATION ON COLLECTION:

For a biographical sketch of Nathan Fiske, see *Sibley's Harvard Graduates*, (Boston, Mass.: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1965), vol. XIII, p. 400-406.

SOURCE OF COLLECTION:

twenty-eight sermons, the gift of Waldo Lincoln, 1907; eight diaries, the gift of Benjamin T. Hill

COLLECTION DESCRIPTION:

Nathan Fiske (1733-1799), son of Nathan and Anne Warren Fiske, was born in Weston, Mass. He graduated from Harvard College in 1754 and then kept school in the towns of Harvard, Mass., and Weston. After turning his attention to the study of theology, he preached his first sermon at Hanover, Mass., in 1756, and was ordained a Congregational minister at Brookfield, Mass., in 1758. He served as minister of the Third Parish of Brookfield from the time of his ordination until his death. He married Sarah Hill (-1774), of Cambridge, Mass., in 1758, then Elizabeth Breck Treat (-1786), of Northampton, Mass., in 1777, and lastly Hannah Wells Reynolds (1736-1825), of Enfield, Conn., in 1789.

Fiske, a liberal Calvinist, was known for his excellent sermons, which were widely printed and reprinted, and for his essays, which were published in the *Worcester Spy*. One hundred and fifty-one of his essays on diverse subjects appear in a two-volume set called *Moral Monitor*, published in 1801. Harvard College awarded Fiske the degree of Doctor of Divinity in 1792 and in 1796 asked him to preach the Ducleian Lecture on revealed religion. He died in his sixty-seven year in Brookfield.

This collection of papers consists of diaries, notebooks, sermons, and miscellaneous papers. There are sixteen diaries, for the period 1754 to 1799, which record the weather and Fiske's daily activity. Also, the diaries record monthly comments concerning the weather and the welfare of Fiske's community. There are typed copies of the 1771 diary.

One of the notebooks, which covers the period 1750 to 1795, consists mainly of poetry and personal account records. Another notebook, ca. 1752?, contains extracts from various history books. The notebook entitled, "Fisk's Sermons & [etc.?]," for the period 1752 to 1795, includes miscellaneous notes, extracts from various religious articles, and essays and sermons apparently written by Fiske.

The final volume contains manuscript sermons, mainly Fiske's, that had been collected together by his grandson, William Jennison (1790-1866), in 1861.

The miscellaneous papers include correspondence concerning religious matters; typescript copies of the 1771 diary; sermons, from the period 1778 to 1798; and copies of extracts from various history books, drafts and copies of sermons, addresses, and religious essays.

American Antiquarian Society
MANUSCRIPTS DEPARTMENT

NATHAN FISKE, PAPERS, 1750-1799
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