

American Antiquarian Society

Manuscript Collections

NAME OF COLLECTION:

Scandlin, William George, Papers, 1849-1936

LOCATION:

Octavo vols. "S"
Mss. boxes "S"

SIZE OF COLLECTION:

4 octavo volumes; 1 manuscript boxes

SOURCES OF INFORMATION ON COLLECTION:

For biographical information, see Rev. Arthur Edward Wilson's sermons on the life of Scandlin in the manuscripts box. These sermons were delivered by Wilson, Minister of the Congregational Society of Grafton, Mass., in 1936. See also, *General Catalogue of the Meadville Theological School ...* (Chicago: s.n., 1945), p. 124, and Samuel A. Eliot, ed., *Heralds of a Liberal Faith*, (Boston: American Unitarian Association, 1910), p. 109-110.

SOURCE OF COLLECTION:

Gift of Scandlin's children: Mrs. George H. Newcomb, her brother and sister, 1936

COLLECTION DESCRIPTION:

William George Scandlin (1828-1871) was born in Southsea (near Portsmouth), England, on 16 February 1828. The youngest of fifteen, he left home at an early age and followed the sea for fourteen years. Around 1847, he became drawn to religion and by 1849 had decided to devote himself to a religious life. After escaping from the British Navy he arrived in Boston in May of 1850 and was befriended by Rev. Edward Thompson Taylor (1793-1871), also known as Father Taylor, of the Bethel Church. Scandlin joined the Methodist Church under the sponsorship of the Seamen's Mission of Boston and with their support, financial and otherwise, attended Meadville Theological School (Meadville, Pa.), from 1850 to 1854.

While attending Meadville, he met his first wife Christianna S. Adrain (-1854), a sickly woman, whom he married on 13 December 1853. She died on 28 April 1854. Scandlin graduated on 29 June 1854 and returned to Boston to preach for Father Taylor during the summer vacation. However, four years at Meadville (an Unitarian institution) had undermined his orthodox theology and on 17 December 1854, he became a minister-at-large for the Benevolent Fraternity of Churches of Boston (a Unitarian organization). He was ordained under Unitarian auspices in the Hollis Street Church on 14 January 1855.

He married his second wife, Mrs. Eliza M. (Foster) Sprague (-), a young widow with a small son, daughter of Captain Ira Foster of Eastport, Me., on 14 April 1855, by whom he had six children. They remained in Boston until 1858, when he accepted the call to the First Congregational (Unitarian) Church in Grafton, Mass., where he was installed on 23 June 1858. He remained in Grafton, except for a period during

the Civil War, serving as minister, and became one of the influential men of the town, sometimes representing it in the General Court.

He served as chaplain in the 15th Massachusetts Regiment and as a member of the United States Sanitary Commission for the first two years of the Civil War. He was captured at Gettysburg, taken prisoner, and confined to three months in Libby Prison in Richmond, Va. He returned to Grafton and remained there until his death on 17 March 1871.

This collection contains the diaries of Rev. William George Scandlin for the period 5 November 1849 to 19 July 1862. Coverage in the later years is sporadic and there are gaps throughout the time span. Most of the diaries include newspaper clippings, and tipped in and loose correspondence.

The collection also contains miscellaneous correspondence, papers, newspaper clippings, drawings, and a photograph pertaining to the life and death of Scandlin. These papers include certificates of preaching; letters to and from the Benevolent Fraternity of Churches; papers and newspaper clippings pertaining to his participation in the Civil War; a newspaper clipping concerning his ordination in 1855; biographies of Scandlin, including a reminiscence by his wife; resolves and letters of condolence written to his wife and children; a photograph; and miscellaneous articles and drawings mostly relating to the Civil War.

See Contents List.

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Contents List

Octavo Volume

- 1 Diary, 1851 December 31 - 1861 August 5
- 2 Diary, 1861 August 4 - 1862 July 19
covers 1861 August 4 - November 17; Sayings of the
War of 1861; 1862 January 15 - March 22; and 1862
March 23 - July 19
- 3 Diary, 1862 August 8 - November 4; 1864 January 15 - December 16
includes correspondence and newspaper articles from
that period
- 4 Biography of William G. Scandlin by Rev. Arthur Edward Wilson

Manuscript Box

- Folder 1 Diary, 1849 November 5 - 1850 April 4
includes a leaf from his log, 1850 February 19
- Folder 2 Diary, 1850 May 3 - November 19
includes poetry written by Scandlin during the period
January 1851 to June 1854
- Folder 3 Miscellaneous Papers and Correspondence, undated; 1853-1869; 1875
includes a letter from Mrs. Scandlin to a Rev. Mr.
Staples in regard to a book being written about her
husband, dated 28 February 1875
- Folder 4 Miscellaneous Newspaper Clippings, undated; 1855-1863
includes clippings pertaining to his ordination;
reviews of addresses he gave concerning his capture
and imprisonment in Libby Prison; and other Civil War
related topics
- Folder 5 Miscellaneous Papers and Newspaper Clippings Concerning
Scandlin's Death
- Folder 6 Miscellaneous Papers Concerning Scandlin's Life,
collected by Rev. Arthur Edward Williams
includes a reminiscence by Mrs. Scandlin
- Folder 7 Biography of Scandlin (by Jencks?)
- Folder 8 Articles, undated; 1871(?); 1886
includes a partial article on Sabbath in war; an
article by Scandlin entitled, "Salt-Water Sketches";
and an article about Libby Prison
- Folder 9 Drawings and photograph