

A Guide to the Papers of John Skinner

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History

Processed by: Special Collections Staff

Title Statement

A Guide to the Papers of John Skinner

Subtitle: Skinner, John, Papers

Collection: 4818-a

Publication Statement

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Publisher: Special Collections, University of Virginia Library

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Profile Description

Creation: Machine-readable finding aid derived from MS Word, created by AEL Data Digitization and Digital Curation Services [Date of source: 2011.

Language Usage: Description is in English.

Descriptive Summary

Language

English

Repository

Special Collections, University of Virginia Library

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

Use Restrictions

Acquisition Information

The collection was purchased by the Library from Jerry N. Showalter, 2007 November 19.

Preferred Citation

Papers of John Skinner, Accession #4818-a, Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Va.

This collection contains appeals, complaints, correspondence, and other papers, 1847-1848, 23 items, in the case of the Reverend John Skinner, put on trial by Presbytery of Lexington on the charge of libel and defamation against the President and Professors of Washington College, three of whom are in the ministry with him, in a pamphlet written by Dr. Skinner.

In the pamphlet (not present), he accused the President and Professors of participating in producing dissatisfaction with his ministry (pages 76-77); treating the students publicly with contempt; acting as police and "spying through key holes"; professors being very jealous of their authority; said the professors feared

Dr. Skinner coming to examine their classes; states that the college dignitaries have a disposition to inflict their wrath on students who wrote a letter of sympathy for Skinner (page 80); accused the President and professors of Washington College of acting to prevent the address of the Rev. Dr. Alexander, who had come by appointment, to the student body (pages 83-84); wrote very specific accusations against his fellow ministers, Rev. Ruffner, Rev. Calhoun, and Rev. Armstrong (pages 81-90), which included the approval of dancing, statements that Washington College was not a Presbyterian College, interfering with his ministry, and communing with Episcopalians, latitudinarianism, among other complaints; and accusing Major J.T.L. Preston (page 65), an elder in the church of Lexington, of unsound doctrine.

The Reverend John Skinner, according to the charges, wrote about himself, "I am a Presbyterian minister of Scottish caliber & I have been set & appointed as sentinel at the gates of the Presbyterian Church here; & since you & your other Presbyterian Professors have playing such 'fantastic tricks before high heaven' in my absence - I am determined just to keep a more vigilant watch in future." For more details see the manuscript Copy of Charges & Specifications exhibited against Dr. John Skinner, February 4-March 22, [1848], and the printed items in Rare Books, including: *Case of the Rev. John Skinner, D.D., and the Presbyterian Church of Lexington* [BX9193.S45S45 1847], *Record of the Presbytery of Lexington, convened for the Trial of the Rev. John Skinner, D.D.* [BX9193.S45 P7 1848]; and *Sundry Papers in the Lexington Church Case* [BX9193.S45 S5 1848].

Contents List

1847 August 12 Copy of a Letter from John B. Style and others to the Rev. John Skinner, suggesting that "a large proportion of the congregation over which you are placed, have not enjoyed or been profited in their attendance upon your ministrations as their Pastor." With a note stating it is the "letter referred to in his Memorial of Resignation."

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1847 August 18 Draft of Minutes taken by the Rev. Henry Brown, at the convening of the Presbytery of Lexington at Bethesda Church, where a sermon from Job 9:2 was preached by the moderator the Rev. W.W. Trimble

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1847 September 9 Protest and Appeal from a decision of the Presbytery of Lexington, of the Rev. John Skinner, D.D. Pastor of the Presbyterian Church of Lexington, to the Synod of Virginia

Box-folder 1:3

1847 October 23 "Appeal of the Rev. John Skinner against a Decision of the Synod of Virginia, to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, to meet in Baltimore in the month of May, 1848," received October 30th by Peyton Harrison Mod[erator?] Synod of Virginia

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1847 October 26 "Synodical conclusions desired" by the Rev. John Skinner

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1847 October 26 Inventory of Documentary Evidence

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1847 October Notes on Dr. Skinner's Appeal

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1848 January 18 Copy of a letter from John Skinner to Mr. Brawford, asking him to put the enclosed citation letters in the post office at Greenville or deliver to the parties respectively at least ten days before February 2nd"

Box-folder 1:8

[1848] February 4-March 22 Copy of Charges & Specifications exhibited against Dr. John Skinner, "Began to take testimony on these Charges February 4th at 3o'clock p.m. continued till 6 o'clock. Resumed the examination on Monday 7th in the afternoon. A.B. Stuart witness. The Pby. was called to hear & issue the case March 22nd"

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1848 February 9 Copy of Dr. Skinner's Answer to 2nd Citation addressed to the Mod[erator] of Lexington Presbytery

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1848 April 3 Final Protest of the Rev. John Skinner, D.D.

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1848 April "Appeal and Complaint to the General Assembly, Rev. John Skinner, D.D. versus Presbytery of Lexington"

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1848 April Complaint to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of the United States, of the Rev. William Calhoun and others, members in the minority of the Presbytery of Lexington, Synod of Virginia, in the Case of the Rev. John Skinner, D.D.

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1848 May 4 Extract from the Minutes of Lexington Presbytery, signed by R.N. Davis

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1848 May 26 "Brief Notes for a speech in the case of Rev. John Skinner D.D. Baltimore"

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n.d. Complaint "Notes on the complaint of Rev. William Calhoun and Mr. Thomas P. Edmondson"

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n.d. Note about "the unwarrantable abuse of this Presbytery of Lexington"

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n.d. "Notes for my speech on Dr. Skinner's Appeal from the Decision of Presbytery suspending him from all the functions of the gospel ministry"

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n.d. Letter from Francis McFarland and Benjamin M. Smith, [as representatives of the Lexington Presbytery?] to the Judicial Committee concerning the appeal of Dr. Skinner

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n.d. Note beginning "The Assembly regards a Commission of a Judicatory, authorized to take up & issue business specially assigned to it"

Box-folder 1:20

n.d. Note beginning "Resolved, that all the Protests of Dr. S. which have not been disposed of by a action of Pres- be referred to a Committee" consisting of Dr. McFarland, Rev. William Brown, Mr. Charles Patrick

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n.d. Note concerning actions that will be taken against those who continue to act disorderly at places of public worship after other kindly and earnest moral means have failed to correct the problem

Box-folder 1:22

n.d. "Notes on Dr. Skinner's Appeal from the decision of the Synod of V. that his appeal would not lie"

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