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Inventory of the William Martin Aiken Papers, 1878-1956

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Descriptive Summary

Title:	William Martin Aiken papers
Date(s)	1878-1956
Creator:	Aiken, William Martin, 1855-1908
Abstract:	Sketchbooks, photographs, clippings and other professional papers of Charleston born architect William Martin Aiken. Materials relate to Aiken's student and professional work as an architect in Boston, Massachusetts, and Cincinnati, Ohio, and as the Supervising Architect of the Treasury Department. Materials also relate to homes designed by Aiken as well as buildings designed by the New York City architectural firm McKim, Mead, and White.
Extent:	5.70 linear feet (3 document boxes, 4 flat boxes)
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Call Number:	Mss 0002
Language of Material:	Materials in English

Biographical Note

William Martin Aiken was born July 1, 1855 in Charleston, South Carolina. In 1872, Aiken attended the University of the South in Sewanee, Tennessee, leaving in 1874 to teach at the Charleston High School and, later, returning to Tennessee to teach on the faculty at the University of the South. Moving to Boston in 1877, Aiken continued his studies at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, graduating two years later. After graduating, Aiken worked in several Boston architects offices, including the office of Henry Hobson Richardson, a prominent 19th century architect. Leaving Boston in 1886 for Cincinnati, Ohio, Aiken started his own practice, partnering with E. H. Ketcham until 1895. During this time Aiken also began teaching at the Cincinnati Art Academy. In 1895, Aiken became the Supervising Architect of the Treasury Department, a position he would hold for two years. As the Supervising Architect, Aiken would design many post offices, court houses, and customs houses across the U.S. Aiken also supervised the planning and construction of the U.S. Mints in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and Denver, Colorado, as well as the government buildings erected at the Atlanta Exposition of 1895 and the Nashville Exposition of 1897. After leaving his position as Supervising Architect, Aiken began practicing in New York City with Bruce Price, and from 1901 to 1902, worked in the office of the President of the Borough of Manhattan as a consulting architect. As consulting architect, Aiken remodeled the interior of the City Hall and the New York County Court House. Aiken passed away on December 7, 1908, in New York City.

Collection Overview

Sketchbooks, photographs, clippings and other professional papers of Charleston born architect William Martin Aiken. Materials relate to Aikens student and professional work as an architect and as the Supervising Architect of the Treasury Department. Aiken's work as an architect is represented by a small number of drawings, numerous photographs and clippings. Aiken's architectural education and travels are recorded in a series of ten sketchbooks, containing sketches of architecture and architectural details of buildings in the United States, Canada, and Europe. Aikens professional work in Cincinnati is best represented. There are measured plans and photographs for the Charles Anderson Jr. residence, built in 1886, as well as photographs of houses designed for Henry Preserved Smith and Captain H .S. Chamberlin. Also included are photographs of federal buildings, primarily post offices, designed by Aiken throughout the United States for the Treasury Department during his two year tenure. Also included are clippings from architectural journals and plates from portfolios relating to federal buildings and homes designed by Aiken as well as buildings designed by the New York City architectural firm McKim, Mead, and White, and churches. Clippings are primarily of buildings designed in the Beaux Arts and Romanesque styles, styles which Aiken generally used for his own designs. Also included are clippings of doorway and wrought iron metal work designs.

Collection Arrangement

1. Sketchbooks, sketches, and working drawings, 1877-1907, undated
2. Photographs, 1880-1898, undated
3. Clippings, 1877-1956, undated
4. General, 1879-1909, undated

Restrictions

Access Restrictions

This collection is open for research.

Copyright Notice

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Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person, family, or organization, by topical subject, by place, and by types of material.

Names

Aiken, William Martin, 1855-1908
McKim, Mead & White

Subjects

Architects--South Carolina--Charleston
Architects in government--United States--History--19th century
Architecture--United States--History--19th century
Architecture--Ohio--Cincinnati--History--19th century
Architecture--Massachusetts--Boston--History--19th century

Places

Boston (Mass.)
Cincinnati (Ohio)

Types of Material

Sketches
Sketchbooks
Black-and-white photographs
Clippings (information artifacts)

Administrative Information

Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], William Martin Aiken papers, College of Charleston Libraries, Charleston, SC, USA.

Acquisitions Information

Materials were donated in 1977 by Albert Simons.

Alternate Form of Materials

Sketchbooks (1878-1907) available online in the **Lowcountry Digital Library**.

Processing Information

Reprocessed by Joshua Minor, August 2011. Originally processed by Special Collections staff.

Encoded by Joshua Minor, January 2012.

Reviewed, edited, and uploaded by Martha McTear, January 2012.

Detailed Description of the Collection

1. Sketchbooks, sketches, and working drawings, 1877-1907, undated

Includes sketchbooks primarily consisting of miscellaneous architectural details by other architects in the United States and Europe. Sketchbooks are done in pencil and watercolor. Most early sketches are of buildings in Boston, Massachusetts, Newport, Rhode Island, and other New England cities. Many sketches show the work of Henry Hobson Richardson and buildings by the architectural firm, McKim, Mead, and White. A small number of the earliest sketches are of details of buildings in Charleston, South Carolina while later sketchbooks are primarily of architecture and architectural details of England, France, and Italy. Occasional landscape sketches are also included. Also included are working drawings for the residences of Mr. Wilfred Buckley, New York, and Mr. Charles Anderson Jr., Cincinnati, Ohio, pen and ink drawings of capitals, towers, and various floor plan sketches.

Sketchbooks (1878-1907) are digitized and available online in the Lowcountry Digital Library.

Sketchbooks, 1877-1907, undated

Box 6 Folder 1

Sketchbook, 1877

Aiken's student sketchbook from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Includes architectural details from publications done in pen and ink on tracing paper.

Box 1 Folder 1

Sketchbook, 1878-1879

Includes pencil sketches and occasional watercolors primarily of buildings and architectural details in Charleston, South Carolina, Boston, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, France, England, and Switzerland.

Box 1 Folder 2

Sketchbook, 1878-1885

Pencil sketches primarily of buildings and architectural details in Boston, Massachusetts, Charleston, South Carolina, Atlanta, Georgia, Virginia, North Carolina, New Hampshire, Montreal, and Quebec, Canada. Also included is a sketch of the Fairbanks house in Massachusetts and sketches from portraits as well as sketches of people and sailing vessels.

Box 1 Folder 3

Sketchbook, 1879-1882

Pencil sketches and occasional watercolors of landscapes and architecture in Boston, Massachusetts, Newport, Rhode Island, Brookline, Massachusetts, White Mountains, New York, Chateaugay, New York, and Quebec, Canada.

Box 1 Folder 4

Sketchbook, 1882

Pencil sketches of the Lyman house in Waltham, Massachusetts, the Howells house in Belmont, Massachusetts, and copies of sketches from publications. Also included are Aiken's copies of fellow student's work, drawn while travelling in Europe, primarily France and Italy, with the initials of the original artist often provided.

Box 1 Folder 5

Sketchbook, 1882-1887

		Pencil and watercolor sketches of houses, mansions, and interior and exterior architectural details including gates, doors, and mantels in Charleston, South Carolina, Savannah, Georgia, Rhode Island, and England. Also included are sketches consisting of details of designs by Henry Hobson Richardson, including a watercolor of the baptismal font of Trinity Church, Boston, and sketches of the work of the architectural firm of McKim, Mead, and White.
Box 1 Folder 6	Sketchbook, 1888-1889	Pencil and watercolor sketches of architecture and architectural details in London, England, including St. Johns Chapel and Trinity College, and Italy, including the Basilica of San Clemente and the Basilica of San Lorenzo. Color watercolor sketches of the St. Minias mosaic from the San Miniato al Monte basilica and the Porta San Nicolo are also included.
Box 1 Folder 7	Sketchbook, 1889	Pencil and water color sketches of Venetian architecture and architectural details. Watercolors include the Basilica of St. Mary of Health and Giudecca at sunset.
Box 1 Folder 8	Sketchbook, 1905	Pencil and water color sketches of Mexican, Italian, Austrian, and Swiss architecture. Sketches are primarily in watercolor and include sketches of domes, chimneys, and towers.
Box 1 Folder 9	Sketchbook, 1905-1907	Pencil sketches of interior architectural details from churches in France and London, England. Also included are sketches of sailing ships and birds.
Box 2 Folder 1	Sketches, 1880-1895, undated	Pencil, watercolor, and pen and ink sketches of towers, floor plans, and crests. Also included are copies of fellow student's work, drawn while travelling in Europe, and a sketch of the remodeled Captain H. S. Chamberlin residence.
Box 6 Folder 2	Sketches, 1880-1895, undated	Pencil and pen and ink drawings of capitals and sculptures as well as a watercolor sketch of a club house designed by McKim, Mead, and White architects. Also includes a study of a post office tower in Patterson, New Jersey.
Box 2 Folder 2	Working drawings, undated	Working drawings for the residence of Charles Anderson Jr. in Cincinnati, Ohio.
Box 6 Folder 3	Working drawings, 1899, undated	Working drawings for alterations to the residence of Mr. Wilfred Buckley, located in New York City. Also included are working drawings for a residence in Mt. Auburn, Massachusetts.

2. Photographs, 1880-1898, undated

Includes residences and federal buildings designed by Aiken as a professional architect and as the Supervising Architect of the United States Treasury. Included is the United States Post Office in Washington, D.C., designed by Aiken and under construction in 1896, as well as post offices in Racine, Wisconsin, Chester, Pennsylvania, and South Bend, Indiana. Residences designed by Aiken include the Charles Anderson Jr. house in Cincinnati, Ohio, and the Henry Preserved Smith house in Walnut Hills, Ohio. Also included are photographs of buildings designed by the architects McKim, Mead, and White, the Edward C. Jones chapel in Magnolia Cemetery in Charleston, South Carolina, circa 1850, since destroyed, and various American and European churches.

William Martin Aiken, architect, 1884-1898, undated

Box 2 Folder 3 Portrait of William Martin Aiken, undated

Box 2 Folder 4 Residences, 1884, 1886, undated

Includes residences designed by Aiken for Judge William Worthington in Walnut Hills, Ohio, and Charles Anderson, Jr. in Cincinnati, Ohio. Also included are images of unidentified residences and a remodeled apartment front in Boston, Massachusetts.

Box 4 Folder 1-2 Residences, 1884, 1886, undated

Includes residences designed by Aiken for Charles Anderson Jr. in Cincinnati, Ohio, and Captain H.S. Chamberlin in Chattanooga, Tennessee. Also included are interior images of the residence of Henry Preserved Smith in Walnut Hills, Ohio, and images of unidentified residences designed by Aiken in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Box 5 Folder 1 Post offices, 1896-1898

Includes images of Aiken designed post offices in South Carolina, Ohio, Wisconsin, Indiana, and Pennsylvania.

Box 6 Folder 4 Post offices, 1896

Includes images of the city post office in Washington, DC, under construction.

Box 5 Folder 2 Electric Station, 30th and Smith Street, circa 1891

Box 2 Folder 5 Nashville Exposition, 1897

Box 2 Folder 6 Eden park barn, 1892

Box 2 Folder 7 McKim, Mead, and White architects, undated

Images of a house and gate entrance designed by McKim, Mead, and White.

Box 5 Folder 3 McKim, Mead, and White architects, 1880

Images of a Rhode Island casino designed by McKim, Mead, and White.

Churches, 1884, 1894, undated

Box 2 Folder 8 American churches, 1884, 1894, undated

- Box 5 Folder 4 American churches, 1884, 1894, undated
Includes interior images of an unidentified church in Cincinnati, Ohio.
- Box 2 Folder 9 European churches, undated
Includes churches in South Carolina, Ohio, Illinois, and New York. Images include Saint Phillips Church in Charleston, South Carolina, Saint Peter's Church in Cincinnati, Ohio, and Holy Name Cathedral in Chicago, Illinois.
- Box 5 Folder 5 European churches, undated
Includes churches in Italy, England, and France. Images include Iffley Church in Oxford, England, and the Church of Santa Giustina, Padua, Italy.
- Box 2 Folder 10 General, undated
Includes churches in France, Italy, England, and Switzerland. Images include Pomposa Abbey near Ferrara, Italy, and the Church of Saint Martin in Schwyz, Switzerland.

3. Clippings, 1877-1956, undated

- Includes clippings of government buildings and homes designed by Aiken as well as buildings designed by McKim, Mead, and White, and churches. Clippings are taken from architecture journals and newspapers, including *The American Architect and Building News*, *The American Architect*, and *The Inland Architect and News Record*. Clippings are primarily of buildings designed in the Beaux Arts and Romanesque styles, styles which Aiken generally used for his own designs. Also included are clippings of doorway and wrought iron metal work designs.
- Box 2 Folder 11 William Martin Aiken, Architect, 1886-1981, undated
- Box 7 Folder 1 William Martin Aiken, Architect, 1886-1981, undated
- Box 3 Folder 1 McKim, Mead, and White Architects, 1877-1927, undated
- Box 7 Folder 2 McKim, Mead, and White Architects, 1877-1927, undated
- Box 3 Folder 3-4 Churches, 1878-1924, undated (Box 3, folder 2-3)
- Box 7 Folder 3 Churches, 1878-1924, undated
- Box 3 Folder 5 Doors, 1896-1926, undated
- Box 3 Folder 6 Metal work, 1879-1929, undated
- Box 7 Folder 4 Metal work, 1879-1929, undated
- Box 3 Folder 7 General clippings, 1879-1956, undated
- Box 7 Folder 5 General clippings, 1879-1956, undated

4. General, 1879-1909, undated

Includes a published article "The Architecture of Our Government Buildings" by Aiken in *The Engineering Magazine and the Report of the Supervising Architect-Treasury Department*, written by Aiken during his time as Supervising Architect of the Treasury. Also includes an issue of *The Western Architect*, containing Aiken's obituary.

Box 3 Folder 8

Writings, 1897, 1895

The Engineering Magazine, Report of the Supervising Architect-Treasury Department and a rough draft of an architecture contract.

Box 3 Folder 9

Personal papers, 1879-1909, undated

Student ticket from the MFA, Boston, program from Madison Square Theatre, New York, program from cornerstone laying service at Phi Delta Theta fraternity at Sewanee, Tennessee, and *The Western Architect*, containing Aikens obituary.