

Archives and Special Collections

Dickinson College

Carlisle, PA

ARCHIVAL COLLECTION REGISTER

Title: **Charles Collins (President, 1852-1860)** **RG 2/5**

Dates: 1852-1860

Material: Papers

Volume: 0.1 linear feet

Usage: There are no access restrictions on these records.

HISTORICAL NOTE

Charles Collins was elected on July 7, 1852 to succeed Jesse Truesdell Peck as the eleventh President of Dickinson College. Collins was born on April 17, 1813 in North Yarmouth, Maine to Joseph Warren and Hannah Sturdivant Collins. He prepared for college at the Maine Wesleyan Seminary. He then entered Wesleyan University and graduated with the highest honors in his class in 1837. Following his graduation he was the principal of a high school in Augusta, Maine for a year. In 1838, he became the first president, as well as treasurer and professor of natural sciences at Emory and Henry College in Western Virginia. He remained there for fourteen years that saw the making of the reputation both of the institution and himself. In 1851 Collins received an honorary doctor of divinity degree from Dickinson.

During Collins' presidential term, Dickinson College built an observatory with a telescope at the top of South College for the use of the students that would remain until 1927. Collins was also instrumental in the building, with a mortgage secured with College funds, of a second Methodist Church in Carlisle, at the corner of West and Pomfret Streets, called Emory Chapel. The introduction of water and gas mains was begun on the campus, although they were built sparingly during this early time. The number of students enrolled in the College rose under his administration even though Collins himself was not widely popular with the student body. This was largely due to his response to independent student activities such as secret fraternities and "rough and tumble" football.

In 1860, President Collins resigned from his position at Dickinson citing his desire to explore ways to make further provisions for his growing family. After declining two other college presidencies, he took a position as the proprietor and president of the State Female College near Memphis in Tennessee. He would serve there for the remaining fifteen years of his life. Charles Collins died on July 10, 1875 in Memphis.

SERIES ARRANGEMENT AND DESCRIPTION

The records contained in the President Charles Collins record group pertain only to his time and affairs as president of Dickinson College. As such, no personal papers are included in this record group. For records concerning Collins' interactions with students, please refer to RG 5/1. The Collins records are housed in one document box with RG 2/2 through RG 2/10 and are arranged into two series: General Business, and Personnel.

The General Business series is comprised of records concerning miscellaneous affairs of college business. The records within this series are arranged chronologically, with undated material housed first. All records concerning college financial affairs and interactions with the church are housed within the Board of Trustees record group.

The Personnel series is divided into three sub-series: Faculty, Non-faculty and Applications. Only confirmed employees of the college are included within the Faculty and Non-faculty sub-series. The Applications sub-series contains the letters and recommendations of persons seeking employment with the College. In cases where it is unclear whether or not the request for a position was granted, the records remain in the Applications sub-series until their employment status can be confirmed. Records within their sub-series are arranged in alphabetical order by the individuals last name.

RECORD GROUP INVENTORY

RG 2/5 - CHARLES COLLINS (PRESIDENT, 1852-1860)

Series 1 General Business

1.1 Miscellaneous Affairs

- 1.1.1 23 Feb. 1854 – Memoranda book
- 1.1.2 16 Sep. 1854 – Notes for "Address to students...opening of the new year"
- 1.1.3 16 Apr. 1858 – Letter of Robert H. Pattison, re: Committee on Education report, Phila. Conference
23 June 1858 – Letter of W. C. Perry, re: NJ Conference report
- 1.1.4 Dec. 1858 – Memoranda and account book

Series 2 Personnel

2.1 Faculty

- 2.1.1 Boswell, William L.
- 2.1.2 Harman, Henry M.
- 2.1.3 Mussleman, Amos F.
- 2.1.4 Tiffany, Otis H.
- 2.1.5 Wentworth, Erastus

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Series 2 Personnel (cont.)

2.2 Non-Faculty

2.2.1 McMurray, Jane
Smiley, Samuel

2.3 Applicants

2.3.1 Rowson, William S.
Vandor, Josef