

Archives and Special Collections

Dickinson College

Carlisle, PA

ARCHIVAL COLLECTION REGISTER

Title: **John Price Durbin (President, 1834-1845)** **RG 2/2**
Dates: 1834-1845
Material: Papers
Volume: 0.2 linear feet
Usage: There are no access restrictions on these records.

HISTORICAL NOTE

In 1833, Dickinson College was approached by the Baltimore Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church with an offer to incorporate the college under its direction. The Board of Trustees agreed, and control was transferred to the Methodist Church. The first meeting of the new Methodist Board of Trustees was held on June 7, 1833, and it was at this time that John Price Durbin was elected as the new president of Dickinson College. In addition to the decision to elect Durbin, a motion was passed at this meeting to amend the College charter so that the president of the College would also take on the position of the president of the Board of Trustees. Therefore, Durbin became both the president of Dickinson College and of its Board of Trustees within one afternoon. Efforts were immediately made by the new Board to raise an endowment to support the institution, but the additional aid of state money was sought and gained to assist the rebirth of the College. The continuance of the Grammar School was approved, as was the introduction of a law department, which would be overseen by Judge John Reed of Carlisle.

Within the first three years of Durbin's presidency, the enrollment rose dramatically. New faculty members were brought in to support the growing student population, creating a strong, predominately Methodist faculty. The programs offered by the College were diversified and strengthened, with the addition of a music program and a pre-medical program overseen by John McClintock. In November 1836, construction was completed on a new building, East College, which provided space for recitation rooms as well as student living quarters. Also in 1836, Durbin purchased a building that was located across High Street that would come to be known as South College. Unfortunately, the original structure was completely destroyed by a fire in December of that year, and its reconstruction would not be completed until 1838.

In 1842, Durbin took a six-month sabbatical to go on a tour of Europe and the Middle East, leaving Robert Emory as acting president in his absence. Durbin was given one thousand

dollars by the Board which he used to buy books and equipment for the College while abroad. He would later write two books on his travels during this time. After his return, Durbin served as president of the college for another two years before he tendered his resignation to the Board of Trustees, explaining that he wished to return to the ministry.

SERIES ARRANGEMENT AND DESCRIPTION

The papers of John Price Durbin contained within this record group pertain only to the years that he spent as president of Dickinson College, from 1834-1845. This includes the papers collected during the period of Durbin's sabbatical, during which Robert Emory served as acting president for one year. The Durbin records are housed in one document box with RG 2/2 through RG 2/10 and are divided into three series: General Business, Personnel, and External Affairs.

Included within the General Business series are the papers generated through the miscellaneous affairs of the college. These papers include addresses given by Durbin to the college community, general college business, and various correspondence, including letters from acting and future president of the college, Robert Emory. These records are arranged in chronological order, with undated material preceding dated material. All financial material, as well as material relating to the college's relationship with the Methodist Church, is housed separately within the Board of Trustees papers from this time period.

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.

The External Affairs series includes papers regarding an event or information from outside of the College that had an impact on the College. This series consists of two sub-series: Miscellaneous and Career Services. Miscellaneous External Affairs sub-series which houses papers such as a history of Methodism in Pennsylvania, and correspondence from various college and church leaders writing to Durbin asking his advice. This sub-series is arranged in chronological order, with the undated material preceding the dated material. The Career Services sub-series does not represent an actual college department. It merely refers to a practice of the college in filling positions when notified or requested by various schools/churches. All of the letters included in this section request students for teaching positions, but the ultimate fate of the request is unknown. Any requests in which a specific student could be identified were placed in the student's individual file in RG 511. The remaining requests are arranged chronologically within the Career Services sub-series, with undated materials coming first.

RECORD GROUP INVENTORY

RG 2/2 - JOHN PRICE DURBIN (PRESIDENT, 1834-1845)

Series 1 General Business

1. 1 Miscellaneous Affairs

- 1.1.1 Undated – Drafts of two resolutions
 - Undated – Address of John Price Durbin, "Religious students in College..."
 - Undated – Examination on *Butler's Analogy* with slips of individual questions
- 1.1.2 Oct. 1834 – Letter of Belles Lettres Society, re: membership
 - 10 Oct. 1834 – Oaths of John Price Durbin, Merritt Caldwell, and Robert Emory
 - 18 Oct. 1834 – Letter of Union Philosophical Soc., re: faculty use of library
 - 15 Nov. 1834 – Letter of Belles Lettres Society, re: faculty use of library
- 1.1.3 c1836 – Schedule of classes with subjects for student orations
 - 1836 – List of academies in Pennsylvania
 - 24 Aug. 1836 – Letter of Merritt Caldwell, re: town/college relations
- 1.1.4 1836-1841 – Notebook of John P. Durbin with faculty meetings and student info.
- 1.1.5 c1837-c1846 – Latin formula used in conferring degrees
 - c1837 – Schedule of classes for 8 irregular students
 - 14 June 1837 – Letter to James Hamilton, re: invitation to attend examinations
 - 20 June 1837 – Letter of James B. Longacre, re: printing the college diploma
 - 7 July 1837 – Letter to James Hamilton, re: invitation to attend examinations
- 1.1.6 15 Aug. 1838 – Letter of John C. Offerman, re: position at Pottsville Institute
 - 27 Aug. 1838 – Letter of Joseph Shippen, re: position at Pottsville Institute
 - 10 Sept. 1838 – Letter of William Grantham, re: church and school affairs
 - 18 June 1839 – Letter of Beverly Waugh, re: travels, abolitionism
- 1.1.7 1840 – Examinations in mathematics
 - 4 Mar. 1840 – Letter of Merritt Caldwell, re: College news
 - Sep. 1840 – List of faculty with hours of recitation for each class
 - 19 Sep. 1840 – Notes for an address of John Price Durbin to the students
- 1.1.8 1841-1847 – Notebook of John Price Durbin with lists of students
- 1.1.9 25 Feb. 1841 – Letter of Nathan Bangs, re: law department
 - 23 Apr. 1841 – Letter of Robert Emory, re: preaching in Baltimore
 - 5 July 1841 – Letter to John Bannister Gibson, Sr., re: alumni gathering
 - 29 July 1841 – Letter of Robert Emory, re: returning to Dickinson
 - Sep. 1841 – Notes for an address of John Price Durbin to the students
- 1.1.10 23 Sep. 1842 – Letter of "A Friend of Dickinson College and the Rites of Man,"
 - re: college hiring policies
 - Dec. 1842 – Letter of anonymous, re: student drunkenness
 - 6 May 1843 – Letter of anonymous, re: students seen at taverns
 - 21 Sep. 1844 – Notes for an address of John Price Durbin to the students
 - 18 Sep. 1845 – Letter to Robert Emory

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Series 2 Personnel

2.1 Faculty

- 2.1.1 Allen, William Henry
- 2.1.2 Blumenthal, Charles Edward
Bowman, Thomas
Bunting, James
- 2.1.3 Caldwell, Merritt
- 2.1.4 Carey, John L.
Crooks, George Richard, Jr.
- 2.1.5 Emory, Robert
- 2.1.6 Hey, John F.
Keagy, John M.
- 2.1.7 McClintock, John
- 2.1.8 Reed, John
- 2.1.9 Roszel, Stephen Asbury
- 2.1.10 Sudler, Thomas Emory

2.2 Non-Faculty

- 2.2.1 Cornelius, James
Crooks, George
Richard, Sr. Phillips, John

2.3 Applications

- 2.3.1 Chalmers, Charles B.
Curry, Daniel
Koppen, A. L.
Larrabee, William C.
Moore, ?
- 2.3.2 Rogers, Henry
Taylor, Thomas V.
Tomlinson, J. S.
Tutwiler, Peyton
Waters, Francis
Westerman, Nathaniel

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Series 3 External Affairs

3.1 Miscellaneous

- 3.1.1 1834-1845 – Catalogue of Univ. of VA, used as model
 - 27 Feb. 1840 – Letter of James Marsh, re: invitation to speak
 - 20 Mar. 1840 – Letter of Samuel Harvey, re: History of Methodism in PA
 - 5 Apr. 1840 – Letter of John McClintock, re: Asbury Historical Society
 - 6 Jan. 1841 – Letter of Edward Cooke, re: Pennington Male Seminary
 - 21 June 1841 – Letter of the Methodist Episcopal Church, re: prep school in Wilkes-Barre
 - 23 July 1844 – Letter of Robert Paine, re: LaGrange College
 - 11 Oct. 1844 – Letter of H. Dyer, re: taxation of teachers
 - 12 Oct. 1844 – Letter of D. McConaughy, re: taxation of teachers
 - 8 Nov. 1844 – Letter of J. W. Nevin, re: taxation of teachers

3.2 Career Services

- 3.2.1
 - 3 Feb. 1841 – Letter of John Franklin, re: teacher for Tamaqua, PA
 - 4 Mar. 1841 – Letter of J. C. Rhodes, re: teacher for Sunbury, PA
 - 10 Mar. 1841 – Letter of George W. Smiley, re: teacher for LaGrange, KY
 - 29 June 1841 – Letter of David Kennison and V. G. Piper, re: teacher for Springfield, VA (WV)
 - 9 July 1841 – Letter of William H. Coffin, re: teacher for Brotherton, MD
 - 28 Sep. 1841 – Letter of H. M. Mills, re: teacher for school near Frostburgh, MD
 - 14 Oct. 1841 – Letter of J. S. Owens, re: teacher for West River Acad., MD
 - 10 Dec. 1841 – Letter of John Bell, re: teacher for Talbot County, MD
- 3.2.2
 - 7 June 1842 – Letter of Robert Emory to Methodist clergy re: placement of Dickinson graduates as teachers
 - 28 Aug. 1843 – Letter of L. F. Morgan, re: teacher for Warrenton Acad.
 - 30 Oct. 1843 – Letter of Alfred G. Chenoweth, re: teacher for Moorefield, VA
 - 7 Nov. 1843 – Letter of Alfred G. Chenoweth, re: previous letter, with terms