

Archives and Special Collections

Dickinson College

Carlisle, PA

**COLLECTION REGISTER**

Name: **Creswell, John A. J. (1828-1891)** **MC 2010.2**

Material: Papers (1818-1889)

Volume: 0.5 linear feet (1 Document Box and 1 Oversized Folder)

Donation: Gifts of various donors.

Usage: These materials have been donated without restrictions on usage.

**BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE**

John Andrew Jackson Creswell was born at Creswell Ferry (now Port Deposit), Maryland on November 18, 1828 to John G. Creswell and Rebecca Webb Creswell. A member of the Belles Lettres Society, he graduated from Dickinson College in 1848 as valedictorian from his class. He married a Miss Richardson (possibly Hannah) of Elkton, MD; the couple had no children.

Creswell was admitted to the bar in Baltimore, Maryland in 1850 and opened a successful law practice in Elkton, Maryland. That same year, Creswell entered the political world as an unsuccessful candidate for the Whig party at the Reform State Convention. After the demise of the Whig party, Creswell became a Democrat just in time to become a delegate to the Democratic National Convention at Cincinnati in 1856. At this Democratic National Convention he nominated fellow Dickinson alumnus, James Buchanan, for presidential candidate.

In 1861, Creswell was elected to the Maryland House of Representatives and affiliated himself with the Republican Party. After being elected into the House of Representatives, it is noted that his middle names were changed from Andrew Jackson to Angel James” due to the political association of having Andrew Jackson as his middle name. Creswell was known at this time for his support of African Americans through his two renowned speeches, one of which supported the enlistment of African American soldiers in the Union army and the other titled “On the Proposed Amendment to the Constitution of the United States,” which is part of the collection.

Creswell served as adjutant general of Maryland from 1862 to 1863. Afterwards, from 1863 until 1865, Creswell was elected to the Thirty-ninth Congress. Creswell was then elected from 1865 to 1867 to the United States Senate to fill a vacancy caused by the death of Thomas H. Hicks. In 1868, he was nominated for vice president, but declined to serve. Instead, Creswell was appointed postmaster general under the Cabinet of President Ulysses S. Grant, serving from 1869

until his resignation in 1874. At the time, he was the longest serving member of the Cabinet for two administrations. Known for being a close friend of President Grant, Creswell and his wife were at Grant's bedside when he died in 1884. Creswell served from 1874 to 1876 as counsel of the United States for the *Alabama* Claims Commission, which handled claims for damages by the United States against Great Britain during the Civil War and was named for the *CSS Alabama*, which was used for Confederate commerce raids.

Creswell resumed his law practice in 1875 and served as the president of Citizen's National Bank in Washington, D.C. Creswell was elected as a trustee at Dickinson College from 1865 to 1871 and again in 1885 to 1891. Creswell died due to prolonged illness and pneumonia near Elkton, Maryland on December 23, 1891.

## COLLECTION DESCRIPTION

The John A. J. Creswell Papers are housed in one document box, arranged in two series, and one oversized folder. Series one consists of John A. J. Creswell's papers, which have been arranged into folders by type of material. This series contains professional correspondence, a copy book of letters and testimonials featuring recommendations for Creswell for the Supreme Court, personal speeches on various subjects, and school notes from Dickinson College on science.

Series two consists of an account book of John Creswell, the father of John A. J. Creswell.

The oversized folder contains three commissions for John A. J. Creswell and one for William Beal, which was approved by Creswell. The commissions are arranged chronologically.

## COLLECTION INVENTORY

### **BOX 1 - MC 2010.2**

#### CRESSWELL, JOHN A. J.

##### Folder 01) Correspondence

Twiford S. Noble to John A. J. Creswell – Mar. 17, 1865

John McClintock to John A. J. Creswell – May 27, 1869

Amos Kendall to John A. J. Creswell – Jun. 11, 1869

John A. J. Creswell to James McCauley Esq. – Nov. 20, 1875

John A. J. Creswell to Charles V. Riley – Jul. 13, 1877

William Crowninshield Endicott to John A. J. Creswell – May 9, 1885

John A. J. Creswell to Andrew H. H. Dawson – Aug. 16, 1885

##### Folder 02) Copy Book of Correspondence

Letters and testimonials featuring recommendations for Creswell for the Supreme Court – Mar.-May 1889

COLLECTION INVENTORY

**BOX 1 - MC 2010.2 (cont.)**

CRESSWELL, JOHN A. J. (cont.)

Folder 03) Speeches

“Parties and Party Men in the times of the First Presidents,” – Jun. 8, 1855

“On the Proposed Amendment to the Constitution of the United States,”  
– Jan. 5, 1865

“Minute of what I saw and heard at the death-bed of Genl. John A.  
Rawlins,” – Sep. 6, 1869

Speech on Ulysses S. Grant’s civilian career – undated.

Folder 04) School Notes on Science, Dickinson College – 1847-1848

CRESSWELL, JOHN

Folder 05) Account Book – 1818-1823

**OVERSIZED - OC 2010.2**

CRESSWELL, JOHN A. J.

Folder 01) Commissions

Commission as Brigade Quartermaster – Jan. 17, 1853

William Beal’s Appointment, approved by Creswell – Feb. 18, 1870

Commission as U.S. Counsel in *Alabama* claims – Jul. 22, 1874

Commission as U.S. Counsel in *Alabama* claims – Jul. 12, 1882

This collection register was prepared by Allison Schell, September 2010.