

Archives and Special Collections

Dickinson College

Carlisle, PA

COLLECTION REGISTER

Name: **Curtin, Andrew Gregg (1817-1894)** **MC 2001.21**

Materials: Photograph Albums and Photographs (c1870)

Volume: 0.25 linear feet (1 Document Box, 20 Photograph Folders)

Donation: Gift of the Friends of the Library, 2001

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

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Andrew Gregg Curtin was born April 22, 1817 in Bellefonte, Pennsylvania, the son of Roland Curtin and his second wife, Jean Gregg. Roland was a Scots Irish immigrant who had begun an iron manufacturing forge in Centre County and Jean was the daughter of a prominent Pennsylvania political family. Andrew prepared at academies in Harrisburg and Milton before entering Dickinson to study law under Judge John Reed. He graduated with the class of 1837 and began private practice after being admitted to the Centre County Bar in 1839. A relatively successful lawyer, he soon ventured into the realm of politics.

Active in support of Whig candidates, Andrew Curtin placed his developing skills as a speaker at the service of an array of candidates, including William H. Harrison, Henry Clay, and Zachary Taylor. By 1854, he was regarded highly enough to be offered the Whig nomination for governor of Pennsylvania, which he refused in favor of his friend James Pollock. In return, Pollock appointed him Secretary of the Commonwealth. Curtin's support of education as *ex officio* Superintendent of Public Schools added to his popularity, and he ran successfully for governor in the pivotal election of 1860 as a strong supporter of Lincoln and the newly founded Republican Party. He thus became one of the so-called "war governors" upon whom Lincoln depended for support after the outbreak of hostilities.

Curtin is remembered for his unswerving activity on behalf of the Union and his raising of and providing support for the troops sent to the Union Army from Pennsylvania. He oversaw the construction of the first Union military camp; opened in April 1861, the camp was dubbed Camp Curtin. A strong advocate for soldiers and their families, Curtin established a war orphans' school and provided for the return of the bodies of Pennsylvania casualties for burial.

Despite suffering a near physical and mental breakdown due to stress during his first term, Curtin was re-elected in 1863 and served out his full second term. Following the end of the Civil War and the closing of his second term in 1867, Curtin became increasingly prominent in

Republican circles; after being briefly considered as presidential running mate to Ulysses Grant in 1868, he was appointed minister to Russia, serving from 1869 to 1872.

Upon his return from St. Petersburg, Curtin supported Horace Greeley for president and hoped to be nominated as Greeley's running-mate. Having become increasingly disenchanted with the direction of the Republicans, Curtin then joined the Democratic Party. It was as a Democrat that he served in the U. S. House of Representatives from 1881 to 1887. After three terms in office, he retired to his home in Bellefonte, PA. Surrounded by family and friends, there he remained until his death on October 7, 1894.

On May 30, 1844, Andrew Gregg Curtin married Catherine Irvine Wilson, daughter of Dr. William J. Irvine and Mary Wilson. The couple had one son and four daughters.

COLLECTION DESCRIPTION

The Andrew Gregg Curtin Photograph Albums and Photographs collection reflects the three year period in which Curtin served as minister to Russia, and is arranged in two series: Photograph Albums and Loose Photographs. The albums are housed in one document box, while the loose photographs are housed within the Dickinson College Photograph Collections as PC 2001.21. Because no definitive date has been given for most of these items, the date of the materials has been indicated as c1870.

The Photograph Albums series includes two albums of *cartes de visite* photographs of individuals that Curtin met during his tenure in Russia, as well as family and friends in the U. S. A few of the photographs have been identified, including those of Eugene Schuyler, Harriet Lane, members of the Latrobe family, and Maryland governor Thomas Swann and his wife. The larger of the two albums contains a large number of photographs of women and children, while the smaller one houses several images of Swann, his wife, and other acquaintances in Baltimore. The two albums are housed together in the same folder in one document box.

The Loose Photographs series has been designated as PC 2001.21 and includes several photographs that may have been part of the albums, as well as various other photographs collected by Curtin. As with the albums, some of the individuals have been identified, if only by surname; these include Cassius Clay, Queen Olga of Greece, the Bey of Algiers, and Prince Gortschakoff of Russia. The photographs have been arranged alphabetically by individuals, with unidentified individuals housed at the end of the series, grouped together into folders by gender and number. If a particular folder contains more than one photograph, the number of photos is indicated in parentheses.

COLLECTION INVENTORY

BOX 1 - MC 2001.21

PHOTOGRAPH ALBUMS

- Folder 01) Russia, c1870
- Baltimore, c1870

PHOTOGRAPHS - PC 2001.21

LOOSE PHOTOGRAPHS

- Folder 01) Bey of Algiers (2)
- Folder 02) Bonham, Sir George
- Folder 03) Buchanan, Sir Andrew
- Folder 04) Buchanan, Lady Belinda
- Folder 05) Clay, Cassius
- Folder 06) Ghesh, Capt.
- Folder 07) Prince Gortschakoff
- Folder 08) Hanck, Minnie A.
- Folder 09) Jones and father
- Folder 10) Lagerheim, M
- Folder 11) Novikoff, Olga nee Kireeff
- Folder 12) Poumetz, General (2)
- Folder 13) Romanov, Olga Constantinovna (Queen of Greece)
- Folder 14) Schuyler, Eugene (2)
- Folder 15) Stoetweger, Madame
- Folder 16) Todtleben, General (2)
- Folder 17) Turkham
- Folder 18) Wellesley, Colonel
- Folder 19) Unidentified males (16)
- Folder 20) Unidentified females (12)
- Folder 21) Unidentified group of men and children

This collection register was prepared by Michele M. Tourney, December 2001.