

Archives and Special Collections

Dickinson College

Carlisle, PA

COLLECTION REGISTER

Name: **Lyon, George Armstrong (1784-1855)** **MC 2006.1**

Material: Papers (1816-1838)

Volume: .75 linear feet (Document Boxes 1-2)

Donation: Gift of Mary Himes Vale and Sarah Vale Rush, 1947

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

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

George Armstrong Lyon was born in Carlisle, Pennsylvania on April 11, 1784. His father was William Lyon, a prominent citizen of Carlisle who had helped survey the town and had played a role in establishing the grammar school from which Dickinson College evolved. Lyon's mother was Ann Fleming, his father's second wife, who had 14 children, five of whom did not survive infancy. Lyon attended Dickinson Grammar School before entering the Dickinson College class of 1800. He left Dickinson before completing his degree and went on to become a local lawyer and president of the Carlisle Bank. Lyon returned to his alma mater as a member of the board of trustees from 1815 to 1833. He served as the board's secretary.

Lyon's family had a history of being very active within the church. Several of his relations were pastors in the Presbyterian Church, and his father had been an elder at the First Presbyterian Church in Carlisle. Lyon also became active in the governing of the church. He was instrumental in the split between the First and Second Presbyterian churches in Carlisle. He led other members of First Presbyterian in starting a new church when the Reverend George Duffield refused to stop preaching his "new light" theology. Lyon and others gathered information on Duffield's "heresies," such as those expressed in his book *Duffield on Regeneration* (the formal title of which is *Spiritual Life, or, Regeneration*), and placed this book on trial in Shippensburg, Pennsylvania before Presbytery authorities. Lyon's concerns were not limited to Duffield's influence in the church, but also included Duffield's influence on Samuel Blanchard How, Dickinson College's president. Such conflict regarding college governance and the rift within the local church contributed to the lack of funding and Presbyterian support that led to the temporary closing of Dickinson College in 1832 and its subsequent transfer from Presbyterian to Methodist leadership. Tensions between Lyon and Duffield continued after these events. The boards of the two Presbyterian churches also frequently came into conflict during the early days, especially when it came to financial matters. Lyon was the first president of Second Presbyterian's board

and continued to play a vital role to the functioning of the congregation. The congregation also elected him to the position of ruling elder, but he declined.

George Lyon married a Virginia woman, Anne G. Savage, in June 1815. The couple had five daughters and four sons: Virginia, William, John, Ellen, Mary Elizabeth, Anna Margaret, Alexander Parker, Thomas Lyttleton, and Alice. All of the sons attended Dickinson College and, with the exception of Alexander Parker, earned their degrees. On January 6, 1855, at the age of seventy-one, George Lyon died from tuberculosis. He was buried in Carlisle's Old Graveyard.

COLLECTION DESCRIPTION

The George Armstrong Lyon collection is housed in two document boxes. The collection is divided into three main categories: Church Business, Dickinson College Business, and Personal Business. The majority of the collection looks at the professional and religious life of George Lyon, with particular emphasis on the split between the First and Second Presbyterian Churches of Carlisle in the 1830s. A number of these materials are copies of original documents written in Lyon's hand. The collection was donated in 1947 by Mary Himes Vale and Sarah Vale Rush, descendants of Charles Francis Himes. It appears that this collection was created when items dealing with George Lyon were separated from a larger collection donated by the ladies. For related research materials, explore the following collections also available in the Dickinson College Archives and Special Collections:

The Records of the First Presbyterian Church of Carlisle, Pennsylvania
The Records of the Second Presbyterian Church of Carlisle, Pennsylvania
The Charles Francis Himes Collection (MC 2000.1)
The Andrew Blair Collection (MC 1999.11)

The majority of the Lyon collection is found in the Church Business series and has been subdivided into five different categories including: general correspondence, financial records, governance, notes, and miscellaneous. All materials within these subdivisions have been arranged chronologically. Most of this series deals with the conflict within the First Presbyterian Church and the creation and structure of the Second Presbyterian Church. Notable correspondents include: Rev. George Duffield, minister of First Presbyterian; Alexander McFarlane, a Dickinson professor; Ashbel Green, a prominent Presbyterian minister; and George A. Lyon. Financial records deal with both the First and Second Presbyterian churches and include items regarding pew rents, bills, and the churches' stocks and loans from the Bank of Carlisle. The governance subdivision includes items such as petitions, meeting minutes and proceedings, committee reports, and resolutions that document the official split between the two churches. It also contains the by-laws for Second Presbyterian and the constitutions for missionary societies. The notes portion of this series includes thoughts on religious topics as perceived by Lyon and notes on Duffield's preaching. The miscellaneous subdivision is comprised of a history of Second Presbyterian and a prospectus of Duffield's book, *Duffield on Regeneration*.

The Dickinson College series consists of materials documenting business handled by Lyon when he was a trustee of the college. These materials are arranged chronologically. The majority of the series deals with Duffield's role in a conflict between College President Samuel Blanchard How, Rev. George Duffield, and Professor Alexander McFarlane.

The Personal Business contains letters from Ebenezer and Harmar Denny regarding rent and annuity for an aunt. These items are arranged chronologically.

COLLECTION INVENTORY

BOX 1 - MC 2006.1

CHURCH BUSINESS

General Correspondence

- Folder 01) Feb. 5, 1831 – First Presbyterian Committee report
re: Sabbath School, “radical subject,” and uniform teachings
Aug. 24, 1831 – Duffield, George to Lyon, George A.
re: Pained people believe Lyon wrote piece by “H”
Aug. 26, 1831 – Lyon, George A. to Duffield, George
re: Article by “H,” not author, but defends author’s views
Aug. 31, 1831 – Lyon, George A. to Green, Ashbel
re: Presbyterian Church and doctrine
- Folder 02) Sep. 1, 1831 – Duffield, George to Lyon, George A.
re: Lyon suspected of writing piece by “H,” Lyon’s draft reply
Sep. 16, 1831 – Green, Ashbel to Lyon, George A.
re: “Critical state of Presbyterian Church”
Oct. 13, 1831 – Burtt, John to Lyon, George
re: Back issues of the *Herald*, “hope Sanctuary may be cleansed”
- Folder 03) Nov. 7, 1831 – Russell, Joshua T. to McFarlane, Alexander
re: Copy of Duffield letter, missionary society, college problems
Nov. 14, 1831 – Duffield, George to Rev. J. N. Olmstead (copied by Lyon)
re: “Heresy hunters in his church,” Prof McFarlane’s return
undated – Lyon, George A. note on Duffield’s letter
Dec. 10, 1831 – Lyon, Geo A. to, Blair, Andrew
re: Church Mission Society, note on Blaire and Duffield
- Folder 04) May 15, 1832 – McFarlane, Alexander to Lyon, George A.
re: Presbyterian assembly in Philadelphia, New Light vs. Orthodox
May 25, 1832 – McFarlane, Alexander to Lyon, George A.
re: Assembly divided, New & Old agree on Second Presbyterian
- Folder 05) Jun. 29, 1832 – McFarlane, Alexander to Lyon, George A.
re: Travel to Pittsburgh and Ohio
Jul. 12, 1832 – Shippensburg Synod
re: Copy of minutes on Carlisle Presbytery in case of Duffield
Jul. 13, 1832 – Lyon and others
re: Request copy of minutes to stop different accounts of story
- Folder 06) Dec. 31, 1832 – Lyon, George A. to First Presbyterian board of trustees
re: Resignation
- Folder 07) Jan. 8, 1833 – Green, Ashbel to Lyon, George A.
re: Procedure for starting new church in Carlisle
Jan. 15, 1833 – Snoodgrass, Robert to Lyon, George A.
re: Hostility of Duffield with Lyons, quarrel with Duffield
Jan. 20, 1833 – Messersmith, P. to Lyon, George A.
re: German Lutheran Church granted use of their building

BOX 1 - MC 2006.1 (cont.)

CHURCH BUSINESS (cont.)

General Correspondence (cont.)

- Folder 08) Apr. 26, 1833 – McKinley, Daniel to Lyon, George A.
re: “Implicating their late board of trustees” by First Presbyterian
Dec. 19, 1833 – McKinley, Daniel to Hamilton, James
re: Hamilton elected superintendent of male Sabbath school
- Folder 09) 1833 – [Duffield & Dewitt, Rev. William R.?] (copied by Lyon)
re: Extracts of *Duffield on Regeneration*, a series of letters from a
person present to his friend
- Folder 10) 1833 – [Watts, Frederick?]
re: Response to *Regeneration* pamphlet in 4 letters
1833 – [Metzger, George and Lyon, George?]
re: Charge against Andrew Blair, bank stock, petition
- Folder 11) 1833 – [Lyon, George and Irvine, William?]
re: Response to pamphlet
undated – Blair, Andrew
re: Communication to the session explanatory
- Folder 12) Jan. 1, 1834 – Lyon, George A. to Green, Ashbel
re: Presbyterian missionary affairs
Jan. 15, 1834 – Green, Ashbel to Lyon, George
re: Presbyterian missionary affairs
Oct. 25, 1834 – Lyon, George A. to McKinley, Rev. Daniel
re: Voting
- Folder 13) Aug. 8, 1836 – Lyon, George A. to Second Presbyterian trustees
re: Decline to accept re-election (draft)
- Folder 14) Aug., 1838 – Lyon, George A. to McGill, Alexander T.
re: Announcing McGill’s call to pastorate of Second Presbyterian
c1838 – [hand of Metzger, George] “A Pastoral Letter to the Churches
under the care of the Presbytery of Carlisle.”
re: Harrisburg Presbytery conflict in religious ideals

Financial Records

- Folder 15) 1827 – First Presbyterian, List of contributors for church repairs
- Folder 16) Jul. 14, 1828 – Lyon, George A.
re: Deed to pew no. 31, note on founding new church
1828-1833 – Church trustees to Bank
re: 16 promissory notes
1829-1832 – Lyon, George A.
re: First Presbyterian Church stock and loans in Carlisle Bank
- Folder 17) May-Oct. 1832 – First Presbyterian
re: Pew rent lists, “circular” request for payment
Jul. 18, 1832 – Duffield, George to Irvine, William (copied by Lyon)
re: Belief Lyon & Hamilton emptied treasury to keep it from him

BOX 1 - MC 2006.1 (cont.)

CHURCH BUSINESS (cont.)

Financial Records (cont.)

- Folder 18) Dec. 1, 1832 – First Presbyterian
re: Pew holders, liabilities, resources Church
1832 – First Presbyterian, “Bank vs. Chambers”
re: Bank stock
- Folder 19) Jan. 11, 1833 – Second Presbyterian Statement subscribers
Jan. 29, 1833 – Trimble, Thomas to bank president and directors
re: Loans and stocks naming Lyon, Irvine, Chambers, Hamilton
c1833 – Lyon, George, Letter wrapper calling letter “libelous”
Jan. 31. 1833 – Carlisle Bank cashier to Lyon, Chambers, Irvine
re: Loans
Jan. 1833 – Second Presbyterian
re: Purchasing site for new church
Feb. 2, 1833 – Irvine, William to Lyon
re: “Mr. Duffield’s libel” (copy of Irvine’s letter to bank directors)
- Folder 20) Mar. 29, 1834 – Irvine, Robert & Lyon, George to First Presbyterian
trustees re: Asked bank to delay proceedings dealing on note
Mar. 29, 1834 – Irvine & Lyon to trustees of First Presbyterian
re: Bank consented to delay
Apr. 1, 1834 – Trimble, Thomas to Lyon, George and Irvine, Robert
re: Trustees decline to act on their communication
Apr. 4, 1834 – Parker, I.B. & Watts, Jean
re: 1/3 sum paid to bank by Lyon on original note
- Folder 21) Jun. 11, 1834 – Holman, Samuel
re: Bill for building Second Presbyterian
Jul. 30, 1834 – Walker & Dailey
re: Bill for carpet
- Folder 22) Aug 7, 1834 – Waddel, Robert to Hamilton, J
re: Bill for candelabra
Aug 25, 1834 – Keeney, Abel to Second Presbyterian trustees
re: Bill for stoves
1834 – Paxton, John, Smith, P. B., Metzger, George to Lyon, George
re: Stove committee
1834 – Paxton, John to trustees
re: Plan for setting up stoves
- Folder 23) Apr. 6, 1835 – Holmes, Andrew
re: Father’s & Judge William Moore’s contribution
undated – List of contributors to the Church
- Folder 24) 1816-1823 – Lyon, George A.
re: Church business meetings

BOX 1 - MC 2006.1 (cont.)

CHURCH BUSINESS (cont.)

Governance

- Folder 25) undated – Lyon, George A., notes on Church Government
re: Elders, deacons, pastors, members, prayer, Duffield, elections
- Folder 26) 1818-1831 – Lyon, George A.
re: Constitution of Missionary Society of Carlisle and record of collections
1828-1829 – Lyon, George A.
re: Establishment of Union Domestic Missionary Society and auxiliary, Domestic Missionary Society of Presbyterian Church
- Folder 27) Aug. 11, 1831 – First Presbyterian members to Duffield, George
re: Against use of Isaac Watts' Psalms and hymns
- Folder 28) c1832 – Clark, Robert (copied by Lyon)
re: Statement on Duffield's behavior regarding church register
1832 – First Presbyterian Lists of members
re: For or against Duffield's ministry and creation of a new church
Jun. 29, 1832 – Lyon, George A.
re: Proceedings of the Shippensburg Synod in the case of Duffield
Jul. 28, 1832 – Lyon, George A. & 23 others to Duffield, George
re: Asking Duffield to stop preaching views
Sep. 28, 1832 – First Presbyterian (25 members) to Carlisle Presbytery
re: On Duffield (draft)
Sep. 30, 1832 – Trimble, Carothers, Knox, McKim (copied by Lyon)
re: Extract from memorial presented to congregation
- Folder 29) Oct. 1832 – Petition to Presbytery of Carlisle
re: To stop progression of evils
Oct. 1832 – Statement to Presbytery of Carlisle
re: Countering petition of Oct. 1832
Oct. 1832 – Synod Resolution
re: Rev. George Duffield's complaint
- Folder 30) Nov.-Dec. 1832 – Meeting for organization of Second Presbyterian
re: Extracts from board of trustees minutes taken by Lyon
- Folder 31) Dec. 3-12, 1832 – Meeting for organization of Second Presbyterian
re: Resolutions, retirement of debts
- Folder 32) Dec 16-17, 1832 – Meeting for organization of Second Presbyterian
re: Committee to obtain a charter of incorporation, stock transfer, exonerated from old rents/payment, church accounts

BOX 1 - MC 2006.1 (cont.)

CHURCH BUSINESS (cont.)

Governance

- Folder 33) 1833 – Carlisle Presbytery Proceedings
re: Defense of Andrew Blair against Duffield's charges
c1833 – Carlisle Presbytery Committee Report
re: Case of Blair
Mar. 25, 1833 – Meeting minutes
re: Authorizing sale of bank stock
Apr. 12-Jun. 5, 1833 – Meeting minutes
re: Second Presbyterian election of Daniel McKinley as pastor
Jun. 2-July 9, 1833 – Meeting for organization of Second Presbyterian
re: Notice of Jun. 3 meeting, by-laws and minutes
Folder 34) c1833-1834 – Second Presbyterian voting policy
re: Answers to objections, obligations of pastors and elders

Notes

- Folder 35) undated – Lyon, George A., notes on Duffield's book
re: Sin and Adam & Eve
undated – Lyon, George A., notes on Duffield
re: Divergence from the Confession of Faith
undated – Lyon, George A.
re: "My Creed on the Subject of Original Sin"
undated – Lyon, George A., notes on "fallen man"
re: Sin, Holy Spirit, power of God
Folder 36) undated – Lyon, George A., notes on the Bible
re: Subjects with scripture
Nov. 1830-May 1831 – Lyon, George A.
re: Notes on prayer meetings, questions posed by Duffield
Folder 37) Jan.-Sep. 1831 – Lyon, George A.
re: Diary of sermons given by Duffield and others
Folder 38) 1831 – Lyon, George A.
re: Notes on Duffield's preaching
Folder 39) 1831-1832 – Lyon, George A.
re: Notes on Duffield's summer preaching
Mar.-Aug. 1832 Lyon, George A.
re: Notes on Duffield's preaching
undated – Lyon, George A.
re: Notes on Duffield's *Regeneration*

BOX 2 - MC2006.1

CHURCH BUSINESS (cont.)

Miscellaneous

- Folder 01) Dec. 29, 1829 – Duffield, George
re: Copy of Duffield's book prospectus
- Folder 02) undated – "Origin of the Second Church"
re: History of the split between First and Second Presbyterian

DICKINSON COLLEGE BUSINESS

- Folder 03) Oct. 25, 1822 – Lyon, George A. to Hamilton, James
re: Claim against Andrew Dunlop for state taxes & college claim
- Folder 04) Sep. 29, 1831 – Lyon, George A.
re: Duffield's remarks on McFarlane, trustees, curriculum changes
Oct. 1, 1831 – Lyon, George A.
re: Duffield's behavior
- Folder 05) Nov. 1831 – How, Dr. Samuel B. (copied by Lyon)
re: Extracts from How's communication on McFarlane & Duffield
Nov. 1831 – Duffield, George (copied by Lyon)
re: Extract from Duffield's reply to Dr. How's complaint
Nov. 1831 – Lyon, George A.
re: Situation between Dr. How, McFarlane, Duffield, & Dickinson
- Folder 06) undated – Lyon, George A.
re: Letter wrapper on Abraham Kauffman note to Belles Lettres
1831-1832 – Lyon, George A.
"Principal and Professor should be present when the Trustees examine and discuss the complaints made by them against the Trustee"
- Folder 07) Feb. 15, 1832 – McFarlane, Alexander to college board of trustees
re: Duffield, "college can never prosper with present faculty"
- Folder 08) Feb. 17, 1832 – Watts, Frederick to college board of trustees
re: Duffield should be off the board, causing college's downfall
Apr. 16, 1832 – Cleveland, Charles D. (copied by Lyon)
re: Extracts from Prof. Cleveland pamphlet "To My Friends," (complete photocopy of pamphlet in Cleveland drop file)
Aug. 3, 1832 – Lyon, George A. to Paxton, Dr. John
re: Rules for society libraries
- Folder 09) June 6, 1833 – Duffield, George to college trustees
re: Resignation
June 7, 1833 – Lyon, George A. to college trustees
re: Resignation

BOX 2 - MC2006.1 (cont.)

PERSONAL BUSINESS

- Folder 10) Sep. 3, 1832 – Denny, Harmar to Lyon, George A.
re: Annuity for “Aunt [Priscilla] Boyd
Sep. 24, 1832 – Denny, Ebenezer to Lyon, George A.
re: Property rentals/rent/copy of his letter to Parker Simmison

This collection register was prepared by Cara L. Holtry, June 2006.