

Jesse W. Griest Papers
A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress



Manuscript Division, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.
2017

Contact information: <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/mss.contact>

Catalog Record: <https://lcn.loc.gov/mm2016086116>

Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms016116>

Prepared by Colleen Benoit

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Collection Summary

Title: Jesse W. Griest Papers

Span Dates: 1869-1884

Bulk Dates: (bulk 1873-1880)

ID No.: MSS86116

Creator: Griest, Jesse W., 1837-1885

Extent: 1400 items

Extent: 4 containers plus 2 oversize

Extent: 1.6 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English

Location: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

LC Catalog record: <https://lcn.loc.gov/mm2016086116>

Summary: Pennsylvania Quaker and Indian agent. Correspondence, letterpress books, diaries, census records, annual reports, financial records, and other records documenting Griest's service as agent for the Bureau of Indian Affairs assigned to the Otoe-Missouria Tribe of Indians in southeastern Nebraska from May 1873 to July 1880.

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the LC Catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically.

People

Green, Albert Lamborn, 1845-1947. Albert Lamborn Green files. 1869-1872.

Griest, Jesse W., 1837-1885.

Griest, Sibbilla, 1835-1904. Sibbilla Griest papers.

Kent, Mahlon B., -1929--Correspondence.

Saunders, John, 1814-1891--Correspondence.

White, Barclay, 1821-1903--Correspondence.

Organizations

Friends' Indian Aid Association of Philadelphia.

Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of Friends (Hicksite : 1827-1955)--Correspondence.

United States. Bureau of Indian Affairs--Correspondence.

United States. Bureau of Indian Affairs.

United States. Department of the Interior--Correspondence.

Subjects

Frontier and pioneer life--Nebraska.

Indians of North America--Agriculture.

Indians of North America--Correspondence.

Indians of North America--Education.

Indians of North America--Government relations.

Indians of North America--Land tenure--Nebraska.

Indians of North America--Nebraska.

Missouri Indians.

Oto Indians.

Society of Friends.

Places

Gage County (Neb.)--History.

Indian Territory--History.

Nebraska--History.

Otoe-Missouria Tribe of Indians--History.

Occupations

Indian agents.
Quakers.

Provenance

The papers of Jesse W. Griest, United States Indian Agent to the Otoe-Missouria Tribe of Indians, were purchased by the Library of Congress in 2016.

Related Material

Other correspondence of Jesse W. Griest can be found at the Friends Historical Library, Swarthmore College, Swarthmore, Pa.

Copyright Status

The status of copyright in the unpublished writings of Jesse W. Griest is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).

Access and Restrictions

The papers of Jesse W. Griest are open to research. Researchers are advised to contact the Manuscript Reading Room prior to visiting. Many collections are stored off-site and advance notice is needed to retrieve these items for research use.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container number, Jesse W. Griest Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

Date	Event
1837, June 20	Born, York County, Pa.
circa 1857	Educated, Millersville Normal School, Millersville, Pa.
1863	Married Mary Halsey Hollingshead (died 1866)
1869	Married Sibbilla E. Moore
1873-1880	U.S. Indian agent for the Otoe-Missouria Tribe of Indians, Gage County, Neb.
circa 1881-1884	Vice president, Kent and Bissell Cattle Co.
1884, Mar. 20	Died, Menallen Township, Adams County, Pa.

Scope and Content Note

The Jesse W. Griest Papers span the years 1869 to 1884 with the bulk of the material dating between 1873 and 1880. This collection comprises correspondence, letterpress books, diaries, annual reports, census records, financial records, tribal council notes, petitions, and other material documenting Griest's career as United States Indian Agent to the Otoe-Missouria Tribe of Indians in Gage County, Nebraska between 1873 and 1880. Material is arranged alphabetically by subject grouping, including agency records, correspondence, diaries and personal material, and oversize material.

The agency records include census records and documents listing tribe members, notes from council meetings with Otoe-Missouria chiefs, petitions from the tribal leadership regarding disputes over Otoe lands and plans for a delegation to

Washington, D.C., and extensive documentation of the agency's financial situation, which includes payrolls, annuities and disbursements paid out to Indians, statements of property issued to Indians, and inventories of goods and supplies. Annual reports describe progress with regard to adaptation of European-American style agricultural development, implementation of an education system, financial administration of the tribe, relationships between tribe members and neighboring tribes, and internal debates over the issue of relocation to Indian Territory. Agency records also contain monthly reports, supply requirements, and floor plans documenting the Industrial School established on the reservation during Griest's tenure and staffed by his wife, Sibbilla Griest, and material detailing encroachments and poaching by settlers. Records dating between 1869 and 1872 represent Griest's predecessor, Albert L. Green, and include legal agreements, received correspondence, and an inventory of tribe members, listing their ages and needs.

The correspondence in this collection documents Griest's career as an agent, as well as his relationships with fellow members of the Society of Friends. General correspondence consists primarily of incoming letters, while the letterpress books comprise copies of outgoing letters. Much of the correspondence is between Griest and members of the Society of Friends, many of whom represented the Indian Aid Association and had ties to Griest's work at the Otoe-Missouria agency. Prominent correspondents include John Saunders, president of the Indian Aid Association, Barclay White, superintendent of Indian Affairs, M.B. Kent, agent for the Nemaha Agency, and other members of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of Friends (Hicksite), including Sam and Mary Jeanes, Amos Peasly, and David Petit, among others. Official correspondence with the Department of the Interior and various Bureau of Indian Affairs commissioners is also included, as is a small amount of correspondence to family members describing life in the western United States. To a lesser extent, letters from Otoe-Missouria Indians are included and document health, crime within the agency, and other topics.

The diaries and personal material is smallest in scope and includes documentation of Griest's employment history and diaries written by both Griest and his wife while they lived in Nebraska. Griest's oath of office, appointment letters, reappointment letters, and resignation material comprise his employment records. Diaries written by Griest span the years 1878 to 1880 and describe the weather and his work at the agency. Diaries written by Sibbilla Griest date from 1873 and 1877 and describe the weather and, at times, her work at the Industrial School.

The oversize material was removed from the collection and is described according to the container and folder from which the items were removed.

Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged alphabetically by subject.

Container List

Container	Contents
BOX 1	Agency records
BOX 1	Accounts and funds, 1872-1878 <i>See also Oversize</i>
BOX 1	Annual reports and statistics, 1873-1879
BOX 1	Annuity, 1878-1879 <i>See Oversize</i>
BOX 1	Blank forms, envelopes, and letterhead, circa 1873-1880
BOX 1	Census reports and tribe lists, 1874-1878
BOX 1	Clippings, 1883, Dec. 29, undated
BOX 1	Council notes, 1876-1879
BOX 1	Debts, 1873, 1876
BOX 1	Disbursements, 1874-1879 <i>See Oversize</i>
BOX 1	Employee list, circa 1876
BOX 1	Encroachment and poaching violations, 1875-1878
BOX 1	Green, Albert, files, 1869-1872
BOX 1	Industrial school, circa 1873-1878 <i>See also Oversize</i>
BOX 1	Maps, undated
BOX 1	Passes, 1875-1880
BOX 1	Payroll, 1876-1880 (2 folders)
BOX 1	Payroll books, 1875-1879
BOX 2	Petitions, 1875-1879
BOX 2	Property issue and return, 1874-1880 <i>See also Oversize</i>
BOX 2	Supplies and inventories, 1878-1879
BOX 2	Valentine bill for sale of reservation land, 1882 Feb. 16
BOX 2	Whiskey sales and abstinence pledge, 1875, 1878
BOX 2-3	Correspondence
BOX 2	General
BOX 2	1872-1877 (6 folders)
BOX 3	1878-1881, undated (5 folders)
BOX 3	Letterpress books, 1873 May 17-1884 Nov. 1 (5 folders)
BOX 4	Diaries and personal files
BOX 4	Appointment and oath of office, 1873 Apr.-May <i>See also oversize</i>
BOX 4	Expense reports, 1876-1877
BOX 4	Griest, Jesse diaries, 1878-1880
BOX 4	Griest, Sibbilla diaries, 1873, 1877
BOX 4	Reappointment, 1878 Apr.-May
BOX 4	Resignation, 1877, 1880
BOX OV 1-OV 2	Oversize
	Agency records
BOX OV 1	Accounts and funds

Container List

Container

Contents

	Estimate of funds, 1872-1873 (Container 1)
	Account current, 1877 Mar. 31 (Container 1)
BOX OV 1	Annuity
	Annuity goods and supplies issue, 1878-1879 (Container 1)
BOX OV 2	Disbursements
	Abstracts and statements of disbursements, 1874-1879 (Container 1)
BOX OV 2	Industrial school
	Floor plans, circa 1874 (Container 1)
BOX OV 2	Property issue and return
	Property issue, 1874-1875 (Container 2)
	Diaries and personal
BOX OV 2	Appointment and oath of office
	Appointment certificate, 1873 Apr. 1 (Container 4)