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The status of copyright in the unpublished writings of Jesse W. Griest is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).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

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

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