Biographical background

Jonathan Richards (ca. 1812-1882) born in Darby (?), Pa. was educated at Westtown School and married Margaret Caley (d. 1877). He was the principal/superintendent of Haverford School from 1853-57.

Richards was appointed an Indian Agent for the Wichitas and affiliated bands at Wichita, Kansas in 1870 and served until 1876.

Richards was appointed under the Peace Policy adopted by President Grant, which officially turned over the management of the Central Superintendency to the care of the Orthodox branch of the Society of Friends. The Central Superintendency included the entire area of Kansas and the Indian Territory.

The area was under the care of nine Agents, all members of the Society of Friends, who were under the supervision of Superintendent Enoch Hoag and the Commissioner of Indian Affairs in Washington, D.C.

The agents were responsible for distributing rations, instructing the Indians in agriculture, counseling and establishing government schools. President Hayes, Grant's successor, appointed a new commissioner of Indian Affairs in 1877 who considered many of the Friends inefficient and in some cases, dishonest. As a result of this change in policy and administrations, the office of Central Superintendent and some of the Agencies were abolished.

(Biographical and background information from: Dictionary of Quaker Biography; "Friends and the Indians, 1655-1917" by Rayner W. Kelsey (Philadelphia : The Associated Executive Committee of Friends on Indian Affairs, 1917) [BX7644 K2 F9]. See also "The Quaker Indian Agents of Kiowa, Comanche and Wichita Indian Reservation" by Martha Buntin (Oklahoma City, 1932) [BX7644 B94 Q2])

Links to images

The following list brings together all of the image links found throughout this finding aid.

Page 1 of ms. copy of letter to Rev. Enoch Hoag, Supt. Indian Affairs, Lawrence, Kansas from W.B. Hazen, April 2, 1870 requesting him to select someone for the Wichita agency position Page 2 (98k and 59k respectively).

U.S. government account of differences, "Wichita Agency-Statement of Differences existing in settlement of accounts of Jonathan Richards, Indian Agent from August 21st, 1870 to March 17th, 1873, inclusive, under his official bonds of Aug. 16th, 1870 and August 10th, 1872" (26 pp. ms.) (image of cover page, 117k)


Summary of collection


Related collections:

Related collections include: Hoag Indian papers, 1865-1883 (Ms. Coll. 1034); John Biddle Garrett papers, 1853-1961 (bulk 1853-1872) (Ms. Coll. 903).

Arrangement and description of collection

Eight folders, arranged as follows:
   includes:
   - accounts of cash payments (payroll - gives names and occupations)
   - expenses for various supplies (corn, hardware, school furniture, books, etc.) against money received from various funds (including "Cash rec. of Supt. Hoag for 'Colonizing and supporting Wichitas and other affiliated bands"")
   also:
   - ALS in account book from Francis R. Taylor, 11/15/1934 giving background on account book and donation to President Comfort, Haverford College (text of letter excerpted for publication in "Quakeriana Notes" listed above)

2. Letters referring to the establishment of the agency April 2, 1870-July 27, 1870
   4 items: 1 ALS (see image below) and ms. copies
   includes:
   - Page 1 of ms. copy of letter to Rev. Enoch Hoag, Supt. Indian Affairs, Lawrence, Kansas from W.B. Hazen, April 2, 1870 requesting him to select someone for the Wichita agency position Page 2 (98k and 59k respectively).

3. Statements made to the Government, 1875-1876
   2 items
   includes:
   - 2 statements of accounts submitted by Jonathan Richards to the U.S. Govt.

4. Government statement of differences, May 1877
   1 item
   - U.S. government account of differences, "Wichita Agency-Statement of Differences existing in settlement of accounts of Jonathan Richards, Indian Agent from August 21st, 1870 to March 17th, 1873, inclusive, under his official bonds of Aug. 16th, 1870 and August 10th, 1872" (26 pp. ms.) (image of cover page, 117k)
   [Note: the difference in question is $23,441.44 (!) which the U.S. Govt. believes is the balance due to themselves]

5. Answer to the government statement of differences
   2 items
   - ms. draft of a statement attesting to the accuracy of Jonathan Richards position re: difference in balance due U.S. Govt. (undated but probably 1872)

6. Letters referring to the settlement of government claims
   ca. 41 items: ALS, ms. copies of Jonathan Richards letters, receipts and papers relevant to the above gov't. claims 1876- 1881
   includes:
   - letters to JR from Jas. S. Delano (ALS, 1881); Jonas Edge (ALS, 1876); E.B. French (ALS, 1877); Edward F. Hoag (2 ALS, 1878); Alfred J. Standing (2 ALS, 1881); W.W. Upton (TLS, 1879); also letters to Edward Hoag from Abel Frazier (ALS, 1877); F. Grinnell (ALS, 1877) and Jacob Stubbs (ALS, 1878)

7. Drafts and final replies to the govt. statements of differences
   ca. 50 leaves in folder [unnumbered and variously numbered sheets]

8. Government statement of differences, November 1877
   ms. (23 pp.)
   - "Statement of differences arising on settlement of the property, subsistence and annuity accounts of Jonathan Richards U.S. Indian Agent from August 21, 1870 to March 31, 1876" - this is a detailed statement of expenses (ex. "15 blacksmith hammers")
   (Note: in box is a copy of "Quakeriana Notes," no. 5, Autumn 1935, with write-up on the donation of this collection.)