Maris Bryant Pierce Papers, 1787-1884 (bulk 1883-1874)  
Microfilm M65-8  
Mss. B00-9

PLEASE USE MICROFILM VERSION, M65-8

Collection Access:

Researchers wishing to access this collection must apply for a Scholar Pass and present valid photo ID upon arrival to the library.

Scope and Content Note

Correspondence with government officials, census officials, Indians, Quakers, friends and relatives, 1834-1874; sermons, speeches and other writings; copies of New York State and federal laws and bills concerning Indians, 1850-1874; and papers concerning the Seneca Nation, including Council minutes, 1833-1865, treaties and agreements, 1787-1844, financial reports, letters, and mss. written by whites about the Senecas, 1807-1874. Subjects include Indian emigration, timber sales, schools, self-government, and relations with the Ebenezers, Quakers, and the Ogden Land Company.

Biographical Note

Maris B. Pierce was an educated Seneca Indian who lived most of his life on the Buffalo Creek and Cattaraugus Reservations. An 1840 graduate of Dartmouth College, he was one of the first Indians to be receive a college education. He returned from college to the Buffalo Creek Reservation, where he was appointed an official interpreter and also taught in the Indian schools.

Pierce served as recording secretary for Seneca delegations to Albany and Washington, D.C., where he was a highly successful and respected advocate for Seneca rights and Indian welfare.

Microfilm Note

The following series description and folder-level inventory do not strictly correspond to the organization of the microfilm edition of the Mans Pierce Papers. However, they can act as a general guide to the contents of the collection. The papers are on 4 reels of film.
Series Description

Series I: Personal papers, 1834-1884

Subseries A: Pierce’s life and papers, 1884
Subseries B: Correspondence, 1834-1874
Subseries C: Sermons, speeches and other writings, 1838-1868
Subseries D: Recommendations and authorizing papers, 1837-1868
Subseries E: Autograph album, 1852

Series II: Seneca Indian papers, 1787-1874

Subseries A: Treaties and laws, 1787-1877
Subseries B: Correspondence, 1807-1874
Subseries C: Council minutes, resolutions, etc., 1833-1865
Subseries D: Other papers concerning government of the Seneca Indians, 1814-1873
Subseries E: Papers concerning emigration, religious activities, census and other matters, ca. 1839-1871

Box and Folder List

Box 1

Series I: Personal Papers

Subseries A: Pierce’s Life and Papers

1. ALS by [Mary J. Pierce], n.d., and clipping, 1884, concerning Pierce’s life and papers

Subseries B: Correspondence

2. Official government correspondence to Pierce, 1839-1867
3. Other correspondence to Pierce, 1834-1848
4. Other correspondence to Pierce, 1849-1874
5. Correspondence from Pierce, 1837-1873

Subseries C: Sermons, Speeches and Other Writings

6. 1838-ca. 1868 and n.d.

Subseries D: Recommendations and Authorizing Papers

7. Recommendations and certifications of Pierce, authorizing him to perform various functions, etc., 1837-1868

Subseries E: Autograph Album

8. Autograph album from Pierce’s service in Washington, D.C., 1852
Series II: Seneca Indian papers

Subseries A: Treaties and Laws

11. U.S. Congress bills concerning N.Y. State Indians, Jan.-Apr. 1874
12. *A Brief Statement of the Rights of the Seneca Indians in the State of New York to the Lands in that state...* Philadelphia, 1877; bound photocopy

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**Box 2**

1. Photostat copies of Pierce’s bound ms. *Copies of Treaties, agreements, and correspondence relating thereto*, 1787-1844
3. Appraisal report by Thomas C. Love and Ira Cook to the Secretary of War, 1844, as per treaty with Seneca Indians of 1842

Subseries B: Correspondence

4. Correspondence to the Seneca Nation, 1807-1854 and n.d.
5. U.S. Government correspondence with agents, subagents, or Seneca Indians other than Pierce, 1834-1866
6. Correspondence and other writings by whites on the subject of the Indians of New York State, 1839-1853 and n.d.
7. Correspondence of Seneca Indians to whites on governments, lawyers, land companies, etc., 1835-1874 and n.d.

Subseries C: Council Minutes, Resolutions, etc.

8. Council meeting minutes and notices, 1833-1865 and n.d.

Subseries D: Other Papers Concerning Government of the Seneca Indians

10. Election materials, 1845-1867

Subseries E: Papers Concerning Emigration, Religious Activities, Census and Other Matters

11. Rolls of New York State Indians emigrating west of the Mississippi, ca. 1846
12. Miscellaneous papers relating to Seneca religious activities, n.d.
13. Miscellaneous materials (Seneca census, list of names, Civil War discharge, will, etc.), 1839-1871 and n.d.

Collection reprocessed and retroconverted:
Peter Nelson
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