

Collection #
SC 2741

INDIANA INDIAN AGENTS PAPERS, 1835–1838

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Processed by

Susan A. Fletcher
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Manuscript and Visual Collections Department
William Henry Smith Memorial Library
Indiana Historical Society
450 West Ohio Street
Indianapolis, IN 46202-3269

www.indianahistory.org

COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF
COLLECTION: 1 folder

COLLECTION
DATES: 1835–38

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NOTES:

HISTORICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

During the 1830s tensions increased among Indians, the United States government, and white settlers in Indiana. The U.S. government's policy toward Indians during this period began in the 1820s with the appointment of Thomas L. McKenney as the first commissioner of the Office of Indian Affairs under the War Department. The 1830 Indian Removal Act set the tone for native-white relations for the next two decades. The forced migration of the Five Civilized Tribes is the most famous case of removal but this pattern repeated itself throughout the nation, including Indiana.

In 1823 John Tipton became the Indian agent at Fort Wayne. He bought two reserves of land near the future site of Logansport and moved the Miami agency there in 1828. Ten years later the official policy towards both the Miami and Potawatomie people became one of removal and Indian agent Abel C. Pepper drafted treaties that seized Indian lands and mandated relocation west of the Mississippi River. In 1838 the removal of the Potawatomie began. Leader Menominee resisted, but Tipton captured him and 850 others, sending them west under heavy guard. The Indians walked most of the way, and typhoid, dysentery, and malnutrition killed 42 while another 50 escaped. The materials in this collection concern the rations allowed the Indians and the state of their removal.

Abel C. Pepper was born in Virginia in 1793. He served in the War of 1812 with Captain William Garrad. In 1815 Pepper moved to Indiana Territory and settled in the region of Dearborn County that eventually became Ohio County. Pepper was a prominent member of the community and secured positions as the militia captain, county commissioner, and sheriff. In 1825 he served as a representative in the state legislature, and ran unsuccessfully for lieutenant governor against Milton Stapp in 1828. The next year Andrew Jackson appointed him sub-Indian Agent at Fort Wayne, and he quickly became the superintendent for the removal of Indians in Indiana, Michigan, Illinois, and Wisconsin. He resigned this post in 1839 but remained active in the political life of the state. In 1845 President Polk appointed him marshal of Indiana and in 1850 he represented Ohio and Switzerland Counties in the constitutional convention. Pepper was a grand high priest in the local Masonic lodge. According to the 1885 *History of Dearborn and Ohio Counties* he was "slightly above medium height, spare and sinewy, of easy and pleasing address...and particularly polite to the ladies." Pepper died 20 March 1860 in Rising Sun.

Ethan Allen Hitchcock was born in Vermont in 1798. After graduating from West Point in 1817 he was sent to Fort Crawford in Wisconsin Territory to oversee Indian affairs. In 1836 he joined Edmund Gaines in the Second Seminole War and was later sent to the Pacific Northwest. In 1841 the War Department hired him to investigate charges of widespread abuse and corruption during the Cherokee Removal. His report proved these charges true and the government suppressed his findings. Hitchcock later wrote *A Traveler in Indian Territory*.

George T. Bostwick was a doctor in Cass County from 1834-44, and became an associate judge in 1836. James Williams lived near Wabash and owned a business on Market Street in Logansport.

Sources:

History of Dearborn and Ohio Counties, IN. Chicago : F.E. Weakley & Co, 1885. General and Reference Collection: F532.D18 W45 1885

Powell, Jehu Z. *History of Cass County, IN.* Chicago: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1913. General and Reference Collection: F532.C4 P6 1913

Rafert, Stewart. *The Miami Indians of Indiana: A Persistent People 1654*
Press, 1996. General and Reference Collection: E99.M48 R35 1996.

Waldman, Carl. *Who Was Who in Native American History.* New York: Facts of File, 1990. Reference Collection: E89 .W35 1990

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection consists of three letters concerning the removal of the Potawatomie and Miami Indians from Indiana during the 1830s. The first letter, dated 27 July 1835, is from James Williams to Indian agent Able C. Pepper. Williams is responding to an advertisement that Pepper had placed in the Canal Telegraph and offers to furnish rations for the Potawatomie Indians at a rate of \$6.40 per hundred and to the Miami at \$7.40 per hundred. The next letter, dated 14 July 1838, is from George T. Bostwick to Captain E. A. Hitchcock. Bostwick offers to ferry supplies for the Indians by river in order to avoid the expense of land shipment. In the August 1838 letter, Hitchcock writes W. Lewis to inform him that the goods will be delivered to the Potawatomie Indians, citing “the state of the Emigration” as the cause for their detention.

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CATALOGING INFORMATION

For additional information on this collection, including a list of subject headings that may lead you to related materials:

1. Go to the Indiana Historical Society's online catalog: <http://opac.indianahistory.org/>
2. Click on the "Basic Search" icon.
3. Select "Call Number" from the "Search In:" box.
4. Search for the collection by its basic call number (in this case, SC 2741).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.