

Field Research Travelogue, August 18 – Sept 1, 2015
Site visits to some of the Quaker Indian Schools in Oklahoma, Kansas, Nebraska, Iowa, and Ohio
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Boulder Friends Meeting

Santa Fe NM Friend Guthrie Miller and I set out from my home in Louisville CO on August 18, beginning a 15-day journey that ended at Pendle Hill, the Quaker study and contemplation center outside of Philadelphia PA. Here I will continue my research through the end of the year, making use of the Quaker history collections at Swarthmore and Haverford colleges and other Philadelphia-area resources. For their financial support of this research, I am grateful to the Ruth Waskey Fund (Boulder Friends Meeting), Pendle Hill (the Cadbury Scholarship), Swarthmore College (the Moore Fellowship), the Native American Rights Fund, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, New York Yearly Meeting, and individual donors. For his spiritual, logistical, and financial support during the field research, muchisimas gracias to Guthrie Miller. For her research contributions, especially helping me identify the locations of the Quaker Indian schools, many thanks to Joan Henshaw.



This report is a travelogue, summarizing our travel experiences without beginning to report what I've learned so far about these schools.

Oklahoma

Fort Sill Indian School

We visited Fort Sill, where a series of Orthodox Quakers served as Indian agents during the Grant administration (1869-77), carrying out Grant's "Peace Policy." Quaker schools at and near Fort Sill served Caddo, Comanche, Delaware, Wichita, Kiowa, and Apache students. The federal government took over the boarding school and managed it as a school for students from many different tribes until it closed in 1980. The property is currently maintained by the Kiowa-Apache-Comanche Tribal Council, but the buildings are in various stages of collapse and disrepair.



Fort Sill Museum display about Lawrie Tatum, Quaker Indian Agent

We spoke with Faith Pablo, a Tohono O'Odham woman who works in a New Pathways drug rehab program that is located in the only building still in use. She sends her grandchildren to Riverside Indian School (a Bureau of Indian Education boarding school) because she thinks it offers better education than the schools on her reservation in Arizona.



The boys dorm was the first building on this site. The original Quaker school was located a short distance away.

We talked with receptionist Carney Saupitty, Jr. at the very impressive Comanche Nation Museum in Lawton. He said the Fort Sill Indian School Alumni Association is active and sponsors reunions for students who return from all parts of the country. He sends his children and grandchildren to public schools because he thinks it is important for them to learn to get along with white people.

Riverside Indian School, Anadarko OK

This is the only school we visited that is still in operation. It was founded by Orthodox Quakers in 1871 for Wichita, Caddo, Delaware and Creek students. It was later turned over to the federal government and is currently under Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) management. Enrollment in grades 4 to 12 is 520 students from as many as 75 different tribes.

Miss Shirley (we didn't get her last name) showed us around the school. She is Kiowa-Comanche-Caddo and was a student at Riverside, as was her father who became a famous Kiowa artist. She taught in public schools for a while and then came back to work at Riverside. She sent her own children to public schools because they could afford it. She stays in touch with Riverside classmates from all parts of the country. She said almost all the students board at the school from mid-August to June, although some day students live in the surrounding community. Most of the students are sent to Riverside because their families cannot care for them due to extreme poverty, deaths or other problems in the family, delinquency, or substance abuse. BIE pays their transportation for the school term and for the Christmas holiday, and will also send students home for tribal ceremonies or funerals, on request. The school provides clothing and other materials to students as well as medical and dental care. Miss Shirley is proud to work there. She said they don't teach Native languages at Riverside (because which one would they choose?), but the students speak their own languages freely among themselves. There's a brand new gym and cafeteria, and new dorms are being built to replace the old ones. All the students are responsible for some housekeeping tasks in the dorms.



Miss Shirley and Principal
Tony Dearman



These old dorms will soon be replaced with new ones.

We also spoke with Carla Whiteman, an Osage woman from Hominy OK who is a counselor at Riverside. She worked in public schools until a position was available at Riverside. She said she always wanted to work there because "these are my people." She is putting a lot of effort into raising the academic performance of the students by developing positive attitudes toward testing, for example. She also organizes off-campus outings to movies, etc., and helped put on the best senior prom ever, where girls wore second-hand prom dresses and all the boys rented tuxes.

Riverside English teacher Viola Zumwalt will mail me a history of Riverside Indian School, written Ruby Shannon.

Kickapoo Friends Center, McLoud OK

Starting in 1883, Orthodox Quakers established a mission and built schools to teach the children of the so-called "Mexican Kickapoos." This tribe was persuaded to return to the United States and settle on a reservation in Indian Territory after living for several decades in Mexico. In 1892, when their reservation was broken up into individual allotments, the Kickapoos showed their appreciation to the Friends by giving them 160 acres of land. Friends later gave back all but the 65 acres where the Kickapoo Friends Center is located today.





Directors Brad and Christine Wood, Evangelical Friends, hosted us for two days in their guest house, where volunteer work crews and youth groups frequently stay. Brad grew up at the Kickapoo Friends Center where his father was director. He met Christine, who is Kickapoo, in school and they married and raised their family at the center. Brad preaches on Sundays and runs the farm; together Brad and Christine organize youth activities. Christine also works in the public schools as a tutor and liaison with Kickapoo families. Every summer they take van loads of Kickapoo

children to Quivering Arrow camp, where they get together with Native children from the other Oklahoma Evangelical Friends centers in Hominy (Osage) and Wyandotte (Seneca-Cayuga). Brad said the current Kickapoo population is around 3,000.

Despite many attempts, the early Quaker teachers were never able to persuade the Kickapoos to send their children to school. The only school term on record lasted one and a half months. Brad said many contemporary Kickapoos are also lukewarm about schooling. As a group, they tend to be home-based and private, he said. Their lives are centered around their families, clan gatherings, and the ceremonies that are held in the thatch "Indian houses" that they build for these gatherings. Brad thinks about half the people speak the Kickapoo language, but it is not taught in the public schools.



Quaker teachers Lina Lunt and Elizabeth Test

Brad scanned and made photocopies of many newspaper articles, photographs, and Kickapoo Friends Center documents for me.

Shawnee Indian School, Shawnee Friends Mission, Shawnee OK

Orthodox Friends started a day school in 1872 and a boarding school in 1876 for Absentee Shawnee and other tribes in the area. We were not able to speak with anyone in Shawnee about the school, but we walked among the graves in the Tecumseh Cemetery where Quaker teacher Elizabeth Test and several generations of Quaker missionaries are buried.



Sac and Fox Mission School, Sac and Fox Agency, Stroud OK

We visited this site on a Saturday afternoon when the Sac and Fox tribal offices were closed, so we were not able to talk with anyone there, but we admired the many-nation flag display and the stop signs. Quakers from Ohio, Thomas Miller and John Hadley, served as Indian agents on the Sac and Fox reservation during the 1870s. A Quaker-run boarding school served Sac and Fox and other tribes in the area.



Hominy Friends Meeting, Hominy OK

We worshiped at Hominy Friends Meeting on August 23, with Orthodox Quaker pastor David Nagle, his two children, and his predominantly Osage congregation. The late Ruby Wilson remembered a Friends school in Hominy’s Indian Village, but I haven’t found documentation on it yet. David introduced us to the Osage community that adopted him some 30 years ago. He dances in their June ceremonial gatherings when all the Osage people come together for cultural festivities. Many families have campsites surrounding the Indian Village square where they dance under the large arbor. “For one month we are Indian,” Romaine Shackelford, 87, told us. “The rest of the year we’re just like everyone else. That’s the way it is now. Some people don’t want to join the mainstream, but you have to.”



Pastor David Nagle in the Hominy Friends Meeting



The Native American Church and grounds in Hominy.



Inside the huge Osage dance pavilion in Pawhuska OK.
Seal of the Osage Nation



Mr. Shackelford was a student at the Seneca Indian Boarding School in Wyandotte OK, which was founded by Quakers and then turned over to the federal government. Later he attended the Haskell Indian Boarding School in Kansas. Most of the students at the Seneca Indian School during the 1940s were Cherokee, he said. They were not punished for speaking their languages, but they “worked all the time.” He remembered getting up at 4 am, cleaning his room, then cleaning the library (his assigned “detail”), then working for a couple hours in the school’s bakery, and doing some of the farm work besides. They kept hogs and had a dairy, and they plowed the fields behind two mules. Somehow they squeezed in half days of academic work. The boys were given Army surplus shoes and jackets, blue jeans and grey shirts, and they were always taken to church on Sunday. Mr. Shackelford remembers the Quaker pastor was kind, and he said the boarding school was good for him because he was raised by his grandparents and they didn’t know anything about school so they couldn’t help him.

Modoc Indian School, Modoc Reservation near Wyandotte OK

The federal government built a building that served as both church and day school for Modoc children. Orthodox Friends purchased the structure in 1891 and moved it next to the Modoc cemetery, where it stands today. The Friends school was open to Modoc and white children. Steve Johnson, pastor of the Wyandotte Evangelical Friends Meeting, showed us the cemetery and the building. The last meeting for worship there was held in 1978.



Seneca Indian Boarding School, Wyandotte, OK

In 1872, Orthodox Friends opened the Seneca, Shawnee and Wyandotte Industrial Boarding School. They managed it until 1880 and then turned it over to the federal government which operated the school, grades 1-8, until its closure in 1980. Students were then absorbed into the Sequoyah Indian Boarding School in Tahlequah OK, which is still in operation today under management of the Cherokee Nation. Several yearly meetings continued to raise money and send materials, clothing, and gifts to students at the Seneca Indian School until its closure, and a Quaker pastor served as the school’s chaplain. Steve Johnson, pastor of the Wyandotte Evangelical Friends Meeting, remembers that the young Seneca School boys filled the church basement when they came to his First Day School classes in the 1970s. Steve took us to the site of the school on a hill overlooking the town of Wyandotte. All the buildings have been demolished, replaced by a beautiful new fitness center managed by the Wyandotte tribal government. A large mural inside portrays the history of the school.





Part of a 2-story mural in the Wyandotte Nation’s Fitness Center which depicts the history of the Seneca Indian Boarding School.

Council House Orthodox Friends Mission and School

In 1884, Friends completed construction of a church building on land they received from the federal government near the Seneca Council House, where tribal meetings were customarily held. Subsequently the tribal meetings were held in the Friends meetinghouse which then became known as Council House. From 1884 to 1907, school for Seneca, Cayuga, and other Native children was held in the old tribal council house building. A new meetinghouse was built in 1948. Two elderly Friends continue to meet for worship most Sundays, and Conservative Mennonites also worship there. Several yearly meetings supported the Council House mission and the series of missionaries who served there. In 1957 they collaborated with the Seneca-Cayuga tribe to build the Loom House and donated looms where Seneca-Cayuga women make fine weavings; sales support the church.



Harvey Wallace (on left) and his Council House congregation in 1910.



Harvey Wallace’s granddaughter, Carolyn Leach, at her home near Council House. She made photocopies of many historical photographs and documents for us and took us to visit the church, cemetery, and loom house.

Carolyn Leach, granddaughter of Council House missionaries Harvey and Elizabeth Wallace, said her grandfather was given the Seneca name Ta No Gou Coe, which means “goes everywhere.” Carolyn introduced us to a Seneca woman, Jeannie Innis, who carries on her family’s weaving tradition at the loom house. Jeannie said Seneca-Cayuga traditional life is centered around the Green Corn ceremonies held the first week of August. Families set up camp at the Stomp Ground, a large open camp. Throughout the week, they prepare traditional foods, play traditional games, and hold dances at night. Spiritual leaders known as Pot Hangers give names to all the new babies. Cayuga and Seneca relatives from Canada and New York come; they are helping the Oklahoma tribes keep their languages and ceremonies alive.



Jeannie Innis holds a weaving made by her aunt, Doris Spicer.

In Wilmington, Ohio, I interviewed Kent Pickard, who grew up at Council House where his parents Lawrence and Lucile served as missionaries from 1951 to 1979. A weaving made on a Council House loom by Seneca-Cayuga Pot Hanger Minnie Thompson hangs on the wall of the Wilmington College Quaker Heritage Center.

KANSAS

Kaw Mission, Council Grove KS

Methodists built and ran an Indian boarding school at the Kanza Indian Agency from 1851 to 1854. When Quaker Indian agent Mahlon Stubbs arrived in 1863, he established the Kaw Indian Manual Labor Boarding School which operated for three years. It was re-opened in 1869 and closed in 1873 when the Kaw (also called Kanza) people were removed to Indian Territory (now Oklahoma). Boulder Friend Joan Henshaw’s family members (Newlins) served as Indian agents and teachers here, and Joan has contributed her family records to this research project.



The Kaw Indian Agency building, possibly used for the Quaker-run boarding school, now preserved by the Kaw Nation.

Diane Barker, president of Friends of Konza Prairie, took us to the Kaw Mission State Historical Site in Council Grove, where we explored the original Methodist school buildings, and to the Kaw Nation’s Allegawaho Memorial Heritage Park. The Kaw Nation recently purchased this piece of their old homeland, where they are gathering again for annual ceremonial dances.



The new Kaw Nation dance pavilion at the Memorial Heritage Park.



This emblem reads: “Wakanda. Bless all who walk here. May we know and respect all your creation and what you have taught our people. Wiblah.”

NEBRASKA

Oto and Missouri Agency and Industrial Boarding School, Barneston NE

With federal government funds and under the direction of Quaker Indian agent Albert L. Green, an “impressive and expensive” boarding school was opened on the Oto-Missouri reservation in southeastern Nebraska in 1875. It was operated by Quakers until the Oto and Missouri peoples were removed to Indian Territory in 1881. Gage County Heritage Preservation, Inc. members Kathy Paul and Lauren Reidesell have spearheaded efforts to preserve what remains of the school building – a section of the original building that was moved and used for a time as a family residence. When it was to be destroyed, the GCHP moved the building to the town of Barneston and set it on a limestone foundation similar to the original. Now they open it up for occasional visitors -- area school children and us! I am full of appreciation for people like Kathy and Lauren who have a sense of the historical importance of structures and memories in little towns all across this country, and who take care to protect and preserve what they can. Lauren, a librarian in nearby Beatrice, is photocopying documents to send to me.



The Oto-Missouri Industrial Labor School, then (1875) and now.



Barneston neighbors Les White and Kathy Paul show us the school's charred second floor ceiling. The story goes that the Otoes stopped by at the school to take the boys along on a buffalo hunt, but the teachers said no. The boys set fire to the school.

IOWA

White's Iowa Manual Labor Institute, Houghton IA

In his will, Quaker Josiah White allocated \$40,000 to establish two boarding schools – one in Indiana, the other in Iowa – to serve the needs of poor and orphaned children of all races. In 1851 this was a lot of money. Indiana Yearly Meeting accepted the bequest, purchased and developed land in both states, built buildings, and hired staff to run the farms and the schools. They were to become self-sufficient operations where students would labor and study, and income would be derived from land rentals.



Drawing of White's Iowa Manual Labor Institute displayed at the Lewelling House Quaker Museum.

The Iowa school opened as a boy's training/reform school in 1863 (subsidized by Iowa's state government), then became a girls training/reform school in 1873 (still subsidized by the state), and in 1883 became a boarding school for Native children (subsidized by the federal government). In 1887 a fire destroyed the school and all but three of the Native students were sent to Haskell Indian School in Lawrence KS. Quaker teachers managed to conduct classes for destitute white children on and off until the school was moved to New Providence IA in 1929. There it thrived and evolved into present-day Quakerdale which administers three residential schools as well as counseling and family services, still keeping faith with Josiah White's vision.

We visited the Lewelling House Quaker Museum in Salem IA, where volunteer Faye Heartsill showed us how the Quaker home became a key stop on the Underground Railroad, offering safety to people who had just crossed the Missouri River, heading north. She gave directions to find the site of White's Iowa Manual Labor Institute a few miles away outside of Houghton. Only the original steps remain, now integrated into the base of a brick farmhouse.



OHIO

Shawnee Friends Mission and School, Wapakoneta OH

We didn't visit the site of this Quaker mission and the school that served the Shawnee from 1794 to 1831 because Friend Christine Hadley Snyder in Wilmington forewarned us that there's nothing left there to see. Instead, Christine gave us a tour of Wilmington Quaker sites and introduced us to people with first-hand or family knowledge of the Friends missions among Native peoples. Christine's own Harvey family ancestors served as teachers in the Shawnee school at Wapakoneta and accompanied the Shawnee people to Kansas

when they were forced to leave Ohio in 1831. On the Hadley side of her family there is Martha Hadley who, in the 1890s, responded to a request for teachers to go to the remote Inupiat village of Kotzgue, Alaska. She said, "I will go," and off she went. She taught there from 1899 to 1903. In similar fashion, in 1862 Isaac Harvey heard the Lord call him to travel to Washington to encourage President Lincoln to emancipate the slaves; he and his wife Sarah made the trip. Their holy obedience is honored with a statue on the Wilmington College campus, where they continue to inspire faithfulness to spiritual leadings.

Friend Kent Pickard told us stories of growing up at the Council House Mission in Oklahoma, while his parents served as missionaries there, 1951-1979. He remembers hearing Seneca and Cayuga people complain to his father about the treatment their children received at the Seneca Indian Boarding School in Wyandotte, where they were forced to go. They were angry that the school broke up the clan structure that is important to the Seneca and Cayuga people, and they said the children were being punished for speaking their languages. He said his father participated in the Seneca-Cayuga ceremonies and "was one of them." When I asked how, he said, "My father shared everything. That's what it meant to be an Indian. They shared everything." His parents traveled to many yearly meetings and monthly meetings, raising money to support their work at Council House.

In Wilmington we learned of two additional Quaker Indian schools: the one where Martha Hadley taught in Kotzebue, Alaska, and one where Wilmington Friend Becky Godfrey taught MOWA Choctaw children in Alabama from 1987 to 1992. When I arrived at Pendle Hill, I met Angela Hopkins who was teaching at the MOWA Choctaw Mission during Hurricane Katrina and its aftermath. Angela has provided lots of background reading about the Choctaw people who disobeyed the 1830 Indian Removal Act, refused to go to Indian Territory, and hid out in remote parts of Mississippi and Alabama where they still live today.

At Wilmington College, Quaker Heritage Center director Ruth Brindle and reference librarian Patti Kinsinger provided valuable references and documents.



With Sarah and Isaac Harvey on the Wilmington College campus, in faith, following our leadings.