

**William H. Richardson
Papers**

(1909-1937, with research material dating to 17th Century)

Descriptive Summary

Quantity: 2 cubic feet

Access: No restrictions

Processed by: Helen Kay Kennedy with guidance from Cynthia Harris.

Biographical sketch:

William H. Richardson was born in Norristown Township, Montgomery, PA., on January 24, 1864, to John C. and Ellen Rittenhouse Richardson. He died in his residence at 92 Summit Ave., Jersey City, NJ, April 25, 1937 and was buried in the Lutheran Cemetery, Old Trapp, PA. He was survived by his wife, Jennie Shortt Richardson, their children - Dr. William R. Richardson of Schenectady, New York, Isabel (Mrs. Joseph B. Gordon) of Marlboro, New Jersey, and Jane (Mrs. M.M. Kallman) of Fort Shafter, Hawaii – and grandchildren, Richard and Jane Gordon and Barbara and Jane Richardson.

He became the official historian of Jersey City in 1930 when he was appointed by Mayor Frank Hague to be the general director of the celebration of the tercentenary of the founding of Jersey City (Pavonia). In 1931 he was named to a salaried position as head of the department of historical research of the Jersey City Board of Education, where he worked under Assistant Superintendent of Schools Dr. K.L. Thompson. In this position he produced papers distributed to public school students, gave lectures, and continued to write feature articles for the local newspapers. His donated books and pamphlets formed the nucleus of an historical reference library for the Board of Education, a collection that was later moved to the Jersey City Free Public Library. In 1933 Governor A. Harry Moore named Richardson to represent New Jersey at the 155th anniversary of the evacuation of Valley Forge in PA.

Richardson had long been an active researcher and writer about historical topics prior to his official appointment and while an active businessman. Before moving to Jersey City in 1902 as Superintendent and General Manager of the Riegal Sack Company's Jersey City plant, Richardson had been editor of *The Miller's Review*, a trade paper of the flour miller industry, and had also written feature articles for the *Philadelphia Times* and the *Philadelphia Record* on local historical subjects. He was an amateur photographer and a member of the Philadelphia Consistory Ancient, Accepted Scottish Rite of Free Masonry. In 1886 he published *Historic Churches of America*.

After moving to Jersey City, Richardson wrote a number of articles for *The Jersey Journal* and other Hudson County newspapers, including a series of articles in 1909 in connection with the opening of the Hudson and Manhattan tubes and again in 1927 in connection with the opening of the Holland Tunnel. In 1910, he was one of the leading figures in the 250th Bergen anniversary celebration. Jersey City was first established as the town of Bergen in 1660. In 1917 he contributed a description of 1867 Jersey City to the 50th anniversary edition of *The Jersey Journal*. He was a member of the Rotary Club and the editor of *The Rotary Call* from 1918 until his death. Deacon of The First Congregational Church, secretary of the YMCA board of directors and master of Charity Lodge, F. and A.M., of Morristown were among his other duties. He was also a member of the Archaeological Society of New Jersey, the Lincoln Association of Jersey City, the Pennsylvania Society of New York, the Theodore Roosevelt Association of Jersey City, and many local and area historical societies.

In 1922 he left Riegel Sack Company and founded the Richardson Garrett Bag Factory with Victor Garrett. The company folded in 1929 after the stock market crash and the remaining years of Richardson's life were devoted to the full-time pursuit of history and a passion for commemorating and rectifying the reputation of his city and state.

Scope and Content note:

The William H. Richardson Papers are organized into four series – correspondence, planning of commemorative events, resources and writings – and are contained in two manuscript boxes. These papers were the personal possession of Mr. Richardson and were given by him to the Jersey City Board of Education. They were later transferred to the New Jersey Room of the Jersey City Free Public Library.

The series organization reflects the activities of Mr. Richardson as a local historian – corresponding with experts and peers about activities and interests, planning and documenting commemorative events, collecting

documentary resources, and communicating his findings and historical perspective through both published and unpublished writings.

Considerable material is included from the planning of the 1930 Pavonia Tercentenary, from research on General Washington's activities in northern New Jersey, and the disputed rights to the invention of the first steamboat, to items of biographical and local interest to Jersey City residents.

Correspondence Series:

Series description – Correspondence files (1909-37), 112 folders
Arranged alphabetically

Richardson's correspondence includes many challenges to printed material. One particularly comprehensive rebuttal involved a map of George Washington's travels through New Jersey printed by the National Geographic Society. For this, Richardson enlisted the aid of the United States George Washington Bicentennial Commission and the Library of Congress. Other correspondence chronicles Richardson's work with Jersey City's Congresswoman Mary Norton in a failed attempt to get a stamp produced for the city's Pavonia Tercentenary Celebration in 1930. In verifying his writings Richardson often sought facts from the best sources of the time. In addition to those mentioned above, there is correspondence with professors of such academic institutions as Harvard, Yale, and Princeton. Various historical societies and museums were also consulted. There is considerable personal correspondence including several letters recording the memories of Erienne Smith's time in Jersey City by her son and also memories of balladeer John Rogers Thomas penned by his daughter. Correspondence with Governors A. Harry Moore and Harold Hoffman and Mayor Frank Hague is also represented.

Box 1	Folder 1	American Indian Organizations, 1919-31
	2	Auto Club of Hudson County, 1931
	3	Book Orders, 1931
	4	Businesses: Jersey City, Banks, 1918-32
	5	Businesses: Jersey City, Colgate, 1918-31
	6	Businesses: Jersey City, Dixon Crucible, 1925
	7	Businesses: Jersey City, Lorillaed, 1917-18
	8	Businesses: Jersey City, Insurance Agencies, 1923-29
	9	Businesses: Jersey City, Miscellaneous Companies, 1909-28
	10	Businesses: Jersey City, Riegel Sack Co., 1915
	11	Businesses: New York, Ginn & Co., Publishers, 1932
	12	Businesses: New York, Miscellaneous, 1910-28
	13	Businesses: New York, Richards Publishing, 1931
	14	Businesses: New York, Steamship Lines, 1927-29
	15	Businesses: Philadelphia, Winston Co. Publishers, 1935-36
	16	Churches: Jersey City, 1912-37
	17	Colleges & Universities: Drew, 1932
	18	Colleges & Universities: Harvard, 1926-29
	19	Colleges & Universities: Michigan, 1932
	20	Colleges & Universities: Miscellaneous, 1929-37
	21	Colleges & Universities: New York State, 1930-32
	22	Colleges & Universities: Princeton, 1931-32

23	Colleges & Universities: Union College, NY, 1925
24	Colleges & Universities: Yale, 1927-35
25	Cosmos Club (re: Cornelia Bradford), 1917-26
26	Genealogical Society of NJ, 1932
27	Geological Survey of NJ, 1907-31
28	Governor: NJ, Hoffman, Harold G., 1931-35
29	Governor: NJ, Moore, A. Harry, 1928-32
30	Highway Commission, State of NJ, 1932
31	Historic Sites Commission, 1932
32	Historical Societies: Gloucester County, 1932-33
33	Historical Societies: Miscellaneous NJ Counties, 1929-32
34	Historical Societies: Monmouth County, 1932
35	Historical Societies: New Jersey State, 1927-31
36	Historical Societies: Out-of-State, 1918-35
37	Historical Societies: Pennsylvania, 1931-32
38	Hoboken Land and Improvement Company, 1931-32
39	Holland Society, 1930-31
40	Jersey City: Board of Education, 1909-32
41	Jersey City: Chamber of Commerce, 1919-31
42	Jersey City: City Clerk Election (Fagan), 1917
43	Jersey City: Commissioner of Revenue Election (Stewart), 1917
44	Jersey City: Fire Department, 1918-20
45	Jersey City: Library, 1927-32
46	Jersey City: Mayor Frank Hague, 1929-35
47	Jersey City: Mayor Otto Wittpenn, 1909-10
48	Jersey City: Organizations, 1916-28
49	Jersey City: Parks and Public Safety Departments, 1921
50	Jersey City: Police Department, 1911-17
51	Jersey City: Schools, 1932
52	Jersey City: Shade Tree Commission, 1911-12
53	Journal Square Association, 1930
54	Libraries, Miscellaneous, 1912-32
55	Library Commission, State of NJ, 1932
56	Library of Congress, 1925-35
57	Library of Congress, Maps Division, 1930-34
58	Library, State of NJ, 1930-31
59	Lincoln Association, 1930
60	Loew's Theater, 1930-31
61	Masonic Societies, 1930
62	Museums, 1931-32
63	National Geographic Society, 1932
64	News media: Herald Tribune, 1932-35

65 News media: Jersey Journal and Observer, 1917-32
66 News media: Minkakwa, 1931
67 News media: New York Times, 1933-34
68 News media: Radio Station WHOM, 1930
69 News media: Sunoco News, Voice of the Air,
Lowell Thomas, 1932-33
70 Organizations: Miscellaneous, 1915-37, undated
71 Personal: Brett Family, 1919-23
72 Personal: Colgate, Russell, 1930
73 Personal: Currie, Mungo, 1920
74 Personal: De Boer, Louis (Van Vorst Family
Archivist), 1935
75 Personal: De Land, Clyde, 1931
76 Personal: Durant Family, 1927-29
77 Personal: Everitt, Ada (re: Van Clief), 1932
78 Personal: Frasse, H. F. (re: E. A. Smith), 1918
79 Personal: Gregory, David Henderson, 1919-27
80 Personal: Hart, Albert Bushnell, 1926-31
81 Personal: Heppenheimer, William G., 1928-31
82 Personal: Honeyman, A. V., 1931
83 Personal: Lyon, Adrian, 1932
84 Personal: Miscellaneous, A-E, 1921-32
85 Personal: Miscellaneous, F-K, 1925-35
86 Personal: Miscellaneous, L-R, 1913-36
87 Personal: Miscellaneous, S-Z, 1916-32
88 Personal: Norton, Mary, 1932
89 Personal: Patton, William, 1932
90 Personal: Philhower, Charles, 1931-32
91 Personal: Pickersgill, H. E., 1932
92 Personal: Runyon, Henry (re: Sip Manor), 1931
93 Personal: Sandberg, Carl, 1927
94 Personal: Schroers, Erwin, 1932-36
95 Personal: Smith, E. M., 1917-18
96 Personal: Smith, Philip H. Waddell, 1932
97 Personal: Stewart, Frank H., 1927-35
98 Personal: Thomas (John R.) Family, 1916-17
99 Personal: Tiffany, J. Raymond, 1929-31
100 Personal: Van Laer, A. J. F., 1932-34
101 Personal: Van Winkle, Edward, 1932
102 Roosevelt Association, 1919-31
103 Secretary of State of NJ, 1931
104 Societies, 1927-36
105 Solon Borglum Memorial Fund, 1922
106 State of NJ: Department of Conservation and
Development, 1937
107 State of NJ: Department of Public Instruction, 1931

- 108 United States: George Washington Bicentennial Commission, 1927-31
- 109 United States: National Museum, 1927
- 110 United States: Navy (Blue Valley Mountain), 1928
- 111 United States: Post Office, 1925-32
- 112 United States: War Department, 1931

Planning of Commemorative Events Series

Series description – Planning of commemorative events files (1919-1935), 30 folders
Arranged alphabetically

The bulk of the notes, lists, manuscripts, and correspondence concerning the planning of commemorative events is connected to the Pavonia Tercentenary Celebration of 1930. In his appointment to direct this event Richardson moved from being a businessman with a strong interest in history to being Jersey City's paid historian. His papers from the planning of that event include lists of committee members and prominent citizens, writings on notable persons and events in the history of Jersey City (Pavonia) and the script of a pageant, "The Land of the Peacock," performed for the celebration. Folders of planning for earlier commemorative events include those for the Lincoln Association 55th Annual Dinner, Dickinson Centenary Celebration, 151st Independence Day, and the Pulaski Sesqui-Centennial. Also included is a theatrical production written for the 300th Anniversary of the Secondary School in America in 1935.

Box 1	Folder 1	151 st Independence Day: "A Nosegay of Remembrance," 1927
	2	300 th Anniversary of the Secondary School in America: theatrical production, 1935
	3	Dickinson Centenary Celebration: 1919, 1920, 1927
	4	Lincoln Association 55 th Annual Dinner: 1921
	5	Pavonia Tercentenary: "Articles Suitable for Exhibition," 1930
	6	Pavonia Tercentenary: Citizens Committee, 1930
	7	Pavonia Tercentenary: Committee Descriptions, 1930
	8	Pavonia Tercentenary: Correspondence: Business, 1930
	9	Pavonia Tercentenary: Correspondence: Jersey City Municipal Departments, 1930
	10	Pavonia Tercentenary: Correspondence: Mayor Frank Hague, 1930
	11	Pavonia Tercentenary: Correspondence: Norton, Mary (US House of Representatives), 1930-31
	12	Pavonia Tercentenary: Correspondence: Organizations, 1930
	13	Pavonia Tercentenary: Correspondence: Personal Miscellaneous, A-K
	14	Pavonia Tercentenary: Correspondence: Personal Miscellaneous, L-Z
	15	Pavonia Tercentenary: Events Schedule, 1930
	16	Pavonia Tercentenary: Illustrations, 1930
	17	Pavonia Tercentenary: "J.A.K.," 1930
	18	Pavonia Tercentenary: "The Land of the Peacock," 1930
	19	Pavonia Tercentenary: list of Dutch settlers and descendants, 1930
	20	Pavonia Tercentenary: lists of notable citizens, 1930
	21	Pavonia Tercentenary: "Little Hoboken – Little Old Jersey City, 1930"

22	Pavonia Tercentenary: Powles Hook, 1930
23	Pavonia Tercentenary: resolution appointing Richardson as director, 1930
24	Pavonia Tercentenary, Writings: Beginnings of Communities, 1930
25	Pavonia Tercentenary, Writings: Devries, 1930
26	Pavonia Tercentenary, Writings: History of Pavonia, 1930
27	Pavonia Tercentenary, Writings: New Netherlands, 1930
28	Pavonia Tercentenary, Writings: Revolutionary and Post-revolutionary Eras, 1930
29	Pavonia Tercentenary, Writings: Stuyvesant, 1930
30	Pulaski Sesqui-Centennial: "Brigadier-General Casimer Pulaski," 1929

Resources Series

Series description – Resource files, 44 folders
 Arranged alphabetically by century

Included in the Resources series are copies and translations of primary source materials used by Richardson for his research. Thus a rich collection of 17th through 20th century documents relating to Jersey City history has been brought together. These include individual legal documents, wills, personal correspondence, documents following long-running disputes or individual lives, organizational manuscripts, war correspondence of General Washington and Richard Varick, etc. Richardson did not generally indicate in his writing the specific sources used in forming his opinions about the history of the area and the implications of such for his own time. This series, however, allows one to discover what many of those sources were. Additionally, most have a note indicating where the original document is located.

Box 1

Folder 1	17th century: Carteret
2	17th century: Great Remonstrance, New Netherlands, 1634-1652
3	17th century: Melyn, "Broad advice to the United Netherland Provinces," 1647
4	17th century: Miscellaneous documents
5	17th century: Pauw, Michiel (1627, 1634)
6	17th century: Tice, Christian, last will and testament, 1638
7	18th century: Fitch, John
8	18th century: Flying Camp, 1776-80
9	18th century: Hasenclever, Peter (1716-1793)
10	18th century: Ind. N.Y. Gazette, 1783
11	18th century: Miscellaneous documents
12	18th century: Revolutionary War documents
13	18th century: Varick, Richard, secretary to General George Washington
14	18th century: Washington, George: correspondence, 1776

15	19th century: Bergen Free School, 1843
16	19th century: Boston Weekly Messenger: Steam boat articles, 1824-1825
17	19th century: Holmes family correspondence, 1839
18	19th century: Jersey Company: Remonstrance against application from Jersey City for land rights, 1848
19	19th century: Miscellaneous documents
20	19th century: Ogden, Aaron: Gibbons dispute & misc.
21	19th century: Postmasters, Bergen, NJ, 1833-73
22	19th century: State of New Jersey v. The People of the State of New York, 1829-32
23	19th century: Vroom, Governor Peter D.: message read 1830
24	19th century: York & Jersey Steam Ferry Boat Company, 1824
25	20th century: "Lafayette's journey from Brandywine to Bethlehem with special reference to inscriptions in hotels and hotel sign boards": Fackenthal, 1936
26	20th century: Clippings, Richardson
27	20th century: Convention of National Rivers & Harbors: presentation by Ross, trade consultant to the City of Newark, 1928
28	20th century: Delaware Indian designs, 1933
29	20th century: Government Agencies, 1928-35
30	20th century: Miscellaneous, 1936 & undated
31	20th century: Newspapers of Hudson County contained in the Free Public Library of Jersey City, undated
32	20th century: Organizations: Aid Associations, 1936
33	20th century: Organizations: Miscellaneous, 1928 & undated
34	20th century: Organizations: Rotary, 1927-37
35	20th century: Port of New York Authority: chapter 333, laws of 1927
36	20th century: Schools, 1933-34
37	20th century: Warren, Robert Penn: response to Thomas Jefferson: The apostle of Americanism by Gilbert Chinard
38	20th century: Washington essay contest, 1932
39	Organizations: Masonic
40	Poetry
41	Powles Hook
42	Staten Island
43	Van Voorst, Cornelis
44	Verrazzano and New Jersey

Writings Series:

Series description – Writings files (1910-1937), 101 folders
 Arranged alphabetically

The Writings Series covers a vast array of Richardson's writings on topics dating from Jersey City's earliest days in the 1600's through the Jersey City of 1936. The bulk of the writings is historic in nature and often is the result of a perceived error in another author's work. Richardson goes to great length to unearth the proof necessary to refute such errors. Included in this series are lists of revisions made to various texts due to his perseverance as well as information on historic sites and, of considerable local interest, the history and reasons for the naming of various streets in Jersey City. There are biographies of such luminaries as Jersey City's first mayor, Dudley S. Gregory, and

Revolutionary War leader Richard Varick. This series provides much insight to events of the 17th and 18th centuries.

Box 2

- Folder
- 1 American Indians, undated
 - 2 American Revolution: Flying Camp, undated
 - 3 American Revolution: Governor Livingston, undated
 - 4 American Revolution: John Fitch, undated
 - 5 American Revolution: Lt. James McMichael, undated
 - 6 American Revolution: Masonic background, undated
 - 7 American Revolution: Medication & Surgery, undated
 - 8 American Revolution: Powles Hook, undated
 - 9 American Revolution: Staten Island, undated
 - 10 American Revolution: Washington's Letter to Lord Stirling, undated
 - 11 Biography: Dickinson, Gordon Kimball, undated
 - 12 Biography: Durant, Charles Ferson, 1929
 - 13 Biography: Gregory, Dudley S., undated
 - 14 Biography: Monnette, Dr. O. E., ca. 1936
 - 15 Biography: Rhea, Jonathan Sampson, undated
 - 16 Biography: Rudolph, Michael, undated
 - 17 Biography: Varick, Richard, 1931
 - 18 Bordentown: "House of a Saint & an Emperor," 1935
 - 19 City Organization Models, 1910
 - 20 Great Remonstrance of 1649, undated
 - 21 Hoboken: "Hoboken's Traditions," undated
 - 22 Hoboken: "Romance of Aert Teunissen van Putten's Widow," undated
 - 23 "Jan Evertsen Bout & the States General of Holland," undated
 - 24 Jersey City: "Evening Post in Bergen," undated
 - 25 Jersey City: "Godey's & Our Attic Treasury," undated
 - 26 Jersey City: "High Brows Half a Century Ago" (Tabernacle YMA), undated
 - 27 Jersey City: "Jersey Bank," undated
 - 28 Jersey City: "Jersey City," 1936
 - 29 Jersey City: "Jersey City's Renaissance," undated
 - 30 Jersey City: "Jersey City...the Spoil of a Jackson Victory," undated
 - 31 Jersey City: "Kieft & Stuyvesant, Some Popular Opinions," undated
 - 32 Jersey City: "More about Bergen's Real Treasures" (re: postmaster), undated
 - 33 Jersey City: "Old Campaign Songster," undated
 - 34 Jersey City: "Our New Hall of Fame in Historic Bergen Square," undated
 - 35 Jersey City: "Pavonia in the Jesuit Relations," 1930
 - 36 Jersey City: "Pavonia Indians, Picturesque Pageant Staged by," 1930
 - 37 Jersey City: "Pioneer Days in Pavonia," undated

- 38 Jersey City: "Plantation of Pavonia & the Growth of Jersey City," undated
- 39 Jersey City: "Problems of the South Cove," 1927
- 40 Jersey City: "Stoffelsen's House, The Burning of ," undated
- 41 Jersey City: "Treasures from an Old Bergen Attic," 1925
- 42 Jersey City: "Two Fundamental Documents on the Founding of Jersey City," 1931
- 43 Jersey City: "When Hudson City Was a Real Place," undated
- 44 Jersey City: "When Slavery was an Institution in Hudson County," 1935
- 45 Masonic Organization, undated
- 46 Melyn's Frame-up & Appeal, undated
- 47 Minkakwa, Native Americans, undated
- 48 Miscellaneous, undated
- 49 New Jersey: The Garden State, undated
- 50 New Jersey: "NJ in America," undated
- 51 New Jersey: "NJ vs. the NY Pretender Andros," 1934
- 52 Notes, Handwritten, Miscellaneous, undated
- 53 Rebuttals: "Age of Revelation" (Boudinot, 1801), undated
- 54 Rebuttals: "Battles of the American Revolution" (Carrington), undated
- 55 Rebuttals: "Description of the Province of New Albion" (Plantagenet, 1648), undated
- 56 Rebuttals: "Discourses at the 50th Anniversary of the First Reformed Church"(Westerfield, 1880), undated
- 57 Rebuttals: Ferguson's Address re: Port Authority, 1935
- 58 Rebuttals: "George Washington" (Marshall), 1935
- 59 Rebuttals: "George Washington & Jersey City," undated
- 60 Rebuttals: "History of the American People" (Beard, 1933), 1935
- 61 Rebuttals: Jackson, Pres. Andrew & Jersey City visit, undated
- 62 Rebuttals: Lafayette, 1935
- 63 Rebuttals: Levin Handy Letter, undated
- 64 Rebuttals: Maps, unidentified, undated
- 65 Rebuttals: Miscellaneous, undated
- 66 Rebuttals: Narrative of New Netherlands (Jameson, 1905)
- 67 Rebuttals: National Geographic Society, Sites visited by Washington mapped, undated
- 68 Rebuttals: National Geographic Society, Sites visited by Washington listed, undated
- 69 Rebuttals: "NJ: People, Resources, & Industries," undated
- 70 Rebuttals: "NJ: Story of Progress" (Cornish, 1931), undated
- 71 Rebuttals: NJ vs. NY, waterway ownership, undated
- 72 Rebuttals: NJ vs. NY, waterway ownership, supporting documentation
- 73 Rebuttals: NJ vs. NY, waterway ownership, supporting documentation, Gordon, 1828
- 74 Rebuttals: NJ vs. NY, waterway ownership, supporting documentation, Whitehead, 1865

- 75 Rebuttals: "Pavonia & the Buchellius Chart," undated
- 76 Rebuttals: "Pageant of America," undated
- 77 Rebuttals: "Port Authority in the Air," 1929
- 78 Rebuttals: "Province of NJ" (Tanner, 1908), 1933
- 79 Rebuttals: "R. E. Lee: A Biography" (Freeman, 1934), 1935
- 80 Rebuttals: Suggested References, undated
- 81 Rebuttals: Textbooks in Jersey City Public Schools, 1934-37
- 82 Rebuttals: Text Inaccuracies & Revisions, 1934-36
- 83 Rebuttals: "Thomas Jefferson, Apostle of Americanism" (Warren), undated
- 84 Rebuttals: "Washington's Travels in NJ" (National Geographic, 1932), 1932
- 85 Religious Groups, 1930-35
- 86 Roosevelt's [...], undated
- 87 Sites: Historic, undated
- 88 Sites: Historic Markers, undated
- 89 Speech: "City Beautiful," undated
- 90 Speech: Dickinson Family, undated
- 91 Speech: "Jersey City's Commercial & Industrial Birthright," 1935
- 92 Staten Island, undated
- 93 Streets: Nomenclature, undated
- 94 Streets: Nomenclature, Markers, 1933
- 95 Town Meeting, 1927
- 96 Washington & Arts/Education, undated
- 97 Washington & Pennsylvania Mutiny, undated
- 98 Washington at Princeton Commencement, undated
- 99 Washington's Birthday, undated
- 100 Washington's Presidency, undated
- 101 Weehawken: "First Citizens," ca.1930

Appendix:
 Cataloged items in the New Jersey Room collection