Finding Aid to the
Gladys M. Pearce Papers

Pearce, Gladys M., 1893-1966
Gladys M. Pearce Papers, 1936, 1956-1957
.2 linear ft.
Collection number: Mss 845

Biography Scope and Content Box and Folder List

OVERVIEW

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BIOGRAPHY

Gladys Pearce, the daughter of Charles and Winnieford Nicholls Pearce, was born in Bismarck, Dakota Territory, on April 2, 1873. She graduated from Bismarck High School and attended Valley City State College. She was employed by the State Health Department in the Bureau of Vital Statistics. She died June 12, 1966 in Bismarck and was buried, at Fairview Cemetery. She had been a member of the First Presbyterian Church and the Bismarck Art Association.

The manuscript, *Claimed by the Prairies*, by Miss Pearce, is a history of the life of her grandmother, Winnieford Winston Nicholls, a Bismarck Pioneer. Winnieford Winston was born March 7, 1830, in Merthyl, Tudfil, Wales, England to Sam and Jennie Winston. In 1834 they immigrated to America settling in Courtland, New York. In 1846, Winnie graduated from Courtland College and soon thereafter

the family moved to Rocine, Wisconsin. There in 1850 Winnie married John Nicholls. They had six children, Sam, John (Pet), Janet, Mary, Winnie, and Nellie.

In 1856 the Nicholls moved to Cherry Grove, Minnesota, where they ran a prosperous farm till the 1867 drought. John and his friend Nels left to work on building the Union Pacific Railroad and were gone three years. When he returned, he had decided on a move west. In 1873 the family left by covered wagon arriving August 3, 1873 in Bismarck, then Edwinton. They had a successful dairy business with the adventurous John frequently absent. Later they established a homestead in Hay Creek Township. In November 1895 John Nicholls died and was buried in Bismarck. On July 13, 1914, at age 84, the long eventful life of Winnie Nicholls ended and she was buried beside her husband.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The Gladys Pearce papers consist of correspondence and a manuscript. The correspondence is between Hazel Pearce Halvorson and Gladys Pearce, and Leonard Sackett of the Institute.

The manuscript, *Claimed by the Prairies*, is a carbon copy and covers the life of Winnie Nicholls from 1830 to 1914, dealing particularly with her life after 1873 as a Bismarck Pioneer. Among people mentioned are Alexander McKenzie, Dennis Hannifin, Calamity Jane, General Custer, the horse, Comanche, William Latimer, Dr. E.P. Quain, Linda Slaughter, and the Marquis de Mores. Described are travel by covered wagon, Fort Seward (Jamestown), gambling halls, the removal of the capital to Bismarck, the 1898 fire, Negro settlements, statehood, Camp Hancock, early schools, social life of Bismarck, scenes in early Montana and many other subjects.

BOX AND FOLDER LIST

Box/Folder	**Contents**
1/1	Biographical material, and Finding aid
1/2	Correspondence, 1956-57 2
1/3	*Claimed by the Prairies* manuscript

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