Pierce, Anna E.; Papers ua902.008

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English

M.E. Grenander Department of Special Collections & Archives
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Summarized Information

Repository: M.E. Grenander Department of Special Collections & Archives
Creator: Pierce, Anna Eloise, 1866-1956
Title: Anna E. Pierce Papers
ID: ua902.008
Date [inclusive]: 1884-1983
Physical Description: 0.5 cubic ft. 2 Digital Files
Physical Location: The materials are located onsite in the department.
Language of the Material: English
Language of the Material: English
Abstract: Namesake of Pierce Hall, she served as Dean of Women from 1913-1933, supported the construction of dorms for women and aided the institutionalization of in loco parentis.

Preferred Citation

Preferred citation for this material is as follows:

Identification of specific item, series, box, folder, Anna E. Pierce Papers, 1884-1983. M.E. Grenander Department of Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, University at Albany, State University of New York (hereafter referred to as the Anna E. Pierce Papers).

Biographical History

Anna Eloise Pierce was born on September 18, 1866 to Edmund Pierce and Susan H. Sloan, both of Worcester, NY. She was the second of three children living on a 40-acre farm. She graduated from Albany High School in 1881 and began teaching at the age of 15. On June 26, 1884, Pierce graduated from the NYS Normal School in Albany. With the help of her cousin, Dr. Andrew S. Draper (Superintendent of Schools), Pierce received an appointment as a relief teacher and secretary to President...
Waterbury. After a year and a quarter as the Preceptress of the Lisle Academy in Lisle, NY, Anna Pierce began a lifelong professional association with the New York State Normal School.

Anna Pierce began her career at the Normal School on July 23, 1886, when President Brubacher hired her as a secretary and substitute. One year later, she was appointed as Member of the Faculty (September 19, 1887), teaching mathematics from 1882-1892. She remained in that post until September of 1891 when she became Principal of the Primary Department of the Model School of the newly renamed New York State Normal College. She eventually became the Dean of Women at the Normal School from 1913-1933, and was affectionately known as "Dean Annie." As dean, Anna Pierce, was perhaps best remembered for her support of the construction of dorms for women, and for the institutionalization of *in loco parentis* as it referred to women students.

In the 1920s, Pierce and John Sayles encouraged the alumni, friends of the college and the student body to raise funds to build dormitories. Throughout the 1920s, Pierce corresponded with Abby Rockefeller, wife of John D. Rockefeller, Jr. for information about her study of housing conditions for young women in industry. As Dean of Women, Pierce wished "to improve housing conditions for the women students in State College. It is a fact that in nearly all such institutions the women are inadequately housed in approved private homes, in sorority and other student-managed houses, or in boarding halls under private management all of which facilities fail in many particulars to give the influence and training that we ought to provide for these young women so soon to be sent out as leaders." By 1935, Pierce Hall was opened. At the same time, Sayles Hall was under construction realizing one of Pierce's long-term goals for the College. For Pierce, long-range housing was to instill a higher-level of sensibilities in the students. In 1920, President Brubacher awarded Pierce with an honorary degree of Master of Pedagogy from the New York State College for Teachers.

In 1928 she authored Deans and Advisors of Women and Girls, where she outlined some of the main responsibilities of college personnel who deal closely with female students. For example, she expressed the need for religious and moral training, appropriate dress and personal appearance, and proper behavior at social activities. These philosophies were also outlined in the College's student handbooks, penned primarily by Pierce and outlining the rules for chaperonage, dress, etc. Around the same time, Pierce developed an interest in the health of students. In 1925, while Chairman of the Health Committee of the National Association of deans of Women, she directed a survey of the student health service in the United States. In 1927, she prepared a catalog of Student Health Literature.

In 1941 Pierce Hall on Alumni Quad, originally called the Alumni Residence Hall was renamed for Dean Anna Pierce. She continued to serve the school even after her retirement as dean, becoming active in the College's Alumni Association, which controlled campus residence halls, president of the Half Century Club of the Alumni Association, and active member of the Benevolent Association. She died at age 91 on November 6, 1956.

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Scope and Contents

Her papers include her autobiography/memoir, correspondence, lecture notes, publications, clippings, a sound recording, and a diary relating to her studies at the New York State Normal School at Albany and her appointment as a teacher, to her service as an officer in the Alumni Association, and especially to her campaign to provide campus housing for women. Also included are the texts of lectures given by Pierce on the importance of spiritual training for youth.

Arrangement of the Collection

This collection has no series.

Administrative Information

Publication Statement

M.E. Grenander Department of Special Collections & Archives

Revision Description

reprocessed and converted to EAD Encoded in EAD by Gregory Wiedeman 2016 February 2016

Processing Information

Processed in 2016 by Rosann Santos and Geoff Williams.

Acquisition Information

All items in this collection were transferred to the University Libraries, M.E. Grenander Department of Special Collections and Archives. Box 2 was donated by the University Alumni Association.
Access

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Controlled Access Headings

- Women's rights--1910-1920.
- Women in higher education
- In loco parentis
- Digital Files
- UAlbany Faculty & Alumni Papers
- Pierce, Anna Eloise, 1866-1956
- State College for Teachers (Albany, N.Y.)

Collection Inventory

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| Note mentioning basque and skirt worn by Anna E. Pierce and 1884 commencement ceremony  
**Date [inclusive]:** 1934 June 23  
Box 2 (Anna E. Pierce Papers)  
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| Correspondence between Mrs. Roderick J. McIntosh and Anna E. Pierce regarding the Western Branch of the Alumni Association  
**Date [inclusive]:** 1921 April 11-15  
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| Program - Tenth Anniversary of the State College Co-Op, established September 1920 (Dean Pierce)  
**Date [inclusive]:** ca. 1930  
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| Two letters in script to Anna Pierce from William S. Twichell (class of 1889)  
**Date [inclusive]:** 1947 February 19, 1947 June 5  
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| "Some specific reasons why NYS College needs a residence hall," letter by Anna E. Pierce  
**Date [inclusive]:** Undated  
Box 2 (Anna E. Pierce Papers)  
Folder 7 |
| Portrait of Anna E. Pierce  
**Date [inclusive]:** ca. 1926-1929  
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Folder 8 |
| Writings - "Choice of Attitudes," drafts and notes  
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| Questions about Women leaders  
**Date [inclusive]:** Undated  
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| Writings - "Economic Relationships and Responsibilities"  
**Date [inclusive]:** 1919 November 5  
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Folder 11 |
| Writings - "The Problem of Social Leadership in Schools and Colleges and its Solution"  
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| "Choice of Chance, Which Shall Rule My Life," speech given to the College News  
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