Guide to the Gustavus C. Pearson Family Papers, 1824-1983

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Note
History --History, CaliforniaGeographical (By Place) --California
Guide to the Gustavus C. Pearson Family Papers, 1824-1983

Collection number: BANC MSS 92/840 c

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Collection Summary
Collection Title: Gustavus C. Pearson Family Papers,
Date (inclusive): 1824-1983
Collection Number: BANC MSS 92/840 c
Creator: Pearson, Gustavus C.
Extent: Number of containers: 1 carton (also containing 2 shoe boxes)Linear feet: 1.25
Repository: The Bancroft Library
Berkeley, California 94720-6000
Physical Location: For current information on the location of these materials, please consult the Library's online catalog.
Abstract: The collection consists primarily of diaries, and letters between the members of Gustavus Pearson's immediate family -- his wife Hattie and three children, John A., Francis, and Norman. Included in the correspondence are also a few letters from Gustavus and his brother George T., to their father, Judge John Pearson; a series of letters from Gustavus's daughter, Frances, written to her husband, James A. Meeks, while on a trip to Europe with her father in 1900; and miscellaneous letters to and from other family members. The diaries provide a more or less daily account (with a number of gaps) of the life of Gustavus Pearson from 1845 to 1905. Also included are a diary by Mrs. A.C. Brown, Frances Pearson's travel diary, and a small book of notes by Judge John Pearson.
Languages Represented: English

Access
Collection is open for research.

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Related Collections
Recollections of Gustavus C. Pearson a California 49'er, BANC MSS C-D 136.
G. C. Pearson California experiences and recollections, 1894-1898, BANC MSS FILM C-D 5153

Photographs have been transferred to Pictorial Collections of The Bancroft Library.

Acquisition Information
The Gustavus C. Pearson Family Papers were given to The Bancroft Library by Frances McReynolds Smith on June 30, 1992.

Biography
Gustavus C. Pearson was born at Ravenna, Ohio on July 17, 1827. He and his father, Judge John Pearson, came separately to California from Illinois in 1849 for the Gold Rush. Gustavus travelled overland through Salt Lake City, and, on Brigham Young's recommendation, created with his companions the first wagon road from Salt Lake City to Los Angeles via San Bernadino. After his involvement in the Gold Rush, Gustavus returned to Chicago, where he remained until 1867. On his return to California, Gustavus located at Vallejo and entered into partnership with A.D. Starr, to operate a milling and grain-shipping business under the name of Pearson & Starr. The Starr Mills, which they built in Vallejo, was one of the largest mills of its day. Gustavus eventually returned East, settling in Danville, Illinois in 1879.

Scope and Content
The collection consists primarily of diaries and letters between the members of Gustavus Pearson's immediate family - his wife, Hattie, and their children, John A., Francis, and Norman. Included in the correspondence are also a few letters from Gustavus and his brother, George T., to their father, Judge John Pearson; a series of letters from Gustavus' daughter, Frances, written to her husband, James A. Meeks, while on a trip to Europe with her father in 1900; and miscellaneous letters to and from other family members.

Gustavus began his diaries in April 1845 and kept them almost continually until 1905. Although there are several gaps -- either lost diaries or cessation in writing -- the diaries provide a more or less daily account of Gustavus' life throughout these years. Also included are a diary by Mrs. A.C. Brown, Frances' travel diary, and a small book of notes by Judge John Pearson, as well as Gustavus' and Hattie's accounts journals and miscellaneous other personal and property records.

Series 1: Family Correspondence, 1824-1932.
Carton 1, 1-12        Gustavus C. Pearson 1845-1900
13-21                Hattie Pearson 1874-1900
22-30                Francis Pearson 1882-1932
31                   John Pearson 1824-1835
32                   Fannette Pearson 1886-1889
33-36                George T. Pearson 1839-1848

Series 2: Diaries, 1845-1905.
Carton 1, 37-46       G. C. Pearson 1845-1854
[Box 1], 1-16         G. C. Pearson 1848-1897
[Box 2], 1-5          G. C. Pearson 1898-1905
6                    Mrs. A. C. Brown 1862-1864
7                    John Pearson Notes 1963
Carton 1, 47          Frances Pearson 1900

Series 3: Miscellaneous Personal Papers, 1844-1983.
[Box 2], 8            Hattie Pearson Accounts 1864
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<th>Carton 1, 48</th>
<th>G. C. Pearson Accounts Journal 1867-1901</th>
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<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>Lease on Vallejo House 1880</td>
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<td>50</td>
<td>Quit-Claim Deed - Illinois 1893</td>
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<td>51</td>
<td>Tax Receipts 1881-1886</td>
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<td>52</td>
<td>Ephemera 1850-1882</td>
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<td>53</td>
<td>Mrs. Meeks in Washington 1938-1939</td>
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<td>54</td>
<td>Marriage Certificate - George T. Pearson 1861</td>
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<td>55</td>
<td>License - John Pearson 1844</td>
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<td>56</td>
<td>Meeks, James A. ca.1905</td>
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<td>57</td>
<td>Smith, Frances McReynolds 1983</td>
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