

## MS-309

The Museum of Northern Arizona  
Harold S. Colton Memorial Library  
3101 N. Fort Valley Road  
Flagstaff, AZ 86001  
(928)774-5213 ext. 256

### **Title**

Sallie Pierce-Harris collection

### **Dates**

1918-1994

### **Extent**

33.25 cm textual material, 1028 photographic images (258 prints, 321 negatives, 1 contact print, 606 slides), 2 patches

### **Name of Creator(s)**

Pierce Harris, Sallie  
Van Valkenburg, Richard  
Smith, Watson  
Pinkley, Frank  
Fontana, Bernard  
Cummings, Byron  
Roberts, Alexa  
Jones, Courtney (Corky)

### **Biographical History**

[Sarah] Sallie Pierce-Harris (3 April 1911 – 2 May 1994) was born in Victor, Colorado to Colwell A. and Mary L. (Rood) Pierce who were born in Rhode Island and Missouri. The family moved to Patagonia, Arizona in 1912 so Pierce-Harris' father could work as a mining engineer at the Mansfield Mining Encampment.

Pierce-Harris studied archeology at the University of Arizona in Tucson and was an ardent admirer of Gladys Reichard's work in the field of Native American studies. When Pierce-Harris graduated with her bachelor's degree in the 1930s she immediately started doing field work at Chaco Canyon. By 1934, she had been working as a civil works administration position at Montezuma Castle classifying artifacts. It was there that she met her first husband, Jim Brewer, a ranger working for the National Park Service [NPS]. They were married that same year and Pierce-Harris became an "Honorary Custodian Without Pay," which was the title given to NPS wives who were equally as qualified as their husbands to work as park custodians and archeologists. Pierce-Harris and Brewer spent the first few years of their marriage living in tents at 8 different National Monuments around the Colorado Plateau. Eventually they were transferred to Wupatki National Monument where they were allowed to live in the ruins. Pierce-Harris referred to Brewer as a "roving ranger" and wrote about their experiences in multiple diaries.

Pierce-Harris and Brewer became very close with their Navajo neighbors, especially the Peshlakai clan. In 1936, they sponsored an exhibit of Navajo crafts at the Museum of Northern Arizona, which was very well-received. Pierce-Harris remained in touch with many of her Navajo friends for the rest of her life. In 1939, Brewer took over custodianship of Navajo National Monument from the Wetherill family. The couple moved into the Betatakin ruins and were the first people to inhabit cliff dwelling in over 500 years. During this time Pierce-Harris was invited to help start a publication for the wives of NPS rangers and custodians called *The Grapevine*, in which women wrote about their experiences and difficulties.

When war was declared in 1941, Brewer enlisted in the Navy. The National Park Service lost most of their custodians and rangers to the war and had no choice but to hire women for war service appointments. Pierce-Harris became the first permanent woman ranger in the Southwest Monuments. She worked at Casa Grande for a year and then was transferred to Tumacacari Mission for the next 6 years. When Brewer returned from the war in 1945, he and Pierce-Harris divorced.

In the early 1950s, Pierce-Harris married a longtime colleague and fellow NPS archeologist, Richard Fowler Van Valkenburg[h]. She was his third wife. Van Valkenburg was working as an archeological researcher for the Navajo Land Claims at the time. Though they did not live together for much of their marriage, they corresponded frequently about his research. They divorced later that decade when Van Valkenburg returned to his second wife.

Pierce-Harris eventually left NPS in the late 1950s after 24 years of service and took a position at the Southwest Archeological Center in Globe. She eventually married her third and final husband, William M. Harris, Jr. In 1968, she retired but continued to be active in environmental organizations, including the Audubon Society. She moved to Prescott in 1981 and passed away in 1994 at the age of 83.

### **Scope and Content**

This collection includes personal papers from Pierce-Harris' early life, including diary entries and poems, as well as diaries written during the early part of her career as an archeologist and as an *Honorary Custodian Without Pay* after she married her first husband. Also included are her research notes and draft manuscripts of papers written on the archeology, ethnology, and history of the Navajo and the National Monuments at which she worked. There are also records and publications from the National Park Service and the Department of the Interior, information on the Peshlakai family, Pierce-Harris' Mexican research, and biographical information and interviews. Notable individuals include A.T. Bicknell, the Wetherill Family, John M. Turney, L.L. Hargrave, Watson Smith, Dorothy Peach-Pollack, Peshlakai Etsedi, Dorothy Newkirk Stewart, and Alexa Roberts. Also included are files of strictly correspondence, personal and professional, often including copies of her responses. These letters span from the early to late 20<sup>th</sup> century and comprise her years with NPS, her relationships with the Navajo people, her relationship with her husband (Van Valkenburg) and his work with the Navajo Land Claim, and letters regarding her and other's research of the Southwest.

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There is also a signed letter from Senator John F. Kennedy. There are also photographs and negatives of areas around the Southwest, mostly Navajo country and the Colorado Plateau. Many of the files were taken on a 1941 trip to various National Parks and Monuments. There are also photographic images of the Peshlakai family and the Van Valkenburgs.

### **System of Arrangement**

Series 1: Research & Writings

Series 2: Correspondence

Series 3: Southwest Photographs

### **Conditions Governing Reproduction and Use**

Unpublished and published manuscripts are protected by copyright. Permission to publish, quote, or reproduce must be secured from the repository and the copyright holder.

### **Languages and Scripts of the Materials**

English & Navajo

### **Immediate Source of Acquisition**

MS-242 was donated by Pierce-Harris in November 1977.

MS-290 was donated by Pierce-Harris in July 1987.

MS-309 was donated by Andrew Christensen in May 1994.

### **Finding Aids**

Detailed inventories are available upon request.

### **Related Archival Materials**

See MS-246, The David DeHarport collection, for more information on Richard Van Valkenburg's work with the Navajo Land Claim. See also MS-162, the Peshlakai Etsedi collection, for more information about his life. For more information on Watson Smith please see MS-325.

The Doris Duke oral history project at the J. Willard Marriott Library, University of Utah, consists of transcripts of interviews. The collection includes a report prepared by Harris on Navajo Oral History at Canyon de Chelly.

### **Publication Note**

Pierce Brewer, Sallie. 1937. The "Long Walk" To Bosque Redondo As Told by Peshlakai Etsedi. *Museum Notes*, 9:11. Flagstaff, Ariz: Museum of Northern Arizona.

Van Valkenburg Harris, Sallie. 1969. *The history of Casa Grand Ruins National Monument*. Globe, Ariz: Southwest Parks and Monuments Association.

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Jackson, Earl, Sallie Van Valkenburgh Harris, Kate Peck Kent, and Katharine Bartlett. 1954. *Montezuma Castle archeology*. Globe, Ariz: Southwestern Monuments Association.

**Description Control**

Finding aid written by Eileen Hogan using *DACS*, 2 November 2010

## MS-309

### Title

Series 1: Research & Writings

### Dates

1926-1994

### Extent

26.25 cm textual material, 2 patches

### Scope and Content

This series includes personal papers from Pierce-Harris' early life, including diary entries and poems, as well as diaries written during the early part of her career as an archeologist and as an *Honorary Custodian Without Pay* after she married her first husband. Also included are her research notes and draft manuscripts of papers written on the archeology, ethnology, and history of the Navajo and the National Monuments at which she worked. There are also records and publications from the National Park Service and the Department of the Interior, information on the Peshlakai family, Pierce-Harris' Mexican research, and biographical information and interviews. Notable individuals include A.T. Bicknell, the Wetherill Family, John M. Turney, L.L. Hargrave, Watson Smith, Dorothy Peach-Pollack, Peshlakai Etsedi, Dorothy Newkirk Stewart, and Alexa Roberts.

Series 1: Research & Writings				
File #	File Description	Date(s)	Extent	Box/Folder
MS-309-1-1	Navajo Weaving: correspondence, clippings, dye recipe	1936-1937, 1988-1991	.5 cm textual	1.1
MS-309-1-2	Wupatki/Navajo Diary	1936-1940	2 cm textual	1.2
MS-309-1-3	"Roving Ranger" Diary	1937	1 cm textual	1.3
MS-309-1-4	Navaho Diary	1940-1941	.5 cm textual	1.4
MS-309-1-5	Wetherill Family: correspondence, clippings, articles	1940-1991	.25 cm textual	1.5
MS-309-1-6	NPS [National Park Service]: employee publications, correspondence, clippings	1941-1977	2 cm textual	1.6
MS-309-1-7	NPS [National Park Service] Patches	undated	2 patches	1.7
MS-309-1-8	"The Grapevine": member surveys	1942	.5 cm textual	1.8
MS-309-1-9	Archeology: notes, clippings, correspondence, articles [2 folders]	1952-1979	4 cm textual	1.9, 1.10
MS-309-1-10	John M. Turney: DOI [Department of the Interior] Administrative Papers	1954-1962	.75 cm textual	1.11
MS-309-1-11	Southwest Ceramics	1955-1985	1 cm textual	2.1
MS-309-1-12	Dating Bottles From Mining Camps	1958-1973	.5 cm textual	2.2

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MS-309-1-13	"The Navajo Occupation of Wupatki National Monument": correspondence, photographs, manuscript	1961-1989	2 cm textual	2.3
MS-309-1-14	L.L. Hargrave: correspondence, manuscripts, obituary	1962, 1978	.5 cm textual	2.4
MS-309-1-15	Sallie Van Valkenburg [Pierce-Harris] Interview	1964-1978	.5 cm textual	2.5
MS-309-1-16	A.T. Bicknell Retirement	1960	1 cm textual	2.6
MS-309-1-17	SWAC [Southwest Archeological Center] Archeologists Meeting	1966	.5 cm textual	2.7
MS-309-1-18	Course Outline: Southwestern Indian Arts	1981	.25 cm textual	2.8
MS-309-1-19	Watson Smith/Wupatki: correspondence, clippings, photographs	1983-1991	2 cm textual	2.9
MS-309-1-20	Yavapai: notes, correspondence, articles, clippings	1984-1989	1 cm textual	3.1
MS-309-1-21	"Broken Rainbows": clippings, correspondence, articles	1985-1986	.25 cm textual	3.2
MS-309-1-22	Dorothy Peach-Pollack: biographical article, correspondence, obituary	1987	.25 cm textual	3.3
MS-309-1-23	Loan Agreement with SWAC [Southwest Archeological Center]	1970	.25 cm textual	3.4
MS-309-1-24	Personal Writings	1926-1960s	.5 cm textual	6.1
MS-309-1-25	"Adobe Notes"	1930	.5 cm textual	6.2
MS-309-1-26	"The <i>Long Walk</i> to Bosque Redondo As Told by Peshlakai Etsedi": notes, correspondence	1937, 1991	1 cm textual	6.3
MS-309-1-27	Mexico Research	1946-1953	.5 cm textual	6.4
MS-309-1-28	Dorothy Newkirk Stewart: correspondence, memorial booklet	1954-1956	.5 cm textual	6.5
MS-309-1-29	SWNM Slides Inventory	1956	.5 cm textual	6.6
MS-309-1-30	Peshlakai Genealogy	1964-1991	.5 cm textual	6.7
MS-309-1-31	Reports, Correspondence, Journal Entries, and Notes Regarding the Navajo and Hopi	1968	.5 cm textual	6.8
MS-309-1-32	Sallie Pierce Harris Biographical Information	1994	.25 cm textual	6.9

## MS-309

### Title

Series 2: Correspondence

### Dates

1918-1987

### Extent

7 cm textual material

### Scope and Content

This series includes files of strictly correspondence, personal and professional often including copies of her responses. These letters span from the early to late 20<sup>th</sup> century and comprise her years with NPS, her relationships with the Navajo people, her relationship with her husband (Van Valkenburg) and his work with the Navajo Land Claim, and letters regarding her and other's research of the Southwest. There is also a signed letter from Senator John F. Kennedy.

<b>Series 2: Correspondence</b>				
<b>File #</b>	<b>File Description</b>	<b>Date(s)</b>	<b>Extent</b>	<b>Box/Folder</b>
MS-309-2-1	Correspondence: Frank Pinkley	1918-1986	.5 cm textual	3.5
MS-309-2-2	Correspondence: MNA [Museum of Northern Arizona]	1934-1939, 1984	.25 cm textual	3.6
MS-309-2-3	Correspondence: Byron Cummings [Arizona State Museum]	1934-1952	.25 cm textual	3.7
MS-309-2-4	Correspondence: NPS [National Park Service]	1945-1964	.75 cm textual	3.8
MS-309-2-5	Correspondence: Richard Van Valkenburg	1952-1954	2 cm textual	3.9
MS-309-2-6	Correspondence: miscellaneous	1952-1975	1 cm textual	3.10
MS-309-2-7	Correspondence: letters from Navajos	1953-1981	2 cm textual	3.11
MS-309-2-8	Correspondence: Bernard Fontana [University of Arizona]	1980-1987	.25 cm textual	3.12

## MS-309

### Title

Series 3: Southwest Photographs

### Dates

1932-1981

### Extent

1028 photographic images (258 prints, 321 negatives, 1 contact print, 606 slides)

### Scope and Content

This series includes photographs and negatives of areas around the Southwest, mostly Navajo country and the Colorado Plateau. Many of the files were taken on a 1941 trip to various National Parks and Monuments. There are also photographic images of the Peshlakai family and the Van Valkenburgs.

<b>Series 3: Southwest Photographs</b>				
<b>File #</b>	<b>File Description</b>	<b>Date(s)</b>	<b>Extent</b>	<b>Box/Folder</b>
MS-309-3-1	Photographs: Chaco Canyon	1932	2 prints	3.13
MS-309-3-2	Photographs: Wupatki	1934-1936	33 prints, 5 negatives	3.14
MS-309-3-3	Photographs: Peshlakai Camp	1935-1936	44 prints, 44 nitrate negatives	4.1, Nitrate Freezer
MS-309-3-4	Peshlakai Camp Photographs: correspondence, inventories	1977-1981	.5 cm textual	4.2
MS-309-3-5	Photographs: Navaho Country	1936	11 prints	4.3
MS-309-3-6	Photographs: Albuquerque/Cuba Aztec Stage	1938	6 negatives	4.4
MS-309-3-7	Photographs: Bluff City	1938-1939	9 prints, 15 negatives	4.5
MS-309-3-8	Photographs: Bryce Canyon	1941	6 prints, 6 negatives	4.6
MS-309-3-9	Photographs: Death Valley	1941	7 prints, 5 negatives	4.7
MS-309-3-10	Photographs: Lake Mead	1941	12 prints, 11 negatives	4.8
MS-309-3-11	Photographs: Lee's Ferry	1941	4 prints, 4 negatives	4.9
MS-309-3-12	Photographs: Nevada	1941	15 prints, 15 negatives	4.10
MS-309-3-13	Photographs: North Rim, Grand Canyon	1941	5 prints, 6 negatives	4.11



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MS-309-3-14	Photographs: Sequoia National Park	1941	13 prints, 12 negatives	4.12
MS-309-3-15	Photographs: Yosemite	1941	22 prints, 31 negatives	4.13
MS-309-3-16	Photographs: Zion National Park	1941	4 prints, 3 negatives	4.14
MS-309-3-17	Photographs: Fort Apache, Kinishba, Vabino	1943	13 prints, 16 negatives	4.15
MS-309-3-18	Photographs: Oraibi and Walpi	undated	9 prints	4.16
MS-309-3-19	Photographs: Navajo National Monument/Twin Caves	undated	1 contact sheet, 12 negatives	4.17
MS-309-3-20	Photographs: Hennikininic Castle	undated	4 prints	4.18
MS-309-3-21	Photographs: Grand Canyon	undated	3 prints	4.19
MS-309-3-22	Photographs: Hovenweep Castle	undated	2 prints	4.20
MS-309-3-23	Negatives: Navajo [2 folders]	undated	121 negatives	4.21, 5.1
MS-309-3-24	Photographs: Navajo Christmas Party at Wupatki/Miscellaneous Native American	undated	5 prints, 11 negatives	5.2
MS-309-3-25	Photographs: Heiser Springs Sheep	undated	2 prints	5.3
MS-309-3-26	Photographs: Hubbell Trading Post	undated	2 prints	5.4
MS-309-3-27	Southwest Slides [2 folders]	1948-1957, 1948-1964	606 slides	5.5, 5.6
MS-309-3-28	Photographs: Emmett & Sarah Peshlakai	1949	2 prints	5.7
MS-309-3-29	Photograph: Clyde Peshlakai	undated	1 print	5.8
MS-309-3-30	Photographs: Chaco Canyon/Mesa Verde National Park	1952	10 prints	5.9
MS-309-3-31	Richard Van Valkenburg Photographs: family, Navajo	1952-1953	5 prints	5.10
MS-309-3-32	Photographs: Honanski	1958	8 prints, 6 negatives	5.11
MS-309-3-33	Photographs: Navaho Dam Project Hogan/Pot Creek Pueblo	1959	5 prints, 4 negatives	5.12

**LCSH Access Points**

Bryce Canyon National Park (Utah)  
 Chaco Canyon (N.M.)  
 Cummings, Byron, 1860-1954  
 Death Valley (Calif. and Nev.)  
 Fontana, Bernard L.  
 Fort Apache (Ariz.)

Grand Canyon (Ariz.)  
Hargrave, Lyndon Lane, 1896-1978  
Harris, Sallie Van Valkenburgh  
Hopi Indian Reservation (Ariz.)  
Hovenweep National Monument (Utah and Colo.)  
Hubbell Trading Post National Historic Site (Ganado, Ariz.)  
Jones, Courtney Reeder, 1915-  
Lake Mead National Recreation Area (Ariz. and Nev.)  
Lees Ferry (Ariz.)  
Mesa Verde National Park (Colo.)  
Navajo Dam (N.M.)  
Navajo Indian Reservation  
Navajo Indians  
Navajo Long Walk, 1863-1867  
Navajo National Monument (Ariz.)  
Navajo textile fabrics  
Pinkley, Frank  
Roberts, Alexandra J.  
Sequoia National Forest (Agency : U.S.)  
Smith, Watson, 1897-1993  
United States. National Park Service.  
Van Valkenburgh, Richard F.  
Wetherill family  
Wupatki National Monument (Ariz.)  
Yavapai Indians  
Yosemite National Park (Agency : U.S.)  
Zion National Park (Utah)