

# Maurice Nicoll papers

MS 1348



July 2008

New Haven, Connecticut

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## Paging Instructions

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## Overview

**REPOSITORY:** Manuscripts and Archives  
Sterling Memorial Library  
128 Wall Street  
P.O. Box 208240  
New Haven, CT 06520  
Web: <http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/>  
Email: [mssa.assist@yale.edu](mailto:mssa.assist@yale.edu)  
Phone: (203) 432-1735  
Fax: (203) 432-7441

**CALL NUMBER:** MS 1348

**CREATOR:** Nicoll, Maurice, 1884-1953.

**TITLE:** Maurice Nicoll papers

**DATES:** 1914-1996

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 8.02 linear feet (15 boxes)

**LANGUAGE(S):** The materials are in English.

**SUMMARY:** The papers consist of correspondence, writings, research materials, scrapbooks and photographs documenting Maurice Nicoll's involvement with the ideas of P. D. Ouspensky and G. I. Gurdjieff. Included are manuscripts of an unpublished novel and short stories, seven scrapbooks, and a copy of Nicoll's five volume work Psychological Commentaries on the Teaching of G. I. Gurdjieff and P. D. Ouspensky. The scrapbooks contain clippings and photographs showing Gurdjieff with his group at the Prieuré Fontainebleau, as well as Nicoll's group which he formed in London. Three of the scrapbooks contain quotations from Gurdjieff's All and Everything with accompanying artwork, probably by a disciple of Nicoll's.

**FINDING AID LINK:** To cite or bookmark this finding aid, use the following address:  
<http://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.1348>.

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## Administrative Information

## Provenance

Gift of the estate of Muriel Oldham, 1982; and Lewis Creed, 1993-1997, and 2006.

## Information about Access

This collection is open for research.

## Ownership & Copyright

Copyright status for collection materials is unknown. Transmission or reproduction of materials protected by U.S. Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S.C.) beyond that allowed by fair use requires the written permission of the copyright owners. Works not in the public domain cannot be commercially exploited without permission of the copyright owners. Responsibility for any use rests exclusively with the user.

## Cite As

Maurice Nicoll Papers (MS 1348). Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

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## Biographical/Historical Sketch

Maurice Nicoll, a psychologist, received his B.A., M.B., and B.C. degrees from Cambridge. He served as a medical officer for nervous system injuries at Empire Hospital, was a lecturer in medical psychology at Birmingham University, and was a member of the editorial staff of the *Journal of Neurology and Psychopathology*. Nicoll was the author of Psychological Commentaries on the Teaching of G. I. Gurdjieff and P. D. Ouspensky.

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## Description of the Collection

The Maurice Nicoll Papers serve as an interesting complement to the papers in the already sizeable P.D. Ouspensky Memorial Collection and illustrate the dissemination of the mystical teachings of Ouspensky and G. I. Gurdjieff in Britain.

Nicoll, a psychologist, had been a student of Carl Jung, and in the collection (folders 1 & 14) there are letters from Jung and his wife discussing their relationship with Nicoll. After joining an Ouspensky study group in London Nicoll became interested in the work of Gurdjieff and spent a year (circa 1922) at his institute at Fontainebleau, France. The Nicoll Papers contain two scrapbooks (f. 22 & 23) from the period; they were compiled by J. deForest Thompson who was at the institute as a young man with his mother, Mrs. Page. The scrapbooks contain interesting photographs of the institute and of Nicoll and Gurdjieff. There are also two handwritten letters addressed to Mrs. Page by Ouspensky. The papers contain a few other items specifically related to Ouspensky and Gurdjieff, including notes on Ouspensky's lectures and a photograph of him in India (folder 18) and the prospectus for Gurdjieff's Institute for the Harmonious Development of Man, notes on his lectures, and a copy of his funeral service (folder 19).

Nicoll formed his own group in London and later during World War II, organized centers for carrying on the Teaching. A scrapbook (folder 20) contains photographs of Nicoll and his group at Tye-Ponds, 1935-40, and at Great Amwell House, 1946-53. The papers also contain a printed copy of his major work, Psychological Commentaries on the Teaching of G.I. Gurdjieff and P. D. Ouspensky.

For many years Mrs. Beryl Pogson was Nicoll's secretary, and many of these papers seem to have been kept by her or other members of the group at the Maurice Nicoll Free Library at the "Dicker". Pogson wrote a biography of Nicoll, compiled the scrapbook of photographs of the "Dicker" (folder 21), and may have been responsible for creating the three scrapbooks of artwork (folders 24-26) illustrating quotations from Gurdjieff's All and Everything. The papers also contain a few scattered items written by other members of Nicoll's group and some reference materials from the shelves of the library at the "Dicker".

The papers were received by the Yale Library in 1982, along with several hundred volumes, from Muriel Oldham. (Mrs. Oldham's husband had been a Nicoll student and had taken over the Nicoll library after Nicoll's death in 1953.) The volumes were received for the general collection in Sterling Library, but amongst them were the scrapbooks, writing, photographs; and pieces of correspondence now comprising the Maurice Nicoll Papers.

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## Collection Contents

### Original Accession

Box	Folder	Description	Date(s)
		Original Accession	Circa 1914-1994
		Materials of Dr. Nicoll	
1	1	Correspondence	1950, 1953, undated
1	2	"Pelican Hotel": TMs for unpublished novel	Undated
1	3	"Stories" : TMs for unpublished short stories	Undated
1	4	<u>Psychological Commentaries on the Teaching of C.I. Gurdjieff and P.D. Ouspensky</u> , vol. 1, 2	1949
2	5-6	<u>Psychological Commentaries on the Teaching of C.I. Gurdjieff and P.D. Ouspensky</u> , vol. 3-5	1949, 1955, 1956
2	7-8	"Index to <u>Psychological Commentaries</u> "	Undated
3	9	"A Simple Explanation of Work Ideas"	Undated
3	10	"Extracts from Dr. Nicoll's Diary in Connection with P.D. Ouspensky"	Undated
3	11	<u>Tresor Hermetique</u> : annotated by Nicoll with AMs "The Emerald Table of Hermes"	Circa 1914
3	12	Notes on Dr. Nicoll's meetings	1944-1951
3	12	Unpublished paper	Undated
3	13	"Introduction to a Scientific Paper" [by Nicoll?]	1944
3	14	Materials of Beryl and Midge Pogson	1953-1966, undated
3	15	Materials of other Members of Dr. Nicoll's group	1956, 1963, 1981, 1993, undated
4	16-17	Materials of other members of Dr. Nicoll's group	Undated
4	18	Materials about P.D. Ouspensky	1922-1936, undated
4	19	Materials about Gurdjieff	1921-1966, undated
		Scrapbook	
5	20	Photographs of Dr. Nicoll's Group	1946-1953
5	21	Photographs of the Dicker	Circa 1966-1976
6	22	Photographs and letters relating to Mr. Gurdjieff and his group at the Prieuré, Fontainbleau	1922-1923, 1933
6	23	Press cuttings printed at the time about Mr. Gurdjieff and his group at the Prieuré, Fontainbleau	1923
7	24	<u>All and Everything</u> First Picture Book	Undated
7	25	<u>All and Everything</u> Second Picture Book	Undated

Box	Folder	Description	Date(s)
8	26	<u>All and Everything Third Picture Book</u> Books relating to the teachings of G. I. Gurdjieff, P. D. Ouspensky, and Maurice Nicoll, written and/or compiled by Beryl Pogson and others	Undated
9	27	<u>Commentary on the Fourth Gospel</u>	1993
9	27	<u>Work Talks in Brighton, 1963-1966</u>	1993
9	27	<u>More Work Talks</u>	1993
9	27	<u>Work Talks at The Dicker, 1966</u>	1993
9	27	<u>Unforgotten Fragments</u>	1994
		Books written by or about Beryl Pogson	
9	28	Beryl Chassereau Pogson: a biographical foreword for <u>In The East My Pleasure Lies</u> compiled by Lewis Creed	1993
9	28	<u>In The East My Pleasure Lies and other Esoteric Interpretations of Plays by William Shakespeare</u> , by Beryl Pogson	1994

## Accession 1994-M-091. Additional Material

Box	Folder	Description	Date(s)
		Accession 1994-M-091. Additional Material	1940-1994
		Also includes Accessions 1995-M-087 and 1995-M-108	
		Books relating to the teachings of G. I. Gurdjieff, P. D. Ouspensky, and Maurice Nicoll, written and/or compiled by Beryl Pogson and others (early undated editions)	
1	1	<u>Commentary on the Fourth Gospel</u> (2 copies)	
1	1	<u>Work Talks in Brighton, 1963 to 1966</u>	
1	1	<u>More Work Talks, 1966</u>	
1	1	<u>Work-Talks at the Dicker, 1966</u>	
		Books written/compiled by Beryl Pogson	
1	2	<u>Romeo and Juliet: an Esoteric Interpretation</u>	1961
1	2	<u>Three Plays by Shakespeare: an Esoteric Interpretation</u>	1963
1	2	<u>Royalty of Nature: A Commentary on Shakespeare's History-Plays</u>	1967
1	2	<u>The Choice</u> (2 copies)	Undated
1	2	<u>Curiosities in Literature: a Fragment of an Unfinished Anthology</u> , compiled by Beryl Pogson, commentaries by Maurice Nicoll	Undated
1	3	Research material for the biographical-foreword of <u>I n the East My Pleasure Lies</u> , by Beryl Pogson	1955, 1992-1993
1	4-5	Incomplete drafts: pages of writings and notes of Maurice Nicoll, Beryl Pogson, and other members of Nicoll's group writings of others	1940s-1960s
1	6	"Gurdjieff, Ouspensky and Nicoll - A Living Teaching?" by T. I. Casswell	1960
1	7	"Memories of EQ and Eve," by Louisa Creed	1994
1	8	"In Memory of E. Q. Nicholson" : memorial service	1992 Nov 4
1	9	"A Note on the story of Jacob," by Laurie Goodman	Undated
1	10	<u>Vibrations</u> , by Muriel Farmer Oldham	Undated
1	11	<u>Words on the Work: by a Worker Talking to Other Workers</u> , anonymous	Undated
1	12	<u>The Work Life: Based on Teachings of G. I. Gurdjieff, P. D. Ouspensky and Maurice Nicoll</u> , by Beryl Pogson  (Accession 1995-M-087)	1994
1	13	<u>Centenary Fragments</u> , by Beryl Pogson, compiled by Lewis Creed  (Accession 1995-M-108)	1995



## Accession 1995-M-123. Additonal material

Box	Folder	Description	Date(s)
		Accession 1995-M-123. Additonal material Also includes Accession 1995-M-125	1916-1987
1	1-2	Incomplete drafts, pages of writings and notes, of Maurice Nicoll, Beryl Pogson, and other members of Nicoll's group	1930s-1975, undated
1	3	Memoriam program for Beryl Pogson	1967 Feb 5
1	4	Photographs	1916-1976
1	5	<u>Maurice Nicoll: A Portrait</u> , by Beryl Pogson	1987

## Accession 1995-M-186. Additional Material

Box	Folder	Description	Date(s)
		Accession 1995-M-186. Additional Material	1965-1995
		Also includes Accession 1996-M-006 and 1996-M-067	
		Accession 1995-M-186. Additional Material	
1	1	<u>Diogenes in Time and Tide (1955-1960)</u>	1995
		Diogenes may have been W.J. Brown M.P., Independent Member of Parliament for Rugby, student of P.D. Ouspensky; original newspaper articles accompany publication.	
1	2	Ouspensky study group meeting notes [recorded by Beryl Pogson]	1963 May 7
1	3	"Shakespeare and the 'Supernatural' -II", <u>Light</u> [by Beryl Pogson]	1965
1	4	Holiday greeting cards of Maurice and Catherine Nicoll	Undated
		Accession 1996-M-006. Additional Material	
1	5	<u>Practical Work Tasks</u> [by Beryl Pogson, compiled by Lewis Creed from meeting notes between 1960-1966]	1995
		Accession 1996-M-067. Additional Material	
1	6	<u>Informal Work Talks and Teachings, 1940-1950</u> [by Maurice Nicoll, compiled by Lewis Creed]	1995

## Accession 1996-M-092. Additional Material

Box	Folder	Description	Date(s)
		Accession 1996-M-092. Additional Material	1940-1996
		Also includes Accession 1997-M-061	
		Accession 1996-M-092. Additional Material	
1	1	"Movements, Sacred Dances and Ritual Exercises of Gurdjieff," [theater program for the Fortune Theater, London]	1952
1	2	Personal note from Lewis Creed [description of his introduction to the work of Maurice Nicoll]	1957
1	3	"Informal Work Talks of Dr. Nicoll," [typescript of notes on and extracts from talks given by Maurice Nicoll from 1940-1950, compiled by Lewis Creed]	Undated
		Ouspensky, P. D.	
1	4	List of mental exercises for his pupils	1940s
1	4	Printed material about his burial site at Lyne	Undated
1	5	"The Mural: the Labours of Hercules"	1957
		Typescript of the impressions of Beryl Pogson's study group on painting the mural of Hercules in the classroom at Dorton.	
1	6	"Beryl Pogson's Centenary"	1995
		Accession 1997-M-061. Additional Material	
1	7	<u>Notes Taken at Meetings with Maurice Nicoll: January 18, 1934 to April 28, 1934</u>	1996
		Compiled by a member of Nicoll's group; typescript and publication.	

## Accession 1997-M-108. Additional material

Box	Folder	Description	Date(s)
		Accession 1997-M-108. Additional material	1962, undated
1	1	"The Choice," compiled by Beryl Pogson	Undated
1	2	Diagrams from Dr. Nicoll's Room" Photocopies of diagrams pertaining to the universe.	Undated
		Photographs	
1	3	Art works	Undated
1	4	The Dicker Includes two drawings of residence.	Undated
1	5	Nicoll, Maurice	Undated
1	6	Pogson, Beryl	1962, undated
1	6	Theobald, Minnie	Undated

## Accession 2006-M-080. Additional material

Box	Description	Date(s)
	Accession 2006-M-080. Additional material	Undated
1	"Some Impressions of Dorton, Christmas 1956."	Undated

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## Access Terms

Gurdjieff, Georges Ivanovitch, 1872-1949.

Nicoll, Maurice, 1884-1953.

Pogson, Beryl, 1895-

Uspenskii, P. D., (Petr Dem'iaĭnovich), 1878-1947.

Psychologists.