Reference code: GB165-0269

Title: Sir Edward Spears Collection

Name of creator: Spears, Sir Edward Louis (1886-1974) Knight, Major General, Politician and Author

Dates of creation of material: 1941-1970

Level of description: Fonds

Extent: 33 boxes


Biographical History from the 1975 catalogue

General and Lady Spears were married in 1918 when General Spears was head of the British Mission to the French War Office and Lady Spears was Directrice of a mobile hospital which she had equipped and given to the French Army. She is the daughter of William Borden of Chicago.

During the present war [Second World War] Lady Spears again equipped and organised and directed a mobile ambulance for the French Army. All the equipment of this ambulance was lost during the French retreat in 1940 and Lady Spears and the English nurses and drivers on her staff were evacuated from France. She then with the help of the Americans equipped
a new unit which she gave to General de Gaulle and which accompanied the Free French to Africa in 1941 and took part in the Syrian Campaign.

General Spears, who had been appointed personal representative to Mr. Churchill as Minister of Defence to Monsieur Paul Reynaud, was with the French Government until the fall of Monsieur Reynaud on the 16th June 1940. He then brought General de Gaulle out of France and was made head of the French Mission to the Free French.

After the Syrian Campaign he organised the Spears Mission to Syria and the Lebanon and when the independence of Syria and the Lebanon was recognised by His Majesty’s Government became first British Minister to the two Republics, a post which he held until the end of 1944.

He was a Member of Parliament from 1931 to 1945. Since his return to England at the end of 1944 he has been prominently identified with the cause of strengthening Anglo-Arab relations and last autumn revisited the Middle East as guest of the Arab League.

While spending the greater part of the years 1942-1944 in Syria and the Lebanon, Lady Spears continued to maintain her ambulance unit with the Fighting French, paying frequent visits to it in North Africa and subsequently in Italy and in France.

While in Syria and the Lebanon she developed a number of mobile clinics which carried medical supplies and medical treatment to the country districts in Syria and the Lebanon where the people had no medical facilities at all. These clinics treated many thousands of Syrians and Lebanese and after Lady Spears’ departure were taken over by the Syrian and Lebanese Governments and are now a State Service.

**Scope and content:** Papers relating to Syrian and Lebanese affairs including the Spears Mission, 1941-44; the Lebanese constitutional crisis, 1943; Syrian and Lebanese independence; the future of Palestine; Anglo-Arab Association correspondence, 1946-66; Mt. Scopus case, 1953; Anglo-Arab Club correspondence, 1962-70; British-Tunisian Society correspondence; Middle Eastern affairs in general; press-cuttings on Syria & Lebanon, Palestine, Arab refugees, the Arab-Israeli conflict. Photographic collection.

Overview of the arrangement

Boxes 1, 1A, 1B, 1C
- General Spears Cairo diary 1941-1942 with extracts from later diaries, 1942-1945
- Syrian Committee telegrams, 1941-1942
- Spears Mission: copies of telegrams, 1941

Boxes 2 and 2A
- Spears Mission: establishment, personnel, administration and finances, 1941-1942
- Correspondence 1940-1945 on relations with the French in the Levant and British policy in the area
- Notes on conversations with Generals Catroux and de Gaulle, and Antony Eden
- General Spears correspondence with Churchill, 1941-1945

Box 3
- Lebanese constitutional crisis, Nov/Dec 1943: correspondence, telegrams, notes and memoranda
- Speeches and communiques on Syrian and Lebanese affairs, 1945-1948
- Application of Syria and Lebanon to the U.N. for the withdrawal of French forces (1946)

Box 4
- Economic development projects for the Levant and Middle East
- Spears Mobile Clinics in the Levant, 1945-1946
- Anglo – American Commission of Inquiry on Palestine, Jan/Feb 1946: evidence of General Spears and others
- Various memoranda on Israeli terrorist activities (late 1950 – early 1951)
- Correspondence and memoranda on Zionism and the Palestine problem.

Box 5
- Correspondence on Middle Eastern affairs with Arab politicians

Box 6
- Middle East Supply Centre report on the agricultural development of the Middle East (1944)
- Committee for Arab Affairs: membership and correspondence, 1945-1948

Box 7
- Committee for Arab Affairs: membership and correspondence, 1945-1948
- Arab Club: correspondence 1945-1949
- Anglo – Egyptian Society: correspondence 1945-1950
Box 8  Cedar Club: correspondence, 1966
    Personal correspondence
Box 9  Partial Manuscripts, partial typescripts of books of Middle East memoirs
    and relations with General de Gaulle
Boxes 10 – 14  Anglo-Arab Association; British Tunisian Society
Box 15  Palestine, Syria and Lebanon, North Africa correspondence and telegrams
Box 16  Elections telegrams 1945, Spears mission reunion dinner,
    correspondence, typed diary extracts 1942, report on Beirut general strike
    1942, telegrams 1941, Spears Mission Magazine, Programme R.A.F.
    Spitfire display 1944
Boxes 17 – 33  Press cuttings volumes 1941-1951, 1957

Access conditions: Open

Language of material: English, French, Arabic

Conditions governing reproduction: Copying at the discretion of the College. The literary
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Custodial history: In the possession of Sir Edward and Lady Spears, also Col. J.A. Aylmer
as residuary legatee.

Immediate source of acquisition: Middle Eastern papers promised by Sir Edward Spears
and given by Lady Spears April 1974; additional papers and photographs deposited on
indefinite loan by Col. Aylmer, 1980.

Related Units of Description:

In Other Repositories
Spears Papers at Churchill Archive Centre, Cambridge
Spears Papers at Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives, King’s College, London

Finding aids: In Guide; Handlist

Archivist’s note: Fonds level description created by Clare Brown 18 January 2000 and last
revised by Debbie Usher 15 Aug 2022. File and item level description created by Diana
Grimwood-Jones August 1975 and last revised by Debbie Usher 25 Aug 2022.
FILE AND ITEM LEVEL DESCRIPTION OF THE SIR EDWARD SPEARS COLLECTION

Box 1

1/1 Typed extracts from diaries. 1942-1945
Anonymous diary May 27 – July 20 1942 on war in Egypt.
1/2 Correspondence re Vice-Admiral Muselier. 1940-1941
1/3 Vansittart Committee: terms of reference and minutes of meetings.
Supplements to the London Gazette (1946) containing Wavell’s and Auchinleck’s despatches of 1941.
1/4 Minutes and memoranda of the War Cabinet Committee on Foreign (Allied) resistance (Syria).
Jul – Dec 1941
1/5 Spears’ Cairo diary. 1941
1/6 Spears’ Cairo diary. 1946
1/7 Syrian Committee telegrams (E-H) on various aspects of British relations with the French in the Levant. 1941-1942

Box 1A

1A Telegram book. 9 Apr 1941 – 10 Jul 1941
1A Telegrams. 11 Jul 1941 – 24 Jul 1941
1A Syrian Committee telegrams (A-G) prior to Armistice. 14 Jul 1941
1A/1 Telegrams: Syrian armistice. Jul 1941

Box 1B

1B Syrian Committee telegrams (I and J). 18 Jul 1941 – 25 Jan 1942
1B Syrian Committee telegrams (K1 – K7). 23 Jul 1941 – 12 Mar 1942

Box 1C

1C Syrian Committee telegrams (K8-K11 and L). 26 Aug 1941 – 11 Jan 1942
1/C/1 Spears mission: copies of telegrams. 25 Mar 1941 – 18 Dec 1941
and
1C/2
Box 2
2/1 Correspondence re Spears’ appointment (1941-1942) and resignation (1944) as British Minister to the Levant States. 1941-1944
Please note there is no file 2/2 – the number was erroneously left out in the original catalogue.
2/3 A few papers on the finances of the Spears Mission and dealings with the French in Syria on financial matters. 1942
2/4 A brief review of events in Iraq, Syria and Lebanon. 1918-1943
Interview with General de Gaulle re Syria 1941 and memo by Anthony Eden 19 Sept 1941. 1941
Memorandum on General de Gaulle and the French in the Levant during Spears’ period there. 14 Apr 1954
2/5 General correspondence 1940-1945 on relations with the French in the Levant and British policy towards Syria and Lebanon. 1940-1945
2/6 Notes on conversations with General Catroux, General de Gaulle, Anthony Eden etc. 1941-1945
2/7 General Spears’ correspondence with Churchill. 1941-1945

Box 2A
2A/1 Spears Mission: establishment, personnel etc. 1941-1942
2A/2 Spears Mission: establishment, personnel etc. 1941-1942
2A/3 Spears Mission: establishment, personnel etc. 1941-1942
2A/4 Correspondence with and about G. MacKereth. 1944
2A/5 Correspondence with and about ex-Spears Mission personnel. 1945-1954

Box 3
3/1 Correspondence, memoranda etc on General Spears’ visit to London in July 1943 (Anglo-French relations in the Levant). 1948, 1965


3/5 Sir J.B. Glubb: memoranda of 1942 and 1943 on post-war settlements in the Middle East: Memo on probable post-war issues in the Middle East (possibly by Glubb).

3/6 Lebanese memoranda on the Anglo-French agreement (Dec 1945) and the application of Syria and Lebanon to the UN Security Council for the withdrawal of French forces (Jan-May 1946).

3/7 Verbatim records of Security Council meetings on Lebanon and Syria.

3/8 Parliamentary questions on Syria and Lebanon.

1943

1943

1943

1945-1948

1945-1948

14-16 Feb 1946

1945-1946

1944-1947

1944-1947

Correspondence and memoranda on economic development projects for the Levant and Middle East in general (including National Broadcasting Station in Lebanon; Haifa-Tripoli Railway; Wheat Office of Syria and Lebanon; Spears’ project for setting up an English company with Middle Eastern capital for economic development in the Middle East; correspondence with Stanley Adams at Thomas Cook re tourism in Syria and the Lebanon, 1944-1947).

Anglo-French financial agreement 25 Jan 1944.

Correspondence with:
Spears Mobile Clinics in the Levant. 1945-1946
Lebanon Hospital for Mental Diseases. 1945-1946

4/3 Parliamentary questions on Palestine. 1945-1951
Anglo-American Commission of Inquiry on Palestine: evidence of General Spears, J Gaster and P. Piratin (with correspondence). Jan-Feb 1946
Statement by Ibn Saud to the Commission. 1 Feb 1946

4/4 Count Bernadotte: Report to the UN General Assembly on Palestine. 1948

4/5 Note on the question of the Hadassa Convoys. late 1950s to early 1951
The Deir Ayyub murders.
Israeli acts of hostility to Jordan.
The Sharafat and Falama atrocities.
Note on Jordan-Israel border relations.
Bulos and Thicknesse: Arab loss in Palestine.
Notes on murder and mutilation by Israeli troops.
Arab Legion press release 120.

4/6 Correspondence on Zionism and the Palestine problem.
Correspondence with Sir J.B. Glubb on his book ‘The Middle East Crisis’.
Letters to The Times 1973 on the Arab-Israeli conflict.
Correspondence with Arab embassies re Margaret Arakie’s ‘The broken sword of Justice’ 1973.

4/7 Memoranda and articles on Zionism and the Palestine problem.

Box 5

5/1 Bulletins from the Bureau Arabe de Publication de Presse. Jun 1946-Nov 1946
5/2 Arab News Agency reports. Dec 1944-Mar 1946
5/3 General Correspondence on Middle East affairs with: 1945-1950
John H Ace
Louis Amery
Arab Office (Albert Hourani and Edward Atiyah)
?E.A. Armstrong  
Austin Motors  
Hubert Bird  
Sir Reader Bullard  
L.W. Carruthers  
Iltyd Clayton  
Sir Kinahan Cornwallis  
Robert Durrant  
Archdale Francis  
Brigadier Frere  
George Giragos  
Sir Edward Grigg  
Alfred Guillaume  
Sir George Holmes  
Kirkbride  
Sir Miles Lampson  
Dudlay Marsack  
Robin Maugham  
Milne-Farquarson  
Colonel S.F. Newcombe  
Sir Bernard Paget  
Air Marshall Sir Keith Park  
Margaret Pope  
M.P. Price  
E. Rawdon Smith  
Dr Georg Schwarzenberger  
Field Marshal Smuts  
C. Strickland  
Ronald Storrs  
Richmond Temple  
A Watkinson  
Fred Wells  
Kenneth Williams
5/4 Correspondence with Arab politicians etc: Abdullah of Iraq, Azzeddine Azzouz and Habib Bourguiba, Yusif Bandak, Emile Bustani, Bechara el Khouri, Choukri Kouatly, Henri Pharaon and others.

5/5 James Heyworth Dunne: Memoranda on the state of Middle Eastern studies in the UK and the possibility of establishing an Institute for Near and Middle Eastern Studies (1944); Curriculum vitae; Undated letter to the Daily Telegraph on British attitudes to the Arabs.

Box 6

6/1 Middle East Supply Centre: Report on the agricultural development of the Middle East. 1944

6/2 Committee for Arab Affairs: Agendas and minutes of meetings. 1945-1948

6/3 Committee for Arab Affairs: membership and correspondence. 1945-1948

6/4 Committee for Arab Affairs: membership and correspondence. 1945-1948

Box 7

7/1 Committee for Arab Affairs: membership and correspondence. 1945-1948

7/2 Committee for Arab Affairs: membership and correspondence. 1945-1948

7/3 Committee for Arab Affairs: Economics Sub-Committee correspondence. 1946

7/4 Arab Club: correspondence. 1945-1949
Anglo-Egyptian Society: correspondence. 1945-1950

7/5 Spears’ Middle East visit, 1946: correspondence, notes, speeches. 1946

7/6 Appeal of North African youth to the UN. Correspondence on Jibouti. 1946
1941-1942
B. Penrose: America and the Middle East.
Alexandria Protocol and other Arab League material. 1944

Box 8
8/1 Appointments book. 1944
8/2 Cedar Club: correspondence. 1966
CAABU: Aims, correspondence. 1967
Correspondence re: an Arab trade delegation’s visit to Carlisle.
Jeremy Thorpe: Tribute to Sir E.L. Spears at his Memorial Service. 7 Mar 1974
8/3 Personal correspondence.
8/4 Personal correspondence.

Box 9
9/1 Book on relations with General de Gaulle: partial MS, partial TS.
Correspondence re proposed book on Middle East.
Correspondence re foreword to Antonius’ ‘Arab awakening’.
9/2 Middle Eastern memoirs: odd chapters, notes, jottings.
9/3 Middle Eastern memoirs: odd chapters, notes, jottings.
9/4 Middle Eastern memoirs: odd chapters, notes, jottings.

Box 10
10/1 Anglo-Arab Association: List of members. 1960
10/2 Anglo-Arab Association: Minutes and Agendas. 1946-1961
10/3 Anglo-Arab Association: Minutes and Agendas. 1946-1961
10/4 Anglo-Arab Association: Accounts.

Box 11
11/1 Anglo-Arab Association: Correspondence. 1946 – Aug 1948
11/2 Anglo-Arab Association: Correspondence. 1946 – Aug 1948
11/3 Anglo-Arab Association: Correspondence. 1946 – Aug 1948
11/4 Anglo-Arab Association: Correspondence. 1946 – Aug 1948

Box 12
12/1 Anglo-Arab Association: Correspondence. Sept 1948-1954
12/2 Anglo-Arab Association: Correspondence. Sept 1948-1954
12/3 Anglo-Arab Association: Correspondence. Sept 1948-1954
12/4 Anglo-Arab Association: Appeal for contributions. 1954-1955

Box 13
13/1 Anglo-Arab Association: Correspondence. 1955-June 1961
13/2 Anglo-Arab Association: Correspondence. 1955-June 1961
13/3 Anglo-Arab Association: Correspondence. 1955-June 1961
13/4 Anglo-Arab Association: Correspondence. 1955-June 1961

Box 14
14/1 Anglo-Arab Association: Correspondence. Jul 1961-1966
14/2 Anglo-Arab Association: Correspondence. Jul 1961-1966
14/3 Anglo-Arab Association: Correspondence. Jul 1961-1966
14/4 Anglo-Arab Club; British Tunisian Society – correspondence.

Box 15
15/1 Correspondence on the Palestine Problem. 1948-1949
15/2 Correspondence relating to Palestine refugees. 1948-1950
Correspondence on refugees with the Jordanian and the Holy Land Arab Refugee Fund.
Report on the refugee children in the Middle East by Dr Leslie Housden. The report covers refugees in Lebanon, Syria and Jordan.
Letters from Musa Alami thanking Spears for help and encouragement. 1953-1956
Correspondence mainly with Edward Atiyeh but also including Roland Outen, Sir George Earle, Mrs Kidd and E.F. Fairbairn on Musa Alami’s Jordan Valley Project.

TS Report ‘The Mount Scopus Case’.

Correspondence relating to A.M. Lilienthal’s ‘What Price Israel?’

15/3 Telegrams, notes and jottings relating to the Palestine question and Great Britain in the Middle East.

15/4 Telegrams re Syrian and Lebanese independence.

Telegram from North African leaders.

Telegram from Habib Bourguiba.

Correspondence with George Wadsworth.

Correspondence with Madame Vidaud.

Society for Protection of Animals in North Africa (S.P.A.N.A) letter and news sheets.

15/5 Correspondence with the Saudi Legation/Embassy.

Correspondence with the Syrian Legation/Embassy.

Correspondence with the Jordanian Embassy.

Correspondence relating to Micel Fred Abcarius’ book ‘Palestine through the fog of propaganda’.

Correspondence relating to Sir George Young’s book ‘Aladdin of Arabia’.

Box 16

16/1 Election telegrams.

16/2 Spears mission reunion dinner.

16/3 Correspondence with Spears.

System of arrangement: alphabetical by author

A Material received from the Liddell Hart Library

16/4 a) Typed diary extracts.

b) Report by Furlonge on the proposed general strike in Beirut.

13-17 Mar 1942

Jul 1942
B Material deposited by Col. T Aylmer 24 Sept 1980

16/5 a) Foreign Office and minister of State Cairo – telegrams re: the interpretation of the armistice terms (including General Spears proposals). Jul – Aug 1941
b) Vol 1 of ‘The Trident’ – the Spears Mission Magazine. 1943
c) Programme for the R.A.F. Spitfire display, Beirut. 1944

Press Cuttings Boxes 17-33

Box 17 Syria 1941 – 1942
17/1 Press cuttings re: Spears’ work in Syria. 1941-1942

Box 18 Syria and Lebanon 1942 – 1945
18/1 Syria and Lebanon 1, (English and French Press). 1942 – 1943
   Old Ref: Press Cuttings Box 1 File 1
18/2 Syria and Lebanon 2, (English and French Press). 1944 – 1945
   Old Ref: Press Cuttings Box 1 File 2
18/3 Syria and Lebanon 3, (Arabic). 1944
   Old Ref: Press Cuttings Box 1 File 3

Box 19 Syria and Lebanon 1943 – 1944
19/1 Syria and Lebanon 4, (Arabic). 1944
   Old Ref: Press Cuttings Box 1 File 4
19/2 American press reports on the Lebanese constitutional crisis. Nov 1943
   Old Ref: Press Cuttings Box 1 File 5
19/3 Indian press reports of the Lebanese constitutional crisis. Nov 1943
   Old Ref: Press Cuttings Box 1 File 6

Box 20 Palestine Mar – Jul 1947
20/1 Palestine press cuttings. Mar 1947
   Old Ref: Press Cuttings Box 2 File 1
20/2 Palestine press cuttings. Apr 1947
   Old Ref: Press Cuttings Box 2 File 2
20/3 Palestine press cuttings. May 1947
   Old Ref: Press Cuttings Box 2 File 3
20/4 Palestine press cuttings.       Jun 1947
    Old Ref: Press Cuttings Box 2 File 4
20/5 Palestine press cuttings.       Jul 1947
    Old Ref: Press Cuttings Box 2 File 5

Box 21 Palestine Aug – Dec 1947

21/1 Palestine press cuttings.       Aug 1947
    Old Ref: Press Cuttings Box 2 File 6
21/2 Palestine press cuttings.       Sept 1947
    Old Ref: Press Cuttings Box 2 File 7

Box 22 Palestine Oct – Dec 1947

22/1 Palestine press cuttings.       Oct 1947
    Old Ref: Press Cuttings Box 2 File 8
22/2 Palestine press cuttings.       Nov 1947
    Old Ref: Press Cuttings Box 2 File 9
22/3 Palestine press cuttings.       Dec 1947
    Old Ref: Press Cuttings Box 2 File 10

Box 23 Palestine Jan – Mar 1948

23/1 Palestine press cuttings.       Jan 1948
    Old Ref: Press Cuttings Box 3 File 1
23/2 Palestine press cuttings.       Feb 1948
    Old Ref: Press Cuttings Box 3 File 2
23/3 Palestine press cuttings.       Mar 1948
    Old Ref: Press Cuttings Box 3 File 3

Box 24 Palestine Apr – May 1948

24/1 Palestine press cuttings.       Apr 1948
    Old Ref: Press Cuttings Box 3 File 4
24/2 Palestine press cuttings.       May 1948
    Old Ref: Press Cuttings Box 3 File 5

Box 25 Palestine Jun – Jul 1948

25/1 Palestine press cuttings.       Jun 1948
Old Ref: Press Cuttings Box 5 File 8
Old Ref: Press Cuttings Box 5 File 9
Old Ref: Press Cuttings Box 5 File 10

Box 30 Arab – Israeli Conflict Jan – Dec 1950
30/1 Arab – Israeli conflict press cuttings. Jan – Apr 1950
Old Ref: Press Cuttings Box 6 File 1
Old Ref: Press Cuttings Box 6 File 2
Old Ref: Press Cuttings Box 6 File 3

Box 31 Arab – Israeli Conflict Jan – Mar 1951
31/1 Arab – Israeli conflict press cuttings. Jan – Mar 1951
Old Ref: Press Cuttings Box 6 File 4
31/2 Arab – Israeli conflict press cuttings. Apr – Jul 1951
Old Ref: Press Cuttings Box 6 File 5
Old Ref: Press Cuttings Box 6 File 6

Box 32 Middle East Visit 1946
32/1 Middle East visit press cuttings. 1946
Language: French and Arabic
Old Ref: Press Cuttings Box 7 File 1 Part 1 of 3
32/2 Middle East visit press cuttings. 1946
Language: French and Arabic
Old Ref: Press Cuttings Box 7 File 2 Part 2 of 3
32/3 Middle East Visit press cuttings. 1946
Language: French and Arabic
Old Ref: Press Cuttings Box 7 File 3 Part 3 of 3

Box 33 Middle East 1957
33/1 Middle East press cuttings. 1957
Old Ref: Press Cuttings Box 7 File