

Reference code: GB165-0302

Title: Hilda Wilson Collection

Name of creator: Wilson, Hilda Mary (1904-1990)

Dates of creation of material: 1939

Level of description: Fonds

Extent: 1 file; 13 photographs

Biographical history: Wilson, Hilda Mary (1904-1990)

Born 4 Sept 1904, daughter of Donald Marten Wilson, clerk in holy orders. Educated at Wolverhampton Girls' High School; Norwich Girls' High School and St Hugh's College, Oxford 1923-1926 Lit. Hum (Classics), Hon. Classical Mods (1926) and BA (1927), passed groups B1 and B6 (1926). Assistant Mistress at St Mary's and St Anne's Abbots Bromley; Abbey School, Reading (1927); vice-principle, Jerusalem Christian College [possibly Jerusalem Girl's or Boy's College] 1935-1936. Served as a school teacher at the Arab High School at Bir Zeit during the Arab Rebellion 1937-1939. In her correspondence to the Archive in 1968 Miss Wilson notes that the typescript was 'based on my diary for the year 1938 (September) to 1939 (June) when I was teaching at the Arab High School at Bir Zeit, Palestine. The Arabs at that time were in revolt against the British Mandatory government, on account of its Jewish policy. Bir Zeit is a village six miles north of Ramallah. During that year the British government in our neighbourhood ceased to function, for a time, as the rebels took over. In correspondence with friends in England I found that people in England had little idea of what was actually going on in Palestine. So I kept this detailed diary, and on returning to England at the outbreak of World War II (autumn 1939) I typed out a narrative version and tried to get it published. No publisher would take it, because – they told me – it contained things derogatory to the British troops, and such things could not be publicized in wartime. So I waited and tried again when the war was over. I was then told that these matters were out of date and nobody would be interested any more.' Miss Wilson also noted that 'unfortunately I have not kept the actual diary from which it is taken. But it is a true account; only the names of people have been changed.' After her work in Palestine, Hilda Wilson worked as a secretary to Lord Walsingham, Norfolk Home Defence Co. (1939); gardener and lorry driver at the Radcliffe Infirmary, Oxford (1941) and secretary to a firm of hard court specialists (1944). Hilda Wilson died in Devon on the 12 Nov 1990.

Scope and content: 'School year in Palestine 1938-39' TS account of a teacher's life at the Arab High School, Bir Zeit during the Arab rebellion, with a curfew pass, curfew notice in Arabic and 13 photographs of Bir Zeit.

System of arrangement: TS account, ephemera, photographs

Access conditions: Open

Language of material: English; some Arabic

Conditions governing reproduction: No restrictions on copying or quotation other than statutory regulations and preservation concerns.

Custodial history: In the possession of Miss Wilson.

Immediate source of acquisition: Received as a gift from Miss Wilson in Jan 1968

Related Units of Description:

In MEC Archive

- For other collections relating to the Arab Revolt see the Guide to collections relating to the Arab Revolt Palestine 1936-1939
- For other collections relating to Education see the Guide to Collections relating to Education

Finding aids: In Guide; Handlist

Publication note: Hilda Wilson's publications include 'Rivers and Waters in Literature' Contemporary Review (1946); 'Good and Bad People in Literature' Hibbert Journal (1947); The Three-Sighted, and other poems (1961); Volunteers for Palestine (1982).

Archivist's note: Fonds level description created by Clare Brown 22 Feb 2000 and last revised by Debbie Usher 13 Jun 2018. Item level description created by Debbie Usher 14 Mar 2012. The date and place of birth and death was provided by the Barnstaple Quakers via Roger Hardy. The death register information for Hilda Mary Wilson notes that the death was registered in Nov 1990 in Barnstaple, Devon. Education, career details, publications and exact date of death provided by St Hugh's College, Oxford.

**SERIES AND ITEM LEVEL DESCRIPTION OF THE HILDA WILSON
COLLECTION**

1	<u>School Year In Palestine</u> TS narrative account of Miss Wilson's life as a teacher at the Arab High School, Bir Zeit during the Arab rebellion, based on a detailed diary kept at the time.	1939	79 sheets plus cover
2	<u>Curfew Notice</u> Arabic curfew notice that was dropped by airplane stating 'This is a warning to you to keep indoors. Any person who tries to leave the village, or to go to the fields surrounding the village, is liable to be shot. You will be told when you may safely leave your houses.' Related material: See page 42 of the TS School Year in Palestine for the account of the curfew Language: In Arabic	1939	1 item
3	<u>Curfew Pass</u> Defence Regulations Temporary Military Curfew Pass which Miss Wilson and her sister used to enable their travel when leaving Palestine in July 1939.	4 Jul 1939	1 item
4	<u>Photographs</u> Black and white photographs of Bir Zeit including images of villagers and school children. The captions are those that Miss Wilson wrote on the back of the photographs. Access: Please note that the photographs are stored separately from the papers.	1938-1939	13 items
4/1	'Bir Zeit School. Some of the girls.'	1938-1939	1 item
4/2	'Picnic, boys' & girls' schools.'	1938-1939	1 item
4/3	'Bir Zeit girl's school. Netball.'	1938-1939	1 item

4/4	'Miss H.M. Wilson, Girls' High School, Bir Zeit, Palestine. Palestine village woman: old fashioned costume, up-to date tin, bringing oil from the olive-press in the background.'	1938-1939	1 item
4/5	'Bir Zeit Villagers'	1938-1939	1 item
4/6	'Snow at Bir Zeit'	1938-1939	1 item
4/7	'Snow at Bir Zeit, February 1938'	Feb 1938	1 item
4/8	'Miss Hulbeit's clinic. Miss Hulbeit in doorway, with nurse's cap. Abu Sulaiman sitting with children'	1938-1939	1 item
4/9	'Bir Zeit boys' school. Drill'	1938-1939	1 item
4/10	'Khalid's Group Drill 1939'	1939	1 item
4/11	'Shurra, school servant'	1938-1939	1 item
4/12	'Boy's school playing field, between Bir Zeit and Jifna'	1938-1939	1 item
4/13	'Bir Zeit village, from school roof'	1938-1939	1 item