

Reference code: GB165-0375

Title: Barbara Wood Collection

Name of creator: Wood, Barbara (b. 1926)

Dates of creation of material: 1966 – c. 1998

Level of description: Fonds

Extent: 1 box

Biographical history: Barbara Wood, née Chambers, was born in Tunbridge Wells, in 1926. Having studied the 'cello at the Royal College of music, she married David Wood in 1948. After running an Old People's Home in England, David Wood was offered a job teaching English as a foreign language in Saudi Arabia. The couple moved to Saudi Arabia in late 1965. David Wood renewed his year-long contract twice, working for three years in a local school in Jeddah. During this time, Barbara Wood was employed as a typist, including working for the BRGM (Bureau de Recherches Géologiques et Minières's). After a short period in Malta in 1969, David Wood accepted a post with the BRGM as second translator. Barbara Wood then worked as a typist for Burns and Roe, the American engineering firm from New Jersey overseeing the construction of the first desalination plant at Jeddah for the American government. They left Jeddah in Aug 1970.

Detailed Biographical History supplied by Barbara Wood

Barbara Wood, née Chambers, was born in Tunbridge Wells, Kent, on September 23rd 1926. Having studied the 'cello at the Royal College of Music, she married David Wood in 1948. David Wood was born in 1904 in Rustenberg, South Africa. After an Honours Degree from Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, he went to Egypt to teach English for the Ministry of Education, and during the 1930s developed their Department of Educational Cinema, of which he was Director until, I think, 1943, when he went to Palestine to take on the job of Assistant Public Information Office for Palestine and Transjordan, which he held until 1946, when he returned to England.

He couldn't get a job in the educational film world in Britain, because of the closed shop policy, and he was restricted in what he could do because of being solely responsible for his young son. He found his elderly mother's housing arrangements were far from satisfactory, and decided to set up a residential home for old people, thinking there must be others in her situation.

However, he went back into teaching once the home was up and running, and it was after retiring from that, and having sold the home, that he saw advertised and applied for a job teaching English in Jeddah, in late 1965.

David Wood renewed his year-long contract twice, working for three years in a secondary school in Jeddah, and inspecting in schools. During this time, Barbara Wood was employed as a typist, editor, and translator at the French Geological Survey Mission, Bureau de Recherches Géologiques et Minières, which was under contract to the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Petroleum and Mineral Resources.

After a short period in Malta, David Wood was offered a post with the BRGM as second translator. As they had a policy of not employing husbands and wives, Barbara Wood then worked as a typist for Burns and Roe, the American engineering firm from New Jersey overseeing the construction of the first desalination plant at Jeddah for the American government. They left Jeddah in August 1970, and David Wood died in August 1972.

After his death, Barbara Wood did some work for Olga Tufnell, a well-known Middle East archaeologist. On her recommendation, she was offered in 1973 the job of Secretary at the British School of Archaeology in Baghdad. The place was closed down a fortnight later by the Iraqi government, but it was hoped that it could be re-opened, and she was asked if she could wait. In the meantime, the job of Secretary at the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem became vacant, and she was offered, and accepted that. However, after a few weeks this offer had to be withdrawn, as the incumbent had given in her notice as she was getting married, but then broke off her engagement and wanted to keep her job. After waiting some time for the Baghdad job to become available, Barbara Wood was offered a job at the headquarters of the British Schools of Archaeology at London University, then at Gordon Square.

Scope and content: Mainly consisting of copies of a diary kept in the 1960s and 1970s, typed up by their creator in the 1990s. Additional papers, comprising of an introduction to events leading up to the beginning of the diaries, and a key to the pseudonyms used in the typed version of the diary, augment the major papers. Further to this there are also 14

sheets of photocopied photographs which were taken in around the same period as the original diary.

System of arrangement:

1. Commentary on the Diaries
2. Pseudonyms in the Diaries
3. Diaries
4. Photocopies of Photographs
5. Correspondence
6. Recipes
7. Photocopy of a News Clipping
8. Poetry
9. Burial Procedures for Americans
10. Photocopy from a book
11. Photocopy of Newspaper Obituary

Access conditions: Open

Language of material: English

Conditions governing reproduction: No restrictions on copying or quotation other than statutory regulations and preservation concerns. Please note copyright in the diaries belongs to Barbara Wood.

Immediate source of acquisition: Received as a gift from Barbara Wood in 1997 and 1998

Location of originals: The manuscript diaries, original typed copies of the diaries and photographs are in the custody of the creator, Mrs Barbara Wood

Finding aids: In Guide; Handlist

Archivist's note: Fonds and file and item level description created by Faye McLeod, Feb 2005

**SERIES AND ITEM LEVEL DESCRIPTION OF THE BARBARA WOOD
COLLECTION**

Box 1

1 Commentary on the Diaries

Commentary on the Mrs Wood's diary of her life in Jeddah, 1996 7 sheets
"supplying an account of the lives we had lived before going to
Jeddah, and of how we came to be there"

2 Pseudonyms in the Diaries

Document supplying the correlation between the real names in 1996 2 sheets
the manuscript of the Mrs. Wood's Jeddah diary of her life in
Jeddah, and those given in the typescript, and corrections. These
were adopted due to the intention to publish the diary

3 Diaries

- 3/1 Photocopy of typed diary of Mrs Wood's life in Jeddah. 1st 2 Dec 99 sheets
Year. "Rechecked photocopies pp. 1-100". Introduction forms 1965 - 8
pages 1-7. Typed from a manuscript diary in 1996-1997 Mar
1966
- 3/2 Photocopy of typed diary of Mrs Wood's life in Jeddah. 1st 8 Mar 99 sheets
Year. "Rechecked photocopies pp. 101-200". Typed from a 1966 - 7
manuscript diary in 1997 Jul 1966
- 3/3 Additional p. 87 for the Year One diary. Typed from a 19 Feb 1 sheet
manuscript diary in 1997 1966
- 3/4 Photocopy of typed diary of Mrs Wood's life in Jeddah. 2nd 10 Sep 136 sheets
Year. Includes photocopy of Christmas card. Typed from a 1966
manuscript diary in 1997 and 18
Jun
1967

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|-----|--|--------------------------------|-----------|
| 3/5 | Photocopy of typed diary of Mrs Wood's life in Jeddah. 3rd Year. Typed from a manuscript diary in 1997 – c. 1998 | 5 Sep 1967
and 26 Jun 1968 | 81 sheets |
| 3/6 | Photocopy of typed diary of Mrs Wood's life in Jeddah. 4 th Year. Typed from a manuscript diary in 1997 – c. 1998 | 25 Aug 1969
and 18 Aug 1970 | 50 sheets |

4 Photocopies of Photographs

Photographs of Saudi Arabia in the 1970s, including images of desalination plants, schools and flooding. Photocopies taken in 1997.

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|-----|--|---------------|---------|
| 4/1 | Black & white photocopy of 2 photographs. Captions on the reverse: 'Desalination plant. 5 Jul 1970' | 1960s - 1970s | 1 sheet |
| 4/2 | Black & white photocopy of 2 photographs. Captions on the reverse: 'A desalination plant', '15 Jun 1970. Mr Macnamara showing that this tank had been installed too near the wall to allow work on it' | 1960s - 1970s | 1 sheet |
| 4/3 | Black & white photocopy of 2 photographs of a desalination plant. No captions | 1960s - 1970s | 1 sheet |
| 4/4 | Black & white photocopy of 2 photographs. Captions on the reverse: 'Girls' school' | 1960s - 1970s | 1 sheet |
| 4/5 | Black & white photocopy of 2 photographs. Captions on the reverse: 'One of the boys' schools (not Al Falah)' | 1960s - 1970s | 1 sheet |
| 4/6 | Black & white photocopy of 2 photographs. Caption on the reverse: '2 views of Sharia Sharafir, Jedda' | 1960s - 1970s | 1 sheet |
| 4/7 | Black & white photocopy of photographs. Street scene and panoramic view. No captions | 1960s - 1970s | 1 sheet |
| 4/8 | Black & white photocopy of a photograph. Street scene and building. No captions | 1960s - 1970s | 1 sheet |
| 4/9 | Black & white photocopy of 2 photographs. Caption on the | 1960s - | 1 sheet |

- reverse: 'Floods after a storm in Jeddah' 1970s
- 4/10 Black & white photocopy of a photograph. Caption on the reverse: 'Ships in the port, Jeddah' 1960s - 1 sheet
1970s
- 4/11 Black & white photocopy of 3 photographs. Captions on the reverse: 'Wood's first floor flat in Abdul el Siday Buildings', 'Outside of the block', 'David and Barbara Wood in the sitting room with David Wood's homemade bookcases' 1960s - 1 sheet
1970s
- 4/12 Black & white photocopy of 4 photographs. Caption on the reverse: 'Driving & camping in the coastal plain, north of Jeddah' 1960s - 1 sheet
1970s
- 4/13 Black & white photocopy of 4 photographs. Captions on the reverse: 'Al Falah school and the gate keeper', 'Guwd outside the British Embassy' 1960s - 1 sheet
1970s
- 4/14 Black & white photocopy of 2 photographs. Caption on the reverse: 'Van outside Binzagr's, Arthur Cox's employer and Mayor of Jeddah' 1960s - 1 sheet
1970s

5 Correspondence

- 5/1 Postcard. Front reads 'Happy Christmas from Ethiopia' and depicts a nativity scene. Addressed to Mr and Mrs David Wood, Jeddah. From Kahasai W.haimanot Undated 1 sheet
- 5/2 Airmail letter address to Mr and Mrs David Wood from Kahasai W.haimanot. Marked in different hand 'D wrote 17 Jan 1970' c. Jan 1970 2 sheets
- 5/3 Airmail letter address to Mr and Mrs David Wood from Kahasai Woldehaimanot Undated 2 sheets
- 5/4 Airmail letter address to Mr and Mrs David Wood from Kahasai Woldehaimanot Undated 2 sheets

6 Recipes

- 6/1 Black & white photocopy of typed recipe and instructions for home-brewed beer Undated 1 sheet

6/2 Black & white photocopy of a typed recipe for cooking cheap beef Undated 1 sheet

7 Photocopy of a news clipping

Photocopy of a news clipping from The Daily Star (Beirut- 19 Jun 1 sheet
Lebanon), regarding the desalination plant 1970

8 Poetry

Black & white photocopy of a poem entitled Where Corals Lie Undated 1 sheet
written by Richard Garnett

9 Burial Procedures for Americans

Typed sheets detailing 'Procedures in the event of the death of an American in the Jidda Consular District'. Found in the envelope of item 27 Undated 4 sheets

10 Photocopy from a Book

Black and white photocopy from book, chapter entitled 'Locust Army'. Inscription at the top of the page reads 'From Destination Mecca by Sayed Indres Shaka, Octagon, London 1969. Written shortly before the death of Abdul Aziz. Found in the envelope of item 27 Undated 1 sheet

11 Photocopy of Newspaper Obituary

Black & white photocopy of a newspaper cutting. Obituary for John Scott. Inscription on the bottom of the page reads "This was the John Scott, working at the Directorate of Mineral Resources, referred to in the diary. B Wood". Found in the Undated 1 sheet

envelope of item 31