

Reference code: GB165-0331

Title: Julian Paxton Collection

Name of creator: Paxton, Julian F.E. (b.1937)

Dates of creation of material: 1930 – 7 Oct 1989, predominant Feb 1948 –1980

Level of description: Fonds

Extent: 14 boxes

Biographical history: PAXTON, Julian, F.E., b 22 June 1937. Educated at Eastbourne College & Hertford College, Oxford where he read an MA in English Language and Literature. Civil Service Interpretership in Arabic. Honourable Secretary of the British-Yemeni Society. From 1959 – 1969 he was in the Regular Army Service, including service as an intelligence officer in Cyprus and a political officer in the West Aden Protectorate of Aden, Yemen. In 1969 he joined Shell International Petroleum Company and worked in government and public affairs functions in Qatar (two years) and Oman (ten years). On return to Shell's London Head Office in 1983 he was appointed adviser to operating companies in the Middle East and Francophone Africa. He retired in 1994 but still acted as a consultant to PDO and Oman LNG. After retiring he was commissioned to compile a history of PDO which was not published due to reasons of political sensitivity. He is currently the editor of the Oman Information Handbook published annually by the Ministry of Information, Oman. Married with two children born 1972 and 1974.

Scope and content: Petroleum Development Oman (PDO) company files mainly from the PDO office in Muscat, which was closed in 1976. The papers contain some reports, but mainly consist of subject and organisational files used by the staff of the Muscat office for reference. The papers also contain a small amount of Paxton's own research papers arising from his interest in Bertram Thomas an early explorer in Oman, and some printed materials relating to Oman and other Middle Eastern countries.

System of arrangement: The files are divided into three main sections: PDO papers; private research papers; and printed materials. There are further sub-sections within PDO papers, but there is little hierarchy within the papers due to their random nature. Where possible, original file titles have been retained. Where a file has been created or a file title ascribed, this is noted in the catalogue.

Access conditions: Open with a few closures at file level as indicated in the catalogue

Language of material: English, some Arabic.

Conditions governing reproduction: No restrictions on copying or quotation other than statutory regulations and preservation concerns. Copies of the PDO papers may be supplied for private research and study, but not for publication.

Custodial history: The files were retained by Paxton as part of a salvage operation and would otherwise have been destroyed when the PDO office closed in 1976.

Immediate source of acquisition: Received as a gift from Julian Paxton through Mr Ian Skeet in 1995

Related Units of Description:

In MEC Archive

The MEC Archive has many collections relating to Oman's military history in 1970s. Please consult the Guide to Collections relating to Oman for further information.

Finding aids: In Guide; Handlist

Archivist's note: Fonds, series and file level description created by Caroline Hughes 29 Aug 2000 and revised by Debbie Usher 16 Sept 2010 and revised by Debbie Usher 2 Jul 2012 after review of closure dates.

**SERIES AND FILE LEVEL DESCRIPTION OF THE JULIAN PAXTON
COLLECTION**

PDO PAPERS

Monthly Reports

Box 1

- 1/1 *Dhofar Area Representative Monthly Reports:* The 5 Mar 1970 – 38 items
reports were prepared for the Management Liaison 7 Jul 1974
Representative in Muscat by the area representative in
Dhofar. Significant issues covered by the reports are:
towns; local Walis; personnel issues; radio coverage;
security; SAF; local health; communications; and tribal
affairs.
- 1/2 *Ibri Area Representative Monthly Reports:* Prepared for 18 Feb 1955 – 108 items
the Chief Representative of PDO in Muscat, by the Area 29 Dec 1962
Representative in Ibri. Each report covers many aspects
of the Ibri liaison work, recurring aspects are: visitors;
personnel; company sites; SAF; local tribal and Sheikh
relations.

Box 2

- 2/1 *Ibri Area Representative Monthly Reports:* Prepared for 22 Apr 1965 – 106 items
the Management Liaison Representative in Muscat and 1 Sep 1974
Mina al Fahal by the Area Representative in Ibri. The
reports for December 1971 to January 1974 are missing.
Each report covers many aspects of the Ibri liaison work,
recurring aspects are: oilrigs; geophysical matters;
relations with local tribes and sheikhs; and seismic
surveys.
- 2/2 *Izki and Parz Area Monthly Reports:* Ascribed title. File 31 Oct 1971 – 1 item

created by Archivist from loose papers. The file contains Nov 1971
two documents, an Annex to the Izki Monthly report from
November 1971 covering the Oman government, and
development at Izki, and Annex to the Parz report for
October 1971 covering local Walis.

- 2/3 *Muscat Area Representative Reports:* Reports prepared 15 Feb 1954 – 80 items
by the Representative in Muscat for the Chief Local 19 Jan 1957
Representative. The file consists mainly of Muscat and
Oman Diary entries for each month, and a series of
political surveys for varying periods of time. The early
part of the file is concerned with a DEF project, probably
a planned excursion into the Oman Interior to survey the
local terrain prior to commencing operations. The rest of
the file relates to: a visit by Company Representatives to
Salalah; the Immam; an expedition to Fahud; the Muscat
Field Force; Sultan Said bin Taimur; the Trucial States;
Qatar; and general issues from Muscat and Oman

Box 3

- 3/1 *Muscat Area Representative Reports:* Ascribed title. 4 Feb 1957 – 55 items
Probably a continuation of the *Muscat Area* 29 Dec 1962
Representative Reports file prepared for the Chief
Representative in Muscat, and later for the Field Manager
(Oman), Ghaba, by the Muscat Area Representative. The
notes report on: visitors to Muscat; commercial business;
government liaison; rainfall; staff accommodation;
Muscat Office; appointments; and incidents.
- 3/2 *Chief Representative's Muscat Monthly Liaison Reports:* 9 Feb 1957 – 93 items
Reports prepared by the Chief Representative in Muscat 13 Jan 1964
for the Managing Director in London. The reports give
an overall review of company liaison, covering: rebels;
relations with tribes; local sheikhs; visits to the Sultan;
relations with other countries; personnel; construction of

the Sumial road; military forces; and many general matters of importance.

Notes For File

Box 4

- 4/1 *Notes for File; Personalities:* Ascribed title. Notes 22 Oct 1966- 63 items prepared by the Liaison Department, about local 12Jun 1971 personalities visited by the Liaison Representatives. The and not dated notes discuss the relationships between personalities and the Company.
File closed until 2022. Reviewed 2 Jul 2012 and still closed (Personal information exemption).
- 4/2 *Notes for File; Personalities:* Ascribed title. Concerning: 12 Apr 1967 - 11 items visits to local Omani personalities including a number of 16 Mar 1972 notes about a personality called Tariq; the Arab-Israeli war; the Immate; Sultan Qaboos bin Said.
Reviewed 2 Jul 2012 sheets 20-23 closed until 2023 (Personal information exemption).
- 4/3 *Notes for File PDO Activities:* Ascribed title. Regarding 13 Jun 1967 – 23 items a miscellany of PDO incidents and activities including: 21 Oct 1972 land tenure; visits to local sheikhs and personalities; the (predominant environment; the political and economic situation; 1967 – 1970) personnel; diving licences; a PDO plan for 1970; SAF recruitment; and a meeting between F. Hughes (a Manager of PDO) and Sultan Qaboos bin Said on 16 and 17 September concerning Shell Market Affairs. The file also contains with some correspondence between Bill Peyton (see Peyton Papers)and colleagues, and an Oil Concession Agreement for the Gulf States 21 October 1972. Bill Peyton (see Peyton Papers) may have created the file.
Reviewed 2 Jul 2012 and sheets 66-67 redacted and sheets 69-74 and 78 closed until 2023 (Personal information exemption).

- 4/4 *Notes for File:* General information about company activities in relation to the liaison department. The file covers: the Development Board; land tenure; Al-Kaudh water wells; government organisation; Beirut; the change in government and its consequences for PDO after the deposition of Sultan Said bin Taimur by his son Qaboos bin Said; tribal matters; relations of Oman with its neighbours; and education. 15 Aug 1968 – 62 items
22 Apr 1974

Subject Files

Box 5

- 5/1 *Border Discussions:* Notes relating to discussions between Oman and Saudi Arabia and between Oman and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in 1974, and also to the formation of committees for discussion and possible delineation of boarders between Oman and Saudi Arabia in 1977. 14 Jul 1974 – 7 7 items
Jun 1977
- 5/2 *Border Dispute Harasis/Duru:* Ascribed title. Notes about the Harasis/Duru boarder dispute including a list of relevant correspondence, a map of the area, and notes describing the Company's position. 7 Apr 1974 – 1 item
30 Apr 1974
- 5/3 *Boundaries Dhofar and Oman:* Correspondence between the Chief Representative of PDO Ltd Sir William O'Brien Lindsay, KBE and various recipients about boundary disputes in Oman. The file mainly relates to disputes over the Dhofar boundary, and contains: correspondence between the Chief Representative of PDO and Dr Wendell Phillips concerning a possible concession granted to him by Sultan Said bin Taimur; and a slightly water damaged map of Muscat and Oman 25 Mar 1955 – 30 items
30 Nov 1960
- 5/4 *Boundaries Dhofar and Oman:* Sub-file of 5/3. Correspondence between the Chief Representative of 1 Feb 1958 – 7 items
20 Feb 1958

PDF Ltd Sir William O'Brien Lindsay, KBE, and Sultan Said bin Taimur, about the Dhofar boundary.

- 5/5 *Boundaries Oman:* Correspondence, notes, and reports about boundary disputes within the Sultanate, and bordering countries. The file relates primarily to the boundary between Oman and Dhofar and contains correspondence between the Chief and Local Representatives of PDO and various predecessor companies. The file also relates to: the boundary between Saudi Arabia and Hadramut; the dispute over borders between Saudi Arabia, the Trucial Sheikhs, and the Sultanate of Oman; and correspondence between the Chief Representative of PDO and Dr Wendell Phillips concerning a concession granted to him by Sultan Said bin Taimur in 1958

24 Nov 1952 – 107 items
18 Jan 1966

- 5/6 *Buraimi:* Correspondence between representatives of predecessor PDO companies in the Buraimi area of Oman, and their superiors in London and Bahrain. The file covers the wishes of the company to obtain a concession to explore for oil in the Buraimi area, and relations between the company, local Sheikhs, and the Sultan Said bin Taimur.

18 Feb 1948 – 74 items
14 Aug 1954

Note: Major Richard Bird, and Edward Henderson were the respective local representatives for Petroleum Concessions Limited, and Petroleum Development Oman Limited, Dukhan, and later Petroleum Development Oman and Dhofar Limited.

Box 6

- 6/1 *Climate of Health:* General notes and correspondence to the Chief Representative regarding matters of interest to him in his official capacity. The early part of the file related to special payments in the Liaison Department.

16 Nov 1954 – 91 items
14 Mar 1973

Other significant subjects are: use of the Sultanate emblem; a project for a beach head at Saih Al Malih and a depot and airstrip west of Azaiba; progress of PDO from 1962 – 1965; environment; labour recruitment in the Interior; notes on the government; notes on prominent local people; recruitment of clerical staff; official precedence in Muscat; pipelines; courtesy; and the ruling family. The file includes a letter from the Consul General D. C. Carden to the General Manager of PDO on 19 February 1968 giving notice of a public execution to be held at Mirani Fort. This was the last time a public execution took place in Oman.

- 6/2 *Customs:* Created by the Management Liaison Representative for company use providing information about local customs in Oman and stating how PDO employees should behave towards the indigenous population in such a way that will not cause offence. The file includes orders made by the Sultan through the Oman Government. The file covers: how non-muslims should behave; restrictions on bounds; the Ruwi gate; dress; hunting restrictions; arms licences; restrictions on use of the colour green; smoking; alcohol; servants; water; and electricity. Some items are in Arabic. 15 Oct 1959 – 30 items
20 Nov 1968
and not dated
- 6/3 *History:* Ascribed title. File originally entitled *Archives*. Relates to: a report by Dr L.E. Virone on his visit to Oman in April and May 1966; teaching Arabic to Company employees; Omani currency; and notes on a visit to the Hamza brothers. The file also contains a newspaper article from 1981 about the possibility of hidden oil reserves, and a copy of the Central Bank of Oman monthly magazine *al-markazi* which reports the death of Sayyid Tarik bin Taimur Chairman of the Board of Governors of the bank of Oman. Some items are in 24 Jun 1966 - 11 items
Jan/Feb 1981

Arabic.

- 6/4 *Income Tax and Agreements:* Income tax decrees and agreements between the Sultan Said bin Taimur and PDO for exploration rights in the Sultanate of Oman. The documents are mainly in Arabic, with some English translations. May 1966 – 7 Mar 1967 6 items

Box 7

- 7/1 *Income Tax and Agreements Middle East:* Sub-file of 6/4. Covering: income tax decrees and agreements for Qatar, Abu Dhabi, and Kuwait between the ruling authorities and the operating oil companies. Much of the file is in Arabic with some English translations. 29 Nov 1952 – 1965 11 items
- 7/2 *Miscellaneous:* Ascribed title. File created by Archivist. Unrelated documents made up of the remaining loose papers from the collection. Subjects referred to are: the Sumail Gap; ways to treat local Omanis; the government of Oman; trade relations; PDO involvement in non-oil development of Oman; and the Dhofar steering committee. 25 Jul 1966 – January 1978, and n.d. 12 items
- Reviewed 2 July 2012 and 1 item is still closed until 2022 (Personal information exemption).
- 7/3 *News and Information:* Mainly draft and official news and press releases from the Sultanate of Oman Ministry of Information, including a series of notes entitled *The Week in Oman* published by the Directorate General of Information, and a number of *News Bulletins* issued by the Liaison Department of PDO. The file was used by PDO to keep up to date with local and government affairs. A significant amount of the file is in Arabic with English translations. Significant events covered are: various visits made by the Sultan to PDO headquarters and installations; the Yibal well blow-out; the Salalah coup; Sultan Qaboos' visits to the Interior; the new 29 Jul 1970 – 7 May 1972 201 items

national flag; and general government business.

Box 8

- 8/1 *Old Bank House:* Regarding the old French Consulate house in Oman sometimes known as Beit Frans. The house was used by PDO as an office and manager's residence company living quarters. 28 Nov 1974 – 3 items
13 Jun 1977
- 8/2 *Oman 1976 – 1979:* Correspondence between J. F. E. Paxton and other PDO employees in Oman and K. Roden for the Shell International Petroleum company in London. The file covers: Middle East Familiarisation courses run by PDO and SIPC; Anglo-Omani Society Agenda for first meeting; political appointments in Oman; relations with the western media, a company magazine *PDO News*; PDO trade relations; PDO Annual Report for 1975; Shell publications; the Durham project. 7 Jan 1976 – 215 items
16 Jan 1980
- 8/3 *Oman Handbook:* Originally a bound document with maps and an Al bu Said family tree inserted at the back. The handbook gives a comprehensive outline of Oman, the people, places, terrain, and customs. The Handbook includes chapters on: Omani background; population; the so-called treaty of Sib; the oil era; the Buraimi dispute; notes on PDO; and government. c.1965 8 items

Box 9

- 9/1 *Participation:* Relates to possible participation between PDO and the Sultanate of Oman over oil exploration and production. The file relates to: correspondence between PDO and the Director of Petroleum and Minerals for the Sultanate of Oman; documents from Jackli, Manager of PDO to London laying out the plans for participation; and hand written notes on a meeting at Salalah with the Sultan. 4 Jan 1973 – 9 items
19 Jan 1973

- 9/2 *Personalities in Government:* Ascribed title. Relating to Omani government officials. The documents give useful information about the various posts and how they function. c. 1981 – Jan 1983 10 items
- 9/3 *Public and Trade Relations:* Partly correspondence with Shell about a proposed visit from Bill Peyton to Oman in order to assess the public relations situation, and his subsequent visit in 1964. Issues covered are: a possible press campaign to coincide with the emergence of Oman as an oil producing company in the gulf; notes about trade relations in Muscat and Oman; relations with Sultan Said bin Taimur and the Sultan's son Qaboos bin Said. The rest of the file relates to other trade and public relations issues: currency; payment of oil revenues to the Sultan; British withdrawal from the Persian Gulf; Japanese oil exploration offshore the Trucial Coast of Abu Dhabi; chaplains; political developments in the Middle East; and relations with the United Nations (UN). The file also contains a booklet entitled *How Shell Works* published by Shell International Petroleum Company Limited. 3 Mar 1964 – 9 Oct 1971 1 bundle
- 9/4 *Quarterly Economic and Political Report:* A series of reviews produced by the company and its predecessors. The Shell Company of Qatar Limited Quarterly Economic and Political Reports contain sections on Oman looking at: security; development; UN relations; concessions; and general issues. The PDO reviews look at the same issues but in more depth. Additional areas covered are: relations with the Sultan; external affairs; tribal relations; and economic affairs. Copies of the reports were sent to Shell as the major shareholding company in PDO. The file also contains some information documents relating to: the ruling family in Oman; statements made by both Sultans; the structure of Jan 1965 – Dec 1973 75 items

the government of Oman; tribes; and minorities. A microfilmed copy of the file has been inserted.

Box 10

- 10/1 *Robert B. Anderson*: Press cuttings and notes regarding Robert B. Anderson, a former US Secretary of the Treasury, businessman, and a Presidential Emissary who was granted powers by Sultan Qaboos bin Said in relation to the diplomatic relations of Oman with foreign countries, particularly the US. In February 1972, Anderson was granted the concession with offshore interests, which had formerly been held by Wendell Phillips. The file also covers the involvement of the American star Shirley Temple in Oman, as the wife of Charles Black head of a US company Mardella. Anderson apparently suggested a deal between Mardella and the Omani government. 8 Oct 1971 - 11 items
Oct 1972
- 10/2 *Subversive Leaflets*: Ascribed title. File created by Archivist. Leaflets from Kuwait and Muscat. The leaflets are anonymous and address issues including British influence in Oman, and corruption amongst the native Omanis favoured by Sultan Qaboos bin Said. 23 Aug 1971 – 2 items
31 Aug 1971
- 10/3 *Tribal and Geographical Notes*: Originally contained in a ring- binder. Notes about many local tribes and their disputes in relation to PDO. The file also contains notes of the terrain of local regions. The file is arranged in its original alphabetical order. Mar 1929 – 8 163 items
Oct 1969
- 10/4 *Tribal Divisions in Oman*: A large note describing the tribal divisions in Oman according to ancestry, sect, and faction with an in-depth discussion of some tribes and their relations with PDO. Tribes discussed are: the Jenaba; the Wahiba; and the Duru. c. mid 1970s 1 item
(estimated date)

Box 11

- 11/1 *Wendell Phillips*: Mainly newspaper and press cuttings about Dr Wendell Phillips, an American oil explorer. The main part of the file relates to a concession granted to Phillips in March 1971 by Sultan Said bin Taimur, for the offshore Ras al-Hadd to Ras Minji area, which was then revoked later in the year, by the Sultan. The file also contains general information about Phillips' life and education and other aspects of his career. The file was collated by the representative function of PDO for general information on a rival oil explorer.
- 18 Feb 1970 - 68 items
19 Oct 1971

Organisational Files

- 11/2 *Personnel*: Relates to a document entitled 'List of Omanis whom it may be helpful to consider for appointment at appropriate levels in the government'. The file contains both a handwritten and official copy of the document that lists the Omani people with a biographical paragraph each. The file also contains a list of Walis and Qadhis (local rulers).
- Jan 1970 – 3 items
15 Aug 1970
- 11/3 *Department Organisation*: Relating to the role of the liaison representatives within PDO and what it involves. Of particular interest is a report on problems of local relations in areas of operation in 1965. The file also covers: job descriptions; reorganisation of liaison representatives in 1965; a proposed base camp in Fahud; and position guides from Management liaison defining projects and actions to be taken.
- 12 Nov 1964 - 19 items
2 Oct 1966
- 11/4 *Supervisors*: List of company rules for labour supervisors and for duty Shaikhs.
- Not dated 1 item
- 11/5 *The Historical Association of Oman*: An independent Association which received much help and support from PDO Management in its early days. Relating to: lists of members; Society publications of *Bulletin*; minutes of
- Feb – Mar 28 items
1972 - 8 Feb
1980, and not
dated

meetings; accounts; correspondence with parties interested in the history of Oman; income and expenditure accounts. Some of the papers are in Arabic.

PERSONAL RESEARCH PAPERS

Box 12

- 12/1 *Research Materials*: Ascribed title. File created by 1930-1939 2 items
Archivist. Two publications written by Bertram Thomas,
the subject of Paxton's research
- 12/2 *Research Materials 2*: Ascribed title. File created by 1984 – 23 Nov 2 items
Archivist. Correspondence between Paxton and Ruth 1985
Mallas about her dissertation for MA History, School of
Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) on Bertram
Thomas. The file contains a copy of the dissertation.
- 12/3 *Bertram Thomas Archive Film*: Ascribed title. File 30 Sept 1989 – 3 items
created by Archivist. Correspondence to Paxton from 7 Oct 1989,
David Mills of Interbase Ltd regarding the demonstration and not dated
VHS cassette of the Bertram Thomas material. The file
includes a synopsis of the cassette and a detailed
document, which catalogues the film. The file also
includes a copy of the cassette, which is entitled *The
Oman Archive 1926 – 1931*.

PRINTED MATERIALS

Box 13

- 13/1 *Oman*: Ascribed title. File created by Archivist. Collected 1874 – 1980, 9 items
by Paxton through his interest in Oman, and position predominant
working for PDO. Includes: Speech made by Sultan Said 1968 – 1980,
bin Taimur about the future of the country when oil starts and not dated
being exported; and papers on Oman; papers on the
Bedouins in the Middle East and Oman; and rock art in
Oman by Jackli (see the Jackli papers).

Box 14

- 14/1 *Oman 2*: Ascribed title. File created by Archivist. Thesis Mar 1967 1 item
on the Ya'rubi Dynasty of Oman by R.D. Bathurst.
Submitted to Cambridge University.
- 14/2 *Other Middle Eastern Countries*: Ascribed title. File c. 1970 – 1972 2 items
created by Archivist Collected by Paxton through his
interest in the Middle East. The file includes a paper on
the United Arab Emirates, and a paper on the Hijaz
railway and the pilgrimage to Mecca