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Catalogue of the papers of D.A.F. Watt

Date range of material: 1900-1960

Durham University Library
August 2026

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Preface

Creation of catalogue
EAD by FG, 2020

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Introduction

Collection title: Watt, David Alexander Fraser
Reference code: GB-0033-SAD
Dates of creation: 1900-1960
Extent: 1 box
Repository: Durham University Library, Archives and Special Collections
Creator: Watt, David Alexander Fraser
Language of material: English

David Alexander Fraser Watt

(c.1877 - 1942)

c.1900-1939	Engineer at Aswan Low Dam, Assiut and the Delta Barrages, Ministry of Public Works, Egypt
1913	Director of Works, Aswan Low Dam
1922	Resident Engineer, Aswan Reservoir

Accession details

Presented by Paula Gibson, Alida England, Marianne Nicoll, 22 October 2019

Arrangement

1. Personal Papers
2. Photographs
3. Museum Objects
4. Newspapers
5. Miscellanea
6. Printed Material

Form of citation

Material in the Sudan Archive is given a reference number, which is unique across the collections of papers. Usually it is not necessary to give the name of the person or organisation within which collection the item is found, although it may be convenient to do so.
The short form of citation should be GB-0033-SAD.*reference number*
Most printed references take the form: SAD.*reference number* .
To order items in the searchroom, use the collection reference code(s), derived by removing the repository code (GB-0033-), followed by the reference number. Citing the section of the finding aid is useful.

1. Personal Papers

Correspondence

SAD.1048/8/1-15 1924-1960
Personal correspondence to D.A.F. Watt relating to his service, and to his family concerning his Egyptian state pension.

- SAD.1048/8/1 20 December 1924
  Letter to Watt from Herbert Henry Asquith (1852-1928) at the Cataract Hotel, Aswan, offering thanks after visit; with envelope.
- SAD.1048/8/2 28 March 1928
  Envelope to Catherine Watt (née Fraser), wife of D.A.F. Watt, stamped by the High Commissioner and bearing royal seal.
- SAD.1048/8/3-6 9 and 11 February 1929
  Two letters from Aga Khan [III] at the Semiramis Hotel, Cairo, to Watt, the first offering thanks after visit, the second introducing Lord and Lady Ednam (William Ward Viscount Ednam (1894-1969) and Rosemary née Sutherland-Leveson-Gower (1893–1930)), in advance of their visit to the Aswan Dam; with envelopes.
- SAD.1048/8/7-8 22 April 1930
  Letter from J.R. Aird, equerry to the Prince of Wales, at Cairo, to Watt, offering thanks following royal visit; with envelope, postmarked High Commission.
- SAD.1048/8/9 3 March 1936
  Letter from Arthur Douglas Butcher (1884-1944), Director-General Southern Nile, Ministry of Public Works, at Cairo, to Watt, wiriting “at the request of the few remaining Englishmen” on Watt's retirement from the service, presenting a commemorative grandfather clock, and recalling Watt's service and hospitality at Aswan and later at the Delta Barrage.
- SAD.1048/8/10-15 1944-1960
  Correspondence from Egyptian Government ministries and probate solicitors Frederick A. Black & Imrie to Louisa Macintosh and Mrs L.M. Brittain, concerning Egyptian state pension.

Decorations

SAD.1048/8/16-19 (outsize), 20-28 1913-1923
Grants (Arabic), British royal warrants, and correspondence relating to the conferments of the Order of the Medjidieh, 4th class (1913) and the Order of the Nile, 3rd class (1922), on D.A.F. Watt.
Outsize SAD.1048/1/16-18 filed at SAD.PF 28/5. See section 3. Museum objects for Order of the Nile 4th class medal, ribbon and rosette.

2. Photographic Material

SAD.A101/1-33 [1912]
"Photographes de S.H. le Sultan": royal ceremonial event at the Aswan Low Dam. Album by by Aziz & Dorès of Rue de l'Hopital Grec 3, Alexandria.

SAD.A102/1-28 23 December 1914
[?Holiday] in Egypt, compiled and captioned by C.J.V.: Residency [at Aswan]; "El Bosta" [Post Office at Aswan]; golfing [at Aswan]; Aswan Low Dam, and sluices, locks, quays; Philae and Elephantine.

SAD.1045/3/1-50 [2019]
Peggy Watt (later Brittain) and [Tom] Brittain at Aswan, Luxor (February 1937), Philae, Gezira, Nile Delta Barrage Dam, Giza, including: Aswan Low Dam, Suez railway, Aswan [?former Watt] residence, [Nile Delta] Barrage gardens and [Watt] residence, aerial photographs of Delta Barrage residence and Giza pyramids (December 1936, from north east). Captioned. Aerial photographs taken by [Tom] Brittain from his Hawker Audax. Colour photocopy.

SAD.1051/3/1 [1900 x 1920]
Qasr el Nil bridge, Cairo, with horse-drawn carriage.

SAD.1051/3/2-22; 1903-[1930]
SAD.1045/4/1-14 Photographs of the Aswan Low Dam, Cataract Hotel, offices and staff quarters including the Watt residence, and the Assiut Barrage (SAD.1051/3/6 only). Includes: 2 aerial photographs of the dam; Mr Johnston, Chief Mechanic.

SAD.1051/3/2-3 [1912 x 1930]
Staff quarters [at Aswan Low Dam], one with the location of Watt's office marked.

SAD.1051/3/4 [1912 x 1930]
Aswan Low Dam, aerial (oblique) view from north, the location of Watt's office marked.

SAD.1051/3/5 [1912 x 1930]
Cataracts below the Aswan Low Dam.

SAD.1051/3/6 [1903 x 1930]
Assiut barrage reservoir, south side. Captioned: "the reservoir at old Assuan Dam full south side".

SAD.1051/3/7 [1912 x 1930]
Foundations across Division Cut, looking west.

SAD.1051/3/8 [1912 x 1930]
Cataract Hotel, Aswan.

SAD.1051/3/9 [1912 x 1930]
[Watt] residence.

SAD.1051/3/10 [1912 x 1930]
Garden and vine walk, Aswan.

SAD.1051/3/11 [1912 x 1930]
Garden, [Aswan].

SAD.1051/3/12 [1912 x 1930]
Elephant Rocks at Awsan.
SAD.1051/3/13 [1912 x 1930]
Mr Johnston, Chief Mechanic.
SAD.1051/3/14 [1912 x 1930]
[Watt] fishing below the Aswan Low Dam.
SAD.1051/3/15 [1912 x 1930]
Cataract below the Aswan Low Dam.
SAD.1051/3/16 [1912 x 1930]
Office buildings at Aswan Low Dam.
SAD.1051/3/17-18 [1912 x 1930]
Local water craft at Aswan Low Dam.
SAD.1051/3/19-21 [1912 x 1930]
Views of Aswan Low Dam.
SAD.1051/3/22 [1912 x 1930]
Cataract Hotel, Aswan.
SAD.1045/4/1 30 March 1903
No. 288. South side of [Aswan Low] dam from east bank.
Photographer: Donald S. George (1861-1944).
Size: 282 x 227 mm
SAD.1045/4/2 [1906]
South side of the [Aswan Low] dam. Photographer: F. Fiorillo.
Size: 298 x 100 mm
SAD.1045/4/3 [1906]
Assuan [Aswan town] general view. Photographer: F. Fiorillo.
Size: 298 x 100 mm
SAD.1045/4/4 [1906]
Cataract Hotel, [Aswan]. Photographer: F. Fiorillo.
Size: 298 x 100 mm
SAD.1045/4/5 [1906]
View from the Cataract Hotel, [Aswan]. Photographer: F. Fiorillo.
Size: 298 x 100 mm
SAD.1045/4/6 10 October 1906
No. 357. R.L.92.00. Rollerless gate with new auxiliary.
Photographer: F. Fiorillo.
Size: 227 x 282 mm
SAD.1045/4/7 15 August 1907
Rest House, Aswan. Photographer: D.S.G. [Donald S. George (1861-1944)].
Size: 289 x 238 mm
SAD.1045/4/8 19 May 1908
No. 419. Aswan Dam heightening. Set 2 & 3. Photographer: Donald S. George (1861-1944).
Size: 290 x 228 mm
SAD.1045/4/9 7 January 1909
No. 443. Aswan Dam heightening. Masonry. Set. 1...
Photographer: Donald S. George (1861-1944).
Size: 291 x 242 mm

SAD.1045/4/10 [1909]
[Aswan Dam heightening.] [Photographer: Donald S. George (1861-1944).]
The figure of David Watt is identified in the photograph in black biro.
Size: 291 x 241 mm

SAD.1045/4/11 25 March 1909
No. 472. Aswan Dam heightening, Masonry set 11^{A}. Looking west. Photographer: Donald S. George (1861-1944).
Size: 290 x 242 mm

SAD.1045/4/12 5 May 1909
No. 492. Aswan Reservoir houses. Photographer: Donald S. George (1861-1944).
Size: 290 x 240 mm

SAD.1045/4/13 [December 1912]
Ceremonial opening of the Aswan Dam.
The figure of David Watt is identified in the photograph in black biro.
Size: 290 x 240 mm

SAD.1045/4/14 28 March 1928
Aswan Low Dam, reservoir full (113.15). Aerial (vertical) photograph
Size: 276 x 215 mm

SAD.1051/4/1-32 1910s-[1930s]
Photographs of public ceremonies at locations including the Aswan Low Dam, including: Lord Kitchener (December 1912) (SAD.1051/4/1-2), Sir John Aird (SAD.1051/4/4), Earl Allenby [1919 x 1925] (SAD.1051/4/8-9), Crown Prince of Italy [Umberto, Prince of Piedmont] [February 1928] (SAD.1051/4/22-27), Lord George Lloyd on S.S. *Ibis* at Aswan returning from the inauguration of the Makwar Dam [1925] (SAD.1051/4/30-32).
The photographs are sorted into 4 rough groups: SAD.1051/4/1-11; 12-22; 23-28; 29-32.

SAD.1051/5/1-20 [1920s-1930s]
Photographs of Nile Delta barrage and barrage gardens, and the Watt residence, including 2 aerial (oblique) photographs (SAD.1051/5/1-2).

SAD.1051/6/1-8; SAD.1045/4/15 [1920s-1930s]
Photographs of ancient Egyptian archaeological sites, including: Mortuary Temple of Ramesses III at Luxor (SAD.1051/6/1), Philae (before and after inundation) (SAD.1051/6/2-6; SAD.1045/4/15), Great Temple at Abu Simbel (SAD.1051/6/7-8)

SAD.1045/4/15 24 May 1900
No. 104. Philae from east. Photographer: Donald S. George (1861-1944).
1 photographic print
Size: 283 x 228 mm

SAD.1051/7/1-16 c. 1900-[1930s]
Photographs of members of the Watt family at Aswan, Nile Delta Barrage residence, and Edinburgh, including: David Alexander Fraser Watt (c.1877-1942), including in 18th-century costume (SAD.1051/7/1) and his wife Louisa Mackintosh Watt (née Maclennan) (c.1877-1959); their three children Louisa Margaret (Peggy) (1910-1995), James Alexander Fyfe, and Marjorie Helen (SAD.1051/7/7-11, 13-16); Miss E. Bakewell (SAD.1051/7/5).

3. Museum Objects

SAD.1051/12 — 23 December 1912
Metal statuette of Hapi the ancient Egyptian god of the Nile, with commemorative inscription: “Assouan Dam Heightening opened by H.H. the Khedive December 23rd 1912”, and “D. Watt Esq.”.
Manufactured by Ransomes & Rapier Ltd, Ipswich.
Presentation box, one part now detached.

SAD.1051/10 — 1927
Medal of the Institut International de Statistique XVII Session le Caire 1927, with ribbon and clasp.

SAD.1051/8-9 — 1939 [A.H. 1357]
2 commemorative medallions, engraved with scenes of Assiut Barrage (SAD.1051/8) and Aswan Reservoir (SAD.1051/9), and each with Arabic inscriptions.

SAD.1051/11 — [early 20th century]
4th Order of the Nile medal, with sash and rosette.

4. Newspapers

SAD.1045/5 28 December 1912
The Sphinx magazine, (?lacking covers): includes illustrated reports from the ceremony marking the opening of the heightened and thickened Aswan Low Dam on 24 December 1912, pp. 3, 13-18, annotated by Louise Watt (née Mackintosh), wife of David Watt.

SAD.1045/6 23 March 1921
Daily Sketch newspaper, including illustrated article “The Sultan of Egypt sees the native sights” (p.16), with a photograph of David Watt, chief engineer of the Aswan Low Dam, wearing a tarboosh.

5. Miscellanea

SAD.1045/7 [2019]
Menu [memorialising] a celebratory “Heightening Dinner” upon the completion of the heightening of the Aswan Low Dam, 24 December 1912 at the Cataract Hotel, Aswan; humourous, with comic vignettes. Signed by the artist in bottom right corner (illegible). Photocopy.

6. Printed Material

Separated printed material now in Durham University Library

Printed material deposited with collection; now integrated into the library's printed collections and catalogued on the Open Public Access Catalogue