The Barbara Castle Cabinet Diaries. Catalogue

Archive reference: GB 0532 CAS

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# INTRODUCTION

This collection offers a unique contemporary insight into the work of and personalities behind of the British Labour governments of the 1960s and 1970s, through the eyes of a remarkable woman with strong connections to Bradford’s story.

Find out more about Barbara Castle and the Diaries in Number 9 of the 100 Objects exhibition: Fighting All the Way.

<http://100objectsbradford.wordpress.com>

This description was written in 2003. It is being made available online with minor edits as part of our Quick Wins programme.

Alison Cullingford, Special Collections Librarian.

# Collection description

## Reference code

GB 0532 CAS.

## Title

The Barbara Castle Cabinet Diaries.

## Dates

1965-1976.

## Level of description

Collection.

## Extent

1 linear metre.

## Name of creator

Barbara Castle, politician, 1910-2002.

## Bographical history

Barbara Anne Betts was born in Chesterfield in 1910. Her father, a civil servant, was a member of the Independent Labour Party and became a contributor to the ILP journal, *The Bradford Pioneer*, which he later edited. Barbara was educated at Bradford Girls' Grammar School and St Hugh's College, Oxford. A left-wing member of the Labour Party, Castle was one of the founders of Tribune, the socialist weekly. In the 1945 General Election Barbara Castle (she had married Ted Castle, a journalist, in 1944) was elected M.P. for Blackburn, a seat that she retained for 34 years. Following the Labour victory in 1964, Prime Minister Harold Wilson put Castle in charge of the newly-created Ministry of Overseas Development.

“I decided on 26 January that I ought to start keeping a regular record of what was happening” : begun in January 1965, she maintained this political diary throughout her periods in office. Her success at this Ministry was recognised and she was made Minister of Transport in 1965, where she was responsible for the introduction of breathalysers, compulsory seat belts and national speed limits. In 1968 Castle became Secretary of State for Employment : she worked on equal pay legislation, redundancy payments, and on prices and incomes policy. Much of this was received favourably, but the partial implementation of the 1969 white paper on industrial relations, In Place of Strife, brought conflict with the trades unions and from within the Labour Party.

Labour lost power in the General Election of 1970 but returned to government in 1974. Castle was made Secretary of State for Social Services, and in this post she introduced payment of child benefit to mothers and worked on the State Earnings Related Pensions Scheme. Her attempt to equalise services in the National Health Service with abolition of pay beds met with considerable opposition, and legislation was still in process when Harold Wilson resigned as prime minister in 1976. His successor, James Callaghan, dropped Castle from the cabinet, ostensibly on the grounds of age.

Castle was a Member of the European Parliament from 1979 to 1989. In 1990 she entered the House of Lords as Baroness Castle of Blackburn. She continued to campaign on a range of issues, particularly on pension rights. She died on the 3rd May 2002.

## Immediate source of acquisition

Bequeathed to the University Library by Barbara Castle and received in January 2003.

## Scope and content

* The Cabinet diaries : typed by Barbara Castle from her shorthand notes, covering the periods January 1965-March 1971 and January 1974-April 1976.
* Transcripts : typed transcripts of the originals.
* Photocopies : photocopies of some of the originals and some of the transcripts, marked for editing and publication.
* *The Bradford Pioneer* : bound volume for 1925.

## Access conditions

Available to researchers, by appointment. Access to archive material is subject to preservation requirements and must also conform to the restrictions of the Data Protection Act and any other appropriate legislation. There are currently no restrictions on access to this collection.

## Copyright/conditions governing reproduction

Copies may be supplied or produced at the discretion of Special Collections staff, subject to copyright law and the condition of the originals. Copyright in Barbara Castle’s writings is held by her Estate. Applications for permission to make published use of any material should be directed to the Special Collections Librarian in the first instance. The Library will assist where possible with identifying other copyright owners but responsibility for ensuring copyright clearance rests with the user of the material.

## Language of material

English. Some shorthand.

## Related units of description

Barbara Castle’s papers are held by the Bodleian Library at the University of Oxford.

## Publication note

These papers were used by Barbara Castle for her publications *The Castle Diaries* 1974-76 (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1980), *The Castle Diaries* 1964-70 (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1984) and her autobiography *Fighting All the Way* (London: MacMillan, 1993).

## Archivist’s note

Described by John Brooker, minor edits by Alison Cullingford.

## Rules or conventions

ISAD(G) 2nd ed.

## Date(s) of description

17 January 2003 (minor edits May 2013).

## Indexing

### Persons

Castle, Barbara, 1910-2002

### Subjects

Great Britain – Politics and government – 1964-

Stateswomen – Great Britain – Biography

# archive contents

## 1. The Cabinet diaries

These diaries, typed by Barbara Castle from her shorthand notes, consist of closely-typed ruled sheets kept in ring-binders. There are occasional handwritten amendments or comments, and some enclosures.

1/1. “26.1.65 to 1.9.65”. January 1965 - September 1965.

1/2. “7.10.65 to 23.10.67”. October 1965 - October 1967.

1/3. “23.10.67 to 26.1.68”. October 1967 - January 1968.

1/4. “29.1.68 to 29.8.68”. January 1968 - August 1968.

1/5. “3.9.68 to 27.11.69”. September 1968 - November 1969.

1/6. “25.11.69 to 11.3.71”. November 1969 - March 1971.

1/7. “1.1.74 to 6.5.75”. January 1974 - May 1975.

1/8. “7.5.1975 - 8.4.76”. May 1975 - April 1976.

## 2. Transcripts

These are double-spaced typed transcripts of the originals, with their own page-numbering.

## 3. Photocopies

Photocopies of some of the originals and some of the transcripts, marked for editing and publication.

3/1. January - November 1965.

3/2. January - December 1966.

3/3. January - May 1968.

3/4. January - June 1969 (mostly typed transcripts).

3/5. October - December 1969.

3/6. January - June 1970.

3/7. June 1970 - March 1971 (Diary January - March 1971, other documents July 1970 - March 1971).

3/8. January 1974 - May 1975 (photocopies of originals).

3/9. November 1974 - May 1975 (photocopies of originals).

## 4. The Bradford pioneer

Bound volume of the Bradford Pioneer for 1925.