SERIES DESCRIPTIONS

Series I. *Portrait of an Island*, 1944-66 and undated

This series contains manuscripts and typescripts of Bowen’s book of poems, *Portrait of an Island*. It is not known whether this collection of poems was ever published.

Series II. *Poems from the Persian*, circa 1940s

These materials include notes, clippings, and correspondence related to Bowen’s book, *Poems from the Persian*. Also included is a typescript copy created in 1943.

Series III. *The Golden Pomegranate*, circa 1940-80 and undated

This series include clippings, drawings by Bowen’s illustrator Phyllis E. MacKenzie, correspondence, posters, and promotional materials related to *The Golden Pomegranate*.

Series IV. *A New Selection from the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam*, circa 1960s-1970s

Series IV contains mechanicals, clippings, endnotes, illustrations, proofs, and publicity materials for *A New Selection from the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam*. Also included are copper printing plates used for cover illustrations.

Series V. *Oriental Proverbs*, 1980

This correspondence pertains to *Oriental Proverbs: Selected, Interpreted, and Rendered into English Verse*. In addition, there is a sample leather roundel for use in the making of the book.

Series VI. *Journey to the Heart of Asia*, 1982-1987 and undated

This series contains notes, manuscript, and typescript copies of the work *Journey to the Heart of Asia*.

Series VII. *Plain Tales of the Afghan Border*, circa 1979-1980s
The letters in this series have been divided into personal and editorial correspondence. Included in the personal correspondence are a small hand-drawn map and two photographs. There is also one folder with clippings, reviews, and notes.

Series VIII. Assorted Literary Materials, circa 1930s-1988 and undated

Subseries 1. Manuscripts and Typescripts, 1942-1988 and undated

This subseries contains manuscripts and typescripts from a variety of works by Bowen, both published and unpublished.

Subseries 2. Assorted literary materials, circa 1930s-1988 and undated

These materials relate to several projects with which Bowen was involved during his career. They include notes, correspondence, sample greeting cards containing Bowen’s translations of Persian poetry, dust jackets, prints and drawings, financial records, reviews, and mechanicals.

The title “Black Lord’s Mountain,” which appears on folder 25, was taken directly from Bowen’s folder title. It may refer to a mountain (Kūh-i-Malik Siāh) located at the tripoint of the borders of Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan. “Black Lord’s Mountain” was most likely a working title for a work that was either never published or appeared under a different name. Within this folder there is also correspondence regarding Robert Graves’ translation of The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam, a translation of the Turkish song “Kâtibim,” or in English, “My Secretary,” or “My Clerk,” and translations of Pashtu proverbs.

Series IX. Biographical Materials

Subseries 1. General, 1810-1987

The majority of this subseries comprises correspondence related to John Bowen and the Bowen family. Also included is a visitors’ book from “The Vicarage,” in Malabar Hill, Mumbai. The subseries also includes a “Walker’s Year by Year” journal from 1935 and 1936, and a typed travel journal describing a trip to Egypt. The origin of the visitors’
book and the two journals is not clear, though they most likely originated within the Bowen family.

**Subseries 2. Bechuanaland Protectorate Records, 1943-1953 and undated**

These records originated during Bowen’s time as District Commissioner in the Bechuanaland Protectorate. The records are divided into financial records and records of the Office of the District Commissioner. The financial records contain cleared checks from Barclays Bank and The National Bank of South Africa. Also included are invoices and receipts. Records from the Office of the District Commissioner include meeting minutes, confidential circulars and reports on issues as varied as the death penalty and tsetse fly control.

**Subseries 3. “Road to Badakhshan,” 1969-73 and undated**

“Road to Badakhshan” is the title, given by Bowen, of the folder in which these materials were found. Badakhshan is a region of what is now northeastern Afghanistan and southeastern Tajikistan. The correspondence, notes, and report relate to Bowen’s preparations and travels to this particular area of Afghanistan. The correspondence includes communication between Bowen and the Royal Horticultural Society’s Garden regarding plant collecting, and several maps that were included in letters. The notes include a travel itinerary, poetry, and sketches.

**Subseries 4. Visual Materials, circa late 1800s-1988 and undated**

This subseries includes photographs, negatives, and an unfinished watercolor painting. The photographs, most of which are not dated, document the Bowen family from the late 18th to late 19th centuries.

**Subseries 5. Ephemera, 1875-1988 and undated**

These materials include: a menu, wedding anniversary cards, a prospectus, prints, hotel cards, issue of the magazine “Ahang,” and a certificate from The National Geographic Society.

**Related Materials**

INVENTORY

BOX 1

Series I. Portrait of an Island, 1944-66 and undated

Folder 1  Manuscript, 1944
Folder 2  Typescript with alternate title, The Island and Other Poems, 1944
Folder 3  Manuscript, 1948
Folder 4  Manuscript, 1966
Folder 5  Manuscripts, undated
Folder 6  Typescript, undated

Series II. Poems from the Persian, circa 1940s

Folders 7-10  Material for Poems from the Persian, circa 1940s
Folder 11  Typescript, circa 1943
Folder 12  Notes, circa 1945
Folder 13  Clippings, 1948-49

Series III. The Golden Pomegranate, circa 1940-80 and undated

Folder 14  Clippings from scrapbook, circa 1940s-60s
Folders 15-16  Drawings by P.E. MacKenzie, 1965
Folder 17  Correspondence with publishers, circa 1980
Oversize  Promotional poster and illustrations, undated

Series IV. A New Selection from the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam, circa 1960s-1970s

Folders 18-21  Mechanicals, circa 1960
Folder 22  Proofs and publicity, circa 1960s-70s
Folder 23  Press clippings, 1961-64
Folder 24  Description of copper printing plates for book jacket, 1966, 1979
Folder 25  Copies of endnotes, circa 1989
Folders 26-27  Illustrations, undated
Carton  Copper printing plates, 1966, 1979
Series V. *Oriental Proverbs*, 1980

Folder 28  Correspondence with publishers, sample leather rondel, circa 1980
Folder 29  Correspondence with publishers, 1980

Series VI. *Journey to the Heart of Asia*, 1982-1987 and undated

Folder 30  Notes, 1982
Folder 31  Manuscript, 1982

**BOX 2**

Folders 1-6  Typescripts, 1986-87 and undated

Series VII. *Plain Tales of the Afghan Border*, circa 1979-1980s

Folder 7  Personal correspondence, 1979-86
Folder 8  Correspondence with publishers, 1979-86
Folder 9  Clippings, reviews, and notes, circa 1980s

Series VIII. Assorted literary materials

Subseries 1. Manuscripts and typescripts, 1942-1988 and undated

Folder 10  Typescript, *Rainbow over Elysium*, 1942
Folder 11  Manuscript, *Rainbow over Elysium*, undated
Folder 12  Assorted rough drafts, circa 1966
Folder 13-15  Typescripts of poetry, 1971-1987
Folder 16-17  Manuscripts of poetry, undated
Folder 19  *The Golden Chorus of English Lyric Poetry*, typescript, undated
Folder 20  *Plitdown Man*, typescript with illustrations, undated
Oversize  *The Golden Furrow Anthology* typescript, undated

Subseries 2. Assorted literary materials, 1930s-1988 and undated
Folder 21 Assorted notes, circa 1930s
Folder 22 Correspondence with publishers, 1931-41
Folder 23 Promotional materials and clippings, 1961-88
Folder 24 Sample cards, 1965-73
Folder 25 “Black Lord’s Mountain,” circa 1970s
Folder 26 Dust jackets, 1978
Folder 27 Luzac and Co. (publishing house) materials, 1980
Folders 28-29 Prints and drawings, compiled in 1982
Folder 30-31 Invoices and financial records, 1979-88
Folder 32 Assorted papers, undated
Oversize Reviews in literary magazines, 1944-88
Oversize Mechanicals, circa 1940s

Series IX. Biographical Materials

Subseries 1. General, 1810-1987

Folder 33 Correspondence – Bowen family, circa 1900s
Folder 34 Correspondence – Deborah Bowen’s trip to Persia, 1943
Folder 35 Correspondence – J.C.E. Bowen outgoing, 1986
Folder 36 Correspondence – Afghan Refugee Information Network, 1986-87
Folder 37 Genealogical records, 1810-1929, undated
Folder 39 Journal, “Walker’s Year by Year,” 1935-36

BOX 3

Folder 1 Travel Journal from trip to Egypt, undated
Folder 2 Clippings, circa 1930s
Oversize Persian language clippings, 1931, 1945

Subseries 2. Bechuanaland Protectorate Records, 1943-1953 and undated

Folder 3 Financial records, 1952-53
Folder 4-7 Records of the Office of District Commissioner, 1943-53
and
undated
### Subseries 3. “Road to Badakhshan,” 1969-73 and undated

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Folder</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Correspondence</td>
<td>1969-73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Notes and clippings</td>
<td>1969-72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Report, “Mounted Reconnaissance Badakhshan,”</td>
<td>undated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Pressed flowers</td>
<td>1969</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Folder</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Photographs</td>
<td>1875-95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Photographs, circa late 1800s</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Photographs</td>
<td>1903-42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-17</td>
<td>Photographs, circa 1910-30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-24</td>
<td>Photographs, undated</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Photographs of J.C.E. Bowen, circa 1905-1965</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Identity card</td>
<td>1940</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Photographs of paintings, 1988 and undated</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Photograph folders</td>
<td>1931</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Negatives, circa 1908-1930 and undated</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oversize</td>
<td>Photographs, 1935 and undated</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oversize</td>
<td>Photographs, undated</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oversize</td>
<td>Unfinished watercolor painting, undated</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Subseries 5. Ephemera, 1875-1988 and undated

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Folder</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>General, 1875-1952 and undated</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Wedding date cards</td>
<td>1891</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Prospectus, circa 1988</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelf</td>
<td>“Smythe” family wooden steamer trunk with steel reinforcing, previously used to store Bowen’s archives,</td>
<td>undated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Processed by Haley Antell, Meaghan Brown, and Ed Vermue in August 2015
Oberlin College Library Special Collections