

T. Harry Williams Center for Oral History Collection

Tape 848 Finding Aid

INTERVIEWEE NAMES: H.P. and Margery Hall

COLLECTION: 4700.0581 Tape 848 (Tape 3 of 4)

IDENTIFICATION: Britons in Pre-Independence India

INTERVIEWERS: Frank de Caro, Rosan Jordan

SERIES: British Voices from South Asia

INTERVIEW DATES: 3/1/1978

TOTAL PLAYING TIME: 1 hour, 32 minutes

OTHER MATERIALS: None

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Tape 848, Side A

Halls (Part 4 of 7)

- 001 man who went out to Kenya, used immoral spy techniques to get inside information
- 005 when Hall went to Fiji, needs of Indians there went not met
- 012 but conditions in India were so bad, the Indians would rather stay in Fiji
- 016 80% of Indians in Fiji were Hindu, 20% Moslem, wanted separate representation but denied separate representation based on religion
- 022 Indian high commissioner and his non-English speaking wife came for tea, wife was thrilled when Hall could talk to her in her own language
- 026 Indian languages and dialects spoken in Fiji
- 030 Hall maintains good personal relations with Fijians and Indians
- 033 holidays and dates
- 040 value of his Indian training in setting up Malaysia, his involvement with Sarawak
- 054 realized early on that there was no point in referring things back to London, had to take action for himself
- 065 drawing up constitution for Malaysia
- 075 laws regarding naturalization as British subjects for imperialist possessions after

- independence
- 084 when Malaysia became independent, all Malaysians became Malaysian citizens and gave up UK citizenship
- 090 differences in administration between India and other colonies, fewer Europeans in India, so British had Indians on their staffs
- 096 cases Hall tried in India
- 103 assessing revenue from crops
- 112 avoiding money lenders
- 117 improved yields of wheat and rice
- 130 his driver, who frequented a certain coffee shop
- 136 joking about locking up his driver resulted in the driver being jailed, driver never late again after that, driver suffered from syphilis
- 144 instances of VD in area
- 154 meeting maharajah in remote area who prided himself on having any drink you wanted available
- 160 going down the river on two barges, live band on the next barge, pageantry
- 169 maharajah's scandalous homosexual behavior
- 178 homosexuality in area, Hall sentenced man to jail for a year for homosexual relations leading to someone getting VD, locals horrified by sentence
- 188 Halls' bearer ran off with pantry boy and stolen articles
- 202 fantastic old cemetery
- 208 people got on their hands and knees, put their foreheads on the ground, when the maharajahs passed in their cars
- 210 Margery felt terrible for the Indian women, poverty, many babies
- 218 inadequate diet available to many Indians
- 222 book someone's grandfather wrote
- 228 many of Hall's colleagues killed in the 1930s, monsoons, war, ambushes on frontier
- 238 quinine for malaria, other medications
- 248 weaker people dying of malaria, other maladies
- 253 how Hall maintained sanity during his days in India, devised education programs for developing countries
- 279 gave up drinking because weather was so hot, 100 degrees day and night
- 285 Margery remembers one day when the weather was bearable
- 290 air conditioning, opinions on interior climate
- 300 never got malaria, took many precautions
- 306 keeping watch over her children
- 312 servants who did everything
- 320 coveted lumps of sugar
- 328 story of going to cocktail party while Margery was pregnant, everyone got too drunk on bad gin
- 349 Hall served during war in Poona
- 360 people telling stories in India
- 375 finding about his transfer to Quetta by reading about it in paper
- 383 appointed to position of major in Delhi, pay
- 395 confrontation between Indonesia and Malaysia while he was setting up Malaysia, relations in rank between him and another man
- 409 telling stories as entertainment, small pox story

- 429 ghost story told by reliable source
- 453 ghost dog at Fort Sandeman
- 460 lots of things in life can't be explained
- 470 money appearing unexpectedly when Margery really needed it
- 486 man Hall knew at Quetta, later at Rawalpindi
- 497 house in Borneo that the Halls almost lived in, Japanese had tortured and killed many people in Borneo
- 506 visiting house for the first time, amazing view, but Margery's hair stood up when they got to the stairs, had terrible feeling, refused to live in house

Tape 848, Side B

Halls (Part 5 of 7)

- 004 dance cards
- 013 met Lady [Fraser?], planned party with caviar
- 022 Lady Fraser was much younger than her husband, they were later in Kashmir
- 030 Halls' relations with other people in India
- 042 Hall was in charge of an opium factory at Neemuch, a ghost town that had been built as a cattle ranch, but turned out insufficient water
- 048 General Ochterlony had had his headquarters there, Eurasian man who ran house, had one corridor for his Muslim wives and a separate corridor for his Hindu concubines
- 052 ranch ran as a club, tennis
- 054 General Ochterlony had died about 100 years before, but locals still revered him
- 057 description of opium factory, process
- 067 visited small state not far from Jhansi, stayed in palace with the maharajah
- 071 plans for a state banquet, attendees
- 082 had a date in Jhansi with a dancer
- 090 other characters he knew there
- 094 description of train he rode
- 103 Sir Gilbert Laithwaite
- 114 encountering men he disliked at an annual sugar party in London, discussed independence of British colonies with them
- 129 Halls discuss whether Laithwaite is now dead
- 134 took law exams in Lucknow
- 145 revenue inspections he made in the Punjab, inspected records of villages
- 161 peacock as food, but sacred to Hindus so had to get permission to shoot them
- 168 Bateman, a cartoonist who went hunting peacock with Hall, ate peacock together
- 175 Delhi was the only place in India with a surplus of girls, "Fishing Fleet" who looked for husbands in India
- 185 attended last ever viceroy's ball in 1938, description of festivities, outfits
- 205 pig sticking
- 208 social events at Wheeler Club
- 220 porridge with worms in it
- 233 religious processions, riot duty
- 255 took course in Shimla about dealing with maharajahs, too much work to do in course
- 274 Hall and Margery decided to get married in 1939, had to get permission from military
- 277 army needed certain number of bachelors to send to remote places considered unsuitable for British families

- 296 silver wedding presents
312 visiting prisoners awaiting hanging, making sure it was the right person, not someone paid to be executed in their place
320 attack on an Indian
334 courts in session from eleven o'clock until five o'clock every day
344 played tennis, squash
347 trying cases in India was not straightforward, Indians were keen on litigation
360 Indian barristers
388 trouble with director of medical services, woman who wanted to be repatriated to New Zealand
420 members of the foreign service who came from Australia and New Zealand
440 comparative status of different regiments
452 regiment that wanted its members to play polo
469 very important in the service to be good at games
472 description of his chosen regiment, the 15th Punjab
482 social life in different regiments, cavalry regarded as playboys
508 first chose Cheshire regiment because of location
518 Hall was a good soldier, good leader
530 reasons it was so easy for Hall to get accepted to his chosen regiment