

T. Harry Williams Center for Oral History Collection

Tape 844 Finding Aid

INTERVIEWEE NAMES:

Fergus Munro Innes	4700.0579	Tape 844.1	(Tape 2 of 3)
C.J. Pelly	4700.0580	Tape 844.2	(Tape 1 of 2)

IDENTIFICATION: Britons in Pre-Independence India

INTERVIEWERS: Frank de Caro, Rosan Jordan

SERIES: British Voices from South Asia

INTERVIEW DATES:

Innes: 2/14/1978

Pelly: 2/15/1978

TOTAL PLAYING TIME: 1 hour, 34 minutes

Innes: 47 minutes

Pelly: 47 minutes

OTHER MATERIALS: None

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Tape 844, Side A

Innes (Part 2 of 3) (844.1)

- 002 keeping in touch with friends around India, socializing
- 007 brother went to Calcutta on business, another brother in army in India, plus many cousins in Indian Army
- 013 seldom saw cousins in India
- 016 social rank very important, seniority
- 024 social rank extended to wives
- 031 his cohorts in Punjab felt like brothers
- 038 friendly fellows who liked to hunt
- 042 Madras traditions
- 047 attitude about being in India Civil Service, differences between serving in different provinces

- 052 Punjab traditions, United Provinces liked sporting, hardworking image of Madras
 060 didn't know much regarding Bombay, Bangalore, or central provinces
 063 book *A Special India* by James Halliday, other reading suggestions
 074 *Past Imperative* by Edward Wakefield
 076 transferring jobs in India, Foreign Political Service made of civilians who weren't
 working and soldiers who weren't fighting, very cushy life
 085 social mixing of different services, rivalry, images different services held about each
 other
 092 social obligation to attend club
 098 got along well with Indian police service
 103 cohesion of Anglo Indians
 111 heat in the Punjab, camaraderie among men, everyone talking shop, colorful characters
 133 industrial development of India, became joint secretary of commerce department in
 Delhi, his father had been member of viceroy's council in charge of commerce, industry
 and railways
 143 Britons were interested in industrial development; Indians held them back, "cow dung
 mentality"
 154 in 1920s, Tata Steel Company came to his father, asked them to prevent importation of
 cheap Belgian steel, father introduced "policy of discriminating protection," Indian Army
 steel bill, 1924
 166 opposition to bill, lacked support of viceroy
 175 Indians were against foreign investment
 179 father's bill passed by only one vote
 198 industrial development craze following war
 208 in old days, British government didn't try to promote industry, just created environment
 in which private industry could flourish
 215 stayed on in Pakistan for a few years after Independence
 225 problems with Pakistan
 237 many British women were unhappy in India, people with closed minds didn't do well
 246 men settled in better than women, because they had jobs to do
 252 servants, nuisance to keep so many, but one man wouldn't do another's job
 260 competence of Englishmen in India
 282 competence of Indian Army
 289 recruitment of men for various services, examinations
 295 training of Indian police
 301 can recall few poor policemen
 319 notable eccentrics; judge in Madras who was Tamil scholar
 333 eccentrics in Punjab; lazy drunkard, man who supposedly walked on all-fours
 359 anecdote about drunken eccentric's treatment of servant
 370 brilliant young man who was a rebel, involvement in court case
 397 two poor peasants who were in debt, creditor framed them for beating people, court case
 427 peasants who sought help from [Penderel?] Moon, old bachelor judge who was helpful
 and kept open house at all hours; Moon helped them out and fined the real perpetrators
 for false accusation
 457 in remote district, deputy commissioner very sick with fever, appalled to learn coffin had
 been made for him

- 484 John Lawrence, circa 1840, ill with fever, told he wouldn't survive the night, Lawrence decided to drink the bottle of burgundy he'd been saving, fully recovered
 503 other case where alcohol cured fever
 508 few Britons, including himself, took enough interest in Indian culture, mostly transplanted their own British culture
 529 got his Sunday newspaper mailed to him, would read it on Sunday mornings three weeks late
 538 mostly Britons were interested in human side of India, people and customs
 545 feeling far away from England

Tape 844, Side B

Pelly (Part 2 of 3) (844.2)

- 006 charcoal burners
 013 every province had different revenue system
 028 sent out to work settlement of his own, south of Kashmir
 036 outbreak of bubonic plague in village, carried by fleas, inoculations
 047 training in judicial work
 055 canals in southern Punjab, his job was to help people settle around canals
 074 feelings about canals
 079 people in area were formerly nomadic
 085 working with tribal people, judicial work
 110 wanted to go to Persian Gulf
 130 lots of protocol
 135 military parades, viceroy's balls, men far more attractively dressed than the women
 144 looking at pictures, Jordan asks about women in pictures, identifying people in pictures
 166 stationed at one Hindu post in western India
 172 only lions in India were near this post, strict orders to kill lions, not leave them wounded
 190 few Europeans at his post
 196 educated Indians joining service then
 201 social life amongst Europeans
 214 investigating a suicide
 221 cliques within European social life
 231 club life; tennis, polo, visiting, drinking, reading, playing bridge
 243 Britons also met in church
 251 ["chicar"?] game known as "Englishman's pride"
 260 lunches of chicken or goat meat, never had pig in Muslim areas, meat cooked in British fashion
 276 English at home envy those who go overseas, Labor party members visiting Rhodesia are horrified by the swimming pools, luxury
 303 climate in Himalayas
 319 working in atmosphere of royalty, higher rank
 344 shooting, duck hunting, viceroy would shoot first
 371 hunting partridges in cotton fields, thinks the birds died of exhaustion
 381 enjoyed touring around India
 387 importance of precedence, rank, complex distinctions
 406 British marine's take on precedence

- 419 formality of society in India
- 430 Indian Army more hierarchical than British
- 455 manners of addressing officers
- 471 how junior people learned the rules in India
- 501 sometimes best to do nothing, not interfere with orders
- 514 perceptions of maharajahs as eccentric
- 526 maharajah's son who was interested in dissecting human corpses