

## **T. Harry Williams Center for Oral History Collection**

### **Tape 847 Finding Aid**

**INTERVIEWEE NAMES:** H.P. and Margery Hall

**COLLECTION:** 4700.0581 Tape 847 (Tape 2 of 4)

**IDENTIFICATION:** Britons in Pre-Independence India

**INTERVIEWER:** Frank de Caro, Rosan Jordan

**SERIES:** British Voices from South Asia

**INTERVIEW DATES:** 3/1/1978

**TOTAL PLAYING TIME:** 1 hour, 33 minutes

**OTHER MATERIALS:** None

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#### **Tape 847, Side A**

#### **Halls (Part 2 of 7)**

- 001 sports popular with 15<sup>th</sup> Punjab regiment, ethnic makeup
- 009 choosing a regiment to join
- 014 joined 3<sup>rd</sup> 15<sup>th</sup> Punjab regiment at [Sorgo?], awful little place in central India
- 016 moved up to Fort Sandeman
- 017 differences between British and Indian Army, fewer people, less hierarchy in Indian Army, easier to get promoted, Hall quickly made company commander
- 024 role of quartermaster
- 028 in 1934, damaged his Achilles tendon while playing soccer with Gorkhas, couldn't run
- 032 no electric lights at fort, primitive medical facilities, sent Hall 200 miles to Quetta (now Pakistan), for medical attention
- 043 his claim for cost of journey to Quetta, was denied because paperwork not done properly
- 048 officer who died from anesthetic gone wrong, Hall temporarily assigned to fill in at captain's pay
- 056 Quetta earthquake in May, 1935
- 069 Hall was responsible for bombs, grenades and other weaponry, missing grenades after

earthquake  
 080 other administrative problems caused by earthquake  
 089 a marshal of the air force flying down from [Noshiro?], forced landing, plane hit a school,  
 no one badly hurt  
 108 one of the man on the plane treated for nose injury, but killed in earthquake  
 114 stories of people's earthquake experiences, deaths  
 123 a colonel who arrived at Fort Sandeman, thought he was too sick to continue to Quetta,  
 Hall had to force him to go  
 130 reasons why Hall left Indian Army, got bored, no room for advancement  
 140 places in Persian Gulf where British political agents operated  
 146 political agents allowed to have wives with them, military people weren't, got to know  
 two political agents in Fort Sandeman, played tennis with them  
 155 decided to transfer to political service  
 168 Hall's relations with other men in service  
 180 moved to Jhansi in central India, went with an advance party to open new station at  
 Jhansi, station there had been closed for several years  
 190 Jhansi well known for its tiger hunting opportunities  
 194 lots of snakes around Jhansi  
 196 few opportunities for entertainment at Fort Sandeman  
 200 Hall had two polo ponies, got up early to school them, played tennis and squash in  
 afternoon  
 206 attended signal school in Poona  
 220 already knew more about electricity and wireless than the instructors  
 230 his classmates at signal school  
 242 Hall refused to take notes at school because he knew it all already  
 250 Hall called up in front of commandant for having large bar bill, but he'd spent it on  
 ginger ale  
 263 rejoined his unit at Jhansi, discovered that the colonel wouldn't release Hall to transfer to  
 political service  
 289 went to see brigadier at his house about his wish to transfer to political service, brigadier  
 wanted him to stay but allowed him to go to his interview for political service in Delhi  
 305 his arrogant attitude toward political service  
 311 viceroy wanted to see Hall, sent car for him  
 330 had casual chat with viceroy's assistant  
 343 went home on leave, played lots of cricket  
 349 returned to India in October 1937, his unit, the Jhansi Brigade had been sent up to war on  
 frontier  
 360 learned that he'd been accepted by Indian Political Service, but his colonel had answered  
 for him that he wanted to stay in the Army  
 378 fought battle on frontier, description of mountain warfare  
 395 couldn't shoot until you were shot at, which put British at disadvantage  
 401 casualties during attempt to take ridge  
 410 people going haywire, shooting up hillside  
 422 spent about ten days up there, then got word that he should report to duty for political  
 service to central India  
 440 differences in amount of leave depending on where you were stationed, how he financed  
 trips home to England

- 456 took two months leave to Kashmir in 1936, stayed on houseboat with two other officers,  
had many hungry and thirsty visitors, wound up costing him a lot of money  
471 got friendly with maharajah of Cooch Behar in Kashmir, who was fond of tennis and  
drove a Bentley  
490 maharajah hit and killed a cow, had to pretend his driver had done it, driver had to leave  
Kashmir because cows were sacred  
503 lived with a family in India for a while  
530 pre-Christmas ball that was well attended by Brits and Indians

### **Tape 847, Side B**

#### **Halls (Part 3 of 7)**

- 002 an assistant political agent, Hall had lots of power in area of Singh and Punjab  
008 relations with tribe on Punjab border  
017 someone who offered to “bump people off” for Hall  
020 description of terrain  
023 popularity of mail routes, dispute between locals who wanted mail contracts  
027 rode militia lorry on trip from Lora Lai to Fort Sandeman  
035 protocol regarding militia lorries  
038 attack on mail lorry, Hall had almost been on it  
045 dealing with locals shooting each other, assassinations  
051 Hall once held up by a gang when he was mistaken for a corrupt garrison agent  
061 work of a political agent, performed diplomatic role  
065 administration in Baluchistan, a northwest frontier province  
074 appointed director of food and civil supplies for Baluchistan during war, in charge of  
rationing of food and consumer supplies  
080 meeting in Delhi to decide on cloth allocations  
080 got word that bigwig was coming to visit him during conference  
091 Brits administered India effectively because Indians obeyed them until the end of their  
reign  
098 called upon to give viceroy account of situation in Baluchistan, description of situation  
there  
109 Baluchistan tribal leader said he’d rather have his country as a British colony than to be  
absorbed into India or Pakistan, more akin to Afghanistan  
115 twelve Brits administered 2.5 million people of Baluchistan  
125 setting date for hand over to India  
133 Baluchistan complied with British rule  
137 tragedy of Indian Independence  
150 deployment of troops, leadership of Mountbatten  
173 problems and alliances between India, Pakistan, Kashmir, Hyderabad  
183 relation to Persian Gulf, extent of British administration  
194 roles of political service versus foreign service, including Nepal, Afghanistan, other  
neighbors of India  
207 compares India to main character of *Three Faces of Eve*, who suffered from multiple  
personalities  
216 Americans spoiled Indians during WWII by paying them double what Brits paid  
224 advent of air service to India  
226 in 1947 it suited Hall to come home and stay home, he had small children

- 233 readjustment to England after life in India  
238 difficulties of people who tried to enter commerce and industry  
243 people who went to colonial service in Africa, a lot in Kenya  
248 many more officers per capita in Kenya, less autonomy and power than in India  
255 people who entered diplomatic service had best post-India careers, examples of careers of people he knew  
280 man who became high commissioner of Tonga  
288 careers of other people he knew in India  
296 people who went to India were looking for wider horizons, escape economic problems of England  
310 man who traveled overland to get to his post, by the time he got there had heard so much criticism of ICS that he resigned upon arrival  
329 other examples of career paths of people he knew  
335 Charles Duke entered foreign service and wound up as ambassador in Israel, others  
353 Mrs. Hall recounts story of man they knew who was so cheap he wouldn't feed his guests  
368 man who went out to Kenya as a deputy lieutenant  
382 India bred eccentric characters, people became a bit more of what they were  
387 Mrs. Hall didn't like the person India made of her  
420 several conversations at once  
427 description of colonial office, people who worked for it  
448 worked for British interests in Hong Kong in 1949  
460 complications of American interests in Hong Kong  
470 intrigue involving Chiang Kai-shek and some airplanes, famous court case in Hong Kong  
492 Hall became head of Pacific and Indian Ocean department, covering, Fiji, Tonga, Seychelles, etc.  
510 conference in 1958 regarding Mauritius, people there are Indian, African, Chinese, Hindu, Franco-Russian  
530 George Wilson, member of the Mauritius conference