

T. Harry Williams Center for Oral History Collection

Tape 849 Finding Aid

INTERVIEWEE NAMES:

H.P. and Margery Hall 4700.0581 Tape 849.1 (Tape 4 of 4)
John Shattock 4700.0583 Tape 849.2 (Tape 1 of 4)

IDENTIFICATION: Britons in Pre-Independence India

INTERVIEWER: Frank de Caro, Rosan Jordan

SERIES: British Voices from South Asia

INTERVIEW DATES:

Halls: 3/1/1978
Shattock: 3/30/1978

TOTAL PLAYING TIME: 1 hour, 31 minutes

Halls: 72 minutes
Shattock: 19 minutes

OTHER MATERIALS: None

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Tape 849, Side A

Halls (Part 6 of 7) (849.1)

- 001 bad feeling about house, turned out it had been inhabited by Gestapo, Japanese
- 009 Japanese occupation of Borneo, damage to North Borneo
- 020 consecration of cathedral in Borneo, Chinese bishop
- 027 story of string of heads in a Borneo long house
- 035 young son of headman was ordained, then thought the heads should get proper burial
- 045 loaded all eleven heads into boat, including one Japanese head, set out for consecrated burial ground, Japanese head disappeared along the way; elders said it wouldn't have been happy in Christian ground
- 055 houses on stilts
- 061 display of heads in long houses
- 064 visiting Borneo woman who was such a lady, had a four poster bed with muslin drapes, covered her bosom

078 woman tried to make the Halls take her daughter with them, for more civilized life
 084 met some school children in Borneo wearing uniforms, contrast to topless old women
 grinding corn
 090 doing laundry, bathing themselves, bathing fighting cocks and getting drinking water
 from same place
 096 went out to Malaysia on special assignment in 1962, traveled around, meeting with
 Chinese, asking their opinions on Sukarno
 100 people's opinions on Malaysia's future
 103 Brunei revolt
 106 threat of a takeover by Sukarno; thought he'd go after Borneo next
 115 Malaysian politics
 125 Hall trying to prevent Indonesian takeover of Malaysia
 130 explanation of Brunei revolt, failed attempt to capture sultan
 143 drunkard who was involved in revolt
 150 troops flown in from Singapore, rebellion contained
 160 Indonesian terrorists, two conversations going on at once
 166 comparison to Vietnam
 172 came home to London in 1963, persuaded British government of his plan for Malaysia
 182 helping locals in Malaysia, improving water supply, helping women with pregnancies
 190 program to win hearts and minds of Malaysians
 203 British worked in teams of four, medical, communications and weapons experts
 208 West [Irian?] situation
 211 North Borneo, prior to war, run by North Borneo Company, withdrew after war
 217 relationship between North Borneo Company and British government
 220 British government took over after war
 223 Roger Books Company ran Sarawak before war; big exports were timber, lumber, black
 and white pepper
 226 first governor of Sarawak was assassinated
 229 had to cross river in boat to go to dinner at Books palace
 237 went to Borneo because interested in witnessing rapid change come to a primitive society
 242 changes that happened while they were there, widespread corruption
 248 Margery worked in Borneo hospital full time, poor, sick and lonely people there
 272 poor white shopkeepers, Anglo Indians who were white, too poor to keep up any
 standards, Halls never met them much
 285 Halls mostly lived in out of the way places where there were few whites
 292 Hall's positions, promotions
 300 abbreviation XOS, meant extra large
 305 importance of rank, status, relationships with people of higher rank
 324 dressing formally for dinner even in out of the way places with no white women
 333 bearers helped you dress, drew baths
 341 high ranking man who supposedly traveled with blue silk sheets
 352 playing tug of war, led to riot, one man killed
 358 frightening riots in Quetta
 375 Margery was scared someone would come to her and ask her for help during a riot, but
 she never heard of a Muslim or Hindu ever asking a European for shelter during a riot
 390 surprised that religious riots never turned on British
 415 religious factors in job advancement

- 430 bitterness, slaughter, caused by religion
 458 honorary titles given by government, man who wanted to be consul
 479 whiskey
 485 Hall was popular because he had access to petrol when it was being rationed
 495 murder cases he tried
 500 ritual murder allowed, could kill old woman for talking to stranger
 508 Hall had to determine if cases were genuine ritual murders or just regular illegal murders
 515 murder case of chief's daughter who'd become pregnant outside marriage
 530 case where body picked out of canal

Tape 849, Side B

Halls (Part 7 of 7) (849.1)

- 002 mayhem at their post
 015 marriage between locals, woman wanted annulment
 025 tape is hard to hear
 053 parents returning from India
 059 beauty of India
 061 Associated States of West Indies set up in 1967
 065 political race on island of Anguilla
 080 Miss Anguilla beauty queen contest, rioting
 090 attempts to capture rioters
 098 Hall went into hills to meet with rioters, lectured them on gentlemanly behavior, told them they were interfering with their girls' chance at winning
 115 addressing the rioters' concerns
 129 more commotion a few months later, attempt to eject police force
 135 associated statehood festivities
 138 trouble between political parties
 145 introduces son who just arrived
 148 Hall diverted from Bermuda, spent night in Barbados, governor of Bermuda arranged to meet him in Barbados
 154 Hall driven to sleazy waterfront hotel in Barbados
 159 heard about demonstration of 5,000 people at airport waiting to meet assistant of high commissioner who was meeting with Hall
 165 arriving into demonstration, Hall couldn't get out of aircraft
 172 Hall asked to speak on public address system to crowd
 177 Hall met with both political parties
 182 couldn't get a flight back to London because it was Easter weekend, but chief minister had asked for Hall's removal after his address at airport, Hall was on assassination list, also had list of assassins, one of whom committed a murder while Hall was there
 201 called upon governor of Barbados to help him get flight, but told they were solidly booked
 208 big turnout at airport for him when he returned to Barbados
 213 eventually worked out the political turmoil
 220 had to wake up female politician, didn't know if she slept in the nude or wore clothes
 225 Hall was confident he wouldn't be assassinated
 234 got used to walking around in places where he might be shot, but didn't think anyone would have the guts to shoot him since he was a senior official

Tape 849, Side B cont'd**Shattock (Part 1 of 5) (849.2)**

- 270 begin interview with J. S. H. Shattock in Kingston St. Mary, Somerset, March 30, 1978
- 275 talking about woman named [Mary Brody?], an outstanding British woman
- 280 Shattock was son of poor clergyman, had exceptionally wealthy godfather who was in business in Ceylon, tea estate
- 285 Shattock asked godfather for job, godfather said to hell he would, didn't believe in giving anything to people in family, but gave him 1000 pounds to go to Oxford
- 290 family connections to India, government in Bengal, railways
- 298 entered civil service, chose India on advice of a professor
- 310 year of preparation after passing exam, studying Indian law, language of province
- 320 Shattock posted to Bengal, learned Bengali
- 325 took horse riding examination
- 330 horse riding and two language tests were compulsory before getting pay raise
- 345 buying clothes for India, bought most of his khaki wardrobe in Calcutta
- 355 evening wear in Bengal, black trousers and a black alpaca coat
- 361 sailed on the Viceroy of India, took train to Calcutta
- 373 staying at United Services Club in Calcutta
- 381 assigned very old Mohammed as personal bearer, formally bearer for a high commissioner
- 389 bearer wanted to do everything for him, wanted to dress and undress him, followed him to and from bathroom
- 397 after the first day, told bearer that he would dress himself
- 401 arrived in India in 1931
- 404 expectations versus reality of India
- 412 posted to a district which is now in northern Bangladesh, area as big as Belgium, population nearly 7 million, was village district magistrate
- 420 Shattock and another young man sent there to be trained together, duties
- 426 terrorism rampant in district at the time, magistrates being assassinated
- 430 his manager was a target for the terrorists
- 433 Shattock warned to buy a revolver in Calcutta before arriving at post
- 439 Shattock's magistrate was very hard on wrongdoers, had sweet wife
- 445 Shattock had a wonderful six months tramping around countryside, reassuring villagers who were mostly Muslim, Hindu terrorists were a small minority of population
- 455 then magistrate went back to England, Shattock assigned to work under an Indian official and live with an Indian junior magistrate
- 470 learned a lot about India this way, Indians thought this was an unusual set up, got along well, lots of Indian visitors
- 480 Shattock was told he was too small time to be assassinated, didn't need to worry
- 488 career of Indian roommate, a Brahmin, his mother was first Indian woman in Madras to get driver's license
- 496 still in touch with his Indian roommate, reads letter he just got from him a few weeks ago
- 517 learned all about private lives of Indians
- 523 wouldn't eat food with his hands, he made too much of a mess
- 530 believes Indians and British could live happily together
- 536 spent two hours each morning studying language, did revenue work in office, began trying cases