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Tape 872 Finding Aid

INTERVIEWEE NAME: Ivan Ellis Jones

COLLECTION: 4700.0594 Tape 872 (Tape 2 of 4)

IDENTIFICATION: Briton in Pre-Independence India

INTERVIEWERS: Frank de Caro and Rosan Jordan

SERIES: British Voices from South Asia

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OTHER MATERIALS: None

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Tape 872, Side A

Jones (Part 2 of 6)

- 004 administration was organized in such a way that everyone under the magistrates was Indian
009 there was no European class in the average Punjab district; generally speaking, there was not a commercial class either
011 there was an advantage because there was not a rival or competition
013 the administration was very Indian, although controlled by the key positions
017 in some areas there was a landlord class, that was considered a key position
026 as outsiders, the British were lucky because there was very little tension of interests; they were outsiders into an area where the tensions were mainly between Hindu and Muslim or Muslim and Sikh
029 there could be come conflict in those areas where a European planter class emerged; however, this hardly existed
032 there was some tea industry in the Himalayas and the Punjab, but an earthquake in 1911 devastated the area
040 Jones went straight out to his first district; he did not stay at all in Bombay
045 Jones remembers seeing miles and miles of space pass by as he was leaving Bombay; there

is more vegetation and variety in central India
 050 by the time Jones got to the Punjab, it was very cool; his first district was Hoshiarpur
 058 the Siwalik Range came out just before the Himalayas; it is geologically older and comes
 out about 200 feet
 061 Punjab Plains are about 1000 feet; it is a vast alluvial plain
 067 Jones and his colleague were struck as they walked out the office on the first day and saw a
 1000 foot ridge about 10 miles away
 070 in the sky beyond it was the snow from the Himalayas hanging in the air, about seventy
 miles away
 077 the inhabitants were a mix of Sikhs, Hindus, Muslims; they were very intelligent
 079 the Punjab in general had a Muslim majority but the non-Muslims tended to be better
 educated; the Muslims were considered as a backward class protected in such things as
 government appointment
 083 the Sikhs were a type of reformed Hindus; they had considerable “weight” in the Punjab;
 they had holy temples and such there
 088 the British took over from the Sikh kingdom; the Sikhs had a fine army lead by French
 officers
 091 the Sikh Wars were very tough to win
 093 the British moved in after the great Sikh ruler died, leaving a minority rule; the British
 acted as regents for the Sikhs
 097 at one time in the Punjab, the non-Muslims had suffered under Muslim rule; during another
 time, the non-Sikhs suffered under Sikh rule
 104 the communal feelings were liable to be brought up at any time, becoming very bitter; this
 was part of the security of the British position there
 106 the divisions were so severe in the Punjab that the British were needed to referee the two
 groups; in areas that were not so tension, the Indians tended to be more aware of the British
 and that they were being ruled by them
 112 when Partition finally came, the hostilities in the Punjab became extremely terrible and
 tragic
 117 Jones found himself staying with the deputy commissioner
 121 a trainee was sent down to the office, given a reader and a uniform; they were given
 someone that would help them learn the language and the law
 129 a trainee was also given third-class magistrate powers; they heard minor cases
 133 the witnesses would talk in Punjabi but the records were kept in [Oulu?] and English
 138 [Oulu?] was a language that was invented about 1600 to solve the problems associated with
 a multilingual continent; it was taken from basic Hindi, which was the goal at the time
 153 they put in a large number of abstract nouns; it is a westernized form of basic Hindi
 167 Oulu was an official language that all non-English correspondence required
 169 it was rare for a witness to speak in the Oulu language; the court reader wrote it all down
 very rapidly however; the magistrate kept a memo in English
 174 the Oulu version would be read out to the witness (who they presumed would understand
 it) and would put his mark of acceptance
 178 this system was efficient when there was a facility in both languages; in the early stages,
 however, it was extremely difficult
 182 Jones remembers that he was studying in his room when he overheard a conversation on
 the veranda. He was excited to learn that he could understand it.

189 they were taken out very early on tour with the commissioner; a district officer spent half of
his time during the winter months touring the villages
195 the routine was that you would ride through the countryside of the chosen area; either tents
were pitched or you would stay in a furnished bungalow or “rest house”
205 part of the tour included an inspection of the villages; you could possibly see three or four
villages on your morning ride
209 in some districts, every village had an area that had houses bunched tightly together; this
was for security and was considered a village
214 the British were concerned with maintaining the records of field ownerships; the fields are
mapped out by the settlement officer
216 there would be a village map, with every field mapped out and numbered; the village
accountant was in charge of taking care of the maps, recording the changes in ownership or
tenancy
219 the accountant would also record the harvest yields and which crop was in which field
222 the collector was in charge of the staff that maintained all the records
226 these were some of the reasons why you would want to visit the villages; the officers were
also concerned about what the villagers were saying
228 upon entering a village, head man would come to meet the officer and discuss grievances
and such that they wished the officer would investigate
235 there was a degree of paternalism in the government system; it was simplified to prevent
the Indians from falling into the hands of lawyers and experts elsewhere
240 if a man died and his land was to go to his sons, the village accountant would make an entry
of this; the accountant would have a book of changes that he kept updated
246 the new entry could not be made until a revenue officer came to the village and recorded
the order, stating who was present and stated the situation
251 this would not necessarily convey a title, but it did convey a presumption of correctness; if
someone would come with a claim against them, they would have to pursue it in civil court
258 they were interested in all of these aspects while on tour; they met with the people, who
would say what they thought needed to be said
263 people would go to see the deputy commissioner for specific problems at the tent or
bungalow; the larger land owners came out of a sense of courtesy and prestige
267 the files and papers followed the officer, having large numbers waiting on his signature
269 they would leave the next morning; everything would be waiting at the next camp site
when they returned from the next round of villages
275 young officers were being taught and shown different things, like the different crops and
their names in the local language
282 they would continue studying the language; they were required to learn Punjabi, which was
one of the Hindi languages that did not have the “Muslim slanted aspect”
288 Punjabi is a local language that varied greatly in dialects
290 there are over 300 languages in India
294 Jones had to prepare for an exam in Punjabi; he had to learn the Sikh scripts
306 Jones once ran upon some Sikh peddlers, who were surprised when he asked them in
Punjabi about a magazine with Sikh scripts
314 Jones only had time for one tour with the commissioner before Christmas; Christmas week,
all the new assistant commissioners were invited to the government house as the
governor’s guest

321 it was a week with a “W”, which meant there would be tournaments, dances and such
324 Jones was surprised to see the invitation said that he needed to bring his own bedding to the
governor’s house
329 there was a canvas roll that you would roll your blankets, sheets and bedding in; this could
be rolled up and strapped down
334 when on a train for long distances, your bunk would be lowered and your bedding roll was
opened, exposing your bedding
338 although the government house was wealthy enough to supply bedding, they were being
housed in tents for extended accommodations
342 one would always tour with his own bedding roll, just like you would normally do with a
toothbrush
348 it was a normal thing to see people carrying their bedding supplies
352 this was Jones’s first official introduction into society, but ended up in the area of the
government house where there was no one to greet him; he had gotten confused about the
area and would have been properly greeted if he had went to the front of the house
364 Jones found his own way into the house without anyone’s help; he eventually saw the room
where a number of people were sitting and having drinks
379 the governor was a man named [Hailey?] , who would become known as Battle Hailey (?);
his famous work was a two volume book on Africa
392 there was practically no headquarter society; there were one or two Sikh judges and a
young battalion of horsemen; there was little organization
405 Jones went back to his district and was sent out on tour with an Indian revenue officer, who
insisted that Jones spoke something approaching Oulu; he was allowed to put in an English
word only if he did not know the Oulu word for it, but the framework had to be Oulu
422 they were suddenly snatched away again for a month after getting back to headquarters and
resuming his studies; they were going to learn about an agricultural college and research
institute
431 they wanted ICS recruits to realize what exactly was being done in terms of research and
the like
433 they were only there for a month, which came as a delight for some of the lecturers;
attitudes varied among the lecturers, for they only had six lectures to get everything
covered
440 the main criticism of the system came in that the recruits believed they would have learned
more if they would have been allowed to go the following year, after they had experienced
the normal life of a villager and seen one year’s round worth of crops and such
447 one of the officers wrote an essay about it a year later, getting the course abolished; it was
revised years later under another form
462 they learned a good deal, but some aspects of the course were useless; they could have
explained more about the machines that may be available in the districts to aid in pest
control and such
475 some did give the recruits a better understanding when compared to others in terms of
diseases in livestock and such
477 Jones came back and took his departmental exam; he then started getting used to the hot
weather because he stayed in that particular district for the whole of that year
486 while still there, Jones did some touring; he enjoyed it, along with gaining more skills in
languages and such

493 Jones was then sent to settlement training after that year; “settlement” referred to the
 assessment and mapping of the land, assessing the land revenue tax
 499 the land revenue taxes in the Punjab was a tax in that the government owned the land and
 the people that held it under the government had to pay rent, which was assessed by the
 crops ability to pay the tax
 507 an assessment officer is appointed every thirty years or so to prepare a newly revised map
 of the old, which would have become weighted down with amendments and such
 513 the recruits were sent off to learn mapping skills and survey work
 516 there were about ten of them living in a tented camp
 519 they spent the winter learning and demonstrating their abilities to put all the tools to use
 533 at the end of winter, Jones found himself being sent off to be individually in charge of an
 area as a subdivisional officer; the area he was in was about two-fifths the size of the whole
 district
 545 Jones was the subdivisional magistrate, which is slightly more than an ordinary register; he
 had supervisory duties over some of the magistrates
 556 the Punjab has a tremendous amount of irrigated area, irrigated by canals drawn from the
 rivers of the area
 570 Jones had similar duties in [Ruper?], like touring and such; there was also folklore in the
 area that appealed to the imagination
 580 the rivers seemed to burst through the hills, through the district and out to a ledge; it was
 about half a mile wide
 586 controlling it during times of high water was interesting to watch; the area railway had a
 cable above it so you could trolley over the water and look down at the rushing waters
 below
 594 the Ruper subdivision included a little village of about 3000 people; when Indian was
 partitioned, the village became the new provincial headquarters; the headquarters were
 designed by a famous French architect
 622 there were seasonal rivers that were dry during the winter months and filled by the
 monsoon rains
 627 the following October, Jones was posted as undersecretary in the home department; it was
 a secretary-like job, filing and such
 638 there was an Indian colleague and friend of Jones that had been brought up in England that
 was very Anglican but very interested in Indian interests; he was “cross-bred”, deeply
 intrigued by both cultures
 660 they would get mercy appeals from convicted prisoners
 677 Jones lived in a residential club that could house about thirty members; there was a lot of
 tennis, riding and such
 691 in Bihar, it was common to go riding before breakfast; you did not automatically sell your
 horse when in a non-touring posting because you never knew when you would be moved to
 a position that required touring
 702 you would go out for your morning ride, come in to shower, eat breakfast and then go off to
 the office; in the afternoon there were tennis arrangements and such
 713 looking back, Jones feels the British only “scratched the surface” of the Indian culture and
 its experiences; for example: one would become very fluent in the native languages
 728 end of side A

Tape 872, Side B
Jones (Part 4 of 6)

004 Jones was a bachelor, so he had no problems with the constant settling then resettling
 elsewhere

005 one tended to grow accustomed to the moving around; one learned quickly how to pack and
 unpack efficiently

019 there were some areas in which the district officer's bungalow would have furniture, which
 was sold from one to the next

022 you would move furniture in a covered wagon pulled by oxen; the same arrangements in
 one place would find their ways into the new place

026 the moves would normally take place after about one or two years

028 Jones once went to a bungalow in Bihar that took seventy yards to curtain the sitting room
 because of all the doors

033 Jones had furniture left to him; the rest was bought or accumulated; Jones brought some
 home, like Indian beds that have transformed into new and interesting pieces

048 when a record came out, it went back into the same envelope in the same place; there were
 some records that managed to get stolen because the box was mistaken as something else at
 the dock

060 along with carrying his records, Jones also tended to carry a fair amount of books around

062 Jones traveled very light going out to India; when he came back on his first leave, he took a
 few coveted collections back with him

067 before leaving India, he had all the music collections bound

077 the Punjab was once referred to as a "Non-regulation Province", in that the government
 tended to be more in touch with the people; this became a concern for those in the land and
 tax revenue system

080 in Bengal there is a permanent settlement because the government works with the large
 land owners in deciding amount of land taxes; the Punjab system put the settlement officer
 working with the village unit, creating a fixed sum for the village/unit and little variation
 between the members

092 the system was close to direct negotiations with the peasant himself

094 the system of rotation involved changing the entries in the records of rights; was done by a
 responsible officer in the village; it was direct land administration

099 the record of rights gave a presumption of correctness; for about 95 cases out of 100, the
 record and regulation of rights was the final judgment; there could be an appeal, but it was
 all part of the direct administration

104 this is what was referred to as the "Punjab System"; it may apply to other provinces as well

107 Punjabi officers may have been more independent in 1840 and such; at the time of the
 Indian mutiny, there was a direct and personal rule that is no longer applied

114 staying close and in touch with the people was a tradition that did remain

117 Jones did not know enough about the areas to make the choice when he was going out; the
 Northwestern Frontier and the Punjab were so popular because the people were athletic,
 friendly, made up a majority of the army and excellent relations with the army

125 service among the Punjabis was pleasant; they did not hate the English

129 communications was another benefit of the frontier; you could move around quickly and
 efficiently

133 there were many places that had a considerable official population, meaning there was an

extensive European population

136 Jones was one hundred fifty miles from headquarters in his first district, so people could
come out on the weekends to visit, shoot and so on; he was not isolated like in Burma

141 Jones was not keen on shooting, but there was light shooting; some tiger shooting

151 there was also a lot of riding; Punjab riding was pleasant

153 the army tradition also meant something, that there was a good number of English and
Indian officers there; relations were good

156 there were once 200,000 men in the Indian army; 100,000 of which were recruited from the
Punjab alone

158 during the war and without conscription, the war grew to over two million, half of which
came from the Punjab

161 those that joined were not traders, they felt that they were defending Indians

164 one of the things that established the right of the Indians to govern themselves was the fact
that they could defend themselves and could not pretend that they could not; they were able
to attack the Nazis, Italians and such just as well as the other soldiers

169 there was a romantic air in India; the Punjabis adapted themselves to this fact and became
part of it

173 relations between officers and soldiers tended to be very well; they were conscious of the
undercurrent of racial hatred

181 the racial hatred did not seem to hinder everyday life; Jones never even owned a revolver;
the deputy commissioner normally had a guard posted outside at night

185 however, the guard would be taken away during more exciting times because of the
demand for more men was more severe in other places

187 Jones never felt danger from the probability of an Indian attack

189 during the war, the more violent factions did emerge and there were a few instances of ICS
officers seeing people being murdered and then being murdered themselves for trying to
intervene

196 the balance of power was shifting, as was the prestige

201 you were more concerned with the urban masses; the urban man's problems did not come
to the British officer but to government officers

212 settlement training was necessary because they were forced to read complicated records
written in Oulu

218 it did not matter if your map was just as good as the next, but you had to understand what to
do and how to do it when the map was produced

221 harvest time was also time for inspection; the village accountant had to go over the harvest
register, which was based on the record of rights

227 the entry would include the tenant, the crops, which failed and which were successful, and
the amount owed

234 you would go through the records with about twenty other people; you were checking the
system on the spot

238 you would make some amendments, which you would do yourself; any order of a mutation
that requested a change could be appealed, coming to you in the district headquarters or
second court of appeals

245 there was a possibility of an error in which someone's claim had not been heard or fully
represented; in this case, they would send the case back to the district officer

248 you were in touch with the realities or the records, so you understood them

251 this system was the heart of the land revenue tax; crime was a different matter; a district
magistrate may get the complaint of a case being tried in a biased manner
258 there was once a case in which a young American male had knocked over an older
gentleman in which the American consulate called “a group of crackpot religionists”; the
old man died as a result of hitting his head after falling
264 the American pled guilty; the following court hearing, he claimed he did it in self-defense
and wanted to plead not guilty; the American claimed the missionary’s wife pulled a gun
on him
269 they reviewed the evidence; one of the Americans from the religious groups claims that
they saw a gun, heard the lady say it but it was not loaded; they put the gun away and
seemed irrelevant because no one asked them
275 there had been an altercation; the American admitted to grabbing the gun and the male was
trying to defend himself, hitting the old man by accident
279 Jones did not hear that case because of the international consequences
281 the administration of criminal law was completely separate; there was a district board that
administered a lot around the primary schools
286 as a deputy commissioner, you were generally chairman of this board; as things advanced,
some became chair in a more official manner
291 the departments included rural dispensaries, veterinary dispensaries, school dispensaries,
etc.; these would all be visited while on tour, checking to see which supplies were needed,
what needed to be repaired or replaced and so on
294 they were inspected on the technical side by official school inspectors
298 the district board may also be in charge of the managing the smaller roads in the district;
the major roads may be done by the federal service
302 small towns had committees that oversaw the government in a small way; larger towns
would have an impact in a larger way
304 provincial headquarters ran a town of about half a million residents, officially in some parts
and unofficially in others; they were torn between disputes, so much that they could not get
any business carried out
311 things began piling up and eventually the administer decided to displace the committee and
put in an administrator, who turned out to be Jones; whatever the committee could do, he
could do
318 there was a lot to do; Jones had to get through certain goals before he left on leave, which
was in six months
323 the immediate attention went to the water supply system; the water was being so ill-used
that the system could only be run for two hours in the morning and two in the evening; the
water system became polluted with back pressure
326 people would fill their water jars in the morning, which would sit there all day until it was
poured out; a constant running tab would allow them to have the water for their necessities
330 Jones successor finally solved the problem
337 as a deputy commissioner, one had an appalling number of things to do; it almost seemed
that one’s patronage was greater than it would normally be
341 the deputy commissioner’s recommendation almost seemed to have too much weight at
times
349 the administration was probably more agriculturally minded rather than industrially; the
impartial nature of the services in times of disputes between groups like the Hindus and

Muslims was very true to the rumor, but not in the area of agriculture versus industry according to one Indian critic

358 there was even the question of whether or not cotton be exported then sold back to them as cloth

365 on the whole, the government of India was fighting for India, not Britain

370 when the war came, it became necessary to make India self-supporting in areas; they immediately found it was possible to use Indian workmanship to satisfy standards and policies in matters of industry

377 India already had the largest steel works in the British Commonwealth

381 industrial development could have been promoted more selflessly by the administration; this may have been the only sense of exploiting India

386 the British were able to find a good market for their man power

396 the feeling in the Punjab was to “protect the underdog”, who was often the cultivator, from exploitation from the upper people, commonly the urban money lender

405 it was upon this platform one was able to find a common basis in which Muslims in the extreme northwest could combine with the Hindus from around Delhi

416 there was a unifying theme that overcame Sikh, Hindu and Muslim borders

430 sports and games were important for the interest of health and pleasure; it helped in creating good relations with the feelings of division between Europeans and Indians

439 there were certain European clubs that restricted the number of Indian members; there were certain Indian clubs that had certain “white” restrictions

449 Jones once went down to the united provinces, that had recently been visited by a European tennis team for a few exhibition matches; one of the local Indian “Big Whig” told Jones that the Indians did well in the first set but they (the Indians) did not have the physique

460 no one would ever dream of saying that in the Punjab, where the shot-put and tennis championships were held by Punjabis

463 there was an Indian hockey team that “swept the boards” at the Olympics; it was a game introduced by the British but adapted by the Indians, who displayed great abilities in brilliance

469 after returning from the Olympics, the team was beaten by a club from Delhi

475 it was one of the sports that you were able to mix freely with the Indians and the two groups would come together respectfully

477 the young officers would join those men from their regiments on the hockey field

486 Jones never had a rifle; he did go out shooting on occasion for the evening, but many would go for entire weekends

497 the maharajahs would post men at every water spot to prevent shooters from harassing birds as they came in to drink; they would have a big shoot for the “VIPs”

501 otherwise, you would go out and take your chances

504 Jones was a district officer in Hisar, near the edge of the Central Desert in “some camel country” 100 miles east of Delhi

507 it was mainly Hindu, with some Muslims; they happened to be there in 1934 or 1935 during the jubilee of the king emperor

513 the officials put on a play, in which all the higher officials had a role; the superintendent was assigned the role of a woman, as was the High Commissioner of India; there are pictures for support

518 Jones was cast as a corrupt clerk of court

520 it was a drama revolving around corruption and romance
528 the storyline involves the corrupt clerk of court informing some of the participants in the
case that there was a preliminary fee to be paid, then the major charge for the job to be
done, followed by a gratitude fee and now a “new take care charge”
547 summer headquarters before the war for the Punjab government and federal employment
had a small theater; it would produce roughly one show per month; productions would
sometimes overlap
567 Jones did walk on for one play and took part in another musical; productions were very
well done
578 this activity was almost entirely European
584 Jones once went to his house in disguise and asked his man servant to look for Mr. Jones;
the servant came back and informed “the stranger” that Mr. Jones could not be found; the
servant was a bit old however and was not too good
599 the Indians did have a loosely constructed opera-type production with a variety influence;
someone would come in and suggest a topic, immediately followed by someone else going
in a singing a song about it and has nothing to do with the plot
608 there were some mythological themes; one was similar to the trials of Job in that the
character was deprived of wealth but still displayed large amounts of virtue
622 snakes were a larger problem in some areas but not in others; certain areas were heavily
infested with krait, which were extremely poisonous and were rumored to have the ability
to jump as high as a horse’s head
633 the Salt Range was also infested with snakes; they would be found on the furniture and so
forth
637 there would be rough stone metal placed around the house to discourage snakes from
climbing in
639 one would always use caution in the summer when sleeping; one would clap his slippers
together before putting them on to ensure there was nothing there to bite
642 there were also scorpions that one had to be aware of
644 a baby cobra once came out of the bathroom wall while one of Jones’s guests was having a
bath and went into his slipper
651 another man was practicing polo when he saw a cobra rear its head upward; the man
decapitated it with his stick
660 the second governor of the Punjab once told Jones that there was a famous deputy
commissioner who once stopped a train in order to go out on a shoot after spotting some
ducks in a pond; end of tape