

## T. Harry Williams Center for Oral History Collection

### Tape 878 Finding Aid

**INTERVIEWEE NAMES:**

Sir Charles Dalton, Brigadier and Mrs. Herbert Dinwiddie  
4700.0598 Tape 878.1 (Tape 2 of 2)  
Mr. and Mrs. Geoffrey Lamarque  
4700.0599 Tape 878.2 (Tape 1 of 3)  
Sir Charles Dalton and Lady Daphne Dalton  
4700.0597 Tape 878.3 (Tape 4 of 4)

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

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

**SERIES:** British Voices from South Asia

**INTERVIEW DATES:**

Dalton and Dinwiddies: 4/27/1978  
Lamarques: 4/28/1978  
Daltons: 47/27/1978

**TOTAL PLAYING TIME:** 1 hour, 34 minutes

Dalton and Dinwiddies: 19 minutes

Lamarques: 47 minutes

Daltons: 28 minutes

**OTHER MATERIALS:** None

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**INDEX****Tape 878, Side A****Daltons (Part 5 of 5) (878.3)**

- 002 certain subjects were a requirement, which were military subjects like tactics and strategy and military history; everyone would take these types of courses
- 005 there were certain voluntary subjects that could be taken and were added on to your composite scores
- 007 it was impossible to gain direct entry on merit alone; one also had to have good marks in

voluntary subjects

008 there were several different areas to choose from for the voluntary subjects; Dalton decided to “polish up” his French and perhaps learn a second foreign language

011 Dalton went out to France and stayed with a family there; he took the Army Interpretership Exam and passed it while there, which was a sort of an insurance policy

014 Dalton then learned German, the hard way; he spent six weeks in Germany during one leave, where he stayed with a German prince on his farm; this was about 1927

019 Dalton often wonders what happened to the prince, for he was an old German family; his estate has now been overtaken by Poland

035 Dalton cannot remember how he came upon the connection

038 Dalton came home and took the German Interpretership Exam and received a pass in that

037 when it came time to take the Staff College Exam, Dalton polished his language skills and received enough marks to get in

039 the rule was one could not gain entry on averages alone, one had to have a third subject; you had to have at least qualifying in a third subject in order to count your marks in the second language

042 Dalton decided on economics, which was not taken by many officers; he received enough marks to count the other subjects and got into the Staff College

049 Dalton had to pick up some of the Indian language while in India but was not there long enough

051 only English was spoken in the headquarters

054 even if you were English, you never talked to an Indian servant in English; they were not supposed to know English

060 Dalton did have someone to teach him Urdu when he first went out to India; Dalton found they would teach “too well” and would be more proper and correct

064 you did not want to know the university standard in pronunciation because the servants were not used to it

077 Southern India is different from the North; it is not as attractive in climate, it is more or less the same temperature all year and more humid

084 the coast was a good place for training jungle warfare, which was what they wanted before going out to Burma

086 Dalton would prefer not to be soldier or live there, however

088 the mode of life for the British was not all that different, but Dalton was only there during the war

092 life in Delhi was different from those in a small station; it was more like living in London because the everyday items were more “posh”

098 life was more civilized in Delhi: you lived in houses and not mud huts, you had a nice garden, there were plenty of parties and social life if one desired

103 going outside Delhi, one could see a lot more sites; the area around Delhi is full of rich history

108 Dalton enjoyed Delhi

109 Sunday was the day when one would go out early in the morning shooting during the winter, leaving about four in the morning

119 a little after sunrise the hunters would start heading back, have a drink and return home about midday

122 it was a very regular sort of life

123 in the British and Indian armies, there were two holidays during the week, which were  
 Thursday and Sunday  
 128 you were encouraged to get out into the open, like riding or walking; the soldiers were  
 always inclined to lay on their beds and sleep  
 131 one was expected to do something sensible and get exercise  
 132 the soldiers got exercise by playing team games; the soldiers lead a more sophisticated life  
 in India than at home because they were seen as more important people  
 136 the British soldier in India was a personality; in England he was the bottom but the Indian  
 was way below him in India  
 140 the Indians loved the soldiers because they shared a similar role, that of a servant  
 142 at home, the soldier was expected to do all of his own polishing and such; it was wrong for  
 a soldier to do such a thing in India  
 147 the barber would go around the barracks with an ordinary razor, shaving all those that had  
 paid him for the month before they even woke up in the morning  
 155 for a time, the British soldiers thought this lifestyle was wonderful; it dulled after a while  
 because of things that were lacking, like white women; some took after the Indian women,  
 but that practice was highly discouraged  
 159 there was reasonable leave, but the soldiers would get bored after a time; they missed the  
 life of those that served in England  
 187 there was not much crime reported; some would take up shooting and hunting  
 171 Dalton did as much shooting as he could, although he did not participate in big game  
 shooting very often; he preferred the smaller game and snipe  
 181 shooting around Delhi was very good because of all the crops; the countryside tended to  
 vary  
 184 sugar beets were a common crop  
 188 the boys and beaters could not walk through the sugar beet crop because it was too tightly  
 packed  
 194 when you reached a patch that you suspected had partridges, one man would walk up one  
 side and another would walk up the other side holding a rope; they would “ripple” the tops,  
 sawing gently back and forth, disturbing the beets and the birds  
 201 because the birds could hear the two men coming, they would come out at the angle you  
 wanted them to; this was very successful and avoided damaging the sugar beet  
 208 otherwise, they would walk through the land in a straight line, like in the United States;  
 there was not a lot of driving done  
 212 in Germany, they go shooting in pairs or three at the most; they also use dogs in Germany  
 216 Dalton preferred to shoot birds because he believes he’s a better shot that way  
 220 the game in India depended heavily on the water because it was so dry, dusty and hot; the  
 place to look was on the river bank  
 233 there was a cruel way to shoot one of type of bird: they would deliberately keep them away  
 from water until they become very thirsty and are not willing to be kept away, which is  
 when you shoot  
 252 Dalton believes that India may have been a little slow in adopting some things like  
 mechanization, but it really did not matter because they did not expect to operate in a  
 situation that required it  
 264 many of the Indians could not be mechanized; all of the training was devoted to such things  
 as fighting in the mountains and such, situations they knew they would encounter

268 Dalton does not think anyone felt that they were behind the times  
 270 things were slower in getting out, like new weaponry, but this was partly a problem of  
 finance  
 272 the army in India was paid for by the Indian government, not the British; from the time  
 Dalton stepped on the boat to India, until the time he stepped off back home, his salary was  
 paid by the government of India  
 281 one was not conscious of the difference; one was more conscious that it was a better place  
 to train because you trained with real men and real weapons in a wide-open area  
 291 social life in India was very distinct because that sort of life was based on the station club;  
 you were a small community that learned to know everyone else in the station because you  
 could not help it  
 300 you had to make your life with the people in the community, unless you chose to go off on  
 leave with a family from elsewhere  
 304 from this stand point, it was very artificial because you knew someone else's business  
 better than your own; it was all good natured however and never did any real harm  
 308 life in India was much better in some instances; when in the war office, Dalton noticed that  
 there was not any social life as far as the army was concerned  
 312 in India, one automatically got to know colleagues and their wives because you would  
 entertain each other at each other's house; it was a friendly sort of practice  
 316 end of interview

**Tape 878, Side A cont'd**

**Dalton and Dinwiddies (Part 1 of 2) (878.1)**

317 beginning of interview  
 318 if people were recording on paper instead of speech, they probably would have said things  
 differently  
 327 the authors of the books thought someone should record how people lived and what they  
 did; they wanted to record their thoughts and virtues  
 338 the men over-seas never cut their hair; they would wrap it in a bun and put it underneath  
 their turbans on top  
 354 there has been trouble with the police because men have been riding their motorcycles  
 without a helmet; they could not fit the helmets on the turbans  
 361 there was a certain amount of options when deciding on a regiment  
 387 there was an all-Sikh regiment; the regiments had different classes and mixes  
 377 the interviewee was in the Sikh regiment; there were about five regular battalions before  
 the war and one regimental center  
 381 there are now fifteen battalions; the Indian army now numbers close to one million  
 385 if you add the 333,000 or so Pakistani soldiers, there is an army numbering over a million  
 and a quarter; the whole number of Indian and British army members before the war was  
 about 250,000  
 392 the Indian Army had an attraction for the British because it was the "Poor Man's Army"  
 400 one could get a marvelous life in India with a chance of active service; the British Army's  
 active service was normally confined to the Great War and World War II, although some  
 did take part in the Frontier campaign  
 409 there was always competition to get into the Indian Army  
 419 the Frontier was not all "Fire and Thunder"; it was inhabited by a lot of poor people that

had to live by rating and fetching other people's goods  
 428 a large of part of the Indian army "regulars" were keeping "watch on war"; nothing would  
 happen for years and then everything would suddenly blow-up  
 438 the reasons for doing so were economics because the government used to subsidize them;  
 the people believed the government was not subsidizing them enough  
 445 the Frontier was about 500 miles; there were about half a million fighting men, if the whole  
 Frontier rose up together  
 457 the men did give the Indian army great experience for junior officers, NCOs and the men; it  
 was the "grounding of soldiering"  
 454 this is why there was a long service army, whose individual training was very good; they  
 found bases to build on to fight in modern terms  
 472 they did not have armor or support; they did have trained men that were full of initiative  
 478 when the war began in 1939, it did not look like India would be involved at all; they did  
 send a division to the Middle East and trained alongside a couple of British groups  
 489 they were going to fight against the Italians; the Italians were all in the bag within a week  
 510 when war with Japan began, there was a disaster in Singapore; the Indian troops were raw  
 that were trained for war in the desert  
 539 there was nothing real particular about the Japanese, except that you had to kill all of them  
 549 up until 1914, the government was in complete control; after that, the trouble started  
 567 the intention to give the Indians their independence began long before  
 576 when Independence did come, it had to be hurried and was too hurried; the differences of  
 the peoples litigated any overall plan  
 588 the Northern Indians were very different from the Southern Indians; there were about 200  
 languages  
 601 they still hear from their old bearer, every year since they have left in fact; the bearer is in  
 Delhi  
 616 their bearer was a Mohammedan that elected to stay in India  
 630 end of Side A

**Tape 878, Side B**

**Lamarques (Part 1 of 3) (878.2)**

007 when Independence came in 1947, Lamarque found that there was minimal interest in the  
 public; all of the newspapers seemed to be concerned with Palestine  
 011 Palestine was a problem then; compared with the 400 million people in India, it was  
 "chicken-feed"  
 014 the departure of the British from Palestine was a difficult operation in many ways, with the  
 problem still today  
 018 Palestine was an enormous interest to the people of England, although in terms of their  
 empirical responsibilities it was a minor affair; India was an enormous affair  
 021 having the Palestine affair being put before the Indian Independence was a shock to  
 Lamarque; he still thinks they had their priorities in wrong order in terms of British  
 importance  
 024 after leaving India, the other places the British have left since have followed automatically;  
 the others were only possessed because of communications with India  
 030 if it had not been for India, Lamarque believes they would have never bothered about  
 acquiring the other countries; having left India, there was no point in remaining in any of

the other countries  
 032 in some ways, Lamarque believes they were a little too slow in giving up the others  
 because they ceased being important  
 035 the British had been conditioned to giving India independence at any date after about 1930;  
 everything was sped up by the war  
 038 there was no resistance whatsoever in giving India independence from the British; it was  
 absolutely right to do it when they did  
 041 Lamarque believes that the Indians could have had independence a lot sooner if they would  
 have played their card better; much of the trouble was because of the Congress party  
 alienating the Muslims  
 045 the Muslims were uncompromising and unprepared to settle  
 046 the Indians never really believed the British when they said they were leaving; they did not  
 really believe they would leave  
 049 no one could quite believe it when the British government set the date; the Lamarques were  
 in Delhi at the time  
 053 Lamarque's family did not have any ties with India, except indirectly; them losing interest  
 in India after a few days was not because of the lack of ties because this was true for almost  
 every who had went out to India and returned  
 060 deciding to go out to India was a "casual thing" for Lamarque; he was unsure about what  
 do when he was an undergraduate  
 062 someone suggested that he take the Civil Service Exam when he graduated  
 064 in those days, the home civil service and the Indian Civil Service candidates took the same  
 exam; Lamarque put his name down for both without giving it much thought  
 067 when the results came out, he learned he might get into the home civil service in a "dismal  
 office" that did not sound very appealing; he could get into the Indian Civil Service straight  
 on, so he decided to go out to India  
 072 it was one of the wisest moves he has ever made, although it only lasted ten years  
 073 he joined in 1936 and departed in 1937, at the end of his probationary year; this was spent  
 at Oxford or Cambridge or London University  
 079 there were courses in Indian history, a great deal of Indian law, horseback riding, and  
 languages  
 087 at the end of the year, they were given an exam in all the subjects; they then went out and  
 were still given exams in language, law and taxes  
 091 most of the ICS men were graduates of Cambridge and Oxford; there were a few from the  
 Scottish universities and from Dublin  
 094 a university degree was essential, because without one it would be extremely difficult to  
 pass the exams  
 096 there was also an interview  
 102 Lamarque does not think that anyone who went out to India as late as he did would imagine  
 that India would last the whole time; this was a time when jobs were difficult to get  
 105 generally exciting life, for the pay was decent and you were given early responsibility; you  
 would have never gotten those responsibilities if you stayed in England  
 107 when Government of India Act was passed in 1935, things stabilized in India because this  
 was an enormous step towards self-government; signaled that independence was not far off  
 112 there was the expectation that, when they got independence, the European/British civilians  
 could be absorbed and make a career in an independent country

117 for this reason, there was a considerable drive in Britain for recruits to go out to India  
120 if it had not been for the war, things may have worked out with Federation  
122 the Federation never got going because the princes failed to respond to appeals to enter into  
a federation; they could never agree amongst themselves  
125 once the war came, all of these activities had to be put on a shelf; this was also a tragedy in  
many ways  
128 had there been no war and things went according to plan, Lamarque suspects that there may  
have been a Federation in India by 1940 or 1941; Independence was a formality of that  
131 if the federal government had asked for independence, there would have been no reason for  
them not to get it  
132 no one in Britain wanted to cling to India as a dependency, which is a fallacy among people  
these days; people now think that the British were “clinging” to India, which is not true  
135 what broke the hearts of the British was that the only way they could get out of India was to  
give them Pakistan  
138 the objective of the British rule in India was to unite the country, keep it united, and hand  
over a united country when the time came  
141 however, this was not to be  
144 Lamarque does not think he was that ignorant about India when he went out  
145 the year would give someone a certain amount of preparation; before then, one had come in  
contact with several people who had been there, even if there were no family connections  
149 one would also know a lot about the British history in India  
150 not knowing anything about the Indian history prior to the British arrival was a little bit of  
a set-back  
160 Lamarque was not married when he went out to India; he went out in 1937, then war came  
it was near impossible to get leave then  
162 Lamarque did not make it back home until 1945; he got married and then went back out  
167 in those days, one could not get a pass for a spouse because there was such a jam up of  
traffic; his wife came out in 1946 and they both went out to Pakistan  
171 after leaving India, Lamarque joined the British Service and went back out to Pakistan for  
four years, from 1951 to 1955  
175 much of the Pakistan government officials had known Lamarque from the time spent in  
Delhi  
179 when they returned to Pakistan, they greeted Lamarque with open arms and allowed him to  
see all of the files and such; they kept nothing from him  
185 Lamarque initially served in Madras; he was then posted to the central government in  
Delhi, where he came across the many Muhammadans  
187 Lamarque then went to Calcutta in 1944, spending 18 months there; he was then sent to  
Bombay for about six months, returning to Delhi in 1946  
197 this is the complaint among those writing up Indian history: they come do not come across  
many people that served in the south  
200 the India Office Library asked retired Indian Civil Servants if they would record their  
experiences in India and send them to the library  
207 by doing this, they were putting on record what it felt like to be “on the spot” for future  
reference for historians about the last days of the British rule in India  
214 Lamarque believes about fifty or sixty people have added their experiences to the  
collections; Lamarque received a letter of thanks from the office because few of those from

south India had contributed  
221 those in the south were perhaps more Indianized because of the greater numbers of Indian  
officers  
226 if you wanted to know the impact of British rule in India, you would have to go to the  
province of Madras because the British had been there for three hundred years; this makes  
a difference  
237 in the Punjab and the Northwest Frontier, it was only a hundred years of British rule and a  
short time when compared to that in the south  
240 the result for the south was that there were naturally higher intelligent people and spoke the  
most beautiful English  
245 Lamarque was first struck by one of the daily papers in that the English was perfect; they  
were highly literate  
253 this was found throughout southern India, even in the villages; there was a high incidence  
of English-speaking people  
255 Lamarque noticed in Delhi that, in the north, unless you knew the local language, you were  
not going to get very far in villages  
259 in south India, everyone spoke English instead of the local language  
263 as the south grew more accustomed to the British ways, the whole way of life and  
administration was extremely efficient  
269 this made life easier for the administrators; you had an affinity with the people that was  
missing in north India  
274 when Lamarque went to work for the central government in Delhi, he found a high  
proportion of Madras people in the subordinate ranks because of their superb English and  
high intelligence  
279 Lamarque used to claim that the central government was run by the [Madrassies?]  
281 there was a rule in the government that was a type of quota, in which there was a certain  
percentage of jobs available to those from southern India, as well as those from other areas  
287 the Madrassies succeeded in infiltrating themselves into the central government and more  
or less running it from below  
292 south India has been less appreciated because it did not have any real problems  
293 the real problem the British had in India was the Hindu-Muslim conflicts, which were  
continuous  
296 in south India, the population was almost all Hindus; the political conflicts were between  
the Brahmans and the non-Brahmans  
305 the Brahmans were the ruling government when Lamarque arrived in 1937; the  
non-Brahmans were the opposition or “Justice Party”  
308 whichever they were, there was not the fierce tension like in the north; this made life easier  
in a way  
317 because the south did not hit the European press headlines, Madras was taken for granted;  
the whole ran smoothly because they were highly efficient and intelligent  
329 south India was seen as being apart from the north; the attitude of those in the south was  
like that of the Scots to the English: they felt very separate but treated as they were the  
same as the rest of the country  
335 it was argued in Madras that the government, when it legislated upon all India subjects,  
would only have in mind the Indus and Ganges Valleys and never appreciate the problems  
in the South’s way of life



341 legislation was often times inappropriate to those in the south; Lamarque made this point in  
the writings for the library

348 the Madras government and the central government were in a state of perpetual conflict,  
always having violent verbal arguments on various subjects that the Madras government  
felt their views had not been given enough attention

353 the legislation that went out from Delhi were not appropriate to south India because the  
conditions were so different in so many ways

358 this tension still persists today

367 Lamarque talks of the various districts he served, all of which were in the extreme southern  
part of India

378 there was one district in that Lamarque was the only European; looking back, it seemed  
like a very lonely life but he did not mind

383 one was so busy with all of the work that kept you moving, whether it was hearing court  
cases or touring; you did not notice you were missing a social life

394 as a district officer, Lamarque is unsure if he felt that southern India was being neglected;  
he noticed when he was in Madras when the war broke out

409 the British believed there would be a stream of telegrams from London at the beginning of  
the war, noting evacuations; none of this happened

421 the British introduced the “sales tax”, in which Canada was the only other country being  
introduced to sales taxes at the time

430 it is a very easy tax to collect and impose

433 the British were such amateurs that they did not know how to administer the tax; Lamarque  
was put in charge of this

439 Central Government did not like the idea because it was new and saw it as inappropriate  
452 when they approached the Central Board of Revenue and asked for the income tax figures  
for the businesses, they were told it was a Central Government matter and had nothing to  
do with the provincials

459 Lamarque went through the phone book, asking everyone what their “turnover” was; they  
eventually figured out the turnover rate and determined the sales tax from there

474 the social relations of those in the South were much easier for many reasons: 1. they had  
been there 300 years, 2. English was the universal language, 3. both parties went out of  
their way to meet the other in social terms

491 because the Indians were so intelligent, the backgrounds were similar to those of the  
British; there was no real problem

496 one of the difficult things to do was to get to know the Indians, especially in North India

498 British women would go out and about; Indian women did not and were kept very much in  
the background

502 the southern Indian women were much more open and accessible; there was no problem  
with women in social terms like there was in the north, which was a great help to social  
interactions

511 there was a certain level of racial discriminations up until the 1940s

518 in the Madras club, only Europeans would be allowed in; it was run by British  
businessmen, which were always more conservative and rigid in racial matters

526 one evening Lamarque went out to play tennis at the club; there was a nice man who had  
just come out for the ICS, whose father was Indian and on the viceroy’s council and mother  
was English

537 the boy was indistinguishable from an Englishman, except that he was slightly darker;  
Lamarque and his friend took him along to play tennis at the club as a guest  
549 one of the Europeans in there said they could not allow the guest in, which was extremely  
embarrassing  
556 this was the only time Lamarque experienced something like this because, on the whole,  
one was pretty careful not to offend the Indians or the Europeans  
565 Bombay was a place where relations between the Indians and Europeans were pretty good  
on the whole; the reason was because the large, influential community that was at ease in  
both camps  
575 end of side B