

## T. Harry Williams Center for Oral History Collection

### Tape 884 Finding Aid

**INTERVIEWEE NAMES:**

Right Reverend Lesslie Newbigin 4700.0604 Tape 884.1 (Tape 2 of 2)  
Arthur Barlow 4700.0605 Tape 884.2 (Tape 2 of 4)

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

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

**SERIES:** British Voices from South Asia

**INTERVIEW DATES:**

Newbigin: 6/21/1978

Barlow: 7/5/1978

**TOTAL PLAYING TIME:** 1 hour, 32 minutes

Newbigin: 46 minutes

Barlow: 46 minutes

**OTHER MATERIALS:** None

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### Tape 884, Side A

#### Newbigin (Part 1 of 2) (884.1)

- 001 Righteous Reverend Lesslie Newbigin worked in Indian missions; de Caro states the  
purpose of the interview is to talk to him about why he went and the kind of work he did  
004 unlike other interviewees Newbigin not of Anglo-Indian origin, but rather his interest in  
India began at Cambridge University  
010 in 1936 Newbigin went to South India as old style District Missionary and was there  
twelve years before Indian independence in 1948  
012 lived in city of Kotturpuram, one of the most distinctive Hindu cities, untouched by  
western influence  
017 duties were teaching in high school, village schools, and congregations  
019 Brahmin boys in high school  
020 spent Wednesday evenings in the Rama Krishna mission discussing Hindu and Christian

gospel  
024 tension in city because of transition to independence  
028 British social remoteness from Indians especially in rural areas, but not in the  
Christian college where his colleagues worked  
032 although the number of British civil servants was low, they were still a kind of ruling  
race  
038 rode his bike to school and boys shouted, “White dog, get out!”  
041 realized that resentment of white foreigners dated to the Crusades; they called him  
[Peringhee?] which is a Tamil term that means Frank  
045 he camped out in Indian village mud huts, fell in love with India, and decided to stay for  
the rest of his life  
050 hostility not personal, but rather official  
052 story about students chanting, “Quit India” but telling his colleague at Christian college,  
“You didn’t think we meant you, sir? Did you?”  
063 missionaries allowed in country on condition that they didn’t partake in political  
activities, but he and his colleagues sympathized with the national movement  
078 immediate consequence of independence was an increase in British population in India  
087 British who interacted with Indians included ICS officials, merchants, and missionaries  
095 levels of Anglo-Indian interaction differed  
098 he stayed in the Indian pastor’s home two days a month, friendship grew  
103 he was looked up to as a powerful person (“Sahib”) in the villages  
110 difference between district missionaries in the 1970s and 1930s; he was monarch of all  
he surveyed and had more responsibilities and authority  
138 district missionaries in the 18<sup>th</sup> century established schools  
150 no preparation before going to India although his wife had a year in a missionary college  
154 undergraduate course in Cambridge from 1928-1931, two years in Glasgow, three years  
of theology on his return to Cambridge  
160 language training, becoming a child in order to master Tamil  
170 because of a bus accident, he had two years of language study rather than requisite one  
184 Indian colleagues argue that most education should be from Indians in the field  
187 contemporary pre-training includes programs to educate people about cultural diversity  
and interacting with different world views  
195 Long-standing British-Indian relationship; British were in Madras over 300 years before  
he arrived, deep love-hate relationship  
213 the culture shock of moving to India was not as intense as when he worked three years in  
Geneva, Switzerland, for the World Council of Churches  
217 in 1930s and 1940s missionaries were more culturally cushioned in mission compound  
226 differences between south Indian states and north Indian states  
229 South Indian languages are non-Aryan, Muslim influence in the north but remote in the  
south; British connection is longest in the Bengal and the south  
258 Tamil poster that read, “English alone is the language of rule”, but English is rejected in  
the north  
284 18<sup>th</sup> Century Mughal Empire and British Empire had established a trade relationship,  
men married Indian women, but there was not much culture change so that trade relations  
would not be affected  
293 19<sup>th</sup> Century; Opening of Suez Canal strengthened British-Indian ties and evangelical  
women and children of the Enlightenment influenced India

- 314 the British in India; Macaulay Education Minute of 1834, the rise of the national  
movement and decolonization
- 381 two stages of decolonization: rising native leadership throws out the invading culture  
with tools of the aggressor, and then revitalizes society with native culture
- 388 1947 to 1956 were “honeymoon years” of independence; Suez ruined friendship
- 426 he was one the first bishops of the United Church
- 433 in 1947, he was in the extreme south of India where business men and some ICS stayed  
on, but most British left
- 457 Indian Mutiny of 1857 had traumatic consequences for British
- 487 British and Indian culture blended on familial, economic, and political levels
- 531 British and Indian reaction to the Hindu world view that regards outsiders, such as the  
British, as untouchables

### **Tape 844, Side B**

#### **Barlow (Part 2 of 4) (884.2)**

- 005 arriving in India; people conjuring, diving off ship for pennies, and making dubious  
proposals
- 011 F.P. Baker, tropical clothes outfitter for the services
- 013 he still has five tropical suits, wore one a few days before interview
- 021 climate, covering your head in the heat
- 024 Americans going to the highest deck of the ship and stripping clothing, Indians and  
British would never do this because of negative health consequences
- 040 Voyage to India, met friends
- 047 first posting in Agra, one of the hottest places in India
- 052 six months in Moradabad, a school for cadets to receive revenue, language, and legal  
training
- 054 subsequently posted to Lucknow, in charge of subdivision called Malihabad
- 061 cadet was an official term once used by the East India Company that remained over  
time to refer to first-year military/administrative men
- 084 Punjab Province, favorite province because of climate and friends he met on ship
- 093 upon arrival, he got on a mail train to [Grinda’s?] Bank in Bombay where he got a prize
- 100 Agra was a large station with doctors, engineers, educators, and missionaries
- 102 although his subdivision was in the countryside he lived in the city of Lucknow, which  
was a larger station than Agra where he also had responsibilities at headquarters
- 132 Phillip Mason, author of autobiography, lived in the rural areas
- 138 Barlow was keen on Foreign Service
- 157 he was with the ICS from 1929-1933 and switched to Political Service in western India
- 172 he arrived in West India as an undersecretary
- 188 military on the frontier
- 192 lived in [Rajkot?] in western India
- 205 traveled in central and western India
- 233 sent to inspect jail, but couldn’t gain entrance because prisoner had key and was at a  
bazaar buying food
- 250 state rulers’ ceremony
- 262 part of his job was to inspect prisons, schools, colleges, canals, and bridges
- 281 people liked personal rulers as long as they were reasonable and sympathetic to the  
people

290 ICS looked after rulers and institutions  
300 stereotypes of Maharajas as eccentric, but rather rulers came in various forms  
327 he had many Indian friends, particularly in the services  
344 leaving West India to live at a listening post in the Northwestern Frontier province in  
Chaghcharan  
378 Chinese and Russians making journey on the frontier difficult  
407 little preparation for this post  
428 the journey took six weeks  
444 traveling through the land of the [Mirs?] and [Hunsa?]  
456 going over the Kilik Pass, past the borders of Afghanistan, and into the province where  
Chaghcharan was located  
461 difficult crossing of the Hindu Kush, a notorious mountain range  
506 the British-India Consulate in Chaghcharan  
522 Peter Fleming and General Kahn  
547 the political situation was confusing  
553 the local Chinese were troops that had been driven out of Manchuria by the Japanese and  
were consequently anti-British, as were the Soviets