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Tape 844 Finding Aid

INTERVIEWEE NAMES:
Fergus Munro Innes 4700.0579 Tape 844.1 (Tape 2 of 3)
C.J. Pelly 4700.0580 Tape 844.2 (Tape 1 of 2)

IDENTIFICATION: Britons in Pre-Independence India

INTERVIEWERS: Frank de Caro, Rosan Jordan

SERIES: British Voices from South Asia

INTERVIEW DATES:
Innes: 2/14/1978
Pelly: 2/15/1978

TOTAL PLAYING TIME: 1 hour, 34 minutes
Innes: 47 minutes
Pelly: 47 minutes

OTHER MATERIALS: None

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007 brother went to Calcutta on business, another brother in army in India, plus many cousins in Indian Army
013 seldom saw cousins in India
016 social rank very important, seniority
024 social rank extended to wives
031 his cohorts in Punjab felt like brothers
038 friendly fellows who liked to hunt
042 Madras traditions
047 attitude about being in India Civil Service, differences between serving in different provinces
052 Punjab traditions, United Provinces liked sporting, hardworking image of Madras
060 didn’t know much regarding Bombay, Bangalore, or central provinces
063 book A Special India by James Halliday, other reading suggestions
074 Past Imperative by Edward Wakefield
076 transferring jobs in India, Foreign Political Service made of civilians who weren’t
080 working and soldiers who weren’t fighting, very cushy life
085 social mixing of different services, rivalry, images different services held about each
090 other
092 social obligation to attend club
098 got along well with Indian police service
103 cohesion of Anglo Indians
111 heat in the Punjab, camaraderie among men, everyone talking shop, colorful characters
133 industrial development of India, became joint secretary of commerce department in
143 Delhi, his father had been member of viceroy’s council in charge of commerce, industry
146 and railways
143 Britons were interested in industrial development; Indians held them back, “cow dung
153 mentality”
154 in 1920s, Tata Steel Company came to his father, asked them to prevent importation of
160 cheap Belgian steel, father introduced “policy of discriminating protection,” Indian Army
166 steel bill, 1924
166 opposition to bill, lacked support of viceroy
175 Indians were against foreign investment
179 father’s bill passed by only one vote
198 industrial development craze following war
208 in old days, British government didn’t try to promote industry, just created environment
215 in which private industry could flourish
215 stayed on in Pakistan for a few years after Independence
225 problems with Pakistan
237 many British women were unhappy in India, people with closed minds didn’t do well
246 men settled in better than women, because they had jobs to do
252 servants, nuisance to keep so many, but one man wouldn’t do another’s job
260 competence of Englishmen in India
282 competence of Indian Army
289 recruitment of men for various services, examinations
295 training of Indian police
301 can recall few poor policemen
319 notable eccentrics; judge in Madras who was Tamil scholar
333 eccentrics in Punjab; lazy drunkard, man who supposedly walked on all-fours
359 anecdote about drunken eccentric’s treatment of servant
370 brilliant young man who was a rebel, involvement in court case
397 two poor peasants who were in debt, creditor framed them for beating people, court case
427 peasants who sought help from [Penderel?] Moon, old bachelor judge who was helpful
457 in remote district, deputy commissioner very sick with fever, appalled to learn coffin had
457 been made for him
John Lawrence, circa 1840, ill with fever, told he wouldn’t survive the night, Lawrence decided to drink the bottle of burgundy he’d been saving, fully recovered.

Other case where alcohol cured fever.

Few Britons, including himself, took enough interest in Indian culture, mostly transplanted their own British culture.

Got his Sunday newspaper mailed to him, would read it on Sunday mornings three weeks late.

Mostly Britons were interested in human side of India, people and customs.

Feeling far away from England.

Tape 844, Side B
Pelly (Part 2 of 3) (844.2)

Charcoal burners.

Every province had different revenue system.

Sent out to work settlement of his own, south of Kashmir.

Outbreak of bubonic plague in village, carried by fleas, inoculations.

Training in judicial work.

Canals in southern Punjab, his job was to help people settle around canals.

Feelings about canals.

People in area were formerly nomadic.

Working with tribal people, judicial work.

Wanted to go to Persian Gulf.

Lots of protocol.

Military parades, viceroy’s balls, men far more attractively dressed than the women.

Looking at pictures, Jordan asks about women in pictures, identifying people in pictures.

Stationed at one Hindu post in western India.

Only lions in India were near this post, strict orders to kill lions, not leave them wounded.

Few Europeans at his post.

Educated Indians joining service then.

Social life amongst Europeans.

Investigating a suicide.

Clique within European social life.

Club life; tennis, polo, visiting, drinking, reading, playing bridge.

Britons also met in church.

[“chicar”?] game known as “Englishman’s pride”.

Lunches of chicken or goat meat, never had pig in Muslim areas, meat cooked in British fashion.

English at home envy those who go overseas, Labor party members visiting Rhodesia are horrified by the swimming pools, luxury.

Climate in Himalayas.

Working in atmosphere of royalty, higher rank.

Shooting, duck hunting, viceroy would shoot first.

Hunting partridges in cotton fields, thinks the birds died of exhaustion.

Enjoyed touring around India.

Importance of precedence, rank, complex distinctions.

British marine’s take on precedence.
formality of society in India
Indian Army more hierarchical than British
manners of addressing officers
how junior people learned the rules in India
sometimes best to do nothing, not interfere with orders
perceptions of maharajahs as eccentric
maharajah’s son who was interested in dissecting human corpses