

## **T. Harry Williams Center for Oral History Collection**

### **Tape 857 Finding Aid**

#### **INTERVIEWEE NAMES:**

John Shattock

4700.0583 Tape 857.1 (Tape 3 of 4)

Major General R.C.A. Edge and Mrs. Patricia Edge

4700.0586 Tape 857.2 (Tape 1 of 3)

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

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

**SERIES:** British Voices from South Asia

#### **INTERVIEW DATES:**

Shattock: 3/30/1978

Edges: 3/31/1978

**TOTAL PLAYING TIME:** 1 hour, 42 minutes

**OTHER MATERIALS:** None

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### **Tape 857, Side A**

#### **Shattock (Part 3 of 5) (857.1)**

- 000 continuation of discussion of servants; a man who did all the brushing and cleaning; you had to have several servants
- 005 after leaving Calcutta, he went to the Defense Department, where he served for three years, where he did work of a military-political nature; at the end of three years, he was due to return to Bengal, but his boss told him he wasn't going back, so he stayed
- 012 before that, he had no political aspirations;
- 017 he liked western Bengal, up in the mountains; he had some interesting jobs
- 021 he had to learn a second language, colloquial Hindustani; he had to speak it a lot in Delhi; he had classes two hours a day
- 035 his first job was a special appointment; there were thousands of small states in western India; his job was to draw up a plan to join the small states with the big states; it was

fascinating work, he had to write up a book and draw up maps; he prepared a report, but it was pigeonholed;

040 a plan was put into effect, where his plan to consolidate the states was declared illegal by a British judge, an amending act had to go through congress and he was quite notorious

048 he was made a political agent for a lot of small states

053 John became ill and was sent to Kashmir

060 the British ambassador had special powers of paramountcy in foreign affairs and defense;

085 John was posted to Champa; the Raj of Champa had died leaving a small son, so there was a minority; when there was a minority a resident or his appointed representative had to rule the state while he was trained

093 in 1946, John was appointed vice president of the council at the time that the ruler received his powers

109 John expected to be there for two years to teach the young ruler how to run the show

115 the council was made up of Indians and ministers

121 John's arrival in Champa: the road didn't go into the town, so he had to do the last bit on horseback; there were hills, a river, and open fields;

133 all the state officials were lined up in the fields to greet him upon arrival

142 there were four young men at the end of the line; he shook hands with the first two, but was not allowed to shake hands with the last two because the first two were the sons of recognized concubines of the late raj, but the last two men were the sons of unrecognized concubine of the late raj

154 the people in Champa were very hospitable; they were kind and generous to him even though he was a stranger; they told him that they had no one of his kind for hundreds of miles and they must not make him feel that he's away from home

164 he couldn't show his friendliness too far below a certain circle because they would start asking for favors;

166 he was the administrator; a resident came to inspect his work

173 he spent a month in winter traveling on horseback throughout the country meeting people

178 people were either easy or difficult; there were some very difficult people; they brought out grievances and shouted at you; the manner with which you controlled a gathering like that, the easier it became for you; you had to show that you weren't a softy

182 story about people trying to fool him

190 running a small state; managing money

200 one of the other ministers would come out on tour with him, and they would eat lunch on the mountain side; he thought what he was doing was a man's job

205 the area was huge, but the population was minute

209 a chief minister of a state like Kashmir would have a different job; he wouldn't be able to travel, he would be sitting in an office

213 when you are working in a political department, it was one of the privileges that you would get one or two of the nicer jobs when it came time to leave

217 he was offered the office of political agent in central India or to go to the hill station where he would be his own master in a lovely master, so he chose the hill station

222 this area was largely unspoiled and untracked

225 a political agent was in charge of a small part of a residency

234 life in a princely state was very colorful; the means for enjoyment were much more amusing than going to British social clubs, etc.

272 efficient rulers and administrators in larger states  
 295 restrictions on power of rulers was limited; sometimes approval of resident was necessary  
 312 there were eccentric rulers  
 321 some had women in every state  
 324 a raj was allowed to have more than one wife  
 330 they were, on the whole, not too eccentric  
 333 moving around became a normal facet of life; sometimes it was regretful, but others it was  
 a relief  
 347 Bengal had some ghastly stations  
 350 John was lucky, he had all good postings  
 350 his residency at Kashmir; it was the biggest state  
 365 the chief minister was an admirable Indian Christian from the united provinces from a high  
 aristocratic family; the people in Kashmir were 80 percent Muslim and 20 percent Hindu;  
 the Hindus congregated near the Punjab, on the plains  
 385 sometimes there was fighting between the groups, and the British had to take control  
 405 there was a large community of retired British people; some admirable, some not so  
 interesting; lots of people lived the rest of their lives in India, some living in houseboats or  
 houses; there was an English church and vicar;  
 412 he was British joint commissioner, but he couldn't leave his day-to-day work as resident  
 due to war, and had to appoint a substitute  
 432 Kashmir was a tourist spot, particularly during the war when people couldn't get back to  
 England; they used to spend the summer; business men came, as well as Americans; he  
 spent two days with American General Stillwell, who was a tough nut to crack  
 448 in Kashmir, there was a great polo ground; on one side there was a golf course, then there  
 was a hotel, then came his house that had a wonderful garden; he had six gardeners; the  
 next house belonged to a retired British state official who was a forest inspector (Kashmir  
 had a vast forest); then came the residency offices; he was a quarter of a mile from the  
 residents' house, which was next to the offices; on the other side was the river (one of the  
 five rivers of Punjab), the houseboats, houses, the church, the club, shops  
 496 a regiment of the Indian Army in Baroda  
 505 discussion of ordinance surveyors, Survey of India people; they moved around a lot  
 531 moving around a lot made him cut down on his accumulations; he didn't bring back a lot  
 of goods, except for rifles; he didn't believe in collecting oriental brassware because he  
 wasn't very fond of it; he liked the objects he found in Iran better  
 562 the Black Hearts Club was founded around 1870 and ran for about 70 years; it was for the  
 entertainment by bachelors and grass widows for of all the kind people who had  
 entertained them  
 577 they used to have three main parties a year; a ball and supper, at which the state lancers  
 would dance; leading the state lancers was the viceroy who was given the girl who was  
 considered to be the best looking girl to dance with; a lot of food was sent out from  
 England, it was the highlight of the Shimla social season  
 592 another dance was given at the end of the season

### **Tape 857, Side B**

#### **Shattock (Part 5 of 5) (857.1)**

000 After the war, John wasn't there long after Independence

005 people who went out were managers in business; a larger number of technicians went out to  
 India to teach people how to do industrial processes; they got licenses to set up factories of  
 British industrial processes and British technicians went to India to train and ended up  
 being managers; independence didn't change the number of executives going to India  
 015 independence changed the face of people like himself who no longer went out to India  
 018 during the war, there was a great deal of diversity of people going to India; some of them  
 were not remarkable; this was quite of change from before the war; after the war was over  
 a lot of British disappeared  
 031 the great change was that there were many technicians going to India rather than service  
 people  
 033 social relations changed: lower middle class and higher working class as opposed to  
 middle-middle class or upper-middle class (before the war)  
 042 there was a distinct dialect among Anglo-Indians  
 046 he still meets people who were in India from time to time  
 052 he doesn't mind going to reunions of services that are still alive (i.e. a Foreign Office  
 reunion), but doesn't like going to those that are dead (ICS); he likes to see the young  
 061 the Indians adopted many English words as well; Bengalis had echo words like "Will you  
 give me a recommendation teccomendation?"  
 066 if a Bengali was very well dressed, they would say he was "fit-fat"  
 078 he was told he had to wear topees; he had a small one, which was more gentlemanly, and  
 a large one for going into the jungle, called a pith helmet; he was also told to buy a  
 cholera belt made of wool  
 085 then came the war, and the doctors (who were not in India) suddenly decided that this  
 was rubbish and they didn't need to wear topees, so he stopped  
 094 some soldiers didn't wear shirts in the stuffy offices, they just wore shorts, stockings, and  
 shoes; this is different from when he first arrived when you had to cover yourself up; he  
 was glad this changed  
 098 he refused to get a cholera belt; it went out of style after WWI; it was supposed to protect  
 you from when your body temperature changed and to protect the spine  
 110 there was little interest in India by the British in England; when there was a debate in the  
 House of Commons about India, the House emptied  
 114 he followed what was going on in India; he corresponded with his parents weekly; his  
 mother wrote him of domestic affairs and family news, and his father wrote him about  
 sports and the new books he'd been reading; the letters complimented each other  
 125 he kept up with news of trouble in Europe in the 1930s  
 137 they would have tremendous dinner arguments about whether Chamberlain was right or  
 wrong about the policy of appeasement [with Hitler]  
 140 story about being wrongly condemned by an officer at a luncheon party because of a  
 comment Shattock made about Hitler invading Austria  
 148 the men would stay at the dining table after dinner while the women went into the drawing  
 room  
 150 the British would rarely drink wine in India because "it didn't travel well"  
 153 there would be a small container of whiskey on the table in front of everyone's plate;  
 [limbupanie?] was a popular dinner drink, especially with the women  
 167 people would call themselves after their trades  
 175 Shattock never felt isolated in India because he met British that he could relate to and felt

- comfortable with; he is also very fond of the Indians; always would keep an interest for things occurring back home by reading the English newspapers that were sent to India, but were always weeks late
- 190 there were great book shops in Calcutta and Bombay
- 197 women seemed to have trouble adjusting to India because they had nothing to do; there were a good number of women that did a lot socially, but there were a number that didn't
- 210 in large communities in the later days, women would mix with high class Indian women; in the smaller stations, it was highly unlikely to meet educated and sophisticated Indian women
- 217 "a sophisticated Indian woman is the most charming and intelligent creature that there ever is"; more and more develop into this type of woman as time went on
- 228 average British women in New Delhi and Calcutta had enjoyable times; they had their own clubs, coffeehouses and libraries; they could also do a lot of shopping because of the great number of shops
- 239 on the whole, the women made the best out of the bad; some did, however, make a bad job out of it; they all could have made a greater effort to mingle and socialize with the Indian women
- 244 the women played a significant role in the English not becoming closer to the Indians: the men would be willing, but the women would hold them back
- 249 the men tended to know the Indians, while the women did not and, as a result, less likely to socialize with them
- 252 in the Indian army regiments, there was a tradition of the wives tending to the younger officers and soldiers' wives
- 260 Shattock's closing sentiments and feelings: he enjoyed the time spent in India and the only sadness comes from it coming to an end (although for a very good reason)
- 303 the Indians had to rule themselves in self-government
- 309 the best thing the British ever did for India was to unite it
- 326 many British thought Pakistan was going to be better than India
- 337 Shattock believes he must have missed something while in India because the Indians did have a love for freedom
- 344 end of Shattock interview

### **Tape 857, Side B cont'd**

#### **Edges (Part 1 of 3) (857.2)**

- 350 beginning of Edge interview
- 352 on his maternal side, Edge's grandfather was in the police and all his uncles were in the Indian army; Edge's great-grandfather was in the education department in India as a headmaster at one of the schools in Calcutta; Edge's great-great-grandfather went out as a soldier and graduated to quarter master; Edge's great aunt married an ICS Commissioner
- 409 his great-grandfather married Louisa Crow, whose grandmother was Indian
- 425 he does not believe there are any connections to India on his father's side
- 439 his father was in the public works department and the first generation of the Edge's to go to India; one of Edge's uncles went to India under strange circumstances
- 474 Edge's trip out was very interesting; his parents lost almost all of their belongings on their trip out in 1916; they all came home in 1920 (Edge was eight then)
- 494 after spending his childhood in India, Edge wanted to go back, as was the case with most of

the children  
497 Edge was determined to go back, so he joined the Royal Engineers; he was one of the four  
people sent there in 1936; he came back in 1949  
511 he and Mrs. Edge were married in India in 1939  
516 when growing up, the Edges rarely thought of themselves as Indians, but they could  
identify with India because their long family history; all of their friends were connected  
with India in one way or another  
537 they were very aware of their many Indian connections while growing up  
579 there was very much an Anglo-Indian community  
586 younger generations no longer exists in the way they did  
602 end of Side B