INTERVIEWEE NAME: Ivan Ellis Jones

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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 some 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
by the time Jones got to the Punjab, it was very cool; his first district was Hoshiarpur
the Siwalik Range came out just before the Himalayas; it is geologically older and comes
out about 200 feet
Punjab Plains are about 1000 feet; it is a vast alluvial plain
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
in the sky beyond it was the snow from the Himalayas hanging in the air, about seventy
miles away
the inhabitants were a mix of Sikhs, Hindus, Muslims; they were very intelligent
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
the Sikhs were a type of reformed Hindus; they had considerable “weight” in the Punjab;
they had holy temples and such there
the British took over from the Sikh kingdom; the Sikhs had a fine army lead by French
officers
the Sikh Wars were very tough to win
the British moved in after the great Sikh ruler died, leaving a minority rule; the British
acted as regents for the Sikhs
at one time in the Punjab, the non-Muslims had suffered under Muslim rule; during another
time, the non-Sikhs suffered under Sikh rule
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
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
when Partition finally came, the hostilities in the Punjab became extremely terrible and
tragic
Jones found himself staying with the deputy commissioner
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
a trainee was also given third-class magistrate powers; they heard minor cases
the witnesses would talk in Punjabi but the records were kept in [Oulu?] and English
[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
they put in a large number of abstract nouns; it is a westernized form of basic Hindi
Oulu was an official language that all non-English correspondence required
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
the Oulu version would be read out to the witness (who they presumed would understand
it) and would put his mark of acceptance
this system was efficient when there was a facility in both languages; in the early stages,
however, it was extremely difficult
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.
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
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”
part of the tour included an inspection of the villages; you could possibly see three or four
villages on your morning ride
in some districts, every village had an area that had houses bunched tightly together; this
was for security and was considered a village
the British were concerned with maintaining the records of field ownerships; the fields are
mapped out by the settlement officer
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
the accountant would also record the harvest yields and which crop was in which field
the collector was in charge of the staff that maintained all the records
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
upon entering a village, head man would come to meet the officer and discuss grievances
and such that they wished the officer would investigate
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
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
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
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
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
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
the files and papers followed the officer, having large numbers waiting on his signature
they would leave the next morning; everything would be waiting at the next camp site
when they returned from the next round of villages
young officers were being taught and shown different things, like the different crops and
their names in the local language
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”
Punjabi is a local language that varied greatly in dialects
there are over 300 languages in India
Jones had to prepare for an exam in Punjabi; he had to learn the Sikh scripts
Jones once ran upon some Sikh peddlers, who were surprised when he asked them in
Punjabi about a magazine with Sikh scripts
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
it was a week with a “W”, which meant there would be tournaments, dances and such
Jones was surprised to see the invitation said that he needed to bring his own bedding to the
governor’s house
there was a canvas roll that you would roll your blankets, sheets and bedding in; this could
be rolled up and strapped down
when on a train for long distances, your bunk would be lowered and your bedding roll was
opened, exposing your bedding
although the government house was wealthy enough to supply bedding, they were being
housed in tents for extended accommodations
one would always tour with his own bedding roll, just like you would normally do with a
toothbrush
it was a normal thing to see people carrying their bedding supplies
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
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
the governor was a man named [Hailey?], who would become known as Battle Hailey (?);
his famous work was a two volume book on Africa
there was practically no headquarter society; there were one or two Sikh judges and a
young battalion of horsemen; there was little organization
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
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
they wanted ICS recruits to realize what exactly was being done in terms of research and the like
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
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
one of the officers wrote an essay about it a year later, getting the course abolished; it was
revised years later under another form
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
some did give the recruits a better understanding when compared to others in terms of
diseases in livestock and such
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
while still there, Jones did some touring; he enjoyed it, along with gaining more skills in
languages and such
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. 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. 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. The recruits were sent off to learn mapping skills and survey work. There were about ten of them living in a tented camp. They spent the winter learning and demonstrating their abilities to put all the tools to use. 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. Jones was the subdivisional magistrate, which is slightly more than an ordinary register; he had supervisory duties over some of the magistrates. The Punjab has a tremendous amount of irrigated area, irrigated by canals drawn from the rivers of the area. Jones had similar duties in [Ruper?], like touring and such; there was also folklore in the area that appealed to the imagination. The rivers seemed to burst through the hills, through the district and out to a ledge; it was about half a mile wide. 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. 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. There were seasonal rivers that were dry during the winter months and filled by the monsoon rains. The following October, Jones was posted as undersecretary in the home department; it was a secretary-like job, filing and such. 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. They would get mercy appeals from convicted prisoners. Jones lived in a residential club that could house about thirty members; there was a lot of tennis, riding and such. 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. 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. 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.
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
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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

Jones did not hear that case because of the international consequences.

the administration of criminal law was completely separate; there was a district board that administered a lot around the primary schools.

as a deputy commissioner, you were generally chairman of this board; as things advanced, some became chair in a more official manner.

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.

they were inspected on the technical side by official school inspectors.

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.

small towns had committees that oversaw the government in a small way; larger towns would have an impact in a larger way.

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.

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.

there was a lot to do; Jones had to get through certain goals before he left on leave, which was in six months.

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.

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.

Jones successor finally solved the problem.

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.

the deputy commissioner’s recommendation almost seemed to have too much weight at times.

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
it was a drama revolving around corruption and romance
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”
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
Jones did walk on for one play and took part in another musical; productions were very well done
this activity was almost entirely European
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
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
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
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
the Salt Range was also infested with snakes; they would be found on the furniture and so forth
there would be rough stone metal placed around the house to discourage snakes from climbing in
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
there were also scorpions that one had to be aware of
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
another man was practicing polo when he saw a cobra rear its head upward; the man decapitated it with his stick
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