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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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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

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.

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.

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.

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

Dalton cannot remember how he came upon the connection.

Dalton came home and took the German Interpretership Exam and received a pass in that when it came time to take the Staff College Exam, Dalton polished his language skills and received enough marks to get in.

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.

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.

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

only English was spoken in the headquarters.

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

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.

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

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.

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

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

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

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”.

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.

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

Dalton enjoyed Delhi.

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

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

it was a very regular sort of life.
in the British and Indian armies, there were two holidays during the week, which were Thursday and Sunday
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
one was expected to do something sensible and get exercise
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
the British soldier in India was a personality; in England he was the bottom but the Indian was way below him in India
the Indians loved the soldiers because they shared a similar role, that of a servant
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
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
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
there was reasonable leave, but the soldiers would get bored after a time; they missed the life of those that served in England
there was not much crime reported; some would take up shooting and hunting
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
shooting around Delhi was very good because of all the crops; the countryside tended to vary
sugar beets were a common crop
the boys and beaters could not walk through the sugar beet crop because it was too tightly packed
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
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
otherwise, they would walk through the land in a straight line, like in the United States; there was not a lot of driving done
in Germany, they go shooting in pairs or three at the most; they also use dogs in Germany
Dalton preferred to shoot birds because he believes he’s a better shot that way
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
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
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
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
Dalton does not think anyone felt that they were behind the times
things were slower in getting out, like new weaponry, but this was partly a problem of
finance
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
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
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
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
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
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
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
end of interview

Tape 878, Side A cont’d
Dalton and Dinwiddies (Part 1 of 2) (878.1)
beginning of interview
if people were recording on paper instead of speech, they probably would have said things
differently
the authors of the books thought someone should record how people lived and what they
did; they wanted to record their thoughts and virtues
the men over-seas never cut their hair; they would wrap it in a bun and put it underneath
their turbans on top
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
there was a certain amount of options when deciding on a regiment
there was an all-Sikh regiment; the regiments had different classes and mixes
the interviewee was in the Sikh regiment; there were about five regular battalions before
the war and one regimental center
there are now fifteen battalions; the Indian army now numbers close to one million
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
the Indian Army had an attraction for the British because it was the “Poor Man’s Army”
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
there was always competition to get into the Indian Army
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

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

the reasons for doing so were economics because the government used to subsidize them; the people believed the government was not subsidizing them enough

the Frontier was about 500 miles; there were about half a million fighting men, if the whole Frontier rose up together

the men did give the Indian army great experience for junior officers, NCOs and the men; it was the “grounding of soldiering”

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

they did not have armor or support; they did have trained men that were full of initiative

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

they were going to fight against the Italians; the Italians were all in the bag within a week

when war with Japan began, there was a disaster in Singapore; the Indian troops were raw that were trained for war in the desert

there was nothing real particular about the Japanese, except that you had to kill all of them

up until 1914, the government was in complete control; after that, the trouble started

the intention to give the Indians their independence began long before

when Independence did come, it had to be hurried and was too hurried; the differences of the peoples litigated any overall plan

the Northern Indians were very different from the Southern Indians; there were about 200 languages

they still hear from their old bearer, every year since they have left in fact; the bearer is in Delhi

their bearer was a Mohammedan that elected to stay in India

Tape 878, Side B
Lamarques (Part 1 of 3) (878.2)

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

Palestine was a problem then; compared with the 400 million people in India, it was “chicken-feed”

the departure of the British from Palestine was a difficult operation in many ways, with the problem still today

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

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

after leaving India, the other places the British have left since have followed automatically; the others were only possessed because of communications with India

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

in some ways, Lamarque believes they were a little too slow in giving up the others
because they ceased being important

the British had been conditioned to giving India independence at any date after about 1930;
everything was sped up by the war

there was no resistance whatsoever in giving India independence from the British; it was
absolutely right to do it when they did

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

the Muslims were uncompromising and unprepared to settle

the Indians never really believed the British when they said they were leaving; they did not
really believe they would leave

no one could quite believe it when the British government set the date; the Lamarques were
in Delhi at the time

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

deciding to go out to India was a “casual thing” for Lamarque; he was unsure about what
do when he was an undergraduate

someone suggested that he take the Civil Service Exam when he graduated

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

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

it was one of the wisest moves he has ever made, although it only lasted ten years

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

there were courses in Indian history, a great deal of Indian law, horseback riding, and
languages

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

most of the ICS men were graduates of Cambridge and Oxford; there were a few from the
Scottish universities and from Dublin

a university degree was essential, because without one it would be extremely difficult to
pass the exams

there was also an interview

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

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

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

there was the expectation that, when they got independence, the European/British civilians
could be absorbed and make a career in an independent country
for this reason, there was a considerable drive in Britain for recruits to go out to India
if it had not been for the war, things may have worked out with Federation
the Federation never got going because the princes failed to respond to appeals to enter into a federation; they could never agree amongst themselves
once the war came, all of these activities had to be put on a shelf; this was also a tragedy in many ways
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
if the federal government had asked for independence, there would have been no reason for them not to get it
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
what broke the hearts of the British was that the only way they could get out of India was to give them Pakistan
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
however, this was not to be
Lamarque does not think he was that ignorant about India when he went out
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
one would also know a lot about the British history in India
not knowing anything about the Indian history prior to the British arrival was a little bit of a set-back
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
Lamarque did not make it back home until 1945; he got married and then went back out 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
after leaving India, Lamarque joined the British Service and went back out to Pakistan for four years, from 1951 to 1955
much of the Pakistan government officials had known Lamarque from the time spent in Delhi
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
Lamarque initially served in Madras; he was then posted to the central government in Delhi, where he came across the many Muhammadans
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
this is the complaint among those writing up Indian history: they come do not come across many people that served in the south
the India Office Library asked retired Indian Civil Servants if they would record their experiences in India and send them to the library
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
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
those in the south were perhaps more Indianized because of the greater numbers of Indian officers
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
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
the result for the south was that there were naturally higher intelligent people and spoke the most beautiful English
Lamarque was first struck by one of the daily papers in that the English was perfect; they were highly literate
this was found throughout southern India, even in the villages; there was a high incidence of English-speaking people
Lamarque noticed in Delhi that, in the north, unless you knew the local language, you were not going to get very far in villages
in south India, everyone spoke English instead of the local language
as the south grew more accustomed to the British ways, the whole way of life and administration was extremely efficient
this made life easier for the administrators; you had an affinity with the people that was missing in north India
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
Lamarque used to claim that the central government was run by the [Madrassies?]
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
the Madrassies succeeded in infiltrating themselves into the central government and more or less running it from below
south India has been less appreciated because it did not have any real problems
the real problem the British had in India was the Hindu-Muslim conflicts, which were continuous
in south India, the population was almost all Hindus; the political conflicts were between the Brahmins and the non-Brahmans
the Brahmins were the ruling government when Lamarque arrived in 1937; the non-Brahmans were the opposition or “Justice Party”
whichever they were, there was not the fierce tension like in the north; this made life easier in a way
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
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
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
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
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.

one of the Europeans in there said they could not allow the guest in, which was extremely embarrassing.

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.

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.

end of side B