McCallums: 4/29/1978
Dixon: 6/17/1978

TOTAL PLAYING TIME: 1 hour, 34 minutes
McCallums: 19 minutes
Spence: 28 minutes
Dixon: 47 minutes

OTHER MATERIALS: None

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Tape 882, Side A
McCallums (Part 3 of 3) (882.1)
007 they were taken to the university
009 the family was treated very badly when they first went out; there were no arrangements for them
012 a day’s pay was collected from everyone in the battalions, part going towards family housing and the other going towards a family hospital
014 even then it was pretty awful
015 McCallum remembers being asked to sign for various medicines; he did not know anything
about it except that they always seemed to want bottles and bottles of [Emgot?]

the last time they went out, there was a fully qualified lady doctor was present in a larger facility; there were also a couple of assistants

they had finally learned the normal hospital procedures

all Gorkha regiments had some sort of tradition; there were no colors because no rifle battalion had colors

the 2nd Gorkhas carried a truncheon, which was given to them by Queen Victoria for bravery on the Ridge during the Mutiny

there was a great connection with various British battalions; there was a connection with a Sea Force from the First World War

there was a connection the Northamptonshire Regiment; they were first class

the Gorkhas were always getting along well with the British soldiers; however, McCallum does not know “how in the devil they spoke”; McCallum does not know what they spoke about either

McCallum’s regiment looked after the Northamptonshire Regiment very well

when Christmas came, a Senior Gorkha officer came up and asked if they could take over all the guards and such of the battalion; this was accepted

after this great friendliness, they were always in McCallum’s canteen because they liked the rum; other men were in another canteen because they liked the beer

no British soldier was ever “had-up” for being drunk because the Gorkhas always took him back

when the Northhamptonshire Regiment left, they were given a presentation and such; in return, they gave the Gorkhas a silver armory member card, making them honorary members of their mess forever

the severing of the goats was an annual affair; it went for all Gorkha regiments

McCallum is unsure if it is still a strong a feeling as it used to be

when there, the deputy commander said that he was going to stop this “slaughter”

India is a funny country

at Partition, terrible things happened; McCallum was there in 1947

McCallum saw some of the rioting and such first hand; some of the after results as well

there was a village outside Rawalpindi, which was half Muslim and half Sikh; they got along well together for years

the trouble makers would then come around

the Sikhs would attack the trains; one train pulled into the station with all dead passengers

McCallum believes they tried to rush things and all the killings were a result of that

McCallum does not see many people that he knew in India; there are few in the area

there is a Gorkha association, but he is too old to attend; there is a yearly mailing

McCallum’s regiment, the 9th Gorkha Rifles, still exists in India

McCallum’s colleagues are rapidly “dwindling away”

they discuss the Gorkha Museum; the secretary of the museum is a man named Maines

end of McCallum interview

Tape 882, Side A cont’d

Spence (Part 1 of 2) (882.2)

if you were born of parents who lived in India, you more or less accepted the fact that around age six or seven you came back to England to be educated

this was not just for those English children in India, but any part of the British Empire
you expected not to see your parents except when they came home on leave, until about the
age of eighteen or when your parents retired

if your parents were not retired by the time you were eighteen, you perhaps went out and
joined them (especially if you were a girl)

now, it is part of everyone’s contract that, if you are working abroad in the forces, they pay
for your children to go abroad for two holidays

the main obstacle was time; it took about three weeks just to get out to India, so you had to
be separated

Spence’s mother came home every six months to see her children

Spence tells of how her sister had to stay with a grandmother, a cousin and at school

they were considered lucky because her father had leave every three years; some fathers
had leave every four years

during the rest of the time, the children had to spend their time with strange people

she compares it to one of Kipling’s novels

there seemed to always be a weekly letter; Spence was considered lucky because both her
mother and father would write to her; most children got letters only from their mothers

even parents in England would send their children away to school, but not at such a young
age; they would send them when they were a little older and for not as long a time

it was more common, especially in the middle class, to send one’s children off to boarding
schools; it was more common to send the boys away when compared to the girls

Spence’s paternal grandfather brought his three children back to England when his wife
died; the children first went to his mother, then a governess/housekeeper

the housekeeper lived with the children until their father retired

life for Spence’s father and siblings was not very thrilling; however, one would accept this
“rather stoically” and a part of life

when the war came, Spence’s mother came home and decided to stay with the children in
England for their education

in those days, one did not expect English children to be in India during their childhood, so
there were no schools to educate them

disease was the main reason why parents wanted to send their children home; there was a
high infant mortality rate

there were no vaccines for malaria and such

Spence and her brother both contracted dysentery and malaria

Spence’s brother was only four when he came home; he lived in the school nursery with his
nanny and went to kindergarten

this meant that Spence could go in and be with the nanny as well; this made things easier

they always had some sort of nanny; this was how it was done in England

in India, it was unheard of not to have a nanny or something

sending children away to school is not as common now, partly because of the financial
situations; it is almost impossible now, unless your family is well-off

Spence tells of how sending children off to boarding school is more political now; the
schools are becoming comprehensive

in the old days, grammar schools were given grants, where you did get a good education;
these are being “squeezed out” now because they are seen as “elitist”

they are becoming private now because they no longer receive grants; this makes them
much more expensive

more common to send your children as “day children” because it is less expensive; families
settle in areas surrounding a school they consider to have a strong academic background
because of the high mortality rate, the British were reluctant to establish schools for the English children in India; one really wanted to get their children out of the country; children always seemed to be ailing; some were alright; Spence remembers going to a British cemetery in India and the whole area “was stiff with the graves of children”; most of the children were about three years old; people do not realize the difference the discovery of antibiotics and cure for malaria made; Spence tells of one man covering all stagnant water with oil or petro; this was to stop mosquito breeding; Spence tells of her mother getting up in the morning and having a swarm of mosquitos fly out of her slippers; one always had to sleep under a mosquito net; the British became very big on boarding schools when it became a necessity to have somewhere for the children to go; it has been a part of the culture; Sidney Smith, an 18th century clergyman, had a terrible time at Winchester because of bullies and such; he was offered a place at Winchester when his son was born and took it because someone offered to pay for it; his son was terribly beaten up and bullied as well; it is estimated the son died in his early twenties as a result of the beatings; Arnold started a system of prefects, after which many of the schools were started with the purpose of boys going into the army or Colonial Service or Indian Civil Service; this system was supposed to teach virtues and such; Spence remembers having a strong sense of doing things for the community while at school; this was very much instilled as part of your education; one had to accept a certain amount of things without complaining, which was also part of it; this “stiff upper lip” philosophy has completely gone overboard now; the British have always been callous about their children in many ways; the children of the upper class were often set-out to wet nurses and nannies; one never saw much of their children; they were brought down to the drawing room around five, which was after tea; they were there for about an hour, all bathed, dressed and tidy; other than that, you saw your nanny; the nanny basically raised you; this has disappeared for the most part now, since people have done away with domestic servants; this system did produce a different type of person; one had the slight feeling that it was bad form to become too emotional about things, perhaps especially in boys schools; now, this is not the case; it was a sheltered existence in some respect because you never really saw the outside world; in other ways, one had to learn how to cope with things on your own; Spence remembers traveling back and forth under a guard when she was around seven; no child now would be able to see if their luggage had gotten off one train and onto another and so forth; in many ways you were tough and independent; in other ways, you lived a regimented life in a boarding school; one lacked learning about certain things, like the opposite sex; one was kept within their own sex until about the age of eighteen; there was little opportunity for meeting anyone of the opposite sex; at Spence’s first school, many of the girls were from families that were out in India; at the second school, there were a few but not many; at about the age of fifteen, Spence took the School Certificate and went on for another two
years at another school
405 Spence talks of the headmistress at her third school; they were radicals and forceful
414 Spence’s second school was a delightful school with a wonderful headmistress; there were
actually two headmistresses, both of which Spence kept in touch with and would visit
418 in many ways, the headmistress acted like a mother
419 the last school was very radical, led by a formidable headmistress; Spence found it a shock
to go there after the first two schools
424 at her first two schools, they never discussed the British Empire or such; one just accepted
“there they were”; at the third school, this was thrown out and Spence had to be very quiet
about her father being in the ICS
431 when her father came home on leave in 1944, he saw the headmistress, who was amazed
because of her pre-conceived notions
450 the ICS was considered the elite of the Colonial Services because you had to make the top
grades and such; the lesser ones went to Africa and various other places; India was
considered the “cream”
461 the ICS was a very small service when compared to the numbers of the Indian population;
it was such a small number of people trying to rule a country
468 on the whole, getting rid of the Empire after the war was done with little trauma; India has
done very well on the whole
478 Spence was amazed at how all the laws are the same as they were under the British; the
only difference with the driving codes were that donkeys had the right-of-way
484 the Code of Justice remains as it was
486 although there is a lot going on that one wishes would not, one cannot expect a newly
emerged country to be superbly governed from the go; it is marvelous that it has not been
worse
501 during the Victorian age, all of Spence’s ancestors had ten or so children; with her father
and his two sisters were two girl cousins, whose parents were in India but had died
513 if you look at their family heritage, Spence’s brother is the only male Spence left
523 one never really settled-down there; you accepted the fact that you were eventually going
to go back to England
530 when Spence’s father returned in 1947, every now and then Indian friends would come and
visit; they were horrified because they were living in a little house across the road

Tape 882, Side B
Dixon (Part 1 of 2) (882.3)
003 Dixon’s father was an officer
006 Dixon mentions the book The Raj; Dixon is the first person in the collection
009 in the original hardback, there were some misleading statements concerning the railway
workers
013 Dixon’s mother went out as a bride and was looked down upon by some people; the only
way to overcome this, according to Dixon, was to look down on the people below you
015 the colored fraternity were definitely a poor outcast
018 the book gives the impression that the railway people were mostly from the Eurasian
society; this was true of the subordinates, like the drivers, guards and station masters
021 these people were drawn from the colored part
022 Dixon first remembers her father as District Traffic Superintendent; as such, he had his
own coach to travel in and was forced to tour for the Northwestern Railway Company
they would spend weeks at a time on the trains in comfort; the saloon was very large and
broad gauge by standards
everyone that goes out to India is impressed by the vastness of the railways
Dixon describes the layout of the train and cars
it was a wonderful experience; they would go and stop at little wayside stations; her father
would inspect the station, making sure the office and signals were working properly
they would often take the opportunity to go off and have a shoot
Dixon remembers laying in her bunk, having her mother or father pass her a duck leg or
something of that nature
there was one experience when Dixon’s father was going into the Low Hills; the morning
after the inspections, Dixon awakened to find the carriage moving
the Indians were moving it to where they thought was the proper place, to be hooked onto
another train; the train got out of hand and they had to chase it down the main line with the
express coming up
Dixon’s mother jumped, Dixon was thrown out; Dixon’s father went back for the servants
they pulled the brake and stopped the cart; they then pushed it off the track, just in time
there was a young man in one of the remote stations who loved playing the violin in the
evening; some of the locals would come down and play their version of the instrument
they became friendly; their priest told them the only way to get to Paradise was to kill the
station master and they did
the whole staff was involved in the killing, except for one who had gone up the side of the
hill to get water; he lived to tell the tale
it was a wonderful time full of wonderful traveling; the rail stations were crowded;
 everyone was in a panic to get on board
there were people asleep on the platform, so one had to jump over them to get past; there
were vendors
the train would probably pull out with people hanging on all over the place
Dixon remembers having a very large and roomy bungalow; there were plenty of gardens
around it
Dixon was the only child until she was four and a half years old
there were about fifteen servants; they were all known just by their job, with one exception
Dixon talks of speaking nursery rhymes in Indian and English; she talks of the little games
she would play with her father
Dixon talks of a Sikh who had served her father
Dixon’s father was one of five boys; the Sikh grew up with her father and they went off to
service with him
the servant served until her father retired; there was a deep-down devotion, shown when he
cried as her father was leaving
Dixon escaped being a spoiled child because she was followed by brothers; the oldest
brother was terribly spoiled, still to this day in fact
Dixon tells of knocking off the turban of her father’s friend when they were playing; he
became upset; children hugged and kissed him, saying everything was going to be alright
Dixon could not sleep one night while her parents were at a party; the servant laid on the
side of the bed and rubbed her back until she went back to sleep
her father would have trusted him with anything
the other servants were all nameless
Dixon rarely heard her father being really angry with a servant; Dixon only remembers one incident in which an Englishman got very angry with a servant.

It happened when they were staying in a hotel in Delhi; the man was supposedly the strongest man in the British army; the man picked up the servant by the neck and threw him over the stairs when the servant upset his wife.

Mrs. Donovan was as strange as her husband; she had a beautiful golden wig and you could see the stitching along the side; it is rumored she wore a black wig when King Edward died.

Dixon talks of the mothers taking the children into the hills during the hot weather while the fathers stayed in the plains.

They moved after her father received a promotion.

They had just moved into a very nice house when her father went out on one of his tours; when they returned, there was servants waiting on the platform, talking a lot between them.

The servants had to report that they could not go back into the house because plague had broken out and they had found dead animals around the house, like rats and such.

Mr. Martin Leek came along with pictures of beautiful botanical gardens that he was the curator of; he offered for the Dixon’s to stay in his house until they got back into their own home; they accepted the offer.

While staying with Mr. Leek, Dixon’s aunt, who was in Army Nursing Service, received leave; she went and stayed with them, bringing her puppy with her.

Dixon talks of how the puppy was very “snappy” and bit her one day; that night, the dog began roaming around the house, rolling about and howling.

The vet believed the dog had rabies.

People at one time had to go to Paris for rabies treatment, normally not making it there in time; there was now a treatment center in India.

On the verge of coming back to England; it had to be canceled as they went up to the clinic.

They had to walk to the Pasteur Institute every day to receive their anti-rabies injections; it went on for three weeks.

For the first half of the time, there was an injection on both sides of the stomach every day; after that, you received an injection on one side then the other side the next day.

One would become rather sore.

Amongst the patients there, there was a man who was in the Burma Forestry; he made his servants hold him down and cut a large area out of his leg where he had been bitten.

He did this because he knew his chances of making it to the Institute in time were very small; he did make it there in time and did not get rabies.

Dixon knows what rabies can be like and takes the threat of it coming seriously.

There was a tour in England, then they went back out to India; her father went out again with another promotion; he was stationed in Calcutta.

Now, all the government service moved up to Shimla for the hot weather, so her father got to go with them; they had a very lovely house in the suburbs.

Dixon could tell from her mother’s actions and mood that it was a good time; her mother was always going off to a ball or party.

Dixon went to a fancy dress party at one of the lodges.

Dixon was around ten at the time, so she began a sort of schooling; she had no real schooling at all at that point.

There was an old woman that gave lessons; Dixon and her neighbor would go.

One day, while they were on their way to the tutor, they were thrown out of the car; this was...
the end of their education

218 Dixon was sent to boarding school in England; she could read well, although she pretty much taught herself

223 the most traumatic thing was to leave your parents and go to school in another country
226 you did not know the school ways or language; you did not know what was meant by all the school terms like “prep” and such
227 dress attire at school were very severe costumes, dress blouses and such; Dixon’s clothes were not like the other girls, so she was laughed at and mocked
233 Dixon was desperate and had to endure two years of this before her mother came home
234 next to go was her brother, probably worse for him because he was very pampered
238 Dixon believes she had a longer educational career than others, partly because of where her parents were stationed
240 her brothers came home much younger when compared to Dixon
241 it did not matter to Dixon; she could read
242 she attended an east school, a private school for girls; they learned many things, but none of the things they needed later
249 while growing up, Dixon wanted to be a doctor; after school, Dixon had to learn physics;
255 Dixon went on to medical school and passed her first medical exam
257 her husband then asked her to marry him, and that was the end of medical school
264 Dixon’s uncles were all in India in various services; all rose to the top of their profession
267 they always spoke Hindustani while in India; the children may have spoken it better than English; speaking English was not encouraged
272 it was believed that speaking English would allow the Indians to determine what you were talking about; you learned their language
277 the medical set-up was rather inferior; Dixon remembers being sick and the doctor coming and prescribing an ointment for her cough
288 in those days, doctors would make their prescriptions in their own offices/pharmacies
289 Dixon was in bed and her mother was giving the baby a bath; the baby began coughing when the medicine arrived
292 her mother put some on the baby’s chest, who began screaming; the skin came right off his chest; he still has the scars today
298 years later, her mother went up in the hills with the two boys; her brother broke out in a rash; the doctor thought it was scarlet fever
305 it was serious because it was not well known in India; once it began to spread, there was no immunity to it
309 her brother went into the new isolation hospital; he was ordinarily going to be placed in a damp bed but her mother discovered the problem; he was eventually put into a dry bed
332 her mother noticed the wall in the back room was bulging because of the rains from the monsoon; the doctor told her not to worry and left
340 a little later, the wall in the back room came crashing down
345 her mother had to leave the door to the room open because there was no other ventilation and it was extremely hot
346 her mother awoke to a nasty smell; it was a wild hill man lying next to her bed; she hit him over the head with her shoe
356 the next morning, she sent for a guard and her father
362 the rash turned out not to be scarlet fever, for it disappeared just as fast as it appeared
366 Dixon’s aunt was in a remote area in the hills when her small son fell and almost severed
his tongue; there was trouble in getting to the doctor because there was a small strike
when they reached the doctor’s office, they found that the doctor had been called out and
was not likely to return that night
the aunt told the assistant to sew the wound, but the assistant said he could not because he
was not allowed to
after the aunt stated she would take responsibility, the assistant said he could do it but he
could not give the boy any anesthetic; the aunt gave the boy some chloroform
the aunt said there is nothing worse than trying to do something to aid the tongue of a
wailing child
they finally got the child calmed down and the tongue stitched
women were coming very young from a sheltered life in England
while growing up, people were constantly telling stories about India; it was something
people talked about regularly
Dixon did not really hear a lot about her ancestors that had served in India; she did her own
research on the subject; she knows the least about her father’s side
Dixon’s paternal great-grandfather arrived in India about 1820; his son had retired to
England by the time Dixon met him
Dixon’s grandfather was in the police force; they were Irish
Uncle Vincent wrote The Silken East, The Isles of Fiji, The Charm of Kashmir and others
Dixon’s brother read an article in the paper concerning someone very anxious to get a hold
of writings about Burma; Dixon’s copy was reserved for her grandson
they look at pictures from India
Dixon remembers her father seeing his brothers in India fairly frequently; Dixon has clear
recollections of them all
after they had returned from England, they were on their way to Shimla when they broke
down at her uncle’s police camp
Dixon remembers sitting in a tub and scooping ants out of the water; it was awfully hot
after two more days of travel, they reached Shimla under heavy snow
they stayed in a hotel once arriving in Shimla; it was infested with monkeys, which you
could hear in the overhanging trees
the hotel was arranged in two blocks, connected by an outdoor staircase; Dixon would go
down the stairs to get her meals
Dixon’s brother refused to get out in the cold and had to have his meals served to his room;
his had to wear gloves until his utensils were warmed
the next morning, their mother found their dog made hole in the couch; you could only see
his head poking out
her mother would sit on the sofa when someone was coming to hide the hole until a new
cushion arrived
there were great temperature extremes that had to be dealt with
India was very much a family thing; it was not uncommon to have brothers, sisters and
other relatives in India at the same time
generations of the same family would keep going out to India
after her father’s generation, fewer children began going back to England for schooling;
this also coincided with the fact that India was gaining independence
in their younger years, Dixon’s mother would go up to a small place where they had a
cottage; the grounds were full of flowers