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Tape 884 Finding Aid

INTERVIEWEE NAMES:
Right Reverend Lesslie Newbigin 4700.0604 Tape 884.1 (Tape 2 of 2)
Arthur Barlow 4700.0605 Tape 884.2 (Tape 2 of 4)

IDENTIFICATION: Britons in Pre-Independence India

INTERVIEWERS: Frank de Caro, Rosan Jordan

SERIES: British Voices from South Asia

INTERVIEW DATES:
Newbigin: 6/21/1978
Barlow: 7/5/1978

TOTAL PLAYING TIME: 1 hour, 32 minutes
Newbigin: 46 minutes
Barlow: 46 minutes

OTHER MATERIALS: None

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Tape 884, Side A

Newbigin (Part 1 of 2) (884.1)
001 Righteous Reverend Lesslie Newbigin worked in Indian missions; de Caro states the purpose of the interview is to talk to him about why he went and the kind of work he did unlike other interviewees Newbigin not of Anglo-Indian origin, but rather his interest in India began at Cambridge University
010 in 1936 Newbigin went to South India as old style District Missionary and was there twelve years before Indian independence in 1948
012 lived in city of Kotturpuram, one of the most distinctive Hindu cities, untouched by western influence
017 duties were teaching in high school, village schools, and congregations
019 Brahmans boys in high school
020 spent Wednesday evenings in the Rama Krishna mission discussing Hindu and Christian
gospel

tension in city because of transition to independence

British social remoteness from Indians especially in rural areas, but not in the Christian college where his colleagues worked

although the number of British civil servants was low, they were still a kind of ruling race

rode his bike to school and boys shouted, “White dog, get out!”

realized that resentment of white foreigners dated to the Crusades; they called him [Peringhee?] which is a Tamil term that means Frank

he camped out in Indian village mud huts, fell in love with India, and decided to stay for the rest of his life

hostility not personal, but rather official

story about students chanting, “Quit India” but telling his colleague at Christian college, “You didn’t think we meant you, sir? Did you?"

missionaries allowed in country on condition that they didn’t partake in political activities, but he and his colleagues sympathized with the national movement

immediate consequence of independence was an increase in British population in India

British who interacted with Indians included ICS officials, merchants, and missionaries

levels of Anglo-Indian interaction differed

he stayed in the Indian pastor’s home two days a month, friendship grew

he was looked up to as a powerful person (“Sahib”) in the villages

difference between district missionaries in the 1970s and 1930s; he was monarch of all he surveyed and had more responsibilities and authority

district missionaries in the 18th century established schools

no preparation before going to India although his wife had a year in a missionary college

undergraduate course in Cambridge from 1928-1931, two years in Glasgow, three years of theology on his return to Cambridge

language training, becoming a child in order to master Tamil

because of a bus accident, he had two years of language study rather than requisite one

Indian colleagues argue that most education should be from Indians in the field

contemporary pre-training includes programs to educate people about cultural diversity and interacting with different world views

Long-standing British-Indian relationship; British were in Madras over 300 years before he arrived, deep love-hate relationship

the culture shock of moving to India was not as intense as when he worked three years in Geneva, Switzerland, for the World Council of Churches

in 1930s and 1940s missionaries were more culturally cushioned in mission compound

differences between south Indian states and north Indian states

South Indian languages are non-Aryan, Muslim influence in the north but remote in the south; British connection is longest in the Bengal and the south

Tamil poster that read, “English alone is the language of rule”, but English is rejected in the north

18th Century Mughal Empire and British Empire had established a trade relationship, men married Indian women, but there was not much culture change so that trade relations would not be affected

19th Century; Opening of Suez Canal strengthened British-Indian ties and evangelical women and children of the Enlightenment influenced India
the British in India; Macaulay Education Minute of 1834, the rise of the national movement and decolonization

two stages of decolonization: rising native leadership throws out the invading culture with tools of the aggressor, and then revitalizes society with native culture

1947 to 1956 were “honeymoon years” of independence; Suez ruined friendship

he was one the first bishops of the United Church

in 1947, he was in the extreme south of India where business men and some ICS stayed on, but most British left

Indian Mutiny of 1857 had traumatic consequences for British

British and Indian culture blended on familial, economic, and political levels

British and Indian reaction to the Hindu world view that regards outsiders, such as the British, as untouchables

Tape 844, Side B
Barlow (Part 2 of 4) (884.2)

arriving in India; people conjuring, diving off ship for pennies, and making dubious proposals

F.P. Baker, tropical clothes outfitter for the services

he still has five tropical suits, wore one a few days before interview

climate, covering your head in the heat

Americans going to the highest deck of the ship and stripping clothing, Indians and British would never do this because of negative health consequences

Voyage to India, met friends

first posting in Agra, one of the hottest places in India

six months in Moradabad, a school for cadets to receive revenue, language, and legal training

subsequently posted to Lucknow, in charge of subdivision called Malihabad

cadet was an official term once used by the East India Company that remained over time to refer to first-year military/administrative men

Punjab Province, favorite province because of climate and friends he met on ship

upon arrival, he got on a mail train to [Grinda’s?] Bank in Bombay where he got a prize

Agra was a large station with doctors, engineers, educators, and missionaries

although his subdivision was in the countryside he lived in the city of Lucknow, which was a larger station than Agra where he also had responsibilities at headquarters

Phillip Mason, author of autobiography, lived in the rural areas

Barlow was keen on Foreign Service

he was with the ICS from 1929-1933 and switched to Political Service in western India

he arrived in West India as an undersecretary

military on the frontier

lived in [Rajkot?] in western India

traveled in central and western India

sent to inspect jail, but couldn’t gain entrance because prisoner had key and was at a bazaar buying food

state rulers’ ceremony

part of his job was to inspect prisons, schools, colleges, canals, and bridges

people liked personal rulers as long as they were reasonable and sympathetic to the people
ICS looked after rulers and institutions stereotypes of Maharajas as eccentric, but rather rulers came in various forms he had many Indian friends, particularly in the services leaving West India to live at a listening post in the Northwestern Frontier province in Chaghcharan Chinese and Russians making journey on the frontier difficult little preparation for this post the journey took six weeks traveling through the land of the [Mirs?] and [Hunsa?] going over the Kilik Pass, past the borders of Afghanistan, and into the province where Chaghcharan was located difficult crossing of the Hindu Kush, a notorious mountain range the British-India Consulate in Chaghcharan Peter Fleming and General Kahn the political situation was confusing the local Chinese were troops that had been driven out of Manchuria by the Japanese and were consequently anti-British, as were the Soviets