INTERVIEWEE NAMES:  H.P. and Margery Hall

COLLECTION:  4700.0581  Tape 847  (Tape 2 of 4)

IDENTIFICATION:  Britons in Pre-Independence India

INTERVIEWER:  Frank de Caro, Rosan Jordan

SERIES:  British Voices from South Asia

INTERVIEW DATES:  3/1/1978

TOTAL PLAYING TIME:  1 hour, 33 minutes

OTHER MATERIALS:  None

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Tape 847, Side A
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001  sports popular with 15th Punjab regiment, ethnic makeup
009  choosing a regiment to join
014  joined 3rd 15th Punjab regiment at [Sorgo?], awful little place in central India
016  moved up to Fort Sandeman
017  differences between British and Indian Army, fewer people, less hierarchy in Indian Army, easier to get promoted, Hall quickly made company commander
024  role of quartermaster
028  in 1934, damaged his Achilles tendon while playing soccer with Gorkhas, couldn’t run
032  no electric lights at fort, primitive medical facilities, sent Hall 200 miles to Quetta (now Pakistan), for medical attention
043  his claim for cost of journey to Quetta, was denied because paperwork not done properly
048  officer who died from anesthetic gone wrong, Hall temporarily assigned to fill in at captain’s pay
056  Quetta earthquake in May, 1935
069  Hall was responsible for bombs, grenades and other weaponry, missing grenades after
earthquake
080 other administrative problems caused by earthquake
089 a marshal of the air force flying down from [Noshiro?], forced landing, plane hit a school, no one badly hurt
108 one of the man on the plane treated for nose injury, but killed in earthquake
114 stories of people’s earthquake experiences, deaths
123 a colonel who arrived at Fort Sandeman, thought he was too sick to continue to Quetta, Hall had to force him to go
130 reasons why Hall left Indian Army, got bored, no room for advancement
140 places in Persian Gulf where British political agents operated
146 political agents allowed to have wives with them, military people weren’t, got to know two political agents in Fort Sandeman, played tennis with them
155 decided to transfer to political service
168 Hall’s relations with other men in service
180 moved to Jhansi in central India, went with an advance party to open new station at Jhansi, station there had been closed for several years
190 Jhansi well known for its tiger hunting opportunities
194 lots of snakes around Jhansi
196 few opportunities for entertainment at Fort Sandeman
200 Hall had two polo ponies, got up early to school them, played tennis and squash in afternoon
206 attended signal school in Poona
220 already knew more about electricity and wireless than the instructors
230 his classmates at signal school
242 Hall refused to take notes at school because he knew it all already
250 Hall called up in front of commandant for having large bar bill, but he’d spent it on ginger ale
263 rejoined his unit at Jhansi, discovered that the colonel wouldn’t release Hall to transfer to political service
289 went to see brigadier at his house about his wish to transfer to political service, brigadier wanted him to stay but allowed him to go to his interview for political service in Delhi
305 his arrogant attitude toward political service
311 viceroy wanted to see Hall, sent car for him
330 had casual chat with viceroy’s assistant
343 went home on leave, played lots of cricket
349 returned to India in October 1937, his unit, the Jhansi Brigade had been sent up to war on frontier
360 learned that he’d been accepted by Indian Political Service, but his colonel had answered for him that he wanted to stay in the Army
378 fought battle on frontier, description of mountain warfare
395 couldn’t shoot until you were shot at, which put British at disadvantage
401 casualties during attempt to take ridge
410 people going haywire, shooting up hillside
422 spent about ten days up there, then got word that he should report to duty for political service to central India
440 differences in amount of leave depending on where you were stationed, how he financed trips home to England
456 took two months leave to Kashmir in 1936, stayed on houseboat with two other officers, had many hungry and thirsty visitors, wound up costing him a lot of money
471 got friendly with maharajah of Cooch Behar in Kashmir, who was fond of tennis and drove a Bentley
490 maharajah hit and killed a cow, had to pretend his driver had done it, driver had to leave Kashmir because cows were sacred
503 lived with a family in India for a while
530 pre-Christmas ball that was well attended by Brits and Indians

Tape 847, Side B
Halls (Part 3 of 7)
002 an assistant political agent, Hall had lots of power in area of Singh and Punjab
008 relations with tribe on Punjab border
017 someone who offered to “bump people off” for Hall
020 description of terrain
023 popularity of mail routes, dispute between locals who wanted mail contracts
027 rode militia lorry on trip from Lora Lai to Fort Sandeman
035 protocol regarding militia lorries
038 attack on mail lorry, Hall had almost been on it
045 dealing with locals shooting each other, assassinations
051 Hall once held up by a gang when he was mistaken for a corrupt garrison agent
061 work of a political agent, performed diplomatic role
065 administration in Baluchistan, a northwest frontier province
074 appointed director of food and civil supplies for Baluchistan during war, in charge of rationing of food and consumer supplies
080 meeting in Delhi to decide on cloth allocations
091 Brits administered India effectively because Indians obeyed them until the end of their reign
098 called upon to give viceroy account of situation in Baluchistan, description of situation there
109 Baluchistan tribal leader said he’d rather have his country as a British colony than to be absorbed into India or Pakistan, more akin to Afghanistan
115 twelve Brits administered 2.5 million people of Baluchistan
125 setting date for hand over to India
133 Baluchistan complied with British rule
137 tragedy of Indian Independence
150 deployment of troops, leadership of Mountbatten
173 problems and alliances between India, Pakistan, Kashmir, Hyderabad
183 relation to Persian Gulf, extent of British administration
194 roles of political service versus foreign service, including Nepal, Afghanistan, other neighbors of India
207 compares India to main character of Three Faces of Eve, who suffered from multiple personalities
216 Americans spoiled Indians during WWII by paying them double what Brits paid
224 advent of air service to India
226 in 1947 it suited Hall to come home and stay home, he had small children
readjustment to England after life in India

difficulties of people who tried to enter commerce and industry

people who went to colonial service in Africa, a lot in Kenya

many more officers per capita in Kenya, less autonomy and power than in India

people who entered diplomatic service had best post-India careers, examples of careers of

people he knew

man who became high commissioner of Tonga

careers of other people he knew in India

people who went to India were looking for wider horizons, escape economic problems of

England

man who traveled overland to get to his post, by the time he got there had heard so much

criticism of ICS that he resigned upon arrival

other examples of career paths of people he knew

Charles Duke entered foreign service and wound up as ambassador in Israel, others

Mrs. Hall recounts story of man they knew who was so cheap he wouldn’t feed his guests

man who went out to Kenya as a deputy lieutenant

India bred eccentric characters, people became a bit more of what they were

Mrs. Hall didn’t like the person India made of her

several conversations at once

description of colonial office, people who worked for it

worked for British interests in Hong Kong in 1949

complications of American interests in Hong Kong

intrigue involving Chiang Kai-shek and some airplanes, famous court case in Hong Kong

Hall became head of Pacific and Indian Ocean department, covering, Fiji, Tonga,
Seychelles, etc.

conference in 1958 regarding Mauritius, people there are Indian, African, Chinese,
Hindu, Franco-Russian

George Wilson, member of the Mauritius conference