

T. Harry Williams Center for Oral History Collection

Tape 843 Finding Aid

INTERVIEWEE NAMES:

Brigadier Richard Gardiner and Mrs. Catherine Gardiner

4700.0578 Tape 843.1 (Tape 2 of 7)

Fergus Munro Innes

4700.0579 Tape 843.2 (Tape 1 of 3)

IDENTIFICATION: Britons in Pre-Independence India

INTERVIEWERS: Frank de Caro, Rosan Jordan

SERIES: British Voices from South Asia

INTERVIEW DATES:

Gardiners: 2/7/1978

Innes: 2/14/1978

TOTAL PLAYING TIME: 1 hour, 29 minutes

Gardiners: 47 minutes

Innes: 42 minutes

OTHER MATERIALS: None

RESTRICTIONS: Copyright retained by interviewee and/or the interviewee's heirs

NOTE: Copyright and property rights are assigned jointly to Centre of South Asian Studies at the University of Cambridge and Louisiana State University and A & M College Libraries and its successor agencies.

NOTE: This index reflects the order of interviewees as they appear on the user copy tape. De Caro's notes state that Side A is the Gardiners, Side B starts with the Gardiners but the recorder malfunctions, and then the remainder of Side B is Innes. It is possible that the tapes sides were accidentally switched when the user copy of the tape was created.

INDEX

Tape 843, Side A**Innes (Part 1 of 3) (843.2)**

- 001 unintelligible [Gardiners interview segment but recorder malfunctioned]
- 040 Feb 14, 1978, interview with F.M. Innes at London House
- 043 father and grandfather were in India, other relatives involved in Madras Army, never expected to do anything else
- 048 Innes born in India, his whole family was there
- 051 no better career open to a young Englishman

054 had to do a man's job from the start
 056 many British families who had generations of involvement in India
 060 when Innes was at Oxford, F.E. Smith gave pep talk to get more Britons in India
 066 shocked by the cynical attitude Smith took toward family connections, reduced it all to financial terms
 071 it was a splendid life, he didn't go for the money
 074 we really believed in British Empire, though it seems naive now
 077 it's different now, wouldn't be acceptable
 082 talks about Philip Woodruff's book *The Man Who Ruled India*
 088 early childhood in Madras, had to return to England at age four, saw mother once every three years, father once every five, communicated through letters
 095 when he returned to India, it wasn't much different from Kipling
 100 meeting ICS men during his Oxford days
 103 twenty-one years' service in ICS
 105 telegram telling him he'd been accepted into ICS
 112 family talked about social life in India, not focused on politics or Indian aspirations
 128 Sir Herbert Edwards, great Punjab character at time of mutiny, who said it might be 100 years before India ready for independence
 137 Britons who believed they should be preparing India for independence
 143 took over Punjab in 1847
 146 India was such a mess, few Brits could imagine a unified, independent India
 149 influence of Gandhi
 155 Innes went to India in 1926
 157 father was member of viceroy's council in Delhi, Innes introduced to top people
 162 assigned to remote district, lived just as they lived in last 100 years, had no ice or electricity, food was intolerable
 170 hot weather in Northern India, fans, advent of air conditioning
 177 hard day's work
 181 first arrived in district during cold weather season
 185 started as magistrate trying petty cases, learning language, learning about district, talking to the people
 197 after six months, took exam to advance to second class magistrate
 201 got subdivision after one or two years' service
 210 promotion very rapid in Innes' time, loose supervision
 220 the Lawrences, who started first Punjab administration
 227 became undersecretary to Punjab government, did lots of work, tremendously understaffed
 235 chief secretary helped Innes with huge backlog of filing
 245 settling a dispute over cost of land
 267 transferred to different district in Punjab in 1932, as deputy commissioner
 272 new district free of political complications, could do old-fashioned administration
 288 the work was endless, hard on his wife because he was so busy, worked from 7AM until 11 PM
 296 touring district, meeting with people to find out what was going on in district
 315 other Europeans in district; an assistant commissioner and a European superintendent of police
 320 many other districts had Indian superintendents of police, better at police than administrative work

- 337 learning the local language
 357 club at his station, problem of deciding whether to admit Indians to clubs or not, eventually most clubs admitted Indian civil servants
 375 Hindus had to wash themselves if they shook hands with “unclean” Europeans; Moslems would be happy to dance with your wife but you can’t dance with his
 383 final breakdown at Karachi in 1952 when club there decided to admit Pakistanis, turned out to be a roaring success
 395 many excuses for British exclusivity, but very divisive
 403 Indian Army didn’t like educated Indians
 411 people tried to enlist allegiance of Innes’ Indian friends because people thought they had influence
 420 Brits got along best with peasants, who looked up to them
 425 problems of Indian peasants, trouble with money lenders and landlords, police
 434 people came to ICS believing they were protectors of the poor who would dispense justice
 448 two things to fight against: corruption and “party barty” or the party game, old feuds that had gone on for generations, combined with democracy, menace to peace of the district
 470 remarkable murder case involving political party rivalry
 490 social life; polo, duck shooting, amateur theatricals, mess night
 503 commissioner’s wife took part in duck shooting and polo, sometimes did good works
 512 wife and family had to be sent into hills during hot season, lots of social life for “abandoned wives” in hills
 528 officers got ten days break in July, ten days in September, to escape heat
 548 later, young men who went to India could afford to buy fully furnished houses
 562 lots of traveling from station to station

Tape 843, Side B

Gardiners (Part 2 of 10) (843.1)

- 001 prep schools for army careers
 010 mathematics stressed
 022 trying to get commission into royal engineers, instead got into royal artillery
 029 went to India with artillery
 032 after two years, got to transfer to engineering, more schooling
 041 Indian Service of Engineers
 051 had almost no involvement with military once he transferred to engineering
 056 expectations of India
 059 mother was in Britain, father killed in war
 062 marriage between stints in India, then wife returned there with him
 067 met wife in Chatham
 069 preparations for going to India: getting uniform, mess dress for evenings
 075 cheaper to buy clothes in India, excellent tailors
 082 helmets required
 091 RAF came to India during WWII for the first time; they didn’t wear standard sun helmets and survived, so orders on helmets were reversed
 108 helmets worn by both Britons and Indians
 112 first job was as gunner on ship called Field Marshall, shipping lines in those days
 121 description of ship, ship seized from Germans

129 civilians bound for India were also on board
 136 problems of carrying civilians on troop ship
 150 Port Said, where people often weren't allowed ashore
 155 near mutiny by civilians who weren't allowed to go onshore at port, finally had to allow
 civilians ashore
 170 Prince of Wales visited India, rioting in Bombay, Field Marshall was rerouted to Karachi
 182 civilians aboard didn't want to board troop trains from Karachi to Bombay
 187 organization of army in India, four corps
 198 ethnic composition of different Indian corps
 207 differences between ethnic groups in India
 225 problem with his aide who couldn't live at post because he was from a different part of
 India, didn't understand local language and couldn't make friends
 235 differences between religious factions
 245 stationed in Bangalore
 253 divisions within Indian Army based on religion
 260 Britons broke castes in army, banned separate Moslem and Hindu kitchens in Madras
 268 two years in Burma, no castes, not much religion, women integrated into everyday life
 273 South India more progressive, tolerant, than North India
 277 people of central India are aborigines
 282 on being a newcomer to India
 296 different ranks; viceroy's commission, king's commission, etc.
 308 engineering projects
 321 promotion to assistant engineer, responsible for 70 miles of rail route
 328 working on construction of a line linking new coal fields
 342 Britons moved around a lot within India, changed jobs
 351 moving house, acquiring furniture
 359 railway people moved for free, their things loaded onto railroad cars
 362 kept personal possessions to a minimum
 367 lost everything he left in storage in Burma
 376 keeping in touch with friends, meeting many new people
 385 spent three and a half years in Calcutta
 400 staff at one of his railroad posts near Benares
 423 railway junctions
 430 many Eurasians worked for railways, police, post office, public works department, were
 backbone of India
 440 original Europeans married Indian girls, after WWI many Europeans stayed in India,
 became railroad drivers
 453 more and more, railroads became Eurasian enterprise
 459 no difference between European and Indian railroad officers
 473 Eurasians torn between Indian and European cultures after WWII, many had very
 European lifestyle
 490 Europeans trying to decide if they should bring their brown wives home after WWII
 499 railroad people were close knit community, had power
 510 social connections in Calcutta
 532 the club was a great institution: tennis, dancing on weekends
 554 at most stations, Brits automatically joined club; in Calcutta, only by application. If you
 didn't join, considered unsociable