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Tape 877 Finding Aid

INTERVIEWEE NAMES:

Sir Charles Dalton and Lady Daphne Dalton

4700.0597 Tape 877.1 (Tape 3 of 4)

Sir Charles Dalton, Brigadier and Mrs. Herbert Dinwiddie

4700.0598 Tape 877.2 (Tape 1 of 2)

IDENTIFICATION: Britons in Pre-Independence India

INTERVIEWER: Frank de Caro, Rosan Jordan

SERIES: British Voices from South Asia

INTERVIEW DATES:

Daltons: 4/27/1978

Dalton and Dinwiddies: 4/27/1978

TOTAL PLAYING TIME: 1 hour, 33 minutes

Daltons: 47 minutes

Dalton and Dinwiddies: 46 minutes

OTHER MATERIALS: None

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INDEX**Tape 877, Side A****Daltons (Part 4 of 5) (877.1)**

- 001 three weeks on the boat with the same people was pretty boring; you went into Port Sudan in the Red Sea
- 004 Lady Dalton passed out once arriving at the port because it was so hot; she only passed out for a moment
- 008 there were very few unmarried girls when compared to the number of men in India
- 013 a young girl had a very social life because of all the available men
- 015 you would meet many people and asked to stay at various homes for a house party; girls would also go out riding, play polo, or dancing
- 018 a regiment would be the particular host in the cantonment and set up the entertainment
- 021 there was one week were Lady Dalton attended a progressive dinner, in which the different courses were served in different houses throughout the cantonment

023 you had to get from one house to the next as best you could
027 it was good, light-hearted fun
029 there were the governors who would hold house parties for various functions; there would
be dances or maybe shooting
032 there was a very active social life that was great fun, according to Lady Dalton
033 your skills as a rider would also produce many extras in sport, such as riding for others or in
a show or to go out hunting
038 shooting was great fun on the weekends
044 the electric fans could not keep up with the extreme heat of the daytime
048 the back doors would be opened; there were two grass screens that acted as a blind
054 a boy was then paid to sit on the veranda and splash water on the screens; the wind would
blow threw the screens and cool the house
058 during the hottest part of the day, the room would suddenly get terribly hot and stuffy; it
was then you realized that the boy had run off or fallen asleep
063 it would emit a pleasant smell, like that of hay; it would also cool the rooms
065 when the Dalton's first went out to India, the fans were hand operated, known as punkers;
the boy who worked the fans was called the punkerwalla
070 he would pull a rope attached to a curtain that was the width of the room and made of cloth;
all houses had this
080 the sand flies were an irritating bug that was hard to see; there were special sand fly nets
over the beds, instead of mosquito netting, because the mesh was smaller
084 in spite of being tucked in all around, they would still sometimes get in and "devour you"
088 Lady Dalton once had to go in cotton gloves and socks to keep from scratching all of the
bites she had suffered
091 some were more vulnerable to being bitten than others; sand fly fever is a recognized
illness caused by sand fly bites
094 sand fly fever is not terribly serious, running a high temperature for a few days
098 you could see the mosquitos and, therefore, kill them
099 mosquito control is much better in India than in Dalton's day; they now concentrate on the
breeding grounds
105 during the war, there were pills that would be taken to help ward off mosquitos and help the
body resist malaria if you were bitten
114 the British and Indian forces had more casualties caused by disease than by enemy fire in
Burma
116 the disease was mostly malaria
118 there was an internal drill, the tablets, and an external drill, by never appearing in shorts
after nightfall
122 in order to get the soldiers to take the pills, the soldiers were lined up and given the pill
every morning
127 the Japanese put a story out into the Indian army that the pills made the men impotent; the
rumor spread like wildfire
135 this was a potent weapon because the men would refuse to take the pill; although people
knew, there was nothing they could do
140 the way to get over this was when the time came for leave; when the soldier would return
three or four months later, he would learn that the rumor was not true
145 Dalton believes there is a lot less malaria now
158 there were a number of regiments, mainly field artillery but others as well

166 at the head in Delhi, there was a Major General Royal Artillery who was one of the staff
 members of the Commander and Chief of Army Headquarters
 168 they were divided into commands: Eastern Command, Western Command, etc.; at each
 command, there was a brigadier who was responsible for the soldiers in his area
 172 the units would rotate every so often; the same men were not in it all the time because the
 British soldiers were only supposed to do a five to six year term
 178 gradually, the Indian units became more and the English units became less
 180 part of Dalton's job during the war was to organize the duplicating and triplicating of
 Indian artillery
 187 you had to have either men on their feet or mules because anything with wheels was no
 good
 190 India also sent many soldiers to the Middle East; the best known division that fought in the
 Middle East was the 4th Indian Division
 195 they formed and trained regiments of all the other branches; they "milked" a percentage of
 officers and NCOs every year
 201 if they had five Indian mountain regiments, they would turn around and make five more
 mountain or field regiments with the officers they got from the mountain regiment
 204 the language barrier was destroyed by forcing everyone to learn English; all commands
 were given in English throughout
 214 the first thing you had to do was to send the people to school and teach them English
 218 just before the war, there was an experimental Indian field regiment called A Field
 Regiment; it was formed with mostly British officers, a few Indian officers and entirely
 Indian other ranks
 223 it gradually became more Indianized; when it grew enough, they cut off some to form B
 Field Regiment
 230 you were expected to spend the tour in India when you signed onto the Royal Artillery
 231 it was inevitable that you would go abroad; depending on one's own wishes, you
 necessarily did not go to India
 234 Dalton suspects that over half of the foreign stations were in India
 238 if you were trained specially in heavy artillery, you would likely go to Singapore; if you
 were trained in horse or field artillery, you were more likely to go to India
 241 most people welcomed the idea of going to India, particularly the bachelors
 243 it was recognized that in India, you received a viable command of troops; in peacetime in
 England, you were always being cut-back and "at half baked"
 250 the Indian army and the British army in India had to be kept at full strength because of the
 possibility of being called to active service on the Frontier at any moment
 255 the moment you went to India, you joined a "live show": everything was up to par; no one
 could be short in India
 258 this is why anyone keen on his job or profession looked forward to going to India: you were
 able to have "a real man's job"
 260 it was also a great opportunity for the young men to enjoy various forms of sport for less
 than at home
 265 it was also a good social life and great fun; one worked hard and played hard
 269 India was not as popular with the young married men
 271 it was too hot for English women in the plains, families were forced to split; separation was
 not popular at all for those recently married and sometimes lead to matrimonial troubles
 279 Sir Dalton did not go out to India until he was in his thirties; the Dalton's had to have a

certain amount of separation

285 Sir Dalton did not mind the separations because there were always opportunities to go up for the weekend and such

286 Sir Dalton spent three years in Egypt before going out to India; Egypt was a wonderful place to be as a soldier because it allows one to see other places

292 the ideas of sport and game applied in Egypt just as in India; one could afford to shoot duck and play polo

296 unless one belonged to a “well-off” family and could afford a good allowance, you were much better off abroad

299 the British kept a relatively large army in Egypt, enough to make their own life; it was similar to India in that respect

302 regiments would go to Egypt for three years and then on to India for nine years

311 the artillery is arranged into both regiments and batteries; batteries were more basic, with generally six guns

314 three to four batteries go to a regiment, which was once called a brigade

318 the changing of words is a bit confusing, according to Dalton, because they are misleading

319 when applied to infantry, brigade means three regiments; in the gunners, brigade means one regiment

327 in most cases, the regimental headquarters would be one place with one or two batteries; the third battery would be in an out station

338 where Dalton was stationed (in an out-station), there was a British infantry battalion and an Indian Infantry battalion; there were various “odds and ends”

346 in war and during mobilization, the troops from there would be allocated would join up with another from elsewhere

351 there was no particular rationale for having artillery in some places and none in others; there would be a battery allotted to a regiment for training

354 there would be a battery per battalion or a gunner regiment per infantry brigade

358 on the Frontier, there were Indian battalions and a few English battalions who were only supported by Indian mountain artillery; you could not apply a field artillery on the terrain

363 Sir Dalton heard the Indian mountain artillery was useful in Burma because of the mountainous terrain; unable to get field artillery until they established suitable roads

368 horses were able to get over high passes, but vehicles were not

371 they went in with mountain artillery and came out with field artillery

378 once you were trained as a staff officer, your first job is with a regiment; you were then given a staff appointment, depending on the circumstances and your aptitude

394 Dalton was sent to Delhi headquarters in 1937; he stayed until 1942, by which time Dalton considered himself “unemployable” in the outside world

405 Dalton did not know the first thing about mechanical warfare when he went out; by the time he left Delhi, he had been promoted to lieutenant colonel

410 when he returned to regimental work, Dalton was ready to command

422 in 1943, Dalton was sent to Burma as a brigadier to command the artillery of an Indian division with a British commanding officer

426 there were three brigades, called Indian brigades; in each brigade, there were two Indian battalions and one British

434 Dalton spent the rest of the war in Burma; he would return to India because of his rheumatism, where he trained Indian troops

444 Dalton went to the hospital in 1944 for a check-up, when he asked the surgeon for pain

medication for his back; the surgeon ran some tests and the medical board determined that Dalton was unfit to return to Burma

484 Dalton and family returned home to England the day the war ended in August 1945
 490 it was not difficult adapting to England after being abroad for so long
 495 Dalton was not allowed any decent military command because of his medical history; he wanted to appeal the down-grade in 1946

512 they had to request his medical history from India, which was very chaotic at the time
 514 after a month, Dalton was informed that the administrators lost the documents
 515 Dalton remarked that he could not think of anything that was wrong with him, only that they told him he was category-B; the doctor replied they did not have any proof and ran certain tests

525 the doctors could not find anything wrong with him, granting him category-A status
 530 Dalton was then promoted and returned to the War Office as head of a branch; he later went back out to Germany, acting as a liaison between the British troops and the Germans and between the high commissioner and the British Commander and Chief

551 competition was intense in those days, and there were two ways of getting into the staff college: direct competition or nomination

563 end of Side A

Tape 877, Side B

Dalton and Dinwiddies (Part 2 of 2) (877.2)

016 Dinwiddie joined in October of 1918 in Peshawar, which was just after the hot weather; it was a large station

021 everyone had good fun from the start, although the pay was microscopic
 023 even though the pay was small, one could do a lot on it
 027 the following summer, a new ruler appeared in Afghanistan; Dinwiddie went off to fight the new regime

029 this started a number of troubles on the frontier, which lasted until 1923; this was also the time when the bulk of the Indian army was in Mesopotamia

033 there were games and work; leave to return home occurred every third year
 038 Dinwiddie cannot think of a happier time
 041 Kashmir was like Switzerland in a way with all the beautiful country; there was a brilliant sun and snow tops; there were many lakes as well

045 it was a free and easy type of life; camping was a nice change of pace from the conforming way of life

050 there was a couple that had went up to Kashmir to go fishing; they enjoyed it so much that they wanted to go back, but the war came and prevented them

055 they were given a passage out to India after the war; they would fly out Friday afternoon and be fishing by Saturday evening

060 before the war, one had to go up 220 miles of winding road and then a three to four day hike to get to that fishing spot

064 there are now beautiful rest houses all the way up that are all furnished
 065 the husband commented on how nice it was to be back, but he had preferred it the old way
 068 late one evening, the Dalton's ran out of gas along one of the roads and had to spend the night in the car; the next morning, a whole batch of Indians appeared and funneled enough gas from their car into the Dalton's car

086 everyone was very helpful when you were in trouble; they would go to any length to help

you out
 093 the Indians continued to have faith in their old officers; they tell the story of one of the sons
 of a Sikh that one of the men served with after they met by chance
 134 in India, when one of the men got into trouble, the officer could write to the deputy
 commissioner and get him to look into the situation; it frequently worked and the men
 received a fair hearing
 141 one of the good things about India and the British rule was that the British were able to help
 the Indians
 145 Dalton wrote to the Indian's boss, telling of the boy's problems and asking if there was
 anything the boss could do; about eight months later, he received a letter stating that it
 worked and the boy was doing well
 160 there was the tradition of when someone arrived in a new place or during a festival, the
 local supermarket manager, who was an Indian, would arrive in your bungalow with a tray
 of fruits and treats; this was known as a dolly
 166 this was to get you accustomed to his shop
 167 traditionally, the British never took anything except one banana or such as a token; as much
 as you would have liked, you could never accept the whole tray
 171 this went in support of the claim that no one would take a bribe
 183 the British Army was always on the move; the great thing was to get to be contractor of a
 British battalion, which was a very lucrative job
 191 the agents would be sent to all of the stations, trying to persuade an officer to take them on
 201 every year, there was the "Trooping Program," which was the movement of troops to and
 from India
 203 this document was very secretive, until the troops were disembarking at such places like
 Bombay; however, all the agents got hold of the document from headquarters
 210 they assumed they would hear from the brewers that one's regiment or battalion was going
 out to India; the first information would always come from elsewhere, which would always
 be right
 217 the Chatfield Commission took place in 1938, when India was trying to get help from
 England to prepare for war
 221 in the end, Admiral Chatfield was sent out to India, with a guardsman amongst his staff,
 who had been posted elsewhere before; when the ship docked in Bombay, the guard's
 bearer was there waiting at the dock
 236 the bearer's response: "Oh Saab, I heard you were coming!"
 238 the "Bush Telegraph" was a wonderful piece of intelligence; the wealthy men had their
 spies every where
 249 the philosophy of the Indians was bribery, which was not considered to be anything out of
 the ordinary; it was a way of life
 253 this could apply to most of the world now
 261 an officer went to one of the carpet factories to make him some carpets for his house;
 eventually, the bungalow was ready and the carpets arrived too big
 270 as it turns out, the contractor had made all the houses one brick smaller all around and made
 thousands of rupees; the only reason he was found out was because of the officer
 283 a special team from England went out to India to investigate because the authorities in
 India were not competent enough to deal with all the fraud that was going out
 288 there was also another large scandal that was going on at the same time
 291 the engineer was working with the contractor in the scam, taking in half of the profits

because he was the man who was supposed to be “measuring up”
 306 there were thirteen rupees to the pound at that time, being worth one shilling and sixpence
 308 the carpet would have been worth about eight pounds
 318 the Persian carpets manufactured in Persia were brought down by camel into India to sell;
 they would sell in the various areas until the hot weather returned, when they would return
 to their highlands
 326 there would often be a carpet they would be unable to sell, which was when “the cunning
 British officer or his wife” would decide to buy; they had to sell the carpet
 332 it was fun because word would spread when someone would be interested in buying a
 carpet; the sellers would come to your house, producing all their carpets for you to choose
 from; after you chose the carpet you wanted, you would then start bargaining and work
 towards a price both sides could accept
 339 they would leave the carpet with you for a few days; when they returned, you would start
 bargaining again, eventually coming to some sort of agreement
 344 the agreement would normally be about half to three-quarters the original price
 352 all of the work on the rugs were done by hand, consisting of around 144 stitches to the
 square inch
 376 the carpets manufactured in India are not made like those in Persia because they lack the
 quality
 379 in 1920, there was the Arab Rebellion in Iraq; all of Iraq, which was still under the British
 army, went up in flames
 402 if one was captured and considered a rebel, the village would be set on fire
 405 there was a clever CO that would want to look around before burning the village; he gained
 many carpets that way
 419 this proved to be a problem when he had to march through Baghdad with thirty donkeys, all
 loaded with looted carpets
 429 to get around it, he had the donkeys lead down a side street so no one would know except
 for the dust cloud that followed them
 443 a military academy was began in Baghdad after the war
 451 there was a European firm that began factories in Persia, as opposed to the hand sewn
 methods, that altered the whole rug business
 459 very few rugs are still hand crafted; they are mostly machine made now, but you can tell the
 differences at once
 467 there would be the groups that would go down to the plains with merchandise to sell; they
 were very traditional in the international trading
 483 communications are better now and most roads are much better
 491 the Prince of Wales went out to India to visit during the cold weather of 1921/1922; he
 went all around India and eventually ended up in Rawalpindi
 496 once there, he stayed in the Commissioner’s house
 505 the Commissioner had a tank of water taken to the roof and, when the Prince pulled a chain,
 one of the men would pour water down upon him; there was a drain connected at the other
 end and this was how the Prince showered
 520 the Indians were great at “make-shift”; they could make things up in no time at all
 528 they discuss different Hindustani words, such as those for “to go” or “to make an
 arrangement”
 556 end of Side B