

Interview with Darwin Hussey - On Life in the International Oil Fields

Title Text: International Drillers
Oral History Interviews
Oil Museum of Canada, 2014

Text: Life in the International Oil Fields:
Getting There



Text: Darwin Hussey
Son of Eric Hussey (Mexico, Pakistan, and Trinidad, 1923-1950s)

[Darwin sits in front of a background with three-pole derricks on it.]

Darwin: He sailed—they took a long time to get over there. They would stop and dally in London, and then they would take a train, go down to Marseille and catch a boat. Or sometimes they caught a boat going through the Gibraltar. I got pictures of Dad through the Mediterranean, showing Gibraltar, and the Suez Canal and Aden, then they'd hit Bombay. Then they'd come home sometimes to California, on the return trip.



Text: Eric Hussey's Home Video: Flying Over Paris

[A silent film clip taken from a plane flying over Paris, France, is shown.]



Text: Sailing into Marseille, France.

[A silent film clip shows a small boat sailing on the water. A group of people is watching off to the side.]



Text: Arabian dhow in the Suez Canal.

[A silent film clip shows a small boat sailing on the water. There are three people on it and it has a wooden mast. The sail is down at first and then the boat is seen sailing with the sail up.]

Text: Life in the International Oil Fields
Houses and Entertainment



Text: On living in Khaur, Pakistan (then India), 1925-1930.

[Darwin sits in front of a background with three-pole derricks on it.]

Darwin: And the Attock Oil Company had great big huge beautiful bungalows for them built,



Text: Bungalow in Khaur where two or three drillers would live.

[A silent film clip shows a person walking along a bungalow that has arches supporting the roof of the porch.]

Darwin: they were all out of stone, they were about a foot—two feet thick and nice and cool inside.



Text: Eric Hussey coming home from work.

[A silent film clip shows Eric Hussey walking in front of a building with his pith helmet on. At the end he sits on a chair, fans himself with his hat, and takes a drink from a servant.]



Text: Aunt Sadie and two other drillers' wives having a jam session.

[A silent film clip shows three women, one playing a small horn, one playing a banjo, and one dancing.]



[A silent film clip shows Eric Hussey golfing in the sand, then playing tennis.]

Darwin: Dad used to play golf in the sand, like you know, they'd have tees and all that but actually it was sand, but anyway. Oh, there was tennis in India, I saw Dad play tennis in India.



Text: On living in Trinidad, 1936-42.

[Darwin sits in front of a background with three-pole derricks on it.]

Darwin: Wonderful houses, bungalows, all shutters with screens, no windows but you could close the shutters. Each house had a cistern and collected water from the roof. I used to pump the water up to the tank up top, supply the house. Servant's quarters in the bottom; cook, the cook, female cook, and maid had one room and the next room was the yard boy's room.

Text: Life in the International Oil Fields:
Dangers

Darwin: They used to have bandits come through the camp, and they would be shooting through the bunkhouse where he was staying and then he said, "I thought it was time I got out of there and I came home." Like, you know, there were bandits coming through the camp in Tampico.

Text: On living in Khaur, Pakistan (then India), 1925-30.

Darwin: I was there maybe a year, year and a half, and I got boils at the back of my neck, these boils, and mother said, "We had to try everything. We figured it was the milk, because there was TB in the milk, cow's milk, so we had to feed you nothing but goat's milk." So I was surviving on goat's milk and it got so bad, the boils, that mother brought me home with Aunt Sadie, on board ship from Bombay down through Singapore and over to Long Beach, to a specialist. And I'm at a specialist, and he did something with the boils, and then not long after, I don't know how many months or weeks later, over comes Dad and Dunc and then they drilled in the Long Beach oil fields and we lived there for two years, in the oil fields there.