

Rory Hope's Digboi

A piece of colonial history through the eyes of a 12-year-old.

Diary kept by Rory Hope of Adelaide, during his trip to Digboi, Assam, India, during school holidays from December 1952 to February 1953.

Introduction

I travelled to India with my school friend, Michael Lewis (Edward Michael Sunderland Lewis). We stayed with Michael's parents in Digboi.



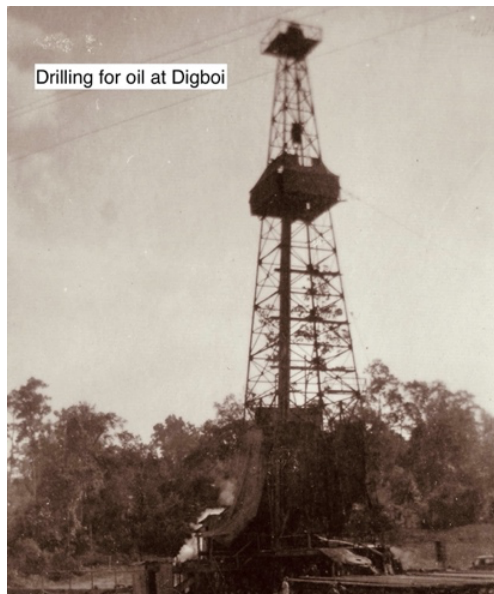
Michael's father, Edward H.S. Lewis (pictured left) was Head (1947-1952) of oil drilling and refining operations at the Assam Oil Company at Digboi in the north east corner of India, close to the border with Burma (Myanmar). The Digboi oil field and refinery is the oldest in India.

The keeping of a diary was imposed on me by my mother and stepfather, a fact that may account for the rather unimaginative text, where many pages commence 'In the morning we did *so-and-so*', followed by 'In the afternoon we did ...'. The top pages were posted home to Australia, while the carbon copies were retained. This transcript was taken from the carbon copies using Apple iPhone dictation facilities. One advantage of this method is that the very large number of spelling mistakes in the original (I am partially dyslexic) were automatically corrected! The photos were taken with an inexpensive 'Agfa' box camera.

Apart from spelling corrections, the diary entries are reproduced here unchanged. Some of the language used may be considered inappropriate now, and I am totally shocked that we got pleasure from snipe shooting and watching cock fights. These practices are abhorrent to me.

It is informative to compare Rory Hope's diary with that of Donald Provan (see *Provan's Digboi*: "True account of a visit to Assam India, 10.12.52 – 8.1.53", Koi-Hai, <http://www.koi-hai.com/Default.aspx?id=490826>).

Donald (with his brother) and Rory were visiting Digboi at the same time, and several of the events they witnessed are described in both diaries. Note that Donald's diary commenced "10th Dec., Saturday" and follows on in sequence with Sunday, Monday etc. I think the 10th of December 1952 was, in fact, a Wednesday. Thus, comparisons between the two diaries requires care with the dates.



The diary

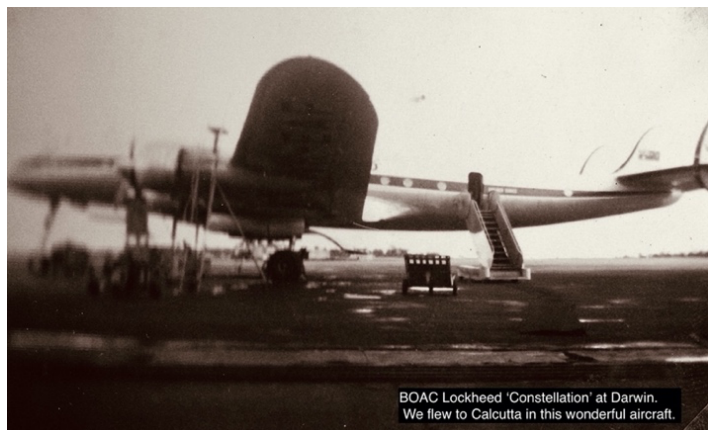
1952

Tuesday 9th December

We set off on a fairly fine day and went up above the clouds. From up above it looks like a 'Dinky Town'. At the moment we are over the beginning of the Flinders Ranges. Good landing at Leigh Creek and we saw the coal fields and a big drag line excavator, the biggest in South Australia. It is very deserted country under us, and Lake Eyre is very dry. We landed at Oodnadatta at about 9.45 (am) It is a small town with very poor soil and is waste land. Good take off but rather bumpy flying between Oodnadatta and Alice Springs. For breakfast we had fish patties, grapefruit, scones with butter and jam. It was very hot at Alice Springs and terrifically bumpy between Alice Springs and Tennant Creek. The pilot left the cockpit door open so I can see him operating the controls. Very hot in Alice Springs and I am feeling sick. We are skipping Daly Waters and flying straight to Katherine. It was raining very heavily at Darwin, so we got delayed. Had tea and went to bed.

Wednesday 10th

We went to the airdrome but the plane had to have a new engine put in so there was an eight-hour delay. The new camera works well. We went for a tour around Darwin and saw all the interesting things. We set off at seven o'clock and are still flying.



Thursday 11th

Got to bed at 4:30 and woke up at seven. Took some photos, then we went for a trip around Singapore. We saw all the buildings and shops and markets and went over the office. Had lunch at the airport and got on the plane. Good takeoff and lovely afternoon tea. We flew over the sea most of the time and are taken up to the cockpit by the first officer. The plane has a crew of 10 The pilot, first officer, second officer, copilot, navigator, wireless operator, two stewards and air hostess. Good landing [at Calcutta / Kolkata] met airport by Mr. Lewis.

Friday 12th

Had breakfast and went for a walk round the block. Calcutta a very interesting place but I will tell you all about it when I get back. Then we went shopping in the market. It is great fun and every

person there comes running after you to try to get you to come to the shop. We have four servants waiting on us. We saw some 'holy men', they're called, lying on thorns in the middle of the footpath, muttering prayers – they were quite mad. Taken lots of pictures and my camera is working well. In the afternoon we went to the pictures. Had a good night sleep.



"Holy Man" on the streets of Calcutta

Saturday 13th

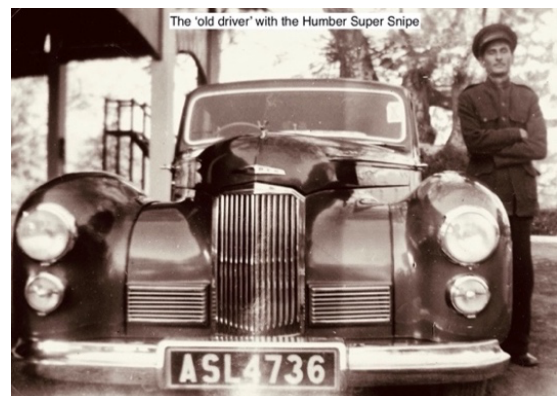
Took off at 7:30 heading for Assam by DC3. The first and only stop Guwahati. Flew with a view of the Himalaya mountains, which were snowcapped. Landed at Mohanbari [airport] at 12:40 and met by the Lewis family with a picnic lunch, after which we motored 47 Miles through tea estates until we reach the Digboi, the oil town. Saw swimming pool and had a look around the garden.



Mr & Mrs Lewis and their son Jeremy, in the garden at Bungalow No. 1, Digboi



Bungalow No. 1, Digboi



The 'old driver' with the Humber Super Snipe



Domestic staff at Bungalow No. 1.
(Jeremy Lewis second from right).
We were well cared for!



The man in charge of clothes
washing at Bungalow No. 1



Bridget (L) and the
'Burmese Nanny' who
cared for Jeremy

Sunday, 14th

In the morning we had a look around and played till 10 o'clock. Then we went to the bazaar which was very interesting. I bought a sharp knife and flute made of bamboo, and a big Indian hat. In the afternoon we went over the oilfield with Mrs. Lewis and saw a well being drilled. Went home and had a good meal.



Scene at the local Bazar, Digboi

Monday 15th

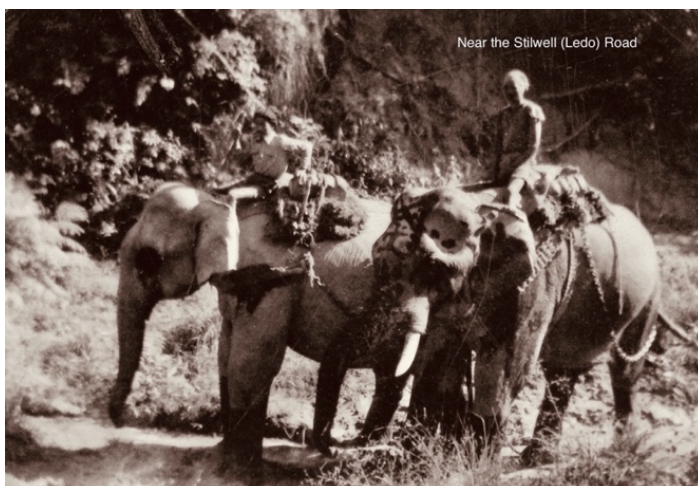
Woke up and played 'till the Bishop of Assam came. Some snake charmers came up to the front lawn and did some charming with cobras and it was very interesting. In the afternoon we had a rest till 3 o'clock and then swam the rest of the day. Had tea and went to bed



Naga people in Digboi

Tuesday 16th

Went for picnic on the Tirap River. It is about a quarter of a mile across and is only 3 feet deep in the deepest part. I walked across the river, and we had a stone throwing contest. On the way back I SAW MY FIRST ELEPHANT.



Near the Stilwell (Ledo) Road

Wednesday 17th

Went for walk to the refinery but weren't allowed in. Then we had a quick swim in the swimming pool and had lunch. Then we rested till 3 o'clock. Then we had a birthday party for a little boy who was staying with us after that. Mr. Lewis arrived from Calcutta and helped us make a crystal set each. We had tea and straight after, the fuse burst and about 16 men came out with ladders and a big truck. We have had a lovely weather. Each day we see odd parties of Nagas. These are wild hill tribes who come

down from the hills in the cold weather to cut and clear jungle for the AOC [Assam Oil Company]. They are primitive in their dress and wear only a loincloth. They have their teeth black, and hair long and most of them wear long lumps of raw amber or turquoise through big holes in the ear lobes.

Thursday 18th

Morning. went to doctor to get some ointment for my tail (spots). Afternoon – we made a Dinky Town upstairs and made some crystal sets. After, that we went snipe shooting.

Friday 19th

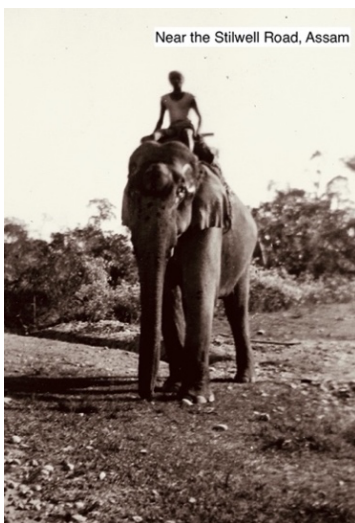
Went Christmas shopping with Mrs. Lewis. Afternoon – swam in the bathing pool and after tea we went snipe shooting. Snipes are fairly small birds with a long beak. After supper, we had cine films in the house.

Saturday 20th

Left early after breakfast for a motor trip up the Burma Road better known as the famous Stilwell Highway, constructed during the war for the retaking of Burma. The road branches to Kunming in China. After lunch we had a family foursome of golf. Mrs. Lewis and I beat Mr. Lewis. and Michael. We went out to dinner with Mr. Corps [Eddie] who has a very funny Burmese servant.

Sunday 21st

Morning – go to church Service, and after have a swim. After that we did various things, such as played badminton and glued our crystal sets together. In the afternoon we went around the Oilfield with Mr. Lewis. After supper, we went to a carol service in the Digboi club.





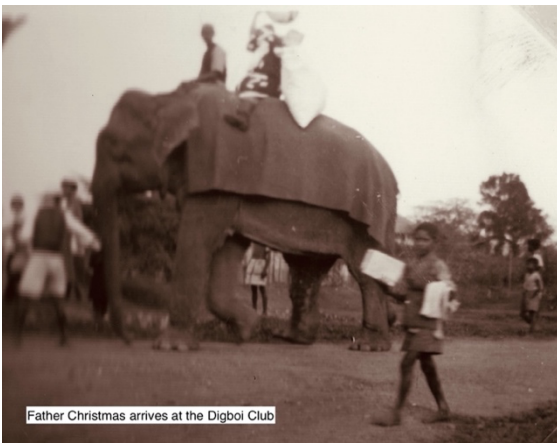
Mr. Corps [Eddie] near the oil refinery

Monday 22nd

In the morning we went to the garage to collect our hired bikes. They are very nice ones – then we went for a bit of a ride. Had lunch and swam all the afternoon had tea and went to bed

Tuesday 23rd

In the morning we went for a ride on our bikes to the golf course which is about 3 miles away from the main house. After that we decorated the house ready for Christmas. After morning tea, we went shopping in the bazaar. It is great fun there. After lunch we rested till 3 o'clock and then got ready for Father Christmas to arrive on an elephant. When we got there (Digboi Club) we had tea and the magician showed us some tricks. After that, Father Christmas arrived on an elephant. I got some photos of him. He gave out presents and then everyone went home. We had tea and after tea, some carol singers came round with candles and sung 'Silent Night'. Most of the people here are Mohammedans [?].



Father Christmas arrives at the Digboi Club

Every year, at a certain time, they throw images made of clay into the lake. It is very interesting, when it is dry, to see all the images that have been thrown in. After that we went to bed.

Wednesday 24th

In the morning we went to a field of green grass (on our bikes) and practice golf; messed about with crystal sets

'till lunch. After lunch we went for a swim. Had very interesting day but are looking forward to Christmas.

Thursday 25th December. Christmas Day.

We had a very happy Christmas day. Michael and I woke up very early and opened some of our presents. I love my book on aircraft. Then we woke Jeremy and Nannie and invaded Mr. and Mrs. Lewis. My presents are as follows: a Kukri from Mr. Mrs. Lewis. This is a Gurkha weapon made in Nepal and use by all Gurkha troops, a book from Mike called 'Coral Ireland,' a diary from Nannie, and a toy helicopter from Jeremy, and after lunch the best surprise of all, but this is a secret. After lunch Indian agents called on us and gave us presents of fruit sweets etc. At 10 am we saw a film in the club (which was decorated like a snow scene) called 'Melody Time' by Walt Disney. Then home to Christmas dinner with goose, plum pudding, and bon-bons. Went to tea in the Duran Lines [?] where we saw the Durwans who are Indian Christians from the Lushai Hills. Mr. Lewis made a speech in Hindustani. After that, we returned home and had an early bed very late. We had a very lovely Christmas tree in the house and all the servants got their presents off it this morning.



Religious parade in Digboi



An obliging Naga on the roadside near Digboi

Friday 26th

After breakfast went for a picnic to the Dehing River about 10 miles from Digboi. The river was mostly sand, and the little water was too dirty to bathe in properly. Saw foot marks (pug marks) of a tiger and cub. Monkeys came right down to the riverbank, but we could not see them on the way to and from our picnic place. We drove through miles and miles of tea Gardens which was very interesting. We were tired and sunburnt and glad when bedtime came. PS Received cable today and Clive's letter.

Saturday 27th

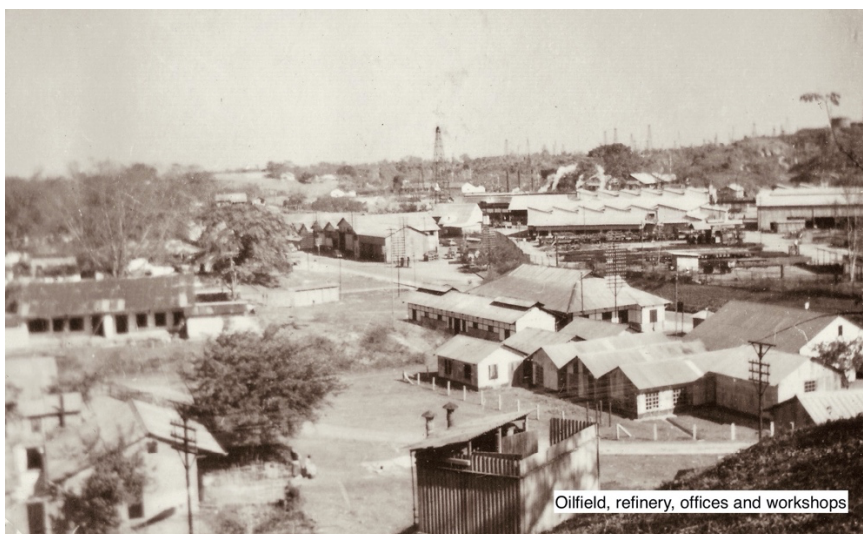
Had breakfast and wired our crystal sets all morning. In the afternoon. We had a swim and then went to the golf course. I did one hole in four. Went home and played canasta, had tea and went to bed.

Sunday 28th

Woke up and had early breakfast. After breakfast we set off on a picnic to the Proban's camp on the Dehing. [The Dehing Patkai National Park is located in the Dibrugarh and Tinsukia districts of Assam]. We set off in a car and drove about 50 miles (saw two elephants), then had one hour push through the jungle to the river. Then we got into a dugout which is like a canoe but hollowed out of a tree. Then we rode up the river for about 3 miles 'till we came to the camp. When we arrived, we had a swim and then had lunch. Then me and Michael and two other boys rowed up the river about 3 miles on the way we had to stop and lie down flat in the boat because there was a herd of wild buffalo and if they had seen us, they would have charged! I got some good pictures. Went back the same way as we came and went straight to bed.

Monday 29th

In the morning it rained very hard, so we played about inside. Then, straight after lunch, which is at 11, we went to the [company] workshops with Mr. Lewis. It is very interesting and complicated. We were given a screwdriver and a [set] square and quite a lot of useful tools. When we got home, we had tea, looked at stamps and went to bed.



Oilfield, refinery, offices and workshops

Tuesday 30th

Woke up and messed about in the workshop till 9.30. Then we went for a ride [on our bikes]. After lunch we went for a swim and then went over to Mr. Swan's place and saw his electric trains. He had them all out on a platform. He has five electric trains. Went home and went to sleep.

Wednesday 31st

In the morning we set off at 6:50 to Mr. Lewis' office where we were taken in charge by one of the fields men. Then we set off to the Field and saw an oil well being put into production. First of all, they erect a big derrick and then start drilling. When they think they are far enough, they let down a gun on the end of a cable. They fire the gun, and it makes a hole down the rest of the way to the oil. When they put it [the well] into production, they [must first] get all the mud out of it. [To do this] they lower down a thing [a crude diagram is drawn in the diary] and the mud goes through the hole at the bottom and can't get back because it pushes down on a ball bearing.

When they got all the mud out the oil should go up because the mud holds down the oil, and when the mud is taken out, the oil gushes out. (THAT IS WHAT WE SAW!). Then the oil flows to the tanks which get all the gas out. [Crude diagram included in original diary]. Then [the oil] goes to the refinery. In the afternoon we went to the pictures.



1953

Thursday 1st

After a family breakfast and New Year greetings, we left by car for Dirok Sands on the bank of the Dihing River which is a tributary of the Brahmaputra, one of the longest rivers in India, where there are still signs of the big 1950 earthquake. We started off with the trip downstream in a dugout. After lunch we played in the river and drove home at teatime when we saw the snow cap mountains of the Himalaya range.

Friday 2nd

Today has been a quiet day at home this morning. Went to tea with Janet Bell, a girlfriend of ours. Mr. Lewis took us snipe shooting at 4 pm. We were unlucky run and got none. We took a 22 rifle and had target practice.

Saturday 3rd

In the morning we went to tea with a rich merchant, and in the afternoon, we had a game of nine holes for golf. Very un-interesting day. I hope my spelling is good

Sunday 4th

The first Sunday of the New Year was spent in lovely weather. We saw two cartoons at the club and had a service before lunch in the afternoon. We took a picnic tea into the oilfield.



Monday 5th

Collected photographs from the bazaar. After lunch we played golf. My game is improving. After supper, Michael and I challenged Mr. Lewis to a game of chess. HE WON!

Tuesday 6th

In the morning we set off to go round the refinery. First of all, we saw the laboratory, which is very interesting and has many complicated contraptions which test the various products. Then we started to look at all the boilers and big towers which separate different materials. First, the crude oil is changed in the petrol, kerosene, high-speed diesel, oil and oil. Then, from those is made paraffin wax, diesel oil, household oil, sleeper oil, wood oil, coke, 120 oil, 150 oil, 180 oil, 200 oil, 250 oil 280 oil. After seeing how they are separated from each other in a big tower, we saw over the place where they make the 40-gallon oil drums. In the afternoon we played golf.

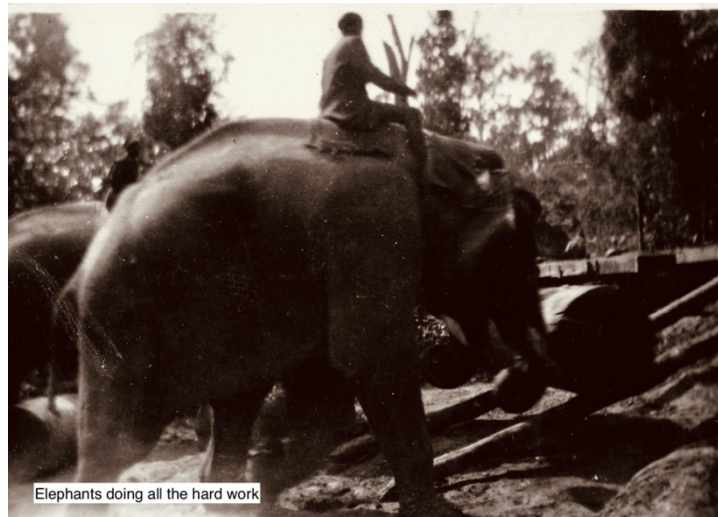
Wednesday 7th

In the morning we played golf with Harry Dasarb – he is one of the servant's children. Then, in the afternoon, we took back our hired bikes because they were too big, and then we went to the pictures – silly picture. (I am writing to Nanna).



Thursday 8th

In the morning we drove half a mile up the Margarita Road, and then got into a little trolley which runs on the rails and was pushed by two men. [Crude drawing in original diary]. We got pushed through thick jungle until we came to a big 20-ton bulldozer which was clearing the jungle. It weighed as much as the trucks at Nairne. [This refers to the iron pyrite mine at Nairne, South Australia]. Then we went for a walk, through thick jungle which had just been cleared. We saw some Naga people clearing jungle. They are head-hunters! On the way back, we saw 15 elephants. I got good photos.



Friday 9th

Had a quiet day 'till the evening when we had a dinner party to farewell the two Provans who came in their kilts. There were 10 of us and we played many different games. Had lots of fun and got to bed at 11:15 pm. The doctor has promised us a plaster cast of a tiger pug mark which we saw in the sand at the Provan's camp.

Saturday 10th

In the morning Mr. Lewis gave us old and old typewriter, which we had a lot of fun with, and after lunch we had had a war with the Chokroo [?] (Indian boys). We watched the tennis match between Digboi and Margarita. Digboi won!

Sunday 11th

Spent the morning in the day nursery. After lunch, went to the sports club tennis meeting and saw some very good tennis played by Indians and Europeans. Mrs. Lewis was very funny giving away the prizes.



Monday 12th

In the morning we played with the new dinky town we had made, and in the afternoon, we went to the golf course. I still haven't beaten my last record of one hole in five [says 4 earlier!]. We have got our own set of golf clubs and are very keen on golf.

Tuesday 13th

We set off in the morning to go round the oilfield with Mr. Wintey [Whitley?] an American. First, we were showed a camera which is lowered to the bottom of the well to take pictures to show if the well was straight. Then we saw a well fishing. This is dropping down a steel cable with a claw on the end. They do this to pick out something that has dropped to the bottom of the well. Then we saw them shooting. When they get down to where they think there is oil all, they lower down a gun which fires 24 holes through the casing of the pipe to let the oil comes through. [A crude diagram is drawn here in the original diary]. After that we each drilled a foot at another drilling well. Sometimes the pipe caves in on the well. To fix this they have a thing like a piledriver, which mends it.



Crude oil squirting from a new well

Wednesday 14th

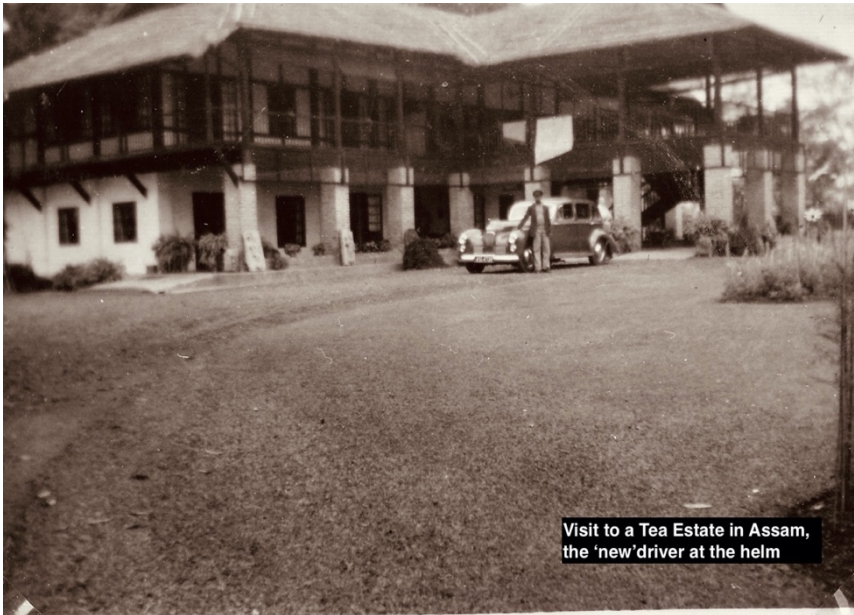
Mucked about in the morning and went deer shooting at night from 8.30 to 11 o'clock. We went with an American and his son. We saw one 400 lb. deer with envelopes, but it was too quick to shoot.

Thursday 15th

In the morning, we played about the crystal sets and then in the afternoon we played golf. I will send you the score, with some negatives.

Friday 16th

Set off to go to the game reserve – first main stop was Dikom Tea Estate where we stayed for lunch. They told us about a cousin of yours [i.e., of Jo Corbin nee Moulden, Rory's mother] called Geoffrey Moulden, who was a tea planter at Mohunbaree [?] Tea Estate until eight years ago. We continued our journey through many different native villages and Dibrugarh, which is the HQ town of the district, and which is on the banks of the Brahmaputra River which there is only about ¼ mile wide but sometimes is 5 miles wide. Arrived to stay the night with Mr. and Mrs. King at Khowang Tea Estate.



Visit to a Tea Estate in Assam, the 'new' driver at the helm

Saturday 17th

Left Khowang after looking around the Tea Estate factory which unfortunately was not working as they only made tea from April to December. Today's journey was only 130 miles, but it seemed much longer because of the bad roads. Arrived at the Kaziranga Sanctuary bungalow which is 199 miles from Digboi. Had a campfire and are going to bed early because we had to get up at dawn to see the rhinoceros which sleep in the day. More tomorrow. Love and kisses, Aunty XXXXX

Sunday 18th

Woke up very early and set off to the reserve. On the way there we saw two Samba. Just as we had passed the Samba, we saw rhinos walking down the street. Then we boarded the elephants. First, we saw three rhino and a baby, then we went further into the reserve and saw the following: 1 Otto, 6 Crains. 26 Pigs, 6 Deer, 1 Jackal, 1 Buffalo, ---. The elephants are very clever the way they push through the jungle. Then we went back to the bungalow and had lunch. Then we set off back to the Khowang Tea Estate. We passed through many different villages. Then we stopped to have lunch at Johat. We continued our journey after lunch and got a puncture. We mended that quickly, and our next stop was an old stand where they used to watch elephant fights. We soon arrived at the place where there are lots and tombs of the various kings. I got some good pictures. Then we set off once more and passed monkeys on the road. We soon arrived Khowang Tea Estate where we had a hot bath and an early bed. We had travelled 200 miles that day.



The Elephants we rode in the Kaziranga Sanctuary

Monday 19th

Woke up and had an early start from the Kings T.E. [Tea Estate]. Journeyed for two hours then the accelerator stuck down on the floorboard and the brakes failed, so we had to turn the car and freewheel for about half a mile until the car stopped. Our driver soon mended it. We arrive safely that afternoon and put pennies on the railway line. [A favorite pastime – putting copper penny coins on the line and having a train flatten them as it passed over.]

Tuesday 20th

In the morning we played golf and walked home in time for lunch. After lunch we played golf with Mrs. and Mr. Lewis and had a lovely time.



Snake charmers attracting attention

Wednesday 21st

In the morning we played with Jeremy [Michael's younger brother] and in the afternoon we had an interesting three hours in the refinery, and we understood it much better in the afternoon. We had a picnic tea on the golf course.

Thursday 22nd

Left home at 10 am and motored about half an hour journey down a jungle Road to Pengaree Tea Estate where Mr. & Mrs. Luming gave us a very lovely day. We took some pluckings of the tea home with us to make our own tea. It takes 5 pounds of leaf to make 1 pound of tea. We played golf on their private golf course and saw some cine films.

Friday 23rd

In the morning we played with our crystal set, and in the afternoon, we played with Jeremy.

Saturday 24th

In the morning we played with Jeremy and in the afternoon, we played golf. Digboi has got a very nice golf course, and I broke my record. I did one hole in four hits, NOT BAD!!!

Sunday 25th

In the morning we went and saw some cock fights. They have two cocks which are both trying to fight, and they have small very sharp knives fastened to them to their legs they fight to one cock gets killed or runs away. The winner keeps a dead cock or the alive one the case maybe. In the afternoon we went to the picture 'An American in Paris'. Next week, 'King Solomon's Mines' is coming, so we're looking forward to a good picture.

Monday 26th

Republic Day in the morning we went and saw the flag raising and cricket and had a lovely curry lunch at the [Digboi] club in the afternoon. We went on with our crystal sets. After tea we went to the Ledo where we saw tribal dancing. I'm bringing back some blotters which have pictures of the tribes of India on them on their back.



Michael with an interesting group of friends on the road near Digboi

Tuesday 27th

In the morning we went to the bazaar and then bought some more pictures and at 1 o'clock we went to see how they test heavy minerals. First, they gather rock and then they wash it to powder and wash it like a gold prospector. Then they boil it in acid which burns the unwanted stuff and leaves the rest. Then they put it in stuff and Mica rises to the top [with hard mineral below]. Then, they mount it on a [microscope?] slide and see if it is the right ground for oil. all, we have each made our own slide, which I will bring back.

Wednesday 28th

In the morning we saw a film how our film is developed. Then, in the afternoon, we first went over a brick factory. All the work is done by hand. Then we went to a tea garden where we had afternoon tea and returned in time for film called 'Five Fingers'. On Sunday, 'King Solomon's Mines' is coming.

Thursday 28th

In the morning we printed films in the company dark room, and in the afternoon, we went to the [Oil Field] where we saw over the mud plant. They mix special mud with water (the mud is always

found with oil) and mix it and then pump it to the drilling well – it is purple. It is pumped down to lubricate the bit at the bottom.

Friday 30th

In the morning we went to a jungle tribe village where we got some bows and arrows made for us. In the afternoon we messed about. After tea we went to a circus.

Saturday 31st

In the morning we printed some more films in the company darkroom. Had a huge Khaw suey (Burmese chop suey), I had three helpings. We took a picnic tea to termed term to Dooma, a tea district about 20 miles from here. We did some shopping.



Naga people with bangles and necklaces



This Naga man has a lethal looking spear

Sunday 1 February.

In the morning we visited Margherita bizarre there we bought trinkets. After that we returned home for lunch and rested till tea. After tea we went to 'King Solomon's Mines' the movie.

Monday 2nd

In the morning we went into the jungle and in the afternoon we messed about.

Tuesday 3rd

In the morning we went and got our bows and arrows from the Nagas and that night we went to the circus again.

Wednesday 4th

Michael was still in bed and could not come to 'Nancy Goes to Rio' which I went to [see]. Then we went shooting.

Thursday 5th

In the morning we went to the bazaar. That is where all the Indians get to sell their odds and ends. In the afternoon we played golf. I played very badly. After supper we went to a funny pantomime called 'Sinbad the Sailor'.

Friday 6th

In the morning we went to Mrs. Belton's [?] school where Jeremy goes. In the afternoon we saw a new tower being put up in the refinery. After that we went out on the fields to take some photos.

Saturday 7th

In the morning we played with Jeremy and various things like that. Then we had lunch and went for a quick trip around the [oil] field and took some more photos.

Sunday 8th

LAST DAY.

In the morning we played with the dinky toys and in the afternoon, we played golf; after that we went to the BOB HOPE film 'My Favorite spy'. I have already seen it once. PS: I played golf very well!!!

Monday 9th

We set off to the aerodrome at 10 o'clock where we boarded the plane for Calcutta. Very uninteresting trip. Landed at Dum Dum [Calcutta] airport at 5 o'clock. Went to stay with Mrs. Scott for the night. Had an early bed.

Tuesday 10th

In the morning we went shopping in Calcutta and brought lots of curios. Calcutta is a good place for shopping because there are lots of things to buy. After lunch we rested. We saw 16 wild monkeys playing in the trees while we watched. Had a very early night.

Wednesday 12th

In the morning we set off in the [??]. We had a good trip to Singapore where we met Mr. & Mrs. Parks, Head of Police. He took us and showed us the lock ups. Had early bed.

Thursday 13th

Woke up and went to aerodrome for breakfast. Plane took off and did a short hop to Jakarta. After that, we arrived in Darwin, and we met by the Juries.

Friday 13th February 1953

Set off early in the morning and had boring flight to Adelaide, where we met by my parents.

FINIS

Edward Michael Sunderland Lewis – a Mini Biography¹

Michel was born in Digboi, Assam, India in 1940. When aged 7, he was sent to boarding school at St Peters College in Adelaide, South Australia. His grandmother lived in Adelaide. Michael and Rory Hope met at St Peters College and in 1952 became joint head prefects of the preparatory school boarding house. In the summer holidays of that year, they travelled together to India.

Michael's secondary education commenced in 1954 at Radley College, UK, and he went on to read Natural Sciences at Cambridge. It was here, that he met his wife to be, Marion, and the two of them developed distinguished scientific and teaching careers. Michael was appointed as a Radley don in 1971, where he wrote several chemistry texts that became widely used for GCSE and A level education in the UK. At Radley, Michael was, at various times, Head of Chemistry, Head of Science, Head of IT, and rowing coach.

After their holiday in India in 1953/53, Rory lost contact with Michael. However, Rory and his wife, Rae, visited Michael and Marion in England briefly in 1973.

¹ I acknowledge the article by John Harris in *The Old Radleian* (2021) pages 97-98, available online at https://issuu.com/radleycollege/docs/old_radleian_2021_online

Michael died on 27 April 2021. In his obituary to Michael, John Harris wrote wrote:

Michael will be remembered for his unfailing wit, warmth and generosity: a truly gentle, wise and lovely man.

Rory Hope 2 January 2024
