

This is a complete transcript of the oral history interview **Raymond Bates Buker Jr. (CN 262, T1)** for the Billy Graham Center Archives. No spoken words which were recorded are omitted. In a very few cases, the transcribers could not understand what was said, in which case [unclear] was inserted. Also, grunts and verbal hesitations such as “ah” or “um” are usually omitted. Readers of this transcript should remember that this is a transcript of spoken English, which follows a different rhythm and even rule than written English.

. . . Three dots indicate an interruption or break in the train of thought within the sentence of the speaker.

. . . . Four dots indicate what the transcriber believes to be the end of an incomplete sentence.

( ) Word in parentheses are asides made by the speaker.

[ ] Words in brackets are comments made by the transcriber.

This transcript was created by Christopher Easley and Paul Ericksen, and was completed in February 1991.

**Please note:** This oral history interview expresses the personal memories and opinions of the interviewee and does not necessarily represent the views or policies of the Billy Graham Center Archives or Wheaton College.



**CN 262, Tape 1. Oral history interview with Raymond Bates Buker, Jr. by Joel Woodruff on November 1, 1983.**

**WOODRUFF:** This is an interview with Raymond Buker Jr. by Joel Woodruff for the Missionary Sources Collection of Wheaton College. This interview took place at the archival offices of the Billy Graham Center on November 1, 1983 at 2:30 pm. Mr. Buker, could you please give me your birthdate and then give me some information about your early childhood and your parents.

**BUKER:** OK. I was born on December 26, 1925. I only spent the first nine months of my life in this country. I was born in Lewiston, Maine. And my parents were missionaries in Burma. So they left the next year, 1926, for Burma and went up into the northern part of Burma. We were six days on horseback from the nearest car, post office and doctor, in an area which is even...not even marked on the map. It was on the border of Burma and China, and we could have very well been in China and didn't know it, because the people there didn't even know where Burma was. So they lived in Burma, they had never heard of the place. [Sound of approaching train] And I was brought up in what we called the Golden Triangle. Now the Golden Triangle is a triangle in the northern part of Burma, Thailand and Laos where seventy...sixty to seventy percent of the world's opium is produced, and that's why they called it the Golden Triangle. So those were my...that was my early childhood.

**WOODRUFF:** What was life [like] growing up as a missionary child? Were there certain disadvantages or advantages to that life?

**BUKER:** Well, I spent...until I was sixteen years old in Burma, and I went to school in a boarding school until the fifth grade in a place called Taunggyi, which was three days by car away. That's after we moved down to a place where you could get a car. And then after that I went to India to school, and it took an average of two weeks (one way) to get there and two weeks to get back. So disadvantages were that I had to be away from my parents much of my life and much of my time. There were, however, many advantages [pauses] in growing up in another culture, and seeing the world as it is, and in other countries...not just in one but in several countries. There's the tremendous advantage of travel. Growing up in a boarding school has its advantages because you inherit a lot of brothers and sisters that you don't in just a regular family. I also had many friends right among the national people that I grew up with in Burma. So plus and minuses, I would put...I would say there are many advantages in growing up in a foreign culture in a situation like that, over and against disadvantages. The schools also were high quality. When we came back to this country we found the school system here rather low compared to the school system there, because you have...you have teachers who are very high quality, dedicated to their tasks, and students who come from parents who are educated and are very concerned. There's discipline in the school, definite study hours, definite times you go to bed, and not all the distractions you have in the United States.

**WOODRUFF:** Could you tell me what kind of relations you had as a child with the national people?



**BUKER:** I had very good relations. I grew up in an area way away from any other white people, you might say. That was the first term, six years. The second term we moved to a place called Kengtung, and my dad's twin, who was a doctor, was there. And he had three kids, two of which were more my age. So the only ones we saw were each other. And so our friends became the nationals, and I had some excellent friends among them. They were just like my brothers. In fact my father and mother inherited a person. You don't call it adopting there; they don't legally adopt. But he was from the Wa tribe. Now the Was are headhunters and he ran away from his parents. And my folks took him in and he grew up and...with me and became like my brother. And I learned many things about this particular tribe of headhunters which nobody had really heard before, because I grew up with him and he taught me many things about that.

**WOODRUFF:** What type of activities, as far as games or any things, were different perhaps there than they would be in the United States?

**BUKER:** Well, in boarding school you never see football as we see it here. It's soccer, basketball, we do a lot of hiking. Of course, when you're playing with the national kids themselves, of the country, they have an entirely different games. One is called "chinlon." That's the national game of Burma, which is...you get in a circle and you hit a wicker ball around, see how many times you can do it before it drops. And there's another game called "Gooli Danda,"\* which is a very popular game in...in India, which would be their version of baseball, but you use a stick and another little long stick to hit it. And so their games are quite a bit different.

**WOODRUFF:** In what ways perhaps did your parents bring you up as a missionary child being on the field? How would that be different than in the States?

**BUKER:** Well, there there're far less temptations than there are in this country. Here you've got drugs, non-Christian scenes in the schools you go too, the pressures of TV, radio, advertisement. There you're...where we were at least, we were way away from any of that. So you're much more with your parents when you are there, when you are not away at school. The schools you go to are Christian schools. Though their culture around you may be non-Christian, might it be Buddhist or Hindu, and yet the environment you're brought in...up in is really Christian and there's a marked difference: you're a Christian or you're a non-Christian, one or the other, and there it a tremendous difference. So, in many ways it is easier to bring up a child there than it is here in the ways of the Lord.

**WOODRUFF:** Could you describe perhaps what British rule was like at that time in Burma?

**BUKER:** British, of course, controlled Burma and India. While we were there, Burma actually got its independence from Britain [1948], and of course later on after I left India, India had gotten its independence from Britain [1947]. But during that time they had started [pauses] a lot of unrest, riots and things in order to gain ind...gain independence. British, as far as colonial ruler...rulers were concerned were among the best that the world has seen. They're far better than French or Belgian rulers, but of course nobody wants colonialism. And they ruled justly, they ruled firmly, but they did rule and they, in many ways exploited the countries. But they did a lot for them: starting a railway system. They united many warring tribes. When they did left...

Burma has had conflict almost ever since they've [the British] left. Between the tribes in the north and the main tribe, which is the Burmese tribe of the south. I'm not sure they're any better off now that they have independence than when they were under British rule. Communist China has exerted its own imperialistic influence, which has cut Burma off from the west. And it's very difficult to go in as a visitor or as a missionary into Burma today, and...this is mostly because of a...the socialist government there and the pressures of Communist China in the north.

**WOODRUFF:** While growing up you also went to high school in India?

**BUKER:** Yes.

**WOODRUFF:** And what was life like there in India and also life at the high school?

**BUKER:** India is quite a bit different than Burma. Its religion is different, Hinduism versus Buddhism. Indi...India is much more overcrowded than Burma. Burma was a very beautiful country. I might say underpopulated. It was very fertile. Has lots of natural resources: oil, rubies, rubber, [pauses] exported rice. When I got to India it was overcrowded, they had to import to keep going. And the religion of Hinduism and Islam was much more oppressive than the religion of Buddhism and mostly animism, where I grew up. In Burma where we were, we had seen many people coming to Christ. In India there're far fewer. Where I went to school in India was much different than where I went to school in Burma. It was high up in the mountains, 7000 ft. You could see Tibet from where we were, the mountains of Tibet, and the average range being 20,000 ft. It was a very rugged life in the school there. We had a lot more independence: went on a lot of hikes. Theologically the school, the mission school wasn't [pauses] nearly as orthodox as the school we went to in Burma. It was a much larger school. The school in Burma only had up to twenty people, and the school in India had up to 450 [pauses] people.

**WOODRUFF:** During your time in high school World War II commenced, I believe. What was life like in Burma during World War II with the Japanese occupation?

**BUKER:** OK. Japan attacked Pearl Har...Harbor when I was on the way to Burma [December 7, 1941]. Actually from school, I was in the Bay of Bengal on a ship when they announced that. So we landed in Burma, I went on up north to where my folks were. And then they...they attacked Burma and they had actually conquered half of Burma at that time and I remember dad telling me that I had to get out. Our only contact with the outside world was a radio. It was run by car battery. We had a person charge it by running a bicycle that was lifted off the ground. It took him ten days, eight hours a day to charge one battery. We had enough juice to run the radio twice a day for about ten minutes, to listen to the news as to how far up the Japanese had gotten. And so the day did come when my folks said they were going to hide in the jungles of Burma and be witness for Christ even though the Japanese would take over. And at that time I had to leave and walk overland with another kid. I was sixteen and he was fourteen. That was quite a journey. It took us five weeks to get out of Burma, and to get to school in India [sound of closing door].

**WOODRUFF:** What path did you take from Burma? To...what countries did you have to cross over land?

**BUKER:** OK. We were in the [pauses] eastern section of Burma. We had to go over to the west and you went by overcrowded lorries, and then by terribly crowded train. By crowded I mean they're on the roof, they're sitting on the engine, they're sitting in between the couplings, and [pauses] it was hard to get food. Then you went by riverboat, and then from riverboat you started walking, over the Hump. This is the range, Himalaya Mountains, the range of mountains between Burma and India. It used to take our fliers about two hours to fly over but it took me altogether of five weeks. And it was that range of mountains that we had to walk over and finally we came to India, to Assam State. First Manipur State and then we came to Assam, and there was a place called Imphal and that was the refugee center. And there thousands would come in and we were put on...in huts with a couple of hundred people in a hut. You just...long houses...you'd sleep right next to a person who'd sleep there right next to you and you would just...on the floor right along. And there were really some experiences that they had gone through to get out of Burma.

**WOODRUFF:** Once you arrived in India, how long did you stay at school?

**BUKER:** Well, I went on up to school. That was another...over a thousand miles to get there, to the northern part. And it had been quite a traumatic time. Literally hundreds of people died, thousands in fact, died in attempting to get out of Burma, of starvation, of bubonic plague, of typhoid. Some of the areas the Japanese had found the jungle paths and they were strafing it. So it was really the grace of God that we had gotten out alive. When I got to the northern part of Burma to...I mean India where the school was in Woodstock, I received word through Secret Service agents that they had received word [that] both my parents had been killed by the Japanese." So you can imagine my amazement that two weeks later I get a telegram to meet my folks in the nearest railroad station. It was another story on how they had gotten out. They were ordered out because those who had tried to hide in the jungles in the Philippines, missionaries, were beheaded. And so they had to get out. And they took off from two different airports, one small one in the northern part of Burma, and the other one right across the border in China. So that it was just a couple months later that they followed me.

**WOODRUFF:** Where then did you meet your parents?

**BUKER:** They came up to where I was going to school in Woodstock. And that's where we met.

**WOODRUFF:** Following that, did you go to...back to the United States?

**BUKER:** Yes. We went down to Bombay and took a troop transport, SS *Brazil* [in 1942]. They had carried seven thousand troops over, and there were two thousand of us on the ship going back. And it was quite a big ship.

**WOODRUFF:** Could you describe that journey going back?

**BUKER:** Yes. We had to go through...we couldn't go through the Suez Canal because of the war, so we went around South Africa. We had three ships, and we didn't have any escorts, such as destroyers, and the submarine threat was very bad. We had one ship in front of us and one in



back of us, and going through the Mozambique Channel, which is between Madagascar and Africa, the ship in front and back were torpedoed by German subs and they reported two times over the radio, in fact the captain heard it, that our ship had been sunk. And it wasn't ours, it was these other two. We came to South Africa. We stopped off at Capetown, and we couldn't get out of the port for ten days because they sighted a sub right outside waiting to get us. Finally the sub left and...and then we went on and came to Bermuda, stopped there and there were terrible...a lot of subs between Bermuda and New York. We had an escort then, and a sub was sighted. They threw depth bombs over and they saw oil. And the...we had about two hundred missionaries on board, and the people were amazed that we hadn't been sunk. And the sailors mentioned, "There must have been a fifty foot wall of prayer around us, and that's why we had gotten through."

**WOODRUFF:** Following your return to the United States, where did you go from there?

**BUKER:** Alright. I went up to Maine with my cousin. I got my first job in the United States: picking potatoes. It was during the harvest season. That really was rough on the back. You didn't do it by machines in those days. And then when the school year started, I started into Stony Brook School, which is a Christian school in Long Island [New York]. And that's where I finished my last two years of high school.

**WOODRUFF:** How did Stony Brook School compare to school in India?

**BUKER:** It was entirely different. Of course, it was America. I was going through cultural shock. I had only been back once to the States in sixteen years...really fifteen years (that was when I was six years old) for a year. So I hadn't been back for ten years. And I had been really out of it, way up in the boondocks. So it was a lot of cultural shock getting used to America. Discipline was very strict at Woodstock. You also (I'm not talking about Woodstock, but Stony Brook School)...there was also a rebellious atmosphere there, because half the kids were brought there who were not Christians, but they had been brought up in Christian homes, and they had rebelled against the Gospel. And the other half were Christian kids and they tried to put a Christian with a non-Christian kid, and with the idea that the Christian kid would be an influence on the non-Christian. So you had a rebellious atmosphere there because of that kind of kid. There were too many of them there. The school educationally was excellent, the training was excellent, the teachers were very good and dedicated teachers. Dr. [Frank] Gaebelein was the [pauses] headmaster and...and he...I took my first good Bible course from him, and it was a...it was a tremendous Bible course. He was a terrific teacher, and real preparation for college.

**WOODRUFF:** What types of culture shock did you go through? Any specific changes that you noticed right away coming back to the United States?

**WOODRUFF:** Well, tremendous emphasis on materialism here. A tendency to not appreciate what we had: food and homes. And yet it appeared to us that we had everything here. Of course there...the whole society was different. The sports scene was entirely different. I'd never seen a football before, and I thought they were round and they had the neatest thing that wasn't. And the church scene was entirely different. Every...the pace was very fast. People were...didn't seem to



be personable or friendly, though hard...very hardworking. The whole set of values was different than what I was brought up in. So it was quite a different scene.

**WOODRUFF:** How...what goals, at that time, did you have in your life for the future?

**BUKER:** I was saved when I was twelve, but I dedicated my life to Christ when I was at Stony Brook. At the time when they asked me to give a testimony to the student body in chapel, partly about my trip across the Hump, and also how the Lord had worked in my life. During the preparation of that testimony, I realized that I didn't have that much spiritually to say. And it was in actual...in preparation of that testimony that I dedicated my life to the Lord, and from then on, I...my goals were to prepare myself for missionary service. And that is why I did, and I did.

**WOODRUFF:** Throughout your [pauses]...from your birth through schooling in high school, what were some of the major influences on your life? Were there any certain people during that time who especially influenced you?

**BUKER:** Well, Dr. Gaebelin was a tremendous influence on me, the headmaster of the school. As a teacher, his own disciplined life, he was a genius. Not only was he a good teacher, he was a top flight educator. He was a pianist; he'd fill Carnegie Hall [pauses] as a piano player. He was a tremendous mountain climber; he had written a book on it. He was a tremendous chess player; he'd written a book on how to play chess. And just that combination of talent and very godly man, dedication in one man was a tremendous influence on me in high school.

**WOODRUFF:** Following high school then you attended Wheaton College? What decisions brought you to come to Wheaton College?

**BUKER:** I had a full scholarship to go to Bates College [clears throat] in Maine. In fact all of the Bukers had gone to Bates: my aunts, uncles, my grandfather, my cousins. I was, as far as I know, I was the first Buker to break tradition. In fact my middle name is Bates. But I came to sch...Wheaton with no scholarship, because I didn't want to sharpen my swords at the...with the Philistines. I wanted to be prepared for the Lord's service. And at that time, there were very few Christian schools...colleges in this country, and Wheaton was by...considered by far the best. The Lord did open the way to come here in order that I might get a good Christian training and that's what I wanted.

**WOODRUFF:** What type of application process did you have to go through at that time to get into Wheaton?

**BUKER:** It was so long ago, it's a little blurred [laughs] as to what I had to go through. We went through the usual application and...and by the grace of God, I was accepted [laughs].

**WOODRUFF:** Could you tell me what some of your first impressions were of Wheaton College?

**BUKER:** Yeah. My very first impression, it was heaven on earth, believe it or not. This to me was the first time I had been in a real genuine Christian environment. Now the school I was in India was generally a liberal school. All denominations had formed it: Presbyterians, Methodists, Episcopalians, and you might say theologically it was blah, and there was no strong Christian testimony. So...and Stony Brook, though it was a Christian school, because of the fifty percent being non-Christian kids, it didn't have much of a Christian atmosphere, it was a rebellious atmosphere. So when I got to Wheaton, the first impression was how Christian it was. It was the first time literally I'd experienced such an environment. And I remember the first days of orientation for freshmen, of just meeting the Christian teachers and the other students, and the time of singing around the piano of hymns. Spontaneity draws out word] of it, and the genuineness of it. And the chapel services, it really...it really did something for me and it was a tremendous blessing.

**WOODRUFF:** Can you describe to me what the academic life was like at Wheaton?

**BUKER:** It was good educationally. I was well prepared for it, I felt, having come out of Stony Brook and Woodstock. So the first year...in fact at Stony Brook they teach sophomore college English in the senior year there, and so I felt I was well prepared for it and for college life. Academically it was good, and I had high regard for the courses I had.

**WOODRUFF:** Could you tell me what some of the required courses were at that time?

**BUKER:** I think we had the usual basics. Everyone is required to take a science course, a certain amount of English and literature, [pauses] a certain amount of Bible, social sciences. It was a balance of requirements.

**WOODRUFF:** Could you also tell me about the anthropology department? You were an anthropology major at Wheaton?

**BUKER:** Yes. Anthropology department had just recently been started. It was probably the first Christian anthropology major in the country. The professor was Dr. [Alexander] Grigolia, probably one of the few Christian anthropologists in existence at that time. He'd...he had a tremendous influence on my life. He came out of Russia, and he had three doctor's degrees, came to this country. He would say in class, "I can speak three...sixteen languages including broken English." And so he was quite an interesting person. And he started the department, and...and I majored under him.

**WOODRUFF:** What other teachers can you recall that were especially influential on your life?

**BUKER:** Okay, my coach. Dr. Grigolia was influential because of his ability, but also because of who he was as a person. All those that took his major, he considered them his children, his sons and daughters. He was like a father. If you went in, you could talk to him about finances or anything, and he'd get on his knees in his office and pray with you. And it was a real impression upon me. He was one of the most brilliant men at Wheaton with all these degrees. And yet a very humble person along that line. My coach, Gil Dodds, had a real influence on me, because of who

he was. He didn't tell us...just tell us what to do; he did it himself. While as coach at Wheaton College he broke the world record in the mile, his own personal life, Christian testimony, fame he'd gotten and yet giving glory to God, was a tremendous influence on me too, to teach me lessons for life.

**WOODRUFF:** While at Wheaton, you were involved in track and cross country. Could you tell me something about the athletic...athletics at Wheaton, especially in track and cross country at that time?

**BUKER:** Yes. I had run some when I was at Stony Brook. And I remember when I went through the line at the freshman orientation to shake hands, I came to one of the coaches, Coach [Edward] Coray, in fact, it was, who's still here. And I shook his hand and he heard my name, and as he...I got to the end he ran around to the end. He said, "Are you the son of Ray Buker that I know?" I said, "Well, that's my dad's name, and he's the one that ran in the 1924 Olympics." I said, "Yes." He said, "Well, I know your father very well." He says, "Do you do any running?" I said, "I did some running in high school." And so from that he made sure I was out for the cross country. He was the cross country coach then. And...and then went out for track, mostly middle distance from half mile up through six miles. The next year Coach Coray got Gil Dodds to be the coach, and that transformed the track team. It attracted many good athletes from around the country here and he took us into strong competition around the country. And it was a very good experience being on that team. The fellowship with the others on the team, as well as with him, and getting to see many places that Wheaton College students didn't get to see in those days.

**WOODRUFF:** Gil Dodds developed the team into a national competitor. What teams did you compete against and what type of athletes were you in competition with?

**BUKER:** Yes. My first cross country meet was with Notre Dame. The year before they'd had the national championship. And we used to contact...with the big universities around, the University of Pennsylvania, we went to the Penn relays. He took his team to the Boston relays, the Chicago relays here, in which you were with the tops in the country. [Sound of approaching train] Aside...the little schools around here, the regular conference didn't give much competition after that. We used to go against Naperville and...and these other schools, but practically would sweep the field. So he took us into a bigger time competition, which was very challenging around the country. He...he broke the budget, because he took us so far. I understand that at the end of the cross country season, he had already gone through the indoor and outdoor track budget, [laughs] just for cross country. So he had to use other means to raise funds so we could [pauses] go around like that.

**WOODRUFF:** Eventually you became captain of the cross country and track teams. Was that during your sophomore year or...?

**BUKER:** I was captain for about.... (I wa...I was in Wheaton only three years, because I took summer school, so graduated in three years.) So I was captain of the [pauses]...of the cross country team, I believe, the last two years, and the track team the last year.

**WOODRUFF:** What responsibilities did that entail...being the captain?

**BUKER:** Oh, not too much really. We would put on the banquet at the end, and be responsible for that for the track team and cross country team. And [pauses]...and generally you're just introduced as that and sort of looked up to as that. But as far as real responsibilities, there wasn't that much. You tried to encourage other teammates and those that were discouraged, and try to be an example of proper training to them, and that type of thing.

**WOODRUFF:** From a personal viewpoint as a runner, how did you feel your Christian life was a witness to perhaps other athletes in other schools or to athletes on campus?

**BUKER:** Yes. I think there are many parallels between running and the Christian life in the Bible, which became very practical. We had a lot of...there were lots of opportunities to witness, mostly because Gil Dodds was our coach. Many places that we would go to we would have speaking appointments in churches. And Gil Dodds would often line up himself, but he would double and triple date himself. So when we get to the church, we find out that he was booked in two or three churches. So what he did was split up the team. And his excuse was it was the Gil Dodds team that was coming. So we would have full responsibilities for services, preaching and everything, as college students, and regular...and the place would be packed. We had lots of opportunities to give testimonies during track meets. Because he [Gil Dodds] was so famous, they'd ask him to give a word over the microphone, and being a regular secular [pauses] setting, so he would give his own testimony. He would then have several of us give testimonies over the microphone. We had lots of opportunities to share Christ with other teammates that we were running against. So it was a real opportunity along that line.

**WOODRUFF:** Did your team have devotionals together too at certain times or...how were the practices normally run?

**BUKER:** Well, we had regular practices, but there are regular times of prayer before meets and afterward. At that time there weren't that many Christian athletes around. This is a phenomena since then. You might say Gil Dodds was one of the first famous ones to come into being that...that...that we knew of at that time. And...but this, I think, sort of got a movement started along that line, and since then there's been increasing influence of Christian athletes in this country.

**WOODRUFF:** Are there any certain moments that you especially remember as an athlete that were perhaps highlights in your athletic career at Wheaton?

**BUKER:** Well, I think, as a freshman [pauses] winning the first cross country tea...race I've ever run against Notre Dame, which the year before had the national champion on it, was quite a...something for me, [pauses] just as a freshman that didn't understand college competition [microphone bumped]. [Pauses] There were many other big meets that we ran in [pauses] that [pauses]...you know, they do a lot for you, and [pauses] a number of opportunities to break records that lasted for quite a few years. As far as outstanding meets, I think of a lot of the meets

where we had opportunity for Christian testimony to friends and people that we would run against, meant a lot to that, because that's really what we were here for.

**WOODRUFF:** How did you feel the student body supported you, or supported the athletic teams?

**BUKER:** It was very supportive, because before this time track wasn't very prominent nor did we have that good a team. But when he [Gil Dodds] came, it did put us into national prominence. So that we were one of the better teams in the country. And so this meant something to a small Christian college which...which hadn't had such notoriety before. People started to know that there was such a college as Wheaton, that was a Christian school, they had a good track team, famous coach. You could...you could go into a little town, like we would be traveling across the country by car; you'd go into a little town for lunch, you know, little things hardly on the map, and...and the waiter would find out that the...this is Gil Dodds that was with us, and they'd get all excited, he'd get a free meal. Or...or you'd go into a store, he may want to buy a shirt, and the head of the store would find out that this is Gil Dodds and he'd give him a free shirt. And that really made quite an impression upon us kids, that wherever we went, you know, they knew him. And this sort of got us to be known too.

**WOODRUFF:** Are there any certain runners on...on your team that you recall or classmates...you especially recall?

**BUKER:** Yeah, there was [pauses] Al Johnston. Dr. Johnston, he went as a missionary to Europe and he is now...teaches at Trinity in missions, and has been asked to go back to Europe to head up a seminary there...to become president. And we were good friends; in fact we were co-captains of the track team. He ran the hurdles, and I was, of course, long distance. Gil Dodds had to leave for a year and actually Al Johnston actually coached the team for awhile.

**WOODRUFF:** Could you tell me something about the social life at...at Wheaton, as far as activities between students?

**BUKER:** At that time the...they had a lot of...they didn't call them sororities and fraternities but societies. And they were quite strong. I wasn't a member of any of those, because we were so busy in track, I didn't have time. Weekends...most every weekend we were away somewhere. But then...they were quite popular in Wheaton in those days. I don't know if they are now, but they were then. There were a lot of spiritual activities. Most of mine were along that line, being very prominent in Foreign Missions Fellowship, which...we met every Wednesday night. And there were three to five hundred people in attendance every Wednesday. And it was very...missions was very high on the campus in those days. It was during the days of Jim Elliott, and we were good friends; Ed McCully, and [Nathaniel] Saint. And of course they went down [as missionaries] and they [Elliott, McCully, Saint, along with Roger Youderian and Peter Fleming] were killed by the Auca Indians [in 1956]. But there was a very high missionary interest [sound of closing door] at Wheaton College in those days.

**WOODRUFF:** What types of activities did the Foreign Mission Fellowship...what types of activities where they involved in?

**BUKER:** Most of it was the...the Wednesday night meeting, which involved small group prayers and then coming together for a major meeting. We were involved practically a lot in Chicago, witnessing there, skid row, as well as in church activities around. In those days we didn't have short term missionary service, like you do today. This is a result of affluence in America, that we can afford it. In those days [laughs] you were just scraping by. And so you...you didn't send people out short term; they didn't have such a thing in those days. Also travel was slow, didn't have planes. We went by boat and it would take a month to get back and forth. So we didn't have those opportunities.

**WOODRUFF:** What other activities were you involved in at Wheaton?

**BUKER:** Well, I was...there was the international club. Major activities were sports, studying and...and missions, you might say, as well as I was active at First Baptist. I was president of the young people's [group] there, and we had very active young people's college group, that was who...wholly run by us, as well as [pauses] witnessing, going into Pacific Garden Mission a lot, witnessing in Chicago, going to jail services here. And I had to also work to get by. So the schedule was very full just doing those things.

**WOODRUFF:** Did you find that mu...most of the student body was in...were involved in local churches in some capacity?

**BUKER:** I think they were quite actively involved, yes. I don't know what the percentage was. Somebody did mention...I worked at the heating plant, and somebody made the observation that they noticed during the Sunday morning service time, that more hot water was used from the heating plant than any other time of the week. So I don't know what tha...[laughs]...what that indicates [laughs], but that was mentioned in chapel one time.

**WOODRUFF:** What...as far as chapel at Wheaton College, what...what was chapel like during that time?

**BUKER:** I suppose the...I don't know if it's that much different than chapel now. It was a daily thing. We had our usual special week of meetings, such as you do now, which were always looked forward to and where in some cases the Lord worked in a real significant way.

**WOODRUFF:** Can you recall any specific chapel speakers or special services speakers that were especially influential?

**BUKER:** I think Dr. [V. Raymond] Edman, then the president of the College. One year they couldn't get the special speaker that they wanted, so he became the special speaker. And everything was real dead the first week [day?] or two. You know, they hear Dr. Edman all the time. He became very concerned about it, and he spoke in chapel. And then the next day, (and we could tell something had happened), he gave an invitation and there was a tremendous

response of repentance. Several came to the Lord. And we learned then that he was so exercised in soul that he had spent almost the whole night in prayer in preparation for it. This impressed us. He was a very godly man, very spiritual man, and as president of the College with so many other administrative duties, to be so concerned about us as in...as individuals and as students, really impressed us. He had a tremendous memory for names too. He would pray for us as individuals by name. And he could tell...name one name after another on campus as he would walk by, call people by their first names. How he could do that, I don't know. But he was a tremendous man of God.

**WOODRUFF:** Were there any other religious events or spiritual events on Wheaton College campuses [?] other than the chapel services and special services that were especially known?

**BUKER:** We didn't have missionary conferences in those days like you do now, though we had a strong emphasis on missions. By that...by the regular Wednesday meeting that we had, where you had, you know, three to five hundred. That would half the student body almost were out to that. When Jim Elliot was president, it hit an all-time high as far as that time in history. And he looked upon Wheaton campus as his mission field, and those involved [pauses] in that missions fellowship were to consider it that way. That each dorm...you know, you'd have a person on each floor of each dorm living there, and he considered that floor...that person as his mission field. And if they weren't out to Foreign Missions Fellowship, he used to be praying for 'em as individuals and visiting them door to door to make sure they got out. And that was the kind of burden that he imparted to others there.

**WOODRUFF:** You mentioned also being a member of the international club, and you eventually became president. What types of activities was that club involved in?

**BUKER:** This was mostly for those who had been...came from other countries, internationals as well as MK's [missionary kids]. And [pauses] we'd get together [banging noise in background] to have, you know, international events, eating and decorating rooms. It's just that we were sort of third culture people and had that in common. I wouldn't consider it one of the more important clubs on campus, but we did exist. I don't know if such a one exists today or not, but....

**WOODRUFF:** What effect did World War II have on campus life?

**BUKER:** Well, it meant in those days that there were more women than men. A lot of the fellows were away. And I think it affected the sports program, because a lot of the fellows were away, and we didn't have the people for the sports program we would have had otherwise. And maybe it was easier for the...us to get accepted then as men [pauses], because they [laughs] wanted them so desperately to make up for the high female population here.

**WOODRUFF:** Were there military units on campus such as a ROTC unit, or....?

**BUKER:** You didn't have that on campus in those days, far as I recall. It was always sobering because every little while you'd hear of a Wheaton alumni that had been killed, and there'd be a

special chapel service. Dr. Edman would always be very moved with this. There'd be a gold star put up. So there was constant reminders first hand of Wheaton family dying for their country.

**WOODRUFF:** What other ways did the school support the...the war effort other than through sending students?

**BUKER:** Well, every day it was at a certain time, the...the bell would ring. And everybody would stop on campus and there'd be a silent...several minutes of prayer for our armed forces abroad. And chapel [microphone or table bumped]...Edman was very supportive of the military efforts as part of Christian duty, and in that sense there was support.

**WOODRUFF:** Are there any...in summary of your college career at Wheaton, were...are there any highlights during your time here at Wheaton College?

**BUKER:** I think [pauses] involvement in track was a definite highlight in many ways. Having Dr. Grigolia as a professor of anthropology, being sort of in the forefront of that discipline during that day, as well as the emphasis on missions and being involved in Foreign Missions Fellowship, I think were some of the highlights.

**WOODRUFF:** What were your goals following your graduation at Wheaton [in 1947]?

**BUKER:** Well, from there, to continue preparation for missionary work. And so for that purpose I went on to seminary.

**WOODRUFF:** And where did you go to seminary?

**BUKER:** I went to Gordon Seminary [in Massachusetts] which is now called Gordon Conwell Seminary. Gil Dodds was a big influence in that, because I was [pauses] considering preparing for the Olympics and Gil Dodds' coach was in Boston. His name was Jack Ryder and he was a famous coach, and Gill Dodds introduced me to him, and Jack Ryder agreed to coach me free. I was a seminary student; he was at Boston College, and so I had to go up to Boston College each day for training under Jack Ryder.

**WOODRUFF:** What did that training entail?

**BUKER:** Well, it was a...it was good st...[pauses]...stiff training for a busy seminary student. And Jack Ryder was an excellent coach, knew his stuff. I had to stop. I didn't actually go of to the Olympics, because I got some serious back trouble, and it's probably a slipped disk, which [pauses] meant that I had to stop competitive running, and just do easier type running.

**WOODRUFF:** What type of training did you receive at Gordon Conwell?

**BUKER:** It was very good training. At that time seminaries were rather small, and there were a hundred students there which was the average sized seminary. The biggest seminary that I knew, that is of the regular evangelical ones, [pauses] was Dallas and they had two hundred students.



Wheaton had less than a hundred at that time. And I felt the training that I received was very good there.

**WOODRUFF:** Were there any courses at Wheaton College that espec...helped you especially prepare for seminary or for mission work afterwards?

**BUKER:** Well, the major in anthropology was excellent, to understand other cultures and people. I appreciated the Bible courses I had; I minored in Bible. They were very good in content and very good teachers. The...those two stood out in my mind.

**WOODRUFF:** What courses at Gordon especially helped you?

**BUKER:** I majored in theology and I appreciated my theology professor very much. Particularly on the matter of inspiration of Scripture. He had gotten his PhD from Harvard, had gone through tremendous struggles in his own heart and mind on inerrancy of the Scriptures, and through this he'd come to a very solid foundation, trusting the Word of God. At that time, liberalism was having a heyday. As evangelicals we were minorities and struggling, not like today. And for many of us we were going through real struggles along that line, and he was a real help to me, to help me think through my own position, reasons why I believed what I did.

**WOODRUFF:** How do you feel Gordon helped you in preparation for the missions field?

**BUKER:** It gave me a strong theological basis. Another favorite teacher, by the way, was Dr. [Hudson] Armerding. He taught me church history at Gordon, before he ever came here [to Wheaton], that time. So theologically, I...it prepared me well for missionary work, and gave me good Bible training and background.

**WOODRUFF:** Following Gordon [graduated in 1950], did you have any other further training that helped prepare you for the mission field?

**BUKER:** Yes. I wasn't planning on anymore training, but we had applied for India and were waiting to get a visa, and it didn't come, then they refused it and we tried again. So [pauses] with [pauses] several of my other colleagues, who were also making preparation to go to India, we all went to Hartford Seminary Foundation and attended the Kennedy School of Missions. They...they had the several emphases there at this Seminary Foundation, and one of them was missions. It was a very liberal school. You had all the way from agnostics to Nazarenes teaching there. But as far as the school, to be properly trained for the mission field, there wasn't a better one in the country. The school is now defunct, but you still don't have one to equal that to this day [pauses] as you did then. You can get your doctorate there in various areas of missions, in...whether it be Hinduism, Islam, linguistics, or literature. All these various areas you can get a PhD that was recognized in the best schools of the country. They had the best missions library, by the way, there, you could find anywhere. And so it was very helpful. We took courses that we never had before in Islamics, Hinduism, and linguistics. It was helpful from that point of view.

**WOODRUFF:** Was it especially helpful in...as far as learning about other religions and cultures...

**BUKER:** Yes.

**WOODRUFF:** ...and language?

**BUKER:** I never expected to work with Muslims, as we did in Pakistan, because I planned to go to India to work with Hindus. But we took courses on Islam there, and [pauses]...and the Lord knew about it because that's where I ended up.

**WOODRUFF:** At what time in you life did you get married [pauses] and how did...what lead up to that?

**BUKER:** Yes. Well, I [pauses] left Wheaton. They said if a person wasn't engaged and went through Wheaton, that they were immune. But somebody said that Gil Dodds worked us so hard that we didn't have time to date [laughs] here. Well, in seminary...after my first year of seminary, I was a summer pastor in Eastport, Maine. And there was a girl in the audience who was up there selling Stanley goods [?] to make enough money to go to Providence Bible Institute. And so [pauses] anyway, she went on to Providence Bible Institute, and I commuted back and forth from Boston to Providence. And eventually we got engaged, and then I got...we got married, when I graduated from seminary.

**WOODRUFF:** And what was your wife's maiden name?

**BUKER:** Her name was Jean McGregor.

**WOODRUFF:** Then...then was she involved in any schooling too after Providence Bible Institute for missionary preparation?

**BUKER:** Not really. She [pauses] did...took some courses down at Hartford with me at Kennedy School of Missions and that was the extent of her training...plus Providence.

**WOODRUFF:** Was there any other type of training after this before your eventual time in the mission field?

**BUKER:** Not really, the rest of the training was over there.

**WOODRUFF:** Did you feel that the training that you had received through schooling and all was adequate?

**BUKER:** Yes, it was good preparation for the missions field [pauses]. You can always learn more but....

**WOODRUFF:** If you could have prepared any differently for mission work, what things would you have done or would you have not have changed?

**BUKER:** Well, I think what we did was [pauses]...prepared us well. [Sound of approaching train] I had been advised well as on what courses to take and what to emphasize. And [pauses] I think we had a good balanced preparation for the field that we were going to.

**WOODRUFF:** How did you go...come about choosing the Conservative Baptist Foreign Mission Society as your mission board?

**BUKER:** My folks were under the Northern Baptist Convention in Burma. They were concerned [pauses] about the liberal emphasis that was there, and I saw it as a child. So my dad came back to this country. He mentioned this to various people and others had realized this. And Conservative Baptist Foreign Mission Society then came into being in 1943. My father was one of the administrative staff, and so you might say I grew up in it. And [pauses] it was an organization...I agreed with it theologically. Administratively it was run well. It was also interested in starting work in fields where I felt the Lord was leading me. So all together the Lord lead us in that direction.

**WOODRUFF:** What was the size of the Conservative Baptist Foreign Mission Society at that time?

**BUKER:** I was appointed in 1951. [Clears throat] I'm not sure exactly how many missionaries. I suppose it'd be [pauses]...must have been at least two hundred [sound of rustling paper] at that time, two to three hundred.

**WOODRUFF:** Did this mission society have a certain strategy for reaching people in the world?

**BUKER:** Our major emphasis was indigenous: that you build the church on the people, that you let them run it from the beginning, become self-supporting, self-propagating. And major emphasis is evangelism and church planting, built in the culture of the people.

**WOODRUFF:** Does this mission society have...did it have any certain training programs for missionaries or any requirements to become a missionary?

**BUKER:** Yes. It requires a seminary degree, if you are going into evangelism and church planning. If you are going into support type ministries, then they're to be thoroughly qualified for the type of work they're going to do, plus one year of Bible training.

**WOODRUFF:** How did West Pakistan come to be [pauses] your location of work on the mission field?

**BUKER:** For years I'd been planning to go to Tibet as a missionary. I'd been burdened because I'd gone to school on the border, and I knew no missionaries were there. But the Communists took that over [China occupied Tibet in 1950], so we applied for India. But we couldn't get a

visa; we were turned down. And so Pakistan use to be a part of India. That seemed the next logical step to go. And so this is where we ended up. But we never expected to be working with Muslims.

**WOODRUFF:** What type of [pauses] requirements did West Pakistan require for missionaries to enter there?

**BUKER:** You mean the government?

**WOODRUFF:** Yes.

**BUKER:** Even though it was a Muslim government, believe it or not, they did allow missionary work to go on. And...and they had, at that time, good relationships with America. So we were let in as missionaries, even as other missionaries had been let in.

**WOODRUFF:** How many years and what years were you involved in mission work in Pakistan?

**BUKER:** We were there for fifteen years. We went there in 1953...4, and we came back in '69.

**WOODRUFF:** Could you tell me about [pauses] your first voyage to Pakistan, and the travel experiences?

**BUKER:** Yes. We went on troop transport. [The Robert] Browns and us were the first missionaries from our mission to open this new field. There were four cabins and all of them were CBFMS [Conservative Baptist Foreign Mission Society] missionaries. Some were going to India and two of us families were going to Pakistan. So that was an interesting experience. It was a freighter, and the captain [pauses]...we could...we used to listen to him with our own radios. He would talk with other ships at night, and he would mention that he had a boat load of missionaries. He'd never had anything like that. And he would say that he's keeping away from us because he didn't want to...want to be converted. And that was true, it was real hard to ge...[laughs] get to him. That was an interesting experience. One day he said, "I have a boat load of missionaries." He says, "When I go to India I'm going to get a boat load...load of monkeys, and I don't know which is going to be worse: missionaries or monkeys." [Woodruff laughs] He would have died had he known we heard all that he [laughs] were saying [laughs].

**WOODRUFF:** Where...where did you arrive then in Pakistan? What city?

**BUKER:** We came to Karachi. And that's where we got off was there.

**WOODRUFF:** And Karachi, was that capital at that time or...?

**BUKER:** Yes, it was the capital at that time.

**WOODRUFF:** And from Karachi, where did you go on to or did you stay in Karachi?

**BUKER:** No, we left our families in Karachi with an Anglican missionary, and Rob Brown and myself went three hundred miles up country to decide on a town where we should start and try...and to get a house for us to stay in.

**WOODRUFF:** And what town did you decide on?

**BUKER:** We went to a place called Larkana.

**WOODRUFF:** What were your first impressions of West Pakistan?

**BUKER:** It...it was quite a shock. Being Muslim, it was overcrowded, the filth and flies got to us in the beginning. [Pauses] And so it took some adaptation to get used to it. We went to Larkana. We didn't know the language, and they didn't know us. We had to really start from scratch. Housing was extremely difficult. We had very difficult housing situation there in the early days. But the Lord's grace was sufficient and took us through it. We learned a lot of lessons.

**WOODRUFF:** What language did they speak there?

**BUKER:** Sindhi language.

**WOODRUFF:** As far as the government situation, at that time in Pakistan, what type of government did they have?

**BUKER:** Well, it was called a "democracy," but a "controlled democracy," they called it. And [pauses] it's...it was fairly stable in comparison to some other countries. Muslim government (you had to be a Muslim to be president) and Muslim constitution.

**WOODRUFF:** Did...and then in 1958, mar...was martial law rendered on the country?

**BUKER:** Yes.

**WOODRUFF:** And what effects did that have?

**BUKER:** Martial law came various times in Pakistan to quell riots, and there would be varied strictness. Sometimes travel was restricted. Shops [pauses] would have to declare what price they were going to [pauses] sell things for. A lot of people were thrown in jail, a lot would be beaten publicly, that type of thing, because of corruption. And that really put the fear into the people. Rather repressive. There were no political parties allowed, [pauses] and then some ways it would be progress in the beginning during martial law.

**WOODRUFF:** What was the government's feeling towards Westerners?

**WOODRUFF:** It would vary. When we didn't have a war with India and we were giving it aid militarily as well as otherwise, we were great friends. But as soon as the...there would be a war with India, and these came every little while, then we were be blamed for it because we armed

India. They forgot we'd also armed Pakistan. And then suddenly we'd become enemies. So during that time, when people asked me where I was from, I'd never tell them I was from the States. I'd tell them that I was from a country near Canada, because they like Canada very much.

**WOODRUFF:** What was Pakistan's relations then with the U.S. as far as...were they friendly to agree accept during the wartimes or...?

**BUKER:** Generally speaking there were...there were fairly friendly. It went up and down. Very fickle, you might say.

**WOODRUFF:** And what were their relations with the Soviet Union at that time?

**BUKER:** It was strained, but [pauses] they bent over to the [microphone bumped] Soviet Union. In fact, our [pauses]...our neighbor, who was Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, who became eventually the president of Pakistan.... In fact we rented one of his houses all these years there. He was hung by the way when the new regime came into being. And he engineered the tilt towards China and toward Russian. And as the President of Pakistan said at that time...he said, "Deep in our hearts we're pro-American. But when you've got these two giants threatening us right on our borders, if they would attack, what could you do about it. So they bent that way in order to...for their own safety, really, not that they trust them.

**WOODRUFF:** What was Pakistan's relations with the other countries in the area surrounding them, India and others?

**BUKER:** Well, India's strained. See, you have these wars that go off and on. With Afghanistan, it was also strained at that time. There was a group called Pathans and they are the major refugees from Afghanistan in Pakistan. They...their state was called Pakhtunistan, and that went over into Afghanistan. And they've have been agitating for their own state. So because of that it was strained.

**WOODRUFF:** Once in Pakistan, what type of work was you involved in and what were your official duties?

**BUKER:** My major work was evangelism/church planning. I was field chairman for much of the time there [pauses], involved translation work, helping to reduce the language to writing in the tribal situation there. So that type of work.

**WOODRUFF:** Could you tell me, were you working with just Conservative Baptist Foreign missionaries or other missionaries, of did you establish your own mission at that time?

**BUKER:** We had good relationships with the other missions there. We've a comity agreement in Pakistan, which means the country's partitioned and various [pauses] groups...missions groups are responsible for various areas. This is so we don't compete, because there's enough work to be done without competing. But we cooperate on things we can't do alone, such as starting a missionary children's school, literature work, cooperating in Bible schools, that type of thing.

**WOODRUFF:** Could you now talk about mainly your first term in Pakistan, and what problems and challenges did you face?

**BUKER:** The major problem was getting settled, finding out where we were (because we were the first missionaries), surveying the area, learning the language without initially having a language teacher (for there wasn't initially a language school going). Housing was the...one of the more difficult. It was extremely difficult to get. We did get a house with two rooms and a bathroom, and with three missionary families. Two families lived in one room, and we, because we had three kids, lived in the other. We cooked together on the screen porch. There was a big sewer outside. The main sewer of town that was open and flies came in; it smelled and there was no electricity. Then finally we got another house and another missionary family came. We got four rooms of the house. In the other three rooms three Hindu families were living. So we had four missionary families, three Hindu families, thirty-two people in one house. We were there in that situation for two and a half years. So housing was a very major problem in the beginning. Learning the language was quite frustrating, coming to understand the people [pauses]...culture that we were in.

**WOODRUFF:** How did you go about learning the language?

**BUKER:** Well, we [pauses]...in the beginning we used the monolingual approach. "What is this?" "That." They...some people that would know English would give us the words. Then that summer we all went up to a place called Murree, eight hundred miles away, where a regular Urdu language school is. Well, we had our Sindhi language school there, and there was an Anglican missionary that learned Sindhi. And we had a good solid three or four months of language study from him that gave us a start. And from then on we kind of ran our own school, pulled our own selves by our bootstraps. We would get local people to be tutors [pauses] that we consult with. And then when the other missionaries came out, then we would teach them.

**WOODRUFF:** Were there several languages that you needed to learn or just one basic language?

**BUKER:** Sindhi was the provincial language and then we had to learn the national language which was Urdu, and then when I started working with a different tribe, (it was called [unclear] Marwaris), and then we started to learn some of that.

**WOODRUFF:** How was [pauses] the different religions of the people, such as the Islam...Islamic religion and others, how did that effect your [pauses] Christian evangelism?

**BUKER:** Well, of course, the major group was...were Muslims and you deal with them one on one. You don't have big meetings out in the open air. That doesn't work. It's mostly one on one, a lot of emphasis on literature distribution, correspondence courses, so they can study the Word of God for themselves.

**WOODRUFF:** What type of people did you work with? Were they in any certain jati or caste system or...?

**BUKER:** Well, with the Sindhis, [pauses] it was all across the board as far as [pauses] status in society. They claim they don't have castes. But when I worked with the Marwaris, they were basically a Hindu tribe, and they were low cla...low caste.

**WOODRUFF:** Were they an impoverished people?

**BUKER:** Very poor, some of the poorest people I've ever seen among the tribal people.

**WOODRUFF:** What type of housing did the people have?

**BUKER:** The [pauses] Sindhis, very much like our American Indians live in. These...we call them [pauses] adobe houses. They have what we call adobe brick, which are mud...mud houses. The tribal people we were with were just little [pauses]...little hovels that they would build from reeds and weeds and things, branches of trees.

**WOODRUFF:** And what were the major professions of the people? An agricultural setting or...?

**BUKER:** Mostly agriculture. Ten percent of the people own ninety percent of the land, and most of the people are really...they rent land and pay fifty to seventy-five percent what they grow to the landlord.

**WOODRUFF:** What types of crops did they raise?

**BUKER:** Mostly rice, some wheat, various types of vegetables.

**WOODRUFF:** What were their staple foods or diet?

**BUKER:** Diet would be rice and curry and chapatis. Chapati is their flat bread that they use [pauses], made from wheat.

**WOODRUFF:** Did you work with any students in [pauses] that time?

**BUKER:** Yes. Students, as far as Muslims are concerned, is much opened to the Gospel as any one particular group. They know some English; they're a little more open to outside ideas; very anxious to practice their English on us. So we had a lot of contact with [microphone bumped] students.

**WOODRUFF:** Can you give me kind of a history or a heritage of the Sindhi people...the people who lived in that area?

**BUKER:** The Sindhis or the Marwaris?

**WOODRUFF:** The Sindhis.

**BUKER:** The Sindhi people themselves.



**WOODRUFF:** Uh-hmmm.

**BUKER:** [Pauses] Sind is a...Sindhi is a very [pauses]...it's a language spoken by about five million people, [pauses] a very ancient language, a combination of Sanskrit as well as Arabic and Persian influence. Sind was the first area to be Islamicized by the Muslims in around the seventh or eighth century. And they're very strong Muslims as a result. There used to be some Hindus there, but most of them have gone [pauses] over to India during partition.

**WOODRUFF:** Were most of the people literate or were they illiterate or...?

**BUKER:** It's about twenty percent literacy among the Sindhis.

**WOODRUFF:** What preconceptions of Christianity did they have? Did they have any preconceived ideals or were they totally new?

**BUKER:** Well, as Muslims, they have a lot of misconceptions as to what Christianity is. They consider calling Jesus the Son of God one of the worst heresies, because they think we mean a physical relationship, which we don't. They think we believe in three Gods because we talk about the Trinity. They claim the Bible was the Word of God but we've changed it, so no longer do we have the actual Word of God with us. These are some of the misconceptions they have.

**WOODRUFF:** I read somewhere that [pauses] there're stories in Pakistan of Jesus and Mary eventually being buried in Pakistan. Could you tell me something of that?

**BUKER:** Yes. There are one branch of Muslims called Ahmadiyahs. This is the most missionary minded of the Muslims. And they claim that Jesus swooned on the cross, and when he was taken down he was revived in the cool tomb. So he walked across...to what is now Pakistan with his mother Mary. She died in the northern part in a place called Murree, and there...they will show you her grave. They claim Murree is named after Mary. And he [Jesus] went on to Kashmir, which is in India, and he died and they'll show you his grave there. Now this is heresy to many Muslims...most Muslims, who say that Jesus wasn't even on the cross, that he went up into heaven and he's alive in heaven.

**WOODRUFF:** What did their [pauses]...Islam in...religion strongly influence their daily lives? And if so how?

**BUKER:** Very much so. You can tell a Muslim by the clothes he wears, by the way he cooks his food, the type of pots and pans he uses and the food that he eats, [pauses] and the language he uses. His whole culture is his religion. You can...when you go down the street, you can spot right away, practically, if the person is a Hindu or a Muslim, just by looking at him.

**WOODRUFF:** What, other than person-to-person witnessing with the Muslims...what other types of evangelism tools did you use?

**BUKER:** Mass distribution of literature, selling of Gospels, going to fairs (to do this going shop by shop). And correspondence course is one of the more effective methods.

**WOODRUFF:** Could you explain about the correspondence course method?

**BUKER:** These are courses made with the Muslim mind [pauses] in mind, which it tells about the life of their second greatest prophet, Jesus Christ, tells about prophecy, and on the Gospels as well as others. We advertised in papers that would allow us to [pauses] about it. We would throw leaflets out of our car window which were correspondence course applications. That's the way we'd advertise it. They'd write in and then we'd send courses to them. And then when...if you come to the Lord, we try to have rallies for 'em, so they'd come together and get to meet each other. Follow them up that way.

**WOODRUFF:** What type of reaction did the Mus...Muslim people have to evangelism?

**BUKER:** There were very strong reaction against it. You'd have to be very careful there, because they're very much anti-Christian, anti-conversion. Things go well until a person comes to the Lord, and when he does, a tremendous pressure is put upon that person and...and on the missionary too.

**WOODRUFF:** What type of pressures were put on the convert himself?

**BUKER:** Well, he [pauses] very often is failed in school. If he's in business he may be boycotted. He may be kicked out of his home. He may be beaten. Sometimes he's poisoned, sometimes he is killed.

**WOODRUFF:** Did you find this to be [pauses] detrimental or did you find this to be a very difficult thing for the converts in...?

**BUKER:** Extremely difficult, very difficult thing for them to go through.

**WOODRUFF:** And did...do you feel that this persecution maybe in some ways slowed down the acceptance of the Gospel?

**BUKER:** Very definitely. Numbers of Muslims would tell us in their hearts that they believed, but didn't make it open because of what they would go through.

**WOODRUFF:** For most people was the conversion something that was a long process [banging noise in background] or was it a fast immediate experience?

**BUKER:** It's a long process. Literally weeks and months [pauses] of friendship and Bible study with a person.

**WOODRUFF:** How many [pauses] Muslims actually joined the church or [pauses] were involved in your Christian work eventually?

**BUKER:** It's hard to know. Our churches there were mostly Hindu background. In these churches you'd have a handful. It's interesting to note that fifty to ninety percent of those who come to the Lord are Muslims, (this is overall of Pakistan), revert back and go back to Islam. I don't know if in Belize they do, but they say they cannot take the pressure anymore. Another thing is the Christian churches do not welcome the Muslim converts. That's one of more difficult parts. It's because they've come out nominal Christian backgrounds themselves. They came out of Hinduism about the turn of the century, and you have you second and third generation [Christians]. And they're rather low caste, some of them, and they barely exist with the Muslims. You might say a cold war exists. So when we bring a person to Christ, these people start getting shaken up and losing their jobs. So they're afraid to even have Muslim converts come to the church. And they also, are sometimes suspicious of their motives.

**WOODRUFF:** Was the...what is the history of the Pakistani church? Was it begun [pauses] earlier...early in this century or has there been a heritage of Christianity in that country for a while?

**BUKER:** It...it, of course, was one with India before 1947, and like most Christians in India, it was actually outcaste movements coming to...into Christianity as whole castes would. And a lot of it was not conversion. It's just a movement into Christianity because we didn't believe in castes, and there were some benefits along that line. Though there...many were that were converted, and so we have second and third generation of that type which was nominal Christianity.

**WOODRUFF:** What was the size of the Pakistan...Pakistani church at that time...

**BUKER:** Okay. In all of...

**WOODRUFF:** ...or at least in your area?

**BUKER:** ...in all of Pakistan, there were about four or five hundred thousand Christians. And in our area, there was a very small group. We [pauses]...we only about thirty or forty in the town where we were.

**WOODRUFF:** Did you see significant growth or...while you were there?

**BUKER:** Not [pauses], not really. We saw growth in some of those Christians coming to the Lord, and a few Musli...Muslims. Our real encouragement came when we switched to the Marwari tribe and saw growth there.

**WOODRUFF:** What type of leadership [pauses] was there in the Pakistani church, [pauses] especially among the nationals?

**BUKER:** There was leadership that's slowly coming into being, but [pauses] they were an underprivileged group, and so a lot of it was discipleship and slowly slowly leadership was coming into being. I wouldn't call it outstanding leadership, though.



**WOODRUFF:** What was a typical worship service like and was it comparable to the Western service in any way, or...?

**BUKER:** Well, we had inherited an Anglican church. There was a small group of believers, and there was a church building. And...and the bishop formally turned them over to Baptists without even asking them. We didn't even know the language; this was when we first got there. So there was a major upheaval over that. They didn't even know what a Baptist was. So it was a process of slowly winning them to the Lord. We adopted Anglican worship [pauses]...prayer book and slowly weaned them away to what we thought was more biblical, until finally their worship [pauses] became quite similar to what would be in a church [pauses] here. Of course, it's different. Men sit on one side and women on the other. We sing a lot of psalms there [pauses] and [pauses] that type of thing.

**WOODRUFF:** Was the music Western music or Eastern...

**BUKER:** Mostly Eastern.

**WOODRUFF:** ...style?

**BUKER:** We had a few Western, but not much. We discouraged that. Mostly their own.

**WOODRUFF:** And was it...the music in the Sindhi language or the official...

**BUKER:** Well, this is [clears throat]...

**WOODRUFF:** ...language?

**BUKER:** ...the Christians were Punjabis, so the music was in that. But we did...we do have a Sindhi hymnbook for working with the tribal people and Sindhi people. And, of course, they use their own musical instruments, which are mostly drums, harmoniums and cymbals. We don't have pianos and things like that there.

**WOODRUFF:** Were there any specific training programs for the national Christians through the mission society or...such as Bible studies or [unclear]?

**BUKER:** We had a small Bible school that we used to cooperate with. There was also a seminary in the north that we had some cooperation with. And then the rest would be personal discipleship, one on one.

**WOODRUFF:** Could you tell me what a [pauses]...a typical day for the missionary would be? I'm sure there maybe isn't one particular typical day, but possibly some of the acts that missionary...or duties that he has to perform.

**BUKER:** Yeah. Well, generally, you're [microphone bumped] woken up with the Muslim call to prayer. There're all kinds of mosques around...loud speakers. And they like to always aim one at

the missionary's house and make sure he hears it. So [laughs] we generally get up soon after that, crack of dawn, have our own private devotions. At that time the milk lady will come; she milks buffalos right on the other side of the wall and brings it around to us [pauses] fresh. You have breakfast, family devotions. You may go to the bazaar to do errands. And then there may be a constant stream. You never know when they're going to come to your door. They want to buy books, want to talk more with you. There may be some letter writing that needs to be done, translation work, preparation of messages. This 'd be [pauses] somewhat of a typical day. You never knew really what's going to come. But that's the way it would go. And [pauses] if there's a fair, you'd go out to that to distribute literature or you might go to town to distribute literature or do personal work with friends house to house, that type of thing. Mostly shop to shop, not house to house. And when you get a real contact, then you have him come to your place for private Bible study, one on one.

**WOODRUFF:** What was it like raising a family on the mission field?

**BUKER:** It's quite a bit different than here. [Pauses] We sent our children to boarding school eight hundred miles away. We'd see them during the summer, as well as during their break, which was during...in the winter. They had their three month holiday there. And [pauses] being a Mu...Muslim country, it was difficult for girls to be brought up there, because.... It was fine for men; it's man's world. But because of veiling of women and that type of thing, it was very difficult. They had to be very discrete and careful when they went out in the streets.

**WOODRUFF:** How did you bring up your children [pauses] differently than your parents perhaps brought you up on the mission field?

**BUKER:** Not that much differently. I was...we had our children more at home more than I was at home, because the school was closer, and because during the summer we would go up there where...and have vacation where they were. So they were home for a longer period of time, and that was an advantage.

**WOODRUFF:** What type of education did your children have? Were they at boarding schools for the most part?

**BUKER:** Boarding school, yes.

**WOODRUFF:** Did...how much did you adapt to the culture...the Sindhi culture...

**BUKER:** Well, we...

**WOODRUFF:** ...as a missionary?

**BUKER:** ...tried to adapt as much as possible. We ate a lot of their food. Our wives, particularly, dressed like them when they went out always, with a veil. They...never over their faces, but over their head. And shalwar-qamiz, which is the regular things that women wore there: their baggy pants down to the [pauses] ankles and...and shirtsleeves down to here. So they...you...we lived in



their homes. We didn't build our own homes. We rented their type of home and lived off the country like they did.

**WOODRUFF:** Did you buy most of the food at say a local market...

**BUKER:** Yes.

**WOODRUFF:** ...type situation?

**BUKER:** Almost all, that's right.

**WOODRUFF:** And did your wives learn how to prepare certain foods of that country?

**BUKER:** Yes, we'd have Pakistani food a lot. It's highly spiced. And they would also take the same food and cook it more bland, more like we would. But it was...all the food from the country there.

**WOODRUFF:** What were your relations with other Americans or other Westerners in the country?

**BUKER:** Well, there were no other Westerners other than fellow missionaries where we were. However, we would go...we had the same school, and so parents would go up there to school, where all the other missionaries were. So we had good relationships with them there. We'd have common Bible studies and services all together. At that time we would try to get to know [pauses] (embassies would come up there too)...we'd try to get to know the people in the various embassies. There were some military aid people. We got to be good friends with some of those.

**WOODRUFF:** What were some of the highlights of your first term?

**BUKER:** A highlight was eventually learning the Sindhi language; of getting usable housing [pauses] for our missionaries; of seeing our missionary family grow considerably from us the first ones to quite a few families; of branching out into four different cities and getting housing for them, and getting set up. And much of it was just getting to know the people, who we were and...and try to discover ways on how to evangelize and to learn the language.

**WOODRUFF:** What important lessons do you feel you learned during your first term as a missionary?

**BUKER:** How to get along with one another [pauses] in a very close situation. And [pauses] lessons on how to relate to Muslims and the nationals there. And how to exist in very hot weather. We lived in the hottest spot in Asia there.

**WOODRUFF:** What type of land setting was it? Was it mainly a desert area or...?

**BUKER:** It was flat in the Sind Desert. But we had a lot of irrigation, largest in the world there. And where there was water, we would produce food.

**WOODRUFF:** In what year did you leave for furlough?

**BUKER:** That was '59, I believe, we left, yeah.

**WOODRUFF:** And how long [pauses] were you on furlough and where did you go?

**BUKER:** We were a little over a year, and in '59 we [pauses] were at Denver. We went east to where my wife's folks were for a while and then we went to Denver for the rest of the furlough.

**WOODRUFF:** And what type of activities were you involved in while on furlough?

**BUKER:** Mostly deputation in various churches. And sometimes we'd take a class at the seminary or help teach class at the seminary.

**WOODRUFF:** What types of things did you do to prepare for your next term on the field?

**BUKER:** Mostly it was deputation. I think we took a class on counselling. I'm trying to remember when that was done. And studied more up Islam to prepare us for going back.

**WOODRUFF:** Are there any other things you'd like to add about your first term in summary?

**BUKER:** Well, I think that would be a pretty good summary.

**WOODRUFF:** Okay.

**BUKER:** Yeah.

**WOODRUFF:** Okay. It looks like a convenient time to stop, so....

**BUKER:** Okay.

**END OF TAPE**

