

Latham Leslie Moore [00:00:09] That gives you an idea of how devoted these Africans can be once they they've worked for you for a long time. [break in tape].

Latham Leslie Moore [00:00:27] Life was nice and quiet and peaceful. People came down to stay with me, sometimes for a week, sometimes longer, and plenty of fishing, of course. But most my time on the sea and in my boat was goggling or lying on the beach and doing nothing. Especially given the most beautiful sandy beach I ever saw in my life. And everything was peaceful and quiet. But on the mainland, there's a lot of this chatter going on about Uhuru [sic]. The freedom. People took it up and they were all talking about who wanted freedom. Of course, none of them knew what the devil they were talking about at all. [indecipherable] and the caucus of semi educated Africans who got the thing going. They formed a union and persuaded most of the people to come and vote for them and they got into power. Eventually, the British government decided they spent quite enough money and could make millions of pounds the country as well. And they gave them their freedom. And of course, the blacks not knowing what to do with it when they got it, they made a most frightful mess of the whole place. One of the things that happened there, the last stop and the few score Africans would be working for me on the coconut chambers and cashew chambers, boats and that sort of thing. So permanent labor force there. They came to me and said, Well, what is all this uhuru, what does it mean? So I explained to them what freedom's going to be when they got it from the Tanganyikan government. And they didn't think it was exactly funny of course. They said, Well, careful, if Tanganyika is going to get the freedom, why can't we have ours? I suppose people go and talk about it and it go home and cook and that of up on me. And I told to get these fellows and tell them exactly what was happening because my boys knew it all, because they had gotten little wireless set they could listen to Dar Salaam and Nairobi and places like that. And they, they knew all about this uhuru and I can't say none of them wanted it of course it was the stay on the island be peaceful and quiet and nobody's going to worrying about paying taxes or anything like that. It simply wasn't. It wasn't done. So. [break in tape].

Latham Leslie Moore [00:03:31] I sent off the, two letters, one to His Excellency Sir Richard Turnbull Governor of Tanganyika and the other to Dag Hammarskjold and United Nations in New York. And they got them all right, because they, both of them acknowledged the letters that it caused a bit of a stink. Basically, the United Nations couldn't even find the place on the map which was rather amusing. So having notified the governor and the United Nations, we had seceded from Tanganyika and it would now do really properly so I designed the flag for the island and I thought this thing out rather carefully and it was emerald green, divided by a small strip of sea blue and blood red to balllance the, the emerald green on the flag. And in the top left hand corner was the Union Jack, which were loyal subjects of the Queen. And I decided this thing, and I sent it up to Nairobi. Where I had the flag made and it was brought down from Nairobi and we had a ceremony of flag raising as soon as it arrived. I got a long pole fixed to the top of the house and had some rope going. We had and got the flag up and everybody was around to see it. And they were particularly pleased about this. I described what the reading of the flag was this that the green and fertile island of Msimbati be separated by the blue waters of the Indian Ocean from the bloody shores of Tanganyika. And this is published in the East African Standard. And when His Excellency Earl Bartlett he was furious. Any way the, we seceded from the Tanganykans [indecipherable] complete. And they could do nothing about it. The provincial commissioner came down. He was bell of mine, he used to come down and stay for weekends, goggling and fishing, that kind of thing. And he said, What are you going to do about this? I said, I'm doing absolutely nothing. I'm simply carrying

here well now, independent, I don't have to pay any taxes to Tanganyika or any thing like that. [indecipherable] come down here and spend the weekend, I'd be delighted to see you. The PC was. [break in tape].

Latham Leslie Moore [00:06:19] Down, he'd spent weekends and were all perfectly friendly, never worried about. Every morning the flag was raised on the flag staff and sun down I took it down again. And this was done regularly. People who came to the island they have to come up to the house. They saluted the flag as they came into the house. [break in tape].

Latham Leslie Moore [00:06:47] So I had to start making new friends of the modern generation. After some weeks, we had the official reply from the United Nations to say that we've been elected to the Assembly and like that. And got all this news I passed on the boys to the staff. And they said, Well, Kyar [sic], we ought to elect somebody who's going to be a sultan of the island. I said, Where you go ahead, get all the boys together and decide who you want, you see. So next day Afani [sic] and the cook came back and they said that everybody wanted me to be the first sulatan, and I said, Right-ho, I'll arrange all this. So everything was fixed up, got a Qur'an, and they had assembled the whole island staff. And well, of course, once having started this thing, we got to do it properly. So I sent down, got three or four bags of shori [sic] rice from the Rovuma river, and we got some goats, sheep and things like that. Going to have a really good be the whole thing. Which we did. We had a Almami [sic] come across from the mainland to conduct the ceremony of inducting me to become the first sultan of the island. [break in tape].

Latham Leslie Moore [00:08:34] And I swore to uphold the the laws of the Queen, Mohammed and everybody could have justice on the island and so on. He had the speech all made out for me, as I said. And then we started the the feast. By God it was a hell of a show too. It lasted about three days. All the women on the island were commandeered to come and help cook and had these large trays of food served on and masses of rice and and goat meat and everything you can think of. It as a terrific show. Of course, lashings of palm, the native brewed beer and it was quite, quite a party. But anyway, they got them all sobered up after about three days. We went on with the work again. It was great fun. They were having so celebrated the crowning of the first sultan of the island, I thought, better let the United Nations know about all this and the governor. So I sent off a couple more signals once they goten that one, to Dag Hammarskjold [sic] being elected and duly crowned as the first sultan of the island and I demanded to have a seat in the United Nations Assembly and so on. And so probably recognize, of course, the United Nations took no notice of me at all. And got the duties made up of various people. Christopher Bon [sic] was going to be my envoy extraordinary, and potentially to the Court of St. James's. Which is a good title for Christopher. And I had various people taped up the councils and things, different places. I never got the job. One morning, about 18 months after we declared our own independence, government motorboat turned up and Tubbs, the official commissioner and the police officer in uniform. Oh, good Lord. I never seen these people in uniform. They all generally came down in shorts and a shirt and that sort of thing. Fishing. And they came up to the house. And I said, well you people dressed up like, as usual, like Portuguese band masters, that sort of thing, and that awful uniform. And they said, Well, we've got to talk to you. I said well, come and sit down and have a drink. No, they couldn't have a drink. [indecipherable] every time, come have a drink, arrive. Said we come here officially. I said, Well, tell me what's all the trouble? Had I committed a murder? He said, no, you've got to stop this independence of yours. British government refuses to recognize your to do anything about it, but they're giving colonies away, not taking other ones on. I said what you mean? He said, Well, you can't go on this independence. All

you've got to return to the Tanganyika fold and pay your back taxes and all sorts of things. I said well this is a rotten show and that. So they explained the whole thing to me and I said, Well, isn't there anyway getting out of this? They said no, it's the orders from the governor and from the colonial office in London. And there it is. So I had to give up my fight for freedom for the island and haul down my flag, which I did. And then. [break in tape].

Latham Leslie Moore [00:12:41] And she got our passages booked and so on and off she went. She was both the last of the the old timers who I knew in the, in the Territory and most of them had resigned from their jobs or got up or things got to, to really to bad there. Except me. I was just a damn fool. I stayed, on of course. [break in tape].

Latham Leslie Moore [00:13:16] And it only lasts a minute. That's a good story [break in tape].

Latham Leslie Moore [00:13:23] Where the watch is still going. This is because every time they giraffe swallowed, it wound the watch up. I've told this story, once twice for people but they never seems to believe it. [break in tape].

Latham Leslie Moore [00:13:42] Thank me for the roundabout and the island and off they want in an evening. Another party that turned up on the Sunday was a Ghanan, a man called Fernandez. [break in tape].

Latham Leslie Moore [00:13:55] To. Old, young came down once or twice and stayed at the dream cottage with his girlfriend and one or two people like that. But otherwise I didn't see anybody till one Sunday afternoon and Miriamu came and woke me up for my siesta to tell me there was about 20 Escaris [sic], all armed outside the house and they wanted to see me. I told her that if I didn't come out we were going to come into the house and fetch me. So I said, well, I better go and see what these drunken fellows want. So I went out and there was all these Escaris dotted about the places around the house and the leader was obviously a Cuban, so I spoke to him in Spanish, rather shook him up a bit. He didn't think that anybody could speak his language. And I asked and I said, Well, what you fellows want? He says, I want to talk to you. I said, Well, here I am. What what can I do for you? And whilst I was talking to the Cuban and most of the people in front of me, two or three of them went round behind me and they got hold of my legs and pulled my legs out from under me and dropped me on the floor pretty heavily and rolled me over and put the handcuffs on me and then left me there. One man came along and told me to get up, of course I couldn't get up. I couldn't move. And so he kicked me in the face and then he gave me two or three kicks in the ribs as well to help me along the course. And I told him not to do that, I can't get up because you got me handcuffs. You got somebody you've got to help me up and eventually got me onto my feet and I said, Now, what the hell are you doing? And they said, Oh, you're going to come into Mtwara with us. I said, why? He said, You're under arrest, I said, What for? We've been ordered to bring you in. There was no reason given. Well, I could do nothing. Mariamu came out of the house and tried to interfere, and somebody hit her, knocked her down, and they took me away. All I had was my Shucar [sic] around me, a pair of shoes on and an old grass hat, and my fly switch and walking stick and was all I had. And I was taken off and taken down to a waiting Land Rover, and I simply chucked into the back of it and I was left. I couldn't move. I had these handcuffs on. And then they started to bump across the sand, back through the mangrove swamps and, to catch the tide before it filled up the, the riverbed there and eventually got into Mtwara. I was in a frightful state, of course, well I had been kicked in the face and knocked about and of course, lying on the boards of a Land Rover. Steel runners on the

inside didn't do my back very much good. And that was a pretty bad state by the time they got into in Mtwara and. [break in tape].

Latham Leslie Moore [00:17:28] High Commission didn't do too much except forward letters. And I eventually, after a long time, got a passport because my passport had disappeared, of course, when I left the island, the house was looted by these hooligans and everything that was worth taking. They took my rifles and my cameras, gramophone, wireless set, masses of records. They destroyed a tremendous amount of books. They simply took them out of the out of the bookshelves and and made a bonfire and burnt them outside the house. That's the sort of thing these [indecipherable] did. [break in tape].

Latham Leslie Moore [00:18:19] One day I was sitting in the Indian house, I got two, one, two books to read and so on. In came John Hemingway [Heminway]. He'd got the story, of course, in the States, and he got onto a flying machine, and he came right over to England and down to Nairobi and Nairobi to Dar es Salam, to Mtwara And he found out where I was and came to see me. He wanted to get me back to the States. Well, I couldn't go, this is before I got a passport and I didn't dare leave the country without a passport. And I've been put on Ellis Island or wherever it is they put these people in the States on arrival. And besides I had no clothes. So he went back and. I had to stay on there for a while. [break in tape].

Latham Leslie Moore [00:19:20] And I stayed in the hotel for a while in Durban. And of course, the news was soon out about me. And a paper called Scoop had published a wonderful story written by Maryanne Richstell [sic] about me, and about the island, that sort of thing. And I was spotted at once as soon as I went to the street. And people said, There he is, there's the old sultan. And I had a frightful time dodging these reporters and people. [break in tape].

Latham Leslie Moore [00:19:57] The all these forms do have to fill out in South Africa. Massive stuff. Who your father was and all that sort of nonsense. Anyway, I fill these things in to the best of my ability. But apparently they weren't understood very well by the police department there. So these two youngsters were sent up to see me and get these papers put in order according to their way of it should be done. But this is the thing that you sort of dossier about yourself and things in your name. And I got all that. All right. And your father's name, they put that down and so on. Are you married? I put No. Single. And they said what does single mean. I suppose it means that I am not married. Oh. So they made a note of that in Afrikaans on the side. And said now who is your wife? I said I am not married. You see, I'm single. Oh. You haven't got a wife? No. Oh, that's alright. So they altered that. How many children you got? By that time, I thought my God, this is good enough for a leg pull. So I thought up one quickly. I said, Now look here. Promise me you won't tell Pretoria anything about this. But when I left my island, I had seven wives and 34 children, and they were all cabriolet [sic]. One of them looked at me and said, What is Cabriolet? [break in tape].

Latham Leslie Moore [00:21:35] Well, they took the papers away. And what happened after that, I don't know. But I wasn't interviewed again by the police department. If you been in South Africa, you'll know exactly what I mean about the stupidity of the Afrikaandos [sic] there. Absolutely. As blockhead can be. [break in tape]

Latham Leslie Moore [00:22:03] Eventually got better. I could amble about a bit. And decided I'd seen quite enough of South Africa, I better go up to Rhodesia and see what I can do up there. So I got everything all fixed up for Degail [sic]. Something to do with these

South African Airways. He used to he got everything all laid on me. And I had my box made for Mitsy, and got into the flying machine. And off we went and landed in Salisbury. Some friends got me a. [break in tape]

Latham Leslie Moore [00:22:45] I'm still having a lot of trouble. My legs, ulcers broke out again everywhere. I had to go and have them attended to, eventually taken to a mission hospital. And they were very good. They looked after me. Then eventually they got more or less healed up and I flew back to England. Rhodesia is a lovely country with a lot of weird things to see. Thing called the balancing rocks. There were all sorts. [break in tape].

Latham Leslie Moore [00:23:29] I still kept in touch with old friends. I used to write to Penelope Penn [sic]. She. She got a little cottage in Old Fox, near Piddletrenthide in Dorchester and I used to write to John Hemingway [Heminway] and Charles Villa in the States and gets the news of how their book's were getting, going on. And also Marianne, who was in, was still in Rhodesia, in South Africa, and I went to stay with them, got into a flying machine in Salisbury and, flew to Johannesburg and went out to stay at their lovely place, called in about 20 miles or so out of Johannesburg. Beautiful place, it was. Mary's got green fingers, had a most lovely garden there [break in tape].

Latham Leslie Moore [00:24:33] Marianne went off to Kenya and got married to Anthony Fitzgerald and had a couple of children. [break in tape].

Latham Leslie Moore [00:24:50] I was still having trouble with my legs. Soon as one crop of ulcers healed up, another crop started again. And they told me in the hospital, they thought that I much better go back to, England get treated in the country there, somewhere. They might do me some good. Eventually decided to go that i wrote to Penelope and I told her I could. [break in tape].

Latham Leslie Moore [00:25:22] I flew back from England to Nairobi. Where Marianne met me and took me out to her house at Lang'ata [sic], about 20 miles or so from Nairobi. I stayed there for a few days, collecting kitten interviewing the passport and immigration officers and things like that. And eventually we decided there was a date with the motor down to Mombasa. So we started off and