2660-119-000-052.mp3

Producer 2 [00:00:04] This is Travels, sound roll number 52, cam roll number 87. We're in New York. It's April 29th, 92 add next step's minus ten. 5-18. And ready.

John Heminway [00:00:37] What did you discover after he died?

Marianne [00:00:41] I was executing his will and I had to write to say that he had died and his pension should be stopped. And then I got a letter back saying that they wanted to send the pension to his next of kin, his wife, Mary Leslie Moore. I wrote back and said, there's been a mistake. Latham was never married. He's been a bachelor all his life with lots of women, but he never married. And they wrote back and showed me proof that he was married to a woman called Mary. I just looked up at the sky and I said, Latham, you've tricked us again. And of course, we'll never know exactly what went on. But in a way, he lived a lie or part of the lie to us because he never told us about that part of his life. It didn't suit his image of being the dandy, the ladies man and even the snob. And Latham was a snob. He wasn't a racist. He always professed to say that, he always professed that he didn't like Africans or Indians. In your case, he told you he didn't like Americans. He didn't like people who came from Birmingham. He didn't like people who came from Manchester. But he loved them all, one by one, as individuals. They came through his door, he sat them down, he gave them a cup of tea, and he regaled them with his stories. And he was never, ever a bore to any of them, including us. Latham was never boring.

John Heminway [00:02:16] It's absolutley true.

Marianne [00:02:17] Mm hmm.

John Heminway [00:02:18] Did, um. What was his last days like? Can you remember the dining room there, for instance, at Nanyuki Sports Club? Can you remember his last days? How he lived things out? How had he changed? For instance.

Marianne [00:02:35] Latham became more English in his manners after he left the island. He used to dress up for dinner.

Producer 2 [00:02:51] 5-19 and ready.

John Heminway [00:02:52] Ready? Maryanne, tell us your recollections of going up to to have dinner with him or see him in Nanyuki.

Marianne [00:03:06] After he left the island, he became more British in his manners, and while his legs held out, he used to go down every day to have dinner and lunch in the dining room, and he'd dress up, brush his hair with his silver back brushes, and he'd comb his beard. And he put on his cravat and his jacket. And he tried to make me [break in tape].

Producer 2 [00:03:30] Speed.5-20. Ready.

John Heminway [00:03:37] The silver backed brushes, becoming more English. Remind us of those wonderful days at Nanyuki.

Marianne [00:03:47] After he left the island, he became more British in his manners and when he was than Nanyuki Sports Club, as long as his legs held out, he used to go down

to eat in the dining room for lunch and dinner. And before doing so he would brush his hair with his silver back brushes. He'd put on his cravat and his jacket, and he'd take his cane and he'd walk down through the garden to the dining room. Everybody had separate tables. It was rather no Kardish [sic], and they didn't necessarily speak to each other, particularly in Latham's case. Latham liked Phyllis Berkus, who is a lady who is highborn and very beautiful, and he would turn to her and say, bonjour sherry. But there was another woman he didn't like at all, and he never spoke to her. And there was a man he didn't like and he never spoke to him either. And then there was an American woman from Hong Kong who he did like, but he addressed her in English because being American, she obviously wouldn't understand French.

John Heminway [00:04:52] Um. And was he, um. There was some talk beginning then. And I know it's something that he thought about a lot, that he might have had a very interesting parentage. Possibly there is a connection with him and the royal family.

Marianne [00:05:11] Latham looked more and more like Edward the Eighth.

John Heminway [00:05:15] Of the sentence.

Marianne [00:05:17] I didn't know this story. This is your story. Not my story. Okay. What? Well. Latham looked more and more like it Edward the Seventh as he grew older. And of course, there were people who were sons of Edward the Seventh born on the wrong side of the blanket. So the story went around that perhaps Latham was one of these people. And Latham, of course, because he had a wonderful sense of humor, liked to encourage the story, but he would never deny it. But he would never confirm it otherwise. So it was left up to us to wonder whether or not it was true. I think it could have been true, but it could have been false as well. It was another secret that Latham took to the grave.

John Heminway [00:06:07] What other secrets do you suppose he had?

Marianne [00:06:11] I think Leatham had a lot of secrets. I think that he was very partizan in the knowledge that he released to his friends, even people who were close to him like you and me, because he had an image of himself and that he wanted to project to everyone around him. And he did. So I think there are a lot of carish [sic] things that Latham might have done, like leave his wife without any money and support. And he wasn't going to tell anybody about that. That didn't fit in with the ladies man and the gentleman. And I suspect that Latham did a lot of naughty things that he never owned up to.

John Heminway [00:06:53] What?

Producer 2 [00:06:54] here's a plain.

John Heminway [00:06:55] Okay. Stop there.

Producer 2 [00:06:57] It. 5-21 ready.

John Heminway [00:07:02] In the end, Marianne was Latham important.

Marianne [00:07:07] Oh Latham was very important. He fired our dreams, and he was visionary. And. And he was wonderful. Latham was everything to me. He was like a

grandfather, like a close friend. I was his mother, his sister. I was never his lover. But I was his lover, too. Latham was everything.

Producer 2 [00:07:31] And cut plane. 5-22. We're ready.

John Heminway [00:07:48] It's not about.

Producer 2 [00:07:50] It is.

John Heminway [00:07:51] Sorry.

Producer 2 [00:07:51] Of it. 5-23. Ready.

John Heminway [00:08:00] Was Latham important?

Marianne [00:08:03] Latham was very important. He was important to all of us. He was a marvelous figure. Eccentric, visionary, unique, independent. He wasn't going to compromise for anyone. He had his own standards and he lived by them. And for me, he was everything. He was my grandfather. He was one of my best friends. Sometimes I was his mother or his sister. We were lovers, even though we were never lovers. He was everything to me.

John Heminway [00:08:38] What does he and his life tell us about Africa?

Marianne [00:08:46] Latham lived a life that was untrammeled. Africa's untrammeled. And he couldn't have done it on another continent. He knew what he wanted to do. And he lived out his dreams. And he understood Africa. He knew that he may have to pay the penalty. The penalty for freedom is that there's, there's no protection if things go wrong. At the end of the day, things did go wrong for Latham. He was thrown out and there was no safety net. He lost everything. But it was worth it.

John Heminway [00:09:19] And why don't we cut there. Mean.

Producer 2 [00:09:27] 5-24.

John Heminway [00:09:32] What does Latham tell us about Africa.

Marianne [00:09:35] Latham lived a life that could only have been lived in Africa. It was untrammeled. Africa's untrammeled. There were no perimeters. There were no horizons. You can do what you want. And Latham did what he wanted. He was free. At the end of the day, he paid the penalty, which was to lose everything. But Latham understood that that's what Africa is about. There's no protection. You can do what you want, but if things go wrong, there's no safety net.

John Heminway [00:10:07] Do you think about him often?

Marianne [00:10:10] Yeah. I think about Lathem. Yeah, I do. I'm very fond of him.

John Heminway [00:10:18] He grows after death, doesn't he?

Marianne [00:10:23] Well, I suppose we sift out the memories that are irksome, like when he doesn't want to do what you want him to do, when he has his fatinas and you get drawn

into it, you forgive him, that you forget it. You remember that great personality who said, Come here, darling, let me tell you some stories when I rub your tummy. That's wrong, actually.

Producer 2 [00:10:57] [indecipherable]. 25. Ready here

John Heminway [00:10:58] Marianne, do you think about Latham now? 25, 12 years after he's dead?

Marianne [00:11:08] Of course I do. I didn't think about him every day, but I think about him. He's, he's part of my life. He'll always be there. Of course I do.

John Heminway [00:11:18] Right. You have not been in Africa in three years. What does it feel? Not being able to go back to Africa.

Marianne [00:11:30] It hurts. It's like the whole world is a prison.

John Heminway [00:11:36] And you just take it. Just use it as a full sentence, you know?

Marianne [00:11:40] It hurts not to go back to. It hurts not going back to Africa. It hurts not to be allowed to go back to Africa. I can go anywhere in the world and I'm in a prison because I can't be where I want to be.

John Heminway [00:12:00] Why is that important?

Marianne [00:12:04] I don't know why I've heard that important, but it's it's something that gets you very deep down. It seizes hold of you. It's it's something that you can't control. And I think about home and. I can't. It's. I think about just the birds sitting on the telephone wire and I crack up. It's, it's a very primitive instinct. I can't explain it.

John Heminway [00:12:37] There are a lot of people in the world who don't know Africa. They don't know what they're missing. How do you explain it to them?

Marianne [00:12:44] Africa is, is huge. You can fly for hours and hours and you don't see one building. You don't see one person. And there's something very primitive and, and awesome about nature on that scale. And it also creates a great community among the people there. You can drive for 9 hours and meet a stranger, and he'll offer you everything that he's got. It's something that you don't find elsewhere. And you can. You have a dream. You can realize it in Africa if you want to, you can listen to your inner voice and follow your your best instincts in Africa. It's, it's a primitive place. It's libidos on the surface. It's very sensual. You can open up your personality in Africa. You're not constrained by what your neighbor thinks. You can be who you want to be. You can be yourself. And you can express yourself how you want to express yourself. It's a very creative place. It's not just by accident. There are a lot of authors and artists and creative people in Africa. They seek it out because it is very stimulating and it's very inspiring.

John Heminway [00:14:03] I almost get the impression that it's a bit like a lover.

Marianne [00:14:07] It is. It's like a mistress. I've always thought of it as a mistress. You feel that you really ought to get rid of her. But you can't. You absolutely cannot. Uh, when I'm not in Africa, I when I was a child, I had some very special toys that I used to wrap up in cotton wool and put in a shoe box and keep on a shelf in the cupboard where they'd be

safe. And when I'm here and not in Africa, that's how I feel. I feel as if I'm wrapped up in cotton wool in a shoe box at the back of the cupboard. And I'm safe, but nothing's happening to me. I'm dead. And I only come alive, properly alive when I go home to Africa.

Producer 2 [00:15:01] 27.

John Heminway [00:15:05] And just tell a story about the club you love.

Marianne [00:15:09] When I was a child, I had some very special toys that I used to wrap up in cotton wool and put in a shoe box, and then I'd put them in a shelf the back of the cupboard, because I wanted to keep them safe. And that's how I feel when I'm not in Africa. I'm wrapped up in cotton wool in the shoe box at the back of the cupboard, and I'm safe. But there's nothing happening to me. I'm dead. I only come alive when I go back to Africa.

Producer 2 [00:15:49] 5-28.

Marianne [00:15:50] What?

Producer 2 [00:15:53] Anytime.

John Heminway [00:15:57] So when all is said and done, what does Latham's life tell us about Africa?

Crew Member [00:16:03] In the end, Marianne was Latham important?

Producer 2 [00:16:06] May I interupt.

Producer 2 [00:16:09] I [break in tape].

Producer 2 [00:16:11] Speed. 5-29. Ready here.

John Heminway [00:16:17] So, Marianne, what in the end does Latham's life tell us about Africa moment?

Crew Member [00:16:25] In the end, Marianne, was Latham important.

John Heminway [00:16:30] In the end was was Latham. No.

Producer 2 [00:16:34] We have this fantasy.

John Heminway [00:16:36] Okay.

Producer 2 [00:16:40] 5-30.

John Heminway [00:16:45] So was Latham important.

Marianne [00:16:49] Of corse Latham was important.

Crew Member [00:16:49] What were his last days like at the Nanyuki Sports Club Dining Room how did he change

John Heminway [00:16:56] Can you remember Latham's last days at the Nanyuki Sports Club? What was his life like? Can you recall walking through that dining room when I can? I bet you you can.

Marianne [00:17:10] Oh, it's wonderful. Whe he dressed up.

Crew Member [00:17:12] I always get the impression, like it is a lover.

John Heminway [00:17:17] I almost get the impression, from listening to you, that Africa is like a lover.

Marianne [00:17:24] Africa is like a lover. She's a mistress.

Crew Member [00:17:27] You have not been in Africa in three years. What does it feel like?

John Heminway [00:17:32] You haven't, Marianne, been back to Africa in three years. What is a separation felt like? I'll do that again.

Marianne [00:17:40] And in fact, I haven't been back to Kenya.

John Heminway [00:17:43] Okay. Right. East Africa. Okay. Okay. You haven't been back to East Africa in, what, three years now? What does it feel like? What does it feel like being separated from Africa?

Marianne [00:17:58] Terrible. Terrible.

Crew Member [00:18:00] Was Latham comfortable in South Africa.

John Heminway [00:18:03] Was was Latham comfortable in South Africa?

Crew Member [00:18:11] Do you recall the circumstances when you got kicked out?

John Heminway [00:18:17] Can you recall the circumstances when Latham was kicked out of from his island? I'll do that again. Can you recall the circumstances when Latham was kicked out of his island?

Marianne [00:18:30] Yes, he was kicked out.

Crew Member [00:18:34] Did Latham ever. Can you do that and kicked off the island?

John Heminway [00:18:35] Okay. Okay. Can you recall the circumstances when, when Latham was kicked off his island and forced to leave?

Marianne [00:18:45] Yes, he was there.

Crew Member [00:18:47] Did they come over to tell you about his future? How he wanted to live out his days?

John Heminway [00:18:53] Did Latham ever talk to you about his future or how he imagined he was going to live out his days in Africa on this island.

Marianne [00:19:02] He wanted to die on his island.

Crew Member [00:19:03] Can you remember your first impressions of him when you met him on the beach?

John Heminway [00:19:09] Can you remember your first impressions of Latham when you first met him? On the beach. And do that again, actually.

Producer 2 [00:19:18] And.

John Heminway [00:19:20] Can can you remember your first impressions when the two when both of us met him for the first time on that beach just outside of his house?

Marianne [00:19:28] Oh, it's wonderful. Terrific.

Crew Member [00:19:32] Can you do that again?

John Heminway [00:19:35] Can you remember that first moment when you first clapped eyes on Latham when he came out of his house and we were on the beach in the car? Can you recall that when.

Marianne [00:19:46] He was wonderful?

Crew Member [00:19:49] Cut, good. Can we do some noise

John Heminway [00:19:52] Okay. Well, are you still rolling.

Producer 2 [00:19:54] Yeah, cutting. 5-31. I ready here.

John Heminway [00:20:00] Okay. Tell me about that week that you were. You stayed with them after. When you return, when you went back to South Africa.

Marianne [00:20:10] Well, I'd rather tell you about the last time I was in Marsabit. And, uh, you know, there's this big crater, there was this swamp at the bottom.

John Heminway [00:20:20] Mm hmm.

Marianne [00:20:21] Well, the last time I was there, an elephant had fallen into the crater and he couldn't get out. It was all bogged down. There was no way he could get out.

John Heminway [00:20:30] Your kidding.

Marianne [00:20:31] But luckily, there was a mouse driving by and to drive a porsch. So the elephant with his trunk. and he said Mouse Mouse [sic] please, I'm stuck. And I can't get out of this crater. So the mouse stopped, got out of the car. He said, Well, this is a fine mess you're in. He said, But don't worry elephant, I put a rope in the back of the car and I'll tie it to the rear fender. And then I'll throw it down into the crater and you just grab it with your trunk, and then I'll get back to the car and rip it up and I give it a really big wreck. This is a very powerful car to drive. I would just, you know, pull you out. So he got tied up the rope and he dropped it in. The elephant grabbed it with his trunk and got back in, he was reving up and they slammed his foot down to the floor and this car just shot forward. And the elephant came out like champagne cork. But he was really grateful. And he said as

much to the mouse, you know, they parted ways. Well, I've stayed there for quite a while, and but a couple of weeks later, the mouse fell into the crater, and got all bogged down and couldn't get up. But lucky enough for him, the elephant was walking by, he said, Oh, elephant, thank goodness that you're walking by because, you know I'm stuck just like you were, and I can't get out. And the elephant said, Don't worry about it. He said, Well, what I'll do is I'll unzip my fly and I'll get my donger out. And I'll just lower it down into the crater and you grab on to it and I just heave you out.

John Heminway [00:22:09] Marianne, I think we need to cut here how we.

Crew Member [00:22:12] We have that on tape.

Producer 2 [00:22:14] Camera roll number 89. So [break in tape].

John Heminway [00:22:17] You wouldn't.

Producer 2 [00:22:20] Speed any of that. It's hard for me to turn with you all here. Here for a second. 5-32. Ready?

John Heminway [00:22:34] You're all ready?

Crew Member [00:22:35] Yep to.

John Heminway [00:22:39] You remember these on his little bureau wherever he went. I remember those, remember those. Msimbati. And then finally Lamu and Nanyuki. Always beautifully polished just like that. Look at that a little where he must have been given those as a, as a boy. Don't you think?

Marianne [00:22:59] Probably. I know that this is his christening mug, so this must be a good 100 years old. It's his. That's his initials. LLM intertwined like that. Beautiful.

John Heminway [00:23:14] And these are all just in his room when, when he died.

Marianne [00:23:17] Yeah.

John Heminway [00:23:20] They're beautiful, he said. I'm sure he's delighted that you have them all. But do you remember him smoking cigarets?

Marianne [00:23:26] No, never. I don't know what he used that for. Maybe he kept stamps in it.

John Heminway [00:23:32] Smells of Msimbati. And it's funny. There's something about an Englishman and his silver and his polished silver in it. I mean, I can remember that great room at Msimbati, walking in and just being overwhelmed by the little gigas, knickknacks, and things that were so English country house. And yet this was off the coast of Tanzania and all these little things that appropriately displayed various things with the silver frames of those old girlfriends. And then I do remember one thing, and that was the, the it was a shell casing from the First World War. It's a huge, big thing. And I think that he used it as a either an umbrella stand or a doorstop or something like that. And he claimed that it was a destroyer, had shot it off the deck of his destroyer at the island of Msimebati, and he collected that there off the beach. Apparently, the island was a was a listening

post, a German listening post during the First World War. And they were bombarding it for to get this one listener. In any case, that was the remains. There's a lovely.

Marianne [00:24:50] I think those are his mother's. I think they come from.