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A part of the crowd at proclamation

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MY father, Tunku Mohammad Jawa, the elder brother of Tunku Abdul Rahman, was invited to attend the Proclamation of Independence ceremony at Merdeka Stadium as a special guest of the Chief Minister.

As his son, I was obliged to take care of him during his stay at the Residency, the official residence of the Tunku.

On the morning of Aug 31, 1957, I

accompanied him to Merdeka Stadium. We travelled there in a chauffeur-driven grey Rolls Royce that belonged to Tunku's Chinese millionaire friend.

When I was in the stadium I had the privilege of sitting beside Prince William, the son of the Duke of Gloucester. I noticed that he was just a teenager and for the occasion he wore a grey lounge suit and he had a medal on his left breast pocket.

I do not think it was intended that I should sit with the prince but I think I was

lucky to get that seat when Datuk Syed Hussain, the Tunku's son-in-law who was then the protocol officer, gave me the invitation card to the stadium.

My proudest moment during the historic event was to hear my uncle making the following declaration to the people of Malaysia: "... I, Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra ibni Almarhum Sultan Abdul Hamid Halim Shah, Prime Minister of the Persekutuan Tanah Melayu ... do hereby proclaim and declare ... on behalf of the people of the

Where were you when Tunku declared Merdeka? Share your memories and pictures of this momentous event (or as related to you by your parents and grandparents) by e-mailing us at merdeka@thestar.com.my

Persekutuan Tanah Melayu as from the 31st day of August 1957 the Persekutuan Tanah Melayu ... shall be forever a sovereign democratic and independent State founded upon the principles of liberty and justice ..."