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HISTORY III PROJECT

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"AN EXTENSION OF THE GRAPEVINE"

CONTENTS

1.	INTRODUCTION	I
2.	THE LIFE OF MR. AKLU ADHAR	2
	a. Decision to leave India	2
	b. His Life in South Africa	3
3.	THE CONNECTION OF THE AKLU AND THE SATGOOR FAMILIES	5
4.	ADVENT OF INDIANS IN NATAL	7
	a. Orange Free State	II
	b. Cape Colony	II
5.	POPULATION FIGURES OF THE 1946 CENSUS	I2

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For making certain documents available to me.

2. Mr. Vinay Bisram

For typing out my project.

INTRODUCTION

Upon investigating the origins of my grandfather I encountered a few problems in that I could only go as far back as my grandfather's marriage and their subsequent ~~XXXX~~ children. My father says that my grandfather did come from India but he has no information as to when he arrived in South Africa, there are no documents available and what he did until he got married.

My grandfather was Satgoor Babooram. He had two sisters and one brother. The sisters names are Jasado, and Kabootra and his brother's name was Sundar. He initially lived in Pentrich and thereafter bought a place in Pietermaritzburg from his father-in-law for £200.

Owing to the limited information that I could learn about my grandfather's early life, I decided to speak to Mr. BUDRAM AKLU who is married to my grandfather's sister, Kabootra. On interviewing him I discovered that he had enough information about his own family history but he had very little information regarding my grandfather's early life. I changed my mind and decided to research his family instead.

This is the reason why I titled my project

"AN EXTENTION OF THE GRAPEVINE" ,

Because it deals more with my grandfather's brother-in-law's family than my own immediate family.

THE LIFE OF MR. AKLU ADHAR

Aklu Adhar was born in Dharbangar, in North Western India. The date of his birth is not known therefore I would not like to speculate. He lived in Dharbangar where he worked on the "channa", or in English commonly referred to as "gram" flour, fields. He was married and had one daughter. They lived out quite a meagre existence on the land. They worked all day on the farm and were very lowly paid. They received a monthly ration from the landowner which was not adequate.

DECISION TO LEAVE INDIA

One day while working on the fields they were approached by certain recruiting agents who told them about the life in South Africa and about the good working conditions. The deciding factor, off course was, the high wages promised which was equivalent to ten Indian Rupees. This was quite a lot in comparison to what they were earning.

Aklu Adhar, without telling his wife and daughter left for South Africa in 1895. He left from Dharbangar for Behar. From Behar he travelled to Calcutta. From Calcutta he was transported to ~~South~~ South Africa aboard a steamer. He landed in Durban and was to become part of the Indentured labour system.

HIS LIFE IN SOUTH AFRICA

He landed in Durban and being part of the indentured system was sent to work on the railways. He was indentured for five years to the railways and began living at Thornville Junction in Natal. After serving his period of indenture he bought his freedom in 1900 to become a "free Indian". As a "free Indian" he moved to Liens River. From 1900 he began farming here. In 1906 Aklu Adhar was introduced to an subsequently married Indha, a lass of 15 years. This marriage beget five children, four boys and one daughter. The boys being Budram, Sukram, Tetaram, and Ramsarub, and the daughter Ramkali.

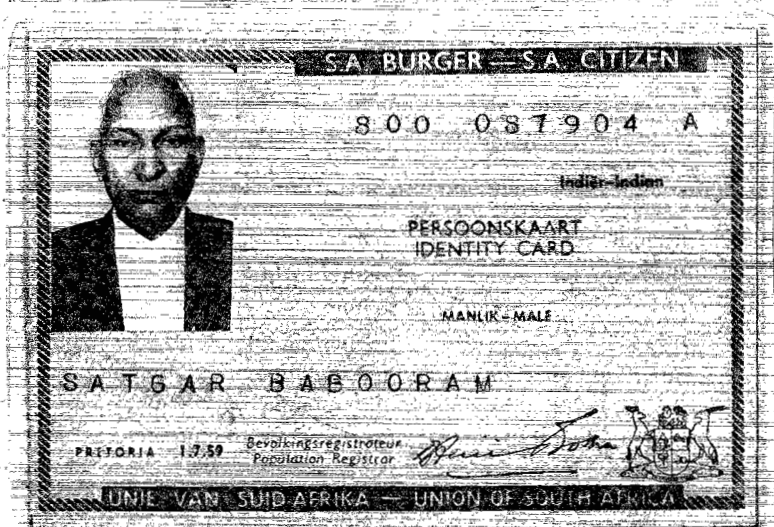
He farmed in Lions River from 1906 - 1914. There after he moved to Pentrich, where he lived from 1914 - 1931. From Pentrich he moved once again with his family to Slaingspruit, where he died on the 1 July 1937.

MEMBERS OF THE SATGOOR AND SUNDAR FAMILIES



THE CONNECTION OF THE AKLU AND THE SATGOOR FAMILIES

In 1928 Aklu's eldest son, Budram marriedd my grandfather's sister, Kabootra. Budram began working at the age of ten at Eddels Shoe Factory where he retired in 1976. From Slaingspruit Budram and his family moved to New Scotland Road in Pietermaritzburg. In 1963 the group areas Act made them move from New Scotland Road to their present residence in the Indian Township of Newholmes.



AN I.D. CARD OF MY GRANDFATHER,

SATGAR BABOORAM



A PHOTOGRAPH OF MY GRANDFATHER

The introduction of Indians into South Africa was in itself, a deliberate step taken in the interests of agriculture and industry. The prosperity enjoyed by the sugar and coal mining industries, the railways and the development of secondary industries, as a result of employment of Indian labour is well known.

After the Boers had trekked north in 1843, Natal was annexed to the British Crown. Natal was at that time undeveloped but the British settlers were quick to realise its enormous potentialities. The first sugar was planted in 1847 and proved that Natal could become a prosperous Colony if a steady supply of cheap labour could be procured. The English settlers themselves were incapable of performing the arduous work of cane planting and cutting in a sub-tropical climate. Native labour was tried and found extremely unreliable, and attempts to secure Chinese and Malay labour met with no success.

In 1855 the Governor of the Cape Colony, at the instigation of the Natal Planters and the Durban Corporation entered into prolonged correspondence with the Home and India Governments with a view to obtaining a supply of labour from India. This request was for some time refused, and agreed to in 1860 only after strenuous importuning from Natal.

In 1860 the first batch of Indians labourers arrived in Natal under a system of indenture which bound them over to their employers for a period, at first three years, and later five years, with a free passage back to India at the termination of their indenture or to settle in the country.

Natal was rapidly transformed into a prosperous and flourishing colony. In spite of a general realisation that this was entirely due to the skill and industry of the Indian labourers, there were many plantations subjected to a form of treatment not very far removed from the old system of slavery, and in 1866 the Indian Government refused to allow any more labourers to emigrate to South Africa. The effect of this was quickly felt on the sugar, tea and coffee plantations, after further lengthy correspondence, immigration was again permitted in 1874, but at this time the Colonial secretary, Lord Salisbury, laid down as a condition that when the labourers had completed their period of indenture they should be free to enjoy the same privileges as any other British subject in the Colony.

The presence of a free Indian population in South Africa resulted in the advent of Indian traders from India and industries in Mauritius. These catered primarily for Indians and subsequently for Natives and Europeans.

Through their industry free Indians and traders prospered in Natal. Their method of intensive cultivation provided the colony with a cheap supply of farm produce. The white settlers became alarmed at their transformation from semi-slaves to successful producers and traders and from 1880 attempts were made to stop immigration and to restrict the rights of the free Indians.

A Commission appointed in 1886 found that:-

"in fairness to the free Indian we must observe that the competition is legitimate in its ~~NATURAL~~ nature and has been welcomed by the general community. There can be no doubt that Natal is ~~AMIRABLY~~ admirably suited whether as a temporary or a permanent home for Indian immigrants." I.

In spite of the Commission's findings, persistent efforts were made to prevent Indian immigrants from obtaining the grant of land promised them by Law 27 of 1870. ~~EXACTLY~~ Eventually in 1890 a motion was unanimously passed through the Legislative Council abolishing the land grants to ex-indentured Indians. Very few grants had been made up to this time and by the passing of this resolution some 13000 Indians, whose claims were pending, lost their rights to the land.

In 1893 the Natal Government sent a deputation to persuade the Indian Government to agree to new terms of indenture. They urged that labourers should return to India on termination of their indenture.

The government of India agreed on condition that free passage was provided and that failure to return did not constitute a criminal offence. This proposal was introduced into an Act in 1895 with the addition that if any immigrant failed to return he, and the members of his family over sixteen years of age, were liable to an annual tax of £3. This iniquitous tax was not abolished until the Smuts-Gandhi agreement of 1914.

This act was the first of many attempts to curtail the rights of Indians in South Africa.

In 1885 agitation against Indians was set afoot in the Boer Republic of the Transvaal where a number of free Indians had settled either as labourers. Law 3 of 1885 was enacted against Asians, including Coolies, Arabs, Malays, and Mohomedans subjects of the so-called Turkish Empire and laid down that :-

- (a) They cannot obtain the burgher right of the South African Republic (i.e. Transvaal).
- (b) They cannot be owners of fixed property in the Republic except in such streets, wards and locations as the Government for the purposes of sanitation shall assign to them to live in.

ORANGE FREE STATE

In 1891 the Orange Free State, also a Boer Republic, passed a law prohibiting any Asiatic from trading or farming and the Indians settled there were forthwith deported with compensation.

CAPE COLONY

In the Cape Colony the only legal discrimination against Indians is that ~~XXXX~~ while Europeans possess adult franchise, Indians and other coloured races have a franchise based on education, property, or income qualification and is enjoyed only by males.

POPULATION FIGURES OF THE 1946 CENSUS IN SOUTH AFRICA

The population of the four provinces is given in the 1946 census as follows :-

PROVINCE	Europeans	Asiatics	Coloureds	Natives
Cape	859 611	16 901	813 190	2 327 099
Natal	232 923	228 119	22 623	1 699 068
Transvaal	1 041 835	37 805	55 270	3 049 169
O.F.State	201 091	14	13 967	660 473

In 1921 and 1936 the European and Indian population of Natal was as follows :-

Year	Europeans	Indians
1921	136 838	141 649
1936	190 551	183 646 2.

2. A.I. Kajeer and P.R. Pather: Treatment Of Indians
In South Africa, p.12.

COLONY OF NATAL

Pass under Act 29 of 1905

No. 88

41

41

Colonial No. 66443

Sex *M* Age *29* Height *5ft 6 1/2*

Bodily Marks *Scar on right arm*

1905 amended by Section 1 of Act 32 of 1906

This Pass expires on the 30th June 1908 and must then be renewed

CHILDREN'S NAMES

Col. No. Sex Age

Col. No. Sex Age

Pass issued by

Magistrate's Office *Howick*

27th July 1907

J. Macdonald

Magistrate

To
A CERTIFICATE ISSUED [^]THOSE WHO PAID THE £3 TAX.

**PASS TO INDIANS
BORN IN THE COLONY**

This is to Certify that.....

Colonial Born, is at liberty to dispose of.....

services. ...

Father's Name

No.

24345

Age

17 yrs.

Height

5 feet 8

Marks

Robertson

Director of Indian Immigration

NAT 11

2 June

190

1908

PASS BELONGING TO BUDRAM AKLU

PASS ISSUED TO MRS. INDHA AKLU

ISSUED AT THE AGE OF 19 YEARS

INLAND REVENUE. R. 886.

10168 1/3/28

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.

5/-

PASS TO INDIANS

No. 28891

Born in the Province of Natal.

This is to certify that.....

Budram

Colonial Born, is at liberty to dispose of.....his.....services.

Father's Name.....

Aklu

No.

66443

Mother's Name.....

Iudha

No.

24345

Sex.....Male.....Age.....19 yrs (12/1/28).....Height.....5' 8" (growing).....

Marks.....

Right fore-finger deformed

OFFICE DATE STAMP.

11 APR 1928

H. Rahmim
Protector of Indian Immigrants.

PASS BELONGING TO BUDRAM AKLU

No. 28891

ISSUED AT THE AGE OF 19 YEARS

SOURCE LIST

1. Mr. Aklu Budram - interview
2. Kajee, A.I., & Pather, P.R : Treatment of Indians
in South Africa. DURBAN (Publication Date Unknown)
3. Dynamic Change In South Africa, PRETORIA, Government
Printer, 1979.