

(Y.S. MOODLEY)⁷⁰¹₅₉₄

I2400

HISTORY III - PART - TIME

RESEARCH PROJECT ⁵⁹⁴ (THE GOUNDEN FAMILY)

T A B L E O F C O N T E N T S

TITLE OF SUBJECT	PAGE
NOTE	p. <u>⁶I.</u>
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	p. <u>II.</u>
ILLUSTRATED MAP OF PLACE OF ORIGIN	p. <u>III.</u>
SHIP - LIST	p. <u>IV.</u>
A.) INTRODUCTION	p. I.
B.) PLACE OF ORIGIN IN INDIA	pp. I - 2.
C.) (THE GOUNDENS' SOCIO)- economic BACKGROUND	pp. 2 - 3.
D.) REASONS FOR LEAVING INDIA	p. 3.
E.) A BRIEF HISTORY OF INDENTURED LABOUR IN NATAL	pp. 3 - 4.
F.) CONTINUATION OF MR. SELLAPPA'S HISTORY	p. 5
G.) THE ARRIVAL	pp. 5 - 6
H.) MOVEMENT OF THE GOUNDENS	p. 6.
I.) KANTHAPPA'S HISTORY	pp . 7 - 8
J.) THE GOUNDEN CHILDREN, BEARERS OF A TESTED CULTURE	pp. 9 - 10.
K.) CONCLUSION	p. 10.
L.) SOURCE LIST	p. II.

NOTE

- I.) I find it necessary to point out that I have chosen to research the Gounden family, instead of my own, due to the early deaths of both my maternal and paternal grandfathers. Further, in view of the scarcity of information pertaining to my forefathers, I feel justified in researching another family.

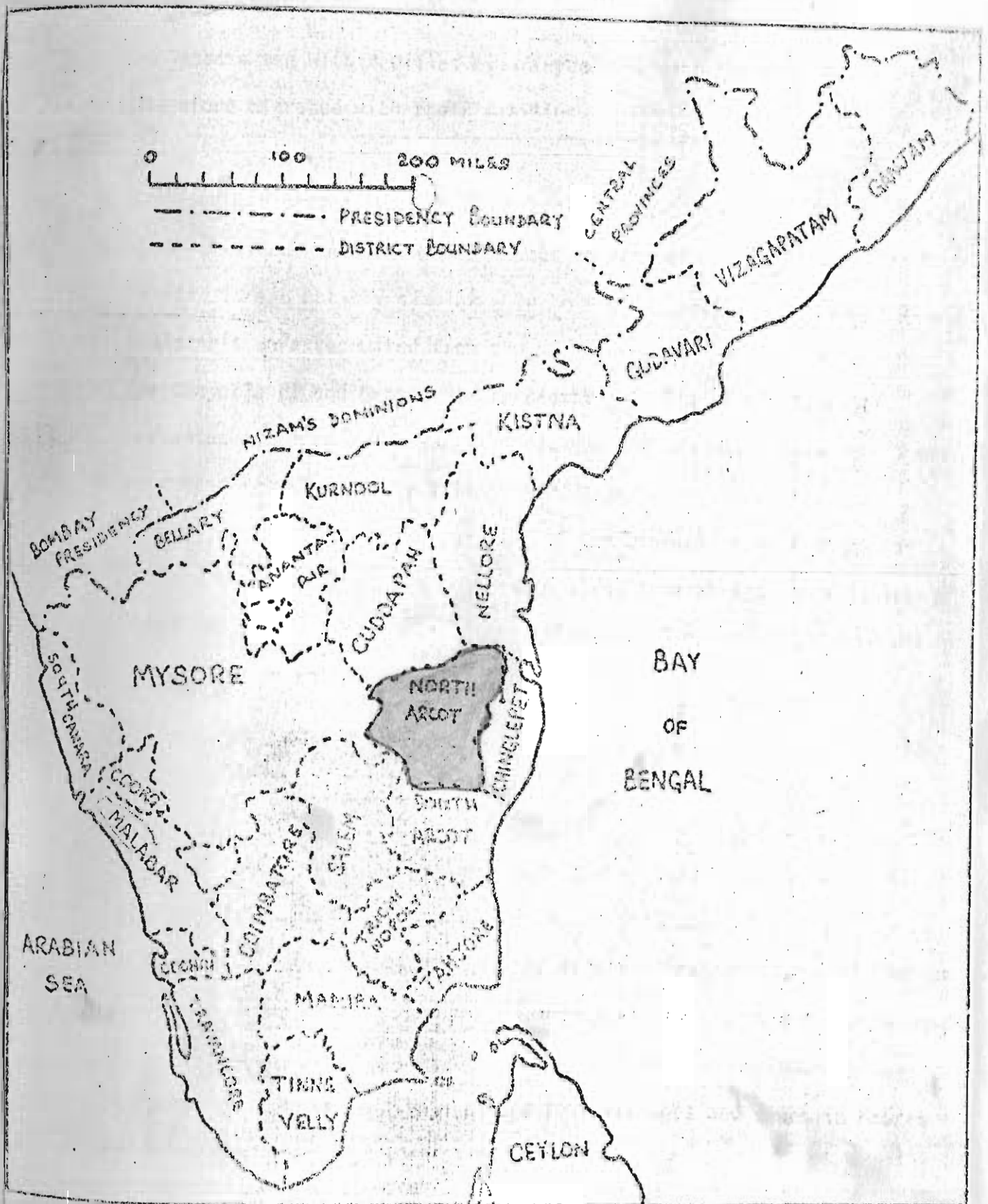
- 2.) At times, I find myself guilty of not, strictly, adhering to the given format. However, I do not think that this partial non-adherence defeats the aim and purpose of this project.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- I.) I sincerely thank Mr. Chellappa Gounden for his patient and invaluable assistance which has made this project possible.

- 2.) My gratitude also extends to Miss. V. Moodley for patiently typing the text.

ILLUSTRATED MAP OF PLACE OF ORIGIN OF SUBJECT



SHIP LIST

(IV)

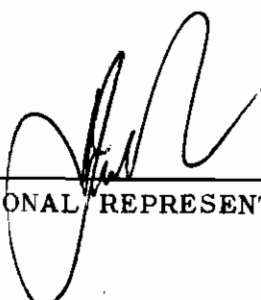
B.M.25

DEPARTMENT OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS

COPY OF SHIP'S LIST OF INDIAN IMMIGRANT

Serial Number	:	380
Colonial Number	:	131564
Date of Arrival	:	23 MAY 1907
Name of Ship	:	S.S. UMLAZI 33
Place of Registration	:	—
Date of Registration	:	—
Number in Register	:	—
Name	:	KANTHAPPA GOUNDEN
Father's Name	:	SELLAPPA GOUNDEN
Age	:	34RS
Sex	:	MALE
Caste	:	VANNIA
District	:	N. ARCOT
Thanna/Taluq	:	VELLORE
Village	:	REDDIPALIAM
Height	:	—
Bodily Marks	:	—
Name of Next-of-Kin	:	—
Relations Accompanied	:	—
Small Pox/Vaccinated	:	VACCINATED
Remarks	:	—

Certified a true copy.


REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE



A. INTRODUCTION

My subject, Mr. Kanthappa Gounden, was according to his son, Mr. Chellappa Gounden, born in Natal, in Sydenham in 1904. However, the ship-list which I managed to get from the Durban Indian Affairs lists my subject's arrival to Natal in 1907, at the age of 3 years old. Unfortunately there is no official record of my subject's father's first arrival to Natal, as an indentured labourer, in the very early 1900's.

In view of the above, I find it necessary to give a concise historical account of my subject's father (Mr. Sellappa Gounden), from the time he left his home-village in India. I, strongly, feel that the history of Mr. Sellappa Gounden, would complement the history of my subject, Mr. Kanthappa Gounden, till his subsequent death in 1979.

B. PLACE OF ORIGIN IN INDIA

Mr. Kanthappa's father, Sellappa, came from South India, specifically, from the village of Reddipaliam, in the district of North Arcot.

South India is a Tamil State and it is not strange that the North Arcot district is, chiefly, inhabited by Tamil-speaking people. Reddipaliam is one of the hundred's of villages that the North Arcot ^{DISTRICT} up to the present time, has under its veil. Reddipaliam is approximately 400 - 500 square miles in size and, still, has an agrarian economy.

The chief crops/...

The chief crops which constitute this fairly-stable agrarian economy are rice and maize.

Reddipaliam, like any other village in India, was socially divided into classes. The class structure was arranged according to material possessions, and in particular, according to the size of land one owned.

C. THE GOUNDENS' SOCIO-ECONOMIC BACKGROUND

Kanthappa's grandfather (in India), occupied the upper rung of the social ladder, due to the important criterion of his ownership of + 50 acres of farmland. Rice, was Mr. Gounden's chief crop. From an economic point of view, Mr. Gounden, was fairly well-off, since his land yielded a good annual crop.

The ship-list discloses the fact that the Goundens belong to the VANNIA caste. Further research into this, particular, caste - type has yielded the following, "The Vanniyan or Vannia, according to both J.H. HUTTON and HILDA KUPER, is the equivalent of POLLI, an agricultural caste of Southern India claiming Kshatriya origin. According to Hutton, the Vanniyan are spoken of as painters and in modern times have assumed the title MUDALIYAR, used by the chief 'painters' of the MALABAR (Tamil) caste in 1680. (HUTTON: Caste in India ... Pg. 290.)

Some Vanniyan/...

Some Vanniyan also use the title Padayachee or Padachi who also claim KSHATRIYA origin. In the shipping lists, though, the designation of caste was never uniform." I.)

D. REASONS FOR LEAVING INDIA

Mr. Sellappa Gounden left India because of domestic problems, he had, with his father. The, detailed, nature of this problem is related in my detailed interview with my subject's son, Mr. Chellappa. However, after a heated argument, over the question of marriage, with his father, Sellappa eloped with his girlfriend to Natal.

At this stage I find it necessary to, briefly, discuss the indentured labour system, which hastened Sellappa's departure from India.

E. A BRIEF HISTORY OF INDENTURED LABOUR IN NATAL

"In 1857 the Colony of Natal required 30 000 'Kaffirs', but only 6 000 to 7 000 were available, and it slowly became apparent that the only practical source of labour for the sugar plantations was a supply of Indian Indentured immigrants. Under the ...

continued pressure/...

- I. A, Sookdeo: INDENTURED INDIAN IMMIGRATION INTO NATAL... the Caste Structure Amongst INDIANS, pp. 38 - 39.

continued pressure of the planters, the Government of Natal was compelled to open negotiations, and the Governments of Britain and India were reluctantly compelled to consent to the plan." I.)

In 1859, the Natal Coolie Law, Law I4, was passed. This law embraced the following principles:- the colony of Natal was to be responsible for the transport of the 'coolies'; employers were to pay three fifths of the passage money of each coolie; a certain proportion of females, as according to regulations should be required to accompany them.

This law also catered for the appointment of an Immigrant Agent, who was to keep a register of immigrants, to assign them to employers for a period not exceeding three years. After serving three years, the labourer could re-indenture for another 2 years, and was subsequently free after, these, 5 years of service. According to Law I4, the employer was to provide medical care for his unit of indentured labourers.

"Special agent for Natal, W. COLLINS, reported from Calcutta to the Colonial Secretary in Natal that a Bill has been introduced in India on the 8th August, 1860, to sanction emmigration to Natal." 2.)

Hence the first subsequent arrival of indentured labourers, to Natal, was in 1860, aboard the 'TRURO'.

I.) M, PALMER: THE HISTORY OF THE INDIANS IN NATAL, p.I4.

2.) Y. S. MEER: DOCUMENTS OF INDENTURED LABOUR, NATAL
1851 - 1917, p.50.

F. CONTINUATION OF MR. SELLAPPA'S HISTORY

According to the interviewee Mr. Sellappa came to Natal in 1904, where he worked as an indentured labourer for a brick - company at Sydenham. Little is known of Sydenham, during this period, except the general observation of it being underdeveloped at that time. My subject, Mr. Kanthappa, was born in the same year of his father's unrecorded, arrival at Natal, in 1904. It follows that my subject stayed with his father, in Sydenham, for the next 2 years.

However during the latter course of 1906, Mr. Sellappa's indentured contract expired. Instead of re-indenturing, he decided to return to India to manage his father's, substantial, farm, due to the death of many of his relatives, in India.

However, it appears that when Mr. Sellappa reached India he suffered from a guilt syndrome, prompted by his early elopement. He, literally, returned on the first ship from India, to Natal with his infant son, Kanthappa (3 years old).

G. THE ARRIVAL

At this point begins the official history of my subject, Kanthappa Gounden, who came to Natal, according to the ship-list, with his father (Sellappa) aboard the 'SS. UMLAZI 33', in 1907.

"During 1907, 16 vessels left India, one coming from CALCUTTA and the remaining 15 from MADRAS.

The SS.UMLAZI //...

The SS. UMLAZI 33 left its Port of Embarkation (Madras) on the 3rd May, 1907 and arrived in Natal (Durban) on the 23rd May, 1907. The ship carried 500 passengers:- 319 Men; 127 Women; 23 Boys; 11 Girls; 12 Infant Boys (my subject being one) and 8 Infant Girls. The shipping contractors were Messrs. KING and SONS and the total ~~✓~~ number landed, from Madras that year (1907) was 6012 Indians." I.)

It needs to be pointed out that general conditions on the ship were quite favourable for the passengers. Dholl and potatoes was the staple diet on board ship.

H. MOVEMENT OF THE GOUNDENS

In 1907 Sellappa reindentured and worked at the Mount Moreland Sugar Estate, for the infamous James Liege Hulett. "In 1903 Hulett's first mill was erected in Wagon Drift, beyond Umholi and this mill was capable of turning out 2 000 tons of sugar, annually." 2.) Sellappa worked his way up to the status of foreman, while his family (wife and only son) continued living with him.

However in 1910 Sellappa decided to enter into private business, as a market-gardener. Hence, he secured leased land, in Virginia, from Mr. FOX, a landowner. Sellappa paid a rate of one pound an acre for the leased land. Virginia during this period (1910's) was very rural in character and farming was the ideal choice. Sellappa, in turn, cultivated most types of vegetables (carrots, turnips, etc.) and sold them to the street market (in Vistoria Street). Sellappa's glorious, nomadic life ended ^{WITH HIS DEATH} in 1951, at REDHILL.

- I.) R. REPORT OF THE PROTECTOR OF INDIAN IMMIGRANTS FOR NATAL FOR YEAR ENDED 31 - 12 - 1907, pp. 4 - 5.
- 2.) R, F, OSBORN: VALIANT HARVEST, p. 195.

I. KANTHAPPA'S HISTORY

At an early age, while still in Sydenham, Kanthappa was apprenticed to his father as a market-gardener. However, due to the scarcity of 'proper' schools and qualified teachers, Kanthappa failed to receive any formal education. Nevertheless, Kanthappa had a keen cultural awareness, which was subsequently exploited by Mr. Rajavan, a renowned Tamil teacher. Kanthappa also excelled in classical dancing athletics and swimming. He also shared his knowledge of classical dancing by teaching his peergroup members and organising plays with ^{other} youth groups.

In 1925, Kanthappa, married and continued living with his father . In November 1927 Kanthappa's first son was born at Virginia. Six more children were born during the period 1928 - 1945, at Virginia.

In 1939 the Gounden family, spearheaded by Kanthappa and his elderly father invested in 2 acres of land at Redhill, a newly developing settlement. This was a fruitful move, for in 1945 the Goundens were asked to leave Virginia. The reason being that Virginia was going to be sub-divided and sold to whites. In fact Virginia eventually became an exclusive White settlement.

Nevertheless Redhill was ideal for the Goundens, since the area was agricultural in nature it catered for the needs of a market-garening family.

Many significant events/...

Many significant events occurred, at Redhill, during the ensuing years. Kanthappa's family eventually increased to 10 children of which 6 were boys and 4 were girls. The family, after living in a make-shift farmhouse, occupied a substantial 9 roomed-house, on the farm. Kanthappa administered his family in true patriachal spirit. This type of administration was advantageous for the family because the business flourished and the children were well-disciplined and hardly troublesome. Kanthappa, like his father, educated his sons in the trade of market-gardening ~~and~~ ^{but} unlike his father, he ensured that all his children have a substantial formal education.

It needs to be pointed out that Kanthappa was never involved in any politics, for most of his time was taken up by providing for the needs of his, fairly large family.

In 1979, Kanthappa died at the mature age of 75 years old.

J. THE GOUNDEN CHILDREN, BEARERS OF A PROUD, TESTED CULTURE

During December, 1979, the family moved from Redhill to Havenside, in Chatsworth. However, by this time, nine off the ten children had married and the marriages have to-date produced 26 grandchildren, of the late Mr. Kanthappa Gounden.

In discussing Kanthappa's children, I have chosen to centre my discussion on Kanthappa's eldest child, Mr. Chellappa Gounden. The reason being that Chellappa is the most educated child, and he seems to have ^{inherited} many of his father's qualities and interests.

Chellappa learnt market-gardening at ~~an~~ an early age, in Virginia. However, due to the influence of a stable formal education, he matriculated at SASTRI in 1947. After working as a clerk at several places, he decided to pursue an academic career. Hence, in 1958, he went to India to study yoga, religion and philosophy. After a period of 4 years he obtained a double qualification in the form of:

- I.) The VIDWAN 2D (which is a degree studied through the medium of Tamil, and
- 2.) An award for 'SAIVAPULAVAR', which is a study in saivism (a religion).

In 1975 Mr. Chellappa Gounden was appointed lecturer of Tamil at the University of Durban Westville, a position he currently holds. Mr. Chellappa's cultural interest is demonstrated by his writing ~~of~~ of 2 books, of which one ('PANNIRU THIRUMURA') enjoys wide publication. Mr. Chellappa is also a confirmed bachelor and a prominent member of the community.

He was/...

He was, in fact, former President of the South African Tamil Federation for many years.

Mr. Chellappa, futher, sees himself as the living testimony of his late father's interests in the broad field of Tamil art, dancing and literature.

K. CONCLUSION

In concluding, I sincerely hope that I have satisfied the requirements of this project, which I endeavoured to construct in an objective manner as possible. However, I am sure that the reader can, without difficulty, follow the historical course of the Gounden family, from their initial arrival to South Africa up to their present day existence.

L. SOURCE LIST

- I.) Meer, Y,S, : DOCUMENTS OF INDENTURED LABOUR, NATAL 1851 - 1917, Institute of Black Research, DURBAN, 1980.
 - 2.) Osborn, R, F, : (VALIANT HARVEST) - The Founding of the South African Sugar Industry 1848 - 1926, SOUTH AFRICAN SUGAR ASSOCIATION, AFRICANA, 1964.
 - 3.) Palmer, M, : The History of the Indians in Natal, Oxford University Press, Cape Town, 1957.
 - 4.) Sookdeo, A, : Indentured Indian Immigration into Natal with special emphasis on the 1890s and the CASTE - STRUCTURE Amongst Indians, U.D.W. , Nov. 1982
 - 5.) Colony of NATAL, Report of THE PROTECTOR of INDIAN IMMIGRANTS for the year ended 31 - 12 - 1907, (ARCHIVES, P.M.BURG).
 - 6.) RECORDED INTERVIEW WITH MR. C. GOUNDEN, 19 - 4 - 1983.
-