

The Indar Gill Family

Indar Singh Gill came to Canada in 1930 at the age of 17, leaving behind a wife, Kartar Kaur and a young daughter, Gurcharan Kaur (who later passed away at nine years of age) in the care of his parents. The economic hardships faced in India due to poor cultivation and lack of irrigation made many people seek a better life in Singapore, Malaya, or East Africa. It was Indar's Taiyaji (Uncle) Naranjan Singh Gill, already settled in Canada, who gave Indar the ticket to a better future. Naranjan sent five sponsorship permits from Canada to the village of Dhudike. It was decided that Indar would travel to Canada with his 13 year old younger brother, Joginder and his cousins, Darbara Singh Shergill and Saudagar Singh Gill.

Indar Singh left India on the day of Diwali (Festival of Lights). He had worked all night irrigating the fields until 4:00am. He left shortly before dawn and traveled by camel with the baggage to GT Road, Village Kilii, near Adjitwal. From there he traveled by horse and buggy (tanga) to the railway station at Ludhiana and then by train to Calcutta before boarding a ship to Canada. They left Calcutta via the Hoogly River and watched the twilight hit the trees on the shoreline as they left their country to adopt another.

The train fare from Ludhiana to Calcutta was Rs 14 (rupees) each and then on the Jardine company steam ship from Calcutta to Hong Kong the fare was Rs 44 each. Traveling from Calcutta to Hong Kong took 17-18 days. Then the fare from Hong Kong to Vancouver on Canadian Pacific's Empress of Japan steamship was \$90 U.S. each.

Photos clockwise from the left

Indar Singh Gill had first set foot on Canadian soil on December 12, 1930 when he was seventeen years old. Seventeen years later, in 1947 he returned to India to be reunited with his wife and soon after they had a son named Nachhatter Singh Gill. On November 25, 1949 Indar brought his wife and son to Canada with him. This photo of Indar Singh Gill and his wife Kartar Kaur Gill was taken in Canada in 1952.

Nachhatter (Nash) Singh Gill met his wife, Rajinder Kaur, while he was on a visit to India in 1969. After sponsoring her to come to Canada, they were married on June 18, 1972 at the Abbotsford Gur Sikh Temple. Their marriage marked one of the first celebrations by this family at the temple.

In this photo Indar Gill is standing on the steps, in the third row, third from the right, wearing a pink turban. His father, Khem Singh Gill is the elderly man in the first row standing second on the right. Indar's brother Mohinder Singh Gill is standing in the foreground to the extreme left.