

Life and Times of SantTeja Singh: 1906-1912

by

Sukhmander Singh

Nicholson Family Professor of Civil Engineering

Santa Clara University, Santa Clara, CA

Abstract

Much has been written about the life of SantTeja Singh who was born in 1877 and passed away at the age of 88 years. He made outstanding contributions for the cause of spreading the glorious teachings of Guru Nanak all across the world throughout his life. But this paper will restrict presentation of his works during the period 1906 through 1912. This period was full of intense activities for young Teja Singh in England, Canada and America. He was only 29 years of age in 1906. A young, brilliant but a dedicated Sikh he did pioneering works in educating Americans and Canadians about Sikhism and establishing Gurdwaras in Victoria (Canada) and Stockton (California). This paper will describe the state of affairs that existed 1906-1912. The paper will present that how a combination of a young scholarly person like Teja Singh, a spiritually enlightened souls like Baba Vasakha Singh, Baba Jawala Singh and a revolutionary person like Baba Bakhana Singh would make an everlasting imprint on the pages of history of Sikhs in America and for the freedom of India. They drew their strength and inspiration from their Sikh faith thereby providing a spring board for the rise of Gaddar movement. The paper will attempt to show that how a neglect of the above noted lesson with regard to the cooperation between the educated Sikh youths and the elderly persons managing the Gurdwaras, has bogged down the progress of Sikh image in modern times in Western countries. Certain examples and suggestions are made in the context of current pursuit of scholarship on Sikhism through Sikh chairs and otherwise and the current management styles of Gurdwaras in U.S.A.

Keyword: Academic studies at London, Cambridge, Columbia and Harvard Universities, Teja Singh's Fights for Justice in Canada. First Gurdwaras in Victoria, London & Stockton, Groundwork for Nationalist Movement for Gaddar.

Introduction

Although the focus of this paper is to examine the "Life and Times" of SantTeja Singh for the period of only 6 years i.e. from 1906 through 1912, a brief look into his life until 1906 is given first. Born in 1877, passed B.A. at the age of 19 years, got LLB degree in 1900 at an age of 23 years and received M.A. in 1901 and became vice principal of Khalsa College in 1904 at the unprecedented young age of 27 years. A brilliant and a remarkable achievement. At Khalsa College he started as a wholly materialistic, non-religious and a disbeliever person. But a deep

spiritual transformation took place in Teja Singh's life in 1905 after meeting Sant Atar Singh who persuaded him to go for higher education. Sant Atar Singh valued education and wanted to establish schools, to provide spiritual as well as western style science education.

England (1906-1908): Studies at University of London and Cambridge University

Young Teja Singh of 29 years of age arrived in London on 24th of August, 1906. He had his wife and two children with him. Three other Sikhs also accompanied him and reached London at the same time. It is interesting to note that these four young Sikhs did not choose to do minimal types of jobs, but straight way embarked upon their pursuit for education in the subjects of science and technology. Teja Singh joined University of London for Doctor of Science, Dharam Singh enrolled for Electrical Training in a London College, Amar Singh joined for Textile and Clothing in Manchester and Hari Singh joined Edinburgh University. Alas, such pursuits are mostly missing among today's arrivals.

Analysis:

In those days (1906), although Britishers knew about Sikhs and their turbans, yet at Universities like Cambridge would not allow students to wear turbans. This was Teja Singh's first fight for justice for Sikhs. He left London University after one term and joined Cambridge University where he successfully defended the right to wear turbans. Thus he was the first ever Sikh with turban at Cambridge. It may be noted that at Cambridge, he enrolled for the 'Science Tripos Degree' and took subjects of Physics, Chemistry and Zoology. For a one hour lecture for these subjects there were three hours of laboratory. Significance of science and technology for progress was recognized by Teja Singh so early. But these days, though there are many academies/organizations in Punjab/USA to recognize achievements of Sikhs in literature/culture/language, there is none to acknowledge their achievements in science, engineering and medicine. Remember Kartar Singh Sarabha enrolled himself in Chemistry and Dalip Singh Saund did his Ph.D in Mathematics at UC Berkeley. From 1906 through 1908 he completed 5 terms at Cambridge University. Only one more term was needed. But before completing the 6th term he left for New York to join Columbia University where he won a scholarship for teachers training studies.

U.S.A (Columbia University 1908) and Impact of Teja Singh's Lectures

While at Columbia University, Teja's grasp of Indian Life and the teachings of Guru Nanak was acknowledged not only by his teachers at Columbia but the general public also. During one of his classes at Columbia he disagreed with his teacher's description of Kipling's character. Teja Singh explained the reason for his disagreement in such a scholarly way that the teacher asked Teja Singh to give a public lecture on Indian Society. The teacher took upon himself to advertise and to invite people to listen to Teja Singh. It is said that about 10,000 people gathered for his lecture. Teja Singh's thorough knowledge and eloquence impressed everyone. But his deep unshakable inner peace as Gursikh, while explaining teaching of Guru Nanak was

the most moving experience for the audience who consisted of professors, students, press reporters and social scholars. Many of the audiences developed reverence for Guru Nanak

and Sikh faith and requested Teja Singh to give weekly discourses to about 100 persons initially, but it doubled in a short time (1).

Analysis:

The fact that the first two lectures of Teja Singh were widely covered by the newspapers throughout America is testimony to the universal appeal of Guru Nanak's teachings and the clarity and the earnest way Teja Singh presented these to the American audience. How many of Teja Singh's like are there among us these days. Kathakaars, though maybe quite learned, yet because of the lack of their command in English, cannot help much. But then there are Sikh chairs but their scholars are obsessed too much with history as to how and when it came about. That may be fine but to keep splitting hairs on this for over 15 years with good amount of financial resources is **beyond comprehension**. As such their spiritless research have created more fogs than clarity regarding the Sikh philosophy/faith. Granted, and it is appreciable, that their chairs have taught Sikhism/Sikh studies to many of their students, yet their scholarly presentation can often be dry and lack that appeal which a truly learned and dedicated Sikh can make to the American audience. Is that one of the reasons that we the Sikhs remain misunderstood. An average American still does not know who Sikhs are and what is their religion. Thanks to CNN that has, after the tragic event in Wisconsin, done a great job in portraying the right image of Sikhs and Sikh values to Americans.

The news about Teja Singh's landmark lectures in New York reached Western Shores of Canada where Sikhs were suffering because of the general ignorance about them and they were thinking to invite a learned person from India to explain about them and their faith to Canadians.

Vancouver (Summer of 1908): Teja Singh's First Visit to Canada

As soon as Canadian Sikhs learnt about Teja Singh's lectures from a Canadian well wisher of Sikhs who had read the news of the two lectures given in New York, they made an immediate and urgent request for Teja Singh to come to Vancouver. This was a time of 1908 summer vacation at Columbia University, so Teja Singh hurried to reach Vancouver. This was his first visit. Teja Singh delivered lectures on teaching of Guru Nanak and endeared himself with the Sikhs living in British Columbia. At the end of summer vacation he returned to Columbia University to finish his studies. His return to New York delighted many of his American admirers who requested him to resume his weekly discourses on the teaching of Guru Nanak. One of the American admirers named T.C. Crawford became deeply and spiritually attached to Sikh faith and also to Teja Singh. He would visit Teja Singh daily to discuss spiritual matters and even started his daily meditation. As the fate would have it, one early morning Crawford came and made an urgent request to Teja Singh to raise \$15,000 to help him save his share in a gold mine in Jacksonville, California. Mr. T.C. Crawford appeared very distressed. Teja Singh could not see a devotee of Guru Nanak in trouble. So he decided to return to Vancouver area to seek funds from fellow Sikhs (2). This was in December, 1908.

Teja Singh's Second Visit to Vancouver & His Stand Against Injustice (December 1908)

This was indeed a drastic decision for TejaSingh to interrupt his studies for such a difficult mission. But somehow there were the innercallings of the Sikhs of Canada, who were to

be shipped like sheep, to Honduras by the Canadian government on the pretext that the Sikhs are mostly unemployed, unclean people and that they are public charge. Honduras in those days was a land infested with yellow fever and there were no job opportunities. This misfortune was looming over Sikhs and they needed some learned and capable person who could save them from their misery by presenting true picture of Sikhs and their faith. Arrival of Teja Singh was a fortunate coincidence. Sikhs were overjoyed to see him and requested him for help. Teja Singh delivered couple of lectures within the first week of his arrival. These lectures were so powerful and full of profound wisdom about Sikh faith that many of the Canadians became keenly interested to know more about Guru Nanak's teachings. Some of Teja Singh's lectures were also published in the newspapers. Since Teja Singh had lectured at Columbia University, he was now popularly known as Professor Teja Singh. This was during the first week of December, 1908 and Teja Singh was only 31 years of age. He was considered no match against Mr. J.B. Harkin, a government commissioner and a well seasoned elderly Governor Swayne who were to tell Sikhs to move to Honduras (3,5 & 7). But Teja Singh, though relatively much younger than these powerful officials, defended the Canadian Sikhs by forcefully discussing against the racial injustice for Sikhs.

"Later speaking at the O'Brien Hall, in Vancouver, Professor Teja Singh, vehemently pleaded for sympathy of the white brethren in Canada over his fellow citizens. He said that: If India's rights are not granted, as prophesied by an English officer in India years ago, that will cause a direct warfare. At the outset, I appeal to our white brethren here to help us in our efforts to prevent the movement from being carried out. It is alleged that we are to be shipped out of the country because there is no work here. No, this is not true. It is a safe estimate that about seventy percent of them are working" (The Vancouver Daily Province).

It was reported that Teja Singh spoke in perfect English and that audience warmly applauded his speech many times.

The way he presented a genuine description of Sikhs and Sikh faith, in the context of world history and historical events that Vancouver newspapers published a headline news with the title "Mystery and Power of Teja Singh." A few quotes from this newspaper are as follows:

"There was no jingoism (boast) in his two-hour address. He spoke calmly and dispassionately quoting historical authorities... The professor showed himself to be a man of profound erudition with a marvelous grasp of the principles of European civilization and intimate knowledge of oriental philosophy. He expounded the principles of true political economy... White men and white women are remembered among his warmest admirers" (6).

"The newspaper further writes that in appearance he is quite distinguished. He wears European attire, his head being surrounded by a large turban. A glossy black beard knotted at the end. He looks like a man who is terribly earnest" (6).

Besides being a learned and spiritual person, Teja Singh was a remarkable planner and organizer. He successfully organized the Sikhs to purchase 250 acres of land near Eagle Harbour for \$25,000 for establishing a Sikh colony and Sikh University (4). He also persuaded

Sikhs to register Guru Nanak Mining and Trust Co. and to buy one-fourth share of Gold Mine in Jacksville, California by collecting \$15,000 and sending this amount to Crawford. All this built a good image and a firm position of Sikh community in Canada. Strong financial strength of Sikhs became a public knowledge and there was no reason for them to become a public charge. Thus the Canadian government's propaganda against Sikhs was exposed and it became worldwide news including India. Sikhs were now enjoying good political image and a comfortable life. Their financial position was sound and improving (1).

Analysis:

Now we all know what follows when Sikhs become too rich and Sikh becomes poor; they fight with each other. This was perhaps the first and the last time a land of this much size (250 acres) was bought by Sikhs together to develop and to set up a University. Crawford was very keen for Sikhs to have a Sikh University on this land, and that the profit from the Guru Nanak Mining Company could be used for the purpose, and to spread/preach the mission of Guru Nanak. But the mutual bickerings and fights among Sikhs resulted in selling that piece of land which would have been billions of dollars worth now (8). Sikhs also withdrew their shares from the mining company. A somewhat similar story, but on a smaller scale that happened in Berkeley, California in early seventies. A two storied apartment building located only two blocks from the University of California Berkeley campus at the crossing of Alliston Way and Roosevelt Street was bought by Stockton Gurdwara members. This was done soon after the establishment of Stockton Gurdwara and to help Berkeley Students stay free for their education. It was named Khalsa Club. Later after several decades due to the lack of maintenance and students opting to stay in other places, it got infected with rats and spiders and finally got torn down by the city of Berkeley. In 1969 and early 1970s we came to know of it when a friend of ours rented an apartment just across the corner where the Khalsa Club apartment used to be. I was studying at U.C. Berkeley at that time and we decided to clean up the lot. We worked very hard several weeks with shovels, picks, and bins and cleared most of the debris out of the lot. We planned to request the Stockton Committee to build a memorial there. Somehow for some reason or the other our team members were not all there in early 1970s. I was on transfer to Houston and then to Alaska. In 1974/76 we learnt that the land has been sold by the Stockton Gurdwara Committee. What a short sightedness born either out of ignorance or due to mutual bickering/fighting which often would not let our members to have visions beyond these fightings/jealousies. Exact date and price at which this piece was sold can be found out from the city records.

Reaching Out to Sikhs in Western Coast

Victoria: In order to reach out to Sikhs in the Western Coast of U.S.A., Professor Teja Singh undertook visits to Victoria, Seattle, Portland, Oregon and California. His first stop in Victoria happened to be in a house where his host and other Sikhs were drinking alcohol. Unperturbed, Teja Singh decided to stay there for the night. And next morning when he addressed them with his uncanny yet profoundly dedicated way to be the jewels of Guru and not a blot, about 15-

20 Sikhs decided to take Amrit which was administered to them the same day. Such was the power and influence of this deeply devoted Sikh of Guru. Upon Teja Singh's suggestion, a plot was purchased to build first ever Gurdwara was in Victoria. Every Sikh gave one month's salary to pay for building. A Real Estate agent Mr. Robert W. Clark's wife arranged public lectures by Teja Singh in a city hall. Impact of Teja Singh's lectures was such that many Europeans loved the Sikh doctrines. Mrs. Clark printed 10,000 copies of pamphlets that she got written by Teja Singh on Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh. She sent these pamphlets far and wide in cities across Canada, America and Europe. As usual none of these pamphlets was saved by Sikhs and the efforts to find a copy of these pamphlets has not been successful. It would have been great to know in what inspiring way Teja Singh wrote and spoke.

California (1909): Accompanied by a few Sikhs of Canada, Teja Singh undertook a mission to visit Sikhs in Western Coast of America for the purpose of helping them and to administer Amrit. Lectures were given in Seattle, Portland and California to Sikhs and many of them took Amrit. This was his first visit to California. When this group of Canadian Sikhs including Teja Singh returned from America, and narrated stories of the Sikhs of California's enthusiasm in taking Amrit, many more Canadian Sikhs got into the Khalsa fold. Again an urgent request came from Sikhs in Pleasanton, California. Teja Singh with his group of Sikhs reached there after a brief stop over in Portland, Oregon. This second visit turned out to be short but equally successful' and the group returned to Vancouver.

Teja Singh's Legislative, Organizational and Constitutional Skills

As such, a need was felt to form an organization of Sikhs. Professor Teja Singh formulated the bylaws and other rules of the organization which was named Khalsa Diwan Society. This society was formally registered in Vancouver, B.C. This was in 1909. Later in 1912 at the time of starting of Stockton Gurdwara in 1912 Teja Singh prepared bylaws for Pacific Coast Khalsa Diwan Society and got it registered on May 27th, 1912. His vision was far reaching. The name Pacific Coast was purposely used to allow this as an umbrella body to facilitate establishing more Gurdwaras without forming another set of bylaws. Unfortunately, we did not see it and now we have many names, sometime after a community name that built the Gurdwara. Anyway here is how the articles of incorporation opening statement

“That we, the under-signed persons, all residents of the State of California, and members of the Sikh faith, do hereby voluntarily associate ourselves together for incorporating under the laws of the State of California and in pursuance of the purposes for which we have been elected as hereinafter set out, a religious corporation, not for profit and without capital stock, and we do hereby certify”
(11).

It demonstrates the able guidance and skill of Teja Singh in drafting these. These articles of incorporation were signed by Teja Singh, as President and Tara Singh as Secretary.

Teja Singh's Constitutional Fight for Justice for Families of Immigrants

Teja Singh joined U.C. Berkeley for Doctor of Literature degree and his plan was to build a Gurdwara at Berkeley also. But he had hardly settled at Berkeley that another urgent letter came from Vancouver.

This was to help Indians in British Columbia resolve a rule by government of Canada, according to which their families could not come from India to join them unless they come on one direct voyage from India, which was not possible. Upon consultation with California Sikhs and after registering Pacific Coast Khalsa Diwan Society to facilitate further opening of Gurdwaras in California, Teja Singh reached Vancouver along with his family. A meeting was called and three persons: Dr. Sunder Singh, priest—Mr. L.W. Hall and Teja Singh were deputed to go to Ottawa to request the immigration ministry to modify the rule. In spite of a very persuasive presentation, the ministry denied the demand. Roman Catholic priest Mr. L.W. Hall congratulated Teja Singh for smartly neutralizing each and every argument put forward by the ministry, and requested Teja Singh to deliver a public lecture to explain the public their position. A large public hall was arranged and about 10,000 audience came in. Teja Singh explained the history of great empire's fall when they denied justice to their people. British Empire can face the same fate. Teja Singh's mastery of the fall of Greek, Roman and the Mughal empires was remarkable and several people agreed with the demand. Later Maharaja Bhopinder Singh of Patiala got it approved during an Empire Conference in London. The delegation returned to Vancouver empty handed, but made significant inroads to the legislative and constitutional rights of Indians in Canada. At a meeting at the Sikh Temple, they drafted the cable as below:

“Khalsa Diwan Society and United India League, Vancouver, implore your office to stop deportation ordered by the Dominion Government of two Sikh ladies and their children under wrong interpretation of immigration laws. This is a gross breach of Imperial unity by attack on Sikh homes.”

London and Back to Vancouver (1910)

Meanwhile as mentioned earlier, tensions and mutual bickering among Sikhs were becoming more common. Teja Singh thought of fulfilling the promise of Sant Attar Singh to set up Gurdwara in England. So he left Vancouver for London via New York, and reached London with his family.

Upon reaching London, Teja Singh sent letters to Sikh students across England to get together in London for the purposes of setting up of a Gurdwara in London. However, it had only been two weeks since his arrival in London that Teja Singh received an urgent request with prepaid tickets to come back to Vancouver to resolve a deepening crisis. Teja Singh left his family in London and returned to Vancouver to find that misappropriation of accounts is being blamed on him. A complete auditing of all the accounts by an impartial body revealed no misuse or misappropriation. Teja Singh's honor was vindicated and he returned to London.

Analysis:

Now 100 years later, Gurdwara accounts remain the main source of division and fighting among Sikhs even today. There are examples of good record keeping by responsible persons. But there are also lousy/sloppy/opportunistic persons keeping doubtful records. This seems to be becoming quite common these days, resulting into wastage of money and time of our community on law suits. It was during a climate of distrust and infightings that Sikhs have often missed golden opportunities of their lives. Selling off of the 250 acres of land and shares in the mining company happened under these circumstances when Sikhs lose vision to think beyond their mutual jealousies.

Back to London (1910): First Gurdwara in London

Upon return to London, Teja Singh had selected, with the help of a Real Estate Agent, a beautiful big house (for free hold) for the Gurdwara. This was for twenty-five hundred pounds. However the Sikhs of London among whom most of them were students, thought it was too expensive. Accordingly a house, for sixty years lease, was acquired for Gurdwara and thus the first ever Gurdwara was set up in London in 1910. At the time of Dewan in the Gurdwara, the Sangat requested Teja Singh that he had been working so hard for Sikh causes and that he should now go back to complete his studies.

Back to Academic Pursuits & Denial of Admission

Accepting Sangat's requests and remembering Sant Attar Singh's directive to acquire education, Teja Singh went to Cambridge University to complete the sixth and the last term. But they did not allow him to resume his studies and said that it was because of his political activities in Canada, a report of which has been received by the University, he could not be readmitted. Teja Singh then approached Columbia University and a similar reply was received. Imagine the days when places of higher learning can be so narrow minded, simply because Indians were slaves—they were the subject of British Empire whose cruel hands can extend far and wide.

At Harvard University (1911) and Financial Hardships:

Teja Singh, now, thought of Harvard University where he had gotten admission while he was still in India; and hoping that Harvard University might not have received information about his political activities of North America. And that was true. He was admitted at Harvard for a A.M degree in English literature. He was to pay \$60 fee for the first term, but he was left with only \$15 after paying his tickets from New York to Boston. He paid \$4 for weekly rental of the house. These were days of great financial hardship for Teja Singh. But he faced these boldly. Together with his wife, they came up with a scheme. Teja Singh would buy plain cloth for pillow or sofa covers and since his wife was skilled at sewing, she would make covers and then Teja Singh would sell these. This worked. The very first cover, they sold for nine dollars. Saving continued to reach the target for fee. Meanwhile when New York Sangat came to know of his presence at Harvard, they invited Teja Singh over for a lecture in New York for

which they paid an honorarium of \$25 besides the return ticket. Thus Teja Singh had saved up to \$60 to pay the fee and was able to start his studies. Once the first term was finished there were not enough funds to pay a fee of \$60 for the second and the last term. The last day to pay the fee was gone and University sent a letter to Teja Singh that he cannot attend classes. Teja Singh writes "Me and my wife went to a park to think and after praying for forgiveness for any selfish thoughts, we returned to the apartment. As soon as we sat down, there was a knock at the door." That was one of his professors named Bilso Perry who gave \$60 to Teja Singh and told him to pay this to needy student whenever he can. What a power of a prayer coming out from the depths of hearts with full faith. Here Teja Singh writes again that contrary to what people think that one cannot carry on Gurbani Nitname when studying it is actually a great support to ride over difficulties on the way to studies (2).

Teja Singh sent his wife and younger son to California where they were received by Baba Jawala Singh and Baba Vasakha Singh. Teja Singh's plan was to let his wife reach India via Shanghai, Hong Kong and that he will follow soon after completing his studies at Harvard. But Baba Jawala Singh and Baba Vasakha Singh would request his wife not to travel alone but to stay in Stockton until Teja Singh comes.

Second term was over and Teja Singh successfully completed his studies at Harvard and left for California with his elder son. Here it is interesting to note that Teja Singh started his journey to California with only fifty cents in his pocket. That was the amount left after he bought two train tickets to California. During the six days of journey they survived by eating pieces of bread with water. What an unflinching determination and faith.

Gurdwara in Stockton (1912) and Teja Singh's Contributions to Nationalistic Movements

Upon arrival at Holt Stockton, there was very warm reception by Baba Jawala Singh (36 years of age in 1912) and Baba Vasakha Singh (35 years of age in 1912). This gave renewed enthusiasm to Teja Singh who embarked upon his mission, given to him by Saint Attar Singh to build Gurdwaras. Teja Singh has become a highly respected person in California due to his previous visits and people can now easily rally around him. Here he played a pioneering role. At the next Sunday Dewan, about 20 Sikhs received Amrit and a committee was formed to work towards setting up of a Gurdwara in California. The members of the committee were Teja Singh, Baba Vasakha Singh, Baba Jawala Singh, Tara Singh, and Bava Singh. Donations were collected at great speed and a nice and open piece of land with a good house and a wind mill on it was purchased with \$3400 in the city of Stockton and thus first Gurdwara in the U.S.A. was established in 1912. Later with an expenditure of \$20,000 a brand new building which still stands today, was built on the land. Building of this Gurdwara proved to be truly eventful in the freedom struggle for India. This became a hub for the revolutionary activities of the Gadar movement. Students of India of all faiths would often visit and stay at the Gurdwara.

Analysis:

Professor Teja Singh's activities in British Columbia and in the Western Coast of

America made him the uncrowned king not only of Sikhs but of all the East Indians. His humility, honesty and dedication endeared him to everyone. In India he was regarded the champion of nationalist movement trying to tell British government that their administrators are unjustly racial to Indians and that they should respect their feelings. It should be noted that this was in 1908-1912 well before the initiation of Gaddar movement in 1913. In fact, Teja Singh's works in Canada and on the Western coast of USA provided the fertile breeding ground for the growth of the nationalistic feelings to help in the formation of Gaddar movement. A testimony to Teja Singh's leadership role in pioneering struggle against British Rule can be seen from the following statement of a British Ruler:

“Captain H.F.E. Freeland of the Punjab regiment, had been in India for 16 years, and had seen services in Burma and China, also. He was in Vancouver in December 1908, and at a party got up in his honor at Hotel Vancouver, he said that: The vast masses of the people in India are loyal to the British and there will be no general uprising... England's safety comes from the large number of races professing different creeds as well as the caste system... In dealing with Orientals you must act with a firm hand. If you show weakness they will not be slow to take advantage... I have read the seditious utterances of Professor Teja Singh who is said to be the leader of the local colony. The boldness of his utterances surprised me. If he returns to India and talks the same way, I think he would be speedily silenced... But John Bull has always been too lenient regarding the freedom of the press and free speech as safety valves. This may be good logic among whites but it does not apply among Orientals... I trust the people of British Columbia will treat the East Indians with justice and fairness.”(11)

It was during these times (1908-1912) that the resentment against the demeaning and racial treatment of Indians majority of whom were Sikhs on the West coast were growing. Even some poor Americans would also come to have Langar at the Gurdwara. Baba Jawala Singh owned a big farm and he established scholarships for students studying at U.C. Berkeley. How generous and forethoughtful was Jawala Singh who knew that higher education is the key to the doors of opportunities. How many more Gurdwaras, and affluent Sikhs are there nowadays, yet the vision for promoting pursuit of education among youths through scholarships is sadly absent among them. They worked in lumber mills in Oregon and in farms in California and had been grounded in faith by Teja Singh's visits. Later in April, 1913, at Astoria, Oregon, they established Hindi Association of the Pacific Coast which got converted into Gaddar Movement named after the newspaper Gaddar of Hindi Association. Baba Sohan Singh Bakhana (43 years of age in 1913) was the founder president of the association. Although highly intellectuals and prolific writers like Lala Hardyal and Ram Chandra have been given lots of credit because of their writings in the weekly newspaper Gaddar, the poems of Baba Vasakha Singh in Punjabi in the gaddar paper were no less forceful, in fact far more nationalistic. More will be covered by others on this especially by Dr. Jasbir S. Mann as to how these shrewd intellectuals swayed away from their commitment and how the Gadderites, majority of whom were Sikhs, never waived and laid down their lives. As such the backbone of Gaddar movement were the Sikhs and should have been acknowledged so.

Gurdwarain Victoria

The Sangat of Victoria had collected enough funds by offering one to two months of their pay to build Gurdwara on the land they purchased in 1909. Drawing of the building, estimation and contract were all accomplished with speed. Teja Singh went to California for about 2 to 3 months for preaching and organization of the California Sikhs and returned to Victoria. Meanwhile the Gurdwara building was near completion. Opening ceremony was done with great pomp and show with Nagar Keertan: after this Teja Singh started his journey back to India.

Conclusion

1. Teja Singh's academic pursuits at London, Cambridge and Columbia Universities are testimony to the value placed by Sant Attar Singh and through his inspiration by Teja Singh on higher education. Sikhs must not forget this.
2. Because of Teja Singh's deep spiritual strength born out of his grounding in Sikh faith, he was able to bring about profound changes in the minds and history of English, Canadian and American, and especially in the heart and soul of Indians for freedom.
3. Teja Singh's pioneering efforts to fight for justice for Sikhs and Indians and to initiate national movement for the freedom of India are noteworthy and were historic. He essentially prepared the ground work for the Gaddar movement to take root.
4. His fights against unjust and ill treatment of Indians in Canada and America were most remarkable and were even acknowledged by the governments of these countries. This was because of his thorough knowledge of world history, his skills in the legislature, constitutional and organizational fields, and the way he articulated these in perfect English to Western Audience. We need spokesmen like him to further our progress in America.

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