

Acknowledgments

The exercise of documenting family history and descendent lineage is a complicated process that took many family members to participate over a period of time. This endeavor took over two years. Complicating this process is conflicting memories by family members that might have been at the same place at the same time. The correct spelling of a persons name, a town or even an Indian word had diverse opinions. This second limited edition was finally completed with much appreciated help from:

Ataur Rahman (descendent of Azizur Rahman)
Bibi Pankaj Durresharan Chowdhury (descendent of Shanoor and Minoor Hazarika)
Buni Nazma Rahman (descendent of Shanoor and Minoor Hazarika)
Rukhsana Hazarika (descendent of Azizur Rahman and Khan Bahadur Sayedur Rahman)
Saleha Rahman (descendent of Khan Bahadur Sayedur Rahman)
Shirajuddin Hazarika (descendent of Minoor Hazarika)
Zinat Akhtar (Deepa) Hazarika (descendent of Azizur Rahman)

Kauser Hazarika (proof reading, descendent of Shanoor & Minoor Hazarika and Azizur Rahman and Khan Bahadur Sayedur Rahman)
Asma Ahmed (restoring old photographs, descendent of Azizur Rahman)

And, most importantly the original author and documenter of the first edition of the family tree, Sharif Mohammed Shah Hussain Hazarika a descendent of Shanoor and Minoor Hazarika.

This work is for members of the family to remember and enjoy their rich heritage. A few names might be spelt in different ways, dates may be slightly off due to fading memories but taken as a whole this documentation is accurate. Short stories on an individual family member was verified by two family members either by person or a telephone conversation. The next updated version will be completed in 2010 and will be distributed more widely to the family on an internet domain. This version is in a magazine and book type format for ease of reading as well as numerous memorable family photographs. The books are Digital Photo Production originals done by a commercial company at Bogotá, Columbia and Salem, New Hampshire. Copyrights are by Tawheed S. Hazarika.

Dated: July 9, 2008

Introduction

Sharif Mohammed Shah Hussain Hazarika started documenting the family lineage around 1960. During a period of ten years he interviewed many of the older generation that were still alive and who lived within a 100 mile radius of the Hazarika ancestral home called Motijan located at Titabar, Assam, India. He meticulously recorded their recollections on nine student exercise books, illustrated in Part 6 (The Elephant Exercise Book, 96 pages each made by Titaghur Paper Mill Co., Calcutta) measuring 6x6 inches.

I can recall seeing him sitting in the “mojia” (family den) every evening around 7:00 p.m., and recording names and relationships for about an hour or two. On many occasions the family and guests gathered around the mojia would provide information. It was a household always filled with many guests, aunts, uncles, nephews, nieces, distant relatives and family friends. The project was never completed since some of the information could not be traced back over the years. However, he was able to successfully record the greater part of the Hazarika family over 6 generations from 1787 to 1972 a span of 185 years.

His son Tawheed Sharif Shah Hazarika transferred this information using a computer in the late seventies and produced 20 hard copy books for the family (first edition). With the advent of digital and internet technology this latest limited second version of descendant's will be easier to access and store for many more future generations of Hazarika's, Dutt's, Rahman's, Adil's, Ghaffar's, Huq's, Ahmed's and so many more, about 3,000 descendents.

This limited edition of the family tree is to update the preceding work as well as post it in an internet domain under www.motijan.com if the site is available in 2009 for wider family viewing. Presently only a few hard copy books of the first edition remain with a few family members along with the original nine Elephant Exercise books (ink fading). This update traces roots of the family back to 1640 and another two current generations to 2007 a span of 367 years.

This second edition also includes the family tree of Rukhsana Hazarika (Rahman) wife of Tawheed Hazarika and her ancestors, the families of Azizur Rahman and Khan Bahadur Sayedur Rahman. This version is very different in many ways. Although the core lineage information is the same it focuses on only one branch of the Hazarika family tree, the Shanoor Ali Hazarika branch, great grandfather of Sharif Hazarika. Another difference in this version is the addition of photographs and short stories on many of the descendant's of Shanoor Ali Hazarika, Minoor Hazarika, Azizur Rahman and Sayedur Rahman.

Introduction (continued)

Finally, an attempt was made to trace the lineage to Bagh Hazarika who fought in the battle of Saraighat. A few members in the current generation by marriage could be traced to him. However, the documentation available on Bagh Hazarika and his descendant's is very sketchy with many gaps (only male descendents documented) so a confirmed link to Shanoor Hazarika or his father Ali Ahmed Hazarika is difficult to trace.

Based on the dates and lineage of Bagh Hazarika it is most likely that Ali Ahmed Hazarika was connected to the seventh generation of Bagh Hazarika's descendents. The eighth generation of Bagh Hazarika, one of who was Faizuddin Hazarika, lived in Jorhat was a first cousin of Tafazzul Hazarika (grandson of Ali Ahmed Hazarika). For now one has to go with the press release in the 1911 Durbar for the coronation of King George V saying Firdost Hazarika's ancestor's fought in the battle of Saraighat.

Part 1 covers Ali Ahmed Hazarika, his ancestors, descendents and the battle of Saraighat.

Ali Ahmed Hazarika and his four children (two boys and two girls), the start of the Hazarika clan at Jorhat, Assam, India:

Bibi Peshami
Minoor Ali Hazarika
Haji Bibi Qureishy
Shanoor Ali Hazarika

Shanoor Ali Hazarika and his six children (two boys and four girls) at Titabar, Assam, India. The foundations to prosperity:

Firdost Ali Hazarika
Suratan Nissa, Zohurmani
Noormahal Israfan Nissa
Tafazzul Hussain Hazarika
Aimena Khatoon Begum
Aitan Nissa.

Brothers Firdost Ali Hazarika and Tafazzul Hussain Hazarika and the building of the estate, Motijan at Titabar, Assam, India. Md. Tafazzul Hussain Hazarika is the father of Sharif Md. Shah Hussain Hazarika and grandfather of Tawheed Sharif Shah Hazarika.

Introduction (continued)

Part 1 details their lives in detail with family events, photographs and short stories.

Part 2 covers the life of Sharif Md. Shah Hussain Hazarika the third son of Mohammed Tafazzul Hussain Hazarika and his life at Motijan.

Part 3 covers the lives of the other ten children of Mohammed Tafazzul Hussain Hazarika as well as their families.

Part 4 is a new section that was developed with the help of Aatur Rahman and is about his ancestors and descendents. Many of the descendents of his father Azizur Rahman had married into the Motijan family.

Part 5 is a new section that was developed with the help of Saleha Rahman and is about her ancestors and descendents. Saleha Rahman is married to Aatur Rahman. They are parents of Rukhsana Hazarika who is married to the author, Tawheed Hazarika.

Part 6 is a new section that was developed with the help of Shirajuddin Hazarika, grandson of Minoor Hazarika. Minoor Hazarika is also the great grandparent of both Noorbahar (Moina) Hazarika (wife of Tafazzul Hazarika) and Sona Noorbahar Hazarika (wife of Sharif Hazarika).

Parts 7 and 8, Chapters 22 through 26 are the original works of Sharif Hazarika and the basis of this second edition.

Chapters 27 through 28 are recent works on the families of Azizur Rahman and Khan Bahadur Sayedur Rahman based on information provided by Aatur and Saleha Rahman.

Chapter 29 is on Bagh Hazarika.

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THE HAZARIKA'S OF MOTIJAN

PART 1

Chapters 1 through 5

Chapter 1

“THE HAZARIKA’S OF MOTIJAN”

The Hazarika family in the documented words of Sharif Mohammed Shah Hussain Hazarika great grandson of Ali Ahmed Hazarika became resident's of “Motijan” in 1893. Sharif Hazarika compiled the Hazarika chronology and family tree during the late 1960's and early 1970's in the following manner:

“ Ali Ahmed Hazarika alias Tholok Hazarika was born in Sankat, India in 1787 and died in Jorhat, Assam, India in 1860.

Ali Ahmed Hazarika's ancestor's got their titled name from the Assam Ahom Kings where they were constant visitors.

(Author's comment and not a quote: Raja Rudra Singha (1696-1714) or King Jayadwaj Singha may have originally conferred the title to either Ali Ahmed Hazarika's grandfather or great grandfather - Alli Ahmed (aka Luthop) or to Bagh Hazarika. Ali Ahmed Hazarika's (aka Tholok) grandfather or great grandfather (i.e. Alli Ahmed (aka Luthop) or Bagh Hazarika) had fought in the battle of Saraighat during the time of Emperor Shah Jehan and Aurangzeb and then migrated from Sibsagar towards Jorhat). The King of Assam conferred the title “Hazarika” (meaning leader of “aik hazar or leader of 1,000, a military commander title)

Ali Ahmed Hazarika then migrated to Jorhat in 1830 and lived in a house in his own land at the present Noh Ali (near current Jorhat Gymkhana club) near the road from Jorhat to Titabar. His house was about 300 yards away from the present Doss & Company store at Jorhat.

Ali Ahmed Hazarika married Afroze who died in the year 1896. There is no record as to who Afroze was. He had four children, youngest being Shanoor Ali Hazarika who kept the above incomplete record.

Shanoor Ali Hazarika's daughter Aimenah Khatoon Begum who is still alive (1960's) remembers seeing her grandmother, Afroze, who was then very old, but still a very beautiful woman, mostly sitting on a “chamar pita (a stool)” and passing her days.

Shanoor Ali Hazarika along with his eldest brother Minoor Ali Hazarika migrated to Titabar in 1885 after selling their house at Jorhat. Between them they possessed more landed property in Titabar than at Jorhat. Later Minoor Ali Hazarika migrated to Heelikha and then again acquired some property at Jorhat.

Shanoor Ali lived at Titabar Char-Ali first and after changing his residence thrice first to a house near Titabar bazaar, then to a house near the place where he was later buried, again to a house near the gate of the present Motijan house. Finally in 1893 he shifted to the Motijan house which is even now occupied by his descendants.

As no one remembers about Ali Ahmed Hazarika's forefather's I am ignoring records on this account. These records were not properly made nor authenticated what I am recording maybe verified by many old people who are still alive.

It is surprising how in a matter of about 150 years one pair of human beings are today represented by so many hundreds of descendents." (end of quote).

Motijan

Motijan literally means Pearl soul. It has no special meaning as most tea estates were named as such during that era. It's inhabitant's over the years were outgoing, business risk takers, fun loving and generous. In 1890, Titabar, Assam, India was a small village of approximately 2,000 people, about a six hour drive from the capital of the State of Assam, Guwahati and 12 miles from Jorhat. Assam is located in Northeast India bordering Burma, China and Bangladesh. The house was located about a quarter of a mile from Char Ali the main intersection in the town of Titabar.

The house itself was about 15,000 square feet of living space, with about 5 acres of landscaped land and surrounded by 400 acres of tea bushes and 200 acres of paddy fields. Hence it was also known as Motijan Tea Estate. On the east side of the house about thirty five yards away was a rice mill. It had seven large bedrooms, master bedroom being 20X30 feet, three vanity rooms, six bathrooms, a family den, a formal living room, a dinning room with a table that seated 50 and which can be extended to seat 150, two food stocking rooms, separate kitchen connected to the house, a visitors greeting room, a "bhoral" (paddy storage house) near the house and a large verandah in the front. At the rear of the house was a small "pukhuri" (water reservoir the size of a swimming pool dug in the ground) which served as the water supply. The front of the house had a large lawn and all around the house were beetle nut, banana, coconut, mango and date trees. There were many flowering trees as well as pineapple and other fruit bushes. In the 1950's there were many mud huts where the servants and plantation employees lived. These dwellings were located approx. three hundreds east of the house beyond the rice mill. The house was in a jungle type environment and once darkness fell one could hear the jackals howling on the front lawn and around the house. Once in awhile a leopard could be spotted trying to raid the chicken house. Snakes were commonly seen near the house.

The final resident of this historic estate was the second son of Sharif Mohammed Shah Hussain Hazarika. Dej Dada Hazarika (Boo) who like his father was born in this house and passed away on January 11, 2004 at the age of 50. About 200 years of comings and goings and finally the end of this Motijan property. In 2008 it lies abandoned with many people encroaching into the property. The current owners of the property are Fafi Rahmatulla Hazarika and Bashir Hazarika, sons of Sharif Hazarika.

Chapter 2

Ali Ahmed Hazarika (alias Tholok) 1787-1860

Ali Ahmed Hazarika 1787-1860
married Afroze Begum (Bhagabati Devi) daughter of Sarma
who was the grandson of Bokaholla Ibrahim

Children:

Bibi Peshami 1825- married Kupeswar Gaonbura

Minoor Ali Hazarika 1833-1913 married Bilquis Banoo; then Roshmari

Haji Bibi Qureishy 1833- , married Haji Jogai

Shanoor Ali Hazarika 1841-1910 married Roqalya Begum (died 1898)

Ali Ahmed Hazarika's ancestors came from Bundelkhand a geographic region in central India and some of the family migrated to Assam around 1630's during the time of Mughal Emperor's Shah Jehan and Aurangzeb. The region today is divided between the states of Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh, with the larger portion lying in Madhya Pradesh. A very small group of talented individuals with a variety of skills migrated from Bundelkhand and other areas of North India to Assam during the 1600's and soon through introductions from an Afghan Royal became integrated in the Ahom Kings court at Sibsagar.

It is most probable that Ahom King Jayadwaj Singha conferred the title of Hazarika to Alli Hazarika alias Luthop, great grandfather or grandfather of Ali Ahmed Hazarika alias Tholok. From reviewing historical dates and events in Assam, as well as family relationships in the 1880's it is very likely that Alli Hazarika and Bagh Hazarika were closely related. Ali Ahmed Hazarika was also known affectionately by his local Assamese nickname Tholok probably joined the rest of the family in Assam at a later date. It is also evident from the documentation on the battle of Saraighat that these families had military backgrounds and were therefore awarded the highest military command title of Hazarika by the Ahom King. Leader or commander of a 1,000. The two swords used in the battle of Saraighat were kept at Motijan and are now in the U.S.A.

Ali Ahmed Hazarika like his forefathers was a frequent visitor to the courts of the Ahom Kings in Sibsagar which is 75 miles north of Jorhat his place of residence. He lived in Jorhat managing his land holdings as a Zamindar (land owner) and collecting income from the fruits of the land worked by the pheasants (mainly paddy land and the crop was "dhan" or shelled rice). The royal household liked him and awarded him many business opportunities. Probably a very common custom around 1775 for former career military men and their descendents since the Mughal dynasty had lost influence in India. On one such visit to the court the King insisted he marry Bhagabati Devi the daughter of Sarma whose grandfather was the respectable Bokaholla Ibrahim. Over the years Bhagabati Devi came to be known as Afroze, a traditional Muslim name. Also, over the years many of the original descendents dropped their Hazarika title and went to using their original hereditary names.

Ali Ahmed Hazarika was born in Sankat, India in 1787 and died in Jorhat, Assam, India in 1860 at the age of 73. He had four children, two girls and two boys, Shanoor Ali Hazarika being the youngest son.

Destiny Bundelkhand/Delhi to Assam to Delhi to Global

Many years ago during the time of the Mughals and the time of Emperors Shah Jehan and Aurangzeb a small group of people from Northern India, Delhi, Utter Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh (Bundelkhand) went to Assam, some with introductions from an Afghan Royal to the courts of the Ahom Kings at their capital Gargaon near Sibsagar. From Gargaon they and their descendents migrated towards Jorhat a small town 50 miles away and then to surrounding villages within a 20 mile radius. They had a variety of backgrounds; military, scribes, metal craftsmen, farmers, etc.

The Hazarika's of Motijan migrated to Jorhat, then Titabar and Heelikha, 12 miles from Jorhat and twelve miles from Golaghat. There were other families related to them today (2006) by marriage (and probably in the 1650's) that also migrated around the same time around the Golaghat area.

The family of Azizur Rahman were scribes and moved to Kachirihat a small town near Golaghat which is 10 miles from Titabar. As the Burmese army invaded Assam they fled by boat along the Brahmaputra river then on the Golong river near Nowgong and finally to Purnigodam. The Burmese army known as "Moi" were a barbarous lot that did not spare the children or women during their many intrusions into Assam. People therefore fled when they were approaching.

The family of Parie Hazarika, great grandfather of Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed who became President of India in the 1970's, moved to Kachirihat from Gargaon.

The family of Sir Syed Saadullah the first Chief Minister of Assam moved to Kachirihat near Golaghat and like the Hazarika's established the Syedbari tea estate that is still run by his descendents (2006).

The family of Khan Bahadur Azizur Rahman, father of Khan Bahadur Sayedur Rahman moved to Fauzdar Goan in Guwahati.

As of 2006 the family of the Jorhat-Titabar Hazarika's still live in Assam but most have migrated back to Delhi and on to the U.S.A., Europe, Australia, UK, Pakistan, etc.

As of 2006 the family of Azizur Rahman father of Ataur Rahman, descendents are now mostly in the USA, Assam, Middle East and Delhi.

Parie Ahmed Hazarika descendents: His son Khaleeludin Ahmed was a cousin of Tafazzul Hazarika. Khaleeludin Hazarika's son was Colonel Zunnur (also Julnur) Ali, Indian Medical Officer (IMS), whose son was Fakhruddin Ahmed are mostly in the USA

and Delhi. Fakhruddin's mother and wife were from Lucknow. The children of Tafazzul Hazarika; Faiz Hazarika and Georgina Dutt became great friends with Fakhruddin during his days in Shillong. So did the descendents of Azizur Rahman. The descendents of Khan Bahadur Sayedur Rahman were related to him through his wife Jewel and her mother Beauty.

Sir Syed Saadullah descendents are in Assam, Philippines and the UK. His descendents continue to be in contact with the other families.

Khan Bahadur Azizur Rahman grandfather of Saleha Rahman, descendents are mostly in Assam, Bangalore, Middle East, Delhi, USA.

These families have also become related in some instances by marriages between descendents: The Hazarika family and the family of Azizur Rahman and Khan Bahadur Azizur Rahman. The family of Zunnur Ali (father of Fakhruddin Ahmed) and Khan Bahadur Sayedur Rahman (his wife Jewel's mother, Beauty is a first cousin of Fakhruddin Ahmed).

A small group of families near Delhi and Bundelkhand, migrated to the remote jungles of Assam in 1650's, migrated to locales within Assam that were within close proximity and finally, moved across the two oceans but still remain in contact and live not too far away from each other, albeit New York/Massachusetts/California is now their base.

The further we go the closer we get!

BUNDELKHAND

Bundelkhand lies between the Indo-Gangetic Plain to the north and the Vindhya Range to the south. It is a gently-sloping upland, distinguished by barren hilly terrain with sparse vegetation, although it was historically forested. The plains of Bundelkhand are intersected by three mountain ranges, the Vindhya, Fauna and Bander chains. Beyond these ranges the country is further diversified by isolated hills rising abruptly from a common level, and presenting from their steep and nearly inaccessible scarps eligible sites for forts and strongholds of local kings.

The principal rivers are the Sindh, Betwa, Ken, Bagahin, Tons, Pahuj, Dhasan and Chambal. The Kali Sindh, rising in Malwa, marks the western frontier of Bundelkhand. The Yamuna and the Ken are the only two navigable rivers.

The major towns are Jhansi, Datia, Lalitpur, Sagar, Damoh, Orai, Panna, Banda and Chhatarpur. However, the city of Gwalior is under a wide influence of Bundelkhand. Bundelkhand's most well known place, however, is Khajuraho which has a number of 10th century temples devoted to fine-living and eroticism. The mines of Panna have been famous for magnificent diamonds.

The Chandela Rajput clan ruled Bundelkhand from the 10th to the 16th centuries. In the early 10th century they were feudatories of the Pratiharas of Kannauj, and ruled from the fortress-city of Kalinjar. A dynastic struggle among the Pratiharas from 912 to 914 allowed the Chandelas and other feudatories to assert their independence. The Chandelas captured the strategic fortress of Gwalior c. 950. Dhanga (c. 950-1008) left many inscriptions, and endowed a large number of Jain and Hindu temples. Dhanga's grandson Vidyadhara (1017-29) expanded the Chandela kingdom to its greatest extent. The Afghan king Mahmud of Ghazni attacked the Chandela dominions during Vidyadhara's reign, but did not retain any Chandela territory.

In the 12th century, the Rajput Chauhan rulers of Ajmer challenged the Chandelas. The Muslim conquests of the early 13th century reduced the Chandela domains, although they survived until the 16th century as minor chieftains. Bundela Rajputs grew to prominence starting in the 16th century. Orchha was founded in the sixteenth century by the Bundeli chief Rudra Pratap, who became the first Raja of Orchha. In 1545 Sher Shah Suri, the only Indian king to defeat Mughals and sit on Delhi throne, was killed while attempting to capture Kalinjar from the local Bundeli kings.

The region came under nominal Mughal rule during the 16th-18th centuries, although the hilly, forested terrain of the sparsely populated region made it difficult to control. Akbar's governors at Kalpi maintained a nominal authority over the surrounding district, and the Bundela chiefs were in a state of chronic revolt, which culminated in the war of independence under Chhatrasal. On the outbreak of his rebellion in 1671 he occupied a large province to the south of the Yamuna. Setting out from this base, and assisted by the Marathas, he conquered the whole of Bundelkhand. On his death in 1732 he bequeathed one-third of his dominions, including Jalaun and Jhansi, to his Maratha allies, who before long succeeded in controlling the whole of Bundelkhand, with the local rulers as tributaries to the Marathas. Under Maratha rule the country was a prey to constant anarchy and strife. By the end of the 18th century, the Bundelas had freed themselves to some extent from Maratha power. Ali Bahadur, a grandson of the Maratha Peshwa, sought to restore Maratha control of Bundelkhand from his base at Banda. Ali Bahadur warred with the Bundelas from 1790 until 1802, when he died while attempting to capture Kalinjar.

The battle of Saraighat

Alli Ahmed Hazarika (Luthop) and the Bagh Hazarika connection

The Battle of Saraighat was fought in 1671 between the Mughal forces (led by Kachwaha king Raja Ram Singh), and the Ahoms (led by Lachit Borphukan, the Ahom governor of Guwahati). Though far superior, the Mughal army was defeated by the much weaker Ahom army, which used a combination of guerrilla tactics, psychological warfare, and military intelligence. The defining battle was fought on the river Brahmaputra, which Lachit Borphukan personally led.

Assam was the only state of India to successfully resist successive attempts by Delhi Sultans and Mughal emperors, from the invasion of Bakhtiyar Khilji, in the early

thirteenth century, to the invasions of the Mughal armies of Aurangzeb in the late seventeenth century. Assam defeated seventeen such invasions. No doubt the geographical remoteness of Assam was the major factor, but no less important was the military leadership and the fighting capabilities displayed by the people of Assam. Of these seventeen invasions, there was only one in which the invader achieved some success. This was Mir Jumla's invasion. Mir Jumla was the Mughal viceroy at Dhaka (Bangladesh today). In 1662 as the head of the large Mughal army, he advanced up the Brahmaputra into Assam. Due to dissension among them, the Ahoms could not offer any worthwhile resistance, and the Ahom capital, Gargaon, fell to the invader, while King Jayadhwaj Singha fled to the hills. Mir Jumla found that he had won only a pyrrhic victory. The Mughal army was decimated by monsoon, malaria and dysentery. During his army's retreat, Mir Jumla died of illness, but not before he had imposed a humiliating treaty on the Ahom. Two Ahom Royal princesses were taken for the Mughal imperial harem, and the Ahom's had to pay 3 lakhs (300,000 rupees) as war indemnity, and an annual tribute of 20 elephants. They also had to cede the western half of their kingdom, from Guwahati to the Manas river.

After this humiliating defeat, Jayadhwaj Singha died in agonising despair. At his deathbed, he exhorted his nephew and successor king, Chakradhwaj Singha, to remove the spear of humiliation from the bosom of the nation (Assam).

Preparations were complete in 1667, and Lachit Borphukan, as the new Commander-in-Chief of the new Ahom army, advanced from Gargaon near Sivasagar (in upper Assam) to Guwahati. Lachit Borphukan soon captured the Mughal post in north Guwahati and later the fort in south Guwahati. (Currently the Kamrup Deputy Commissioner's bungalow is situated on this site). Although the Mughal cannons posed a heavy threat to Lachit's army, the cannons failed to charge, **as an Assamese muslim subordinate of Lachit, Bagh Hazarika (aka Ismail Siddique)**, in a secret mission executed the previous night, had poured water into the cannons. The Mughal governor was captured along with a large number of soldiers. The Mughals abandoned Guwahati.

The Mughals struck back in March 1669. Raja Ram Singh was the Commander-in-Chief of the advancing Mughal army, consisting of 30,000 infantry, 15,000 archers, 18,000 Turkish cavalry, 5,000 gunners and over 1,000 cannons, besides a large flotilla of boats.

The Mughals were decisively defeated when they retreated from Guwahati, and Ahom territory, up to Manas River, was once again liberated. Thus ended the Battle of Saraighat, giving Lachit Borphukan legendary fame in Assam. It has been remembered as a glorious Ahom victory, despite all odds. (excerpts are from Wikipedia free encyclopedia, Battle of Saraighat).

Below are pictures of swords used by the Hazarika ancestors at the battle of Saraighat: Handles are made of ivory and bronze in the shape of an elephant head. The eyes had rubies, the casing is brass and the swords are iron and fairly heavy.



Chapter 3

Shanoor Ali Hazarika 1841-1910

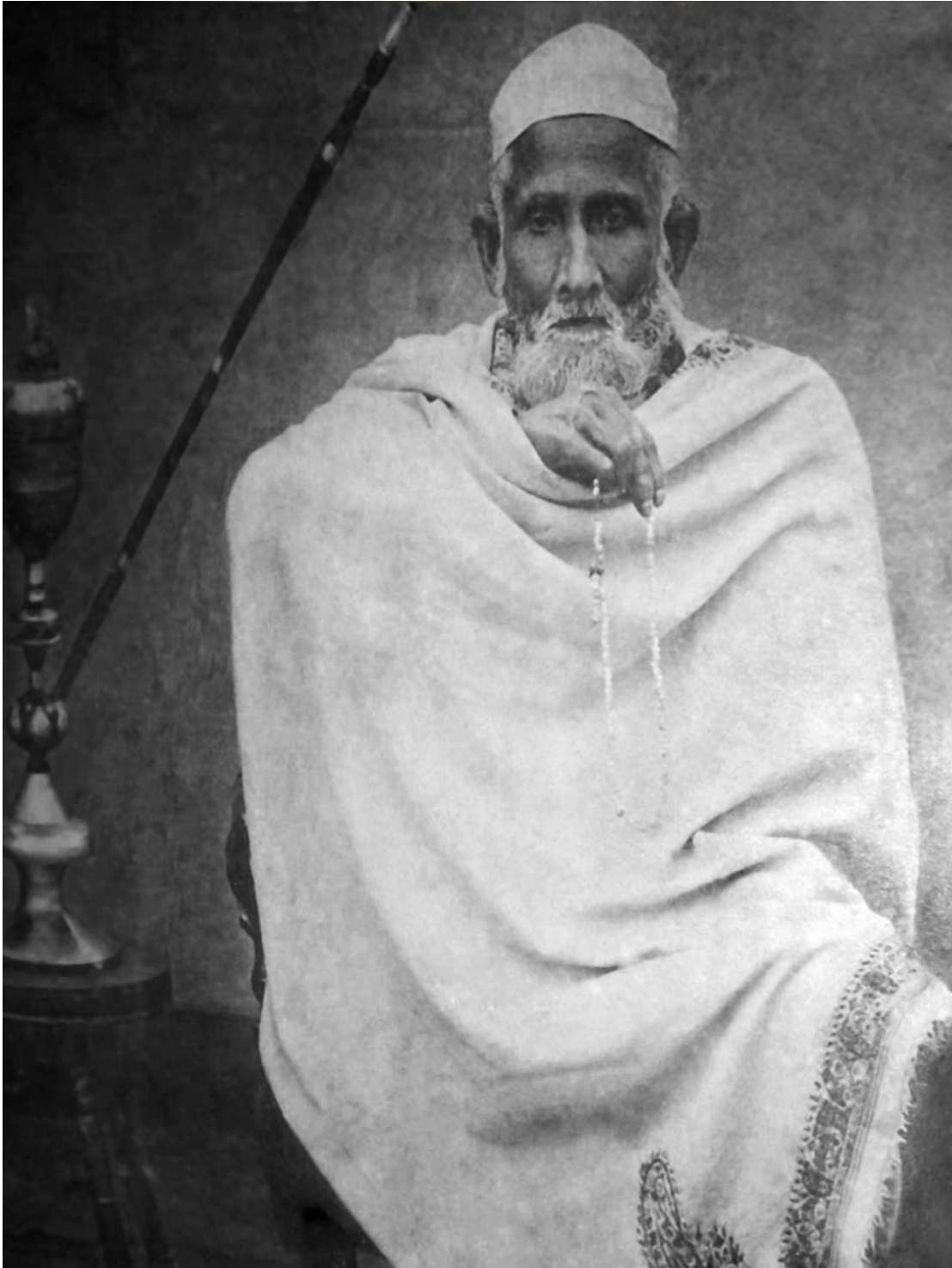
Shanoor Ali Hazarika (1841-8-8-1910)
married Roqaiya Begum daughter
of Paynoor Ali (died 8-6-1898)

Children:

Firdost Ali Hazarika, Tea Planter 1861- July 25, 1926
Suratan Nissa 1866-1928
Zohurmani Noormahal Israfan Nissa 1869-1927
Md. Tafazzul Hussain Hazarika 1881- 9:15am, May 17, 1938
Aimena Khatoon Begum 1884-1969
Aitan Nissa 1887-1939

Shanoor Hazarika built the Motijan house in 1893 with brother Minoor and was the first resident. Very little is recorded about him. He had six children, two boys and four girls. He also started as a Merchant dealing in land and paddy, a Zamindar like his father and then went into the tea business. He ran the business jointly with his older brother Minoor Ali Hazarika. Minoor was the banker and Shanoor looked after the operations. A dispute between the two brothers relating to rupees 5,000 that was missing resulted in them parting ways and Minoor moving to Heelikha. They never spoke to each other again, although their families grew up together, many marriages, and interacted socially. As Shanoor grew older, he retired completely from normal life and spent hours at a time in meditation and chanting prayers. He would be reading the holy Koran or sit, close his eyes, and meditate for hours at a time. He spent his time in the east side of the house rarely leaving his room, not communicating with anyone and his meals were invariably left outside his bedroom door. He had basically phased out of normal living and became a recluse. He left the business to be managed by Firdost Hazarika, his oldest son and his second son, Tafazzul Hazarika who was 20 years younger to Firdost. Shanoor Hazarika had a long white beard, smoked his pure silver hookah regularly, saw very few people and died at the age of 69.

Picture of Shanoor Ali Hazarika with his hookah and prayer bead.



Picture of restored hookah which now resides in the U.S.A. Marvelous carvings on the silver and brass hookah finished with teak wood (table is also from Motijan and restored):



Chapter 4

Firdost Ali Hazarika 1861-1926

Firdost Ali Hazarika

married Rafawati daughter of Poirā Khonikar in 1884, who's wife was Nurjaha, daughter of Farusi, who's father was Ali Ahmed Hazarika, grandfather of Firdost Ali Hazarika. After her death married Aziran Nissa (Sanimai) daughter of Samash Ali Chowdhury (original member of Jorhat local board (1887- July 24, 1925). After her death married Khurse Zarina Begum daughter of Kupeswar Goan Bura

No children

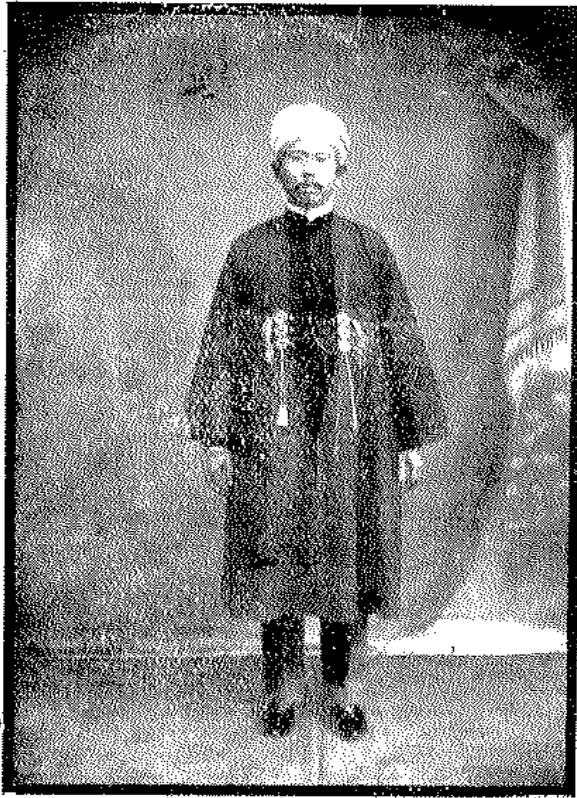
Firdost Hazarika lived in Motijan and expanded the family business with brother Tafazzul Hazarika. Firdost Hazarika was a tall man, 6ft 7 inches. He died six months after his third marriage. With no children from his first marriage, his father Shanoor Hazarika and he pressured Tafazzul Hazarika to get married, which resulted in the younger brother getting married at age 20.

Firdost Ali Hazarika attended King George V Royal Durbar in 1911 in Delhi. He was featured in the official Imperial coronation publication (below) as one of selected dignitary invitees across India and one of two from Assam. He attended the Delhi Durbar regularly. He traveled to Delhi very often with brother Tafazzul by train, stayed with friends and rented an elephant in Delhi to take him to the Durbar. At the Durbar he spoke in Urdu/Persian only and had a personal interpreter translate to English, although he spoke and read English well.

His brother Tafazzul in the 1930's financed part of the costs of the Gandhi round table conference in London. Firdost was a sharp dresser and due to his height stood out. He generally wore the traditional Muslim dress of the aristocrats of that time, a turban or Fez cap and a long cape. He was the architect of the wealth expansion of the Hazarika family, making many wise investments in Tea properties and land. He was tight with money.

During his time and around 1910, the family owned almost half the land in the Jorhat municipality and most of Titabar and the paddy land surrounding Titabar. They were probably the richest family in Assam. Firdost Hazarika died at the age of 65 at Titabar and is buried at the Motijan Kabastan.

Featured in the publication of George V Royal Durbar, 1911:



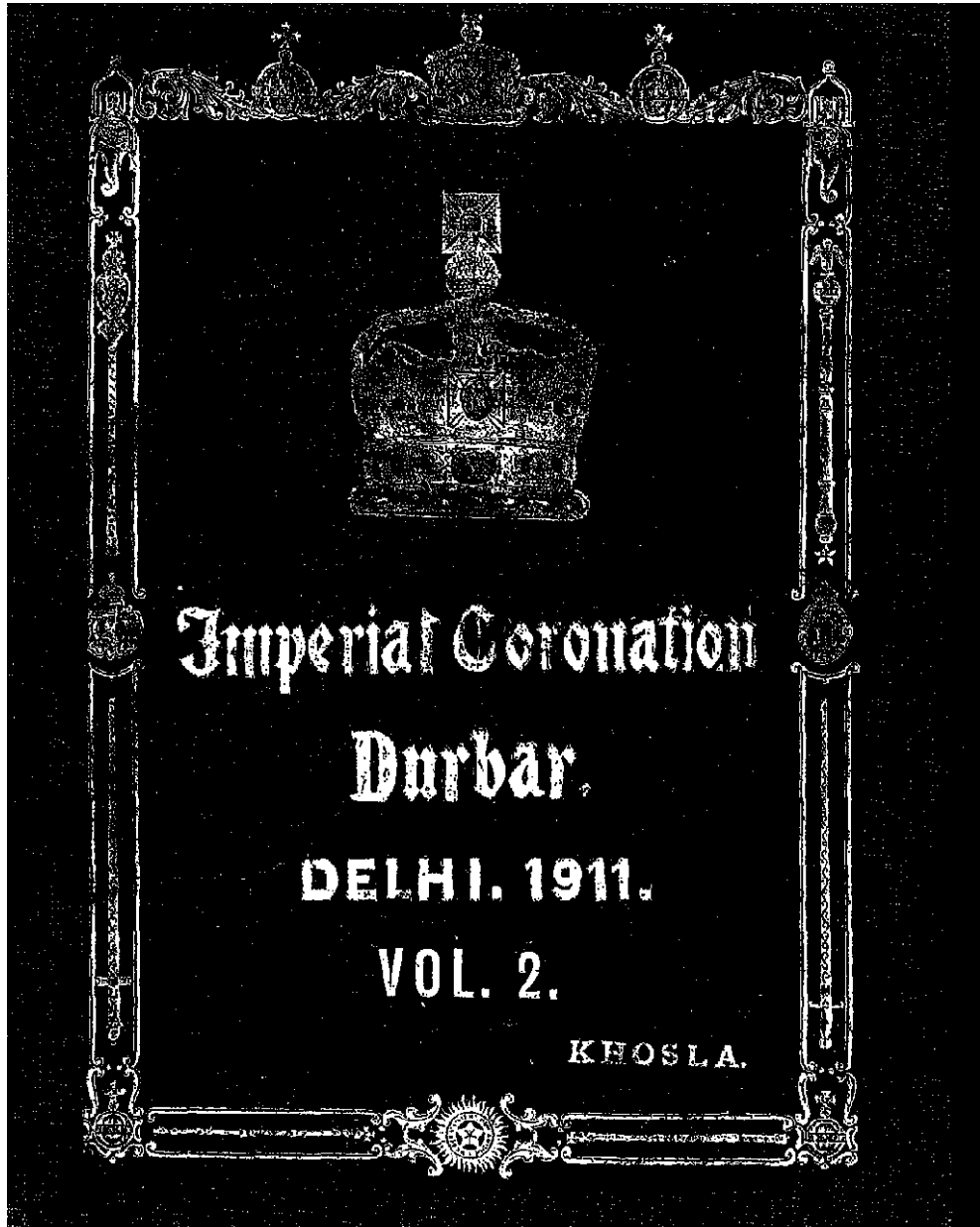
S. FIRDOST ALLI HAZARIKA,
TEA PLANTER, TITABAR, ASSAM.

S. FIRDOST ALLI HAZARIKA, TEA PLANTER,
TITABAR, ASSAM.



FIRDOST ALLI HAZARIKA, TEA PLANTER AND HONORARY MAGISTRATE, SON OF LATE SHAH-NOOR ALLI HAZARIKA, RAIS OF JORHAT, ASSAM, was born in 1864 A.D. Proprietor of the Motijan estate in the District of Sibsagar and holder of extensive landed properties. A public-spirited gentleman, held in great esteem by his countrymen and is taken into confidence by the Government. One of his ancestors Ali Ahmed *alias* Luthop Hazarika, who fought in the battle of Saraghat, originally of Bundelkhand migrated to Assam at the time of Emperor Aurangzeb. The hereditary title of "Hazarika" was conferred on him by Raja Rudra Singh, the then king of Assam. He had the honour of being present at His Imperial Majesty's Levee and invitation of attending the State Garden Party on 2nd January, 1912. He is a recipient of the Durbar Medal.

Cover of George V Royal Durbar book:



The brothers Firdost and Tafazzul Hazarika at Motijan (about 1912) with Tafazzul's children:
Left to right: Faiz Hazarika, Daisy Aziz, Ali Hazarika, Firdost Hazarika, Sharif Hazarika, Tafazzul Hazarika at Motijan house.



Chapter 5

Md. Tafazzul Hussain Hazarika (1881-1938):



Mohammed Tafazzul Hussain Hazarika, born 10th Rabias sani 1881 married Noorbahar Begum in 1901 (1886- died December 2, 1951) daughter of Roshan Nissa & Sikander Ali Chowdhury of Balibat, Jorhat. Roshan Nissa was the daughter of Minoor Ali Hazarika who's father was Ali Ahmed Hazarika.

Children:

Daisy Saheban Nissa Shamsun Bahar (1904 -1983)
Faiz Md. Shah Hussain Hazarika (1906-1978)
Ali Md. Shah Hussain Hazarika (1907-1966)
Sharif Md. Shah Hussain Hazarika (1909-1972)
Shirazy Shamsun Ara (1912-1964)
Imam Md. Shah Hussain Hazarika (George) (5-14-1912 to 2-2-1952)
Georgi Shamsun Nissa (1916 -2002)
Georgina Shamsun Jehan (1918 -1986)
Hassin Md. Shah Hussain Hazarika (7-21-1921 to 7-1-1957)
Zum Zum Shamsun Nahar (1922-1978)
Bulu Sharifa Bahar 1924-

Md. Tafazzul Hussain Hazarika had fifteen children, four died in infancy. The eldest was Daisy Hazarika then Faiz Hazarika then Ali Hazarika and so on as listed above. Tafazzul Hazarika married at the age of 20 due to tremendous family pressure since his older brother was childless from his three marriages.

He was tall, 6ft 4 inches. He was a very handsome and rugged looking person who wrote love letters to all the young girls in the surrounding area of Jorhat and Titabar. Elder brother Firdost with no children continuously pressured Tafazzul to marry early.

A beautiful bride Noorbahar Begum (Moina) from the Chowdhury family of Jorhat was arranged. She was a descendent of Minoor Ali Hazarika whose brother was Shanoor Hazarika. Noorbahar Begum's mother was Tafazzul's first cousin which made her his niece. She was only 15 at marriage and her first child was born when she was 16.

Tafazzul was a romantic who played the sitar and wrote love letters to his wife regularly "I will cut my liver and with its blood write my love for you". He loved music. He treated his wife to the best one could buy, especially jewelry. She was provided with all the servants, governesses and nurses to take care of the children. The governesses were invariably from families like Lord Sinha's niece (took care of Sharif Hazarika) or were often English Governesses.

Noorbahar Begum was not allowed to do any work in the house and Tafazzul was often heard to say loudly - if there were no servants then he would do all the housework himself. He was a man deeply in love with his wife.

Tafazzul Hazarika with his brother Firdost Hazarika amassed a sizable fortune consisting of city land, paddy land and tea plantations enabling them and the children to lead a very luxurious life. They acquired a number of tea estates such as Mokrung, Noorbari, Madori, Motijan, Sonajan (about 7 tea estates) and others, as well as extensive land holdings in Jorhat and Titabar. Madori tea estate was the last tea estate bought by Tafazzul. (Unfortunately, the broker who helped close the deal fraudulently inserted his name instead of Tafazzul's name).

Firdost and Tafazzul became one of two or three wealthiest families in Assam in 1900's and they established close political connections to the ruling Congress party and the British Raj. Tafazzul sent his eldest three sons to be educated in England and lavished expensive jewelry on his daughters.

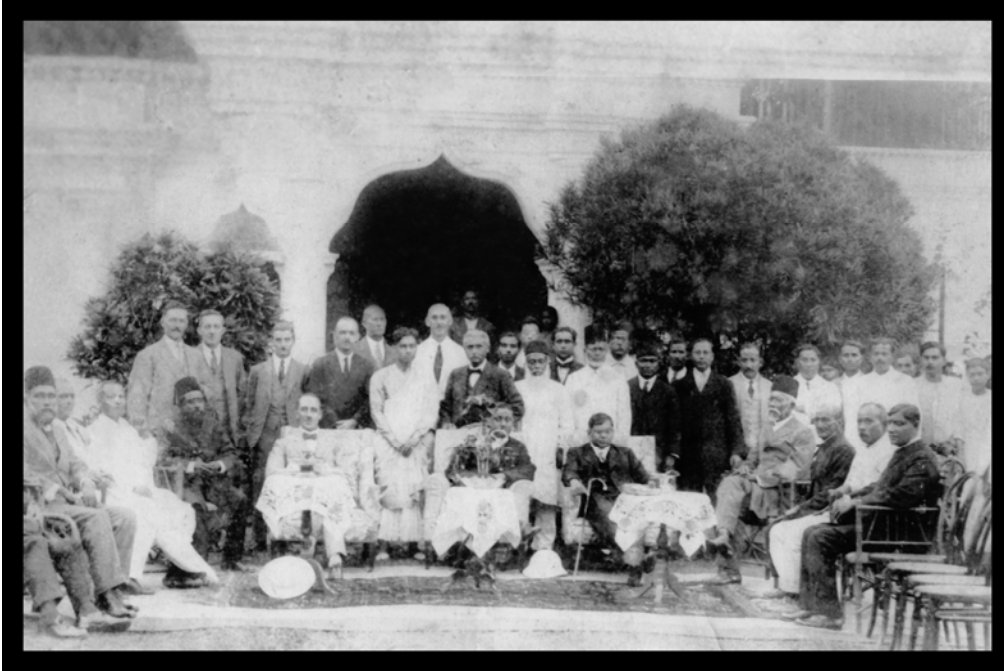
Much of his time was spent in Kolkutta with his bankers, tea brokers and tea agency companies; at Shillong with his political friend's and at Titabar with his family. The family was very close friends of Sir Syed Saadullah the first Chief Minister of Assam who had the Syedbari tea estate literally next door.

Picture of Noorbahar Begum and Tafazzul Hazarika with bow tie that was hung at the main room (mojia) at Motijan. It was damaged in 2003 and the picture was unfortunately thrown away.



Tafazzul was active social and had a wide circle of friends especially in Kolkutta where he spent a good part of his time. His good friend from Aligarh University Dr. Ziauddin Ahmed, Vice Chancellor, advised him and his children on many matters of importance in political and educational affairs.

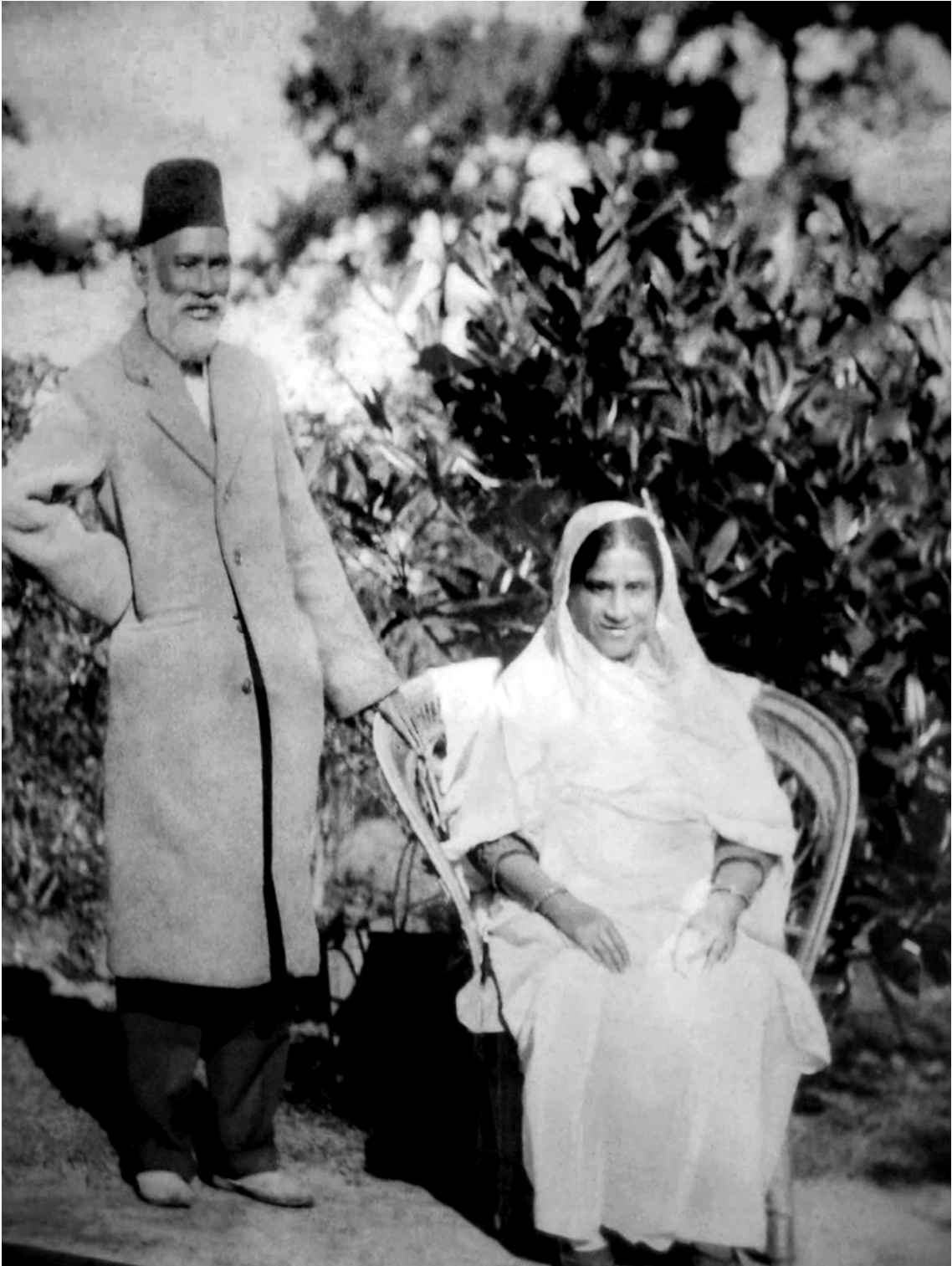
Tafazzul sitting on extreme left, Firdost sitting fourth from right with dignitaries at Kolkutta. His brother Firdost Hazarika is sitting on the right side (fourth with black fez cap).



Political meeting at Motijan. 1950's. At Motijan front verandah are Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed (later became President of India) and Bishnu Ram Mehdi (front center) Chief Minister of Assam:



Tafazzul Hazarika and wife Noorbahar around 1935:



Tafazzul Hazarika was a visionary as well as a lavish spender and very generous. He sent his three eldest children to the Doon school in India. The Doon school was run by an English Headmaster and was considered the best in India in the 1920's and had students from the families of the reigning Maharaja's and Nawab's of India.

Not many years before he passed away Tafazzul told his children that he had made enough provisions for his family that he felt it would last them another seven generations of good living even if no one worked for a living. Little did he understand the life style his children could achieve thereby exhausting all the properties within one generation. Most of the properties acquired by Firdost and his brother Tafazzul were just given away due to neglect or lost to settle gambling debts from playing poker. Whatever remained went towards a very lavish life style. Not a single new property was acquired by the family after he passed away. Most of Tafazzul's children ran out their inheritance by the time they passed away. Sharif Hazarika kept the main property Motijan intact (although by 2005 his two sons Dej and Fafi Hazarika were unable to hold on to most of it), Hassin Hazarika was a senior executive in banking, but died young. Daughters Zum Zum Adil and Georgi Hussain married well and did not need the inheritance. Daughters Daisy Aziz and Shirazy Ghaffar lived frugally and held on to their possessions but their inheritors have sold most of their properties. Georgina Dutt lived well and sold most her properties.

Tafazzul died of a heart attack at the age of 58. He was not in very good health. It was also rumored that the extreme grief he felt due to the problematic marriage of one of his daughters. Apparently, her mother in law wanted to lay claim on all her expensive and sizable jewelry given to her by her family as per Indian tradition and when she refused asked her second son to get rid of her (it was rumored the mother in law also tried poison on another occasion but failed).

Tafazzul passed away soon after in his flat at Ballygunge, Calcutta. He was taken back to Titabar by special train arranged by his son Sharif Hazarika then Superintendent of Assam Bengal railways.

Tafazzul's wife Noorbahar Begum (Moina) was very pretty, talked very little. People would constantly visit her and spend hours sitting besides her without many words being exchanged. She was considered to be a holy person and upon leaving people would ask her for her blessings. She would touch their head and whisper a prayer.

Noorbahar died at the age of 65 in Shillong in the Robert Welch Mission hospital and was brought to Titabar for burial.

MOTIJAN DURING THE TIME OF TAFAZZUL

All three brothers went from Doon school in India to England. Faiz Hazarika to study medicine, Ali Hazarika to study administration and Sharif Hazarika to study law. It was rumored that Faiz spent much of his time partying and he was asked to return to India by his father. The return of Faiz and Ali was instigated by a letter written by Sharif to his

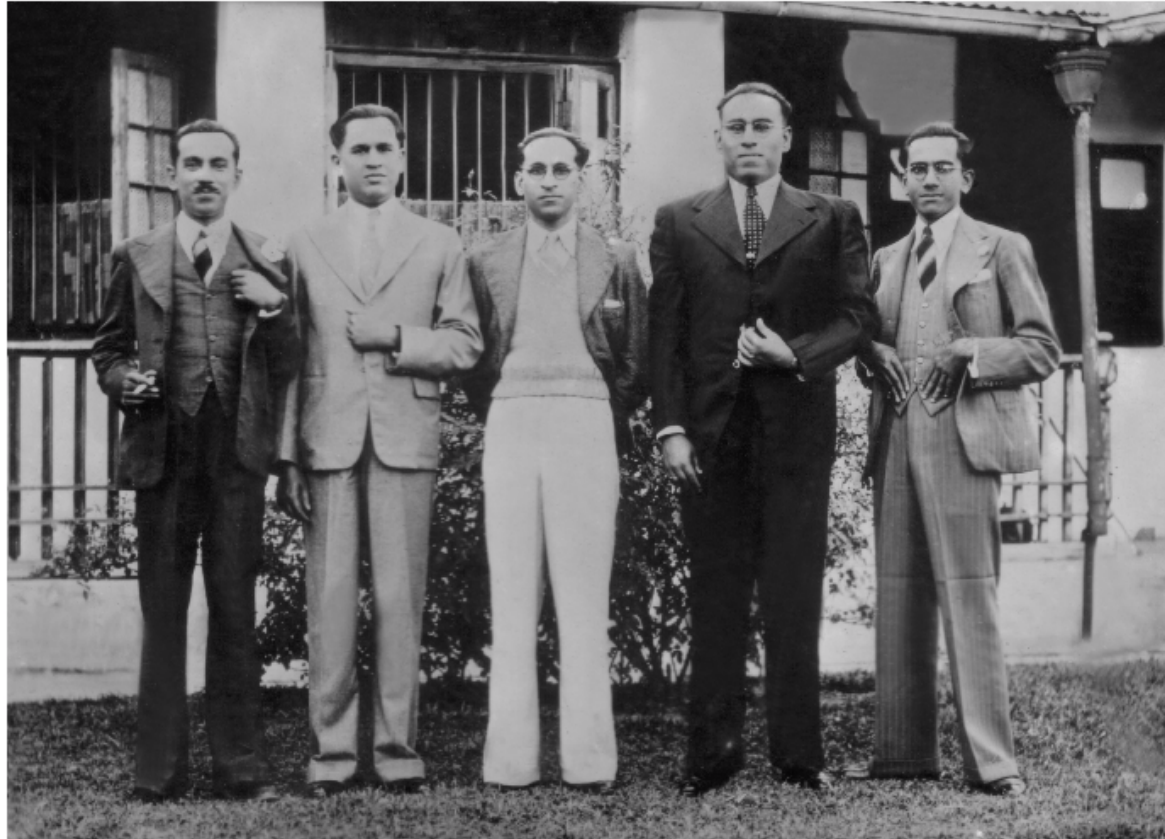
father that both brothers had given up studying in London. Faiz returned back to India. Ali came back shortly after. All the brothers did have a good time in London, often going to Paris to party. Their allowances were generous and they lived well with their friends many of whom were Indian Princes and Nawab's. They all returned to the family business and soon Motijan was a center of parties for all their friends. They all picked up the habit of drinking whisky which bothered their parents. To avoid any unpleasantness, Tafazzul built a cottage by the front gate of the Motijan house so his sons could do their drinking there. Unfortunately their business judgments were very unsound and very rapidly all the estate holdings were in financial trouble.

1940's: Son and daughters of Tafazzul and Noorbahar Hazarika at Motijan :
Rear standing: Zum Zum; Sharif; Faiz; George; Hassin; Ali and Georgina
Sitting: Georgi, Daisy and Shirazy.
In the front: Bulu



Sons of Tafazzul Hazarika at Motijan, 1940's:

Left to right: Faiz Hazarika; Ali Hazarika; Sharif Hazarika; George Hazarika & Hassin Hazarika



Visitors at Motijan:

General Omar Bradley was posted in Assam during World War 2 and visited Motijan one afternoon. He was greeted by Toto Ghaffar.

The neighboring Naga's from what is the Nagaland State were a fierce headhunting tribe living just a few miles from Motijan. During the famine they were given salt and other supplies and in return pledged alliance to Tafazzul. The British were alarmed by this alliance. Thus the British took care of Tafazzul and Firdost thinking they might otherwise lead an insurgency against them in partnership with the Naga chiefs. Assam was important strategically for the British since it had an airbase that the Americans used to drop supplies to China and also keep supplies to the British troops fighting the Japanese in Burma.

The Nizam of Hyderabad showed up one day for a brief visit.

Aruna Ashraf Ali an independence freedom fighter once took shelter at Motijan to avoid being captured by the British.

Faiz Hazarika had many friends in his young adult years. Plenty of money and the ability to entertain lavishly bought many of them to Motijan. He was friendly with Feroz Gandhi (husband of Indira Gandhi who later on became the Prime Minister of India) and he would show up once in awhile.

The hotel Kings of that time were the Oberoi's who were good family friends (the two Oberoi brothers were referred to as MS and KS their nicknames). Later on one of their sons Vicki Oberoi and his wife Goodie became good friends with Faiz's niece Bibi Ghaffar (Bibi and Goodie were classmates at Miranda House, Delhi). Mina Singh who was the Uncle of Maneka Gandhi (Indira Gandhi's daughter in law) was interested in marrying Bibi Ghaffar.

Many of these visitors to Motijan came for shikar (hunting). Assam was mostly dense jungle with plenty of tigers, elephants, deer and other wild life. Organizing shikars was a favorite pass time of the Hazarika clan. A few trucks were loaded with supplies, guides and servants hopped into a few more and the Hazarika shikaries and their guests led the way on V-8 Fords and Wiley's jeeps. A frequent quest was the Raja of Darbhanga from the State of Bihar/Bengal. He bagged quite a few tigers.

Naseem Hazarika with tiger kill in Assam, 1960's.



Motijan was very popular with the Maharaja's, Nawab's and Government Officers since they became friendly with the three brothers Faiz, Ali and Sharif in England and assumed they were Princes from Assam. The guests were treated in great style and luxury so they all became regular visitors. Of course, they were also very aware of their friends pretty sisters. The Raja of Darbhanga's (known as VC) wife had passed away and on one of his frequent visits asked to marry Georgina Hazarika. Tafazzul refused on the grounds he was already married once and also a Hindu. Ironic since a few years later Georgina married Dinesh Dutt who was a Hindu. Not one to be discouraged the Raja then asked for Zum Zum Hazarika's hand and was politely refused.

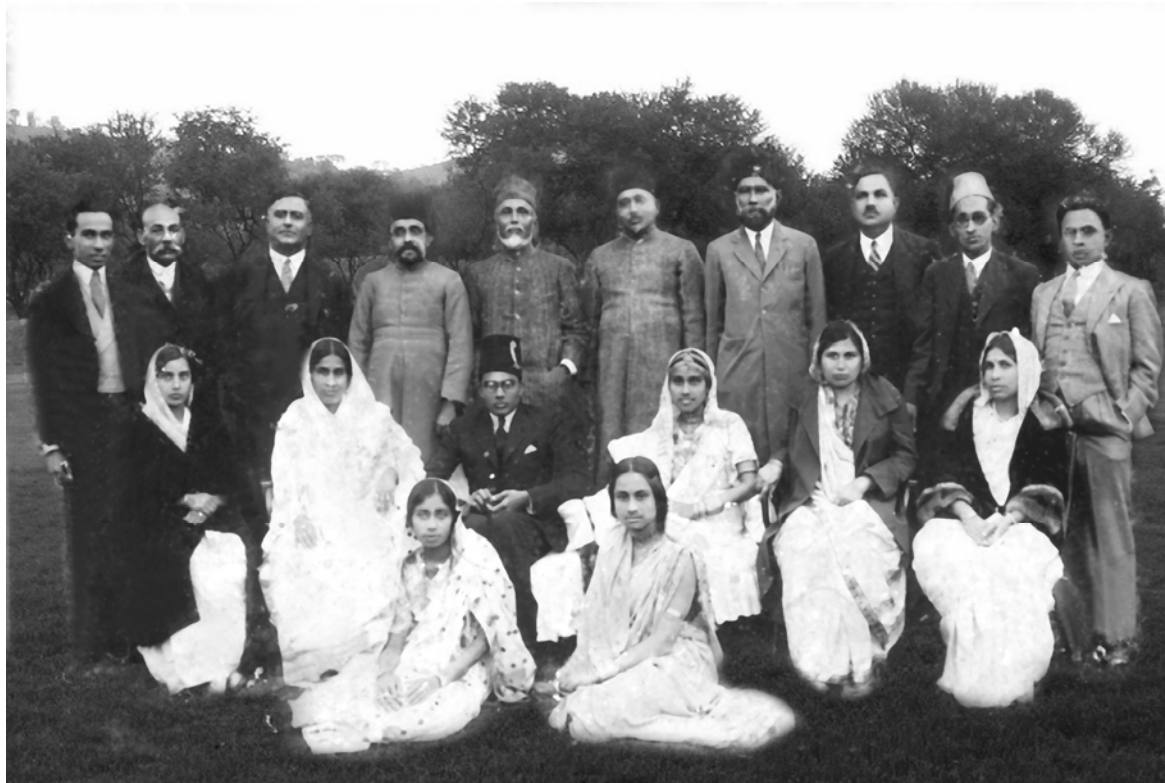
1931-32 At Shillong, Assam, Georgi Hazarika's wedding:

On ground: Naseema Hazarika, Georgina Hazarika

Sitting L to R: Betty daughter of Saadullah, Noorbahar Hazarika (wife of Tafazzul); Hadi Hussain I.C.S (groom). ;

Georgi Hussain (the bride), unknown, Fanwar Hazarika.

Standing L to R: Faiz Hazarika, Knak Lal Barua, unknown Sylhet Minister (fourth), Faiznoor Ali, Sir Syed Saadullah (sixth, first Chief Minister of Assam), Tafazzul Hazarika (seventh); Afzal Hussain.; Sharif Hazarika (ninth), unknown



Food at Motijan was an event. Even with a dining table that could be extended to seat fifty people inside the house and 150 outside on the front lawn three settings were planned for every meal – first the children were served, then the grown ups and finally the women. The cooking pots were all oversized and were still being borrowed in the 1970's by family and friends for cooking wedding meals. The rice cooking pots were very large and could hold 50 gallons of water. Meals were fit for a King since Noorbahar Begum insisted on beef, mutton, chicken, fish and eggs be served for all major meals along with the other side vegetarian dishes.

Motijan early 1948-49, many members of the extended family:



Standing left to right:

Rajina Hazarika (sister of Wahid) Hadi Hussain (2nd), Georgi Hussain (3), Babi Hazarika (5 th. Sister of Wahid), Abdul Aziz (husband of Daisy), Ali Hazarika (7th with hat), Afzal Hussain, George Hazarika (9th) carrying Tawheed Hazarika, Sharif Hazarika(10), Pori Mohati (sister of Noorbahar), Wahid Hazarika (12th), Shirazy Hazarika (13), Faiz Hazarika (14), Abdul Ghaffar (husband of Shirazy), Dorji nana (Taylor and relative).

Sitting left to right:

Afzal Hussains daughter (once considered to marry Sharif Hazarika), Noorbahar Begum (wife of Tafazzul), Mrs. Afzal Hussain, Nassima Begum (wife of Ali Hazarika), Tusika Aziz (daughter of Daisy).

Ground left to right:

Georgina Dutt, Hassin Hazarika, Afzal Hussains son (proposed to marry Zum Zum), Bulu Chapman, Usiqua Aziz (daughter of Daisy), Zum Zum Hazarika.

The Motijan family moved in a block usually by train/car. Two full railway carriage compartments were reserved for the servants and food ingredients and utensils. Three train carriages for the family. Summer was in Shillong at a residence named JunAli, winters were a combination of Motijan and Calcutta. Idd celebrations at Motijan were managed like wedding events. Ballygunge, Calcutta was their residence for two months of every year during the winter months of December and January. All supplies were shipped by train to Calcutta. This included their tailors, sewing machines and cooking utensils plus crockery and cutlery. The parties and food servings and the guests were all the same except for location.

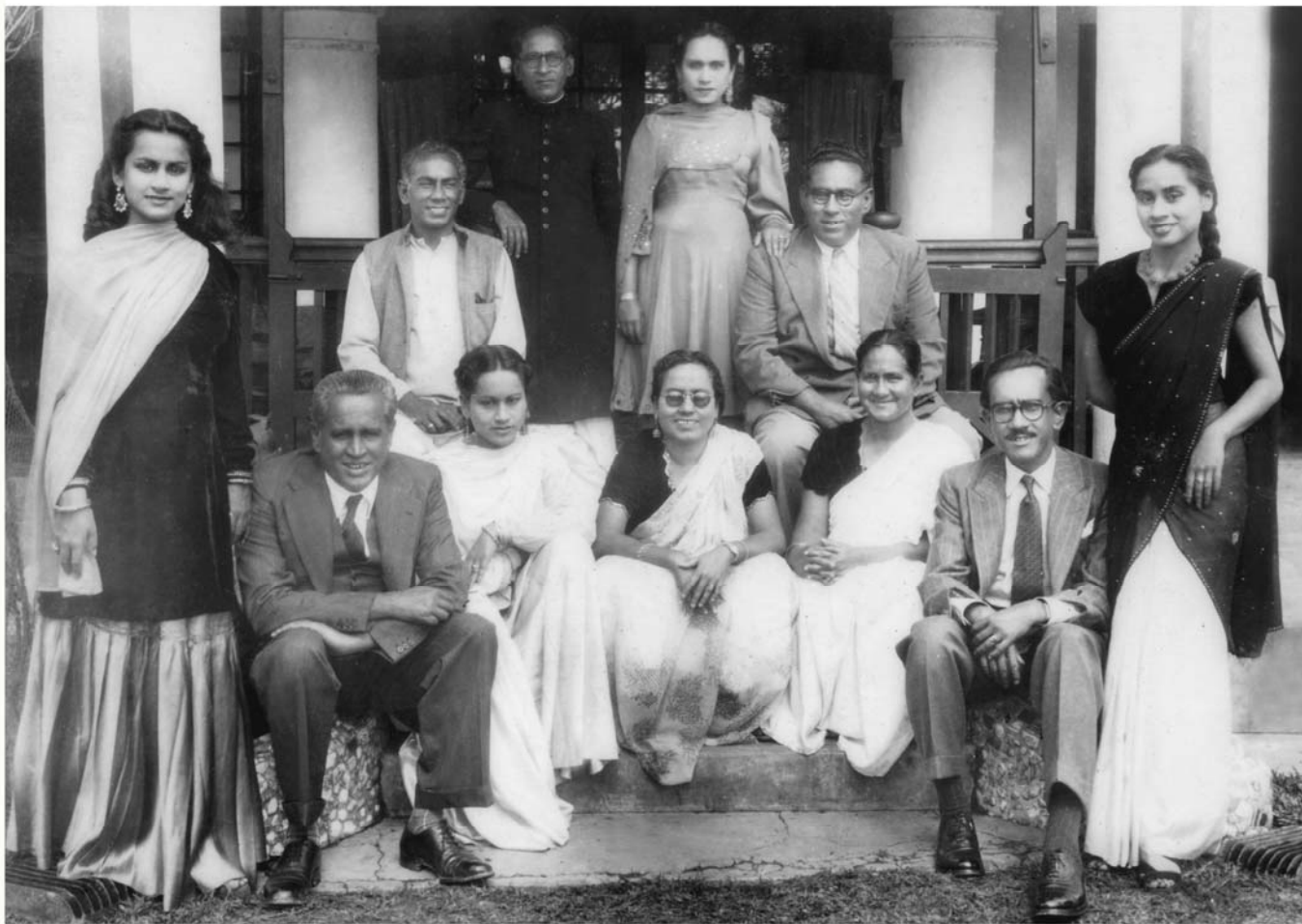
Idd celebration around 1930's at Motijan:

Tafazzul Hazarika (extreme right); Abdul Ghaffar (rear and next to him), sitting is Daisy's husband, Abdul Aziz.

Car is V8 ford convertible owned by Abdul Ghaffar (husband of Shirazy).



1950's Sons and daughters of Tafazzul and Moina Noorbahar Hazarika celebrating Idd at Motijan.
Front row: Sitting: Ali; Georgina; Shirazy; Daisy; Hassin and Bulu
Rear: Zum; Faiz; Sharif; Georgi; George and Bulu



Celebration Bihu at Motijan.

L to R: Bulu Hazarika, Usiqua, Naseema (Ali's wife), Zum Zum Hazarika, Tusika.



The formal living room at Motijan in 1973:



The Motijan house in 1999 (Dej Dad Hazarika in the front):



Motijan Kabarstan (cemetery):

First arch: Lies Shanoor Hazarika, Firdost Hazarika, Abdul Aziz

Second arch: lies Tafazzul Hazarika, Moina Noorbahar Begum. Third: Sharif Hazarika

Fourth: Sona Noorbahar Hazarika Rear: Daisy Aziz Hazarika, Imam (George Hazarika)

Other relatives in rear also.

2003



2005



2006 Motijan kabastan (restoration work still in progress to be completed in 2008):



2008



The Motijan house in 2005:



The Motijan house in 2005: Sajidur Rahman and Tawheed Hazarika near the gate.

