

Books

Singh Teja and Ganda Singh. A Short History of the Sikhs. Patiala: Punjab University, Patiala, 1994. pp 44-47

Singh, Puran. The Book of The Ten Masters. Amritsar: Singh Bros., August 2002. pp 95-96

Cherry, Lynne. The Great Kapok Tree. Harcourt Brace Co.

Gurū Harirai (1630-1661)

Gurū Harirai was the grandson of Gurū Hargobind . He was born at Kīratpur (ਕੀਰਤਪੁਰ). He was very gentle and kind hearted and opened a hospital where medicines and treatment was given free. He spread the message of the previous Gurūs. He is particularly known for love towards animals .He made special hospitals for animals and also made a zoo and all species of animals and birds and gave them his utmost love. He propagated the use of herbal medicine as well.

One day as a child, while passing through a garden, his loose flowing robes damaged some flowers and scattered their petals on the ground. This sight affected his tender heart and brought tears in his eyes. After that he always walked with his skirts tucked up, and resolved never to harm anything in the world. When he grew up, he carried the same spirit with him. He used Bābā Farīd's (ਬਾਬਾ ਫਰੀਦ) quotation frequently:

"All men's hearts are jewels; to distress them is not at all good;
If thou desire the Beloved, distress no one's heart."

Gurū Harirai was most magnanimous. His food was very simple, he did not desire dainty dishes. Whatever valuable offerings were made to him, he used to spend on his guests. On the advice of his grandfather, Gurū Hargobind, he kept twenty-two hundred mounted soldiers. In the afternoon he used to go to chase. The Gurū took some of the animals he had obtained from the chase, freed them and protected them in a zoological garden, which he had made for the recreation of his followers. In the evening the Gurū used to hold his court, listen to hymns sung by his choir, and then give divine instructions.