



War Heroes from the Commonwealth

Rav Singh, A little History of the Sikhs

Wednesday 13 November 2024
11am – 12 noon, via MS Teams





War Heroes from the Commonwealth

Rav Singh, A little History of the Sikhs



“When you go home tell them of us and say: For your tomorrow we gave our today”



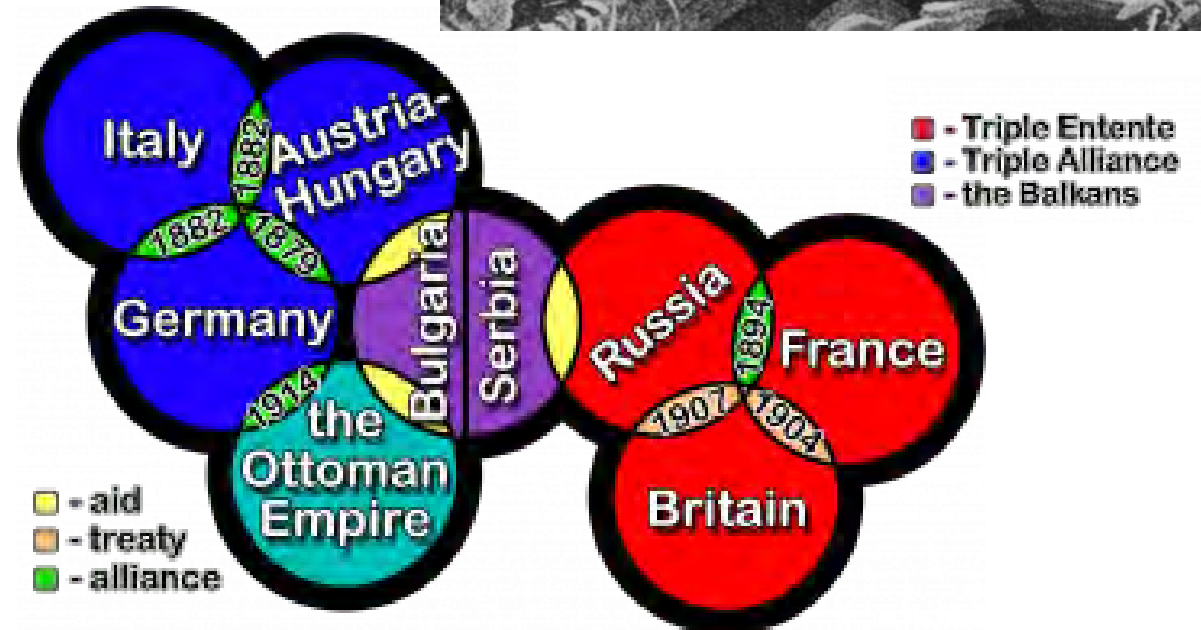


War Heroes from the Commonwealth

The Outbreak of War in Europe



The triggering event cause of World War I was the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne, in 1914.



1. Austria-Hungary- declared war on Serbia due to the assassination.
2. Serbia- became a participant by Austria-Hungary's war declaration.
3. Russia- allied to Serbia by their treaty
4. Germany- allied to Austria-Hungary by their treaty
5. France- allied to Russia
6. Britain- allied to France. Since Britain has entered the war, her many colonies have become participants, whether with direct military support or financial support.



War Heroes from the Commonwealth

The British Army in 1914



At the start of 1914, the British Army had:

- 80,000 regular troops
 - Six divisions, and
 - One Cavalry division, and
 - Four divisions overseas
- 14 Territorial Force divisions

Reserve Army

- 300,000 troops

French and German Armies – 70 divisions

Lord Kitchener foresaw a war lasting many years

ARMY CORPS

led by Major General
10 – 14,000 soldiers

DIVISION

BRIGADE

led by Brigadier General

BATALLION

led by General



BRITONS



"WANTS YOU"
JOIN YOUR COUNTRY'S ARMY!
GOD SAVE THE KING

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THE EMPIRE NEEDS MEN!



**AUSTRALIA
CANADA
INDIA
NEW ZEALAND**

All answer the call.

Helped by the **YOUNG LIONS**
The **OLD LION** defies his Foes.
ENLIST NOW.



TOGETHER



*War
Heroes*
from the *Commonwealth*

Recruitment from
across the Empire



THE INDIAN ARMY AT THE PALACE

THE FORGOTTEN STORY OF THE INDIAN ARMY
CAMPS AT HAMPTON COURT PALACE

August 1902 – Coronation of Edward VII
1919 – WW1 Peace Parades

June 1911 – Coronation of George V
May 1937 – Coronation of George VI





War Heroes from the Commonwealth

The Indian Army at the Palace Exhibition



Historic Royal Palaces
Hampton Court Palace

History where it happened – the story of the soldiers who have camped on various occasion for reasons such as the peace celebration in 1919 to mark the end of the WWI and for Edward VII's coronation in 1902. Focus on life at camp at what the soldiers did and where they went.

The wider impact their presence had on Britain and interest from press and public alike – look at how they were presented via images and newspaper articles – some positive and some not so much.

Modern day context of how their presence has impacted Britain today – what do we know **and what don't we know of this history. Much has not been recorded formally and remains as 'family stories' that are passed down orally. We are doing this to make a lasting impact for future generations and how they relate to world wars history while also changing the 'common' narrative around this history.** Themes of memory identity and belonging will be explored through donated objects that we will ask South Asian communities to contribute by having a public call out for any objects or stories that they may have that have a link to WWI/II and the coronation.





*War
Heroes*

from the *Commonwealth*

Coronation of Edward VII –
August 1902





War
Heroes

from the *Commonwealth*

Coronation of Edward VII –
August 1902

DAILY ARRANGEMENTS.

JUNE 21,
Saturday. Official (Indians) Smoking Concert
at Headquarters, 1st Middlesex
Volunteers, Davies Street,
Berkeley Square, at 8 p.m.
Entertainment of Colonials at
Alexandra Park.

JUNE 22,
Sunday. Zoological Gardens. Visit of
Indians.

JUNE 23,
Monday. Mounted Indians proceed to
Fulham Palace Camp; 300
Colonials invited to evening
entertainment at Bath Club.

JUNE 24,
Tuesday. Bishop of London's Garden Party
(Indians). Preparing for Coro-
nation.

JUNE 25,
Wednesday. Preparing for Coronation.

JUNE 26,
Thursday. CORONATION.

JUNE 27,
Friday. Colonial and Indian Troops
proceed to Southampton.
Colonials leave 10 p.m., Indians
11 p.m.

JUNE 28,
Saturday. Naval Review.

JUNE 29,
Sunday. Return from Southampton.

JUNE 30,
Monday. Polo match at Ranelagh. Indians
to attend from Hampton Court.

JULY 1,
Tuesday. Lady Elliott's Garden Party,
Wimbledon. Native Officers
only. Palace Steamers.

JULY 2,
Wednesday. Visit of the King to the City.
Oxford and Cambridge Match.
Lord and Lady Roberts'
Reception, 10 p.m.

JULY 3,
Thursday. Hall can entertain 50 men, arrive
1.40, commence 2 p.m. Re-
ception Indian Office evening.
Alexandra Park Race Meeting.

JULY 4,
Friday.

JULY 5,
Saturday.

JULY 6,
Sunday. Match at Lord's, Gentlemen v.
Players, 100 Colonials can
attend.

JULY 7,
Monday. Matinee Palace Theatre. Match
at Lord's, Gentlemen v. Players,
100 Colonials can attend.
Henley Regatta.

JULY 8,
Tuesday.



THE FIGHTING FORCES OF INDIA.



C.N. A TYPICAL INDIAN REGIMENT OF INFANTRY. Copyright.

FOR the first time in history the soldiers of our Indian Empire are to wage war upon European soil. Seeing that they will fight side by side with British and Colonial troops, it is of more than passing interest to describe the manner of man, with his methods of fighting, who will be ranged in our far-flung Imperial battle line. As is well known, some 70,000 men are being

dispatched from India to the front, and the selection of troops has been carried out in such a manner that every important branch of our Native Army is adequately represented. Sikhs, Gurkhas, Jats, Hindus and other races and sects have ranged themselves together in this common struggle, and each has vowed according to those laws which he venerates that he will fulfil his duty to the utmost. A wave of enthusiasm is sweeping throughout India, from the slopes of the Himalayas to Cape Comorin, urging the men to make their first appearance on the battle-grounds of Europe. They are eager for the fray, and there is no doubt but that the first battle in which they are engaged is likely to be one of the most memorable of the whole war.

It must be remembered that the Indian troops will be fighting side by side with the British troops to which they are attached. For instance, each of the two infantry divisions now taking the field has one brigade of British infantry and two of native troops, while the cavalry brigade comprises one British and two native regiments. Of course, the whole of the artillery of this force is entirely British, for the simple reason that there has been no native artillery since the black days of the Mutiny. This state of affairs, however, is likely to be changed upon the conclusion of the war, when the Indian Native Army will undergo reorganisation in accordance with the lessons taught by the conflict.

Seeing that the brunt of the fighting to be done by the Indian Army will probably fall upon the infantry, one cannot do better than begin with the Sikhs of the Punjab, who will form a prominent proportion



J. A. Stevens. A CAVALRY OFFICER. Copyright.



J. A. Stevens. AN INFANTRY OFFICER. Copyright.

The Troops of the Indian Empire

soldier is armed to combat with the most efficiently equipped Western foe. The Cavalry is armed with the Lee-Enfield carbine, while the Infantry carries Lee-Metford rifles. It may be added that the Ordnance Department in India manufactures a great deal of the armament required for the Army.

Great attention is paid to the selection of Remounts for the Cavalry. The Government maintains a number of remount depôts in various parts of India, where horses, mules, and donkeys are bred. Horses are imported from Australia and Arabia. However, it is found that the improved type of the country-bred animal is hardier and capable of greater endurance than those imported from abroad. It is necessary to add that the Rajas and Indian gentlemen, especially those belonging to military families, take great interest in horse-breeding. The Maharaja



Photo. G. F. Jones and Son, Kingston-on-Thames. OFFICER, IMPERIAL SERVICE INFANTRY.



Photo. G. F. Jones and Son, Kingston-on-Thames. SARDAR RAM SINGH, OF THE 15TH SIKHS, AN OFFICER WHO IS FAMED IN THE INDIAN ARMY FOR HIS BRAVERY.

Cavalry and Infantry are of the most modern type. Until quite recently it was thought advisable not to give the latest type of weapons to Indian soldiers, but this policy of mistrust has been revised, and now the Indian



War Heroes

from the Commonwealth

Coronation of Edward VII – August 1902

INDIA IN LONDON.



War
Heroes
from the *Commonwealth*

Coronation of Edward VII –
August 1902



WASHING DAY.
Cleanliness is next to Godliness.



THE LAUNDRY.
Folding and ironing the clothes.



Photos. Copyright.

INQUISITIVE VISITORS.
Conversing under great difficulties.



Navy and Army.

SOME INDIAN CHEFS.
Cooking meals for their caste.

THE ENCAMPMENT AT HAMPTON COURT.



*War
Heroes*

from the *Commonwealth*

Coronation of George VI
- May 1937



Gurmukhi/Punjabi:

ਪਿੰਡ ਵਿੱਚ ਰਹਿ ਕੇ ਸਰਪੰਚ ਬਣ ਕੇ ਕੰਮ ਕਰਦੇ ਰਹੋ।

ਕਿਤੇ ਹੋਰ ਨਾ ਜਾਣਾ। ਸੇਚੇ ਜੇ ਮੈਂ ਕਹਿੰਦਾ ਹਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ
ਸਮਝ ਜਾਓਗੇ ਕਿ ਮੇਰਾ ਕੀ ਮਤਲਬ ਹੈ ਜਦੋਂ ਮੈਂ ਕਹਾਂਗਾ ਕਿ
'ਪਿੰਡ ਵਿੱਚ ਰਹੋ'

Hindi:

गाँव में ही रहो और अपना सरपंच का काम सँभालते
रहो। कहीं ओर मत जाना। बहुत ध्यान से सोचो और
समझो कि मैं क्या कह रहा हूँ। तुम समझ जाओगे कि
'गाँव में ही रहो' का मतलब क्या है।

A wounded Sikh to a brother in India

14 February 1915, England

[Gurmukhi]

Stay in the village and carry on the work as
headman. Do not go anywhere else. Think
over what I say and you will understand what I
mean when I say 'stay in the village'.



The **INDIAN ARMY**

at the **PALACE**



Exhibition - Voice
Interpretation & Transcripts



**Transcripts of Indian Soldiers
letters read in languages Urdu,
Punjabi (Gurmukhi script) and
Hindi by**

Rav Singh, Raminder Sarihyan, Vaanee
Sarihyan, A Little History of the Sikhs

Yousuf Abraham
London Urdu Voice

Tajinder Paul Singh
Punjabi Theatre Academy

In our country (the Punjab) there is great scarcity. The price of maize is 4 chauhars and wheat at 3 chauhars per rupee cannot be had. In this calamity there is also the misfortune of separation from you. Oh, young men, be careful do not get confused: even if you die, show some bravery! one day we all have to die.

Gurmukhi/Punjabi:

ਪੰਜਾਬ ਵਿੱਚ ਬਹੁਤ ਕਮੀ ਹੈ। ਮੱਕੀ ਦੀ ਕੀਮਤ 4 ਚੌਹਾ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਕਣਕ 3 ਚੌਹਾ ਪ੍ਰਤੀ ਰੁਪਏ ਦੇ ਹਿਸਾਬ ਨਾਲ ਨਹੀਂ ਮਿਲ ਸਕਦੀ। ਇਸ ਆਫ਼ਤ ਵਿੱਚ ਤੁਹਾਡੇ ਤੋਂ ਵਿਛੋੜੇ ਦੀ ਬਦਕਿਸਮਤੀ ਵੀ ਹੈ। ਜੇ ਨੌਜਵਾਨੇ, ਸਾਵਧਾਨ ਰਹੋ ਅਤੇ ਉਲਝਣ ਵਿੱਚ ਨਾ ਆਓ: ਭਾਵੇਂ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਮਰ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹੋ, ਕੁਝ ਬਹਾਦਰੀ ਦਿਖਾਓ! ਇੱਕ ਦਿਨ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਸਾਰਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਮਰਨਾ ਪਵੇਗਾ।



The INDIAN ARMY at the PALACE



Exhibition
Voice Interpretation &
Transcripts

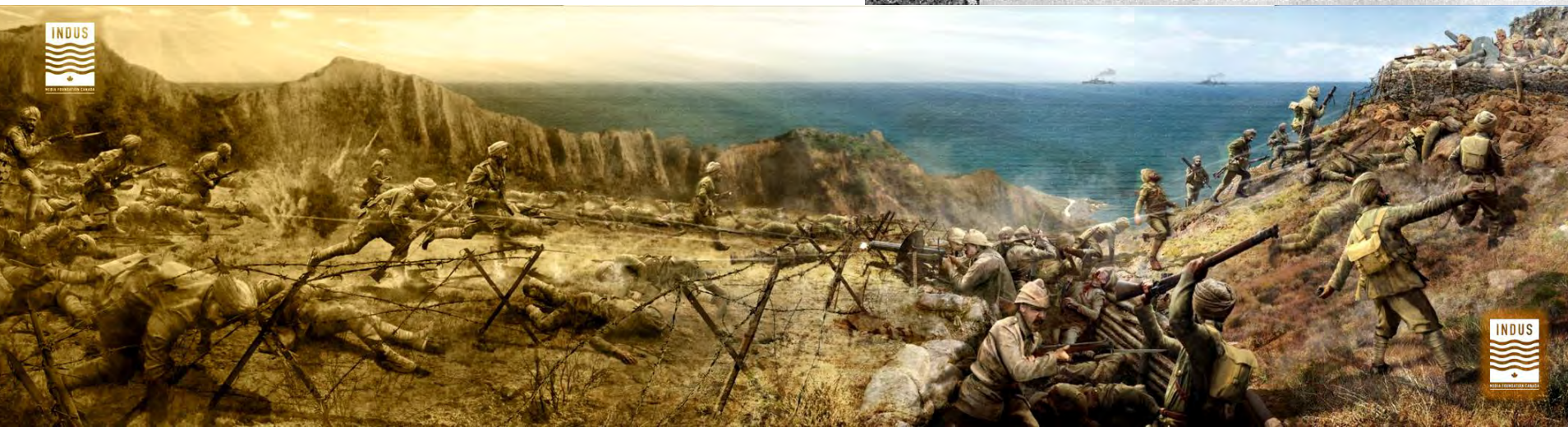


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The INDIAN ARMY

at the PALACE

A little
HISTORY
of the
SIKHS

Exhibition - Voice
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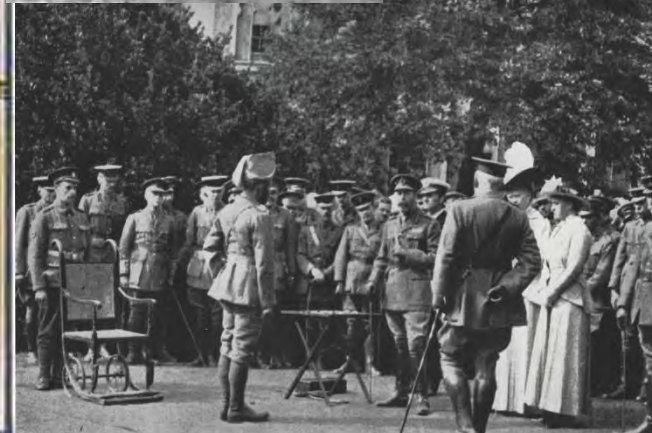
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Punjabi Theatre Academy

Subedar Mir Dast (Pathon, 55th Coke's Rifles, attached 57th Rifles, 38) to Subedar Khan
(57th Rifles, Kohat, NWFP), The Pavilion Hospital Brighton, 12th July 1915

I am in England. I have been twice wounded, once in the left hand, of which two fingers are powerless. The other injury is from gas - that is dhua (smoke). I suppose you know about that. It gives me great pain and I will go on doing so. The men who come from the row regiment have done very well and will do so again. I want your congratulations. I've got the Victoria Cross. Victoria Cross is a very fine thing, but this gas gives me no rest, it has done for me.

خان، میں انگلینڈ میں ہوں۔ میں یہاں دو مرتبہ زخمی ہوا ہوں، پہلی بار بائیں ہاتھ کی دو انگلیاں سن ہو کر رہ گئیں ہیں۔ دوسری چوٹ گیس یعنی دھوئے سی لگی ہے۔ تمہیں اس کی غالباً خبر ہے۔ اس سے مجھے بہت تکلیف ہو رہی ہے جو یقیناً وقت کے ساتھ کم ہو جائے گی۔ ہماری رجمنٹ سے آنے والے جوانوں نے بہت اچھا کام کیا ہے اور آئندہ بھی کریں گے۔ چلو مجھے مبارک باد دو۔ مجھے وکٹوریہ کراس مل گیا ہے۔ وکٹوریہ کراس بہت عمدہ چیز ہے۔ مگر کیا بتاؤں یہ کم بخت گیس کے زخم کی تکلیف مجھے آرام نہیں کرنے دیتی۔





The **INDIAN ARMY** at the **PALACE**



East Front Gardens -
Standing with Giants and
the Sikh Soldier Silhouettes
(November only)



War Heroes from the Commonwealth

Major Parkash Singh VC



**8th Punjab
Regiment Badge**
Image © Avtar S Bahra



Universal Carrier in India, February 1942

Source: <https://aw.my.games/en/news/general/unsung-hero>

Imperial War Museum
© IWM (MH 2601)
Source:
<https://www.iwm.org.uk/history/major-parkash-singh-vc>





War Heroes from the Commonwealth

Major Parkash Singh VC



Havildar PARKASH SINGH
Received the V.C. for his 'high courage and initiative' on two occasions: on January 6, 1943, he saved two gun crews whose carriers had been put out of action and their ammunition exhausted; on January 19 he rescued a carrier carrying its own and another crew; then drove out again, and towed to safety another carrier containing two wounded men, all under heavy fire, on his own initiative.



© Avtar S Bahra
The Bahra Collection
Sikhs In The Army

**8th Punjab
Regiment Badge**
Image © Avtar S Bahra

THURSDAY, 13 MAY, 1943

War Office 13th May 1943

The KING has been graciously pleased to approve the posthumous award of the VICTORIA CROSS to —

Major (temporary Lieutenant-Colonel) Derek Anthony Seagrım (26914) The Green Howards (Alexandra Princess of Wales's Own Yorkshire Regiment) (Westward Ho Devon)

On the night of the 20th/21st March 1943 the task of a Battalion of the Green Howards was to attack and capture an important feature on the left flank of the main attack on the Mareth Line. The defence of this feature was very strong and it was protected by an anti-tank ditch twelve feet wide and eight feet deep with minefields on both sides. It formed a new part of the main defences of the Mareth Line and the successful capture of this feature was vital to the success of the main attack.

From the time the attack was launched the Battalion was subjected to the most intense fire from artillery machine-guns and mortars and it appeared more than probable that the Battalion would be held up entailing failure of the main attack.

Realizing the seriousness of the situation Lieutenant-Colonel Seagrım placed himself at the head of his Battalion which was at the time, suffering heavy casualties and led it through the hail of fire.

He personally helped the team which was placing the scaling ladder over the anti-tank ditch and was himself the first to cross it. He led the assault firing his pistol throwing grenades and personally assaulting two machine-gun posts which were holding up the advance of one of his Companies. It is estimated that in this phase he killed or captured twenty Germans.

This display of leadership and personal courage led directly to the capture of the objective.

When dawn broke the Battalion was firmly established on the position which was of obvious importance to the enemy who immediately made every effort to regain it. Every post was mortared and machine-gunned unmercifully and movement became practically impossible but Lieutenant-Colonel Seagrım was quite undeterred. He moved from post to post organising and directing the fire until the attackers were wiped out to a man.

By his valour disregard for personal safety and outstanding example he so inspired his men that the Battalion successfully took and held its objective thereby allowing the attack to proceed.

Lieutenant Colonel Seagrım subsequently died of wounds received in action.

War Office 13th May 1943

The KING has been graciously pleased to approve the award of the VICTORIA CROSS to —

No 14696 Havildar Parkash Singh 8th Punjab Regiment Indian Army

On the 6th January 1943 at Donbaik Mayo Peninsula Burma when two Carriers had been put out of action Havildar Parkash Singh drove forward in his own Carrier and rescued the two crews under very heavy fire. At the time the crews of the disabled Carriers had expended their ammunition and the enemy were rushing the two disabled Carriers on foot. This NCO's timely and courageous action entirely on his own initiative saved the lives of the crews and their weapons.

On the 16th January, 1943, in the same area, three Carriers were put out of action by an enemy anti-tank gun and lay on the open beach covered by enemy anti-tank and machine-gun fire. One of these Carriers was carrying the survivors of another Carrier in addition to its own crew. Havildar Parkash Singh, on seeing what had happened, went out from a safe position in his own Carrier, and with complete disregard for his own personal safety, rescued the combined crews from one disabled Carrier, together with the weapons from the Carrier. Having brought

the crews to safety, he again went out on the open beach in his Carrier, still under very heavy anti-tank and machine-gun fire and with the utmost disregard to his personal safety, dismounted and connected a towing chain on to a disabled Carrier containing two wounded men. Still under fire, he directed the towing of the disabled Carrier from under enemy fire to a place of safety.

Havildar Parkash Singh's very gallant actions, entirely on his own initiative, were an inspiration to all ranks both British and Indian.



"Havildar Parkash Singh's very gallant actions, entirely on his own initiative, were an inspiration to all ranks both British and Indian."



Pictured: Parkash Singh being congratulated on the award of the Victoria Cross by General Auchinleck.

Image courtesy of Avtar S Bahra - The Bahra Collection, Sikhs In The Army



War Heroes from the Commonwealth

Major Parkash Singh VC



A fascinating interview with Indian Victoria Cross recipient, Major Parkash Singh V.C.

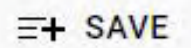
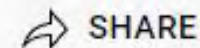
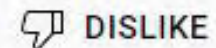
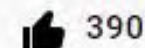
First shown: 06/08/1985

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U2hlijmwnV98>



Victoria Cross recipient | Parkash Singh V.C | Indian Soldier | For Valour | 1985

17,116 views...





Commonwealth War Memorial Gates Hyde Park Corner, London



War Heroes from the Commonwealth

Major Parkash Singh VC



A GRATEFUL NATION REMEMBERS
FOURTEEN VICTORIA CROSS RECIPIENTS

Lieutenant General Sir Fenton John Aylmer Bt, VC, KCB
Major The Viscount Alexander Edward Murray Fincastle VC, DSO, MVO, DL
Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Colelough Watson VC
Colonel Edward Douglas Brown-Syng-Hutchinson VC, CB
Corporal James Upton VC
Brigadier The Rt. Hon. Sir John George Smyth Bt, VC, MC
Lieutenant Leonard Maurice Keysor VC
Lieutenant Colonel William John Symons VC, OBE
Rear Admiral The Hon Edward Barry Stewart Bingham VC, OBE
Lieutenant Commander Percy Thompson Dean VC
Major James Palmer Huffam VC
Lieutenant Colonel Sir Brett Cloutman VC, MC
Corporal Arthur Percy Sullivan VC
Major Parkash Singh VC



Source: <http://www.memorialstovalour.co.uk/vc640.html>



War Heroes from the Commonwealth

Major Parkash Singh VC





Noor Inayat-Khan WWII



On 13 September 1944, a beautiful Indian princess lay on the floor in a concentration camp in Dachau. She had been brutally tortured and shot through the head by an SS guard. Her name was Noor Inayat Khan. The Germans knew her only as Nora Baker, a British spy.

In fact she was the first woman radio operator to be infiltrated into occupied France. She would posthumously be awarded Britain's highest civilian honour, the George Cross and France would bestow on her the Croix de Guerre. But on that bleak September day, she lay alone.

<https://war-experience.org/lives/noor-inayat-khan-soe/>





Noor Inayat-Khan WWII



The story of Noor Inayat Khan, descendant of the famous seventeenth century Indian ruler, Tipu Sultan, is one of the most intriguing and tragic stories of the Second World War.

Noor and her American Mother Ora Ray Khan
She was born on 1 January 1914 in a monastery just outside the Kremlin in Moscow. Her father was a Sufi preacher, Hazrat Inayat Khan, and her mother was an American, Ora Ray Baker

SOURCE: <https://war-experience.org/lives/noor-inayat-khan-soe/>





Noor Inayat-Khan WWII



In a bombed out London, Noor volunteered for the Women's Auxiliary Air Force (WAAF). Here she was trained as a radio operator, becoming the first batch of women to train in this field.

But while Noor was tapping away at her Morse code, she was being watched by the Special Operation Executive (SOE), who were looking out for people with language skills.

The SOE was a crack organisation set up by Churchill to aid the Resistance movements in Occupied countries. Their job was sabotage, and providing arms and money to the Resistance.

Noor fitted the bill perfectly. She was fluent in French and knew the area well. She was also a trained wireless operator, a job that was in great demand. It was considered one of the most dangerous areas in the field.

<https://war-experience.org/lives/noor-inayat-khan-soe/>





Noor Inayat-Khan WWII

Bust of Noor Inayat Khan, Gordon Sq, London WC1H 0PD



Inscription {On the front of the plinth:}
Noor Inayat Khan, 1914 - 1944, GC, MBE,
Croix de Guerre
Unveiled by HRH The Princess Royal on 8
November 2012

{On the right of the plinth:}
Noor Inayat Khan was an SOE agent infiltrated
into occupied France. She was executed at
Dachau Concentration Camp. Her last word
was "Liberte".

{On the left of the plinth:}
Noor lived nearby and spent some quiet time
in this garden.

{On the back of the plinth:}
The Special Operations Executive (SOE) was a
secret organisation set up by Winston
Churchill to help resistance movements
during WWII.

Installed by the Noor Inayat Khan Memorial Trust
Sculptor Karen Newman



Johnny Smythe, WWII

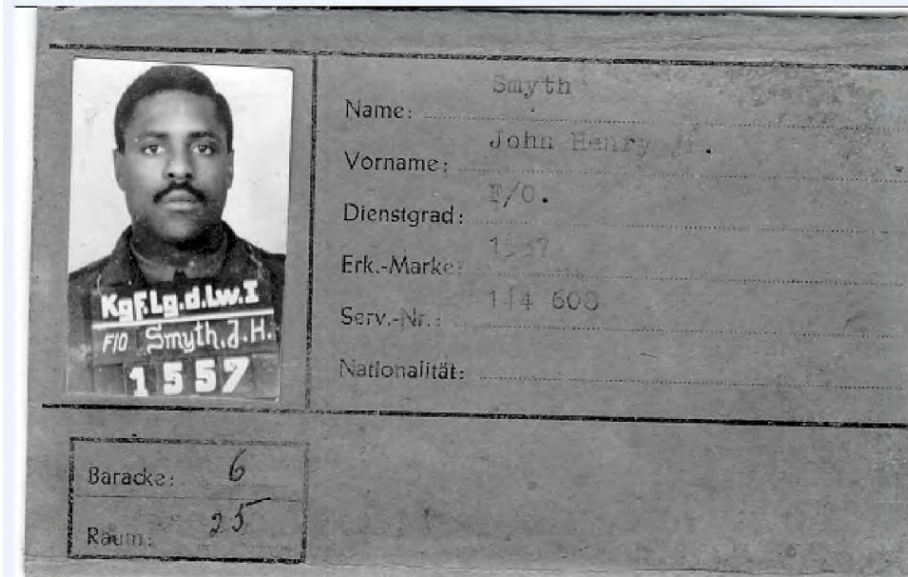
John Henry Smythe was born in 1915 in Sierra Leone in West Africa. When he was 25, he responded to a call to the colonies from Britain for recruits. His high scores in the mathematics tests meant he was selected to train as a navigator following initial training as a pilot.



The crew of the 623 Squadron stand in front of a Short Stirling bomber



Johnny Smythe, WWII



“He was transferred to hospital and his wounds treated before he was moved to Frankfurt. He was then sent to prisoner-of-war camp Stalag Luft I. For his first year in the POW camp, he was the only black prisoner. United by their situation, race was no longer an issue. Smythe recalled that unless he looked in the mirror, he no longer remembered he was black. He spent 18 months imprisoned and woke up one morning to find the guards had fled. The war was over. The Soviet army arrived on 30 April 1945 and within weeks Johnny was back in Britain. He received an MBE for his wartime efforts.”



Johnny Smythe, WWII



Many would consider that enough adventure for one lifetime, but that wasn't the end of Johnny's outstanding career. Eddy recalls his father was often 'in the right place at the right time or sometimes the right place at the wrong time. He took advantage of whatever situation he found himself in. He was very intelligent, very articulate, very eloquent, very charismatic, he had the ability to get along with all different types of people.' After the war he was offered a post with the Colonial Office where he was tasked with caring for demobilised Caribbean and African airman.

As part of his role with the Colonial Office, Johnny was required to defend ex-servicemen in court martial situations and his eloquence and ability to carry out research and mount a credible defence would lead to their acquittal. A judge he had appeared in front of a couple of times suggested that he should consider a law career and wrote him a letter of introduction to the Inns of Court. He trained as a barrister and once qualified, he returned to Sierra Leone where he initially worked for the government, becoming Solicitor General and later attorney general. In this capacity he would later meet Attorney General Robert Kennedy in the White House. He subsequently set up his own practice and became a Queens Counsel.



Maharajkumari Indira Kaur Devi

Britain's Radio Princess

Maharajkumari Indira Kaur Devi, known as Princess Indira, was born on 26 February 1912 to Maharaja Paramjit Singh and Maharani Brinda of the Princely State of Kapurthala, Punjab.

Image: Indira Devi with her mother and two sisters





Maharajkumari Indira Kaur Devi

Britain's Radio Princess


Maharani's
of Chelsea



RADA
ROYAL
ACADEMY OF
DRAMATIC ART

Princess Indira arrived in Britain in 1935 at the age of twenty-three and studied at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art (RADA) in London.

However, the difficulties of the film industry in the late 1930s, primarily due to the onset of World War II, meant that Indira did not get her big break in the movie business.



Maharajkumari Indira Kaur Devi

Britain's Radio Princess



Maharani's
of Chelsea



After the outbreak of the Second World War, Indira Devi passed the St John Ambulance examination and drove motor ambulances during air raids.

In 1942, she joined the BBC and became known as the '**Radio Princess**', hosting a radio programme in Hindi for Indian forces stationed in the Middle East and the Mediterranean.

She also presented a programme called the 'The Debate continues', a weekly report on the proceedings in the House of Commons, **where she was the only woman in the Press Gallery.**

512a Nell Gwynn House
Sloane Avenue, Kensington
London, SW3 3AU



Maharajkumari Indira Kaur Devi

Britain's Radio Princess

Maharani's
of Chelsea



She was offered a permanent contract with the Overseas Service Division in 1943 and continued to work for the BBC until 1968.

Princess Indira died in Ibiza, Spain in September 1979.





Lt John Smyth VC



Sepoy Fateh Singh
Sepoy Sucha Singh
Sepoy Ujagar Singh
Sepoy Sunder Singh



Sepoy Ganga Singh
Sepoy Naik Mangal Singh
Sepoy Sarain Singh
Sepoy Harnam Singh
Sepoy Sapooran Singh

Sepoy Lal Singh



Lt John Smyth VC and his Ten Sikh Supermen

John Smyth & His Ten Sikh 'Supermen' >

UK Punjab Heritage Association



0:01 / 6:49



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PUNJAB & WORLD WAR ONE

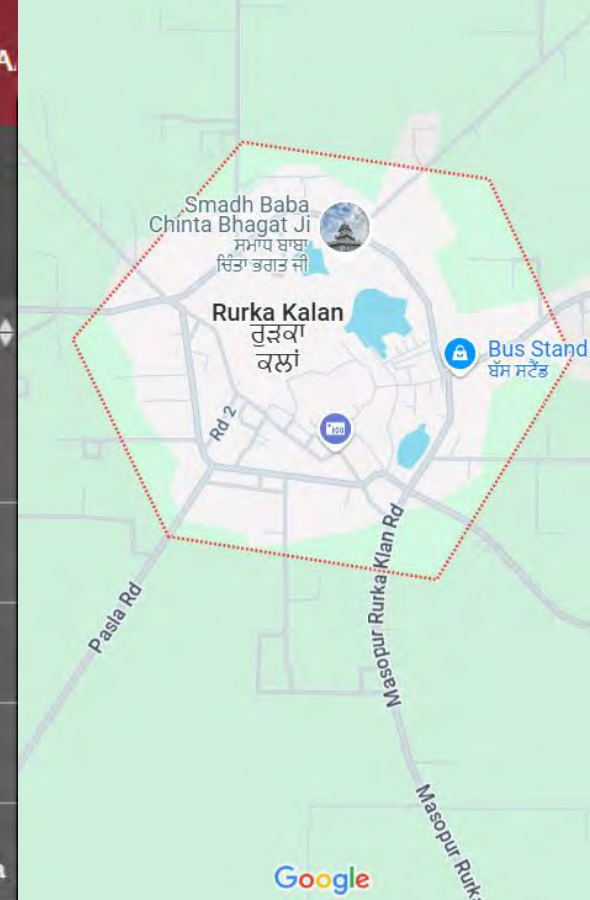
WELCOME TO A COLLABORATION BETWEEN UKPHA AND THE UNIVERSITY OF GREENWICH, ALLOWING USERS TO NAVIGATE A MAP OF THE PUNJAB AND FIND NAMES OF MEN WHO FOUGHT IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR.

VILLAGE NA

Search Results 103 men found ×

Rurka Kalan

Soldier	Father	Village	Regiment
Abdul Rashid	Miran Bakhsh	Rurka Kalan	Regt nop 130, coy no 3
Achal Singh	natha singh	Rurka Kalan	regt no 29
Amar Singh	LABHU	Rurka Kalan	motor driver no 18632
Arjan Singh	Sunder Singh	Rurka Kalan	Regt no 92, coy no 2
ATMA singh	fateh singh	Rurka Kalan	no 10416, mesopotamia



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www.punjabww1.com



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