

Sikh and Indian Australians

Teacher Resource 3 - Sikh Anzac profiles A Sikh Anzac: Case study of Hazara Singh



Hazara Singh

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australianindianhistory.com

Hazara (Haizara) Singh arrived in NSW in 1897 and worked as a hawker until he was able to buy a shop in the country town of Brungle in 1908. He had been a member of the 32nd Sikh Regiment and fought in Afghanistan and Burma. In December 1915 he enlisted in the 13th Infantry Battalion of the Australian Imperial Forces (AIF) and left Sydney on 31 March, 1916 for Egypt in preparation to fight on the Western Front. He joined the British Expeditionary Force in France and was wounded, then sent back to Australia in 1917. He was discharged in June 1917 for being “Overage”, as he was possibly 53 years old by this time (he had put 33 years as his age when he enlisted in 1915 as his date of birth cited in records ranges from 1864 to 1883). Singh did not wear the slouch hat, but instead always wore the traditional turban. (See Image provided)

Hazara Singh re-enlisted in November 1917 but was once more discharged, in June 1918, for being over the age limit. He was welcomed with other Anzacs to Gundagai on 4 December, 1918. The Gundagai Independent newspaper on 16 December included these comments: “the townspeople accorded a welcome home to three returned Anzacs, Corporal Frank Withers and privates Bern. Marshall and Hazara Singh. Mayor Wright

presided at the gathering and gave a “glad hand” to the three Anzacs telling of their exploits at Gallipoli and France.... Pte Hazara Singh told of how all the boys at the front were true comrades - if one had a biscuit he shared it with all his mates. Cheers for the returned Anzacs, the boys still over the seas and the King concluded the gathering.”

Hazara Singh had returned to Australia with his English wife and they settled in Gundagai.

<https://www.myheritage.com/research/record-10450-1005189/gundagai-independent-and-pastoral-agricultural-and-mining-advocate-nsw>

The information above also comes from the following websites, “Australian Indian History, Indians Gallipoli and World War One” and “Australian Sikh Heritage, Sikh Anzacs”.

Student activity

In pairs choose one of the 19 soldiers of Sikh origin listed in the Sikh Heritage website (Type the following into your search engine “Australian Sikh Heritage, Sikh Anzacs”). Study the military records available for the individual. What questions do you have about the reliability and usefulness of these records?

Use the range of records available on the individual soldier to create a one page profile of that particular soldier which includes: the soldier's name, date and location of birth, previous military experience, occupation, date of enlistment and which battalion they entered, when and where they fought during the war, what happened to them (died, injured or discharged when the war concluded).

Be prepared to: i. discuss any problems you encountered or questions you have about conducting this short research activity; ii. display your soldier's profile or share it on Google Docs (or another online site) so the class can compare the profiles to identify any patterns or similarities. (see a suggested template for the profile below, which will enable students to compare their soldier with others).

Possible Template to use for your Sikh Soldier's profile

| | | | |
|---|--|--|--|
| NAME | | | |
| Date and place of birth | | | |
| Previous military experience | | | |
| Occupation at time of enlistment | | | |
| Date of enlistment and Battalion | | | |
| Years and location/s of fighting during the war | | | |
| What happened to the soldier | | | |
| Military medals (if mentioned) | | | |