

PREMIER'S ANZAC SPIRIT SCHOOL PRIZE 2025

PRIVATE SARN SINGH

SERVICE NUMBER: 2255, Served in the 43rd Battalion, A.I.F.



Figure 1 Jordan, C. (2017)

24/01/1883 - 10/06/1917

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The life and service of Private Saran Singh

Saran Singh was born in January 1883 in the village of Jandiala Manjki, Phillaur tehsil, Jalandhar district, Punjab, India¹ (Figure 2). Raised in a Sikh family, he grew up with a strong sense of duty, discipline, and

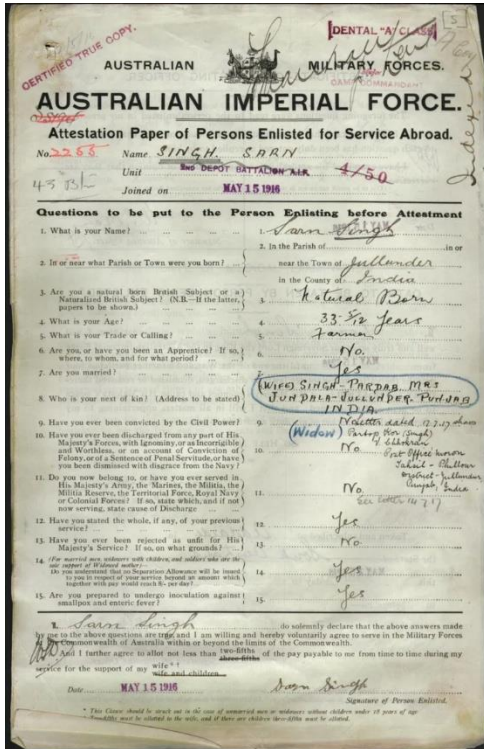


Figure 2 Attestation paper for service abroad circled part is his place of birth and wife's name. (Private (2019))

resistance. From a young age, Singh contributed to his family's farm, where he developed practical skills and a work ethic, which would later support him on the battlefield. His early life was heavily shaped through the values of responsibility and loyalty, which are both central to his Sikh heritage, and the qualities later celebrated in the ANZAC spirit².

In hope of a better life, Singh made the decision to migrate to Australia, leaving behind his wife, Pratap Kaur, his father Kishan Singh Zalidar, and his brother Charan Singh³. In

Australia he settled in a small rural town of Maggie, South Australia, where he worked as a farmer, demonstrating skills of perseverance and adaptability, adjusting to

foreign land, new culture, and a society where migrants often faced prejudices, and systemic racism⁴.

On May 15th, 1916, at age 33 years and 5 months, weighing 136 lbs, standing five feet 3 ¼ inches tall, Sarn Singh made the decision to join the Australian imperial force in Adelaide and to camp Morphettville⁵ (Figure 3).

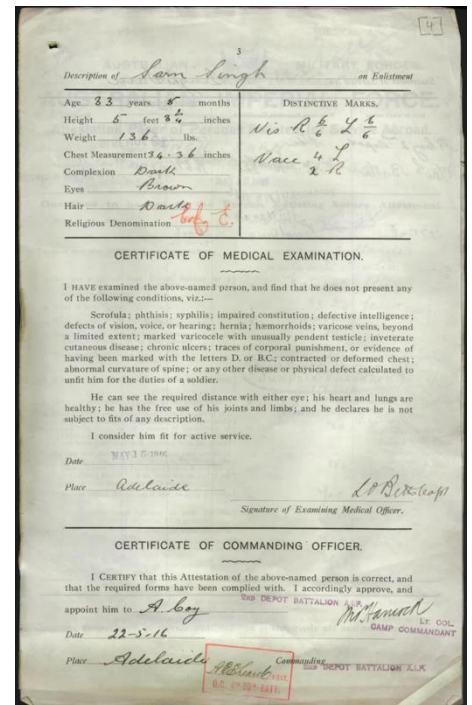


Figure 4 Sarn Singh's medical examination certificate (Private (2019))

¹ (Private, 2019) Australian Sikh Heritage. [online] Australian Sikh Heritage. Available at: <https://www.australiansikhheritage.com/private-sarn-singh>

² Ibid.,

³ Ibid.,

⁴ Sarn SINGH (2025) Vwma.org.au. [Online] [Accessed on 30th August 2025] <https://vwma.org.au/explore/people/124329>.

⁵ (Private, 2019) Australian Sikh Heritage. [online] Australian Sikh Heritage. Available at: <https://www.australiansikhheritage.com/private-sarn-singh>

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This enlistment was more than a duty; it was an act of courage and a statement of belonging at a time when the Australian military was overwhelmingly European⁶. Fewer than five Punjabi men from South Australia are known to have enlisted, making Singh one of the very few Indian soldiers in the first AIF⁷. His enlistment carried profound significance. Under the act of 1909, enlistment was restricted to European heritage, making Singhs enlistment unusual. On 15th June 1916, he was assigned to the 50th Infantry Battalion, where he endured long, marches, and strict discipline to prepare for the harsh realities of trench warfare⁸ (Figure 5).

Unit in which served	Promotions, Reductions, Casualties, etc.	Period of Service in each Rank		Remarks
		From	To	
A Coy 2 nd Depot	None	22-5-16	15 JUN 1916	
4/50 th Batta.	D. 10/13/16	16-6-16	24-11-16	Transferred 24-11-16 - 5/13/16 A.S.
43 Batta	EMBARKED 17/8/16 Ballarat Panaji	25-11-16	27-10-16	

Figure 5 Singh's posting record (Private, 2019).

Despite being far from home and part of an extremely small minority, by volunteering Singh overcame both systemic barriers and personal challenges, he demonstrated perseverance mastering the physical and psychological demands of military life while forging mateship with fellow soldiers, laying the foundation for the ANZAC spirit that would define his service⁹.

⁶ Indian Down Under (2017), 'Details including executor Amon Bux and medal distribution and pension of Singh's estate', The Indian Down Under. Available at: <https://indiandownunder.com.au/2017/07/australia-remembers-sarn-singh-and-nain-singh-sailani-on-their-100-anniversary-of-death-serving-with-a-i-f-in-wwi/>

⁷ Ibid.,

⁸ Australian War Memorial (AWM) 2021, 'Remarks on Defence Act 1909 and enlistment of non-European soldiers', AWM Collection. Available at: <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/P11057272>

⁹ Indian Down Under (2017), 'Details including executor Amon Bux and medal distribution and pension of Singh's estate', The Indian Down Under. Available at: <https://indiandownunder.com.au/2017/07/australia-remembers-sarn-singh-and-nain-singh-sailani-on-their-100-anniversary-of-death-serving-with-a-i-f-in-wwi/>

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Over a month later on August 12th, 1916, Singh embarked from Adelaide onboard The HMAT *Ballarat* (A70), on its way to England¹⁰ (Figure 6). After a long and dangerous voyage, he disembarked at Devonport, England on 30th September 1916, and was transferred to the 43rd battalion at Larkhill, England, on 25th October 1916 (Figure 6).

This period of training in England involved rigorous physical conditioning, drills, and preparation for the harsh realities of trench warfare. For Singh, this training was both physically demanding and culturally isolating¹¹, he

was doing this for a nation, which was not his own.

On 25th November 1916, Singh

proceeded overseas to France,

disembarking at Le Havre (Figure

6). By December he was actively

engaged in the Western front

operations, facing harsh trench

conditions, artillery

bombardments, and the constant

threat of enemy fire¹² (Figure 6). In early 1917, Singh experienced illness common to trench soldiers, he was

admitted to the field hospital on 2nd February 1917 and later transferred to the 9th field ambulance for treatment

Date	From when received	Notes	Place of Casualty	Date of Casualty	Remarks
		A 70. "Ballarat", Embarked	Adelaide	12.8.16	
		Disembarked	Devonport	30.9.16	
30.9.16	13th T.B.	Marched to	Godford	30.9.16	
25.10.16	B213-43rd Bn	Taken on Strength 43rd Bn.	England	25.10.16	FR 1619 EG 2375149E
25.11.16	do.	Proceeded Overseas, France	Stamton	25.11.16	FR 1438 EG 2375149E
2.2.17	do.	To Hospital Sick.	Field	30.1.17	C22/17.D06/587
4.2.17	9th F. Amb.	Adm. (Inflamed foot)	"	30.1.17	AK 850/23
"	do.	To Duty	"	31.1.17	AK 850/23
2.2.17	B213-43rd Bn.	Rejoined Battalion,	"	31.1.17	C22/17.D06/587
11.6.17	8th D.H.Q.	Killed in Action,	"	10.6.17	AT13002.V1261
15.6.17	B213-43rd Bn.	Killed in Action,	"	10.6.17	C22/17 R-23/2500

Signature of Officer: J. Holloway

Figure 6 Singhs casualty form active services record (Private, 2019).

¹⁰ Australian War Memorial (AWM) 2021, 'Collection entry – Private Sarn Singh', AWM Collection. Available at: <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/P11057272>

¹¹ Jordan, cris (2017) *Sarn Singh and Nain Singh Sailani on their 100 Anniversary of Death serving with A.I.F. in WWI*. Australian Indian Hi. [Online] <https://www.australianindianhistory.com/post/sarn-singh-and-nain-singh-sailani-on-their-100-anniversary-of-death-serving-with-a-i-f-in-wwi>.

¹² Australian Indian Historical Society Inc. (2013), 'Image credit: Crystal Jordan', Australian Indian Historical Society. Available at: <https://www.theaustraliatoday.com.au/do-you-know-two-hindu-indian-australian-anzac-soldiers-made-the-first-supreme-sacrifice-106-years-ago/>

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experience of offensive operations¹⁹. Singhs first deployment was on 7th June 1917, when he moved to St Andrew’s drive to commence attacks on Messines Ridge, providing vital support as part of the carrying party for the 9th Brigade. His unit relieved the 43rd battalion and participated in assaults on enemy position for 2200 hours, demonstrating bravery under intense enemy fire²⁰.

Tragically on 10th June 1917, during the fighting near Messines Ridge, Belgium, private Sarn Singh was killed in action (Figure 10). He was one of many South Australians who did not return home, and among very few Sikhs to fall while serving with the AIF. He has no known

43rd BATTALION A.I.F. Sarn Singh D 25904 Army Form B. 103. 2255

Casualty Form - Active Service.

Regiment or Corp. 43rd Bn. Rank. P. Name. SARN SINGH (Sikhs)

Regimental No. 2255. Enlisted (a) 18/5/16. Terms of Service (a) Service reckons from (a) 18/5/16.

Date of promotion to present rank. Date of appointment to lance rank. Numerical position on roll of N.C.Os.

Extended. Re-engaged. Qualification (b).

Report Date	From whom received	Record of promotions, reductions, transfers, casualties, etc., during active service, as reported on Army Form B. 213, Army Form A. 31, or in other official documents. The authority to be quoted in each case.	Place	Date	Remarks taken from Army Form B. 213, Army Form A. 31, or other official documents.
12/8/16		Embarked from Adelaide SA on 16th 2nd Ballarat A No.			
30/9/16		Disembarked at Leuport & transferred to Looford arriving 6pm 30/9/16			
30.9.16	13th Bn	Moved in.	Looford.	30.9.16	
25 OCT 1916	13th Bn	TAKEN ON STRENGTH	43rd Bn Coy	25 OCT 1916	YR 1002/51078
25 NOV 1916	13th Bn	PROCEEDED OVERSEAS FRANCE	Hampton	25 NOV 1916	YR 1499
2.2.17	13th Bn	To hoop	Seel	30.11.17	DO 3812712 F
4.2.17	13th Bn	admn. diploma for	do	30.11.17	DO 4167
2.2.17	13th Bn	To duty	do	31.1.17	DO 4167
2.2.17	13th Bn	Rejoined Bn	do	31.1.17	DO 4167

(a) In the case of a man who has re-engaged for, or enlisted into Section D, Army Reserve, particulars of such re-engagement or enlistment will be entered.
 (b) e.g., Signaller, Shooting Smith, etc., etc., also special qualifications in technical Corps duties.

P.T.O.

Figure 8 Original Casualty form active services record (Private, 2019).

¹⁹ SBS Punjabi. (2022). *Know the Story of Private Sarn Singh – Australian Sikh Heritage*.

<https://www.sbs.com.au/language/punjabi/en/podcast-episode/know-the-story-of-private-sarn-singh-australian-sikh-heritage/kr88iyy7>

²⁰ Australian War Memorial (AWM) 2021, 'Remarks on Defence Act 1909 and enlistment of non-European soldiers', AWM Collection. Available at: <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/P11057272>

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grave, like many others that died during the war, however he has a memorial in the Messines Ridge British Cemetery²¹ (Figure 9). Today, Singh's memory lives on in both the Sikh community and broader Australian



Figure 9 Sarn Singhs memorial (Private, 2019)

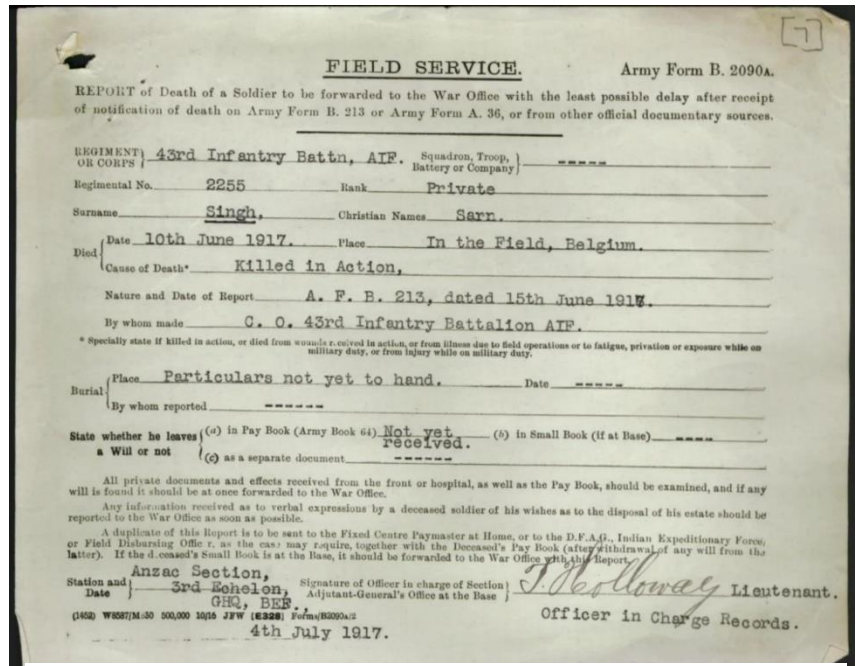


Figure 10 Original death report of Private Sarn Sing (Private, 2019).

remembrance. Modern photographs show Sikh Australians laying wreaths at his grave in Belgium and on ANZAC day ceremonies in

Australia (Figure 11) (Figure 9) (Figure 12)²². His story bridges two

identities; as a Sikh son of Punjab, and as a South Australian soldier who gave his life on the western front and his

name lives on at the Menin Gate Memorial in Belgium, the

National War memorial in Adelaide, and the roll of honour

in Canberra (Figure 13)²³. After his death, Singh's widow,



Figure 11. Wreath laying ceremony invitation (Private, 2019).

²¹ (Private, 2019) Australian Sikh Heritage. [online] Australian Sikh Heritage. Available at: <https://www.austliansikhheritage.com/private-sarn-singh>

²² Ibid.,

²³ Australian Indian Historical Society Inc. (2013), 'Image credit: Crystal Jordan', Australian Indian Historical Society. Available at: <https://www.theaustraliatoday.com.au/do-you-know-two-hindu-indian-australian-anzac-soldiers-made-the-first-supreme-sacrifice-106-years-ago/>

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Figure 12. Wreath laying ceremony (Private, 2019)



Figure 13 Singh S. (private Sarn Singhs) on the role of honour in Canberra panel 137. (Private, 2019)

Pratap Kaur received the British war medal and victory medal in 1922

(Figure 14)²⁴.

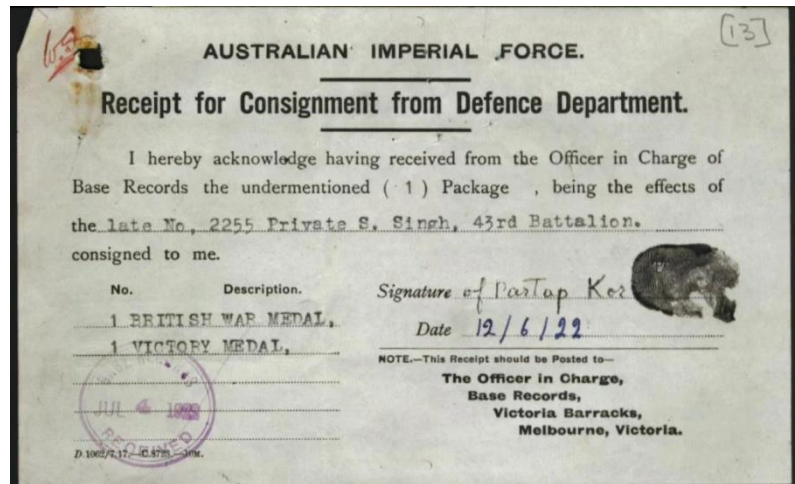


Figure 14 Receipt for consignment from defence department. Original records of Pratap Kaur receiving the medals (Private, 2019).



Figure 15 The man in this photo is Hartinder Singh Johal, the Grand Nephew of Sarn Singh Johal (Private, 2019)

Before leaving for war, Singh had drafted a will leaving all his savings, to his brother, Charn Singh, (Figure 16)²⁵, however, Pratap Kaur discovered that Charn, and her father in law, were not willing to support her, and so she wrote a letter to the authorities stating that ‘ it

would have been much better if I might have died before my husband’

(Figure 18-19)²⁶.

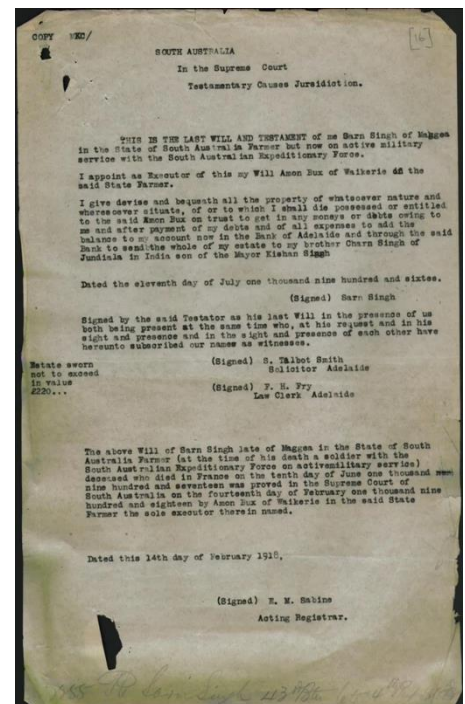


Figure 16 Sarn Singhs will (Private, 2019).

²⁴ Australian Imperial Force (1917) 43rd Battalion Unit War Diary, May–June 1917. Canberra: Australian War Memorial, AWM4 23/60/10.

²⁵ (Private, 2019) Australian Sikh Heritage. [online] Australian Sikh Heritage. Available at: <https://www.australiansikhheritage.com/private-sarn-singh>

²⁶ Australian Sikh Heritage (n.d.), 'Information on Adelaide centenary commemoration of Pte Sarn Singh, including Government House reception', Australian Sikh Heritage. Available at: <https://www.australiansikhheritage.com/100th-anniversary-of-private-sarn-singh>

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Her words reveal the devastating toll, of war, not only on soldiers but also on the families left behind. Yet, despite her suffering, the Australian authorities did not abandon her. After reviewing her case they granted her a war pension, which ensured she had the financial support to continue her life after Singh's death (Figure 17)²⁷. Though her grief remained, this recognition meant she was not forgotten by the nation her husband had died to serve. In this way, Pratap Kaur's story, like Singh's, reflects the enduring ANZAC spirit; sacrifice, loss, and the bonds of duty that extend beyond the battlefield. His legacy is one not just of courage in war, but of resilience in the face of hardship, carried forward by those who love him.

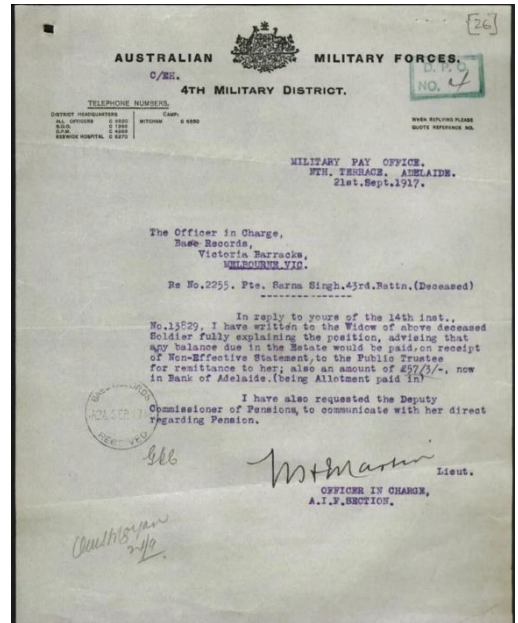


Figure 17 war pension request record (Private, 2019).

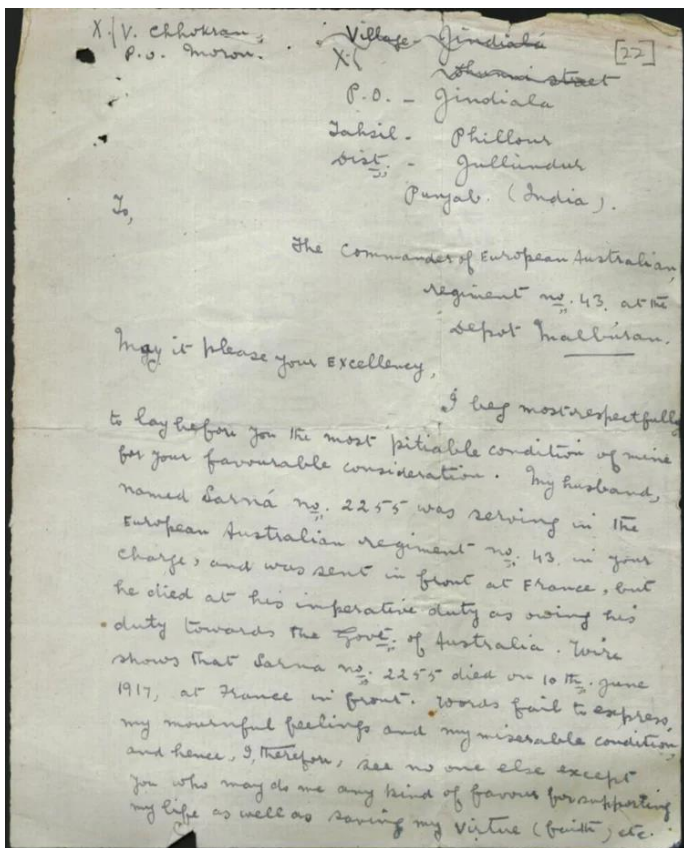


Figure 18 Pratap Kaur's letter (Private, 2019) Highlighted part is part quoted in the paragraph.

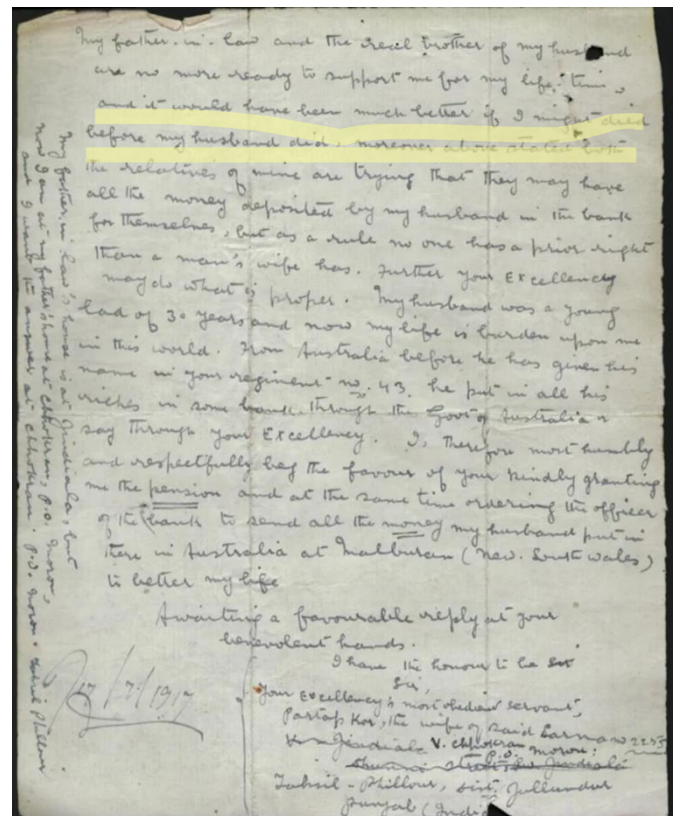


Figure 18 Pratap Kaur's Letter (Private, 2019).

²⁷ (Private, 2019) Australian Sikh Heritage. [online] Australian Sikh Heritage. Available at: <https://www.australiansikhheritage.com/private-sarn-singh>

PREMIER'S ANZAC SPIRIT SCHOOL PRIZE 2025**ANZAC SPIRIT:**

Private Sarn Singh's service in World War I reflects the ANZAC spirit in a very profound way. Although he was one of very few Punjabi men in the Australian Imperial Force (AIF), his journey shows qualities of both courage and perseverance, which were essential to the soldiers of the 43rd battalion on the western front.

Singh displayed remarkable courage from the moment he left home, and enlisted in Adelaide on 15th May 1916, despite being one of only five Punjabi Indians, known to serve in the AIF²⁸. Volunteering in the face of prejudice and embarking on HMAT Ballarat in August 1916 was an act of bravery itself, but his courage was most evident during the battle of Messines. This courage reached its peak during the battle of Messines, where Singh was killed on 10th June 1917. His determination to stand alongside his comrades in the face of death exemplifies the fearless commitment, and courage.

His decision to volunteer, leave his home, and embark on HMAT *Ballarat* in August 1916 showed a willingness to sacrifice for a cause greater than himself. This courage reached its peak during the Battle of Messines, where Singh was killed on 10th June 1917. His determination to stand alongside his mates in the face of death exemplifies the fearless commitment at the heart of the ANZAC spirit.

Alongside courage, Singh showed perseverance, in February 1917, he was admitted to the 9th field ambulance with inflamed feet, however with great persistence and courage returned back to duty only three days later²⁹. His battalion diary further shows the strain he endured; in May 1917, Singh marched for days during training exercises and then manned the frontline near the river Lys, before returning to billets at Pont Nieppe³⁰. Despite the exhaustion, he pressed on until the final push at Messines. His determination to keep serving, despite illness, marches, and extreme battle conditions, reflects the perseverance and resilience central to the ANZAC spirit.

WORD COUNT: 1496

²⁸ Australian Sikh Heritage (n.d.), 'Private Sarn Singh', Australian Sikh Heritage. Available at: <https://www.australiansikhheritage.com/private-sarn-singh>

²⁹ Australian War Memorial (AWM) 2021, Private Sarn Singh, Australian War Memorial, Canberra. Available at: <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/P11057272>

³⁰ Australian Imperial Force (1917) *43rd Battalion Unit War Diary, May–June 1917*. Canberra: Australian War Memorial, AWM4 23/60/10.

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Appendix

13829 14th September 7

D. P. M.
4th Military District.

The following inset copy of a communication from the wife and legal next-of-kin of the late No. 2255 Private S. Singh, 43rd Battalion, is referred for favor of attention and reply to enquirer direct. She should also be advised in respect to her claim to consideration under the War Pensions Act, and if eligible, the necessary forms forwarded for application.

"I beg most respectfully to lay before you the most pitiable condition of mine for your favourable consideration. My husband, named Sarna, No. 2255 was serving in the European Australian Regiment No. 43 in your charge, and was sent in front at France, but he died at his imperative duty as owing his duty towards the Govt. of Australia. Wire shows that Sarna No. 2255 died on 10th June 1917 at France in front. Words fail to express my mournful feelings and my miserable condition, and hence, I therefore see no one else except you who may do me any kind of favour for supporting my life as well as saving my virtue (faith) etc.. My father-in-law and the real brother of my husband are no more ready to support me for my lifetime, and it would have been much better if I might died before my husband did. Moreover above stated both the relatives of mine are trying that they may have all the money deposited by my husband that they may themselves, but as a rule no one has a prior right than a man's wife has. Further your Excellency may do what is proper. My husband was a young lad of 30 years and now my life is burden upon me in this world. From Australia before he has given his name in your regiment No.43. He put in all his riches in some bank through the Government of Australia, or say through your Excellency. I therefore most humbly and respectfully beg the favour of your kindly granting me the pension and at the same time ordering the officer of the bank to send all the money my husband put in there in Australia at Malbunan (New South Wales) to better my life.
Awaiting a favourable reply at your benevolent hands.

(sgd) Partop Kor (Singh)
V. Chokran,
Post Office Moron,
Tahsil - Phillour,
District - Jullundur,
Punjab, INDIA.

Major.
Officer i/o Base Records.

To The Secretary
The Defence Committee
Mellorville

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE
557/162

Sir,
The Defence Bom boy speak to me your cablegram informing me the death of my son Sarn Singh a p/b no 2255 in Coy C of 43rd Battalion Aust. Imp. force on Active service abroad, though I am informed that my son was killed in action on the 10th of June 1917. I beg you to be good enough & inform me the detail of it, whether he died of wounds in any Hospital or was killed in the front, and whether or not his dead body was found, further I beg you to kindly inform me as to how his personal effects i.e. articles belonging to him were disposed of, & what amount on account of pay etc is due to him, He after his enlistment in the said Battalion informed me by letter that he has deposited all his money in the bank, I therefore beg you to kindly inform me the name of the Bank in which he deposited his money & what amount, and also kindly inform me whose name he had noted as his heir

RECEIVED
11 SEP 17
THE DEFENSE

Appendix 2: Letter from Pratap Kaur requesting for war pension (Private 2019).

Appendix 1 Kishan Singhs (Sarn Singhs father) letter to the Australian authorities requesting for Sarn Singh belongings and will (Private, 2019).



Appendix 3 British war (left) and victory medal (right), that were given to Pratap Kaur (Private, 2019)

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Whether his wife's name or his
 bested name,
 Also do me the favours by intimating
 what amount of pension will
 be payable and to whom and
 where.
 I hope you will kindly excuse
 me the in-convenience caused to
 you by this humble petition of
 mine and that you will kindly
 favour me with a reply.

Shree to Eeman
 Swi
 Your most obedt
 Servant
 Kishan Singh
 Zaildar
 O Jindiala
 Distt Jullundur
 Punjab India

Appendix 6 Kishan Singhs (Sarn Singhs father) letter to the Australian authorities requesting for Sarn Singh belongings and will (Private, 2019).

In Memory of
 Private
Sarn Singh
 2255, 43rd Bn., Australian Infantry, A.I.F. who died on 10 June 1917

Remembered with Honour
 Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial

Commemorated in perpetuity by
 the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

Appendix 4 Memorial certificate of Sarn Singh (Private, 2019).

The Secretary,
 The Prime Minister's Department. 557/1/179. [18]

Transmitting herewith a copy of a despatch from the Viceroy of India relating to the effects of the late No.2255 Suran Singh, 43rd Battalion, Australian Imperial Forces. In this connection I desire to invite attention to my memorandum of the 18th September forwarding a letter from Mrs. Pratap Kaur applying for a pension on account of the death of her husband, who appears to be identical with the man referred to in the despatch from the Viceroy.

By direction. Official Secretary to
 H.E. the Governor-General.

The Acting Secretary,
 Department of Defence.

Referred by direction, for favor of attention. I enclose copy of a letter sent to Mrs.P.Kor. Secretary, Prime Ministers, Dept
 4/12/17.

JML/VD. Finance Member.

Referred in respect to financial matters. No personal effects have so far come to hand, but anything received would be transmitted to deceased's legal next-of-kin, his wife.

Melbourne Major.
 Officer i/c Base Records.
 21/12/17.

Appendix 5. Letter from the secretary, from the prime minister's department, to send a letter to Pratap Kaur, for a pension on account of Sarn Singhs death (Private, 2019).

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Transferred to **D** D 30635

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.

No. 2255
 Rank Pvt Name SINGH S
 Unit 43rd Battalion

LIST. **3rd Casualty** Killed in Action 10/6/17 C.S.D. 15279232 dated London 25/6/17

"WHERE THE AUSTRALIANS REST."
 Passport sent to Mr. Parker, New Singh, 10-5-22 Lds

1914/15 STAR
BRITISH WAR MEDAL D/45
VICTORY MEDAL D/45

DATE	A. F. L. 103 Received	PURPORT.	A. F. B. 2090A Received.	REF. NO.
28/6/17		M.C. 4 ADVISED, KILLED IN ACTION. 10/6/17 "General" Bombay adv. do "		
JUL 1917		COPY MADE FOR WAR PENSIONS		
23 7 17		Crown R.O. authority for effect		
30 7 17		F. account sent.		
12 7 17		Father asking particulars re death. Effect Def. by Pension		
		CONFIRMATION RECEIVED OF		
		Cable No. <u>280/1527/100/7/139/8</u> 2/7/17		
2.5.18		Copy of Will from D.P.M. No. 29556		
		Circular U.R.M. 46/1003 & Booklet re Graves despatched. 6/1/20 JCS		
28.4.22		BRITISH WAR MEDAL to <u>Pratap Kaur</u> M.C.B.R.M. 54788 5/4/22		
		VICTORY MEDAL inscribed and issued by Admiralty House. P.R.M. 59/1485		

WAR HISTORY (written vertically on the left)

DEX (written vertically on the left)

MEMORIAL SCROLL
 Issd. in
 England
 Home Roll
 325875

Appendix 7, original records form the Australian Imperial force, with stamp that gives evidence that Pratap Kaur, in the end did receive pension (Private, 2019).

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THE ADVERTISER, ADELAIDE,

SATURDAY, JULY 7, 1917.

THE ROLL OF HONOR.**"Faithful Unto Death."****319th CASUALTY LIST****ISSUED 9 P.M. FRIDAY.****SOUTH AUSTRALIA.**

Killed in Action.

1882. Pte. H. P. McAULIFFE, Port Augusta (June 9).
 1609. Pte. R. E. SANDERS, England (June 7 or 9).
 2100. Pte. H. P. HINDMARSH, Hilton (June 7 or 9).
 2261. Pte. J. E. H. N. St. CLAIRE, Adelaide (June 11).
 675. Pte. C. S. GRAVES, Mile-End (June 10).
 782. Pte. D. J. JACKSON, Kapunda (June 10).
 2107. Pte. J. KELLY, Adelaide (June 10).
 2255. Pte. SARN SINGH, India (June 10).
 2250. Pte. G. T. SAYNER, Wilmington (June 10).
 760. Pte. L. J. COFFEY, Parkside (June 10).
 780. Pte. C. P. GIBB, Johnburg (June 10).

Appendix 8 319th Casualty list (Private, 2019).

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Reference List

1. Australian Indian Historical Society Inc. (2013) *Image credit: Crystal Jordan*. Australian Indian Historical Society. Available at: <https://www.theaustraliatoday.com.au/do-you-know-two-hindu-indian-australian-anzac-soldiers-made-the-first-supreme-sacrifice-106-years-ago/> (Accessed: 12 June 2025).
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PREMIER'S ANZAC SPIRIT SCHOOL PRIZE 2025**PART B. REFLECTION**

When I first heard about the Premiers ANZAC spirit prize, I instantly knew that I wanted to research on someone whose story is little known, who overcame significant obstacles to serve, and who deserves greater recognition. In order to construct the story of Private Sarn Singh, I used a combination of both primary and secondary sources to gather reliable information about his life and service. The most important website was the Sikh heritage website, which provided official original military information such as enlistment details, medical examinations, battalion transfers, his will and correspondence after his death. These documents were created by multiple authors at different times, such as enlistment officers in Adelaide, medical staff, battalion clerks, and later government officials handling pensions and medals. This made the source very valuable, as it combined factual military data with insight into the personal struggles of Singh's widow after his death. Its reliability lies in being based on official original records; however, the interpretations require care as some sections reflect administrative prioritise rather than Singh own voice.

The second source I consulted was the Virtual War Memorial Australia (VWMA). Unlike the detailed service papers from the first source, it summarised his service history, unit details, and enlistment, drawing on official documents like the National Archives of Australia (NAA) files and Australian war memorial records. Its purpose was to inform a wide audience about Singh role, ensuring his memory is preserved. While it is reliable in terms of factual accuracy, it only briefly shares his story, it lacks the nuance of primary documents, and the problems Pratap Kaur had to deal with after. However, it was highly useful in cross checking details and confirming the timeline of his service.

The third source I used was a photograph of Sikh Australians commemorating Singh at ANZAC day ceremonies and his grave in Belgium. This modern source reflects the ongoing remembrance of Singh within both the Sikh community and broader Australian society. Its purpose was to commemorate and educate, providing visual evidence of how Singh legacy is honoured today. Unlike the first two sources this one is more symbolic and interpretive, it is led reliable for factual details about Singh life but highly relevant for sowing how his story continues to resonate and how his dual identity, as a Sikh son and as a south Australian soldier is remembered. Together, these three sources complemented one another. The Sikh heritage records provided factual details about Singh service, and life for his family after, the VWMA entry contextualised his story for a broader audience, and the commemorative photograph demonstrated his legacy today. Using sources with different perspectives and purpose also allowed me to check reliability by comparing information. For instance, I was able to align significant dates from VWMA and Sikh heritage records, to make sure that the information was correct. By gathering evidence from these sources, I was able to construct a narrative that not only described Singh military service but also honoured his memory as part of both Sikh and Australian history.

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