

The following presentation was given at the inaugural Vaisakhi Meet and Greet in 2012 held at Gurdwara Nanaksar by Ranjeet Singh Shahi.

It depicts a brief portrait of Sikh settlement and involvement with the city of Southampton and the county of Hampshire.

Please note that R S Shahi holds the copyright for the map depicting Sikh residences from 1973-75 on page 17 of this presentation

# The Sikhs in Southampton:

Our City, Our History

Ranjeet Singh Shahi

# Overview

1. The First Sikh
2. Queen Victoria's Durbar
3. The Sikhs of Netley
4. The First World War
5. The Rebel
6. The 1950s – 1980s
7. The Sikhs of Southampton

# 1. The First Sikh



- May 1854 – Maharaja Duleep Singh arrives in Southampton.

## 2. Queen Victoria's Durbar



- 1891 – The ‘Durbar Room’ is commissioned.
- Queen Victoria wanted a ‘flavour of India’
- Lockwood Kipling sends a talented student of his to design this room.



## 2. Queen Victoria's Durbar



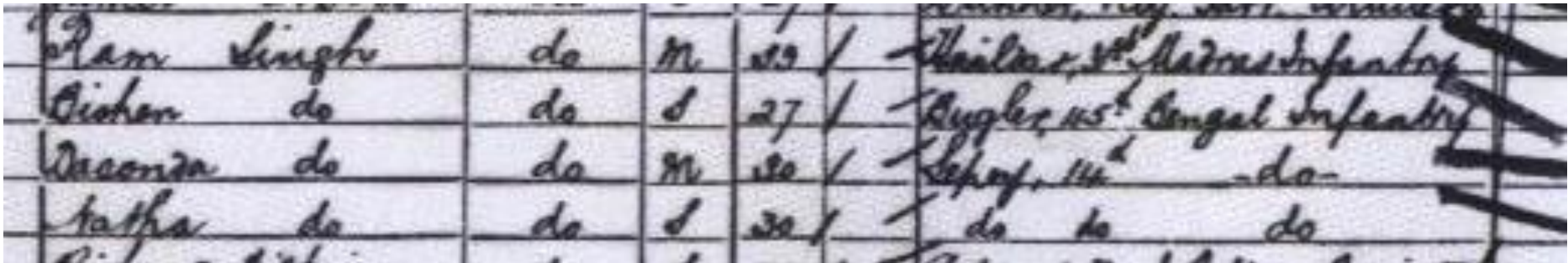
- Ram Singh
- Spends two years working in Britain designing, making and building.

## 2. Queen Victoria's Durbar



- Also designed:  
Khalsa College, Amritsar  
Chiefs College, Lahore  
Lahore Museum  
College of Agriculture,  
Lyallpur

### 3. The Sikhs of Netley



|           |    |   |    |   |                                           |
|-----------|----|---|----|---|-------------------------------------------|
| Ram Singh | do | M | 33 | / | Thailor, 31 <sup>st</sup> Madras Infantry |
| Bishan do | do | S | 27 | / | Bugler, 45 <sup>th</sup> Bengal Infantry  |
| Dacoda do | do | M | 30 | / | Sepoy, 14 <sup>th</sup> -do-              |
| Katha do  | do | S | 30 | / | do do do                                  |

- 1901 Census
- 4 Sikhs listed
  - 45<sup>th</sup> Bengal Infantry (Rattray's Sikhs)
  - 31<sup>st</sup> Madras Infantry
  - 14<sup>th</sup> Bengal Infantry (Ferozepore)

### 3. The Sikhs of Netley



- 1894 – Southampton becomes HQ for the Indian Troop Service (Ships), receiving wounded from Sudan, North West Frontier<sup>1</sup>



1. Hoare. P. (2001). **Spike Island: The Memory of a Military Hospital**. London: Fourth Estate p156

## 4. The First World War



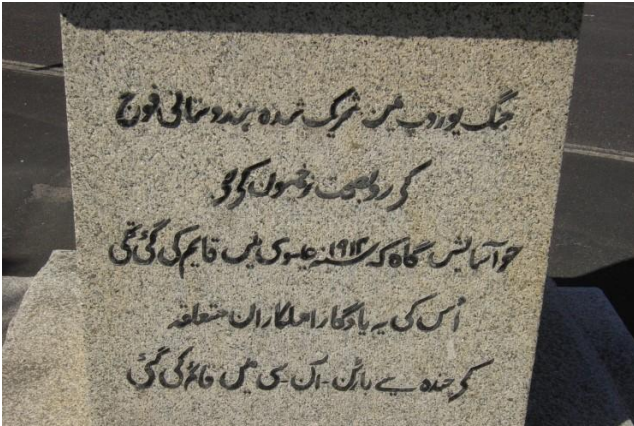
- 1914 – Indian Soldiers training camp set up in Ashurst and Brockenhurst
- 1915 – Indian hospital set up in Barton-on-Sea

# 4. The First World War



105M93/1/35 - Sikh Soldiers at New Milton train station

## 4. The First World War



- Memorials to Indian soldiers set up at Barton-on-Sea and Patcham, Brighton



## 5. The Rebel



# 5. The Rebel



- July 1939 – 12 Manchester St, working at Lindsay Parkinson and Co, as a carpenter.<sup>1</sup>
- Less than a year later, March 13<sup>th</sup> 1940, Udham Singh, kills former Lieutenant-Governor of Punjab

1. Daily Mirror (1940). Assassin Shoots Peers, Knights in London. March 14<sup>th</sup> 1940

## 6. 1940s – 1980s



- A 'Ron Singh' appears in 1939 Kelly's Directory living at 86 Graham Road
- Sikhs arrive in great numbers in 1950s and 60s
- 'Kabul Singh' appears in 1951 Kelly's Directory living at 82 Princes Street

## 6. 1940's – 1980's



- First Gurdwara (Sikh place of worship) established formally at No. 8 Clovelly Rd in 1966

## 6. 1940's – 1980's



## 6. 1940's – 1980's



- Schools – Non English Speaking Pupils
- 1977  
Mount Pleasant First (90%)  
Mount Pleasant Middle (90%)

## 6. 1940s – 1980s



- Recruitment drives in India talk of a Commonwealth of Nations
- 1970s racism spearheaded by National Front leads to clashes in Southall (1979). Affects 2<sup>nd</sup> Generation, leading to questioning of identity.



# 7. Sikhs of Southampton



- 2799 in Southampton  
(581 in Eastleigh, 271 in Test Valley)
- Forming 1.3% of total pop
- 32% live in Bevois Ward  
where they form 9% of the  
Wards population

THANK YOU