neuve chapelle indian cemetery

overview

This memorial commemorates 4,742 Indian soldiers with no known graves, who fell in battle while fighting for the British Indian Army in the First World War. The location of the memorial was chosen because of the participation by Indian troops at the **Battle of Neuve Chapelle**.

The memorial was unveiled in 1927. Attending the ceremony was a contingent of troops from India to represent the units that fought in France, including Sikhs, Dogras, and Garhwalis.

Also present at the unveiling ceremony was Marshal Ferdinand Foch, who gave a speech in French:

"Return to your homes in the distant, sun-bathed East and proclaim how your countrymen drenched with their blood the cold northern land of France and Flanders, how they delivered it by their ardent spirit from the firm grip of a determined enemy; tell all India that we shall watch over their graves with the devotion due to all our dead. We shall cherish above all the memory of their example. They showed us the way, they made the first steps towards the final victory".

gabar singh negi: vc recipient

Commemorated here is Gabar Singh Negi, who came from the Uttarakhand of India. He was awarded the Victoria Cross for bravery after his death. According to the London Gazette:

"For most conspicuous bravery on 10th March, 1915, at Neuve Chapelle. During our attack on the German position he was one of a bayonet party with bombs who entered their main trench, and was the first man to go round each traverse, driving back the enemy until they were eventually forced to surrender. He was killed during this engagement".

In total, six Indian soldiers received the Victoria Cross, the highest award for gallantry for soldiers of the British Empire.