

Zorawar Singh and Fateh Singh

The brave and fearless Sikhs of guru [Gobind Singh](#) were engaged for months together in a prolonged battle with the Mughal army outside the fort of Anandpur. Emperor Aurungzeb sent a



message on Oath that if the Guru and his Sikhs left the fort they would be allowed to go wherever they please.

Guru Gobind Singh had his doubts, but on being persuaded by his devoted Sikhs, he reluctantly agreed to leave the fort. However it happened exactly as the Guru had apprehended. As soon as Sikhs came out of the fort the Mughal Army pounced upon them. A fierce battle was fought on the banks of Sirsa River. The Valiant Sikhs faced the enemy with unparalleled courage. Each one of them killed quite a few Moghul soldiers before sacrificing himself.

In the dust and din of battle, members of the family of Guru Gobind Singh got separated from each other. The two younger sons Sahibzada Zorawar Singh and Sahibzada Fateh Singh, proceeded along with Guruji's revered



old mother Mata Gujri Ji. They passed through thick forests and difficult terrains. They came across wild animals saw lions and snakes on the way but the brave Sahibzadas walked on and on fearlessly in the company of their grand mother, reciting the holy psalms of their Gurus. The grand mother related to them stories

from Sikh History. They were thus able to cover journey comfortably.

The two elder brothers, Sahibzada Ajit Singh and Sahibzada Jujhar Singh, accompanied their father Guru Gobind Singh. After Crossing Sirsa river, they stayed for the night at Roper and reached the Chamkaur Fort early next morning. After an arduous journey Mata Gujri Ji along with the two Sahibzadas, reached the hut of a Muslim water carrier, Kuma. On seeing Mataji he rushed out and, with folded hands, requested Mataji to bless his humble cottage by staying therein. Mataji was pleased with his



devotion. Since it was getting dark, she decided to halt there for the night.

On getting duet the old Guru's domestic servant, Gangu arrived the next morning. He requested Mataji to go with him to his village. He assured her that their whereabouts will not be known to the Emperor's officials and they would be quite safe there. Mataji was a little reluctant but on his persistent requests she agreed. After getting their luggage loaded on a pony, all of them set out for his village. The two Sahibzadas went walking along with their grand mother. Off and on, they would enquire about their father and the elder brothers, Sahibzadas Ajit Singh and Jujhar Singh.

After trekking the whole day, they reached village Kheri in the evening. On arrival in Gangu's house Mataji put her bag and baggage in a corner of one of the rooms. Sahibzadas Zorowar Singh and Fateh Singh changed their clothes and set their beddings, recited the holy evening prayer and went to sleep in their grand-mother's embrace.

At midnight Gangu quietly stole into their room, looked at Mataji who was resting in her bed with her eyes shut. Presuming that she was fast asleep, he bent down, put his hands into the bag, removed the gold coins and slipped out of the room. Mataji heard the sound of footsteps but she just slept over it and continued resting as usual. When she got up the next morning, she asked Gangu, "Our things are lying scattered about, I hope the outer door was closed. Where are the-gold coins?" Gangu just looked blank. Without uttering a word he rushed out of the house and started shouting for help to trace the thief. Mataji called him in and asked him not to make unnecessary fuss. Gangu, however, persisted in saying that the thief must be found out. Mataji tried to pacify him and asked him to keep the gold coins if he so wished. At this Gangu flew into rage, "So you are suspecting me. How ungrateful of you. I have given you refuge and this is the reward I get." Mata Gujri made every effort to persuade him to see reason. Gangu, however, would not listen to any advice. He left his house and headed straight for the Police station at Morinda. On arrival at Morinda, he went straight to the Kotwal. After paying his respects he told him that he desired to convey some confidential information. On an enquiry by the Kotwal, Gangu confided to him in a low voice that Guru

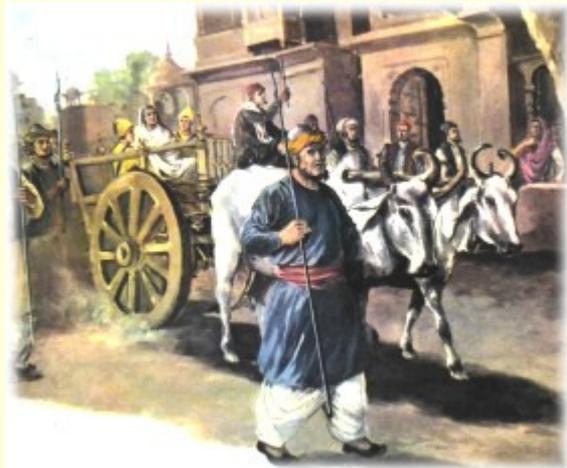
Gobind Singh's mother and his two young sons were hiding in his house. The Kotwal was pleased to get this news. He called his constables and sent them along with Gangu to his house to arrest them.

When the constables reached Gangu's house, some neighbours peeped out. The constables ran to the back of the house and were surprised to see Mata Gurji ji and the two Sahibzadas sitting unconcerned. They apprised them of the Kotwal's orders to arrest them. Mata Gujri ji embraced the two Sahibzadas who were ready to go. Sahibzada Zorawar singh and Sahibzada Fateh Singh and Mata Gujri ji accompanied the constables. A small crowd had collected outside the house Ganga was standing aside with downcast eyes. People were cursing him for his dishonesty and betrayal. A woman remarked "How trecherous! He brought them to his house and then went and informed the authorities". They were wondering why the young innocent boys and respected old lady were being escorted to the police station. They were impressed by the divine looks and the graceful bearing of Mata ji.

On arrival at the police station Mata Gujri ji and the two Sahibzadas were lodged in the Kotwali for the night. Both brothers listened to the tales of bravery of the followers of Guru Nanak, story of the unique martyrdom of Guru Arjun Dev and Guru Tegh Bahadur from their dear and affectionate grand mother. All three joined in reciting the sacred evening Sikh prayer, *Rahras* and *Kirtan Sohila* - before going to bed. Early next morning

they were taken in a bullock cart to Bassi police station. News of their arrest had spread far and wide. Large crowds collected

everywhere on the way. People were surprised that the young innocent boys had been put under arrest along with their venerable grand mother. The fearless looks of the Sahibzadas aroused their admiration and they observed, "They are the brave sons of their brave father". The remarks of the on-lookers made the constables



panicky and they started walking fast. The cart-driver also whipped the bullocks so that they could reach Sirhind quickly. On arrival at Sirhind, they were lodged for the night in a cold room in the tower. At a great risk to his life,

one of the devotees of Guru, Bhai Moti managed to send milk for Mataji and the Sahibzadas. Sahibzada Zorawar Singh and Fateh Singh listened to episodes from Sikh History related to them by their grand-mother. On hearing about the ideals set by the Gurus the two Sahibzadas assured

Mata Gujri ji that they would stand by their faith and follow in the foot steps of their illustrious father. Mataji was pleased to hear this and admired her grand children's courage and firm determination.



Next morning the police constables appeared again and told Mataji that they had orders for taking the two boys to the Nawab's court. On an enquiry by Mataji as to why they were called there, they answered that they were not aware of the reasons, their duty was to obey orders only. Mataji embraced her grandsons, blessed them and asked them to uphold the

sacred traditions of the Gurus. The two Sahibzadas pledged to do so and departed cheerfully. The two Sahibzadas walked to the court boldly along with the constables. As they reached the Court they noticed that the big gate was closed and there was only a small window for gaining entry to the Court. It was setup so that the Sons of Guru Gobind Singh would have to bow to Quran which Qazi was holding in his hands across the door. The intelligent Sahibzadas saw through the game. They put their feet forward and jumped inside through the window without bowing their heads.

The Nawab's court was in session. As the two Sahibzadas stepped inside, they greeted the courtiers with the Sikh salutation -- *Wahguru ji ka Khalsa, Wahguru ji ki Fateh* "The Khalsa is God's own Victory be to God" The court resounded with their greeting. All the courtiers were greatly impressed by their fearless behaviour. Dressed in saffron shirts with Kirpans worn round their wrists, the Sahibzadas looked very sweet. Nawab Wazir Khan addressed them in an affectionate tone: "What sweet and brave faces! Islam will be proud to have you within its fold. Just recite Kalma (Muslim benediction) and we shall welcome you in our midst. You will get anything for the asking"

The two sahibzadas shouted back in one voice. "we care not for the worldly wealth. We shall not renounce our religion at any cost" The nawab got annoyed at their reply but just kept quiet. Addressing the qazi the nawab said, "Have you observed the insolent behaviour of these boys! Don't regard them as innocent. They are the rebellious sons of a

rebel. They will have to be punished." The qazi told the nawab that, according to islamic law, the two boys were not guilty of any crime. They could not be held responsible for their



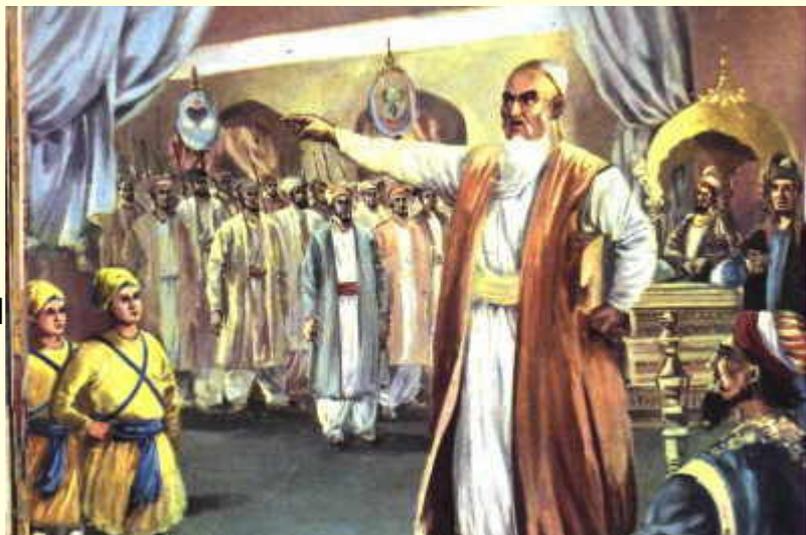
father's actions. The nawab observed, however, "They are rebels too. Haven't you heard their rude statements!". The Qazi answered, "But they have not committed any crime". Nawab Wazir Khan was taken aback at the Qazi's unexpected reply. Nawab Wazir Khan again tried to pursued them and said " You are still young and innocent. It is your age for enjoyment and fun. If you listen to our advice, you will enjoy life to your heart's content in this world and be blessed with a glorious life in Paradise"

Sahibzada Zorawar Singh spoke fearlessly. "We are fighting against tyranny and injustice. We are the sons of Guru Gobind Singh, the grand sons of Guru Tegh Bahadur and descendants of Guru Arjan Dev. We shall follow in their footsteps. We are ready for all sacrifices for the protection of

our faith" In a low voice the Nawab observed, "How proud of their faith!" One of the officials of the Moghul government Dewan Sucha Nand, who happened to be there, walked up to the Sahibzadas and asked them, "If you are released, where will you go?" Sahibzada Zorawar Singh said, "We shall go to the forests, gather together a few Sikhs, get hold of any good horse and then come and face you and your army on the battlefield." On hearing this, Dewan Sucha Nand observed, "Do you know that your father has been slain?" Both the brothers reacted in an angry tone, "No one can kill our respected father. He will never fall into your hands." The two Sahibzadas shouted back, "We don't need any advice from you. Listen carefully. Until this tyrannical government is completely wiped out, we shall go on fighting.

Dewan Sucha Nand was taken aback at their reply. Addressing the Nawab he said, "Sir killing the serpent and feeding his young ones would not be wise. When these young kids grow up, they will rebel against the government. They must be punished and should, on no account, be released." The Nawab listened to what Dewan Sucha Nand said. The two Sahibzadas were in a playful mood, talkin to each other fearlessly and quite unconcerned when the Nawab, the Qazi and Dewan Sucha Nand were engaged in this conversation. The courtiers were quite amazed at the lack of any fear or anxiety on their faces even though it was a question of life and death for them. The Nawab said to the Qazi again, "You have heard the impertinent answers given by them to Dewan Sucha Nand. It would not be safe to release them. They are sure to raise the banner of revolt, like their father when they grow up.

The Qazi had listened to the conversation that took place between Dewan Sucha Nand and the two bold sons of Guru Gobind Singh. After some deliberations he



pronounced the judgement and ordered that they be bricked up alive in a wall. (a standard punishment taken straight from Quran for "seditious activities against muslim state") Sahibzadas heard the sentence without dismay but the courtiers were taken aback on hearing the judgement. The Qazi advised the Nawab further that they be handed over to the Nawab of Malerkotla for carrying out the sentence since his brother met his end at the hands of the Guru so that he can have his revenge by getting his sons buried alive.

Nawab Wazir Khan called Sher Mohammad Khan, the Nawab of Malerkotla, and conveyed the Qazi's orders to him, "Your brother lost his life at the hands of Guru Gobind Singh. Here is an opportunity for you to wreak your vengeance. The Qazi has sentenced these two sons of Guru Gobind Singh to death and has further ordered that they be bricked alive. We are handing them over to you for doing the needful" On hearing this Sher Mohammad Khan was dumbfounded. After some pause he said to the Nawab in a faltering voice, "This is cruelty! my brother was killed on the battlefield. These innocent boys are not responsible for his death. If we have to take revenge it shall be from the father. God save us from this sinful act." Saying this he got up and remarked in a mournful tone, "O God, how cruel!"

Thereafter the Nawab ordered that both the boys be sent back to the tower. He directed his officials to arrange for executioners who would brick them alive in between two walls, which may be constructed immediately. The sahibzadas reached the tower and gave a report of the proceedings of the court to their grand mother. She embraced her grandsons patted them on their backs for their courageous and bold stand and said, "You have rightly upheld the dignity and honour of your revered grand-father and your valiant father May God ever abide with you."

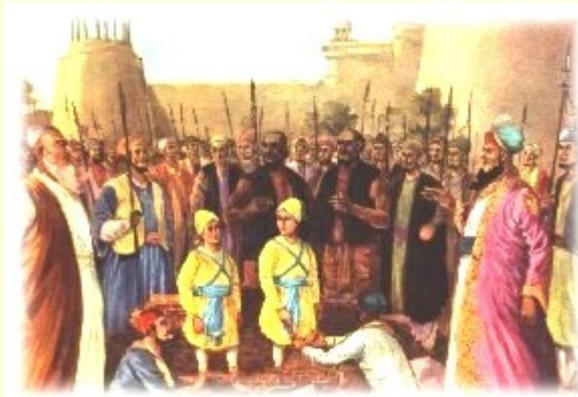
Next morning they were taken to the Nawab's court. The Nawab asked them again, "I do hope you have made up your mind to embrace Islam, otherwise, as you know, you will be bricked up alive." Both the Sahibzadas proclaimed fearlessly, "we shall never give up our faith, whatever may be the consequences. Death has no meaning for us." The Nawab was simply

amazed at their determined and firm reply. One of his officials stepped forward, and said to the Nawab, "Sir the two royal executioners of Delhi, Shisal Beg and Vishal Beg, are present in the court for hearing of their case. They are prepared to carry out your orders for bricking up these boys alive if they are granted pardon." The Nawab called them and told them, "Your request for pardon has been granted on condition that you brick up these two sons of Guru Gobind Singh alive in a wall."

The constables took away both the Sahibzadas. A large crowd had collected. The Nawab that the two young innocent sons of Guru Gobind Singh were to be bricked alive.

"What crime have they committed?" said one. "How cruel and inhuman. O God!" exclaimed another. "But they are not terrified," remarked a lady in the crowd. "They are brave sons of their brave father, Guru Gobind Singh," put came the remark by her companion.

The constables who were escorting the two Sahibzadas, were getting perturbed on hearing such observations from the crowd and were rushing forward.



The Sahibzadas were brought to the spot where a wall was being raised. Both of them were made to stand side by side. The Qazi arrived there soon after and tried to persuade them to accept Islam and not to cut short their lives. Even the executioners tried to prevail upon them but they were both unflinching in their

determination and told the executioners, "Raise the wall fast and bury the Moghul Raj Quickly. Don't delay for a minute." Thereafter both of them started reciting Japji while the wall was going up brick by brick.

The wall went up higher and higher until it reached their chests. The Nawab and Qazi approached them and said to them in an affectionate tone, "There is still time for you to save your lives, just recite the Kalma and the wall will be pulled down immediately."

The Sahibzadas shouted loudly, "We shall not give up our faith death does

not frighten us."

Both the Nawab and Qazi were amazed at their steadfast determination. Tears flowed from the eyes of onlookers, as they observed, "Blessed be their mother who gave birth to such children."

The wall went up still higher and it was shoulder high. Sahibzada Zorawar Singh said to his younger brother, "They are putting us to test. They do not know that the Sikhs of Guru Nanak are fearless. Our Fifth Guru Arjan Dev faced martyrdom cheerfully on burning iron pans. Whereas he guided humanity to the path of a truthful and noble life, he also set an example of facing death boldly and with full faith in God." The younger brother Sahibzada Fateh Singh remarked, "The martyrdom of our revered grand father, Guru Teg Bahadur was also unique. We shall soon join him. He is waiting us." Later both the Sahibzadas became unconscious. The executioners became nervous and consulted each other. "They are now nearing their end. There is no need to raise the wall further. Why not cut short their agony by beheading them? It is already getting dark." The wall was pulled down. They brought the unconscious Sahibzadas out laid them flat on the ground and, in an instant, martyred them. People in the crowd were shocked at this ghastly act. They sighed in dismay, "what cruelty!"

As soon as the two Sahibzadas attained martyrdom, Mata Gujri ji, who was sitting in meditation in the tower, breathed her last. The messenger who came with the news of the martyrdom of the Sahibzads found that Mata-Ji had already attained salvation. There was great commotion in the town of Sirhind. Everyone was furious at the atrocious crime. They were unanimous in their view that this heinous act would herald the doomsday of the Moghul Empire. They admired the courage and steadfastness of the brave sons of Guru Gobind Singh and remarked, "What determination at this young age! They did not budge an inch from their position in spite of several allurements by the Nawab and Qazi."

The same evening Dewan Todar Mal, a jeweller reached Nawab Wazir Khan's court for permission to cremate the dead bodies of the two Sahibzadas and Mata Gurji.

The Nawab agreed on condition that the dewan paid for the required piece of land by spreading as many Gold coins as would cover the entire spot.

The dewan accepted the terms and brought bagfuls of Gold coins. He marked the site and spread coins on entire piece of land he selected for cremation.

The two martyred young sons of Guru Gobind Singh were cremated with full honours along with their grand mother. There is no parallel to the martyrdom of such young boys in the annals of human history. Sahibzada Fateh Singh was less than Six years old (born 1699) and Sahibzada Zorawar Singh was just over eight (born in 1696). They laid down their lives in December 1705. They were bricked alive but did not bow before the tyranny of the Moghul government. Guru Gobind Singh was at the time in the forests of Machhiwara when the news of the martyrdom of his younger sons reached him. On hearing this he pulled out a plant with the tip of his arrow and prophesized that this tragedy will herald the uprooting of Moghal Empire in India. And to the Emperor he wrote: "It matters little if a jackal through cunning and treachery succeeds in killing two lion's cubs, for the lion himself lives to inflict retribution on you."

Guru Gobind Singh addressed his followers thus: "I have sacrificed four

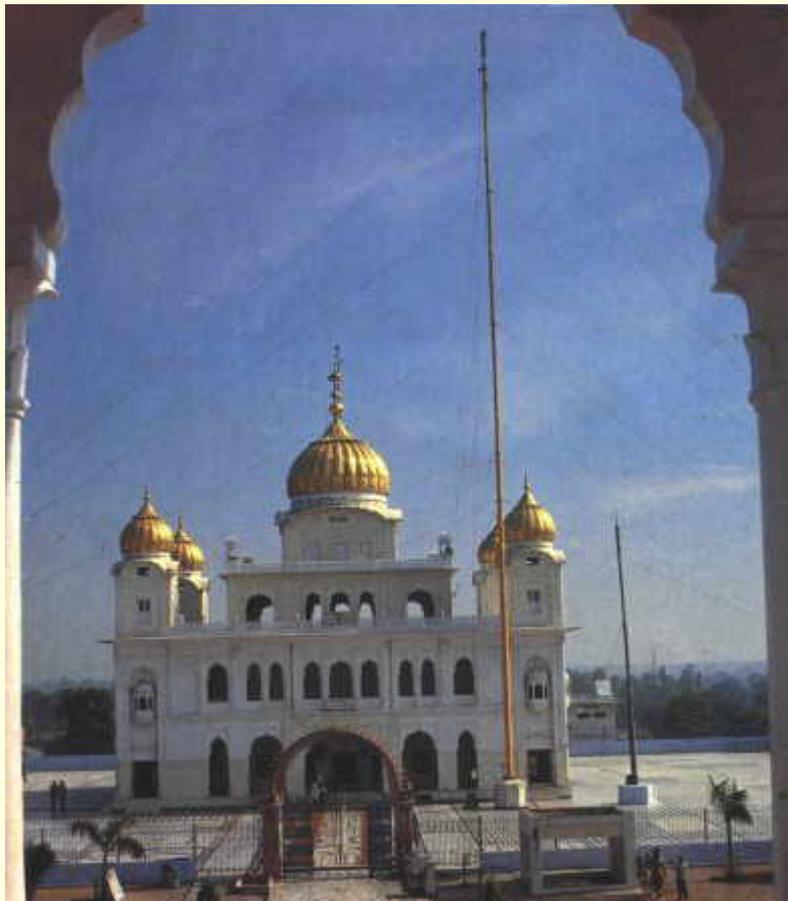


sons for the survival of the thousands of my sons who are still alive." (All Sikhs are Guru Gobind Singh's sons and daughters). A wave of anguish gripped the country at

the news of the martyrdom of the Sahibzadas. After some time the recluse Banda Bairagi came under the influence of Guru Gobind Singh ji, and was

made Khalsa as [Banda Singh Bahadur](#). He shook the Moghul empire and the town of Sirhind was reduced to the utter ruins.

The renowned Hindi poet, Maithli Saran Gupta in his well known book Bharat Bharati said: "Whatever their present position, the future of the community whose sons can thus lay down their lives for their faith, is bound to be glorious."



Gurdwara Fatehgarh Sahib, martyrdom place of Sahibzades

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Sahibzada Ajit Singh ji (1687 - 1705)



Sahibzada Ajit Singh was born to Mata Sundari and Guru Gobind Singh ji at Paonta Sahib on 26 January 1687. The following year, Guru Gobind Singh returned with the family to Anandpur where Ajit Singh was brought up in the approved Sikh style. He was taught religious texts, philosophy and history, and had training in the manly arts such as riding, swordsmanship and archery. He grew up into a handsome young man, strong intelligent and a natural leader of men.

Soon after the creation of Khalsa on 30 March 1699, he had his first test of skill. A Sikh Congregation *Sangat* coming from pothohar, northwest Punjab, was attacked and looted on the way by Ranghars of Nuh, a short distance from Anandpur across the River Sutlej.

Guru Gobind Singh ji sent Sahibzada Ajit Singh, barely 12 years old, to that village. Ajit Singh along with 100 Sikhs reached there on 23 May 1699, punished the Ranghars and recovered the looted property.

A harder task was entrusted to him the following year when the hill chiefs supported by imperial Mughal troops attacked Anandpur. Sahibzada Ajit Singh was made responsible for the defence of Taragarh Castle which became the first target of attack. This according to the Bhai Vahis, happened on 29 August 1700. Ajit Singh assisted by Bhai Ude Singh, a seasoned soldier, repulsed the attack. He also fought valiantly in the battle of Nirmohgarh in October 1700. On 15 March 1701, a Sikh Sangat, column of Sikh devotees, coming from Darap area (around Sialkote) was waylaid by Gujjars and Ranghars. Sahibzada Ajit Singh led a successful expedition against these thugs.

As instructed by his father Guru Gobind Singh on 7 March 1703, he led 100 horsemen to Bassi, near Hoshiarpur and rescued a young Brahman bride forcibly taken away by the local Pathan chieftain. In 1691, Mata Sundari gave birth to another boy which was named Jhujhar Singh. Sahibzada Jhujhar Singh was four years younger than Ajit Singh. Sahibzada Ajit Singh for him was a sort of role model to be followed. Jhujhar Singh also was entrusted with several engagements around Anandpur and on hills. Both Ajit Singh and Jhujhar Singh led hundreds of successful expeditions against tyrants, helping needy who would come to Guru Gobind Singh asking to get them justice.

Then Mughal forces sieged Anandpur in 1705, Sahibzada Ajit Singh displayed his qualities of courage and steadfastness. When, at last, after Mughal Faujdar give assurances that he only wanted the castle of Anandpur, Anandpur was vacated on the night of 3-4 December 1705. Sahibzada Ajit Singh was given the command of the rearguard. As the besiegers, violating their solemn promises for a safe conduct of the evacuees, attacked the column, he stoutly

engaged them on a hill-feature called Shahi Tibbi until relieved by Bhai Ude Singh. Ajit Singh crossed the Sarsa, then in spate, along with his father, his younger brother, Jhujhar Singh, and some fifty



Sikhs. Further reduced in numbers by casualties at the hands of pursuing troop from Ropar, the column reached Chamkaur in the evening of 6 December 1705, and took

up position in a garhi, a high walled fortified house. The host, since swelled by reinforcements from Malerkotla and Sirhind and from among the local Ranghars and Gujjars, soon caught up with them and threw a tight ring around Chamkaur. An unequal but grim battle commenced with the sunrise on 7 December 1705-in the words of Guru Gobind Singh's Zafarnamah, a mere forty defying thousands. The besieged, after they had exhausted the meagre stock of ammunitions and arrows, made sallies in batches of five each to engage the encircling host with sword and spear.

Sahibzada Ajit Singh led one of the sallies and laid down his life fighting in the thick of the battle. Gurdwara Qatalgarh now marks the spot where he fell, followed by Sahibzada Jhujhar Singh who led the next sally. An annual fair is held in the commemoration of their martyrdoms on the 8th of the Bikrami month of Poh (December - January).

The martyrdom of two of the sons of Guru Gobind Singh in the battle of Chamkaur is substantiated by a contemporary record in the form of an official letter preserved in a MS., Ahkam-i-Alamgiri by

Emperor Aurungzeb's official letter writer, Mirza 'Inayat' Ullah Khan Ismi (1653-1725). The relevant extract from the Ms., translated into English, shows that Mughals supplied at least 700 men while Sarhind, Malerkotla, and Ranghars were rest, it reads:

Received the letter containing miscellaneous matters including the arrival of Gobind, the worshipper of Nanak, to a place 12 kos from Sirhind; the dispatch of a force of 700 with artillery and other material; his being besieged and vanquished in the haveli [a large walled house] of a zamindar of village chamkaur and killing of his two sons and other companions; and the capture of his mother and another son...

Salute to Great Sikh Warrior Sardar Sahibzada Ajit Singh ji.

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SAHIBZADA JUJHAR SINGH (1691-1705)



The Second son of [Guru Gobind Singh](#), born to Mata Jito ji at Anandpur on 14 March 1691. Like his elder brother, [Ajit Singh](#), he started training in the fighting skills as soon as he started learning the religious texts. In 1699, when he was eight years old, he received the rites of Khalsa initiation. By the time it became necessary to leave Anandpur under the pressure of a besieging host in December 1705, Jujhar Singh, nearing the completion of his fifteenth year, was an experienced young warrior, strong and fearless. He was one of the band that successfully waded through the flooded Sarsa rivulet on horseback and made good their way to Chamkaur by nightfall on 6 December 1705, with the adversary in hot pursuit. With little respite during the night, he participated in the next day's battle warding off assault after assault upon the garhi, the fortified house in which Guru Gobind Singh had, along with his 40 Sikhs and two sons, taken shelter. As they ran out of ammunition and arrows, Sikhs inside split themselves into batches of five each who would go out one after the other to engage the besiegers in hand-to-hand combat. Jujhar Singh led

the last sally towards the end of the day (7 December 1705), and laid down his life fighting near the place where he had earlier seen his [elder brother Ajit Singh fall](#). Gurdwara Qatalgarh in Chamkaur Sahib now marks the site.

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